



# APT Insight

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In an effort to draw a broader viewpoint into the process of editing this publication, I invited APT Los Angeles Director, Irene Tsatsos to take the lead on this issue. She proposed we consider how over the past 10 years “relational aesthetics” has moved beyond the theoretical into community-based activism. Two writers, one from Los Angeles and one from Istanbul, present distinctly different viewpoints that reflect the cultural practices in their extended regions. Four artists from different parts of the world have contributed brief responses about their practices that engage the idea of “community” as a prospect for individual and collective change.

Prospect...an interesting word and apt title for international curator Dan Cameron’s new US biennial in New Orleans, “Prospect.1 New Orleans.” With 81 artists working throughout the city, this exhibition takes a form of community activism as well, seeded by Cameron’s primary objective to draw attention to the plight and ongoing struggles of the city following Hurricane Katrina. A number of the works/installations were conceived in response to New Orleans and its heritage, culture, neglect and need.

Finally, this fall saw an unprecedented explosion of biennial/triennial exhibitions throughout East Asia. Our directors report from China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan and Singapore on seven survey exhibitions including more than 350 artists from around the world.

Pamela Auchincloss \_ Editor, APT Insight

Ten years ago Nicolas Bourriaud, co-founder and former co-director of the Palais de Tokyo, published *Esthétique relationnelle*, in which he defined the term “relational aesthetics.” He continued to explore this idea in his 2002 book *Postproduction -- Culture as Screenplay: How Art Reprograms the World*, which describes Esthétique Relationnelle (Relational Aesthetics) as works that take as their point of departure the changing mental space opened by the Internet.

Now, more than ten years since Bourriaud first introduced this term, we would like to explore the trajectory of this idea through the work of APT artists for whom social engagement is an intrinsic part of the creative output, and in some cases even a direct part of the artistic practice; who, in the course of developing their practice, find ways to engage or involve others through diverse sites ranging from the street outside their studio to the Internet.

We are making a distinction between artists who are involved with discrete creative projects outside of their studio practices, and those whose creative interests, hobbies, passions, etc., create a social phenomenon, the existence of which results in a community activity that in turn fuels the artist’s practice.

We hope you enjoy this issue.

Irene Tsatsos \_ Director, APT Los Angeles,  
Associate Editor

# Man Knows Himself Only In Man

By Pelin Uran



A Constructed World  
**Second Chance**  
2008, Video still from documentation  
Photo courtesy of ACW



**Relational Aesthetics**, originally a collection of essays written by the curator and writer Nicolas Bourriaud, is a term applied to a category of art production from the 1990s that brings forth moments of sociability and/or objects proposing sociability.

Bourriaud defines relational art as: "A set of artistic practices which take as their theoretical and practical point of departure the whole of human relations and their social context, rather than an independent and private symbolic place."

Indeed, the constitution of convivial relations has been an historical constant since the 1960s; the predecessors of relational aesthetics go back to Allan Kaprow's Happenings and the Situationist International. In the former case, Allan Kaprow's Happenings in the late 1950s and 1960s were based on the idea of viewing art as a vehicle for expanding our awareness of life through unexpected interactions; of blurring the distinction between audience and artist and therefore decentralizing the authorship; and of seeing art as a participatory experience. In the latter case, Guy Debord, a founding member and leading force of Situationist International, was manifesting his theories on constructed situations.



A Constructed World  
**Second Chance**  
2008, Video still from documentation  
Photo courtesy of ACW





Mario Rizzi  
**Drafting Moods / Double Vision**  
2002, One-screen video & photo installation  
Sound, 55', Courtesy of the artist





According to Debord, constructed situations were participatory events that used experimental behavior to break the spectacular bind of capitalism. The constructed situations aimed at producing new social relationships and new social realities.

Today, the difficulty of the concept of relational aesthetics is that the term relational art has become loosely applied to almost any kind of work, from that which establishes relationships in which meaning is elaborated collectively, to situations in which an artist creates a context and viewers create a so-called community; from work that emphasizes the viewer's active participation in order to generate meaning, to an approach in which the artist remains the author and involves others in a more directed manner. The term often functions as a designator referring to a type of outcome regardless of the conceptual underpinnings of the production.

The artists discussed here share a wide perspective, one that requires dialogue, negotiations and collaborative relationships in order to produce their art. Jacqueline Riva and Geoff Lowe, a collaborative duo known as A Constructed World (ACW) (APT London), construct workshops by engaging with groups of people who don't usually have anything to do with contemporary art. These workshops are inter-subjective encounters in which meaning is created collaboratively. Their work is a manifesto that everyone, regardless of background or specialization, is capable of producing according to their own interpretation. Throughout the workshops ACW use the states of *not knowing*, appropriated from psychoanalysis, as a shared space on which to base the dialogue. *Second Chance* (2008), a day of workshops realized with the students of Maison Lafitte in Paris, explored the idea that the audience could work with the same movable, flexible role as the contemporary artist. In these workshops they made works utilizing music, visual art and performance without expertise or preparation in any of these areas.

Not knowing is crucial for another collective known as ha za vu zu, which is formed by five members. In the nature of a collective, they are constantly aware of the consequences of collaboration such as feeling vulnerable, at risk and disconnected, while simultaneously confronting rejection and the range of paradoxes that exist within human nature. Their collaboration is extended to their art practice, which consists of working temporarily with individuals and groups with whom they forge convivial relations. In the performance *Our Teeth Will Be Snow White* (2007), ha za vu zu and their collaborators projected fragmented words and sentences onto a collage of images taken from the media. They used the sound of the deconstructed words to prioritize the basic act of communication, liquidating the discursive element of language. Throughout the work, ha za vu zu constantly switched roles between creators, directors and performers, thereby constantly negotiating power relationships.

The practice of Mario Rizzi (APT Dubai), which is based on video, installation and photography, differs from the former by engaging with different communities solely in the production phase. All of Rizzi's works are based on inter-personal relationships born of interacting and engaging with others in the course of producing the work. In *Drafting Moods/Double Vision* (2002), Rizzi gave 98 residents of Amsterdam from diverse backgrounds, many of whom were immigrants, disposable cameras and invited them to take one photo a day for 60 days. Rizzi and the participants then edited and installed the snapshots together. The second part of the project consisted in making a film entitled *Double Vision*; eighteen people, also with various cultural and social backgrounds, were each given a video camera for one week and invited to film their own neighborhoods and the center of Amsterdam. A one-hour film was produced from this material.





Mario Rizzi  
**Drafting Moods / Double Vision**  
2002, One-screen video & photo installation  
Sound, 55', Courtesy of the artist

The works of Rizzi, ACW and ha za vu zu share an interest in psychology and psychoanalysis, which gives them the necessary tools to be vigilant against the already fetishized and divisive discourse around the “other.”

Pelin Uran is a freelance curator and writer currently based in Istanbul.

Mario Ybarra Jr.  
The Sweeney Tate: Chop Shop  
2007, Installation





By Jessica Rath

# NO PURCHASE NECESSARY

# If the medium is the message, is it not a one-on-one relationship with the public, with each other, our best formal strategy for making art?

The ten-year trend toward relational aesthetics (a term coined by French art critic Nicolas Bourriaud) is seen in art that presents actions, interventions and spectacles in which audience response is part of a work's creation. The term has most recently helped an affluent art world and attendant critics generate an aesthetic discourse about works they have previously shunned as solely activist.

I was surprised that Artist Pension Trust® (APT), which collects tangible objects to invest in its trust, includes many artists whose practices reflect relational aesthetics, including Milena Bonilla (APT Mexico City), Carolina Caycedo (APT Mexico City), Jeff Cain (APT Los Angeles) and Mario Ybarra Jr. (APT Los Angeles).

On a bus outside San Juan, Puerto Rico passengers watch a young woman, needle in hand, stitching up slashed bus seats, adding her flourished marks to this well-used public space. Bogotá-based Milena Bonilla admits that her interventions are often surreptitious because “a little

bit of silence amid the large noise [of Bogotá] is healthy.” Bonilla marks place with thread, as with *Transitory Map* (2002-2004), in which the bus routes where she conducted repair interventions is reflected on a sewn map of Bogotá. These are thread drawings of routes that were previously marked for other intentions and speeds, alluding to a different pace set by our own mental maps of a city.

For her latest project in Spain, *Our Hospitality* (2007), Bonilla questions our relationship with consumerism and our assumptions about charity and identity through deconstructing and reworking an Yves Saint Laurent dress with 25 pieces of charity shop clothes. This new line is carefully displayed as art, selling for 100 to 200 euro; and as clothes, for 20 euro at the same shop, while the EACC museum in Castellón features images of this art production. Both venues display maps to the other and in that way leave trails between the audiences.



Carolina Caycedo  
**Daytoday**  
(2000 – present)  
Performance/Intervention







20/04/26 I moved Amy's stuff from a storage building in Brooklyn Navy Yard to her new apt in El Barrio. She gave me a camera, books, clothes, plastic dishes, curtains, toys and 6 gm of fine herbs.

San Juan-based Carolina Caycedo (APT Mexico City) is well known for *Daytoday* (2000 - Present), an ongoing project in which she forgoes all daily money exchange and instead barter her possessions out of a van to get life's essentials. Featured at the 2006 Whitney Biennial, *Daytoday* is one project in over a decade's worth of public works including itinerant hairdressing parlors, symbolic flag planting and how-to manuals on obtaining a British passport. For Caycedo, the art world, like any hierarchy, is there to subvert "by transferring to the audience the power given to me by the art circuit."

How do we critically evaluate works defined by relational aesthetics? Artist Jeff Cain (APT Los Angeles) asks if “the aesthetic response [to a public work of art] is sublime because it is revolutionary? Because of the relationships?” During a pier festival in California, Cain projected seductive aerial footage of the entire length of Los Angeles, planetarium style, above the audience’s heads, who then relaxed on the ground chatting together about the scenery. Unlike a theater experience that demands we keep silent and focus on the given narrative, Cain’s film and style of presentation creates a spectacle, a space to share new narratives between audience members. The city is suddenly a night sky on which to project dreams again.

For his most recent work, Cain went on what he called a “fool’s quest” for Constructivist artifacts. Setting up a kiosk in the public square in the Ukraine, Cain sought out surviving Constructivist artists using Tatlin’s definition: “[an] initiative individual who acts to express the creativity of a collective.” The resulting website indexes responses of the passersby. In all but a few cases, “artworks” were social projects not authored by artists but by anonymous collectives, such as an entirely self organized public outdoor gym of handmade machines with no single author.

For *The Sweeney Tate: Chop Shop* (2007), Los Angeles-based Mario Ybarra Jr. (APT Los Angeles) recreated a Los Angeles barbershop where passersby sat down for a cut and chatted about their barbershop experiences with strangers. Ybarra states that “public works operate as more of an offensive space, where sometimes we, as artists, lose control of the ball for a minute to see how far we can take an idea across the playing field.” In 2006 Ybarra and his wife Karla Diaz created *The Peacock Doesn’t See It’s Own Ass/Let’s Twitch Again: Operation Birdwatching* (2006) for the Serpentine Gallery in London. Workshops with five young London artists evolved into a clubhouse style installation and the formation of a bird club, with over 200 members of the general audience joining.

As Bonilla suggests, most of these artists oppose classification, instead preferring that their practice “move as a virus, shifting, jumping and escaping stylization” and incorporating members as part of the work. While stylization affords the gallery system a commodity on which to bank, the looming world recession might finally change how we view aesthetic currency and these works with and in the service of the public.

Jessica Rath is an artist and writer in Los Angeles.



Jeff Cain  
Skyglow  
2008, Video projection



# ASIA UPFRONT



On the eve of September 3rd I set out on a 10-day journey around the world bound for East Asia. Following a quick stop-over in London, my destination was Guangzhou, China for the third Guangzhou Triennial. This was the beginning of a whirlwind trip that took me to Shanghai, Nanjing, Singapore, Taipei and finally Beijing. In all of these cities, but for Beijing, I took in the ambitious programmatic efforts of 24 curators dedicated to making broad sweeping statements about the condition of our diverse and complex world as seen through the eyes of more than 350 artists from around the globe. This extraordinary, first-time-ever, regionally-coordinated platform of contemporary art biennials and triennials drew crowds from every continent as artists, collectors, curators and gallerists made the trek to as many as 6 countries (Korea, China, Singapore, Taiwan, Japan and Australia—three of which I traveled to) in effort to become fully versed in the international art scene centered around Asia.

The following reports are contributions from our Asian directors and myself, with brief overviews of these exhibitions while highlighting the contributions of our APT artists. / P.A.

Heman Chong

**One Hundred Years of Solitude**

2008, Aluminum on outdoor wall fixture

10 x 7 m, Courtesy of the artist and Vitamin Creative Space



# HUNDRED OF SOLITUDE



# The Singapore Biennale is an international contemporary art event organized by the National Arts Council of Singapore.

By Sunyoung Oh

Launched in 2006, it saw the grand opening of its second edition this year (September 11 – November 16, 2008). Tokyo's Mori Art Museum Director Fumio Nanjo, who was the Artistic Director of the 2006 Singapore Biennale, was reappointed to head the 2008 Curatorial Team, which includes Joselina Cruz of Singapore/Malaysia and Matthew Ngui of Singapore. The 2008 Singapore Biennale has received favorable reviews for staying faithful to its original objective of focusing on the works of Asian artists with few exceptions, thereby differentiating itself from other biennales. This year, the exhibition is divided into three main venues in an effort to highlight as well as promote the understanding of the artworks and the sites.

The two main features that set the 2008 biennale apart from its inaugural event in 2006 are the theme and the venues of the exhibition. The theme of this year's exhibition is "Wonder," which followed up the inaugural biennale's theme of "Belief." Is wonder a feeling of *curiosity* coming from *belief*? This year's theme could mean many different things. Through "Wonder," the 2008 Singapore Biennale invites us to ponder all the things in life that make us feel surprise, question and doubt. Its conceptual scope is the contemporary world. And through the art of the contemporary world, the exhibition takes interest not in the apparent but rather the stories underneath that we may easily miss. It is Fumio Nanjo's second invitation for reflection, after having provoked thought on the many meanings of belief for the first exhibition. On the exhibition theme, Fumio Nanjo explains that, "This year's exhibition and artworks that have been selected or newly developed with artists will attempt to eliminate all the obstacles that lead to perceptual limitations, social structures and prejudices. The attempt in turn will make us wonder about what it is that actually makes us surprised, scared, anxious or daring."



This year's exhibition showcases artworks that propose diverse interpretations and layers of wonder. Most noteworthy works include those by artists from Asia, Middle East, Europe and the Americas such as Ilya and Emilia Kabakov, Deborah Kelly, Isak Berbic, Hans Op de Beeck, Anthony McCall, Isaac Montoya, Faisal Samra, Fujiko Nakaya, Ko-bong Rhee and Felice Varini, to Southeast Asia and Singapore such as Alfredo and Isabel Aquilizan, Apichatpong Weerasethakul, Heman Chong (APT Beijing), Shubigi Rao, Tang Ling Nah, Willy Koh and Sherman Ong. While the fog-like disappearing and reappearing work of Fujiko Nakaya surprises its viewers, the sublimely beautiful and serene white snowscape of Hans Op de Beeck offers deep tranquility in another exhibition area. The paintings and drawings of Felice Varini and Tang Ling Nah conjure up new spaces, thus questioning the relationship between real space and created spaces. As such, the participating artworks offer us a chance to reflect so that we may understand the way each artist works and shows his/her creations.

### **Art and Site**

Another feature of the 2008 Singapore Biennale is that the artworks are installed in sites that are not traditional exhibition spaces. That does not mean that all the artworks in the biennale are site-specific or highlight the sites. However, by being installed in new, non-exhibition venues, the content of the artwork itself combined with the site's own image give rise to new stories that the viewers can feel for themselves. This also is a possibility that this year's exhibition intentionally sought.

In contrast to the 2006 Singapore Biennale, which was held in multiple venues spread across 19 different cities, this year's biennale is generally divided into the three main sites of the old City Hall, the Marina Bay and South Beach. 137 artworks by 66 artists invited from a total of 36 countries are shown. South Beach presents the works of 25 artists including the Singaporean artist Heman Chong's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. In Marina Bay, Japanese artist Shigeru Ban's gigantic pavilion, made from containers for his Eco Project campaign to conserve energy and fight against environmental pollution, serves as the exhibition venue.

The old City Hall building, which was built in 1929, is a historical site representing public power in its heyday. It was closed in 2005, reopened in 2006 to house the first Singapore Biennale and opened its doors once again for the 2008 edition. The many office rooms as well as halls that used to be tribunals in the past are left as found for the artwork installations. The building will reopen as the "National Art Gallery" in 2013, a visual arts exhibition space which will focus on showcasing the works of Southeast Asian artists.

South Beach is also being used temporarily to exhibit the artworks of the biennale. As a cluster of Art Deco buildings dating from the 1930s, South Beach was the seat of the Singaporean Army headquarters after World War II, and even served as a camp for the Singapore Volunteer Corps for some time.

In Heman Chong's new series of wall and floor installations for Singapore Biennale 2008, the artist opts to explore a working process in which the work wrapped itself around the existing architecture of a given space with the application of self-adhesive stickers and 250,000 black offset prints each measuring 9 x 4.5 cm that carpet the floor. The floor work, *Monument To The People We've Conveniently Forgotten (I Hate You)* (2008), is a somber and poignantly political work in a show that drifts toward the sublime.

From the beginning of biennales until present, biennale exhibitions have been critically acclaimed as a platform for showing the currents of contemporary art where and as they were happening. However, with the onslaught of biennales, they have recently lost some of their luster. Despite the situation, one common point among all the biennales is that they have a penchant for large scales and evaluate their success on how many artists participated from how many countries. As a result, the list of participating artists end up resembling one another between the many biennales, and these artists continue to show similar works over many exhibitions. So-called "biennale artists" have become a trend. One cannot help but question why the Singapore Biennale was created at such a time in such a context, what they will be able to show that will set them apart from other biennales and what meaning the Singapore Biennale holds today.

Sunyoung Oh is the Co-Director of APT Beijing. She is based in Seoul.





Jina Park  
**Moontan 03**  
2007, Oil on canvas, 130.3 x 180 cm  
Courtesy of the artist

The Gwangju Biennale  
presented its seventh edition  
this year, with the 66 day-long  
event starting on September  
5th under the title of *Annual  
Report: A Year in Exhibitions*  
(September 5 – November 9, 2008).

By Sunyoung Oh



Under the direction of Okwui Enwezor, Dean of Academic Affairs and Senior Vice President of the San Francisco Art Institute, who was also at the helm of the Kassel Documenta in 2002, the 7th Gwangju Biennale was co-curated by independent curator Hyunjin Kim and the Indian-born curator Ranjit Hoskote.

The most distinctive feature of the Gwangju Biennale this year is that a foreign curator was appointed as its Artistic Director for the first time since its inauguration. Moreover, also noteworthy was that this year's exhibition was based on the enormous research conducted by the Artistic Director and the curators, who selected and edited works from the major exhibitions and activities that were held between 2007 and 2008 in Korea and abroad. Like the Artistic Director's comment that "The absence of a special theme is the theme of this event," the background of the Biennale, similar to that of the last Berlin Biennale, was that it reflected the recent trend of showing the overall flow of contemporary art in its various forms, and did not follow one clear thematic direction or particular predominant current. For this year's event, the key was to examine the trends of contemporary art today and explore its future directions by gathering the "chosen" works in one place under the title of *Annual Report*.

A total of 127 artists from 36 countries participated in this year's exhibition, whose works flowed in an organic composition featuring no clear division between the venues, which included the Gwangju Museum of Art, the Biennale Hall, Uijae Museum of Korean Art, Daein Traditional Market and Cinema Gwangju. The exhibition was designed around three main components titled "On the Road", "Position Papers" and "Insertions".

Thirty-six exhibits were shown in the first part, "On the Road," which represented the major international exhibitions held during the past year. In particular, the installation work of Hans Haacke, which featured visual image effects that contrasted reality and the ideal, as well as the retrospective of the conceptual artist Gordon Matta-Clark, which showcased his post avant-garde installation and architectural works from the end-1960s to early-1970s, were worth viewing. Meanwhile, the performance and installation work titled *Sediments, Sentiments* by Jennifer Allora and Guillermo Calzadilla who, lying down in a large-scale sculptural tunnel made of white plaster resembling a gigantic crystal, sang excerpts from George W. Bush's and the Dalai Lama's speeches in the opera format, which provided an experience that was at once spatial and sensory.



MAP Office  
**The Final Battle**  
2008, Procession of 9 wagons  
(bamboo, paper, firecrackers, mixed media)  
carried by 2 people each, sound  
2 hours in duration, Dimensions variable  
Courtesy of the artists



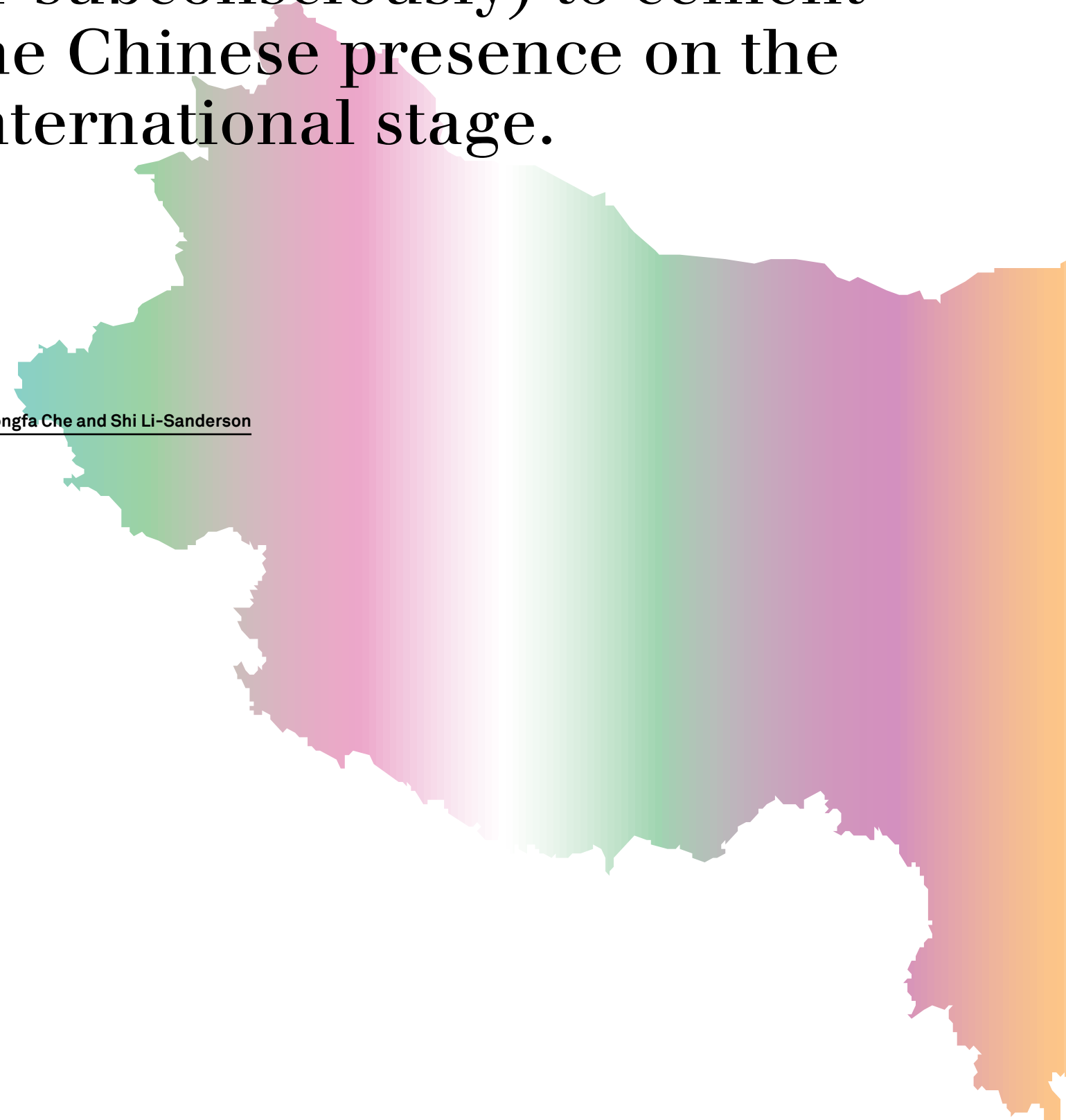
The second part of the exhibition, “Position Paper,” proposed by the five curators Jang Un Kim, Sung-Hyen Park, Abdellah Karroum, Claire Tancons, and Patrick D. Flores, featured small group exhibitions or on-site workshops by four to six artists (or artist teams) of each of the curator’s choosing. In particular, curator Sung-Hyen Park’s *Real Estate Agency Project* attracted much attention as a public art project that helped to revitalize the city’s traditional market through its “open studio program”, which involved the opening of the participating artists’ residence studios in the five commercial blocks of Gwangju’s Daein Traditional Market.

The third part, “Insertions,” invited into the Biennale a series of specifically commissioned new projects that had been realized to maximize the organic flow of the exhibition. Of particular interest were Dolores Zinny and Juan Maidagan’s installation *Model for Gwangju*, a three-dimensional structure made of Plexiglas boards, linoleum, fabric, etc. that invited viewers to approach it and experience the multi-dimensional illusion that exists between surface and depth, and Eunji Cho’s *MudPoem\_ Exodus*, a performance involving throwing against the walls mud dug up from the surrounding newly developed cities, an act which suggests life’s new beginnings. The paintings of Jina Park (APT Beijing), the collaborative works of artist Hae Jun Jo (APT Beijing) and his father, the video works of Jooyeon Park, and the works of Jewyo Rhii (APT Beijing) were also worth noting.

Sunyoung Oh is the Co-Director of APT Beijing. She is based in Seoul.

September saw the opening of three major art festivals in China, all serving (on the surface or subconsciously) to cement the Chinese presence on the international stage.

By Kyongfa Che and Shi Li-Sanderson

A stylized map of China is shown in the background, filled with a vibrant, multi-colored gradient. The colors transition from green on the left, through purple and pink in the center, to orange and yellow on the right. The map's outline is slightly irregular, giving it a hand-drawn or artistic feel.





The Guangzhou Triennial, the Shanghai Biennale and the Nanjing Triennial each presented large groups of artists embodying their various curatorial ideas: Guangzhou included 210 artists organized around the title “Farewell to Post-Colonialism”; Shanghai, with 60 artists, coined the phrase “Trans Local Motion”; while Nanjing settled on “Reflective Asia” to frame its 106 artists.

Many of the works in these survey exhibitions manage to reflect art’s progress as an expression of business, economy and technology—elements in our improving environment—pressing at the front line of opening minds as China merges into the global forum. S.Li-S.



Amy Cheung  
*Ashes Unto Pearl*  
2008, Sound Installation  
Courtesy of Guangzhou Triennial

## Guangzhou

“Farewell to Post-Colonialism,” under the direction of curators Gao Shiming (China), Sarat Maharaj (London/India) and Chang Tsong-zung (Hong Kong), offers a compelling proposition framed by the cultural and political colonialism two of the curators have personally experienced. This is particularly evident in their choice of artists including, among others: Doa Aly (Cairo/APT Dubai); Sarnath Banerjee (New Delhi/APT Mumbai); Amy Cheung (Hong Kong/APT Beijing); Archana Hande (Mumbai/APT Mumbai); Gulsun Karamustafa (London/APT Mumbai); Jeuno Kim (Seoul/APT Beijing); Leung Chi-Wo (Hong Kong/APT Beijing); Ahmet Ögüt (Istanbul/APT Dubai); Qui Zhijie (Hangzhou/APT Beijing); Masahiro Wada (Tokyo/APT Beijing); Wang Yuyang (Beijing/APT Beijing); Haegue Yang (Berlin/APT Beijing); Zhang Hui (Shanghai/APT Beijing).

Amy Cheung’s remarkable sculptural installation titled *Ashes Unto Pearl* (2008) is one of several newly commissioned works on view. Inspired by a short poem by Rabindranath Tagore that tells the story of a pearl diver in search of “the perfect pearl of the formless” and ends with, “And now I am eager to die into the deathless.” Cheung interviewed more than 100 people about their idea of a “formless pearl.” The responses, largely existential, emit as soft murmurs from small mirrored speakers embedded in the charcoal coated surface of this imposing 2.8 meter sphere. For those willing to take a closer look, discrete viewing portals reveal a slow burning figure (a self-portrait) made from incense slowly disappearing inside this universe fallen from the sky. There is an unmistakable sense of the ritual in this work but the ambiguity keeps this reading safe from doctrine. S.Li-S.

# Shanghai

In Shanghai, the center of the banking industry of China, the curatorial team of Zhang Qing (Artistic Director/China), Henk Slager (Curator/The Netherlands) and Julian Heynan (Curator/Germany) consider migration as an overriding influence in how cultures evolve.

Of the artists included in “Trans Local Motion” Korean artist Sanggil Kim’s (APT Beijing) photographs of building facades clearly capture a sort of hybridization of architecture. Not one could be distinguish as native or regional. Turkish-born Inci Eviner’s (APT Dubai) room installation of stylized black and white ink drawings and wall paintings weave a timeless mythology that is difficult to ascribe to any one country or history. Also from Korea and a current resident of Amsterdam, Yang Ah Ham’s (APT Beijing) photographs and video works can be seen as prosaic or as fantastic dreamscapes. In *Dream...In Life* (2004), her three-channel video projection, the popular and hallmark attraction for the New York City tourist—the Central Park horse-drawn carriage—is, in one respect, about how the magic of dreams, fantasy and fairy tales will not translate into life experience. But it might also be about the migrant population that brings their stories, their lives and their dreams to the American continent. S.Li-S.



Sanggil Kim  
*Mode\_2001*  
2006, ed. 6, C-print  
220 × 180 cm  
Courtesy PKM GALLERY



Yang Ah Ham  
**Dream...in Life**  
2004, 3 channel video installation with  
view from Insa Art Space, Seoul

## Nanjing

The Nanjing Triennial, formerly the Triennial of Chinese Contemporary Art, broadened the scope to Asia; “Reflective Asia” considers artists’ critical examination and responses to the dynamic economic, cultural and social change happening throughout Asia, while embracing the complexity and notion of “Asia” as an imagined and conceptualized entity and community. In doing so, the Triennial further attempts to show and analyze the development and status quo of the Asian contemporary art scene.

The chief curator Huang Du is an independent curator and art critic based in Beijing and was one of the curators for the sixth Shanghai Biennale in 2006. He teamed up with three curators—Fumihiko Sumitomo from Japan, Kang Jaeyoung from Korea and Li Zhenhua from China—to select over 100 artists to show their works within the traditional Chinese architecture of the Nanjing Museum and RCM The Museum of Modern Art.

The range of works embodies the wide spectrum of social and cultural development in Asia. Included in the exhibition are Jiang Zhi (APT Beijing), Kira Kim (APT Beijing), Meiro Koizumi (APT Beijing), Tsuyoshi Ozawa (APT Beijing), Gimhongsok (APT Beijing), Chen Shaoxiong



Wang Yuyang  
*Tonight I Will Consider Who I Am*  
 2008, Installation  
 Courtesy of the Nanjing Triennial

(APT Beijing), Wang Yuyang (APT Beijing) and Zon Ito (APT Beijing). Among them, Ozawa, Gim and Chen, who have been collaborating as a collective named Xiching Men, created Xiching Olympics and organized a series of performances during the opening period of the Triennial. Koizumi presented his new video work titled *CraftNight*, in which a man is confined in an absurd setting where he is asked to perform as a mad man, make a sculpture and talk about his private life at the same time. The footage is ridiculous, funny, eerie and unsettling, as it shows his agitation and frustration being piled up while it remains ever ambiguous whether it is performed or coming from his personal feelings. K.C.

One work that seems prescient of China's future as a world power in business and technology is Wang Yuyang's *Tonight I Will Consider Who I Am* (2004). The relationship of art with technology comes out strongly in this work, with its stranded astronaut. This piece shows where art can have a direct relationship with reality and world events. Initially we have Wang's piece, pre-empting China's latest foray into space by weeks—art does not represent reality but predicts. The progress of time is reversed: the artwork came first, then reality develops out of it.

The astronaut survives in the fragile sliver of earth-like atmosphere in his suit. This biosphere could be likened to the Chinese identity, an ordinary situation but perilous. Contrast this with outside the suit—the international identity to which we aim, the public, shared space. Inside is local, outside is beyond our present thinking, but once we get there, it confers a hidden power on us. As the space race boosts national prestige and influence, just to cross our border and reach this space is an act and makes us something.

So, considering this piece, perhaps an appropriate question to ask those of us who are part of the international art environment would be “Who are we tonight?” S.Li-S.

Kyongfa Che is the Co-Director of APT Beijing. She is based in Tokyo. / Shi Li-Sanderson is an APT Curatorial Associate and Curator at the Beijing Art Museum of Imperial City (BAMIC). She is based in Beijing.

# Taipei Biennial 2008

By Pamela Auchincloss

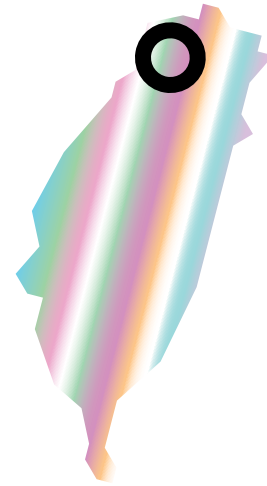
Seated outside the Taipei Fine Arts Museum, with only a tarpaulin roof structure separating guests from the growing ferocity of typhoon Sinaklu, the opening night of 2008 Taipei Biennial, curated by Vasif Kortun and Manray Hsu, got underway with Nevin Aladag's (APT Berlin) performance work *Raise the Roof*. From stage-left around eight girls each climbed onto an individual platform and proceeded to dance to music played from their own personal headphones without acknowledging their audience and in a world of their own. With only the noise of shuffling and stomping high-heels beating out different rhythms and on this occasion with the sound of heavy rain in the background, the performance allowed a moment for personal contemplation on individual action.

Taipei 08's main themes are all connected to the effects of neo-liberal capitalist globalization and includes works that suggest the potential for achievable forms of activism, self-organization and D.I.Y. intervention. Many included commissions have already put an idea into action and these include Lara Almarcegui's (APT Berlin) officially endorsed conservation of the empty terrain of an island in the Danshui river, as well as Superflex's (APT London) *Freebeer* project, in which they collaborated with a local brewery to produce a beer that has an open license for anyone to copy. Other artists offered the audience a chance to intervene in the public domain themselves, such as Nasan Tur (APT Berlin) with his work *Backpacks*. His individualized backpacks are available for anyone to borrow from the museum and each contains a different set of materials and props that can be used for a particular street action. They include backpacks with materials for forming a demonstration, making a public announcement, cooking on the side-walk etc.,

Also commissioned to produce work for the Biennale, Mario Rizzi (APT Dubai) focused on a local issue and produced *The Chicken Soup* a film that explores the experience of two foreign women who began their lives in Taiwan as bought brides. Other artists looked to their own contexts: Christodoulos Panayiotou's (APT Dubai) slide installation *Wonderland* presents a series of images found in the Municipal archives of Limassol that depict the strangely out-of-place, but globally orientated, annual Disney Carnival, and Yochai Avrahami (APT Dubai) focuses on two sites located between Jerusalem and Ramallah to present a no-man's land of abandoned potential, inhabited in his videos by his own animated creations.

With projects also taking place in other venues and open spaces within the city, the curator's ambitions were spread into the public arena. These ranged from another project by Almarcegui that required the official permission to remove a wall visually blocking an abandoned Japanese house to expose to the public's consciousness the state these houses have remained in since the post-war period and before coming planned renovation; to the more manageable invitation of Mali Wu's crop gardens that can be realised at the smallest scale on any spare piece of land, on a balcony or in a container anywhere in the urban fabric.

Pamela Auchincloss is Interim Co-Director APT Beijing



# Yokohama Triennale 2008

By Kyongfa Che

The 3rd edition of Yokohama Triennale (September 13 – November 30, 2008) is directed by Tsutomu Mizusawa, the chief curator of the Museum of Modern Art, Kamakura and Hayama, with a team of five curators—Daniel Birnbaum, Hu Fang, Miyake Akiko, Hans Ulrich Obrist and Beatrix Ruf. It features 72 artists from 25 nations, including Keren Cytter (APT London), Douglas Gordon (APT London), Jorge Macchi (APT Mexico City), Falke Pisano (APT Berlin) and SUPERFLEX (APT London), whose works have been spread into seven different venues in the city of Yokohama.

The theme “Time Crevasse” signifies the abyss created by the linear and standardized notion of time and the unified value system that constitute the current digital and global world. The Triennale attempts to introduce the kind of artistic practice that allows one’s eye to glimpse the abyss, or multiple axis of time, which potentially bridges chasms between different nations, races, cultures and religions.

Participating on the curatorial team Ruf, who curated the Tate Triennial 2006 at Tate Britain, and Obrist, who recently curated “Il Tempo Del Postino” with Philippe Parreno for Manchester International Festival, it is not surprising that the Triennale includes a number of performance works, such as Joan Jonas, Philippe Parreno and Tino Sehgal. In addition, there are several time-based works and programs such as contemporary dance, experimental sound programs and film screenings. According to the curatorial statement, the strategy does not merely aim to attract the public to the site; it provides an unmediated experience of art to the viewer, and affirms the artistic space and production in which the global art market does not produce or accommodate.

Kyongfa Che is Co-Director of APT Beijing.  
She is based in Tokyo.



Falke Pisano  
**Object and Disintegration:  
The Object of Three**  
2008, Courtesy Ellen de Bruijne  
Projects / BaliceHertling

# Prospect.1



Anne Deleporte  
**Editorial Blue**  
2008, Newsprint and paint  
(Installation view at the Louisiana State  
Museum – U.S. Mint; also installed at the L9  
Center for the Arts, Lower Ninth Ward)  
Photo credit: John d'Addario



# For a Changed World

By Pamela Auchincloss

When Dan Cameron shared with me and our APT New York Curatorial Committee, of which he is a standing member, his early-on vision for a biennial exhibition in New Orleans that would shine a light on the devastation left behind by Hurricane Katrina, we all applauded the intention but could not envision the form. On October 30th and 31st, curators, collectors and artists from around the world descended upon this unique and colorful cultural city to take in the outcome.

In these charged political times when governments and financial institutions have all but failed every moral obligation to lead, protect and provide, New Orleans provides an apt venue for artists to consider and comment on accountability, not only of our institutions but of ourselves. Of the 81 participating artists more than 20 created new works that respond directly to New Orleans and its community, resulting in an exhibition that carries a thoughtful and affective message.

*A Thousand Miles Away* (2008), John Pilson's (APT New York) 15' 11" video projection, presents eight vignettes shot in a semi-documentary style and merged into a seamless portrait of New Orleans. Installed in one of the more unlikely Prospect.1 venues spread throughout the city—the chapel of the Gaskin-Southall Mortuary that was recently purchased by the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Foundation—viewers sit in pews and are forced to reconcile the setting and the subject. Pilson distinctively crafts each narrative as though one were reading through a collection of short stories—a playful picnic of young lovers, a dread-locked rapper singing on his back steps, a family portrait taking session, a boxer working out in a community center, a taxi dispatch office, a bookstore scene, and a walk down by the river with dogs in tow—are stitched together by viewpoint. By shifting the frame from close up to telescopic, the experience moves from the intimately personal to the more distilled angle of photojournalism.

McCallum/Tarry  
**The Evidence of Things Not Seen**  
2008, Oil on canvas with china silk  
Dimensions variable  
Installation view  
at the New Orleans African American Museum as part of Prospect.1  
New Orleans  
Photo credit:  
John d'Addario



*The Evidence of Things Not Seen* (2008), Bradley McCallum's and Jacqueline Tarry's (APT New York) politically charged installation of 104 portraits that are based on the police mug shots of those individuals who participated in Martin Luther King's first large-scale act of civil disobedience during the Montgomery Bus Boycott, is installed in the New Orleans African American Museum—a late 19th century landmark in the Treme neighborhood of New Orleans, considered to be the oldest surviving black community in the United States. Hung salon style on a deep burgundy red wall, these modestly-scaled paintings each covered with a thin scrim of china silk carrying a photographic screen of an original photograph, are powerful reminders of the inimitable value of collective action.

In a neighboring building on the museum grounds, Rico Gatson's (APT New York) multi-channel video installation *Spirit, Myth, Ritual and Liberation* (2008) is inspired by the murder of Meredith Hunter as documented in the film "Gimme Shelter" (1970), a pivotal event that effectively marked the close of a decade of idealism. Gatson re-worked scenes from the film, added a scene from Jean Luc Goddard's film "Sympathy for the Devil" (1968) and a soundtrack that includes music by Mahalia Jackson, who is from New Orleans, and Sonhouse to create a visual composite of flowing images that, in Gatson's words, "represent a symbolic liberation of a spirit in conflict, as well as a way to view tragedy and pain as a process that often is only resolved through time."

Perhaps the greatest achievement of Cameron's vision is the city-wide reach of the participating venues. The infamous Lower Ninth Ward alone has 14 projects throughout the region. Anne Deleporte (APT New York) in *Editorial Blue* (2008), and Adam Cvijanovic (APT New York) worked directly on the wall creating environments within the modestly scaled rooms of a traditional New Orleans bungalow. Deleporte papers the walls with newspapers collected from around the world, spanning more than a decade of journalism and consumerism. It is her editing eye that then reduces these daily journals into a magical and mythical room of images. Cvijanovic created a site specific installation of the Louisiana landscape brought from the outside into the upstairs living quarters of a merchant's shop. An eccentric and enigmatic selection of objects are discretely arranged around the room making oblique references to history, literature and a moment present and past that only the observant visitor will consider.

Rico Gatson  
**Spirit, Myth, Ritual and Liberation**  
2008, Video Installation with 3 color DVDs  
Courtesy of the artist and Ronald Feldman  
Fine Arts, New York





John Pilson  
**A Thousand Miles Away**  
2008, Single channel video  
projection with sound  
Courtesy of Nicole Klagsbrun  
Gallery, New York

Also in the Ninth Ward, Mark Bradford (APT Los Angeles) has built an ark using the shell of a destroyed and abandoned home. Sanford Biggers (APT New York) hangs—or wraps—a grand piano around the trunk of a life-size oak. Rigged as a player piano, it plays a melancholy tune of the American Jazz standard *Strange Fruit*. There are several ways to read this image: the piano could have been thrown up into this tree in a ravaging storm (Katrina?) or, an equally weighted indictment of a different shade, we are looking at a hanging tree from which the vestiges of black American culture hang.

There are so many reasons to see “Prospect.1”, not least of which is the quality of the art and the curating. But perhaps the most compelling reason is activism—to do something for New Orleans, to appreciate this extraordinary city rich with more than just beauty and cultural heritage. It is rich with people who believe in and care deeply about where they have chosen to live despite the odds and the inaction of local and federal governments. Go. Do something for your country...and for yourself.

Pamela Auchincloss is CEO and Director of APT New York.



Edgar Arceneaux  
**Watts House Project**  
September 27-28, 2008, Photo by  
Aimee Chang, Director of Academic and  
Residency Programs, Hammer Museum  
Courtesy of Watts House Project



# Edgar Arceneaux

## Watts House Project and the Science of Complexity

Extending from the lineage of conceptualism and activist practices, Watts House Project (WHP) is an ongoing collaborative artwork in the shape of a neighborhood redevelopment project, centered around the historic Watts Towers in Watts, California. Using interdisciplinary approaches, WHP engages art and architecture as a catalyst for expanding community. In collaboration with artists, architects, museums, corporations, students, community leaders, social policy makers and residents, the Watts House Project works to realize, as short term goals, physical enhancements of the neighborhood—such as the remodeling of homes, artistic lighting, fencing and signage. Equally important are social improvements in education, community organizing and street maintenance, for example. The long term goals include purchasing properties for new green architectural projects that will provide housing, as well as contribute to community life with a café, communal house, office space, an artist-in-residency program and exhibition spaces.

Understanding that basic ecological problems stem from social problems, WHP is an ecological movement that fuses art, design and creative problem solving with community action enabling the physical and social revitalization of the area surrounding the Watts Towers.

The organizing principles of the WHP are grounded in the science of Complexity. We view the neighborhood of 107th Street, our redevelopment zone, as a dynamic social system, meaning a system capable of change over time. The law of emergence describes the way patterns arise in complex systems out of a multiplicity of relatively simple interactions. Societal changes within a city as large as Los Angeles are never designed by one person and often not through collaboration (direct coordination), but rather with many individuals working in co-operation (often unknowing of others doing the same). Emergence of patterns and trends in the social sphere can be spontaneous and self-organizing.

We recognize these dynamics in the microcosm of our neighborhood and are attempting to form an organizational model that is flexible and open to spontaneous and chance events as well as opportunities. This force we are describing is insufficiently explained by reductive reasoning. Reductionism is at the basis of traditional organizational models which strive to incorporate goal formation, environmental analysis, strategy formulation and implementation of strategic control. All of these goals are based on a stabilized environment. Watts possesses both social and ecological imbalances, so what if the background in which you work is based in instability and disequilibrium?

One of the many ongoing objectives of the WHP is to look at other models towards creating principles of our own that move beyond the inside/outside dialectic of community-based art as well as the many unquestioned assumptions found in many public art projects. Models that are invested in:

**EMERGENCE  
SPONTANEITY  
INSTABILITY AND DISEQUILIBRIUM  
NON-LINEARITY  
TRANSITIVE STATES  
IRREGULARITY AND PATTERN  
SELF-ORGANIZING DYNAMICS  
METONYMY  
CONTINGENCY AND CHANCE  
UNKNOWABILITY OF THE FUTURE  
NON-REDUCTIONIST THINKING**

We are looking within the fields of linguistics (metonymy), philosophy (phenomenology) and science (complexity and chaos theory) to create a set of axioms that can change the way one describes the socially-based practice of the embedded in the WHP. If you are interested in joining this discussion, want to come for a visit or volunteer, contact me at [edgar@wattshouseproject.org](mailto:edgar@wattshouseproject.org).

Edgar Arceneaux (APT Los Angeles) lives and works in Los Angeles.

**Interfaculty? It is a question! It is neither a static object, nor an infinite concept but a responsive architecture generating a program of first intentions, moving forward fluidly. It has the great capacity to link thereby creating a place of possibilities that is not a faculty itself but a temporal and experimental studio. Its input/ output frequencies can be unpredictable taking you to a location not yet experienced<sup>1</sup>.**

**Interfaculty cannot be defined by what it is, but by what it is not. It's the leftover of definitions, the undefined junction somewhere in the galaxy, any place anytime, no place now. Above all it resides inside the interrelational capacities of human kind. An attitude allowing for things to change and interact, interact and change<sup>2</sup>.**





text/image Nico Dockx design Jean-Michel Meyers *"Every time somebody else comes into the kitchen and helps you or eats with you, the work changes... the conversation is different." (Rirkrit Tiravanija, 1999)*

– I would like to underline this notion of an artistic practice as a potential territory for the random development of works aimed at stimulating indeterminate events rather than creating art objects, hereby generating different levels of community not drawing any fixed conclusions but rather bringing forward temporary moments of learning. Today, too many things are planned and speculated upon, so it is perhaps a question of growing very personal methods of research and creating an off-beat ambience based on reciprocity and generosity. I am always already looking for people and social processes because I do not see art as a finished product but as a curious sequence of collective efforts and energies adding things to other things in search for 'another color', 'another view', 'another name'. I feel that our responsibility is that things can be changed and I like to see things change depending on the interaction of others who are using and sharing this situation/ invitation in which both our learning environment and knowledge production become interdependent. The intention of the work is not to defend a thesis but to make a contribution to life refreshing its many different sensibilities through playful actions of criticality. To practically disappear from the stage, effacing yourself, leaving its spatial conditions entirely to the public and allowing for a polyphonic subjectivity to resonate. It connects with my belief not in hierarchies but in the intensity of qualities of interconnection opening up rather than occupying 'authorship'. So more than designing a new kind of art, such an experiment tries to design a new kind of artist dropping out of time for moments, repairing to a different place and moving in between times. To be invited to do a project, or to write a text here and now –and to decide what to do, to place something in a given situation and to say this is what I do and now you can all listen to it. I am not sure. This idea of doubting,... of irregular structures I find very interesting not only because of the richness of shapes they produce but also their ever exceptional tolerance to imperfection (f.ex. cooking admits, even imposes, this very notion of imperfection and improvisation). It is about building a coalition of understanding, acceptance and difference... not to have a perfect body but a functional body –which could be a philosophy of **interfaculties** setting up various conditions necessary for creative production, collaboration and social engagement in order to develop ideas for which you may not have an answer, or will not need to provide any kind of legitimate, final product but where you move towards discovery, going beyond established programs of research.



### Seed Stage

In Corin Hewitt's *Seed Stage* on view at the Whitney Museum of American Art this fall (October 3 – January 4th) the artist has taken up residency in the lobby gallery of the museum in a self-contained theatrical space that invites the audience to partake in his daily practice through narrow vertical viewing slots at each corner. We asked Hewitt a few questions in effort to learn more about this unusual and unique engagement of the museum audience and here is what we learned.

First, Corin, will you tell us a bit about the process and the outcomes of this part of your practice?

In the case of this Whitney show, I am working on and in the set, making things and photographing them for a minimum of three days a week for the duration of the show. My time in the room shifts between a variety of processes including cooking, sculpting, casting, composting and maintaining the systems of the set. This happens alongside the ongoing process of composing, taking, and printing photographs.

The space is about 13 feet wide by 23 feet long. The front ten feet is a densely packed kitchen/workshop with most of the tools on the walls. It has a ziggurat shaped stairwell that contains box molds for casting and seed starters for growing whatever sprouts out of the compost. The stage extends from the kitchen counter for about ten more feet. On the stage I have large rolling shelving units containing canned and dried goods. Underneath the stage is the root cellar and the water system. The last three feet behind

the stage is an area that I consider the “historic” storage. In that area there is access to the back end of the shelving units that contain much of the preserved material as well as a selection of images that are of art historic interest to me hung adjacent to older photographs of mine.

I am thinking about the performative process in terms of systems—systems to reproduce, preserve, and create information. I am thinking more about the “medium” as a verb, an action that changes the state or form of material over time. I consider this whole process as being one where I create and steward a series of systems that produce new ways of looking at things. The systems range from ones that heat and cool (stove, panini press, and hotplates, refrigerator and freezer) to sculpting reproductions from 3d color wheel made of Plasticine, as well as a worm composting system that processes both vegetable debris and photographs that I later remove and then incorporate into other photos. I like thinking about “medium” as a conduit or tool to produce and reproduce form.

How are your “laboratories” and what do you do in them that is different from your studio?

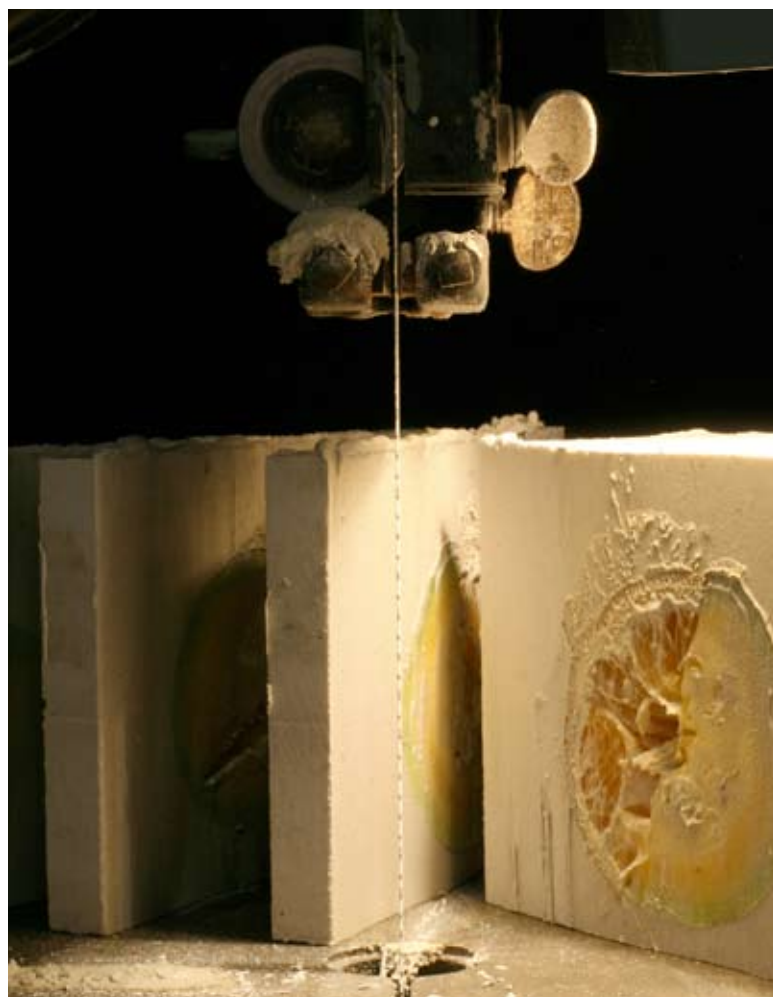
The most important difference is that in studio practice there is a building of material anticipating a finality of release. In this case there is no finality of product.

Do you see this as a solitary studio practice or in some way interacting with your audience by making a public “spectator” event of your working process?



# Corin Hewitt

Corin Hewitt  
**Corin Hewitt: Seed Stage**  
October 3, 2008 – January 4, 2009  
Installation view at the Whitney  
Museum of American Art, New York  
Photo credit: Sheldon C. Collins



It is more of a theatrical practice of process and record. It is a theatrical space where observation is its foundation. Theatre has historically required an audience, but in this case a large portion of the theatrical observation is done by me with cameras. I wanted to create a space where both the viewers and I can have a real time relationship with an image of making and material in transitional states. As the viewers only can observe the interior through narrow slits in the corners of the room, they are not physically engaged with the material that is being worked. We are both involved in images of actions being played out in time. Throughout the course of the exhibition, photographs I have created within the space are posted on the exterior, in a way making the viewers part of this process. This is also part of the process of looking—the location and dislocation of these photographs.

Is the audience an integral—or perhaps essential—part of your creative practice in these orchestrated settings?

As there is little to no overt engagement with the audience, the audience may have more subtle affect on the work due to the intensity or duration of their observation. Although it feels impossible to quantify, I would say that there is a certain psychological affect in both the visual pressures and inspiration resulting from sense of interest that I feel from the looking. And yet the audience is also as integral as it is for viewing a painting, a sculpture or a photograph.

What becomes of the photographs? Do you see them as visual representations of more than the performative process?

I select a group of these photographs that go on to function in a variety of ways. We are currently working on a book of the photographs from Performance #2 (in Portland) that will be completed for the spring to accompany an exhibition at the Seattle Museum of Art of these same photographs. I will also keep one complete group of photographs together as a single collection so that they can function as an interrelated conversation from each performance period and a more limited selection of photographs from each group that are sold as individual editions. I also continue to use the reproductions of the photographs as material in future performances.

Finally, what is your stepping off point for this work? Are there certain practices, artists or works you reflect upon while making this work?

I find connected thought in work ranging from Casper David Friedrich's painting to Kurt Schwitters' Merzbau. I am very interested in the formal theatre at the Bauhaus, particularly the work of Oscar Schlemmer and Andreas Weineger. Other influences range from the Light-Space Modulator of Moholy Nagy to the still lives of Cotan, Zuberan and Morandi.

Corin Hewitt (APT New York) lives and works in Brooklyn.

## Salon Aleman

*Salon Aleman* is a gathering place, an experimentation field for contemporary visual artists creating an innovative connection between their work and a large audience. The project's premise examines the notion of removing the spectatorship of the traditional viewing experience by inviting an audience that is perhaps unaware of the artistic intentions of the salon. The project first premiered in Berlin, in the basement of unitednationsplaza, a project by Anton Vidokle structured as a seminar/residency program. *Salon Aleman* has since traveled to venues in cities all over the world, recently including the Whitney Museum of American Art as part of the 2008 Whitney Biennial, the New Museum in New York City and the 21c Museum in Louisville, Kentucky.

Fueled by *Tequila Sarabia*, a central aspect of the project is audience participation that need not be limited to the *Salon Aleman* event location but may be transferred to private spaces (via complimentary bottles of tequila). This allows the audience to continue the project in self-created, uninhibited environments and actively interact within a special context that stresses the notion of the translatability of visual, social and spiritual languages while building a departure point for further cultural investigations that explore the global, the popular and the academic.

Furthering this idea of engaging non-art audiences in my practice, in March 2009, I will create a site-specific project at the U.S. Consulate in Guadalajara, Mexico, which receives 390,000 visitors per year. Mixing humor and absurdity, this project will make light of political messages and reinforce the importance of understanding the human consequences in relation to international necessities and generosities.

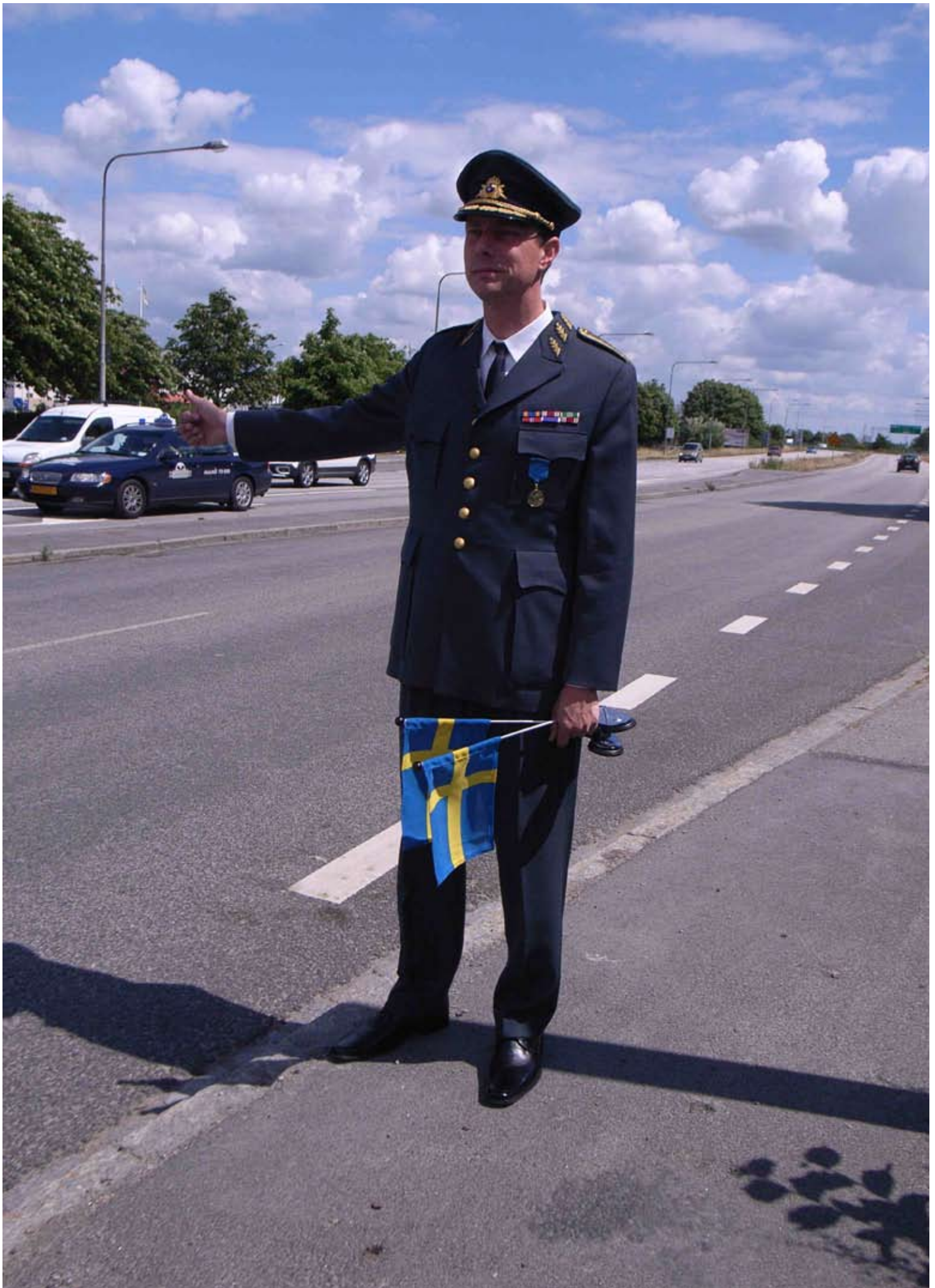
Eduardo Sarabia (APT Los Angeles) lives and works in Los Angeles, Berlin and Guadalajara, Mexico.



Eduardo Sarabia  
Salon Aleman  
Courtesy of the Artist

# Eduardo Sarabia





# Ahmet Ögüt

## Looking After the Hitchhiking General

Last summer I was invited to participate in a project curated by Jacob Fabricius. The project was called Autostop, which means hitchhiking in Spanish. During this project in June 2008, members of the staff at Malmö Konsthall hitchhiked with artist's works, performed artist instructions, handed out texts or simply hitchhiked in the southern region of Sweden. Including Jacob, every person working at the Malmö Konsthall hitchhiked for two days on behalf of an artist working on the project.

When Jacob approached me with this very intriguing idea, I immediately told him my memories of the period when I hitchhiked almost everyday while I was studying for a B.A. at Hacettepe University in Ankara. The funniest encounter I had on one of these occasions was when a driver stopped to pick me up and then told me that he knew me. I asked how so, and he said that a year ago he had taken me from the same location. Another time I experienced the scariest encounter during my hitchhiking adventures: I was trying to gain a lift for three hours and nobody had stopped. It was already very late when a car finally pulled over. I looked inside the car and saw four really scary and uncanny looking guys. I wasn't sure if I could trust them, but it was late and so I got in anyway. While we were on the road they found out that we came from the same village. So I was fortunate enough and arrived home safely. Lastly I would like to mention my most interesting encounter: One fine day, years ago, I was hitchhiking with three of my friends. We were trying to get to the city center from our university campus. All of a sudden an official-looking black car stopped and offered us a lift. Inside was a driver and a very good looking man wearing a suit sitting in the back seat. He told us that he was the head of the local municipality. We were surprised, and even more so when he told us we should visit him. We took him up on his offer and he gave each of us a free travel card that was valid for three months using any form of public transportation.

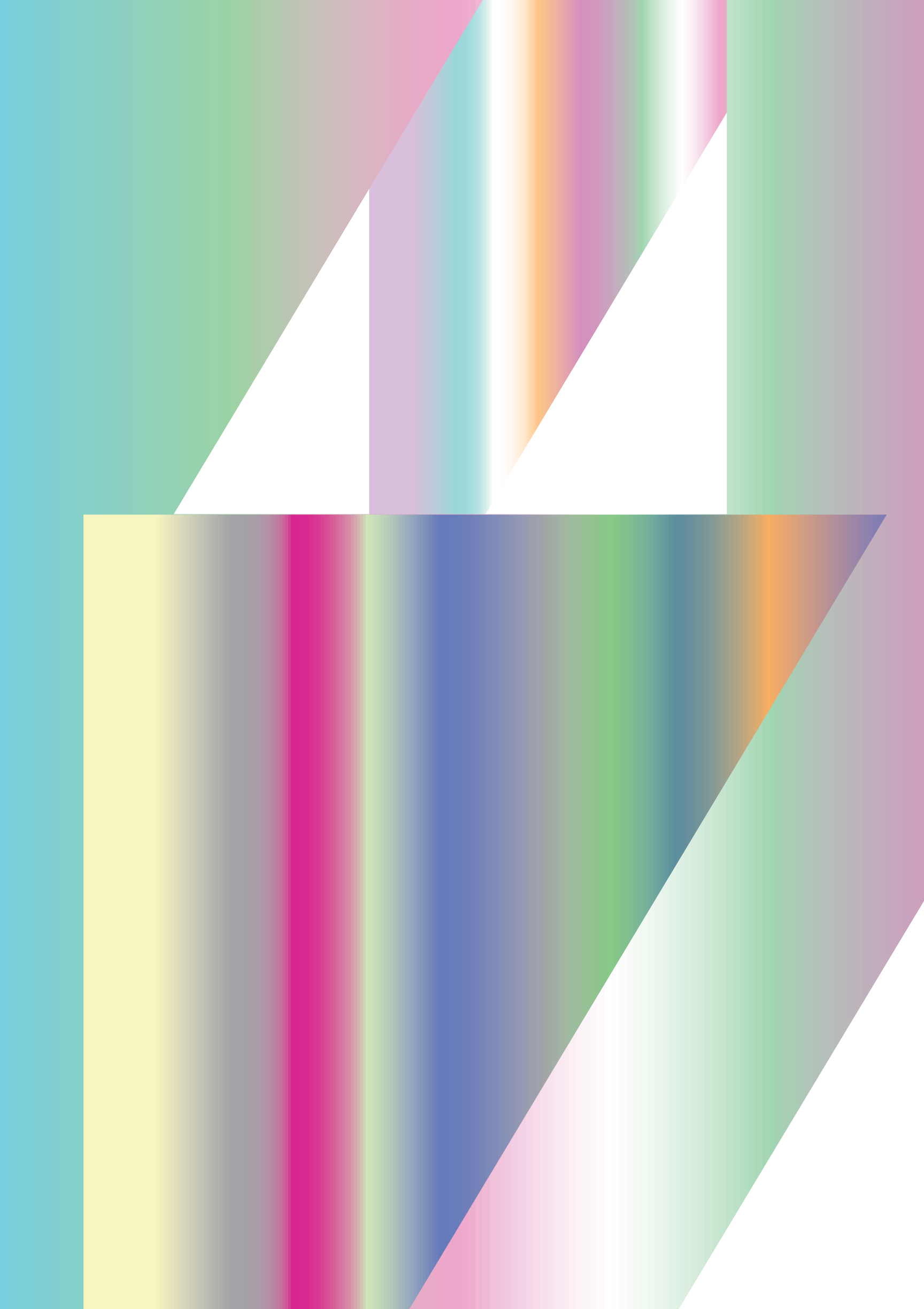
I took this last event as the inspiration for my project for Auto-stop, which was called *Hitchhiking General*. *Hitchhiking General* was performed by Olof Olsson, who was one of the participating hitchhiking Malmö Konsthall members in June 2008. For two days Olof wore a standard Swedish general suit and hitchhiked with two "car flags" in his hands. Whenever someone stopped to offer him a ride, he would suggest that they place the two small flags on the front bonnet of the car, just like the flags on "official" cars. The flags would remain in place throughout the journey until the General got out of the car. I used *Hitchhiking General* as an absurd metaphor in terms of power structure. This orchestrated situation displaces the position of power and demands participation. In a General's costume, the hitchhiker is no longer just a stranger who needs to be transported from one place to another—he becomes a strategic symbol that is hard to refuse or ignore by passersby.

For me one of the most interesting outcomes from this idea is that the audience who on those days drove their car past the *Hitchhiking General* did not have much time to think about whether he/she should stop upon seeing a General hitchhiking on the road. The visual encounter is so short that the driver has only a few moments to decide what to do and if the driver doesn't stop, they would never find out if the General is real or not. This moment of fleeting potential is the art action. The memory of not having stopped to find out the reality will stay in these drivers' minds as a question to contemplate forever.

Ahmet Ögüt (APT Dubai) lives and works in Istanbul and Amsterdam.



Ahmet Ögüt  
*Hitchhiking General*  
Courtesy of the Artist



Artist Pension Trust<sup>®</sup> (APT) is the first investment planning product, dedicated and tailored to the needs of emerging and mid-career artists - a group whose career trajectories and employment patterns make existing long-term investment programs inaccessible. The program, which is globally patented, is centered on the collective long-term investment of the participating artists' works thereby providing artists with the opportunity to invest in their financial future as well as that of other selected artists.

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Corin Hewitt  
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Installation View at the Whitney Museum of  
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Photo credit: Sheldon C. Collins