



SETH PRICE

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SOCIAL SYNTHETIC

EDITED BY BEATRIX RUF AND ACHIM HOCHDÖRFER

STEDELIJK MUSEUM AMSTERDAM
MUSEUM BRANDHORST, BAYERISCHE STAATSGEMÄLDESAMMLUNGEN, MUNICH

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Synthetic Piracy, 2015
Ink transfer on polycarbonate, baked enamel on CNC-routed aluminum

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FOREWORD

The Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam and the Museum Brandhorst in Munich, a museum of the Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, take great pride in jointly staging the first comprehensive retrospective of the work of Seth Price, one of the most influential artists of his time. The exhibition, titled *Social Synthetic*, provides a comprehensive overview of Price's artistic career to date, encompassing more than 140 works created since 2000 and including sculpture, installation, 16-mm film, photography, drawing, painting, video, clothing and textiles, web design, music and sound, and poetry. Rather than settle into one medium or style, Price has repeatedly pushed into new territory. His many innovations, interests, and themes have been pivotal among both his own cohort and younger artists, thanks in part to his approach to digital manipulation and cultural flux, in which a deep kinship with technology meets skepticism toward its advances. Price comes from the generation born before the internet became entrenched and has thus experienced every step of the increasing dissemination of digital culture—from the first computer games and programs in the 1980s to the full-on integration of digitization in everyday life since roughly 2000. He is a key figure in addressing technology and artistic authorship, and his work traces an important art-historical shift from the concept of collage, where chance plays a major role and the image is constructed of multiple layers, to the concept of a unified image, which envelops us in an endless, undifferentiated digital stream.

This exhibition grew out of conversations with the artist in early 2015, when Price had just completed his novel *Fuck Seth Price*, which was undertaken during a period of voluntary withdrawal from producing so-called objects of visual art. The artist began to consider experimenting with the exhibition format itself and was looking into producing and showing works again. These conversations led the organizers to the decision to have the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam and the Museum Brandhorst work closely together on this exciting endeavor.

Social Synthetic was enriched and driven by the involvement, consultation, and participation of Seth Price himself. We are also much indebted to the enthusiastic and incisive assistance of Seth Price Studio, most notably Kat Parker, and thank them all for sharing their knowledge and giving their time so graciously.

We are grateful to the museums, galleries, and collectors who so generously loaned us their works, making an essential contribution to the success of this project. The efforts of the artist's galleries, including Petzel Gallery, New York; Galerie Gisela Capitain, Cologne; Capitain Petzel, Berlin; and Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris, were of tremendous support to the project.

It is thanks to the commitment and effort on the part of the teams at the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam and the Museum Brandhorst that this complex project has become reality. Our deep-felt gratitude goes to all the people involved, notably Leontine Coelewijn, co-curator; Anniek Vrij, project manager of the exhibition; Hans Lentz, head of exhibitions installation; Niels Staats, floor manager; and Annette Cozijn, registrar, at the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, and, at the Museum Brandhorst, Tonio Kröner, assistant curator; Elke Schütze, assistant to the director of the collection; Elisabeth Bushart, head of conservation; Wolfgang Wastian, head of exhibitions installation; and Simone Kober, registrar, as well as Anja Leps, head of administration of the Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen.

This ambitious exhibition project is accompanied by an equally ambitious book. The most comprehensive publication on Price to date, the monograph was envisioned by the artist to provide a true

overview of his work, incorporating voices from the present and the past as well as documentary material and even a complete version of his influential publication *Dispersion*.

True to the artist's use of a variety of styles and practices, the contributions to this book range from poems to conversations, from interviews to recollections and weighty art-historical contemplations of Price's oeuvre. We would like to thank Cory Arcangel, Ed Halter, Branden W. Joseph, John Kelsey, Michelle Kuo, Rachel Kushner, Laura Owens, and Ariana Reines for their thought-provoking, significant, and extraordinary contributions. This remarkable monograph is designed by Eric Wrenn, who worked closely with the artist to conceive a design that both complements and enhances the content of the book. We are grateful to Eric Banks for his excellent editorial guidance of this publication project and to Sam Frank for his marvelous attention to linguistic detail, and to the Stedelijk's publication team, Jeske Decock, Sabien Stols, Sophie Tates, and Katie Wolters, who worked hard to help bring this book to fruition.

We are, of course, obliged to all those who supported this project. On the part of the Stedelijk Museum, this includes the City of Amsterdam for its highly appreciated financial support, as well as the founders, principal donors, exhibition sponsors, and sponsors of the museum for their generous contributions. Furthermore, we owe a great debt of gratitude to the Stedelijk's Supervisory Board. On the part of the Museum Brandhorst, we would like to thank PIN. Freunde der Pinakothek der Moderne e.V. for its continued and magnanimous financial support. Together with the exhibition funds from the Bavarian State, this enabled us to realize our ambitious plans for this seminal show. We are also sincerely grateful to the Udo and Anette Brandhorst Foundation, who paved the way for this exhibition project with major acquisitions of Seth Price's work for the Museum Brandhorst.

Beatrix Ruf
Director, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam

Bernhard Maaz
Director General, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Munich

Achim Hochdörfer
Director, Brandhorst Collection, Munich

INTRODUCTION

Beatrix Ruf

What art? What artist? Since the early 2000s, when his work began to appear in the context of the visual arts, Seth Price has considered what is at stake when the physical and formal differentiation of “things” and how we come to know them as material reality—bodies and objects but also texts and sounds, as well as a range of sensual and behavioral relationships, whether in the arts, politics, or any area of everyday life—are challenged and transformed by the unified flow of images and information in the interminable digital stream. The digital image, digital information as a whole, has no body or material definition but can take on any form, settle in, materialize as anything imaginable. Price’s work consequentially encompasses an assortment of mediums and disciplines, including sculpture, installation, 16-mm film, video, photography, drawing, painting, fashion and textiles, web design, music and sound, and writing. It involves various versions of realization and embodiment, in a continued morphing of possible shapes, sizes, materials, and medium-languages as absorption of the fluidity and potentiality that digital information holds in its untranslated form.

The “realizations” that constitute Price’s work recall temporary constellations, swarming formations of information that can take on any conceivable form or content, always in a state of flux and resistant to existing conventions governing form and format. In his seminal text *Dispersion*, from 2002–, the artist writes: “With more and more media readily available, the task becomes one of packaging, producing, reframing, and distributing; a mode of production analogous not to the creation of material goods, but to the production of social contexts, using existing material.”

Distribution is accordingly a major concern of Price’s work. His projects involving music, writing, and video have by design circulated freely beyond the art space, while other activities take place as much outside the art world, as it were, as within it (like the fashion line *Folklore U.S.* he created with Tim Hamilton for dOCUMENTA (13), or the 2008 assemblage of found and manipulated texts *How to Disappear in America*, or the 2015 autofictional novel *Fuck Seth Price*). The loops and logics of circulation and distribution have been an integral part of his oeuvre, as crucial to his theater of appearances and disappearances as his materials, with their connection to packaging and wrapping, and as the disposal of desires and consumption. From his first exhibition at Reena Spaulings in New York in 2004—filled with vacuum forms of body parts, videos broadcast on TVs encased in their original boxes, DVDs and prints for inexpensive distribution, and the leftover waste of the used materials—to his most recent show at 356 S. Mission Rd. in Los Angeles in 2016, in which the massive exhibition space was crammed with tubing, cladding, building material, and high-res images of human skin besides the remnants originating in a commercial printing facility, Price’s project has been to make use of any surface from which reality can arise, imprint, press at or through, bulge, impress, appear, affect, mark, extrude, emerge, shape, figure, form, or identify, in each case in the form of materials to package and present or technologies to disseminate.

Polystyrene and PVC, plywood and rare burlled mahogany, linen and silk, tawdry consumer goods and cardboard packaging, industrial print waste, aluminum and steel, polymer resins and gels: all are materials that he uses not simply out of aesthetic motivation but for their resonances, both sociological and historical.

An example is Price’s 2002–6 series of works exploring the phenomenon of jihadist beheading videos. How does one contemplate and represent such brutality, which is simultaneously utterly

contemporary and completely barbaric, both hidden and available for all to see? First, he wrote about the phenomenon in *Dispersion*, considering it as an example of authorless, “headless,” internet-transmitted communications. The videos themselves were then included in a series of 2004 works, encoded on stacks of DVDs used to prop up heavy glass sculptures, which rendered the videos unwatchable. In 2005, Price decided to use the videos’ iconic image of a severed head held aloft but again declined simply to show it, instead screen-printing the image on long rolls of Mylar (a material used for protective book jackets), which he then crumpled into sculptures, distorting the image and evoking screens, film stock, scrolls, and garbage. In 2006, he chose to show the decapitation scene explicitly, but only by way of a sidestep, by appropriating a kindred image: Caravaggio’s *David with the Head of Goliath*. He exhibited the resulting prints along with a 16-mm film of algorithmically generated ocean waves that roll endlessly toward the viewer.

The presence of the embodied reality that we live, but also the information these bodies reveal as form, surface, narrative, and conflict, courses through the entire oeuvre of Seth Price. It is experienced in his vacuum forms of faces, wrists, and breasts, realized since 2004, and in symbolically loaded objects of nature, as well as in the cultural symbols represented by the *Vintage Bombers* (2005–8), a series of wall reliefs produced by forcing heated polystyrene over the cast of a bomber jacket, creating an empty shell that manages to be both 3-D icon and warped 2-D image. The result is a plastic image hosting a large number of cultural and symbolic references: to the postwar Western belief in progress, to the packaging industry and the distribution of consumer goods, and to the “elasticity” that emerges from the virtually endless possibilities inherent in digital manipulation.

In vacuum forms with bulges formed by ropes, part of Price’s work since 2008, the artist merges art-historical references with the earlier bomber jackets and provides a connection to the body of work that was to follow: silhouettes made of plastic bonded to natural woods that are visually recognizable for what seems only a fleeting moment: faces, hands, kisses, touches that appear before they are bound to lose themselves again in vexation. They embody the impossibility of things remaining in a state of visibility beyond the formal appearance of the material. The merger Price effects calls to mind Bruce Nauman’s *Henry Moore Bound to Fail* (1967–70), as well as Marcel Duchamp’s 1913–14 chance formations of a rope forming one-meter-long silhouettes, *3 stoppages étalon* (3 Standard Stoppages).

Embodiment is also a component in the series of hard and soft security envelopes the artist created in metal, wood, and fabric beginning in 2008 and continued with *Folklore U.S.*, and which he expanded to include baggy clothes in 2011. The series refers not only to writing and the hand, hiding and the body, but also to the infected privacy of the logos on the interiors of the envelopes and clothing and to the odd semblance of security they promise. In Price’s most recent body of work, embodiment is translated into the digital perversity of high-resolution images of human skin, backlit in commercial light boxes. Human skin finds its counterpart in the images of animal skin that we gaze at in digital moving images as if eyeing the cosmos.

Flesh and skin, corporate monograms, trash and waste and packaging, isolated body parts, leisure products, brutal and violent imagery, fashion and design, cold alienation and blank icons, glowing screens, film and foil and plastic, calm elegance next to ugliness and banality, unruly humor next to solemn beauty: Seth Price provides nothing short of an unflinching portrait of contemporary Western life.



PROCEDURES OF ENTANGLEMENT

Achim Hochdörfer

“...An art that condemns, and celebrates the condemnation, and condemns the celebration.
You want it all in there...”*

The voice of the narrator guides us through the jungle of images as if were a fairy-tale forest. We encounter masterpieces of art history, devotional images, computer graphics, cave paintings, comic-book illustrations, and canvases for sale on eBay. The journey cuts through history obliquely, traversing a range of social milieus with varying degrees of emotional intensity. The deftly interwoven images, music, and romantic narratives seduce the viewer and trigger a set of convictions and moods, then convert them into their precise opposite: gloomy premonitions are unexpectedly transformed by the glimmer of fantastic utopias; nostalgic intimacy and a shudder down the spine go hand in hand in the face of a technology-permeated present.

The fairy-tale forest is digital. Its material stems from the results generated by a search engine when Seth Price, its author, chose *painting* as his search term. We see a slide show rendered unfamiliar by digital effects, made up of images tagged by human users and systematically ordered by search-engine algorithms. Created at the start of the twenty-first century, “*Painting*” *Sites*—the title of the 2000 video—points to the fundamental changes in visual culture associated with digital media’s generalized establishment in all realms of life. Price’s intertwining of internet and fairy tale gives us the impression that we can see the concealed mechanisms at play here, dredging images from cultural archives to the surface of the present. In the process, there is a shift in the way images circulate and are consumed, just as their categorization is displaced. In this respect, “*Painting*” *Sites* refers to a fundamental legitimacy crisis regarding the historical narratives that decisively shaped art discourse in the 2000s. The neat periodization by decade that held sway throughout the past century apparently became utterly invalid at the beginning of the new one.¹ It looked as if the full dynamic of stylistic means and discourses had suddenly become available at the mere click of a mouse: all the polemics, secret connections, dead ends, exclusions, and inner contradictions.

Price comes from the generation born before the internet became entrenched and has thus experienced every step of this medium’s dissemination: the first computer games and programs during the 1980s, demonstratively flaunting their pixelated aesthetics; the political utopian moment in the 1990s, representing both the intuition and the anticipation of the new technology’s democratizing potential; and the post-2000 full-on digitization resulting from Web 2.0 and smartphones, a period that has given rise to the internet serving as a catalyst for incipient crises, from the “war on terror” to financial meltdown. Price’s artistic practice has evolved along a trajectory punctuated by such conflicts and their structures of desire: motivating forces for a global neoliberal society. Alienation and utopia, cynicism and commitment, transgression and striving for autonomy—such antagonistic pressures become inextricably tangled.

This is precisely the antagonism that Price alludes to in *Industrial Synth* (2000–), conceived as a foil to “*Painting*” *Sites*. The video begins with an image of a digital fairy-tale forest, depicting zig-zagging silhouettes that gradually open to reveal a clearing. Technoid eeriness gives way to a vision of natural beauty: “It’s so beautiful,” the narrator explains against a backdrop of falling rain and a raging storm, “that at first you think no one has ever laid eyes on it; that you must be the first person to ever have discovered this place.” Two texts in outmoded word-processing fonts follow: “>an old friend came to visit. It had been a long time” and “>something we used to do.” This is followed by an abrupt cut

*The title and subheads in this essay derive from my conversations with Seth Price. I wish to thank him for his delightful and insightful discussions about his work.



to home-video footage of Price and a school friend experimenting: Price inhales and exhales rapidly, pushing himself to the verge of losing consciousness, at which point his friend puts his hands around Price's neck until Price collapses, a smile on his face.

To cite Roland Barthes, aesthetic desire is "like that untenable, impossible ... instant so relished by [the] libertine when he manages to be hanged and then to cut the rope at the very moment of his orgasm, his bliss."² In *Industrial Synth*, Price presents the transition between categories—technoid eeriness tips into intimate familiarity, self-destruction into self-salvation—as aesthetic desire thus offering us the key to understanding his artistic practice. His art scans and hacks current cultural codes, opens up to an engagement with fashion and technology, and strives to encounter the world in all its menace and corruption. In his quest, Price slips through societal realms from high culture to the quotidian. The harsh tenor of this struggle for survival, leveling all political and historical categories, is directed toward himself too: *Fuck Seth Price!*

"...ripping apart whatever that structure is, from the inside..."
Early Video and Music Productions

Price's education in the 1980s and '90s coincided with a period when new media were truly novel but were in the process of being gradually absorbed into everyday practices, a development that had profound importance for his identity as an artist. Early on, he displayed enormous artistic talent; in particular, encouraged by his parents and teachers, he became a virtuoso in appropriating various modes of expression. One example is *In the Path of the World: A Book of Strange Drawings and Writings*, created by the eight-year-old Price, which responds both to Warner Bros. cartoons and to avant-garde artworks by Magritte. Price took art classes but decided against going to art school: "I was totally supported. But my default mode is to resist anything that's in front of me, including my own inclinations or tendencies."³ Enrolling at Brown University, he studied literature and political science, engaging with video art and film only as part of the minor he was taking in the Department of Modern Culture and Media. His meandering creativity blossomed following his move to New York in 1998. Rejected by the Whitney Museum's renowned Independent Study Program, he became a technical assistant at the video-and media-art-distribution platform EAI (Electronic Arts Intermix), which offered him access to video-editing tools that were not yet widely available. While there, he worked with such artists as Dan Graham, Martha Rosler, Mike Smith, and Joan Jonas. The position also proved socially fruitful, as EAI was based in the same Chelsea building as Dia Art Foundation, which afforded Price not only an immersion in contemporary debates in art theory but the opportunity

to weave a wide network of artists and critics (including Wade Guyton, Kelley Walker, Josh Smith, and his future partner, Bettina Funcke).

As his early videos and films reveal, Price did not see himself as a classical filmmaker. His interest lay more in the cultural, political, and artistic contexts in which film was the most privileged medium. Theoretical formulations on the cutting edge of the late 1990s clustered around film. At the same time, the impact of media-driven effects of digitization on film—from Hollywood blockbusters to the relatively new medium of music videos—was profound and lasting. Picking up on these changes, Price distanced himself from conventional video and media art. He did not use a camera, there was no set, and there were most definitely no actors. Instead he worked on a computer, processing found visual material with digital-graphics programs. *Nieuw Jaccz Swinjge* (2001) addresses computer games, *The Rolling Skull* (2010) the documentary visual language of news channels, and *2 for 1 Piece* (2002) advertising—all three analyzing the workings of specific distribution systems and the rules governing their operation. In the introduction to their anthology *Mass Effect: Art and the Internet in the Twenty-First Century*, Lauren Cornell and Ed Halter describe these videos as among the earliest "to respond to the internet not as a new medium, but rather a true *mass medium*, with a deeper and wider cultural reach, greater opportunities for distribution and collaboration, and advanced corporate and political complexities."⁴ In 2001, Barbara London invited Price to contribute to a screening at the Museum of Modern Art; the next year, Chrissie Iles included "Painting" Sites in the Whitney Biennial and, in an initial glimmer of painting's reevaluation as a medium in light of digitization, Lauri Firstenberg integrated the video into the *Painting as Paradox* exhibition at Artists Space. Price, however, soon felt restricted by defining himself solely as a filmmaker, and at his first MoMA screenings he flirted with the idea of redefining his position: "I thought, well, in this context I'm not just a filmmaker. I'm going to do this artist-performance lecture about music production, which was *New York Woman*. I'm going to give out CDs, I'm going to talk: it's performance."⁵

The areas of overlap between film and music exploded in the wake of digitization—both are time-based media, and structural similarities can be detected in the digital processing and reworking in both spheres. Price's interest in the existing modes of expression in such media lay at the heart of the multilayered *Title Variable* (2001–), five editions of which have been released to date.⁶ Each installment of the project contains a compilation of works from a specific 1980s or '90s musical phenomenon, an accompanying text, and a specially designed CD cover. *Game Heaven* (2001), for example, presents a combination of video game sound tracks whose synthetically generated beats and riffs establish an outlandish link between minimal music and New Wave. In contrast, *Akademische Graffiti* (2003–5) investigates how synthetic computer music was utilized in high culture e-music during the 1980s—a movement often overshadowed by pop music's usurpation of sampling techniques. In the spirit of Michel Foucault's historical archaeology of power and techniques of enforcement, *Title Variable* tackles the questions of how and why specific styles enjoy commercial success, what patterns define the formation of a countercanon and niche discourses, and how the meaning of certain modes of expression can be manipulated through a shift in social context. Rather than looking back on these topics as historical



Selections from *Outside in the City*, 1999–2000, twenty-three photographic prints

Stills from "Painting" Sites, 2000, video, 19:02 min.

closure, Price instead focuses on the potential that can be unleashed by appropriating and reusing stylistic means from recently bygone eras.⁷

In 2002, Price systematically combined his ideas in his photo essay *Dispersion*, the text of which became one of the most widely read art world statements of the era. Intended to stake out a particular position, the essay soon took on manifesto status concerning digitality's economic and technological impact on contemporary art practice. *Dispersion*, to cite Tim Griffin, "catapulted [Price] to the forefront of younger artists currently writing on art (and, more specifically, on its tenuous engagements with a broader culture radically impacted by new media)."⁸ The historical point of reference in *Dispersion* was conceptual art practice—from Duchamp through classical conceptual art to 1990s institutional critique—that turned a critical gaze on its own conditions of distribution within a capitalist exploitation logic: "New strategies are needed to keep up with commercial distribution, decentralization, and dispersion."⁹ In the manner of its circulation, art, Price explained, should reflect actively on its own design. What's more, art's role lies in intervening in the cultural archive of digital data flows, the "unruly archive": "With more and more media readily available, the task becomes one of packaging, producing, reframing, and distributing; a mode of production analogous not to the creation of material goods, but to the production of social contexts, using existing material."¹⁰ The goal was to lead the tradition of conceptual art out of its iconoclastic "elitism," away from its tendency to produce "dryly theoretical propositions rather than address issues of, say, desire."¹¹ With this reference, Price provided a decisive keyword: for the established theories of critical art since the 1960s clung doggedly to the modernist opposition between artistic production and capitalist mechanisms of exploitation. Where classical conceptual art conceived of its attempts to circumvent the market and the wider world of capitalist society as an alternative to the art system, he argued that contemporary art practice must open up to popular culture's structures of desire, its cunning, often-perverted maneuvers to heighten desire by constantly reassessing and shifting the meaning of established categories. As he put it, commercial media, design, fashion, and the music industry are thus "the arenas in which to conceive of a work positioned within the material and discursive technologies of distributed media. ... One must use not simply the delivery mechanisms of popular culture, but also its generic forms."¹²

In this spirit, Price alluded to social developments in the 1980s and '90s that Luc Boltanski and Ève Chiapello had described as manifestations of the "new spirit of capitalism": the momentous melding of cutting-edge art and neoliberalism, spreading worldwide and proclaiming the driving forces of economic development to be individual flexibility, flat hierarchies, and project-based working methods. In the so-called creative industries, dehierarchization and the dismantling of barriers led to an ideology that could no longer be adequately described in terms of right or left, authentic or commercial, conservative or progressive, male or female. Against this backdrop, Price insisted that a critical art practice "is a reaction to the fact that the merging of art and life has been effected most successfully by the 'consciousness industry.'"¹³ A reaction such as this can, however, no longer operate with the outdated oppositions beloved of "ideology critique" but must find its way through the paradoxes of the neoliberal universe. Price thus puts up for debate an array of genealogies (and discourses) dating back to the 1960s in all their entangledness. On the one hand, he clings to the avant-garde hope that the internet's freely circulating forces will develop a subversive potential; on the other, he notes the futility of an art practice that recalcitrantly positions itself outside the art context. Price referred to the resistant potential of slowness against "the contemporary mandate of speed"; his approach

counters the emphatic insistence that art can be relevant only if it engages the most topical "energy nodes, attractors, transmitters, conductors of new thinking, new subjectivity and action."¹⁴ These contradictory instructions do not, however, slackly coexist in a postmodernist spirit of "anything goes," but instead constitute a structuring principle for argument and design. *Dispersion* is both a combative call to arms and a despairing swan song, an art-historical analysis and an individual profession of faith. This becomes apparent in the photo-essay's design, too: we are confronted with an unmanageably disparate mass of historical references that weave a network of significances, reciprocally charging one another with meaning and then voiding that meaning once again—from Baroque allegories to conceptual art, from Albrecht Dürer's *Melancholia I* to a video still from a jihadist beheading.

"...It looks like presets, but they're quite designed, everything is intentional..."

Calendar Paintings

If *Dispersion* represents the broadening of a conceptual art practice that makes use of popular culture's channels, the *Calendar Paintings* (2003–4) seem to be a practical implementation of such considerations. In these works, Price picks up on one of the most popular image-distribution systems in modernity—the packaging of art in the form of calendars, a veritable marketplace of reproductions from a plethora of contexts that hangs in offices, living rooms, kitchens, and restrooms. Historical precursors of Price's *Calendar Paintings* include Seth Siegelaub's *One Month*, a conceptual project in which thirty-one artists were invited to send in a work, one for each day of the month of March 1969. Siegelaub stapled the responses together and published them in calendar form, the exhibition consisting solely of this "catalog" of typewritten instructions, statements, and blank pages.¹⁵

Price's *Calendar Paintings* were produced on a computer using scanned elements like the artist's line drawings and handwritten phrases; the "paintings" were created with programs that were then just conquering the market. He subjected their parameters—lines, shadows, fonts, and color gradients—to a sophisticated design process. He played with their rules, modes of functioning, and potential for error. It is as if he were exposing the idiosyncrasies of the digital language of code, revealing the inner life of an emergent cultural technique. Like his CD-cover designs, these images existed in the first instance as digital files lacking any direct material basis, and the presentation mode could be changed as a function of the context. Initially, Price printed the computer-created images onto films that could be glued to the wall in any order whatsoever; soon, however, he switched to printed aluminum panels, and then to canvas, a step that could be described as a prescient example of "network painting, in which the format of a traditional painting on canvas is printed in a digital reproduction process."¹⁶ It is a strategic use of anachronism, one that, rather than play the digital off against the analog, explores instead how two cultural techniques exist alongside and within each other—what might be described, à la Georges Didi-Huberman, as the "afterlife" of the analog world in the digital realm.¹⁷

The afterlife of painting in the information age shines through in the motifs in the *Calendar Paintings*. The imagery in a number of them was appropriated from American paintings realized between World War I and II, created in the spirit of Regionalism and Precisionism by the likes of Thomas Hart Benton, Arthur Dove, Charles Sallée Jr., Charles Sheeler, John Atherton, and Alexandre Hogue, artists who portrayed the Great Depression through the prism of scenes of alienation. We see

cows dead from drought, toiling workers, a lonely drinker, overwhelmingly powerful agricultural and industrial machinery, and landscapes devastated by human activity. Price establishes a confrontation between these images and the purported luster of the technological present, producing in the process a set of unsuspected cross-references: between the “folkloric slant” of American Regionalist painting and current standards of digital advertising art, between themes linked to economic decline during the 1930s and the emerging financial crises in the 2000s, between the existential directness of the motifs depicted and posthuman inexpressiveness. In addition, in his appropriation of a pictorial tradition outside the modernist canon, Price renders visible the process of marginalization attendant to such styles and calls into question such aesthetic judgments.¹⁸

While the *Calendar Paintings* pick up on the methodological and stylistic positioning of Price’s early films, they also touch on theoretical debates concerning the options available to art in dealing with exponentially expanded access to images and knowledge, styles and discourses. Viewed through the prism of period neologism such as “Renewed Appropriationism” and “Referentialism,”¹⁹ the reach back to appropriation art offered a formula for returning to a critical notion of the artwork after institutional critique: to a self-corrupting view of an artwork that is itself divided and “folded,” combining a series of very different determinations—formalism and institutional critique, painting and graphic design, analog and digital. Surprising historiographic insights into the meandering paths that art has followed since the 1960s are opened up through this heightened dynamism of the concept of the work, which Price brought into play in a whole host of new constellations in the ensuing years. It is not so much a question here of the coexistence of aesthetic narratives but rather of an archeology that delves into the ideological implications arising from such a narrative.

To a large extent the urgency that informs this retrospective consideration of the most recent past’s subcutaneous conflicts stems from the latest technological and economic developments, which at the start of the new century gave rise to a fundamental loss of the orientation that historical categories provide. Price’s search to respond to the question of where a critical agenda could still be located led him to an artistic practice in which the precision of formal placements remains in motion vis-à-vis their societal contexts and preconditions.

“...Lost in the emptiness is this single, violent gesture...”

Fists, Breasts, Spills, Bombers

Price had his first solo show at age thirty, at the gallery Reena Spaulings Fine Arts in autumn 2004. Founded by John Kelsey and Emily Sundblad, the gallery, named after the fictional protagonist of the eponymous novel by the artist group Bernadette Corporation, interconnected a broad spectrum of discourses and scenes in the mid-2000s: network painting, queer performance, fashion, pop culture.²⁰ The venue’s experimental nature dovetailed with Price’s interests across a range of topics and media, particularly the fact that Reena Spaulings was not a conventional commercial gallery but an artist-run exhibition space.

Price’s installation was made up of what at first glance appeared to be entirely disparate works. In the display window of the gallery—an erstwhile fashion outlet—he affixed one-way-mirrored security film (*Privacy for John and Emily*), making it impossible for passersby to look inside.²¹ Next to the entrance, a television set was placed on the floor, still in its original packaging, screening

Digital Video Effect: “Spills”, a recording of a debate between Richard Serra, Robert Smithson, and gallerist Joseph Helman circa 1970, documented by Joan Jonas, on artistic integrity in light of the art market’s growth. A further constellation of components engaged issues related to information visibility within various media framings. Four photographs in the 4:3 aspect ratio of video were each



propped on stacks of black CD-Rs. The photos, printed on archival paper and mounted behind security glass, showed scans of sliced bread. Critics found the images reminiscent of a lunar landscape or a slab of marble. In her review of the show, Emily Speers-Mears wrote that “the air bubbles which perforate the bread cause the scans to resemble a malformed version of the dot-matrix that constitutes the printed photograph and the Xerox, both technologies arguably on the verge of becoming outmoded.”²² The CD-Rs each contained a video file of the decapitation of Nicholas Berg, an American worker, at the hands of Iraqi terrorists; the video, which spread via the internet in May 2004, unleashed a debate about how the media should handle Islamist visual

propaganda. Toward the back of the exhibition, the video file (along with Price’s musical compilations, a T-shirt, and a pamphlet) was available for ten dollars. Price’s ideological and commercial concerns become amalgamated in the politics of the image in the internet age—its violence and power of penetration encapsulated in the shattered pane of security glass, in 4:3 video format, hung from a bar in the room.²³

Yet the principal group of works in the exhibition was the *Vacuum Forms*, which sited the body at the center of the tensions unleashed by these mechanisms of exploitation. Price had originally planned to show the recently completed *Calendar Paintings*, but while he was sketching, he drew a calendar grid with a naked posterior emerging from it, and this inspired him to make some kind of 3-D plastic work. He saw “the field of information being broken, being disrupted, by a body. It wasn’t simply vacuum forming in general, it was that I wanted to disrupt the flat information of the visual field with a body.”²⁴ Turning to vacuum forming—an inexpensive packing method that became a hallmark of the circulation of a variety of consumer goods after the 1950s—Price first produced casts of two body parts: a clenched fist and a woman’s breast. Some of the white, gold, and other *Vacuum Forms* were installed in the gallery in usual fashion, but a number were simply stacked against the wall: shrink-wrapped corporeal packaging coagulated into unusable mass merchandise.²⁵

As imprints of the body, the *Vacuum Forms* draw on a technique of reproduction that is prehistoric in origin. Georges Didi-Huberman refers to casting as a process “in which past and present are mutually reoriented, transformed and engage in self-criticism.”²⁶ The process, he continues, instantiates a particular temporal complexity, in which “an inconceivably ancient technique encounters contemporary practice in order to produce a flash, a constellation.”²⁷ Vacuum forming seems particularly suited to express the dialectic between the human body’s presence and absence, between touch and loss, aura and reproduction.

Most reviewers of the Reena Spaulings show underlined the disconcerting impression conjured up by the exhibition. Fia Backström wrote, “Here is a constant diversion of the channels of circulation of signs, barring possibilities for making sense. No satisfaction in sight, and infertile terrain, the original purpose of function of so many elements temporarily obstructed: this show is perverted. ‘It’s 2004,

baby.”²⁸ Against the backdrop of the post-2000 crisis of legitimacy with regard to historical narratives, the emphatic mention of the year of production in the *Vacuum Forms*, where the date is signaled with boldface numerals, seemed to constitute a hollowed-out assertion of the here and now. In contrast to the twentieth century, where decade periodization (the Twenties, the Sixties, etc.) had become a conventional way to figure historical meaning, the new century lacked this shorthand orientation.

Furthermore, the show’s air of perversion was connected to the massive overheating of the art market, which swelled to unprecedented dimensions in the mid-2000s. Symbolizing the era’s gold-



rush mood, an omnibus show titled Greater New York opened at P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center in March 2005 with more than 160 artists, many of them still students: “the art world eating its young,” Jerry Saltz proclaimed.²⁹ In the *New York Times*, Michael Kimmelman described the exhibition as “a mirror of the current power structure” that admitted no prospect of escape. Against this backdrop, the fist in Price’s *Vacuum Forms* can be read as a gesture of protest against the art market’s financialization. These forms literally push their way into the gallery space, without breaking through the pictorial surface or, therefore, through the aesthetic appearance: “no cries for justice can be heard,” as Backström aptly commented.³¹ They become an expression of an internalized artistic protest that is immediately fed back into the system.

As his contribution to Greater New York, Price developed the *Vintage Bombers*. The bomber jacket’s history is one of constant reproduction and recasting of meanings. Developed in World War I for pilots flying in open cockpits and exposed to the elements, the jacket later became associated with any number of subcultural types, from bikers to punks and skinheads, a symbol of both hetero- and homo- sexuality, haute couture and mass-produced fashion, all symptomatically manifest in the go-it-alone, tactically autonomous figure of the pilot. In its horizontal or vertical arrangement, the *Vintage Bomber* is reminiscent of a pistol. Rigidified as a solid object, the left sleeve hangs down limply, and the fine line of the zip leads high up into the collar, draped so that the seam recalls a gaping wound. Like an emptied-out shell, it hangs on the wall, pointing to an absent subject. As a crypto-self-portrait, the form recalls nothing short of the flayed, flaccid skin of St. Bartholomew, the figure to whom Michelangelo gave his own facial traits in *The Last Judgment*.³² If the focus in casting as a technique is on the “task of reproduction of the human being,” to cite Didi-Huberman, one might refer here to a “montage of identity”: “This is therefore the great power of the cast, its essential magic: a touch that allows dissemination.”³³

“...So then, yes, you can make something that’s this beautiful, fetishized, expensive art object...”

Mylars, Silhouettes, Knot Paintings

The *Vintage Bombers* created a stir among curators, critics, gallerists, and collectors. On the heels of Greater New York, Price mounted a solo exhibition at Friedrich Petzel and soon after began to show with Gisela Capitain and Isabella Bortolozzi. He also contributed to group shows such as *NY Twice* and *Wade Guyton, Seth Price, Josh Smith, Kelley Walker*.³⁴ In the ensuing years, in addition to expanding the number of *Vacuum Forms*, he produced a breathtaking sequence of series: monoprints, *Mylars*,

new films, CDs, poems, *Silhouettes, Knot Paintings*, and *Envelopes*. With each show, he upset the expectations surrounding his work by introducing fresh topics, techniques, and contexts. This stance articulated his uneasy relationship to predetermined role models, yet Price also made visible his entanglement in the very mechanisms he criticized. His constantly changing modes of production can be interpreted as “mimicry” of the economy of affects driven by the overheated art market. Bettina Funcke has compared Price’s nebulous references to the cash flows of financialization: “The reframing and reuse of art by itself is ... similar to the rise of money made from money, built on its own circulation rather than on labor or products per se.”³⁵

Following his exhibition at Reena Spaulings, Price began to work on the *Mylars*, in which internet images are printed on archival transparent polyester film, a material used by libraries to preserve printed matter. These works have no fixed shape but can be installed in a variety of modes, depending on the space and context: they can be bent, folded, rolled, or crumpled, placed on walls, on the ceiling, on plinths, or on the floor. The pictorial motifs therefore mostly appear cropped, distorted, or concealed. Alluding to the flexibility and placelessness of digitally circulating image files, the *Mylars* could be described as the *embodiment* of the movement of images in and through space: “Digital media is radically elastic,” Laura Cornell and Ed Halter assert, “as it can move across multiple, changing platforms, scaled to fit (or not fit), be read, accessed, broken down, and embedded in ways that previous cultural forms cannot.”³⁶

In the *Mylars*, Price concentrates on a trio of pictorial motifs related to jihadism: two depict masked terrorists with guns, and the third—which became predominant in the series over time—derives from a decapitation video. It pictures the moments at which the propaganda message is read out and the hostage’s severed head is displayed. Thus, a pathos formula with a long tradition in mythology and art history is concealed behind the shocking depiction; it aims to underscore the propaganda’s forceful visual impact. This is also alluded to in *Addresses*, a monoprint series Price made in 2006 for his first solo show at Petzel.³⁷ It depicts a reproduction of Caravaggio’s *David and Goliath* in the Galleria Borghese in Rome, printed and “layered over bloodlike washes of color,” as Roberta Smith described it.³⁸ In his painting of the Old Testament scene, Caravaggio concentrates on the psychological interaction between the protagonists: David, who is shown exhibiting great grief and sympathy, and the dead bearded giant, which is in fact a self-portrait of the painter. In the installations of the *Mylars*, Price perverts the interaction between culprit and victim, setting their bodies in every conceivable constellation of interrelation, bending and deforming the figures. Between the *Addresses* prints, as a counterpoint to the horrors of decapitation, Price projected his 16-mm *Untitled Film/Right*, a digital clip of an ocean wave swelling up and down. The vista of the sea evokes what Sigmund Freud described as an “oceanic feeling,” a sense of “being one with the external world as a whole,” in which the boundary between interior and exterior dissolves.³⁹ However, Price’s configuration offers no escape route into consoling timelessness.

By 2007—the year that the tech boom seemingly inaugurated a new world—Price was debuting a series of works, *Silhouettes*, at the Museum of Modern Art in Oxford, England, and in his first solo show at Galerie Gisela Capitain in Cologne, which addressed digitized human contact. The pictorial motifs were again taken from the internet, yet they appear only as a kind of negative space. As in flip-flop or optical-puzzle images, like the famous rabbit-duck figure associated with Wittgenstein, the eye constantly leaps back and forth between alternative interpretations. The outlines creating the

forms recall maps and the boundaries of territories. The *Silhouettes* are fluctuating lines that result from JPEG compression, with recesses and protrusions, rigid edges and points: their conflict-ridden course turns the gaze on the perpetual antagonism of perspectives, forcing the viewer to switch back and forth between interior and exterior, foreground and background, center and periphery. In considering the series, Michael Newman has referred to Derrida's conception of the *parergon*, in which the question of the location of the "actual" work is constantly recontextualized: "If the *parergon* is the structural condition of this operation, it is here that Price's work is situated. The eroded edge of the 'silhouettes,' one of the places where this inversion . . . occurs, connects the space in which the object is shown to the virtual space of the Internet archive from which the much-magnified negative image comes."⁴⁰

In contrast to the aggressive rhetorical charge of many motifs in the *Calendar Paintings*, *Vacuum Forms*, and *Mylars*, in the *Silhouettes* Price concentrates on images of human communication, understanding, and care. We see hands writing, serving food, or lighting a cigarette, and profile views of people kissing, photographing each other, and talking. These are images that Price downloaded after searching for terms like *eating*, *drinking*, *writing*, *touching*, *mother*, and so forth.⁴¹ All the *Silhouette* images feature contact and touching. The space is therefore bisected by a gesture of touch in each image. As the motifs' outlines "open up" at the precise points where bodies touch, Price creates a formal *mise-en-scène* of the intimacy of the gestures—an instant of intermediation, in which the positive and negative forms merge. However, the actions display no trace of individual expression or psychological empathy. On the contrary: magnified, pixelated, and monumentalized, they are revealed as what Bertolt Brecht called "social gestures," thus embedding human actions into a social context. They are also reinvented in technologically mediated form; with the introduction of the smartphone and the swipecable touch screen, touching became the vector for navigating the new space of social media. Unlike the initial group of the *Silhouettes*, which were realized from the aluminum composite Dibond, the second series is made from precious woods such as cherry burl, burlled Carpathian elm, and Vavona redwood. Price deliberately opted to eschew the industrial serial-production methods that figured in earlier works: "I was moving toward something that could work against this idea of brutality and industrial production, something that had to do with the perfect surface, and formalism, and beauty, and shiny things."⁴² And he was promptly confronted for the first time with polemical comments from critics, who were suspicious of his support for a practice that he himself described as "aggressively formalist."⁴³ Without overstating the point, one might argue instead that in the *Silhouettes* Price is using these luxurious and elegant materials at once to pervert an avant-gardist reductionism and, as it were, to deflate the humanistic image of communication.

At first glance, it might seem that in the *Silhouettes* Price had moved far from his theory of *Dispersion*. In the course of just a few years, he had found his way into the heart of the art world; he was exhibiting in renowned galleries, critics and collectors were taking an interest in his art, and in 2008 he was invited to present a first survey show at Kunsthalle Zürich. He reflected on this development in two new works: in the film *Redistribution* (2007–), in which he appropriates the stylistic elements of documentary "artists' films" and presents an overview of his career; and in the vacuum-form work *Essay with Knots*, in which the photo-essay *Dispersion* is printed on nine wall-hung panels. Many saw this as a cynical gesture: whereas what underpinned *Dispersion* was the hope of freely circulating artistic practice, *Essay with Knots* seemed a sellout of those ideas. Conversely, however, *Essay with*



Knots points to *Dispersion* as art: in Price's reckoning, "People were starting to simply talk about *Dispersion* as an essay, which it's not. . . . It's the text, but it's also the package, the design, it's the circulation. That's why I wanted to print it on these big panels with the knots: then you have to look at it as art."⁴⁴ One key factor in *Essay with Knots* is the need to maintain an open stance about the thrust of Price's theory of dispersion: the theory may entail simply brushing up against the art system, moving within its discursive logic, or searching for a route out of this context and into popular culture—and from there back into the art system. The active magnetic pull of Price's artworks in contexts outside the art-world frame becomes apparent, for example, in the 2009 advertising campaign for HBO's *True Blood* television series, which incorporated silhouettes of kissing faces that look remarkably like Price's work.

Essay with Knots marked the beginning of a new series of works, the *Knot Paintings*. Price had begun integrating ropes in various constellations into the vacuum-forming procedure in 2006. With the *Knot Paintings*, he began to introduce paint. The homophonic slippage of *knot* and *not* (i.e. "not painting") hints at these works' medium-related ambivalence. Although what Price realizes in this body of work is obviously not painting in the technical or historical sense of the term, the *Knot Paintings* manage to address the medium. In three groups produced between 2009 and 2012, Price intertwines various aspects of the painterly in an increasingly complex tangle of viewpoints. The first group comprises near monochromes that concentrate entirely on the formal details of the work process. After being vacuum-formed, the images were sprayed with automobile paint in gold, silver, bronze, and an array of gray hues. When the polyester was heated and shaped, tiny cracks appeared, making the surface look like artificial skin. The shapes of heads and extremities can be identified in the ropes' configuration, along with an abstract kinetic rhythm that invites viewers to interpret them as anthropomorphic formations. The titles of the works also point to human associations: *Harsh Way of Life*, *Rapid Growth*, *Sexy Dancer*, *Soft History*, *Apparation*, *Some Things I've Figured Out*, *High Heel*. In a further series of *Knot Paintings*, shown in 2010 at Capitain Petzel in Berlin and in 2011 at the Venice Biennale, Price increasingly experimented with the effect of applying paint, varying the texture of the surface and the configuration of the ropes. These works stand at the heart of an expanded discourse on painting that took shape in the course of the 2000s. Each *Knot Painting* introduces a fresh set of concerns: drawing and print techniques are integrated, slits are made in the surface, new ways of applying paint are tested. Painting becomes a node in a network of media-related and societal references.⁴⁵ In this context, the ropes function like a lasso with which contexts can be captured, integrated, and interlinked—a topographic metaphor of reflections on relations, in the sense familiar from Lacanian and Deleuzian theory.⁴⁶

“. . . to see how these different languages warp the content in different ways. . . .”
Folklore U.S.

Price produced *Vacuum Forms* consistently beginning in 2004. Alongside the *Vintage Bombers*, he explored the motif of a flower and a kind of featureless, anonymous human face that recalls a death mask. The *Vacuum Forms* gradually became established as Price's "signature style" and threatened to cast a shadow over the diversity of his work and activities as a whole. For that reason, he decided in 2011 to conclude work on the series—at least for now. In the last *Knot Painting*, from 2012, a centrifugal energy is already present, an unease about subsuming his artistic practice within "painting" as a

Unknown designer, polystyrene prop
from J. Crew's 2013 nationwide
"vacuum-formed knot" shopwindow
display strategy



category. Invited in 2011 to participate in dOCUMENTA (13), Price began to develop a new group of works, *Folklore U.S.*, which occupied his attention for the next few years. The motif of the envelope formed the conceptual point of departure. Here Price selected security envelopes with standardized patterns and logos printed on the interior, making it impossible for anyone to identify the message inside after the envelope has been sealed: official communications such as notification of fines and court decisions, bank statements, obituaries, and the like. These bureaucratic mantles are only filled with life in concrete social situations—a kind of life that is literally given an administrative stamp.

In *Folklore U.S.*, there are hard and soft envelopes. The substrate of the hard envelopes is plywood (an industrially processed natural material), into which the envelopes are integrated. At times, the hard envelopes project out from the picture-like format; ripped open, contorted, folded out like a disembowelled body, they evoke the art-historical tradition of shaped canvases.⁴⁷ The soft envelopes, on the other hand, are made of matte and shiny fabrics, equipped with zippers and inner surfaces that are also imprinted with logos. They can be presented in a variety of ways—hanging or lying, open or closed—entangling the viewer in a game of concealment and unveiling, mystification and visualization. In this respect, they evoke clothing and skin, and thus the expressive qualities of bodily gestures. Their formal flexibility also corresponds to their permeability vis-à-vis social realms such as fashion and design, as well as to accessories and objects like handbags, sleeping bags, body bags, and blankets. Paradigmatically for this border-flouting approach, Price developed a fashion line as an integral component of *Folklore U.S.*, created in conjunction with fashion designer Tim Hamilton and presented in a catwalk show at dOCUMENTA (13) in addition to being offered for sale at a department store situated next to the Fridericianum. All the garments—including a trench coat, a bomber, a flight suit, and gaiters—come from the military realm. They are made of white canvas on the outside, with either abstract envelope patterns or corporate logos—of the bank Capital One, the insurance agency

Floral Theme with Decoration, 2012
Canvas, printed cotton liners, charm, zippers, buckles, straps, etc.

FDIC, the picture rights agency Corbis, the payroll company Paychex, the financial services company UBS—printed on the liners. This encounter between military function, the clinical and artistic purity of white canvas, and commercial logos could hardly be more replete with tension—like an echo, it duplicates the opposition between art and fashion: “Too dumb to even propose,” to cite the artist’s own words, “within a framework that’s concerned with criticality.”⁴⁸ Price presents the classical ingredients of “ideology critique” in various constellations: the sellout of criticality, criticality as fashion, fashion as art, art as commercial system, commercial system as fashion. It seems he is focusing on keeping these different modes of reaction and moods in play, observing how they shift as a function of respective context and sensibility, and giving a form to this experience.

Folklore U.S. provides a kind of review of Price’s earlier groups of work, with all their formal antagonisms: hard and soft, transparent and opaque, natural and artificial, open and closed, positive and negative, analog and digital, material and immaterial—the list could go on ad infinitum. And that is not even the whole story: the canvas bomber jackets and envelopes hanging on the walls recall the *Vintage Bombers*, the folding and bending procedures remind us of the *Mylars*, the interplay of presence and absence is reminiscent of the *Silhouettes*, and the integration of logos brings to mind the *Knot Paintings*. Transporting all the formal and conceptual experiences of these groups of works, Price searches for a way back to the medial and conceptual diversity of his theory of dispersion. *Folklore U.S.* is therefore more than just a new series of works; it constitutes an attempt to conceptually unite previous designs and activities in a metadiscourse on the logic and modus operandi of Price’s idea of the work.

In this context, art is revealed to be a cognitive model that reflects on quotidian mechanisms through formal procedures and in the process repeatedly folds itself into the conditions of distribution in everyday life. In his work, Price cuts a path through a number of discourses and a host of contradictions—devising a grammar of modern and postmodern art that he grafts onto current constellations—in order to once again set in motion elements that have become solidly fixed in place. It is an attempt to read these dynamics and tensions as an existential role play, observed not from a distance or in a cynical manner but intimately and up close, fully lived out in its extreme form. The outmoded motif of the envelope, surviving in its digital afterlife as an icon of sent messages, seems to be the outer shell of an emptied-out subject—the “anachronic subject,” who, in Roland Barthes’ words, “simultaneously and contradictorily” participates “in the profound hedonism of all culture (which permeates him quietly under cover of an art de vivre...) and in the destruction of that culture: he enjoys the consistency of his selfhood (that is his pleasure) and seeks its loss (that is his bliss). He is a subject split twice over, doubly perverse.”⁴⁹

Notes

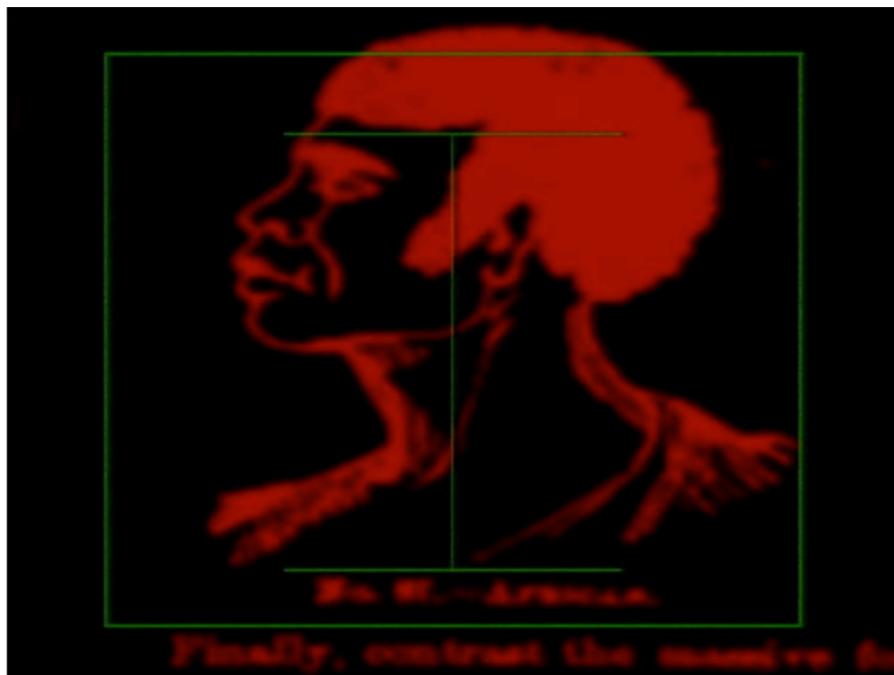
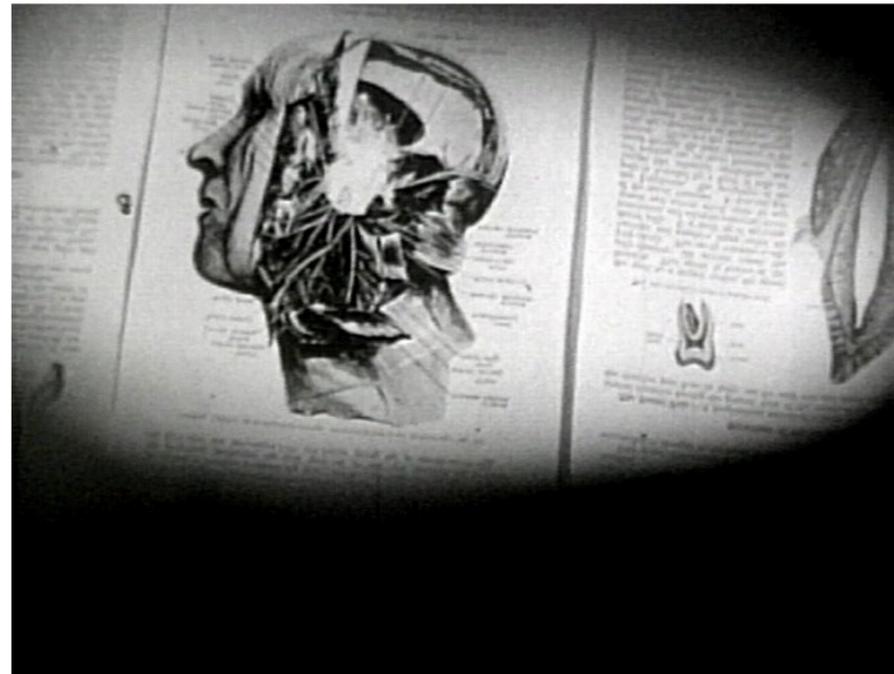
1. The history of art in the first decade of the 2000s has yet to be written. Whereas in the 1980s and '90s there was an out-and-out struggle at the start of each decade to determine what would be its defining, central concept—the return of painting in the '80s and institutional critique or relational aesthetics in the early '90s—no style or label prevailed in the 2000s. Revealingly, the concept of “post-internet art” that has recently emerged seeks to subsume the diversity of current artistic development into the technological transformation effected by digitization. The crisis of legitimacy vis-à-vis historical categories in the 2000s becomes particularly apparent in museum presentations. Tate Modern, which opened in 2000, is paradigmatic of this development, abandoning a progressively evolving history of styles in favor of a hanging that is guided by thematic concerns and combines works in various media and from a range of temporal and spatial contexts—a practice that has since prevailed in the mode of presentation adopted for most collections around the world.

Notes

2. Roland Barthes, *The Pleasure of the Text* (1973; New York: Hill & Wang, 1975), 7.
3. Seth Price, in conversation with the author, summer 2016. My thanks to Seth Price.
4. Lauren Cornell and Ed Halter, eds., "Hard Reboot: An Introduction to *Mass Effect*," in idem, *Mass Effect: Art and the Internet in the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2015), xvii.
5. Price, in conversation with the author.
6. *Title Variable* (2001–) comprises five compilations and essays: *Akademische Graffiti*, *Game Heaven*, *New Jack Swing*, *Industrial Fist*, and *8–4 9–5 10–6 11–7*.
7. On this point, see in particular the reader edited by Tom Holert, *Imagineering. Visuelle Kultur und Politik der Sichtbarkeit* (Cologne: Oktagon, 2000).
8. Tim Griffin, "The Personal Effects of Seth Price," *Artforum* 47, no. 10 (Summer 2009): 286.
9. Seth Price, *Dispersion* (self-published, 2002–), n.p.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. Seth Siegelau, *One Month*, exh. cat., <http://primaryinformation.org/files/March1969.pdf>.
16. An initial series of *Calendar Paintings* printed on film was presented in group shows curated by Wade Guyton, Josh Smith, and Kelley Walker.
17. Cf. Georges Didi-Huberman, *Ähnlichkeit und Berührung. Archäologie, Anachronismus und Modernität des Abdrucks* (Cologne: Dumont, 1999), 7.
18. One of the *Calendar Paintings* showed an advertisement from the 1990s with a computer screen and a keyboard adorned with gemstones. The motif and the aesthetic already looked outdated in 2004 and rendered highly visible the process of historicization through the example of the recent past. Price also used the *Calendar Painting* with the computer screen and jewel-studded keyboard as a poster for his exhibition at the Kölnischer Kunstverein in 2008, where he presented a larger group of *Calendar Paintings* for the first time.
19. See Lauri Firstenberg, "Notes on Renewed Appropriationisms," *Parkett*, no. 67 (2003). This article was followed by the exhibition at the Project in Los Angeles (March 13–April 24, 2004), which included works by Siemon Allen, Wade Guyton, Ellen Harvey, Seth Price, Anton Vidokle, and Kelley Walker. In his essay "Reflexive Systems of Reference: Approximations to 'Referentialism' in Contemporary Art," André Rottmann asserted that "Referentialism" has "in recent years become the predominant production-aesthetic model in contemporary art. . . . 'Referentialism,' in this sense, is a classical 'umbrella term,' serving at least for the time being to subsume a heterogeneous multitude of references, allusions, homages, pastiches, quotations, appropriations, adaptations, and reverences in order to initiate further discussions of current artistic procedures that enact a decidedly critical engagement with references such that the reflective procedure of a re-presenting adaptation of and commenting upon specific systems of reference can supplant legitimizing emulations." *Texte zur Kunst*, no. 71 (September 2008): 157.
20. Price was one of the novel's many authors.
21. In its inversion of the gaze's function, flipping from observation to being observed, Price's intervention recalls Dan Graham's mirror-covered pavilions.
22. Emily Speers-Mears, "Two-Way Piracy: Seth Price at Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York," *Texte zur Kunst*, no. 57 (March 2005): 154f.
23. On this point, the press release aptly states: "Testing the poetic potential in a variety of industrial materials including safety glass, Liquid Glass, conservator's film and vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene, Price combines these with archival digital prints and appropriated video in order to interrogate the interdependency between information flow and security in an epoch where freedom has become equated with circulation and circulation is inseparable from control."
24. Price, in conversation with the author. The date, imprinted like a signature in some of the *Vacuum Forms*, recalls the *Calendar Paintings*.
25. Views of the *Vacuum Forms* were partly blocked in places by the vertical and horizontal bars for hanging clothes that had been left in place, relics of the previous use of the space as a fashion outlet. In the context of Price's exhibition, however, they appeared more like barriers.
26. Didi-Huberman, *Ähnlichkeit und Berührung*, 7.
27. Didi-Huberman, *Ähnlichkeit und Berührung*, 8.
28. Fia Backström, "Seth Price—Not Making Sense," *NPD*, no. 2 (June 2005): 11. Emily Speers-Mears writes that Price, "with his 'decorative gestures,' thus dances along the line between the dismantling of aesthetic order, and its perversion." Speers-Mears, "Two-Way Piracy," 154f.
29. Later in the review, Saltz is even clearer, stating that, in its overflowing plenitude, the exhibition showed "an art world out of balance." Jerry Saltz, "Lesser New York," *Village Voice*, March 22, 2005.
30. And he continues: "it is impossible not to feel implicated in the vast apparatus of this bullish market, from which the show, and hence its coverage, whether good or bad, cannot escape." Michael Kimmelman, "Youth and the Market: Love at First Sight," *New York Times*, March 18, 2005.
31. Backström, "Seth Price," 10.
32. Cf. Leo Steinberg, "The Line of Fate in Michelangelo's Painting," *Critical Inquiry* 6, no. 3 (Spring 1980): 411–54.
33. Didi-Huberman, *Ähnlichkeit und Berührung*, 26.
34. *NY Twice*, curated by Fabrice Stroun, ran from May 28 to June 25, 2005, at Air de Paris; *Wade Guyton, Seth Price, Josh Smith, Kelley Walker*, curated by Beatrix Ruf, from April 8 to May 28, 2006, at Kunsthalle Zürich. *Guyton, Price, Smith, Walker*, ed. Beatrix Ruf, exh. cat., Kunsthalle Zürich, Zurich (self-published, 2007).
35. Bettina Funcke, "Readymade Operations," in *An Unruly History of the Readymade*, ed. Jessica Morgan (Mexico City: Fundación Jumex, 2008), 20. Elizabeth Schambelan elucidates: "Working in an expanded range of media and subtly deranging the strategies of mass-cultural production (repackaging, piracy), he stakes out resistant, rather than recuperative, positions within the so-called spaces of flows—the partly virtual, partly physical field in which information, culture, and capital circulate under ever-increasing state and corporate control." Elizabeth Schambelan, "Openings: Seth Price," *Artforum* 43, no. 9 (May 2005): 237.
36. Cornell and Halter, "Hard Reboot," xxvii.
37. Price showed his *Mylars* in 2005 and 2006 in four exhibitions: the group show that he curated at Friedrich Petzel Gallery, *Grey Flags* (http://petzel.com/exhibitions/2005-07-01_grey-flags); *Make It Now: New Sculpture in New York* at SculptureCenter (<http://sculpture-center.org/exhibitionsExhibition.htm?id=10107>); his first solo show at Petzel (http://petzel.com/exhibitions/2006-09-08_seth-price); and *Wade Guyton, Seth Price, Josh Smith, Kelley Walker* (<http://kunsthallezurich.ch/de/wade-guyton-seth-price-josh-smith-kelley-walker>).
38. Roberta Smith, "Art in Review: Seth Price," *New York Times*, September 29, 2006.
39. Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1930; New York: W. W. Norton, 1961), 11–12.
40. Michael Newman, "Seth Price's Operations," in *Price, Seth*, ed. Kathrin Jentjens, Anja Nathan-Dorn, and Beatrix Ruf, exh. cat., Kunsthalle Zürich, Zurich, and Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne (Zurich: JRP/Ringier, 2010), 51.
41. *Seth Price*, exhibition, Petzel Gallery, February 9–March 8, 2008, http://petzel.com/exhibitions/2008-02-09_seth-price.
42. Price, in conversation with the author.
43. "I'm going to make beautiful objects. Except they're going to be empty. The idea is missing; it's been cut out. All that's left is formalism." Price, in conversation with the author. One example of the criticism the *Silhouettes* incurred is Ken Johnson's review in 2008: "Mr. Price still produces gallery art as one dimension of his multifaceted conceptualist enterprise, but he is not as interesting an object producer as he is a writer." Ken Johnson, "Seth Price," *New York Times*, February 22, 2008.
44. Price, in conversation with the author.
45. During the creation of the *Knot Paintings*, David Joselit's essay "Painting Beside Itself" was published. *October*, no. 130 (Fall 2009): 125–34.
46. Cf. Wolfram Pichler and Ralph Ubl, *Topologie. Falten, Knoten, Netze, Stülpungen in Kunst und Theorie* (Vienna: Turia + Kant, 2009).
47. Plywood is made by heating and compressing several layers of wood; the way in which it is produced recalls the *Vacuum Forms*.
48. Seth Price, in "Christopher Bollen in Conversation with Seth Price," in *Folklore U.S.* (New York: Petzel Gallery; London: Koenig, 2014), 22.
49. Barthes, *The Pleasure of the Text*, 14.

1997–2002

Early Film and Video



Top row, left to right:
Still from *Sub Accident*, 1997,
video, 21:45 min.

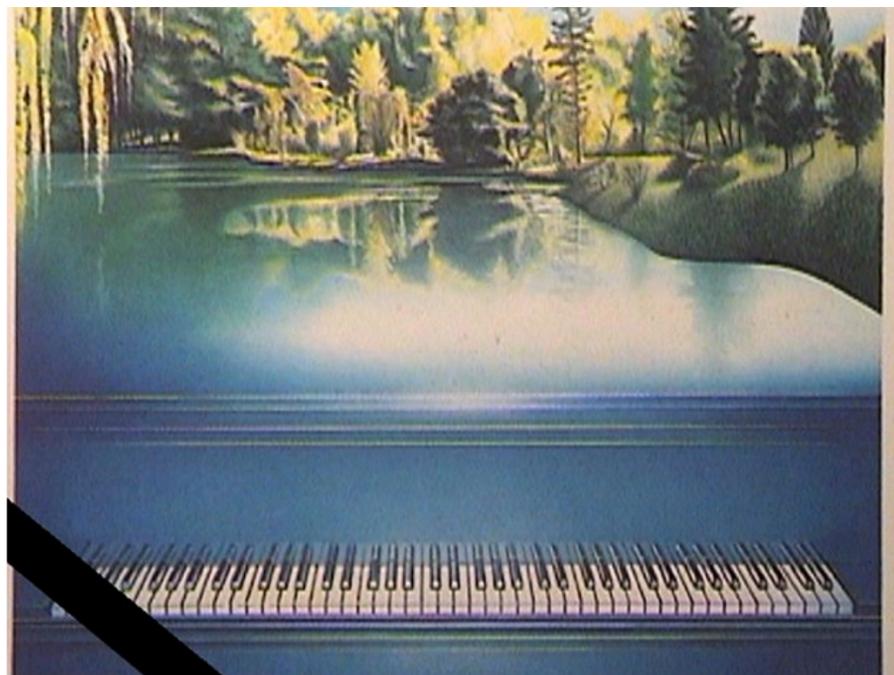
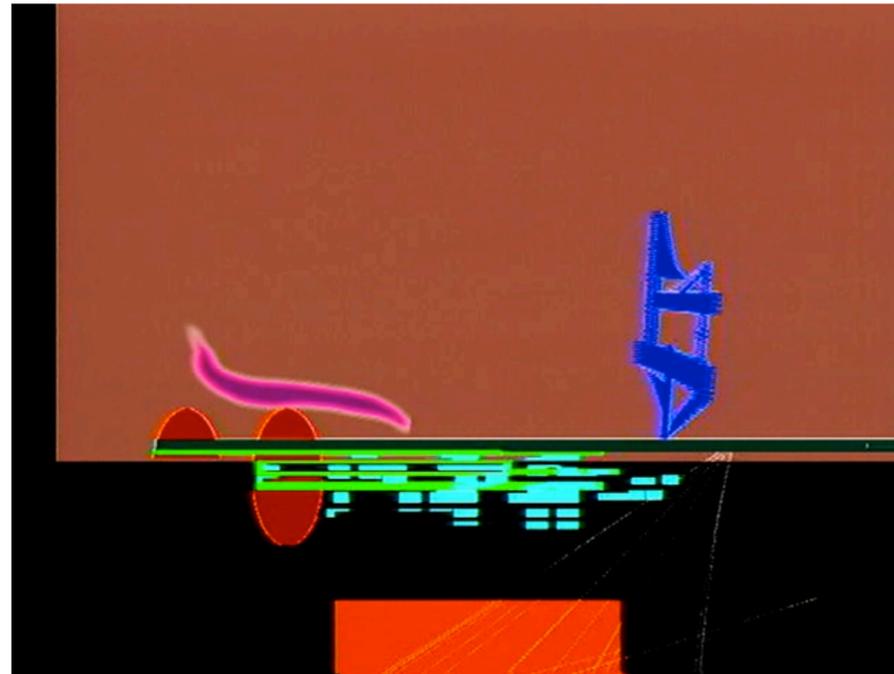
Still from *Sub Accident*, 1997,
video, 21:45 min.

Still from *Analogue*, 1999,
video, 4:43 min.

Bottom row, left to right:
Still from *Sub Accident*, 1997,
video, 21:45 min.

Still from *American Graffiti*, 1999,
video, 15:27 min.

Still from *Modern Suite*, 2002,
video, 10:28 min.



Top row, left to right:
Still from *Rejected or Unused Clips*,
Arranged in Order of Importance,
2003, video, 10:38 min.

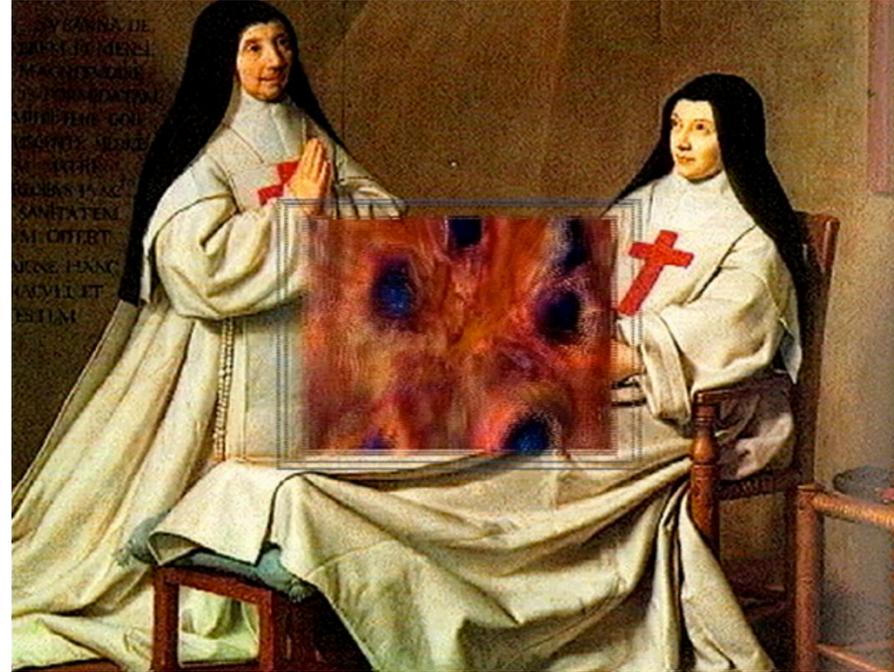
Still from *New York Woman*, 2001,
video, 7:20 min.

Still from *New York Woman*, 2001,
video, 7:20 min.

Bottom row, left:
Still from *Rejected or Unused Clips*,
Arranged in Order of Importance,
2003, video, 10:38 min.

Bottom row, right:
Still from *New York Woman*, 2001,
video, 7:20 min.

New York Woman, 2001
Mini CD



ACHIM HOCHDÖRFER: Working in the experimental-film world, at the beginning, was already a move to go outside the art world, to start from somewhere else. Is that true?

SETH PRICE: No, it was just the form available to me at the time. I went to a liberal arts college. I actually wanted to take classes in the Visual Art Department, but you had to take the intro, which was a lottery, and I didn't get in. So I was like, "Fuck your department," and the form that was then available to me was film and video, because it was housed in the critical department I was in.

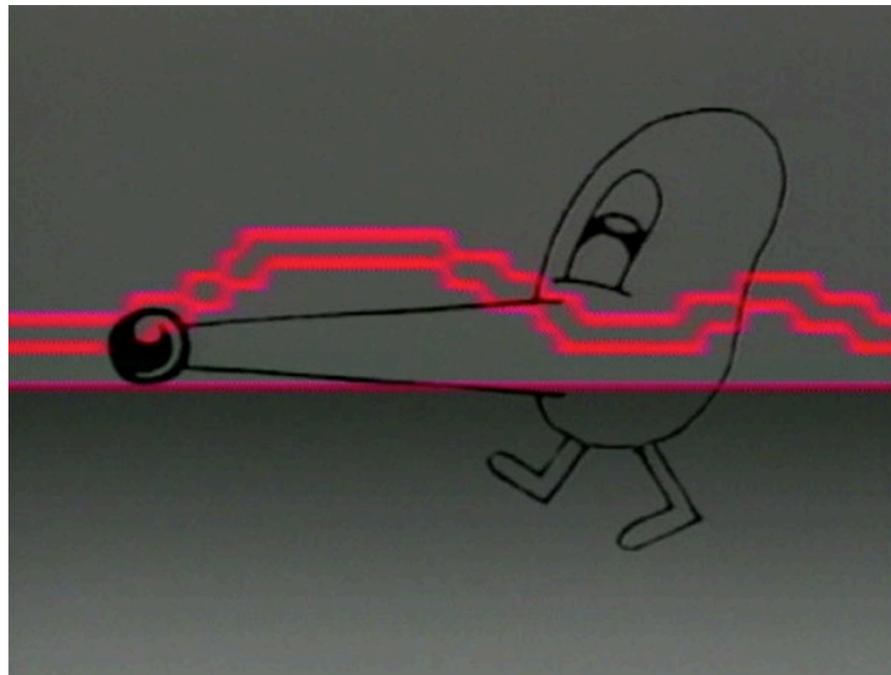
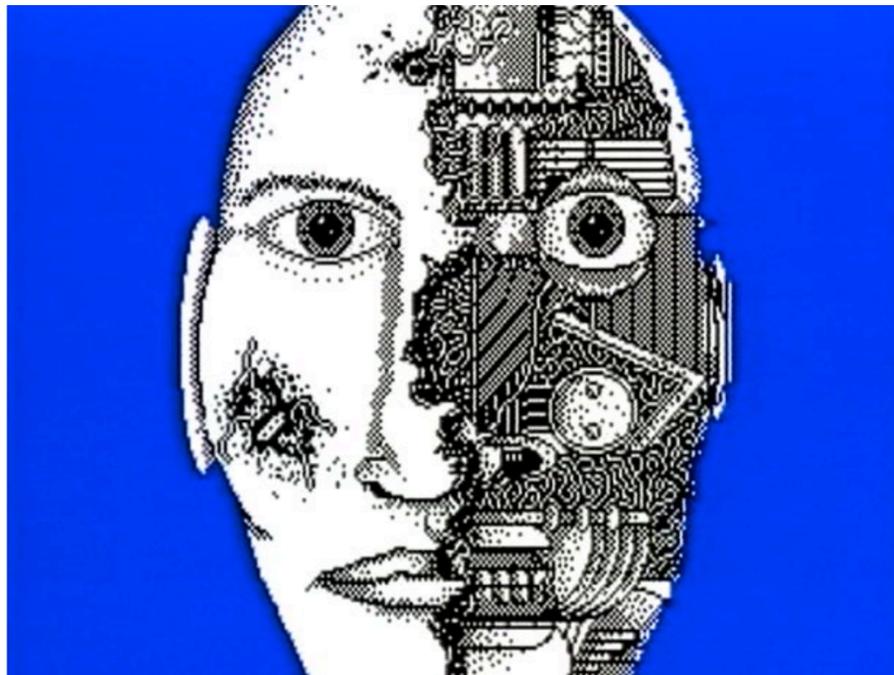
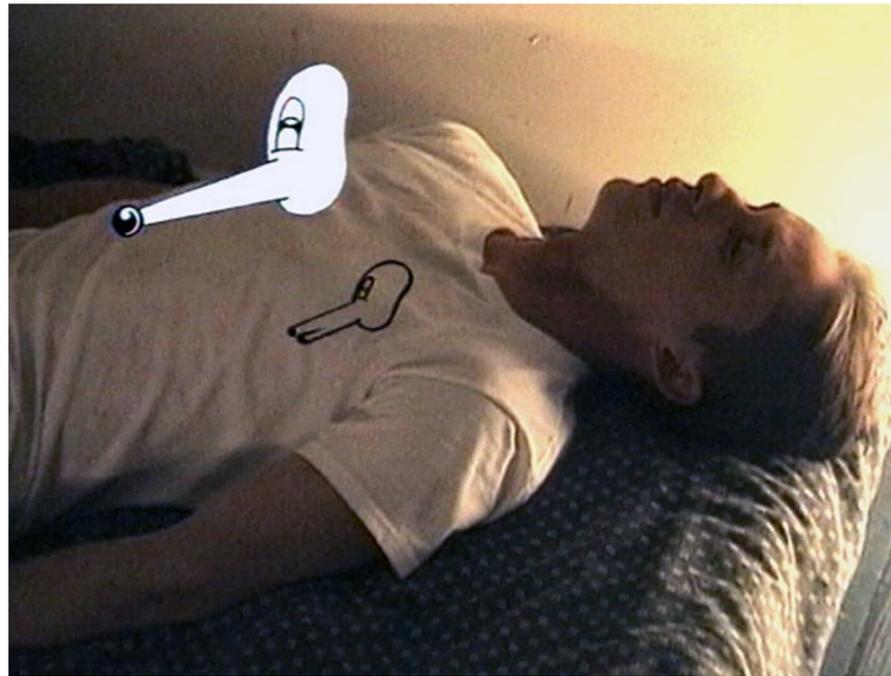
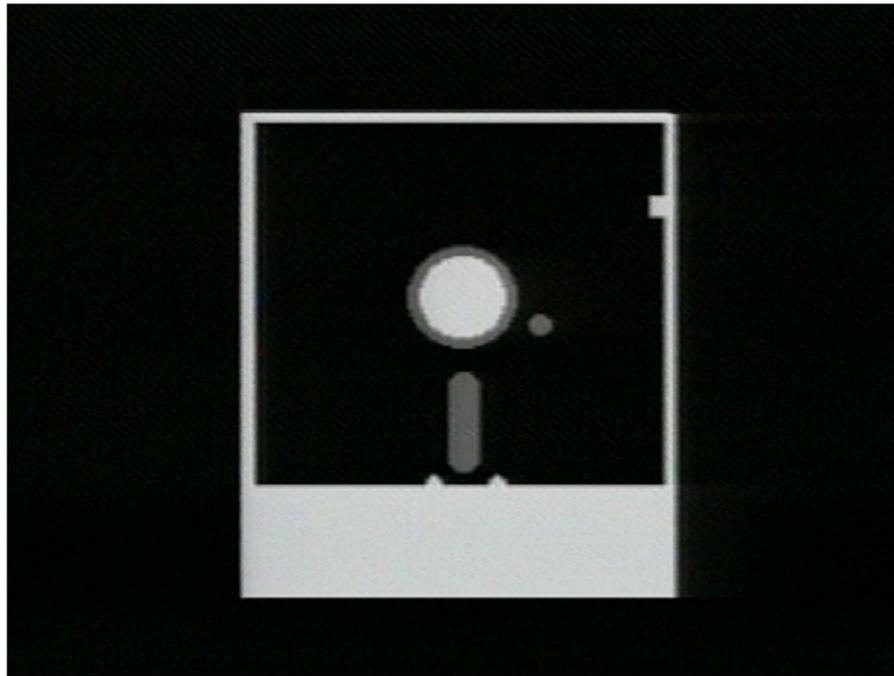
HOCHDÖRFER: It was the time where analog film was, in the critical scene, much more popular than it is today. So it was right to do something with analog film. And yet your first artwork, as you put it, was "Painting" Sites. Going in the completely opposite direction.

PRICE: I thought, what are people doing in this world of experimental video? In reaction I said, "I'm going to make videos without a video camera. I'll make my work out of Photoshop and internet trash." To make art out of internet searches was unusual at the time, I still don't know many earlier examples. Computers were seen as "new media"; they were seen as dorky. "Painting" Sites was embarrassing for me to show. It's images that obviously originated from a computer, they're already compressed, and then you add these ridiculous effects. And I really did want it to be stupid, I took the program's preset effects and randomly dropped them on the paintings.

HOCHDÖRFER: What were the effects?

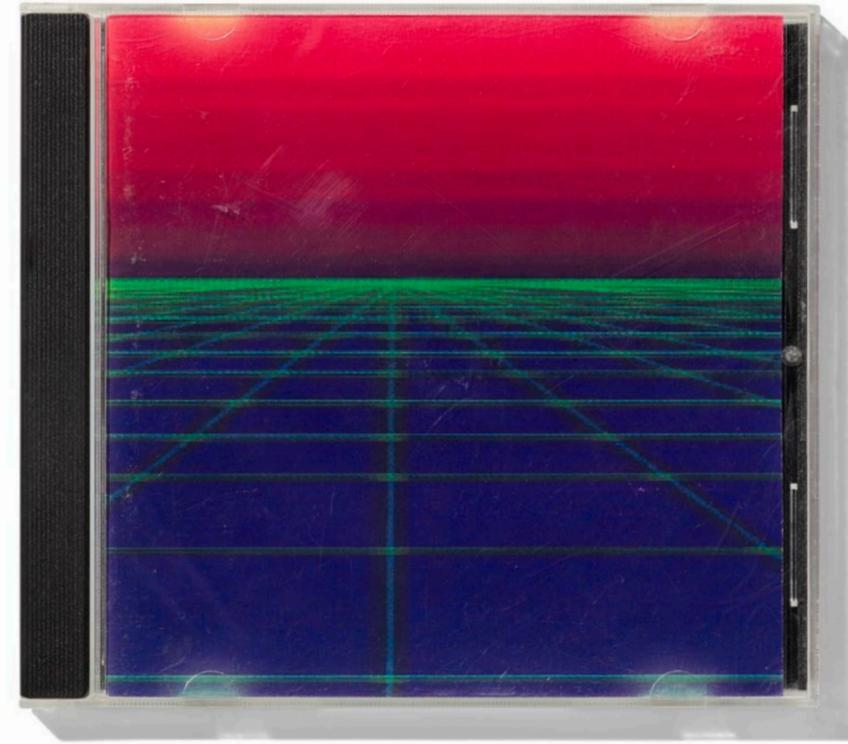
PRICE: Silly transitions that the maker of the software just throws in; they don't even expect anyone to use them. This is why in the context of film screenings it looked dumb, because real filmmakers weren't using the presets. It's like, when you get a real synthesizer it comes with banks of sounds that a lot of people don't use, because the whole point is that you're supposed to make your own. But then there's a kind of musician who likes to use the stupid sounds that are given by the manufacturer. Those are two positions, and I like them both. I want to make my own work, entirely, from scratch, but I also want to use the presets.

Stills from "Painting" Sites, 2000, video, 19:02 min.



2001–

Title Variable
Dispersion
Related Works



Game Heaven, CD
(New York: Distributed History, 2001)

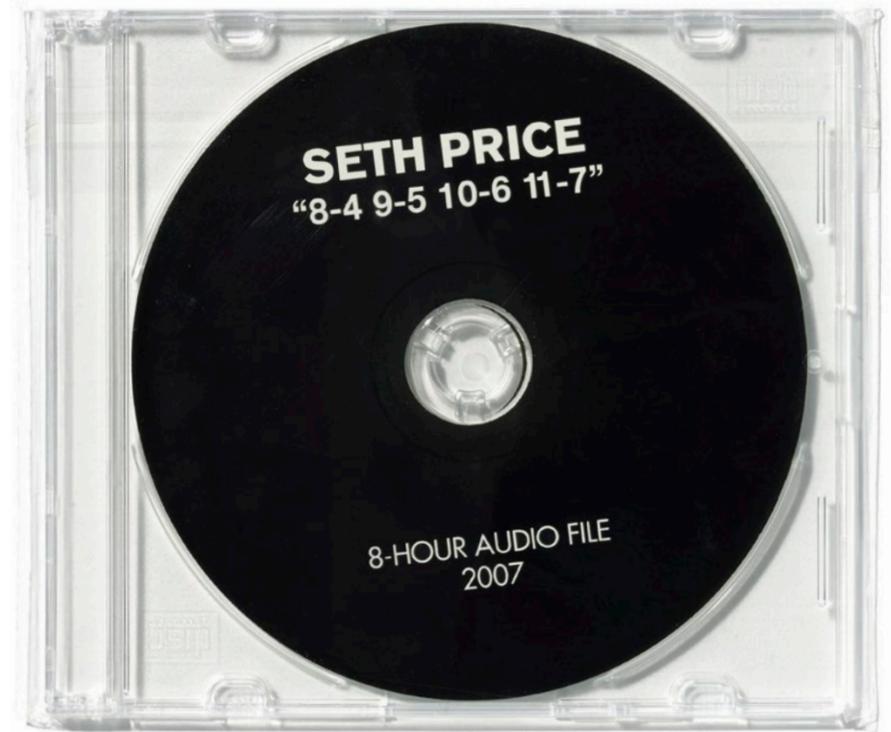
Video Game Soundtracks 1982-1987, CD
(New York: Distributed History, 2001)



New Jack Swing, CD
(New York: free103point9, 2002)



NJS Megamix 2K, CD
(New York: Distributed History, 2003)

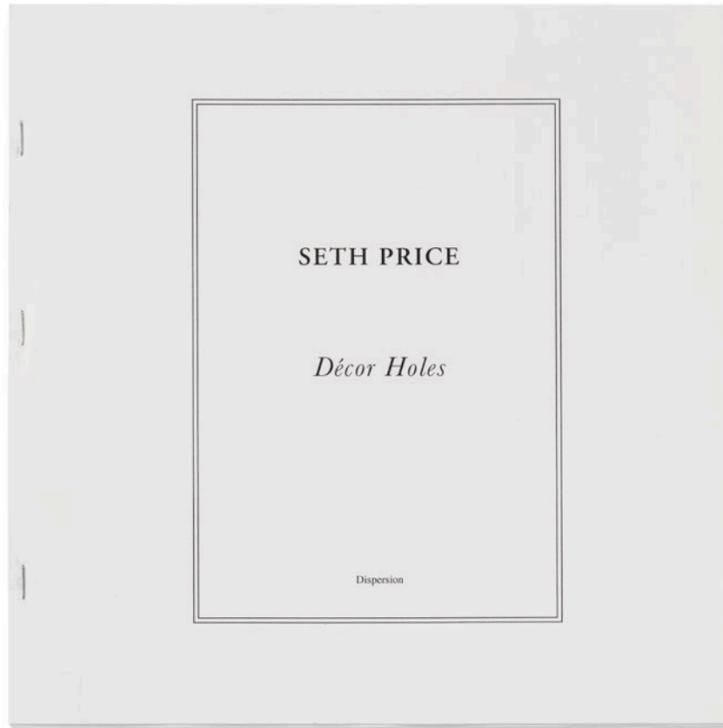
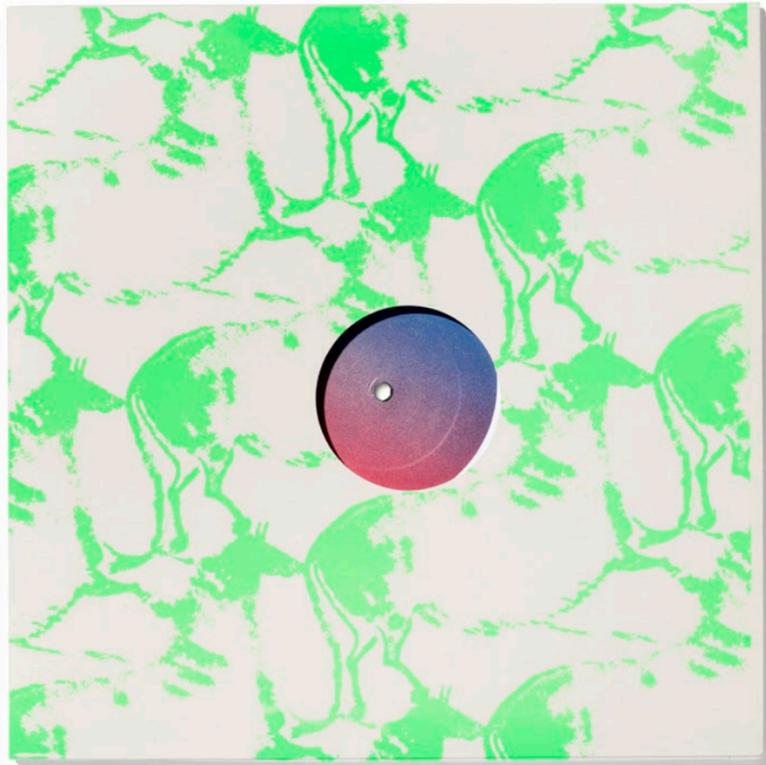


Industrial Fist, cassette
(New York: free103point9, 2003)

Industrial Fist, CD
(New York: free103point9, 2003)

8-4 9-5 10-6 11-7, CD
(New York: Distributed History, 2007)

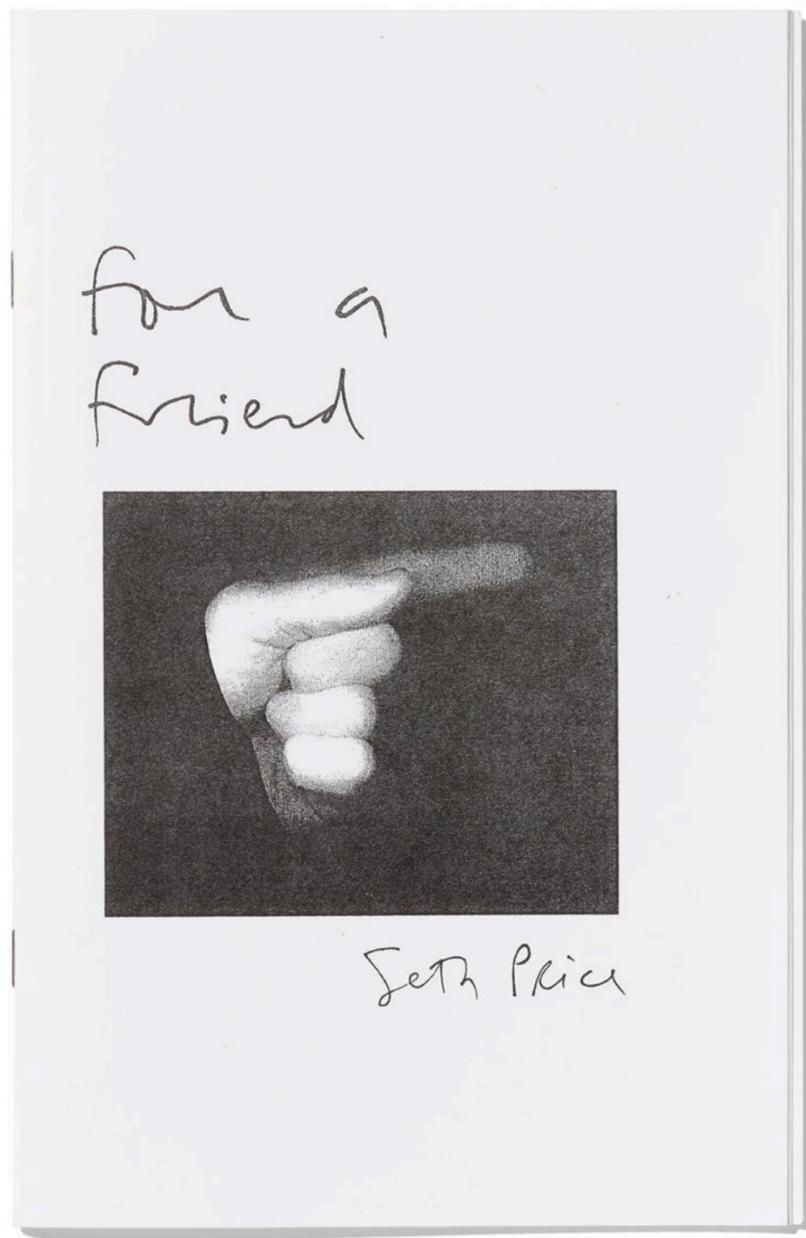
Akademische Graffiti, CD
(New York: Distributed History, 2005)



Akademische/Décor Holes, LP with screen-printed, hand-cut cover and booklet insert (New York: Reena Spaulings Fine Art, 2006)

Décor Holes, 2006, insert accompaniment to *Akademische/Décor Holes* LP (New York: Reena Spaulings Fine Art, 2006)

Akademische/Décor Holes, LP with screen-printed cover and booklet insert (New York: Reena Spaulings Fine Art, 2006)



For a Friend, photocopied booklet
(New York: Reena Spaulings Fine Art; Los Angeles: Ooga Booga, 2009)



Unique Source, untrimmed LP
(New York: Reena Spaulings Fine Art, 2006)



TORTURE TECH: SETH PRICE'S WEAPONS

Branden W. Joseph

Everything human and inhuman that is either physically or verbally, actually or allusively present, has become part of the glutted realm of weaponry, weaponry that can refer equally to pain or power.

—Elaine Scarry

One of the most noteworthy, if least substantial, entries in Seth Price's critical bibliography may be found in the seemingly innocuous mention of his CD compilation *Industrial Fist* (2003) by *New York Times* music critic Neil Strauss. Sandwiched between capsule reviews of the experimental group Evidence and the rap duo Young Gunz, Strauss's barely two-paragraph-long report lauded Price's collection of mid-'80s industrial music from such bands as Manufacture, Ministry, Skinny Puppy, and Controlled Bleeding as an archival, if nostalgic, recuperation of an overlooked moment in "white-person dance history"—"the chronological bridge between post-punk and techno."¹ Evidently already a fan, Strauss name-checked Price's previous two compilations: *Game Heaven* (2001), which gathered early video-game sound tracks from 1982 to 1987 (roughly the same years covered by *Industrial Fist*), and *NJS Megamix 2K* (2003), which surveyed New Jack Swing, the R&B-rap hybrid that arose in the late '80s and early '90s around such groups as Bell Biv DeVoe. All three compilations, Strauss observed, were "short on liner notes, song titles and explanatory information but long on musical intelligence."²

Price later augmented his series of compilations with *Akademische Graffiti* (2005), centered on the early years of the digital sampler and, in a somewhat different vein, *8-4 9-5 10-6 11-7* (2007), an eight-hour-long MP3 of dance music spanning four decades. All five collections are part of the ongoing project *Title Variable* (2001–), a single, open-ended artwork that comprises the various formats in which Price's compilations have been released—from freely accessible downloads to commercially distributed CDs and (in the case of *Industrial Fist*) cassette tapes to more precious (and expensive) art-edition vinyl LPs—as well as a series of accompanying texts, which have also appeared in multiple forms, formats, and venues, from commercial magazines to the Internet. "The packaged media in this project are not the work; they're more like off-cuts or something," explains Price. "It's not understood as a thing, it's understood as a state or a condition, like the weather."³ That Strauss apparently did not notice *Industrial Fist*'s role within *Title Variable*'s nebulous, overarching, postconceptual framework is precisely the point. For, as Price laid out in his influential essay *Dispersion* (2002–), he had set himself the goal of producing "an art that insinuates itself into the culture at large," "a categorically ambiguous art" that could be not only multiply formatted, modified, and inserted into diverse channels of distribution but also received by various audiences within different arenas of cultural production.⁴

Prior to Strauss's review, Price had sought to infiltrate music journalism by placing the textual accompaniments to *Industrial Fist* and *NJS Megamix 2K* in the short-lived periodical *Sound Collector Audio Review*. There, his reflections on middle-period industrial music—variously known as electro-industrial, industrial synth, or, in its most brutal and unrelenting form, torture tech—masqueraded as an appreciation of the Revolting Cocks' 1986 Wax Trax! Records release *Big Sexy Land*.⁵ The choice was not haphazard. Not only did Price's compilation open with "Union Carbide," a song from the LP, but, as he indicated, *Big Sexy Land*'s sleeve appropriated the cover of the Weimar-era avant-garde journal *Das Neue Frankfurt* (which itself might be the moniker of an industrial band), substituting the album title for the name of the architect Adolf Loos, the subject of the special issue. With *Industrial Fist*, Price reverse-engineered that appropriation by incorporating the group's music back into an artistic project.



Such knowing interactions between art and popular music had previously formed the subject of conceptual artist Dan Graham's essays "Punk as Propaganda" and "The End of Liberalism."⁶ Graham argued that bands like Devo—whose project, he asserted, involved "attempting to infiltrate popular culture"—self-consciously packaged themselves and their music as a means of ironically appropriating and commenting on broader cultural manifestations.⁷ Just as Pop artists Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein simulated mass production and subverted the "fascist types" depicted in comic strips, punk groups like Devo and the Ramones knowingly emulated corporate conformity and self-reflexively critiqued the "urban terror and the repressed fascism" of American culture.⁸ "Despite its apparent capitulation to 'white trash' fascist values," Graham contended, "in actuality, punk kept an ironic distance from its content.... These songs alluded to the second-hand violence depicted in comics, TV, and film images, which expressed the real violence of society beneath its liberal rationalizations."⁹

Although Graham's essays serve as important precedents for Price, the two artists' perspectives diverge in significant ways. Distinguishing the music on *Industrial Fist* from that of genre pioneers like Throbbing Gristle or Einstürzende Neubauten (both of whom always had artistic affinities), Price presents industrial synth as nearly irrecoverable: "Not as obtuse as hardcore, less insidious than 'alternative,' yet obstinate and dumb, so dumb you still can't get it downtown."¹⁰ Price describes New Jack Swing similarly: "a sound overly indebted to then-fashionable production tools," "large-format, cash-making, eyes-on-the-charts," and now "vaguely embarrassing," "a dumb, catchy mode that will later sound like death."¹¹ If, as Price argues, industrial synth addressed issues of fascism and social control, it did so without the reflexive criticality Graham ascribed to punk rock. Quoting the band Front Line Assembly ("Can't say yes, you can't say no / You're living in a fascist world"), Price declares, "Apparently what we're reduced to is crappy doggerel."¹² Ultimately, Price proves less interested in subcultural production (the subject of Graham's essays) than in technological infrastructure: video-game coding, professional electronic studios, drum machines, synthesizers, and the like. As he explained to Daniel Baumann, "Certain historical moments seemed emblematic of shifts in production, and the albums present those moments. The music itself, as tracks you actually listen to, is sort of incidental."¹³

For the music on *Industrial Fist*, the primary technological determinant was the advent of MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface), a protocol developed in the 1980s to allow electronic instruments, computers, and other equipment from different companies to communicate with one another when connected, or "chained," together. "Industrial Synth," writes Price, "was born in 1983, the son of the MIDI sequencer. Kraftwerk pioneered its use, but [the] sequencer really boomed in that brief window between '70s tape manipulation and '90s software capitulation. A moment of pattern programming, MIDI-slaves, -ins, -outs, and -throughs, metronomic digital chatter riding chains of boxes, studios like a kid's drawing of a traffic jam."¹⁴ In *Was Ist Los*, the textual accompaniment to *Akademische Graffiti* (where it is titled *Décor Holes*), Price links MIDI to aspects of what Alexander Galloway and Eugene Thacker have termed "protocological control," the means by which informatic and biological networks can be governed and regulated.¹⁵ In MIDI, Price explains, "packets of information, commands in fact, are relayed from one piece of gear to the next, allowing a synthesizer of one manufacture to get in line with a drum machine of another. These silent commands, such as 'start note' and 'end note,' are known as *events*. Arguably a language, and certainly a system of control, destined to be the new coin of the realm, a currency of loins and coins."¹⁶ As such, industrial synth's flirtations with fascist chic, however "dumb," find their media-technical counterparts in near-



Imaginary Self-Portrait/Industrial Culture, 2003, pen on paper, two parts

despotic lines of control, a situation complemented by the suggestively sadomasochistic language of MIDI "masters" and MIDI "slaves."¹⁷ More disciplined than any dominatrix, one stroke of a MIDI keyboard unleashes an inexorable sequence of commands (events or messages) to the instruments and other machines connected to it. Price continues, "Strike the key and trigger an event, which is immediately sequenced in a series of other events. A chain of control achieved through a simple depression. When I am depressed, there is power at work somewhere."¹⁸

Like the LP it accompanies, *Was Ist Los* is primarily dedicated not to the MIDI sequencer but to the digital sampler, a separate music technology designed to capture, store, manipulate, and play back any sound—in particular, for Price's interests, that of the human voice. Prefiguring observations he made in the video *Redistribution* (2007–) about the so-called uncanny valley (where computer-animated simulations of human likenesses appear more disconcerting than convincing), Price speculates in *Was Ist Los* that the sampler's digitally manipulated utterances, made to usher forth at the stroke of a key, fell out of favor not merely because the technology became outmoded but "because sampled and repitched voice is disturbing, a speech terrible and inhuman, an emulation gone bad."¹⁹ Once the technological novelty wears out, Price suggests, both computer-animated bodies and digitally processed voices give rise to fears of humanity's utter co-optation by power. With sampling, he declares, "The voice becomes a structural element under total control, it is made useful, as opposed to evocative or expressive. That which reliably promises communication becomes pure instrumentality, a move based on the notion that instruments give us what we want—predictability, security, control—rather than the confirmation of an accurate representation of the real."²⁰

In the video piece *Digital Video Effect: "Holes"* (2003), Price accentuated the unsettling impact of sampled voice by pairing pitch-shifted utterances of the simple vocalizations *um* and *ah* with grisly visual depictions of mutilated corpses downloaded from the Internet. The images, originally taken by police, journalists, and soldiers (or possibly fabricated), were then processed with a filter so that they appear and disappear through a seemingly random accumulation of circular apertures (each accompanied by a sound), to be subsequently replaced by an equally repellent scene or temporarily obscured by blackness and silence. As a result, both life (in the voice) and death (in the image) prove thoroughly manipulated, instrumentalized to hideously decorative effect. As noted by art critic Tim Griffin, the wavering prelinguistic vocalizations and the repugnant images of humans-become-meat are similarly nauseating, such that the experience of watching the video is somewhat like a rocky, sea-sickness-inducing boat ride.²¹

With sampler technology conjoined to the control structure that is MIDI, command and communication protocols would seem only further consolidated. Writing about the sampled and digitally manipulated electronic music collected on *Akademische Graffiti*, Price explains, "The machine recalls events and dispatches them in a digital relay that is by design simply on or off, making obsolete the weak signal, the half-understood communication. A zero-sum spell."²² Yet immediately following this passage, he devotes two pages to his "occult cameo" motif of 2001, a variant of an eighteenth-century insignia that can be read, depending on orientation, either as a happy nobleman sporting a cap or as a demonic (but still happy) skeleton surrounded by flames. Like Ludwig Wittgenstein's famous duck-rabbit image, Price's memento mori perpetually alternates, or "flashes," between one reading and the other in a manner quite different from the binary command structure that he characterized as "simply on or off."²³ While never fully coincident (as a single, two-headed image), the two countenances



of the occult cameo never perceptually resolve into either the nobleman or the skull; they remain, rather, ambiguous, a “half-understood communication” in some uncertain domain between nobility and damnation.

The figure of the occult cameo, which Price has reproduced on multiple occasions, may be seen to emblemize the ambitions behind work like *Title Variable*, the components of which signify differently, yet always somewhat ambiguously, in different circumstances.²⁴ This ambiguity plays out along an axis of presence and absence. When *Industrial Fist*, for instance, is received as a CD compilation, certain absences, such as track listings, become present; when approached as an artwork, the presence of actual tracks almost doesn't matter. In the cassette version (emblazoned with an ambiguously oriented double image of a hand with a revolver), Price played up such distinctions by adding an initialed gold seal across the case: in order to listen to the music, one must break the seal; if the cassette is regarded as an artwork, one wouldn't dare. “You're making objects that always point elsewhere, that refer to other structures. And these structures are incomplete,” writes Price. “In fact,” he adds appositely, albeit in a different context, “there are two opposed readings that are sometimes brought out in the same breath or the same text.”²⁵

Art historian and critic Johanna Burton has astutely characterized the mechanics of ambiguity operating within Price's images and objects. “Structurally,” she notes, “one thing is *taken for another*, which is to say that for a moment two things are taken to be the same and, for a moment, they read both *against* and *within* one another. This effects a strange kind of materialization wherein the thing misrecognized seems to become something else and, in a sense, is made to disappear even while remaining fully there.”²⁶ Partly due to the subject of Price's artist's book *How to Disappear in America*, the contents of which were mostly appropriated from texts about shedding one's identity, such discussions of disappearance have become a leitmotif within the artist's critical reception.²⁷ Thus far, however, even Price's most astute commentators have failed to note the persistent relationship between disappearance and a somewhat more martial, even militant, analogy: “An object disappears,” Price writes in *Dispersion*, “when it becomes a weapon.”²⁸

Price's allusion to weaponry arises amid his reflections on Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge's *Public Sphere and Experience*, a book that proposes infiltrating the bourgeois public sphere with “counterproducts” to oppose the illusions that mask and maintain “the violence of present social relations . . . reproduced in the systems of press monopoly [and] the mass media” (precisely the phenomena addressed in Graham's analyses of punk). Cautioning against a critical strategy beholden solely to ideology critique, Negt and Kluge argue that “a counterpublic sphere that is based on ideas and discourses with progressive content [alone] cannot develop effective *weapons* against the combined elements of illusion, the public sphere, and public power.” Rather, they conclude, “the only antidotes to the production of the illusory public sphere are the counterproducts of a proletarian public sphere: idea against idea, product against product, production sector against production sector.”²⁹

As indicated by *Industrial Fist's* reception in the music pages of the *New York Times*, work like *Title Variable* probes the counterproduct's capacity to disappear into the apparatus of mass distribution, to act as a weapon via infiltration. “It's space into which the work of art must project itself lest it be outdistanced entirely by these corporate interests,” Price argues, still in dialogue with Negt and Kluge. “You must fight something in order to understand it.”³⁰ At the beginning of *Was Ist Los*, however, Price reverses his previous mention of the weapon's disappearance. Referencing Steve Reich's

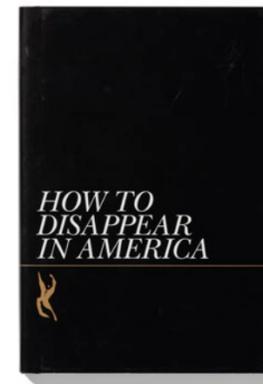
use of a digital sampling keyboard to incorporate the voices of concentration-camp survivors into his composition *Different Trains* (1988), Price declares, “Listening through this music, specific language emerges: testimonials from Holocaust survivors, overburdened with meaning, unassailable. Well, a thing only really appears when it's turned into a weapon. *Ovens, showers, lampshades, soap*: an innocuous group of words, unless we're told that the context is Germany in the 1940s.”³¹

At first glance, this reference to the weapon's *appearing* may seem merely cynical, as though Price were following his own advice from “Folklore U.S.” on how to come across as cool: “Just keep your mouth shut, mostly . . . [but] when you do say something, say the opposite of what someone else just said, just reverse it.”³² On closer inspection, however, the dialectic of appearance and disappearance conjured by the two seemingly contradictory comments points to what literary theorist Elaine Scarry has analyzed as “the expressive potential of the sign of the weapon.”³³

Noting that scenes of torture frequently take place in sites pseudonymously designated “guest rooms” or “safe houses,” which simulate and pervert the norms of domesticity, Scarry describes how perpetrators convert every element conventionally associated with comfort into an instrument of suffering: beds, cots, ceilings, and floors are deployed for stress positions; bathtubs are used to simulate drowning; chairs, refrigerators, and filing cabinets are converted into objects of blunt force. “The room,” writes Scarry, “both in its structure and its content, is converted into a weapon, deconverted, undone. Made to participate in the annihilation of the prisoners, made to demonstrate that everything is a weapon, the objects themselves, and with them the fact of civilization, are annihilated: there is no wall, no window, no door, no bathtub, no refrigerator, no chair, no bed.” “That is,” she continues, “in the conversion of a refrigerator into a bludgeon, the refrigerator disappears.”³⁴ In *Was Ist Los*, Price alludes to the odious conjunction of domestic objects and inhuman behavior by juxtaposing *Design in the Fifties*, a book on midcentury modern furniture, with the Amnesty International report *Torture in the Eighties*.

As outlined by Scarry, an object's *disappearance* when turned into a weapon simultaneously entails the weapon's *appearance* as a sign. “As an actual physical fact,” she writes, “a weapon is an object that goes into the body and produces pain. As a perceptual fact[, however], it lifts the pain out of the body and makes it visible or, more precisely, it acts as a bridge or mechanism across which some of pain's attributes—its incontestable reality, its totality, its ability to eclipse all else, its power of dramatic alteration and world dissolution—can be lifted away from their source, can be separated from the sufferer and referred to power, broken off from the body and attached instead to the regime.”³⁵ Crucial for this second transformation—the emergence of the weapon as sign—is a “self-conscious display of agency,” the assailant's demonstration that he (and he alone) has the capacity to transform the victim's environment at will.³⁶ It is via the “appropriation of the world into the torturer's arsenal of weapon[s],” Scarry argues, that “objectified pain is denied as pain and read as power.”³⁷ Thus, as she elaborates about the conversion of such items as refrigerators into bludgeons (and here we come back to the above-quoted passage from Price's *Was Ist Los*), “The appearance of these common domestic objects in torture reports of the 1970s is no more gratuitous and accidental than the fact that so much of our awareness of Germany in the 1940s is attached to the words ‘ovens,’ ‘showers,’ ‘lampshades,’ and ‘soap.’”³⁸

Despite a long-standing engagement with issues of violence (dating back at least as far as the film *Cowboys*, 1996), Price's work conjures up Scarry's analysis less on the subject of torture per se than on the transmutation of objects and images from one state or status to another. Attentiveness to the mutability ushered forth by digitization has long been regarded as one of Price's signature artistic

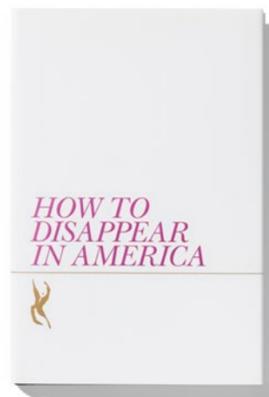


How to Disappear in America
(New York: Leopard Press, 2008;
1st ed.)

innovations, leading to work that can emulate and inhabit the fluctuating networks of information-age capitalism. “There’s something unstable about the medium,” Price writes about the Internet. “Anything can be replaced or altered at any time, and nothing ever is truly finished or final.”³⁹ As he (or, rather, his fictional alter ego) has commented more recently in *Fuck Seth Price: A Novel*, “According to the digital way of thinking, anything could be transformed into anything else and no one need worry about being cheated because this alchemy relied not on cunning sophistry, economic sleight of hand, or cultural bad faith, but on the bland, automated, everyday magic of numbers.”⁴⁰ Price portrays the apotheosis of digital culture as “the air-tight control structure” of near-ubiquitous cloud storage and computing.⁴¹ “The dream of the cloud,” he observes, “was complete meltdown, such that every thing became liquid.... The aim of such a frictionless state was that anything, not only virtual but physical, might eventually be exchanged for absolutely anything else. Only not by you! The moment you snapped a photo, some force beyond you would transmogrify it into numbers, money, power; it might become a song, or a law, or a healthcare plan, or a disease vector, or a drone strike.”⁴²

In the inexorable transformation of objects and information by a force beyond one’s control (“not by you!”), Price’s characterization of the dream of a digital economy resonates disconcertingly with Scarry’s account of the nightmare of clandestine “guest rooms.” Such similarities, though, point to a more profound degree of common insight. Scarry argues that the semiotic in extremis by which the incontestable certitude of bodily pain is attributed to the weapon (and thus to the perpetrator or regime that wields it) attains particular force during periods of a widespread societal “crisis of belief,” historical moments “when some central idea or ideology or cultural construct has ceased to elicit a population’s belief... because it has for some reason been divested of ordinary forms of substantiation.”⁴³ That just such a crisis was initiated by the advent of digitization is precisely the “slightly off-the-wall” hypothesis tentatively advanced toward the conclusion of *Fuck Seth Price*.⁴⁴ Provocatively likening the impact of digitization to the trauma of the Second World War, Price proposes, “The so-called digital age was, first and foremost, a tremendous challenge to the idea of *meaning* as a category. It was not yet clear if this category had been emptied-out or filled up or magicked into something new, but there was tremendous anxiety about the shift.”⁴⁵ He then proceeds to speculate about how the digital revolution, which entailed “the transvaluation of all values, the undoing of all fixity, and the unmaking of that which had been known as human,” might be related to, or even predicated on, “the displacing of violence from a society’s bodies into the realm of images.”⁴⁶ “Violence,” he states, “was intolerable to a highly developed society, but at the same time that society somehow needed violence to remain present. How to make something present and absent at the same time? In a highly developed culture, violence was dispersed into images, so that it might be held, passed around, bought and sold.”⁴⁷

Although Price’s most prominent evocation of the connection between digital imagery and violence appears in the *Hostage Video Still with Time Stamp* pieces (2005–), his reiteration of the dialectic of presence and absence points back to the operations of *Title Variable*. As previously mentioned, Price formulated the work to emulate and inhabit the nebulous, transitory trajectories of digitization: “Nothing in the *Title Variable* project need ever be finished. The music and the essays can be endlessly re-edited, repackaged, re-released, a title can change, the content can change, and it remains the same ‘piece.’”⁴⁸ Yet while *Title Variable*’s diffuse condition may be likened to “the weather” (an analogy Price also applies to information on the Internet), it stands opposed to the digitized operations of “the cloud.”⁴⁹ For if, following Scarry, a weapon may be defined by the unilateral direction of agency



How to Disappear in America
(New York: Leopard Press, 2008;
3rd ed., 2015)

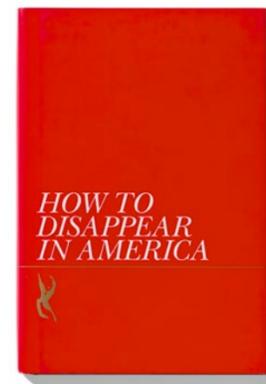
and the thoroughgoing instrumentalization of the object or expression used, then by inverting both characteristics Price’s counterproducts reveal themselves as counterweapons.⁵⁰ Appropriated from different areas of corporate culture and adopting the forms and formats of the same, Price’s music compilations are reintroduced into the circuits of mass distribution as digital information, packaged commodities, and art objects with the objective not of seamless integration (even if they “disappear” into their milieus) but of provoking reflections on both their contents and their contexts. “The release of Game Heaven,” writes Price about his compilation of video-game sound tracks, “enacts the common marketing strategy of uprooting an ‘underground’ or otherwise obscure cultural artifact and exposing it to a broad audience.” However, he continues, “the aim here is not to profit, rather it is to raise questions of access, distribution, and circulation, by reinserting these songs into the marketplace.”⁵¹

With *Industrial Fist* and *Akademische Graffiti*, as we have seen, Price extended his line of questioning to the possible imbrication of music-production technologies with instrumentalized expression and protocological control. Following Negt and Kluge, however, the efficacy of Price’s counterproducts is to be judged not on their information value, but rather on their capacity to keep such questions “in suspension,” to flash between one mode of cultural production or reception and another and thereby produce what Sarat Maharaj has termed “conductors of new thinking, new subjectivity and action.”⁵² If, on the one hand, Price’s ambitions for *Title Variable*’s deinstrumentalizing procedures are rather modest (“to take pleasure in the process, and hope that the difficulty is preserved in the work as a question”), on the other they are quite expansive: “the intimation of a categorically ambiguous art, one in which the synthesis of multiple circuits of reading carries an emancipatory potential.”⁵³

*

About three-quarters of the way into *How to Disappear in America*, the reader encounters a brief section that may serve as a parable of those issues in Price’s art that this essay has been circling around. It is devoted to ridding oneself of “any firearms your opposition might have which you feel could be used against you.”⁵⁴ Counterintuitively, the advice given is not to take them with you on the lam, bury them in a field, or toss them in a river, but rather to drop them (preferably unloaded) into a nearby mailbox. “The police will keep any firearm you deposit into a postal box for a long, long time, perhaps even destroying it even though it’s not been used in a crime,” the largely appropriated text helpfully explains. “The letters and boxes taken from the postal box will also be subjected to several days—if not weeks [*sic*]—delays as they are checked and the origination and destination addresses checked. Because of that, you shouldn’t deposit any letters you might feel to write in the same box as they will be delayed.”⁵⁵

Once deposited into a mailbox, it seems, an unloaded gun cannot be fluidly converted into a package or a letter—the weapon, that is (to push the metaphor), cannot be frictionlessly converted into a “sign.” Unlike a letter bomb or an envelope filled with anthrax, an unloaded gun in a mailbox does not, in itself, have the capacity to inflict damage. Instead, the action of placing it in the mail transfers an object that circulates seamlessly within its own system of distribution (gun shop, gun show, pawnshop, even concealed mail order) into another: parcel post. Simultaneously a package and a weapon, but not unproblematically either one, the posted gun functions as an occult cameo, existing in an ambiguous state that cannot be easily or straightforwardly read or received. It disrupts the distribution of the gun and the mail, deinstrumentalizing both with a view toward enlarging the emancipatory potential of the person seeking to evade the impact of the weapon.



How to Disappear in America
(New York: Leopard Press, 2008;
2nd ed., 2011)

Notes

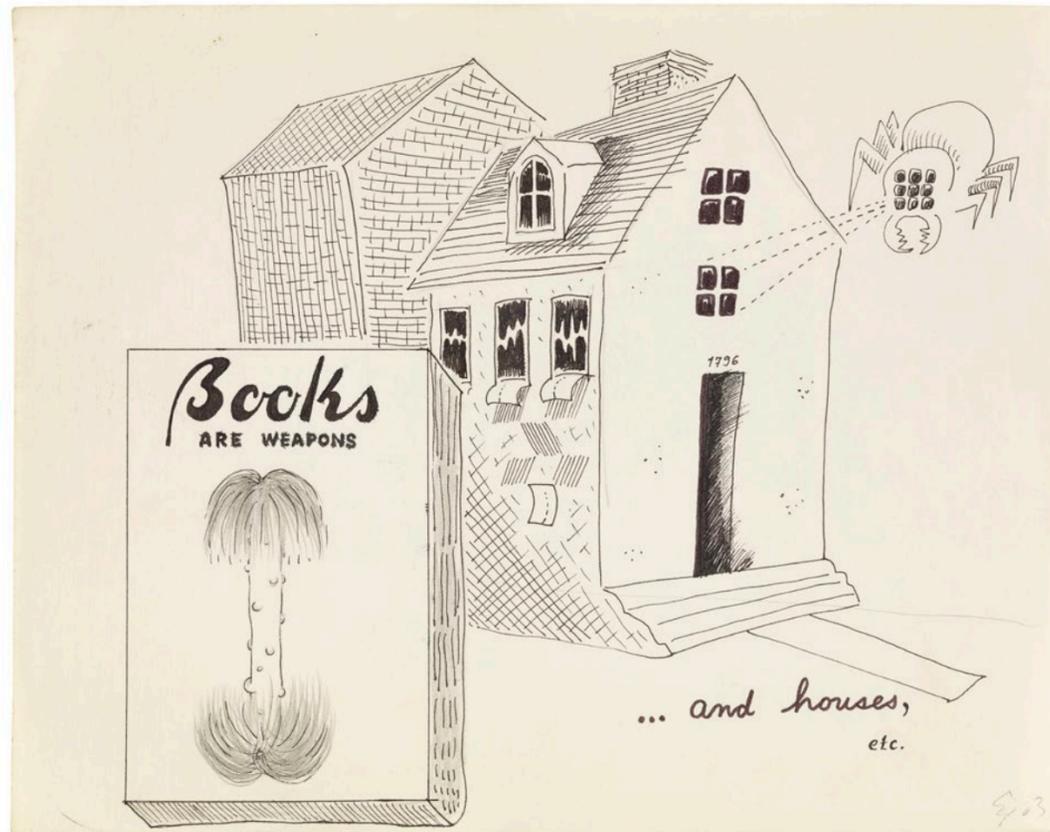
1. Neil Strauss, "An Indie Smorgasbord Features Current Fare," *New York Times*, March 1, 2004, E7.
2. Ibid. *NJS Megamix 2K* was also issued under the streamlined title *NJS* and in a spelled-out version as *New Jack Swing*.
3. Gwen Allen, "Interview with Seth Price," *Art Journal* 66, no.1 (Spring 2007): 89.
4. Seth Price, *Dispersion* (self-published, 2002–), n.p.
5. Seth Price, "Revoluting Cocks: *Big Sexy Land*," *Sound Collector Audio Review*, no. 4 (Winter 2003–4): 16.
6. Dan Graham, "Punk as Propaganda" (1979), in *Rock My Religion: Writings and Art Projects, 1965–1990*, ed. Brian Wallis (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1993), 96–113; and Dan Graham, "The End of Liberalism" (1981–82), in *Rock My Religion*, 70–79. In the essay accompanying *NJS Megamix 2K*, Price quotes a statement by Devo ("If you take a band that's good, you bust it up and sell three times as many records") that also appears in "Punk as Propaganda": Seth Price, "Various Artists: *NJS Megamix*," *Sound Collector Audio Review 3* (Summer 2003): 7; and Graham, "Punk as Propaganda," 96.
7. Ibid., 76.
8. Ibid., 73, 77.
9. Ibid., 77.
10. Price, "Revoluting Cocks," 16.
11. Price, "Various Artists," 7.
12. Price, "Revoluting Cocks," 16.
13. Daniel Baumann, "Real Cheating: A Conversation with Seth Price," *Parkett*, no. 75 (2005): 156. Price's compilation *8–4 9–5 10–6 11–7* represents both a culmination and a transformation of his *Title Variable* project: culmination, because the technologies foregrounded in each of the previous compilations could be seen as leading to the ubiquitous form of dance music that it contains; transformation, because the collection no longer focuses on a specific technological transition, but speaks to wider realms of affect management and the incorporation of leisure and lifestyle into the ever-expanding realm of work. The title refers to the typical daily schedules of someone working in a union job, an office, a gallery, and a retail boutique, respectively.
14. Price, "Revoluting Cocks," 16.
15. Alexander Galloway and Eugene Thacker, "Protocol, Control, and Networks," *Grey Room*, no. 17 (Fall 2004): 6–29.
16. Seth Price, *Was Ist Los* (aka *Décor Holes*, *Unique Source/All Natural Suicide Gang*, *Akademische Graffiti*, and *Depletion*, first published 2003; repr., New York: 38th Street Publishers, 2010), n.p.
17. In the language of MIDI, "master" refers to the device that sends information out as a binary bit stream; the "slave" is the unit that receives the information. A quick glance at enthusiast websites such as gearslut.com reveals appropriately fetishistic-sounding threads on, for example, how to establish an "AKAI MPC 1000 as a slave in a hardware MIDI setup" (<https://gearslut.com/board/electronic-music-instruments-electronic-music-production/530800-akai-mpc-1000-slave-hardware-midi-setup.html>).
18. Price, *Was Ist Los*.
19. Seth Price, "Redistribution (video transcript)" (2007–), in *Price, Seth*, ed. Kathrin Jentjens, Anja Nathan-Dorn, and Beatrix Ruf, exh. cat., Kunsthalle Zürich, Zurich, and Kölischer Kunstverein, Cologne (Zurich: JRP/Ringier, 2010), 85; and Price, *Was Ist Los*.
20. Price, *Was Ist Los*.
21. Tim Griffin, "The Personal Effects of Seth Price," *Artforum* 47, no. 10 (Summer 2009): 291.
22. Price, *Was Ist Los*.
23. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe, 3rd ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1958), 196e–197e.
24. Price's occult-cameo motif first appeared in *Dispersion*. Two versions, *Occult Cameo 1* and *Occult Cameo 2* (both 2001), are reproduced in *Seth Price Drawings: Studies for Works 2000–2015* (London: Koenig, 2015), 20–21. A third variant appears in *Was Ist Los*.
25. Price, "Redistribution (video transcript)," 92, 94.
26. Johanna Burton, "Seth Price: A Human Interest Story," in *Guyton, Price, Smith, Walker* ed. Beatrix Ruf, exh. cat., Kunsthalle Zürich, Zurich (self-published, 2007), 76.
27. Seth Price, *How to Disappear in America* (New York: Leopard Press, 2008). On disappearance, see also Griffin, "The Personal Effects of Seth Price," 285–93; and Michael Newman, "Seth Price's Operations," in Jentjens, Nathan-Dorn, and Ruf, *Price, Seth*, Ibid., 29–73.
28. Price, *Dispersion*.
29. Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge, *Public Sphere and Experience: Toward an Analysis of the Bourgeois and Proletarian Public Sphere*, trans. Peter Labanyi, Jamie Owen Daniel, and Assenka Oksiloff (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 78–80 (emphasis altered).
30. Price, *Dispersion*; the last line reappears (with exclamation point) in Price, *Was Ist Los*.
31. Price, *Was Ist Los*.
32. Seth Price, "Folklore U.S.," in *Folklore U.S.* (New York: Petzel Gallery; London: Koenig, 2014), 210.
33. Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 17.
34. Ibid., 40–41.
35. Ibid., 56.
36. Ibid., 27.
37. Ibid., 45.
38. Ibid., 41.
39. Price, "Redistribution (video transcript)," 89.
40. Seth Price, *Fuck Seth Price: A Novel* (New York: Leopard Press, 2015), 109.
41. Seth Price, "Compatibility [*sic*] Mode," *Mousse* 41 (December–January 2013–14): 75.
42. Price, *Fuck Seth Price*, 109.
43. Scarry, *The Body in Pain*, 14.
44. Price, *Fuck Seth Price*, 110.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid., 117, 119.
47. Ibid., 119.
48. Price, "Redistribution (video transcript)," 91.
49. Price, in Allen, "Interview with Seth Price," 89; and Price, "Redistribution (video transcript)," 91.
50. Cf. Judith Butler's comments on the possibility of transforming military weapons such as tanks and trucks into "a support or platform for a nonmilitary resistance": Judith Butler, *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), 72.
51. Seth Price, "Game Heaven," *In Magazine*, no. 3 (2002), n.p.
52. Price, "Redistribution (video transcript)," 96; and Price, *Dispersion*, quoting Maharaj from Daniel Birnbaum, "Sarat Maharaj: In Other's Words," *Artforum* 40, no. 6 (February 2002): 110.
53. Price, "Redistribution (video transcript)," 82; and Price, *Dispersion*.
54. Price, *How to Disappear in America*, 75.
55. Ibid., 78. On the use of the postal service as a weapon, see Colby Chamberlain, "George Maciunas and the Art of Paperwork" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2016).



Title Variable, 2001–
Framed CDs, text on board, free CDs bootlegged by Daniel
Baumann, installed at Kunsthalle Basel, 2004

Title Variable, 2001–
Essay on paper, installed at the Modern
Institute, Glasgow, 2008





Books Are Weapons, 2003
Pen and graphite on paper

Study for a Christian Novel, 2001-2
Pen, graphite, and tape on paper

IT IS LATER THAN ITS EVER BEEN!

**No Profanity! ?
No Sex! ?**

YEAR 2033

CULT OF THE INDIVIDUAL

- CYDONIA

- A VIRTUAL COUNTRY OF CYBER-KIDS. EXTREMELY OLD PERSON (1000's/YRS)

FATAL FLAWS

OUR HERO
STARTS to have Visions while Playing a video game OF an Angel

THE INTERNET WAS USED TO CONTROL PEOPLE

RAPTURE
MILLIONS OF CHRISTIANS VANISH
PAROUSIA - GREEK: "COMING" ("CAUGHT UP")
↳ SUPERNOVA APPEARANCE
CHRIST WILL COME LIKE "A THIEF IN THE NIGHT"

THE ANTICHRIST EMERGES FROM THE SEA
JOHN 1+2 - ANTICHRIST REFERENCE

The Beast is A Kingdom, not a single Creature. The Antichrist is not a single man, but a group of lost Christians.

LUKE 21:25
There will be signs in sun, moon + STARS
have a "CHRISTIAN" who is an unbeliever (Judas)

NASA = The Antichrist covering up the fact that Cydonia = ZION - NASA is under-water because water from fountains, pestilence + earthquakes

WARS & RUMORS OF WAR
A Great Deception Comes Upon The People
AND NASA/Hollywood triggers a flood that drowns all civ. (John escapes +) 1/2 earthquake

FORCES OF EVIL

- CLONING
- BUSINESS PARKS
- COPYRIGHT IS ABOLISHED (EUROPEAN EMPIRE BANNED IT)
- MAKING A VIRTUE OF PSYCHIC DAMAGE.
- Dea Essentes - Scalloped Turtle dies Odor Symphonies
- HOB = the dead
- A COMPANY called "MOSAIC"
- IF ONE IS unhappy, one goes to a "Cutter" house & cuts oneself.
- "CORPSE-TALKING" The wounds of the Corpse bleed in the presence of a MURDERER...
- PESTBILDER Medical images of Christ to ward off plague. 1st mass-produced PRINTS. Made by unscrupulous artists.
- (DANSE MACABRE)
- HIGH PRIEST w/ A BIRD-MASK

4 KINGDOMS: Lion Bear Leopard Dragon w/ 10 horns

(The Beast is to come But The Antichrist is already here (John 2:18))

"SOCIAL SECURITY"
was the bedrock on which the totalitarian IT System was built.

1. People are intended to migrate to Cydonia.

2. The ALIENS who built it are the "Gods" of Pagan Cultures

3. (HELL ON EARTH) he fights to get to the "ship"

4. high priest in a bird-mask

5. (GOES TO MARS)

6. (ON MARS)

The Antichrist is a cloned Baby - they impregnated 666 women

Pharmaceutical companies break down barriers to age (for the wealthy) (A Restraint)

The Rich Live only on Cash - so that there is no record via databases.

Because of prison-overcrowding, prisoners are allowed to live free, with implants to surveil their movements.

THE RICH LIVE ONLY ON CASH - SO THAT THERE IS NO RECORD VIA DATABASES.

BECAUSE OF PRISON-OVERCROWDING, PRISONERS ARE ALLOWED TO LIVE FREE, WITH IMPLANTS TO SURVEIL THEIR MOVEMENTS.

THE SUM OF ALL NUMBERS UP TO 36 = 666

1010011 } Binary number of The Beast

THERE IS A PLAGUE - A DISEASE IS SPREADING... PEOPLE ARE CONVERTING TO SOMETHING DIFFERENT...

RIK 2 Days

NIEUW JAZZ & SWINGJ&E

Historye

Buy Game Heaven CD

PRESS ROOM

SETH PRICES

?slink?

Like Death, but with an 'S....'

My Web Page

His the name Seth, Price. To emal, it is there the right side.... Also Projec of Swingbeat music, or to the video game songs from store, etc.



New Jack MegaMix 2000

IM A CAT



Well he is working on soem things:

- 1. Shows
- 2. Musics

He lives in L.I. City, nyc.



Hey, Man
 ?Oh, whats going on dude
 yeah thts totally crazy that that hapened
 ??????????
 ?uuh! I hope or my momll kill me

"Not an Everyday Sort": Catching up with Seth Landry

Seth Landry is what one might call "raffishly handsome". With his impish smirk, hair oh-so-mussed, and a carefully-cultivated five-o'-clock shadow, he draws stares as we enter the dim pub he's chosen for our interview. When the phrase is suggested, he looks briefly perplexed, and shrugs it off. "Is that English, 'raffish'?" he muses. "I wouldn't really know." But then, modesty is just a part of his charm. It's hard to believe that it's only been a year since he first wowed audiences with his performance in Graeme Wilcox's Rigor Mortis. Since then, it's been one long whirlwind of star turns, endorsements, interviews—and, of course, gossip and scandal. "I got a lot of that, yeah," he grins ruefully, mopping up his salad with a fistful of pommes-frites. "It wasn't so good." If only that were how his very public doings were characterized in the press, which has had a field day with his trysts and lager-fueled shenanigans. He seems genuinely honest when he says that he doesn't want a return to those days. "It's kind of like I've had enough," he explains, suddenly serious. "I don't care for the BS about how, you know, I did this or that or the other." As if to punctuate the statement—and against the protestations of this interviewer—he orders a round of ale, and promptly makes short work of his mug. For one who brings such an air of gravity to whatever he's working on, it only seems natural that he'd put away food and drink with a vengeance. Fittingly, the maitre d' seems to know him, and they exchange a minute of good-natured banter, of the sort that only casually-acquainted men can pull off. "It really is like my neighborhood place," he admits, "I love that." Indeed, the bistro is barely a stone's throw from the townhouse he's recently purchased with his wife, designer Helena Smith. Together with decorator Neville Jean, the couple have been renovating the flat in anticipation of their first child (due for Christmas!). Will it be Landry Jr., one wonders? "Oh, we don't know what to call him, yet, really," he says sheepishly, settling back in his chair and pushing off his plate. His gaze moves to the street outside, as if this turn in the conversation has taken him to a more private place. However, when I inquire about his newly-constructed, steel-reinforced cement sub-basement, his eyes crease at the edges and he screws up his face in a merry grin, at ease again. "You mean the pounder!" he exclaims, lapsing into gales of mirth. "The pounder" is what he and Forgery front-man Clive Duncan call their new practice room. It's an addition to his 18th century townhouse which, tellingly, was installed against Helena's wishes. Pressed on the point, he squints into the middle distance, brooding. "It's not really a row," he insists after a pregnant pause, "more of a tiff". Such a distinction is just what one might expect from the man whom some have dubbed the "life style buccaneer". Talk turns to his work, which he has sensibly placed on the back-burner now that Helena is expecting. "I'm really just looking for that good bite," he explains, "the kind of one that would pretty much put it away, for life." He leans in conspiratorially and whispers: "And that's not an everyday sort". Well, he may be waiting a while, but then, he's earned the right.

-© 1990, Set Price, with help from Clive, Nigel, Ian, Graeme, Simon



Back to Main

WELCOME TO OUR WEB SITE

What's come on
MAN

THE RUNNING MAN Some chatsters have emailed The List inquiring about "the running man" It's kind of hard to describe in words but it is a new kids/80's/early nineties/cheezy dance that you would expect to find at some junior high dance-off or something. It is moving like you were running but you stay in one place. Imagine putting together the moonwalk and running in place, then incorporate some sort of random arm movements and you got it holmes

[Back to Main](#)

DISPERSION



**SETH
PRICE**

The definition of artistic activity occurs, first of all, in the field of distribution.

Marcel Broodthaers

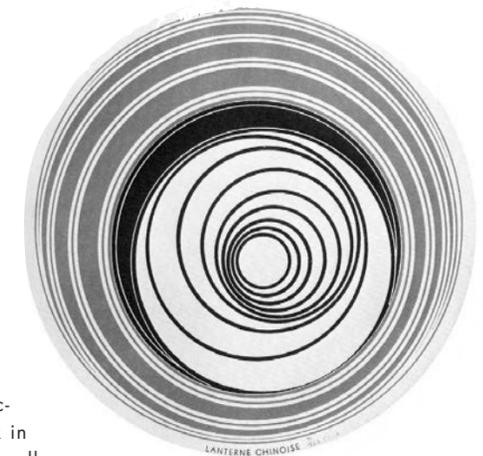


One of the ways in which the Conceptual project in art has been most successful is in claiming new territory for practice. It's a tendency that has been almost too successful: today it seems that most of the work in the international art system positions itself as Conceptual to some degree, yielding the "Conceptual painter," the "DJ and Conceptual artist," the "Conceptual web artist." Let's put aside the question of what makes a work Conceptual, recognizing, with some resignation, that the term can only gesture toward a forty-year-old historical moment. But it can't be rejected entirely, as it has an evident charge for artists working today, even if they aren't necessarily invested in the concerns of what you could call the classical Conceptual moment, which included linguistics, analytic philosophy, and a pursuit of formal dematerialization.

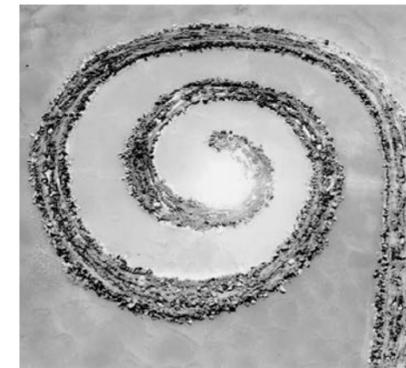
What does seem to hold true for today's normative Conceptualism is that the project remains, in the words of Art and Language, "radically incomplete": it does not necessarily stand against objects or painting, or for language as art; it does not need to stand against retinal art; it does not stand for anything certain, instead privileging framing and context, and constantly renegotiating its relationship to its audience. Martha Rosler has spoken of the "as-if" approach, where the Conceptual work cloaks itself in other disciplines, philosophy being the most notorious example, provoking an oscillation between skilled and de-skilled, authority and pretense, style and strategy, art and not-art.



Hermann Hugo. *Pia Desideria*. 1659.



Duchamp was not only here first, but staked out the problematic virtually single-handedly. His question "Can one make works which are not 'of art'" is our shibboleth, and the question's resolution will remain an apparition on the horizon, always receding from the slow growth of practice. One suggestion comes from the philosopher Sarat Maharaj, who sees the question as "a marker for ways we might be able to engage with works, events, spasms, ructions that don't look like art and don't count as art, but are somehow electric, energy nodes, attractors, transmitters, conductors of new thinking, new subjectivity and action that visual artwork in the traditional sense is not able to articulate." These concise words call for an art that insinuates itself into the culture at large, an art that does not go the way of, say, theology, where while it's certain that there are practitioners doing important work, few people notice. An art that takes Rosler's as-if moment as far as it can go.



Not surprisingly, the history of this project is a series of false starts and paths that peter out, of projects that dissipate or are absorbed. Exemplary among this garden of ruins is Duchamp's failure to sell his Rotorelief optical toys at an amateur inventor's fair. What better description of the artist than amateur inventor? But this was 1935, decades before widespread fame would have assured his sales (and long before the notion that an artist-run business might itself constitute a work), and he was attempting to wholly transplant himself into the alien context of commercial science and invention. In his own analysis: "error, one hundred percent." Immersing art in life runs the risk of seeing the status of art—and with it, the status of artist—disperse entirely.

These bold expansions actually seem to render artworks increasingly vulnerable. A painting is manifestly art, whether on the wall or in the street, but avant-garde work is often illegible without institutional framing and the work of the curator or historian. More than anyone else, artists of the last hundred years have wrestled with this trauma of context, but theirs is a struggle that necessarily takes place within the art system. However radical the work, it amounts to a proposal enacted within an arena of peer review, in dialogue with the community and its history. Reflecting on his experience running a gallery in the 1960s, Dan Graham observed: "if a work of art wasn't written about and reproduced in a magazine it would have difficulty attaining the status of 'art'. It seemed that in order to be defined as having value, that is as 'art', a work had only to be exhibited in a gallery and then to be written about and reproduced as a photograph in an art magazine." Art, then, with its reliance on discussion through refereed forums and journals, is similar to a professional field like science.



What would it mean to step outside of this carefully structured system? Duchamp's Rotorelief experiment stands as a caution, and the futility of more recent attempts to evade the institutional system has been well demonstrated. Canonical works survive through documentation and discourse, administered by the usual institutions. Smithson's *Spiral Jetty*, for example, was acquired by (or perhaps it was in fact "gifted to") Dia Art Foundation, which discreetly mounted a photograph of the new holding in its Dan Graham-designed video-café, a tasteful assertion of ownership.

That work which seeks what Allan Kaprow called "the blurring of art and life," work which Boris Groys has called biopolitical, attempting to "produce and document life itself as pure activity by artistic means," faces the problem that it must depend on a record of its intervention into the world, and this documentation is what is recouped as art, short-circuiting the original intent. Groys sees a disparity thus opened between the work and its future existence as documentation, noting our "deep malaise towards documentation and the archive." This must be partly due to the archive's deathlike appearance, a point that Jeff Wall has echoed, in a critique of the uninvitingly "tomb-like" Conceptualism of the 1960s.

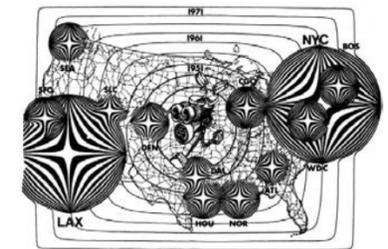
What these critics observe is a popular suspicion of the archive of high culture, which relies on cataloguing, provenance, and authenticity. Insofar as there is a popular archive, it does not share this administrative tendency. Suppose an artist were to release the work directly into a system that depends on reproduction and distribution for its sustenance, a model that encourages contamination, borrowing, stealing, and horizontal blur? The art system usually corrals errant works, but how could it recoup thousands of freely circulating paperbacks, or images of paperbacks?



"Clip Art," 1985.

It is useful to continually question the avant-garde's traditional romantic opposition to bourgeois society and values. The genius of the bourgeoisie manifests itself in the circuits of power and money that regulate the flow of culture. National bourgeois culture, of which art is one element, is based around commercial media, which, together with technology, design, and fashion, generate some of the important differences of our day. These are the arenas in which to conceive of a work positioned within the material and discursive technologies of distributed media.

Distributed media can be defined as social information circulating in theoretically unlimited quantities in the common market, stored on or accessed via portable means such as books and magazines, records and compact discs, videotapes and DVDs, or personal computers and mobile devices. Duchamp's question has new life in this space, which has greatly expanded during the last few decades of global corporate sprawl. It's space into which the work of art must project itself lest it be outdistanced entirely by these corporate interests. New strategies are needed to keep up with commercial distribution, decentralization, and dispersion. You must fight something in order to understand it.



You Are Information

Ant Farm, 1960s.

Mark Klienberg, writing in 1975 in the second issue of *The Fox*, poses the question: "Could there be someone capable of writing a science-fiction thriller based on the intention of presenting an alternative interpretation of modernist art that is readable by a non-specialist audience? Would they care?" He says no more about it, and the question

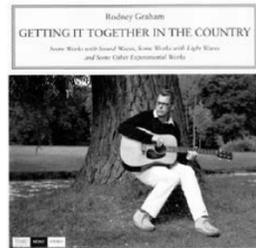
stands as an intriguing historical fragment, an evolutionary dead end, and a line of inquiry to pursue in this essay: the intimation of a categorically ambiguous art, one in which the synthesis of multiple circuits of reading carries an emancipatory potential.



"Literature being reeled off and sold in chunks"—Grandville, 1844.

This tendency has a rich history, despite the lack of specific work along the lines of Klienberg's proposal. Many artists have used the printed page as medium; an arbitrary and partial list might include Robert Smithson, Mel Bochner, Dan Graham, Joseph Kosuth, Lawrence Weiner, Stephen Kaltenbach, and Adrian Piper, and there have been historical watersheds like Seth Siegelaub and John Wender's 1968 show *Xeroxbook*.

Dan Graham. *Figurative*. 1965.



2000.

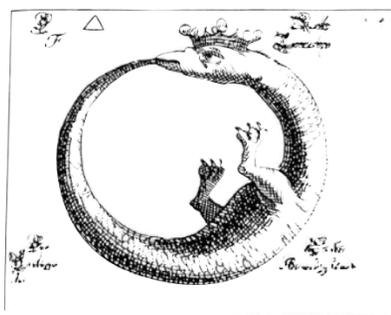
The radical nature of this work stems in part from the fact that it is a direct expression of the process of production. Market mechanisms of circulation, distribution, and dissemination become a crucial part of the work, distinguishing such a practice from the liberal-bourgeois model of production, which operates under the notion that cultural doings somehow take place above the marketplace. However, whether assuming the form of ad or article, much of this work was primarily concerned with finding exhibition alternatives to the gallery wall, and in any case often used these sites to demonstrate dryly theoretical propositions rather than address issues of, say, desire. And then, one imagines, with a twist of the kaleidoscope things resolve themselves.

This points to a shortcoming of classical Conceptualism. Benjamin Buchloh points out that "while it emphasized its universal availability and its potential collective accessibility and underlined its freedom from the determinations of the discursive and economic framing conventions governing traditional art production and reception, it was, nevertheless, perceived as the most esoteric and elitist artistic mode." Kosuth's quotation from *Roget's Thesaurus* placed in an *Artforum* box ad, or Dan Graham's list of numbers laid out in an issue of *Harper's Bazaar*, were uses of mass media to deliver coded propositions to a specialist audience, and the impact of these works, significant and lasting as they were, reverted directly to the relatively arcane realm of the art system, which noted these efforts and inscribed them in its histories. Conceptualism's critique of representation emanated the same mandarin air as did a canvas by Ad Reinhardt, and its attempts to create an Art Degree Zero can be seen as a kind of negative virtuosity, perhaps partly attributable to a New Left skepticism toward pop culture and its generic expressions.

Certainly, part of what makes the classical avant-garde interesting and radical is that it tended to shun social communication, excommunicating itself through incomprehensibility, but this isn't useful if the goal is to use the circuits of mass distribution. In that case, one must use not simply the delivery mechanisms of popular culture, but also its generic forms. When Rodney Graham releases a CD of pop songs, or Maurizio Cattelan publishes a magazine, those in the art world must acknowledge the art gesture at the same time that these products function like any other artifact in the consumer market. But difference lies within

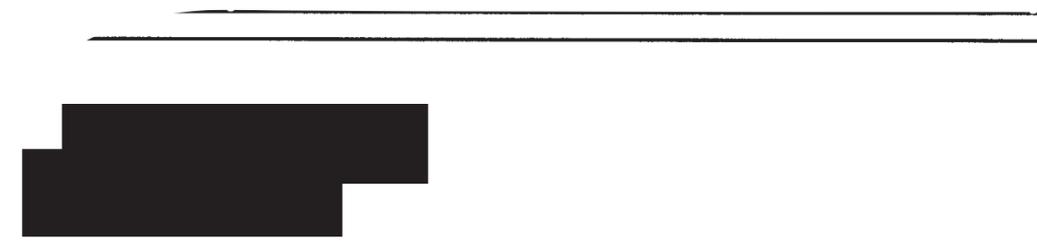
these products! Embodied in their embrace of the codes of the culture industry, they contain a utopian moment that points toward future transformation. They could be written according to the code of hermeneutics:

"Where we have spoken openly we have actually said nothing. But where we have written something in code and in pictures, we have concealed the truth..."



A. Eleazar. *Ouroboros*. 1735.

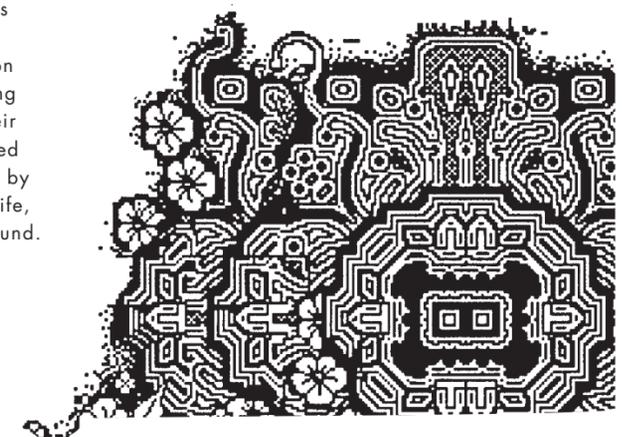
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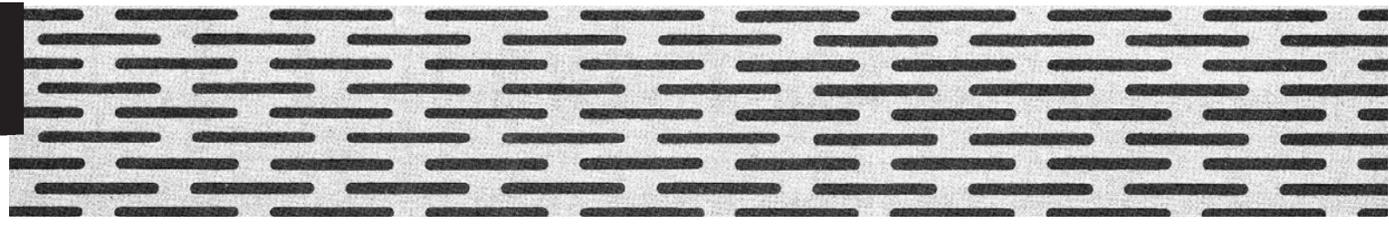


Let's say your aesthetic program spans media, and that much of your work does not function properly within the institutionalized art context. This might include music, fashion, poetry, film-making, or criticism, all crucial artistic practices, but practices which are somehow stubborn and difficult, which resist easy assimilation into a market-driven art system. The film avant-garde, for instance, has always run on a separate track from the art world, even as its practitioners may have been pursuing analogous concerns. And while artists have always been attracted to music and its rituals, a person whose primary activity was producing music, conceived of and presented as Art, would find art-world acceptance elusive. The producer who elects to wear several hats is perceived as a crossover at best: the artist-filmmaker, as in the case of Julian Schnabel; the artist as entrepreneur, as in the case of Warhol's handling of *Interview* magazine and the Velvet Underground; or, as with many of the people mentioned in this essay, artist as critic, perhaps the most tenuous position of all. This is the lake of our feeling.

One could call these niches "theatrical," echoing Michael Fried's insistence that "what lies between the arts is theater... the common denominator that binds... large and seemingly disparate activities to one another, and that distinguishes these activities from the radically different enterprises of the Modernist art." A practice based on distributed media should pay close attention to these activities, which, despite lying between the arts, have great resonance in the national culture.

Some of the most interesting recent artistic activity has taken place outside the art market and its forums. Collaborative and sometimes anonymous groups work in fashion, music, video, or performance, garnering admiration within the art world while somehow retaining their status as outsiders, perhaps due to their preference for theatrical, distribution-oriented modes. Maybe this is what Duchamp meant by his intriguing throwaway comment, late in life, that the artist of the future will be underground.



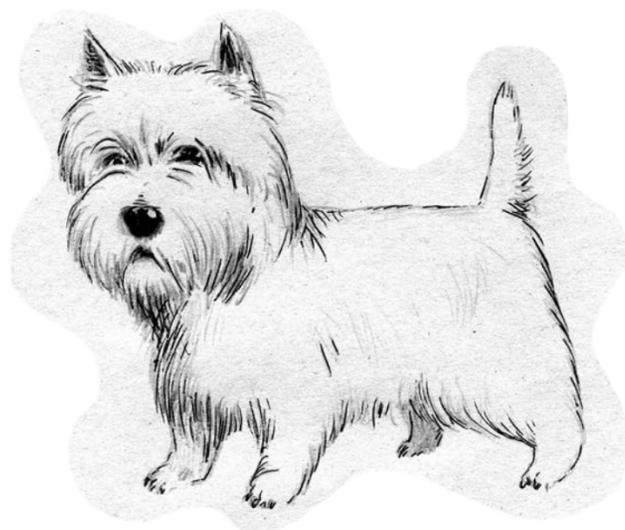


Ettore Sottsass. Lamiera. Pattern design, Memphis collection. 1983.

If distribution and public are so important, isn't this, in a sense, a debate about "public art"? It's a useful way to frame the discussion, but only if one underlines the historical deficiencies of that discourse, and acknowledges the fact that the public has changed.

The discourse of public art has historically focused on ideals of universal access, but, rather than considering access in any practical terms, two goals have been pursued to the exclusion of others. First, the work must be free of charge (apparently economic considerations are primary in determining the divide between public and private). Often this bars any perceptible institutional frame that would normally confer the status of art, such as the museum, so the public artwork must broadly and unambiguously announce its own art status, a mandate for conservative forms. Second is the direct equation of publicness with shared physical space. But if this is the model, the successful work of public art will at best function as a site of pilgrimage, in which case it overlaps with architecture.

Puppy, after Jeff Koons. S. Price.



The problem is that situating the work at a singular point in space and time turns it, a priori, into a monument. What if it is instead dispersed and reproduced, its value approaching zero as its accessibility rises? We should recognize that collective experience is now based on simultaneous private experiences, distributed across the field of media culture, knit together by ongoing debate, publicity, promotion, and discussion. Publicness today has as much to do with sites of production and reproduction as it does with any supposed physical commons, so a popular album or website could be regarded as a more successful instance of public art than a monument tucked away in an urban plaza. The album is available everywhere, since it employs the mechanisms of digital free-market capitalism, history's most sophisticated distribution system to date. The monumental model of public art is invested in an anachronistic notion of communal appreciation transposed from the church to the museum to the outdoors, and this notion is received skeptically by an audience no longer so interested in direct communal experience. While instantiated in nominal public space, mass-market artistic production is usually consumed privately, as in the case of books, CDs, videotapes, and digital "content." Content producers are not interested in collectivity, they are interested in getting as close as possible to individuals. Perhaps an art distributed to the broadest possible public closes the circle, becoming a private art, as in the days of commissioned portraits. The analogy will only become more apt as digital distribution techniques allow for increasing customization to individual consumers.

The monumentality of public art has been challenged before, most successfully by those for whom the term "public" was a political rallying point. Public artists in the 1970s and 1980s took interventionist praxis into the social field, acting out of a sense of urgency based on the notion that there were social crises so pressing that artists could no longer hole up in the studio, but must directly engage with community and cultural identity. If we are to propose a new kind of public art, it is important to look beyond the purely ideological or instrumental function of art. As Art and Language noted, "radical artists produce articles and exhibitions about photos, capitalism, corruption, war, pestilence, trench foot and issues." Public policy, destined to be the terminal as-if strategy of the avant-garde! A self-annihilating nothing.

An art grounded in distributed media can be seen as a political art and an art of communicative action, not least because it is a reaction to the fact that the merging of art and life has been effected most successfully by the "consciousness industry." The field of culture is a public sphere and a site of struggle, and all of its manifestations are ideological. In *Public Sphere and Experience*, Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge insist that each individual, no matter how passive a component of the capitalist consciousness industry, must be considered a producer (despite the fact that this role is denied them). Our task, they say, is to fashion "counter-productions." Kluge himself is an inspiration: acting as a filmmaker, lobbyist, fiction writer, and television producer, he has worked deep changes in the terrain of German media. An object disappears when it becomes a weapon.



Anonymous.



The problem arises when the constellation of critique, publicity, and discussion around the work is at least as charged as a primary experience of the work. Does one have an obligation to view the work first-hand? What happens when a more intimate, thoughtful, and enduring understanding comes from mediated representations of an exhibition, rather than from a direct experience of the work? Is it incumbent upon the consumer to bear witness, or can one's art experience derive from magazines, the Internet, books, and conversation? The ground for these questions has been cleared by two cultural tendencies that are more or less diametrically opposed: on the one hand, Conceptualism's historical dependence on documents and records; on the other hand, the popular archive's ever-sharpening knack for generating public discussion through secondary media. This does not simply mean the commercial cultural world, but a global media sphere which is, at least for now, open to the interventions of non-commercial, non-governmental actors working solely within channels of distributed media.

A good example of this last distinction is the phenomenon of the “Daniel Pearl Video,” as it’s come to be called. Even without the label PROPAGANDA, which CBS helpfully added to the excerpt they aired, it’s clear that the 2002 video is a complex document. Formally, it presents kidnapped American journalist Daniel Pearl, first as a mouthpiece for the views of his kidnapers, a Pakistani fundamentalist organization, and then, following his off-screen murder, as a cadaver, beheaded in order to underline the gravity of their political demands.



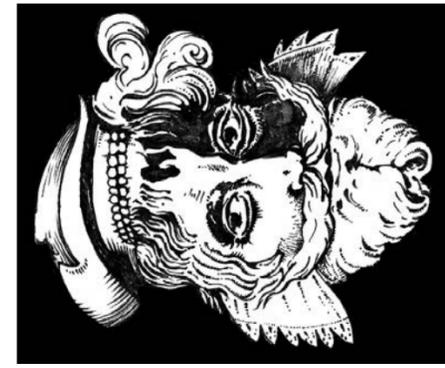
دانيال بيرل اليهودي

One of the video’s most striking aspects is not the grisly, though clinical, climax (which, in descriptions of the tape, has come to stand in for the entire content), but the slick production strategies, which seem to draw on American political campaign advertisements. It is not clear whether it was ever intended for TV broadcast. An apocryphal story indicates that a Saudi journalist found it on an Arabic-language website and turned it over to CBS, which promptly screened an excerpt, drawing heavy criticism. Somehow it found its way onto the Internet, where the FBI’s thwarted attempts at suppression only increased its notoriety: in the first months after its Internet release, “Daniel Pearl video,” “Pearl video,” and other variations on the phrase were among the terms most frequently submitted to Internet search engines. The work seems to be unavailable as a videocassette, so anyone able to locate it is likely to view a compressed data-stream transmitted from a hosting service in the Netherlands (in this sense, it may not be correct to call it “video”). One question is whether it has been *relegated* to the Internet, or in some way created by that technology. Does the piece count as “info-war” because of its nature as a proliferating computer file, or is it simply a video for broadcast, forced to assume digital form under political pressure? Unlike television, the Net provides information only on demand, and much of the debate over this video concerns not the legality or morality of making it available, but whether or not one should choose to watch it—as if the act of viewing will in some way enlighten or contaminate. This is a charged document freely available in the public arena, yet the discussion around it, judging from numerous web forums, bulletin boards, and discussion groups, is usually debated by parties who have never seen it.



Computer Technique Group. Cubic Kennedy. 1960s.

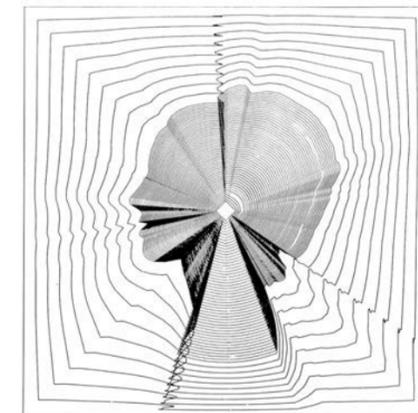
This example may be provocative, since the video’s deplorable content is clearly bound up with its extraordinary routes of transmission and reception. It is evident, however, that terrorist organizations, alongside transnational corporate interests, are one of the more vigilantly opportunistic exploiters of “events, spasms, ructions that don’t look like art and don’t count as art, but are somehow electric, energy nodes, attractors, transmitters, conductors of new thinking, new subjectivity and action.” A more conventional instance of successful use of the media-sphere by a non-market, non-government organization is Linux, the open-source computer operating system that won a controversial first prize at the digital art fair Ars Electronica. Linux was initially written by one person, programmer Linus Torvalds, who placed the code for this “radically incomplete” work online, inviting others to tinker, with the aim of polishing and perfecting the operating system. The Internet allows thousands of authors to simultaneously develop various parts of a work, and Linux has emerged as a popular and powerful operating system and a serious challenge to profit-driven giants like Microsoft, which recently filed with the US Securities and Exchange Commission to warn that its business model, based on control through licensing, is menaced by the open-source model. Collective authorship and complete decentralization ensure that the work is invulnerable to the usual corporate forms of attack and assimilation, whether enacted via legal, market, or technological routes (however, as Alex Galloway has pointed out, the structure of the World Wide Web should not itself be taken to be some rhizomatic utopia; it certainly would not be difficult for a government agency to hobble or even shut down the web with a few simple commands).



After an anonymous cameo, circa 18th century. S. Price.



Both of these examples privilege the Internet as medium, mostly because of its function as a public site for storage and transmission of information. The notion of a mass archive is relatively new, and a notion which is probably philosophically opposed to the traditional understanding of what an archive is and how it functions, but it may be that, behind the veneer of user interfaces floating on its surface—which generate most of the work grouped under the rubric “web art”—the Internet approximates such a structure, or can at least be seen as a working model.



Computer Technique Group. Return to a Square. 1960s.

With more and more media readily available through this unruly archive, the task becomes one of packaging, producing, reframing, and distributing; a mode of production analogous not to the creation of material goods, but to the production of social contexts, using existing material. What a time you chose to be born!

An entire artistic program could be centered on the re-release of obsolete cultural artifacts, with or without modifications, regardless of intellectual property laws. An early example of this redemptive tendency is artist Harry Smith's obsessive 1952 *Anthology of American Folk Music*, which compiled forgotten recordings from early in the century. Closer to the present is my own collection of early video game soundtracks, in which audio data rescued by hackers and circulated on the web is transplanted to the old media of the compact disc, where it gains resonance from the contexts of product and the song form: take what's free and sell it back in a new package. In another example, one can view the entire run of the 1970s arts magazine *Aspen*, republished on the artist-run site *ubu.com*, which regularly makes out-of-print works available as free digital files. All of these works emphasize the capacity for remembering, which Kluge sees as crucial in opposing "the assault of the present on the rest of time," and in organizing individual and collective learning and memory under an industrialist-capitalist temporality that works to fragment and valorize all experience. In these works, resistance is to be found at the moment of production, since it figures the moment of consumption as an act of re-use.

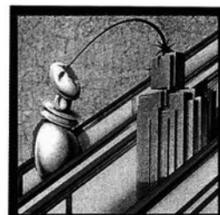


The Blind Man. 1917.

It's clear from these examples that the readymade still towers over artistic practice. But this is largely due to the fact that the strategy yielded a host of new opportunities for the commodity. Dan Graham identified the problem with the readymade: "instead of reducing gallery objects to the common level of the everyday object, this ironic gesture simply extended the reach of the gallery's exhibition territory." One must return to *Fountain*, the most notorious and most interesting of the readymades, to see that the gesture does not simply raise epistemological questions about the nature of art, but enacts the dispersion of objects into discourse. The power of the readymade is that no one needs to make the pilgrimage to see *Fountain*. As with Graham's magazine pieces, few people saw the original *Fountain* in 1917. Never exhibited, and lost or destroyed almost immediately, it was actually created through Duchamp's media manipulations—the Stieglitz photograph (a guarantee, a shortcut to history), the *Blind Man* magazine article—rather than through the creation myth of his finger selecting it in the showroom, the status-conferring gesture to which the readymades are often reduced. In *Fountain's* elegant model, the artwork does not occupy a single position in space and time; rather, it is a palimpsest of gestures, presentations, and positions. Distribution is a circuit of reading, and there is huge potential for subversion when dealing with the institutions that control definitions of cultural meaning. Duchamp distributed the notion of the fountain in such a way that it became one of art's primal scenes; it transubstantiated from a provocative objet d'art into, as Broodthaers defined his *Département des Aigles*: "a situation, a system defined by objects, by inscriptions, by various activities..."

i'm in heaven when you file

Hot on the heels of last year's Output compilation of Commodore 64 tunes comes *Game Heaven*, a collection of computer soundtracks from 1982-1987. This selection comes from across the board of home entertainment, culled from collections of internet files which have been hacked from ageing consoles and outmoded arcade machines before being traded by techno fetishists. Mercifully, the bulk of these tunes are rather easier on the ears than the psychosis-inducing Commodore collection; while sharing the same lo-fi aesthetic, the 19 tracks display a surprising level of invention and variation. The tracks have been compiled by the artist Seth Price, who is represented at the 2002 Whitney Biennial. Price was born and raised in Jerusalem's volatile West Bank but has lived and worked in New York since 1997. All the pieces on the CD are unlisted and uncredited, raising several issues pertinent to digital culture: the acknowledgement of authorship, the loss of information as systems become obsolete and the point at which commercially or mass produced work becomes artistically valid. "The genre represents unique limitations," Price explains. "Designed for adolescent boys intent on play, the tracks must be energetic, but not distracting; the consummate background music." Eight-bit muzak as art, anyone? JUSTIN QUIRK
Game Heaven is available at the Whitney Museum Bookshop, 945 Madison Avenue, New York (212 570 3676).



iD Magazine. 2002.

The last thirty years have seen the transformation of art's "expanded field" from a stance of stubborn discursive ambiguity into a comfortable and compromised situation in which we're well accustomed to conceptual interventions, to art and the social, where the impulse to merge art and life has resulted in lifestyle art, a secure gallery practice that comments on contemporary media culture, or apes commercial production strategies, even as its arena gradually has become, in essence, a component of the securities market. This is the lumber of life.



Iakov Chernikhov. Constructive Theatrical Set. 1931.

This tendency is marked in the discourses of architecture and design. An echo of public art's cherished communal spaces persists in the art system's fondness for these modes, possibly because of the utopian promise of their appeals to collective public experience. Their "criticality" comes from an engagement with broad social concerns. This is why Dan Graham's pavilions were initially so provocative, and the work of Daniel Buren, Michael Asher, and Gordon Matta-Clark before him: these were interventions into the social unconscious. These interventions have been guiding lights for art of the last decade, but in much the same way that quasi-bureaucratic administrative forms were taken up by the Conceptualists of the 1960s, design and architecture now could be called house styles of the neo-avant-garde. Their appearance often simply gestures toward a theoretically engaged position, such that a representation of space or structure is figured as an ipso facto critique of administered society and the social, while engagement with design codes is seen as a comment on advertising and the commodity. One must be careful not to blame the artists; architecture and design forms are all-too-easily packaged for resale as sculpture and painting. However, one can still slip through the cracks in the best possible way, and even in the largest institutions. Jorge Pardo's *Project*, an overhaul of Dia's ground floor which successfully repositioned the institution via broadly appealing design vernaculars, went largely unremarked in the art press, either because the piece was transparent to the extent of claiming the museum's bookstore

and exhibiting work by other artists, or because of a cynical incredulity that he gets away with calling this art.



Liam Gillick. Post Legislation Discussion Platform. 1998.



Ettore Sottsass. Design of a Roof to Discuss Under. 1973.

A similar strain of disbelief greeted the construction of his own house, produced for an exhibition with a good deal of the exhibitor's money. It seems that the avant-garde can still shock, if only on the level of economic valorization. This work does not simply address the codes of mass culture, it embraces these codes as form, in a possibly quixotic pursuit of an unmediated critique of cultural conventions.

An argument against art that addresses contemporary issues and topical culture rests on the virtue of slowness, often cast aside due to the urgency with which one's work must appear. Slowness works against all of our prevailing urges and requirements: it is a resistance to the contemporary mandate of speed. Moving *with* the times places you in a blind spot: if you're part of the general tenor, it's difficult to add a dissonant note. But the way in which media culture feeds on its own leavings indicates the paradoxical slowness of archived media, which, like a sleeper cell, will always rear its head at a later date. The rear guard often has the upper hand, and sometimes *delay*, to use Duchamp's term, will return the investment with massive interest.



Michael Green. From *Zen and the Art of Macintosh*. 1986.

One question is whether everything remains always the same; whether it is in fact possible that by the age of fifty a person has seen all that has been and will ever be. In any case, must this person consult some picture or trinket to understand that identity is administered, power exploits, resistance is predetermined, all is hollow?



To recognize... the relative immutability of historically formed discursive artistic genres, institutional structures, and distribution forms as obstacles that are ultimately persistent (if not insurmountable) marks the most profound crisis for the artist identified with a model of avant-garde practice.



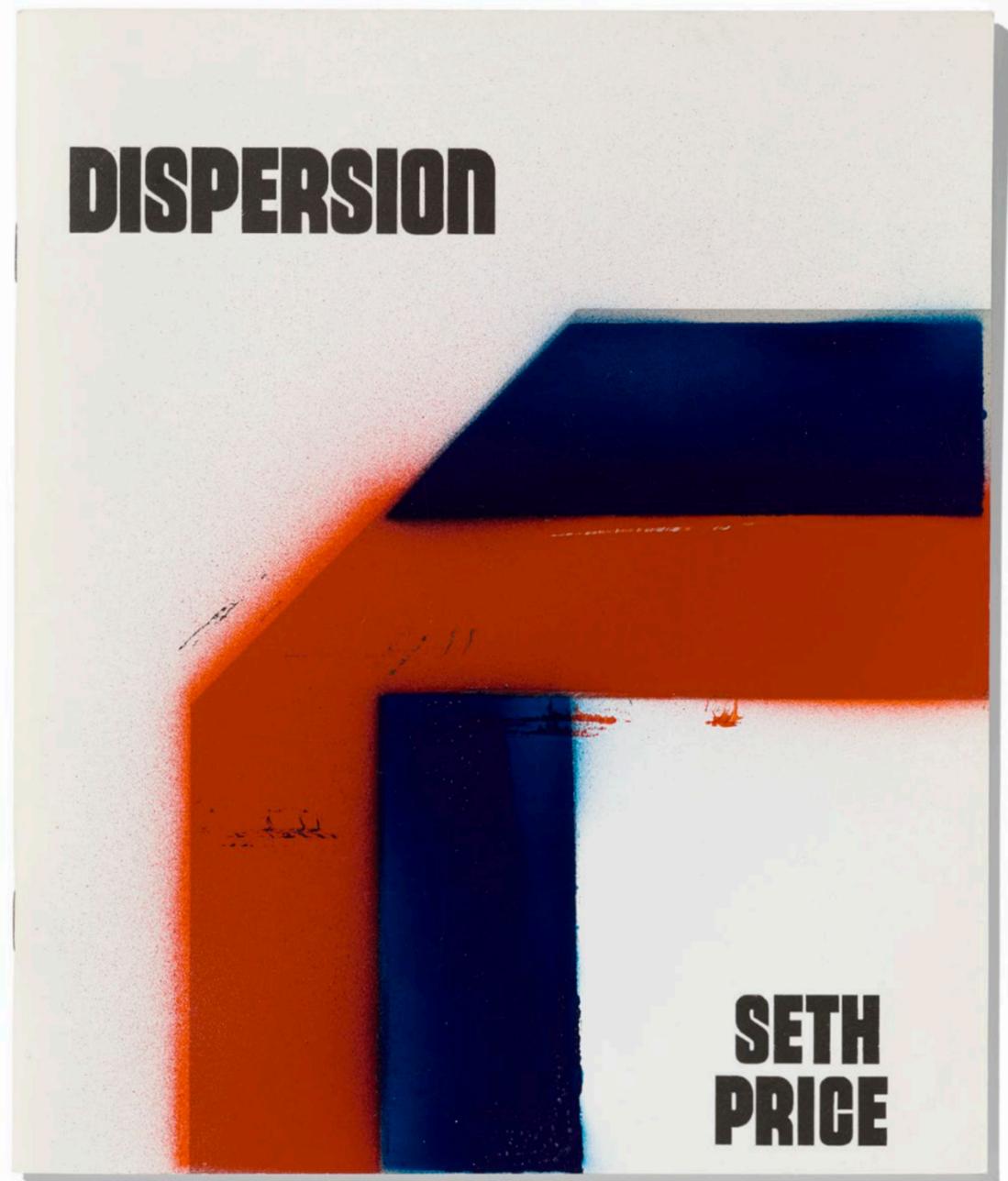
So the thread leads from Duchamp to Pop to Conceptualism, but beyond that we must turn our backs: a resignation, in contrast to Pop's affirmation and Conceptualism's interrogation. Such a project is an incomplete and perhaps futile proposition, and since one can only adopt the degree of precision appropriate to the subject, this essay is written in a provisional and exploratory spirit. Spirit. Spirit. An art that attempts to tackle the expanded field, encompassing arenas other than the standard gallery and art-world circuit, sounds utopian at best, and possibly naïve and undeveloped.

Complete enclosure means that one cannot write a novel, compose music, produce television, and still retain the status of Artist. What's more, artist as a social role is somewhat embarrassing, in that it's taken to be a useless position, if not a reactionary one: the practitioner is dismissed as either the producer of over-valued decor, or part of an arrogant, parasitical, self-styled elite.

But hasn't the artistic impulse always been utopian, with all the hope and futility that implies? To those of you who decry the utopian impulse as futile, or worse, responsible for the horrible excesses of the last century, recall that each moment is a Golden Age (of course the Soviet experiment was wildly wrong-headed, but let us pretend—and it is not so hard—that a kind of social Dispersion was its aim). The last hundred years of work indicate that it's demonstrably impossible to destroy or dematerialize Art, which, like it or not, can only gradually expand, voraciously synthesizing every aspect of life. Meanwhile, we can take up the redemptive circulation of allegory through design, obsolete forms and historical moments, genre and the vernacular, the social memory woven into popular culture: a private, secular, and profane consumption of media. Production, after all, is the excretory phase in a process of appropriation. It may be that we are standing at the beginning of something.



Albrecht Dürer. *Melencolia I*. 1514.



Dispersion
(New York: 38th Street Publishers, 2008; repr.)



Iron Curtain Girl, CD
(New York: Distributed History, 2002)

Iron Curtain Girl

Home <-- CLICK FOR MYSPACE

(Click above for Pictures)



Welcome

The setting: Wencelas Square, Prague, Czechoslovakia. The time: New Years Eve, 1989

Champagne's popping, and the hats flying: people are happy at the breaking of our Berlin Wall.

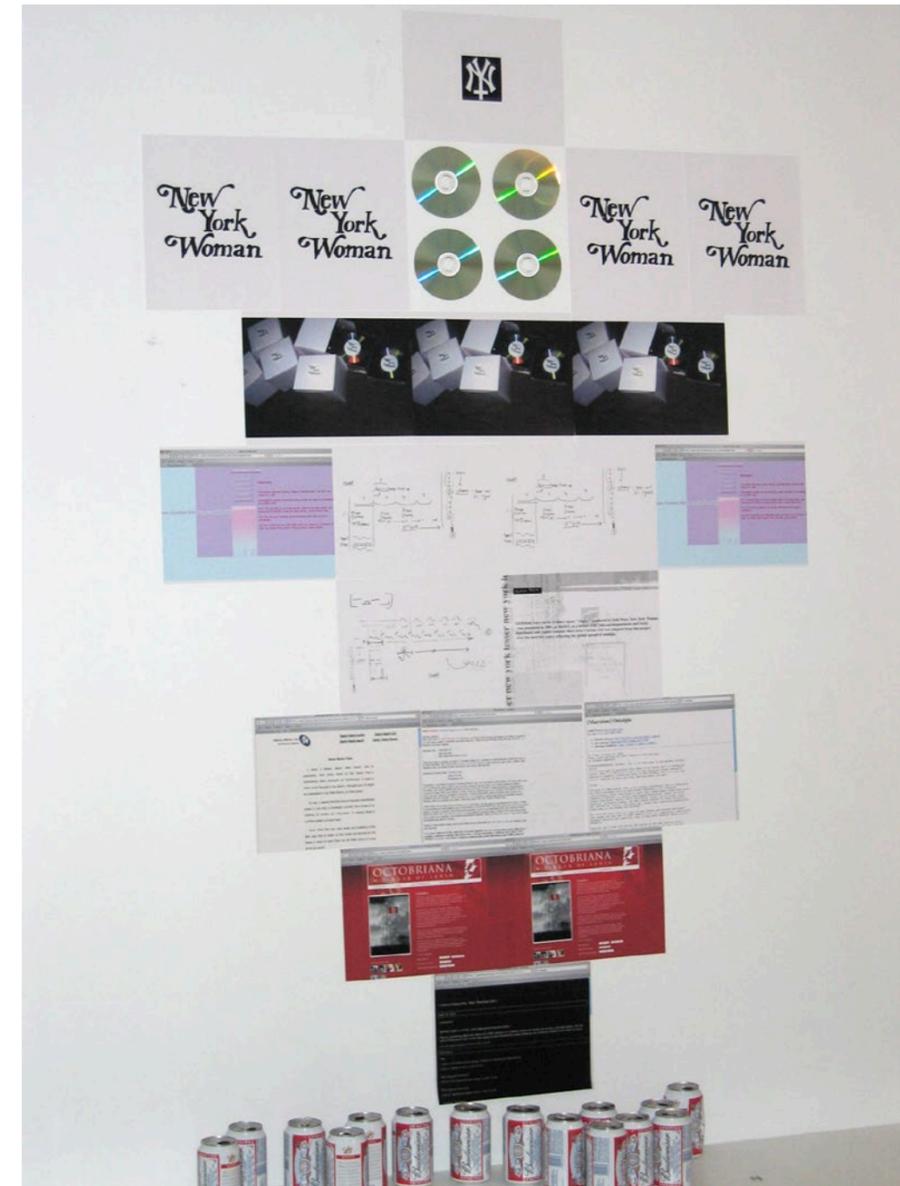
BUT: This time We are not in the Square, rather in the store nearby, and looking for RECORDS of cold war Dance Music, Eastern Block style

This LPS are soon Obsolete. So we can make them safe for you on compilation.

And Iron Curtain Girl from 1980-1986, which are made on to CD format. The "girls" are where? Who knows? if they are there, please identify

Iron Curtain Girl Iron Curtain Girl

SETH PRICE: Iron Curtain Girl came out of New York Woman. In New York Woman I was trying to make dance tracks using older production styles. I was listening to a lot of freestyle and electro, genres like that. Singers like Connie, Xena, Shannon. One-name women. The producers were always male, but they had to find a woman singer to make Billboard. The New York Woman tracks were just skeletons, though, there was no singer, because I was trying to figure out these structures, reproduce it as style, and leave out the vital thing, that thing that makes it pop. But after a couple of years I decided to go back and add singers, and that was Iron Curtain Girl. One thing I wanted to do was nostalgify the tracks. In the late '90s, there were a lot of nostalgic and retro styles. Electroclash was a knowing revival of classic electro, and I saw this electroclash band Fischerspooner at Passerby, and I thought it was great but also embarrassing, like, "Why do we have to redo this ironically?" But I figured out that it's not irony, it's performance. I think a lot of my own work is like that, where the distance comes from exploring a position, not from irony. I was also interested, and maybe this is related, in Ostalgie, when people in the former Soviet Union developed nostalgia for life under Communism. I mean, mashing up Ostalgie with this campy take on electropop, yes, it's a bad idea [they laugh]. Maybe they're both about a kind of perversion of the '80s, but that's it. I don't know, at the time people were crazy about mash-ups, which is basically an art move played out in mass culture, and I thought, why not? I had women sing over the New York Woman tracks, in Eastern Bloc languages. I put it on MySpace. As a name, "New York Woman" sounds classy, like a jazz song, or some Golden Age Hollywood movie. "Iron Curtain Girl" sounds like, what, a porn site.



Screen grab of distributedhistory.com/ironcurtaingirl.htm, from *Distributed History*, 2002–

Iron Curtain Girl, 2002
Arranged by Fia Backström at *Lesser New York*, Fia Backström Productions, New York, 2005

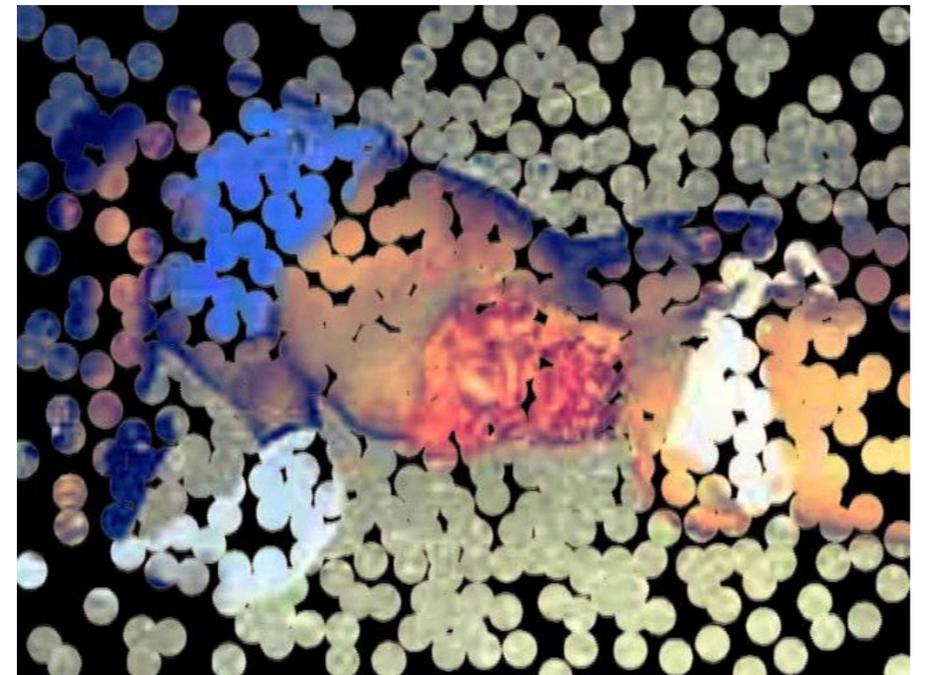
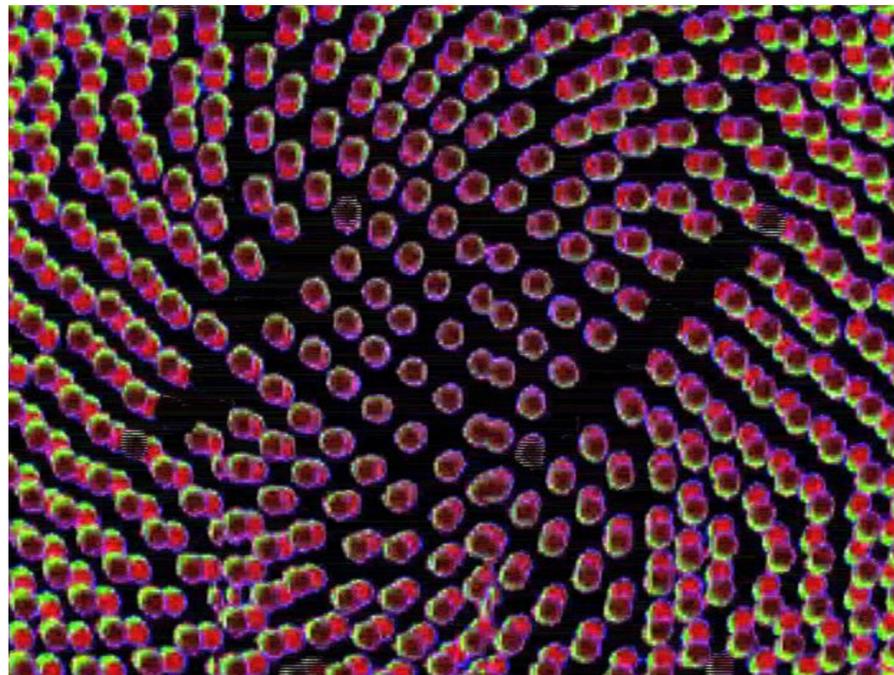
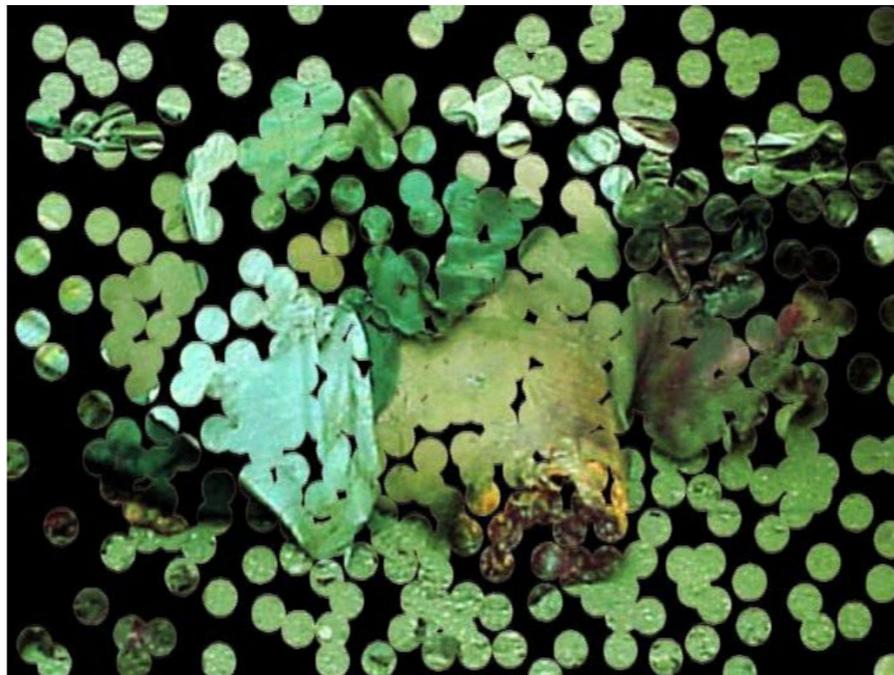
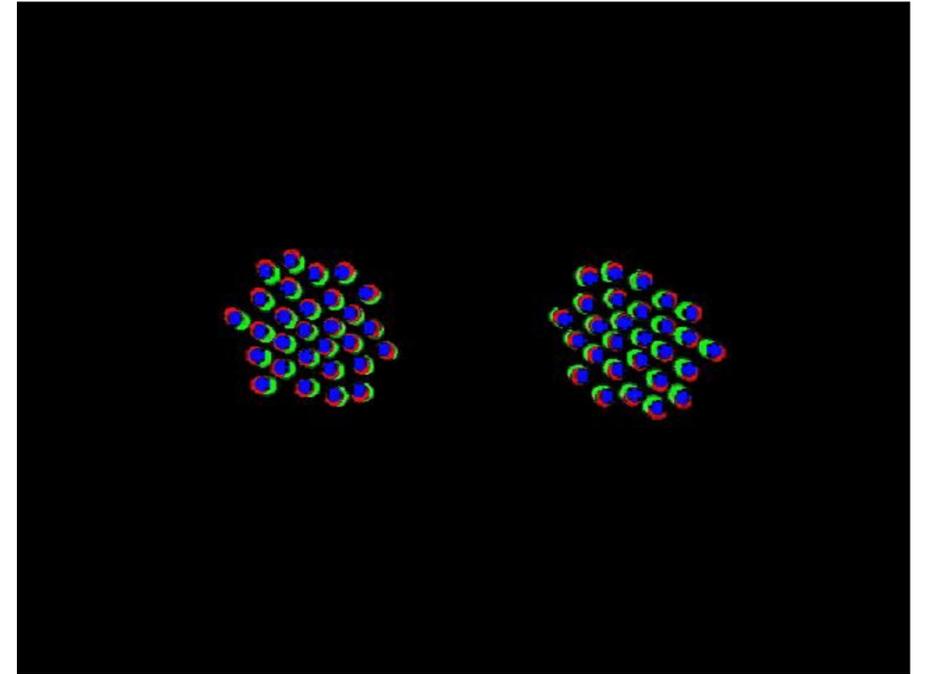
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Digital Video Effects

Poems

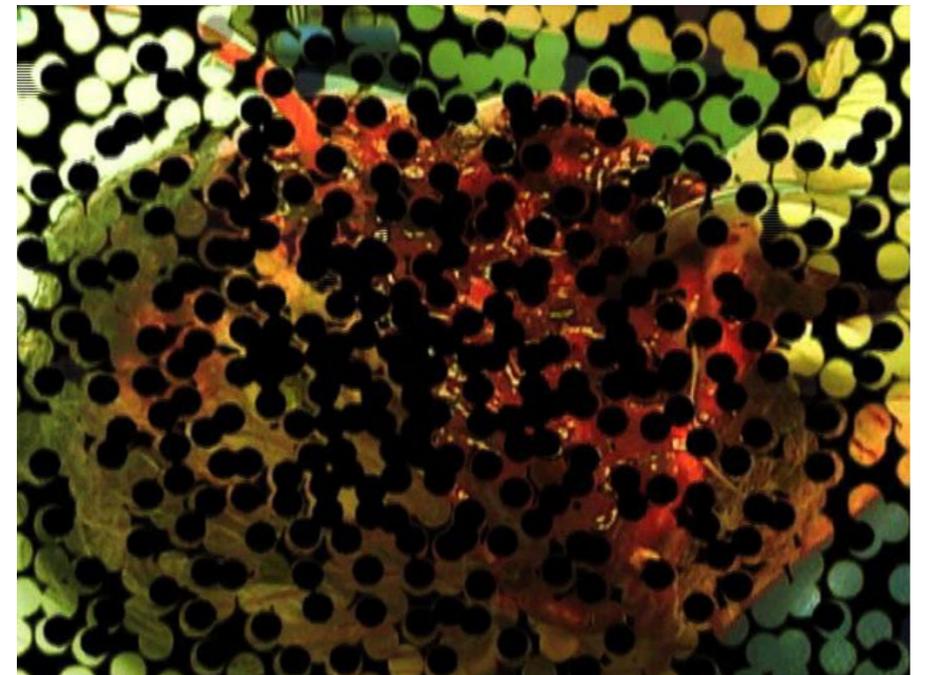
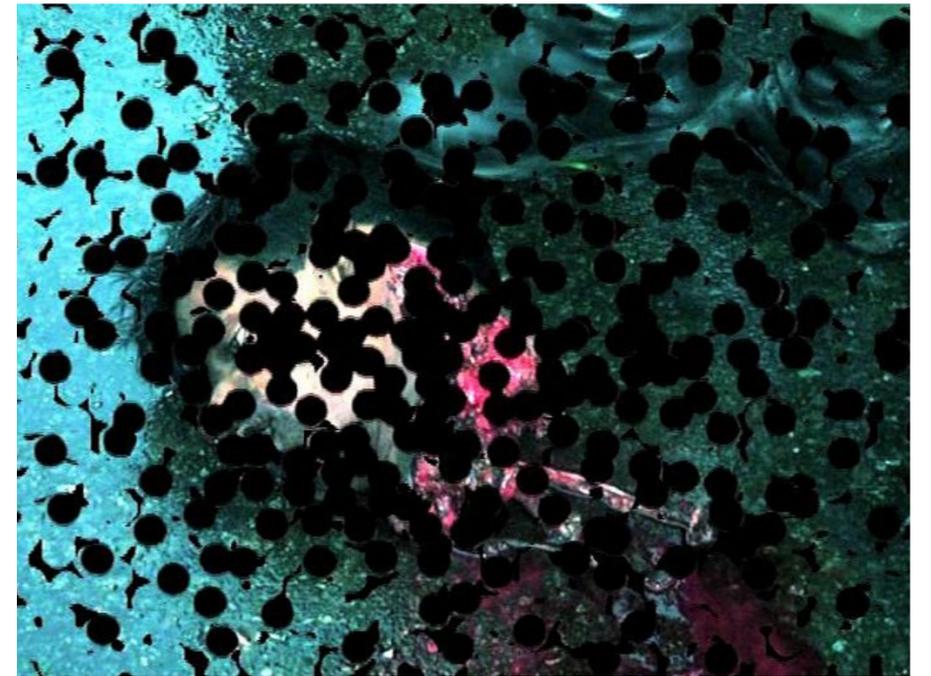
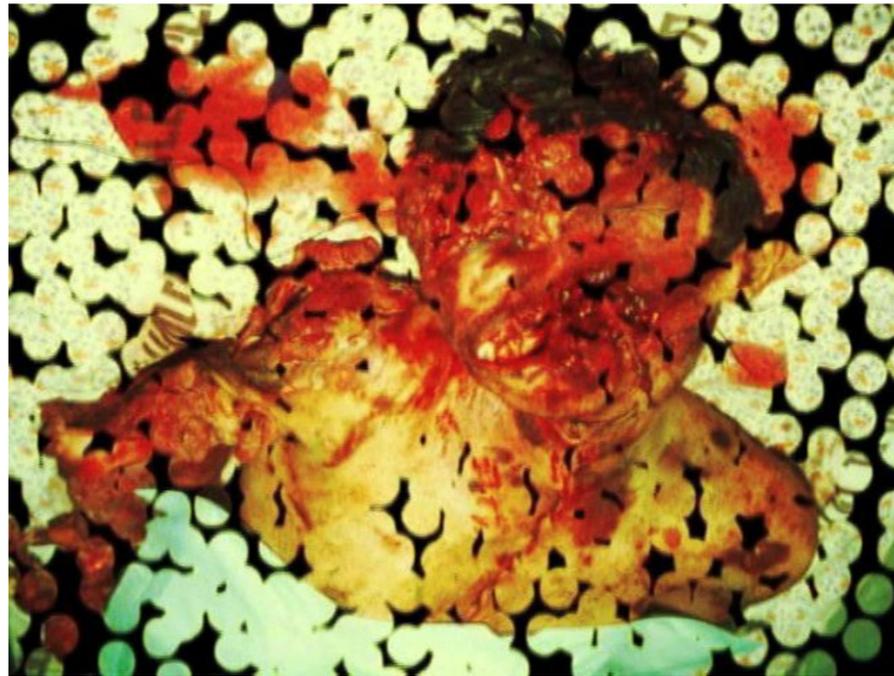
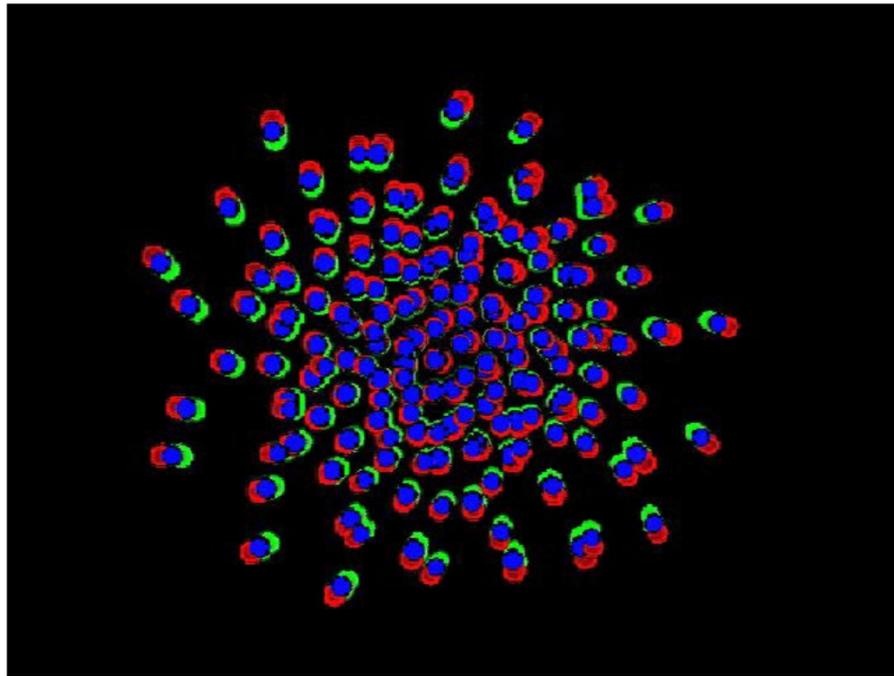
Calendars

Vacuum Forms

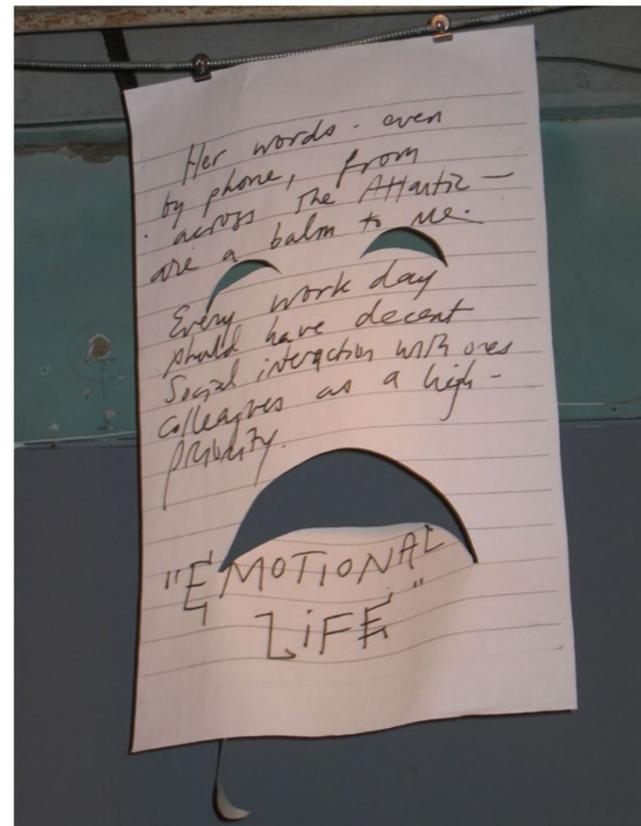
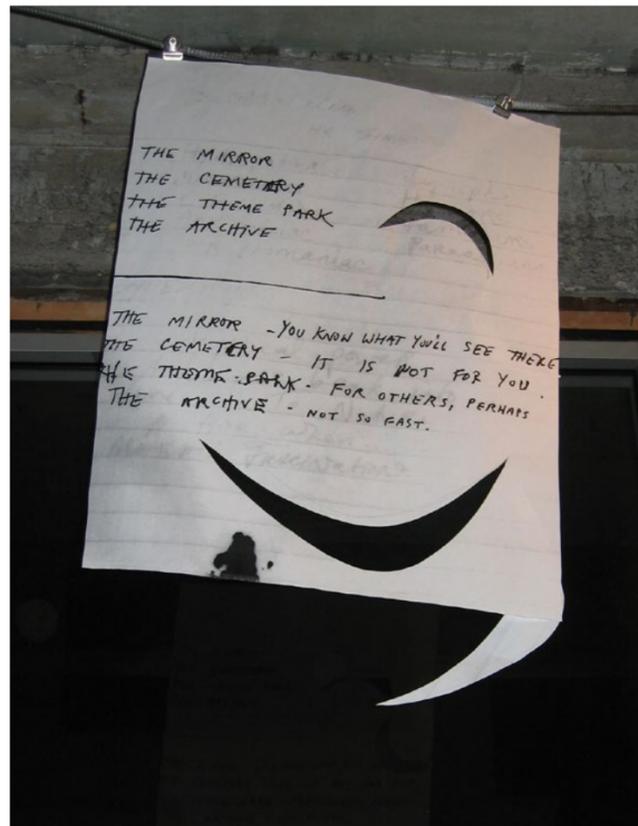


Digital Video Effect: "Holes", 2003
TV/DVD player in its original packaging, DVD, installed at
Seth Price, Kunsthalle Zürich, 2008

Stills from *Digital Video Effect: "Holes"*,
2003, video, 7:25 min.

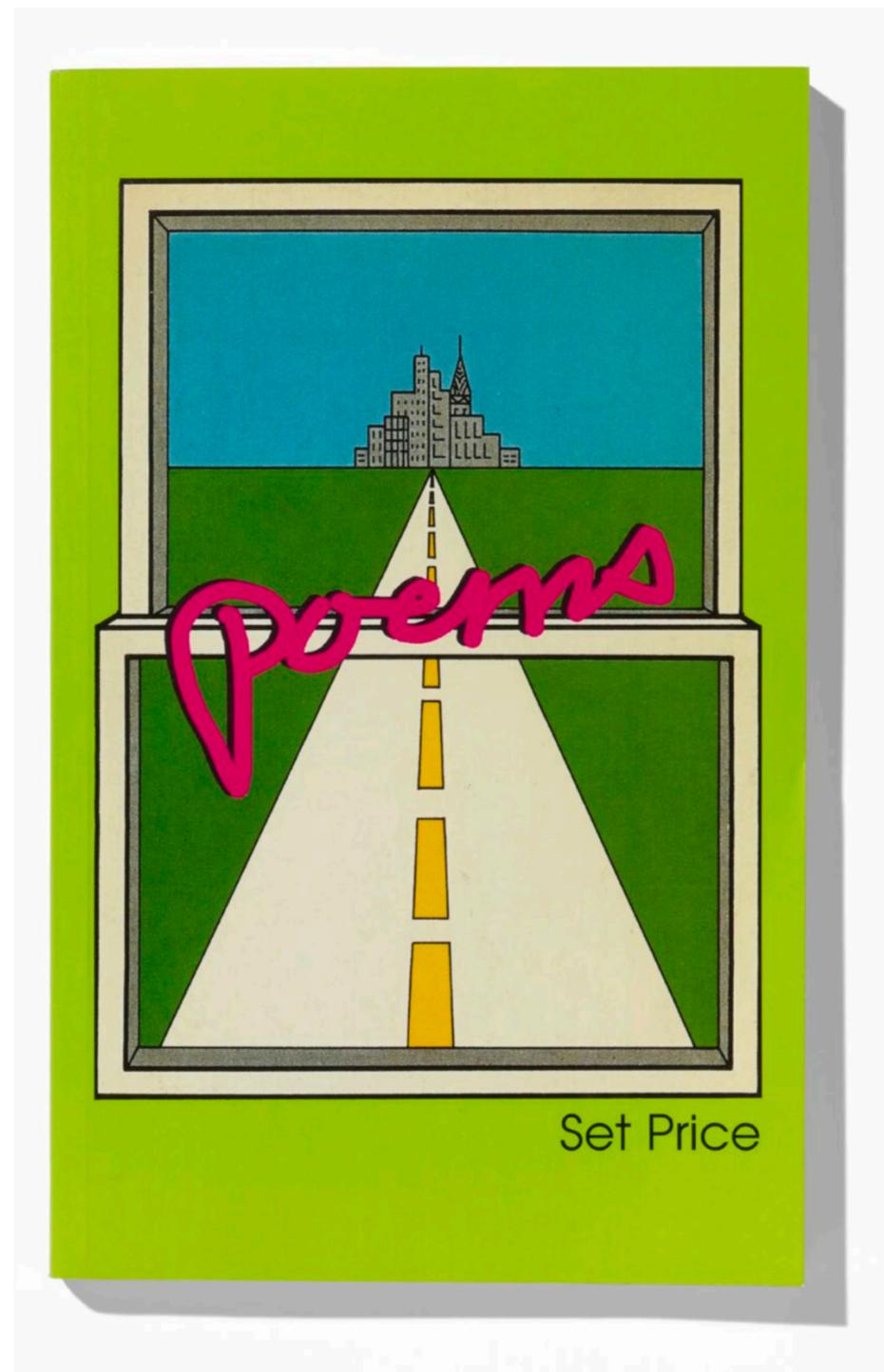


Stills from *Digital Video Effect: "Holes"*, 2003, video, 7:25 min.



Mirror/Cemetery/Theme Park/Archive,
photocopy on paper, 2004, installed at
Archives Generations Upon, curated by
Wade Guyton, Year, New York, 2004

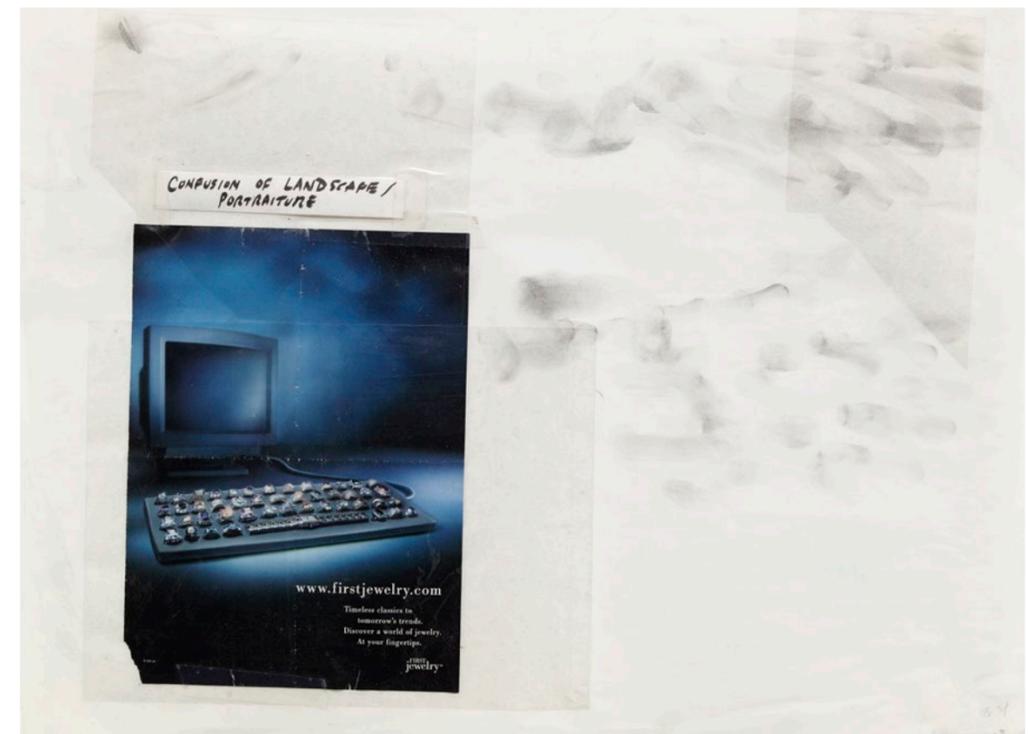
Emotional Life, photocopy on paper,
2004, installed at Archives Generations
Upon, curated by Wade Guyton, Year,
New York, 2004



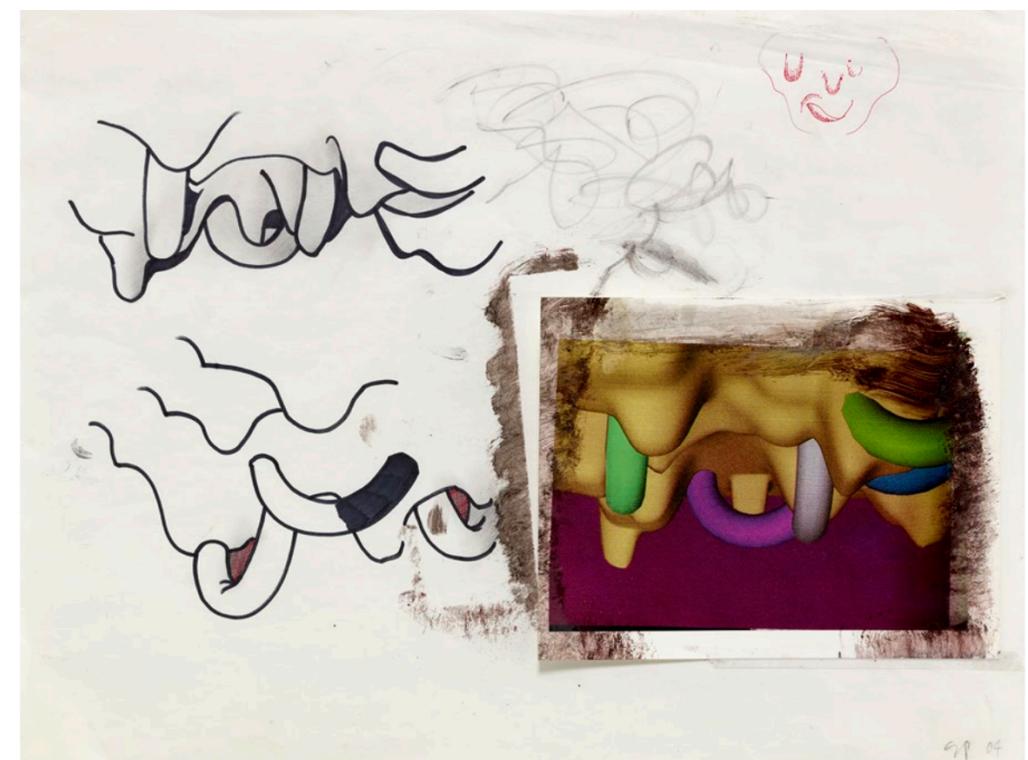
Poems
(Paris: Onestar Press, 2004)



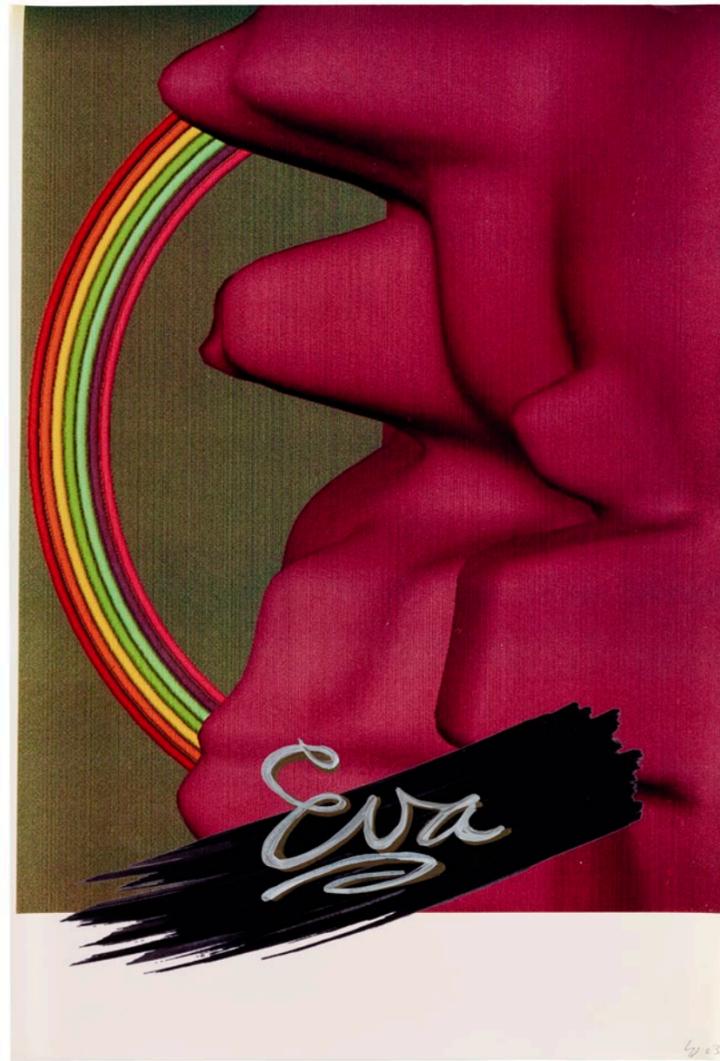
Calendar Study: *The Road Ahead*, 2003
Ink-jet on paper



Confusion of Landscape and Portraiture, 2003
Collage with magazine, vinyl, pen and charcoal on paper



CGI Face Study, 2004
Collage with pen, graphite, and ink-jet on paper



Eva in Ray Tracing, 2003
Enamel on ink-jet print

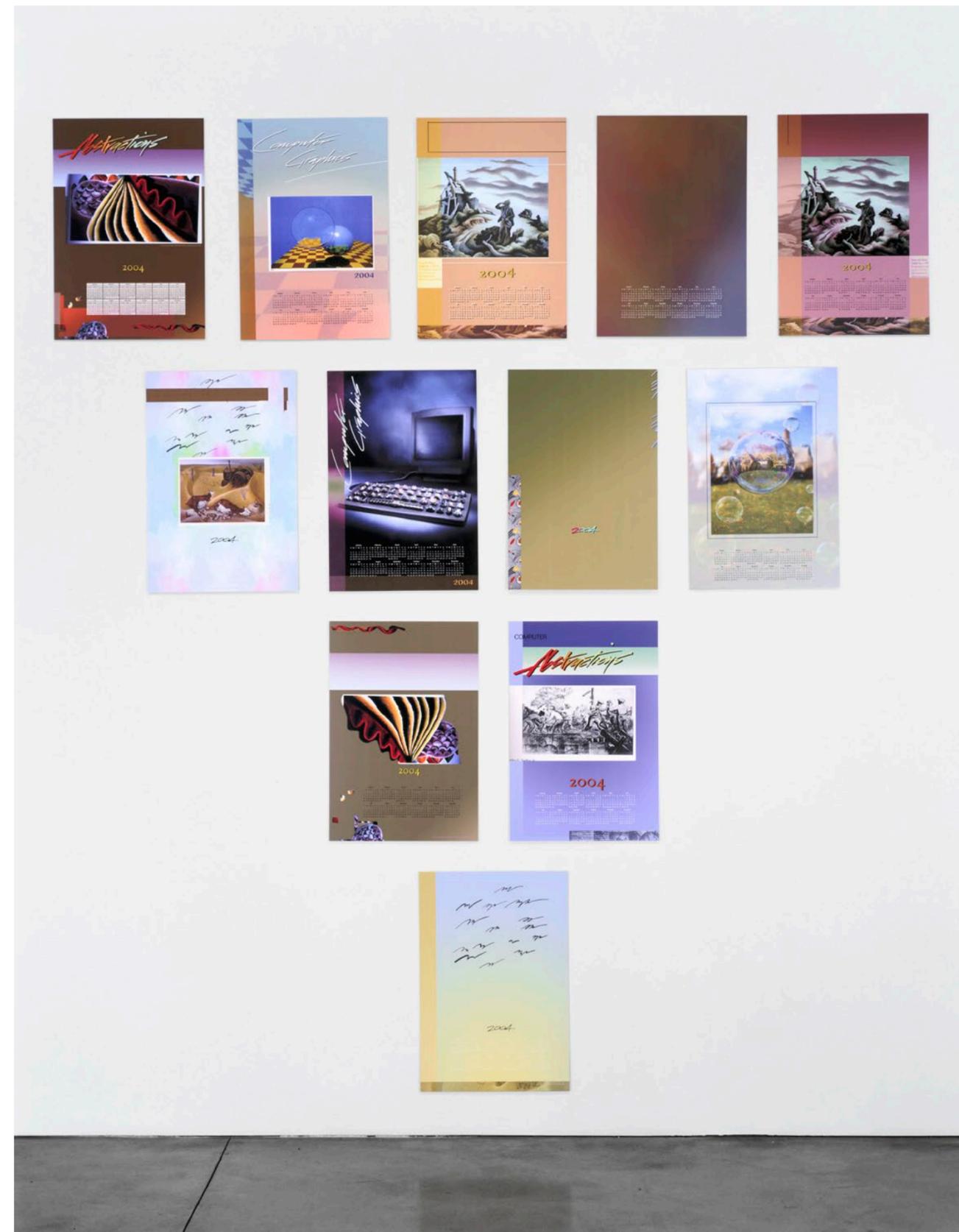


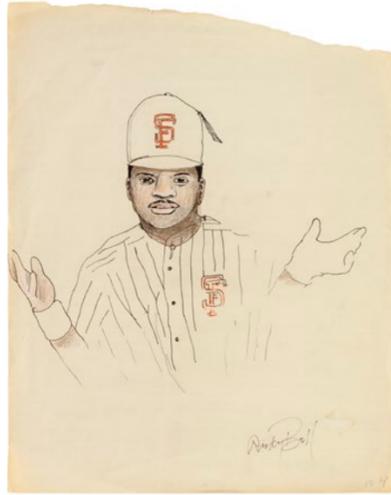
Clockwise from top left:
Lee, Triple Lee, Martha, Crossed-Out Lady, Sherrie, Joan, all 2003,
Enamel paint marker on shrink-wrapped wooden palettes



TBA, 2004
Fifteen ink-jet prints, installed at *So Few the Opportunities, So Many the Mistakes*, curated by Josh Smith, Champion Fine Art, New York, 2004

TBA, 2004
Twelve ink-jet prints on archival paper mounted on steel, installed at *Last One on Is a Soft Jimmy*, curated by Kelley Walker, Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, 2004





WTF

Cory Arcangel

In the early 2000s, Seth and I were both A/V techs. I worked at the recording and video-editing studio Harvestworks Digital Media Arts Center, and Seth worked across town at the video distributor Electronic Arts Intermix. Sometimes we would hang out after work at EAI. I'd love to say we were discussing fine art and philosophy, but in reality we were two nerds geeking out—a *literal* A/V club. What we did talk about were things that seemed very present then: the net, music, computers, and stuff we were working on. At the time, I had a sideline in antique computers and HTML, and Seth had a sideline in bizarro mixtapes and strange videos. We were not *artists* making *work*, but instead, we were *nerds* making *projects*.

One such project Seth handed me in 2002, on VHS—at the time still a viable medium(!)—was called *Nieuw Jacxz Swinjge*. The short video features a flyover of a cheap laser-tag computer-grfx-styled topological map of famous New Jack Swing producers. We see Guy, Boyz II Men, and even ringleader and mastermind Teddy Riley (in classic Price, misspelled “Terry Riley”), all while generic computer-generated stars and triangles shoot across the screen. The sound track is a wobbly, unquantized Korg M1 synthesized funk jam with a rude digital slap bass (think the *Seinfeld* theme) and out-of-tune whistling overlaid. I'd recently graduated from a music conservatory, after a childhood spent glued to MTV and a home computer, and the video seemed eerily custom-made for my interests: rudimentary computer graphics, check; embarrassing early digital and home-brew music production, check; a nearly academic knowledge of a recently passé—though vital—pop vernacular, check! I knew immediately after viewing the video that it was perfect. I had ended up in New York randomly and was as clueless as to what exactly I was doing as a twenty-four-year-old could be. But *Nieuw Jacxz Swinjge* was so concise, so *totally bizarre*, and lined up so perfectly with my own nonsense experiments, I clearly remember thinking, “If this is the kinda stuff people in New York are making, I'm in the right place.”

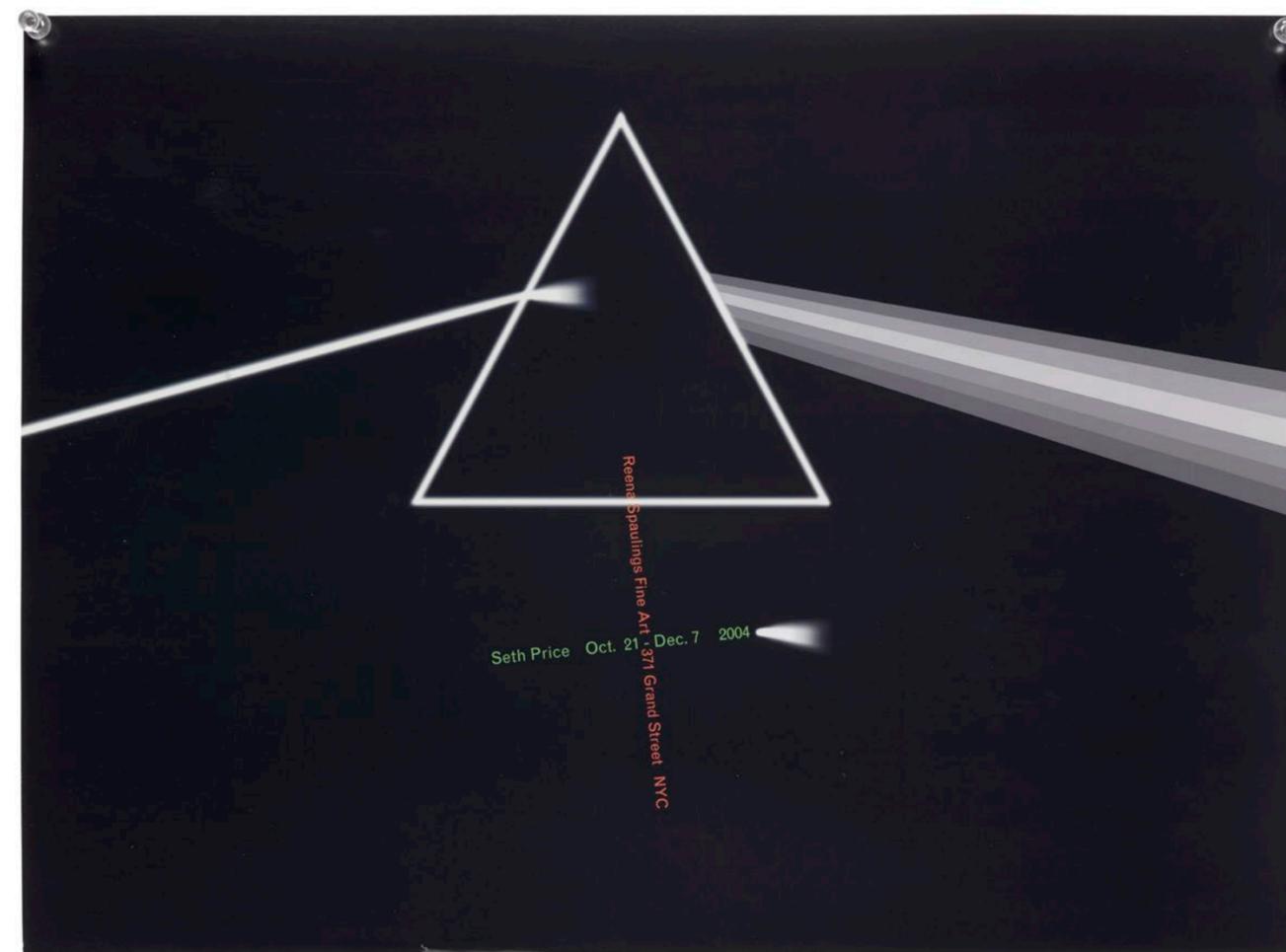
A few years later, in 2004, Seth had his first gallery show, at Reena Spaulings. It was mostly objects. Seth had hung broken safety glass over a few poles, lined the space with flat plastic wall hangings featuring breasts, and leaned a print of a scan of a piece of bread against a wall. Even for Seth, this stuff was weird. I was *completely* lost. And I wasn't alone. There was a theory going around among Seth's A/V friends that the sculptures in the show were, in fact, a joke. The confusion mainly stemmed from a small merch table Seth had placed in the corner. On the table were many of his A/V(ish) projects from the previous few years—a zine version of *Dispersion*, a book of his poems, and some mix CDs. Given the familiarity and gravity of these projects—he had been handing out this stuff for years, some of it already semilegendary—the theory was that the merch table was the *actual* show, and the rest of the stuff was a gag that Seth had spent a few hours (at most!) cooking up the weekend before. As far as I was concerned, it was plausible—the Seth I knew made stuff on computers, not sculpture. I had no idea he even had a studio!

It took a couple of years, but I eventually got clued in to the non-A/V world of fine art, and thus it dawned on me that Seth hadn't been joking in 2004 (at least not in the way rumored). He had somehow become an *artist* who made *work*. Even so, the experience I had at his first show has repeated itself over and over for more than a decade. Seeing Seth's work is always a massive WTF. Luxury body bags? Skin scans? Italian-American pasta? Luckily, in decoding the work, I have my experience with *Nieuw Jacxz Swinjge* to provide a reference. If Seth's cultural radar was astute enough to pick up (let alone combine) New Jack Swing, minimalism, early computer graphics, and raw digital

funk in 2002(!), my assumption has always been that *all* his work is made with such sensitivity and foresight—an assumption he continues to prove correct even though sometimes it might take a hot sec to piece together. With *Nieuw Jacxz Swinje*, Seth not only provided me with a road map for his body of work, he gave my own nonsense projects a sense of home—while also demonstrating the effect a perfect three-and-a-half-minute video made by a member of *my own generation* could have. And not only did I want to participate in that game, it gave me something to shoot for. Not bad for some random VHS from an A/V friend.

Coolin' in the studio, you know how the story goes / Bobbin' our heads to the tune we're about to do / It's a laid-back swing thang / The groove we feel is strong / We need peace here to get it on ... / We're just vibin'.

—Boyz II Men



Exhibition poster for *Seth Price* at Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, 2004, offset on paper



Seth Price, Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, 2004, installation view

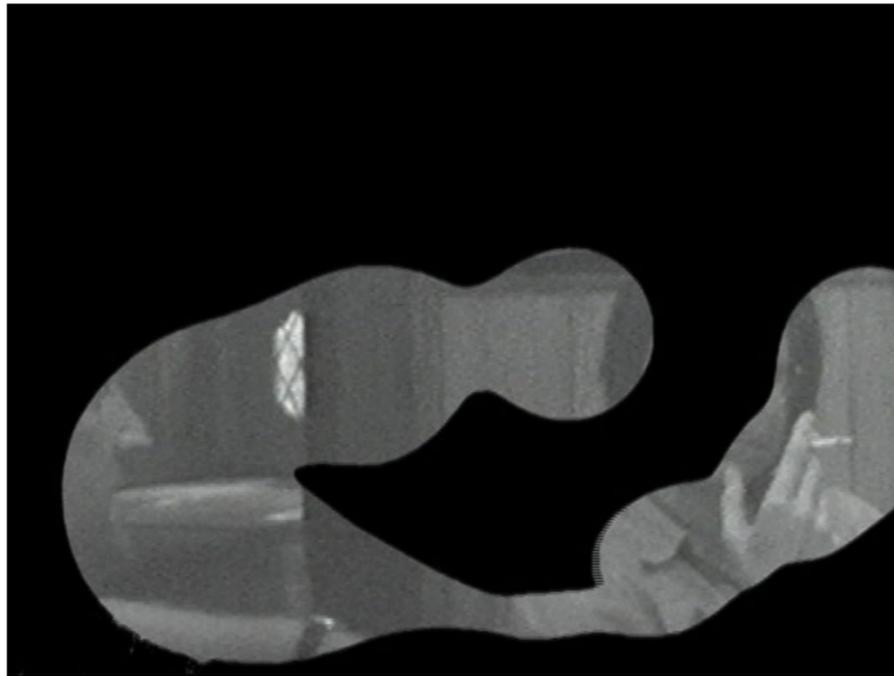


Seth Price, Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, 2004, installation view



Different Kinds of Art, 2004
Vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene, installed at *Seth Price*, Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, 2004

Digital Video Effect: "Spills", 2004
TV/DVD player in its original packaging, DVD, installed at *Seth Price*, Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, 2004



Stills from *Digital Video Effect: "Spills"*,
video, 2004, 11:57 min.



Untitled A, 2004
Archival ink-jet print laminated to safety glass, BEVA archival film, fifty to one hundred CDs containing altered downloaded jihadi-execution video files, spindles, installed at *Seth Price*, Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, 2004



Different Kinds of Art, 2004
Vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene, installed at *Seth Price*, Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, 2004



Untitled D, 2004
 Archival ink-jet print laminated to safety glass, BEVA archival film, fifty to one hundred CDs containing altered downloaded jihadi-execution video files, spindles, installed at *Seth Price*, Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, 2004



Glass Meat Test, 2004
 C-print mounted to safety glass, hardware

Merch table with *Jihadist Title Screen T-Shirt*, *Untitled Multiple*, *Dispersion*, *Poems*, and *Video Game Soundtracks 1982–1987*, installed at *Seth Price*, Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, 2004





Different Kinds of Art, 2004
Vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene

Different Kinds of Art, 2004
Vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene, cardboard, hardware,
installed at *Images*, Fridericianum, Kassel, 2016





Different Kinds of Art, 2004
Vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene



Vintage Bomber, 2006
Vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene



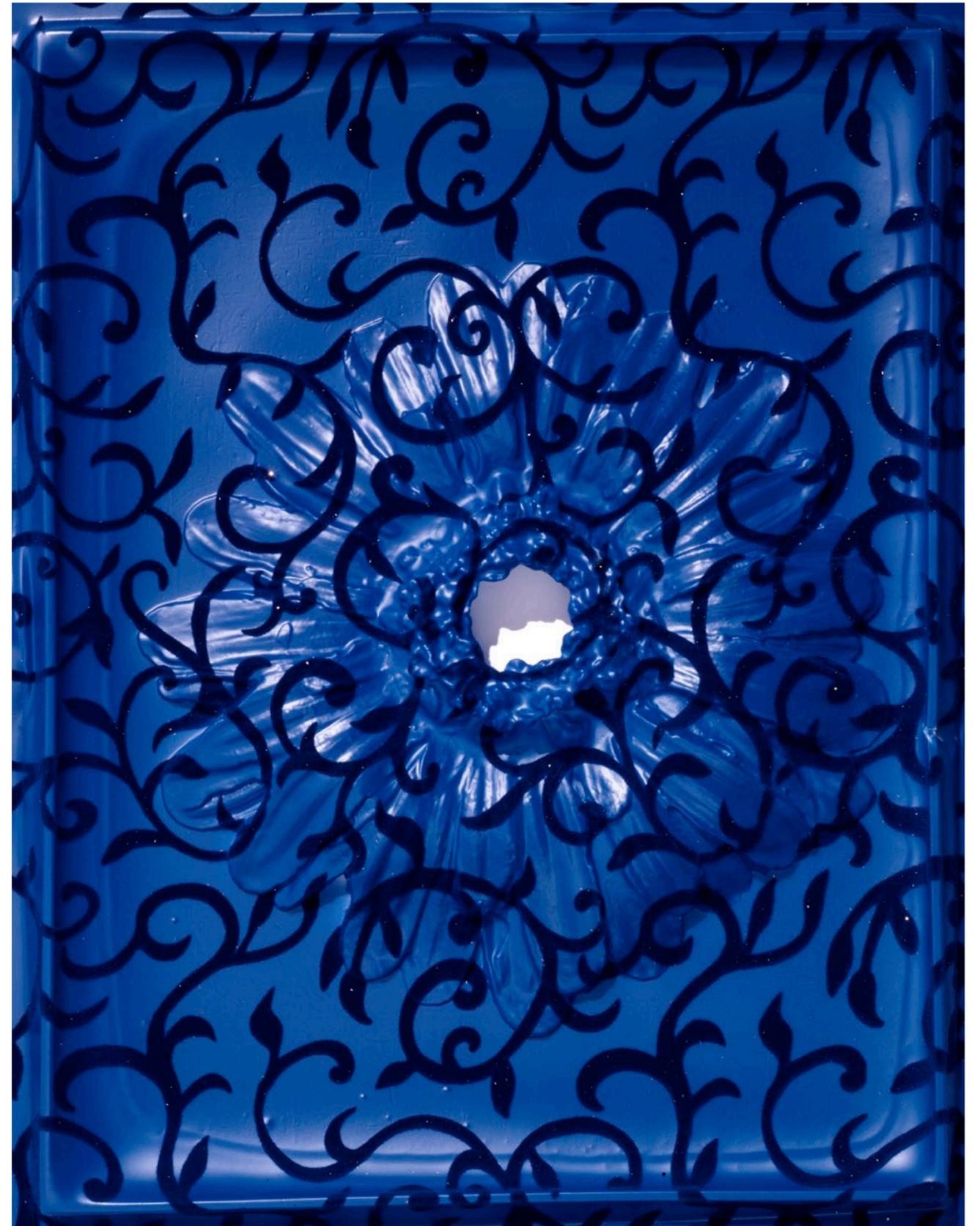
Vintage Bomber, 2005
Vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene



Vintage Bomber, 2005
Vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene



Cheap Wall, 2006
Vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene



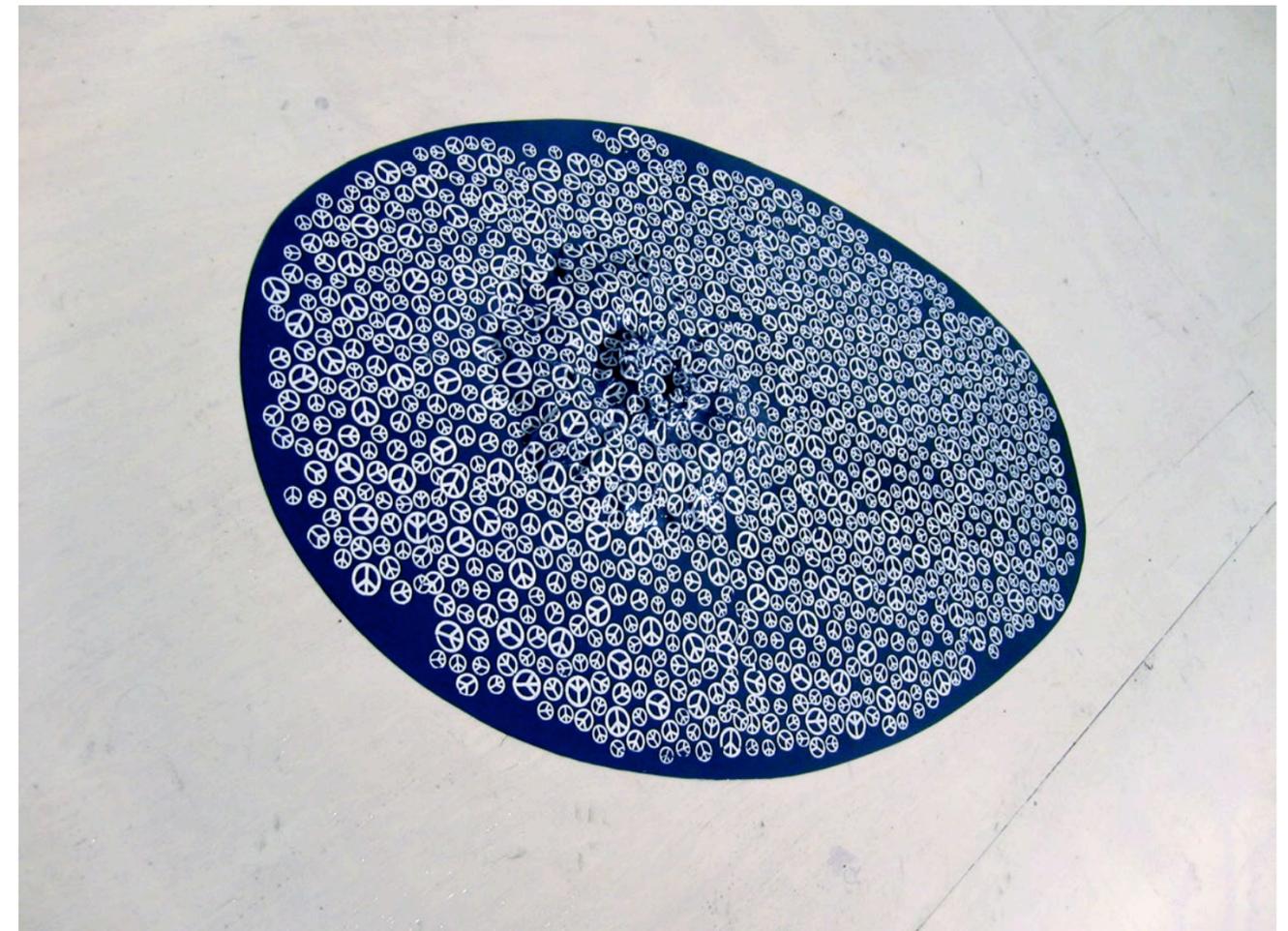
Cheap Wall, 2006
Vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene with flocking



Different Kinds of Art, 2004
Vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene



Artist Monogram, 2005
High-impact polystyrene vacuum-formed over ropes



Vintage Bomber/Peace (detail), 2006
Screen-print ink on vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene

Floor Flower/Peace, 2005
Screen-print ink and spray enamel on vacuum-formed PETG (destroyed)



Untitled, 2006
Vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene, two parts





Untitled, 2006, high-impact polystyrene vacuum-formed over knotted ropes, sixteen pieces, installed at *Wade Guyton, Seth Price, Josh Smith, Kelley Walker*, Kunsthalle Zürich, 2006

2005-7

Grey Flags
Mylars
Film and Video

Grey Flags
Seth Price
2005

Instructions

Grey Flags is a work intended for the group show format. It consists of a press release, an exhibition title, and these conditions of use:

-The exhibition must be titled Grey Flags.

-The attached text must serve as the sole and entire press release for the exhibition. Don't make any other description or statement available to press or public. To this text you can append the following: participating artists, exhibition dates, curator's name, name and address of the gallery or institution, checklist.

-My work goes on the checklist more or less like this: "Grey Flags, Seth Price, 2005, exhibition title and press release" (formatted to your specs).

-For exhibition in countries where English is not the tongue, the press release text can be distributed in translation; however you must likewise translate the exhibition title (i.e. Germany: Graue Flaggen), and in this case please don't provide the original English text or title.

If there are any questions please contact me at the email address provided. In the past I have drafted apologetic explanatory statements to be used by press offices responding to disgruntled journalists seeking information for their write-ups.

Thank you!

FRIEDRICH PETZEL | GALLERY

535 W 22ND STREET □ NY NY 10011 □ TEL 212 680 9467 □ FAX 212 680 9473

Richard Artschwager, Wade Guyton, Georg Herold, Joan Jonas, David Lieske, Seth Price
"Grey Flags"

July 1 – August 12, 2005
Opening Reception: Thursday, June 30, 6-8 pm

When you stop talking and doing, and close your eyes, what comes to mind? Voices? Images? Feelings? Like landscape seen from a plane, these phenomena hover on the sublime verge between fascinating and boring. Well, this may be true of anything viewed from a distance. The stars, the sea, mountains, the horizon... And social phenomena? Same. On any forgotten record, it's in the 'filler' songs that you find the blank, thoughtless strivings laid bare, the production patterns of another day, secrets of the ornaments.

Look further back, to a time when age 25 was referred to as 'the mid-point of life', to when cattle were the only capital. One senses something of the mesh of fear and regimentation and suffering and bloody sacrifice from which civilization was meant to escape. This is the coin of the realm, a currency of loins and coins. Consider, likewise, megaliths, dolmen, tumuli—all the brooding architecture of early man. It may be that this is not "architecture" at all, but faith embodied, which is to say, magic. Magic is a process that always uses the most advanced technologies at hand: in the stone age this meant fire, fur, bone, blood; in the middle ages, the crucible, the alembic, the chalk circle. Today it is images, a thickening web of images that amounts to a magic circle through which the citizens of this age have passed, never to return. What a time you chose to be born!

The question, then, is how to paint one's subjectivity in the codes of culture? In response, one would like to be able to curl up and go to sleep. After all, there's no such thing as culture, it won't be still, there's no "stand back, let me get a look at you!" And here lies the reason religion was invented by man: a system to remember for you. You have only to recall one thing, and know that there is a power that manages the rest in your stead. Do not mistake this for a throwback, a revival, or a regression. What is proposed here is every bit as modern as global capitalism and the information economy: a Utopia that stands abreast, yet apart. The fact is, over the course of her history America has become more religious, not less, despite the influences of science and government. Why should it be so? Because science may answer anything and everything, true, yet still it cannot tell us why there is something, rather than nothing. And the duty of government is to establish law, but other than that, government—arguably democracy itself—is a price to pay, an inefficiency, a hindrance to the market. "Labor and production", those specters of the twentieth century, no longer have a thing to offer us.

Is man so perverse that he would continue to eat acorns after the discovery of grain? To those who decry Utopia as a futile project, or worse, one whose failures brought us the horrors of the last century, consider that we are in a Utopian moment, that each moment is a golden image. We no longer face the Fascist threat, the World War, all the dirty shadows of the last century. Much current public sentiment is based on an outraged sense that there has been committed a horrible, criminal insult, but the twist of the knife is that the entire bohemian twentieth century is itself the insult. Bohemianism thrives under a capitalism with a belief in its own future; hence the well-known, post-war Californian variety, perhaps also the European variants. But we have entered a new kind of nature, a nature composed of images. And there can be no criticism of nature; it is always taken just as it is.

Remember that most of your body lies on the inside, in utter darkness from birth to death, at least if your luck holds. It would be a death of sorts if, at some point in our future, we were to lose this idea of center, core, heart; if networks expanded to dissolve every community and tradition. The last day of all time would then be strangely comforting: finally, an end to all this. A calm whisper in parting: "Goodbye, Doctor", a pulsing, regular rhythm, the time-lapse image of decay turning into birth. If one could tell an unborn child that it soon would be forced to leave its only world, the child might struggle frantically against the thought: birth must be a death. But of course it is the other way around.

Seth Price

This exhibition will be on view from July 1 through August 12, 2005, with an opening reception on Thursday, June 30 from 6-8 pm. For further information, please contact the gallery at 212-680-9467 or info@petzel.com. Friedrich Petzel Gallery is located at 535 West 22nd Street, New York, NY 10011.

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GREY FLAGS

May 7 – July 30, 2006
Opening Reception: Sunday, May 7, 4-6pm

JOHN ARMLEDER, TACITA DEAN, CLAIRE FONTAINE, LIAM GILLICK, PIERO GOLIA, MICHAEL KREBBER, STEVE MCQUEEN, GABRIEL OROZCO, WALID RAAD, ALLEN RUPPERSBERG, SETH PRICE, KARIN SCHNEIDER, SHIRANA SHAHBAZI, KELLEY WALKER, APICHPONG WEERASETHAKU

SculptureCenter is pleased to present *Grey Flags*, curated by Anthony Huberman and Paul Pfeiffer.

When you stop talking and doing, and close your eyes, what comes to mind? Voices? Images? Feelings? Like landscape seen from a plane, these phenomena hover on a sublime verge between fascinating and boring. Well, that might be true of anything viewed from a distance: the stars, the sea, mountains, the horizon. And what of social phenomena? Same. On any forgotten record, it's in the filler songs that you find the blank, thoughtless strivings laid bare, production patterns of another day, secrets of the ornaments.

Look farther back, to a time when age 25 was referred to as 'the mid-point of life', when cattle were the only capital. One senses something of the mesh of fear and regimentation and suffering and bloody sacrifice from which civilization was meant to escape. This is the coin of the realm. Consider megaliths, dolmen, tumuli—all the brooding architecture of early man. It may be that this is not properly architecture at all, but faith embodied, which is to say, magic. Magic is a process that always uses the most advanced technologies at hand. In the Stone Age that meant fire, fur, bone, and blood; in the Middle Ages, the crucible, the alembic, and the chalk circle. Today it is images, a thickening web of images, amounting to a magic circle through which the citizens of this age have passed, never to return. What a time you chose to be born!

The fact is, over the course of her history America has become more religious, not less, despite the influences of science and government. Why should this be? Perhaps because science, which may answer anything and everything, still cannot tell us why there is something rather than nothing. And while government's duty is to establish law, other than that, it—and arguably democracy itself—is a price to pay, an inefficiency, a hindrance to the market. Labor and production, those specters of the twentieth century, no longer have a thing to offer us. The question, then, is how to paint one's subjectivity in the codes of culture? But there's no such thing as culture, it won't be still for the picture, there's no "stand back, let me get a look at you!" And here lies the reason religion was invented by man: a system of photography. You have only to recall one thing, and know that there is a power that manages the rest in your stead. Do not mistake this for a throwback, a revival, or a regression; what is proposed here is every bit as modern as global capitalism and the information economy. A Utopia that stands abreast, yet apart.

Is man so perverse that he would continue to eat acorns after the discovery of grain? Like most liberals, I prefer questions to solutions. To those who decry Utopia as a futile project, or worse, one whose failures brought us the horrors of the last century, consider that we are in a Utopian moment, that each moment is a golden image. Much current public sentiment is based on an outraged sense that there has been committed a horrible, criminal insult, but surely the entire bohemian twentieth century is itself the insult. Bohemianism thrives under a capitalism that aligns itself with nature; hence the well known, post-war Californian variety. But we have entered a new kind of nature, a nature composed of images. And there can be no criticism of nature; it is always taken just as it is.

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Seth Price

Gallery Hours: Thursday – Monday, 11am-6pm Admission: \$5 suggested donation
Media Contact: Katie Farrell t 718.361.1750 x111 f 718.786.9336 kfarrell@sculpture-center.org

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Drapeaux gris

John Armleder, Lutz Bacher, James Lee Byars, Helen Chadwick, Chen Xiaoyun, Cinema Zero, Tacita Dean, Claire Fontaine, Liam Gillick, Piero Golia, Michael Krebber, Jonathan Monk, Gabriel Orozco, Seth Price, The Atlas Group/Walid Raad, Allen Ruppertsberg, Salon de Fleurus, Wilhelm Sasnal, Erik Satie, Karin Schneider, Shirana Shahbazi, Kelley Walker, Apichatpong Weerasethakul, Mario Ybarra Jr.
Commissaires Anthony Huberman et Paul Pfeiffer

Exposition du 20 décembre 2006 au 18 mars 2007

Vernissage mardi 19 décembre, 19 heures.

Quand tu cesses de parler et d'agir, et que tu fermes les yeux, qu'est-ce qui te vient à l'esprit ? Des voix ? Des images ? Des sentiments ? Tel un paysage vu d'avion, ces phénomènes vacillent sur une crête sublime distinguant le fascinant du quelconque. C'est vrai, on pourrait dire cela de toute chose observée d'une certaine distance : étoiles, mer, montagnes, horizon... Et qu'en est-il des phénomènes sociaux ? Pareil. Sur n'importe quel vieux vinyl, ce sont les fillers qui trahissent les labeurs inconséquents et sans objet, les paradigmes de production révolus, le secret des ornements.

Remonte un peu dans le temps, vers un âge où on avait la cinquantaine à 25 ans, où tout capital se mesurait en têtes de bétail. Terreur, discipline, souffrance, sacrifice de sang : voilà bien, on peut l'imaginer, la camisole dont la civilisation était destinée à se libérer, la monnaie du royaume. Pense aux mégalithes, aux dolmens, aux tumulus - toute cette sombre architecture de l'humanité primitive. Peut-être qu'il ne s'agit là en définitive pas d'architecture, à proprement parler, mais d'une incarnation de foi ; c'est-à-dire de magie. La magie est un procédé qui se sert toujours des technologies les plus avancées du moment. A l'Age de la Pierre, c'était le feu, la fourrure, l'os et le sang ; au Moyen Age, le creuset, l'alambic, le cercle de craie. Aujourd'hui, ce sont les images, une trame d'images qui s'épaissit sans cesse, jusqu'à former un cercle magique qu'ont franchi, irréversiblement, les citoyens de notre temps. Tu en as choisi, une époque, pour naître !

Le fait est qu'au fur de son histoire, l'Amérique est devenue plus religieuse, pas moins, malgré l'influence des sciences et de l'Etat. Pourquoi donc ? Peut-être parce que la science, qui a pourtant réponse à tout, demeure incapable de nous dire comment ça se fait qu'il y a quelque chose, là, plutôt que rien du tout. Quant au pouvoir politique, mis à part son devoir premier d'établir la loi, ce n'est —comme la démocratie elle-même, sans doute— qu'un coût à encourir, une inefficience, un obstacle au marché. Le travail et la production, ces spectres du vingtième siècle, n'ont plus rien qui vaille à nous offrir. La question devient alors : comment s'y prendre pour empreindre sa subjectivité dans les codes de la culture ? Mais en réalité la culture n'existe pas, il n'y a rien d'assez stable pour le portrait photo, pas de "recule un peu que je puisse te voir !" Voilà donc pourquoi l'homme a inventé la religion : une technique de photographie. On n'a plus à se souvenir que d'une seule chose, quitte à faire confiance au pouvoir suprême qui gèrera le reste à notre place. Ne vas pas surtout pas t'imaginer qu'il s'agirait d'une nostalgie, d'une vogue, d'un retour de manivelle : ce qui se réalise là est tout aussi moderne que le capitalisme global et l'économie de l'information. Une Utopie qui se tient debout, fièrement, mais à part.

L'homme est-il si pervers qu'il s'obstinerait à manger des glands après la découverte du blé ? Comme la plupart des esprits progressistes, je préfère les questions aux solutions. Que ceux qui accusent l'Utopie de futilité, ou pire de responsabilité pour les horreurs du siècle dernier, comprennent bien que nous nous trouvons en pleine saison d'Utopie, où chaque instant qui s'égrène est fait icône. On a aujourd'hui le sentiment bien-pensant d'un outrage plus ou moins généralisé, une vague impression d'avoir essuyé un affront collectif horrible sinon criminel ; il est pourtant clair que c'est le vingtième siècle bohème dans son ensemble qui constitue l'outrage. La bohème prospère sous un capitalisme qui s'aligne avec la nature ; d'où la variante californienne bien connue d'après-guerre. Mais nous évoluons désormais dans une nouvelle nature, une nature faite d'images. Et il n'y a pas de critique possible de la nature : elle est toujours prise telle quelle.

Souviens-toi que la plupart de ton corps s'étale sur le dedans, dans une obscurité complète de la naissance à la mort, enfin disons si tu as un brin de chance. Ce serait une sorte de mort si, à l'avenir, on en venait à perdre cette idée de centre et de cœur; si les réseaux se dilataient au point de dissoudre toute communauté et tradition. Le dernier jour de l'histoire serait alors étrangement reconfortant : enfin, une fin à tout ça. Un chuchotement tranquille en guise de révérence : "Au revoir, Docteur," une pulsation, un battement régulier, une image en accéléré du corps déliquescents en voie de renaissance. Si l'enfant à naître pouvait être averti que bientôt on le forcerait à quitter son seul univers, sans doute y résisterait-il furieusement ; la naissance doit être une mort. Mais c'est bien évidemment l'inverse.

(Traduction de l'anglais : Eric Anglès)

Seth Price

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ACHIM HOCHDÖRFER: *The earlier work with distribution, Title Variable, is hard to grasp, because it starts from outside in order to examine certain systems. But at one point, maybe with these Mylar works, you switch to the other way around: you start with an image, then go outward from there and spread it out.*

SETH PRICE: *Yes, but both projects were concerned with dispersion, in different ways. Title Variable was about how you make a piece networked so there's no one piece, no single image, there's no time of the work, there's no place. It became the hardest piece to grasp, because it's a collection of different files encoded on different media: compact discs, cassettes, vinyl, files; and the titles change, the artwork, the track selections. And each has an essay, which are all published different places. You fragment the piece entirely. That was the challenge.*

HOCHDÖRFER: *Yeah, but with the Mylar pieces, this is an artwork. I mean, it's not dispersed. There is a certain set of like fifteen, twenty, twenty-five of those.*

PRICE: *But I always thought of the Mylar sculptures as part of a larger constellation. With hindsight, I think of that series of works as exploring an image from different approaches.*

HOCHDÖRFER: *So the Mylar pieces also came somehow out of Dispersion and the idea of image circulation, and film still being a way to deal with—*

PRICE: *That whole series of inquiries, yes; that idea of networked art or whatever it's called. At that one-night show that me and Wade and Kelley did at the pirate radio station in Williamsburg [91.9 FM 88.7 FM 103.9 FM, 2002], I showed the Daniel Pearl video on a little TV, along with a whole bunch of writing, Martha Rosler-style, where you could read all these blogs and web comments people made arguing why you should or shouldn't watch beheading videos. But that didn't work. You can't just show the video. That's when I thought the project is about not showing the image, because the image is on your computer; anyone can go see it. So in Dispersion I wrote about it; it was approached through discourse. In the Reena glass pieces, the videos are coded on CDs, which prop up an image that is not an image, the scanned slice of bread. The next year I moved on to the Mylars, like, "Now I'm going to show the image, but we'll distort it, so the sculpture becomes a screen or film stock or a scroll or a piece of trash." For the show in 2006, I thought, OK, it's time to actually show this image, but maybe by mirroring another image. The executioner with the severed head appears in the Bible and the French Revolution and art history, where it looks almost identical to the jihadist image. Again, you have a thing as code, encoded in this other image and narrative, and with it you provide something else to look at, the waves film, which, like the bread, is familiar and unfamiliar, artificial and natural. My point is that it's a cloud of works that are related; it's the same impulse of dispersion. The physical things are code carriers, in all these cases. In the jihadist works the difference is that you include capital-s Sculpture. Whereas in Title Variable, the material component was a vinyl LP or a CD, which is harder to grasp. I think that's the difference, and the similarity.*



Untitled Multiple, 2004
Altered downloaded jihadi-execution video files encoded on compact discs, spindle

Hostage Video Still with Time Stamp, 2005
Screen-print ink on polyester film, grommets, installed at Grey Flags, Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York, 2005



Hostage Video Still with Time Stamp, 2005
Screen-print ink on polyester film, grommets, installed at
Grey Flags, Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York, 2005



Hostage Video Still with Time Stamp, 2008
Screen-print ink on polyester film, grommets



Hostage Video Still with Time Stamp, 2005
Screen-print ink on polyester film, grommets, installed at *Grey Flags*, Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York, 2005 (left), and in a private home (right)





Hostage Video Still with Time Stamp, 2006
Screen-print ink on polyester film, grommets, plinth, installed at *Wade Guyton*,
Seth Price, Josh Smith, Kelley Walker, Kunsthalle Zürich, 2006



Seated Man with Standing Men, 2005
 Screen-print ink on polyester film, grommets, installed at *Make It Now: New Sculpture in New York*, SculptureCenter, New York, 2005



Hostage Video Still with Time Stamp, 2008
 Screen-print ink on polyester film, grommets, plinth, installed at *Seth Price*, Kunsthalle Zürich, 2008



Seated Man with Papers, 2005
 Screen-print ink on polyester film, staples, installed at
New York Twice, Air de Paris, Paris, 2005



Hostage Video Still with Time Stamp, 2008
 Screen-print ink on polyester film, grommets



Seth Price, Kelley Walker, *Continuous Project*,
Modern Art Oxford, 2007, installation view

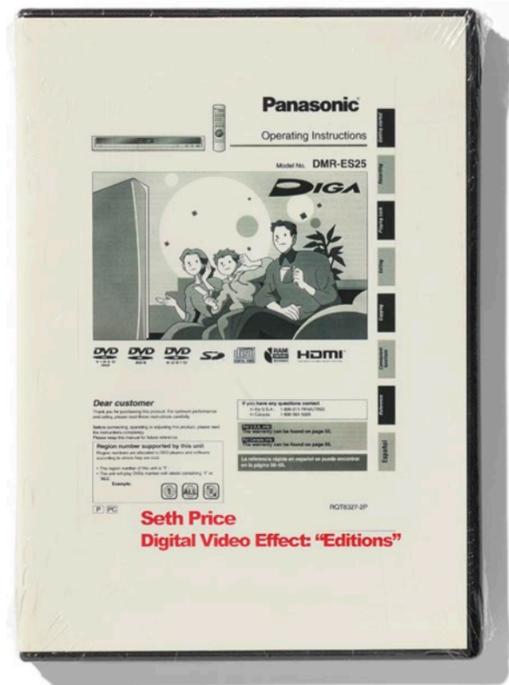


COPYRIGHT 2006 SETH PRICE, 2006
 Video, 12:48 min., installed at Wade Guyton, Seth Price, Josh Smith, Kelley Walker,
 Kunsthalle Zürich, 2006 (top), and Art Basel Miami Beach, 2009 (bottom)



Digital Video Effect: "Chords", 2007
 Portable media players, screen-print ink on glass, installed at Seth Price, Kelley
 Walker, Continuous Project, Modern Art Oxford, 2007





ACHIM HOCHDÖRFER: After Greater New York in 2005, where you first showed the bomber jackets, your career escalated. Coming out of EAI and the film world, and then Reena Spaulings, an artist-run gallery, you began to work with Petzel, in the midst of the Chelsea gallery system. How did you address this change of context?

SETH PRICE: It was actually a triple show. It was at Friedrich's and Reena, and also at EAI.

HOCHDÖRFER: So you bound them all together.

PRICE: It did feel like entering this big Chelsea scene, so I decided to spread it out. These days people often do an uptown show and a downtown show simultaneously, but not many people did it then, not in my circle of friends or among the people we knew. So there were people at the time who saw it as just a way to sell more stuff. But for me it was like, instead of doing one big show in Chelsea and doing it with the known product, you do it with film, and you spread it out to these other venues, and the film points outward to other, earlier art editions, and it points to EAI; the video circulates and goes elsewhere. It's this thing about making work that can point to other structures. I didn't conceive of it so specifically at the time, but looking back it seems pretty clear.

HOCHDÖRFER: So you never did a gallery show with the bomber jackets. You jumped back to film.

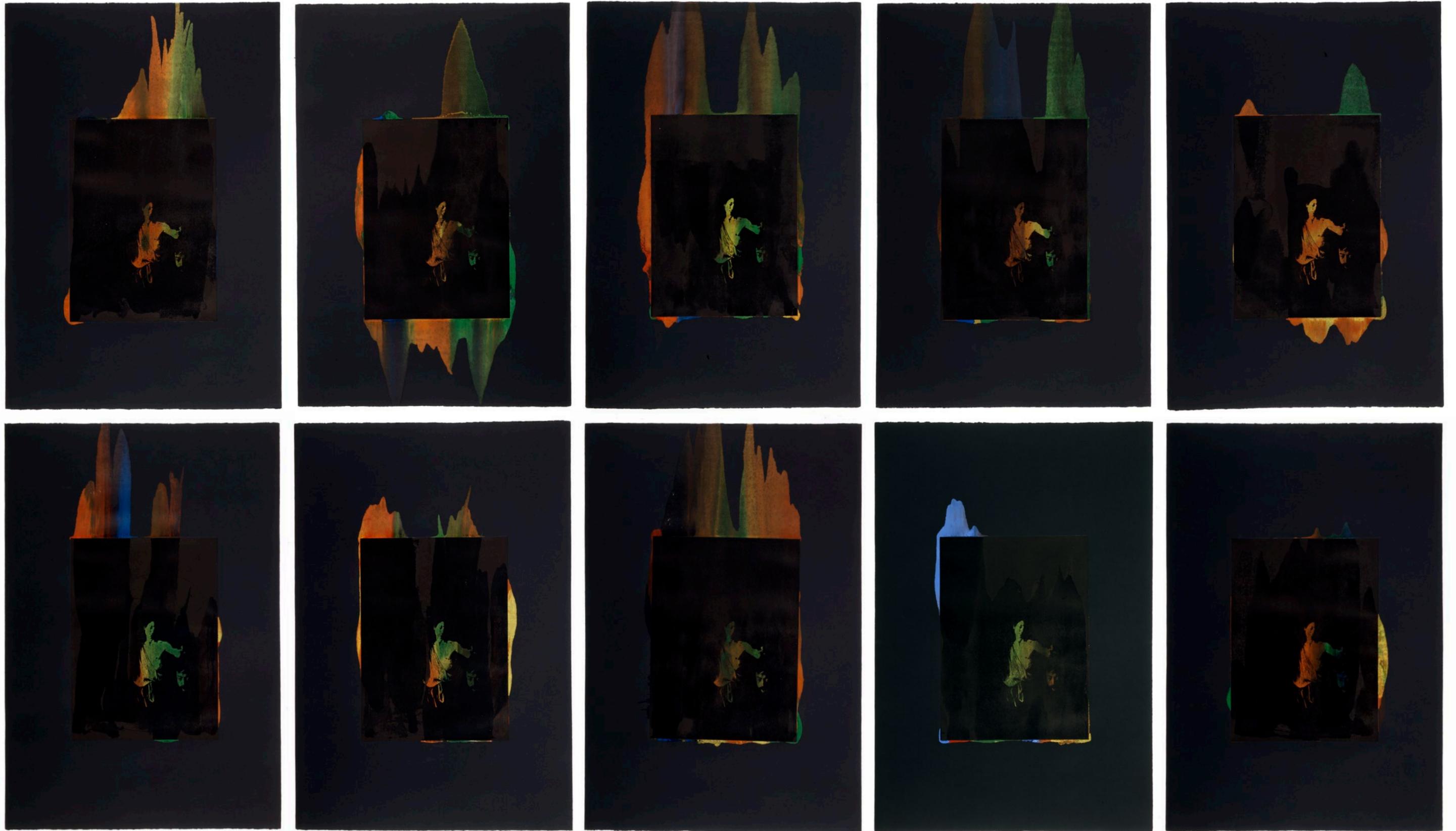
PRICE: Yes, the show was about film and video and how they circulate, in and out of the art world, and about filmic abstraction. The 16-mm film at Reena took all my editioned videos, my art editions, and spliced them into a single montage. Who gets to see art editions? Nobody. Collectors own them. I tried to cut them up into a seductive rhythm and ignore the content. Then I made a video version of that and gave it to EAI to circulate freely, to be rented to schools or sold as an unlimited edition. If you distribute the editions like that, on the one hand anyone can see them, but they also can't, because they've been chopped up and coded into something new. So that was one kind of filmic abstraction. And the film at Friedrich's with the digital waves and the Caravaggio prints was the second approach to abstraction. In a way, I was trying to present three approaches to abstraction.

Edition of *Digital Video Effect: "Editions"*, 2006
Video, 11:05 min. (Oxford: Modern Art Oxford, 2007)

Exhibition poster for *Seth Price* at Reena Spaulings Gallery, Friedrich Petzel Gallery, and Electronic Arts Intermix, New York, 2006, offset on paper

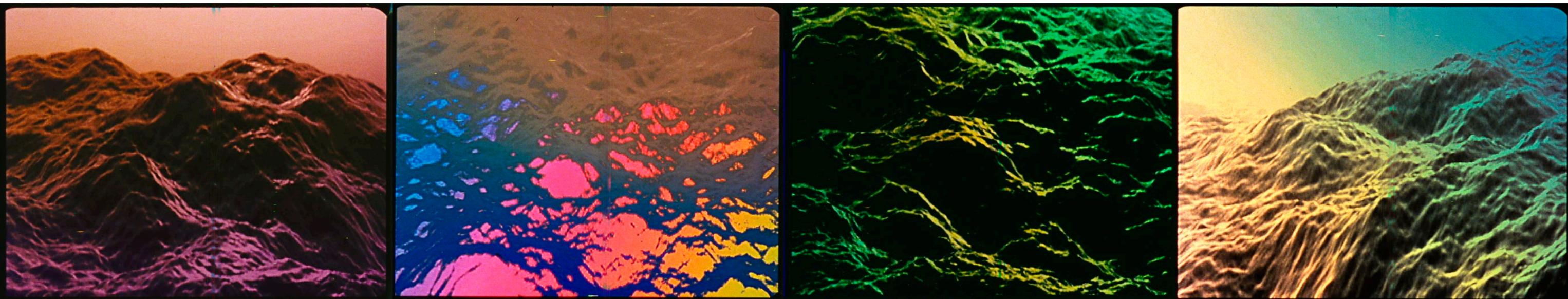


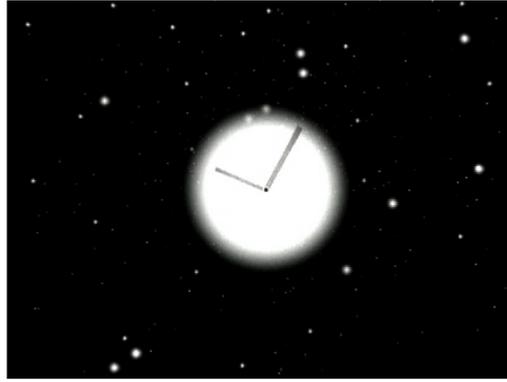
Seth Price, Friedrich Petzel Gallery, 2006, installation views



Addresses, 2006

Ten etchings and oil monoprints on Arches paper: http://archive.liveauctioneers.com/archive3/Hermann-historica/9099/0167_1_md.jpg; <http://musicweb.uk.net/SandH/2005/Jan-Jun05/DavidGoliath400.jpg>; http://art-perfect.de/Caravaggio/carav_david_goliath_grt.jpg; <http://www1.fccj.edu/cgroves/photogallery/photo28079/caravaggio-david%20w%20head%20of%20goliath.jpg>; 69.20.65.141/paintings/artists/c/Caravaggio_Michelangelo_Merisi_da_oil-big/David.jpg; <http://tslpl.org/images/David.jpg>; <http://academics.uww.edu/wota/imagebank/030.jpg>; <http://fineartimaging.com/include/images/thumbnails/400/CAR26.jpg>; <http://stevenboone.com/images/Europe/rome/carravagio.jpg>; http://hispanart.com/ciudadanoarte/cinco/imagines/Caravaggio_davidborghese.jpg





TIME DILATION

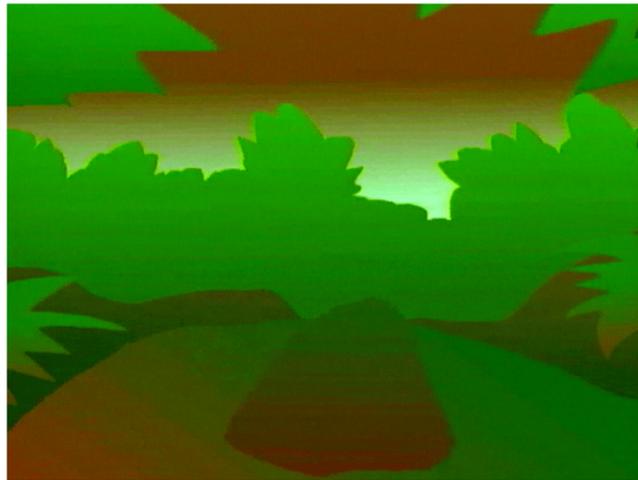
Ed Halter

“You are walking in a forest,” Seth Price intones over a black screen at the start of his video *Industrial Synth* (2000). His voice sounds close-miked and enhanced with a slight echo effect. “You don’t know where you are, or how you came to be here.” Suddenly an animated image appears: a cartoon jungle whose crudely drawn leaves pull apart to simulate a first-person perspective of forward movement, as if the viewer had just opened his or her eyes in the midst of wandering through this artificial terrain.

Rewatching *Industrial Synth* recently, I noticed a peculiar quality to the color of the forest’s branches as they spread open to invite my gaze inward. The clusters of foliage are made from irregular green polygons whose hue fades into splashes of orange-brown toward the bottom of the frame, and they move away from one another with the simple precision of early Flash animation. Their colors, however, are muddled with blotches of digital artifacts, and the outlines of the leaves break up into pixels along their diagonal edges. These imperfections contradict my memory of *Industrial Synth* from a decade and a half ago, when this sequence represented to me the very image of algorithmic uniformity, appearing then as crisp shapes of perfectly textured color on a standard-definition cathode-ray monitor. In 2016, as this turn-of-the-century animation unfolds on my iMac’s high-definition LED-backlit display, *Industrial Synth*’s history can be read indirectly from the quality of the image itself. In 2001, Price’s animation was output to Betacam videotape for exhibition and, years later, transferred from videotape back to a new digital file for use in today’s media environment, retaining a subtle visual echo of its past analog embodiment.

One could argue that this shift in *Industrial Synth*’s visual qualities is mere happenstance, as Price would have been unable to predict this particular by-product of the transition from one form of media to another. The video has not changed so much as have the world around it and, thereby, our perspective on its images. Yet to understand the experience of watching *Industrial Synth*’s opening sequence as a manifestation of media obsolescence and transmigration would be entirely consistent with the sensibility found in Price’s work as a whole. For Price, media images never travel through time as stable objects but function rather as strange nodes of attraction in a delicate, ever-shifting matrix of cognitive and emotional effects. And while Price’s writings—particularly *Dispersion* (2002–)—have often been interpreted as keys to understanding the themes and structures of his art, relatively little attention has been given to his video productions, which the artist himself considers central to his career. The paradigmatic shift from production to postproduction, and from creation to circulation; the aesthetic confrontation with the past, both personal and collective, through old technologies; the riddles of form and content posed by the immaterial nature of electronic media—all these concerns and many others are powerfully evoked in his videos, both in the act of their construction and in the phenomenological experiences they provide to a careful viewer.

Industrial Synth continues through a series of apparently disconnected sound-image combinations, cut harshly together, at times proceeding more like a work-in-progress assembly than a final edit, returning again and again to the aesthetics of the consumer tech of the 1980s and the home computing of the 1990s. Therein tones warble over a screen-saver-style starry night. A black-and-white robot face drawn with MacPaint gives a gnomish speech, again in Price’s voice: “I embrace the darkness and violence of everything that has been forgotten by time,” it chatters. (Here as elsewhere, Price’s use of echo effect subtly dislocates the sound from the image, severing acoustic and visual space.) A title card written in bitmapped Geneva font bears the phrase “All the works of antiquity that did not survive,” leading into a slide show of Walkman cassette players and boom boxes, comprising found



photos scanned at various resolutions, set to a boppy synth loop. A black square drawn inside a white rectangle suggests a Polaroid frame; some of its pixels shift from black to white, and it transforms into a stylized 5.25-inch floppy disk. *Industrial Synth* ends with silent images from a text-adventure game (one Price had begun to code in 1987 but never finished) that brings the player on a quest through a dark tower, wherein dwells a robed figure of Death. “Your death is lurking in the distance,” the game’s prompt declares. “Take death,” the player types into the command line. “You can’t do that,” the game replies.

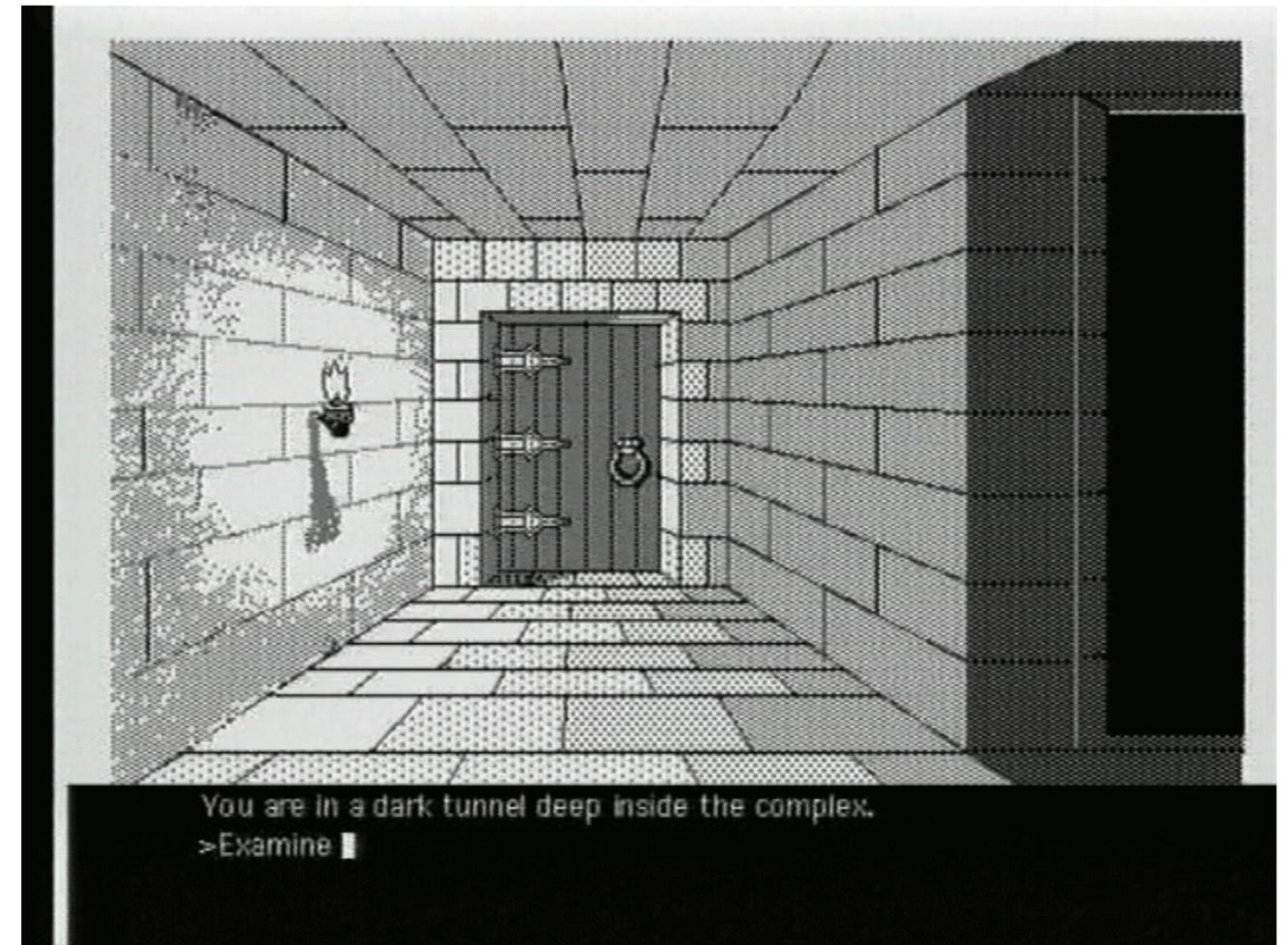
By combining such a variety of found and original footage with music, text, transitions, and intermittent, solemn voice-overs, *Industrial Synth* plays like an essay film without a central essay, eschewing overt argumentation in favor of wandering

through a series of media artifacts brought together into one continuous timeline. Aside from the recurring theme of mortality, the main connecting tissues are the physical substrate of video, which brings together materials produced by numerous audiovisual technologies into a single, unified medium, and the figure of the artist himself, as unseen compiler and editor.

Price provided further context in a statement handed out at the premiere screening of *Industrial Synth* at the Museum of Modern Art in 2001. “The web is composed of disparate media previously available only in controlled broadcasts, or locked into discrete consumer objects such as videotapes and records,” Price writes. “At least theoretically, then, the historical archive of pop culture becomes accessible, and, just as importantly, mutable: this is an opportunity not simply for preservation, but for re-circulation and recombination along new lines.” Price penned these words just as Google was emerging as the dominant search engine and years before the rise of platforms like YouTube or Tumblr. However, his point was not merely to imagine the technological possibilities of a growing internet but also to evoke the profound existential responses that continuous encounters with the past might precipitate. “An archive like this allows for an experience of history that is quite personal,” he continues. “Artifacts such as pop songs, typeface designs, logos, and advertisements, are, like illuminated manuscripts or Victorian corsets, headstones marking a bygone era; the difference is that an item of the ‘just-past’ may have originated in the lived experience of the viewer, and produces the shock of the uncanny.” Here, Price is clearly working through ideas about the distribution of media and its relationship to the work of the artist that would find a further-reaching analysis in his essay *Dispersion*, which ponders similar questions in the context of art history, more specifically the legacies of appropriation and conceptualism.

In 2001, however, Price was only just beginning to engage with the art world proper. His background and formal training had been in experimental film and video production, and most of his exhibition opportunities had been at cinemathèques and film festivals. As an undergraduate at Brown University in the 1990s, he had studied with experimental filmmaker Leslie Thornton, best known for her ever-evolving *Peggy and Fred in Hell* (1984–), a sprawling moving-image collage of found and original material that she continues to edit into new forms today. *Sub Accident* (1997), completed during Price’s time as an undergraduate, bears many of the hallmarks of his subsequent video productions:

Still from *Industrial Synth*, 2000, video, 16:37 min.

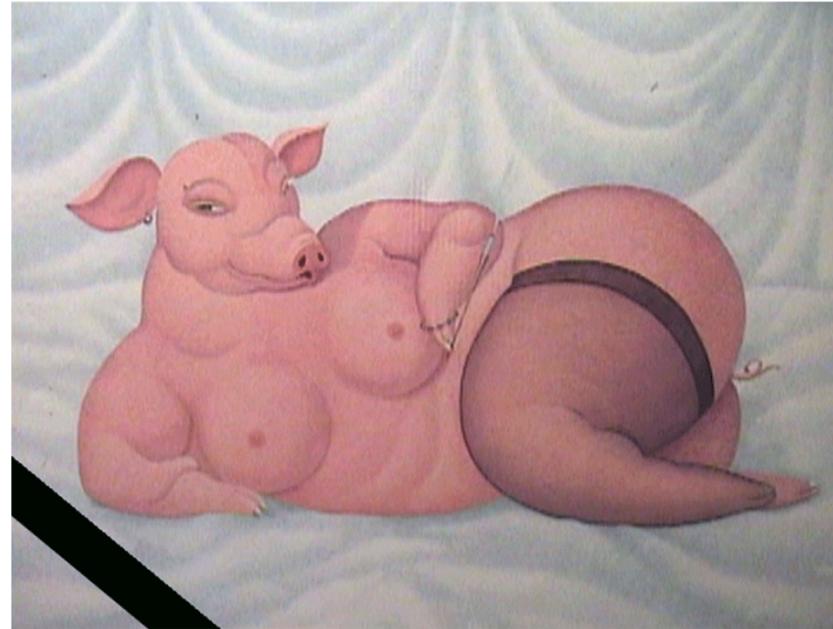


it’s a jumpy montage of elements, some found, others original though seemingly found, of various provenances—stuck VHS clips, crudely recorded voice-overs and DIY music, grainy Super 8 and 16-mm footage. More openly parodic than his later work, *Sub Accident* begins by invoking the sound-image structure of a Ken Burns documentary, with the camera zooming in to an absurd degree on an old newspaper photograph while Price narrates and a banjo plays. (This sequence foreshadows the title of a later work by Price, his 2004 video *Folk Music & Documentary*.) Two other early 16-mm works, *Cowboys* (1996; reedited into the video *American Graffiti*, 1999) and *Recital* (1999; reedited into the video *Male Feeling Disorder*, 2000), include original film footage shot with an ambiguous objectivity that recalls sequences of *Peggy and Fred*, in which Thornton directs the children playing her eponymous characters in a style somewhere between cinema vérité and Warhol’s Auricon automaticity.

By the time he created *Industrial Synth*, Price was working as technical director at the non-profit Electronic Arts Intermix in Manhattan, a job he held from 1998 to 2005. Founded by gallerist

Still from *Industrial Synth*, 2000, video, 16:37 min.

A tremendous sadness
that life is the way it is
and not some other way



Howard Wise in 1971, EAI is one of the world's oldest distributors of artist's video; its economic model grows out of the century-old practice of film distribution still used today, wherein copies of individual works are rented out on a per-screening basis to schools, cinemas, festivals, and museums, and the distributor splits the fees with the artist. For years, this had been a largely successful means of remuneration for artists who make film and video; EAI's catalogue contained, then and now, such major figures as Nam June Paik, Dan Graham, Martha Rosler, and Dara Birnbaum (all of whom Price worked with). In the 1990s and into the early part of the following decade, however, this model came under challenge by two rapidly growing and seemingly incommensurable forces: first, the system of limited editioning, based on similar practices with reproducible artworks like prints and cast sculpture, in which commercial galleries enforce scarcity by selling a fixed number of official copies to collectors; second, the practice of bootlegging video, which expanded dramatically following the shift from analog to digital technologies and the rise of file sharing on the Internet.

For Price, part of the initial attraction of working at EAI was the access to its tape-based video-editing facilities; his position would eventually involve overseeing the organization's transition to software-based postproduction systems. Today, he considers his tenure at EAI an important chapter in his artistic training. This kind of technology-bridging job would be familiar to many film- and videomakers born, like Price, in the 1970s, who learned media production in school on analog equipment, then worked in hybrid analog-digital systems like Final Cut Pro and MiniDV in their twenties, and transitioned to primarily digital technologies by the early twenty-first century. In retrospect, it seems unsurprising that Price would have been drawn as an artist to an aesthetics of obsolescence and memory, of "recirculation and re-combination," during an era of such complex transitions.

Around the time he was making *Industrial Synth*, Price began a series of projects in which he

used the early peer-to-peer network Napster, among other means, to create compilations of synth-based musical genres like video-game sound tracks, industrial dance, the hip-hop/R&B fusion known as New Jack Swing, and academic electronic composition. In his moving-image work, a related process contributed to what he would come to call "cameraless videos," or videos created entirely from images sourced from the Internet. His terminology recalls the phrase *cameraless filmmaking*, sometimes used by experimental filmmakers to describe hand-painted films made without shooting footage, repositioning such a tactile practice into the more detached activity of online search. The first such project was his video "Painting" Sites (2000), a nineteen-minute slide show of sometimes banal, sometimes bizarre images screenshotted from websites arrived at by searching for the word *painting*, combined with various editing effects and Price's own voice relating an emulation of nineteenth-century German Romantic *Märchen*. *Modern Suite* (2002) performs a similar operation, this time collecting images of playgrounds, set to atonal modernist music that, like the narration in "Painting" Sites, was written by Price. The initial visual impact of both "Painting" Sites and *Modern Suite* depended in part on the transformation of the meandering, ephemeral experience of web browsing into the linear, fixed, and repeatable event of video, as well as the dramatic resizing of low-resolution, small-scale images via video projection. After the advent of Google Images in mid-2001, the creation of artist's videos from pictures obtained using search technology has become increasingly common, and thus "Painting" Sites and *Modern Suite* have lost some of their original effect, reading now largely as archival examples of a historical techno-cultural moment, records of early explorations into a new data space.

Something of a formal sequel to *Industrial Synth*, Price's *Rejected or Unused Clips, Arranged in Order of Importance* (2003) engages with a more complex arrangement of sound-image combinations than the slide-show projects. *Rejected or Unused* includes not only still images found online and other bits left over from incomplete projects and from *Industrial Synth* but also moving images, sourced before YouTube by means including BitTorrent clients like LimeWire: these included home movies of babies and moms, teen street fights, weird religious videos, military footage. Made the same year as the American-led invasion of Iraq, *Rejected or Unused Clips* exudes a more violent vibe than *Industrial Synth*, suggesting an undercurrent of aggressive nerd masculinity that has become all too familiar on the Internet today. "We are in a utopian moment now. Each moment is a golden age," Price's voice-over portentously states at one juncture, over a poorly compressed clip of a professional soccer player cold-cocking a rival.

Even more so than *Industrial Synth*, *Rejected or Unused Clips* proposes the artist-assembler as a character behind the work, suggesting a narrative of the video's making in its very title and reinforcing *Industrial Synth*'s sense of video as an all-purpose substrate, a medium able to combine Price's disparate practices of writing, filmmaking, audio production, and collecting into a single form. As a container for other media, video also functions, for Price, as a means of distribution. This is most apparent in numerous short works that take the form of music videos, each bearing a single musical composition that dominates the experience of the work; the images can seem, to varying degrees, almost to be throwaway decorations. Price's first video of this nature was *New York Woman* (2001), originally produced to supplement a lecture on electronic music production, which has as its score tracks excerpted from an eponymous EP he composed. He initiated a larger series of such videos in 2010, using music he had made many years earlier and matching it to bits of found video and old

footage he shot himself. By this point, Price had become interested in the way that YouTube videos were often used in a similar manner to distribute music unofficially; this series was both uploaded to YouTube and exhibited at galleries and museums in a series of single-person booths, one per video, that required the viewer to don headphones and watch in semiprivacy. Price has said that the inspiration for these kiosks came from the kinetoscopes of early cinema, which showed loops of film inside coin-operated devices that a single user could operate at a time. “Now, just as at the beginning of cinema, moving images were consumed largely by individuals, who once again laid hands on their machines to set private pictures in motion, thereby fully commanding both the time and the space of the image,” he later observed in his philosophical *Fuck Seth Price: A Novel* (2015), connecting cinema’s origins with the YouTube age.

Price has also used video as a medium for performance, perhaps influenced by his sojourn at EAI. For Price, performance has often taken the form of storytelling, inspired by the repetitive tropes and tics of folktales. Bits of these mini-narratives occur as moments of voice-over in the compilation tapes, from *Sub Accident* onward, but Price has also made a few videos that are more purely concerned

with storytelling. *Triumph (Raw Version)* (2000) is an hour-long installation tape in which Price, dressed in outdoorsy clothing and situated in a rustic setting, continuously retells a story in the persona of a friend of Ronald Reagan’s, larding his narrative with the clichés of mainstream political campaign-speak. The six-minute *Folk Music & Documentary* could be read as a companion piece to *Triumph*. In this video, Price records his friend James Christopher Kendi—who at the time happened to dress and look enough like the artist that viewers could potentially mistake the two—attempting to deliver a monologue based on sections from Price’s 2003 essay “Sports,” which employs a dense pastiche of language habitually found in protest statements and other leftist discourse. Price’s own voice can faintly be heard feeding Kendi each line off-camera, undercutting Kendi’s already halting delivery. Perhaps Price’s most



extreme example of storytelling is the video *Romance* (2003), a tape that silently records the screen as he plays the first text-based video game, *Adventure*, initially programmed in 1976 for mainframe computers and subsequently ported to other systems. Consisting only of scrolling green text on a black screen for half an hour, relating a character’s subterranean travels through a fantasy environment, *Romance* is at once the most “narrative” video Price has made and, somewhat paradoxically, virtually impossible to follow, thanks to its visual tedium.

Although Price considers *Romance* a single-channel work, which should be shown cinematically along the lines of *Industrial Synth* or *Rejected or Unused Clips*, in practice the piece functions more like an installation and has often been exhibited as such. Video works that Price has made expressly as sculptural installations have likewise engaged in this data-dump approach to content, reinforcing the notion of the apparatus of video as a receptacle that might arbitrarily hold any manner of material. *Digital Video Effect: “Holes”* (2003) and *Digital Video Effect: “Spills”* (2004) consist of CRT televisions with built-in DVD players, which are housed in their original packing materials and placed screen-up for display. *Holes* showcases an original transition effect consisting of an accumulation of

Still from *Triumph (Raw Version)*, 2000, video, 60 min.



dots that lead from one image to another; the images thus concatenated are gory real-death photos found online. *Spills* uses eleven minutes from a black-and-white Porta-Pak tape shot by Joan Jonas in the early 1970s; the image is obscured with a new effect resembling dark liquid in motion. While Price’s choice of effects relates to the source materials—*Holes* suggests the punctures of wounds and voyeuristic peeping into violent scenes, while *Spills* refers to the pouring of paint and thus, by extension, to art history—the content is in each case subsumed under the effects themselves, which become more like instances of image processing than mere editing tools. When these pieces are seen installed in a space, the viewer is more likely to be drawn to the fluctuating digital patterns than to the original media they have decorated. In 2004, when Price first exhibited *Spills* at Reena Spaulings Fine Art in New York, he propped up several other sculptures with legs made from stacks of black CDs, each containing a file of the infamous Nick Berg execution video released by a terrorist group online earlier that year: an even more severe instance of video technology as a coldly neutral storage medium.

Price went on to explore many of these ongoing concerns around the moving image—shifts in distribution models, the vocabulary of visual effects, video and film as containers or substrates—in an exhibition that took place in 2006 in New York, held simultaneously at EAI’s exhibition space, Reena Spaulings Fine Art, and Friedrich Petzel Gallery. At EAI, he premiered a new video to be placed in distribution by the organization, *Digital Video Effects: “Editions”* (2006), an eleven-minute compilation of clips from all his editioned videos sold through commercial galleries up to that date. Paralleling the concept of *Holes* and *Spills* (both of which are featured in *Editions*), the video uses Price’s own previous work as its content, “yielding a montage that, while bordering on incoherence, provides access to these publicly unavailable artworks,” as EAI’s description (perhaps written by Price himself) puts it. At Reena Spaulings, this same video was transferred to 16 mm and exhibited as *Untitled Film/Left* (2006). Meanwhile, at Petzel, Price installed *Untitled Film/Right* (2006), a 16 mm film made from a six-second CGI clip of a roiling liquid surface, purchased from a stock-footage agency and intended for use as a background graphic. Price altered the colors and speed of the clip and repeated it many times until he generated nearly twelve minutes of footage, which was then transferred to film for looping exhibition. He thereby enacted a series of crossover gestures—from video to film, from limited edition to unlimited distribution—that clarified the social, technological, and aesthetic shifts the moving image was currently undergoing. These connections were further

explored in a publication entitled *Notes on This Show* (2006), also presented at the exhibition, which compiles ideas seemingly jotted down by the artist in preparation for the event. Paralleling Price’s loose assembly-style editing in his compilation tapes, his writing often takes the form of disparate notes, confronting the reader with the shocking nakedness of half-formed thoughts. An excerpt from *Notes* shows how closely Price was considering the differences between cinema and the art world at this time.



Digital Video Effect: “Holes”, 2003
TV/DVD player in its original packaging,
DVD, installed in a private home

Digital Video Effect: “Editions”, 2006,
video, 11:05 min., installed at 9th
Biennale de Lyon, 2007

The fragmentary nature of these ideas, and the line breaks imposed by font size and margins, lend his words an automatic poetics:

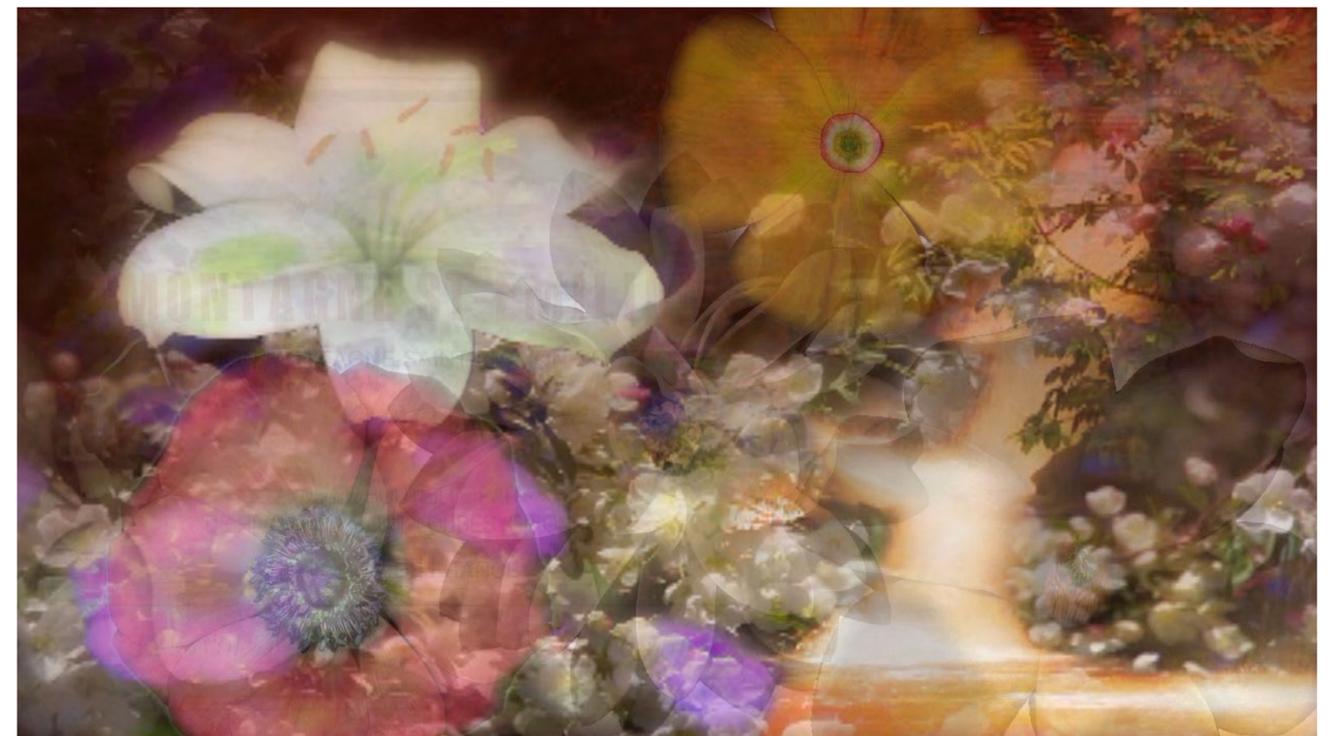
Abstraction

somehow is anathema in the film of art world/gallery -
--video also, possibly less so---certainly abstract film always is present as continuing discourse of "avant-garde", "underground" sphere: i.e. festivals, etc.--
- a parallel track to the art world, with an interest in materiality
so, why is abstract film not visible in the art context? Because of the young legacy of video art--
1) performance thread
2) narrative thread
=an anti-cinematic tradition, leads to a lack of air for abstrax

In this linked set of exhibitions in 2006, Price uses the recent history of his own artistic development — his movement through both art contexts and cinematic culture—as a framework for understanding the circulation of images. Soon after, he began what has been his most ambitious moving-image project to date, *Redistribution* (2007–). At the core of the varying-length piece is a video recording of an artist's talk Price gave at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York, in which he is shown guiding the audience through the history of his practice, discussing the ideas and motivations behind works like *"Painting" Sites*, *Digital Video Effect: "Holes"*, and *Untitled Film/Left*. At first, *Redistribution* might appear to be a straightforward explication of Price's art, the kind of video usually classed as documentation rather than as a work unto itself. Yet like Price's various texts, which have often been taken at face value as "artist's statements," *Redistribution* alters the supposedly neutral material in ways both subtle and obvious, thereby folding it back into itself like the loop of a Klein bottle. To wit, he has reshot parts of the talk in his studio, using a black background and the same T-shirt to make it appear as if there were close-ups in the museum's documentation. He has placed the originally squarish standard-definition images inside a wider 16:9 frame, surrounding them with high-definition graphics to put their rapid historical recession into dramatic relief. He apparently has added material that was not in his original talk, and has re-recorded and dubbed his own speech, in the manner of old Italian films, imposing an unnerving disconnection between the image of his body and the sound of his voice. The total effect is less like documentation and more like a dissociative dream. At one point in his narration, he appears to point back toward the implications of these postproduction effects:

The "artist's statement," for example, or lectures like this one: the artist is used as a bridge from one frame to another. In a funny way, to speak about my own work now, looking at these slides of older work, feels like a splitting. People often want to hear what the artist has to say, what lies "behind" the work, yet at the same time it's taken as performance, and in the end maybe they really don't care to hear the tone and enunciation of a particular speaking voice.

Extrapolating from the potentially endless nature of postproduction and the arbitrariness of declaring a digital video finished, Price reedits *Redistribution* every time it is shown. He thus ensures a unique experience to viewers who encounter the work at a particular moment. In this, he is also circling back to the beginnings of his own education in video, as Thornton applies a similar procedure in the case of *Peggy and Fred in Hell*, tweaking its edit, adding and subtracting material, every time the film is shown. Thus *Redistribution*, like *Peggy and Fred*, ultimately denies the existence of a stable, completed work that might be inserted simply into any standard system of distribution or editing. For Price, the meaning of his video works lies in their status never as fixed objects but as ever-shifting experiences.



2006–8

Double Hunt
Keys
Silhouettes

The Pregnant Mare
Ariana Reines

The pregnant mare ... it's a line drawing ... the most ancient painting ... she's being hunted ... presence of the horse in the Americas ... Geronimo on horseback ... What it means to be the last to surrender ... A dream of unfathomable lengths, expanses of time, flames throwing shadows upon a wall, images in darkness, what you can suppose of the day from within a cave, red-green color blindness, images' afterburn, no not images but things, things, galloping things burnt into you by the sun, edges raised and singed by a woodburner, is it a cartoon or a masterwork, she is female, she is running and full, running and full, full of life ... a surface concealing what interiority, what fullness, remaining full even after you empty it, turn it back on itself, crumple it up, throw it away ... almost ... transparency as the controlling idea of the WikiLeaks era, transparency and surveillance, the body of the mare, the middle of the mare, the surfaces of skin, if Borges is the M. C. Escher of literature, this is a laconic hi-functioning slacker's approach, obsessive slacker, slacker w' style, to the Möbius strip, to infinity as we now know it ... A history of human concepts of infinity and its diagrams ... the contemporary field of data presentation, data visualization ... David Foster Wallace's infinity book ... Pregnant mare, pregnant with a load of unknowing ... galloping thru a cloud of unknowing ...



Untitled, 2006
Screen-print ink on polyester film, grommets (destroyed)



Wade Guyton, Seth Price, Josh Smith,
Kelley Walker, Kunsthalle Zürich, 2006,
installation view



Nailed to the Wall, 2006
Screen-print ink on plastic bag

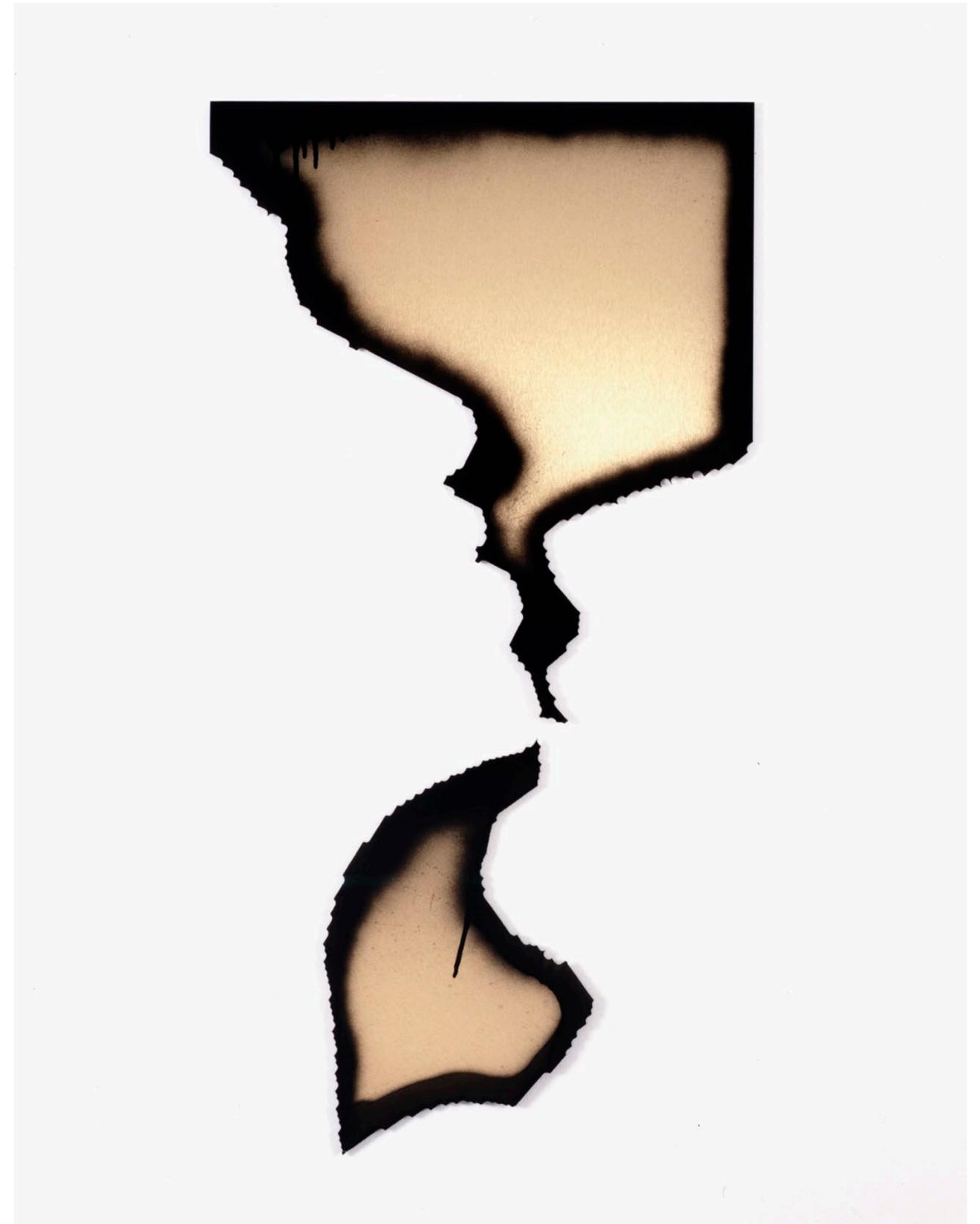


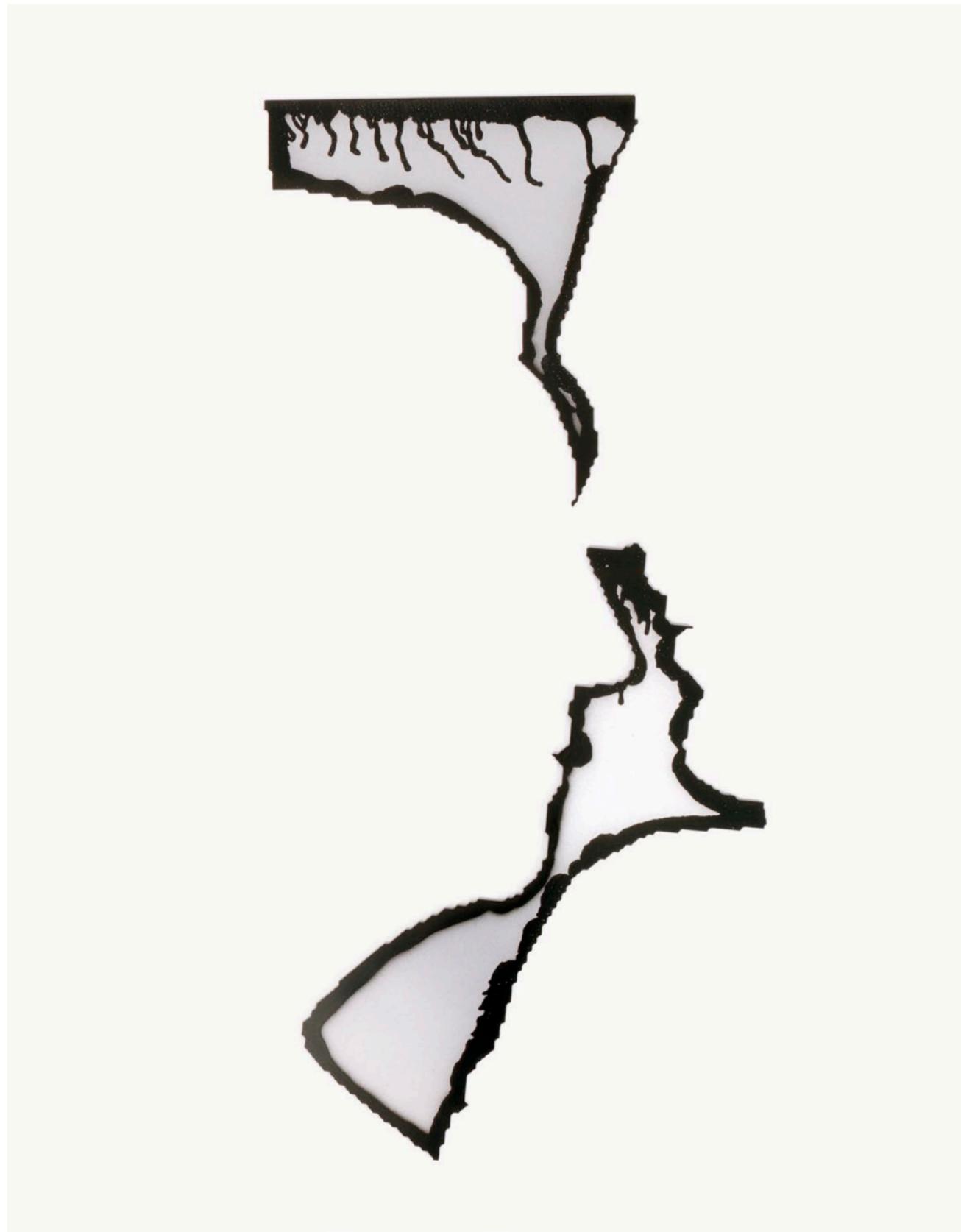
Double Hunt, 2006
Screen-print ink on PETG, hardware, installed at *Images*,
Fridericianum, Kassel, 2016



Untitled, 2008
UV-cured ink-jet on aluminum composite

Untitled, 2008
Spray enamel on aluminum composite





Older Couple, 2009
Spray enamel on aluminum composite

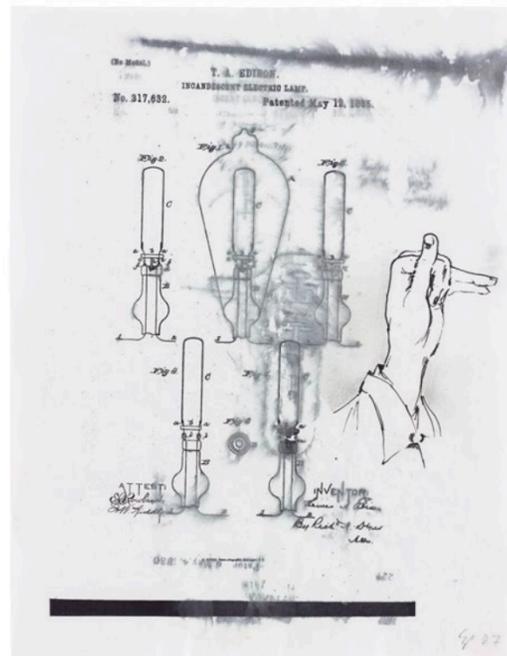
Untitled, 2013
UV-cured ink-jet on aluminum composite



Untitled, 2016
Screen-print ink, pigmented acrylic polymer, and UV-cured ink-jet on aluminum composite



Untitled, 2016
UV-cured ink-jet on aluminum composite



Parlor Trick, 2007
Ink-jet, water, and pen on paper

Untitled, 2007
UV-cured ink-jet on foil on aluminum composite, installed at Seth Price, Kelley Walker, *Continuous Project*, Modern Art Oxford, 2007



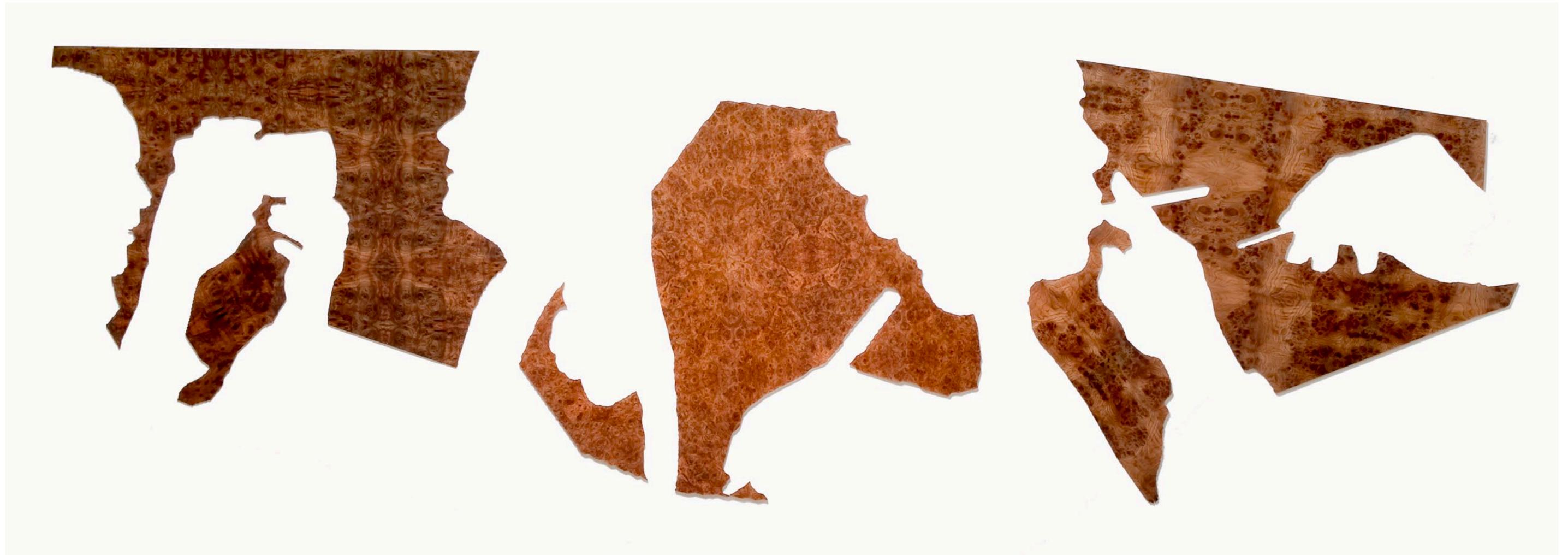
Marriage Stencil, 2008
Spray enamel on aluminum composite



Untitled, 2008
UV-cured ink-jet on aluminum composite, installed at *Seth Price*,
Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York, 2008



Seth Price, Friedrich Petzel Gallery,
New York, 2008, installation view



Untitled Map, 2008
Burled Carpathian elm, burled olive ash, and burled walnut laminated to acrylic



Untitled, 2008
Pencil and charcoal on paper



Writing/Feeding, 2008
 Olive ash and Vavona redwood laminated to acrylic, UV-cured ink-jet on aluminum composite, installed at *Seth Price*, Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York, 2008



Untitled, 2008
 Imbuia, burled cherry, and burled Carpathian elm laminated to acrylic, installed at *Seth Price*, Kunsthalle Zürich, 2008



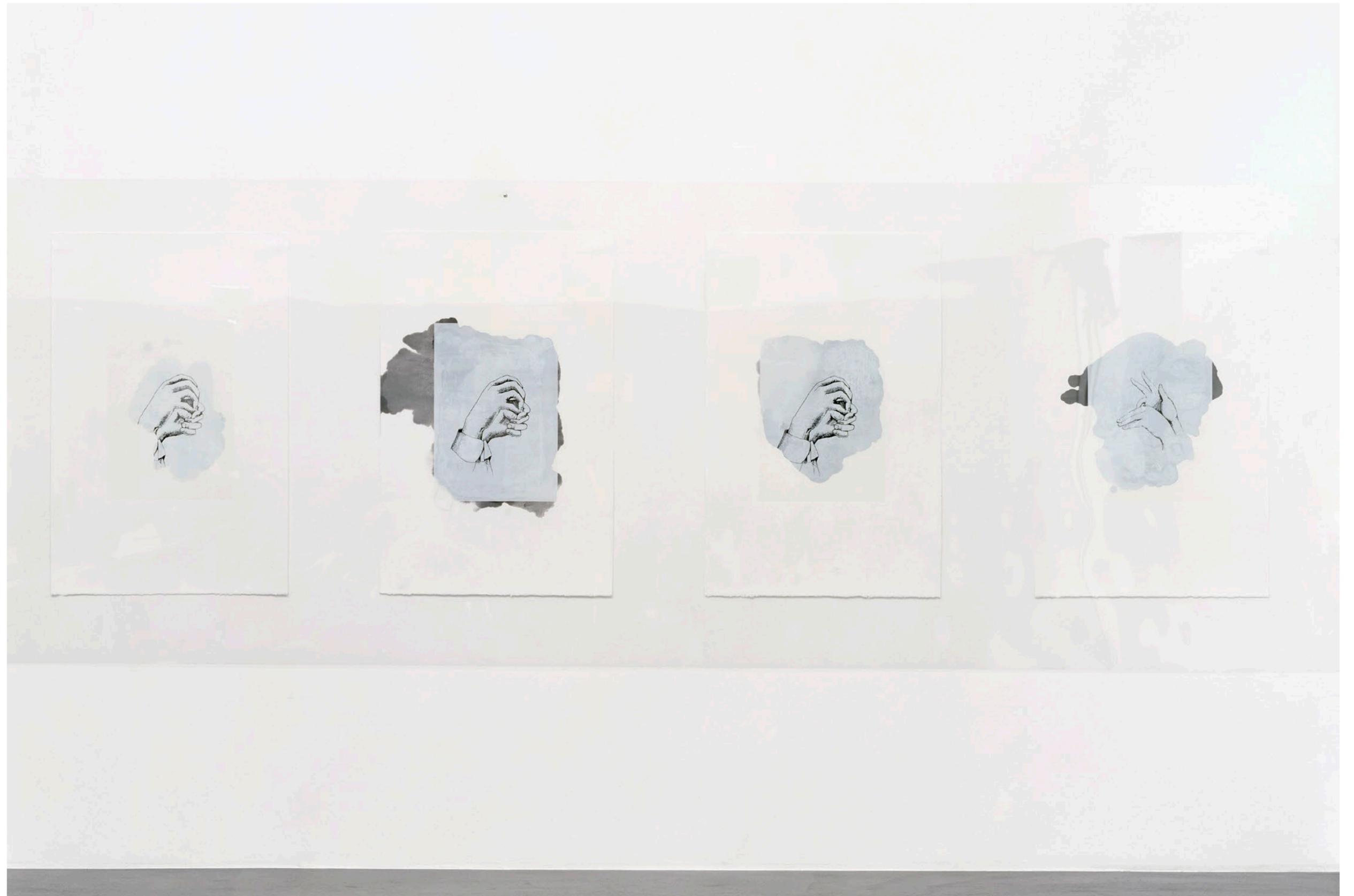
Secret, 2009
Burled camphor laminated to acrylic

Lighting/Machine Waste, 2008
Routed MDF panel



2008

Kunsthalle Zürich
Redistribution



Untitled, 2008
Four relief prints on monprint on Arches
paper, polyester film, installed at *Seth Price*,
Kunsthalle Zürich, 2008



ACHIM HOCHDÖRFER: *After the Silhouettes, you came back to the Vacuum Forms, did you not?*

SETH PRICE: *Yes, but only by going back to Dispersion. After the Silhouettes I had my first institutional show, and I think I did two things to help me deal with that. One was Redistribution, and the other was vacuum-forming the Dispersion essay. In hindsight I think they were both about taking the way I was starting to be perceived, the story, and alienating it a little. For Essay with Knots, I took this essay that people had tried to take as their own, which supposedly offered a way to think about art and the internet, and I tried to say, "Well, this is a piece of art. This is not an essay. I'm not a writer. This is not a manifesto for me or anyone else; this is not a way to think about the internet or something; it's just another experiment, and now I'm doing other work." At the time some people said, "This is cynical; the essay was all about being free, and now you're selling it"—*

HOCHDÖRFER: *Yeah, yeah.*

PRICE: *—but they mistake flexibility for cynicism. Because traditional morals, traditional scruples, are about being unbending and staying true, not about being flexible. I don't think it was cynical, I think it was showing the way the essay works. The essay itself was all about existing in different forms. That whole line of thinking about redundancy came out of the Title Variable project, where a work exists in different economies. Akademische Graffiti is a free download, but it's also available at Printed Matter as a ten-dollar CD, and it's also available as a vinyl LP, an edition, for art-world prices.*

HOCHDÖRFER: *And how did Redistribution tie in to this?*

PRICE: *The Redistribution film came out of me coming to grips with the impulse to understand an artist's work, to build a narrative, which you start to feel quite strongly as a pressure. A museum sometimes tries to do this in a very literal way, where the education department makes a video. I went to the Matthew Barney show and there was a monitor in the middle of the Guggenheim, at the bottom of the rotunda, interviewing him while he's installing the show. I thought, here's a thing that is not art, it states that it's outside the art, it's very awkward, but at the same time, it's literally in the center of the museum. Art is so weird that we need to have this non-art, right in the middle. I thought, OK, I'm going to make my own non-art and put it in the middle, and it's going to be very embarrassing. Who wants to see the artist say a thing inside the actual show? I mean, you do but you don't. So at the Kunsthalle Zürich you walked all the way through one way, and you're like, "What is all this stuff?" At the end of the show I'm up there, like, "Let me tell you about it. Not what it means, but something." And then you walk all the way back. That's kind of horrible as a gesture. It was very hard for me; it was like doing something embarrassing in public.*

This page and overleaf:
Seth Price, Kunsthalle Zürich, 2008, installation view





Untitled, 2008
Vacuum-formed polystyrene, two parts





Wooden Structure, 2008
Vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene, grommet



Vintage Bomber, 2008
Urethane automotive paint on vacuum-formed PETG



Vintage Bomber (detail), 2009
Synthetic enamel on vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene



Vintage Bomber, 2008
Urethane automotive paint on vacuum-formed PETG



Inorganic Play, 2008
Ink-jet on protective film on acrylic, two parts, installed at *Seth Price*, Kunsthalle Zürich, 2008



Twine, 2008
ink-jet on protective film on acrylic, two parts





This spread and previous:
Seth Price, Kunsthalle Zürich, 2008, installation views



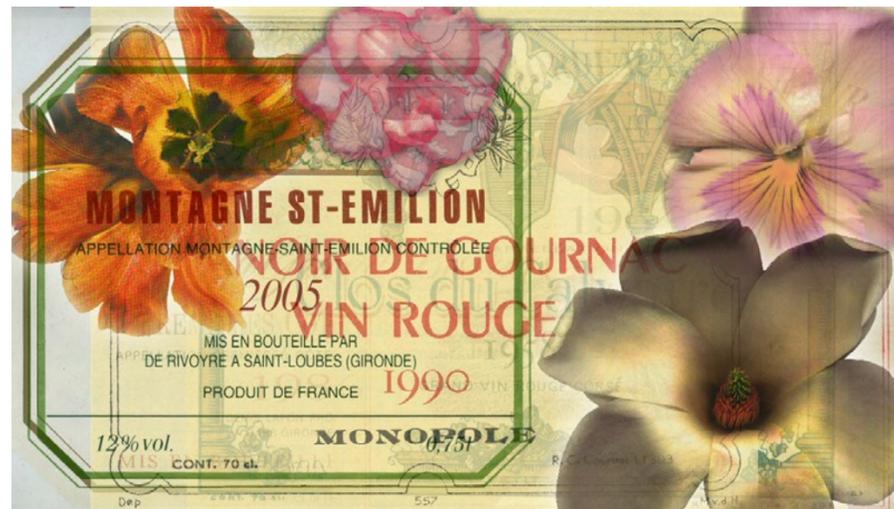
Essay with Knots, 2008
Screen-print ink on high-impact polystyrene
and PETG vacuum-formed over rope knots,
nine pieces (eight shown here), installed at the
Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2014

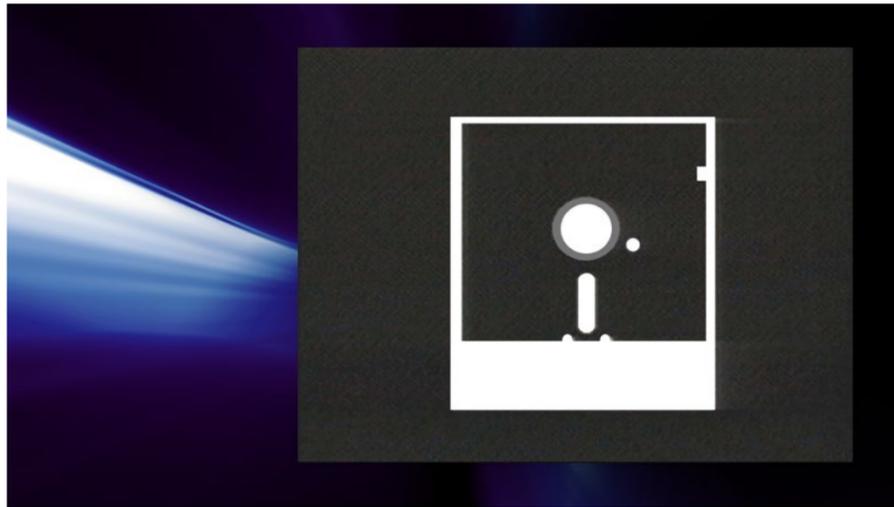


Seth Price, Kunsthalle Zürich, 2008,
installation view



Still from *Redistribution*, 2007–, video, length variable (currently 44:15 min.), installed at *Seth Price*, Kunsthalle Zürich, 2008







OPEN FIFTHS

Ariana Reines

I just watched a Tony Robbins video
You may judge this a counterrevolutionary gesture
Thinking about the people I forgot to write back to
I ate as much peanut butter as I could
Listening to I CAN'T HELP FALLING IN LOVE WITH YOU

(Pats the boot of his gun affectionately) a kind of bug
As siphoner sucking up the purple world thru its straw
Whorling hurricanes out from the backs of beetles, diaper rashes
Heavy tits heavy eyes of a heavy lady, a lady with fibroids
A lady who suffers migraines, I wanna fuck a woman who knows pain

I wanna feel the heat of a woman who knows pain
Yezidi women and girls call each other comrade
I'm not at all certain this is true
I met Pussy Riot at Richard Hell's one night, proceeded to not write about it
Richard had just read a thing in public to make him look like no friend of women

Then Pussy Riot called him wanting to be friends the lord moves in mysterious ways
Richard's apartment is tiny it was an intimate affair whiskey
And thick stew Sheelagh made Stephen
Gave someone a suboxone. Nadya had a bad
Cold and a toothache. Maria though perhaps slightly less photogenic was sexier in person

I worship poetry she told me what would I be if I came from such a country
Putin barechested on his horse & out a-raping
The people of Pushkin having not yet forgotten at which altar
To kneel & worship & I've run out of money
Again there's really no excuse this time

The worship of certain maladaptive behaviors
As though they pertained to art but they do
In general it's my womanhood that takes the hit
I used to think the defining characteristic of a writer
Was not wanting to have her picture taken ever

A possible inversion of a yet deeper yearning
As the one revealed by Shakespeare in the Sonnets
For Beauty: first the despair at ever incarnating it in oneself
Second despairing of possessing it thru the Other, & finally
The sick & unassailable triumph of The Writer, the rare

Very rare one great enough to make a Beauty that won't die
Which if you think about it is something even God doesn't do
But the question of Beauty is no longer the question not the question
I mean of our times but it is but we won't admit it my stomach
Hurts from all the peanut butter I've eaten

You are allergic to peanuts and soy you are beautiful like a tuff & tall dove
There's a kind of truth most people are afraid of
Telling, which I understand because it would make them look bad
I am similarly afraid of telling such truths, but now I'm standing
Up on a crowded train I don't know that I'll be able to finish what I'm saying

Yes I will a man has just offered up his seat. Gentle city, today again
Underestimated by me! You looked so good on Google
Hangout this morning I know it sounds jejune
& though what we discussed about the subject FAKE
Apparently what they want you to teach at Parsons

Hurt me a little as it hurts me now how the man
What gave his seat up is now um adjusting something
In the pocket of his pants less than a foot from my face
In just such a way I really wish you were here
Already even though I don't yet know how to live

Part of me loathes poems the amorous ones
With a living addressee & feels as a reader
I not only have a right to but deserve an author's
Total devotion. I resent that other person behind their "you" want
My writers flayed & turning on the spit for my love or God's, that's it

And as for artists I don't know in the fornicating wilderness
Through which we all have no choice but to move I don't think it wrong
To require of a thing at least passing devotion the train
Vibrating everybody's genitals while half of us smash glass & spray machine
Gun bullets across our phones that shit used to badly unnerve me

I don't want to stop but it's time
For therapy. Therapy doesn't help very much. It helps
Exactly enough sane slightly tantine presence
Bearing witness to all the normie things I never learned
Time management, the idea of not dying

Some things some beings
Just have more life in them fake as we all
May be, at least when we begin. And yes the future at times
Itself can seem the most pernicious form of fakery
You want to stay with the truth of having been destroyed

By what really did happen but now you must go on
I'm so full I can't really think, like
I just literally farted in a businessman's face but I had headphones
On so it was easy to ignore what I'd done. You've hit the road
Our laurel on your dashboard, you say, reminding you you will win

The moon was in Scorpio this AM, v moody &
Macho which we also were & this record's like a piece of carnival
Machinery, as they say, on crack. I read a beautiful essay
By Russell Brand about crack and dope and not smoking
Them. I hope "they" give him the credit he deserves

Soon if they have not yet. There are reasons a lapidary
Style's a better bet for a woman than say mine
Now I am peeing in REI. Now I'm in Whole Foods
Buying Pro Bars. Leopoldine gripped me by the hips
When she saw me. I really did

Eat a sick amount
Of peanut butter & after that mung
Beans simmered in New Mexican chilis etc
Cos that was all there was. Now I'm missing Women's
Gymnastics now I'm looking at progressive foods

I can see the money arpeggiating in transparent tubs
Of plantain chips (tostones) & Spicy Pub
Mix, snack foods of The People, bar fare of Joe and José
Six Pack, Fanfare for the Common Man
By Aaron Copland now gleaming on a shipping pallet

Ready to be turned into human money. I need chocolate
Almond milk and cold brew concentrate
If I'm going to clean the apartment and finish this
All in the same night and tell the boy
Named Offer I can't go to the Noguchi

With him cos I'm in love with you
Marin Marais comes into my ears
I'm thinking of Dolly Parton
Likening her heart to a bargain store, her butterfly
Tattoo and taking money from my little brother

I gave him Thurston & Eva's Necrobutcher book
The bent Peruvian man I met two days ago
In his new ice cream shop full of toys
I still owe him a dollar. Except now it's tomorrow
I've paid him back with interest. This morning

I heard FINE AND MELLOW for the first time in an age
There are five lines a stanza in here open staves of slave
Wheat waving in oppressive Ancient Egypt or if you prefer
The Americanizing trumpets of Aaron "studied counterpoint
With Boulanger" Copland, I don't know the things

It's right to care about, that's a feeling, my excesses go straight
Into my own pussy where I pay them not a penny
FINE AND MELLOW aches & aches with what is true
Your mouth the way you cock
Your head all over me oblivion

Oblivion's the larger part possibly
You know of my art, at least latterly
It has been. You never told me the meaning
Of the yellow pollen your grandmother blessed
Us with, so gently gently I looked it up online

Now you're texting me you've stopped in Soledad
For a sandwich so I ask you to please pour out
Some cola to the memory of Jonathan Jackson and George
Jackson have you ever seen a string of shit hanging from a fish tank
Fish I asked you cos that was a little how I felt

Rather spirderish my poem unspooling out of me
Inside this imprisoned feeling. Men and women are not the same
Thanks for the pic of NATURE'S GIFT CHERRIES
"Remember here?" you asked & I do
I feel relaxed & amorous but at the edge

Of me's the sensation I'm being come into by six
Hundred years of colonial horror as in that Adrienne
Rich poem, the one that is for me her masterpiece
The archival impulse in dudes makes me impatient
But who, who is clean of it. & "dudes" made the place where we now meet

"Nothing, this foam" that's Mallarmé
In the poem called SALVATION or SALUTE or HELLO
Or HI. If I remember correctly he was an English
Teacher. Why don't people remember that when they come
All day all over what he left behind, taking him

So Oedipally seriously, "me already
On the poop," he writes I swear to God
Badly on purpose. White shit. Cream
Deth, the opposite of Prince. The day I earn
As much as Seth's the day he'll kiss my ass

At Leopoldine's reading she and the other female
Reader both treated twin subjects: impecunity
And getting stoned. Which will probably both be showing
Up a lot for a while as more young woman
Writers as they say EMERGE

Yesterday the director of the Belgian opera
Took me to lunch at the place I met Seth
Right off a redevye (I was) for breakfast
I drank two camparis & told him (Belgian opera man who by the way is Swiss)
My courtroom drama fantasy. It made me feel a little gross

& I don't see him going for it. Carina says she got called "an aggressive bitch"
At work today. I haven't read "The Painter
Of Modern Life" in half an age but I told Sheelagh
I'd translate "Correspondences" for the Symbolism
Show at the Frick.* Good job you have detected this is a New

York School of Poetry poem, for one thing, by the presence
Of the Frick with its Polish Rider so beloved of Frank O'Hara
And I'm going to show it to you when you get here
Even though you've already seen it but like the song
Says, I'll Take You There. My pen she glide so smoothly I can't

*Erratum: The 2017 exhibition *Delirium: The Art of the Symbolist Book*, for which I translated "Correspondences" by Charles Baudelaire, is at the Morgan Library & Museum, not the Frick.

Stop.

Actually I could stop and did but now I'm back again
Tex Ritter's singing RIDE RIDE RIDE. Seth had
An extremely Western shirt on when me met
The other week. A pregnant mare is not for riding
On. My hat's beside you as you drive you said. "A Step

Away From Them" is a poem I love. I can't remember
What happens in it right now though. "As I Walked Out
One Evening" is an Auden nonsense poem. A love
Poem I thought of as I walked out one morning into the porky
Air, families of Queens having slept in then all set in unison

To frying bacon. Now the cat is yowling
To the tune of RIDING INTO THE TOWN OF ALBUQUERQUE
Which is where I got that leather biker
Vest for \$7. Where Byron would go on
And on a lady'd be wise to stop for my experience has shown me Romance

Looks better on the rich & lordly. SING COWBOY
SING goes the radio, not bidding Ariana go on, supremely cracker
Ass & so hokey in its stylings you have to think it is "on purpose". Is my heart open
Like O'Hara says his poem is? I'm looking at his
Long-lost dick by Larry Rivers on SELECTED POEMS

Poets and painters, the joys of men, midcentury modernism
Whatever. My mean way of reducing to furniture all the old avant
Gardes I close my eyes and see your open
Hand, your fist. Chelsea just walked in. Hello I say
Her check has yet to come. Mine too. I guess I should go watch gymnastics

It's true what they say, that meaning can be made from anything. The real
Question might be must it & if so how. It's true what the Jews say
That the drawing-together of the two most disparate things is the real
Mark of intelligence. It's true what the Greeks say
That metaphor is transportation. And Art's

Demand that one turn a single idea into a thing, a place
A series, and do it elegantly, I've put that in my pipe
All over again and smoked it too. She picked
Her potted plant up off the floor but did not disturb
The dirt that it had left there. Transparency, surveillance

And whiteness. These are the three things. Compression
Dispersal, being everywhere at once, dark feelings, sustained attention
Paid to other people's major obsessions for minor & neglected modes
Of production, recent-past antiquing that can & must be turned to profit
The delicate art of sculpting as with a scalpel using the market as one among several tools

While all the while fleeing, seeming to flee from it or at least to appear
Relaxed. I'm a romantic & a voluptuary. I like
My food & my lord you. I like lying around & getting dressed
& walking around talking only to the shit
Talking little Mozart of my mind

& I who was nowhere near Annandale-on-Hudson
How could I know SCORPION GRASS was another word for FORGET
ME NOT another blue flower
Of poetry not that I had read Novalis either
But I did see an early picture by Mondrian one time

Woke up with MOTOWN PHILLY in my head
Guess whose fault that is
I was gonna send you I LOVE YOUR SMILE by Shanice
But better you send my love to your grandmother
But I do love that song. Then all of a sudden the birds begin to scream

I'LL BUY YOU A CHEVROLET IF YOU LET ME DO SOMETHING TO YOU and
THE WAY YOU SHAKE THAT THING MAKES ME LOSE MY APPETITE
I had another dream I was in a cave filling out forms I couldn't
Understand while JT yelled at me all day. Then finally here
Come the warm jets, Crowley tears on my pillow...

And he rode into town in his sores...
 In the idiot cloth of a do-gooder...
 Seated backwards upon an ass
 Lo-res infinity in quiet carbonation about his head
 Neither top nor bottom tier, plaintive strains on a kind of trombone...

Afternoon new music
 The early dawn is very old, PRELUDE
 TO THE AFTERNOON OF A FAUN except that wasn't it
 At all, a daffodil or Wordsworth's sister
 Dorothy, the poem Wm wrote to Toussaint Louverture

Worlds whipping themselves slowly into a cream
 She left her broken beaded necklace scattered where it fell
 "I'm paid a toll by every star inside this constellation"
 Humid Alberti bass of allergens & other dander
 Dusting haughtily the unchurned Milky Way

Moving unconsciously through this
 Apparently open system... The color
 Of neutrality, dignity's gender
 The babysmooth cheek of specie
 But I don't feel it's my job to resolve these things for you

& here's a little bag of preservatives inside a big bag
 Of jerky & here are condom wrappers & fingernail parings
 Engraved lead pipe fittings subtracted from the sites of their utility
 Soft black lead scored with the long long names of demons
 Held now in a white flame & now thrust deep in a cold cold mountain spring

Tears on my pillow... And what of the Dumpster™
 Marked CENTURY WASTE, mess of tubes
 Comprising the inspirational skyline of tomorrow?
 Bay Bay it's fucking hot out
 LADY U NEED A TABLE was the old sluggard's weird catcall

To me as I scrivined fast upon a legal pad outside the deli & what if I did?
 & who was he to say. Helas, the human heart
 Whose work can in no wise be avoided
 The sluggard retreated indoors with a Family
 Size bag of Lays & quickly drew the curtains

My hair's at least as good as Seth's
 Or Byron's so get down
 On yr knees & pay me I mean pray
 To the rainbow preserved in a jet
 Of oil, the ordered entrails of a bird...

As I mounted the stair fat drops of acid
 Rain bursted down upon me I thought of Diego
 With his sour and silky-looking hair
 Diego who has fucked more women
 Than you sir have even seen

The voice of Mick Jagger in Wild Horses
 Always makes me think a little of cough syrup
 But in a good way. I didn't come here
 To resolve what you take to be MY DILEMMA
 Though for there is sir NO DILEMMA

For love requires leisure, the love poem
 Leisure too & slightly more. I have won
 Myself both by my refusal
 Ever to do anything else.
 Next question?

Clear Channel, The Complete Poem
 Brazilian Blowout by Ariana Reines
 Moroccan Oil Tome The First, too many Olympic
 Rings on yr fingers my friend but we both know
 That you are not my friend

What if it were true about the magic figures
 As simple as writing them down
 Roaring like a lion and never barring a seven
 With a bar, just never crossing your legs? What if it is
 As simple as that, and who can prove it isn't?

I am ready, frog titty, to receive the key
 I am wearing my organdy windbreaker
 I am shining like an alabaster
 And painted pig
 & I have hands & opposable thumbs

The pure religion of Blind Lemon Jefferson
The horrible deathlike stomachlike feeling
For Avital says the stomach is the crypt of the body
And she is right about that and death's deferral
Is another's upcycled trash. Now there are two fat men

Inside of CENTURY WASTE & a truck goes by
With "TRAGEDY" tagged huge over the cab, quotation
Marks included. I was watching this woman eat a bag
Of Cool Ranch Doritos, it was ten in the morning & I swear
It said in the upper corner of her blue bag MADE WITH 100% DOG OIL

Tears on my pillow, silhouettes on the shade
Black words like falling hairs upon repurposed sailcloth
Shipwrecks in the cool whip mind of Mallarmé pirates highwaymen knowing how to hit
The glancing edge of badness where the setting sun's acclaimed
By bolts of lightning falling fast into the hills

2008–10

Calendars
Knot Paintings

ACHIM HOCHDÖRFER: *The Calendar Paintings were done in 2003–4, but only given a proper showing in 2008. This is surprising because they seem to be crucial for your transition from a film- and music-based practice to the production of artworks for a gallery context.*

SETH PRICE: *I put them in some group shows in early 2004, first as posters glued to the wall and then as prints mounted on steel. I was making the canvas ones, too, but I couldn't afford to keep doing that without selling them.*

HOCHDÖRFER: *You could have presented the Calendars in your first solo at Reena Spaulings, which would have been logical, but instead you developed a whole new body of work, the Vacuum Forms.*

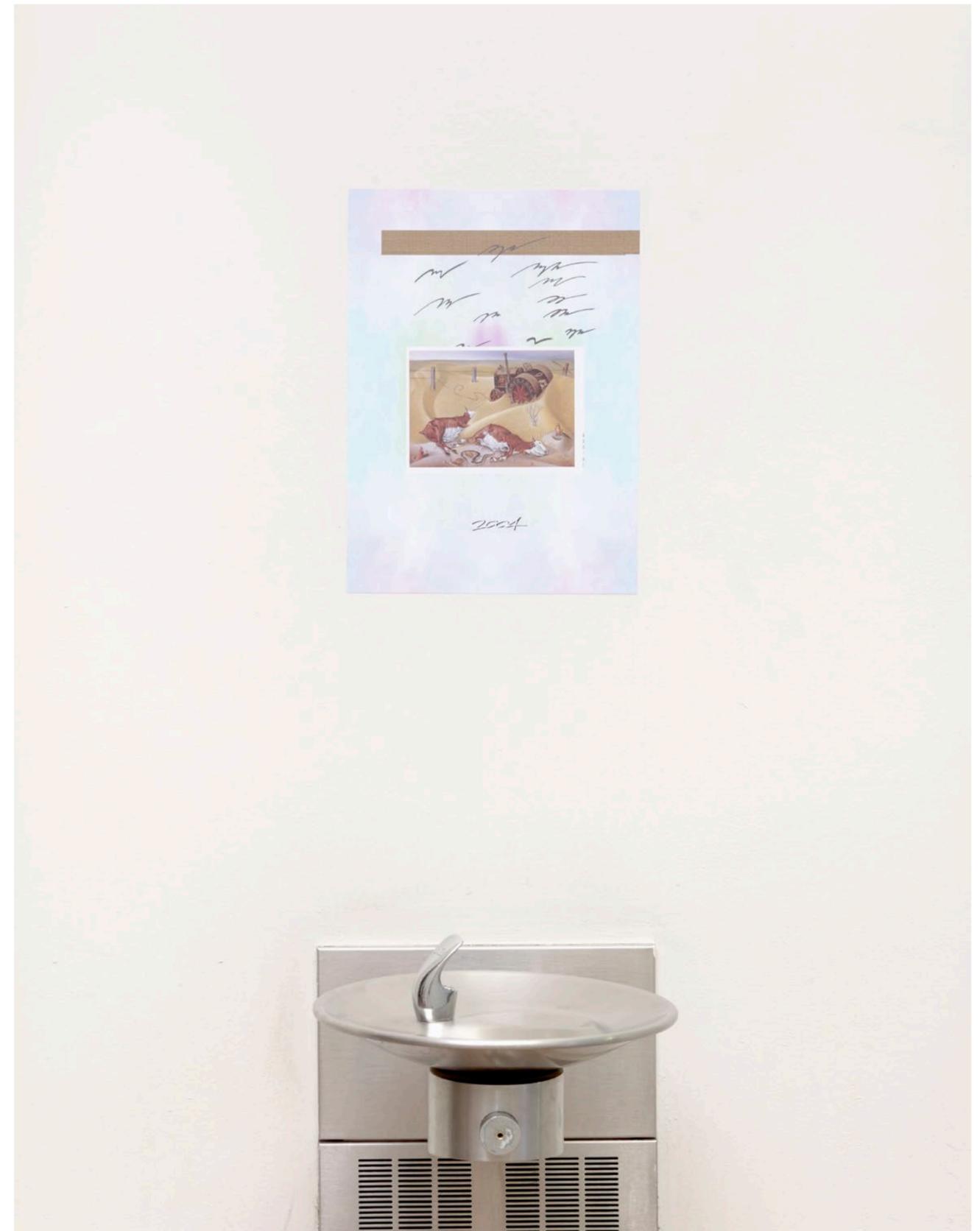
PRICE: *The Vacuum Forms came right out of the Calendars. I have a sketch somewhere of a calendar with somebody's ass sticking out of it. Thinking about how if you have an ass sticking out of some numbers, you're mapping information on a body.*

HOCHDÖRFER: *So even if it was not intentional, the delayed presentation corresponds with the anachronistic nature of the Calendar Paintings, which combine the tradition of "easel painting" and digital manipulation, American painting between the wars, and the tools of contemporary graphic design.*

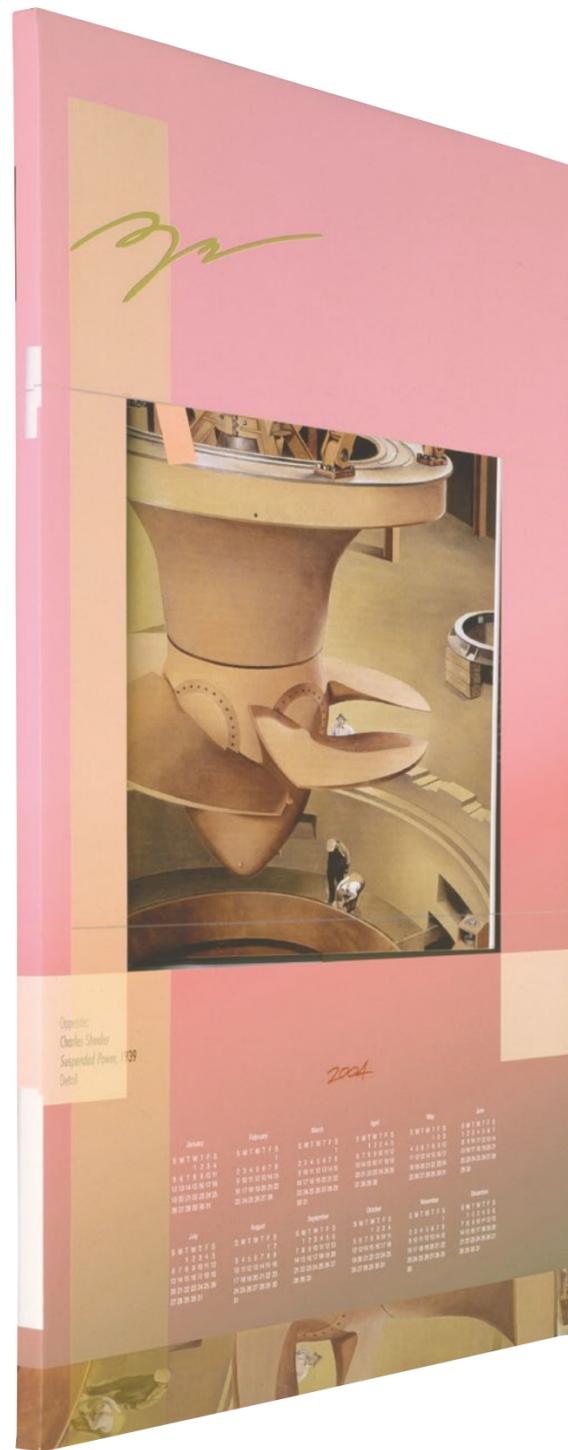
PRICE: *I liked the gesture of showing older work. You know I like to fuck with my own work. In 2008, there were already Calendars, but only a few people knew them, and now they were literally dated. What is an obsolete calendar? It's useless, it's used up. And then to hang them next to the masks made for a very strange feeling that I couldn't understand.*

calendar_cowsz.tif, 2004, ink-jet on paper, installed at Greater New York, P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center, New York, 2015

Overleaf: Seth Price, Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne, 2008, installation view



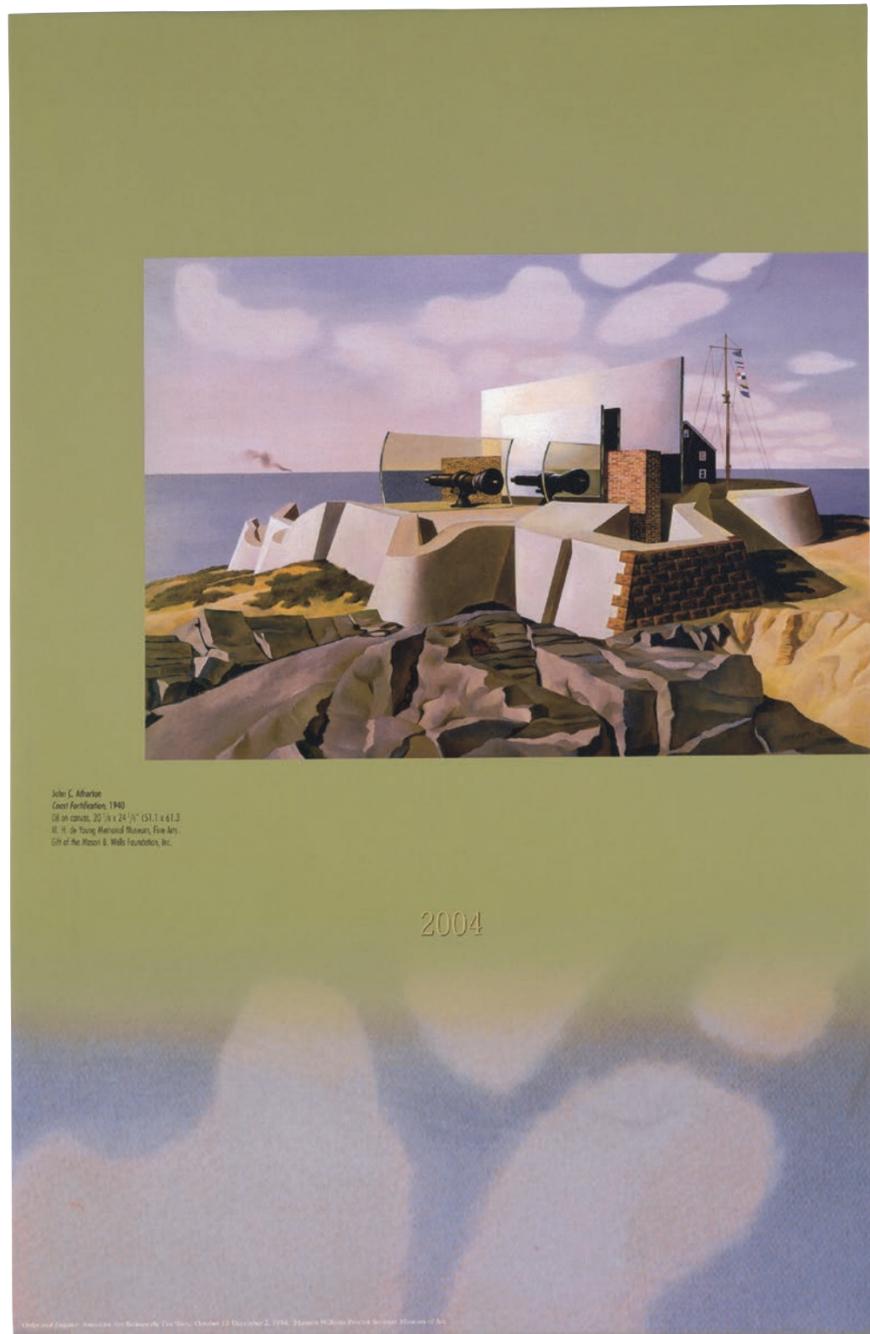




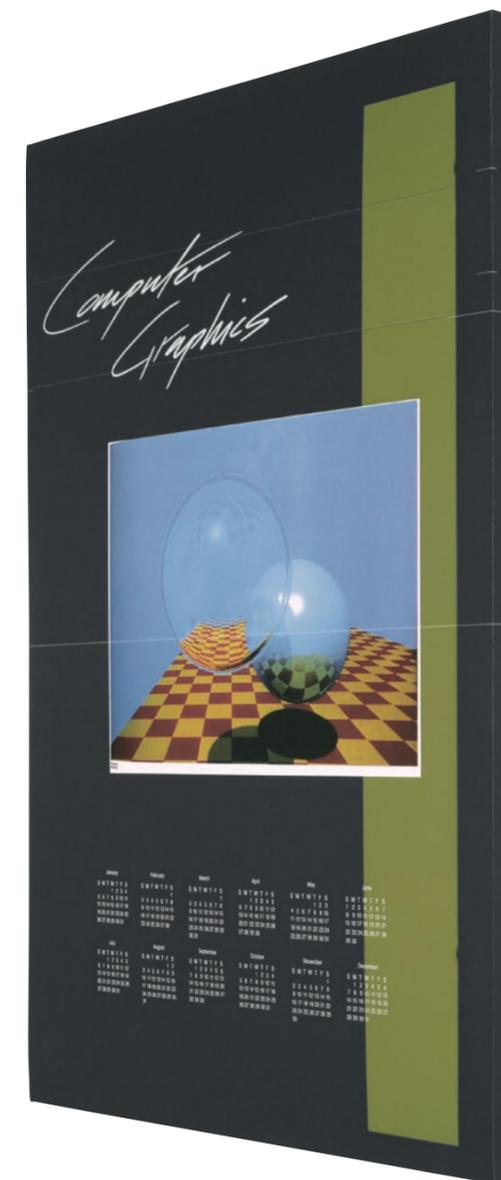
Big Pink Screw, 2004, ink-jet on canvas



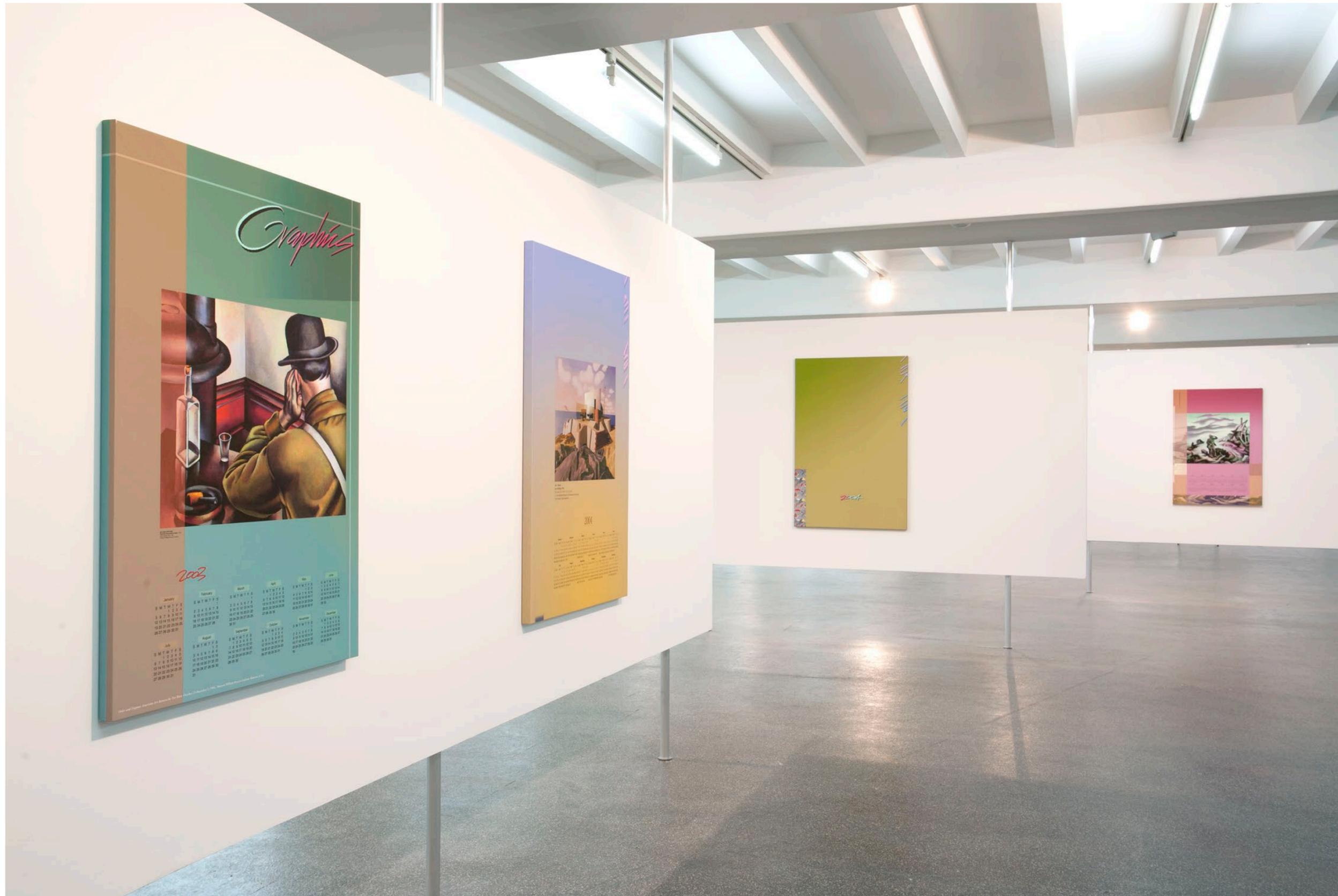
Gray Drought, 2004, ink-jet on canvas



Pea Green Station, 2004, ink-jet on canvas



Black Comps, 2003, ink-jet on canvas





3B Bubble House, 2004, ink-jet on canvas

Cheap Wall (detail), 2006, vacuum-formed PETG





Seth Price, Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, 2009, installation view



Seth Price, Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, 2009, installation view



Crenellation Screen, 2006, screen-print ink on vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene



Arm Blueprint, 2004, ink-jet on canvas

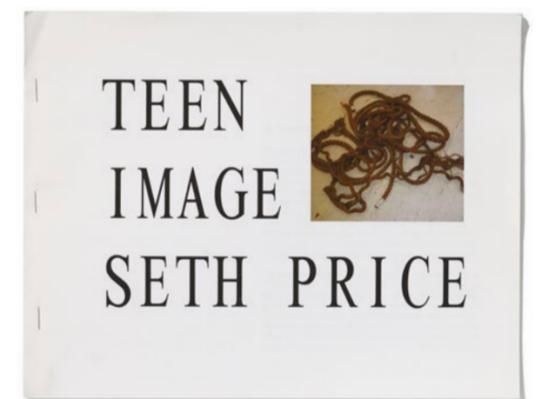


Untitled, 2008
Automotive urethane on vacuum-formed high-impact PETG



Seth Price, Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna, 2009, installation view

Teen Image, photocopied booklet (self-published, 2009)





SETH PRICE

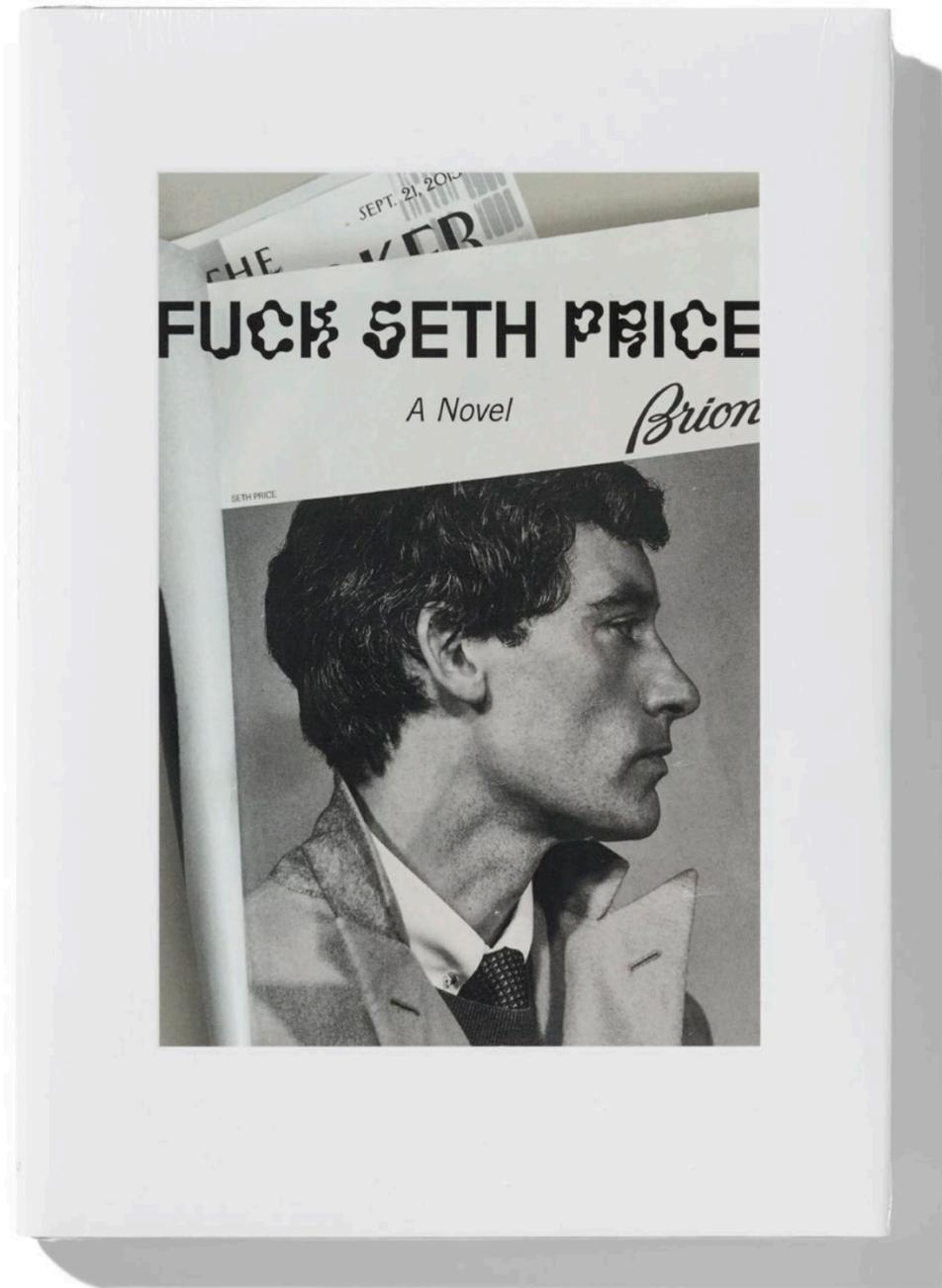
John Kelsey

For the cover of the second edition of his book *Fuck Seth Price: A Novel* (2015), Seth Price rephotographed a Brioni ad for which the artist and author, looking a bit like a character in a Jean-Pierre Melville film, had agreed to model one of the company's classic belted trench coats. Displacing his portrait from its usual place at the back of a book, Price fucks with the distinction between literature and fashion (the author as cover girl), troubling both of these systems while gaining access to fresh aesthetic territory. The artist has now become a moving image, performing a strange new mobility in response to the post-medium conditions of art, picking up speed by shedding substance and weight. Performing the artist, mannequin (or "novel"), and black-and-white author's photo all at once, Price causes a kind of slippage on the cover of *Fuck Seth Price*, which is itself a slippery product, at once a novel and a speculative essay on the practice of contemporary art. In this displacement, Price himself becomes the sort of self-othering, self-troubling agent he describes in writings such as *Teen Image* (2009):

A human body subjected to frenzies of processing is an aggressive and disturbing alienation, but the threat is also fascinating; like a gif-compressed headshot, a Cubist portrait recalls the ancient ritual gesture of donning a mask or hood, and the ambivalent pleasures of othering oneself. Fashion also hunts this path.¹

If what Price names the teen image is like a perverse body that slips from the disciplinary grid of art-historical discourse in order to wander and fuck around in its own mutant time zone, online and in social media, the Brioni-packaged body of the artist—like the book itself—also oscillates between multiple, even contradictory possibilities without finally settling on any of them. When Brioni asked the artist (along with Karl Holmqvist, Tobias Madison, and other art-world males) to model for this campaign, he agreed on one condition: that the ad be placed not only in the usual fashion pages but also in those of the *New Yorker* magazine. At work on his "novel" at the time, Price was already angling for crossover potential, or a perverse slippage within his practice between industries, contexts, and value systems: these same *New Yorker* subscribers could easily become readers of *Fuck Seth Price* as well, and might even find a review of it here in these same, Brioni-branded pages.

Price's use of the Brioni image as book "jacket" immediately recalls the many appearances of the bomber jacket in his oeuvre, where the abstracted garment takes on a timeless, iconic status, becoming almost logo-like in its repetition across various vacuum-formed surfaces. It also echoes *Army Jacket* (2002), a CD and LP that compiles miscellaneous music tracks recorded by Price from 2000 to 2002. These are retro male looks that evoke the discipline and order of a now-defunct symbolic regime while returning these as vague metrosexual options in the present. And while military style may still communicate anonymity and death, in Price's work it does so mainly by unfolding a fast, flat space where aesthetics hooks up with the commodity form and its ruin. Here is where Warhol meets Bataille in a practice that often appropriates violent, excessive material while reformatting such unconsumable content as quasi-well-behaved works for galleries. There is the looping news-camera footage of the assassination attempt on Ronald Reagan in *COPYRIGHT 2006 SETH PRICE* (2006), or the viral video of the beheading of communications repairman Nick Berg at the hands of jihadist bloggers in 2004, which Price redistributes as a QuickTime file that is somehow "buried" in sculptural works such as *NTSC* (2004). *NTSC* is Price's sort of post-internet *Pense Bête*: by putting the video *in* the sculpture, he also renders it unviewable, because the CDs that store the file have now been put



Fuck Seth Price: A Novel
(New York: Leopard Press, 2015; 2nd ed., 2016)

to work as load-bearing sculptural material. Works such as *Digital Video Effect: "Holes"* (2003) and *Digital Video Effect: "Spills"* (2004) open up and operate a kind of negative space within the looping video image, whether by adding black or by digitally subtracting information. Displayed faceup in their own packaging, these hacked TV sets are not only "video art" but also sculptures made of media, and reprogrammed readymades. Subjecting found content such as home movies of Robert Smithson and forensic imagery found on 4chan to "effects" that hypnotically puncture, amputate, or black out the image, they make one think of digital *Fresh Widows*, channeling death and negation along with the video in the gallery. Moving aggressively into postcinematic channels now, the teen image plays out as info-violence, even info-terror. Among other things, the author of *Dispersion* (2002–) is one of the original trolls of contemporary art, alternating in his writing between mock professorial gravitas and exaggerated, half-made-up cyberslang, pirating and leaking content, faking authorship, instigating flame wars on art blogs, and so on. By unsettling and troubling the relationship between art and its weird new medial conditions, Price shows where the real work and the real fun need to happen: in this gap where the unity of the work was once imagined, here between art and its information.

What Price calls teen images is at the same time a "cybernetic vision" summoned via the layers and histories of digital manipulation that make up and *inform* such images. It's the intoxication that comes with the sudden and violent movement of existential data; the experience of disorientation that accompanies the ecstatic circulation and repetition of bodies and selves within networks and on screens. Price has used words like *perverse* and *uncanny* to describe works that use digital manipulation as a means of disorienting and troubling human recognition of its own form. As postwar sound and image technologies have multiplied the possibilities of algorithmically capturing and reprocessing the human voice, human flesh, and human expression, we experience a fascinated estrangement from our own self-image. But what's also troubled here is the relation between art and non-art. It's strange to realize how much of the art world is now located "off-site" in the cloud. Weird also to realize how Zuckerbergian art and artists have become, really no longer in possession of the borders and boundaries that once defined them. Meanwhile, for the teen image, all that matters is to access a space of hallucination and transformation, wherever and however. The question Price seems to pose in the course of his practice is not only whether art can share in this ecstatic, transformative experience of the teen image but whether it can survive it. And with this question we can't be far from the Dionysian foundations of contemporary media theory, which, in an early text, Friedrich Kittler ascribes to Nietzsche:

The materiality of signs links erotology and medial aesthetics. If signs are not based on signifieds or referents, nothing and no one prescribes what all can be a sign or the sign of a sign. The artist stands in for this unlimitedness.²

Elaborating a post-Romantic concept of media that foregrounds the "materialities of communication," Kittler follows the "path of the body" opened via Nietzsche's attention to the physiological dimension of language and meaning, where "culture" names the various means of drilling a soul and spirit into bodies.³ When he defines art as "erotic invention," or when he signals the bodily transgressions that always already occur with the use and *enjoyment* of media, Kittler displaces control from the human imagination to the programs, black boxes, and slippery bodies underlying all communication.

And by calling an image “teen,” Price similarly shifts agency to the materialities of communication: the JPEG and its channels are themselves the restless, delinquent, sexed-up subjects. Describing the new smooth bodies of digital pornography, the artist is in close range of Kittler’s posthuman notion that defines subjects as media acting on and against other media:

To identify with that self is to confront an uncanny wraith, mostly due to the stubborn difficulty of recollection. Try to remember your distracted gaze downward, idly taking in the young self, the true self beyond mirrors or photos, a slippery body spied from headless central command, the smooth genitalia at the center.⁴

Erotology also names the intoxicating experience of the channels themselves, before meaning and after art. Such thinking entails a disruptive concept of media evolution, whereby the teen image troubles adult discourse by continuously inventing new ways of undermining the stability and unity of its medium—the exact function the Brioni ad plays atop the second edition of *Fuck Seth Price* (a multichannel work that, in midmutation now, hardly musters a parting glance at any supposed unity of the novel).

Meanwhile, in his “novel,” Price makes reference to “weird” young adult (YA) writing—maybe the literary sibling of the teen image—which the artist opposes to both academy-sanctioned poetry and art-historical discourse. *Fuck Seth Price* and other texts perform a sort of disorientation both of and within discourse, as Price channels teen banter and bro-speak, then mock literary erudition, then, suddenly, a folksy storyteller or the possibility of *screenwriting*, all while continuously performing and trolling the medial conditions of contemporary art. Like the teen image, YA is a troubling of the “critical apparatus” through a disorienting and materialist use of signs and surfaces, following the Nietzschean insight that all language is fiction transmitted between bodies, drilling into and programming them. Meanwhile, with the invention and differentiation of real-time data streams for storing and processing cultural information, “literature is what always already vanishes along with the unity of its medium.”⁵ As with his reissue of *Fuck Seth Price*, Price’s reprinting of (the design file of) his essay *Dispersion* across a series of vacuum-formed polystyrene sheets raises the question of what might happen if art finally begins to divest its energies from literature. In the Kittlerian view, such an abandonment is inevitable: literature no longer holds an erotic candle to real-time communication and digital networks. But for now, there is still the packaging of language, the thing and its jacket: a provisional organization of channels, surfaces, and signs known as the book, which until recently was such a potent disorientation machine for humans. YA seeks this same intoxication while using “literature” as a jump-off point into channels which perhaps hadn’t yet existed until this jumping off. In the 1970s and ’80s “theory” was doing this; why not now call it teen image or YA?

A fully genealogical fascination drives archivally schemed projects such as *New Jack Swing* (2003) and *Décor Holes* (2003–2005).⁶ Each of these works consists of a text by Price, a playlist of audio files and their storage/playback medium (CD or vinyl), and of course the visual artwork that packages and decorates this information (or “hoardings,” to use another term from “Teen Image”). While *New Jack Swing* treats a short-lived early-1990s corporate pop-music genre, *Décor Holes* considers the rarefied development of sampler music within university computer-music departments in the 1960 and ’70s. In both works, the “materialities of communication” are key: how a particular sound, style, or even



lifestyle emerges directly from the contingent technological formats, gear, and economic conditions under which it was produced.⁷ These projects are studies of specific techno-acoustic events, repackaged and replayed by Price in order to make them function as strange, vaguely unfamiliar Benjaminian ruins in the post-internet present. Putting these tracks back to work now as “dialectical images,” or sound-images, the artist also underlines the strangeness and ruin that await all media situations, present and future.⁸ Also revealed are the weirdly emergent or “teen” possibilities within any medial context: the smart/dumb uses of holes and gaps, a perverse taste for spills and leaks, an existential swarming around points of medial instability. And from this genealogical perspective, isn’t the artist himself an “uncanny wraith,” “viewed from headless central command”?

The violence or erotology of media evolution is further underscored in the way Price recycles his own works, releasing reprints and spin-offs, continuously scheming new editions in alternate formats. *New Jack Swing* was released online, then as a CD, and later on vinyl. Meanwhile, a version of the accompanying text by Price was also published “off-site” in a music-industry trade journal.⁹ A special edition of *Décor Holes* included a vinyl LP that was left intentionally untrimmed after its pressing: a drooping excess of communicative material, too unwieldy to play back or even fit on a normal turntable. Throughout his practice, Price continuously invites such instances of rebooting, rewriting, and rereleasing. This has been no less the case with his texts and video works. *Dispersion* has seen numerous revisions, and maybe still refuses to settle into a final draft. The same goes for *Redistribution* (2007–),

Folklore U.S. SS12 fashion show, staged during the opening of dOCUMENTA (13), Kassel, 2012

a video based on a 2007 lecture-performance by Price at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum: with its open or blank date of completion, this work remains perpetually unfinished and in progress, as the artist continues to reshoot and reedit, years after the event it purportedly documents (and notice how far we are from the “Happening” now). *Digital Video Effect: “Editions”* (2006), a sort of mash-up of several earlier video works by Price, was made available both as a low-priced, unlimited video edition via Electronic Arts Intermix and as a very limited-edition 16-mm film (*Untitled Film/Left*, 2006) with the high price of a gallery artwork. Reversing or scrambling the usual logic of commercial distribution, whereby a film print is massively reproduced on video after a brief theatrical run, Price transferred “original” digital content to celluloid, giving it a new materiality and grain that it didn’t have or need before it was “copied” in this way. In each case, something slips or is transformed in the act of reformatting content: resolution is lost or gained, value escalates or plummets, channels are changed along with the accessibility of the work. Each rerelease is a direct experiment in media erotology, producing the intoxicating situation of an artwork hovering very closely to its own negation as it slips between formats.

Another example in experimental reformatting is *Digital Video Effect: “Chords”* (2007), which recasts the video *COPYRIGHT 2006 SETH PRICE* for playback on three channels. Now copied onto three discs, the same program plays back simultaneously on three brands of cheap, portable DVD players. To each disc, Price has added a minimal piano track, and because the devices are not synchronized during playback, these three recordings continuously recombine as an aleatory composition that never plays the same way twice. Meanwhile, the sweet, melancholy affect of the piano resonates strangely with the murky violence and chaos of the Reagan assassination attempt, all of this looping Rotorelief-like on crappy, already obsolete consumer technology. I don’t know if this qualifies as a dialectical image exactly, but there is no clear way to navigate the temporal gaps and abysses opened up between 1980s TV-news footage, the spare modernist vibe of the piano, and the sadness of last year’s AV gear: *Chords* is a sort of snuff music box (musical snuff box?), a low-res disorientation machine intoxicated by its own recycling.

As if honing a new lexicon of visual symbols, Price has communicated the experience of medial disorientation via such basic forms as jackets, envelopes, fists and breasts, severed heads, knots and ropes, keys, holes, and waves. In 2015, he began experimenting with medical imaging technology, uploading disquietingly high-definition photographs of human skin as large-scale light boxes, and currently he’s trying something similar with a digitally manipulated squid’s skin, which will fill the space of the museum as a video projection. This is a practice that, even in its most sculptural moments, seems always to gravitate toward the flatness and thinness of print. The screen is still a kind of page, it seems—or skin. And the page is a “dataplasm.” With his use of vacuum-formed plastics—commonly used for packaging mass-produced goods—the artist makes a form of nothing but the surface itself, giving it an image and a shape by wrapping it around a void (the negative space left by a missing form, where the commodity or content should be). With his sculptural envelopes, on the other hand, Price works with complex constructions of interfolded, stitched, and zipper-fastened textiles. These garment-like works never settle into a final look or shape but can be endlessly “styled” by zipping and unzipping, buckling and unbuckling. The standard business envelope—blank on the outside and printed with a security pattern on the inside—is a strange remainder from the Romantic/postal epoch, when subjects enclosed and posted their private, hand-written affections to a far-flung addressee, or street number.¹⁰ Making an image of the envelope itself, minus any message, Price underscores vectorization

as such, reworking this efficiently transmissible form in a variety of materials: ink-jet on acrylic, screen-printed ink and gesso on plywood, tailored combinations of synthetic textiles, and, for dOCUMENTA (13), the envelope mutated into a sportswear line (and runway show and department-store window display), produced in collaboration with designer Tim Hamilton. It would seem that if what’s “inside” is always a function of its container or format, then artistic genius is subordinate to or somehow spoken by the discourse channel within which it finds movement and expression. And with his latest depictions of the envelope, Price has emphasized the violent tearing open of this standardized form, the destruction and topological chaos that occur in the act of opening and reading it—and suddenly the mangled envelope starts to resemble a primitive mask or death’s head.¹¹

In his recent book *La vraie vie*, Alain Badiou conceptualizes male adolescence as the experience of disorientation following the dissolution of the patriarchal symbolic order in the West. For boys and men, according to the philosopher, there is no clear exit from symbolic disorientation in a capitalist desert where traditional rites of initiation into adulthood no longer operate and the only relevant law is that of general equivalence. Here, only the teen image is “free”: hairless, headless, smooth, blank, exposed, branded, and detached from any positive agenda beyond careerism. As abstract and strange to itself as the commodity form is to life, this is a body captured in its own mobilization...



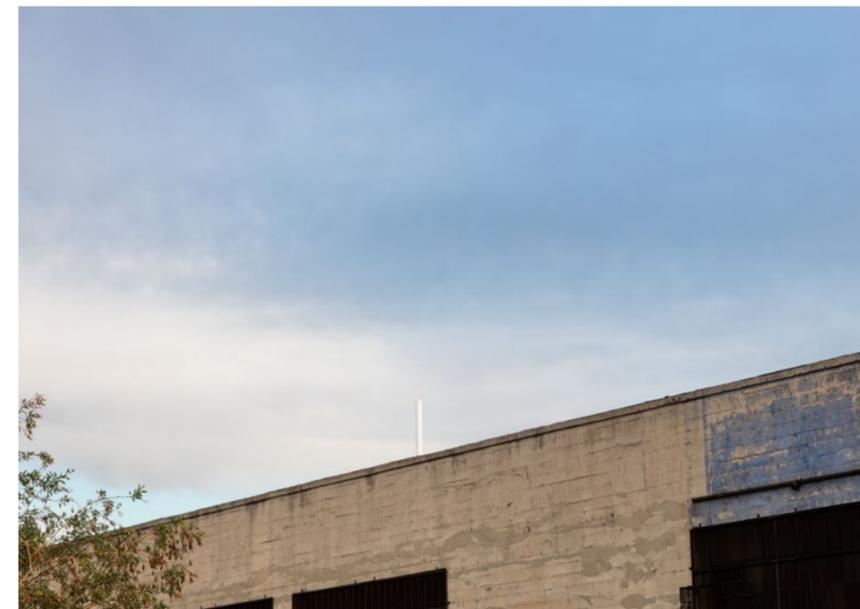
Here we have the morose construction of a body without an Idea. This is what I call the “perverted” body, without any allusion to the so-called “perversions” but perverted rather in the sense that it’s derailed from its usual function, which is to be the seat of a subject.¹²

Lacking an Idea, the teen image channels an aggression that is experienced mainly at the level of vectorization, as an attitude against and within its own transmission and circulation. Inaugurating no new world and opening onto no next level, in other words, adolescent aggression can only engage immobility and repetition (within mobilization). So in the happy, anxious void where the Law of the Father once spoke, we now have revenge porn, trolling, and terrorism. Badiou remains hopeful that an alternative symbolism can still be elaborated by millennials and their offspring, a new order based this time on principles of equality. But until then, we can expect driverless cars, weirder weather, Brexits. It seems that a real exit from symbolic disorientation would require something more energetic than the programmed “disruptions” of Silicon Valley: the assumption of a new, foundational, initiatory, affirmative violence, the ghost image of which seems to haunt many works by Price... as decapitations, clenched fists and other body parts, holes, spills, waves, ripped-open envelopes, etc. Captured within forms such as screens and video loops, and in the serial repetition of vacuum forms, violence finds a strange, ghostly destiny as a sort of highly aestheticized media hole, a sublime glitch.

Riding is Price’s word for the discursive wing of his practice. A prolific disseminator of texts, he is also hypervigilant in his attentions to the destiny of language, literature, and the page under the shifting conditions of the contemporary media environment. So many of his writings are performative instances of what Kittler calls “discourses on discourse channel conditions,” addressing not only the screen they appear on but the nerds who are reading them there, as well as the strange temporality of writing and reading within a real-time data stream and the possibility of continuous rewriting within this stream.¹³ “Teen Image” itself, originally published on the blog Art Fag City, is a discourse on the production and consumption of digital media, combining text with a “hoarding” of JPEGs of

photos of open books on the same screen. This digital text/image also included an interactive comment option in which a “flame war” erupted and was later shut down by the blog’s administrator: here is a discourse that gladly includes its own trolls. As with *Redistribution* and *Fuck Seth Price*, these “ridings” update Nietzsche’s insight that language originates as a possibility of displacement of sense and energy between bodies—an experience that is not nonviolent, never neutral. And at the same time they are Kittlerian performances of literature’s demotion after Edison, following the technological development and differentiation of real-time data streams: we have other means of disorienting ourselves now, other word processors . . . and coding. The posthuman intuition, which is also Freud’s, that subjects don’t speak so much as they are *spoken by* (programmed by) language and media, and are never fully in control of what they say, seems to inform *How to Disappear in America* (2008), Price’s book-length compilation of found and manipulated texts on how to abandon one’s social identity and go off the grid. Meanwhile, a constant throughout his practice has been the desire for fiction and storytelling, so much so that one could even consider his entire career as the production of a “perverted body” or fiction called Seth Price, a tall tale unfolding in multiple media at once. As a “discourse on discourse channel conditions,” this multichannel fiction in the same gesture performs art’s giving way to digital media, and then its uncanny return in these same weird channels. In this telling, the artist himself becomes a sort of screenwriter and programmer.

Gazing down at a scale model of the Stedelijk Museum that Price has set up in his midtown studio, we see fifteen years of work, an entire midcareer in one glance: mini bomber jackets, envelopes, and knots, the roiling wave of digital Gak that was also a *Flash Art* cover, Lascaux horses and Al-Qaeda beheadings screen-printed on Mylar, *Dispersion*, *Redistribution*, even *Chords*. Meanwhile, there is the still-unresolved question of how to install his recent printed PVC *Waste Piping* in the galleries. A survey show immediately confronts us with the question of whether chronology is the best means of organizing a practice in space, and Price has come around to the curator’s wish to follow the logic of a timeline leading from room to room, knowing that viewers are always free to zigzag and make U-turns in relation to this linear design. The artist, whose web address is distributedhistory.com (“since” 2002), has always fucked around with time and chronology in his practice. In many instances, he literally brands works with the dates of their production, so that a given bomber jacket can never for one second escape “2006,” for example. Chronological order is already troubled in works like the *Calendar Paintings* (and how to date this early digital work with its lagged release on canvas?), which merge outmoded 1980s computer graphics and WPA-era social-realist painting, and on the many occasions where Price has rereleased and revised works over the years, so that dating his productions becomes a kind of play on time and its representation: “in gazing back at the emerging outline of a history of manipulation, it surveys its own slippery body, a snake coldly assessing the contours of recent meals . . .”¹⁴ If there were such a thing as a “teen time-image,” its purpose would be to disorient art history: it would come with the force and desire of the “untimely,” to use Nietzsche’s word. This would be another means of surveying a career of disorientation, one gesture seeming to follow another, maybe with waste piping connecting the different galleries.



Notes

1. Seth Price, “Teen Image,” *Art Fag City*, October 22, 2009, <http://artcity.com/2009/10/22/img-mgmt-teen-image>.
2. Friedrich A. Kittler, “Nietzsche (1844–1900),” *The Truth of the Technological World: Essays on the Genealogy of Presence* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2013), 28.
3. *Ibid.*, 25.
4. Price, “Teen Image.”
5. Kittler, “Nietzsche,” 23.
6. These projects both belong to Price’s larger work *Title Variable* (2001–).
7. Bernhard Siegert, *Cultural Techniques: Grids, Filters, Doors, and Other Articulations of the Real* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2015), 2.
8. Susan Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989); Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).
9. Seth Price, “Various Artists: NJS Megamix,” *Sound Collector Audio Review* 3 (Summer 2003): 7.
10. Bernhard Siegert, *Relays: Literature as an Epoch of the Postal System*, (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999).
11. A Lacanian would say that both the jacket and the envelope stand for the imaginary unity and oneness of the human body, ego, or artwork. The various operations Price subjects these images to tend to emphasize the violent chaos of drives such forms “mask” or cover.
12. Alain Badiou, *La vraie vie* (Paris: Librairie Arthème Fayard, 2016), 70 (my translation).
13. Geoffrey Winthrop-Young, *Kittler and the Media* (Cambridge: Polity, 2011), 32.
14. Price, “Teen Image.”



Affairs (detail), 2009, printer's ink and screen-print ink on aluminum composite, five parts, installed at *Die Nuller Jahre*, Galerie Isabella Bortolozzi, Berlin, 2010



Die Nuller Jahre, Captain Petzel, Berlin, 2010, installation views



Important Chair (detail), 2009
Enamel and UV-cured ink-jet on high-impact polystyrene



Harsh Way of Life, 2009
UV-cured ink-jet on vacuum-formed
high impact polystyrene



Noodles, 2011
Acrylic, enamel, tinted resin, and UV-cured ink-jet on PETG
vacuum-formed over knotted rope, foam, aluminum



Lux Retreat, 2011
Acrylic, enamel, tinted resin, and UV-cured ink-jet on PETG
vacuum-formed over knotted rope, foam, aluminum



Untitled Yum, 2011
Tinted resin and UV-cured ink-jet on PETG vacuum-formed
over knotted rope, foam, aluminum



Kissing and/or Mouth Full, 2010
Tinted resin and UV-cured ink-jet on PETG vacuum-formed
over knotted rope, foam, aluminum



Yum, We Prefer Questions to Answers, 2010
 UV-cured ink-jet on high-impact polystyrene vacuum-formed
 over knotted rope



Untitled, 2009
 High-impact polystyrene vacuum-formed over knotted rope

Overleaf, from left:
Form Blush, 2012, UV-cured ink-jet
 on PETG vacuum-formed over knotted
 rope, aluminum

Untitled, 2009, tinted resin and UV-
 cured ink-jet on PETG vacuum-formed
 over knotted rope, routed foam,
 aluminum



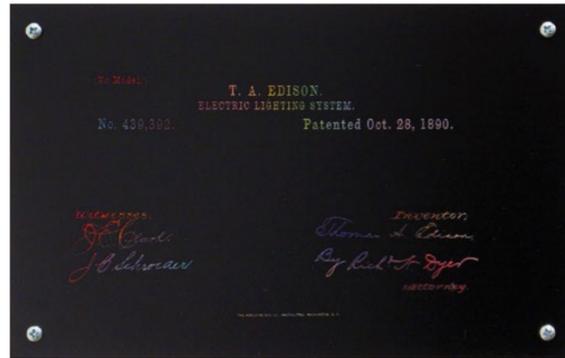


Folklore U.S., Petzel Gallery, New York, 2012, installation view

Untitled, 2011, enamel on Yves Saint Laurent handbag

"Business Envelope" Wrapped Candy Bar, 2012, acrylic, enamel, tinted resin, and UV-cured ink-jet on PETG vacuum-formed over knotted rope, printed foam, aluminum





SETH PRICE: *I didn't make those videos as art. I was just trying to think how I could get some of my music out there, because back when I was making music more seriously there was no web distribution. So I decided to make some music videos and put them on YouTube. Then suddenly there was a free slot at Friedrich's, and it seemed like it would be weird to put YouTube videos in a gallery.*

ACHIM HOCHDÖRFER: *They were for sale?*

PRICE: *Technically, yes, it was an installation, you'd get eight kiosks. But I decided to make it an unlimited edition, and when people heard that they'd lose interest.*

HOCHDÖRFER: *And it was a kind of arcade.*

PRICE: *Yes, but I was thinking more about early film. The first way film was presented was as a single-user technology. You'd go into a booth and have a private experience. Now it's like that again, with computers and phones.*

HOCHDÖRFER: *How did you choose the imagery?*

PRICE: *I just took whatever was on my hard drive. You know, I was putting these together quickly, I'd be doing it after dinner or something. It was a mishmash of stuff I'd had for years of web clips, or found footage meant for other videos, or stuff I shot a long time ago on Super 8 or DV. Making the videos had a lightness because I wasn't thinking of it as art, or even as anything that anyone would see. I was just like, "Does this work if you're high?"*

HOCHDÖRFER: *And you came back to Thomas Edison for this show.*

PRICE: *He's insane. He took out patents on lightbulbs, movie cameras, projectors, the telephone, movie screens, everything you need to make a film and show it and send it out over a connection. In the gallery there were these little plaques that are supposed to go by all your light switches, like: "Don't forget who owns the power!"*



*Standard Household Set (detail), 2011
UV-cured ink-jet on aluminum composite, five pieces*

*Non Speech, Fire & Smoke, Friedrich Petzel Gallery,
New York, 2011, installation view*



Seth Price: 'Lookin' Bak,' 2001



Seth Price

Subscribe 352

458 views

+ Add to Share More

6 0

Published on Oct 6, 2012
Post-9/11 rewrite of 'Jack and Diane'

Seth Price

werdtoyourmoms



Seth Price: 'Nieuw Jacxz Swijngje,' 2001-02.
Seth Price



Seth Price: 'Feeling In The Eyes,' 2002
Seth Price

Seth Price: 'Sickly Air/Dying Air,' 2003

Secure <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IsNDY5U1ScU&list=PLM40DchWAW7zI9aXzv-zwG0oBxjd21KqL>

YouTube



Seth Price

Subscribe 352

808 views

Add to Share More

Published on Dec 1, 2012
Sickly air dying air

Footage of my own wedding
back in the day
Times ain't so easy
That's what they say
(uh-huh)
Say don't let no one tell you
Life ain't no picnic
all roses and bubblee
(Uh huh)
Say yeah don't let no one
Not tell you
Life ain't be no un-pic-nic
In opposite-world.
So I'm out, yeah,
Out on that warpath,
Sayonara Holmes, cause
We eating Bugles here,
in the depths of a den,
Or leaning on a Corian counter,
abstractly pushing fingerfuls of yum
down the hatch,
So yeah, if you need me, girl
(just raise your voice a bit with a slightly reproachful tone)

Category People & Blogs
License Standard YouTube License

SHOW LESS

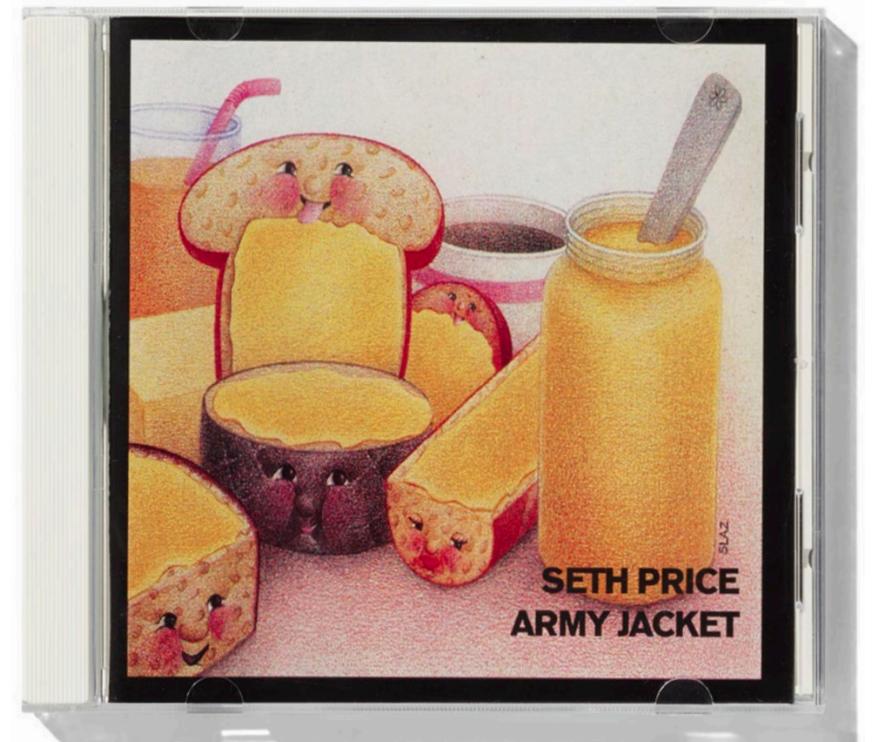
COMMENTS

Seth Price

- 1 Seth Price: 'Sickly Air/Dying Air,' 2003
- 2 Seth Price: 'Nieuw Jaocz Swijnge,' 2001-02.
- 3 Seth Price: 'Feeling In The Eyes,' 2002
- 4 Seth Price: 'Pencil Legs,' 2010
- 5 Seth Price: "Whipz," 2001
- 6 Seth Price: 'Lookin' Bak,' 2001

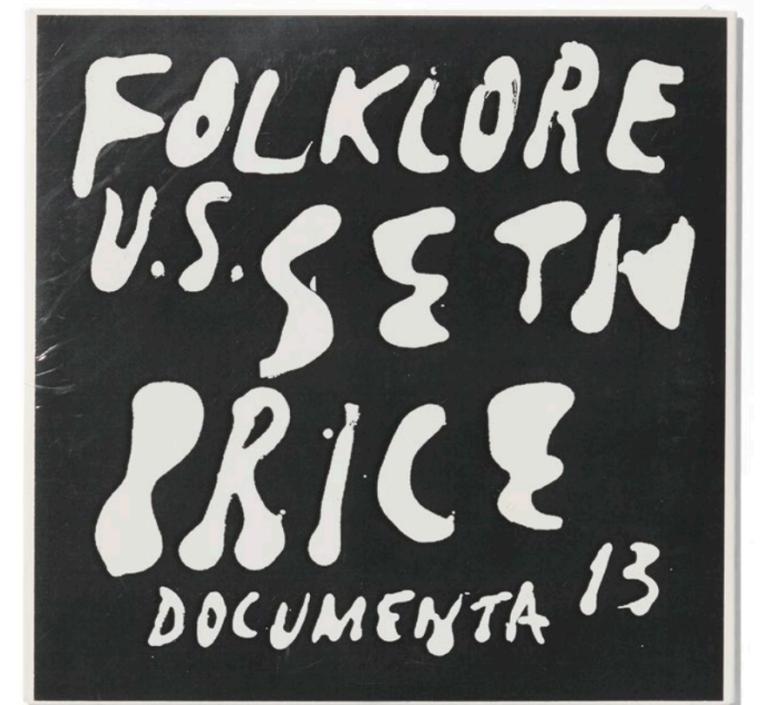
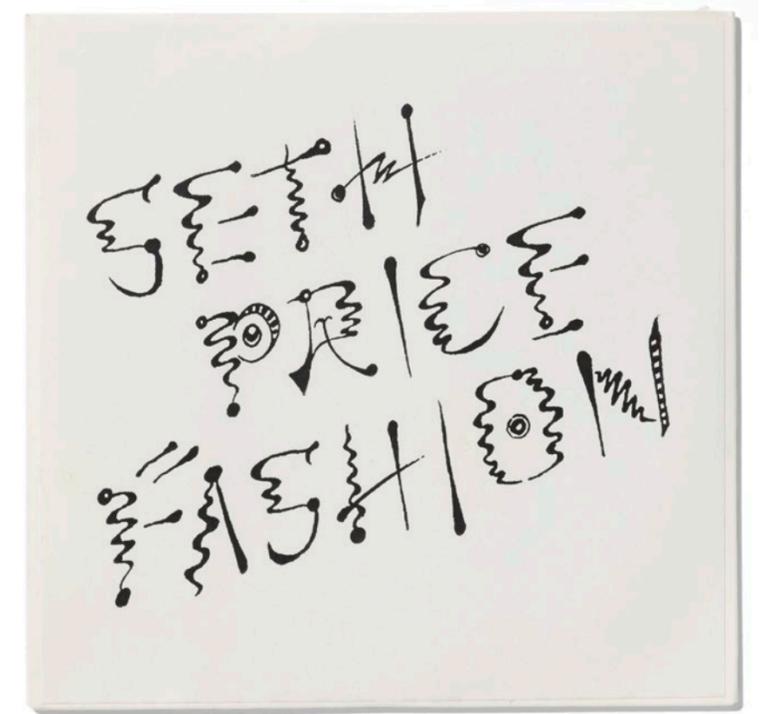
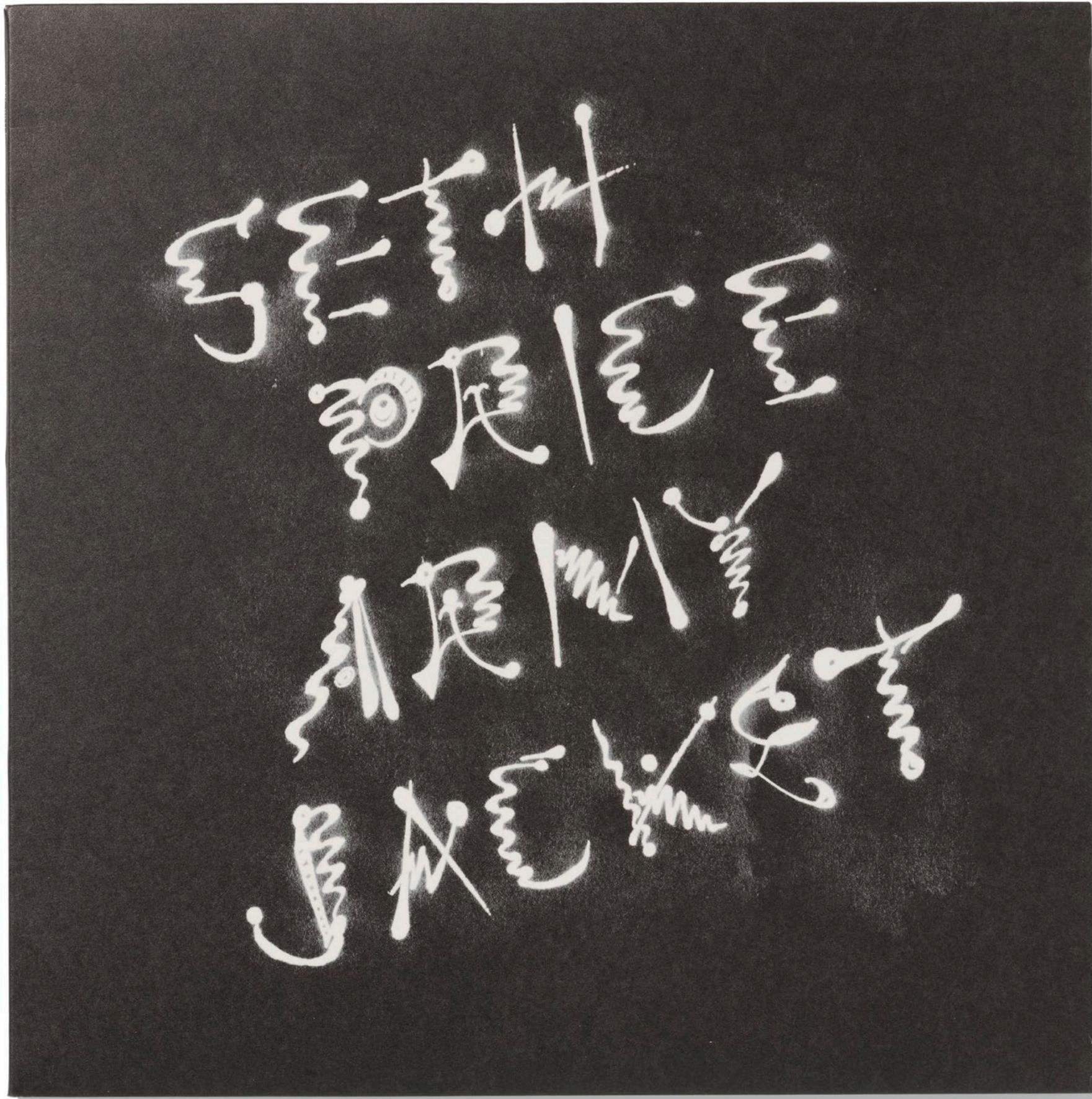
Seth Price does fashion at Documenta 13
artnet
1,543 views

Seth Price: 'Keep Hollywood Close,' 2001
Seth Price
2,503 views



Honesty, LP
(New York: Audio Visual Arts, 2011)

Army Jacket, CD
(New York: Distributed History, 2009)



Army Jacket, LP
(New York: Dais Records, 2012)

Seth Price Fashion, CD
(New York: Distributed History, 2011)

Folklore U.S., CD
(New York: Distributed History, 2012)

2011-14

Folklore U.S.



Folklore U.S. SS12 garment collection
in SinnLeffers department-store window,
DOCUMENTA (13), Kassel, 2012



Folklore U.S. SS12 fashion show, staged during the opening of dOCUMENTA (13), Kassel, 2012

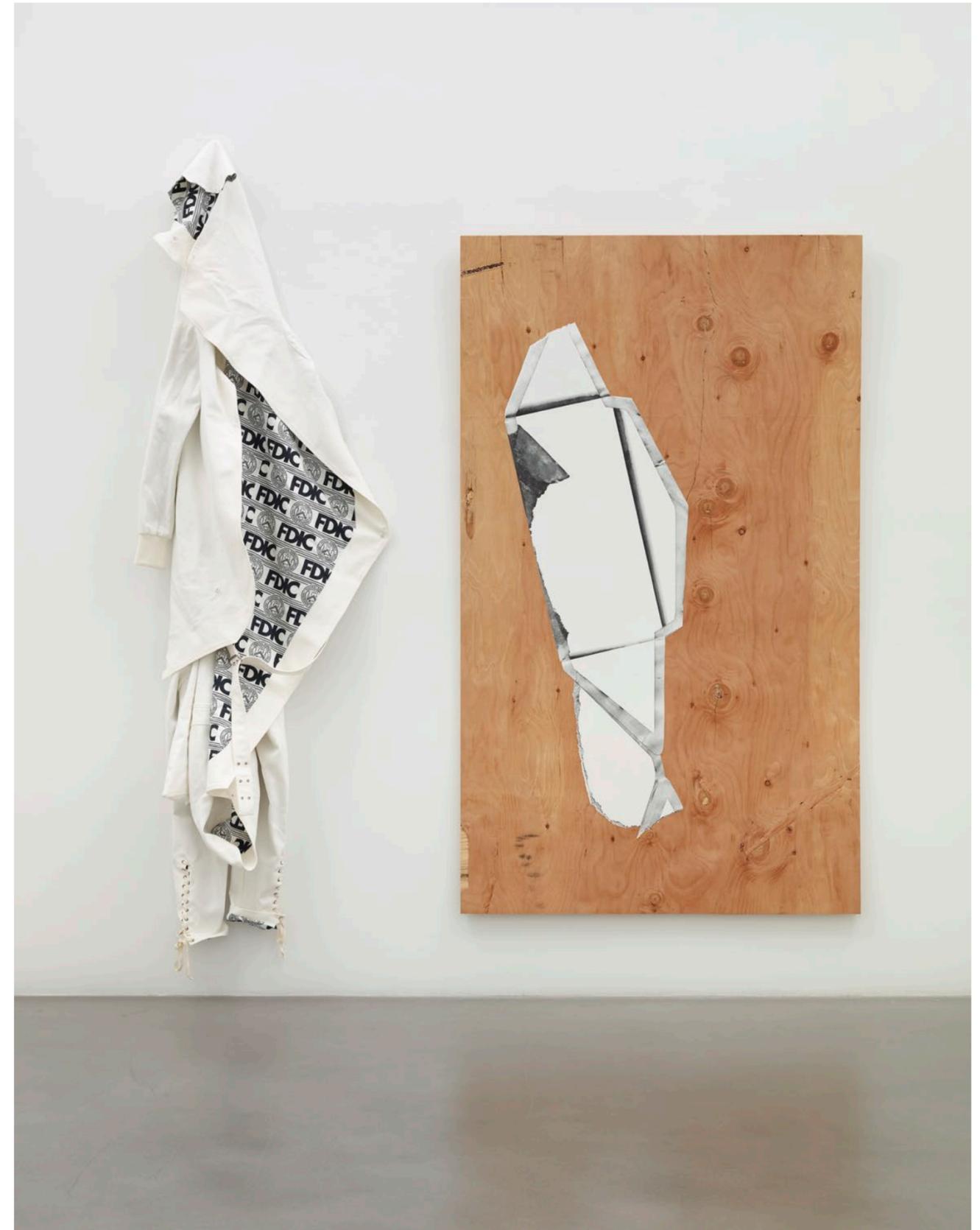


ACHIM HOCHDÖRFER: *Is it fair to say that this series is a kind of meta-commentary on your work? I'm thinking about the folding and mutability and draping, the questions of inside/outside and presence/absence, the antagonism toward the image, the body, the skepticism. And you turn it all into a kind of fashion.*

SETH PRICE: *For me it wasn't really about fashion. I mean, I know that sounds disingenuous, and, yes, maybe it was, in the sense that garments are about making a million variations on the same themes, since bodies are constant. So all the variations assume importance. And I think that comes out in the different seasons I did: sleeping bags, handbags, straitjackets, envelope paintings. But the project started as an experiment in fabrication, to make sculptures inside the world of garment design, inside its logic, and then to send the exact same materials and processes to Documenta through two separate channels: the art exhibition and the department store next to the Fridericianum. I talked to the store, and they were into it, so we sent this stuff to the racks as clothing, rather than to the walls as sculpture. The point was to see how these languages warp the content in different ways, toward or away from critique, or use, or fashion, or readability. And I still don't know what the outcome was!*

Folklore U.S. SS12 garment collection for sale in SinnLeffers department store, dOCUMENTA (13), Kassel, 2012

Folklore U.S., 2012, canvas, printed cotton, zippers, buckles, screen-print ink, and synthetic polymer on plywood





Looks from *Folklore U.S. SS12* line: Bomber Jacket, Infantry Poncho, Field Gaiter, Paratrooper Pants, Officer's Trench, Batwing Sniper Jacket, and Flight Suit. Garments designed in collaboration with Tim Hamilton; looks styled by William Graper

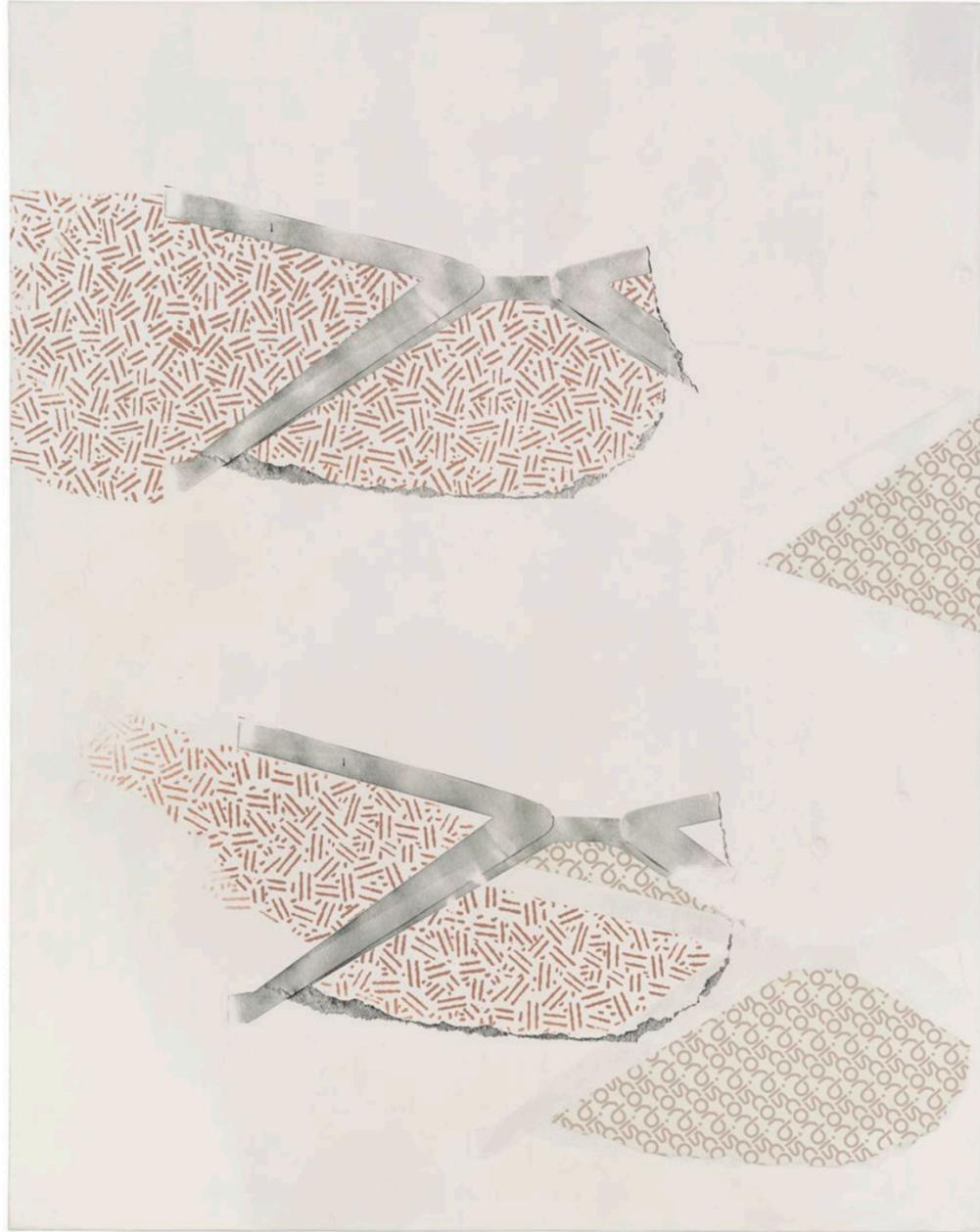
Container for Virus Pattern plus Handmade Pattern, 2013
Blackened-cork facing, neoprene shell, printed charmeuse liner, screen-printed Tyvek center panel, double-headed zippers, zipper tape, covered snaps, grommets, buckles, straps, etc.



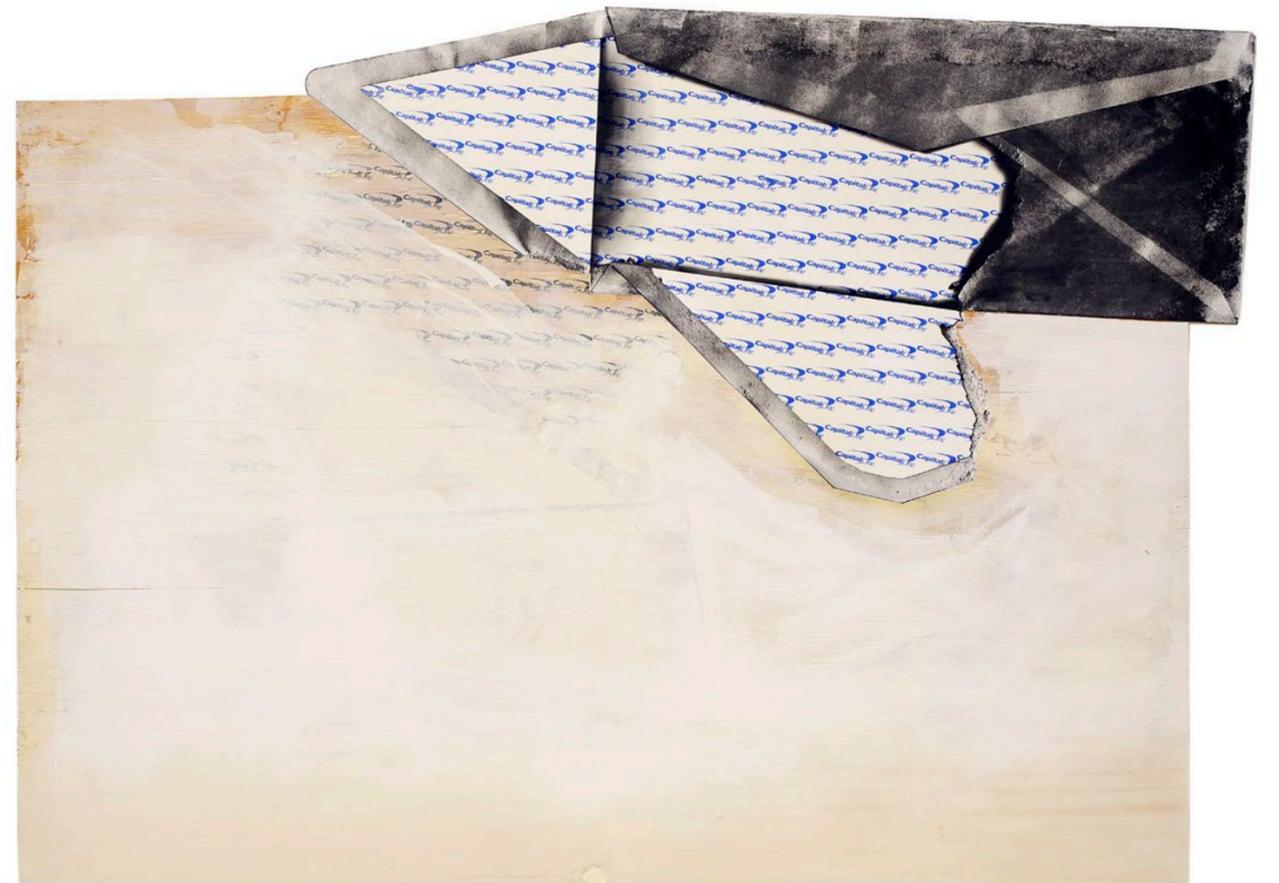
Folklore U.S., dOCUMENTA (13),
Kassel, 2012, installation view



Jumpsuit with Decorative Security, 2012
Canvas, printed liner, buckles, straps,
drawstrings, etc.



Untitled, 2013–15
Screen-print ink, acrylic, and pigmented acrylic polymer on plywood



Black Letter with Company, 2012
Screen-print ink, gesso, acrylic, enamel, and acrylic polymer on plywood



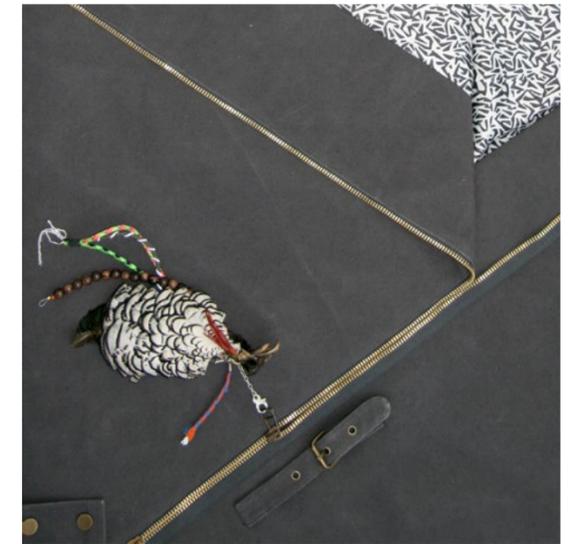
Virus Pattern with Revelers Bag, 2012
Canvas, printed charmeuse liners,
zipper, buckles, straps, charm, etc.



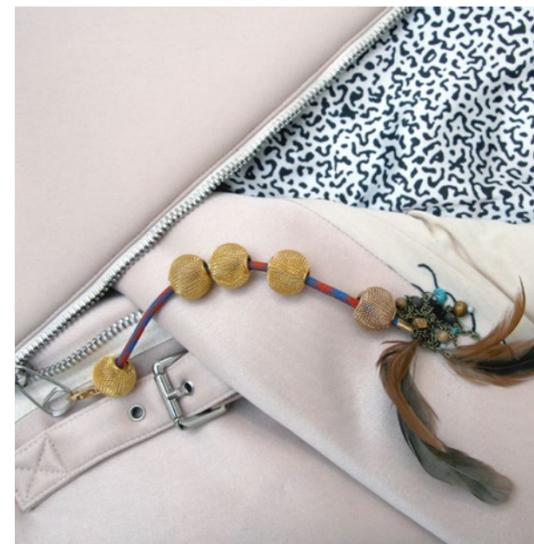
Youth Culture Bag, 2012
Canvas, printed cotton liners, buckles,
zippers, snaps, charm, etc.



Clockwise from top left:
Double Pattern Bag with Charm (detail),
2012, canvas, printed cotton liner,
zippers, buckles, straps, charm, etc.



Federal Print Bag (detail), 2012, canvas,
printed charmeuse liner, zippers,
buckles, straps, charm, etc.



Rotating Sawtooth Pattern Bag (detail),
2012, canvas, printed charmeuse liner,
zippers, buckles, straps, charm, etc.

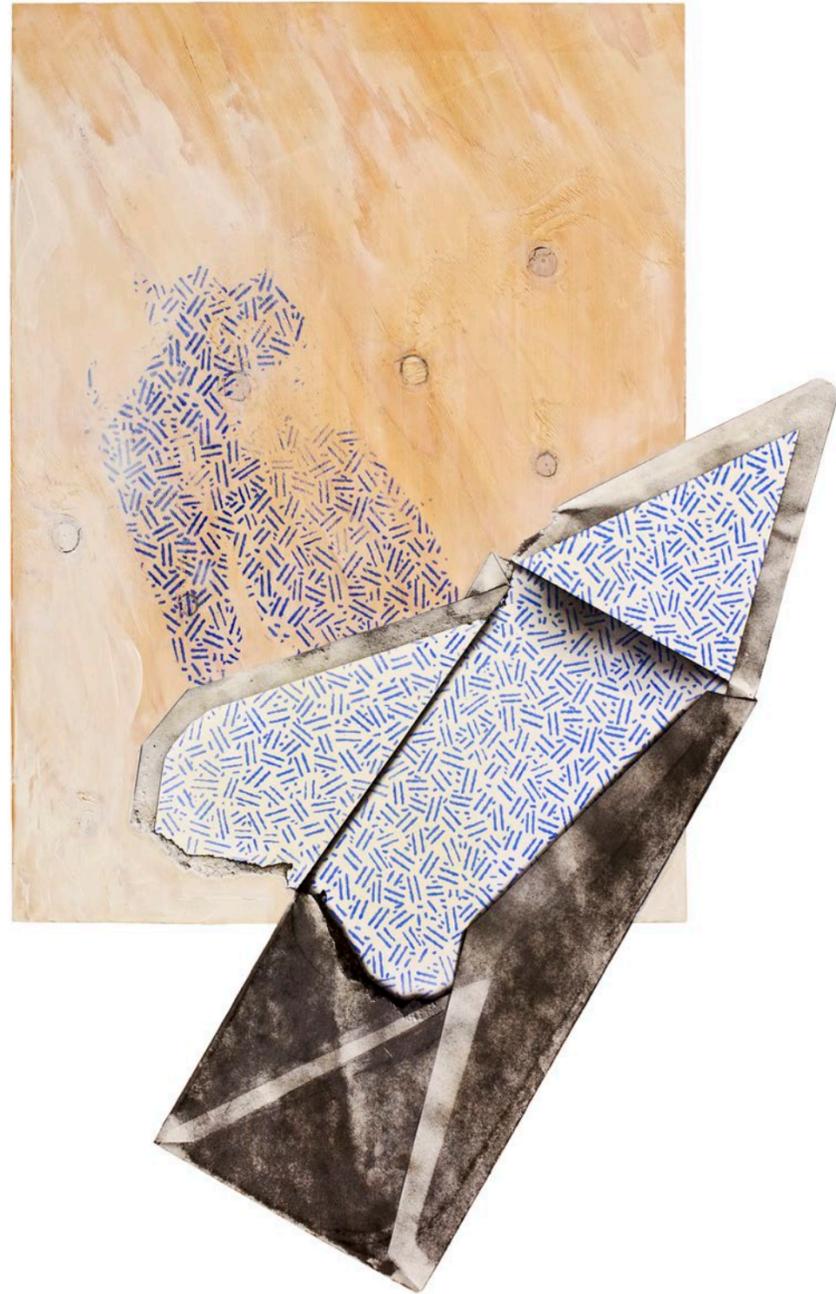


Virus Pattern with Revelers Bag (detail),
2012, canvas, printed charmeuse liner,
zippers, buckles, straps, charm, etc.



Youth Culture, 2014
Screen-print ink, gesso, and acrylic polymer on plywood,
installed at *Seth Price*, Eden Eden, Berlin, 2014

Design as a Spray of Surfer's Cum on the Waves, 2013
Screen-print ink, acrylic, pigmented acrylic polymer, and
gesso on plywood



Black Letter, 2012
Screen-print ink, gesso, and acrylic polymer on plywood



Letter from Inside/Out, 2014
Screen-print ink, pigmented acrylic polymer, and gesso on plywood



Container for Virus Pattern Plus Abstract Pattern, 2013, blackened cork facing, Kevlar-mesh shell, printed charmeuse liner, screen-printed Tyvek center panel, double-headed zippers, etc., and *Nothingness as a Big Head*, 2013, screen-print ink, acrylic polymer, and gesso on plywood, installed at *Steh Pirce*, Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, 2013



Subsurface Scatter Calendar, 2014
Screen-print ink, polyester resin, pigmented acrylic polymer, and gesso on plywood



Medium, 2014
Screen-print ink, acrylic, pigmented acrylic polymer, and gesso on plywood



Compatibility Mode, 2014
Screen-print ink, acrylic, pigmented acrylic polymer, and gesso on plywood

2014–17

Fuck Seth Price
Organic Software
Wrok Fmaily Freidns

ACHIM HOCHDÖRFER: *One or two years ago I invited you to do a project, and you were on strike that year. You weren't doing any shows. You weren't making art. You were even trying to have all interviews and articles about you taken down from the web. It was, of course, a personal crisis or whatever we might call it, but it also had to do with being fed up with a certain market system.*

SETH PRICE: *I don't think it was the market system, in the specific sense of money and auctions, that I was having a problem with. I've never really had an issue with the business side; I think I'm realistic in that I just want to do my work, and once it leaves the studio, I recognize it enters a system I can't control. It was the larger issue of visibility that I had a problem with, the figure of the artist, the career, the way things start to settle into pictures and narratives. And most of all I needed to take time away from dealing with an art career in order to really write. I was writing Fuck Seth Price and making the website Organic Software.*

HOCHDÖRFER: *Are they related?*

PRICE: *I thought of them as companion pieces. They're both written: one is a novel; the other is coded. One takes up a current literary form, the other looks like a social-media site. They were published in the same month. They're not art objects. They don't make money, they cost me money. The site was an exercise in making an anonymous and unpublicized artwork, while the title of the novel makes it the opposite of that. They both express a kind of negativity and aggression, obviously. They're publicly accessible, and they circulate outside the art world. At the same time, they both address a kind of local politics, in the sense of the art world as the world around me, the thing I know about, care about, can speak about and also implicate myself in, and all my feelings about that. But there's a level of fiction introduced; it's not a direct view. The novel is a slippery autofiction, and the website's About page has a fictional backstory for why there's this massive database of art collectors. Also, they're both portraits, in a way, portraits of the art world of 2015, as it sits within a larger world of finance and taste and politics. There's something about persona, profiles, data, and fiction that applies equally to the novel, the site, and the Wrok Fmaily Freidns show, but I don't fully understand it yet.*



Fuck Seth Price: A Novel
(New York: Leopard Press, 2015; 1st ed.)

ORGANIC SOFTWARE BROWSE- RANDOM ABOUT Search...



WWW.ORGANIC.SOFTWARE

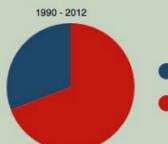
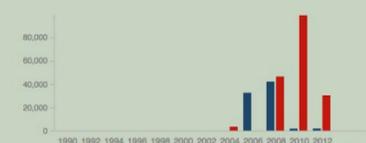
search: "ART COLLECTOR"

ORGANIC SOFTWARE BROWSE- RANDOM ABOUT Search...

STEVEN A COHEN

Why SAC Capital's Steven Cohen Isn't in Jail - Businessweek
 Steve Cohen Can't Shake SAC's Crimes in Divorce Lawsuit ...
 Steven A. Cohen Was Buyer of Giacometti's 'Chariot,' for \$101 Million
 Steven Cohen in Deal to Buy Beverly Hills Estate Listed for \$35 Million
 Steven Cohen Implicated in Alleged Insider-Trading Scheme - WSJ
 Steven A. Cohen to Sell Works at Sotheby's and Christie's ...
 \$616 Million Poorer, Hedge Fund Owner Still Buys Art - NYTimes.com
 Who Is Steve Cohen? A Glimpse Into SAC Capital's Top Dog - Deal ...

DONATIONS (R/D)

Frank Lautenberg (D) \$4,300
 Hillary Clinton (D) \$3,900
 Max Baucus (D) \$2,000
 Jon M Huntsman Jr (R) \$1,000
 Bill Clinton (D) \$1,000
 Ronald Lee Wyden (D) \$1,000
 Chuck Schumer (D) \$1,000
 Jack Reed (D) \$500
 Carl Levin (D) \$500
 Mark Kennedy (R) \$500

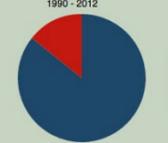
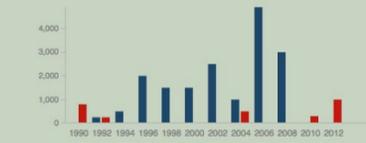
500 Club \$5,300
 Lautenberg NJ Victory Committee (D) \$1,000

AFFILIATIONS
 University of Connecticut Foundation Emeriti

GEO DATA


Businessweek ORGANIC SOFTWARE BROWSE- RANDOM ABOUT Search...

1990 - 2012

Frank Lautenberg (D) \$4,300
 Hillary Clinton (D) \$3,900
 Max Baucus (D) \$2,000
 Jon M Huntsman Jr (R) \$1,000
 Bill Clinton (D) \$1,000
 Ronald Lee Wyden (D) \$1,000
 Chuck Schumer (D) \$1,000
 Jack Reed (D) \$500
 Carl Levin (D) \$500
 Mark Kennedy (R) \$500

500 Club \$5,300
 Lautenberg NJ Victory Committee (D) \$1,000

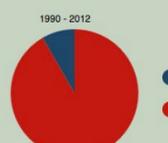
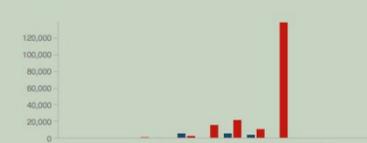
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GEO DATA


Bloomberg ORGANIC SOFTWARE BROWSE- RANDOM ABOUT Search...

DONATIONS (R/D)

1990 - 2012

John McCain (R) \$72,600
 Christopher H Shays (R) \$6,100
 Bill Nelson (D) \$5,900
 Marty Meehan (D) \$4,000
 George W Bush (R) \$4,000
 Arlen Specter (R) \$3,000
 Ander Crenshaw (R) \$2,000
 James Matthes Talent (R) \$2,000
 A Wayne Allard (R) \$1,000
 Mark Kennedy (R) \$1,000

Republican National Committee (R) \$28,500
 Colorado Republican Federal Campaign Committee (R) \$13,350
 Pioneer Political Action Committee (R) \$10,000
 Armor Holdings, Inc. Political Action Committee... \$10,000
 Republican Party of Minnesota (R) \$9,230
 Republican Party of Wisconsin (R) \$9,230
 Republican Campaign Committee of New Mexico (R) \$9,230
 Connecticut Republican Soc (R) \$5,000
 Allard Leadership Committee (R) \$5,000
 Democratic National Committee (D) \$5,000

PHILANTHROPY
 Boys and Girls Club of Greenwich \$14K (Jun '08)

ORGANIC SOFTWARE BROWSE- RANDOM ABOUT Search...

WASHINGTON INSTITUTE FOR NEAR EAST STUDIES

AFFILIATED COLLECTORS

- Daniel S Loeb
- Norman Braman
- Audrey Butvay Gruss
- William L Mack
- Leon M Wagner
- Milton Fine
- Irma Braman
- Lyn M Ross
- Paul Amir
- Marvin Haas
- Howard Kaye
- Nancy Rosen
- Jill and Jay Bernstein
- Wilma & Howard Kaye
- Robert P. & Arlene R. Kogod
- Richard and Lisa Plepler

The Partnership for New York City ORGANIC SOFTWARE BROWSE- RANDOM ABOUT Search...

Los Angeles County Museum of Art
 Fix the Debt
 Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth College
 Trump Economic Advisory Council
 David Edelstein

board member
 CEO fiscal leadership council member ('12-)
 Trustee ('81-'87)
 Adviser to the president friend

EDUCATION
 Dartmouth College (Undergraduate)
 Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth College (Graduate)

DATE OF BIRTH 1942
 NET WORTH 1.3 billion

GEO DATA



Beverly Hills



East Hills

ORGANIC SOFTWARE BROWSE- RANDOM ABOUT Search...



A Day Trip with the Guggenheim Museum to Greenwich ORGANIC SOFTWARE BROWSE- RANDOM ABOUT Search...

GEO DATA

 Greenwich

USER INPUT

Anonymous 11-18-15 @ 3:38am
 Warm and generous collectors who have been vital to the art community for many years - without keeping tabs.

Anonymous 11-24-15 @ 6:55pm
 bla bla bla

Anonymous 2-2-16 @ 2:26am
 oh, not dirty enough for you?

your name... (optional)

comment...

Submit

Screen grabs from Organic Software, 2015, a web application located at http://organic.software, with 4,149 unique profiles and associated data. Written in Ruby 2.2.2 using Sinatra 1.4.6, with a MySQL database for user comments and auction data. View templates written in ERB; styles written in SASS. Hosted on an Amazon EC2 instance running Ubuntu 14.04. Web server: Apache 2 with Phusion Passenger



ABSENT THIRD TERM

Rachel Kushner and Laura Owens in Conversation

LAURA OWENS: Seth mentioned a conversation where he had had some studio assistants talk about his work. And you said to him, “Oh, you like to be this—”

RACHEL KUSHNER: —“absent third term.” In a Freudian construction, the third term is the father, I guess: interfering with the illicit bond between mother and child. But Seth is just facilitating conversations about himself between a different two, so I’m not sure my analogy works. Like he did to you and me right now. But we meet at this place all the time anyway. Except tonight we are assigned by Seth Price to talk about Seth Price.

OWENS: When I talked to him about *Fuck Seth Price*, I was seeing the book as an artwork.

KUSHNER: As an object, a conceptual artwork, or a work of literature? Because to me those first two are utterly different from the third, the literature.

OWENS: I think it is all those things but I really felt it was another artwork of his. I was most interested in him using the artwork as a novel or novel as artwork to find a space where his identity is contained and completely removed at the same time. When you write a novel, there is the implicit idea that the protagonist is fictional. It’s not Seth Price, it is him writing. So there is a level of play and distancing that can happen that is missing in an artwork you would see in a gallery. There is no current way of thinking of my last show at the Wattis as being that I created a protagonist who made that show.

KUSHNER: It’s a “he,” unnamed. I felt like that allowed Seth to get a glimpse at, a purchase on, his own set of thoughts about the contemporary moment, without seeming confessional. There’s a coldness to the tone. A ruthlessness. Maybe the “he” allowed for it. But somehow it operates for me in some other valance from “fiction” versus “nonfiction.” It’s not like I’m reading a memoir by Seth Price. But it’s not the hallucinogenic space of literature, either. It has a precision that inheres in something real. The he is him, it’s Seth, but turned sideways or something. Glimpsed awry in that Brioni suit, aspirational in a perverse way, as a kind of Patrick Bateman of Chelsea, but not a killer, a truth-teller.

OWENS: My first reaction after reading it was that it was a painting, because what I think the best paintings do is critique other paintings. And this was a critique that shut the door on a lot of paintings that were made in the past ten years.

KUSHNER: Including his own?

OWENS: Maybe this is how he saves his own work from falling into the categories he describes so well in the book, because the book telescopes out and adds a layer of knowing irony onto everything he has made. Because I now know he’s the one who wrote the book. This self-awareness or critique is a kind of credit, and that credit travels back in time to anything he already made, so we can see it all as part of a whole.

KUSHNER: Don’t you think he’s talking about his own practice in the book, though?

OWENS: I thought it was an amalgam of a lot of different strategies. I was reminded of ten or twenty artists.

KUSHNER: I, too, pictured certain people, and an entire scene. But then I wondered if it was even necessary for me to start presuming certain players, or culprits, because if you limit the arguments in the book to Seth's own work and persona and dilemmas, the arguments remain complete. It's extremely funny, especially the first part. And you think, Oh my God, somebody is actually talking about this publicly and finding a language to describe what's going on. And that middle part, which I think informs the title, about wanting things to look cool or be cool—coolness is easy to deride, but everyone participates in trying to achieve it or maintain their already established coolness. The coolest ones understand that trying to be cool is not at all cool. Then there is inevitable backlash, that anyone who manages to be cooler than the rest, or is perceived as such, becomes an object of jealousy, or not quite jealousy but the object of a negative collective drive to recalibrate and punish those who have experienced too much success. The hating commences. "Yeah, fuck ____ [insert latest hot artist]. Fuck Seth Price." I bring that phantom attitude to the title, for me it's pronounced in that dismissive tone, "We've had enough of that guy." But then again, the book itself is a more subtle project. It takes a book, in length, to express what he had on his mind.

OWENS: What was amazing was his decision to make it a fiction instead of an essay. He can say things that are only 30 percent true, but you still want to hear them said out loud.

One section I found to be like this was where he describes the phase of being a young artist and how it's all about "open doors." On the one hand, looking back, you might feel like there was an endless stream of praise and highs at your "first solo, first mention in a magazine, first show in Europe," but this is not the reality of being a young artist, at least at the time it's happening to you. He is setting up this binary between firsts and the situation as he later describes it in order to talk about the differences between unknown artists (and the advantages of this position) and midcareer artists. Ultimately all of this is a critique of the current situation, hence my thought that it would more naturally be an essay rather than a novel. But it just could never work as an essay, he would sound foolish saying these things in such an exaggerated way. After I read the book, I went back and read *Dispersion*, which is in essay form, but it has parts that just sort of glide into each other. He's just a confident—he has a very confident voice. In a lot of his essays or previous writing, it's the tone and the voice that carry it through.

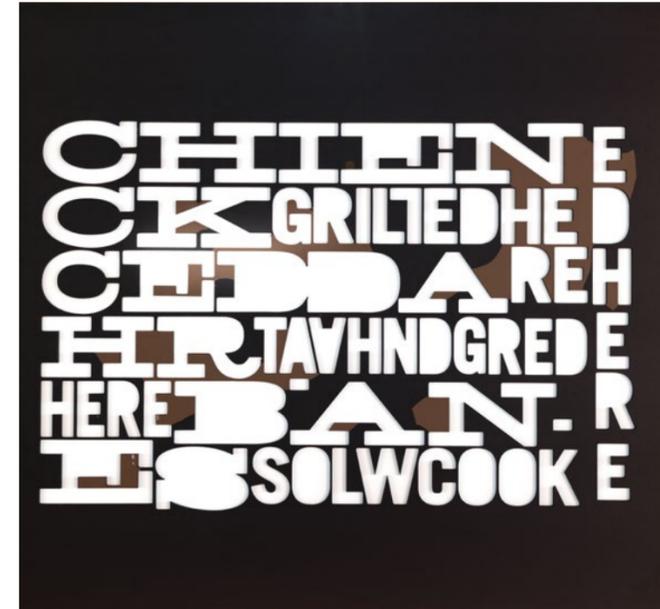
KUSHNER: Here's an example of his tone that I like: "And this tangle of contradictions was the greatest thing about art. It always meant the opposite of what you thought it meant or wanted it to mean. Abstract versus representational, old versus new, pure versus corrupt, tasteful versus tasteless. All artistic values and categories were inherently unstable and might suddenly swap places."

OWENS: Right.

KUSHNER: The art is trying to mime and echo and comment on the thing it's miming. But it gets collapsed sometimes and becomes that thing. It's dealing with capitalism in an intimate manner.

OWENS: I think many artists are trying to crawl up for air, trying to get one step ahead of the market swallowing that feels inevitable. It feels like a giant black hole that will suck all art into itself.

KUSHNER: You want to be in on the joke. Or you want to outsmart it or outrun it. There's a part of the



book where he talks about an occult practitioner recommending a practice of walking through the city "resolutely refusing to focus on anything in particular." But Seth seems to me to be someone who takes it all in. He's thoroughly conversant in the language of images and also in how they are made. In the *Wrok Fmaily Freidns* show at 356 S. Mission Rd., it looked like he'd scavenged these stencils for letters. The letters were upside down or backward and not in alphabetical order. Looking, you suddenly understand that the order is about efficient use of the material, of whatever the letters were being punched out of. You start thinking about how much material they save by punching letters in an ergonomic sequence: it's like this weird metadata that will be misread by a future civilization. Maybe they'll think print waste is our Rosetta stone. When I first saw those stencils at Mission Rd., I thought, Oh, that's what "wrok fmaily freidns" means, it's a reference to stencil order. And he said, No, that was from the theory that when you look at a word with transposed letters, you still can read it, because it's

like a face and you recognize the main features. But in this case, I thought of the title of the show but was looking at an operation that was automated and pragmatic and the letters were not able to, or meant to, become a face.

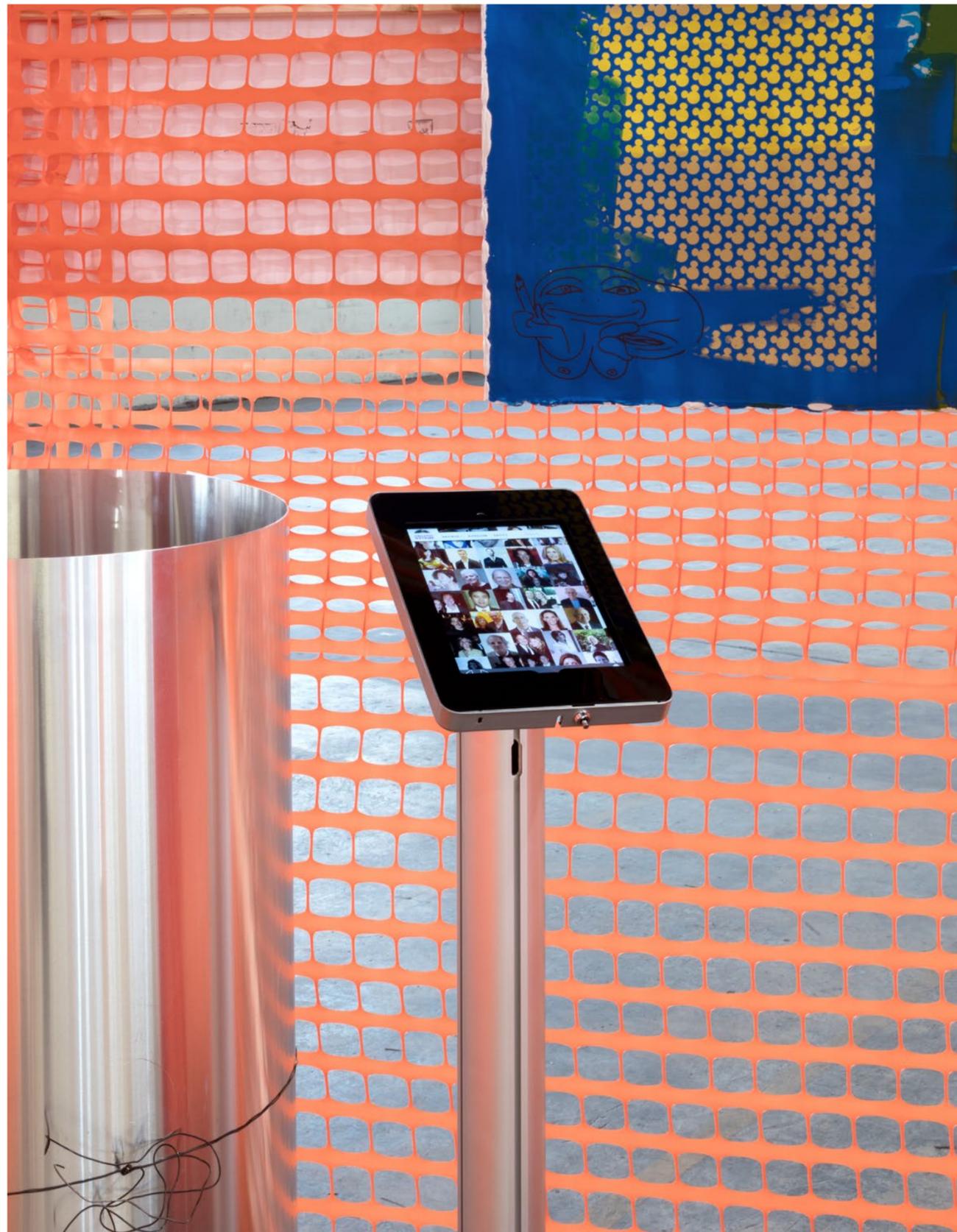
OWENS: A lot of the work in that show is reflective of recent technological developments in photography and printing, asking, What could you do with it? At the same time not foregrounding the technology in and of itself but manipulating and subverting it into a couple of larger narratives.

KUSHNER: There's the printing on the PVC pipes.

OWENS: He couldn't figure out how to print it actually on the PVC, so it's a vinyl that's wrapping it. There were a couple of objects where he applied some roughly textured acrylic, creating a varying dimension that goes across the surface of the work. Then he printed on the piece with a flatbed printer. The printer can only pick one level to print on, so it creates a distortion and depth of field because it's hitting the surface at different heights. He's exploiting the machine to make a work that goes in and out of focus because he is printing on a surface that's not meant to be printed on.

KUSHNER: The way he uses the methods of advertising was part of what was alien and interesting. To source their technology for a different purpose entirely.

SOLWCOOK, 2016
Found PVC print waste from commercial imaging facility mounted on aluminum composite



OWENS: The light boxes. Yeah. I was dumbstruck by the color and depth of field of this printing on something so finely woven, what looks like polyester rayon but is actually a proprietary synthetic material that was developed for Apple. It's incredibly detailed and rich, but also the fabric mutes the light in a way that is very different from, say, a Jeff Wall light box. I'd call it a matte-finish light box.

And then on top of that, he used a camera that takes a million photos of an object from every angle, steadily moving around the object. The original purpose is to get all aspects in focus, instead of having a natural depth of field from the one point of view. But then he decides to use that camera to photograph a close-up of human skin, which can't help but have subtle movement, from breathing. So again he is using technology not to show us how insanely pimped out this thing can get but to subtly intervene in its best efforts to produce a perfect product.

KUSHNER: Vision so accurate it becomes fiction. Relentlessly accurate.

OWENS: And then to do it with something that's living, breathing skin. There was a final step involved using new software developed specifically for this camera, which weds all these millions of pictures together. So it works and doesn't work because the object is in motion, it has movement. I like to imagine he read about these software designers and thought, How could I use that?

KUSHNER: I feel almost like the person who narrated the book and made that show is walking through Times Square every minute, and maybe that's the sense of a fiction, an avatar, a person who is alive to the changes and the slickness and the epic qualities of advertising, the sheen, the directions in which technology points. Not as utopia or dystopia, but this weird access road. Like, he's someone with *technê*, know-how, but using it with precise intent, and "wrongly." On a frontage road to nowhere with all the signs pointing in weird directions. It's comforting to me to think that there are artists with the means and the energy to corral these insidious and complex technologies, and to put them to even less useful tasks.

OWENS: But it also illuminates the absurdity that we're living. What did you think of the website that was in the Mission Rd. show?

KUSHNER: He told me, "I made this completely crazy website." When I looked, it seemed like it was all art collectors. So maybe I expected something a bit crazier? But there were layers of it that I probably didn't quite understand.

OWENS: I like that it's hard to pin down what the keywords are that are pulling certain people and data from the internet. I don't know. I thought it must be "art collector," but then I fantasized that maybe he used words like "top notch aesthetic connoisseur" or "art power junkie" because I feel like it would make him laugh to have something like that in the code/backdoor.

KUSHNER: Oh, it's actively pulling in data from the internet?

OWENS: What does it say when you click on the "about" menu?





KUSHNER: [reading] “What is the site? A demonstration of a proprietary algorithmic perception tool. Who are these people? Art investors—slash—collectors. The tool may address any data set, but art investors are a good demo of the tool because art investor data intersections (finance—slash—culture—slash—power—slash—media presence—slash taste) are an ideal pool to demo the algorithmic perception tool. This is because art market data pools are both visible and invisible. Invisibility of art investment (no government regulation, contracts, public auction records, etc.) equals ideal to show the algorithmic perception tool’s power. Obscurity of art investment worth equals media—slash—public obsession. The West is obsessed with finance—slash—culture—slash—art.”

I guess it’s true, but then I’m not sure. If you’re in the art world and live in New York, I’m sure it *seems* true.

“The algorithm correlates demographic data across multiple points: address—slash—GPS meta-data, social media trail, keyword match. What is next? Further development and application of other data sets.”

OWENS: When I saw the website in the show, the first thing I thought was, OK, here’s a little aside from looking at the art. Like here’s a moment where you look at an iPad and you’re in a different world. It’s an unreliable proposal of what’s behind the scenes of this art show, like a comic-book box that says, “*Meanwhile...*” And it’s a self-effacing act. Like, yeah, I’m making my art show and here’s the reality of what this is all about, which is like what you’re describing, a kind of circulation of value for capital to reside in.

Waste Piping, 2016
Printed vinyl on PVC pipes

Skin Color Test Scrap, 2015
UV-cured ink-jet, screen-print ink, acrylic, enamel, and pigmented synthetic polymer on board

KUSHNER: Biting the hand that feeds?

OWENS: No, not biting the hand, but sort of implicating himself in the system; saying, Well, this is the bare reality of it. I think he is being really blunt, that it’s meant to expose the fact that Seth knows people are buying art. And not to hide that under a blanket and just have an art show without that fact being a part of it. I think the stylistic decisions, calling it *Organic Software* and claiming it is more about the algorithm than the content are also of this same aspirational, corporate tone. I think he’s thinking that if you were to stumble on this website, the font and the color and the presentation style have a certain tone that seems sober. And it appears transparent and helpful, useful. I think that’s the fiction, that it’s helpful and transparent.

KUSHNER: I like this notion of bare reality. It’s there, subtending, a form of truth. Still, I’d be curious to see the application of... another data set. Another bare reality. The skin photographs, speaking of bare, are so strange and visually engulfing. They start to suggest that inside the mise en abyme of capital there are places to hide in plain sight. Even under magnification, there is a lot you can see that does not tell you very much, or even anything you can integrate.

That term, *organic software*: I like to think that Seth’s narrative persona is part of this implied malleability. Even the qualifier *soft* before *ware* could be mood, posture, man, walker, thinker, shape-shifter. Organic not as the unwitting face of the money, but something interior, one person divided into a multiplicity and malleable enough to critique himself from an angle. Write a book. Arrange this dinner so that we are the organic in the software.

So did people buy Seth’s sewer pipes? Those were interesting. The symbolic potential of pipes. They gave the gallery “flow.” Maybe the occult practitioner in *Fuck Seth Price* who advocates refusing to focus on the streets of New York might also recommend installing floor-to-ceiling pipes, down or up, through which energy can be redirected. They’re like vertical crosscurrents.



OWENS: I think we sold a couple of sewer pipes. There was one that I really wanted to buy. It looked like a yoga tote bag.

KUSHNER: How about just repipe an entire house with those things?

OWENS: Oh my God, that’d be great.



Street Style Print Test, 2015
Oil print, acrylic, screen-print ink, and pigmented synthetic polymer on plywood



Socioshaman, 2016
Oil print, acrylic, polyurethane, and pigmented synthetic polymer on plywood

Overleaf:
Wrok Fmally Freidns, 356 S. Mission Rd., Los Angeles, 2016, installation view





Mascot Waste, 2015
CNC-routed aluminum, installed at *Wrok Fmaily*
Freidns, 356 S. Mission Rd., Los Angeles, 2016



Danny, 2015
Dye-sublimation print on synthetic fabric,
aluminum, LED matrix, installed at
Wrok Family Freidns, 356 S. Mission Rd.,
Los Angeles, 2016



CREATIVE SUITE

Michelle Kuo

Tools are always late. We wait for them to appear, to fulfill a need, to be used. At the same time, users are also always playing catch-up, constantly learning new technologies, perpetually adapting to their strangeness.

Seth Price adapts, too. He absorbs processes high and low, new and old, familiar and odd—like 3-D animation, robotic photography, CNC routing, vacuum forming, lamination.¹ He likes getting to the game late but also darts ahead, exploiting the drags and spurts of technical development, design, style.

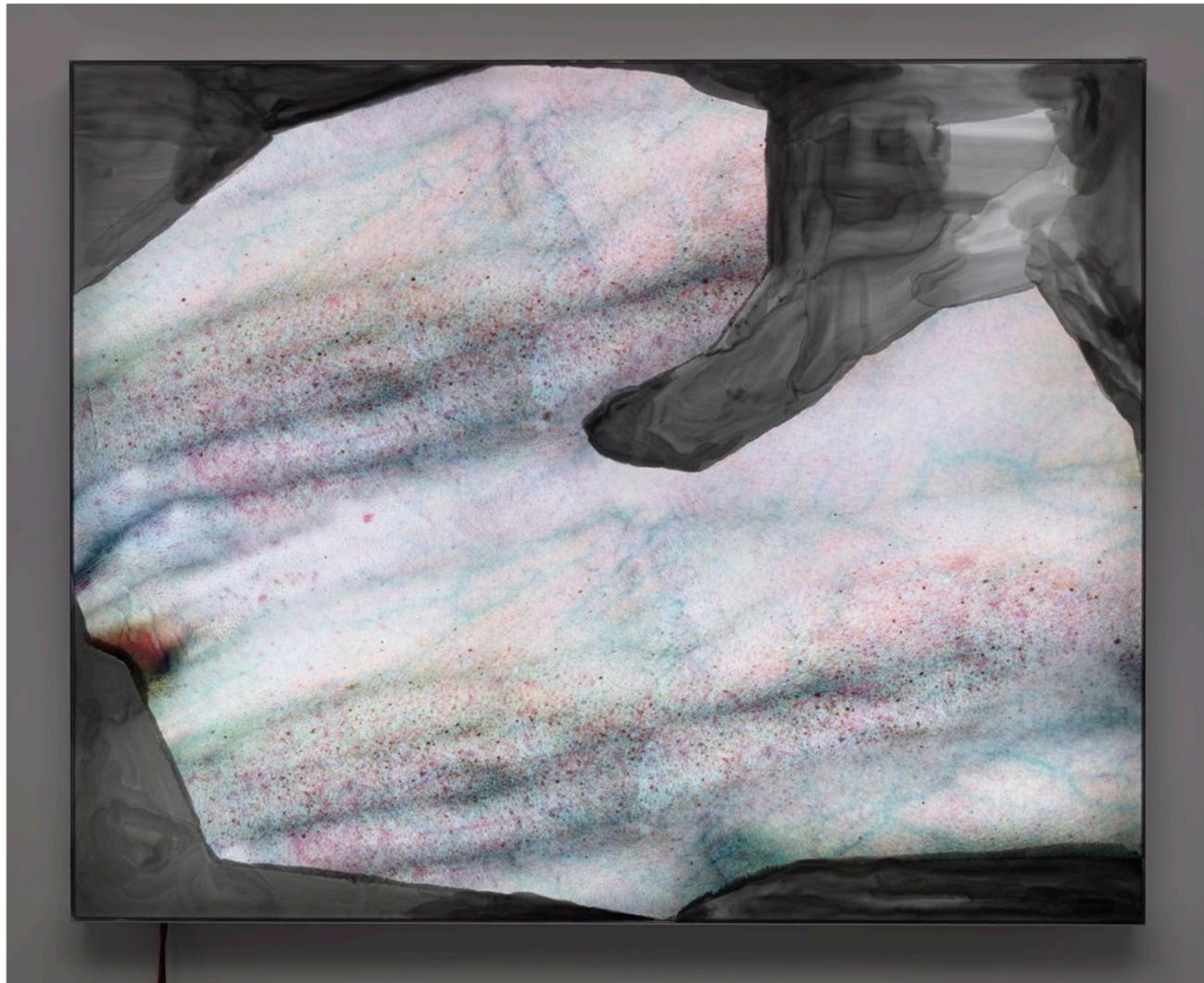
These fugitive moves—the work’s lithe inhabitation of different times and states—are often taken as emblematic of some pure mutability that is endemic to our era. Price’s work is seen in terms of effects, not causes; of simulacra, not stuff; of the virtual rather than physical. It is seen as a reflection of the supposedly infinite flexibility of the digital, or “network capitalism”; as symptomatic of a condition of total fluidity and totalizing control, of utter immateriality.

But things are more difficult than that. In fact, Price’s work is not seamlessly fungible but impossibly knotted, vexed, tortured—not ethereal but mired in matter. This might explain the feeling of perversity we get when we see his fucked-up surfaces and weird amalgamations. Or why the specific finishes or materials found in his work never merely reflect or reveal the processes via which they were made, processes that often remain mysterious or misaligned. His art makes us feel like we know what we are looking at when we don’t, like we are ahead when we are behind.

To try to understand this creeping sensation of delay, or difficulty, I’d like to look more closely at Price’s way of working. The artist has developed a number of processes that are particularly counter-intuitive—introducing a frisson, or interregnum, between production and dispersion, image and substance. These procedures may seem quicksilver, weightless, yet they are pulled by gravity, mass, flesh; they have drag.

Take, for example, vacuum forming, in which thermoplastic is heated, stretched onto a mold, and sucked against it. Much has been made of Price’s use of this technique, beginning in the early 2000s, when he started molding vacuum-formed polystyrene, PVC, and other materials over fabric or flesh: bomber jackets, breasts, and fists. And the artist himself has spoken eloquently of how plastic—its near-magical elasticity—signaled the promise of the postwar economic miracle, its new and advanced materials, its endless possibility. But vacuum forming is also forced, messy, and brutish. Its adaptation is never simply that. Its products are generally crude: packaging, road signs, kiosk enclosures, plastic shells that are low-rent approximations of the things over which they once melted. The mold itself is single-surface, meaning that it is the simplest topological form—a solid, which is really just a planar relief. And imperfections are legion: moisture may create bubbles within the plastic; webbing, puckers, and creases can form around the molds. Worse, the plastic can stick to the mold, ruining the entire thing.

In Price’s vacuum works, these blemishes and stoppages run riot. Webbing and creasing course through the plane, sometimes nearly fracturing it; Price has also formed the plastic over knotted ropes, which remain underneath—the form stuck to the mold becoming the centerpiece of the work. The surfaces may be clear and thin, or thick and coated with synthetic enamel. They are never, however, merely smooth: most are warped and irregular at the edges, curling out from the wall like separating membranes. Sometimes a bomber jacket looks as if it is being extruded from a laminated wood panel, its coloration and texture frighteningly morphing from grain to metallic gold Styrofoam. Price’s liquefaction is viscous, painful.



Nearly all other sculpture ever made since the beginning of time is either additive or negative: you add material (amassing lumps of clay, 3-D printing layers of plastic) or you subtract it (carving a block of marble, CNC routing a metal chunk). But vacuum forming is a zero-sum game. It is neither additive nor negative: nothing is lost or gained, only warped. You end with what you began with; you manipulate what is already there. The sheet of plastic just droops, descends. The choice of knotted rope seems especially pointed: if knots can generate endless permutations, their proliferation is suddenly slowed, calcified, in Price's encasement. These works are not thin, transparent simulacra or immaterial effects but opaque, even resistant, assemblages of things, equipment, information, and flows.

Price pushed the limit of assembly in his subsequent series of "silhouettes"—negative forms of a kiss, a handoff, an embrace—for which he CNC-routed delicate shapes out of sheets of rare-wood veneers bonded to acrylic. The components were simple enough, as were the procedures of adhesion and routing. But it was the bonding of the specific materials that went against the grain. It turned out to be extremely difficult to bond organic, rich wood—which has a highly variable reaction to humidity and temperature: expanding and contracting, breathing and swelling—to cold, hard, inert plastic.²

The artist went through numerous trials and an arduous testing process to find a way to combine the two utterly disparate materials so that the composite looked effortless, creating a generic, glossy, vaguely midcentury look. After much experimentation, he was able to force burlled maple or Vavona redwood or butternut walnut against slick polymer, as if the Frankenstein stepchild of lowly laminated MDF and classy bent plywood. The result seems uncannily familiar; it is, as Price describes it, "shiny, hard, yet also warm and 'natural.' It looks like something that you might see anywhere, in a walk-in cigar humidor or in a restaurant, but in fact it isn't something you've seen before, and that's because it's perverse."³

Such material labor goes unnoticed, and yet the exertion—and its effacement—is crucial to the silhouettes' unsettling existence. They appear banal, when in fact the process that formed them was extremely onerous and lengthy and experimental. They appear postindustrial, frictionless, when in fact they are anything but lubricated. We sense that something is wrong. Speed and acceleration get stuck, bogged down. The object is held in excruciating tension.

More recently, Price has turned up the pressure. A new series of large-format photographs and HD videos extends the exploration of the tension between material states to the tension between skin and skeleton, surface and support, information and embodiment. In his 2015 *Fuck Seth Price: A Novel*, the artist writes about the image as skin—as printout. "How to give form to the immaterial? This was the burning question for many young artists now. . . . Flat printing had become a lifeline, a quick and easy way to bridge the gap: you seized circulating data, tamed it, plasticized it, caged it for later observation. In flat printing, image became skin."⁴ The concept of skin that emerges is that of an entity hovering between projection and solid, network and ground—possessing a certain thickness, yet always threatening to evaporate into pure rendering, model, algorithm, image feed. Artists, in this quasi-fictive scenario, are constantly struggling against dissolution but also buying into it. This is the paradox of materiality in an immaterial era.

Price may have been making fun of this dilemma in his fiction, but he also seemed to take it seriously. The year before his novel came out, he started to assemble mood boards about all things related to skin: neoprene, cladding, prosthetics.⁵ And then he zoomed in. He began to focus on the human dermis itself, attempting to capture this infinite, misshapen field of pores and crevices and cells with the tools of today—a data-gathering mission verging on absurdity. Price hired a commercial photographer with a high-end PhaseOne camera and constructed a professionally lighted set to take innumerable images of models' bodies, which could then be sutured together in postproduction. Ultimately, the "real" or traditional camera couldn't get as close as the studio needed, and there was a problem with stitching the constituent images together successfully.

Price wanted big data—a massive set of information about the skin being photographed. The most obvious solution would have been 3-D scanning, generally used for video-game design, and he looked into walk-in scanners and other systems, but the resolution was not high enough.⁶ Eventually, he found a startup in San Francisco that had the technology he was looking for. He flew out to train on the system, then rented it for several months for his studio in New York.

Normally, images are rendered either at enormous size but comparatively low resolution or at small size but high resolution; the solution Price found offered a way to achieve both: incredibly high resolution over a large surface area. A digital camera was attached to a robotically controlled arm that could move a camera on three axes, using specialized software. The human model lay on a platform



Ariana, 2015
Dye-sublimation print on synthetic fabric,
aluminum, LED matrix, installed at
Wrook Family Freidns, 356 S. Mission Rd.,
Los Angeles, 2016

under the camera; the operator demarcated an area for photography on the computer, establishing the four corners of a planar grid (X- and Y-axes), as well as the highest and lowest focal points (on the vertical Z-axis). The robotically controlled camera started at the upper left grid point and systematically lowered, taking images all the way; rose back up; moved to the next grid point; and so on. Thousands of color images were taken—it took Price’s studio at least six hours for most skin patches—then processed as RAW files, which contained the unprocessed information from the camera’s sensor.⁷

The RAW files were converted into high-quality bitmap TIFFs (which took overnight).⁸ This generated a gargantuan amount of data—on the order of two terabytes—all destined for a single artwork. The studio then “squashed” each “stack” of images, the series of shots taken as the camera was lowered in one vertical descent, using software designed expressly for this purpose: it synthesized all the shots of a given point, some in focus and most terribly out of focus, into a single focused shot. Put another way, a three-dimensional cube of images was flattened into a planar grid. (This operation also took overnight.) The studio then processed the two-dimensional grid of images via software that stitched the constituent images together, lining up matching image data and eliminating any deviations. According to Price, this step entailed a great deal of user correction and manual point matching, and even with this labor the program might spit out an erratic constellation of stitched areas punctuated by black space. Sometimes the studio had to start over and readjust the data. The technology was far from seamless.

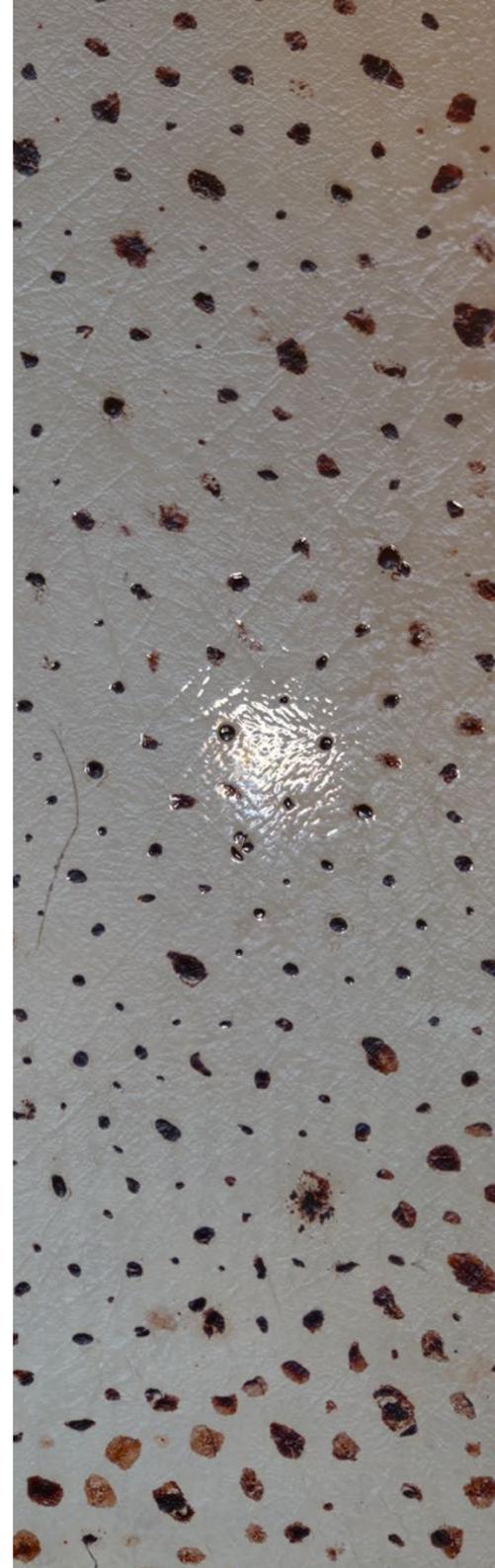
But it was being misused: the original system was never meant for Price’s quixotic procedure; it was created to deal with tiny, nonliving, nonmoving, relatively flat subjects. (Thus far it has been used by scientists to take pictures of insects and by the FBI to perform bullet forensics.) Price reversed all the terms.

To suture even further the discrete sections of skin, Price hired a fashion-photo retoucher to go over the files—which were still enormous, as large as ninety gigabytes. The artist worked closely with the retoucher, often tempering the latter’s impulses to “make it pop,” as Price puts it, while emphasizing other aspects that might not normally come to the fore in commercial retouching.⁹ The studio then manipulated the refined images in a CGI program, turning any remaining out-of-focus areas (where the robot or software had not achieved sharpness) into a gel-like swath.

The photographs would not remain virtual. At the time he began conceiving of the pictures, Price had learned of a new printing technology from a production specialist with whom he had been working for eight years. The technology had been commissioned by a “special client”—which turned out to be Apple—for its store displays. The process employed a new type of fabric that is able to receive a dye-sublimation transfer—an extremely high-resolution print that uses heat to transfer the ink—and resist wrinkling. The image was then stretched onto a light box. Price persuaded the consultant to let him use the technology, and they started doing tests in the studio.

The finished works were dye sub printed onto the textile at 300 dpi (standard print resolution) and fitted onto light boxes, illuminated from behind. Each is five feet tall and as many feet wide as the image data yielded. They are a kind of skin on a skin—the human tissue, which exists in the world in the round, wrapped around a body, is flattened as image and then manifested as membrane. But the transposition is not only from two to three dimensions; in this operation, unfathomable amounts of information are arrayed onto a sprawling plane.

Photographic representation was historically about the three-dimensional becoming two-dimensional, about the world become picture.¹⁰ Now it is about number crunching, bodily space



becoming media space, the world as code. Price’s monstrous skins and tools confront this shift directly, and in this sense they could not be more different from the cinematic images of large-format and Conceptual photography. If, decades ago, Jeff Wall and Andreas Gursky similarly sutured hundreds of individual photographs or scans into a smooth montage, these composites were staggeringly simple by comparison; they addressed mass culture, advertising display, and collective reification, while Price toys with the extraction of individual biometrics and the disintegrating body. And if the likes of Wall and Gursky illuminated the printed image in a light box or mounted it onto brilliant Plexi, this served to further dematerialize the image, to examine the concept of the Picture with a capital *p*. Price, by contrast, renders the light box matte, not glossy. His fabric surfaces are not crisp and lambent, like Wall’s transparencies, but soft and dull. These pictures do not elevate the photograph onto the plane of reflexive ideation but embody the haptic confronting the ontic, the nonspace of the network struggling into the backdrop of the iPhone, the scopic gaze overloaded with data, the neurological pushed into the chemical. Price’s material conversion is incomplete, profane. (*Dye sublimation* itself refers to a conversion of states of matter: the process was first thought to work by converting solid into gas, without a liquid state in between—a startling dissolution of mass into fume.)

The video *Social Synth* (2017) models another transposition. Price used the entire robotic imaging system to take thousands of photographs of a dead squid; this time, however, the colossal mosaic of pictures was imported into a 3-D-animation program to add movement, reflections, and ambient, volumetric light. The three-dimensional is wrested into two- and back again, eventually sucked into a vortex of no dimensionality, a corpse adrift in the network.

Price’s recent aluminum sculptures figure a literal network. They are modeled on a mathematical operation called a Voronoi diagram, which generates lines between a random distribution of points, producing a web-like or cellular structure. These patterns are CNC-routed onto heavy sheets of aluminum, creating perforations that allow the surfaces to be bent, folded, and manipulated along the seams. The flat panels are thereby pushed into volumetric and freestanding furniture-like forms: quasi tables, stools, pedestals. The surfaces are coated in baked enamel or anodized (Price refers to Maglite flashlights). But in this, too, surface and structure are out of joint, do not map onto one another: the anodizing “doesn’t work so well,” it’s not made to be bent.¹¹ The awkward carapaces have the anodyne look of “high-tech” design or athleisure, as the artist describes it (citing Lululemon yoga wear, which

bears a signature pattern much like Voronoi noise). Yet the forms are also janky, postapocalyptic, mechanomorphic—folded in ways to produce a “spiky, shuddering, menacing feeling,” as he puts it, something on the edge of falling apart.¹² The network is rendered as brittle cliché, an accessory for the body of the twenty-first-century chill creative. And that body itself haunts the icon, or “mascot,” that



Price also cuts into the patterning of the pieces: a polymorphous set of figures that are each marked by vagina, penis, breasts, pencils, and smiles. Hermaphroditic emojis, “Janus faced, like the silhouette works, but updated for the advertising age we live in.”¹³

For all their wry style, these deformations of technology and material, network and body, are dangerous. The edges and points of the aluminum sheets are incredibly sharp, so that Price and the fabricators had to wear special gloves to avoid being cut while bending and folding the pieces in the workshop. This knifelike threat—where planar diagram becomes palpable cut—recalls Price’s topological distortion of horrific images of beheadings and jihadi videos, printed onto clear Mylar and crumpled, left hanging (*Hostage Video Still with Time Stamp*, 2005–). The picture is never just effect, phantom limb, simulacrum, circulation, redistribution. It is also violently material.

Price himself has written that “it was easy and even commonsensical to believe that everything was melting into everything else in the face of the cloud and its triumph of immateriality, as long as you took into account only art, money, culture, and images.... In reality, though, all the same human pain persisted, lurking on the other side of the curtain. It hadn’t changed and it wasn’t going anywhere.”¹⁴ The notion of the extreme fluidity of the digital, of advanced capitalism, “overlooked brute materiality, or, to put it another way, human suffering.”¹⁵

Tools go unnoticed most of the time. Invisible when operating smoothly, they become visible only when, as the old adage goes, something goes wrong—when they break down.¹⁶ Yet there is another scenario in which tools are suddenly foregrounded: when they work all too well, when the tool becomes a weapon.

Notes

1. As Elizabeth Schambelan has written, Price invents new forms with which to “ravish the faint charms of the recent past.” Elizabeth Schambelan, “Openings: Seth Price,” *Artforum* 43, no. 9 (May 2005):
2. Seth Price, email to author, September 13, 2016.
3. *Ibid.*
4. Seth Price, *Fuck Seth Price: A Novel* (New York: Leopard Press, 2015).
5. Price, email to author, September 13, 2016; description that follows *op. cit.*
6. Seth Price, email to author, September 28, 2016.
7. RAW denotes the raw file format.
8. Tagged Image File Format.
9. Price, email to author, September 13, 2016.
10. Photography sought to render the topographic as map, the body as archive. As Wall famously wrote, “[P]hotography can put into play only its own necessary condition of being a depiction-which-constitutes-an-object.” But, he goes on to argue, photography is also the perfect “anti-object.” Jeff Wall, “‘Marks of Indifference’: Aspects of Photography in, or as, Conceptual Art,” *Reconsidering the Object of Art, 1965–1975*, eds. Ann Goldstein and Anne Rorimer, exh. cat., (Los Angeles: Museum of Contemporary Art, 1995), 247.
11. Price, email to author, September 28, 2016.
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ibid.*
14. Price, *Fuck Seth Price*, 118–19.
15. *Ibid.*, 118.
16. Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time [Sein und Zeit, 1927]*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), §16, 103–104.



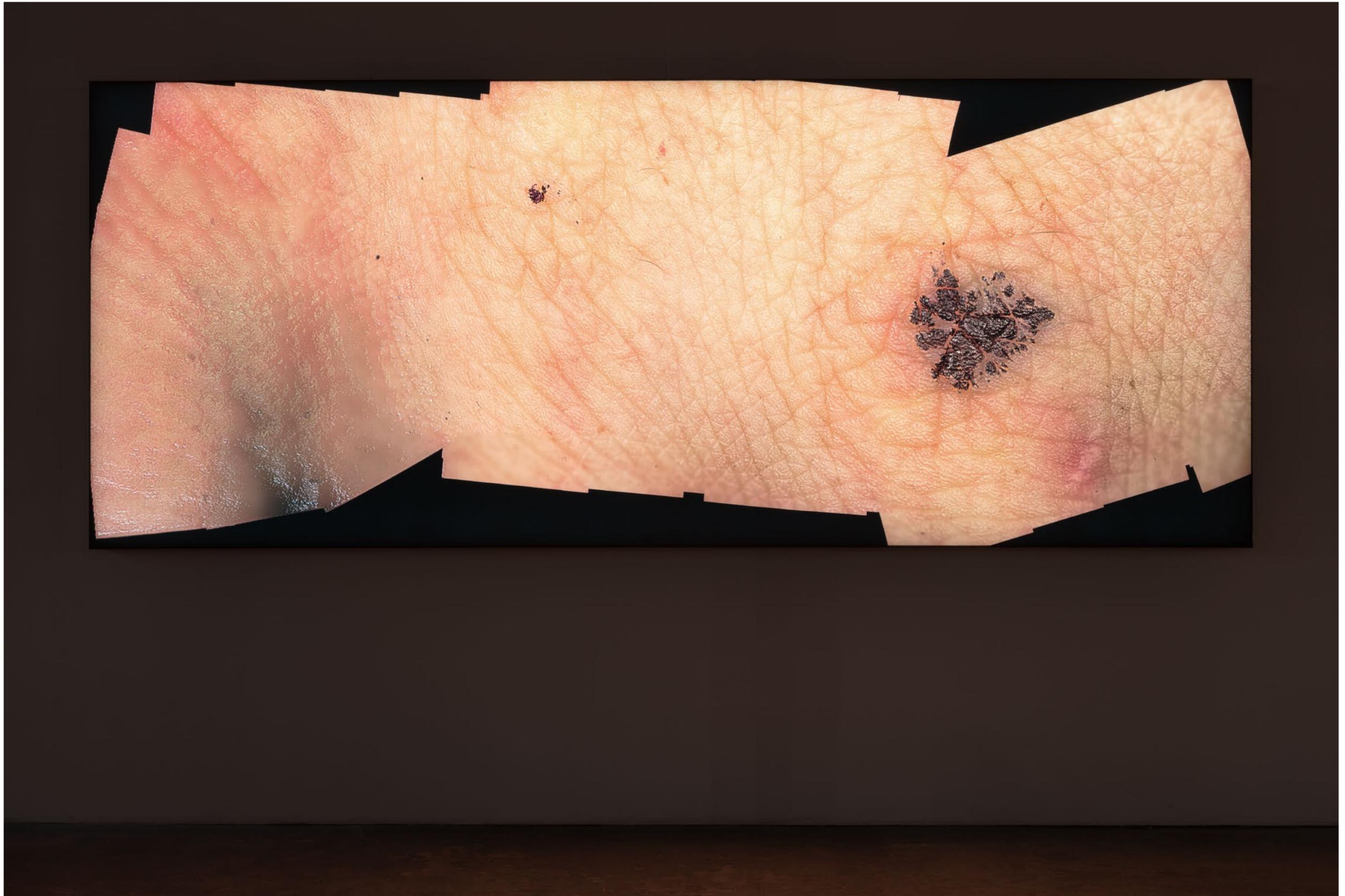
Exploded Dry Erase Board with Pieces, 2015
UV-cured prints, screen prints, pigmented
synthetic polymer, aluminum composite,
plywood, installed at *Wrok Fmally Freidns*,
356 S. Mission Rd., Los Angeles, 2016



Untitled, 2016
UV-cured ink-jet and synthetic polymer on wood-fiber veneer



Untitled, 2016
UV-cured print and synthetic polymer on plywood

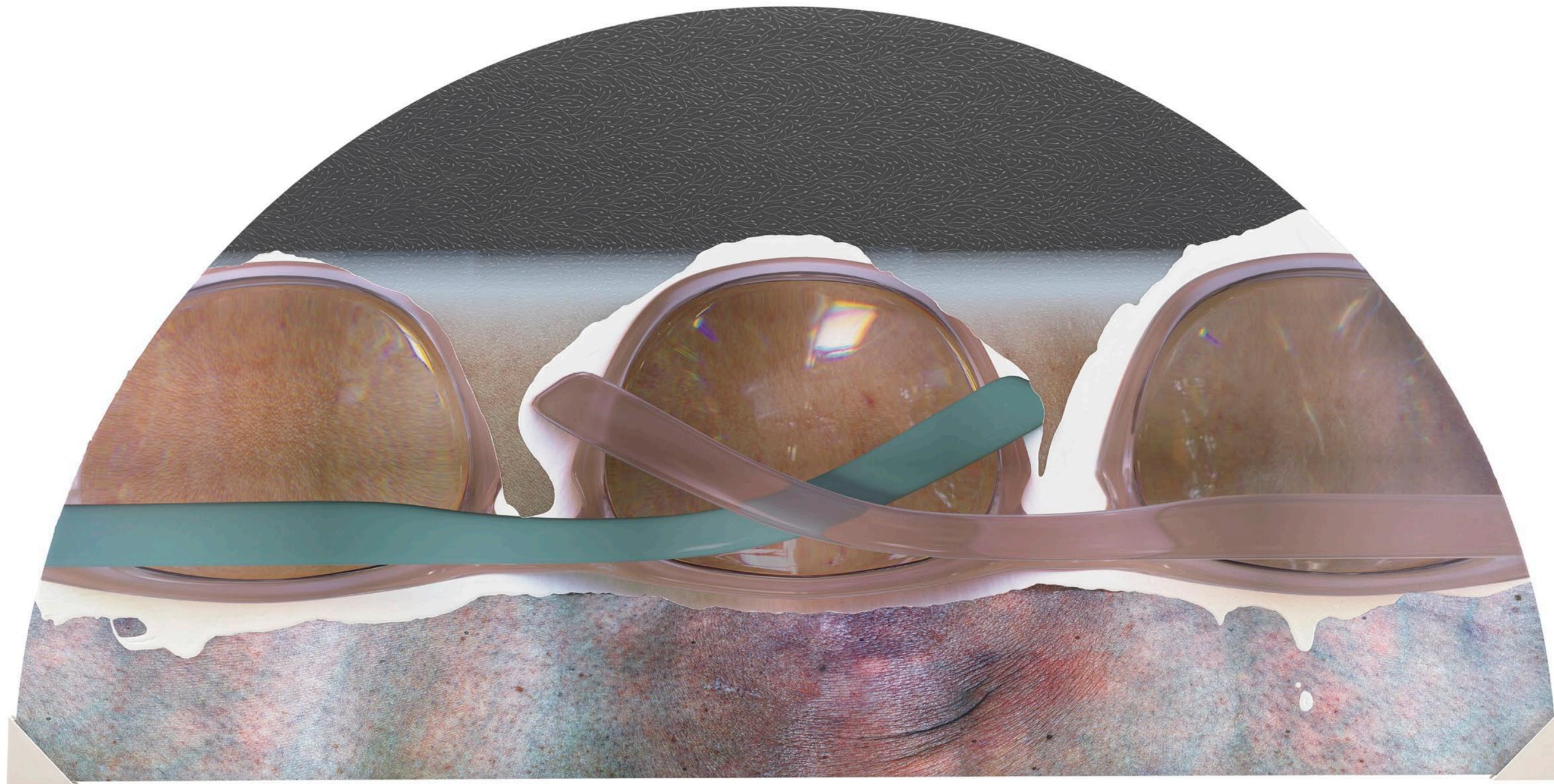


At right: *Brad*, 2015
Dye-sublimation print on synthetic fabric,
aluminum, LED matrix, installed at *Wrok
Fmaily Freidns*, 356 S. Mission Rd., Los
Angeles, 2016

Overleaf: *Disidentified Multinational*, 2015
UV-cured print on wood-fiber veneer,
installed at *Wrok Fmaily Freidns*, 356 S.
Mission Rd., Los Angeles, 2016







Previous spread: *Print Waste*, 2016
Printed vinyl wrapped around found PVC print waste from commercial imaging facility, wooden pallet, straps, installed at *Wrok Fmaily Freidns*, 356 S. Mission Rd., Los Angeles, 2016

Untitled, 2017
UV-cured ink-jet on polymer emulsion, printed and embossed aluminum, synthetic polymer, wood

EXTENDED CAPTIONS

We would like to thank all the participating archives, museums, private collections, and photographers for their assistance with this publication and for granting permission to reproduce their material. Despite careful investigation, in some cases it proved impossible to find the copyright holders; if you hold copyright to an uncredited work, please contact us.

Cover

Untitled, 2008, spray enamel on aluminum composite, 49 x 24.5 inches. Courtesy Museum Brandhorst, Munich. Photography: Simon Vogel.

6

Synthetic Piracy, 2015, ink transfer on polycarbonate, baked enamel on CNC-routed aluminum, 11 × 9 × 5 inches. Private collection, Tashkent. Photography: Ron Amstutz.

14

Untitled, 2013, UV-cured ink-jet on aluminum composite, 67.5 × 67.5 inches. Private collection, Esperanza Base, Hope Bay. Photography: Jason Mandella.

16

Stills from *“Painting” Sites*, 2000, single-channel video, 19:02 min., color, sound. Original format: Betacam. Courtesy Electronic Arts Intermix, New York.

17

Selections from *Outside in the City*, 1999–2000, twenty-three photographic prints, each 5 × 4 inches. Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Seth Price.

21

Wade Guyton, Amy Sillman, Seth Price, Bettina Funcke and A. L. Steiner at the opening night of *Seth Price*, Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, 2004.

22

Greater New York, P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center, New York, 2005, installation view. Photography: Seth Price.

25

Unknown designer, polystyrene prop from J. Crew’s 2013 nationwide “vacuum-formed knot” shopwindow display strategy. Courtesy Seth Price and J. Crew. Photography: Ron Amstutz.

26

Floral Theme with Decoration, 2012, canvas, printed cotton liners, charm, zippers, buckles, straps, etc., 48 × 95.5 inches. Private collection. Photography: Larry Lamay.

32

Stills from *Sub Accident*, 1997, single-channel video, 21:45 min., color, sound. Original format: Betacam. Courtesy of the artist.

32–33

Still from *Sub Accident*, 1997, single-channel video, 21:45 min., color, sound. Original format: Betacam. Courtesy of the artist.

Still from *American Graffiti*, 1999, single-channel video from 16-mm source, 15:27 min., color, sound. Courtesy of the artist.

33

Still from *Analogue*, 1999, single-channel video, 4:43 min., color, sound. Original format: Betacam. Courtesy Electronic Arts Intermix, New York.

Still from *Modern Suite*, 2002, single-channel video, 10:28 min., color, sound. Original format: Betacam. Courtesy Petzel Gallery, New York.

34

Stills from *Rejected or Unused Clips, Arranged in Order of Importance*, 2003, single-channel video, 10:38 min., color, sound. Courtesy Electronic Arts Intermix, New York.

34–35

Stills from *New York Woman*, 2001, single-channel video, 7:20 min., color, sound, supplement to lecture-performance *New York Woman*, Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2001. Courtesy of the artist.

35

Still from *New York Woman*, 2001, single-channel video, 7:20 min., color, sound, supplement to lecture-performance *New York Woman*, Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2001. Courtesy of the artist.

New York Woman, 2001, mini CD distributed at lecture-performance *New York Woman*, Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2001. Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Ron Amstutz.

36–37

Stills from *“Painting” Sites*, 2000, single-channel video, 19:02 min., color, sound. Original format: Betacam. Courtesy Electronic Arts Intermix, New York.

38–39

Stills from *Industrial Synth*, 2000, single-channel video, 16:37 min., color, sound. Original format: Betacam. Courtesy the artist and Electronic Arts Intermix, New York.

42

Game Heaven, CD (New York: Distributed History, 2001). Courtesy of the artist.
Video Game Soundtracks 1982–1987, CD (New York: Distributed History, 2001). Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Ron Amstutz.

43

New Jack Swing, CD (New York: free103point9, 2002). Courtesy of the artist.
NJS Megamix 2K, CD (New York: Distributed History, 2003). Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Ron Amstutz.

44

Industrial Fist, cassette (New York: free103point9, 2003). Courtesy of the artist.
Industrial Fist, CD (New York: free103point9, 2003). Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Ron Amstutz.

45

8–4 9–5 10–6 11–7, CD (New York: Distributed History, 2007). Courtesy of the artist.
Akademische Graffiti, CD (New York: Distributed History, 2005). Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Ron Amstutz.

46

Akademische/Décor Holes, LP with screen-printed, hand-cut cover and booklet insert (New York: Reena Spaulings Fine Art, 2006).
Décor Holes, 2006, insert accompaniment to *Akademische/Décor Holes* LP (New York: Reena Spaulings Fine Art, 2006). Courtesy of the artist and Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York. Photography: Ron Amstutz.

46–47

Akademische/Décor Holes, LP with screen-printed, hand-cut cover and booklet insert (New York: Reena Spaulings Fine Art, 2006). Courtesy of the artist and Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York. Photography: Ron Amstutz.

48

For a Friend, photocopied booklet (New York: Reena Spaulings Fine Art; Los Angeles: Ooga Booga, 2009). Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Ron Amstutz.

48–49

Unique Source, untrimmed LP (New York: Reena Spaulings Fine Art, 2006), Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Ron Amstutz.

50

Untitled Multiple, 2004, altered downloaded jihadi-execution video file encoded on CD. Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Ron Amstutz.

52

Imaginary Self-Portrait/Industrial Culture, 2003, pen on paper, two parts, each 11 × 8 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Petzel Gallery, New York. Photography: Ron Amstutz.

54

Occult Cameo 2, 2001, marker on paper, 12 × 13 inches, Courtesy of the artist and Petzel Gallery, New York. Photography: Ron Amstutz.

55

How to Disappear in America (New York: Leopard Press, 2008; 1st ed.). Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Ron Amstutz.

56

How to Disappear in America (New York: Leopard Press, 2008; 3rd ed., 2015). Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Ron Amstutz.

57

How to Disappear in America (New York: Leopard Press, 2008; 2nd ed., 2011). Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Ron Amstutz.

60

Title Variable, 2001–, framed CDs, text on board, free CDs bootlegged by Daniel Baumann, dimensions variable, installed at Kunsthalle Basel, 2004. Photography: Seth Price.

61

Title Variable, 2001–, essay on paper, dimensions variable, installed at the Modern Institute, Glasgow, 2008.

62

Books Are Weapons, 2003, pen and graphite on paper, 11 × 14 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Petzel Gallery, New York. Photography: Ron Amstutz.

63

Study for a Christian Novel, 2001–2, pen, graphite, and tape on paper, 24 × 18 inches. Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Ron Amstutz.

64

Screen grab of distributedhistory.com/sindex.htm, from *Distributed History*, 2002–.

65

Screen grab of distributedhistory.com/interview.htm, from *Distributed History*, 2002–.

66

Screen grab of distributedhistory.com/Probably%20Future.htm, from *Distributed History*, 2002–.

67–81

Dispersion, 2002–, PDF.

82

Dispersion (New York: 38th Street Publishers, 2008; repr.). Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Ron Amstutz.

83

Iron Curtain Girl, CD (New York: Distributed History, 2002). Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Ron Amstutz.

84

Screen grab of distributedhistory.com/ironcurtaingirl.htm, from *Distributed History*, 2002–.

85

Iron Curtain Girl, 2002, arranged by Fia Backström at *Lesser New York*, Fia Backström Productions, New York, 2005. Photography: Seth Price.

88

Digital Video Effect: “Holes”, 2003, TV/DVD player in its original packaging, DVD, dimensions variable, installed at *Seth Price*, Kunsthalle Zürich, 2008. Courtesy Sammlung Goetz, Munich. Photography: Seth Price.

Still from *Digital Video Effect: “Holes”*, 2003, video, 7:25 min., color, sound.

88–91

Stills from *Digital Video Effect: “Holes”*, 2003, video, 7:25 min., color, sound.

92

Mirror/Cemetery/Theme Park/Archive, photocopy on paper, 2004, 36 × 26.5 inches, installed at *Archives Generations Upon*, curated by Wade Guyton, Year, New York, 2004. Courtesy of the artist.
Emotional Life, photocopy on paper, 2004, 41 × 26 inches, installed at *Archives Generations Upon*, curated by Wade Guyton, Year, New York, 2004. Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Seth Price.

93

Poems (Paris: Onestar Press, 2004). Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Ron Amstutz.

94

Calendar Study: The Road Ahead, 2003, ink-jet on paper, 19 × 13 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris. Photography: Ron Amstutz.

95

Confusion of Landscape and Portraiture, 2003, collage with magazine, vinyl, pen, and charcoal on paper, 18 × 23.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Petzel Gallery, New York.
CGI Face Study, 2004, collage with pen, graphite, and ink-jet on paper, 18.5 × 23.5 inches. Kadre Family Collection. Photography: Ron Amstutz.

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96	<div></div> <div><i>Eva in Ray Tracing</i>, 2003, enamel on ink-jet print, 19 × 13 inches. Private collection. Photography: Ron Amstutz.</div>
97	<div></div> <div><i>Lee</i>, 2003, enamel paint marker on shrink-wrapped wooden palette, 15 × 29.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Petzel Gallery, New York. <p><i>Triple Lee</i>, 2003, enamel paint marker on shrink-wrapped wooden palette, 15 × 29.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Petzel Gallery, New York.</p> <i>Joan</i>, 2003, enamel paint marker on shrink-wrapped wooden palette, 15 × 29.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Petzel Gallery, New York. <i>Martha</i>, 2003, enamel paint marker on shrink-wrapped wooden palette, 15 × 29.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Petzel Gallery, New York. <i>Sherrie</i>, 2003, enamel paint marker on shrink-wrapped wooden palette, 15 × 29.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Petzel Gallery, New York. <i>Crossed-Out Lady</i>, 2003, enamel paint marker on shrink-wrapped wooden palette, 15 × 29.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Petzel Gallery, New York. Photography: Seth Price.</div>
98	<div></div> <div><i>TBA</i>, 2004, fifteen ink-jet prints, each 28.5 × 19.5 inches, installed at <i>So Few the Opportunities, So Many the Mistakes</i>, curated by Josh Smith, Champion Fine Art, New York, 2004. Photography: Seth Price.</div>
99	<div></div> <div><i>TBA</i>, 2004, twelve ink-jet prints on archival paper mounted on steel, each 18.5 × 19 inches, installed at <i>Last One on Is a Soft Jimmy</i>, curated by Kelley Walker, Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, 2004. Courtesy H.A.M. Holdings, Lagos. Photography: Ellen Wilson.</div>
100	<div></div> <div><i>NJS Drawing: Ricky Bell</i>, 2002, pen and colored pencil on paper, 14 × 11 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Petzel Gallery, New York. Photography: Ron Amstutz.</div>
103	<div></div> <div>Exhibition poster for <i>Seth Price</i> at Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, 2004, offset on paper, 12.5 × 17 inches. Photography: Ron Amstutz.</div>
104–7	<div></div> <div><i>Seth Price</i>, Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, 2004, installation views. Photography: Takahiro Imamura.</div>
108	<div></div> <div><i>Different Kinds of Art</i>, 2004, vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene, 48 × 34 inches, installed at <i>Seth Price</i>, Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, 2004. Photography: Seth Price.</div>
109	<div></div> <div><i>Digital Video Effect: “Spills”</i>, 2004, TV/DVD player in its original packaging, DVD, dimensions variable, installed at <i>Seth Price</i>, Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, 2004. Courtesy of the artist and Reena Spaulings Fine Art. Photography: Seth Price.</div>
110–11	<div></div> <div>Stills from <i>Digital Video Effect: “Spills”</i>, video, 2004, 11:57 min., color, sound.</div>
112	<div></div> <div><i>Untitled A</i>, 2004, archival ink-jet print laminated to safety glass, BEVA archival film, fifty to one hundred CDs containing altered downloaded jihadi-execution video files, spindles, 30 × 50 inches, installed at <i>Seth Price</i>, Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, 2004. Courtesy Josh Smith and Megan Lang, New York. Photography: Seth Price.</div>
113	<div></div> <div><i>Different Kinds of Art</i>, 2004, vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene, 50 × 30 inches, installed at <i>Seth Price</i>, Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, 2004. Courtesy Filiep Liebeert Collection, Belgium. Photography: Seth Price.</div>
114	<div></div> <div><i>Untitled D</i>, 2004, archival ink-jet print laminated to safety glass, BEVA archival film, fifty to one hundred CDs containing altered downloaded jihadi-execution video files, spindles, 50 × 30 inches, installed at <i>Seth Price</i>, Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, 2004. Courtesy Barbara and Howard Morse. Photography: Seth Price.</div>

115	<div></div> <div><i>Glass Meat Test</i>, 2004, C-print mounted to safety glass, hardware, 14 × 32 inches. Collection of Global Seed Bank Secondary Investments, Davos. Photography: Ron Amstutz. <p>Merch table with <i>Jihadist Title Screen T-Shirt</i>, <i>Untitled Multiple</i>, <i>Dispersion</i>, <i>Poems</i>, and <i>Video Game Soundtracks 1982–1987</i>, installed at <i>Seth Price</i>, Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, 2004. Photography: Seth Price.</p></div>
116	<div></div> <div><i>Different Kinds of Art</i>, 2004, vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene, 30 × 50 inches. Private collection, Moscow. Photography: Ron Amstutz.</div>
117	<div></div> <div><i>Different Kinds of Art</i>, 2004, vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene, cardboard, hardware, 54 × 30.5 inches, installed at <i>Images</i>, Fridericianum, Kassel, 2016. Private collection. Photography: Andrea Rossetti.</div>
118	<div></div> <div><i>Different Kinds of Art</i>, 2004, vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene, 50 × 30 inches. Courtesy John Kelsey.</div>
119	<div></div> <div><i>Vintage Bomber</i>, 2006, vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene, 54 × 32 inches. Private collection.</div>
120	<div></div> <div><i>Vintage Bomber</i>, 2005, vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene, 50 × 58 inches. Courtesy Ringier Collection, Switzerland.</div>
121	<div></div> <div><i>Vintage Bomber</i>, 2005, vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene, 50 × 30 inches. Private collection.</div>
122	<div></div> <div><i>Cheap Wall</i>, 2006, vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene, 48 × 32 inches. Courtesy Kim Heirston and Richard Evans, New York.</div>
123	<div></div> <div><i>Cheap Wall</i>, 2006, vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene with flocking, 20 × 16.5 inches. Private collection. Photography: Jason Mandella.</div>
124	<div></div> <div><i>Different Kinds of Art</i>, 2004, vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene, 48.5 × 34 inches. Courtesy the Human Fund, Abu Dhabi. Photography: Ron Amstutz.</div>
125	<div></div> <div><i>Artist Monogram</i>, 2005, high-impact polystyrene vacuum-formed over ropes, 56 × 30 inches. Private collection. Photography: Simon Vogel.</div>
126	<div></div> <div><i>Vintage Bomber/Peace</i> (detail), 2006, screen-print ink on vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene, 34 × 48 inches. Private collection. Photography: Larry Lamay.</div>
127	<div></div> <div><i>Floor Flower/Peace</i>, 2005, screen-print ink and spray enamel on vacuum-formed PETG (destroyed), dimensions unknown. Photography: Seth Price.</div>
128–29	<div></div> <div><i>Untitled</i>, 2006, vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene, two parts, each 50 × 34 inches. Astrup Fearnley Collection, Oslo, Norway. Photography: Larry Lamay.</div>
130–31	<div></div> <div><i>Untitled</i>, 2006, high-impact polystyrene vacuum-formed over knotted ropes, sixteen pieces, dimensions variable, installed at <i>Wade Guyton</i>, <i>Seth Price</i>, <i>Josh Smith</i>, <i>Kelley Walker</i>, Kunsthalle Zürich, 2006. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Gisele Capitain, Cologne. Photography: Simon Vogel.</div>
138	<div></div> <div><i>Untitled Multiple</i>, 2004, altered downloaded jihadi-execution video files encoded on compact discs, spindle, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Ron Amstutz.</div>

138–39	<div></div> <div><i>Hostage Video Still with Time Stamp</i>, 2005, screen-print ink on polyester film, grommets, dimensions variable, installed at <i>Grey Flags</i>, Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York, 2005. Courtesy Eleanor and Bobby Cayre, New York. Photography: Larry Lamay.</div>
140	<div></div> <div><i>Hostage Video Still with Time Stamp</i>, 2005, screen-print ink on polyester film, grommets, dimensions variable, installed at <i>Grey Flags</i>, Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York, 2005. Private collection, courtesy Petzel Gallery, New York.</div>
141	<div></div> <div><i>Hostage Video Still with Time Stamp</i>, 2008, screen-print ink on polyester film, grommets, dimensions variable. Courtesy Museum Brandhorst, Munich.</div>
142–43	<div></div> <div><i>Hostage Video Still with Time Stamp</i>, 2005, screen-print ink on polyester film, grommets, dimensions variable, installed at <i>Grey Flags</i>, Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York, 2005 (left), and in a private home (right). Private collection. Photography: Larry Lamay (left) and Howard Morse (right).</div>
144–45	<div></div> <div><i>Hostage Video Still with Time Stamp</i>, 2006, screen-print ink on polyester film, grommets, plinth, dimensions variable, installed at <i>Wade Guyton</i>, <i>Seth Price</i>, <i>Josh Smith</i>, <i>Kelley Walker</i>, Kunsthalle Zürich, 2006. Courtesy of the artist and Captain Petzel, Berlin.</div>
146	<div></div> <div><i>Seated Man with Standing Men</i>, 2005, screen-print ink on polyester film, grommets, dimensions variable, installed at <i>Make It Now: New Sculpture in New York</i>, SculptureCenter, New York, 2005. Courtesy of the artist and Captain Petzel, Berlin.</div>
147	<div></div> <div><i>Hostage Video Still with Time Stamp</i>, 2008, screen-print ink on polyester film, grommets, plinth, dimensions variable, installed at <i>Seth Price</i>, Kunsthalle Zürich, 2008. Courtesy of the artist and Captain Petzel, Berlin.</div>
148	<div></div> <div><i>Seated Man with Papers</i>, 2005, screen-print ink on polyester film, staples, dimensions variable, installed at <i>New York Twice</i>, Air de Paris, Paris, 2005. Courtesy of the artist and Petzel Gallery, New York.</div>
149	<div></div> <div><i>Hostage Video Still with Time Stamp</i>, 2008, screen-print ink on polyester film, grommets, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Gisela Capitain, Cologne. Photography: Simon Vogel.</div>
150–51	<div></div> <div><i>Seth Price</i>, <i>Kelley Walker</i>, <i>Continuous Project</i>, Modern Art Oxford, 2007, installation view.</div>
152	<div></div> <div><i>COPYRIGHT 2006 SETH PRICE</i>, 2006, single-channel video, 12:48 min., color, silent, installed at <i>Wade Guyton</i>, <i>Seth Price</i>, <i>Josh Smith</i>, <i>Kelley Walker</i>, Kunsthalle Zürich, 2006 (top), and Art Basel Miami Beach, 2009 (bottom). Courtesy of the artist and Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York. Photography: Joerg Lohse.</div>
153	<div></div> <div><i>Digital Video Effect: “Chords”</i>, 2007, portable media players, screen-print ink on glass, dimensions variable, installed at <i>Seth Price</i>, <i>Kelley Walker</i>, <i>Continuous Project</i>, Modern Art Oxford, 2007. Courtesy of the artist and Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York.</div>
154–55	<div></div> <div>Stills from <i>COPYRIGHT 2006 SETH PRICE</i>, 2006, single-channel video, 12:48 min., color, silent.</div>
156	<div></div> <div>Edition of <i>Digital Video Effect: “Editions”</i>, 2006, single-channel video, 11:05 min., color, sound (Oxford: Modern Art Oxford, 2007). Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Ron Amstutz.</div>
157	<div></div> <div>Exhibition poster for <i>Seth Price</i> at Reena Spaulings Gallery, Friedrich Petzel Gallery, and Electronic Arts Intermix, New York, 2006, offset on paper, 24 × 18 inches, Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Ron Amstutz.</div>

158–59	<div></div> <div><i>Seth Price</i>, Friedrich Petzel Gallery, 2006, installation views.</div>
160–61	<div></div> <div><i>Addresses: http://Archive.liveauctioneers.com/archive3/Hermann-historica/9099/0167_1_md.jpg</i>, 2006, etching and oil monoprnt on Arches paper, 44.5 × 30 inches. Private collection. <p><i>Addresses: http://Musicweb.uk.net/SandH/2005/Jan-Jun05/DavidGoliath400.jpg</i>, 2006, etching and oil monoprnt on Arches paper, 44.5 × 30 inches. Private collection.</p> <i>Addresses: http://art-perfect.de/Caravaggio/carav_david_goliath_grt.jpg</i>, 2006, etching and oil monoprnt on Arches paper, 44.5 × 30 inches. Private collection. <i>Addresses: http://www1.fccj.edu/cgroves/photogallery/photo28079/caravaggio-da-vid%20w%20head%20of%20goliath.jpg</i>, 2006, etching and oil monoprnt on Arches paper, 44.5 × 30 inches. Private collection. <i>Addresses: 69.20.65.141/paintings/artists/c/Caravaggio_Michelangelo_Merisi_da/oil-big/David.jpg</i>, 2006, etching and oil monoprnt on Arches paper, 44.5 × 30 inches. Private collection. <i>Addresses: http://Tslpl.org/images/David.jpg</i>, 2006, etching and oil monoprnt on Arches paper, 44.5 × 30 inches. Private collection. <i>Addresses: http://Academics.uvw.edu/wota/imagebank/030.jpg</i>, 2006, etching and oil monoprnt on Arches paper, 44.5 × 30 inches. Private collection. <i>Addresses: http://Fineartimaging.com/include/images/thumbnails/400/CAR26.jpg</i>, 2006, etching and oil monoprnt on Arches paper, 44.5 × 30 inches. Private collection. <i>Addresses: http://Stevenboone.com/images/Europe/rome/carravagio.jpg</i>, 2006, etching and oil monoprnt on Arches paper, 44.5 × 30 inches. Private collection. <i>Addresses: http://Hispanart.com/ciudadanoarte/cinco/imagines/Caravaggio_davidborghese.jpg</i>, 2006, etching and oil monoprnt on Arches paper, 44.5 × 30 inches. Private collection.</div>
162–63	<div></div> <div>Frames from <i>Untitled Film/Right</i>, 2006, 16-mm film, 11:36 min., color, silent.</div>
164–67	<div></div> <div>Stills from <i>Industrial Synth</i>, 2000, single-channel video, 16:37 min., color, sound. Courtesy of the artist and Electronic Arts Intermix, New York.</div>
168	<div></div> <div>Still from <i>Romance</i>, 2003, single-channel video, 32 min., color, silent. Courtesy Electronic Arts Intermix, New York.</div>
168–69	<div></div> <div>Still from <i>Rejected or Unused Clips, Arranged in Order of Importance</i>, 2003, single-channel video, 10:38 min., color, sound. Courtesy Electronic Arts Intermix, New York.</div>
170	<div></div> <div>Still from <i>Triumf (Raw Version)</i>, 2000, single-channel video, 60 min., color, sound. Courtesy of the artist.</div>
171	<div></div> <div><i>Digital Video Effect: “Holes”</i>, 2003, TV/DVD player in its original packaging, DVD, dimensions variable, installed in a private home. Collection of Karen and Andy Stillpass. Photography: Seth Price <p><i>Digital Video Effect: “Editions”</i>, 2006, single-channel video, 11:05 min., color, sound, installed at 9th Biennale de Lyon, 2007.</p></div>
172	<div></div> <div><i>Notes on This Show</i> (self-published, 2006). Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Ron Amstutz.</div>
173	<div></div> <div>Still from <i>Redistribution</i>, 2007–, single-channel video, length variable (currently 44:15 min.), color, sound. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Isabella Bortolozzi, Berlin.</div>
177	<div></div> <div><i>Untitled</i>, 2006, screen-print ink on polyester film, grommets (destroyed), dimensions unknown. Photography: Seth Price.</div>
178–79	<div></div> <div><i>Wade Guyton</i>, <i>Seth Price</i>, <i>Josh Smith</i>, <i>Kelley Walker</i>, Kunsthalle Zürich, 2006, installation view. Private collection.</div>
180	<div></div> <div><i>Nailed to the Wall</i>, 2006, screen-print ink on plastic bag, 58.5 × 36 inches. Private collection. Photography: Simon Vogel.</div>

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181
<div><i>Double Hunt</i>, 2006, screen-print ink on PETG, hardware, 48 × 24 inches, installed at <i>Images</i>, Fridericianum, Kassel, 2016. Collection of Stéphane Ribordy.</div>
<div>182<div><i>Untitled</i>, 2008, UV-cured ink-jet on aluminum composite, 67.5 × 67.5 inches. Private collection. Photography: Larry Lamay.</div></div>
<div>183<div><i>Untitled</i>, 2008, spray enamel on aluminum composite, 49 × 24.5 inches. Private collection. Photography: Larry Lamay.</div></div>
<div>184<div><i>Older Couple</i>, 2009, spray enamel on aluminum composite, 55 × 29 inches. Private collection, courtesy of Petzel Gallery, New York. Photography: Ron Amstutz.</div></div>
<div>185<div><i>Untitled</i>, 2013, UV-cured ink-jet on aluminum composite, 67.5 × 67.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Petzel Gallery, New York. Photography: Jason Mandella.</div></div>
<div>186<div><i>Untitled</i>, 2016, screen-print ink, pigmented acrylic polymer, and UV-cured ink-jet on aluminum composite in artist's frame, 68 × 68 inches. Photography: Ron Amstutz.</div></div>
<div>187<div><i>Untitled</i>, 2016, UV-cured ink-jet on aluminum composite, 67.5 × 67.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Petzel Gallery, New York. Photography: Jason Mandella.</div></div>
<div>188<div><i>Parlor Trick</i>, 2007, ink-jet, water, and pen on paper, 11 × 8.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris. Photography: Ron Amstutz.</div></div>
<div>188–89<div><i>Untitled</i>, 2007, UV-cured ink-jet on foil on aluminum composite, 103 × 146.5 inches, installed at <i>Seth Price, Kelley Walker, Continuous Project</i>, Modern Art Oxford, 2007. Courtesy Stoltizka Collection, Graz. Photography: Larry Lamay.</div></div>
<div>190<div><i>Marriage Stencil</i>, 2008, spray enamel on aluminum composite, 68 × 42 inches. Private collection. Photography: Larry Lamay.</div></div>
<div>191<div><i>Untitled</i>, 2008, UV-cured ink-jet on aluminum composite, 45.5 × 45.5 inches, installed at <i>Seth Price</i>, Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York, 2008. Courtesy Warren and Allison Kanders, New York. Photography: Larry Lamay.</div></div>
<div>192–93<div><i>Seth Price</i>, Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York, 2008, installation view. Photography: Larry Lamay.</div></div>
<div>194–95<div><i>Untitled Map</i>, 2008, burled Carpathian elm, burled olive ash, and burled walnut laminated to acrylic, 65 × 230 inches, installed at <i>Altermodern</i>, 4th Tate Triennial, Tate Britain, London, 2009. Private collection, Vladivostok. Photography: Sam Drake, Tate Britain, London.</div></div>
<div>195<div><i>Untitled</i>, 2008, pencil and charcoal on paper, 18 × 24 inches. Courtesy Museum Brandhorst, Munich. Photography: Larry Lamay.</div></div>
<div>196<div><i>Writing/Feeding</i>, 2008, olive ash and Vavona redwood laminated to acrylic, UV-cured ink-jet on aluminum composite, 139.5 × 67 inches, installed at <i>Seth Price</i>, Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York, 2008. Courtesy Sammlung Sander/The Sander Collection. Photography: Larry Lamay.</div></div>
<div>197<div><i>Untitled</i>, 2008, Imbuia, burled cherry, and burled Carpathian elm laminated to acrylic, 139.5 × 67 inches, installed at <i>Seth Price</i>, Kunsthalle Zürich, 2008. Collection of Maja Hoffman. Photography: Larry Lamay.</div></div>
<div>198<div><i>Secret</i>, 2009, burled camphor laminated to acrylic, 62.5 × 54 inches. Courtesy of Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris. Photography: Nick Ash.</div></div>

199
<div><i>Lighting/Machine Waste</i>, 2008, routed MDF panel, 96 × 48 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Captain Petzel, Berlin. Photography: Simon Vogel.</div>
<div>202–3<div><i>Untitled</i>, 2008, four relief prints on monoprint on Arches paper, polyester film, each 30 × 44.5 inches, installed at <i>Seth Price</i>, Kunsthalle Zürich, 2008. Courtesy of the artist and Captain Petzel, Berlin.</div></div>
<div>204–7<div><i>Seth Price</i>, Kunsthalle Zürich, 2008, installation views.</div></div>
<div>208–9<div><i>Untitled</i>, 2008, vacuum-formed polystyrene, two parts, each 96 × 48 inches. Private collection.</div></div>
<div>210<div><i>Wooden Structure</i>, 2008, vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene, grommet, 96 × 48 inches. Private collection, Azerbaijan. Photography: Larry Lamay.</div></div>
<div>211<div><i>Vintage Bomber</i>, 2008, urethane automotive paint on vacuum-formed PETG, 96 × 48 inches. Private collection. Photography: Larry Lamay.</div></div>
<div>212<div><i>Vintage Bomber</i> (detail), 2009, synthetic enamel on vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene, 96 × 48 inches. Courtesy Edoardo Gnemmi, Milan. Photography: Nick Ash.</div></div>
<div>213<div><i>Vintage Bomber</i>, 2008, urethane automotive paint on vacuum-formed PETG, 96 × 48 inches. Courtesy Edoardo Gnemmi, Milan. Photography: Larry Lamay.</div></div>
<div>214<div><i>Inorganic Play</i>, 2008, ink-jet on protective film on acrylic, two parts, each 47.5 × 92 inches, installed at <i>Seth Price</i>, Kunsthalle Zürich, 2008. Courtesy Ringier Collection, Switzerland.</div></div>
<div>215<div><i>Twine</i>, 2008, ink-jet on protective film on acrylic, two parts, each 92 × 47.5 inches. Private collection.</div></div>
<div>216–19<div><i>Seth Price</i>, Kunsthalle Zürich, 2008, installation views. Photography: Stefan Altenburger.</div></div>
<div>220–21<div><i>Essay with Knots</i>, 2008, screen-print ink on high-impact polystyrene and PETG vacuum-formed over rope knots, nine pieces (eight shown here), each 48 × 96 inches, installed at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2014. Courtesy Museum of Modern Art, New York. Photography: Ron Amstutz.</div></div>
<div>222–23<div><i>Seth Price</i>, Kunsthalle Zürich, 2008, installation view. Photography: Stefan Altenburger.</div></div>
<div>224–25<div>Still from <i>Redistribution</i>, 2007–, single-channel video, length variable (currently 44:15 min.), color, sound, installed at <i>Seth Price</i>, Kunsthalle Zürich, 2008.</div></div>
<div>226–29<div>Stills from <i>Redistribution</i>, 2007–, single-channel video, length variable (currently 44:15 min.), color, sound.</div></div>
<div>230<div><i>Business Envelope</i>, 2008, UV-cured ink-jet on protective film over iridescent mirrored acrylic, 48 x 96 inches. Private collection. Photography: Stefan Altenburger.</div></div>
<div>245<div><i>calendar_cowsz.tif</i>, 2004, ink-jet on paper, 19 × 13 inches, installed at Greater New York, P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center, New York, 2015. Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Ron Amstutz.</div></div>
<div>246–47<div><i>Seth Price</i>, Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne, 2008, installation view. Photography: Seth Price.</div></div>

248
<div><i>Big Pink Screw</i>, 2004, ink-jet on canvas, 41.5 × 29 inches. Collection of Leonard and Nancy Amoroso. Photography: Farzad Owrang.</div>
<div>249<div><i>Gray Drought</i>, 2004, ink-jet on canvas, 42 × 29 inches. Courtesy Museum Brandhorst, Munich. Photography: Farzad Owrang.</div></div>
<div>250<div><i>Pea Green Station</i>, 2004, ink-jet on canvas, 46 × 30 inches. Courtesy Museum Brandhorst, Munich. Photography: Farzad Owrang.</div></div>
<div>251<div><i>Black Comps</i>, 2003, ink-jet on canvas, 40.5 × 26.5 inches. Collection of Marielle and Jack K. Cayre, New York. Photography: Farzad Owrang.</div></div>
<div>252–53<div><i>Seth Price</i>, Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne, 2008, installation view. Photography: Simon Vogel.</div></div>
<div>254<div><i>3B Bubble House</i>, 2004, ink-jet on canvas, 38 × 26 inches. Courtesy Sammlung Goetz, Munich. Photography: Larry Lamay.</div></div>
<div>255<div><i>Cheap Wall</i> (detail), 2006, vacuum-formed PETG, 47 × 32 inches. Photography: Seth Price.</div></div>
<div>256–59<div><i>Seth Price</i>, Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, 2009, installation views. Photography: Farzad Owrang.</div></div>
<div>260<div><i>Crenellation Screen</i>, 2006, screen-print ink on vacuum-formed high-impact polystyrene, 55 × 34 inches. Private collection. Photography: Lothar Schnepf.</div></div>
<div>261<div><i>Arm Blueprint</i>, 2004, ink-jet on canvas, 42 × 29 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Captain Petzel, Berlin. Photography: Farzad Owrang.</div></div>
<div>262<div><i>Untitled</i>, 2008, automotive urethane on vacuum-formed high-impact PETG, 96 x 48 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Petzel Gallery, New York. Photography: Larry Lamay.</div></div>
<div>263<div><i>Seth Price</i>, Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna, 2009, installation view. <i>Teen Image</i>, photocopied booklet (self-published, 2009). Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Ron Amstutz.</div></div>
<div>264<div><i>Untitled</i>, 2007, lacewood and Brazilian rosewood laminated to acrylic, 26 × 46.5 inches. Kevin Bruk, New York.</div></div>
<div>266<div><i>Fuck Seth Price: A Novel</i> (New York: Leopard Press, 2015; 2nd ed., 2016). Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Ron Amstutz.</div></div>
<div>269<div><i>Folklore U.S.</i> SS12 fashion show, staged during the opening of dOCUMENTA (13), Kassel, 2012. Photography: Leon Reindl.</div></div>
<div>271<div><i>Sketch for Twee Mascot</i>, 2015, ink on paper, 8.5 × 11 inches. Private collection, Azerbaijan.</div></div>
<div>273<div><i>Waste Pipe</i>, 2016, printed vinyl on PVC pipe, dimensions variable, piercing rooftop at <i>Wrok Fmaily Freidns</i>, 356 S. Mission Rd., Los Angeles, 2016. Photography: Brica Wilcox.</div></div>
<div>274–75<div><i>Affairs</i> (detail), 2009, printer's ink and screen-print ink on aluminum composite, five parts, each 22.5 × 43.5 inches, installed at <i>Die Nuller Jahre</i>, Galerie Isabella Bortolozzi, Berlin, 2010. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Isabella Bortolozzi, Berlin. Photography: Nick Ash</div></div>

276–77
<div><i>Die Nuller Jahre</i>, Captain Petzel, Berlin, 2010, installation views. Photography: Roman März.</div>
<div>278<div><i>Important Chair</i> (detail), 2009, enamel and UV-cured ink-jet on high-impact polystyrene vacuum-formed over knotted rope, 96 × 48 inches. Courtesy Isabel Ernst. Photography: Roman März.</div></div>
<div>279<div><i>Harsh Way of Life</i>, 2009, UV-cured ink-jet on vacuum-formed high impact polystyrene, 96 × 48 inches. Private collection. Photography: Roman März.</div></div>
<div>280<div><i>Noodles</i>, 2011, acrylic, enamel, tinted resin, and UV-cured ink-jet on PETG vacuum-formed over knotted rope, foam, aluminum, 46.5 × 45.5 inches. Private collection, Germany. Photography: Simon Vogel.</div></div>
<div>281<div><i>Lux Retreat</i>, 2011, acrylic, enamel, tinted resin, and UV-cured ink-jet on PETG vacuum-formed over knotted rope, foam, aluminum, 46.5 × 45.5 inches. Courtesy Ringier Collection, Switzerland. Photography: Simon Vogel.</div></div>
<div>282<div><i>Untitled Yum</i>, 2011, tinted resin and UV-cured ink-jet on PETG vacuum-formed over knotted rope, foam, aluminum, 45.5 × 46.5 inches. Courtesy Ringier Collection, Switzerland. Photography: Simon Vogel.</div></div>
<div>283<div><i>Kissing and/or Mouth Full</i>, 2010, tinted resin and UV-cured ink-jet on PETG vacuum-formed over knotted rope, foam, aluminum, 46.4 × 44.5 inches. Courtesy Holly and Albert Baril, Los Angeles. Photography: Larry Lamay.</div></div>
<div>284<div><i>Yum, We Prefer Questions to Answers</i>, 2010, UV-cured ink-jet on high-impact polystyrene vacuum-formed over knotted rope, 45.5 × 46.5 inches. Stoltizka Collection, Graz. Photography: Simon Vogel.</div></div>
<div>285<div><i>Untitled</i>, 2009, high-impact polystyrene vacuum-formed over knotted rope, 96 × 48 inches. Private collection, Singapore. Photography: Ron Amstutz.</div></div>
<div>286<div><i>Form Blush</i>, 2012, UV-cured ink-jet on PETG vacuum-formed over knotted rope, aluminum, 46.5 × 44.5 inches. Private collection, Wuhan. Photography: Ron Amstutz.</div></div>
<div>287<div><i>Untitled</i>, 2009, tinted resin and UV-cured ink-jet on PETG vacuum-formed over knotted rope, routed foam, aluminum, 96 × 48 inches. Private Collection.</div></div>
<div>288<div><i>Folklore U.S.</i>, Petzel Gallery, New York, 2012, installation view. Photography: Larry Lamay <i>Untitled</i>, 2011, enamel on Yves Saint Laurent handbag, 11 × 14.5 × 5 inches. Photography: Florian Kleinfenn.</div></div>
<div>288–89<div><i>"Business Envelope" Wrapped Candy Bar</i>, 2012, acrylic, enamel, tinted resin, and UV-cured ink-jet on PETG vacuum-formed over knotted rope, printed foam, aluminum, 48 × 96 inches. Private collection, Chengdu. Photography: Ron Amstutz.</div></div>
<div>292<div><i>Standard Household Set</i> (detail), 2011, UV-cured ink-jet on aluminum composite, five pieces, each 6 × 9.5 inches. Courtesy Daesh Shell Investment Trust, Lahore.</div></div>
<div>293<div><i>Non Speech, Fire & Smoke</i>, Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York, 2011, installation view. Photography: Seth Price.</div></div>
<div>294–95<div><i>Lookin' Bak</i>, 2012, online music video for "Lookin' Bak," 2001, 2:50 min., color, sound, youtube.com/watch?v=pQ4JmpWmQKc.</div></div>

EXTENDED CAPTIONS

296–97
<i>Sickly Air/Dying Air</i> , 2012, online music video for “Sickly Air/Dying Air,” 2003, 4:31 min., color, sound, youtube.com/watch?v=IsNDY5U1ScU.
298–99
<i>Honesty</i> , LP (New York: Audio Visual Arts, 2011). Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Ron Amstutz.
299
<i>Army Jacket</i> , CD (New York: Distributed History, 2009). Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Ron Amstutz.
300–301
<i>Army Jacket</i> , LP (New York: Dais Records, 2012). Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Ron Amstutz.
301
<i>Seth Price Fashion</i> , CD (New York: Distributed History, 2011). Courtesy of the artist. <i>Folklore U.S.</i> , CD (New York: Distributed History, 2012). Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Ron Amstutz.
304–5
<i>Folklore U.S.</i> SS12 garment collection in SinnLeffers department-store window, dOCUMENTA (13), Kassel, 2012. Photography: Henrik Strömberg.
306–7
<i>Folklore U.S.</i> SS12 fashion show, staged during the opening of dOCUMENTA (13), Kassel, 2012. Photography: Henrik Strömberg.
308
<i>Folklore U.S.</i> SS12 garment collection for sale in SinnLeffers department store, dOCUMENTA (13), Kassel, 2012. Photography: Seth Price.
309
<i>Folklore U.S.</i> , 2012, canvas, printed cotton, zippers, buckles, screen-print ink, and synthetic polymer on plywood, 95.5 × 48 inches (canvas), 81 × 48 inches (plywood), overall dimensions variable. Museum of Modern Art, New York. Photography: Ron Amstutz.
310
Looks from <i>Folklore U.S.</i> SS12 line: Bomber Jacket, Infantry Poncho, Field Gaiter, Paratrooper Pants, Officer’s Trench, Batwing Sniper Jacket, and Flight Suit. Garments designed in collaboration with Tim Hamilton; looks styled by William Graper. Photographer: Leon Reindl.
311
<i>Container for Virus Pattern plus Handmade Pattern</i> , 2013, blackened-cork facing, neo-prene shell, printed charmeuse liner, screen-printed Tyvek center panel, double-headed zippers, zipper tape, covered snaps, grommets, buckles, etc., 23 × 50 inches, Dorothea Jendricke and Alastair Cookson. Photography: Joerg Lohse.
312–13
<i>Folklore U.S.</i> , dOCUMENTA (13), Kassel, 2012, installation view. Photography: Henrik Strömberg.
314–15
<i>Jumpsuit with Decorative Security</i> , 2012, canvas, printed liner, buckles, straps, drawstrings, etc., 95.5 × 48.5 inches. Courtesy VoltanAlloy GmbH, Hamburg. Photography: Henrik Strömberg.
316
<i>Untitled</i> , 2013–15, screen-print ink, acrylic, and pigmented acrylic polymer on plywood, 51.5 × 41 inches. Courtesy Museum Brandhorst, Munich. Photography: Jason Mandella.
317
<i>Black Letter with Company</i> , 2012, screen-print ink, gesso, acrylic, enamel, and acrylic polymer on plywood, 42 × 59 inches. Private collection. Photography: Henrik Strömberg.
318–19
<i>Virus Pattern with Revelers Bag</i> , 2012, canvas, printed charmeuse liners, zipper, buckles, straps, charm, etc., 48 × 95.5 inches. Courtesy Tony and Elham Salamé-Aishti Doundatio, Beirut. Photography: Larry Lamay.

320
<i>Youth Culture Bag</i> , 2012, canvas, printed cotton liners, buckles, zippers, snaps, charm, etc., 48 × 95.5 inches. Courtesy Ringier Collection, Switzerland. Photography: Jason Mandella.
321
<i>Double Pattern Bag with Charm</i> (detail), 2012, canvas, printed cotton liner, zippers, buckles, straps, charm, etc., 48 × 95.5 inches. Photography: Seth Price. <i>Federal Print Bag</i> (detail), 2012, canvas, printed charmeuse liner, zippers, buckles, straps, charm, etc., 48 × 95.5 inches. Courtesy Candy and Michael Barasch, New York. Photography: Seth Price. <i>Virus Pattern with Revelers Bag</i> (detail), 2012, canvas, printed charmeuse liner, zippers, buckles, straps, charm, etc., 48 × 95.5 inches. Private collection. Photography: Seth Price. <i>Rotating Sawtooth Pattern Bag</i> (detail), 2012, canvas, printed charmeuse liner, zippers, buckles, straps, charm, etc., 48 × 95.5 inches. Courtesy Lena and Per Josefsson, Sweden. Photography: Kat Parker.
322
<i>Youth Culture</i> , 2014, screen-print ink, gesso, and acrylic polymer on plywood, 96 × 48 inches, installed at <i>Seth Price</i> , Eden Eden, Berlin, 2014. Courtesy Giancarlo and Danna Oliati Collection, long-term loan to Spazio-1, Lugano. Photography: Nick Ash.
323
<i>Design as a Spray of Surfer’s Cum on the Waves</i> , 2013, screen-print ink, acrylic, pigmented acrylic polymer, and gesso on plywood, 40 × 39 inches. Private collection, Tianjin. Photography: Ron Amstutz.
324
<i>Black Letter</i> , 2012, screen-print ink, gesso, and acrylic polymer on plywood, 58 × 37 inches. Private collection, Ubud. Photography: Henrik Strömberg.
325
<i>Letter from Inside/Out</i> , 2014, screen-print ink, pigmented acrylic polymer, and gesso on plywood, 40 × 40 inches. Collection of Thorsten Koch, Berlin. Photography: Nick Ash.
326–27
<i>Container for Virus Pattern plus Abstract Pattern</i> , 2013, blackened cork facing, Kevlar-mesh shell, printed charmeuse liner, screen-printed Tyvek center panel, double-headed zippers, etc., 80 × 55 inches, and <i>Nothingness as a Big Head</i> , 2013, screen-print ink, acrylic polymer, and gesso on plywood, 71 × 43 inches, installed at <i>Steh Pirce</i> , Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, 2013. Collection of Paul Ettlinger and Raimund Berthold, London (<i>Container for Virus Pattern plus Abstract Pattern</i>), and Collection of Danny and Lisa Goldberg, Sydney (<i>Nothingness as a Big Head</i>). Photography: Joerg Lohse.
328
<i>Subsurface Scatter Calendar</i> , 2014, screen-print ink, polyester resin, pigmented acrylic polymer, and gesso on plywood, 72 × 47 inches. Courtesy Josef Dalle Nogare. Photography: Ron Amstutz.
329
<i>Medium</i> , 2014, screen-print ink, acrylic, pigmented acrylic polymer, and gesso on plywood, 54.5 × 45.5 inches. Private collection. Photography: Ron Amstutz.
330–31
<i>Compatibility Mode</i> , 2014, screen-print ink, acrylic, pigmented acrylic polymer, and gesso on plywood, 47.5 × 83.5 inches. Collection of E. Gutzwiller & Cie., Banquiers, Basel. Photography: Ron Amstutz.
335
<i>Fuck Seth Price: A Novel</i> (New York: Leopard Press, 2015; 1st ed.). Courtesy of the artist. Photography: Ron Amstutz.
336–37
Screen grabs from <i>Organic Software</i> , 2015, a web application located at http://organic .software, with 4,149 unique profiles and associated data. Written in Ruby 2.2.2 using Sinatra 1.4.6, with a MySQL database for user comments and auction data. View templates written in ERB; styles written in SASS. Hosted on an Amazon EC2 instance running Ubuntu 14.04. Web server: Apache 2 with Phusion Passenger.

338
<i>Pencil Render</i> , 2015, digital file.
341
<i>SOLWCOOK</i> , 2016, found PVC print waste from commercial imaging facility mounted on aluminum composite, 48 × 52 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Petzel Gallery, New York. Photography: Brica Wilcox.
342
<i>Wrok Fmaily Freidns</i> , 356 S. Mission Rd., Los Angeles, 2016, installation view. Courtesy of the artist and 356 S. Mission Rd., Los Angeles. Photography: Brica Wilcox.
344–45
Screen grab from <i>Organic Software</i> , 2015, a web application located at http://organic .software, with 4,149 unique profiles and associated data. Written in Ruby 2.2.2 using Sinatra 1.4.6, with a MySQL database for user comments and auction data. View templates written in ERB; styles written in SASS. Hosted on an Amazon EC2 instance running Ubuntu 14.04. Web server: Apache 2 with Phusion Passenger.
346
<i>Waste Piping</i> , 2016, printed vinyl on PVC pipes, cart, 40.5 × 29 × 72 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Petzel Gallery, New York. Photography: Brica Wilcox.
347
<i>Skin Color Test Scrap</i> , 2015, UV-cured ink-jet, screen-print ink, acrylic, enamel, and pigmented synthetic polymer on board, 28.5 × 23 inches. Private collection, Fairbanks. Photography: Ron Amstutz.
348
<i>Street Style Print Test</i> , 2015, oil print, acrylic, screen-print ink, and pigmented synthetic polymer on plywood, 56 × 41 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Petzel Gallery, New York. Photography: Ron Amstutz.
349
<i>Socioshaman</i> , 2016, oil print, acrylic, polyurethane, and pigmented synthetic polymer on plywood, 57.5 × 48 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Petzel Gallery, New York. Photography: Ron Amstutz.
350–51
<i>Wrok Fmaily Freidns</i> , 356 S. Mission Rd., Los Angeles, 2016, installation view. Courtesy of the artist and 356 S. Mission Rd., Los Angeles. Photography: Brica Wilcox.
352–53
<i>Mascot Waste</i> , 2015, CNC-routed aluminum, 36.5 × 72 × 43 inches, installed at <i>Wrok Fmaily Freidns</i> , 356 S. Mission Rd., Los Angeles, 2016. Courtesy of the artist and 356 S. Mission Rd., Los Angeles. Photography: Brica Wilcox.
354–55
<i>Danny</i> , 2015, dye-sublimation print on synthetic fabric, aluminum, LED matrix, 58 × 223 inches, installed at <i>Wrok Fmaily Freidns</i> , 356 S. Mission Rd., Los Angeles, 2016. Private collection. Photography: Brica Wilcox.
356
<i>Synthetic Piracy</i> , 2015, ink transfer on polycarbonate, baked enamel on CNC-routed aluminum, 11 × 9 × 5 inches. Private collection, Tashkent. Photography: Ron Amstutz.
358
<i>Untitled</i> , 2015–16, gouache and dye-sublimation print on synthetic fabric, aluminum, LED matrix, 60 × 48 inches. Private collection, Dhaka. Photography: Ron Amstutz.
360–61
<i>Ariana</i> , 2015, dye-sublimation print on synthetic fabric, aluminum, LED matrix, 58 × 178 inches, installed at <i>Wrok Fmaily Freidns</i> , 356 S. Mission Rd., Los Angeles, 2016. Private collection. Photography: Brica Wilcox.
363
Still from <i>Social Synth</i> , 2017, single-channel video, 13:53 min., color, silent. Courtesy of the artist and Petzel Gallery, New York.

364
<i>Folded Heart on a Table</i> , 2016, UV-cured print on anodized CNC-routed aluminum, 54 × 43 × 32 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Isabella Bortolozzi, Berlin. Photography: Ron Amstutz.
366–67
<i>Exploded Dry Erase Board with Pieces</i> , 2015, UV-cured prints, screen prints, pigmented synthetic polymer, aluminum composite, plywood, dimensions variable, installed at <i>Wrok Fmaily Freidns</i> , 356 S. Mission Rd., Los Angeles, 2016. Courtesy of the artist; 356 S. Mission Rd., Los Angeles; and Petzel Gallery, New York. Photography: Brica Wilcox.
368
<i>Untitled</i> , 2016, UV-cured ink-jet and synthetic polymer on wood-fiber veneer in artist’s frame, 61 × 61 inches. Courtesy Kemper Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri. Photography: Ron Amstutz
369
<i>Untitled</i> , 2016, UV-cured print and synthetic polymer on plywood, 60 × 60 inches. Courtesy Galidium Synthetic Futures Fund, Frankfurt. Photography: Ron Amstutz.
370–71
<i>Brad</i> , 2015, dye-sublimation print on synthetic fabric, aluminum, LED matrix, 58 × 146 inches, installed at <i>Wrok Fmaily Freidns</i> , 356 S. Mission Rd., Los Angeles, 2016. Courtesy of the artist and Petzel Gallery, New York. Photography: Brica Wilcox.
372–73
<i>Disidentified Multinational</i> , 2015, UV-cured print on wood-fiber veneer, walnut artist’s frame, 61 × 121 inches, installed at <i>Wrok Fmaily Freidns</i> , 356 S. Mission Rd., Los Angeles, 2016. Courtesy of the artist and Petzel Gallery, New York. Photography: Brica Wilcox.
374–75
<i>Print Waste</i> , 2016, printed vinyl wrapped around found PVC print waste from commercial imaging facility, wooden pallet, straps, 53 × 116 × 5 inches, installed at <i>Wrok Fmaily Freidns</i> , 356 S. Mission Rd., Los Angeles, 2016. Courtesy Maurice Marciano Foundation. Photography: Brica Wilcox.
376–77
<i>Untitled</i> , 2017, UV-cured ink-jet on polymer emulsion, printed and embossed aluminum, synthetic polymer, wood, 48 × 96 inches. Courtesy IX G Seasteading Capital, Pacific Ocean. Photography: Ron Amstutz.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2017
Social Synthetic, Museum Brandhorst, Munich
Social Synthetic, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, Amsterdam
- 2016
Wrok Fmaily Freidns, 356 S. Mission Rd., Los Angeles
- 2015
Drawings: Studies for Works 2000–2015, Petzel Gallery, New York
- 2014
Animation Studio, Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris
Eden Eden, Berlin
- 2013
Galerie Gisela Capitain, Cologne
Steh Pirce, Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York
- 2012
Folklore U.S., Petzel Gallery, New York
- 2011
Miami!, Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris
Non Speech, Fire & Smoke, Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York
- 2010
Die Nuller Jahre, Capitain Petzel and Galerie Isabella Bortolozzi, Berlin
- 2009
Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York
Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna, Bologna
- 2008
Kunsthalle Zürich, Zurich
Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne
Petzel Gallery, New York
- 2007
Modern Art Oxford, Oxford (with Kelley Walker and Continuous Project)
Tricks, Galerie Gisela Capitain, Cologne
- 2006
Friedrich Petzel Gallery/Reena Spaulings Fine Art/Electronic Arts Intermix, New York
Sculpture, Galerie Isabella Bortolozzi, Berlin
- 2004
Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York
Archives Generations Upon, organized by Wade Guyton, Year, New York (with Mai-Thu Perret)

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2016
Pandora's Box: Jan Dibbets on Another Photography, Musée d'Art Moderne, Paris
Ordinary Pictures, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis
Images, Fridericianum, Kassel
- 2015
Painting 2.0: Expression in the Information Age, Museum Brandhorst, Munich (traveled)
Under the Clouds: From Paranoia to the Digital Sublime, Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Serralves, Porto
Greater New York, MoMA PS1, New York
- 2014
Sites of Reason: A Selection of Recent Acquisitions, Museum of Modern Art, New York
8–4 9–5 10–6 11–7, Parcours, Art Basel 45, various locations, Basel
- 2013
The Universal Addressability of Dumb Things, curated by Mark Leckey, Nottingham Contemporary, Nottingham
- 2012
Ghosts in the Machine, New Museum, New York
DOCUMENTA (13), Kassel
The Painting Factory, Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles
- 2011
ILLUMinations, 54th Venice Biennale, Venice
- 2010
10,000 Lives, 8th Gwangju Biennale, Gwangju
- 2009
Altermodern, 4th Tate Triennial, Tate Britain, London
- 2008
Dispersion, Institute of Contemporary Arts, London
Whitney Biennial, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York
- 2007
9th Biennale de Lyon, Lyon
- 2006
Wade Guyton, Seth Price, Josh Smith, Kelley Walker, Kunsthalle Zürich, Zurich
Grey Flags, SculptureCenter, New York
- 2005
Uncertain States of America, Astrup Fearnley Museet, Oslo (traveled)
After the Act, Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien, Vienna, Austria
Make It Now: New Sculpture in New York, SculptureCenter, New York
Greater New York, P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, New York
Lesser New York, Fia Backström Productions, New York
- 2004
Continuous Project, CNEAI, Paris
Last One on Is a Soft Jimmy, curated by Kelley Walker, Paula Cooper Gallery, New York
So Few the Opportunities, So Many the Mistakes, curated by Josh Smith, Champion Fine Art, New York
- 2003
25th Ljubljana Biennial of Graphic Arts, curated by Christophe Cherix, Ljubljana
- 2002
Whitney Biennial, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

SELECTED EVENTS

- 2015
Fuck Seth Price, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (reading)
- 2012
Folklore U.S., DOCUMENTA (13), Kassel (fashion show)
- 2011
Seth Price x Tim Hamilton Spring/Summer 2012, New York (fashion presentation)
- 2010
Freelance Stenographer, Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien, Vienna (collaborative performance and video project with Kelley Walker)
- 2007
Seth Price: Films, British Film Institute, London (screenings)
Seth Price Screening Evenings, Modern Art Oxford, Oxford (screenings)
Freelance Stenographer, the Kitchen, New York (collaborative performance and video project with Kelley Walker)
Continuous Project #12, Modern Art Oxford, Oxford (performance)
- 2006
Continuous Project #9, “Wieder und Wieder/Again and Against: Performance Appropriated,” Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien, Vienna (performance)
- 2005
Continuous Project #4, Klosterfelde Gallery, Berlin (performance)
- 2004
TBA, SculptureCenter, New York (performance)
- 2003
Psyche-Out 2K3, Anthology Film Archives, New York (screening curated with Cory Arcangel)
- 2002
Short Filmmaker in Focus: Seth Price, International Film Festival Rotterdam, Rotterdam (screening)
91.9 FM 88.7 FM 103.9 FM (with Wade Guyton and Kelley Walker), New York (one-night exhibition)
Folk, Galapagos, New York (performance)
- 2001
New Work/New York, Museum of Modern Art, New York (screening and lecture-performance)
Biennale de l'Image en Mouvement, Centre pour l'Image Contemporaine, Geneva (screening)
- 1998
New York Video Festival, New York (screening)

SELECTED WRITINGS AND PUBLICATIONS

- Fuck Seth Price: A Novel*, 2nd ed. (New York: Leopard Press, 2016)
Books of Ice (Los Angeles: Ooga Booga, 2016)
Fuck Seth Price: A Novel, 1st ed. (New York: Leopard Press, 2015)
“Lecture on the Extra Part,” *Texte Zur Kunst*, no. 99 (September 2015)
Nothing More (published to distributedhistory.com, 2015)
How to Disappear in America, 3rd ed. (New York: Leopard Press, 2015)
Drawings: Studies For Works 2000–2015, Petzel Gallery, New York (London: Koenig, 2015)
2000 Words: Seth Price, ed. Karen Marta (Athens: Deste Publications, 2014)
Folklore U.S. (New York: Petzel Gallery; London: Koenig, 2014)
“Uptight World,” in *Nora Schultz: Parrottree* (Chicago: University of Chicago, Renaissance Society, 2014)
Folklore U.S. Lookbook (New York: Petzel Gallery, 2013)
Folklore U.S. press release, Petzel Gallery, New York (2012)
How to Disappear in America, 2nd ed. (New York: Leopard Press, 2011)
Was Ist Los (New York: 38th Street Publishers, 2010)
Die Nuller Jahre press release, Capitain Petzel, Berlin (2010)
Price, Seth, ed. Kathrin Jentjens, Anja Nathan-Dorn, and Beatrix Ruf, exh. cat., Kunsthalle Zürich, Zurich, and Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne (Zurich: JRP/Ringier, 2009)
Teen Image (first published to artfcity.com, 2009)
For a Friend (New York: Reena Spaulings Fine Art; Los Angeles: Ooga Booga, 2009)
Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna (Bologna: Commune di Bologna, 2009)
How to Disappear in America, 1st ed. (New York: Leopard Press, 2008)
Freelance Stenographer, with Kelley Walker (self-published, 2007)
Guyton, Price, Smith, Walker, ed. Beatrix Ruf, exh. cat., Kunsthalle Zürich, Zurich (self-published, 2007)
Continuous Project #12, ed. Suzanne Cotter (London: Modern Art Oxford, 2007)
Sculpture press release, Galerie Isabella Bortolozzi, Berlin (2006)
Notes on This Show (self-published, 2006)
People with No Heads v. People with the Heads of Animals, Pacemaker 11 (Paris: Toastink Press, 2006)
Continuous Project #8, ed. Bettina Funcke (Paris: CNEAI, 2006)
Continuous Project #7 (Vienna: Parabol AM, 2006)
Décor Holes (2003–5, first self-published and distributed with *Akademische/Décor Holes* LP, 2006)
Grey Flags, ed. Bettina Funcke (New York: SculptureCenter, 2006)
“Sports,” in *The Uncertain States of America Reader* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2006)
Continuous Project Bulletin #1–7 (Paris: CNEAI, 2005)
Continuous Project #5 (Paris: Toastink Press, 2005)
“Source unique le clan du suicide ‘Au natural,’” in *Packaging* (Geneva: Forde, 2005)
Grey Flags press release, Petzel Gallery, New York (2005)
Poems (Paris: Onestar Press, 2004)
Global Taste, with Josh Smith (self-published, 2004)
Continuous Project #3 (Paris: CNEAI, 2004)
Continuous Project #4 (self-published, 2004)
OK, Just Send Me the Bill (self-published, 2004)
“Revolting Cocks: *Big Sexy Land*,” *Sound Collector Audio Review*, no. 4 (Winter 2003–4)
Stay At Home/Go Home (published to distributedhistory.com, 2003)
“Various Artists: *NJS Megamix*,” *Sound Collector Audio Review*, no. 3 (Summer 2003)
Black Book, with Josh Smith (self-published, 2003)
Dispersion (first self-published as booklet, 2003)
Continuous Project #2, HTML code for the Continuous Project website (published to continuousproject.com, 2003)
Continuous Project #1 (self-published, 2003)
Dispersion (first published as PDF to distributedhistory.com, 2002–)
Distributed History, distributedhistory.com (2002–)
“Game Heaven,” first published in *In Magazine*, no. 3 (2002)
Industrial Synthesis (self-published and distributed at *New Work/New York*, Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2001)
Charley 1, ed. Maurizio Cattelan, Bettina Funcke, Ali Subotnick, and Massimiliano Gioni (2001)

EXHIBITION HISTORY

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SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

Sickly Air/Dying Air, 2012, 4:31 min., color/sound (online music video)
Feeling in the Eyes, 2012, 5:57 min., color/sound (online music video)
No Way, 2012, 4:13 min., color/sound (online music video)
Whipz, 2012, 2:40 min., color/sound (online music video)
Lookin’ Bak, 2012, 2:50 min., color/sound (online music video)
Ugly Kill, 2012, 2:54 min., color/sound (online music video)
Sister Ray, 2011, 2:21 min., color/sound (online music video)
Language Lesson, 2011, 4:19 min., b&w/sound (single-channel video)
SS12, 2011, 15:26 min., color/silent (single-channel video component of fashion presentation)
Tale of the Mountains, 2010, 3:40 min., color/sound (online music video)
Fire & Smoke aka *Pencil Legs*, 2010, 4:47 min., color/sound (online music video)
The Rolling Skull aka *Tale of the Skull*, 2010, 3:52 min., color/sound (online music video)
Keep Hollywood Close, 2010, 2:29 min., color/sound (online music video)
Army Jacket, 2010, 3:44 min., color/sound (online music video)
N.Y. Sorrow, 2010, 3:48 min., color/sound (online music video)
No Such Thing aka *Happy Boots* aka *Relaxation*, 2010, 2:40 min., color/sound (online music video)
Die Leguane, 2010, 2:29 min., color/sound (online music video)
Non Speech, 2010, 3:33 min., color/sound (online music video)
Köln Waves/Blues, 2008, 11:36 min., color/sound (single-channel video)
Redistribution, 2007–, length variable (currently 44:15), color/sound (single-channel video)
Digital Video Effect: “Chords”, 2007, 12:48 min., color/sound (three-channel video installation)
Freelance Stenographer, with Kelley Walker, 2007, 32:27 min., color/sound (performance with video component)
Untitled Film/Left, 2006, 12 min. loop, color/sound (16-mm film)
Untitled Film/Right, 2006 11:36 min. loop, color/silent (16-mm film)
Digital Video Effect: “Editions,” 2006, 11:05 min., color/sound, distributed by EAI (single-channel video)
COPYRIGHT 2006 SETH PRICE (CBS and ABC news footage with manipulated color, speed, and aspect ratio), 2006, 12:48 min., color/silent (sculptural installation)
Folk Music & Documentary, 2004, 6:11 min., color/sound, distributed by EAI (single-channel video)
Digital Video Effect: “Spills” (with manipulated home-movie footage shot by Joan Jonas ca. 1970), 2004, 11:57 min., color/sound (sculptural installation: TV/DVD player in its original packaging, DVD)
Romance, 2003, 32:00 min., color/silent, distributed by EAI (single-channel video),
Rejected or Unused Clips, Arranged in Order of Importance, 2003, 10:38 min., color/sound, distributed by EAI (single-channel video)
Digital Video Effect: “Holes”, 2003, 7:25 min., color/sound (sculptural installation: TV/DVD player in its original packaging, DVD)
Playground, with Michael Smith, 2002, 2:58 min., color/sound (video installation)
Modern Suite, 2002, 10:28 min., color/sound (single-channel video)
2 for 1 Piece aka *“Global Taste, a Meal in 3 Courses, Element 1, 1985,”* by *Martha Rosler*, 2002, 29:29 min., color/sound (video installation)
Nieuw Jacxz Swinjge aka *New Jack Swing* aka *NJS Map*, 2001, 2:21 min., color/sound, distributed by EAI (video supplement to a lecture-performance)
New York Woman, 2001, 7:20 min., color/sound (video supplement to a lecture-performance)
Industrial Synth, 2000, 16:37 min., color/sound, distributed by EAI (single-channel video)
“Painting” Sites, 2000, 19:02 min., color/sound, distributed by EAI (single-channel video)
Triumpf, 2000, 19:18 min., color/sound (single-channel video)
Triumpf (Raw Version), 2000, 60 min., color/sound (single-channel video)
American Graffiti, 1999, 15:27 min., color/sound (single-channel video)
Analogue, 1999, 4:43 min., color/sound, distributed by EAI (single-channel video)
Sub Accident, 1997, 21:45 min., color/sound (single-channel video)

EXHIBITION HISTORY

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SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

Zero Bow Childreen, Distributed History, 2016 (audio files)
New Age According to Seth Price (1994–1996), Distributed History, 2016 (audio files)
Directions 1999–2003, Distributed History, 2014 (audio files)
Sounds 2000–2003, Distributed History, 2013 (audio files)
Folklore U.S., Distributed History, 2012 (CD)
Army Jacket, Dais Records, 2012 (LP)
Honesty, Audio Visual Arts, 2011 (LP)
Seth Price Fashion, Distributed History, 2011 (CD)
Sines, Period Tapes, 2011 (audiocassette)
Cold Soul, Distributed History, 2009 (audio file)
Akademische Graffiti, Frac Aquitaine, 2009 (CD)
Gowanus, with Stefan Tcherepnin, Distributed History, 2007 (CD)
8–4 9–5 10–6 11–7, Distributed History, 2007 (CD)
Army Jacket, Reena Spaulings Fine Art, 2006 (CD)
Unique Source, Reena Spaulings Fine Art, 2006 (LP)
Akademische/Décor Holes, Reena Spaulings Fine Art, 2006 (LP with booklet insert)
Working Music, Distributed History, 2005 (audio files)
Sines, Distributed History, 2005 (audio files)
Blues, Distributed History, 2005 (audio files)
Industrial Fist, free103point9, 2003 (audiocassette)
Industrial Fist, free103point9, 2003 (CD)
New Jack Swing, free103point9, 2003 (CD with paper insert)
Iron Curtain Girl, Distributed History, 2002 (CD)
Army Jacket, Distributed History, 2002 (CDR)
Modern Suite, Distributed History, 2002 (audio files)
New York Woman, Distributed History, 2001 (mini CD)
Game Heaven, Distributed History, 2001 (CD)
Girlfriend, Distributed History, 2000 (CDR)
Policier, self-released, 1998 (audiocassette)

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Seth Price Studio, New York
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Kevin Wendle
and a number of private lenders

CONTRIBUTORS

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CORY ARCANGEL is an American artist and entrepreneur based in Norway. His work includes drawings, music, videos, games, performances, digital media, and Arcangel Surfware, a merchandise and publishing imprint done in collaboration with the Bravado Group, a division of Universal Music Group. He recently opened the touring two-person show *Asymmetrical Response* with Olia Lialina at the Western Front in Vancouver.

CONTRIBUTORS

ED HALTER is a New York–based critic and curator. He is a founder and director of Light Industry, a venue for film and electronic art in Brooklyn, and his writings have been published in *Artforum*, *The Believer*, *Bookforum*, *Cinema Scope*, *Frieze*, *Mousse*, and other publications. He teaches as critic in residence in the Film & Electronic Arts program at Bard College. He has curated screenings and exhibitions at Artists Space, the Brooklyn Academy of Music, the Flaherty Film Seminar, the Museum of Modern Art, and the New Museum in New York, and the Institute of Contemporary Arts and Tate Modern in London. He is currently writing a history of contemporary experimental cinema in America.

CONTRIBUTORS

ACHIM HOCHDÖRFER is director of the Brandhorst Collection, Munich. From 2001 to 2014, he was curator at the Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien (mumok), where he mounted exhibitions of the work of Jeff Wall, Mike Kelley, Josh Smith, Cy Twombly, Tacita Dean, Claes Oldenburg, and Albert Oehlen, among others. He taught regularly at the Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna, and the Department of Art History at the University of Vienna. In 2015, he curated together with Manuela Ammer and David Joselit the exhibition *Painting 2.0: Expression in the Information Age*.

CONTRIBUTORS

BRANDEN W. JOSEPH is the Frank Gallipoli Professor of Modern and Contemporary Art in the Department of Art History and Archaeology at Columbia University and a founding editor of the journal *Grey Room*. He is author of five books, including *Experimentations: John Cage in Music, Art, and Architecture*; *Beyond the Dream Syndicate: Tony Conrad and the Arts after Cage*; and *Random Order: Robert Rauschenberg and the Neo-Avant-Garde*. He is also the editor of Kim Gordon’s *Is It My Body? Selected Texts*, as well as numerous scholarly essays and articles in the fields of contemporary art, music, and cinema.

CONTRIBUTORS

JOHN KELSEY is an artist, writer, and core member of Bernadette Corporation, an artist collective that first infiltrated the worlds of fashion, film, and publishing in 1994. Kelsey is also a cofounder of Reena Spaulings Fine Art, the Lower East Side gallery in New York, and a contributing editor of *Artforum*.

CONTRIBUTORS

MICHELLE KUO is the editor in chief of *Artforum*. She is currently working on a book about the group Experiments in Art and Technology (E.A.T.), which was founded in 1966 in New York and generated widespread collaboration between artists and engineers.

CONTRIBUTORS

RACHEL KUSHNER is a widely praised author. For her first novel, *Telex from Cuba*, and second novel, *The Flamethrowers*, she was nominated for the National Book Award. Her fiction has been published in the *New Yorker*, the *Paris Review*, and *Harper’s*. She contributes occasionally to *Artforum* and has recently contributed essays to monographs on Martin Kippenberger, Laura Owens, and Cy Twombly. In 2013, she was the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, and she recently won the Howard D. Vursell Memorial Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

CONTRIBUTORS

LAURA OWENS lives and works in Los Angeles. She is known for her large-scale paintings made with a diverse range of techniques and borrowing both art-historical and vernacular motifs. In addition to her studio practice, she teaches at the ArtCenter College of Design, Pasadena, and runs the exhibition space 356 S. Mission Rd. with Gavin Brown and Wendy Yao.

CONTRIBUTORS

ARIANA REINES is a poet, playwright, and performing artist. Her books include *The Cow* (winner of the 2006 Alberta Prize), *Coeur de Lion* (2007), *Mercury* (2011), and *The Origin of the World* (for the 2014 Whitney Biennial); her theatrical and performance works include *Mortal Kombat* (Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 2015), *The Origin of the World* (Stuart Shave/Modern Art, London, 2013), *UN<3SIMPLE* (Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2012), *Miss St.’s Hieroglyphic Suffering* (Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 2009), and the Obie-winning *Telephone* (Cherry Lane Theatre, New York, 2009). She is in private astrology practice at lazyeyehaver.com.

CONTRIBUTORS

BEATRIX RUF was appointed as director of the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam in 2014. After completing her studies, she was curator at Kunstmuseum Thurgau, Warth, Switzerland, from 1994 to 1998, and director of Kunsthaus Glarus, Switzerland, from 1998 to 2001. In 2001, Ruf became director of Kunsthalle Zürich, overseeing a substantial expansion project launched in 2003 and concluded in 2012. She developed an internationally renowned exhibition program of solo presentations and group exhibitions. Ruf serves frequently as a jury member on award committees, among them the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum’s Hugo Boss Prize, the Absolut Award, the Han Nefkens/MACBA Award, the Erasmus Prize, the Prix de Rome, and currently the Turner Prize.

PUBLICATION

This catalogue was published on the occasion of the exhibition *Seth Price: Social Synthetic* at the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, April 15–September 3, 2017, and at the Museum Brandhorst, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Munich, October 12, 2017–March 18, 2018.

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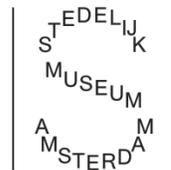
EXHIBITION

The exhibition is organized in cooperation between the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam and the Museum Brandhorst, a museum of the Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, in Munich, and is curated by Stedelijk Museum director Beatrix Ruf and director of the Brandhorst Collection Achim Hochdörfer, in close collaboration with the artist.

EXHIBITION STEDELIJK MUSEUM AMSTERDAM

Seth Price: Social Synthetic is curated in close collaboration with the artist by Stedelijk Museum director Beatrix Ruf, co-curated by Leontine Coelewij. The exhibition is organized in collaboration with the Museum Brandhorst in Munich. The Stedelijk Museum would like to thank Petzel Gallery, Capitain Petzel, and Galerie Gisela Capitain for their cooperation and support for the exhibition and publication.

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Seth Price wishes to thank:

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