



ENTRE CHIEN ET LOUP

***Entre chien et loup* is a multi-layered expression. It is used to describe a specific time of day, just before night, when the light is so dim you can't distinguish a dog from a wolf. However, it's not all about levels of light. It also expresses that limit between the familiar, the comfortable, the unknown and the dangerous (or between the domestic and the wild). It is an uncertain threshold between hope and fear.**

***Entre chien et loup* is a selection of works from the Meana Larrucea Collection produced by Guillermo Paneque.**

Cover: Raymond Pettibon, *No title (P. S. I do not write)*, 1992 (detail p. 140)

Jacket: John Baldessari, *Prima Facie (Third State)*: Pitiless / Wishful / Disappointed / Tricky / Quizzical / Unfathomable, 2005 (detail p. 126)



**Entre chien  
et loup  
/  
Works  
from the  
Meana  
Larrucea  
Collection**

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**IBERDROLA**

Ignacio Sánchez Galán  
Chairman of the Board of Directors, Iberdrola

I am proud to present the publication of *Entre chien et loup*, containing a careful selection of works from the Meana Larrucea Collection.

These two natives of Bilbao have been collecting passionately for over forty years, during which time they have built up one of the best private contemporary art collections in the country, which received the ARCO Collector's Award in 2007.

This book, published with the active involvement of Iberdrola, is in itself a privileged journey through international art of the last thirty years, reflecting its multi-genre nature including paintings, photography, sculpture and installations by the most prestigious contemporary artists.

These artists include key influential names such as John Baldessari, Alighiero Boetti, Olafur Eliasson, Tracey Emin, Jenny Holzer, Robert Mapplethorpe, Juan Muñoz, Robert Rauschenberg or Cindy Sherman. The pieces chosen also include representations of recent generations of Basque artists who have a solid international reputation, such as Ibon Aranberri, Txomin Badiola, Cristina Iglesias, Pello Irazu or Asier Mendizábal.

The sponsorship of this publication is part of the cultural activities developed by Iberdrola as a socially responsible business, and is a further example of our company's ongoing commitment with the people and the city of Bilbao and the Basque Country as a whole – a land to which we feel deeply connected.

I would like to thank Fernando Meana and María Victoria Larrucea for their generosity and to congratulate all those who have worked together in order for us to be able to enjoy this magnificent publication.



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The publication of this book on our collection is the perfect opportunity to express publicly our gratitude to everyone who has made it possible, and to all those who have supported us in building up the collection.

We would like to start with our daughter Estefanía Meana Larrucea, who has made enormous efforts to fill in the missing documentation for the collection, obtaining ownership certificates and graphic documents about the works in order to make it possible for this publication to go ahead.

Luis Fernando García Arechabala has taken care of the storage, organisation and care of the works of art for all these years. His work has been, and continues to be exceptionally important.

We would also like to thank the artists, who are without a doubt the cornerstone of the collection, and the galleries, who have always been on hand with their support and advice.

Many other people have also been involved in this publication, whose involvement and professionalism must be reflected here. The curator, coordinator, authors, designer, publishing coordinator, translators, photographers..., they have all contributed with their conscientious and invaluable work.

Finally, and in particular, we would like to express our thanks to Iberdrola S.A. and their Secretary General, Julián Martínez-Simancas Sánchez, without whose backing it would not have been possible to publish this selection of works from our collection.

Hypothesis of a story without works, ruptures in a collection  
Guillermo Paneque

"For many years now I have been overcome by the urge to continue every book I read into another and then another, as if to remain for a long time in the company of a single character, a single plot, a single author was an unnatural act.

"Not long ago, I realised that every film I saw reminded me of a different one; yet, the links between them were almost never obvious. I said to myself.

[...]

"Gradually, I became aware that a new kind of exile was forming within me: it was not exile from the mother country nor from mankind but exile from human works. If a film made me think of another (not just any one but one in particular) it was because what I was looking for between them was the abyss that separates them. That abyss was the land of exile, that *terra incognita* into which I (and many like me) were entering."

I am not sure whether this project began a long time ago, as I always believed, when I read these introductory notes by Raúl Ruiz in a film programme<sup>1</sup>. Or maybe it was the films themselves, with their interlinked web of couples and counterpoints, that captured my attention?

The conscience is unstable matter, constructing reality from snippets of distorted memories, lost information and unfinished dreams. The directions and horizons of a collection also change progressively, without ever entirely forgetting its origins or getting in the way of its evolution. Its images and objects surpass the context that created them and in this way, time does not come from the past but from memory. A collection is living and moving matter. We might deduce that one of Ariadna's threads runs from one work to another and we hope that our understanding benefits from this constant searching. In fact, the script used to bring together this set of works was nothing more than one piece of fiction among many other possibilities, albeit a useful piece of fiction that, this late in the day when the project has already been closed for publication, realises the possibilities buried along the way.

A set of works: thinking of them within the pages of this book and imagining them mapped out as a possible exhibition, they could be seen to form a path of outlines and fragments extracted from an impossible totality. Nevertheless, how can we credit the relationships highlighted between these works with legibility? Where should this story start and what steps will it take? We will thereby need to consult a map of conjectures and intentions spanning all this time.

Let's start the journey with a double conversation, in this respect, with the works themselves and their different ways of operating in the world. They have determined a narration full of encounters and misunderstandings whilst not, on the contrary, "showing" a topic. There is also a reflection on the meaning of the works within the collection itself: its pertinence, its complexity, but also its multiple nature and its weaknesses that, when all is said and done, help to shape it and bring it to life.

Nevertheless, what determines the potential feeling of an association of works of art? And how can you move from one to another without imposing a single text on them that would capriciously reduce these possibilities of meaning? In these approaches to very different works and artists, I have attempted to probe new analogies and paths, from the intuitive to the social aspect, from the common to the inexplicable, stories that are told through groups of works that form separate constellations, although jostling each other, following certain common rules.

A network of fortuitous connections embraces many topics that crop up among the works. From one space denoting absence and impossibility to another with visual analogies; from an approximation of real life through the work and the process to speculations on the material nature of painting and the condition of the gaze; from fertile oppositions in trawling, research and reconstruction of the place to the interpretation of one culture looking at another; from language and perception to the pathetic gesture; from creases in identity to the economy of expression; from absence to biography and exile. These are micro-narratives reflected in each other, without necessarily reaching a conclusion or an denouement.

The emphasis that I want comes from the apparent narrative logic between the works that follows an argument to a certain extent. This logic could be nothing more than a non explicit combination of the works, finding strengths in the weaknesses of another apparent relationship, contradicting it, speculating on it, prolonging it<sup>2</sup>. This happens when several topical sequences are structured in such a way that you simply need to combine them with others to discover unexpected aspects of the narration.

It can happen in a narrative structure such as this, based on the *ars combinatoria*. Occasionally, it is linked to intuition lacking fundament, a similar distancing between several works and several topics with

<sup>1</sup> Originally in *Between two Exiles, Time and Tide-The Tyne International Exhibition of Contemporary Art*, Newcastle, 1993. Included in *Vagamundo. Reflexiones sobre el exilio*, Córdoba, Andalusia film library, 1994.

<sup>2</sup> Idea developed in Raúl Ruiz. *Poetics of Cinema*, Paris, Dis Voir, 1995.

an almost invisible link that eventually joins them together; or even a relationship that also recognises clichés, although putting them in a new and potential context. So how can we explain certain pairs of oppositions and contradictions between sense and structure? There are also many rhymes and analogies in their acceptance of plays on words: visual and verbal. For example, why is a relationship between X and Y so irresistible? X can act more successfully from the emphasis in the process, although it is not his most natural space... X also strengthens the duplication between image and idea... X, Y and Z form a network of counterpoints that moves erratically backwards and forwards in time...

A chain of echoes would have ended up relating these works and I accepted that I needed to give them special attention. And maybe the metonymic nature of some works and, at the same time, the fact of not fulfilling the necessary narrative role but appearing as insertions that stop time and space were more closely linked, deep down, to the very nature of the gaze.

This itinerary, full of connections, encounters and coincidences, appears organically among the many different contents and contexts. It is worth enjoying it as a game, come to life, regarding the narrative possibilities contained in this collection's objects and images, the stories that remain latent in the centre and on the edges of all visual representations.

#### About this book

Organised as an essay of images and texts, each point along the path has been considered deeply, from prologue to conclusion. It is possible that associations made here may be extended whilst physically arranging the works into an exhibition, when unexpected affinities and differences are interposed and dismantle my initial proposal. I would like to thank Javier Montes, writer and art critic, who agreed to represent the role of a spectator looking round the works of art in the sections proposed in this itinerary. The multiple aspect, on this occasion, requires the narration to be organised using a voice-over, a voice as a story of story. It is just one among many possibilities.

If conversations are among the most interesting formats of theoretical and discursive production, this book also strives, in its own way, to strike up a dialogue with the interested reader, to understand the current context of an artistic scene, whose main debates are often eclipsed by their relationship with the market. For this reason, I wanted to invite a number of authors to share their reflections on matters relating to contemporary subjectivity, ranging from the essay by the psychoanalyst Gérard Wajcman on the state of intimacy in society today, to the psycho-geographical journey on the representation of violence by the Art Historian Xabier Sáenz de Gorbea, topics shared between some of the works in the collection. Wajcman also proposes a reflection on collecting, a Potlatch theory, on spending beyond need and usefulness, as outlined by Georges Bataille. I would like to thank all of them.

#### A final rupture

If omission is the core of the structure in the Ruiz film, *Hypothesis of a stolen painting* (1979), just as a set of pictures is presented to us as a series with order and meaning that cannot be checked due to the fact that one of them is missing; it is this same condition that I wished to highlight throughout this trip: a sign of what is missing, evidence of the cut or the selective process. Leaving the possibility of an interval open like a liberating crack in meaning, as an open structure or inconclusive piece. Like the collector from this piece of fiction, whose hypothesis is supported in arbitrary connections of facts and objects, the signs of my interests also appear in the associations sketched out among the works although creating, I would hope, sufficient space for the spectator to include them and their own stories in the tale.

Fortunately, other readings and approximations to the Meana Larrucea collection will take place in the future with different constructions and works, giving rise to the other viewpoints, because there is no collection without horizon that, once reached, does not reveal a new path which leads towards it.

I cannot think of a better way of conversing with Fernando and Mariví.



**Dora García**  
***La Habitación Cerrada*, 2002-2010**

Door in the wall, vinyl letters

Site-specific dimensions

Edition of 3





It is appropriate that a door is the opening piece of this proposed journey and map of possible constellations from the depths of Meana Larrucea Collection. Guillermo Paneque will sketch the lines of an *open work* here: the fact that the door is closed does not mean that you are prevented from going through it. On the contrary: it encourages us to find ways of entering the adjacent space, or construct the place it is hiding using our imagination.

The author, Dora García, has kept exclusive use of its only key. But this restriction actually gives us camouflaged freedom: precisely by preventing access to it, it gives the spectator the possibility of roaming freely around the forbidden room and defining it along the lines of another type of inner perspective. A similar mechanism to the mental space proposed here by Guillermo Paneque: being given (to quote Duchamp, author of another famous closed and permeable door) coordinates that can be used as a framework, we are helped to mark out our path, we trace our own asymptotes and we let ourselves get carried along the path by means of personal intuition and our chosen affinities.

The closed door, that paradoxically opens up the way to an infinite number of contingent places and is now used by us as an entrance, on the other hand, has a solid and extensive genealogy in which Duchamp's *Étant Donnés* is no more than an initial threshold. Bricking up the library door for Alonso Quijano, the canon, the mistress and the niece actually create Don Quijote: this opens up for them a myriad of alternative routes towards fiction contained in its inaccessible books that cross over from literary to real adventures.

And that same *locked room mystery* is the creative archetype that allows Poe of *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, Conan Doyle of *Study in Scarlet* (first appearance of Sherlock Holmes, the Victorian and 19th century Quijote) or Gaston Leroux of the delicious *Mystery of the Yellow Room* turn the firmly closed door (and let's not forget that it is closed *from the inside*: in the same way as the door by Dora García, the author of the mystery and holder of the key has forbidden access from inside his own creation) into the detonator of potential interpretations and conjectures, of all the deductions and specifications of the mystery novel genre that most fascinated Borges: along with Duchamp, another avocation that will recur along this path.

In his recent work entitled *El error*, César Aira composes one of these narrative processes from a door similar to this one: above it, we can read letters spelling "ERROR" and for this reason the narrator (and the reader) breaks through as the real or virtual visitor of this open narration, articulated through images: the threshold of Aira's book, like this one, clears the way for a myriad of broken narratives and possible journeys.

The closed door — any closed door — is not only an obstacle for access to another space: it is, in itself, a transition point and a gap that turns out to be as plastic as truly described in the French expressions that the curator chose as the title for this show: *Entre chien et loup* (Between a dog and a wolf), between day and night, at that exact time and place where nothing is definitive or univocal. In this non-place, that in time becomes all places, we can maybe start our journey.

# II

A second untitled work by Francis Alÿs can be used as a *pendant* and doubles up the prologue to our journey. It also announces the series of dualities — reality/representation, object/language — that we find later on.

Because this work by Alÿs is also double. In the 1990s, the artist produced small paintings-models that were later interpreted and reproduced by several advertising illustrators in Mexico City. They transformed the dimensions, tones and even the positions of the characters proposed by Alÿs following their own style. The series entitled *The Liar, the Copy of the Liar* was presented as a work in collaboration and the illustrators, along with Alÿs, managed to form a commercial cooperative that produced hundreds of paintings in only a few years.

This thereby laid the foundations for the bridges that will outline this journey later on: between languages (the “artistic” and the “craftsman”) and between speakers: like in the old game of Chinese whispers, maybe artistic communication is nothing more than a defective transmission of messages, open to error and to free interpretation, capable of shooting off in unexpected directions and crystallising into new meanings.

**Francis Allys**  
***Untitled*, 1995**

Oil on canvas and car paint on galvanised steel  
15 x 19 and 51 x 62 cm



**Cildo Meireles**  
***Dados*, 1970-1996**

Case, dice and bronze plates

5.5 x 9 x 9 cm

Edition 11/25





Objects and letters are used as a common theme on this first threshold. Maybe they belong to the same infinite family of signs: signs making up the great alphabet of visible reality or that are used to represent it. Words and things tend to be like the family members we would not always choose: we have to remember that Foucault deservedly entitled his capital work *The Order of Things* (although literally translated the title refers to Words and Things) to understand the archaeology of thinking and language. We should also rightly recall that his study of what can be thought (and said, and represented) in a particular point in history began with the analysis of a work of art, *Las Meninas*.

Because Foucault tells us that art actually works to widen these limits, modifying the episteme of a given period and articulating the visible reality in new alphabets, structures and relations.

Maybe one of Cildo Meireles' *Dados* under which we find the relevant explanatory sign with the word that (for now) is used as a meaning, is secretly related to the soap pill (bearing no sign) by Joan Brossa, an artist that knew exactly to what extent objects are also words or verses from poems. Maybe Brossa would not have been against exhibiting next to Meireles' impossible seven sided dice, offering an emblem of the *Dau al Set* that twisted words to express their possibilities.

The de-contextualised or arbitrarily emphasised object (on pedestals, behind glass) that Guillermo Paneque works with in *Interruptions* or Bestué and Vives employ in their personalised iPod that opens the recent series of their *Encargos difíciles*, is used to remind us, unhitching the chain of meanings that usually cloud its appearance, just how far it can host all possible meanings: everything is a matter of perspective and context. "Everything in the world is encoded": in some way, his works assume Gombrowicz's maxim in *Cosmos* and request from the world — and provide for the spectator — the time-out and room for manoeuvre required for deciphering.

In this respect, *XL (Cuarenta en romano)*, the slideshow by Ignacio Uriarte, provides us with a privileged occasion: his harmless Bic biros (like so many other elements of office paraphernalia featured in his work) are grouped together to form a numerical series: they are objects that are letters that are numerals, emblematic of the malleability of meanings that we can attribute to things.

Alighiero Boetti embroiders letters on the tapestry that make up *27 maggio, 1988*, Ricardo Rendón reminds us of the ultimate controllable object on the cover of any newspaper, that aspires to meaning but cannot get away from its object-like (and degradable) roots. And Rivane Neuenschwander uses a strategy in *Accidental Alphabet* that is diametrically opposed to Uriarte: subtracting elements from visible reality's infinite cluster of objects that, when isolated, will make up the "accidental alphabet". This is a good way of reminding ourselves of Foucault's thesis: the accidental nature of all alphabets, of all historical structures of thinking, that aspire to presenting themselves as immutable. It is not by chance that we read Borges' famous fragment on an unauthentic Chinese encyclopaedia in *The Analytical Language of John Wilkins* that was used as the initial quote in *The Order of Things*: like some of the works brought together here, it was used as an emblem and allegory for the futility — or the changeable nature — of all ordered grouping of objects, words and signs: "A certain Chinese encyclopaedia entitled *Celestial Emporium of Benevolent Knowledge*. In its remote pages we find that animals are divided into (a) belonging to the Emperor, (b) embalmed, (c) trained, (d) piglets, (e) mermaids, (f) fabulous, (g) stray dogs, (h) included in this classification, (i) that run around madly, (j) innumerable, (k) drawn with a very fine camel hair brush, (l) etc., (m) that have just broken the jug, (n) that are nothing like flies..."

**Joan Brossa**

***Sabó Brut*, 1982**

Soap, ink, wood, and Plexiglas

12 x 15 x 12 cm

Edition 3/10

**Guillermo Paneque**

***Interruptions*, 1995**

Glass, wood, plastic and tape

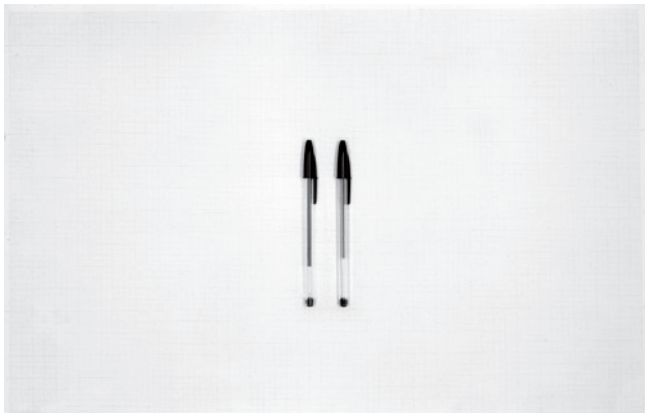
76 x 164.4 x 95.9 cm





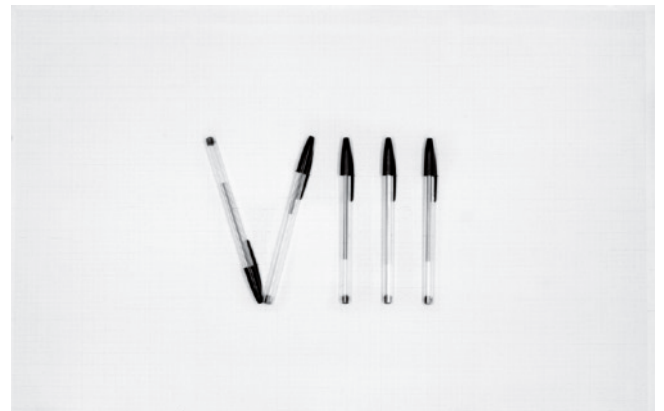






*XL (Cuarenta en romano)* [XL (Forty in Roman numerals)] is a projection of eighty slides counting up from 1 to 40 and down again in Roman numerals. This is relayed using biros, not in the usual way, but as sculpture elements that physically create the numbers themselves on the paper. In this way, the writing tool is turned into a sign.

Ignoring its usual way of working, the biros are used as sculpting elements making up the very numbers themselves. In this way, the writing tool becomes a sign and the usual way of working is suspended. The irony lies in the fact that we are not doing anything out of ordinary: we are writing with biros on paper or at least this is the final result, just that the process is slower, more tedious and absurd than usual. This process also has a positive side and this allows us to observe and analyse the biro's qualities in terms of sculpture: its degree of transparency, its visual deformation if we look through it, its possibilities for being piled up with the additional resulting shadows, of being extended or contracted using the lid, etc. The Roman numerals and the projection technique are clear references to the past. The photos are in black and white, which simplifies and unifies the language of signs that is used.

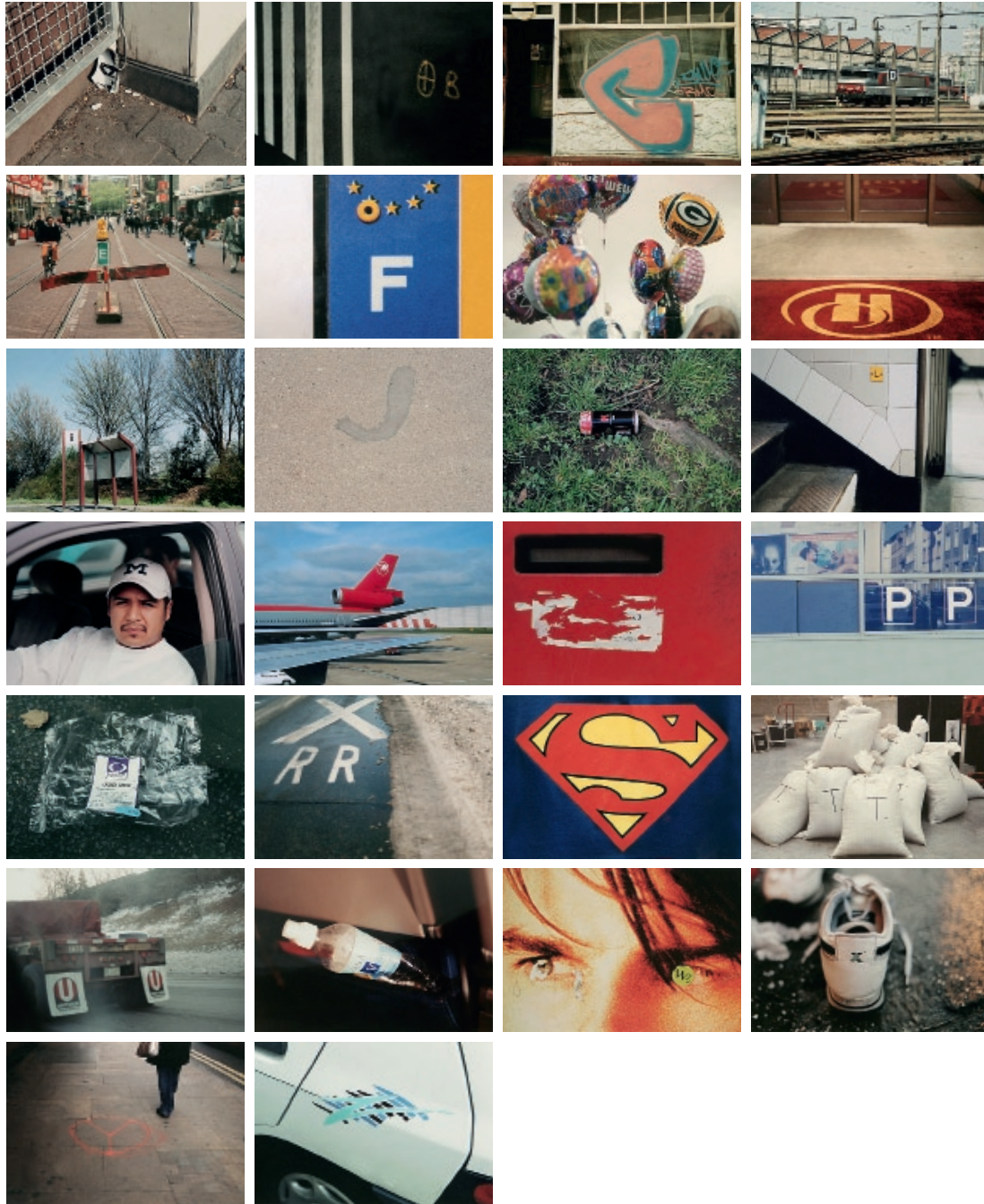


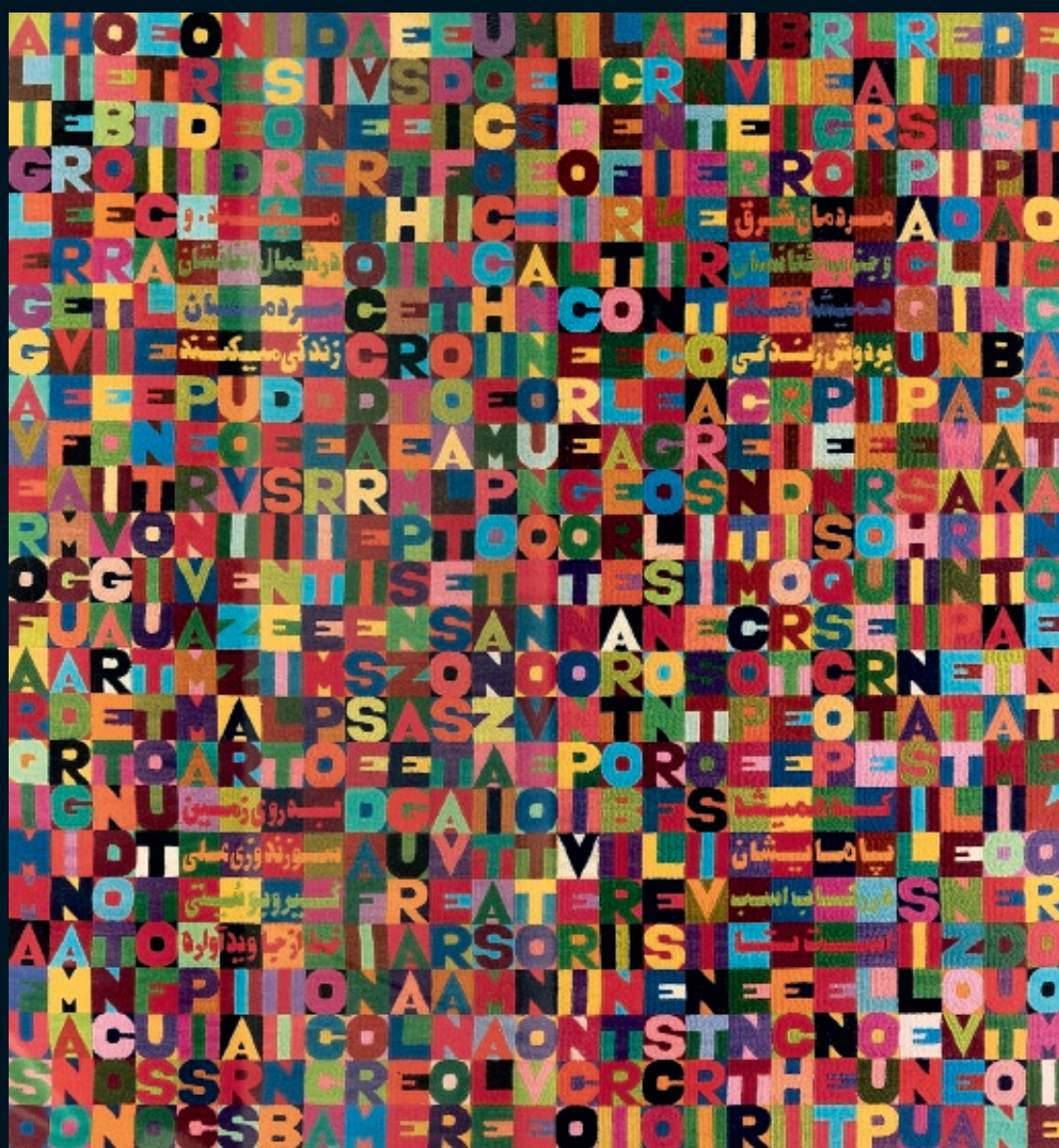


**Georg Herold**  
***Flagge*, 1988**  
Bricks and fabric  
310 x 160 cm

**Rivane Neuenschwander**  
***Accidental Alphabet*, 2003**

Chromogenic print  
 26 panels of 20 x 30 cm  
 Edition 2/4 + 2 A.P.







**Melanie Smith**  
**Comercial Mexicana Mixcoac, 2000**  
Chromogenic print  
122 x 154 cm  
Edition 2/3





**Ricardo Rendón**  
**Trabajo diario: Mes de trabajo (Enero, 2008), 2008**  
 Drilled newspapers  
 30 panels of 38 x 58 cm  
 (Selection of four out of thirty panels)



**Chen Chieh-jen**

***The Route*, 2006**

35mm film transferred to DVD;

single-channel video installation, colour and black and white, without sound, continuous projection

16 minutes, 45 seconds

Edition 3/5

This film is inspired by the Liverpool dockers' strike in 1995.

During the regime of Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s, all British ports became privatized. Private enterprises started to employ non-European Union workers to replace the original workers from the Union.

In September 1995, twenty Liverpool dockers were unexpectedly sacked by the Mersey Dock and Harbour Company. In response to the sackings, the other 400 Liverpool dockers decided to picket. This movement triggered a resistance to port privatization from dockers all over the world.

In September 1997, two years into the strike, scabs in Liverpool loaded cargo onto a ship called the *Neptune Jade*. The ILWU (International Longshore and Warehouse Union) in Oakland received communication that the *Neptune Jade* was heading to the Port of Oakland to unload. When the ship arrived in Oakland, the ILWU set up a picket line, and dockers refused to cross the picket line to unload the ship.

Failing to unload from port to port around the world, the *Neptune Jade* eventually sailed to the Port of Kaohsiung, Taiwan, on 17 October 1997. Reportedly, the ship and its cargo were auctioned off at the Port of Kaohsiung.

Dockers at the Port of Kaohsiung had never heard of the *Neptune Jade* incident.

Neither had they had contact with organizations like the ILWU. During the same year as the *Neptune Jade* incident, the Longshoremen's Union of the Port of Kaohsiung, in revolt against the privatization of the port's cargo handling work, staged a resistance against the authorities. Yet due to a lack of connections with international organizations and the complexity of local political and economic factors, the Longshoremen's Union of the Port of Kaohsiung was not able to alter the privatization policy. Later, dockworkers at the Port of Kaohsiung were forced to accept the reality that the new management would hire temporary workers.

In early August 2006, after learning of the *Neptune Jade* incident, the Longshoremen's Union of the Port of Kaohsiung decided to set up a symbolic picket line. Though history cannot be rewritten, they hope to carry on the pickets mounted by dockers all over the world and be united with them through this symbolic action to confront the problem of port privatization.

On 17 August 2006, employees of a private company renting a dock at the Port of Kaohsiung secretly let us enter and film.

Before filming *The Route*, Chen Chieh-jen went to Liverpool and Kaohsiung to interview the local dockers there. Because of this, he learned that both of them were completely unaware of how the *Neptune Jade* incident ended. Chen also went to the Kaohsiung Harbor Bureau looking for any record of the auctioning of the *Neptune Jade*. He found no information whatsoever.

That is why in *The Route* he hoped, through a fictitious event, to alter the ending that occurred in reality. For this reason, he invited the longshoremen of Kaohsiung to launch a symbolic "picket line," echoing the previous resistance movement of dockworkers around the world united against the privatization of ports, and continuing to extend and build connections with the meaning of this movement.





**Franz Ackermann**  
***Versteck 1 (bootshaus), 2000***  
Oil on canvas  
190 x 280 cm



# IV

Foucault also stated that the wish to represent, whose epistemological bases have encouraged us to doubt here, clearly has a political undercurrent (and effects). When representing the Other, when the language to do it does not question its own rigidity and arbitrariness, the result is a colonisation of outside identity and a reduction in otherness in its deformed and grotesque version: exoticism. Art can contribute to this colonisation, as clearly demonstrated by the history of European Salon painting in the 19th century (*pompier*, archaeological, orientalist: it is enough to remember how Edward Said deciphered his codes in *Orientalism*). However, it can also help to articulate a post-colonial discourse that “deactivates” the pre colonial gaze and its dominating inertia by means of parody, disaffection and scientific analysis.

In this respect, Christopher Williams’ photographs apply themselves to deactivating some of these codes, or at least to demonstrating their ineptitude. *Carica Papaya Linne* reminds us how far the taxonomies established by Linneo represent a scientific option that is almost as arbitrary as Borges’ Chinese encyclopaedia and forces the outside world to adapt to a prior pattern (it has been used, in any case, as an instrument of colonial domination during the great European expansion ever since the Enlightenment).

It is not difficult to establish a link with his work entitled *Air France Building, ca. 1960, Dakar, Senegal*. This classic International Style block appears in the centre of Dakar like a physical expression and the ultimate consequence of this type of language taken to the extreme. Modern Architecture was not, to a certain extent, anything but a constructive (and political) code applied indistinctly to very different situations and geopolitical environments. Its influence and lack of adaptation are portrayed in this work and passed on to the portraits of African industrial workers in the work entitled *Ablaye Bà, Bira Bà, Sidath Fall and Aziz Ngom*. Run aground in the heart of a different city and climate, Le Corbusier’s great standardised block talks eloquently about the shipwreck of the ideals of modernity understood as a univocal and impermeable language.

Maybe the landscape within the landscape portrayed by Sharon Lockhart in *Untitled* is a good emblem of the panorama that opens up after questioning Modernity’s utopias and provides an entrance for new voices and perspectives within global discourse: the exotic image is already presented as an *impure* and self-assumed representation by those that, in their day, were its object: on the cement and concrete of the industrial landscape of new China hangs a reproduction of a past that never existed: maybe it is ironic, maybe nostalgic; in any case refractory to the dogmatic interpretation outside the encyclopaedias and languages imposed by the West.



**Sharon Lockhart**  
***Untitled, 1996***  
Chromogenic print  
119.4 x 150 cm (framed)



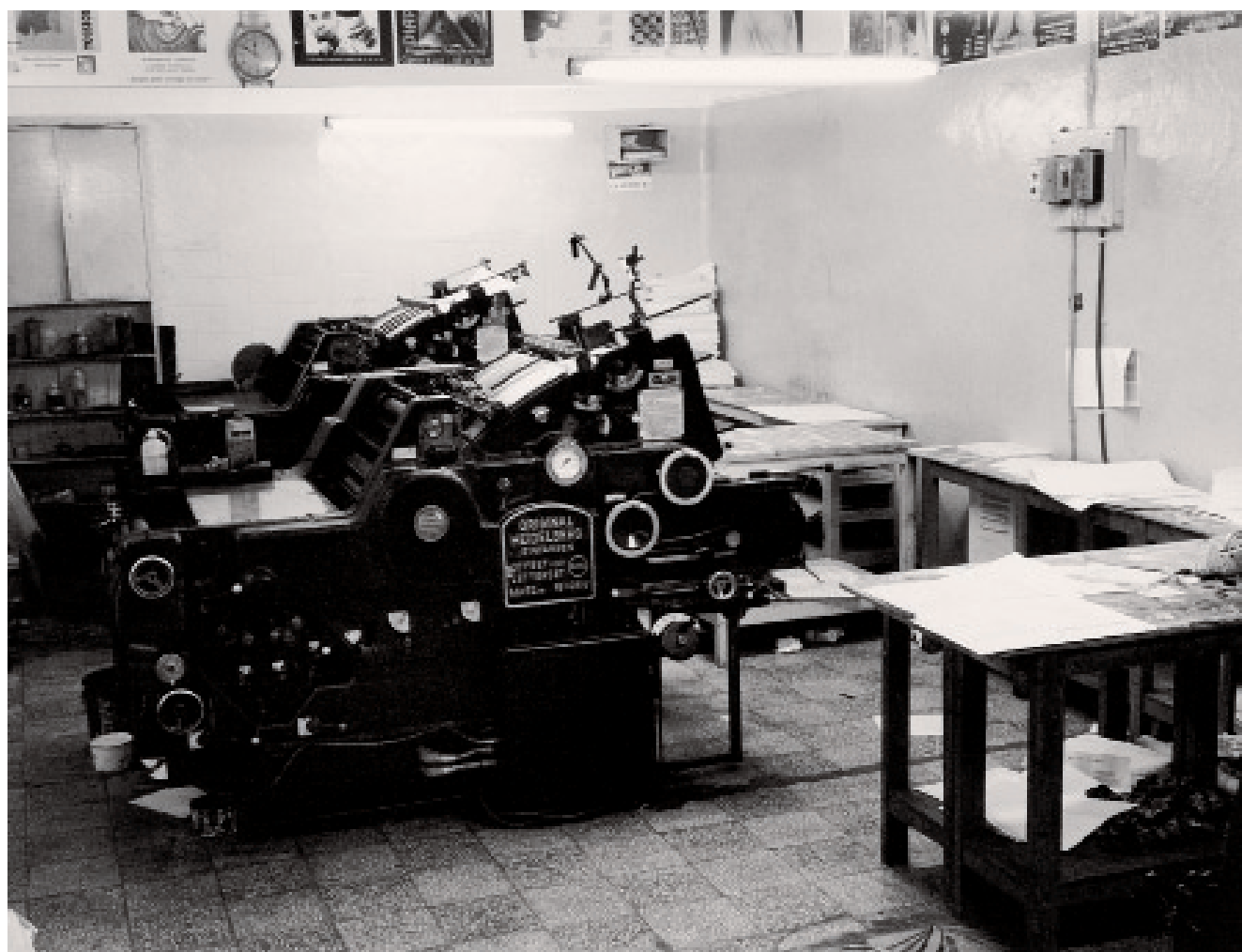
**Christopher Williams**  
***Ablaye Bà, Bira Bà,***  
***Sidath Fall and Aziz Ngom,***  
***La Senegalaise de l'Imprimerie,***  
***Dakar, Senegal,***  
***May 14, 1996 (Nr. 1-2)***  
**1996**

Gelatin silver print

28 x 35.5 cm

64.5 x 74.7 cm (framed) (each panel)

Edition 11/12



**Albert Oehlen**  
***Sin título*, 1988-1989**  
Mixed media on canvas  
280 x 380 cm









**Christopher Williams**  
***Air France Building***  
***ca. 1960***  
***Dakar, Senegal***  
***May 17, 1996, 1996***  
Gelatin silver print  
28 x 35.5 cm  
64.5 x 74.7 cm (framed)  
Edition 10/10



**Christopher Williams**  
**Caricaceae**  
**Carica Papaya Linne**  
**Melonenbaum, Papaya, Trop. Amerika**  
**Botanischer Garten München**  
**September 13, 1993, 1993**  
Gelatin silver print  
28 x 35.5 cm  
64.5 x 74.7 cm (framed)  
Edition of 12 + 4 A.P. (1/4 A.P.)

**Christopher Williams**  
**Claes Oldenburg**  
***Blue and Pink Panties, 1962***  
***Plaster-soaked muslin***  
***62 ¼ + 34 ¾ + 6 inches***  
***The Museum of Contemporary Art,***  
***Los Angeles:***  
***The Panza Collection (87.13)***  
***August 8, 1994, 1994***

Gelatin silver print

28 x 35.5 cm

64.5 x 74.7 cm (framed)

Edition of 12 + 4 A.P. (1/4 A.P.)



**Merlin Carpenter**  
***Versace*, 1999-2000**  
Acrylic on canvas  
195 x 360 cm



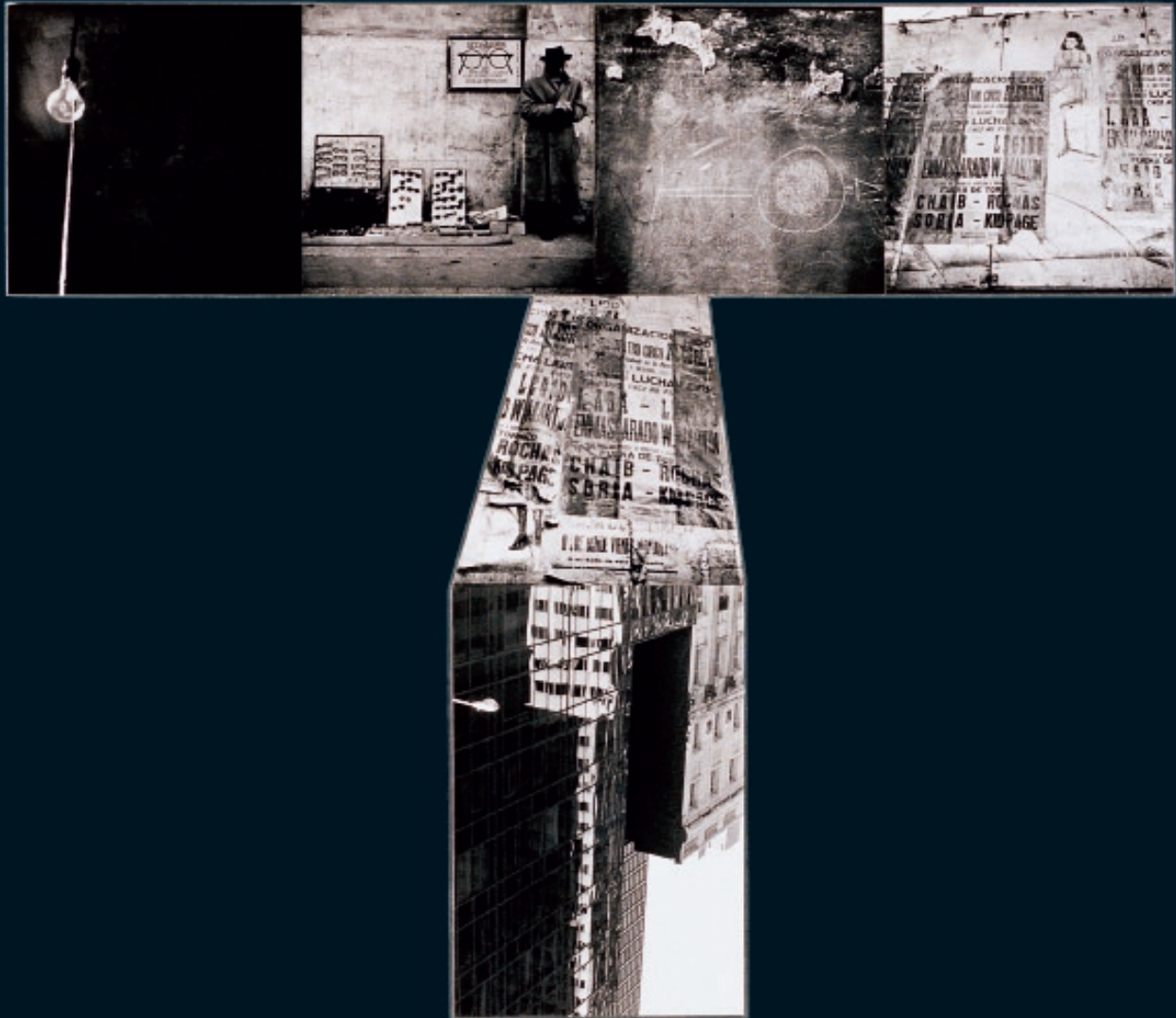






**Sharon Lockhart**  
**Goshogaoka Girls**  
**Basketball Team:**  
*Kumi Nanjo and Marie Komuro,*  
*Rie Ouchi, Atsuko Shinkai,*  
*Eri Kobayashi and Naomi*  
*Hasegawa, 1997*  
 Chromogenic prints  
 3 panels of 79 x 66 cm (framed)  
 Edition 8/8 + 2 A.P.

**Robert Rauschenberg**  
**Photem Series I (27), 1981**  
Gelatin silver print on fibreboard and aluminum  
6 photos  
137.1 x 157.4 cm



# V

The unique and homogeneous landscape dreamt up by Modernity is fragmented here into a myriad of perspectives and views. Often, what the artist captures is the shadow after the battle or the ruins of what might have been. *After the fact* is exactly the title given to Mads Gamdrup's photographs: dry portraits, desolate maybe but careful to avoid any temptation to fall into pathos, of landscapes where the American dream has fallen apart, where moral vacuum and absence make up for any heroic temptation. In *Playground*, the epic horizon of the mythologies surrounding conquering in-country United States is reduced to an inoffensive and ordinary background provided by a dusty basketball court. This is echoed in the work by Félix Curto, *When the music is over*: once again the mythical, vast expanses of Utah and Colorado appear domesticated to us, scored with asphalt, framed with posters and tracks from precarious and trivial control.

Jean Marc Bustamante shows a human landscape permanently besieged by the nature that it attempted to repress and control whilst Melik Ohanian portrays architecture reduced to its minimum expression and a purity of lines that scratch through silence. They are sad comments providing a bitter reminder of International Style's failed pretensions portrayed by Williams in the previous section: maybe everything ends up reduced to an ironic game of horizontals (and horizons) as proposed by Liam Gillick in *Cousin/Literally No Place*: literally, *non places* that have been left out of modern discourse or prove their failure or, as Marc Augé predicted, coming up with the phrase, their successful death.

Halfway through our journey, Guillermo Paneque placed an open door that works as a replica and *pendant* of the closed door by Dora García that we saw back at the start. Pedro G. Romero places his lintel in the midst of an empty space and leaves it paradoxically open, despite the fact that his title includes a mention of Buñuel's *El ángel exterminador* (The Exterminating Angel), another famous twist on the *locked door mystery* and quite a parable on the reclusion of bourgeois ideologies as hermetic and airtight systems. Perhaps, this is not actually the paradox: perhaps it is not important whether the door is open or closed, because in any case we are closed off on one side: the *here* side, the side of reality. The hinges and brackets of its openings turn to lead to other landscapes, other voices and fields.

So, on the physical (and political) *background* proposed by previous works, we can make out the *figures* that until now have been noticeable by their absence. The black silhouette works as a real Barthes *punctum* from *Untitled n°10 (Atlanta)*. *American Night*, by Paul Graham. And it sketches a proposal to study the subjective, individual view that is necessary to *repopulate* the empty landscapes from the previous section; Rauschenberg cuts and pastes and *edits* the urban landscape until he turns it into the subjective, mental landscape from his *Photem Series I*; Paul Graham plays at setting distant places against each other to make a hybrid panorama full of possibilities in *New York/North Dakota*, 2005; and finally *Je est un autre* by Rimbaud becomes a circular and claustrophobic *J'est un je n° 5* in the painting by Simeón Saiz Ruiz: exactly like Buñuel's *Ángel exterminador*, the I is represented as an inescapable place and faithful representation of the archetypal mystery that we approached *from the outside* at the start of this journey.



**Pedro G. Romero**  
***El ángel exterminador*, 1990**  
Door and revolver in sulphur  
210 x 80 x 80 cm

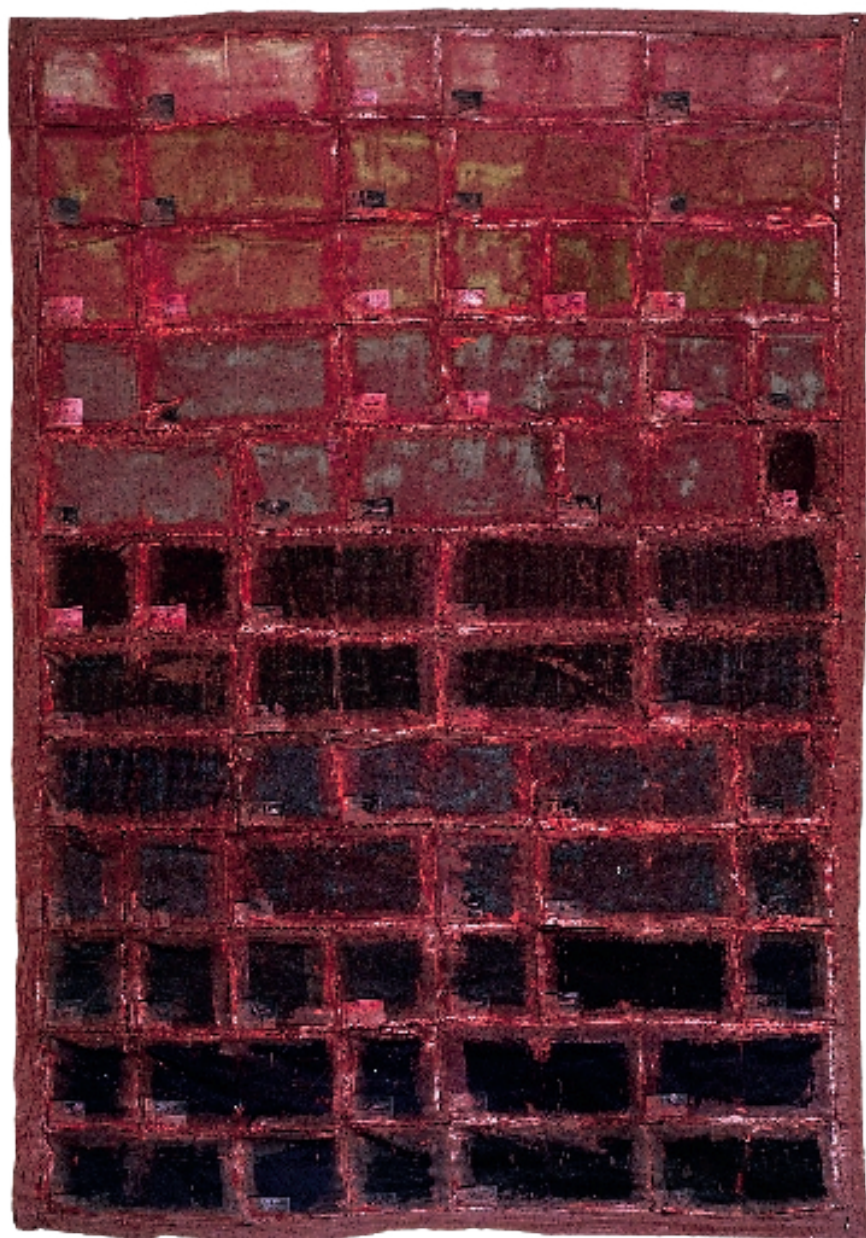


**Paul Graham**  
***Untitled n° 10 (Atlanta)***  
**From the series "American Night", 2002**  
Endura lightjet c-print on diasec  
190 x 239.4 cm  
Edition 2/3 + 1 A.P.

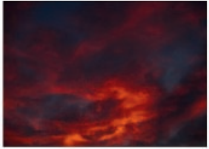


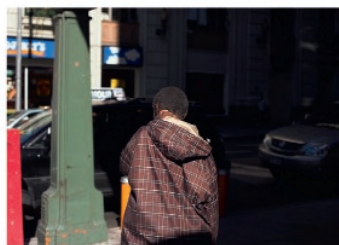
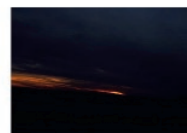
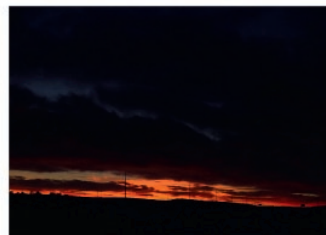
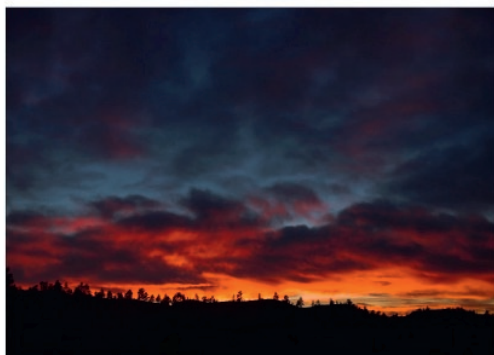
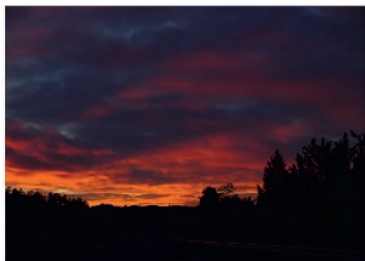
**Simeón Saiz Ruiz**  
***J'est un je n° 5, 1996***  
Oil on canvas  
170 x 275 cm



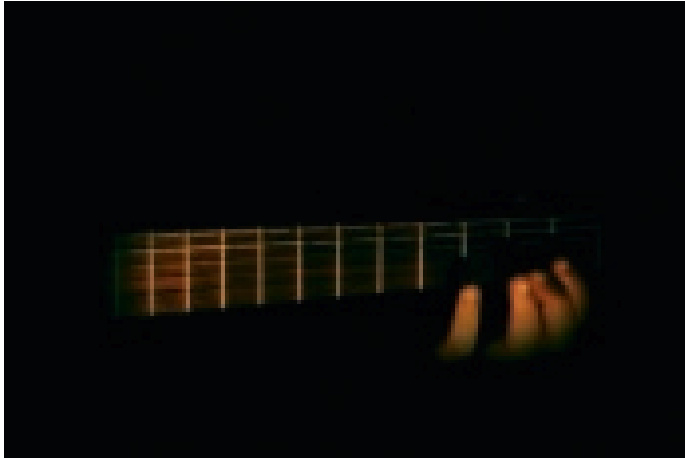
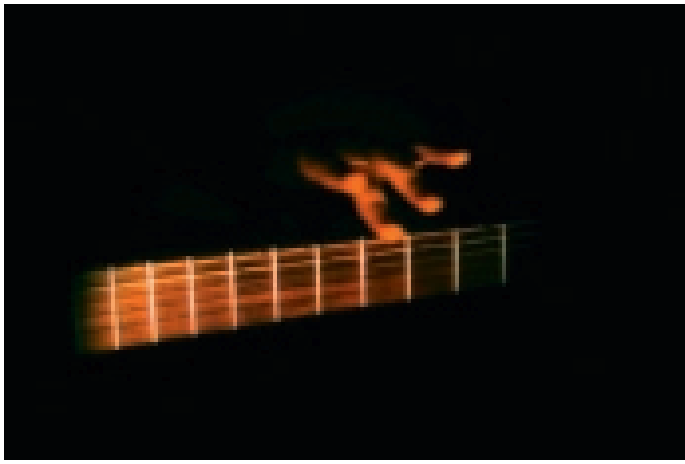


**Leda Catunda**  
***Quadrados de Lã, 2001***  
Tapestry and painting  
220 x 150 cm





**Paul Graham**  
**New York/North Dakota, 2005 (*Sunset/Walking*)**  
**From the series "A Shimmer of Possibility", 2005**  
 15 pigmented ink prints on photographic paper  
 15 panels; upper panels: 30 x 40.5, 46 x 63.5,  
 44.5 x 61, 75 x 104.5, 49.5 x 68.5,  
 66 x 91.5, 44.5 x 61, 28 x 38 cm;  
 lower panels: 37.5 x 52, 49.5 x 68.5, 78.5 x 109,  
 46 x 63.5, 41.5 x 56, 41.5 x 56, 35.5 x 49 cm  
 Edition 1/5 + 1 A.P.



*The invisible patriot* is a free, contemporary version of *La Bayamesa*, Cuban national anthem. Seemingly, this work of art gives back to Perucho Figueredo's 1867 original composition its original popular imprint. Before it became solemn anthem, people used to whistle and hum this tune in the neighborhoods, as genuine popular patriotic expression. Novo asked the young Cuban musician Gerald Moya to make a variation based on the original scores. In the video, one can only see, in a half-light, part of a guitar's neck and glimpses of fingers playing music on strings. The ambience is filled with a certain sacred atmosphere, perfect harmonic symbiosis of image and melody. Providential reverence to the anonymous hero, glorious individuals without a defined face who make history.

(Text: María E. Zayas)

**Félix Curto**  
***When the music is over, 2005***  
Chromogenic print mounted on dibond  
90.5 x 141 cm  
Edition 1/5





**Mads Gamdrup**  
***Playground, 1998-1999***  
Chromogenic print  
94 x 125 cm  
Edition 6/8

**Liam Gillick**  
***Cousin/Literally No Place, 2001***  
Anodized aluminum and Plexiglas  
240 x 240 x 30 cm





**Jean-Marc Bustamante**  
**T. 8. 01, 2001**  
Chromogenic print  
240 x 160 cm  
Edition 1/6 + 1 A.P.

**Mads Gamdrup**  
***After the fact, 1999***  
Chromogenic print  
90 x 98 cm  
Edition 2/8





**Mads Gamdrup**  
***After the fact, 1999***  
Chromogenic print  
90 x 98 cm  
Edition 2/8

**Melik Ohanian**

***Selected Recording # 080***

Lambda print mounted on aluminium

124 x 186 cm



# VI

The journey now opens up into paths that fork to reach a wide perspective of work by very different artists on topics that are being sketched: background and shape, figure and landscape. And is more: interiorised landscape as a construction of memory and inner vision. Widely varying artists such as Olafur Eliasson, Miguel Ángel Campano, Darren Almond or Peter Nadin propose vast panoramas in this respect. Precisely in *View XX*, Peter Nadin eludes to reconstructing/fragmentating an inner view, and the visible prints from the palms of his hands cutting across the background suggest that the external view is concentrated in the object that can act as its emblem of quintessence. Maybe this sense could be used to interpret Hreinn Fridfinnsson's symbolic work or Josiah McElheny's archaeological memory (archaeology is always an emblem of memory).

*Plane/Figure Drawing III*, by Robert Mangold, verbalises and schematises this relationship between figure (object) and background (landscape): we are entering the land of tracks, traces and witnesses to the artist's attempt to make his mark and *humanize* the given external conditions. The mystic (and mythical) *land art* from the epic 60s is a long way behind us, and Santiago Sierra's work *50 kg de yeso sobre la calle* now only works as a sardonic and stark comment on his former aspirations to totality in the fusion of the individual and their environment. In this way, *Mar del Pirineo* by Ibon Aramberri can work as a backdrop for the ironic and desperate acrobatics by which Robert Kinmont aims to take control over nature that fundamentally belongs to other people in his series *8 Natural Handstands*. Off the plot, far from his natural environment and his mechanically guided path, the carousel horse moved by Anri Sala looks taken aback at the inapprehensible panorama that opens up beyond the windows.

In other cases, artists resolve the impossibility of apprehending the external landscape by reducing their work to the essential and using symbolic models. So, Valeska Soares or Iran do Espírito Santo recreate made-to-measure horizons and small universes to scale in the lab conditions provided by the studio and the gallery. On the other hand, Curro González chooses the shortcut of the synecdoche and takes the side of the whole: on minimal details (a few metres of poorly lit, underground passageway) perhaps alludes to the vast universe that stretches beyond the limits of the work.

Instead of aspiring to the mythical (and failed due to its own nature) 1:1 scale map of visible reality that Borges imagined in *Tlon, Ñqbar, Orbis Tertius*, Gabriel Orozco symbolically reduces the size of his reconstructions-maps, as in his *Marble Game on a Rotating Field*. Or he looks for unusual perspectives to renew the view of panoramas to which our eye is already too accustomed, as in his *Under the Table*.

The magic and precarious circle of objects brought together in his *Cementerio 6* of Mali is maybe thereby closed within Schnyder's painting or within the untidy multitude (perhaps about to close in and order itself into another circle) of Alberto Peral's offerings that return to the archaeological image of memory strata. These resources are maybe ironic, maybe desperate, to confront the anxiety that is caused by the confrontation with a visible reality that cannot be tackled.

**Victor Grippo**  
**Árbol, 2001**

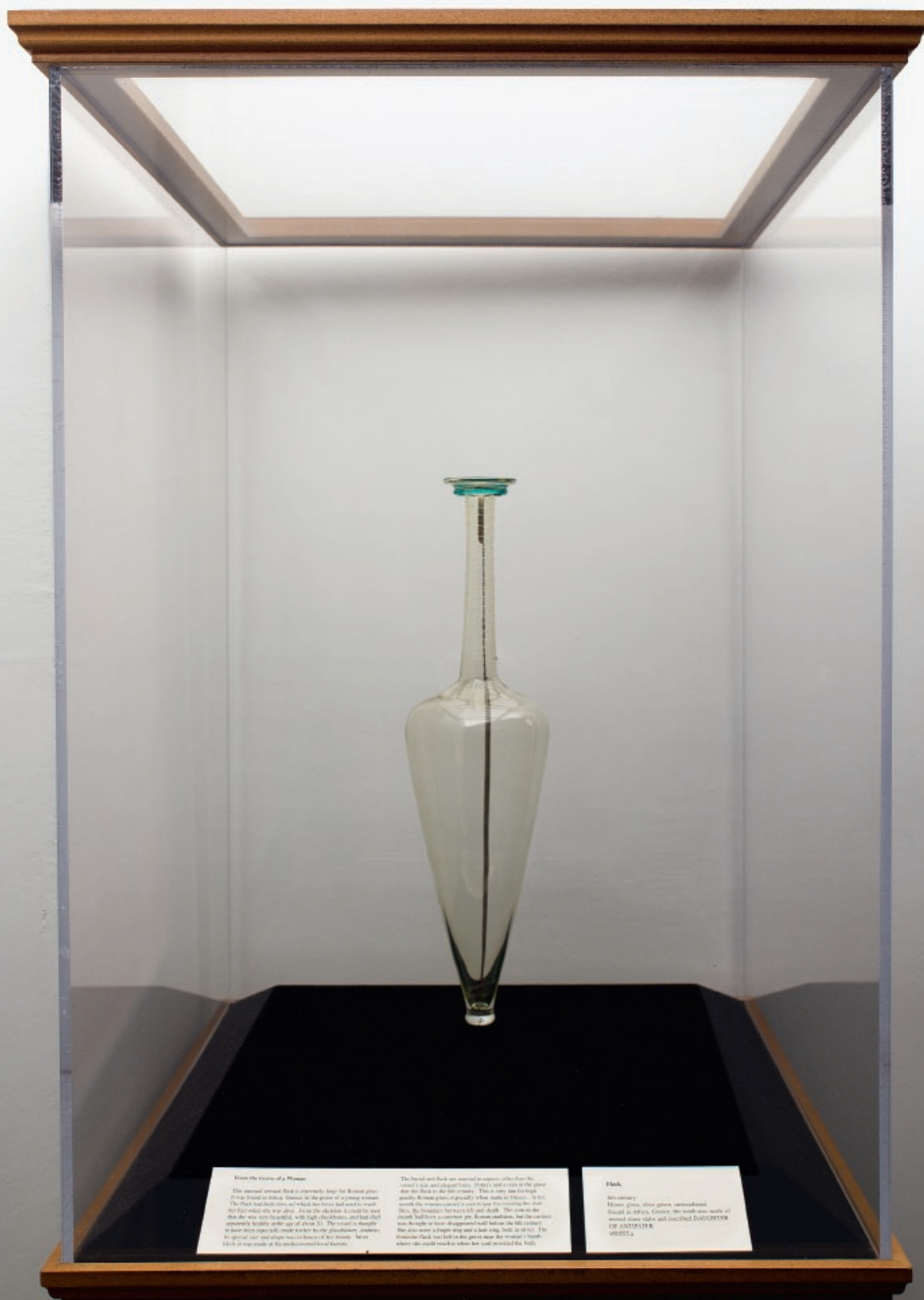
Painted plaster and wood in a glass painted wooden case  
44 x 34.5 x 11.5 cm





**Miguel Ángel Campano**  
***Omphalos I*, 1984**  
Oil on canvas  
195 x 260 cm





#### Flask of the Victim of a Woman

This unusual, ornate flask is extremely large for Roman glass. It was found in Africa, Greece, in the grave of a young woman. The flask had both sides of which the lower half could be read for the victim's name. As on the inscription it could be read that she was very beautiful, with high cheeks, and had died apparently before the age of 25. The vessel is thought to have been especially made for her. The inscription, however, is upside down and the name of her family. More likely it was made at the end of the 1st century.

The flask and flask are unusual in appearance. The vessel is in the shape of a pear, with a long neck. It is very large for Roman glass, especially when made in Africa. It is thought the vessel was made to be used for the victim's name. The inscription is upside down and the name of her family. More likely it was made at the end of the 1st century.

#### Flask

Flask, glass, clear green, unadorned. Found in Africa, Greece, the flask was made of ornate glass and is called "Flask of the Victim of a Woman".

OP 1011518

990052

**Josiah McElheny**  
***From the Grave of a Woman, 1995***  
Blown glass, text and display case  
80 x 54.6 x 54.6 cm

**Peter Nadin**  
***View XX, 1987***  
Oil on canvas  
160.5 x 182.5 cm



**Darren Almond**  
***Until MMXLI.XII, 2002***  
Chromogenic print  
74 x 74 cm  
Edition 4/5 + 2 A.P.



**Darren Almond**  
***Until MMXLI.VIII, 2002***

Chromogenic print  
74 x 74 cm  
Edition 4/5 + 2 A.P.



From: María Montero  
Date: 29th September 2010 16:26:02 GMT+02:00  
To: Guillermo Paneque  
Cc: Elba Benítez  
Subject: Hreinn Fridfinnsson

Dear Guillermo,

With all the information I currently have, I am answering to all the queries you raised with my colleague Grego regarding the work by Hreinn Fridfinnsson, *Study in Black I*:

A) The work that belongs to Mr Meana's collection, *Study in Black I*, according to the artist himself, is not complete right now. In the work of this Icelandic artist, the condition of time forms an undeniable part of his work. The artist has been working on many projects over the years and we have seen different versions of them in his exhibitions. However, in this case the work is kept alive in the artist's mind and he has the intention of continuing it, as he began a new experiment with it by using an abandoned object and the condition of the horizon.

B) The meaning of this work is therefore not total as we only have part of the project developed. However, I can mention some of the key points that Fridfinnsson himself told us about whilst the work was being installed in the gallery. *Study in Black I* returns to a constant concern in the artist's work in the form of his interest in science and nature. This is introduced subtly in his works, on this occasion, by using a mechanical tool, the *artificial horizon*, used to measure the horizon at sea. The work itself involves a definition of this tool in vinyl, plus the presentation of the object along with the unusual black mirror. The three elements make up the work entitled *Study in Black I*. This is as far as the clues given to us by the artist can lead us. From here on in, there are several more poetic explanations, like the artist's work, more literal with the logical link between the title and the black object that limits or interrupts the horizon.

Text: *We value the artificial horizon when, on attempting to find our bearings, the apparent horizon or the real level is not clearly visible or cannot be distinguished at all. Using the artificial horizon and determining the angular value between a star and its specular image...*

C) Information relating to the use of images:

Courtesy of the artist and the Elba Benítez Gallery, Madrid

Copyright: Hreinn Fridfinnsson

Photo credit: Luis Asín

This is all the information I can give you for the time being. In any case, when Elba returns, we will be able to make further comment on the development of the work and specify how it is to be completed.

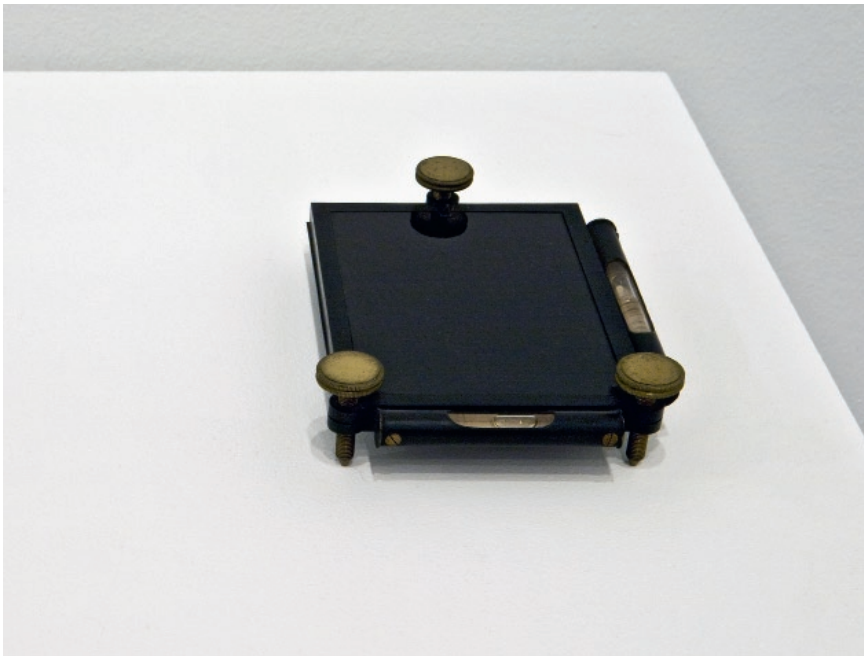
Regards,

María Montero Sierra  
Galería Elba Benítez  
San Lorenzo 11  
E-28004 Madrid

**Hreinn Fridfinnsson**  
***Study in Black I, 2009***

Black mirror, artificial horizon and text on wooden ledge, and 2 photographs

Mirror: 210 x 55 cm; shelf: 4 x 30 x 30 cm; photographs: 42 x 30.8 and 30.8 x 42 cm





From: María Montero  
Date: 13th October 2010 14:09:53 GMT+02:00  
To: Guillermo Paneque  
Subject: Hreinn Fridfinnsson

Dear Guillermo,

I am writing to let you know about the latest progress in producing the two photographs to complement the work by Hreinn Fridfinnsson, *Study in Black I*.

As Elba has already mentioned, the work consists of two photos that have to be taken in Madrid on a clear night to capture the constellations and the sky with as many stars as possible. In principle, a full moon had been mentioned, which means the pictures should be taken on 23<sup>rd</sup> October.

Tomorrow, our photographer is going to speak directly to Hreinn to go through the details and we will let you know as soon as he has the exact production dates. Given that these will be digital photos, they will be sent directly to the lab to be developed and then framed. In this respect, we depend on the work schedule that they set us.

Once they are ready, the work will be installed again to take the new picture. I do not know our time margin for putting the catalogue together; I hope that we can include it because Hreinn would also like this.

I'll keep you up to date on the process.

Any clarifications you can make for us would be welcome.

Regards,

María Montero Sierra

From: María Montero  
Date: 22th October 2010 11:41:41 GMT+02:00  
To: Guillermo Paneque  
Subject: Hreinn Fridfinnsson

Dear Guillermo,

I am writing to keep you up to date with the programming for taking pictures to complete the work entitled *Study in Black I* by Hreinn Fridfinnsson.

This weekend the photographer will go to the mountains outside Madrid to find a clear point and take two pictures, one directly of the sky showing the constellation of Venus and the other of this vision reflected in the *artificial horizon*. Once these images have been delivered and Hreinn has approved them, the pictures will be blown up to the real size to then frame them. For the time being, the start date is this weekend.

If you have any queries or need to speak to us, please do not hesitate to call the gallery.

Regards,

María Montero Sierra

From: María Montero  
Date: 10<sup>th</sup> November 2010 13:50:55 GMT+01:00  
To: Guillermo Paneque  
Subject: Hreinn Fridfinnsson

Dear Guillermo,

I am writing to inform you that Luis has taken a series of images of the constellation and, according to Hreinn, it's looking good. Over the course of this week, Luis is going to send the definitive images to get Hreinn's confirmation. If he agrees it, we will then send them to production. If the pictures have to be taken again, this will be done in the next few days. I'll keep you informed.

Regards,

María Montero Sierra

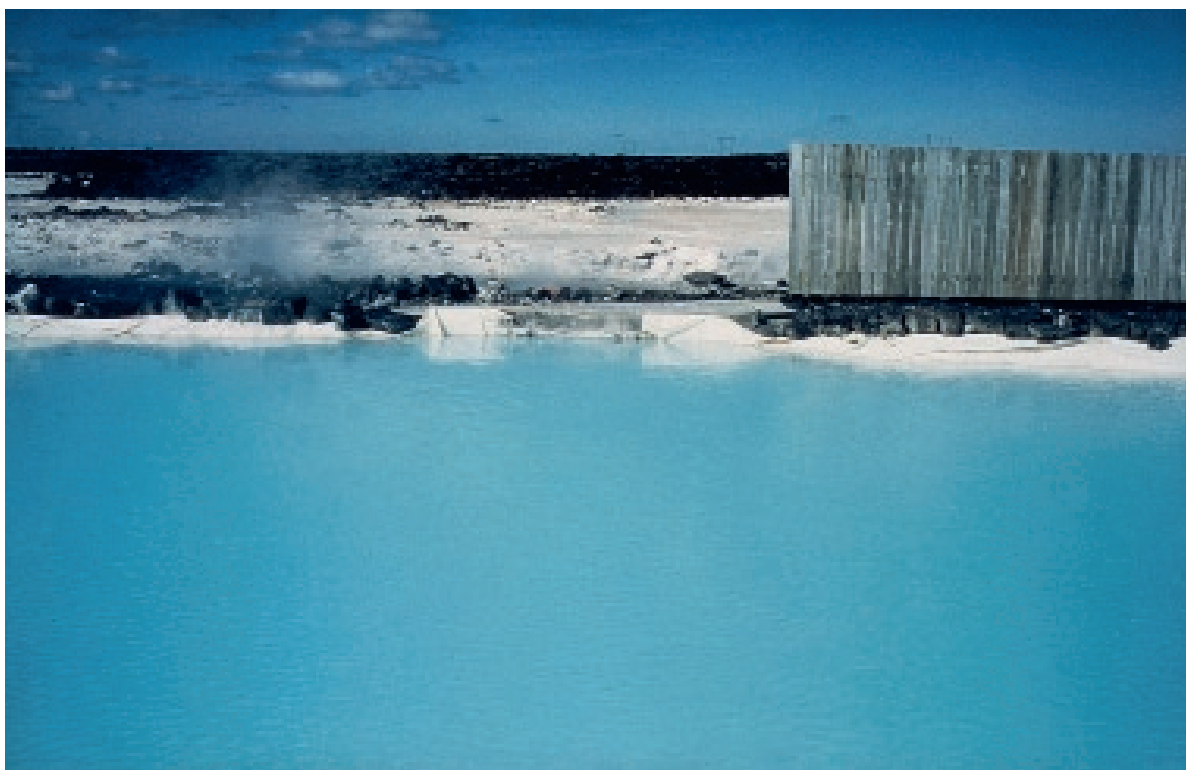
**Olafur Eliasson**  
***Untitled (Islandserie), 2002***  
Chromogenic print  
60 x 90 cm



**Olafur Eliasson**  
***Untitled (Islandserie), 1999***  
Chromogenic print  
60 x 90 cm

**Olafur Eliasson**  
***Untitled (Islandserie), 1999***  
Chromogenic print  
60 x 90 cm





**Olafur Eliasson**  
***Untitled (Islandserie)*, 2001**  
Chromogenic print  
2 panels of 60 x 90 cm

**Olafur Eliasson**  
***Untitled (Islandserie), 2002***  
Chromogenic print  
60 x 90 cm



pages 88-89

**Anri Sala**  
***Fuera del Carrousel, 2002***  
Chromogenic print  
60 x 90 cm  
Edition 5/5

I. Intimate constellations<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In this first part of the text I am echoing some points from the text entitled *Intime collection* published in the *Le collectionneur derrière la porte*, catalogue of the exhibition held at "la Maison Rouge-Fondation Antoine de Galbert", Paris, Ed. Fage, 2004.

The private collection sometimes occupies the function of what we might call 'a conversation piece' giving an object a varying degree of artistic value that, due to a certain novelty value, attracts our attention and creates a talking point. This would be a conversation topic all in all, although *hardwired*. The first strange thing for us about private collections is that they are private in the first place, or in other words we do not get to see them by definition, at least never really, only from afar, through fragments or photographs, to the extent that we maybe talk about them more than we see them.

A look at collectors: collections are a whole different world and maybe the constellations formed by the works paint a kind of portrait of the collectors, imaginary image-less portraits, at best like completing a jigsaw or joining the dots, we can get an outline of a figure in the end.

It is possible that, one of these days, on a greyer day than normal, all alone in the comfort of your own home, a question might pop into your head: is this really "my own home"? What I mean to say is: are we really sure that the place where we live, our house, is really "our home"? I am talking about this feeling, weird really and quite hard to put your finger on, that we get without really being able to express it properly, of feeling "at home". Everyone is looking for home. Sometimes we find it. For some people, it might even be a hotel. Sometimes we look for it endlessly. We all know people that never feel at home anywhere, always flitting here and there. This might have to do with a taste for travel, which might involve endless drifting or an endless quest, or maybe running away. It is perpetual movement, an uncertainty, that encouraged restless and determined wandering, happy and unhappy, between her different houses, for the character played by the very beautiful and much lamented Pascale Ogier in Éric Rohmer's film *Les Nuits de la plaine lune*, moving ceaselessly from one place to another, endlessly leaving one place for another, one man for another, one life for another as well. No place to call home.

We might wonder what place could be given to our intimacy. Is it not ourselves? But what is "ourselves"? Can we really be certain that we are ourselves our own home, our most intimate inner place? Intimacy is something inside us but it is also something outside us, our house, the place where we feel at home, where we keep these objects that hold a part of use, a memory, something that attaches itself to us deep down and us to it, often beyond what our eyes can see. We are always a little inside objects. This is also true for anyone who sincerely protests that they are not attached to things and feel indifference for trinkets and charms. It is just that they do not see the objects that attach them. In any case, arriving in a place where we are going to stay, the first thing we usually do is get our things out: personal effects, a toothbrush, a raincoat that we hang in the cupboard, a photograph, a book tossed on to the bed not just the suitcase that we leave open in the middle of the room as a reminder of our departure. Objects are a simple way of domesticating a strange place, making it belong to you, living in it and being yourself.

Even the word *intimate* seems encouraged by this tension between what is inside and outside you. Paradoxical intimacy, as used since the 16th century to name our inner life, a person's secret (romanticism exalted this meaning), a very dear friend, a relationship with this friend and then by metonymic sliding, whatever closely links things between them. *Intimacy* thereby seems to float between what is most hidden, most interior (in Latin *intimus* is the superlative of *interior*), and most exterior, namely objects.

Therefore we would have good reason to say that a collection is the intimate property of the collector. He is, in any case, someone that lives in objects. His "home" is his collection. You only have to enter his house to discover the paradox of intimacy displayed for all to see: the collection lives in the collector's home but the collector visibly lives within his collection — and is inhabited by it. Hence we should logically admit that the collector also therefore "lives" in the sometimes distant place, where he holds part of his works — it seems that in every collection there is a certain excess with regard to what a house might contain, as if they always need one more work, one work too many for there to be a collection.

Talking about a collector's passion is a way of saying that an intimate part of him is in his collection. "You know, a collector one day told me, I spend more of my life with objects than with people." The works in a collection speak volumes about the collector, not in themselves, but in that they are in his house, even if in this respect we do not know how to understand them. He is full of them and they, in one sense, are full of him. The collector's inner-self is exhibited on his walls, mysteriously. What we call a collection are works of art but charged with something else that is due to the collector, this little thing, untouchable and living, that lives in every object in a collection, making it something slightly other than itself. It is true for each and every one of us that intimacy can be incarnated in objects; the collector is the person that

demonstrates this. It is his genius to make others see the intimacy and where the intimacy is found, and that it is not a thing hidden deep down but, if we want, hidden outside ourselves, hidden in the full light of day, in objects, right before our eyes. Not just any old objects of course: the things we specially like, that have the most value for us — everyone knows that it is inevitably not the objects in themselves that are most precious. A work in a collection is a work weighed down with the desire for the work.

The collector shows himself in his collection. “Because as usual we collect ourselves” says Baudrillard, and he concludes that a collection is a composite projection of images of oneself. The collector is in his collection, but is it thereby an “image” of him? Firstly, most of the time there is nothing narcissistic in a collection. Even if he is proud of his collection, nobody is less like Narcissus than the collector who, by definition, will always put his works before himself. The collector loves his works not as he loves himself but more than he loves himself. In truth, rather than thinking that a collection would be the image of the collector, it would be fairer and doubtlessly more productive to make the inverse hypothesis that the collector is the image of his collection. He is what it is, and he changes with it. We should not be unaware of the power of objects. Far from this vision of potentate inspired by prejudices and fascinations, we should accept the idea that the collector is less of a master seated on his collection than a being — man, woman, couple — there to serve his collection. A subject subjected to his collection, or in other words he is himself the object of his collection. And so he actually collects himself. And so also, in one sense, he cannot see himself.

The collection exposes the collector’s intimacy not only in an image of himself but in the diehard depths of an enigma. Could we imagine psychoanalysis of collections? Surely not. Psychoanalysing objects would seem quite outrageous. In any case, by meeting collectors, we understand quite fast how psychological traits, by which Freud might have come up with a sort of collection-related neurosis, are barely capable of realising the diverse and complex real world of collectors, and how much, it has to be said, his insights were in the end quite conventional, let’s say very 19th century, very Balzac, more suitable for describing a Gobseck-type figure than a François Pinaut.

How, in any case, could we believe that we might solve a collector’s personal equation simply by looking at his collection? No more or less than we get an idea of a person from his way of speaking, or dressing, by looking at his handwriting, by browsing his library or meeting his wife, or husband or considering his absence of wife or husband. It is this idea of multiple singularity traits that encouraged Rémy Zaugg when invited to present the collection of his friend Jean-Paul Jungo at the Cantonal Museum of Fine Art in Lausanne in 2000. He was immediately able to grasp that only exhibiting a collector’s paintings, drawings and sculptures merely gave a partial “inadequate” point of view of a man’s passion, a man who was interested in “everything revolving around literature and cinema”. Likewise Rémy Zaugg, in his exhibition entitled *Portrait d’un ami, Jean-Paul Jungo*, would have conceived to “evoke a human being with his desires and his ghosts” to deploy the entire series of all his objects, thereby constituting a portrait that is “comparable with a portrait painted by Cézanne.” A forcibly incomplete portrait: is the collector the sum of his collection, his books and all that he owns — are we the sum of our objects?

## II. The collection in the eclipse of the gaze

Later on, Patricia Falguières came up with a fundamental question. Proust, she says, challenging “the forced contextualisation” that the critic imposes on the literary work and offering to build real “poetry of de-contextualisation”, would have strongly emphasised “this effort from the spirit to isolate the work from its environment (a necessarily contingent, anecdotal framework) that is only respected by integrity. Are we not persuaded of this, she notes, when looking at the photographs from Gertrude Stein’s apartment or the Chtchoukine Palace, as we mentally “unframe” the Picassos and the Matisses from the heavy furniture that suffocates them? This mental exercise, she concludes, is the genealogy of the “white cube” in galleries and museums, the neutralised, disinfected space required by modern art”.

We do actually “unframe”, but today however, in another way, we mentally frame the works. More precisely, we should say that the museum’s “white cube” has unframed the works to be able to improve their frame: by exhibiting them with no background, separate, “alone”. This seems however to subscribe to a certain paradox in modern museums, to the extent that we would actually have had to wait for modernity and Mondrian to eliminate the frame from the paintings, which in his eyes was a necessary gesture to be able to counteract the illusion of depth created by the frame. It was also to be able to go against its exact separation effect, in the name therefore of the opposite wish to eliminate the borders between the work and everything else, as far as striving, as Jean-Claude Lebensztejn would say, for “the disappearance of art from life.”

In this respect, any private collection is, by definition, conceptually Mondrianesque. The collection frame is unframed, and that seems to me in passing to also explain this current tendency in some artists to produce works that would exhibit a "collection" of works or objects, to be installed therefore in museums, themselves containing "unframed" works, constituting a logical, compulsory response to the modern museum as a frame factory. What the museum's white walls give off, to deliver the work to our gaze in the whiteness of a ghost, dreams of a purity that nothing can pollute or parasite, with original virginity that would offer the work of art up to the each spectator's pleasurable enjoyment as if for the first time.

In fact, regardless of whether it is through diverse, vague or wise learning that we get works, our gaze on works of art is always more or less a "second gaze". We always see them a little as others have managed to see them, with their eyes and we can accept that as it is so difficult to see anything new. Exhibiting works plunged in the collector's gaze, intrinsically woven into their lives, leads us to imagine the benefit we would have, to look at old works, to restore something of the gaze of their backer, for example the places for which they were intended. The place, the house "includes" the works, in the sense of course that it contains them but as much as it gives them sense, it lights them up. We could imagine a museum that would exhibit works with all the gazes that have been directed at it over time and that not only make up the history of each work but in some respect also belong to the work.

Should we suppose that in their house a work of art is no longer the unique place for the collector for a singular experience but only part of the decoration? It is true that for the collector, a work is only a work of art in his home by eclipse, when he looks at it; except for this moment, it is an object in the shadows. But is this so strange or unsettling? Would he otherwise go to museums at night? It would be worth going to take a look. In a house, does the unit inevitably offset the work towards the entire collection? However, nobody ever looks at "a collection" because a collection is not a set of works, but an undefined series of singular objects: one work + one work + one work.... The work of art does not stop being a unit just because it is placed next to other works, or brightly coloured stacks of books, or a shiny 18th century chest of drawers. It is simply neglecting the fact that a work of art is not exactly like other objects, that it is not a passive object, waiting for our gaze which will be free to embrace it or not embrace it; it is forgetting, or choosing not to know, that each work is in itself a gaze, that more often than not it grabs our attention and forces us to look at it. The idea that each work is an imperative gaze coincides with what Roger de Piles thought back in the 17th century, at the time attributing to colour in particular the mysterious power of the painting to captivate our gaze.

When in the privacy of his own home, away from the gazes of others, the collector enjoys exorbitant and marvellous privileges that we do not, like walking up and down in front of the works in his underwear or having his breakfast with his back to them — an incomparable privilege: *the collector has the power not to look at the works* — or even to touch them. Patricia Falguières reminds us that for Benjamin the collection was above all a tactile phenomenon. Now, it is here, as usual, "forbidden to touch". Invited to see private collections, we are not invited to enjoy the freedom of their legitimate owners.

The collection might well be the collectors' intimacy but nevertheless, the works do not come from them, but the artists' intimacy: they are objects that have come from other places and other people. Making a collection involves letting other places and the Other into your home; it means inviting strangers; it represents your intimacy receiving the most intimate part of these strangers, their creations; it means welcoming other gazes into your home.

We tend to represent the home of a collector as a bourgeois interior, both opulent and chilly, closed in on itself. Nothing could be more absurd. Firstly, the collector is a natural lender, to museums or elsewhere. The taste for owning a work does not foretell a taste for taking it away from others. However, we persist in pricking up our "social" conscience regarding collectors, understanding "private collection" as if it meant "deprived of a collection". Regarding this collection deprivation where the other or the elsewhere comes to live, there is still something left to say: through the works, this closed place that is the collector's world actually contains the entire universe. The private collector's stage is not their apartment, but the whole world. We should tell ourselves that for him the essential part of his collection is not in his home — his collection is still to come, still spread all over the world, and every gallery and every fair is in a sense for him the occasion to go and find his future collection. Essentially, the collection knows no borders. By letting works from all over the place into his home, the collector does not privatise them; he does not remove them from universal heritage; on the contrary he accomplishes a mystery: he lets the world into his house.

Deep down, we might speak about private collections as Jean-Luc Godard did about cinema: that it is a "capable way of bringing together our inner world and the cosmos".

### III. The collector on the couch, discontent in culture

The matter of collections is important. The psychoanalyst cannot strip it down. Obviously, the ball we hit into his court first of all is to say whether the collection reveals anything clinical. This clinical approach constitutes the first viewpoint that I shall propose. I will then invite you to look elsewhere to bring to life the complex question of the collection in other ways.

Does collecting cure anything? To answer this, the collector first of all has to ask to be treated. I would not be wasting my breath reminding you that only patients are allowed into the psychoanalyst's office. This means that it is not politicians, sportsmen, plumbers or artists that lie back on the couch, no more than people who are sick, suffering neuroses or plain old crazy people, not even men or women but what Plato called birds without feathers, human beings gifted with speech. It is possible that among them we might find people who collect things. And it is also possible that they might call themselves "collectors". I would note that although others always come back to saying whether something is good or big, important or mediocre, the collector only institutes himself. It seems that collectors agree on a certain value by way of passing from declaration to attribute: "I have works, I collect", to this statement: "I am a collector". There is an ontological step in that move. The best proof of the subjective importance of this kind of statement is that some people, through doubt or modesty, do not take the risk of saying "I am" even though word on the street makes them out to be great collectors.

Therefore, being a collector, is it serious? Is it a diagnosis? Is a collection a symptom? In any case, I hold the view that a collection cannot be interpreted. I have met collectors that inferred "obsession" in "collection". When I asked a great German collector about this one day, Mrs Charlotte Zander classified herself as a *collector junkie*. We can in any case already take our first clinical notes: the collector tends to self-diagnose. However we should immediately add that I have never heard a collector complain about his obsession or his addiction. In addition, not one collector I have met ever confided in me that the act of collecting caused him to suffer. The only real suffering experienced by someone who collects would be on the contrary that, for one reason or another, he was prevented from doing this. Demanding passion, obsession, addiction, maybe, but collectors demonstrate an obstinate obsession rather than a joyful addiction.

There is enjoyment in collection. But today, in the era of the absolute reign of the object, where, as everything pushes us towards consumption, everything seems to become addictive, the collector tends to become an essential, central figure, an exemplary case, a paradigm for the general relationship with the object. Making enjoyment of the object aesthetically pleasing, the collector would in the end be the person that raises addiction and fetishism to the sublime. I'll come back to this.

Whatever it is, by meeting collectors, we can quite quickly measure how psychological traits, sampled from the Freudian weaponry, through which a sort of collecting neurosis takes shape, are not particularly likely to provide reason to the collectors' complex world. Collectors today clearly make no effort to follow Freud. It is doubtlessly because they are more partial to Lacan. And if we add what we usually classify as "passion", the fact that the collector is a being of desire, that this is what essentially encourages him, I fear that we have to conclude that this collector, unsatisfied eternal obsessed junkie, is a being that is first and foremost rather normal. In any case, it seems that as a collector, he has no reason to turn to a psychoanalyst because he knows something certain about his desire. We would also say that this is the case for the fetishists as well although this is exactly the problem these days, because fetishism tends to lose its clinical perversion value to become a sort of global social fact. Consequently, the only diagnosis that we could make for the time being returns to the notion that the collector knows a little more than most mortals about the object of his desire.

Finally, psychology does not seem to me to be the best adapted key to discover the collectors' secret, particularly in today's world, dominated by the culture of the object, devoted to the cult of the object. Objects are rightly the magnetic poles of the collector's world. His desire is magnetised, encouraged and guided by objects and towards objects. Suddenly, elsewhere, we realise that the collector has nothing to do with shutting himself up in his house, and this is, on the contrary, a journey, an incessant drift in strange geographies. For example, on the maps of contemporary art collectors, a direct motorway links up Basel and Miami, Venice and London passing via Madrid. If we wanted to play with figures from the 19th century, far from the image of the satisfied bourgeois sitting heavily on his treasure, the collector tends more towards Baudelaire's strollers, or the Man with the Wind at his Heels, as Verlaine saw Rimbaud. On the ocean of objects that make up our world, the collector appears as a great navigator, the man setting the major courses for the pleasure civilisation. It is this viewpoint of civilisation that we have to take now. And suddenly, we will be able to see that the perspective of collections is going to move, and that we run the risk of coming out of the clinical frame to find ourselves faced with a much vaster question affecting the very nature of our societies.





I could tackle that in the form of prediction: let's wait for collecting to rise in power in the years to come. This prediction does not speculate on cultural, economic, financial or patrimonial data but is deduced from the very nature of the hypermodern society because by entering a new century we have entered a new era. And the sign of this new era, as I previously mentioned, is the preeminent place given to the object. Formerly, watching Napoleon pass by his window in *Lena*, Hegel said that he had seen *Zeitgeist* riding a horse, as Napoleon was the spirit of the times. Today we could say that the object has seriously passed by our window. The object has become the *Zeitgeist* of our times.

One image seems to sum up what I wish to say. It is the striking image, seen over and over again in the not too distant past, on the central squares in towns in former Eastern Bloc countries, taking down the statutes of Lenin and replacing them with Coca Cola advertising, using the slogan: *Enjoy!* Here is the word for the new world order: *Enjoy!* This image simply shows the fundamental direction of civilisation in fast forward. It is not simply a matter of the victory of capitalism over socialism, of leaving penury behind for the land of plenty; we should assess the fact that we have passed from one era to another. In truth, we went from the closed world of all things forbidden to the infinite world of pleasurable enjoyment.

One of the catchphrases of May '68 was: *Jouir sans entrave* (*Enjoy without restrictions*). In fact, we thought, with Freud, that the bourgeois society was used as a cause of repression, that all powers were in league together to repress desire, to censor it. It was a time when psychoanalysis meant having to plead for the right to enjoy which is probably what gave it its poor reputation. It could extol the virtues of releasing desire, salvation by impulse. It was a period when social insertion was primordially done by symbolic identification. Now times have changed. We have entered an era when it is no longer the forbidden things, values and ideals that are displayed at the "social zenith" but objects, objects that have fallen to the point of merely becoming goods. This merchandise future even affects human bodies these days.

Ideas or knowledge are no longer desirable compared to mobile phones and i-pods. We have to measure something here because it is not just that enjoyment has been freed, but the paradox is that it is capitalism itself, and the bourgeois society that freed enjoyment. They have done even more than that: they have made enjoyment compulsory: *Enjoy!* This is the categorical imperative of our times. The irony of history is that what was never forbidden has become compulsory. The end of prohibition is all very well but we realise that it also has a downside in the injunction of enjoyment, a calling to debauchery, what economists interested in the problem have not hesitated to call forced consumption, advertising conditioning, performance. In these days when it is the object that is in charge, social insertion now takes place by consumption — which evidently contains a principle of exclusion for anyone who does not have the means to consume.

But what I would like to highlight, providing a new frame of thought for collecting, is that it is precisely in this injunction to enjoy that we find the vogue of addictions. There is a line of thought these days that everything can become an addiction, way beyond forbidden substances. Social reality shows itself to be dominated by a lack-of-enjoyment.<sup>2</sup> We should recognise in addictions, as in the frenetic consumption of over-enjoyment<sup>3</sup> that technology multiplies and puts on the market at an increasingly faster pace, a desperate effort to compensate for a lack of satisfaction built into the structure.

The dream is now less liberation than satisfaction. This is the key aspect of clashing civilisations. This essentially refers to the opposition, the incompatibility of religion civilisation and trading civilisation, of civilisation dominated by the ego Ideal and that this dominates the imperative of enjoyment, of civilising respect and greediness. I mean to say that faced with this element of *Enjoy!* in our societies, some people reply with the opposite type of word: *Enough!* The enjoyment culture necessarily engenders people who rail against debauchery and the eulogists of moral values. For example there are people that shut girls up in burkas and stick an explosive belt round their waist whilst they are about it, all in the name of the glory of the father. Sometimes we also see how the fracture line sometimes passes through families, or even through individuals themselves, torn between being religious fanatics and worshiping their iPad. These are new times. The issue today involves inventing how to resist these dreadful drifts one after another.

When I see Damien Hirst's diamond skull, I tell myself that, with some psychoanalysis, there is salvation through art.

This brings me to another comment, another change in direction. Because, when the psychological interpretation of the collection closes in on itself, an economic and cultural interpretation seems to therefore open up.

<sup>2</sup> Translation from the Lacanian term: "manque-à-jouir".

<sup>3</sup> Idem, from the Lacanian term: "plus-de-jouir".

#### IV. Collecting over history

To make any further progress, we need to make a brief detour through the history of collecting. The circumstances of the birth of collecting are well documented. The first art market was set up in Rome. The nature of the first works that were going to provide the first collections are worthy of some interest. In fact, in the first century BC, Rome was flooded with sculptures and the paintings confiscated from the Greeks beaten by the Empire. The first art market is therefore a market for the spoils of war, the produce of conquest. If we highlight that the first collections were made up of works removed from enemy and conquered peoples, we can get an idea of the nature of the collection. It is not a matter of hanging on to the idea that collectors would be predators (I am moreover greatly interested in the recent case of a real thief collector, Stéphane Breitwieser, who was in prison a few years ago). I am talking about the fact that originally, for the Roman patrician, creating a collection really came down to bringing foreign objects into his home — so foreign that they were made by enemy peoples.

As revealed by Pliny who reported on the first art market in Rome (*Natural history* XXV, II, 2), Roman collectors welcomed into their homes “effigies of strangers” and “unknown gods”. From the history of collecting, I particularly retain one trait. We have for a long time had an essentially moral understanding of collections that represented looking at the accumulation of works firstly as an accumulation of wealth. Suddenly this accumulation was only seen as a hoarding, meaning that it fell under the blows of moral and religious condemnation. Things changed again in the Renaissance when this accumulation of wealth took on a positive value by considering that whilst private, the collection could conceal public virtue. It was no longer going to be looked at as hoarding, which is a sin, but as a sign of Magnificence, which is a virtue, like Justice — or, following an old sense, a rich and generous person’s disposition, someone who spends radiantly, without counting the cost, for themselves and for others. So magnificence was able to be a virtue in the sense that having a share in the city’s command implied that one was able to excessively return what one had received. In an economy where the ideas of profitability and productivity did not really make any sense, the capability to spend too much became a virtue that qualified men for government. Gilding the town’s streets or the facade of their houses with statues opened up a presumption of capability to hold public office for anyone ready to assume the expense. We might say that this was a world where private did not oppose public.

In our times, the values given to profit and to profitability have changed the order of civil virtues. We have the feeling that the State, far from seeing the magnificence of a virtue, would see it rather with hostile mistrust, as an arrogant threat from the private sector over public things. Magnificence is the type of aristocratic virtue that struggles to find a place in our societies that, with a reasonably Christian sense, rent out whatever gives but not whatever spends. When we consider the role of collectors in today’s society, we get the feeling that we are witnessing a singular return. We can tackle this in terms of political philosophy. The State and the institutions that depend on it look at collections through 19th century eyes. Deep down, collector = bourgeois equation maintains all its force in a drawing worthy of Balzac or in liberalist thinking according to Benjamin Constant. If Ancient freedom consisted of active participation in public affairs, then Modern freedom was composed of “peaceful enjoyment of private independence.”

The modern ideal was to build, like the old regime, a society where individuals maintain total freedom over everything involving their enterprises and their occupations. The individualist and industrial 19th century was its great accomplishment. And it is this vision that today accentuates opposition between public and private as an ideology of institutions. In the past, collectors entered this framework, physically representing the glory of the private — collections were closed away inside and celebrated their power. The problem in my eyes is that this opposition is now obsolete. It no longer allows us to realise what collectors are today. Of course they own what they own, but private collectors now play an aesthetic role in art and culture within the city, insofar that some of them appear to be Renaissance princes.

Here we should introduce a third term between Ancient and Modern which is Renascent. The problem comes from the hiatus between the State cultural institutions, dominated by the ideology setting private against public, and the real situation. We can measure the urgency of extracting ourselves from the public/private opposition concerning collectors, now that they use their freedom today and their power to intervene in the public domain, as patrons or creators of foundations. It is precisely because the private/public opposition seems obsolete to me today that I do not support the notion of private but prefer the term intimate. In my eyes, the collection is no longer a “private passion” — to echo the title of an exhibition organised by the Paris Modern Art Museum in 1995. It is an intimate passion. Now intimacy is not opposed to the public. Each and every one of us, in one way or another, invests in their intervention in their most intimate social public space — their enjoyment, as a sum total.

Whatever it is, we can possibly accuse collectors of surrendering to an exhibitionist impulse, but certainly not to removing part of humanity's cultural patrimony. I propose shifting our viewpoint one last time to make another landscape emerge. The question would be: how can you be a Renaissance prince in the times of the universal market, when merchandise is the only future for the object? This leads to reopening the chapter on the desire to collect, no longer looking at it from the point of view of psychology, but what we should call a "general economy" of the collection, in the sense that Georges Bataille was able to give to this idea. This means that instead of seeing an accumulation in a collection, as we would do naturally, I suggest paying attention to what is lost. Looking at the collection as a negative rather than a positive. By means of this operation, the collector's desire could be injected back into the market.

#### V. The collector's economy of desire

It must be said that the relationship between desire and market originates as an integral part of the history of collections. If we leave to one side the historical question of conquests and colonisation, it seems to me that we can isolate a constituent trait here that in a collection: with works, it is not only the outside you bring into your home, it is something strange and foreign, it is the Other that we invite to enter our intimacy. In the collection there is a desire of the Other. In that sense, a collection is never strictly an image of the collector. It is not narcissistic. In one sense, all collections are foreign.

Suddenly, another trait appears at the very origin of collections. It is that by placing votive works intended for a temple in your bedroom, you are only welcoming the Other into the place of your intimacy: we diverted the works from their destination and their meaning, which might go as far as neglecting their integrity because, as Pliny said, we used to see collectors unscrewing statues and fixing any old head on any old body at whim. It goes without saying that this art market obviously leads to a subversion of objects. One word summarised this generalised subversion that induces the art market: *luxuria*, or the appetite that deregulates the economy of the republican city, transgresses its laws and overthrows its hierarchies.

The *luxuria* of antique collectors invites us to consider what I called a "general economy" of collections. This is a non standard economy because it is a desire economy. I will talk about it as a useless desire. In our Benthamian world tyrannised by the "god of the Useful, implacable and serene" to speak like Baudelaire, such desire emerged as a non integrated disorder. There is a little Baudelaire in the collector, explaining society's constant wish to include him. It is striking that we always aim to make collectors the capitalist's accomplice who through his collection would, on the one hand, apply the capital gains laws to cultural capital in terms of artistic patrimony, and, on the other hand, adorn and clean up their personal wealth, always a bit ugly, with the prestige of Beauty and Art.

On the one hand, we condemn the collector and on the other we rush to plunge him into Culture, to raise him to the dignity of a cultural benefactor. Bringing the collector back into the light of cultural goods is doubtlessly supposed to reassure a dark desire. Or we even make the collector appear as the consumer's top, absolute paradigm consuming, beyond material goods, the spiritual produce of art. Although the media never misses an opportunity to scorn the prices attained by some works as extravagances — just for exciting envy or the incredulous laughter of millions of small consumers against these people who are capable of such madness — there is nevertheless something socially reassuring in the single fact of putting a figure on works, fixing a financial value for them, as if we still held on to the inside of a market regulated by common economy laws. As if we could, by means of a figure, not only measure but contain, control the excess of enjoyment. But enjoyment is always excessive. At the end of the day, I tell myself that discourse on the art market is only ever a way of refusing to know that the collection is involved with another economy, impossible to put a figure on or decipher, more dangerous and that deep down transgresses the laws of the market economy.

Georges Bataille developed a theory on this other economy of desire and enjoyment. It supposes that wealth is the energy and that the very principle of life revolves around an excess, a "profusion of energy" that is lost without counting, without counterpart. Man is an effect of the surplus of energy from the "effervescence of life" and money is a form of energy permitting transgression. The basis of this economy is therefore not consumption but *consummation*: donation, spending, wasting, generosity, prodigality, dilapidation, loss. The fundamental problem of what Bataille called the general economy then becomes not need or usefulness but what he decides to call luxury, or according to his definition "the need to lose without profit".

This looks at what I called useless, Baudelaire-like desire from the collector. We might say that a collection is something that is not useful for anything — except for desire. Here we are in an economy not involving

profit but loss. The sense of man's life is only in line with the rhythm and destiny of the world. Now this is placed under the luminous but damned sign of *ubris*: Greek excesses that designate the fate of desiring more than their fair share of the destiny attributed to us. Here we are under the sign of excess and dilapidation. In this, Bataille thereby reverses traditional accumulation and conservation morals.

I would willingly sign collectors up to the paradigm not so much of consumer but "consummator". As opposed to an economy of hoarding, consumption, distribution, sharing, that is our economy, he commands another economy: an economy of spending. This is where I find this virtue of magnificence in some collectors. Collectors — those that I know and love at any rate — are virtuous.

Today, as one last comment, we rarely hold a collector up as a paragon of virtue. Generosity, prodigality and spending are not longer adorned with virtues but seen as a sign of social sin, and in some way depriving others of art. This then paints a picture of the collector as an "art bachelor". This is perhaps what pushes certain collectors to make donations or to create exhibition places, Foundations or private museums that, to add to the expense, return the prestige of a public virtue to the collector by signing up to donation and exchange. A good collector is a giving collector. The view of the collector as an "art bachelor" also has another aspect in that the idea of a "damned part" of an economy devoted to spending, to loss, opens up the vision of an unproductive character, without production or that even diverts reproduction.

We could say that we thereby designate a sort of *perverse* and non economic part of Bataille's general economy. And sometimes, institutions look down disapprovingly on private collectors who they silently reproach precisely for being "art bachelors" meaning that we accuse them of being unproductive pleasure seekers, social perverts.

But finally, if we had to produce an ultimate diagnosis on the collector, I would suggest describing a new syndrome that we could baptise, as we created Stendhal's syndrome, Lorenzo's syndrome — the collector as a case of acute magnificence. A little magnificence among the shelves of the planetary hypermarket is a sickness that might not go down too badly.

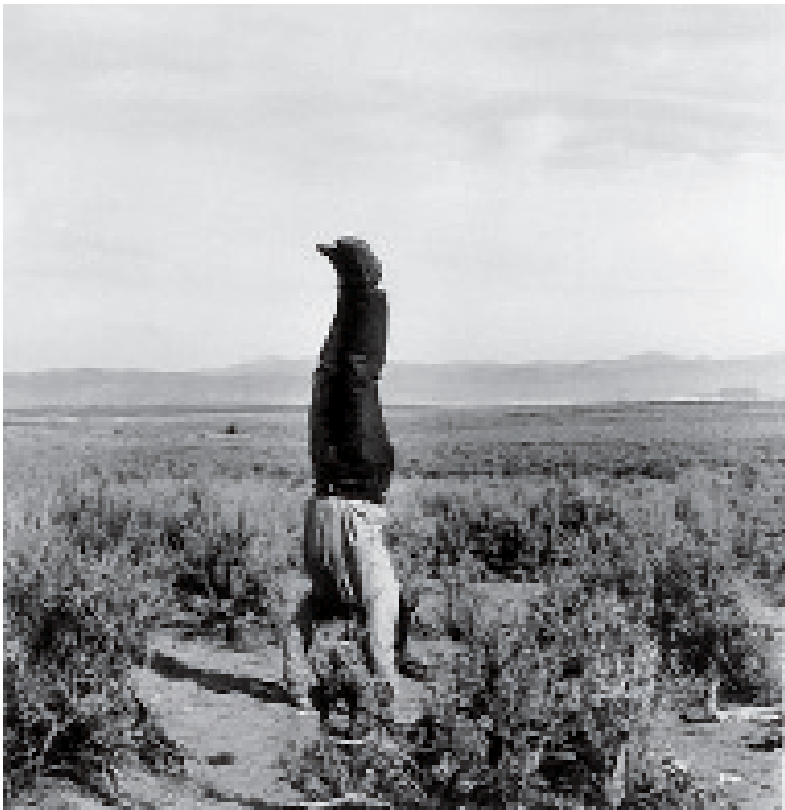
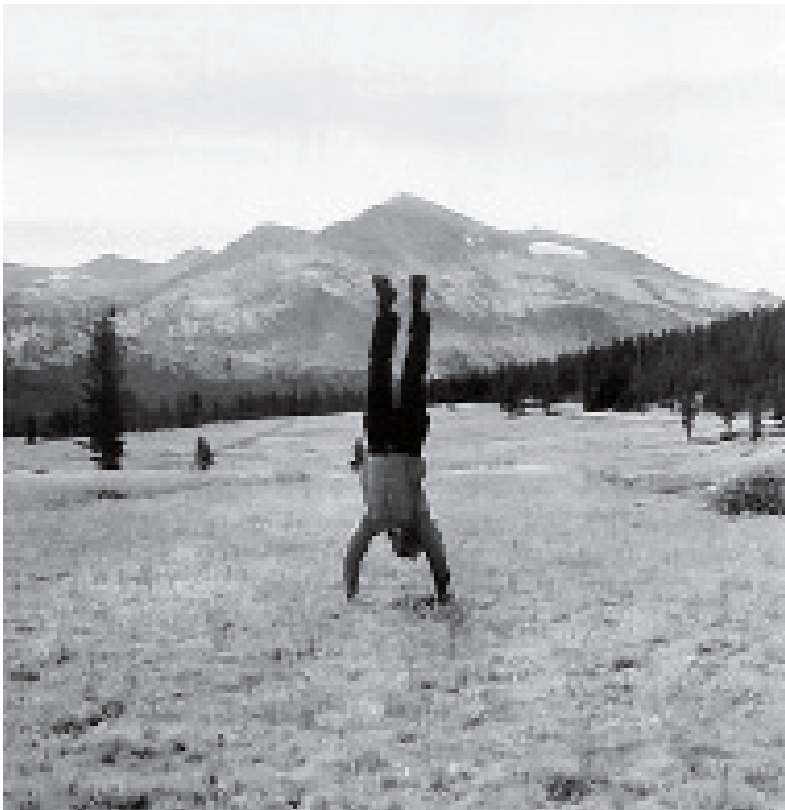
**Robert Kinmont**  
**8 Natural Handstands, 1969-2009**

Gelatin silver prints  
9 panels of 21.5 x 21.5 cm  
Edition 3/10















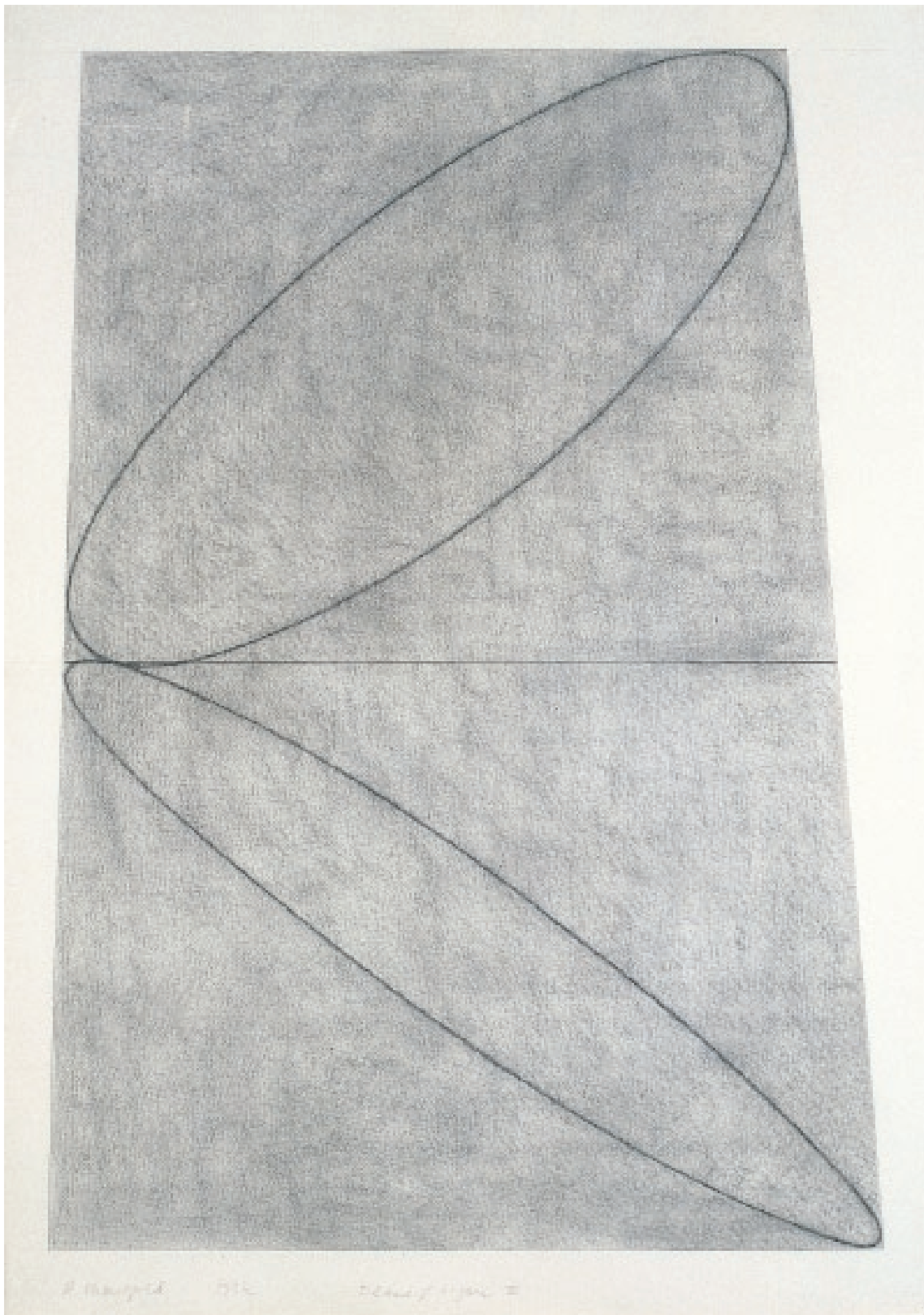
**Ibon Aranberri**  
***Mar del Pirineo, 2006***

Photography and graphic intervention  
134 x 300 cm  
Edition 1/3

**Perejaume**  
***Estel I congesta, 1985***

Acrylic and collage on canvas  
47 x 36.5 cm





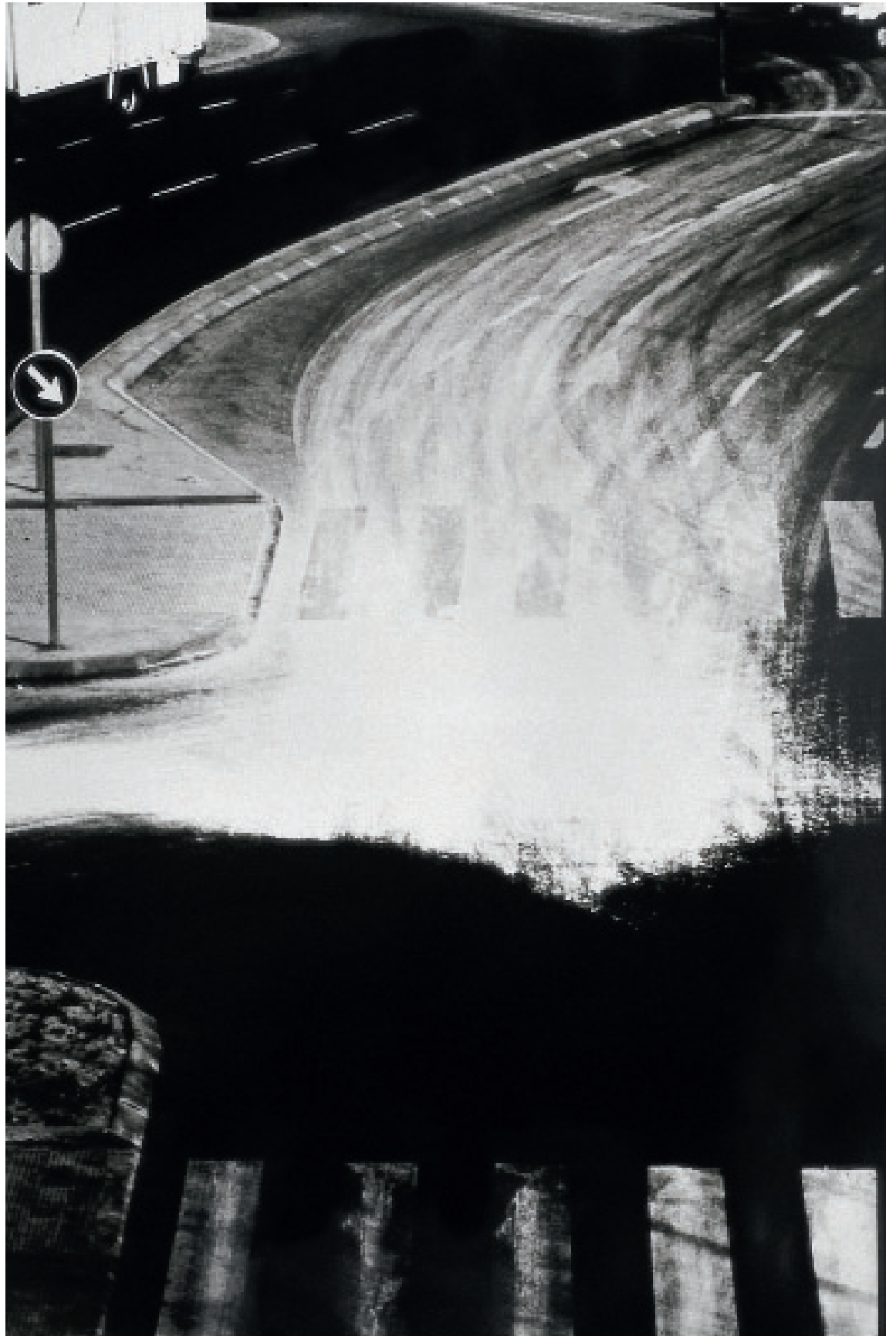
**Robert Mangold**  
***Plane/Figure Drawing III, 1992***  
Graphite on paper  
148 x 105 cm

**Santiago Sierra**  
***50 kg de yeso sobre la calle, 1994***

Chromogenic print

225 x 150 cm

Edition 2/5



**Iran do Espírito Santo**  
***Fluorescente I, 2000***

Stainless steel

60 x 3 x 4 cm

Edition 3/5

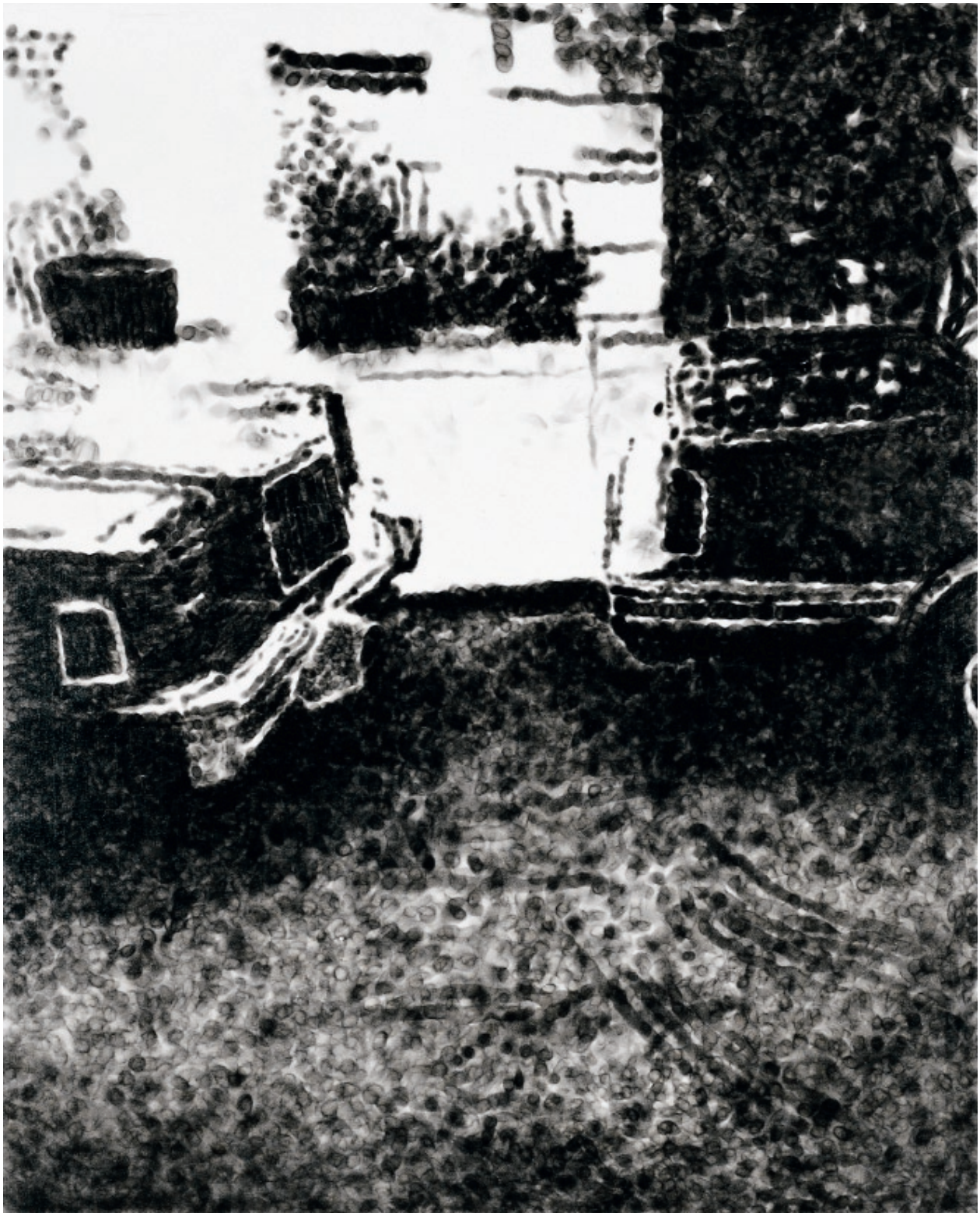


**Miguel Rio Branco**  
***Red and Blue, Luziânia, 1974***

Cibachrome  
4 panels of 95 x 129.5 cm  
Edition 4/5







**Jirí Georg Dokoupil**  
***Espacio entre dos coches, 1989***

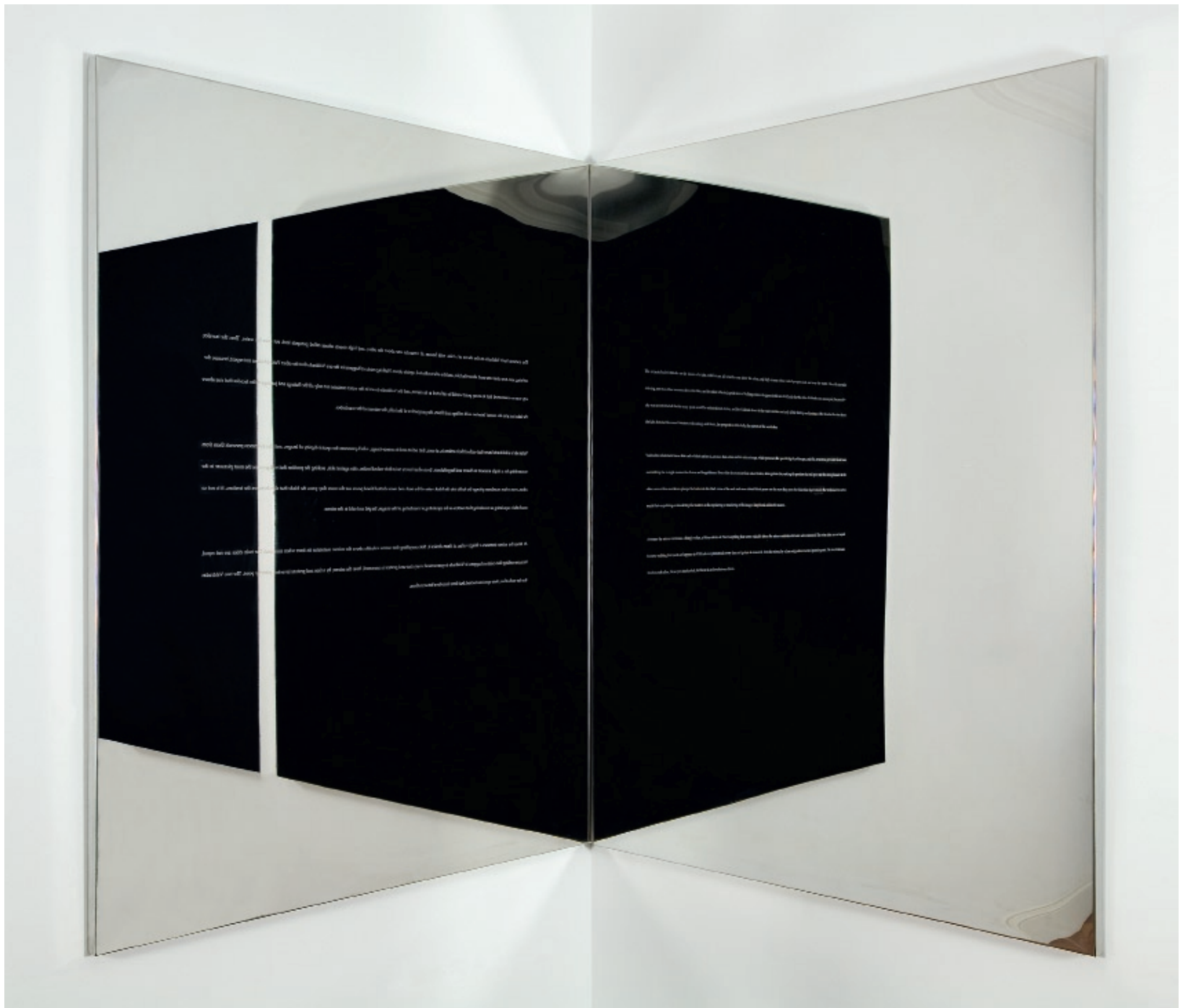
Soot on canvas  
162 x 130 cm



**Iran do Espírito Santo**  
***Sedimentar, Modulo II*, 1998**  
Synthetic enamel on wood  
3 panels of 80 x 70 x 73 cm

**Curro Gonzalez**  
***El Descenso nº VI, 1989***  
Mixed media on canvas  
195 x 195 cm





The ancients built Valdrada on the shores of a lake, with houses and verandas one above the other, and high streets whose railed parapets look out over the water. Thus the traveler, arriving, sees two cities: one erect above the lake, and the other reflected, upside down. Nothing exists or happens in the one Valdrada that the other Valdrada does not repeat, because the city was so constructed that its every point would be reflected in its mirror, and the Valdrada down in the water contains not only all the flutings and juttings of the facades that rise above the lake, but also the rooms' interiors with ceilings and floors, the perspective of the halls, the mirrors of the wardrobes.

Valdrada's inhabitants know that each of their actions is, at once, that action and its mirror-image, which possesses the special dignity of images, and this awareness prevents them from succumbing for a single moment to chance and forgetfulness. Even when lovers twist their naked bodies, skin against skin, seeking the position that will give one the most pleasure in the other, even when murderers plunge the knife into the black veins of the neck and more clotted blood pours out the more they press the blade that slips between the tendons, it is not so much their copulating or murdering that matters as the copulating or murdering of the images, limpid and cold in the mirror. At times the mirror increases the value of something, at times it denies it. Not everything that seems valuable above the mirror maintains its force when mirrored. Twin cities are not equal, because nothing that exists or happens in Valdrada is symmetrical: every face and gesture is answered, from the mirror, by a face and gesture inverted point by point. The two Valdradas live for each other, their eyes interlocked; but there is no love between them.

(Engraved text: Italo Calvino, *Invisible cities*)

**Jean-Frédéric Schnyder**

***Stilleben*, 1984**

Oil on canvas

30 x 42 cm





**Gabriel Orozco**  
***After the Table, 1999***  
Wood and acrylic painting  
250 x 107 x 10 cm

**Alberto Peral**

***Sin título, 1996***

Clay and wood

13 x 40 x 50 cm



**Gabriel Orozco**  
***Eaten Hose (Manguera mordida)*, 1990**

Cibachrome  
31.8 x 47.6 cm  
Edition 1/5



**Gabriel Orozco**  
***Marble Game on a Rotating Field*, 1996**

Cibachrome  
40.6 x 50.8 cm  
Edition 3/5

**Gabriel Orozco**  
***Parachute in Iceland (West)*, 1996**

Cibachrome  
31.8 x 47.6 cm  
Edition 2/5





**Gabriel Orozco**  
***Under the Table (Bajo la mesa)*, 1993**

Cibachrome

22.5 x 34 cm

Edition 3/5

[following page](#)

**Gabriel Orozco**  
***Cementerio 6*, 2002**

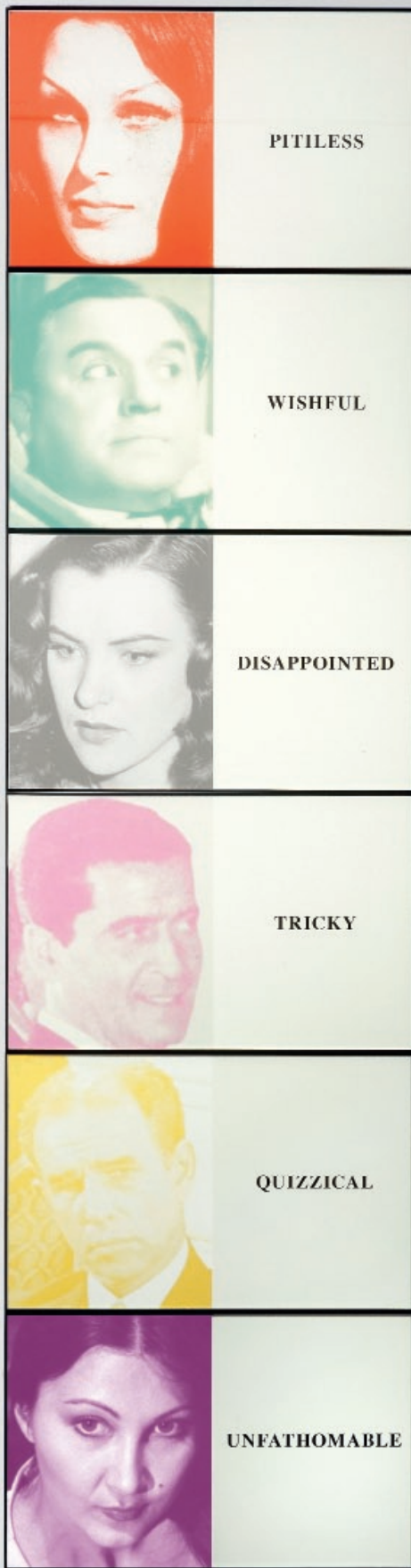
Cristal chromogenic print on museum board

65 x 98 cm

Edition 3/3 + 2 A.P.







# VII

Along this non linear path of multiple narrative and strata transversally interlinked by common reasons, we periodically see the issue of language reappearing: its use as an instrument, its relationship with what it says it represents and its malleability as a material of artistic reflection. And it is very fair to say that it does this working from how other artists have treated it, led by the work — essential in this field — of John Baldessari. The relationship between saying and showing, between language and image has been his subject of continuous artistic research for decades. One of the pieces making up his *Prima Facie* series sets faces against the words that attempt to summarise them, to reduce them to the condition of describable objects, understandable at last. *Prima facie*, on the other hand, is a legal term that now comes to the point: it denotes the judge's capacity to judge without needing greater proof, at first glance, a situation that appears obvious. And at the same time it encourages us, just like so many of the works selected here, to doubt this capacity and this evidence: to look twice, to question the apparently irrefutable proof of our perception of the visible.

There are other faces here: faces deformed to the point of grotesque by Douglas Gordon, the face reduced to an ironically abstract quality (with echoes that run from Brancusi to Louise Bourgeois) by Rosemarie Trockel. And there are also many works (and many voices) around the question of language: diverse in their approximation and in their *tone of voice*, all united by a healthy mistrust towards pretensions of universality: the slight irony of Jenny Holzer and her truisms recorded in stone, the irreverent and punk approximation of Raymond Pettibon, Tracey Emin's exasperated calligraphies, Joseph Kosuth's dispassionate philological reflections, the reappearance of Rivane Neuenschwander's alphabets.

In the end, maybe a sketch consists of an idea of language as an emblem of the conscience understood as a trap for itself, maybe represented in Slominski's rat-traps and ambushes. Perhaps when coming to verbalise it, it might be possible to resort to the Gombrowicz from *Cosmos*: "There is something in the language that becomes a trap in itself. Could it be that reality is, essentially, obsessive?"

**John Baldessari**

***Prima Facie (Third State): Pitiless / Wishful / Disappointed / Tricky / Quizzical / Unfathomable, 2005***

6 archival pigment prints on ultrasmooth Fine Art paper mounted on museum board  
373 x 98.8 cm (framed)



**Jonathan Hernández**  
***Everything is OK*, 2002**  
Mirror, acrylic and wood  
200 x 122 x 7 cm (x2)

**Jenny Holzer**  
***Selection from the living series, 1989***

Engraved white granite  
43.18 x 91.44 x 45.72 cm

Following pages

**Andreas Slominski**  
***Durchlauffalle, 1998***

Wood and metal  
33 x 119 x 30 cm

**Andreas Slominski**  
***Untitled, 2000***

Wood and metal  
107 x 122 x 45 cm









**Tracey Emin**

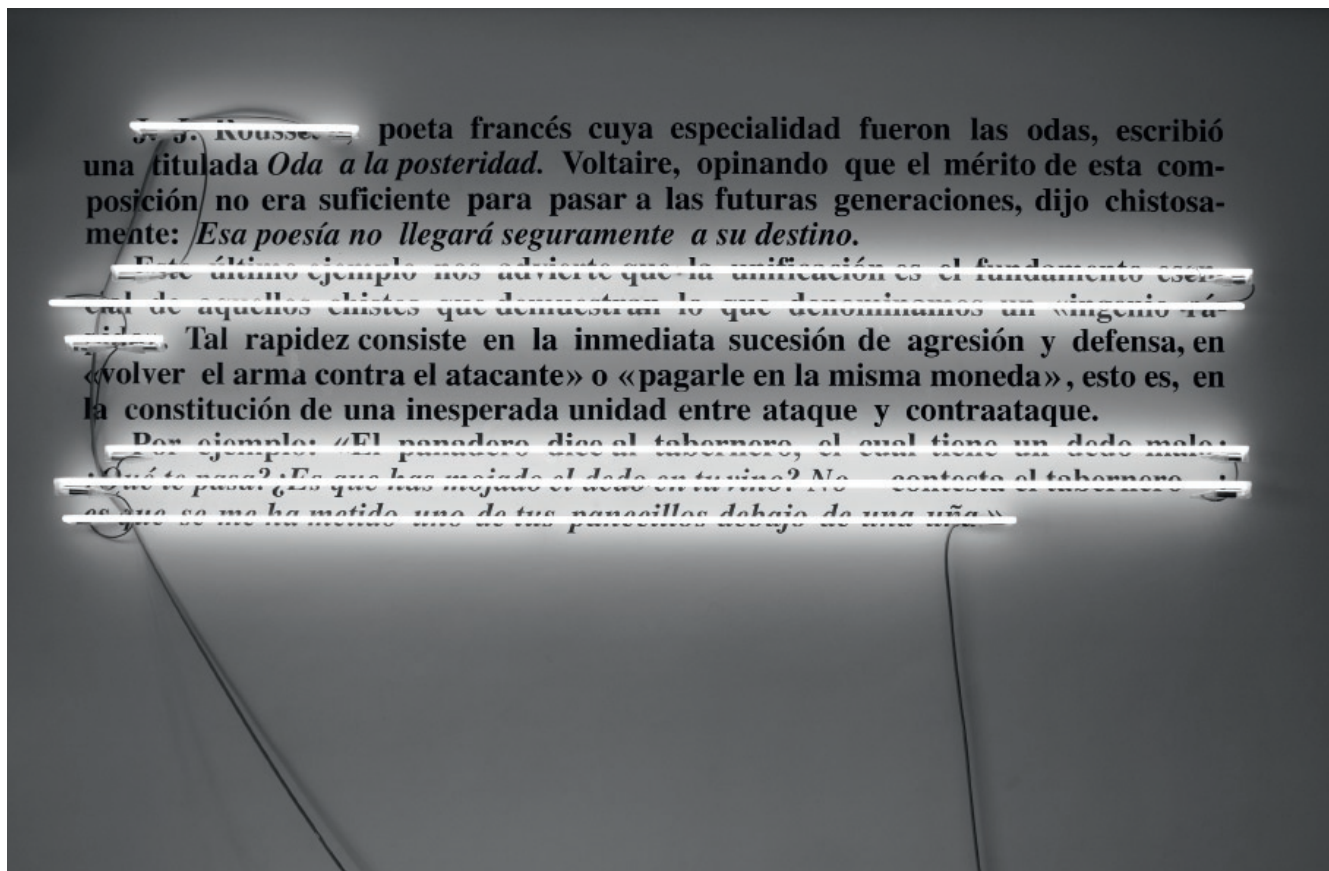
**Very Happy Girl, 1999**

Neon

Top panel: 76.2 x 147.3 cm

Lower panel: 38.1 x 250.2 cm

Edition 3/3



**Douglas Gordon**

***Self portrait of you + me (William Holden), 2006***

Photography, smoke and mirror

24 x 19 cm; 62.5 x 62.5 cm (framed)





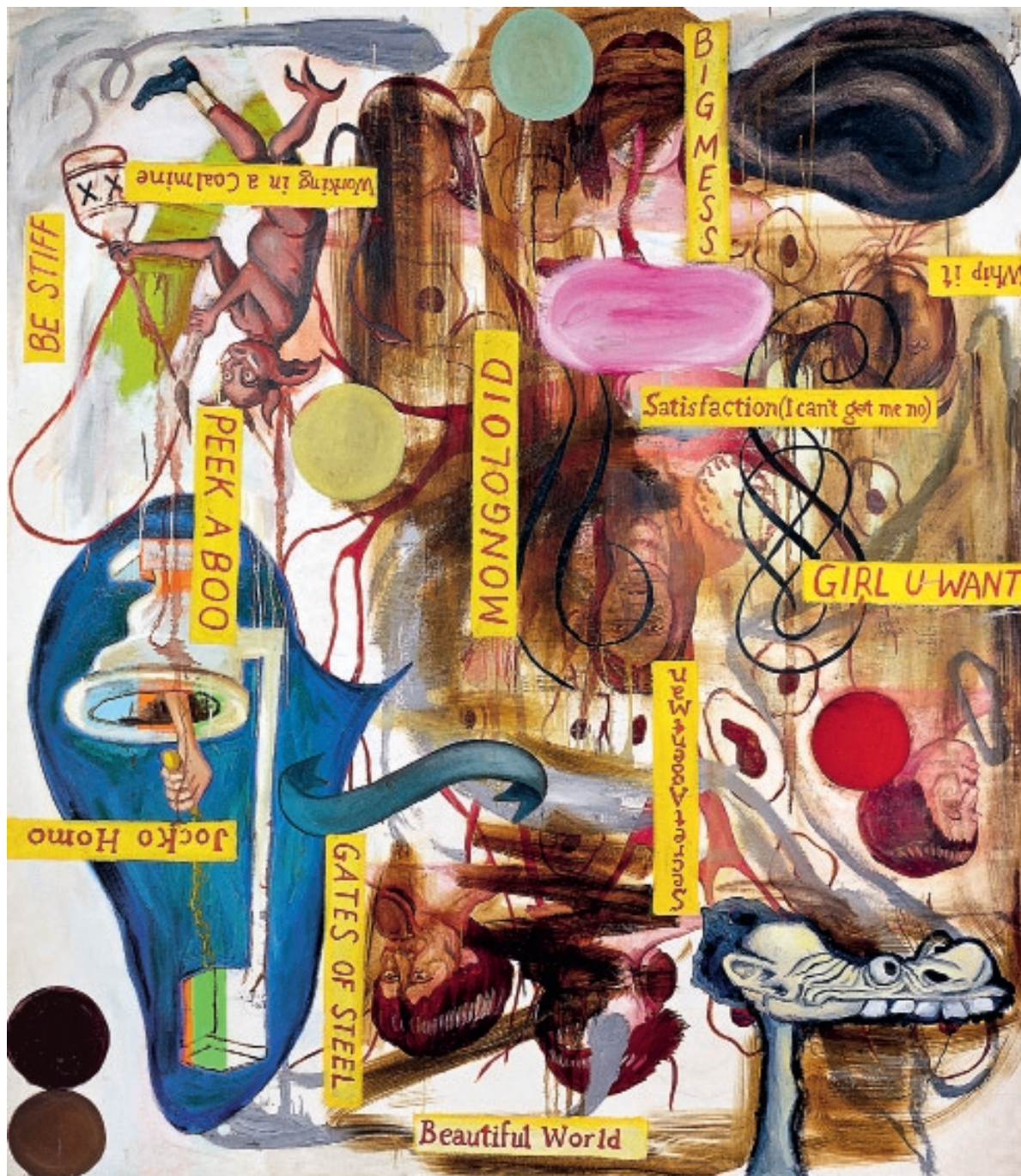
**Douglas Gordon**  
***Self portrait of you + me (Keneth Williams), 2006***

Photography, smoke and mirror  
34 x 27 cm; 88 x 88 cm (framed)



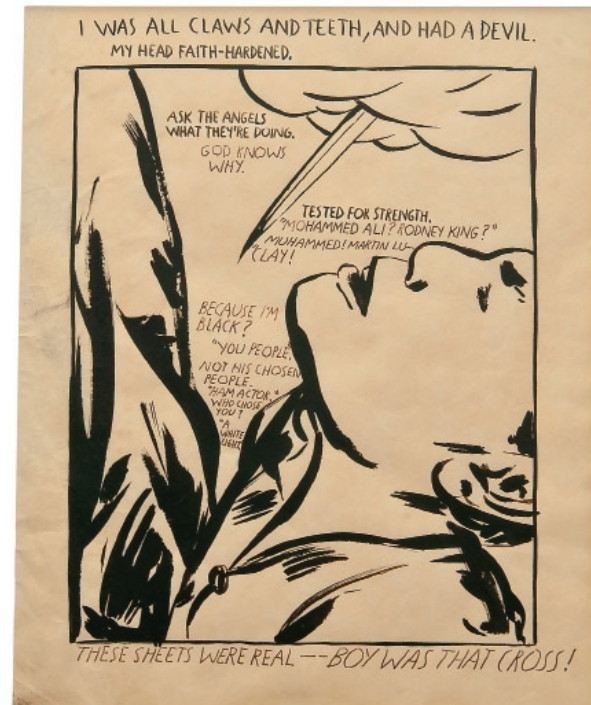
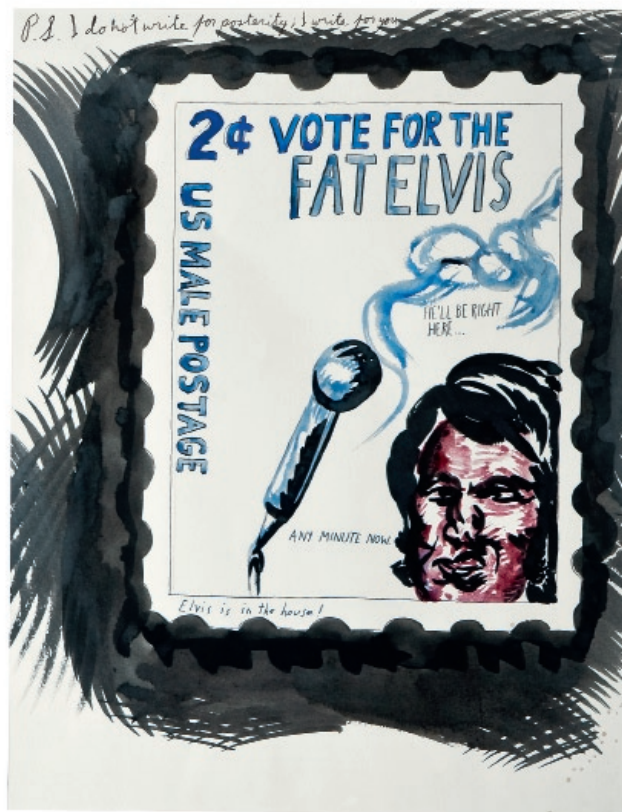
**Michel Majerus**  
**MoM Block Nr. 98 (viva zwei-collaboration), 1999**  
 Silkscreen and acrylic on canvas  
 200 x 180 cm

**Manuel Ocampo**  
**Untitled (De-evolution), 1997**  
 Oil on canvas  
 224.5 x 194.5 cm



**Raymond Pettibon**  
**No title (P.S. I do not write), 1992**  
 Pen and ink on paper  
 55.9 x 43.2 cm

**Raymond Pettibon**  
**No title (I was all claws), 1990**  
 Pen and ink on paper  
 35.6 x 26.4 cm





**Raymond Pettibon**  
**No title (Not that I), 1999**

Pen and ink on paper  
 64.8 x 48.3 cm

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**Rivane Neuenschwander**  
**Alfabeto Comestível 2, 2002**  
 PVC sheet, adhesive tape and spices  
 26 panels of 42 x 27 cm







**Rosemarie Trockel**  
***Ohne Titel (Eva in trance mit ektoplasma)*, 1989**

Papier maché, plaster and iron  
106 x 40 x 40 cm

**Ernesto Neto**

***Glop*, 1999**

Styrofoam, poliamide and saffron  
120 x 100 x 100 cm

**Ernesto Neto**

***Untitled*, 2001**

Lycra tulle and styrofoam  
232 x 232 x 50 cm





# VIII

Georg Herold's deforming, almost grotesque, mirror introduces the subject of embodiment (but also disembodiment), fundamental as the backbone for most of recent art and well represented in the Meana Larrucea Collection. And in *The Return of the Real*, Hal Foster announced — and promoted — this return of art over the last few decades towards carnality and the corporal, the irreducible to the intellect, after a few years, during the 60s and 70s, in which conceptual cold range art and belated and cerebral minimal art had set the creative guideline.

Foster reminded us that artistic work itself can be understood as a fragmenting mirror of the corporal image. And he precisely used the fundamental works in this issue such as Cindy Sherman's series, represented here by one of the photos from her series entitled "Untitled Film Stills": working with her own face, deforming and disguising her body and photographing the result, Sherman opened new lines for current art in this seminal series: halfway between performance, photograph and representation, she decomposed and relocated body, face and identity of the Other, like the photographs by Zoe Leonard, Francesca Woodman or Barbara Ess: legs, arms, faceless bodies that show their particularly eloquent details.

The stark carnality of Miguel Rio Branco's *Roman Bath*, Collier Schorr's challenging or abject body, the celebration of its festive and almost intoxicating intimacy in Nan Goldin's photographs perhaps culminate in their disembodiment, their passage to simulation, their multiplication on to a thousand screens worthy of contemporary times: this reminds us of Guillermo Paneque's series *Untitled (One possible ending I and II)*.

**Barbara Ess**

***Untitled, 1991***

Chromogenic print

67.8 x 108.4 cm (framed)

Edition 2/6





**Francesca Woodman**  
***Untitled, Providence, Rhode Island, 1976***  
Gelatin silver print  
13.2 x 13.2 cm  
Edition 21/40

**Francesca Woodman**  
***Untitled, New York, 1979-1980***

Gelatin silver print

13.3 x 13.53 cm

Edition 4/40





**Cindy Sherman**  
***Untitled Film Stills, 1980***

Gelatin silver print

20.3 x 25.4 cm

Edition 3/10

**Collier Schorr**

***Defensive Tight End. Lindenfeld, 1995-1996***

Chromogenic Print

101 x 75.5 cm

Edition 1/5





**Thomas Hirschhorn**

***Art center 6 (Blow Down)*, 2001**

Wood, cardboard, neon, adhesive, aluminium, white and grey paint, drawings  
170 x 310 x 131 cm

I can take no credit for this title as it was Murielle Gagnebin who came up with “intimate borders” as sometimes happens with friends who really understand us, she was far quicker and sharper to see what might matter to me and what I think does matter. Intimacy, of course, has not just fallen from the sky, exactly as a book that I once devoted to windows<sup>1</sup> attempted to define the conditions of possibility for this subjective nucleus that we call intimacy. I actually supposed that this was not a given fact, but that intimacy always had a singular structure, and a history, that intimacy has not always existed and it might not go on forever. I still have to finish defining it as a place, with both an architectural and visual essence: a space where the subject can be held and prove itself away from the Other’s gaze. It is an internally exclusive space, an island, what we often call feeling at home where the subject escapes the supposition of even being looked at. This is the possibility of what we have hidden. A subject might have nowhere that they can thereby escape this supposition giving an insight into hell. If it is essentially architectural, this place is not necessarily incarnated in architecture. Additionally we can feel at home in many different ways, in a crowd, anywhere, in a hotel, in the middle of the countryside. The fact that it depends on you to feel at home with the Other demands that we make the idea of intimacy more sophisticated.

<sup>1</sup> Gérard Wajcman, *Fenêtre. Chroniques du regard et de l’intime*, Paris, Éditions Verdier, 2004.

With the historical birth of intimacy, my hypothesis looks at the fact that this would have been embodied in a domain that was *a priori* unexpected, not in the field of law, where the idea of “private” is partly elaborated, or of philosophy but in art. I have evoked it in architecture although this is not where intimacy was conceived and considered. I am referring to painting and this appearance took place during the Renaissance. In one stroke: intimacy was established with the arrival of the modern painting, defined by Alberti as an “open window”. Giving this the widest possible extension, I can envisage that modern painting will have, by the same gesture, established the Cartesian idea that man has from now on the right to look at the world, with God, and defined intimacy as this place in the world where man can separate himself from the world, from where, through the window, in secret, he can look at it and where, in a place no one can see him, he can look at himself. If it is what I say, both source of the power of man that appropriates the work by looking at it, and cradle of this inner land where inwardness is deployed, we have to admit that there is an inkling of truth in setting the establishment of Alberti’s painting as the founding disruption of a new time.

This time is still ours, but for how long?

To keep us attached to intimacy, we have to make its tragic and crucial stakes appear here. This is where its current issues lie. Because the possibility of the hidden must not simply be thought of as a gain or a conquest, in terms of more or less: it is an absolute condition of the subject. I would say that there is no subject if it can be not seen. Here we understand the modern subject that thinks and therefore that is — we might as well say that the subject being looked at does not think. Therefore, in modern times, intimacy, the secret land, of the shadows or the opaque, is where we actually find the subject. Talking about intimacy in terms of land necessarily raises a question on borders. This question is raised today but if it matters to think about it, it is not to refine a topology of intimacy (in the line of Lacan who invented an opposite for intimacy which does not have one: extimacy), it is in the urgency of a threat. Weighing on intimacy, it weighs on every subject today.

There is a policy surrounding intimacy. Intimacy can be threatened and it must be defended.

Invoking a right to what is hidden means giving intimacy a definition beyond architectural and visual, also beyond psychology and anthropology. Intimacy takes on a political dimension, founded on force because the definition that I give to it, a place free of all gazes, implies a relation of power, to power, or more exactly a separation from being with it. It is actually a matter of holding ground outside the always totalitarian power of the Other. This constitutes the real condition of intimacy that we can relate to the right to secrecy. Intimacy can be broken down on the basis of Bentham’s Other, the unwelcome, intrusive or invasive gaze — that wants to see everything and know everything all the time. It is then a matter of saying what can limit this limitless desire. We can invoke the law but the law preserves privacy; or rather, privacy is this part that can be protected by law. Intimacy exceeds this; it would not be able to come from the law, it only comes from a subject’s real possibility to hide away and keep their silence. Its guarantor is material meaning that the right to secrecy is only held up by the subject himself, by his single force and not the Other, the force of the law. It is the subject’s action that keeps the subject free. We can suddenly make out that intimacy, secrecy and freedom are all tied together.

From this point, I would like to make a few comments focusing on the current state of intimacy.



**Miguel Rio Branco**  
***Roman Bath, 1994***  
Cibachrome  
2 panels of 80 x 80 cm  
Edition 1/7



**Nan Goldin**

***Noa dressing for the Venus show at Shogun, Tokyo, 1994***

Cibachrome

65.5 x 97.5 cm

Edition 3/15





**Nan Goldin**  
*Yurie in her mirror, Tokyo, 1994*  
Cibachrome  
45 x 61 cm  
Edition 5/15

**Nan Goldin**  
*David in bed, Leipzig, Germany, 1992*  
Cibachrome  
45 x 61 cm  
Edition 11/25



The former concerns what I would call the usefulness of psychoanalysis. We might emphasise that during the Romantic period, the idea of intimacy took on a colour that would clearly tinge Freud's intervention. By drawing boundaries around anything strictly personal and held hidden, it isolates anything encroaching on sexuality as the most personal and hidden aspect. Sexuality is designated as the opaque core of intimacy. This colour always tinges the intimate in one way or another.

However this interest is even more radical, because intimacy does not only create a boundary around the subject's most subjective place: as I said before, it lies in its very condition. It would not be able to have a subject without secrecy, or in other words a subject that is entirely transparent. With the dissolution of all opacity, any dream of transparency carries off the dissolution of the subject itself. Democracy is, of course, encouraged by an ideal of transparency but this refers, in principle, to power and not to subjects. Not only does it oppose the subject and the transparency of the Other, the state, but it is supposed to defend this opacity against any intrusions, which also means defending its freedom. This is where we find the problem today: in the facts, our democracy seems to be encouraged by a perfectly opposed wish: on the one hand, the Other tends to become increasing opaque and, on the other, the subjects are made increasingly transparent. In fact we know less and less about the power machine, whilst on the other hand, by sampling all types of information, power knows more and more about each of us.

Whether this comes from video-surveillance, medical files or procedures to evaluate how dangerous children might be in the future, all these measures put intimacy and the right to secrecy in danger.

My second comment looks at the nature of threats to intimate borders.

The right to secrecy is a barrier outlining the border of intimacy. If there is a reason for talking about borders, in the plural, this is not due to this border being diverse or variable, or there being more or less secrecy or intimacy: the right to secrecy and the intimate is absolute — it either exists or it does not. On the other hand, like any border, it marks out two spaces, intimacy, the subject's place, and the field of the Other. The border can therefore be seen from two sides. This leads to three possible states for the border. Either it is hermetic and preserves intimacy from all intrusion, defining a certain state of real democracy. Or crossing takes places which can be conceived in two ways. Either there is an invasion of intimacy, or intimacy is renounced. The former is done by the Other, the power, the latter is done by the subject.

Let's consider the act performed by the power first of all, or in other words when the Other sticks its nose into intimacy. This is a weighty trend, massively marked by the fact that we are living in the time of video-surveillance. Police, urban or military, it has been more than generalised now: it covers the whole planet, as eyes are watching us at all times, day and night, all around the Earth — easily demonstrated by clicking on *Google Earth*. We are living in times of paranoia. But the serious question raised by the presence of cameras on every street corner is that this is not simply a matter of technical progress allowing power to spread and invade public space; it is that this technical progress has insensitively brought about a reversal. When we developed surveillance techniques in former times, it was to flush out criminals' secrecy; now current techniques are put to service for the very opposite purposes: they are there to monitor the innocent and control their secrets. The control society that Deleuze talked about is a society where the innocent are controlled. This is what engenders this vague feeling that society has been criminalised, where we are all watched as if we were potentially guilty or as yet unaware as that we were.

In the sense of this rampant generalised criminalisation of society, we can shed light on certain current procedures at the service of what is said to be a preventive criminality policy. Prevention has become a major concept in this era, reaching the point where Foucault's "Monitor and punish" has been replaced by "Monitor and prevent". We have entered a time of non limitation for the master's gaze, an intrusive outlook, supported by science and technique. The subject that was formerly dealt with by God in his soul is today scrutinised in body by experts, right down to the most secret corners of their spirit — inside their mother's wombs, or even before. Intimacy, defining itself as a window open to the subject and closed to the Other, is incessantly probed and extorted.

From now on, an immense device is laying siege to the borders of intimacy.

We must shift the viewpoint and reverse it because there is therefore another way of crossing the border of intimacy: in the other direction involving people that, free from all constraints, open up their intimacy, confess it or expose it. In fact, here lies the most immediate meaning of “shameful images” as pictures that are not stolen but deliberately exhibited. It must be understood that this is not a matter of the subject renouncing the right to secrecy, but on the contrary, a free act, exercising of this right in a certain way. The right to remain silent, that we hear ritually evoked in American police films after each arrest, does not oblige us to keep quiet — we would then fall directly into totalitarianism according to Lacan: anything that is not forbidden is compulsory.

Art and literature are places for exercising this freedom to display intimacy. This can take all sorts of forms, pornography, exhibition, confidence, confession, report, admission, whether this refers to *La vie sexuelle de Catherine M.*, Larry Clark’s films, photos by Araki or Nan Goldin. Of course, we could adopt the defence that intimacy was exposed way before they came along although we might just add that in the 18th century, for example, when Rousseau published his *Confessions*, this was not an intimate work in the strictest sense, because an intimate diary in those times was a diary that remained secret and not published.

Our times are characterised by the fact that, in addition to talking about ourselves in the secrecy of the analyst’s office, intimacy is published these days, over our screens and exhibited on museum walls. And I might add: shamelessly. We have entered a time of unveiling, a shame-free time. This does not mean a total absence of decency pushing us into limitless provocation, but the simple fact of lowering or maybe dissolving the feeling of shame. We have to admit that it is not entirely wrong to be happy about shedding this type of load. This is, to a certain respect, what singularises the exhibition of what would be revealed from the category of “shameful images”, namely that today they are exhibited without shame. It is hard for shameful images to make us feel any shame. These are hard times for pornographers. This means that the crossing over that I was talking about in art can no longer be thought of today in terms of subversion, scandal, provocation, profanation or outrage. The fall of prohibitions does not cry out sacrilege or blasphemy, but shrieks of day to day existence. Scandal today is so cheap that it lies within the grasp of mere publicity. This leads to a situation where any works of art that want to sell themselves as provocative in this day and age have to sell themselves to the highest bidder, subject to ever-exhausting inflation, and seem to end up reasonably trivial, sometimes even grotesque or pitiable. Thankfully there are still some tense censors around to create a bad smell around certain works that, without these calls for prohibition, would not arouse the tiniest bit of interest. It needs to be said that today, we’ve seen it all. So how can we still create a scandal? The inquisitor’s fervour demonstrated by a certain *moral minority* is merely a sign of the collapse of prohibitions, and this desire to restore values is the best sign that times have changed, that shameful images barely cause any shame, that their power to destabilise has been singularly blunted. That must hold us back.

We would also like to reshuffle the idea of the novelty of shame-free shameful images and opposing historical precedents. For example, after reading Daniel Arasse, there would be some credit in holding up Titian’s *La Venus d’Urbino* as a paradigm of “shameful images”. This naked woman lying down and caressing herself whilst smiling up at us is a shameful image in certain respects without shame. Except that, and this is the point, this intimate image was only intended for the intimacy of a single viewpoint, that of Guidobaldo della Rovere who had commissioned this pin-up from Titian for his exclusive use — which moreover raises a real problem not concerning the exhibition of this painting today but regarding its sense in a public art space. At the time, intimate works were seen in intimacy. Today they go into a museum, this great place for the outlook democracy, standing on the principle that all visible works must be able to be seen by everyone — which determines a slight structural museum antipathy for guys like Guidobaldo della Rovere and private collectors.

And that is how the painting looks in these delightful times. We have been led into a double statement. On the one hand, in our times that move forward under the standard of human rights, the material right to secrecy is materially threatened everywhere we go. Now there might be a point in defending the concept that man’s principle right is the right to secrecy. The second statement concerns a generalised exposition of intimacy. The very topic of “shameful images” seems to rest on this aspect, which then guides the debate essentially towards different ways of receiving these images, on moral panics, for example as mentioned by Ruwen Ogien.

In my opinion, I suggest that we consider the matter by confronting the other side, the general threat to intimacy. I believe that it might be profitable to think about the status of “shameful images”, namely that there are two sides: intimate exposed and intimate extorted. The question that I am raising, and that bothers me, concerns the possible relationship between the two.

My hypothesis is that the current nature of exposing intimate images does not only reveal a modern way of exercising freedom but paradoxically responds to the threat to the intimate. Of course, we might say that the veil is a response to the hypermodern threat of an unlimited viewpoint of intimacy. Now we are also witnessing an unveiling movement in art that, after all, be perfectly in phase with the modern master's desire to be all-seeing. Now art images are really heart stopping. We should therefore say how and why.

This all means that to understand what "shameful images" are today, we should not be focusing on the forbidden but actually on the contrary: this all-seeing machine, this intimacy extorting machine that today puts power in the hands of the hypermodern master. The current nature of "shameful images" would in this respect be the current nature of threats to intimacy. If one function of art is to show what cannot be seen, we cannot however limit ourselves to thinking that what cannot be seen is forbidden, or that "bad types", to echo the title of the book by Dominique Baqué (*Mauvais genre*), would be a response to preppy types from a *moral majority* that would impose hiding what we were not capable of seeing. Not because intimacy would be less subject to the forbidden than the confession, as Foucault thought, but because it is purely and simply threatened by dissolution.

We might simply ask ourselves: what can be the sense and the value of exhibiting pornographic images in a world where we are seen everywhere, all the time and in all guises, examined down to the very last blood cell and the depths of our souls?

This explains why is important to look at what affects us, and to unveil all the gazes that, without us seeing it, make us controlled subjects. Sustained by the scientific ghost of transparency, this right to look from the power opposed to the subject's right to secrecy is a major and acute political problem.

It is also a problem when thinking about art today. Not that the question is specifically raised for art, but rather, following the idea that I have of art, I think that today it is a place where the question of the ghost of science is raised and exposed, in the sense that we unveil it, showing it as it really is. Art is a place where the ghost of science and of the modern master are thought about perhaps most deeply, and also where there is a response to the threat of this kind of ghost. I will give you an example. When Wim Delvoye took x-ray images of a kiss or sexual acts, or when Bernard Venet exposed a self-portrait to the scanner, these artists are only aesthetically taking control of scientific and sometimes state-of-the-art techniques, as we have seen in art for a very long time — I think Meret Oppenheim was the first to create X-Ray portraits in 1964, a self-portrait to be exact. By exposing the body's scientific hyper-intimacy, these images of artists really form a critical answer to the ghost of science for a transparent subject — or in other words fully knowable. These scientific images alert us to science's desires and its pretensions to a subject that is entirely calculable, evaluable as we say these days, meaning that it is also completely predictable. In truth, these images of transparency, shown by artists when displaying scientific images of transparency, demonstrate that there is a certain irreducible opacity using the ghost of science. There is a reaction to science which I will come back to later.

To continue talking for a moment about critical art or resistance art, I cannot resist referring to a work by Bruce Nauman. I have to say that I hold Bruce Nauman up as a sort of universal thinker. In my eyes he is the Swiss Army knife of our times. He has made major revelations concerning the new feeling of discontent in civilisation. Moreover I have created a law that I have named the *T.I.A.W.B.B.N.F.E.O. Law* — There Is A Work By Bruce Nauman For Every Occasion. For this particular occasion I will talk about the resounding piece that could be seen in Paris and more recently in London at the Tate Modern. We freely enter a small padded room, dark and empty, and as we approach the walls, we can vaguely hear something. As we near the screens, there is a clearer voice that firmly murmurs *Get out of my mind, get out of this room*. This is Bruce Nauman's actual voice. We therefore go to the museum and kindly enter a space to have a look, as usual, and once inside, we firstly discover that there is nothing to see and then that we are inside the mind of Bruce Nauman and that we had better get out of there pretty quickly. A work that throws you out is really the last straw for a museum piece. However, if I had to award a Grand Prize for Art against "psychological autopsy", giving the prize to the most acute work to denounce experts' desire to get inside our minds, a work of public salvation announcing that the assessors are already in our heads and, at the end of the day, the fiercest work to defend intimacy, I would nominate this piece by Bruce Nauman without any hesitation.

I would actually say that art today lies there, following the idea that shameful images pop up exactly wherever there is something that does not lie straight in sexuality, something that we cannot manage to put into words or see properly. Art opens up the space that is no longer sexuality but unease in sexuality, unease in enjoyment.

This also involves opening up art for post-Freudian times. We have the idea today that it is good to confess all enjoyment, but there is something for which words fail us whatever we do. When we read Catherine Millet's sexually explicit novel, it speaks of a certain silence of enjoyment. Nan Goldin is a great artist on the unease of enjoyment, the untidiness of love. She is also an artist from today's era of psychoanalysis, from the ultimate truth of psychoanalysis which is the impossible. These images of wrecked transvestites at four in the morning, with their mascara running and their beautiful dresses in a state, are images unveiling the truth about sex — and the phallus: wrecked and shapeless, not erect. This is the hour of the worn-out phallus. This is punk sex art, and I am referring to the *non future* of sex. The images have lost all their dazzle. They are deliberately not floppy images themselves. Not ugly, not provocative, or disgusting, or anything like that: just true. They can therefore be moving, beautiful, gripping, worrying, anything we want, because there is no reason for the truth to always be ugly and unpleasant. Because these images show that there is something else behind the gloss, behind the images and everything, behind the great incurable untidiness of love. Meanwhile, Larry Clark filming American teenagers shows liberated sexuality, also from the era that saw the heyday of psychoanalysis, a sexuality that came out in the end, also meaning an extenuated sexuality. These children are in one way still the children of Freud and Coca-Cola.

I would then put things like this: unease in enjoyment that does not side with sexuality is shown in images. I encounter the Lacan-Wittgenstian machine there that encourages me on the question of image, following the proposal from *Tractatus* that states that something inexpressible, things that cannot be said, and that we cannot say, are shown. To this I would simply add that shameful images today should not be placed within the register of subversion and liberation; they do not rail against the forbidden but confront the impossible, the sexual relation that does not exist.

This brings me to my conclusion speaking about two X-ray images by Wim Delvoye. These X rated x-rays demonstrate an extreme force of truth but not where we think, where we can see. Showing a kiss or fellatio, they are there to be seen, of course, like any image but in some ways these images show what we do not see with the naked eye: the inside of the body as it works. And on the other hand, they show something that we do not see: how it works. In the end, they show what we do not see. And that it is normal that we do not see it. We can photograph the intimate operation of the sexual organs, mobilising science and the most sophisticated techniques for this and not run the risk of handing over the secrecy of sex, of how human desire works and the stunning sex machine for whom no one has a blueprint, as opposed to the excretion machine that, coincidentally, Wim Delvoye himself has decided to build, very successfully. So the Cloaca-Turbo (which also provides a view of a mechanism from inside the body) and the X-Ray image of a sexual act will be the opposite sides of the same coin: image of a machine that works on one side, image of a machine that doesn't work on the other. More exactly, I would say that these X-Ray images echoing Da Vinci's famous anatomical image featuring a cross section of coitus, above all show that there is something that we cannot see: how love works, which would be the secret to sexuality. It is their critical dimension: it also speaks to doctors and everyone else to say: the search for the body's transparency is a ghost because there is something that we can never see, never know and therefore never control: sexual relations. You can x-ray the body, give it an autopsy, make it as see-through as you wish but you will never see the secret of sexual relations. Here is something that at the end of the day definitively resists the wishes of the master for it to "work". *Experts come a cropper over sexual relations* could be the title of the series of images by Wim Delvoye.

It is suddenly funny to reveal that the first X-ray image taken by Röntgen, inventor of radiography in 1895 — the same year as psychoanalysis and the cinema were also born — was his wife's hand and that what we first see is the shadow of her wedding ring. This means that the first image of the inside of a woman's body firstly reveals the presence of a man, more accurately a husband — for whom she has no secrets. That would certainly explain this image. We might actually wonder what Röntgen was thinking when he chose an x-ray of his wife's body as his first image. We might say that Wim Delvoye is showing what Röntgen was thinking. It's best not to dream.



**Zoe Leonard**  
***Legs (Geoffrey Beene Fashion Show), 1990***

Gelatin silver print

81 x 55.5 cm

Edition 1/6



**Susana Solano**  
***La Lluna nº 2, 1985***  
Iron  
81 x 126 x 220 cm





**Georg Herold**  
***Titelverwaltung, 1999***

Mirror plate, wood, silicon and lacquer  
237 x 137 x 10 cm

**Guillermo Paneque**

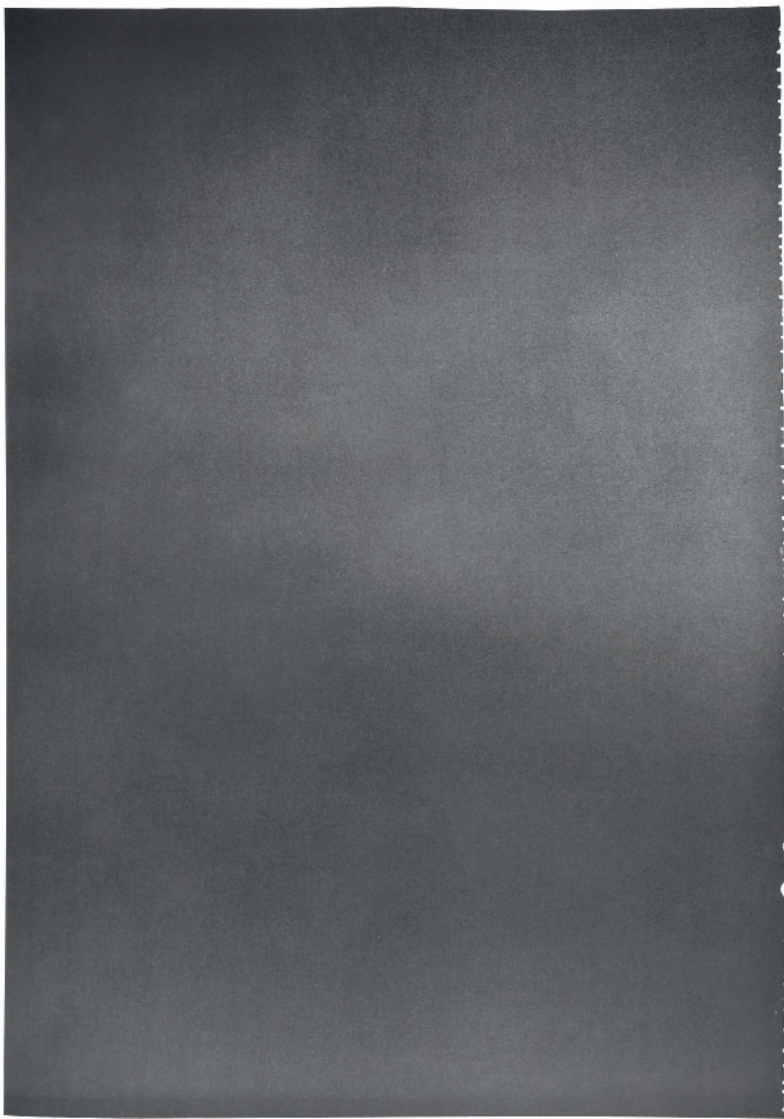
***Untitled (One possible ending I), 2003***

Pigmented ink prints on photographic paper, light and collage

5 panels of 39.5 x 30 cm

Edition 1/5







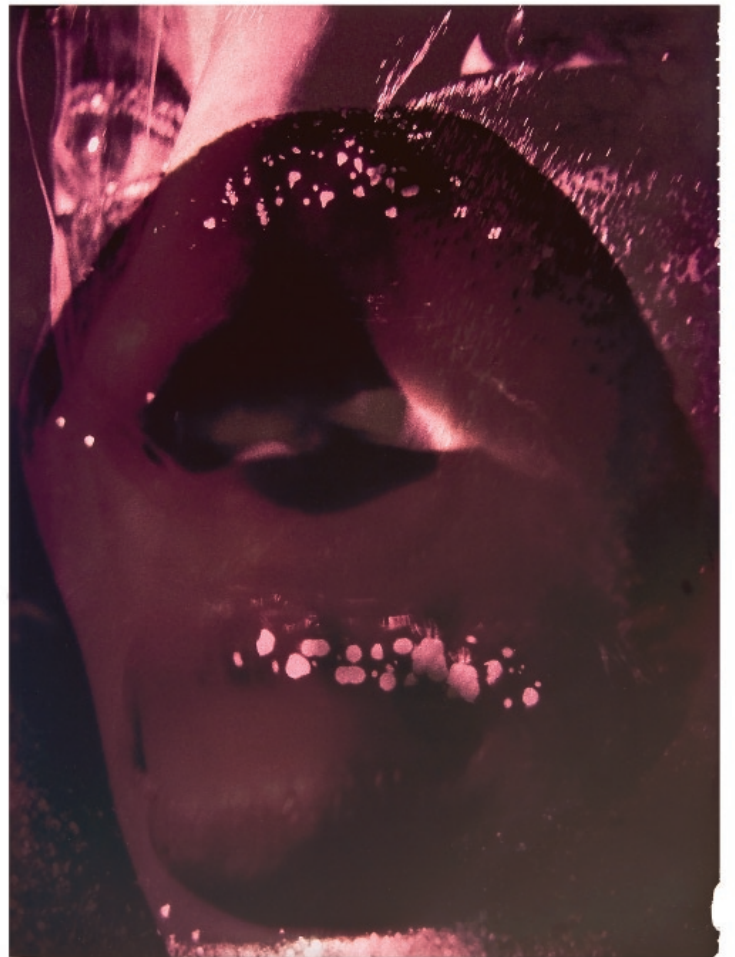
**Guillermo Paneque**

***Untitled (One possible ending II), 2003***

Pigmented ink prints on photographic paper, light and collage

5 panels: 49 x 33 cm, 38 x 30 cm, 43.5 x 37 cm, 46 x 37 cm

Edition 1/5









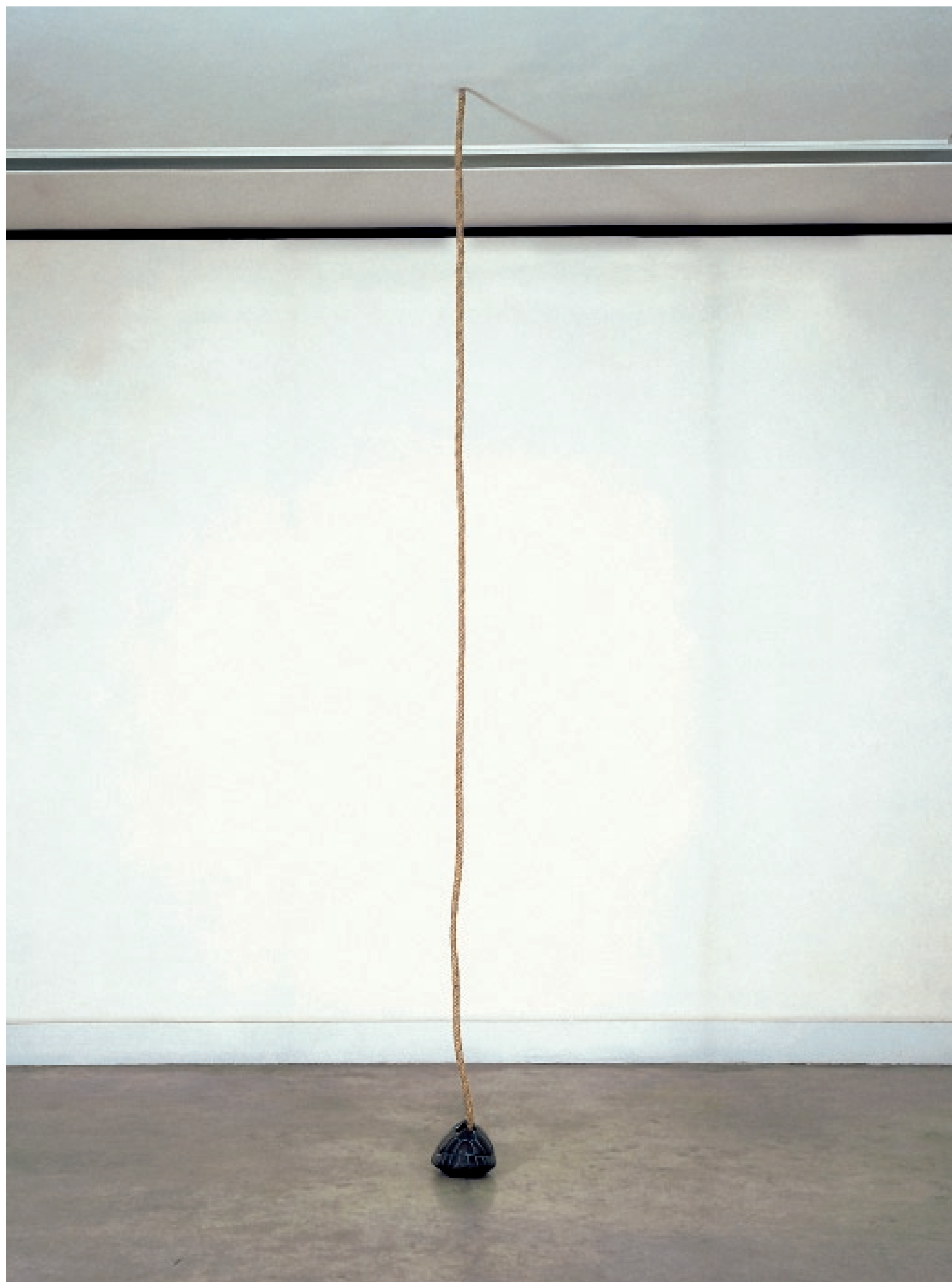
# IX

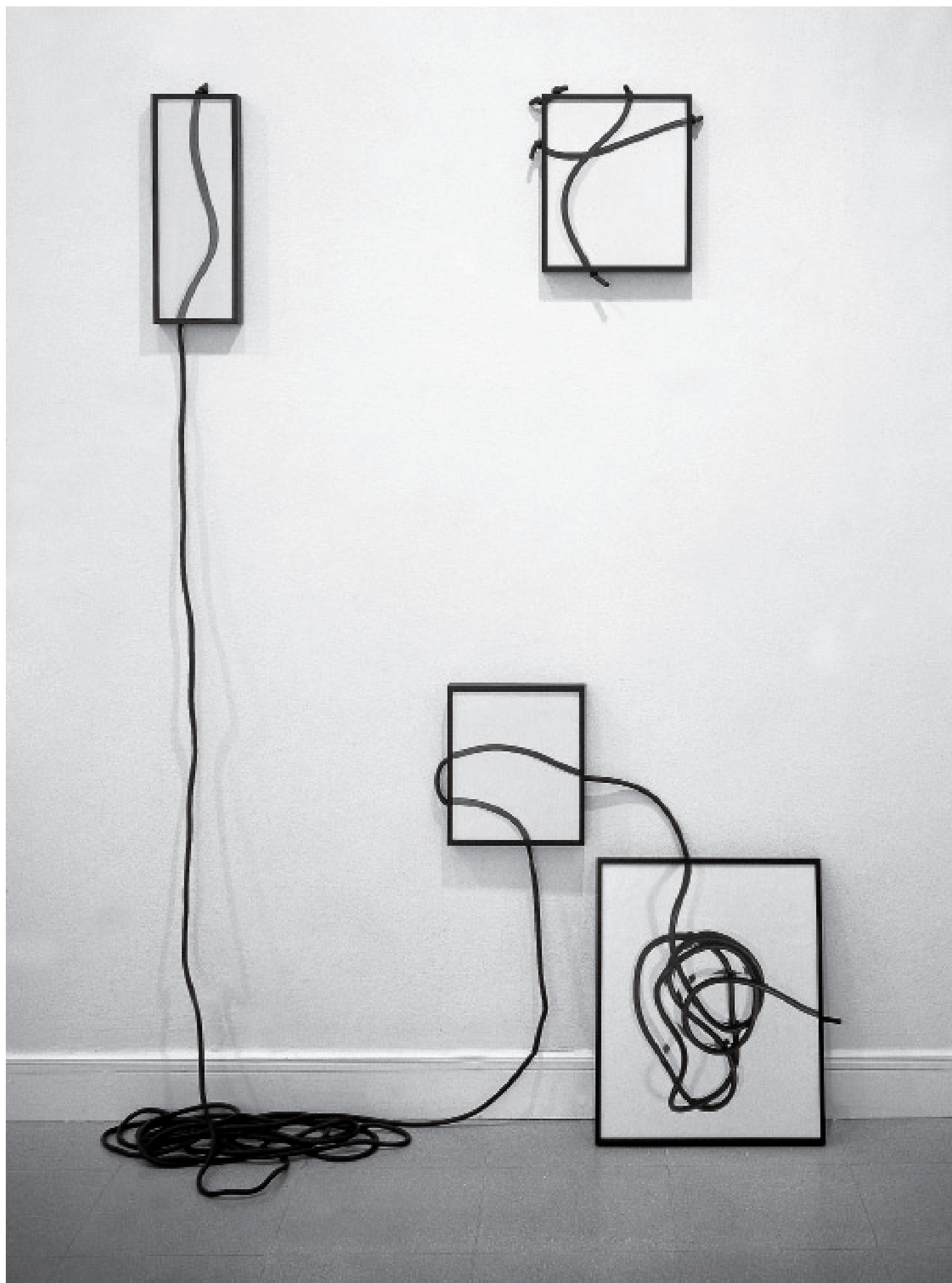
From objectivising the body and flesh to sensualising the object, maybe Pepe Espaliú was one of the artists from the second half of the 20th century that best knew how to infuse objects with this carnal, corporeal and almost suffering quality: his thing is objects that *remind* and *feel* and it is particularly fortunate that he is represented in the Meana Larrucea Collection by means of fundamental pieces such as *El evangelio según San Mateo* and *Sin título* (Turtle and string): two emblems of the body's anxieties to transcend its limits, to ascend to totality or melt into the recognition of the Other.

In *La bella durmiente*, by his contemporary Susana Solano, once again, as in Mirosław Balka's pained, twin monoliths, we find objects that are used as a cradle for memory, that remind us of or symbolise the passing of the body to other states, to other fields. However, it is also possible to choose the opposite road. Passing from commemoration to ironic observation, distanced and almost implacable: this is what happens in a very interesting piece by the first Vik Muniz, *Kon Tiki*, where we can perceive traces of his ironic humour and his interest for matters of perception and spontaneous formation of visual patterns; or in the tiny, little sculptures by Guy Limone that might be able to work for the helpless inhabitants of the *Proyecto para Conjunto Habitacional Blanco* by Damián Ortega.

**Pepe Espaliú**  
***El evangelio según San Mateo*, 1993**  
Enamelled iron  
245 x 115 x 28 cm

**Pepe Espaliú**  
***Sin título, 1989***  
Bronze and string  
Turtle: 15 x 18 x 25 cm





**Vik Muniz**  
***Kon Tiki*, 2000**

Gelatin silver print and rubber  
4 pieces of 62.5 x 52.2, 52.5 x 20, 40.5 x 34.5, 37 x 32 cm

**Pepe Espaliú**  
***Tortugas*, 1989**

Bronze  
17 x 22 x 14 cm (x2), 17 x 14 x 17 cm (x1)





**Pepe Espaliú**  
***Carrying VIII, 1992***

Iron  
97 x 150 x 46.2 cm

**Mirosław Balka**  
***2 x (171 x 13 x 24), 1994***

Iron, canvas and salt  
171 x 13 x 24 cm (each)





**Marepe**  
***Natal (Christmas), 2001***  
Wooden chair and acrylic cubes  
Site-specific dimensions

**Susana Solano**  
***La bella durmiente*, 1987**

Iron and lead  
69 x 104 x 59 cm

**Dryden Goodwin**  
***Arcan*, 2001**

Pencil on paper  
137 x 101 cm





**Rosângela Rennó**

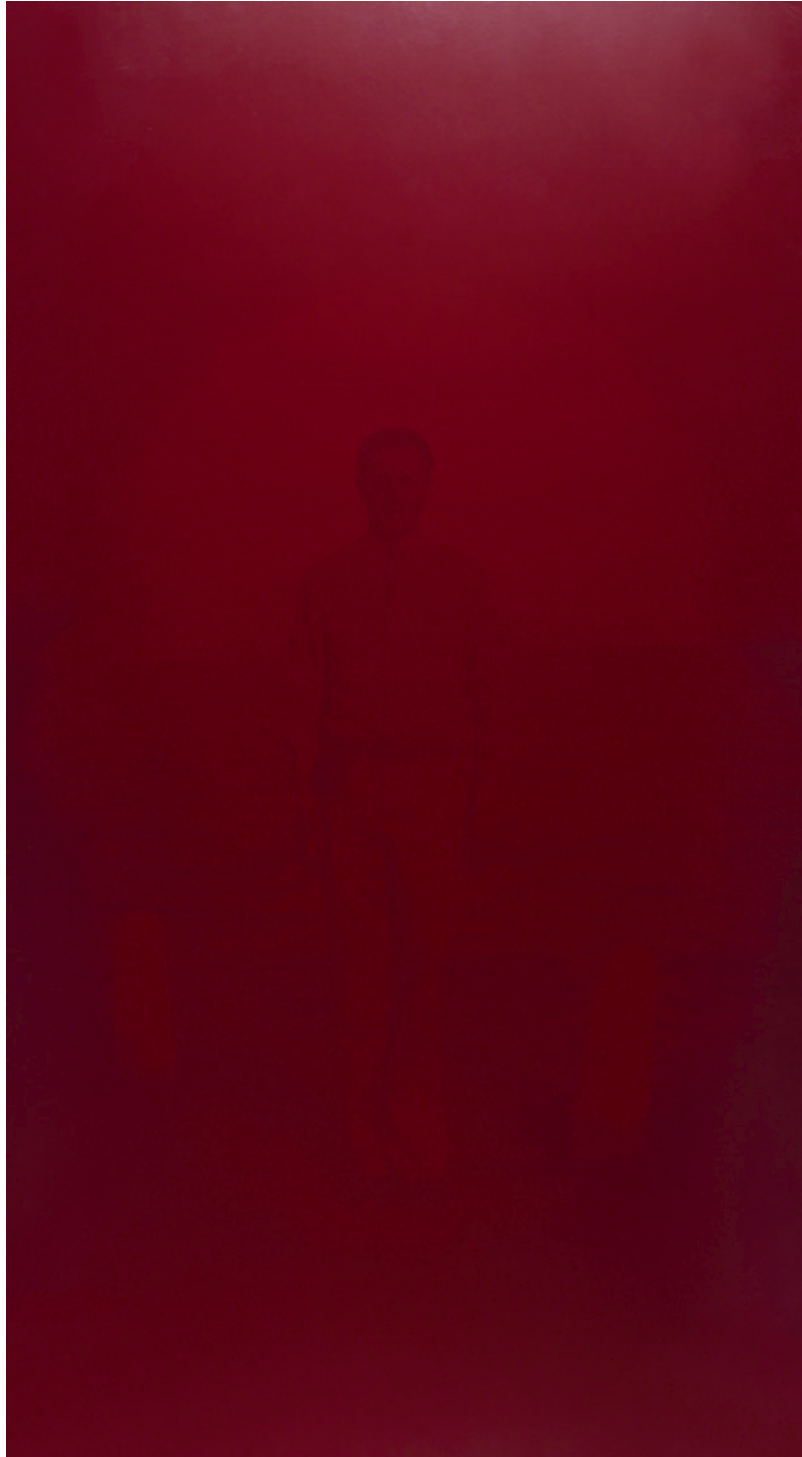
***Untitled (Two Stones)***

**From the series "Red Series", 1996-2000**

Lightjet print on photographic paper mounted on PVC

180 x 100 cm

Edition 5/5





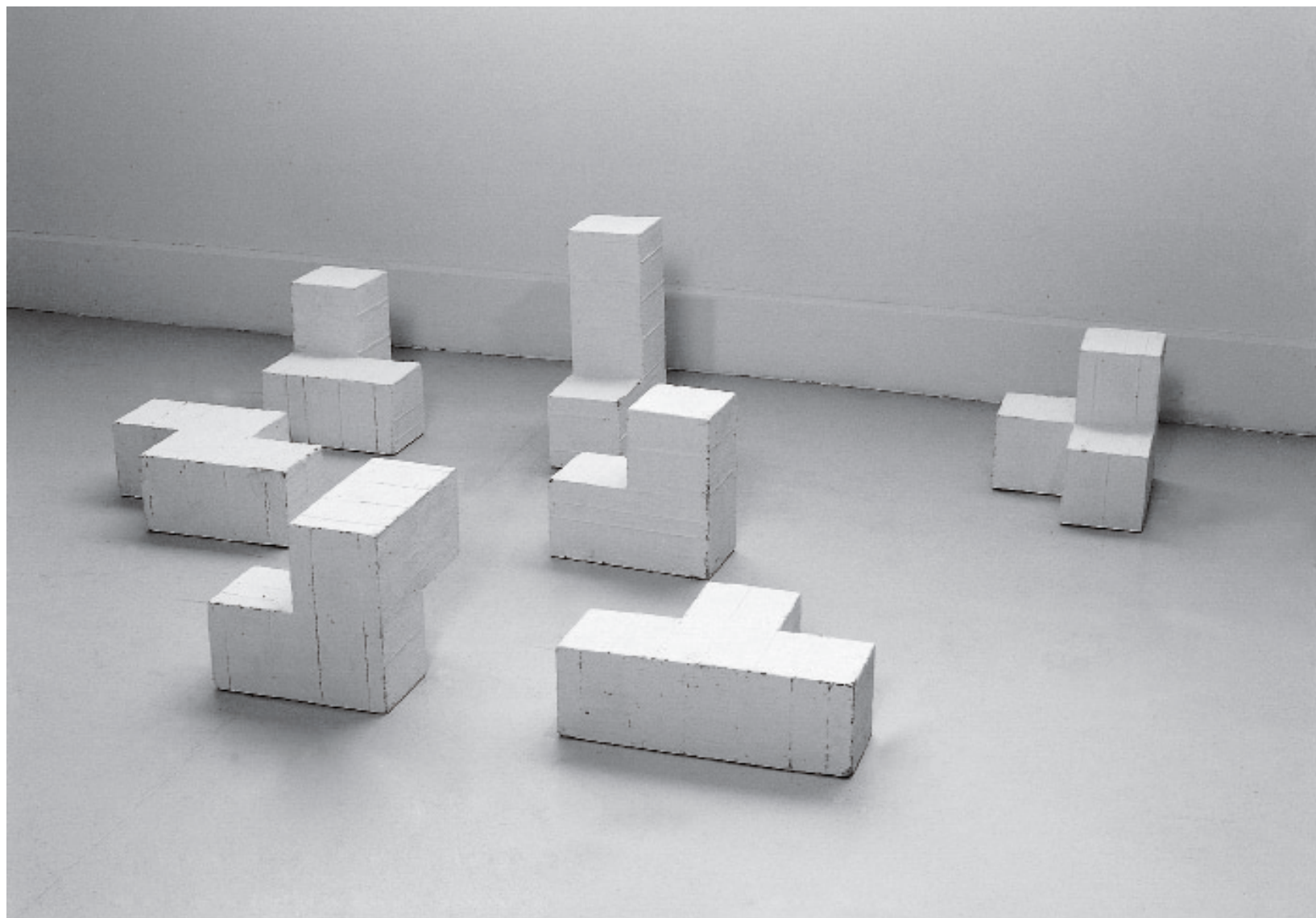
**Rosângela Rennó**  
***Untitled (Castle King)***

**From the series "Red Series", 1996-2000**

Lightjet print on photographic paper mounted on PVC

180 x 100 cm

Edition 2/5



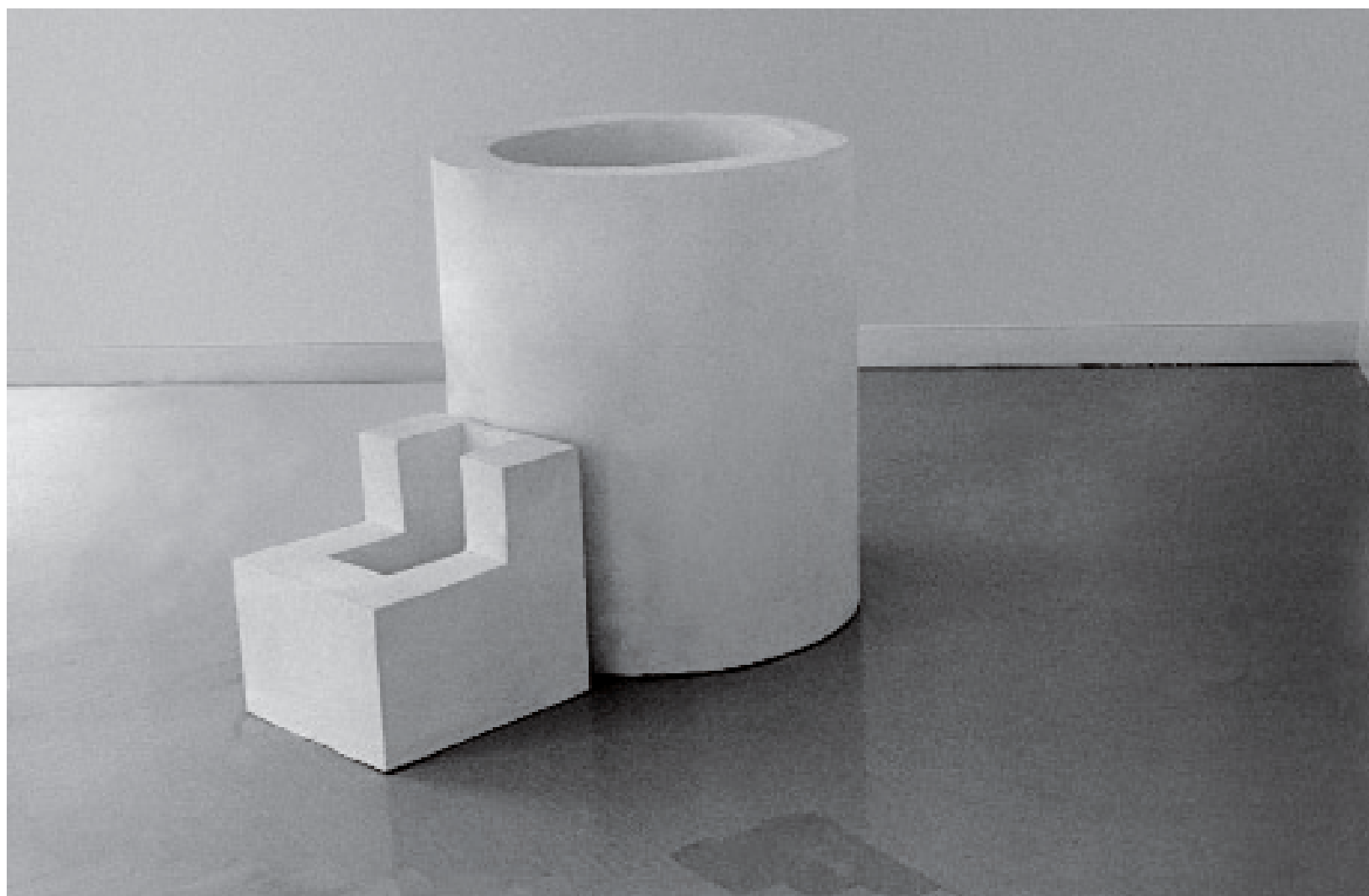
**Damian Ortega**  
***Proyecto para Conjunto Habitacional Blanco, 2003***  
Cast pigmented concrete  
Site-specific dimensions

**Pedro Cabrita Reis**

***Fonte*, 1990**

Stone

80 x 110 x 69 cm



**José Damasceno**

***Organograma*, 2001**

Plastic beads with engraved letters

168 x 5 x 5 cm

Edition 1/3







**Guy Limone**  
***49% des Français sont favorables aux couples***  
***homosexuels, 1999***  
 350 painted plastic objects  
 Diameter: 175 cm





Towards the end of the journey, it is only fair that we once again find an allusion to one of its motives and lines of force: this recurrence of the idea of closed, penetrable/impenetrable space that cuts through the proposal which is also maybe proposed as a symbol of the artistic activity or its reception. I deliberately talked about Dora García's closed room from Leroux's *Mystery of the yellow room*, paradigm of this story model. And we find it again now just before the last bend in the path (also reminding us of the journey we have covered) in *El cuarto amarillo* by Federico Guzmán: once again, the idea of a latent space that exudes its enigmas and that, precisely by being closed *from the inside*, makes a myriad of interpretations possible from the outside: maybe it is this bolt shot across from the inside by the artist that paradoxically gives us the greatest access freedom.

**Federico Guzmán**  
***El cuarto amarillo, 1989***

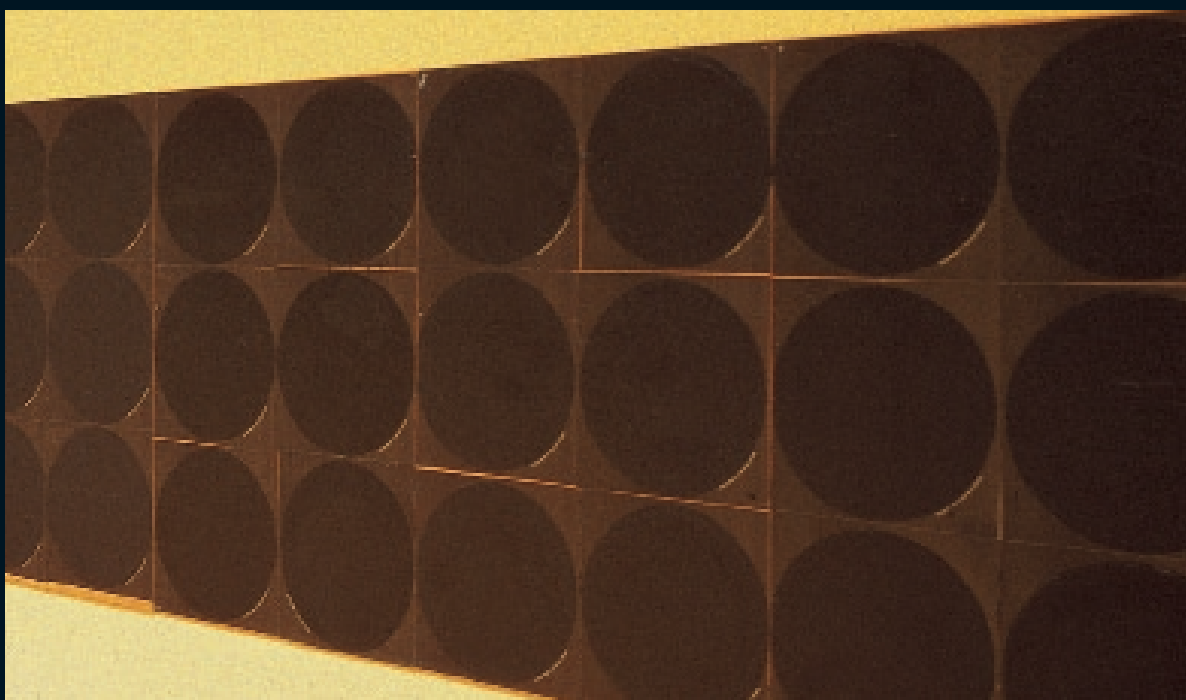
Installation: Acrylic paint on wall and telephone wires.

Acrylic and oil on canvas: 200 x 300 cm;

acrylic on paper and wood: 5 panels of 150 x 100 cm;

mixed media (conductive paint, wires, silicon, acrylic, enamel and metal): 4 elements of 45 x 45 cm

Site-specific dimensions









**Eugenio Dittborn**

**Codigo de Aguas**

**(Airmail Painting n° 160), 2004**

Tincture, polygal, sateen, stitching and photosilkscreen  
on one panel of cotton duck fabric  
210 x 140 cm

# XI

The closed door we saw at the beginning finally opens out on a vast panorama of possibilities. A very interesting sculpture by the first Juan Muñoz might be held up as an emblem of the position that the journey provides for the Meana Larrucea collection: it leans out, like the silhouette from Emily Jacir's photograph, over a horizon of proposals. Rather than closing, they open new doors to fresh reinterpretations, all this under the cloud drawn with clouds by Vik Muniz, what seems to be a puzzle that is actually a proposal to conciliate languages. A meeting, even just fleeting, of the object and the image/word that designates it: meaning and signifier momentarily coinciding and maybe even optimistic.

So, opposites attract and maybe even complement each other in the work by Annette Lemieux *Maker (Distinction/Extinction)* and in the work by Cildo Meireles: *Razão e loucura* are presented with identical segments with the same mobile circumference. An illusion of totality contained in Artur Barrio's *Transportável nº 5*: small microcosms that take tools with them for construction, wrapping their mystery and etched with the necessary guidance to use them.

In this way, lines of force and motives interspersed along the path are taken up again and strengthened: Shirin Neshat and Carlos Garaicoa's work, using distant resources and languages (but unfortunately with links in the political context from which they leave and to which they allude) approach new possibilities of bringing together *figure and background*, individuality and identity on the collective, political and historical background.

And the *open ending* is made clear in the selection of works by artists that return to the concern for the physicality of the artistic work and propose very different forms of approaching the *new object*. In *Conspirador*, Txomin Badiola proposes something similar to what Pello Irazu offers in his untitled piece: a reflection on the conditions of the new sculpture that is another way of looking at traditional Basque sculpting and Oteiza's essential work. Vicente Larrea's tormented plasticity finds an unexpected echo in Robert Mapplethorpe's *Satyr* (that perhaps appears here as a camouflaged self-portrait of the artist; of all artists). And along very different lines Cristina Iglesias, Manfred Pernice, Tobias Rehberger or Angel Bados applied themselves to *semantically* recharging an object with conceptual connotations and a *warm* emotional range.

And so only at the end, we can find Juan Muñoz's *Dos centinelas en suelo óptico* that perhaps should have flanked the entry to Dora García's *Habitación Cerrada*. Maybe they do this from the other end of the journey. Maybe situated at its end, they guard the entry to other principles and allude to this same aspiration to conciliation and a dialogue of opposites. The *outside* and the *inside* come together here: depending *where* you look from, in their own way they flank a crossover to a series of works that multiply the expressive and interpretative possibilities of the collection's depths and allow multiple readings and possible narratives to be taken down in the future.

**Emily Jacir**  
***Dusk, Bethlehem, 2006***

Chromogenic print

56.5 x 76 cm

Edition 2/7



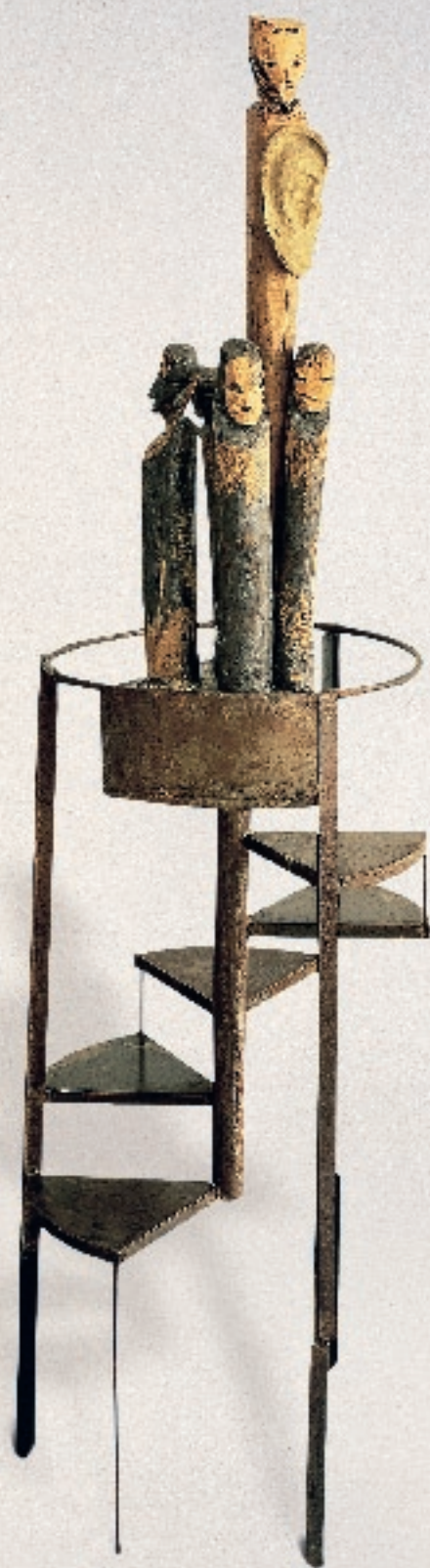


**Wolfgang Laib**  
***Rice House*, 1989**  
Sealing wax and rice  
17.5 x 20.5 x 104 cm



**Vik Muniz**  
***Cloud, cloud, 1999***  
Gelatin silver print  
47 x 57 cm  
Edition 5/10

**Juan Muñoz**  
***Sin título, 1984***  
Iron and wood  
168 x 43 x 43 cm





**Cildo Meireles**

***Razão e loucura, 1979***

Bamboo, nylon, chain and razor blade

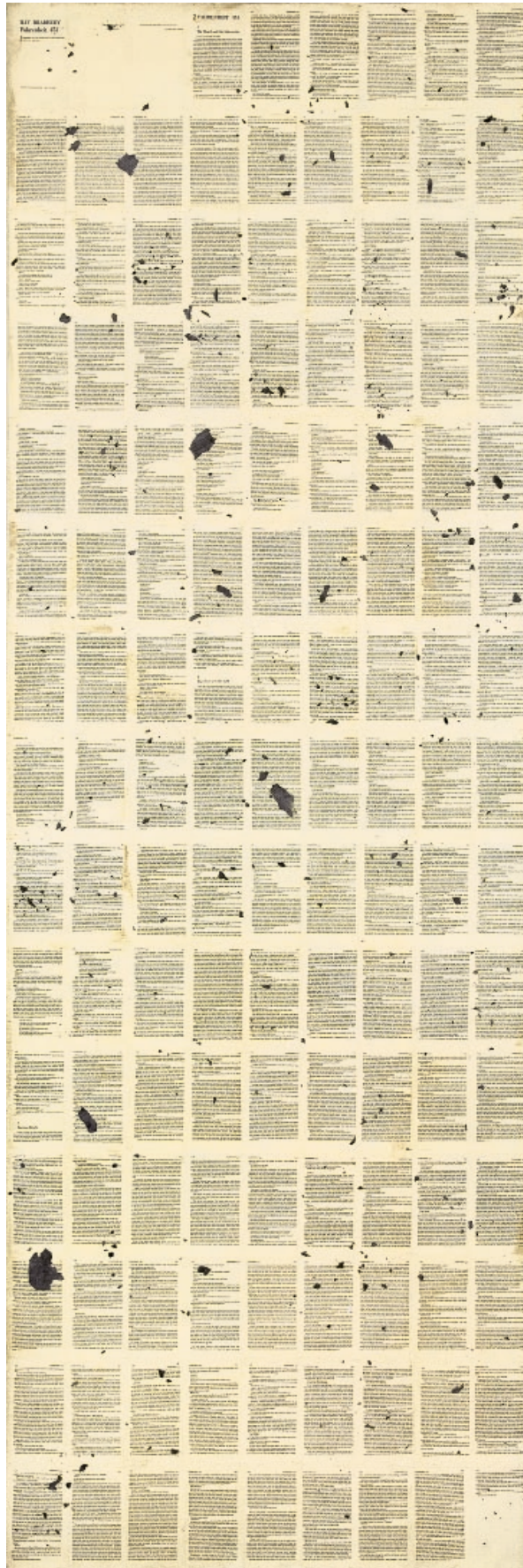
2 pieces of 150 x 55 cm

Edition of 3



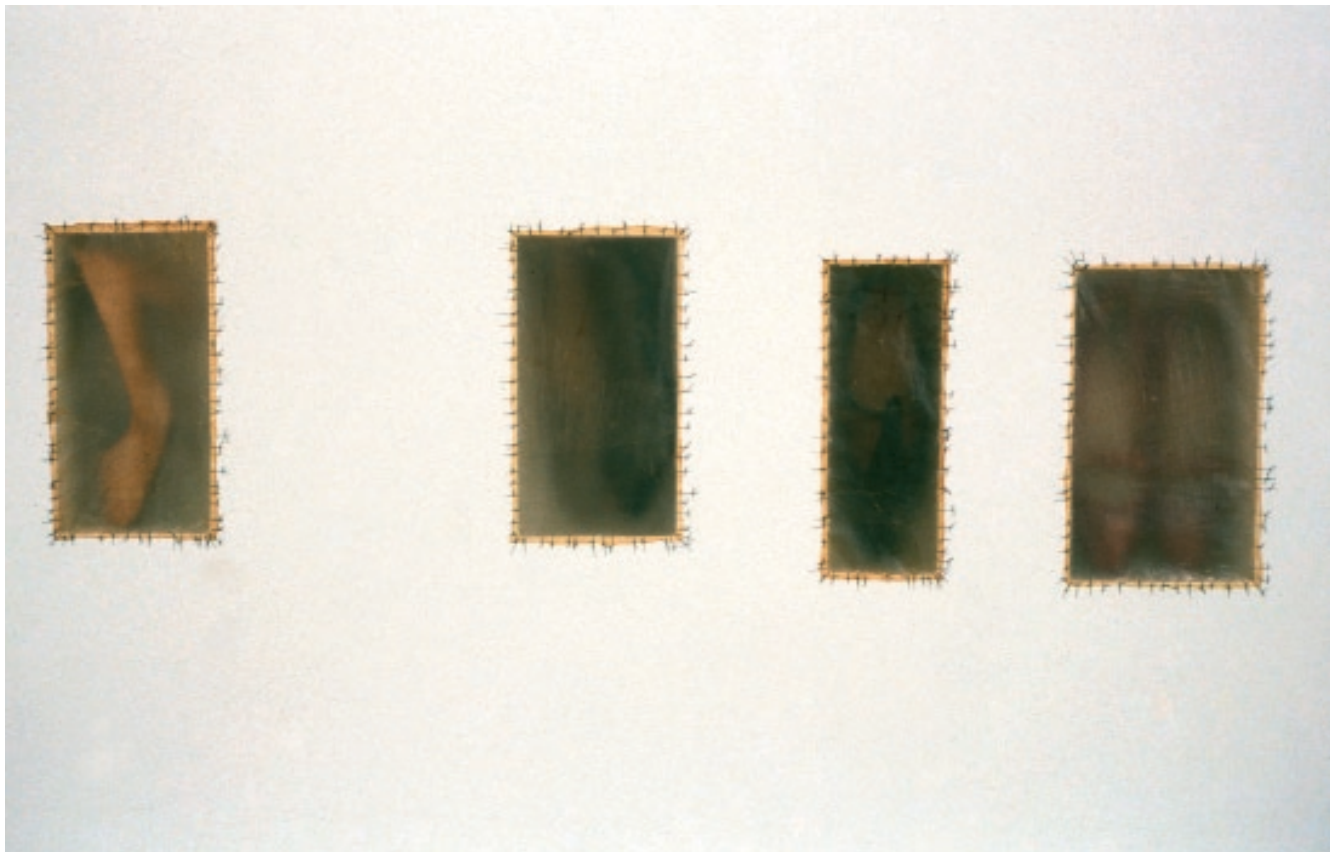
**Tim Rollins & KOS**  
***Fahrenheit 451*, 1988**

Ash and varnish on paper mounted on canvas  
305 x 102 cm





**Artur Barrio**  
***Transportável nº 5, 2001***  
 Fabric, rope, metal, wood, plastic and ink  
 33 x 65 x 34 cm



**Doris Salcedo**  
***Atrabiliarios*, 1993**

Wall installation with drywall, six shoes,  
cow bladder and surgical thread in four niches  
122 x 150 x 13 cm

**Annette Lemieux**  
***Maker (Distinction / Extinction), 1989***

Latex on canvas  
303 x 183 cm

anvil maker  
 arrow maker a  
 x maker bag mak  
 er balance make  
 r barrel maker  
 basket maker be  
 d maker beer ma  
 ker bell make  
 r bellows m  
 aker belt m  
 aker blanket maker block maker boar  
 d maker bobbin maker bodice maker bod  
 y maker boiler maker bolt maker book  
 maker boot maker bottle maker bow mak  
 er box maker brake maker bread maker  
 brick maker bridge maker broom maker  
 brush maker bucket maker bullet maker  
 butter maker button maker cabinet mak  
 er cake maker candle maker candy make  
 r canvas maker cap maker carpet maker  
 cart maker case maker cement maker ch  
 ain maker chair maker cheese maker ch  
 est maker chisel maker cider maker ci  
 garette maker cigar maker cloak maker  
 clock maker clog maker cloth maker co  
 ach maker coffin maker collar maker c  
 omb maker cord maker core maker couch  
 maker cradle maker crate maker cup  
 maker die maker dish maker doll m  
 aker door maker dress maker dye  
 maker fan maker felt maker fi  
 ddle maker file maker garment  
 maker glass maker glove maker  
 glue maker gun maker harness  
 maker hat maker hook maker hu  
 b maker ice maker ink maker i  
 ron maker kettle maker lace m  
 aker lamp maker leather maker  
 lens maker lock maker lute ma  
 ker map maker match maker mod  
 el maker nail maker needle ma  
 ker net maker paper maker pat  
 tern maker pen maker pie make  
 r plate maker porcelain maker  
 pot maker powder maker ribbon  
 maker rope maker rug maker sa  
 ck maker saddle maker safe ma  
 ker sail maker salt maker sau  
 sage maker saw maker scale ma  
 ker scarf maker screw maker s  
 cythe maker shirt maker shoe  
 maker soap maker steel maker  
 sugar maker sword maker tent  
 maker thread maker tile maker  
 tool and die maker tool maker  
 tube maker tub maker wagon ma  
 ker watch maker web maker whe  
 el maker whip maker wig maker

**Shirin Neshat**  
**Untitled**  
**From the series "Rapture", 1999**  
Gelatin silver print  
90 x 178 cm (framed)  
Edition 1/5





**Carlos Garaicoa**  
***Cuatro cubanos, 1996***

Installation; 4 Hi8 videos transferred to DVD

2 minutes (each video)

Edition 2/5 + 3 A.P.

Four Interviews Without...

...that it would be better not even...after all, what.... Or if at least we had know... or if we had had a... but most of us were too young to... like a kind of adventure... perhaps also because it was about someone's else's country... with the possibility of dying for something that you had never... because the Great Words were one thing and quite another was... but not precisely Heroes or Martyrs... that to recognize that all of us were... not only the circumstances but also those that planned the wars... and finally the corpse into the hole... always the same shit...





And as for the medals, they can go as far as I care... together with all the speeches, the slogans, the harangues... in reality the only important thing was to have... although unfortunately some didn't even... or they came back in a better way... No, never again, never again... Fear, of course, but also a little more... only apparently, but I think that within us we all were left... Yes, forever... to this rubble, to these ruined buildings... many times we have felt... like a reflection of our... Yes, perhaps it's preferable to let... Oh, on the contrary... Because the silence is much worse... if you like, turn that off and you will see that it's enough with only... they will understand it very well like this without...

(Text: Orlando Hernández)

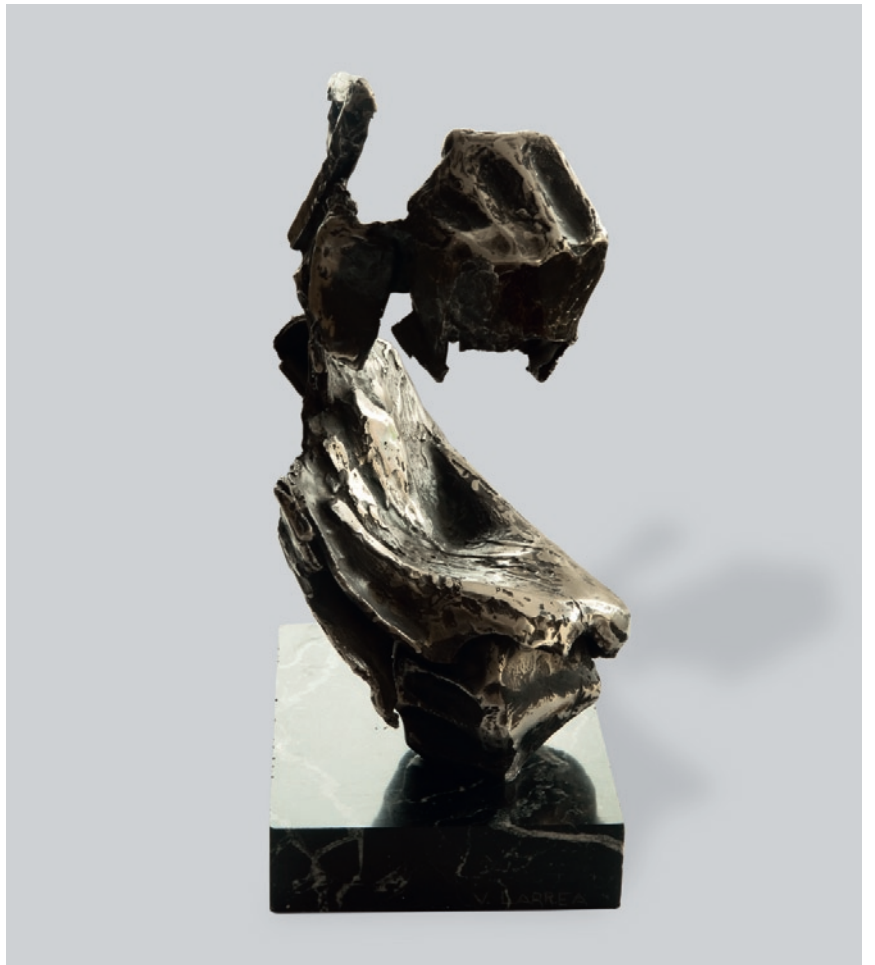


**Andreas Slominski**

***Windmühle, 1999***

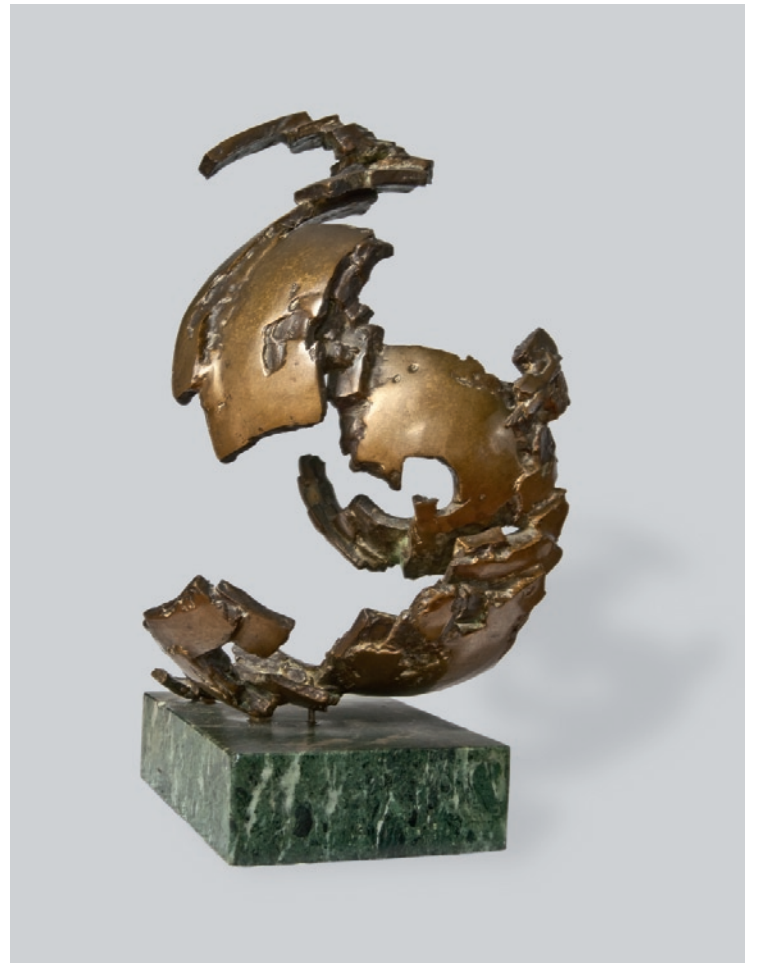
Wood and paint

63 x 40 x 40 cm



**Vicente Larrea**  
***Música de txistu*, 1970-1971**  
 Bronze  
 23 x 14 x 12 cm

**Vicente Larrea**  
***Poder negro*, 1970**  
 Stainless steel  
 36 x 20 x 18 cm



**Vicente Larrea**  
***Sin título*, 1972**  
 Bronze  
 13.5 x 11.5 x 18 cm  
 Edition of 75 + 7 A.P.

**Vicente Larrea**  
***Cadena 2*, 1968**  
 Bronze  
 35 x 24 x 19 cm

**Andrés Nagel**  
***Estela Hombre, 1985***  
Bronze  
90 x 25 x 12 cm





**Pello Irazu**  
***Sin título*, 1985**  
Steel  
53 x 34 x 13.5 cm



**Txomin Badiola**  
***Conspirador, 1987***  
Steel  
105 x 67 x 81 cm

**Cristina Iglesias**  
***Sin título*, 1989**  
Cement and iron  
178 x 53 x 29 cm



**Angel Bados**  
***Sin título, 1996***  
Glass and wire  
21.5 x 39 x 32 cm





**Robert Mapplethorpe**

***Satyr*, 1988**

Gelatin silver print

50.8 x 61 cm

Edition 1/10

Following pages

**Franz West**

***Verjüngung – ein sublimiertes Kaffeehaus – gespräch*, 1996**

Paint and collage on paper, painted board and paper-mâché

Collages: 67 x 98 cm, table: 74 x 85 x 80 cm;

sculptures: 53 x 30 x 42 cm and 45 x 25 x 30 cm

**Manfred Pernice**

***Mitgefühl*, 2003**

Steel, lamp, textile, cement and hanger

227 x 54 x 50 cm





**Tobias Rehberger**  
***Four Ashtrays / One Stone, 1999***  
Lime tree lacquered  
47 x 24 x 24 cm



"Lupus est homo homini, non homo, quom qualis sit non novit".

[Wolf is the man for the man, and the non man, when he does not know who the other is]

Tito Macio Plauto (254 B.C.-184 B.C.)

There are many types of violence, related to war and social exclusion. Violence exists in abnormal situations and in everyday experience. It happens for no particular reason. There is one which breaks the rules and common laws. There is violence that is exerted by people with power and another very different violence from people who have no power and seem to have no other expectation than damage. It can be individual and also collective, between social, national, racial, ethnic, religious, political and sexual groups. It is not possible to recognise all suffering, but some authors feel pressed and offer the chance to approach some kind of strategy. A chasm that separates us from otherness and meets the function of isolation.

Violence is a constantly current reality. In the subway, at the corresponding help window, in front of someone selling you something, when one person expresses an opinion and takes sides, watching different television channels or reading the press. There are events and nothing more than events and this is what sells and grabs our attention. Individuals are bamboozled by so much information, whilst in their free time they play games involving killing or while away the hours shopping in out-of-town retail parks.

Aesthetics fans and defenders of sensorial complacency whose sole purpose is beauty believe that art must not look at disagreeable topics and much less questions such as violence. However, the historical avant-garde already brought violence to society by highlighting it with its revolutionary innovations. Even futurists consciously produced it and loved war as a form of hygiene to wipe away the past. Later on, someone who took part in a war, such as Joseph Beuys (1921-1986), aimed to conciliate the dual nature of art and life. After producing an action or an installation, he approaches reconciliation around his stylized figure and a constant conversion that aims to file off any roughness and overcome distances so that communication can take place. The aesthetics of resistance provided by Hans Haacke (1936) represent a 'just in case' that bows down in the light of evidence that enthusiasm for change and the possibilities of a better world are promises that do not necessarily have to be honoured.

The world is one great dung heap whose ethical rottenness represents a challenge for the more sensitive among us. There is too much art that is purely there for decoration or to cure our insomnia, as Jorge Oteiza (1908-2003) pointed out. Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805) talked about the educational quality of aesthetic creation. Changing the perception of things, offering knowledge, opening up the conscience or moulding sensitivity represents the aim of their art for some artists. The world regurgitates all types of violence like a seed whose harvest is repeated or a well-known litany, even broadcast live. Dealing with these matters is quite a problem, on which artists have not always been able to encompass in their reflections and staging. We have to think that it is not possible to exceed to the registers of *Guernica*. Not even Picasso (1881-1973) himself managed this afterwards, as the Korean War drew closer. When the pain is very intense, it is difficult not to fall into easy victimisation and simple denouncement. Standing very close to the fire means that you will inevitably end up scorched. Collusion can involve neutrality or laundering absence. Creation is properly measured in short distances, handling the materials or giving new life to plastic problems but less in the conceptual virtues and the virtues of meaning. Works of art transcend time and manage to move about through different contexts to which current affairs can provide a meaning supplement, even when unease overcomes us when actually looking at the device.

For Gianni Vattimo (1936), art and violence are inseparable notions. "We can talk about violent art, meaning works that include scenes of cruelty," he explains, "or an art that denounces social and public violence. In other words, committed art, as Sartre understood it." According to the Italian philosopher, creative works can cause sensations of strangeness and peace. And both play at balancing out a work that can assume the responsibility of providing freedom and standing up against injustice.

There is a psycho-geography of violence that carries with it the answer from important artistic expressions, spread all over the world. Beyond the diversity of cause and effect, territories and problems differ as much as the strategies that the authors develop. This is not a case of being moralist or of using demagoguery or false dramatics, but the sincere search for sensations that are rooted in the psychological and reflective skills of whoever is watching. In any case, they propose extreme situations that are taken into consideration and transferred to the projects. Since nineteenth century modernity, art has become

critically aware of reality, adopting specific solutions and widely varied methodological strategies to face up to the present in a world that it does not agree with.

As there are many different types of problems, the functions and the aims of the proposals also change. A commitment challenge that is demonstrated when conflicts appear, regardless of their natures and where they are going. This is a matter of reflecting what is happening, orchestrating knowledge, dissecting reasons, analysing contexts, settling up, compiling information, parodying scenes, satirising situations and even denouncing processes whose complexity lies between the I and otherness, between us and the rest. Along with many good intentions that lead to simplistic and naive effects, some contributions are more difficult and denser and they create viewpoints capable of indicating and interrogating.

There are many works that meet these approaches. They have been conceived by creators that pay attention to contexts with social implications and with a marked political content. Many authors prefer to dedicate themselves to jobs with a strong critical dimension although there are others that occasionally respond to events, for personal reasons or due to more general issues.

### Setting, presenting noting

In many cases, the works simply aim — nothing more nothing less — to set down what is happening, something that the authors have seen and met in the first person, to present it in the context of the institutions and in the tradition of plastic and audiovisual arts. It is not like history painting that is the guide rope transmitting what others have recounted and commissioned responding to the interests of power, but rather it is a matter of a contribution from someone who is involved in the events and demonstrates them with different means and procedures. The aim is not so much to draw attention but to raise awareness directly, a purpose that is achieved by means of very different techniques and materials.

In the form of a memory, there is the singularity of the events of 2nd and 3rd May produced by Francisco de Goya (1746-1828), an honest image that aims to reproduce the drama of the facts by presenting the inadmissible evidence of the brutalities some human beings commit against others. Knowledge of similar situations in the former Yugoslavia made Jake and Dinos Chapman (1962 and 1966) return to these compositions for *Disasters* in 1994. This involved translating the Aragonese painter's prints to natural size in sculpting materials, applying the superficial qualities of artists' models to the bodies, as if we were looking at idealised actors that have very little real about them and we had seen them on the television that makes even the most absolute cruelties ordinary.

Many photo-journalists go after this type of reality, but not all of them can be like Gervasio Sánchez (1959), whose motivation concerning the results of war is not to judge but to investigate and capture, for example, people mutilated by anti-personnel mines and to see how each of their lives changes over time. On seeing with how the images appear, the photographer's evaluation adopts the form of an external declaration, such as the speech that he gave during the Ortega and Gasset Award ceremony in 1989, where he spoke openly giving details of Spain's involvement in manufacturing deadly contraptions whose effects were revealed in the photos.

Clemente Bernad (1963) takes a different approach. The Navarrese author works on different topic-based series, one of which brought him political criticism hailing down plus indignation from victims. This took place when his work was shown in the exhibition entitled *Chacun à son goût* in the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao (2007). Some of his photos showed terrorist events and street brawls that are closely linked to the Basque conflict. According to the author: "I like taking photos to (...) get closer and live the events that affect people's lives, being a close witness and trying to express it from a personal viewpoint in a visually interesting way." He adopts the inheritance of the informer and presents an accumulation of shots that keep pace with current affairs. Given to situating human, personal and public problems, he works along the lines drawn by Jean-Luc Godard (1930): "I don't want to communicate anything but communicate with someone." For some, showing these facts without evaluations or speeches represents neutrality that cannot exist. His work has unearthed phobias and has injured sensitivities. They think that capturing what happens is amoral, despite the fact that these terrible shots appear in the press everyday and are perceived by a massive audience that barely bat an eyelid never mind actually comment on them.

The images by Willie Doherty (1959) are purified and free of all artifice. They take things to extremes and pursue a problem such as Northern Ireland that divides the country into two very different communities. However, this is not a matter of taking a closer look at the easy misunderstandings that occur in the different districts and cities, but tracking down what actually moves them. This is the case of country roads closed due to rocks in the context of a romantic landscape, a noble effort to give a vision of the

conflict, providing traits. This is what can be seen in *The Fence* (1996), a nocturnal image seen by the light of a torch that explores the land around a space closed in by a metal fence challenging the outlook and preventing us from passing.

From the disturbing silence that they cause, some photos by Emily Jacir (1970) also aim to promote the destabilising encounter of reference points that occur in Palestine. This is what happens in *Dusk Bethlehem* (2006), a low angle shot that signals the existence of a disconcerting proximity, where dumps, aerials, satellite TV dishes and a Catholic religious image meet among the rooftops. An approach to diversity that is not free from conflict.

As opposed to the spontaneity of an image that offers what the camera was able to capture without any type of retouch, we also find the contribution of the audiovisual memory picked up in situ and in real time. This is a video that can be seen time and again, like a bad dream collected by someone passing through. This occurred with the violence demonstrated by the police in 1991 against the black citizen Rodney King, whose minutes were recorded by George Holliday and exhibited in the Whitney Biennial in 1993. This was a historic moment providing the opportunity for someone without creative interests to make an artistic contribution. This represents a proposal from the Youtube era that tries out Joseph Beuys's extended idea, where anyone can be an artist, eliminating the distance between spectator and participant.

### Allegorising, metamorphosing, implying

Transcending the facts, without giving them in detail or weighing them down with notarial precision, is a solution that many people have chosen, giving brief respite to understanding and meaning. This is the approach that Pablo Picasso took regarding the attack on the town of Guernica by Condor planes serving the fascist forces. He produced a work whose symbolic value talks in universal language about massacring civilians. For lack of pictures on facts that he knows about through the written media and oral transmission, he worked on the plastics of previous works and created a mental way of overcoming the tragedy. It is a mural in shades of grey with a photo-journalistic or cinematographic documentary look that does not hide the picture's precise detonation. It shows the eclectic survival of expressionist distortion and cubist structuring, expanding the temporary sense of a representation that is expanding.

The work done by the Cooper Union's teacher in New York, Dennis Adams (1948), on the destruction of the twin towers on 11th September in New York is not tear-jerking or a catastrophic description of the facts. On the contrary, the "Airborne" series (2001) provides a very sensitive lyrical and fleeting line that, far from running away, brings us closer to the facts in a very singular way. This encompasses around twenty digital photographs, whose foreground shot is made up of shopping bags and sheets of newspaper that fly across the blue sky background; a homage that certifies the floating aspect of memory and contrasts the avalanche of images that were offered after the tragedy. Following the most harmless objects moved by the air gives a warm feeling of wrongful fragility, a wind that adds a touch of renewal and hope at the same time that it demonstrates the provisional nature of the experience, the transformation of the environment and the transit of highly different communications from the texts printed on the paper and the plastic. The transit of an individualised memory (in transit), whose movements coexist with the collective effects.

The quality of the objects is the trace left by many other works that aim to reveal more than inform. Mona Hatoum (1952) comes from Palestine although her family had to leave the territory. Her personal condition of exile led her to produce a work that was committed to the experience she underwent. For this reason, she uses shapes and ideas from her time sustained by sensitive awareness-raising on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. She does this with uniform complexity and its references introduce a personal connotative cosmo-vision. She re-objectualises all types of functional elements to turn them into devices that permeate the possibility of thinking and feeling. She draws the facts that concern her and oblige the spectator to take up a new position physically and in terms of argument, not as an art to be consumed nor to produce the ecstatic sensation of beauty and all things nice, but to have a critical conscience that is at the same time a responsible means of sensitive knowledge.

The sculptures by the Columbian Doris Salcedo (1958) are made with furniture and all types of domestic objects, from old cupboards to dilapidated chairs and old beds in which materials such as cement, flower or scraps of cloth have been incrustated. A violent and poetic way of operating to recall the traces of the long conflict is devastating their country. This is the case of the work *Atrabiliarios* (1993), made up of a series of shoes incrustated in the walls and covered in veils. It talks about the people who have died or vanished or who were made to leave their lands. They are like memories, injured as they are

but which can barely be made out. This demonstrates a lack of clarity that cannot avoid their presence or the fatal absence of their bodies.

Whether it wants to be or not, death is present in all human experiences, but much more in the case of Teresa Margolles (1963), whose work responds to an irrepressible need to give a voice to what she perceives around her, neither with notarial eagerness nor political rhetoric, but with sensitivity in performance and allusive implication. Commitment is inherent in her work tackling the violence of drug trafficking in Mexico. The responsibility of giving an answer to the violence does not only fall to artists, but the author wishes to go deeper into sensitive land, from a certain ambiguity, to generate a space for implication that affects the spectator. Avant-garde strategies have been changing over time. This is no longer an invasive denouncement that abuses the grotesque in a booming shout, nor a matter of displaying cold piles of data on the flow of human injustice that follows us day after day without a break. For example, she uses strategies such as embroidering gold letters on bloody cloth to compose phrases such as "See, hear and say nothing", "This is how rats end up" or "So they learn some respect". Aphorisms and street rules that are cooked up during the exhibition whose process refers to the fact that injustice and murders continue: nothing has finished and everything continues fatally. She also constructs objects that are used without us even noticing them. The table created with fluids collected at murder scenes represents another awareness of what has been hidden, a way of transferring substances and relating real dramas with facts, places and everyday functions. In the same way, the fabrics in the "Sangre recuperada" series are printed with the remains of mud collected at the scene of criminal incidents on the northern border with the United States. They are like translucent curtains that incorporate the external viewpoint, as in Venice (2009) or in Kassel (2010), covering the windows and preventing anyone from looking inside, as a metaphor for exclusion. The Culiacán artist offers the partial residue of a memory for reflection and to raise awareness, producing a barely tangible work, sometimes immaterial, raising interaction between life and art through performance, the social reality of sound and the world of objects.

#### Remembering, evoking, memorising

Many creators go back to the past and reactivate it in the work's present. They have not experienced the facts they are alluding to directly, but they have studied them and realise their causes and effects. This represents an interested return to historical memory, because populations that are not aware of what happened might reproduce the conditions that led to such fateful results. The painting by Anselm Kiefer (1945) questions the nature of art and carries the ignoble aura of the unfinished pictorial process to the representation of the ignominious Nazi legacy. Placing itself before the environmental deterioration of nature in war or demonstrating in terms of processes the ravages of time on the great architecture raised by Hitler's architects, it proposes allegories of purification and redemption. It gives us a chance to think about Germany, between awareness and the symbolic weight of references and knowledge.

The initial proposals by Hans Haacke (1936) pass through different avant-garde happenings that connect him with the inter-war process, such as the germinal, constructive and militant phase. However, since the 1980s, he has created contextual devices particularly prepared for the places where he works. The works are the result of constant research. He is aware that, as Massimo Cacciari (1944) said, "Art, like philosophy, does not give us any answers, it rather raises questions instead." He no longer limits himself to works that only affect the art world, but also focuses on social, political and cultural targets. He creates open systems in real time where the information provided is used. An aesthetic of resistance whose aims do not transgress the limits; they are solutions that lean on the contemporary showcase in the supermarket of images. Each work is produced not only for a specific place but also for a specific cultural context, to enter into communication better with the people in the place and also manage to capture their interest. By referring to local problems, this puts an end to the myth of the universal. The work creates its major climax in specific spaces, as occurred in Graz with *Y sin embargo sois los vencedores* (1988). This is a device that reconstructs a context developed fifty years earlier. The main square of Graz was decked out for a Nazi demonstration, covering the monumental sculpture with icons and slogans praising the Austrians joining the Third Reich, a replica of a return to the past that also provides data on the consequence of these facts. This public art was burnt, given that not everyone could stomach the historical reminder from a work that was predisposed to different readings. This attitude takes him from the conceptual and tangible predominance to the supremacy of the contextual and situational, imposing greater relativity on how it is received. They are done for the here and now rather than for posterity. As a work for each context, whose function differs from one place to another, this is a matter of constructing circumstantial and re-linking environments. In an attempt to overcome his own contradictions and reveal unusual and uncomfortable situations, Hans Haacke accepts the

challenges that liberal societies and their corresponding art have given him and he does this under the sweet and pleasant perspective of an attractive staging, extracting his shapes both from art traditions and social habits more suited to commerce, propaganda, urban display, public documentation and theatrical staging. When tackling the complexity of any system, he isolates the circumstances and gives the individual the main part, centre stage that has been denied to them throughout history. He suggests a discourse on what we can have an opinion on, he separates a question like a good structuralist and he addresses it further than you might imagine. He moves away from the universal notion and tackles the experience of each place. He deals with a work that is permanent and immovable, the ephemeral pulse of a job that operates transitorily and affects people differently depending on their generation, background, knowledge and ideology.

The plural procedure-based demonstration by North American Dennis Adams (1948) is not a million miles away from Haacke's approach. Much of his commitment is specified in works that trawl back through history and offer unusual angles, capable of revealing vacuums and providing reflections beyond the obvious. In 1995 he participated in the "Puente de Pasaje", artistic encounters held around the Portugalete hanging bridge, where he put up the important work entitled *Operación Ogro*, a piece that was publically available in an area where many people were passing by, from which we could perceive the reality of what children learn over the water. The author used a still from Gillo Pontecorvo's film on the assassination of the Spanish Vice-President, Admiral Carrero Blanco. The car is captured in midair, appearing within a window frame, over a balcony that is transformed into a platform speaking to the location. After donation, the work disappeared.

Afterwards he continued to look in a complex way at conflictive and awkward matters from the 70s, such as the case of the radical left in Germany at the time. If Joseph Beuys took Baader & Meinhoff to the Documenta in 1972, Adams resorted to memory and produced two works that he dedicated to each of the RAF (Red Army Fraction) leaders. In the first, he appropriated a 17 second sequence from a film made in 1970 where the military leader appears in the script and showing the treatment handed out to girls in the orphanages. The video entitled *Outtake* (1998) compiles the filming of a very special performance, consisting of handing out 416 stills of the aforementioned take to homeless people in Berlin. In this way, we get closer to the past by means of a singular transmission of visual proof pilfered for almost thirty years and now filmed in slow motion to reconstruct the original metering of the tape. This slowing down is also demonstrated in the work entitled *Lullaby* (2004), a vinyl record featuring music by Eric Clapton found on a turntable on 18th October 1977, day of the presumed suicide of Andreas Baader in prison. A steel plate has been added to the cell's record player in order to slow down the turning speed and make it hard to identify the song. He thereby manages to establish a distance from the never completely clarified past whose new construction can bring us closer to the facts in an unusual way.

This is a past from the collective memory that is hardly a game when remembering it, as raised by the work by Cuban Diango Hernández (1970). The actual title, *History is my Best Toy*, demonstrates this. A traditional sculpture of Lenin broken into three parts that is accompanied by three drawings using constructivist language. Not only does it demonstrate the destruction of fallen idols from the Communist revolution, but it also seems to evoke a commitment to a traditionally-cut official art, a proposal that represents the practical interruption of the avant-garde process in Soviet authors.

Something else very different happens in some works by Juan Muñoz (1953-2001). Reviewing them does not explicitly mention a specific reality but is based on knowledge and the weight of culture. With his work *Dos centinelas sobre suelo óptico* (1990) he takes the line of the collection of poems *Wasteland* by T. S. Eliot (1888-1965), a text that produced a previous work which has procedure and visual links with this one. The work presents two soldiers, like puppets on strings, keeping guard on a border that crosses the floor tiles whose order is destabilised visually and metaphorically.

#### Provoking, activating and getting involved

There are creators who need to relive in themselves the episodes of violence and even their motivations. They think that this is the best way of understanding the victims and the humiliating injustices that they suffer. These are actions where they assume experiences on their own skin, putting themselves introspectively into the events and being able to look into them in more depth. They are presented in very different ways combining performances with recordings and later installations.

For example, Marina Abramovic (1946) committed to cleaning more than 2000 kg of bones, removing the meat and leaving them clean, as a way of preparing herself to understand the fratricidal fights between the former Yugoslavian republics. The action is a process of purifying the disagreeable, whose





**Diango Hernández**

***History is my best toy, 2009***

Plaster, prints, glass and plastic building pieces

Sculptures: 124 x 56 x 59 cm, 80 x 77 x 45 cm, 35 x 30 x 28 cm;  
engravings: 75 x 50 cm (each)

catharsis is transformed into an installation lit by just three video screens along with the remains of the action in a cart next to buckets of putrefied water. The images allegorise a couple of scenes that talk about her parents' personal memory and show the author herself dancing to a popular song whilst the sickly smell takes over the place and brings spectators to the point of vomiting whilst the narration is read of how a rat-wolf turns into an insatiable plundering animal; a staging that is weighed down with powerful expressive resources affecting all our senses.

The Serbian artist also feels deep concern for excesses in contemporary representations of violence. For this reason, she proposes photographs and a series of stunning moving images by means of a complex video-installation on five screens. This is a counterpoint to the atrocities, highlighted by the warlike games played by children in Laos, a way of exemplifying the constant presence of war in the history of humanity.

Performances by Regina José Galindo (1974) are recorded on video and represent constantly entering the field of claiming responsibility, whilst also taking on events that act drastically on the anatomy. She can suffer for the rapes and murders committed on the women in her native country by beating her body, once for every aggression. Putting the pain inside a white bucket demonstrates the low visibility of crimes against women, a way of expiating the violence as she did in 2005, with *Quién puede borrar las huellas*. She walked between the Constitutional Court and the National Palace after dipping her bare feet in a bowl of blood. There are a great many experiences that she re-lives on herself, such as evoking an interrogation room where she submerges her head time and again in a drum of dirty water, the famous bath tub method. This torture takes her to the limit of extenuation and loss of orientation.

There are other means used and the role of spectator is also different in the work entitled *Domestic Tension* by the Iraqi Wafaa Bilal (1966). In it, he carries out an action where he is closed in a room in a Chicago mall for forty two days and offers the public the chance to intervene using a paintball. His performance is filmed in real time and can be followed over the internet where pressing a button produces the remotely controlled consequence of a shot. These are mechanisms that allow us to feel the situation of neglect and abandonment experienced by civil society during a war. This is awareness-raising to tackle the "famous" collateral effects of those who decide from the outside.

Weapons, their sounds and shots are also present in the Cuban Tania Bruguera (1968) who has brought violence to many works. At a conference she even shot herself in the head, like in a sinister Russian roulette, letting havoc reign among the audience. She takes the spectator into consideration without giving them a determined role, apart from abandonment.

### Contradicting, debating and duelling

The old spirit of contrasts between war situations and social initiatives remains alive in some creators. In some cases, the proposal is dual, but allows wider readings in both directions. These are dialectics that do not provide synthesis and do not make us decide. They are simply there.

Martha Rosler (1943) has become known for covering women's rights and housing topics but she has also proposed dialectic between the parts making up manual and digital collages. This is not merely a matter of having a debate between good and evil but between different types of events. On the one hand, we have filtered images of the conflict areas in Iraq and, on the other, shots of comfort in American homes seen in the light of information that transports luxury and comfort values.

In addition Shirin Neshat (1957) usually proposes duality between the rights, values and behaviour of Iranian men and women, video-installations with poetic but tense dialectic providing the contained emotion of moving situations on two facing screens. With total film awareness, a man's hymn is heard by an Auditorium populated entirely by men, whilst a woman waits her turn on the other side in an empty theatre. The static and one-directional aspect of one frame compared with the mobility of the other. This is a game of contrasts that she has also used both in later videos and previous photos. A series such as "Women of Allah" (1993-1997) puts images of a woman's body carrying weapons up against poetic texts written on the skin, providing the emotion of connotation. These are perplexing shots: revolution and violence against harmony and delicate veiled faces. "I produce art to find answers", says the artist. She produced a representation of contemporary Islam whose obsession leads her to encounter different arguments. In *Rapture* (1999) she situates the question of identity in the complex social and psychological framework of Islam as an encircling image like the black gowns with the chador on their head as worn by the female collective. This dark subject determines the role of women in society and their dramatic status.

Cuban Carlos Garaicoa (1967) often uses diptych format to provide information on colonial architecture in Cuba. This is one way of looking at the violence of the damaged reality in one image and its

transforming possibility in the other. On other occasions, the dialectic appears in audiovisual format. This is the case of *Cuatro cubanos* (1997). This is a hypnotic and unique frame that shows confrontation between the foreground and the background. The undaunted presence of the destruction of houses and the unperturbed attitude of the figures that take over from each other without managing to finish what they were saying, whilst time leaves the mark of an enigmatic and contemplative shadow over their faces. These are open works that take the form of a document debated between the ephemeral and the perennial. They change people and their silence does not hide the degradation and deterioration that is rooted in the land.

#### Accumulating, documenting and archiving

This is the age of Google and the Internet. We should not be surprised that some of the possibilities offered by this form of media might be used by creators.

The idea of archive proposes a new type of device to deal with extreme situations, a specialisation using knowledge and historical research. It talks about a subject that is not always individual but collective, taking its own name or anonymous. It suggests a type of work that moves away from procedures and genres using new mechanisms for participation and interaction. This is not a matter of a single fact but an abundant succession, which might be accompanied by all types of documents activating the synaesthesia and also looking in greater depth at contexts, making it possible to analyse causes and effects. *Atlas Group* stands out in this approach, developed by Walid Raad (1967), proposing staging information and documentation by means of installations which find room for all types of sound, visual and textual media presented even with computers. This gives an accumulation of references around the complexities of life and Lebanese society.

In this task to recover the past and provide knowledge, Emily Jacir (1970) also stands out, as an author who analyses past events in the light of organising inter-disciplinary documents. This gives a reconstruction of the facts by means of images, press cuttings, drawings or recordings whose purpose is to keep historical memory alive. She started the collection in 2005 to make a film which earned her the Golden Lion award for artists under 40 years old at the Venice Biennial 2007. The work is conceived as a memorial to the assassination of Palestinian Wael Zuaiter by Israeli agents after the Israeli team massacre at the Munich Olympic Games in 1972. It includes letters, photos, souvenirs and voices from the filmmaker Pier Paolo Pasolini or from writers Alberto Moravia and Jean Genet.

Alfredo Jaar (1956) also proposes accumulative works inspired by the Rwandan genocide in 1994. He moves away from direct information and creates an allegorical character by putting the eyes of a child on a million slides, the same number as those who died. Another type of documentation takes into account the informative reality of the media using the consecutive front pages of the same magazine to be able to analyse how and how long it takes to reflect such dramatic events, offering the relevant topics in parallel.

The photos brought together by Ibon Aranberri (1969) around very specific topics, as occurs in the work entitled *Domestic Landscape* (2006-2007), offer documentation demonstrating that violence does not only act on people but also on the land and its identity. The images are hung next to each other, without any comments, proposing the plot of an argument. This is the itinerary of a series of photos that look at the landscapes invaded by water from the reservoirs and also showing resistance to transforming the environment.

#### Deconstructing, complicating, "creating ambiguity"

Other artists whose contexts are not violence-free proclaim an approach that is less clear and full of hidden angles: no explicit viewpoints but an extreme search. This is not a matter of explaining, expressing or understanding but deconstructing, complicating and creating ambiguity. One of the artists defending this spirit is Txomin Badiola (1958). For the sculptor from Bilbao "it seems that excluding positioning is demanded, in short, there is a search for meaning, whilst as artists we try and break this, question it, deconstruct it or demonstrate the logic that joins together some signs with others to make sense." Ideas that are not always properly understood and that have spread the accusation to the Basque artistic world of collusion with terrorism due to not reflecting the violence in their experiences. But neither was Spanish art, with a few last minute exceptions, particularly belligerent in terms of topic against the dictatorship and the reprehensible acts carried out under Franco. Post-structuralism thinking is not beyond the attitude of not tackling certain subjects. Furthermore, the neo-vanguard had advocated the separation and specialisation

of each medium, aiming to bring the search for its specific limits to each procedure. So, for one reason or another, the idea of separating work and personal commitment is widely spread. However if the practice does not absorb political or ethical opinions directly, participation will be very important from artists in social or ideological collectives on the other hand. This situation is not a million miles from approaches in other territories. During the 1960s, when there was a whole host of civil and anti-war campaigns in the United States, creators did not demonstrate their beliefs in artistic work. A different militancy was also proposed: resistance, presenting manifestos and disassociating art and life. For example, in 1969 there was an assembly whose "anti-system" resolutions were signed by one thousand five hundred people from the world of art, most of them linked to the AWC (Art Workers Coalition).

In the 1980s, an interesting debate arose in Euskal Herria (Basque Country), not itself exempt from contradictions and problems, as they tried to find points to link the post-modern spirit, the idea of the modern and the vanguard position. Assuming experimental projects and ethical behaviour as proposed by Jorge Oteiza (1908-2003) provides a reference point taken up by new generations. Quite a few creators participated in protest associations such as EAE (Euskal Artisten Elkartea), a collective created in 1983 and made up, among others, of the painters Iñaki de la Fuente (1954) or the Roscubas brothers (1953) and the sculptors José Ramón Morquillas (1947), Txomin Badiola, Juan Luis Moraza (1960) or Pello Irazu (1963). We live in a time when action and protest are not going to go away. Whilst some people wash their hands of the conflict, others can produce metaphors on Lope de Aguirre's adventure or trails dedicated to people who died in the Civil War, as a way of recovering historical memory. One work by Angel Bados offers a cenotaph dedicated to Hernán Cortés. This is a wooden structure, like formwork with movable platforms, containing an archetypal lead landscape with enigmatic and allegorical keys.

Many other works make use of meta-language and self-referentiality. This is the case of *Conspirador* by Txomin Badiola, a title that draws connotations from a piece that receives the constructive and significant inheritance passed down by Jorge Oteiza. Less explicit are the iron pieces that Pello Irazu is currently showing: precise structures whose volume combines presence and force without explicit references, between the *minimal* legacy and constructivist solidity.

The kingdom of suspicion appeared in many Basque works in the 90s. More than an acid or lateral view, this referred to strategies where parody and *déjà-vu* work along with an accumulative stratum of effects whose meaning does not become clear at the other end. Referring to these practices, Txomin Badiola believes "If there is something that characterises all youth stances then it is its ambiguity, and I also wanted to understand this in its most radical and transforming aspect, separating it from what could be an act of hiding, to make it just the opposite: a revelation" His work takes this role, resorting to very different devices to operate between the near and the far, myths and behaviours. This is not a matter of imposing a specific meaning but providing the freedom to interpret.

The drawings, images and videos by Jon Mikel Euba (1967) from the late 90s constitute the presentation/representation of intercut narrative, enigmatic situations and social and political staging. An awareness of specific fact that is seen to be perturbed by successive repetition of the same action, as occurs when shooting or preparing a scene in a film. *Pandamask 1* (1998-1999) begins a series of videos questioning a reality that is continually being re-elaborated. Time and again his own image might appear with suspicious balaclavas or with his blacked up face next to a black car coming in and going out, as if something was about to happen. This shows the paradoxical existence of filming that finally parodies fiction.

Some of Ibon Aranberri's work takes a similar path, as occurs in *Ethnics* (1998). It mimics a presentation of items collected in a police raid and displayed for the media. Despite appearances, we realise that the materials themselves do not have a violent use, but they provoke the sensation of holding danger and could be used to manufacture a bomb. They affect the aesthetics of the representation, how they penetrate the meaning of things, making us look more closely, whether this is said by an artist, a politician or presented by the police and broadcast on the TV.

The contribution from Asier Mendizábal (1973) follows a path which is not dissimilar. He also produces provocative work. A can takes us to an incense burner that reminds us of a violent death. It has a flame that, paradoxically, is controlled by a duct up to the roof, going outside the exhibition space. Its *povera* nature has the grounds of the psycho-political scenic reality that perturbs traditional ideas of art, monument, museum and public environment. Iñaki Garmendia (1972) also moves through parameters that cross limits. He has worked with Mendizábal on specific jobs. *S/T. Txitxarro (Testigos Dos y Uno)* does not specify its meaning. It is a work that accumulates reference points, procedures and materials. The floor is composed of two structures that have the format of a bed covered in camouflage fabric as

used by the army. On the wall, there is a drawing of a roof, like a church. Leaning on the wall, there are also images of a couple of houses, one of which has a white rectangle partially hiding it. This description can help us to relate the elements through a narrative where subjectivity and imagination fabricate their interpretation.

It is true, as the Czech writer Ivan Klima says "Living through an extreme situation does not make you wise" but at least it predisposes you to feel and think about the complexity of what has happened. Artists are free people that have the power to decide how to determine attitudes, ideas and commitments for themselves. It is possible to accept responsibilities and know what you want so you can act accordingly. They know how they can save victimisation from simple ideas in order to erect a work that shares the possibility of having experiences with the spectator where they also have something to say. As the psychologist Jenny Firth-Cozens said: "Nothing makes you stronger like admitting your weaknesses". No matter how problematic the topic is, it is necessary to confront memory and repair because sometimes thousands of people are murdered and nothing happens, whilst one single death in another part of the world might represent a great deal. Artists can also help to build an account of the world, contributing an outlook with no impositions. As Zigmunt Baumann (1925) said, "the only thing that we have left in the light of this undeniable defeat that we call life is to try and understand it". The only certain thing is uncertainty.

**Willie Doherty**

***The Fence, 1996***

Cibachrome mounted on aluminium

122 x 183 cm

Edition 3/3





**Carmelo Ortiz de Elguea**  
***Sin título*, 1970**  
Oil on canvas  
170 x 400 cm





**Mikel Díez Álava**  
***Sin título, 1977-1978***

Oil on canvas  
65 x 81 cm

**Ibon Aranberri**

***Domestic Landscapes, 2006-2007***

Photomontage on tablex, glass and metal sections

3 panels of 91 x 140 cm

Edition 1/3











**Asier Mendizabal**  
***Sin título (sin título, Kalero), 2009***

Photographs, iron and concrete

(Partial view)

1 black and white photograph: 150 x 100 cm;

1 colour photograph: 50 x 30 cm;

2 concrete pieces: 100 x 40 x 40 cm;

11 iron pieces: 10 x 10 x 1 cm

**Iñaki Garmendia**  
***S/T. Txitxarro (Testigos Dos***  
***y Uno), 2010***

Quilts, wooden structures, glass bottles  
and three digital prints in black and white  
Structures: 20 x 305 x 219 cm  
Prints: 70 x 100 cm







**Sophie Calle**  
***Untitled*, 1990**

Black and white photography  
2 panels of 181 x 111 cm  
Edition 1/5 + 2 A.P.

**Willie Doherty**

***Closure*, 2005**

Single-channel video installation, colour, with sound, 16:9 format, transferred to DVD

11 minutes, 20 seconds

Edition 1/3

*Closure* is a single-channel video installation projected directly onto the wall of a dark space. The work shows a young woman dressed in black walking around the perimeter of a long and narrow enclosed space. The walls of the space are lined with corrugated metal and appear to be part of a military or security installation. The camera tracks the woman as she paces the length of the space, holding her in frame and occasionally cutting to a close up of her face. The scene is shot on an evenly overcast day without shadows and infused with a bluish grey tone. The sequence is accompanied by a voiceover that oscillates between references to the destruction of a domestic space and an expression of the woman's determination and resolution in the face of apparent adversity.





My purpose is clear.  
My endurance is constant.

The crack is splitting.  
The glass is shattered.

My mission is unending.  
My anger is undiminished.

The street is ablaze.  
The steel is twisted.  
The surface is melting.

My ardour is fervent.  
My passion is unbowed.

The roof is decomposing.

The ceiling is dripping.  
The floor is submerged.

My intuition is fatal.  
My judgment is decisive.

The door is permeable.  
The wall is penetrated.

My faith is undimmed.  
My loyalty is unwavering.

The edge is blurred.  
The boundary is invisible.

My nature is ingrained.

The paint is blistering.  
The veneer is peeling.  
The laminate is corrupted.

My devotion is unfailing.  
My will is unbending.  
My submission is absolute.

The sewer is leaking.  
The bed is putrid.

My intention is precise.  
My choice is ruthless.

The membrane is weeping.  
The plastic is mutating.  
The skin is alien.

My desire is overwhelming.  
My compulsion is shameful.

The joint is fragmenting.  
The corner is unstable.  
The cavity is airless.

My destiny is preordained.  
My integrity is uncompromised.

The water is stagnant.  
The seam is damp.

(Video script)

**Juan Muñoz**  
***Dos centinelas***  
***en suelo óptico, 1990***  
Iron and wood  
Site-specific dimensions







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"Start at the beginning of each chapter, as in a conventional novel, simply turn the pages until a paragraph catches your eye. If the ideas or images seem interesting, scan the nearby paragraphs for anything that resonates in an intriguing way. Fairly soon, I hope, the fog will clear and the underlying narrative will reveal itself. In effect, you will be reading the book in the way it was written".

J.G. Ballard, *The Atrocity Exhibition*, London, Cape, 1970



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