CURATORIAL COMPOSITIONS

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Abstract

This thesis proposes and articulates innovations in curatorial research and methodology. The terms and applications were elucidated in practice in an exhibition of contemporary art mounted at the Haus der Kunst in Munich from November 7, 2003, to February 15, 2004. The author of this thesis created and curated this exhibition, *Partners*, as the inaugural show for the museum’s incoming director, Chris Dercon, and its chief curator, Thomas Weski.

For the past three decades, the author-curateur has focused on the exploration of modern and contemporary culture in relation to world memory through the more than 100 contemporary-art exhibitions she has presented over that period. Her practice-based projects are anchored in her contemporary-art scholarship.

*Partners* offers a particular diagnosis of twentieth-century history and culture. The curator assembled individual artworks and placed them in a visual arrangement—the exhibition—with significations, insights and meanings arising out of her specific curatorial approach.

The title, *Partners*, signals the interdependencies of human beings in their tendency to congregate under the safe-seeming umbrellas of myths, moralities, conformities, philosophies and ideas. The title also suggests that group consensus determines world memory.

From an art-historical point of view, the title articulates a three-way partnership—a co-ordination between the curator, the space and the objects she has selected to interpret that space.

This curatorial practice celebrates art that has urgency in the moment of the exhibition, while also seeking to transcend that moment by integrating events in political and cultural history as essential elements of the exposition.

In the manner of artists, this curator presents exhibitions that can be seen as summoning counterparts to the artists’ intuitions about life. The exhibitions are not expressions, opinions or illustrations of reality, but reveal their own truths in the creation of a parallel world through the arrangement of art objects and artifacts.

Given that focus, the curator took special note of Haus der Kunst’s historical and physical space. Originally called Haus der Deutschen Kunst, the gallery played an important role in Nazi propaganda and is
well known in art history for its place in the German cultural scene of the 1930s. In response to the challenge to reactualize the museum in a new century, the curator made a composition that addressed the history of the past with specifically chosen examples of art and artifacts that foregrounded the present.

*Partners* proposes an innovation in curatorial methodology in that it is a “curatorial composition,” one that has its own unity and point of view, like an individual work in any artistic medium. In a curatorial composition such as *Partners*, the individual works stand in specific relationships to each other, both in terms of their physical placement and in terms of their cognitive consonance, dissonance and resonance. The media in which the artworks are made and the place in which they are set all provide the curator with opportunities to mine artworks for meaning, knowledge and insight beyond the possibilities inherent in the individual works themselves.

This curatorial composition was a direct function of the curator’s intellectual and experiential engagement with specific objects, as well as the history that informed their location. In other words, the autonomous elements on display have dual roles — as fixtures that pin down the cultural-diagnostic content of the show in its historical space and as provocative contemporary-art gestures that hold positions in history, as well as in the history of art. While each work or object has content, it takes on additional meaning when placed in a specific space with other works. As a result, a dialogue occurs between the works themselves along with the arena in which they are placed. The voice of each artist is not only heard through each work but amplified by the works around it, as well as by the architectural context surrounding and situating it.

Rather than assembling a body of examples from a chosen roster of artists to express a curatorial concept, *Partners* exemplifies a model of curatorial practice that expresses itself by putting particular works together in a particular space. These pieces are then assembled alongside iconic objects and artifacts from other disciplines and media, such as photography, photojournalism and contemporary-art photography, images from popular culture, as well as a performance of a pop song by an Elvis Presley impersonator. The curator also included *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, an archive assembled from a source unique to our time (the Internet auction site, eBay) as both a contemporary-art work and as a context to present a contemporary sculpture. Also included are vernacular objects such as antique teddy bears and a rare tin toy. It is fundamental to the curator’s practice that she may explore any media to make her own work.

Two influential and pioneering predecessors, Harald Szeemann and Rudi Fuchs, are discussed in the Introduction to the thesis, not only in terms of their contributions to modern curatorial practice but also in the ways their practices have contributed to, but also differ from, the author’s own. Szeemann pioneered the idea of curating group shows around a theme, a methodology that has now become the norm. Naming his shows was the start of his process, based on his intuitive appreciation of what artists were producing at the time. He was receptive to the art he saw, and created engaging titles that offered a broad opportunity for artists to make or provide works as interpretations of his initial concepts. He created exhibitions in the form of a *Gesamtkunstwerk*
Like Szeemann, Fuchs also worked closely and poetically with artists. A virtuoso curator, he made organic, coherent shows whose form and content derived from his deep understanding of and response to what artists and their artworks were saying. Both curators exhibited art and antique artifacts in imaginative juxtapositions that were engaging and illuminating and that created correspondences between objects of both the same and different periods of history.

Both were highly receptive to the visual arts through their empathic relationships with the works and with the artists whose work engaged them. Neither approached art as a theoretician. They celebrated the practices of artists in their own practice-based work as curators.

While acknowledging her indebtedness to Szeemann and to Fuchs, Partners’ curator presents a more relational perspective that calls upon the history of the architectural space as a cultural context and the diagnostic possibilities arising from the interplay of works from different disciplines. Szeemann and Fuchs also exhibited art and artifacts together, imaginatively and with juxtapositions, making for arresting shows. The author of this thesis, however, unites the art and objects chosen as essential and specific parts of a narrative that puts an equal focus on what each object is saying in and of itself, in its context and in its location. Partners created a dialogue with the museum in which it was mounted, and that relationship between locale and content was itself designed to elicit insights into art’s place in history and in world memory. The author-curatorial has long striven to unmoor works from the realm of art history and allow them to come to life in association with popular culture or icons of history. Instead of building an exhibition around a specific group of artists or theme to make a statement about the art of our time, Partners examined twentieth-century culture through a multidisciplinary group of works and artifacts whose physical, intellectual and emotional interrelationships in a particular space, when co-ordinated together, created the potential for a transcendent experience in the viewer.

The author-curatorial’s approach of reading a work through the frame of several contexts alters the discourse between the artist and the curator; it increases the intensity of the partnership while taking it to a new metaphorical plane. The curator’s practice engages in an alternative partnership with the artist, precipitating a new kind of conversation about the interpretation of specific works, as well as a different and mutating relationship with the viewer that provokes insights into the work of art and what history can tell us about ourselves that goes beyond the literality of information. Indeed, the viewer may think the show is about one thing, when a closer consideration, through the lenses of contemporary-art expectations or the lenses of other disciplines, might reveal that it is actually about another. Meaning becomes a matter of perspective and how you look at things. In fact, the image of the tin toy, Minnie Mouse Carrying Felix in Cages, which served as the poster identifier for the show, metaphorically encapsulates the notion of attempting to capture that which is
fugitive. Felix, the partner of Minnie Mouse, is both “there” and “not there.”

*Partners* as an exhibition proposes a new concept of curatorial composition and practice. Its development and exposition, presented through the written component, *Notes on the Exhibition*, constitute critical elements in the research that underlie the author’s conceptual framework and program. The text is not intended to translate the exhibition’s meaning or the feelings it evokes into words. The thesis is about the arrangement of art objects and artifacts to be experienced in real space, in real time.

Alongside other introductory material, the text, *Notes on the Exhibition*, was written as a guide to the terms and forms of the exhibition. The text provides the theoretical underpinnings and practical exegesis of the thesis. Themes are stated, then repeated or restated when necessary as the text progresses, to compose a verbal representation of the components of the exhibition and the interrelationships between its constituent parts.

The exhibition, mirrored by the text, is divided into three narrative-allegorical passages designed to give the viewer the most engaging experience. The three passages, flanking each other in a classically laid-out floor plan, suggest journeys for the viewer, providing the means to experience the items in the exhibition as well as the exhibition itself in ways that are both immediate and retrospective. The exhibition’s narrative power unfolds as the viewer proceeds through the passages for the first time, then reviews and re-examines what has been seen on returning through them. In this way, works are recontextualized and nudged into new realms of interpretation that arise from the viewer’s progression while also hearkening back to what was already experienced. The show not only sets up the viewer for a new experience, as occurs in life, but also allows for a deeper consideration with the eyes of someone willing to contemplate the past by reconsidering what was just seen.

Both in terms of the particular artworks assembled and their considered and contextualized layout, *Partners* was designed and constructed to offer viewers the opportunity, through contemporary art and culture, to have an embodied experience that addresses human nature in relation to world history and world memory. The curatorial practice is a direct and physical manifestation of the author-curator’s own exploration of this relationship. While all viewers are partners in the exploration, the exhibition encourages an individual engagement by each.
Samenvatting


De afgelopen drie decennia heeft de auteur-tentoonstellingsmaker zich gericht op de verkenning van moderne en contemporaine cultuur in relatie tot world memory door middel van de ruim 100 contemporaine kunsttentoonstellingen die zij in deze periode heeft samengesteld. Haar practice-based projecten zijn gestoeld op haar werk in de hedendaagse kunstwetenschap.

Partners biedt een specifieke diagnose van de 20e-eeuwse geschiedenis en cultuur. De tentoonstellingsmaker heeft individuele kunstwerken verzameld en deze geplaatst in een visueel arrangement — de tentoonstelling. Door middel van haar specifieke benadering ontstaan momenten van betekenisgeving en inzichten.

De titel, Partners, duidt op de onderlinge afhankelijkheid van mensen die tot uiting komt in hun neiging tot groepsvorming onder de ogenschijnlijk veilige bescherming van mythen, moraal, conformiteiten, filosofieën en ideeën. De titel suggereert ook dat groeps consensus bepalend is voor world memory.

Uit kunsthistorisch oogpunt articuleert de titel een drievoudig partnerschap — een coördinatie tussen de tentoonstellingsmaker, de ruimte en de objecten die zij heeft geselecteerd om die ruimte te interpreteren.

Deze praktijk van de tentoonstellingsmaker richt zich op kunstwerken met een zekere urgentie voor het moment van de tentoonstelling. Tegelijkertijd tracht deze dat moment te ontstijgen door gebeurtenissen uit de politieke en culturele geschiedenis te integreren als essentiële elementen van de expositie.

Net als de werkwijze van de kunstenaars, presenteert deze tentoonstellingsmaker exposities die de tegenhangers van de kunstenaars’ intuities over het leven oproepen. Deze tentoonstellingen zijn geen expressies, meningen of illustraties van de realiteit, maar leggen hun eigen waarheden bloot in de creatie van een parallelle wereld die ontstaat door het arrangement van kunstobjecten en artifacten.
Deze focus in acht nemende, heeft de conservator bijzondere aandacht besteed aan de historische en fysieke ruimte van het Haus der Kunst. Deze galerie, die oorspronkelijk Haus des Deutschen Kunst heette, speelde een belangrijke rol in Nazi propaganda en staat in de kunstgeschiedenis bekend om zijn plek in het Duitse culturele landschap van de jaren dertig. De uitdaging om het museum opnieuw actueel te maken in een nieuwe eeuw heeft de gastconservator beantwoord door een compositie te maken die de historie van het verleden behandelt met specifiek gekozen voorbeelden van kunstwerken en artifacten die het heden op de voorgrond doen treden.

Partners introduceert een innovatie in de methodologie van het creëren van tentoonstellingen omdat het een “tentoonstellingscompositie” ["curatorial composition"] betreft, een die zijn eigen uniciteit en gezichtspunt heeft, zoals dat ook het geval is voor een individueel werk in een artistiek medium. In een tentoonstellingscompositie zoals Partners staan de individuele werken in specifieke relaties tot elkaar, zowel wat betreft hun fysieke positie als hun cognitieve consonantie, dissonantie en resonantie. Het medium van de kunstwerken en de plaats waarin zij gepositioneerd zijn bieden de tentoonstellingsmaker kansen om betekenis, kennis en inzicht te ontdekken aan de kunstwerken voorbij de mogelijkheden die inherent zijn in de individuele kunstwerken zelf.

Deze compositie van de tentoonstellingsmaker was een direct gevolg van haar intellectuele en experimentele engagement met specifieke objecten, evenals met de geschiedenis die hun locatie heeft gevormd. Met andere woorden, de getoonde autonome elementen hebben tweevoudige rollen — als objecten die de culturele-diagnostische inhoud van de tentoonstelling positioneren in haar historische ruimte en als provocatieve handelingen van contemporaine kunst die posities innemen in de geschiedenis en de kunstgeschiedenis. Alhoewel ieder werk of object op zich inhoud heeft, krijgt deze meer betekenis wanneer het in een specifieke ruimte met andere werken wordt geplaatst. Dit resulteert in een dialoog tussen de werken zelf en van deze met de arena waarbinnen ze geplaatst zijn. De stem van iedere artiest is niet alleen hoorbaar in ieder werk, maar wordt versterkt door de omliggende werken, alsmede door de architecturale context waardoor ze omgeven en waarin ze gesitueerd worden.

In plaats van een concept in een tentoonstelling te duiden door het samenbrengen van een verzameling voorbeelden uit een bepaalde groep artiesten, geeft Partners uiting aan een praktijk die specifieke werken bij elkaar brengt in een specifieke plaats. Deze werken worden vervolgens geassembleerd naast iconische objecten en artifacten uit andere disciplines en media, zoals de fotografie, fotojournalistiek en contemporaine kunstfotografie, alsook een uitvoering van een popliedje door een Elvis Presley imitator. De tentoonstellingsmaker nam ook Partners (The Teddy Bear Project), een archief verkregen uit een bron die uniek is voor onze tijd (de internet veilingssite eBay), op als zowel een contemporain kunstwerk door haarzelf gemaakt als ook als een context waarbinnen contemporaine sculptuur gepresenteerd kan worden. Populaire objecten zoals antieke teddyberen en een zeldzaam tinnen speeltje maken ook onderdeel uit van de tentoonstelling. Het is van
fundamenteel belang voor de werkwijze van de tentoonstellingsmaker dat zij ieder medium kan onderzoeken om haar eigen werk te maken.

Twee invloedrijke en baanbrekende voorgangers, Harald Szeemann en Rudi Fuchs, worden besproken in de introductie van de dissertatie. Deze discussie richt zich niet alleen op hun bijdrage aan de praktijk van de moderne tentoonstellingsmaker, maar ook op de manier waarop hun werk heeft bijgedragen aan, maar ook verschilt van, dat van de auteur zelf. Szeemann verrichtte pionierswerk door groepstentoonstellingen te maken rond een thema, een methodologie die nu de norm is geworden. Zijn werkproces begon met het geven van een naam aan zijn show, en hij baseerde zich hierbij op zijn intuïtieve beoordeling van wat kunstenaars op dat moment maakten. Hij was ontvankelijk voor de kunst die hij zag en bedacht boeiende titels die kunstenaars mogelijkheden bood om werk in te dienen als interpretatie van zijn aanvankelijke concept. Hij maakte tentoonstellingen als een Gesamtkunstwerk (compleet kunstwerk), naar analogie van de late muziekdramas van Richard Wagner.

Zoals Szeemann, werkte ook Fuchs met de kunstenaars samen op poëtische en nauw betrokken wijze. Als virtuoos tentoonstellingsmaker maakte hij organische, coherente tentoonstellingen waarin vorm en inhoud waren gebaseerd op zijn diepgaand begrip van en reactie op wat de kunstenaars en hun werken uitdroegen. In hun tentoonstellingen creëerden beide tentoonstellingsmakers imaginatieve juxtaposities van kunst en antieke artefacten. Deze waren boeiend en verhelderend en creëerden correspondenties tussen objecten uit zowel dezelfde als verschillende periodes uit de geschiedenis.

Beiden waren zeer receptief voor de visuele kunsten door hun empathische relaties met de kunstwerken en met de kunstenaars wier werk hen boeide. Geen van tweeën benaderde kunst als theoreticus. Ze waardeerden de praktijk van de artisten in hun eigen practice-based werk als tentoonstellingsmakers.

De tentoonstellingsmaker van Partners erkent de invloed van Szeemann en Fuchs, maar presenteert zelf een meer relationeel perspectief dat de geschiedenis van de architectonische ruimte gebruikt als culturele context. Deze relacionaliteit wordt ook ontleend aan de diagnostische mogelijkheden die ontstaan uit de interactie tussen werken uit verschillende disciplines. Szeemann en Fuchs hebben ook kunst en artefacten gezamenlijk tentoongesteld, op creatieve wijze en met juxtaposities, en hebben als zodanig boeiende exposities neergezet. Anders dan hen brengt de auteur van deze dissertatie de kunst en de gekozen objecten samen als essentiële en specifieke onderdelen van een narratief dat een gelijke nadruk legt op wat ieder object uitdrukt op zichzelf, in zijn context en in zijn locatie.

Partners creëerde een dialoog met het museum waarin het geëxposeerd was. Deze relatie tussen locatie en inhoud was ontworpen om inzichten te ontlokken in de positie van de kunst in de geschiedenis en in world memory. De auteur-tentoonstellingsmaker heeft lang gestreden om de werken los te koppelen van het domein van de kunstgeschiedenis en ze tot leven te laten komen in associatie met de populaire cultuur of geschied-
Partners streeft er naar om een statement over de kunst van onze tijd te maken, maar neemt hiervoor niet een groep artiesten of een thema als uitgangspunt. In plaats daarvan onderzoekt het de 20e-eeuwse cultuur door een multi-disciplinaire verzameling werken en artefacten wier fysieke, intellectuele en emotionele interrelaties in een specifieke plaats, wanneer samen gecoördineerd, de mogelijkheid voor een transcendent ervaring in de kijker te wekken.

De aanpak van de auteur-tentoonstellingsmaker om een werk te lezen door het kader [frame] van verschillende contexten, verandert het vertoog tussen de kunstenaar en de conservator; het vergroot tegelijkertijd de intensiteit van de samenwerking tussen beide en telt het naar een nieuw metaforisch niveau. In de praktijk van de tentoonstellingsmaker bestaat een alternatieve samenwerkingsvorm met de kunstenaar waardoor een nieuw soort conversatie over de interpretatie van de specifieke werken mogelijk wordt. Daarnaast resulteert het in een andere en veranderende relatie met de kijker die nieuwe inzichten biedt in het kunstwerk en in wat de geschiedenis ons kan vertellen over onszelf dat voorbij de letterlijkheid van informatie gaat. De kijker zou kunnen denken dat de tentoonstelling over het ene gaat, terwijl uit een aandachtige consideratie, vanuit het gezichtspunt van verwachtingen in contemporaine kunst, of de gezichtspunten van de andere disciplines, wellicht zou blijken dat het over het andere gaat. Betekenis wordt een kwestie van perspectief en de wijze waarop men naar dingen kijkt. Het beeld van het tinnen speelgoed, Minnie Mouse Carrying Felix in Cages, de afbeelding op de poster van de tentoonstelling, omsluit op metaforische wijze de poging vast te houden aan datgene wat vluchtig is. Felix, de partner van Minnie, is er zowel “daar” als “niet-daar.”

Als tentoonstelling biedt Partners een nieuw concept van de compositie en het werk van de tentoonstellingsmaker. Partners’ ontwikkeling en expositie, zoals gepresenteerd in de geschreven component, Notes on the Exhibition, zijn kritieke elementen in het onderzoek dat ten grondslag ligt aan het conceptuele kader en programma van de auteur. De tekst is niet bedoeld om de betekenis van de tentoonstelling, of de gevoelens die het oproept, te vertalen in woorden. De dissertatie gaat over het arrangement van kunstobjecten en artefacten die ervaren kunnen worden in echte ruimte, in echte tijd.

Naast ander inleidend materiaal, is de tekst, Notes on the Exhibition, geschreven als een handleiding tot de termen en vormen van de tentoonstelling. Deze tekst biedt het theoretisch fundament en de praktische uitwerking van de dissertatie. Een verbale representatie van de componenten van de tentoonstelling en hun interrelaties wordt in deze tekst gevormd door het noemen, herhalen en, indien nodig, hernoemen van thema’s.

De tentoonstelling, gespiegeld in de text, is verdeeld in drie narratief-allegorische passages die zijn ontworpen om de kijker de meest boeiende ervaring te bieden. De drie passages, die aan elkaar grenzen in een klassiek uitgelegd grondplan, bieden de kijker routes waardoor het mogelijk wordt om de objecten in de tentoonstelling en de tentoonstelling zelf te ervaren op manieren die zowel onmiddellijk als retrospectief zijn. De narratieve kracht van de tentoonstelling manifesteert zich als de kijker voor de eerste keer door de passages
beweegt en, wanneer zij hierdoor weer terugkeert, herziet en heronderzoekt wat er eerder gezien is. Op deze manier worden de werken opnieuw gecontextualiseerd en geïnterpreteerd als gevolg van zowel de beweging van de kijker door de passages als de reflectie op datgene wat al eerder ervaren is.

De tentoonstelling biedt de kijker niet alleen een nieuwe ervaring maar ook een meer diepgaande beschouwing, mits iemand bereid is om na te denken over het verleden, door datgene wat zojuist bekeken is in heroverweging te nemen. Zowel wat betreft de termen van de specifieke verzamelde kunstwerken en hun overwogen en gecontextualiseerde layout, was *Partners* ontworpen en geconstrueerd om, door middel van contemporaine kunst en cultuur, kijkers de mogelijkheid te geven een belichaamde ervaring te hebben die de menselijke natuur in verband brengt met wereldgeschiedenis en *world memory*. Deze praktijk van de tentoonstellingsmaker is een directe en fysieke manifestatie van de auteur-tentoonstellingmakers eigen verkenning van dit verband. Hoewel alle kijkers partners zijn in de verkenning, stimuleert de tentoonstelling een individueel engagement van ieder op zich.
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Ydessa Hendeles
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Introduction

This text accompanies the exhibition *Partners*, which was mounted at the Haus der Kunst in Munich from November 7, 2003, to February 15, 2004 [Figures 1.0–1.4], and the catalogue that was published in time for the opening. *Partners* was created in the 24th year of the curator’s three decades of presenting more than 100 exhibitions.

While the catalogue contains elucidatory texts from the perspective of scholars, the curator did not attempt to interpret the show, preferring to write a short composition for the catalogue as a personal introduction to the exhibition and a section at the end, called *Notes on the Exhibition*, which evokes—in form and, to some extent, content—the traditional didactic role of footnotes. But, although themes are suggested, this text does not attempt to “read” or interpret the experience of the show for the viewer. The title, *Notes on the Exhibition*, was inspired by and intended to evoke *Pictures at an Exhibition*, a suite in 10 movements composed for piano by Modest Mussorgsky in 1874.

Like the audio guides in major galleries, *Notes on the Exhibition* was available in the catalogue to provide background historical information for viewers who wanted more information than could be provided on wall labels. *Notes on the Exhibition* attempts to preserve the mystery of the exhibition while allowing visitors to have a deeper experience and further means to gain entry into the works, separately and together.

*Partners* was created to offer a contemporary-art experience that interprets the past from the vantage point of the present.¹ It provides a provocative and poetic interpretation of twentieth-century history and culture. For decades, the curator’s work has focused on exploring modern and contemporary culture in relation to world memory. *Partners* explores the way art reflects on human nature by conjuring images of the twentieth century, underscored by themes of desire and frustration, murder and suicide, potency and impotency, sabotage and survival. It is, in effect, a work of cultural diagnosis.

*Partners* creates a narrative and tells stories through contemporary art using three narrative-allegorical

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¹ This approach of making the past a “response” to the present, which the curator has been practising for decades, has been termed “pre-posterous history” by Mieke Bal; see: Bal 1999
passages created expressly to give the viewer the most engaging experience. The exhibition is composed of an assortment of items, not all of which would necessarily be considered as traditional art objects. It includes, for example, a contemporary artwork (created by the curator) in the form of an archive assembled from a source unique to our time (the Internet auction, eBay), as well as historical photography, photojournalism, vernacular objects such as a rare tin toy and images from popular culture.

The title, *Partners*, indicates the interdependencies of human beings and their tendency to congregate under the safe-seeming umbrellas of myths, moralities, conformities, philosophies and ideas. It also suggests that group consensus determines world memory. The twentieth century was the first in which historical events could be seen by many people through film, photographs and television and no longer primarily through paintings or drawings. Moreover, the importance of historical figures, from popular culture and historical incidents, are all promulgated by consensus of the media.

*Partners* not only invokes relationships between people in order to provoke possible meanings to take into consideration but also, through the works on view, looks at alliances between people in relationships that are documented in history, be they romantic, political or circumstantial.

*Partners* embodies an innovation in curatorial methodology in that it is a “curatorial composition.” It is a composition because the exhibition is a visual arrangement of elements that creates a sense of unity, comparable to a single artwork or a piece of music, dance, writing or film. The method is “curatorial” because it offers a selection of items chosen specifically to create a point of view. Through the encounter with this point of view, the exhibition provides an opportunity for knowledge, insight and a greater understanding of the works, individually and together, as well as in the context in which they are exhibited.

A curatorial composition is an exhibition integrated to such a high degree and to such a high level of insight that as a whole it can precipitate a transcendent experience for the viewer in the manner of an individual work of art. In other words, *Partners* proposes an exhibition that functions like a single artwork. It took the form of a group show, using specific works and the multiple connections among them. But it also has its own separate identity.

While the role of auteur-curatorial has a long history in the presentation of artworks, Harald Szeemann is largely regarded as the pioneer of creative curating in contemporary art. He introduced the practice of curating group shows around a theme, a methodology that has now become the norm. Indeed, his *Documenta 5* in 1972 has a mythic position of reverence among art historians as a watershed example of the large-scale group exhibition that is presented every five years in Kassel, Germany.

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Szeemann pioneered a style of contemporary-art exhibition following the form of a Gesamtkunstwerk (total work of art), analogous to the later music dramas of Richard Wagner.\(^4\) Szeemann's themes were imaginative and his shows theatrical. They also suited the conceptual art and large installation works being made when he began as an Ausstellungsmacher (exhibition-maker). He was receptive to the art he saw, and created engaging titles that offered a broad opportunity for artists to make or provide works as interpretations of his initial concepts.

Naming his shows was the start of Szeemann's process, based on his intuitive appreciation of what artists were creating at the time. He then invited artists to provide works they felt would suit his idea. He bonded with artists, and realized partnerships that generated works that became what he called "poems in space." He also described his shows as "structured chaos."

In his final show as Director of the Kunsthalle in Bern, *Live in Your Head: When Attitudes Become Form* (1969), Szeemann curated the first large survey of conceptual art in Europe. This exhibition became so controversial with the local press that he became disheartened and resigned. Free of the mundane, political tasks of a collecting museum, he moved through the world as an independent curator.\(^5\)

His contribution as a co-presenter of art, working together with artists in the manner of a partner or, as he called it, an “accomplice,” changed the methodology of how a contemporary-art exhibition was made. In the process, he opened the door to the creativity of curators to invent imaginative ideas for shows and act as cultural diagnosticians who identify trends and movements of art.\(^6\)

Although several major curators have contributed consequentially to the history of presenting exhibitions of contemporary art, the lineage of the curator of Partners is most directly traced to the practices of Szeemann and of Rudi Fuchs. Curating was an act of empathy for both. They grasped the artists’ art practices with deep understanding, almost as if they had, metaphorically speaking, climbed inside the heads of artists to see the

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\(^4\) At the outset of his exile from Germany, Richard Wagner famously published a number of essays in quick succession to elucidate his ideas about the role of art in society in general and the Gesamtkunstwerk in particular, the latter evolving in Wagner's terms as an attempt to unite all the arts in an operatic performance that staged stories of universal (mythic) significance. Though Wagner's inspiration came from his understanding of the practice of Attic Greek theatre, his ideas were to some extent a reaction to what he regarded as the shallow and artificial spectacle that informed opera conventions of his own day. He would return to his ideas in theory and practice throughout his career, but he first laid them out in: *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft (The Artwork of the Future, 1849)*, *Die Kunst und Die Revolution (Art and Revolution, 1849)* and *Oper und Drama (Opera and Drama, 1851)*. See: Wagner 1993; Wagner 1995; Wagner 1995.

\(^5\) The exhibition was held from March 25 to April 27. Szeemann began a leave of absence from his position at the Kunsthalle Bern on April 30 and officially resigned on September 30, 1969 (Szeemann, et al., eds. 2007: 260). This exhibition, and the reaction to it by the media, is thoroughly documented in Szeemann, et al., eds. 2007: 225-261 (see also Szeemann's interview with Hans Ulrich Obrist: Obrist, 2008: 88-89).

\(^6\) But the process was not without controversy. The risk is that the artist and artworks will be subsumed within the authorship of the curator. In his essay included in Jens Hoffmann's 2003 project *The Next Documenta Should Be Curated by an Artist*, John Baldessari wrote, "Curators seemingly want to be artists. Architects want to be artists. I don't know if this is an unhealthy trend or not. What disturbs me is a growing tendency for artists to be used as art materials, like paint, canvas, etc. I am uneasy about being used as an ingredient for an exhibition recipe, i.e., to illustrate a curator’s thesis. A logical extreme of this point of view would be for me to be included in an exhibition entitled ‘Artists Over 6 Feet 6 Inches,’ since I am 6’7”. Does this have anything to do with the work I do? It's sandpapering the edges off of art to make it fit a recipe.” (Baldessari 2003).
world through their eyes. They then externalized their comprehension through the curating of their shows. In the process, they were able to share with viewers insights into the times from the artists’ points of view. The works exhibited by these curators did not “describe” the times, or express it with art co-ordinated into typologies, using consonances as a curatorial strategy for coherence. Instead, Fuchs and Szeemann used correspondences that displayed their profound grasp of the art they presented and the power of that art to express its time in history.

Both curators worked closely with artists and both worked poetically, with Fuchs referring to his ahistorical pairings of works as “stanzas,” but their methodologies are different.7

Unlike Documenta 5 by Szeemann, Fuchs’ Documenta 7 (1982) did not start out from a title but with the actuality of how Fuchs experienced artworks. He showed art in imaginative juxtapositions that were engaging and illuminating, and that established correspondences between works of both the same and different periods of history. When he showed works from different periods of history together, each retained its self-sufficiency. His approach was to search for the essence of a work of art—that is, its timeless dimension, which can be traced in visible form.

As if to emphasize the union of the curator with the art as rooted in material, empirical evidence, Fuchs wrote a brief introduction to Documenta 7 that ended as follows: “When the French traveller who discovered the Niagara Falls returned to New York, none of his sophisticated friends believed his fantastic story. ‘What is your proof?’ they asked. ‘My proof,’ he said, ‘is that I have seen it.’”8

Partners is a very different kind of curatorial “marriage.” The curatorial practice of Partners is “relational.” Indeed, the image of Minnie Mouse Carrying Felix in Cages [Figure 1.0], which served as the poster identifier of the show, encapsulates metaphorically and allegorically the way in which the curator’s practice both comments on the curatorial practices of Szeemann and Fuchs while also differing from theirs. Like them, she eschewed the constructs of art historians and worked ahistorically—reinterpreting the canon of art history. And like them, she, too, has a responsive relationship to her particular moment in history. Her curatorial

8 Fuchs 1982: xv.

Fuchs’ Documenta 7 of 1982 was the first one actually viewed in person by this curator and it had by far the most inspirational and long-lasting effect, to the point that a decade later, Okui Enwezor, curator of Documenta 11, 2002, made public reference to this being “Ydessa’s favourite Documenta,” when he talked about the history of Documenta at the Art Gallery of Ontario in Toronto. Richard Rhodes begins his 1993 profile of Ydessa Hendeles, “The Narrator,” by describing how, in July 1982, she made a presentation of 350 slides she took of Rudi Fuchs’ Documenta 7 to the professional art community in Toronto over a 12-hour period, from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. The writer, then a curator for Parachute magazine, and now the editor of Canadian Art, stayed to the end. It was a filmic presentation, as described by the article as follows: “It was not just the technical quality of the images, it was the painstaking way in which the images had begun at the beginning and proceeded, almost work by work, through the entire exhibition. She would say things like: This is the third floor of the Friedericianum and Herman Nitsch’s installation. (Click.) This picture is now about fifteen feet further along the corridor. (Click to detail.) You can see the way the red has been splashed up and allowed to run down like blood along the walls. Slide after slide, precise descriptions of objects were linked with precise, almost uncanny descriptions of the spaces they were in.” (Rhodes 1993: 42, 43).
compositions reflect a more relational perspective between objects with meanings that modulate. Boundaries between disciplines are being broken and redefined, and images have become unmoored and increasingly elusive. Images from reality have started to coalesce with images of art. Like the image of Felix, meaning that appears to be identifiable either mutates or flees. Truths are no longer limited to what the artist intended, or what the art itself expresses, and the art is no longer under the autonomous control of the curator or the museum.

The curator and the owner of the copyright—be it the artist or some other agency—have a relationship of equivalent power with respect to a particular artwork and its display. In the case of Partners, there is also a third partner—the museum itself, as a context that affects the choices and alters the reception of the exhibited items.

Partners began with a cultural context—an invitation by the Haus der Kunst in Munich to mount the flagship show that would announce the new direction by incoming Director Chris Dercon and Chief Curator Thomas Weski. The museum was originally built to showcase art that served the state as propaganda. Although its current role had long since been redefined to display contemporary art, the place had lost its urgency and its audience.

In response to the challenge to reactualize the museum, the invited curator created a composition that addressed the history of the past with specifically chosen examples of art and artifacts that foregrounded the present. But more than that, the composition put into place works that served to precipitate precise interpretations of history, past and present, on several levels. In effect, the composition wrangled with the profound cultural underpinnings of the museum’s original intention as a context for its current role. By selecting pieces that resonate strongly in their own right, and positioning them as a narrative, the curator was able to use the context of the museum as a platform to enable those works to speak site-specifically, both individually as well as in a group. In other words, the curator did not utilize the works to illustrate a preconceived notion or theme, but worked with her understanding of the content of the individual artworks themselves to articulate her commentary on the museum’s multi-faceted, complex identity.

The title of this exhibition, Partners, has many meanings. A first partnership emerged from the combination of the works and the building. The building was mined for meaning by virtue of the works and, as a result, became united with those works as if they were born in the spaces. Neither was subordinated to the other; there was a balance in the partnership between the items installed and the context.

But there was also another partnership—between the artist and the curator. As with Szeemann’s connection with artists in the production of meaning, the curator of Partners also bonded with artists, but in a relationship with specific, individual works rather than oeuvres. The artworks were the site of a dialogue between the two. The curator was, in effect, reflecting back to the artist a close reading of the work. Indeed, it was the curator’s intimate insights into the latent content of each specific work that enabled her to
co-ordinate and choreograph the works into an articulate, coherent curatorial composition composed of various interwoven narratives.

A central aspect of this curatorial vision is that while each object has inherent content, when placed in a specific space with other works it takes on additional meaning. As a result, a dialogue occurs between the items themselves, along with the arena in which they are placed, to the point where the voice of each artist through each work is not only heard but amplified by the works around it, as well as by the architectural context surrounding and situating it.

The partnerships in *Partners* access the content of the individual works and partner it with the historical, architectural statement of the space, suggesting a multi-layered approach. This differs significantly not just from Szeemann’s approach but also, and perhaps most particularly, from the now-conventional curatorial practice he initiated. The Szeemann-style practice starts from a preconceived thesis or thematic title and then assembles artworks to illustrate or respond to that mold. *Partners*, in contrast, was the result of the curator interpreting individual works and then placing them in a specific context — both the galleries and the museum itself — so the works could, in effect, respond to one another, resonate and provide insight, separately and together.

*Partners* took special note of Haus der Kunst’s historical and physical space. Haus der Kunst, originally known as Haus der Deutschen Kunst, played an important role in Nazi propaganda and is well known in art history for its place in the German cultural scene of the 1930s. On July 18, 1937, the exhibition *Grosse Deutsche Kunstausstellung* (*Great German Art Exhibition*) [Figure 1.6] opened there as an opportunity to display state-sanctioned art. In a well-orchestrated propagandistic step, the infamous exhibition *Entartete “Kunst”* (*Degenerate “Art”*) opened at the Arcades of the Hofgarten across the road a day later. *Entartete “Kunst”* is notorious for exhibiting works of many important avant-garde artists — including Max Beckmann, Max Ernst, Wassily Kandinsky and Ernst Ludwig Kirchner — as insane, immoral and un-German. In this exhibition, modern art was the target for National Socialist attacks, and, indeed, the exhibition is a good example of the complex use of propaganda by the Nazi regime.9

Knowing Haus der Kunst’s past is thus essential to the experience of *Partners*. The building’s history echoes around the exhibited objects and creates a unique context for viewing and understanding them. The most poignant and straightforward example is *Him*, Maurizio Cattelan’s child-sized sculpture of the adult Adolf Hitler [Figures 1.97–1.99]. Interpretations of this sculpture, such as Laura Hoptman’s reading of it as questioning the limits of Catholic doctrine, have particular resonance in this building. In *Partners*, *Him* invites

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9 For the exhibition *Grosse Deutsche Kunstausstellung* (*Great German Art Exhibition*), see Guenther 33-36. For the exhibition *Entartete “Kunst”* (*Degenerate “Art”*), see Lütichau 45-81. Among many publications on this moment in Germany’s cultural history, see, in particular, Michaud 2004.
a reading in terms of its presentation in a space that Hitler commissioned, used for his propagandist aims and visited in person. The abstract question that Hoptman’s interpretation poses about *Him* (Will God forgive Hitler?) turns into an urgent question directed to the viewer in Haus der Kunst.¹⁰

The installation of *Him* is one example of the way *Partners* makes use both of the building’s history and its physical space—a space that, like many objects in the exhibition, holds memories of the past. But it is also a paradigm of the way in which the works have dual roles: as fixtures that pin down the cultural-diagnostic content of the show in the historical space while concurrently acting as autonomous contemporary-art gestures that are provocations and that hold positions in history, as well as in the history of art.

The curatorial approach to *Partners* actively embraces the Paul Ludwig Troost-designed building, and in so doing, makes him and it a partner in the exhibition. *Partners* was put together taking into account the context of its locale, both physically and as a cultural interpretation. Rather than starting with raw space and carving it up to suit the art, *Partners* retained an allegiance to the space in which the art was installed. Indeed, the curator returned much of the interior to Troost’s original. This approach to the installation has more in common with the restoration and respectful refitting of a historical house (“Haus”) than a drastic reconfiguration of the architecture to suit the art. It is, in some essential sense, an intervention on as well as of an existing space while also offering a diagnostic interpretation of that space.

The objects in the exhibition complement as well as comment on the historical context of the restored interior. In the case of the Hanne Darboven installation, *Ansichten* <82> [Figures 2.4 – 2.8], for instance, the work, with its repetitive, marching imagery, highlights the building’s original history as a monumental Fascist space of pageantry. However, its humanistic content also undercuts that past. Meanwhile, at the other end of the scale spectrum, but just as referential to the past, a small antique tin toy, *Minnie Mouse Carrying Felix in Cages* [Figures 1.14, 1.17 – 1.2], hearkens back to Hitler’s ban of this American icon from Germany because it annoyed him that Mickey Mouse was a beloved talisman for German fighter planes.¹¹

What defines the curatorial practice of *Partners* is that it projects first and foremost a visual, experiential journey created by and resulting from the works on display and the multiple connections among them. Every element has a connection with every other element, and each enhances the experience of the others. That is, each piece provokes reconsideration. Rather than statically retaining its initial content through the course of the exhibition, its meaning mutates and modulates as the viewer moves through the galleries, ultimately growing, as if organically, with alternate and additional layers of meaning. More readings are proposed as each gallery frames the next. The works are recontextualized and nudged into new realms of interpretation that arise from

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¹⁰ “The problem with Catholic doctrine, which says that everybody is absolved if they ask for it, and here is Hitler on his knees, asking for absolution. The question is, if there’s a God, will this God forgive Hitler? Very few recent works of art deal with issues like that.” Hoptman as quoted in: Tomkins 2004: 88.

¹¹ Lester 2005: 222; see also Laqua 2009.
the viewer's progression while also hearkening back to what was already experienced.12

Contributing to Partners' coherence and the way it conveys its content is its physical composition, which is defined by three passages within a symmetrical, classically laid-out floor plan [Figure 1.5]. These passages suggest journeys [Figures 1.8, 2.0, 3.0]. There is the unfolding of a story as the viewer progresses through the galleries for the first time and another, upon reflection, having seen all the elements, and still others, upon review, re-examination and reflection, after returning through the passages. The exhibition offers continuing possibilities for insight as the viewer walks back through the galleries and can review their initial experience retrospectively. In this way, the show not only sets up the viewer for an original experience, as occurs in life, but also allows for a deeper consideration with the eyes of someone willing to contemplate the past by reconsidering what was just seen.

These viewing routes are sequenced so that each gallery frames those adjacent to it. But they are not labyrinthine. Viewers do not get lost in these passages, nor are they trapped. If one passage seems crowded, the viewer can head towards another. The experience is encouraging rather than coercive. Even in the most abundantly installed spaces, there is visible space either at the end, into an open space, or an escape onto upper levels where one can even traverse over doorways. Thus suggestions for itineraries and an experience of freedom combine to form an ideal of cultural production for the viewer.

The series of experiences, then, are optional to allow for individual choice and variance. The curatorial practice of Partners endeavours to recontextualize works by juxtaposing pieces on all sides of each work and each gallery, so there are no rules, no set order in which the exhibition should be viewed. It is a narrative, but one that is complex and layered. As referenced above, Partners is, in the end, a composition—a picture more than a road map.

Each passage is weighted in a way similar to the next, creating three that are in balance. Each starts out with an expository work, meanders through works that add meaning and complexity, and ends on works that jar and surprise the viewer, sometimes with sounds, or a combination of sounds and images, and sometimes solely with images that, because they come from real life, have a different timbre, functioning as visual pistols or as triggers that set off or detonate deep cultural memory. They can embed imagery into the brain, or sear it with a memory burnt into it forever. The image of the execution of a Vietnamese suspect photographed by Eddie Adams [Figure 2.62] and the horrific images of the immolation of the politically protesting monk captured by Malcolm Browne [Figures 2.49 – 2.57] are memorable precisely because they are unexpected in a contemporary-art gallery setting, and particularly because of where they are located, at each end of a majestic

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12 Due to this “moving” quality, the exhibition has been characterized as “narrative” by one critic (Alphen 2003) and as “filmic” by another (Bal 2008).
passage that is like a long processional corridor, where one cannot readily make out the images until one arrives up close.

Viewers are offered extended stages on which they can mingle with the art and artifacts in the manner of a *mise en scène*, in light-filled and darkened galleries, quiet spaces and noisy spaces, and music-filled spaces that are sometimes punctuated with the sounds of gunshots. There are higher and lower vantage points, and many different ways to see and experience objects in real space and time. It is as if one were invited to enter a work by Jeff Wall and be part of the “story,” part of the picture. The curator’s practice of making compositions aligns with Wall’s work, although in the case of *Partners*, the viewer can actually enter the scenario.

The show also creates a narrative with the curator functioning as narrator. The story connects disparate elements that comment on the history of the twentieth century, and the works are put together like a series of sentences. The curator, having responded to the objects viscerally and worked through the content with careful thought, puts them together to interpret what happens to their meaning when plucked out of one context and put into another. Each work frames the next, contextualizes it and others, and acts as a counterpoint to elements elsewhere in the show.\(^{13}\)

Each gallery functions in the same way, as both a composition and a component. There are explicit symmetries and implicit ones that suggest mirrors and mimesis, much like the layout of the Haus der Kunst. One can view, for instance, the self-portrait of Diane Arbus [Figures 1.12], taken while looking into a mirror, in tandem with Giulio Paolini’s doubled images in *Mimesi* [Figure 2.1] and then extrapolate metaphorically to include Jeff Wall’s *Mimic* [Figure 3.2]. There are points and counterpoints, such as the life-like, diminutive figure of Hitler [Figure 1.52], akin to a doll in Hitler’s doll-haus, which is in dialogue with the cartoon-like, life-sized dolls in *Saloon* by Paul McCarthy [Figures 3.26–3.43], as if *Saloon* were an oversized toy. There are images of heroes and villains, of orchestrated cinematic pictures and of candid shots. Indeed, the shots extend into other realms and come in the form of pictures or what comes out of pistols or bottles of booze. The show is variously silent and audible. *Box*, by James Coleman [Figure 2.79], at the end of one long passage, packs a punch, viscerally, but so do the pieces at the ends of each of the passages, visually.

The text *Notes on the Exhibition* is meant to function in relation to the three passages just described. This guide is part literal content, part thematic tour. It correlates to the three passages and thus corresponds to the exhibition’s structure. Each passage of text is divided into short sections that follow the exhibition’s viewing order according to the floor plan. However, while the text recreates the concrete structure of the exhibition, it

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\(^{13}\) Robert Storr, former curator in the Department of Painting and Sculpture at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, described the curator’s approach to her curatorial practice: “[Ydessa Hendeles] uses exhibitions as a way of phrasing her thoughts, and she [curates] the works that will make the sentence complete...” (Wallach 1996: 46).
cannot be understood as a linear depiction of the viewer’s experience.

*Notes on the Exhibition* repeatedly raises several themes in relation to the various works and so veers away from the exhibition’s path even as it follows it. Each instance is a variation on a broader theme, but raised in relation to a particular object. The themes are thus simultaneously general and specific. Moreover, the intertwining presentation of the themes affects the textual presentation of the artworks. Although prima facie presented as following the viewer’s route in the exhibition, descriptions of the interrelations between works from different passages in the exhibition constantly interrupt the text’s progress. Thus the text seems to jump back and forth and move laterally, in the way that the curator’s thinking also does, and so undermines the structure of the exhibition it might appear to duplicate.

This form of writing is an attempt to make the text correspond to the experience of *Partners*, in which each object has multiple connections with the other objects. This again activates the analogy to musical composition evoked above. Indeed, this almost contrapuntal manner of representing the exhibition in words finds its closest analogy in musical composition. Every score is made up of musical phrases and themes that the composer develops through a series of iterations—sometimes just subtle variations, sometimes radical, though still related, restatements—that move the music forward even as they may hark back to what has gone before or even intimate what will be heard later. As a result, every piece of music has its own organic character, colouring and meaning as it flows from beginning to end, the whole depending on the particular relationships, correspondences and contrasts between the constituent parts. The textual representation of *Partners* in *Notes on the Exhibition* works in the same way. Themes are stated, then repeated or restated when necessary as the text progresses, to compose a verbal representation of the exhibition and the interrelationships of its constituent parts.

Every passage in *Partners* sets the viewer up to be surprised. The curatorial practice at work in *Partners* utilizes the strategy of those contemporary artists who take on the role of trickster and make jokes that shock, and in doing so, capture the attention of the viewer. In some ways, it resembles a comedian setting up a joke and then delivering the punch line. However, to invoke this analogy should not reduce *Partners* to such comedic moments for that would short-circuit this complex endeavour to an easy, cheap chuckle. The humour, instead, is a trigger in its own way. It shocks by its seeming inappropriateness and thereby incites viewers to reflect on what art is and can do, and on the place of humour in it. Contemporary art, by giving expression to latent issues underlying our current moment, provokes deeper and more thoughtful considerations that reverberate long after the exhibition is over. The moments of surprise, including laughter, are only the starting point of that process. In this way—and this is the theoretical point of this project—art has a unique and ongoing capacity to act as a civilizing force.

Cattelan’s *Him* [Figures 1.97–1.99] is an example of an artwork that is particularly provocative as a
transgressive act in this setting. The inclusion of it and the way in which it was situated in the show provide a paradigm for the curator to elaborate upon the curatorial practice in Partners.

*Him* was made to be placed directly on the floor in an empty space, with nothing to distract the viewer from approaching it. Because it is a figure, and is placed with its back to the entry, the viewer is enticed to approach to see the face. As viewers progress towards what appears to be innocuous statuary and walk around the sculpture, they are suddenly taken aback. The art manipulates the viewer into a startling confrontation with the adult face of Adolf Hitler, on the deceptively diminutive body of what appears to be a 12-year-old choir boy.14

This work is also deceptive in the context of this exhibition. It sets up the viewer by introducing the stereotypical, superficial point of view that, since an image of Hitler is included, this must necessarily be a show mounted to lament the Holocaust. Not so. As an autonomous work of art, *Him* stands in its own right and does not serve as a simple illustration of the image of Hitler. As a work of contemporary art, it is not to be taken literally.

In its contemporary-art context, *Him* functions in some aspects as a prank by a trickster. The same strategy is then picked up by the curator. By showing this sculpture as a work of contemporary art in an exhibition of contemporary art in this particular context—of the building and its position in the curatorial composition—the curator makes a counter-move in terms of comprehension, as well as acknowledging the latent content of the work, and effectively tricks the trickster, along with the viewing public. In effect, she lobs the ball back to the artist in a dialogue about a specific work of art, while also creating a larger cultural dialogue about an icon in the world memory of history in a place that now showcases both the past and the present. By pushing against the boundaries, which is what the artist was also doing, the curator torques the inclination to irony and stakes out a new territory—indeed, makes a new frame for the reading of the work.

The Haus der Kunst offers an architectural context where one can approach the art and objects in it in different ways. How a viewer reads *Him* is complicated, because not only the frame but also the strategy of presenting contemporary art differs from displays of objects with historical content. *Him* appears to be just such an object. But when it is placed in a “ground zero” location like the Haus der Kunst, it can become confusing and contentious. When located in the curatorial composition immediately after Partners (*The Teddy Bear Project*) [Figures 1.22–1.94], *Him* is set up to read even more persuasively as somber—and because of the supplicating pose, verges on the ecclesiastical. This then heightens the impact of surprise.15

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14 This suggests that Cattelan may be making an oblique reference to the youth organizations of the Nazi Party, the Deutsches Jungvolk (German Youth), for boys aged 10-14, Hitler-Jugend (Hitler Youth), for boys aged 14-18, and Bund Deutscher Mädel (League of German Girls), for girls aged 10 to 18 (Dear 2006:7-15).
That is, the curator is working in tune with the work but taking the reading to one extreme aspect within it. The piece would read entirely differently in another context. But this curatorial partnership bonds with Him, and presents it in a way that so exposes its latent content, it aspires to trump all other presentations. Contemporary-art group shows are identified not only by the title but more importantly by the roster of artists. Partners is not about celebrating a body of work or the “brand” of an artist. One cannot visualize what this show is about from reading a list of the artists included. It is about mining the individual object and the context in which it is presented for meaning, each initially in its own frame of reference, be it contemporary art or a museum of historical objects, and then, as the artist himself did with this sculpture, cross over the boundary from emotional distance to the intimacy of personal alarm.

The process of not just featuring the work as an incident but also reading it through the frame of several contexts alters the dialogue between the artist and the curator, and elevates the intensity of the partnership while taking it to a new metaphorical plane. The curator’s practice has engaged in an alternative—even provocative—partnership with the artist, precipitating a new kind of dialogue that has to do with the interpretation of specific works, as well as a different kind of contrarian relationship with the viewer, who may think the show is about one thing when a closer consideration, through the lens of contemporary-art expectations, would reveal that it is actually about another. The curator thus proposes a different kind of relationship with the viewer, provoking insights into the work of art and what history can tell us about ourselves that goes beyond the literality of information.16

The subject of conformity by human beings—their desire to “fit in” and the manipulations by figures of authority and groups that influence them—is one of the abiding notions that animates Partners. However, unlike the dark humour of Sacha Baron Cohen’s mainstream comedic work, which sets up situations that mock the so-called “unthinking masses” and locates the movie audience as if comfortably outside the realm of attack, Cattelan’s work does not presume that he is separate from the group of those who are the target of his criticism. He also does not see the art community as sacrosanct and hence, safe from his satire. Everything is available to be looked at with an eye to uncovering some deeper human truth.

Cattelan is in a knowing dialogue with the works by artists working under the rubric of Young British

16 The placement of Him in a Catholic girls’ school in the 2006 Berlin Biennale was a “counter-response” to the contextualization of this work in Partners (see Cattelan et al., eds. 2006). That is, the curating of this work precipitated subsequent partnerships with the artist, who himself partnered with a curator and a critic, all of whom became “partners” in the dialogue on the presentation of this particular work. This is acknowledged in this e-mail from one of the trio of curators, which includes the artist of the work, Maurizio Cattelan himself. In an e-mail to the curator from Massimiliano Gioni dated Tuesday March 25, 2008: “I have read over and over again your book Partners, which was also a major inspiration of the Berlin Biennale I curated with Maurizio [Cattelan] and Ali [Subotnick] in 2006. Partners still is one of the most incredible exhibitions I have ever seen.” (Gioni 2008).
 Artists (YBAs), who have also been using transgression to get attention for their art.\textsuperscript{17} But there is a complexity in his work, and in particular in Him, that does not limit its readings to a visual one-liner that can easily be digested and dismissed. Him was a contemporary art “move,” to be appreciated for its “post-Duchampian” wit.\textsuperscript{18}

While the YBAs aim for the newspapers and tabloids as their targets, Cattelan has courted the media of the art community. In keeping with the tradition of contemporary art to stimulate thought and break with tradition, the sculpture doubles as a prop for a photo-op that, so to speak, “stoops to conquer” the covers of art magazines so that the attention-grabbing image of the artwork becomes mythologized. The converse also occurs in this exhibition: photojournalists’ images of totemic events in history that are then shown in a gallery break the boundaries between “facts” and “metaphors” and invite new considerations of how much world memory, accurately and inaccurately, is determined by photographic images. These two strategies for how information that includes both fact and fiction enters into our collective image archive convene in the way Him is displayed in Partners.\textsuperscript{19}

Additionally, when installed in the context of the curatorial composition of Partners at Haus der Kunst, Him invites thoughtful reflection by virtue of the precise place it is installed — at the end of the first of three passages, rather than as the punch line at the end of the exhibition. Since Him is positioned early in the show, it paces the narrative by significantly slowing down the viewing experience and preventing it from being something that runs headlong, like a speeding train rushing to an end, as if the whole show were about one single thing. The placement of this work functions in the composition like the proverbial reference used as a title for Jeff Wall’s artwork, The Stumbling Block [Figures 3.4, 3.5]. It trips up viewers in a way that invites them to stop and think, and to consider this work as a way of locating the context of the show in the twentieth century, and therefore not fall into the simplistic presumption that this is a show only about the Holocaust.

This single example suggests that Partners was curated to propose a provocative interpretation of the ongoing legacy of World War II and the Holocaust in the wider context of twentieth-century history. The exhibition was a way of talking not only about history but also about this moment in history and identity. Very importantly, the exhibition raised the larger issue of what creates a consensus that sets some figures and

\textsuperscript{17} The YBAs include the following three artists:
Chris Ofili (born 1968): Ofili affixed varnished elephant dung to his depiction of the Madonna, called The Holy Virgin Mary, 1996. When this artwork was shown in the touring exhibition Sensation at the Brooklyn Museum, in 1999, it created a scandal when then-mayor Rudy Giuliani threatened to cut off public funding for the museum (Plate 2002: 1-6).
Marc Quinn (born 1964): One of Quinn’s most notorious artworks, Self, 1991, consists of a frozen sculpture of the artist’s head made from several litres of his own blood, taken from his body over a period of several months (Kent 1994; Marsh 2008).
Damien Hirst (born 1965): Hirst has gained international fame for his works in which dead animals, such a shark, sheep and a cow, were shown, sometimes dissected, in vitrines filled with formaldehyde (Bonami 1996:112-116; Kent 1994).
For the YBAs’ rise in fame in the late 1980s and 1990s, see Ford 1996: 3-9; Shone 1997: 12-25.
\textsuperscript{18} Jonathan P. Binstock, Curator of Contemporary Art at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, as quoted in Weingarten 2005.
\textsuperscript{19} Hendeles 2005: 40.
events apart as totemic in the history of the world while others are not as recognizable. It is, on another
level, a dialogue between who sees and who gets seen. The exhibition was not made to sing the song of
victims. It was made to provide a context for the viewers to contribute their own experience. Nor does it
normalize the Holocaust as being anything other than unique. Instead, it resolutely offers and supports the
importance of a contemporary-art experience that allows each viewer to come to their own conclusion about
how they themselves feel about the conundrums of history, the nature of humanity and their own personal
identity at this moment in time.

In this way, the exhibition is interactive. The curatorial composition places a series of images that can
read as facts or can be interpreted metaphorically. It is a co-ordination of specifically chosen objects that
creates a context that offers a metaphorical floor or a ground on which viewers can stand and locate them-
selves and react in keeping with his or her personal experiences in life. It is a curatorial practice that is
specific to what is seen, but is not literal. It is a pinned-down series of incidents that leaves room for the
viewers to make up their own stories.

The result of this open-ended approach, as well as the specificity of the historical references, is that
there is abundant room for the perspectives of different generations to contribute their interpretations and make
meaning that is specific to their life experience. *Him* was made by an artist who was born in 1960. Like an
earlier generation of conceptual Italian artists such as Paolini, who was born in 1940, there is an inherent
difficulty in contributing something consequential against the backdrop of a long cultural legacy of the history
of art in their native country. As a strategy, both artists have looked beyond the impact of the physical sculp-
tures in gallery settings to the increasing importance and power of photographs to convey the content of their
works. Indeed, Paolini’s plaster sculpture, *Mimesi* [Figure 2.1], like Cattelan’s statue, is itself an endeavour
in wit that utilizes historical iconic imagery to make an art statement, but harvested from the history of art—
complete with pedestal—rather than from political history and made into a different kind of *mise en scène*.

Like Cattelan’s *Him*, Paolini’s plaster forms for *Mimesi* also double as images that stand in as
“substitutes for” and “mimic” the originals. In this way, they function as props for the camera. The photograph
of the substituted elements that together make an artwork then becomes a celebrated image in its own right,
over and above the highly replicable cast-plaster pieces, which in and of themselves are much like photographic
prints, in that they can be repeatedly generated. The image of the work is then published in magazines and
books, and becomes a stand-in for knowledge of the original work. Yet another layer to this work is the

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20 In the case of Giulio Paolini, this subject is directly addressed in a work titled *Dal “Trionfo della rappresentazione”* (cerimoniale:
l’artista è assente) (*The Triumph of Representation The Absent Artist*), 1985, shown at the Ydessa Hendeles Art Foundation in 1997 in a
group exhibition, Observances. It is composed of three slide projectors, mounted on three white sculpture pedestals. The projectors
generate three images onto the walls. See: Disch 2008: 564. For Cattelan, see: Bonami et al. 2000.
“Certificate of Authenticity,” which is also in the form of a photograph that is signed by the artist. This document locates the work in the realm of art, as individuated from the literal plaster forms themselves (which can be readily acquired), and stands as a substitute in status for the sculpture’s materiality as an object. As with the work by Cattelan, the work by Paolini moves through the world as a picture in a publication—known and appreciated from its photographic image of a surrogate made to imitate life and art.

The two decades between these two Italian artists also identify the variable relationships that different generations necessarily have to totemic icons in world memory such as Hitler. Older viewers will have a different perspective on Cattelan’s *Him* than younger viewers. Those old enough to feel the effect of World War II through their own experiences or through those recounted or suffered by their parents or grandparents may respond more directly and emotionally to the image, while those young enough to feel this part of history is no longer relevant to their daily lives may respond to it with some emotional distance. The younger generation may dismiss it as another dusty subject one learns about in school or even as a camp trope. Or, because of the shock of humour, they may not.

The legacy of Adolf Hitler and National Socialism is an indelible part of the identity of both the German people and the Jewish people. From the point of view of history, they will forever be linked ironically as partners. However, this show was not made for a political purpose, nor to contribute to the process of healing. Instead, *Partners* is a post-Holocaust document that looks at “us” and “them,” and notions of sameness and difference, to precipitate insights into the essence of human nature and the inclination to belong, using new ways to articulate that which changes the least.

Both in terms of the particular artworks assembled and their considered and contextualized layout, *Partners* was designed and constructed to offer viewers the opportunity, through contemporary art and culture, to have an embodied experience that addresses human nature in relation to world history and world memory. The curatorial practice is a direct and physical manifestation of the author-curator’s own exploration of this relationship. While all viewers are partners in the exploration, the exhibition encourages an individual engagement by each.

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Partners

Pictured here [Figure 1.19 – 1.21] is an antique tin toy, seven inches tall, made in Spain by Rogelio Sanchis between 1928 and September 1936, when Sanchis went off to fight alongside Francisco Franco in the Spanish Civil War, where he was killed.1 Displayed, as well, is a photograph—a portrait of a child from a family album [Figure 1.7]. The toy serves several functions. In addition to its original intent to entertain, for me it stands alone as a metaphor for collecting. But on these pages, I propose a connection of a toy with a boy, to make another kind of statement.

Minnie Mouse, the girlfriend of Mickey Mouse, emerged on November 18, 1928 in *Steamboat Willie*, the first animated cartoon that successfully synchronized sound with moving pictures.2 While Felix the Cat was the first silent-film cartoon star, by 1931, the talking Mickey replaced the silent Felix as the new leader in cartoons, making the toy into a comical commentary on cultural consumption.3

Minnie has captured Felix, but what does she have? Lithographed on the outside of both suitcase-like cages is an image of Felix struggling to escape. Seen from either side, Felix appears to be captured. However, viewed from other angles, the molded-tin construction of the toy reveals that the suitcases are empty. Felix the Cat was famous for being elusive, solving problems in ways unique to the world of film animation. He could pull on his tail and disappear. However, the Felix in the toy suitcase appears to be both present and absent, like a film still, caught in motion—in perpetuity. So, what is a collection to a collector?

Like the suitcases, a collection is both beacon and baggage. Minnie walks with the support of the enlightenment of art as well as the burden of its material weight. Furthermore, she has captured someone who does not want to be possessed by her, and indeed cannot be. Art, like Felix, is fugitive, with meanings that metamorphose, from person to person and over time. As well, copyright laws protect images from being owned by anyone other than their makers or their estates. What then is actually captured by the collector?

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1 Bertoia 2000: 86.
In my case, I find myself captured by the object. I become engaged in my interpretation of what I encounter and make a commitment to what holds my attention by including it in the collection. I then choose works for exhibitions, which I compose by making metaphorical connections from one object to another to precipitate insights. Indeed, that is my purpose in linking this toy together with this photograph.

The toy shown, one of only three known examples to have survived, was deaccessioned from a Spanish museum, and still bears the original cataloguing number on Minnie's left cheek. The registration reminds me of the numbers tattooed on my parents' left arms, used to catalogue them in Auschwitz.

The family-album photograph [Figure 1.7] inspired my collection of photography. It is a vintage postcard-sized portrait of a three-year-old boy named Szlamus Zweigel. The photo is dated: Warthenau, May 31, 1942. The city, formerly Zawierce, Poland, was renamed once it was German-occupied.4 For safety, my mother made this particular yellow and green outfit, with its Bavarian appearance, for her Jewish nephew, her brother's only child. The photograph is the only evidence of my cousin's existence. Shortly after the picture was taken, the child was put on a train and killed in Auschwitz.

The key-wind clockwork toy leads me to a fantasy of empowerment. It lampoons the natural predatory power structure by creating a scenario of a cat captured by a mouse. In Art Spiegelman's cartoon books, Maus, of 1986 and 1991, Nazis are depicted as cats, and Jews as mice.5 This contemporary allegory suggested to me yet another interpretation of the antique toy, in addition to it being a metaphor for collecting. When juxtaposed with this particular photograph, the toy of a mouse who has caught a cat can now extend its realm of meaning to become an inversion of the political power structure of the Third Reich. A Jew has captured a Nazi.

The invitation to curate an exhibition for the Haus der Kunst has given me an opportunity to reify this inversion. It has also given me a voice in the country in which I was born. The legacy of Hitler and Nazism is an indelible part of the identity of both the German people and the Jewish people. The show I have composed invites viewers to consider the mutating meaning of images in our cultural history through a series of narrative passages, with scenarios of desire and frustration, murder and suicide, potency and impotency, sabotage and survival.

The exhibition looks at the notion of alliances made by design and by fate. It articulates icons and belief systems embedded in the twentieth century that have inspired or precipitated connections, by choice or by circumstance, thereby defining the participants in history. I have named it Partners.

Ydessa Hendeles
Toronto
April 2003

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4 Spector 2001: 1181, 1494-5.
Notes on the Exhibition identifies the exhibition as a “curatorial composition.” By providing only the information required for viewers to appreciate the individual elements on display, and not an elaboration on the meaning of the show, the curator positions the exhibition as a whole to be addressed as a work of art with a life of its own.
Notes on the Exhibition

Passage One

DIANE ARBUS
Self-Portrait with Camera
February 1945
[Figures 1.11–1.13]

Diane Arbus, in this small photograph, is a woman of twenty-two years old. She was born in 1923 in New York City, to an upper-middle-class Jewish family, and died by her own hand in 1971.¹ The picture, though taken ten years before she studied photography with Lisette Model (from 1955 to 1957), clearly identifies her as a photographer. Arbus ultimately became a pivotal person in the history of twentieth-century documentary photography. In this photograph, she has made a composition of herself in partnership with her large Deardorff & Sons camera, a gift from her husband, Allan Arbus. Arbus has used her camera to capture the moment of looking at herself in the mirror of her parents’ bathroom. She is not peering into the camera's lens but rather at her reflection.

The picture is one of several photographs Arbus took of herself in order to stay connected to her husband once he had been sent to Burma during World War II. The photograph documents yet another bond. On April 3, 1945, Doon, the first of two daughters, was born. Since 1971, Doon has administered the rights to her mother’s work.

There is an additional historical connection, by virtue of coinciding dates, which suggests a link of two Jewish lives in contrasting circumstances. Across the Atlantic, Anne Frank, a Jewish child born in 1929 in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, fled with her family to the Netherlands in 1933, when she was four years old. Until she was eleven she grew up in Holland. In 1940, the Netherlands was occupied by Germany. When, in 1942, the deportations to the “work camps” began, Anne's parents hid in the attic annex of the building that housed the business of her father, Otto. For the next two years, Anne wrote a diary of her life. In August 1944,

¹ Roegiers 1985: 7.
The people in hiding were arrested and deported. Via the transit camp Westerbork and then Auschwitz, Anne was taken to Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, where she died in March 1945. This is a widely recognized date of the death of someone known the world over for her diary and her death. It is therefore of note that this passing took place one month after Arbus took the photograph of herself, and one month before the birth of her daughter, Doon. Had Arbus, a Jew, been living in Europe, she and her child might have had a completely different fate.

The connection of Arbus to Frank emerges from the context in which the picture is placed. Partners has been presented in three passages for the viewer to progress narratively and cumulatively, landing in cul-de-sacs, as pauses for thought, before continuing by retracing the route and revisiting the works. Each work frames the following work, first upon entering and later upon returning back through the works already seen. The return trip recontextualizes the works for the viewer, enabling them to be perceived differently than when first encountered. It is after seeing the exhibits in the subsequent galleries that this picture’s implications expand to embrace the life of Anne Frank.

To construct these passages, some entrances to galleries have been closed off. Faux doors replicating Paul Ludwig Troost's original, multi-paned pairs of doors are used to maintain an appearance compatible with his architecture for the Haus der Kunst.

Partners is a composition made of metaphors. Like a tapestry, it provides a picture woven with threads of themes, but is ultimately not thematic, illustrative or didactic. Partners offers a contemporary-art experience to individuals where they can transcend the literal to search for new insights and reflections of themselves—particularly how their identities are formed, by virtue of their personal histories and those they inherit.

JOHN SWARTZ
*The Wild Bunch*
ca. 1900
[Figures 1.14–1.16]

The Wild Bunch was a gang of outlaws who, from about 1895–1902, robbed banks and trains in the Rocky Mountain area of America. Their notorious acts extended the era of the Wild West into the twentieth century.

Pictured here, seated left to right, are Harry Longbaugh (alias the “Sundance Kid”), Ben Kilpatrick (the “Tall Texan”) and George Leroy Parker (alias “Butch Cassidy”). Standing are Wm. Carver and Harvey Logan (a.k.a. “Kid Curry”).

Legend has it that, on September 19, 1900, after the Winnemucca, Nevada robbery, the gang got into a playful scuffle at Fanny Porter’s Sporting House. According to James D. Horan’s book, *The American West: The Outlaws*, they “repaired to a hat store” and, seeing some derby hats in the window, “decided as a jest to attire
themselves in this headgear, which was unusual in the West at the time.” Then, as a joke, they went to have their portrait taken by photographer John Swartz, posed with their new hats in front of a feminine floral background.2

Until this time, the gang members’ faces were not known, which protected them from being apprehended. However, this photograph provided detectives of the Pinkerton Detective Agency with a document with which they could pursue them more ardently. By 1906, copies were posted liberally, even in South America, where the gang was thought to have fled.

Historians believe that, after robbing the Aramayo Mining Co. payroll, Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid found themselves in a shoot-out in San Vincente, a town in southern Bolivia. Wounded and unwilling to allow themselves to be captured, the two committed suicide by shooting themselves in the head.3

By virtue of their mythologization in American movies such as Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, this photograph of a gang of outlaws invites us to consider the extent of our affinity with those who transgress. At the time and through the century, popular culture has supported these renegades as both bad guys and good guys. At what point do villains who break the law and even commit murder, as these men had done, become perceived as evil? This question is posed more directly as the passage progresses.

The portrait dramatizes the power of a photograph and articulates the historical point at which it became a force. These men were, in effect, shot by a photograph.

R.S. (LA ISLA TOYS)
Minnie Mouse Carrying Felix in Cages
ca. 1926–36
[Figures 1.14, 1.17–1.21]

R.S. were the initials of Rogelio Sanchis, founder of the company and the toy’s designer. La Isla was the name of his castle, where the toys were manufactured. The company made toys only from 1926 to 1936. It closed when Sanchis went off to fight on the side of Francisco Franco in the Spanish Civil War in which he was killed.

Felix the Cat first appeared on November 9, 1919, the creation of Otto Messmer (1892–1983) for the Pat Sullivan Studio. Felix, the first cartoon character developed for the film screen, was also the first intelligent animated figure, resolving problems in ways that were unique to the world of animation. Felix became the first licensed, mass-merchandised cartoon star.

Minnie Mouse, the girlfriend of Mickey Mouse, made her film debut, together with Mickey, on November 19, 1928, in the animated cartoon Steamboat Willie by Walt Disney Studios, the first cartoon

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2 Horan 1976: 256-257.
that successfully synchronized sound with moving pictures. By 1931, the talking Mickey Mouse replaced the silent Felix as the new leader in cartoons and character licensing.\textsuperscript{4}

*Minnie Mouse Carrying Felix in Cages* was issued without licensing permission from the two trademark-holders of Minnie Mouse and Felix the Cat. Bypassing these legal restrictions allowed the depiction of Minnie not with Mickey but rather with Felix, who is portrayed as both captive and elusive.

Indeed, though Felix has been captured in a caged suitcase, what Minnie Mouse possesses is questionable. The same image of Felix is portrayed graphically on each side of the suitcase. However, when viewing the toy from the front or the back, Felix is nowhere to be seen. He is seemingly embedded in the toy, located somewhere within suitcases that are open and therefore cannot actually contain anything. Notwithstanding Felix's capacity in film to make imaginative escapes from predicaments, the simultaneous presence and absence of Felix in this toy introduces a duality that links it to the dualities inherent in subsequent items on display, like the teddy bears, the dead dog and the Christ-like Hitler figure.

In addition to referencing the belief system that allows us to animate inanimate objects with our imagination (as with the bears), the toy also raises the question of what one really has when one captures something. What is at the heart of collecting? What is it that makes someone desire something and acquire it? Taking a photograph, by capturing a moment in time, is an act of collecting. Adolf Hitler was a collector, not only of objects and lands but also entire races, for which he planned commemorative museums.

A collection of anything, and particularly of art, has a place in our culture that is both enabling and baggage. In the Minnie Mouse/Felix toy, it is physically enabling, since the suitcase halves carried by Minnie, one in each hand, have wheels, allowing her to walk, step by step, without falling. A collection is both a physical burden and a precious reservoir of information, providing a resource for scholarship. A coherently curated collection suggests the universe has an inherent order that can be discovered, based on a belief that order can be made out of chaos. However, a collection can also be baggage, insofar as a system can distort reality.

Minnie Mouse is included in this show not only for the metaphorical interpretation that can be made of her partnership with Felix in this toy but also for her power as a popular icon in the twentieth century. Minnie and Mickey Mouse have endured in the imagination of the public — the result of promotion and culture. The German people were captivated by Mickey Mouse. German companies responded to the demand and fostered further engagement by producing high-quality toys, china and many other items that featured him. Indeed, it was not uncommon to see a picture of Mickey Mouse located below a Nazi Luftwaffe pilot's window as a talisman of good luck. However, when Hitler saw Mickey on the side of the plane also identified with a swastika

\textsuperscript{4} Canemaker 1991: 3-7.
and an Iron Cross, he found the symbol of the mouse offensive. Ultimately he declared war on the beloved character by banning his image in any form. Mickey’s presence became an absence.

YDESSA HENDELES
*Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*
2002
[Figures 1.22–1.94]

*Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)* includes an archive of found family-album photographs determined by a single motif: a toy teddy bear. Every photograph includes the image of a bear. The pictures are arranged in over one hundred typologies that are presented in a series of interlocking narratives so they can be read by approaches from either end of each wall.

Bears have played an important role in the legends and folklore of countries around the world for thousands of years. Possibly these creatures were of interest because they were plantigrade animals, like humans — capable of walking upright, with heel and toes making contact with the ground. The bear is central to the shamanistic rituals of North American Indians, the Inuit and the Ainu of Japan, and played a particularly significant role in Celtic cultures as well as in European and Russian myths. Bears were always powerful adversaries that humans respected.5

The story of the birth of the teddy bear, which occurred between 1902 and 1904, differs, depending on whether it is told from a German or an American perspective. The debate in the teddy-bear world over who wins credit for making the first teddy bear is as fierce as the one in the boxing world over who won the world-title boxing match in 1927 between American boxer Gene Tunney and Irish boxer Jack Dempsey, an event that is central to the metaphorical work by James Coleman in this exhibition.

Like Pat Sullivan and Disney, the original patent-holders of Felix the Cat and Minnie Mouse, brought together in the creation of a toy, Germany and America were also unwilling partners in the creation of the toy teddy bear. Theodore (Teddy) Roosevelt, an American born in New York (1858–1919), and Appollonia Margarete Steiff, a German born in Giengen (1847–1909), are both responsible for the birth of the teddy bear. They had little else in common except for childhood illness. Steiff contracted polio in 1849, which left her bound to a wheelchair, unable to walk and with a weakened right arm. Roosevelt suffered from debilitating asthma, which may have encouraged him to cultivate a macho image by becoming a big-game hunter who went on expeditions to shoot bears.

In November 1902, Roosevelt, as the 26th president of the United States, travelled to Louisiana and Mississippi to settle a border dispute. During the trip, he went bear-hunting. After four days without success,

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5 Maniera 2001: 8-19.
his hosts tried to help by tying an elderly bear to a tree, but Roosevelt refused to shoot the tethered target (though he did have it killed with a hunter’s knife).

The press reported the incident, and, two days later, on November 16, 1902, a cartoon by Clifford K. Berryman (1869–1949), head political cartoonist for The Washington Post, ran on the front page of the newspaper with the caption “Drawing the Line in Mississippi.” In the drawing, Roosevelt was posed with his hand raised in a gesture of refusal. (How effective a hand gesture can be. One has only to think of Hitler’s use of a hand gesture for propagandistic purposes, and Jeff Wall’s effective use of an expressive hand gesture in his work, Mimic [Figures 3.2, 3.3], included in this exhibition.)

At the end of November, Berryman drew a pen portrait of Roosevelt with a small bear and titled it “Teddy Bear Nov. 1902.” This is likely the first appearance of the name for what was about to emerge as a new icon.

Earlier toy bears were made to ride on wheels, with unmovable limbs and head. The first version of a toy bear with arms, legs and a head that could all be moved seems to have been introduced by Morris and Rose Michtom, immigrants from Russia who had a novelty and stationery shop on Thompson Avenue in Brooklyn, New York. As the story is told, Rose capitalized on the publicity of the cartoon and made a plush bear, which she displayed in the Michtoms’ store window with a card labelling the item “Teddy’s Bear.” This bear, and other doll-like bears Rose made, sold quickly.

The demand for Teddy’s Bears soon exceeded the Michtoms’ capabilities, and so a company by the name of Butler Brothers, a wholesaler in Brooklyn that also owned mills that produced plush, partnered with the Michtoms. This ultimately led to the establishment of the Ideal Novelty and Toy Co., which became the first major manufacturer of the teddy bear in America.

The German version of the story is that in 1902, the Steiff family, after years of research, made a plush bear-doll with a pointed nose, a hump on its back, and legs and arms that were all the same size so the bear could both sit and stand. A system of joining the legs and arms with strings enabled the bear’s head and limbs to move. It was designed to have mohair for fur, boot buttons for eyes and a nose made of sealing wax with nostrils carved into it. The toy, Bär 55 PB, was introduced at the Leipzig Toy Fair in March 1903, where it was not received with much enthusiasm. In Steiff’s cataloguing system, the 55 after Bär (bear) means he was 55 cm (22 in.) tall when seated. The “P” meant it was Plüsch (plush) and the “B” meant it was Beweglich (movable). It was not until the last day of the fair that Hermann Berg, the head buyer for the toy department of George Borgfeldt & Co., a New York wholesaler, saw the toy bear (which was reportedly described as a “stuffed misfit”) and immediately ordered three thousand. The bear was

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6 Berryman 1902.
7 Maniera 2001: 26-29.
named Petsy, based on an old-fashioned German name for a bruin, Meister Petz.⁸

Meanwhile, in America, the teddy-bear motif was further utilized by Berryman in subsequent political cartoons throughout the Roosevelt presidency. In fact, the president and his supporters exploited what had become known as teddy’s bear as a potent political mascot. By 1904, the link between the man and the bear proved very effective in the election campaign. Toy teddy bears, made by the Ideal Novelty and Toy Co., were given out as promotional items. By the time of Roosevelt's second term in office, 1905–1909, a huge market had developed for teddy bears.

But there was something special about the characteristics of the teddy bear, over and above the effective marketing of the toy. William Taft, Roosevelt's successor, tried to find a comparably popular mascot for his presidential campaign of 1909, but his attempt failed. As Leyla Maniera put it in her book, Christie’s Century of Teddy Bears, “The teddy bear had captured the public’s heart and was not to be ousted by an upstart marsupial called Billy Possum.”⁹

In 1904, Steiff created a metal-rod-jointed bear, but, by 1905, the design had been changed to disc joints. The appearance of the bear was also altered. It started to look more as it would appear for some time to come, with very long limbs, oversized paws and feet, a hump on its back, a head with a long snout, sewn nose and mouth, and boot buttons for eyes. The new design was a huge success, resulting in 400,000 teddy-bear toys sold, and the company, Margarete Steiff GmbH, was formed.

By 1906, the U.S. toy-trade journal Plaything, rather than use the name “teddy’s bear,” called the toy a teddy bear. As the craze gathered force, the competition between the companies and the countries increased. Steiff, watching copies of its toys being manufactured in America, started to patent its designs. According to Steiff’s records, by 1907 it had made and sold 975,000 bears. By 1908, Steiff finally accepted the American name for its bears. The toy was called a teddy bear. The partnership between the countries became permanent.

Both America and Germany celebrated the birth of the teddy bear, starting in 2002 on the hundred-year anniversary of the cartoon and continuing this year, 2003, with the centenary celebration of the anniversary of the first jointed teddy bear.

One of the reasons the teddy bear was chosen as a determinant of Partners (The Teddy Bear Project) is that a photograph that includes a jointed teddy bear clearly dates it as a picture from the twentieth century, the time frame spanned by this show. It thus defines the parameter of the archive as well as that of the exhibition in which it is a component.

The teddy bear’s popularity in the twentieth century, and the online access to markets in many countries through eBay auctions, have allowed for an archive to be assembled that portrays a wide range of cultures.

⁹ Maniera 2001: 32.
and contexts throughout the century. While a significant number of the teddy-bear photographs in this collection came from Germany (where the bear is featured in Berlin’s coat of arms), they are also from the United Kingdom, America, Croatia, Serbia, Samoa, Japan, China, the Czech Republic, Finland, Russia, Bulgaria, Austria, Hungary, New Zealand, Spain, Portugal, Estonia, France, Italy, Israel, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Belgium, Australia and Canada, the birthplace of Winnie the Pooh.

One important conceptual contribution *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, the installation, makes to *Partners*, the exhibition, is its continuation of the notion of duality introduced by the tin toy displayed in the first gallery. As a mohair-covered, stuffed, jointed toy, with movable arms, legs and head, a teddy bear can be cradled and hugged like a baby. But the wild bear referenced by the toy is an animal that can be threatening to human beings. Having a ferocious guardian at one’s side makes the teddy into a symbol of protective aggression, which is why, for the past hundred years, it has provided solace to frightened children and later to adults, who carry that comfort with them as a cherished memory.

Another area of duality is in the display. Because of the relative rarity of photographs that include teddy bears, the resulting multitude of over three thousand pictures provides a curatorial statement that is both true and misleading. Viewers are inclined to trust a curator’s presentation of cultural artifacts. While these systems are not necessarily objective, they can be convincing and therefore of comfort. The fact that the photographs are organized in typologies lends *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)* a reassuring aura of scholarship, in the same way that the teddy bear reassures the child. But the scholarship here is deceptive, because the use of documentary materials actually manipulates reality. Creating a world in which everyone had a teddy bear is a fantasy, as well as a commentary on traditional thematic, taxonomic curating.

*Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)* is structured in the form of a classic, traditional and systematic presentation of natural history or cultural objects, with antique museum-display cases and mezzanines built along the walls to permit close inspection of every photograph. However, unlike an array of arrowheads or African masks displayed for the didactic purpose of comparing and contrasting data, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)* takes vernacular, mundane, family-album photographs and makes them into a project with meaning that is metaphorical.

The bear’s appearance over and over again, in thousands of photographs, not only validates the importance of the image of the teddy bear but also enables it to transcend the literal circumstances of its individual scenarios to become, philosophically, a pure form, the Platonic idea of a teddy bear.

By isolating one component, collections can be persuasive in giving meaning to things that might not otherwise be appreciated as independent objects. For viewers who have looked at more than three thousand photographs with a teddy bear in each, a normal family-album picture, without a teddy bear in it and picturing an unfamiliar person, may seem mundane and less precious.
There is the additional enhancing effect on each individual photograph when co-ordinated into typologies. Taxonomies create contexts of consistencies. The vernacular elements in Partners (The Teddy Bear Project), objects that have mostly been discarded (along with the vitrine display cases, which came from architectural salvage houses), when pulled together create a coherence. This allows a once cacophonous chorus of disparate images, culled from places around the world, to sing together in harmony to a theme. Museum exhibitions tend to trace themes as ends in themselves. This presentation, on the other hand, uses themes as a means to further insight. Themes on this occasion are devices that raise issues other than the history of the teddy bear or the conventions of family-album photographs.

The teddy bear here is totemic and emblematic, which invites comparison with other twentieth-century symbols that also serve as identity anchors, such as the fifty stars and stripes of America and the swastika of the Third Reich. Partners (The Teddy Bear Project) is a construct. Indeed, the project is discriminatory. Like an exclusive club, there were specific qualifications that defined the standards for membership. The inclusion of a teddy bear in a picture identified it as part of a group and became, in effect, a passport to this particular archive.

The teddy-bear was also chosen for what it reveals about the complex partnership of culture and commerce. The teddy bear craze and its continued popularity became a belief system that not only fulfills a human need but has also fuelled a century-long financial phenomenon in the toy marketplace, in America and Germany as well as in England, which, as it did in the wars of the twentieth century, became a central player in the history of the teddy bear. J.K. Farnell, in 1908, made the first British teddy bears, of which Winnie the Pooh (from the book written by A. A. Milne in 1926) is a famous example.

Any clarity as to whether the bears' popularity resulted from their appeal as a symbol of goodwill or from the manufacturers' successful marketing of teddies is complicated by the activities of ardent arctophiles in England, such as British actor Peter Bull (1912–1984), whose 1907 American bear, Delicatessen, starred as Aloysius in the television adaptation of Evelyn Waugh's novel Brideshead Revisited,10 and Colonel T. Robert “Bob” Henderson (1904–1990), an army officer in World War II under Field Marshall Montgomery, who promoted the psychological, spiritual and philosophical benefits of the teddy bear. Henderson founded the British branch of the charity Good Bears of the World, which gives teddy bears to sick and disadvantaged children. Innumerable toy companies rose to the occasion to produce teddy bears, but the public's enthusiastic response was not solely the result of commercial promotion. There were many non-commercial players who promoted the history of the teddy bear.

This complexity became apparent once the doll industry tried to capitalize on the appeal of the teddy bear.

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bear by creating Billikens, hybrid teddy-dolls with porcelain or celluloid faces but with teddy bear bodies covered with mohair, felt hands and feet, excelsior stuffing and containing bear “growlers” inside their bodies. The teddy bear prevailed, however, and continues to be part of the culture of childhood, in Western and Eastern cultures. Japanese people, for example, have adopted teddy bears as beloved toys and there is now a sanctuary devoted to them, the Izu Teddy Bear Museum, yet another affirmation of the value of these toys, both emotionally and commercially.

The teddy bear has appealed not only to children as playthings and as surrogate playmates but also to adults as props to express whimsical fantasies at parties, in the workplace, at sports events and in sexual play. In fact, teddy bears have attended every social function in society. They have been photographed at weddings, in schools, in hospitals, on battlefields, at births, deaths and memorials.

Red Cross workers and police forces regularly distribute them to children in distress. Indeed, English children in World War II, who, when evacuated to the country for greater safety, were permitted to bring few possessions, were allowed to take teddy bears, as these were considered to be necessities and not luxuries. The teddy bear has also been a symbol of solace on occasions such as the mourning of lives lost in the Oklahoma bombing, and they were manufactured to commemorate disasters such as the sinking of the “Titanic.”

In fact, included in this exhibition’s inventory of antique teddy bears displayed alongside photographs of their original owners is a very rare black bear, made especially for the British market by Steiff in 1912 and 1913 to commemorate the passengers lost on the “Titanic” on April 14, 1912 [Figures 1.36, 1.37]. Four hundred and ninety-four bears were delivered to England. All of England had gone into mourning because of the disaster, in which more than fifteen hundred people perished at sea. Everything and everyone was in black. Though a prototype black bear proposed by Steiff had been rejected five years earlier, the grieving gave this bear a new purpose. The disaster symbolized by the bear sets up a distinction between tragedies that befall people living their lives, as happened with the explosion of the “Hindenburg” zeppelin (photographs of which are also included in Partners), and those that come as the result of the deliberate aggression of other human beings.

This black memorial bear was chosen by the young Hester Drew as a Christmas gift in 1913. She named him Teddy Bear Black. Accompanying the bear is a photograph of Hester [Figure 1.38], standing behind a chair on which her bear is seated, taken at her grandparents’ home in Bournemouth two weeks after her mother’s death. The bear spent most of his existence attired in Hester’s father’s christening gown, which had also been Hester’s christening gown. Teddy Bear Black’s jacket acted as a protection against the fading of his black mohair. By dressing him in it in this display, it also becomes a symbol of his survival and rebirth into a new century.

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Having a teddy bear has become a cultural convention of childhood. As a result, teddies entered the arsenal of photographers’ props. From studio to studio, from country to country, the pictures generated with teddy bears in them are surprisingly similar. The snapshots made by family members using hand-held cameras also fall into identifiable conventions, many of which are displayed on the sixteen walls of this part of the exhibition. The conventions that make up the typologies in *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)* not only connect photographers as unwittingly complicit partners but also all of twentieth-century humankind.

Like the belief in the comforting power of teddy bears, people also believe in the ability of family photographs to depict reality. Indeed, they trust these truths more than they do the reality of pictures by photojournalists, who attempt to capture events as facts, despite the way in which the resulting photos are captioned and contextualized by the news agencies that use them.

However, the primary factual evidence in family-album photographs is the way in which people want to be seen and remembered. The photographs reflect the subjects’ values and aspirations, and are not at all objective representations. They reveal how important it is for people both to feel they belong to a group and also to have a special place within that group—but always within limits defined by society. Hence the collection is a reflection of the values of society at the time of the photographs. It is notable not only for what it includes but also for what is absent. Only one child with Down Syndrome was discovered, and only one portrait of a child with a cleft palate. It is clear what society designates as acceptable (or not) to keep in a family album at different times in history, as well as what pictures are deemed marketable. Some of the most difficult photographs to locate were photographs of families with Nazi-uniformed fathers and mothers. While the uniforms were previously a source of pride, with men dressed in them for Christmas pictures, they are now as hard as hen’s teeth to find.

Ultimately, what surfaces from this visual thesis on the history of the teddy bear and the conventions of family-album photographs is the human desire to conform to the expectations of others in order to fit in. While there is an instinctual social desire to belong, there is also a competitive instinct to stand out as separate and above others. Parents who dress up their children for a studio photo-shoot hope they will appear not only as appealing as all the other children but perhaps even a bit better. The desire to provide a pleasing public face belies the private truths these pictures conceal and will never reveal. They form a façade to protect the secret stories behind the pictures.

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12 Marianne Hirsch in her research on the connections between postmemory and family-album photography stresses the artificial and conventional character of these images. She argues: “Now, more than a hundred years later, photography’s social functions are integrally tied to the ideology of the modern family. The family photo both displays the cohesion of the family and is an instrument of its togetherness; it both chronicles family rituals and constitutes a prime objective of those rituals. Because the photograph gives the illusion of being a simple transcription of the real, a trace touched directly by the events it records, it has the effect of naturalizing cultural practices and of disguising their stereotyped and coded characteristics. As photography immobilizes the flow of family life into a series of snapshots, it perpetuates familial myths while seeming merely to record actual moments in family history…” (my emphasis). Hirsch 1997: 7.
They also form tableaux. The tableau is a fundamental format in this show, introduced not only in the individual photographs but also by the form of their presentation. Indeed, the architectural context of mezzanines, spiral staircases and vitrines provides an elaborate tableau for the taxidermied dog [Figures 1.95, 1.96], setting up a dialogue between a stuffed toy and a stuffed dog.

The teddy bear plays a particularly useful role in a tableau. It is an object, but even as a photographer’s prop, it adds another presence to the photograph, as if another living being were also in the picture. Because teddies stay still for the camera, they can be animated in a photograph to activate the picture's narrative. In fact, the teddy bears in many of the pictures look as alive, if not more alive, than the human sitters, at least in part because the photographer could more easily control the poses of the bears than the people. The teddy bear does not characterize the sitter as much as it animates pictures in ways that would otherwise not be possible.

The teddy bear, with its arms and legs and upright, seated position, has semi-human attributes, which invite the projections of people’s imaginations. It falls somewhere between a pet and a person—a silent comrade, and, like the photographs, the bearer of confidences.

Photographs, because they are images of people captured in the past, are actually as much about absence as about presence. This links Partners (The Teddy Bear Project) to Felix the Cat, who is both present and absent, and in fact to all recorded images. The display of bears with photographs of their original owners identifies that person’s existence at a point in time in history, reminiscent of the date paintings from the TODAY series made by On Kawara [Figure 2.73].

In fact, the material survival of the bear, changed but recognizable over the years, makes it into a memento mori. Twenty other teddy bears in the exhibition are shown with photographs and ephemera from their original owners [Figures 1.28 – 1.73, 1.81 – 1.83]. The subject of death is an inevitable part of any discourse on photography since the relationship of photography to time and memory is pivotal.\(^\text{13}\) The notion of death and the connection of photography to death are dramatized by the image of the teddy bear. A teddy bear sits in a place between life and death as a trope, in a way that a toy truck and a doll don’t. The latter are both literal representations. But a teddy bear bypasses this limitation and seems to be alive by virtue of the ease with which it accepts projections. It transcends the literality of the object. Like art, the teddy bear is not consumed by the viewer’s comprehension. Indeed, when included in a photograph, it leads to a suspension of disbelief.

\(^{13}\) For an expansion of the theme of photography and memento mori see, for example: Batchen 2004.
MAURIZIO CATTelan

*Untitled*
1998
taxidermied dog
[Figures 1.95, 1.96]

Most viewers are initially shocked when they realize the dog is not sleeping but dead. Maurizio Cattelan's taxidermied dog from a Paris pound is a sculpture that can only be displayed persuasively alive in a gallery context if it is an intervention. The sculpture on the floor has the opportunity to be convincing because it is contextualized by the vast teddy-bear display. The sculpture is not an adjunct to the teddy-bear vitrines and photographs — but is rather the inspiration and catalyst for the project that surrounds it, framing it as the focus for the viewer.

Cattelan's dog allows the exhibition to explore in more depth the human urge to project life onto both dogs and teddy bears. Each embodies a belief system. The mohair-covered plush toys, stuffed with wood excelsior, their faces articulated with boot-button eyes and thread-sewn noses and mouths, became objects of meaning to those who developed attachments to them. Animation is projected onto them, in the form of imagined personalities and power.

Both dogs and teddy bears are receptacles for people's projections. Neither are what we think they are, but we believe them to be how we imagine them — even though the dog is dead and the teddy bear was never alive in the first place. The bears gaze at us, appearing to be full of life. We look at the dog, believing him to be asleep, but in the end are left to imagine the dead dog alive.

MAURIZIO CATTelan

*Him*
2001
[Figures 1.97–1.99]

*Him* by Maurizio Cattelan is positioned in order that the viewer first encounters the diminutive, clothed, child-like figure from behind, unaware of its identity. When the viewer gets to the other side of the sculpture, the face of Hitler comes as a shock.

The sculpture is also placed in the centre of a large, empty gallery with pairs of tall doors, original to the Paul Ludwig Troost architecture of the Haus der Kunst, on the walls that flank each side of the figure's face.

The image of Hitler is a powerful symbol. Indeed, the German government has forbidden the use of images from the Third Reich for the purposes of glorifying the Nazi regime in an attempt to dissuade subsequent followers from their political philosophy. This may have had the unintended effect of making the images more appealing. For example, Third Reich symbols have entered the realm of rebellious teenagers as well as the repertoire of sexual fantasies practised by some homosexual men, a group Hitler sought to eliminate.
Still, over time, the image of Hitler has changed in meaning and is now about to be consumed by history. The people who have actual memories of him and were affected by his harm are now aged and dramatically diminished in number. Hitler and the teddy bear, both indelible icons that define the twentieth century, are proposed in this exhibition as sharing some basic dynamics.

The system of the teddy-bear archive raises the notion of other systems created with strict stipulations, and how they can, because they appear to make sense, persuasively manipulate reality. The purity of race to which Hitler aspired was the application of a system of rules. Like the teddy bear, Hitler shares a duality of origin, where danger is domesticated. Indeed, the benign belief system of the myth of a protective teddy bear (based on the image of what is actually a wild and often dangerous creature) can be compared in function to the image of Hitler for the German people, as their partner, offering a deceptive source of safety.

More pertinent is the fact that Hitler is an inherent part of both the identity of the German people and the Jewish people. Those who have inherited the legacies of the perpetrators and their victims have become, historically, partners.
Notes on the Exhibition

Passage Two

GIULIO PAOLINI

*Mimesi*

1975–76

[Figures 2.1 – 2.3]

The Italian artist, Giulio Paolini, has created a work with two life-sized plaster casts of the Medici Venus (readily available from a manufacturer in Torino), put them on plinths and placed them to face each other so they are each the reflection of the other.

The meaning of this juxtaposition, according to the artist, is not in the act of placing the two sculptures one in front of the other but in the “side effects” of this positioning. In response to Gerhard Richter accusing Paolini’s *Mimesi* of being a “decorative game,” the artist explained his actions:

> When I place two identical copies of the same ancient statue one in front of the other, I do not aim to rediscover and recreate that statue, nor do I want to be delighted by the situation. My only aim is to focus on the distance, on the empty space between them. That is the true body of the work of art, bearing in itself, in the closed circuit of a cryptic answer, the question concerning its very existence.

Hence, the decorative effect: an induced and unexpected decoration as ultimate truth, as something “unaware” of the work of art, a decorative game that is more real than the illusion of truth.¹

As Craig Owens has written:

> Giulio Paolini’s art invariably stages a (double) disappearance—both of the art object itself, which has been reduced to the status of fragment or trace, as well as the subject who can claim the object

as his, as one of the modes of his vision, his thought. What we encounter in Paolini’s installation is never the thing itself, but a stand-in or replacement for it (the lost object, the object of desire); hence, the plaster casts of antique statuary out of which so many of his works are composed, or the wall drawings which often double either for the objects exhibited in the gallery space or the space itself. The disappearance of the subject, in Paolini, the “dematerialization of art,” its removal from the circuits of appropriation and consumption, entails a dispossession—the death of the artist. (I am referring, of course, to Roland Barthes’ famous post-mortem, ‘The Death of the Author,’ in which Barthes argues that the author cannot—or can no longer—claim to be the unique source of meaning and/or value of the work of art.) For Paolini... the work of art is an essentially narcissistic structure which returns neither the artist’s nor the viewer’s gaze. In *Mimesi*—which remains for me Paolini’s most powerful work—he deploys, with his customary elegance and economy, two identical plaster casts of an antique Venus pudica as mirror images, exchanging gazes into infinity. An image of fulfilled desire—the narcissistic desire for our own image that motivates our looking at works of art—*Mimesi* radically excludes both artist and viewer in the name of its own internal completion.2

*Mimesi* initiates the centre passage of *Partners*. It continues the notion of reflection that was introduced by the self-portrait reflection of Arbus in the mirror. As well, there is a perpetuation of doubling, as occurred in the antique toy, *Minnie Mouse Carrying Felix in Cages*, along with the duality of the presence and absence of Felix. However, this sculpture is more than the start of a Noah’s Ark of pairs; it furthers the concept of connections and their implications. The themes are the threads of the exhibition that make up the picture, but not the cloth. They provide links from one work to another, creating contexts in which viewers can then locate themselves.

For example, there is a connection between the object shown and the history of what was once shown in these spaces. In the days when Hitler chose the art for these halls, he picked huge, homoerotic bronze statues that were so tall and majestic that they dwarfed living human beings. *Mimesi* is also composed of nudes, but in this case, and in opposition to the types of works for which the Haus der Kunst was constructed, they are vulnerable plaster casts of women who are petite and in human scale. The philosophical differences are highlighted by this thematic link. The fact that they are both nudes is merely a conduit to that consideration.

The artist has requested it be clearly stated these are “exhibition copies” of his work. They are made of plaster and come from the same mold, and are, in every respect, the same as the original. The requirement for

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Paolini’s permission is an indication of a partnership between the artist and collector and exhibitor—a theme and subject that pervade this exhibition. The notion of ownership and what it means, in terms of power and entitlement, has become a complex concept. The artist has the copyright on the work, the photographer on the photograph, the agency of the newspaper journalist and photojournalist owns the licences to display and publish images. The rights and limitations of ownership provide a parallel paradigm of practical partnership in the modern world of art exhibitions.

HANNE DARBOVEN

*Ansichten >82<*

1982

[Figures 2.4 – 2.8]

The title of this work by German artist Hanne Darboven means “points of view” and “vistas” as well as “postcards.” On the top part of fifty-three of the fifty-four panels is a reproduction of a vernacular found portrait photograph of an unknown sailor, not unlike the many found in *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*. It is used here as a surrogate for a specific sailor Darboven has celebrated in this work. Below this reproduction on paper of a family-album photograph is a lithograph of a found oil painting of a ship from the Hamburg-AmerikaLinie (Hamburg-American Line), which is a stand-in reference for the head of the company, Albert Ballin. Below, and on all fifty-four panels that run along the four walls of this huge, 140-foot-long hall, is a third sheet of paper with the artist's characteristic notations for each day of each week for the year 1982. In addition to an introductory panel of ten pre-war postcards and twenty-four black-and-white souvenir photo cards of Hamburg (collaged with handwritten excerpts from the 1973 *Brockhaus Encyclopedia* and handwritten quotes), each of the remaining panels is inscribed with handwritten notations on a calendar delineating each day of each week. The framed works were all composed virtually the same, except for the specific dates.

In order that the panels themselves could create a horizon line around the gallery, the prominent picture rail which graphically connected the tops of the doorways was removed, as part of the exhibition design for *Partners*. This restoration to the original architecture allowed the fifty-four framed, repetitive images of *Ansichten >82<* to be spread over four walls of the centre gallery without a competing horizon line.

The panels are spaced evenly, giving the visual effect of pageantry. Fifty-three of them have a head on the top and together resemble a regiment of soldiers, available for the viewer to stand before and inspect. The artist, trained as a classical musician and the composer of a number of musical works, has presented a memorial as a visual series of musical cadences that might conclude a symphony.³

³ For an interpretation of Darboven’s work through musical terms see: Pohlen 1983: 52-53.
The work was inspired by a story about a writer of folk tales, Johann Kinau, who lived in Finkenwerder, a town near Darboven's home in Harburg, near Hamburg. This fellow, who once worked for the Hamburg-AmerikaLinie (HAPAG), later became a German sailor. He died on May 31, 1916, on the battleship “Wiesbaden,” during the Battle of the Skagerrak in World War I. Ansichten >82< links this humble everyman in perpetuity to the powerful head of the Hamburg-AmerikaLinie, Albert Ballin, who was the general director of HAPAG from 1899, and who, on November 8, 1918, three days before the end of the war, committed suicide. With her signature ritualistic scrolling style of handwriting, Darboven made an artwork that commemorates a metaphorical relationship between these two people that forever links them in her version of history.4

The introductory panel contains excerpts from the 1973 Brockhaus Encyclopedia, translated from the German as follows:

The German sailor, Johann Kinau, was born in Finkenwerder, near Hamburg, on August 22, 1880. He died on May 31, 1916, on the battleship “Wiesbaden” during the Battle of the Skagerrak. Before he left his job to serve in the German navy, Johann Kinau was a bookkeeper for the shipping company, Hamburg-AmerikaLinie.

He was also a humorous and warm-hearted writer who, under the pseudonym “Gorch Fock,” wrote folk songs and poems, partially in Hamburger Platt [the local dialect of Hamburg]. His work was published in the folk anthology, From the World of the Fish Trap Specialists.

Albert Ballin, born in Hamburg on August 15, 1857, was the general director of the Hamburg-AmerikaLinie. On November 8, 1918 he committed suicide in Hamburg.

Albert Ballin succeeded in turning the Hamburg-AmerikaLinie (HAPAG) into one of the largest shipping companies in the world. He had great influence on international shipping and hoped for a peaceful equality between Germany and England. He recognized the dangers of Admiral Tirpitz’s fleet politics and, as a confidant to Wilhelm II, tried to challenge these tactics. He fought for a negotiated peace agreement for the seas between Germany and England. The First World War threatened his life’s work, and may have caused him to decide to put an end to his life.

The encyclopedia speculates, without any evidence, that Ballin’s suicide might have been financially inspired. This perpetuates a cultural stereotype—in contrast to all that Ballin did in his life—that suggests his suicide may not have been like the suicides of many demoralized Germans at that time.

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Additional quotes and translations of quotes on this introductory panel, handwritten by the artist:

“There is no collective guilt. There is, however, a collective shame.” Theodor Heuss, 1948

“Imagine,” by John Lennon (born in Liverpool on October 9, 1940,

gunned down in New York City on December 8, 1980)

“freundschaft” (friendship)

“heute” (today)

“gedankenstrich” (pause; dash; silence to reflect)

“und keine worte mehr” (and no words more)

“tagesrechnung” (daily total)

The quote by Theodor Heuss, German writer and the first president of the Federal Republic of Germany, makes a clear reference to World War II, even though this work is explicitly about a connection between two people in World War I. Also notable in the first panel is the mention of John Lennon’s popular song, “Imagine,” an expression of peace and in light of his own death from a gunshot wound a particularly poignant longing for a world without violence.

By recounting a story from World War I, Darboven alludes to World War II. In World War I, Ballin, known to be a Jew, identified with Germany so profoundly that he may have committed suicide rather than live with the consequences of defeat. He was, at this time in history, first a German and second a Jew. By implication, Darboven is noting subtly how a person’s national identity can be changed without his consent, such that in World War II, a German Jew was identified first as a Jew and then as a German.

The image of the sailor in this work tolls like a bell, never letting us forget the image of the lost unknown sailor, a synecdoche of loss that is presented by the artist as a stand-in for the very specific Kinau, imprinting it repeatedly into our brains. The ship portrayed, metonymic of Ballin, when repeated fifty-three times gives the impression of ships passing over the Atlantic in a perpetual filmic rerun, like a loop of a single voyage, reminiscent of the many boats of immigrants and shipments that have passed across the ocean back and forth, physically and metaphorically connecting the New World to the motherland. The repetition initiates for the viewer the idea of a chronicle, which is further confirmed by the daily handwritings of the artist, in which the word “Heute” (today) is crossed off the way a date would be stroked off on a monthly calendar, to mark the passing of time, not only as a commemoration of the past but as a reification of the time spent in making the memorial.

On the relation of Darboven’s work to time, see: Graw 1990: 68-71.
The doubling of the matching images of Felix, in *Minnie Mouse Carrying Felix in Cages*, links to the doubling of images in *Mimesi*. This repetition is expanded in *Ansichten >82<* into a multitude of the same images, but with a different impact and meaning.6

YDESSA HENDELES
Ships (The Zeppelin Project)
2002
[Figures 2.9 – 2.30]

Moving from the ships in the water that link Germany to America (which is also, importantly, a reification of the structure of the presentation in the exhibition, with icons from Europe on one side and recognizable images of the identity of America on the other), there is, in the subsequent gallery, a display of over one hundred and twenty photographs of ships floating in the sky, sometimes with their silhouettes shadowed on the ground below, which continues the interweaving of Germany and the rest of the world.

Small, silver-bromide photograph cigarette cards were made in 1932 and 1933 and eventually compiled into three books (now out of print) titled *Zeppelin-Weltfahrten*. These cards demonstrated, through professionally made documentary photographs, how far and wide were the journeys of the enormous ships in the sky, called zeppelins after their inventor, Count (Graf) von Zeppelin.7 A selection of these tiny pictures was enlarged into the 8 x 10 inch (20.32 x 25.4 cm) photographs displayed in this gallery along with other pictures taken of zeppelins that were not part of this series.

Bird's-eye views were taken from zeppelins over towns, rivers, mountains and oceans, and over cities such as Cairo, Jerusalem, Cologne, London, Rome and Munich. They provide picturesque photographs not only of landscapes but also of pre-war German cityscapes that are similar to 1930s documentation of American cities such as New York and Los Angeles. The zeppelins travelled close enough to the ground that buildings are identifiable. The shadow of the zeppelin is cast onto famous architectural landmarks such as the Sagrada Familia (Holy Family Church) by architect Antonio Gaudí in Barcelona and the British Parliament buildings, as well as the walls of Jerusalem and the magnificent terrain of Switzerland, Antarctica and Rio di Janeiro. One can even see an extensive Nazi rally with a large swastika. Also included are some pictures taken from the ground, such as the one displayed of a British R-100 zeppelin flying by the Ontario Parliament buildings in Toronto.

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6 The first extensive exhibition of Hanne Darboven's work outside Europe was at the Ydessa Hendeles Art Foundation in Toronto in 1991. For the opening, a concert was presented: the world premiere of the *First Symphony for Chamber Orchestra* by Darboven and Friedrich Stoppa, performed by Arraymusic. A subsequent group exhibition at the Foundation, which included Darboven's *Ansichten >82<*, was mounted in 1994.

7 For a historical account of the development of zeppelins see: De Syon 2002: 15-25.
But zeppelins were not completely benign in their role as scenic ships in the sky. They also functioned as carriers of bombs dropped by Germans on cities during World War I. The zeppelin image has the graphic shape of a phallus—potent with ambition and the exemplification of might and power. However, the pictures have now become poignant, since they record pre-war Germany before the destruction by Allied bombing in World War II.

This gallery also contains a display of sixteen vintage news photographs of the "Hindenburg" disaster, as recorded by a photojournalist for Associated Press [Figures 2.31–2.42]. The German commercial passenger airship “Hindenburg” (LZ-129) was 804 feet (245 m) in length and 135 feet (41 m) in diameter, and, at the time, was the largest aircraft that had ever flown.

The first photograph [Figure 2.32] shows a close-up from a small plane of the “Hindenburg” flying over the tip of lower Manhattan, during its approach to Lakehurst, New Jersey, a few hours before it exploded into flames at 7:25 p.m. on May 6, 1937. The photographs that document the event follow the airship over New York to the actual explosion of flames, which appeared suddenly, and, as it looks in the photographs, like an ejaculation. By morning, there is documented only the final skeleton of what once was a potent, powerful airship. Out of ninety-seven persons aboard, twenty-three passengers and thirty-nine crew members were saved, some injured to various degrees. Thirty-six people perished in the flames: thirteen passengers, twenty-two crewmen and one civilian member of the ground crew.8

Analogous to the story of the “Titanic,” this is the story of yet another loss of an enormous ship. In fact, it could be described as the “Titanic” of the sky. The original photo-documentation shows America’s embrace of this pride of the Third Reich. An airship with its tail displaying swastikas, flying over the tip of lower Manhattan in 1937, was celebrated by Americans for its glory. The isolationist policy of American politicians identifies America, at least at this point in time, in a complicit relationship with Germany.

But the partnership that continues is the bond among those who lost loved ones in the tragedy at Lakehurst. On May 6 each year, at 7:25 p.m., the Navy Lakehurst Historical Society holds a memorial service for those who lost their lives in the “Hindenburg.”

LUCiano FABRO
Italia d’oro
1968–71 (conceived in 1968 and executed in 1971)
[Figures 2.43–2.45]

Across from the wall with the “Hindenburg” in flames is a golden, glowing sculpture by Luciano Fabro. The map of Italy, an inherent part of the country’s cultural identity, is suspended upside down by its “toe,” the

8 Chant 2000: 105-106.
Calabrian peninsula. Sicily and Sardinia are fixed to the back of the map of the mainland. The work uses an iconic form to question the very idea of Italy. While Fabro made many versions of this sculpture in a wide variety of materials, this one, cast in gilded bronze, has a clarity of image that sets it apart from the more abstract versions that marry form and material, such as one made of fur and another made of wire mesh. This one, with identifiable mountainous terrain on the surface, has the appearance of being viewed from very high up, as if from a spaceship.

What comes to the fore in this particular context is the reference to the famous image of the dead Benito Mussolini and his mistress, Clara Petacci, hanging upside down in Milan's Piazzale Loreto on April 29, 1945.

Hitler had assisted Mussolini in becoming the leader of an Italian socialist republic in German-held northern Italy, but Mussolini was eventually arrested. Hitler sent German paratroops to try to rescue him from the mountaintop resort where he was imprisoned. But when the Germans surrendered in northern Italy, Mussolini and his mistress were taken from the jail at Giulino di Messegra and executed by the military forces of the Italian Resistance. The next day, their corpses were hung in public view.

It would be unfortunate if the depth of meaning of Fabro's work, and its finely tuned relationship of form to content, were diminished to a mere political reference to Mussolini and the mercantile success of Italy, as the artist himself has made clear: “However much it may appear to the contrary, my Italie are linked by a very slender thread to iconography....”

Nevertheless, in this display, the iconography and associations are highlighted. Mussolini, Il Duce, Fascist dictator of Italy, attempted to create an Italian empire in alliance with Hitler’s Germany. He joined Hitler in supporting the Fascist Nationalist side in the 1936–1939 Spanish Civil War, gaining him an ally in Spain's General Franco, who was associated with many atrocities in that brutal war. In the context of this exhibition, Rogelio Sanchis, the creator of Minnie Mouse Carrying Felix in Cages, who went to war in support of Franco, is linked not only to Franco, but also, by association, to Mussolini, who was a partner of Hitler.

LAWRENCE WEINER
Cat. #471
1980
[Figure 2.46]

The form of art by Lawrence Weiner is words. The meaning comes from the viewer's interpretation of the phrases the artist has composed, as they are graphically presented on the wall, and in the context of their

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placement. Weiner has made a dramatic contribution to the conceptual-art dialogue by dematerializing the art object while providing content without a material host, and in the process redefining what constitutes art.

In this work, the words on the wall of Partners are displayed as follows:

THE RESPONSE OF AN OBJECT TO  
CONTACT SUFFICIENT TO LEAD TO  
A CHANGE IN INHERENT QUALITY  
(VIS INERTIAE)

LA RÉACTION D’UN OBJET AU  
CONTACT SUFFISANT A ENTRAINER  
UN CHANGEMENT DE QUALITÉ  
INHÉRENTE (VIS INERTIAE)

Canada’s official languages are French and English. The letters are in a moss green shade determined by Weiner, a colour that is, according to him, a reference to the myth of Sisyphus, who ritualistically and repeatedly rolled a boulder up to the top of a mountain, where it slid down and he began again. There is a play on the colour green, because if a rock is forever rolled, it cannot gather any moss and become green.12

This metaphorical work lends itself to many interpretations. Were it installed in another context, it might propose that art can have an almost alchemical effect on the viewer. However, in Partners, this interpretation modulates to include not only the impact of art on a viewer but also the impact of images on society. What was general, in this context, becomes specific.

The text is installed between two columns in the colonnade space, at the point in the show’s structure where the exhibition bifurcates into two passages. As part of the exhibition design for Partners, this space was restored to recapture its original processional grandeur. The plaster walls were removed from the doors and windows to reveal the original Troost architecture. Natural light now enters, as it originally had, and draws viewers, as it did many years ago, to progress through the galleries towards the light [Figures 2.47, 2.58].

The work by Weiner is positioned to mediate between two performances captured in photographs and polarized at opposite ends of a long, narrow space. These recorded events—a suicide on one end and a murder on the other, staged for the camera and then transformed by the subsequent dissemination of selected

12 The information on the symbolic nature of the colour green in the artist’s work originates from a personal correspondence with the author.
images by the media—invite another interpretation of the word “contact” in Weiner's work. A photographic print can be made by the direct contact of a negative on paper. The mass publication of the record of an event transmutes it by recontextualizing it, turning it into something else, resulting in “a change in inherent quality.”

This work by Weiner, in the place where it is presented, acts as a kind of mantra, a refrain, or even a caption to the news photographs, which, when read after seeing the displays that follow, provides another perspective on what the viewer has just experienced. In the process, it contributes to the show by corralling the area of cultural symbols in the news media.

The acquisition of a work by Weiner involves the transfer to the purchaser of the legal copyright to the text. The artist's sole stipulation is that only one installation of a particular piece can exist at any one time. Conceptually, it is the words that are owned—to a point. VG Bildkunst is the official agent for copyright clearance in Germany. Artists such as Weiner and Nauman belong to this organization, which means they have requested that copyright for their works be cleared through VG Bildkunst. Publishers who do not comply have to pay a penalty fee. The collector or museum may own the actual work of art but not the “geistige Eigentum” (intellectual property). At the end of each year, all members receive a proportional share of the income from VG Bildkunst. Like all artworks, the artist ultimately owns the copyright to his art. And as with all artworks, there is a partnership not only with the viewer but between the artist and anyone who displays or publishes the art.

MALCOLM BROWNE

_Sacrificial Protest of Thích Quảng Đức_
June 11, 1963
[Figures 2.47–2.57]

The documentation of a performance can precipitate “a change in inherent quality” by disseminating it so it becomes widely known. Such is the case with the sequenced photographs depicting the sacrificial protest of Thích Quảng Đức in Vietnam in 1963, as photographed by Malcolm W. Browne, a foreign correspondent (and not a professional photographer) for Associated Press. This series of photographs consists of the nine vintage photographs that were the originals (ex-collection John Faber) published in Faber's book, _Great News Photos and the Stories Behind Them._

Browne had been invited to attend an early morning “memorial service” at the intersection of two streets in Saigon. Upon arrival, he found himself faced with a vast crowd of three hundred and fifty Buddhist monks and nuns, dressed in liturgical robes. After an hour of chanting and ritual observances, Thích Quảng Đức, seated in the lotus position, in the centre of the intersection and surrounded by an assembled circle of supporters, made a ceremonial protest for the Buddhists' right to religious freedom in Saigon: he was doused with pink gasoline and diesel fuel, ignited himself and burned to death.
Rumours had abounded of some impending act, but after a number of false alarms, foreign newsmen had lost interest. Thích Đức Nghĩa phoned several dozen foreign correspondents the night before: only Browne responded to the invitation and showed up with his camera cocked. Once the immolation began, Browne’s actions were determined by his job. He recorded the fiery, aggressively provocative protest performance by Thích Quảng Đức with the comparatively mundane, ritualistic clicks of his camera, completing the courageous act of the monk by bearing witness and capturing for the world the images of his self sacrifice.13

In his memoir, *Muddy Boots and Red Socks: A War Reporter’s Life*, Browne wrote: “These images played an important role in President Kennedy’s decision to end support of President Ngô Đình Diệm’s regime in South Viet Nam—an action that led to the coup in which Diệm was overthrown and killed on November 1, 1963.”14

The pictures are installed at the end of a colonnade. Upon entering this space, one cannot easily discern what the images are on either end wall, as they are far away. The viewer is encouraged to approach to get a better look. The result is that the viewer is pulled down the narrow corridor lined with monumental columns as if in a solemn processional. Viewers are invited to witness a suicide and martyrdom.

They are also encouraged to contemplate the relationship of the photographer to his subject and consider the power dynamics between the two. In this series of images, there is a duality of power. There is a partnership between the subject and the photographer. Each has critical control. Browne recorded an event over which he had no control. However, there were no other news people there, making his record all the more crucial for its later dissemination. His role and identity as a newsperson made it unlikely he would not document the immolation. And the position of the newsperson empowered Thích Quảng Đức. Had Browne not been there, camera in hand, the event might not have occurred as it did. Certainly the ceremony would not have had the visibility it ultimately had, once the World Press Photo Award-winning image of the burning monk was published in newspapers and journals all over the world. Browne’s record of the martyrdom of Thích Quảng Đức, on the altar of a cushion on a street, found itself on the altar of every newspaper’s front page. Each of the two principal people were linked to the other, in power and in perpetuity.

EDDIE ADAMS
*Murder of a Vietcong Suspect by Saigon Police Chief (Vietnam)*
February 1, 1968
[Figures 2.58–2.67]

On the opposite wall of this long arcade, precipitating yet another processional by the viewer, is a second

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series of photojournalist images. What was once called *Execution of a Vietcong Suspect* is now called *The Murder of a Vietcong Suspect by Saigon Police Chief (Vietnam)*.

Eight vintage photographs by the photojournalist Eddie Adams show South Vietnamese National Police Chief, Brigadier General Nguyễn Ngọc Loan, summarily executing a non-uniformed Vietcong suspect with a point-blank shot to the head. The subsequent wire transmission of one of these images was published in every major newspaper and magazine. While there was also a film of the event, it was the impact of the photograph that changed the course of the Vietnam War. When the images of this event first appeared in print, it was a rude awakening for the American people. They woke up one morning to something they had never experienced before: a murder recorded on the front page of every newspaper. As well, it was intolerable to think that Loan, a South Vietnamese general and the highest-ranking police officer in the country, was casually and brutally killing an unarmed, non-uniformed man with his hands tied behind his back while presumably acting on behalf of Americans, who preferred to believe themselves to be righteous and humane in this war.

The event as recorded also became mythologized, totemic of a moment that altered history. Umberto Eco included the Pulitzer Prize-winning image from this series when he observed in his essay “A Photograph” that:

> [the] vicissitudes of our century have been summed up in a few exemplary photographs that have proved epoch-making. Each of these images has become a myth and has condensed numerous speeches. It has surpassed the individual circumstance that produced it; it no longer speaks of that single character or of those characters, but expresses concepts. It is unique, but at the same time refers to other images that preceded it or that, in imitation, have followed it.17

However, Adams, in a 1983 interview in *Parade* magazine, expressed regret that he had taken the photograph: “In taking that picture, I had destroyed his life. For General Loan had become a man condemned both in his country and in America because he had killed an enemy in war. People do this all the time in war, but rarely is a photographer there to record the act.” Adams said his picture “wasn’t meant to do what it did.”18 The photograph had spun out of the control of the photographer and had become reframed as a

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15 According to Walter Benjamin’s “Little History of Photography,” photography can depict the *optical unconscious* due to its ability to penetrate movement in a way that the naked eye cannot. Photography can “reveal the secret” of movement by presenting isolated images of what is usually concealed because of the character of movement as changeable and continuous. This explanation might aid in the understanding of the popularity of the stills images over the film of the same event. The stills photographs allow the viewer to see more than he actually can (to see details that he could not recognize in real time, to see for a longer period of time than a fleeting moment etc.), while maintaining the “real effect” of photography. Benjamin 1999: 510-512.


symbol that developed a myth and meaning of its own, almost independent of the actual event.

In other words, the graphic image was misleading when taken out of the context of the actual event and what preceded it. The powerful visual image overrode the circumstance of the killing. The suspect wearing a sport shirt was in fact a soldier, a terrorist—a Vietcong lieutenant who was known to have murdered a South Vietnamese major, his wife and their children. As well, General Loan led the lieutenant, hands bound behind his back, to where there was a bevy of journalists and photojournalists, and provided a performance for them to record. Though appearing to be factual, and certainly authentic, the event was captured as if the execution were spontaneous.

The fact that it was staged is not easily apparent until one reads about the event. Its appearance now has a place in culture as a construct of reality. Its impact was the result of the fictions generated around it. A photograph does not become imbued with this kind of mythological power on its own, but, like the teddy-bear phenomenon, is fuelled by culture and commerce. Unlike the icon of the single shot, this group of eight images in sequence, as presented in Partners, is all the more gruesome because the murder is displayed as it unfolded in a narrative, a form that engages the viewer in the horrific scene. Showing the whole series interferes in the mythologization that took place when the single image of the actual moment of the shot was propagated all over the world. The eight photographs offer the possibility for engagement, one of the primary effects of narrative.

These news images reveal the persuasive impact of the media’s fictionalizing system of dealing with the inexorable rush of information, and also the voyeuristic position of viewers when confronted with images that pinpoint the moment between life and death. When juxtaposed to the systems used by artists that comment artistically on the information generated by the world outside their subjective realms, the role of the media becomes highlighted as society’s selective system for presenting portraits of our time. We can also see, over time, the changing moral standards of what society tolerates as presentable to the public.

At one end of the corridor is the pictorial portrayal of a suicide. At the other, a murder. Returning from this gallery, back through Ansichten >82< by Darboven, viewers are reminded of two earlier stories about murder and suicide. However, after seeing the photojournalistic examples of violent deaths, the poetry in the...
presentation of the murdered unknown sailor is enhanced. The harsh, you-are-there photographic document of reality contrasts sharply with the comparatively romantic portrait of a sailor from years gone by and the benign, painted picture of a boat. The sailor portrait is similar to photographs many people have in their homes of relatives from long ago. It exudes a sense of memorial that is reassuring, of a loss that was not for naught, and it is without the messiness of death from aggression. This sailor is shown alive. His death is imagined and felt as a conceptual loss, but not described graphically in the work.

But after seeing photographs of an actual killing in war, as depicted by the two photojournalists, re-entering Ansichten >82< is a completely different experience—one that is injected with a dose of violence. The juxtaposition reformats the viewer’s initial reception of the images chosen by Darboven and changes somewhat the perception of this work upon the second viewing.

The murder and suicide in Darboven’s work become a counterpoint to the photojournalist narratives. The worlds of art and life intersect. One looks to art to elicit and release an intensity of feeling, which then results in transcendence. The juxtaposition of these series and the works that surround them creates a context where they transcend their original function as information and contribute to the escalating curve of emotion that viewers are encouraged to feel as they progress through the show. War as a romantic idea and war as a wrenching reality both have a role in our culture.

BRUCE NAUMAN

Thank you

1992

[Figure 2.68–2.71]

From the left limb of the tree-like composition of the exhibition, the viewer’s passage provides a branch leading to a gallery accessed by a glass-panelled, sound-retaining door.

Entering, viewers encounter a video monitor containing a man’s face shouting out verbal assaults.

Thank you, a private gift to the curator/collector from the artist, is a confrontational performance mounted for attack at standing height. The provocative and relentless audio-visual message is made by the artist himself, his facial expression ruddy and angry as he spits out in varying cadences, “Thank you!” “Thank you!” “Thank you!” “Thank you!” “Thank you!” “Thank you!” “Thank you!” “Thank you!” in a ten-minute loop.20

The repetition replicates the structure of Darboven’s Ansichten >82<, continuing the theme of ritual that threads through the show. The video, in its aggression, identifies a latent “Fuck you” in the quotidian

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20 This work was later included in an exhibition in the Unilever Turbine Hall at the Tate Modern, London, as a part of a commissioned presentation of his effort to expand the definitions of art through the medium of sound (Dexter 2004: 18-23). See also Nauman 2004.
words “Thank you,” and vice versa. The phrase “Thank you,” uttered by the recipient of a gesture, acknowledges the inherently ambivalent relationship in the bond that exists between a giver and a receiver. When “Thank you” is discharged repetitively, in rapid-fire, loud shouts, as in this videotape, it becomes a verbal pistol. The words are “Thank you,” but the authoritative tone is like the Führer’s in his speeches to persuade Germans to support his Fascist position in World War II. Located adjacent to Thích Quảng Đức’s gift of his life, the silent aggression in the monk’s act is given voice.

The video by Nauman affirms that even the most benign of everyday, ritualized interactions — indeed all relationships — involve power positions that slide gelatinously along on a slippery gradient from attraction to revulsion. When reformatted, “Thank you,” a normally civilized social nicety, reveals the aggression in ambivalence, which exists in varying degrees in all relationships. The simple switch in tone lifts the shroud on existing aggressive human instincts, resting threateningly close to the surface in us all. In a flash, like the rolling up of a sleeve of a garment, latent hostility lies on the surface of the arm, waiting to be exposed.

The hostile sexual reference and the fully frontal body position taken by the artist in his performance, assuming at once the role of actor, director and purchased, exhibited artist, make manifest the power implications of both giving and receiving. The analogy to the sexual act diagnoses, with wit, the power relations of dominance and control as they exist in all human relations, with particular reference to the power dynamics between the artist and collector, between the artist and curator, and between the artist and viewer. The performance is a direct response to the power dynamic in a collector’s or curator’s relationship with the artist’s work. The video makes a playful, but decidedly provocative, statement of resistance. It repeatedly and ferociously copulates with the viewer again and again and again and again. Power — mirrored, squared and confounded into absurdity.

The interchange of artworks for money and for exhibition is not without complicated repercussions. There is both an increase and a sacrifice of power by both parties. “Thank you” may be the slap-on-the-back of approval, but not without the force felt. Saying “Thank you” in response to a perceived gesture of power is presumably meant to achieve balance. But whether anyone really wants social equilibrium is questionable. The natural urge is to try for the upper hand, which inevitably leads to tension, like the implied sexual tension proposed in this video gesture.

The sending of a video note was a functional social missive in a modern medium, like the ones sent in the form of picture postcards in Partners (The Teddy Bear Project) and the snapshot by Arbus of herself, in a pregnant state, to her husband in Burma. None of these pieces was originally intended to be artworks. But when I proposed to Nauman the possibility of showing this work in the context of an exhibition that included Sacrificial Protest of Thích Quảng Đức, which was also not intended to be an artwork, Nauman arranged for his video technician to convert the videotape onto a laser disc and offered the specifications of a stand to
As a continuation of the right limb of the exhibition, adjacent to the images of *Murder of a Vietcong Suspect by Saigon Police Chief (Vietnam)*, is a branch of the exhibition that starts with a gallery accessed through a large arch made of two columns of the colonnade.

Upon entering the gallery, viewers are confronted with a small, penetratingly vibrant, cerulean blue painting, inscribed with the date “May 15, 1981,” meticulously hand-painted in white letters, made by the Japanese-American conceptual artist, On Kawara. From 1966 on, Kawara has been creating (among a range of other kinds of works) monochromatic paintings with dates painted on them, which he has titled the *TODAY* series. These paintings were made under the artist's self-imposed terms for completion: each painting must be started and completed on the actual day depicted on the painting, in the language of the country in which the artist painted it, in one of eight sizes the artist predetermined for this series, ranging from 8 x 10 inches (20 x 25 cm) to 61 x 89 inches (41 x 226 cm). If the painting is not finished by the end of the day, it is destroyed. Decisions about whether a painting would be undertaken on a particular day, as well as its scale and background colour, typeface, and how many paintings might be attempted, are all intuitively made, depending on Kawara's emotional state of mind upon rising from bed. There are many days when no paintings are made. But when one is, the work is very painstaking. Each canvas is covered with as many as four or five layers of paint for the background, which he refines to make it free of any appearance of brushstrokes, and an additional six or seven coats of paint are applied to make the white letters, which are not stencilled but are all masterfully drawn by hand.

Like many artists, such as Andy Warhol and Gerhard Richter, Kawara has appropriated published newspaper articles and pictures as part of his work. Each painting is later fitted with a cardboard box,

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21 The gift of this work to the curator recognized a special connection between the curator and the artist. In a later interview on the occasion of his exhibition *Raw Materials* at the Tate Modern, London, Nauman describes the inception of the work in the following words: “I thought of it as a piece. It was a thank you, but it was a piece” (Simon 2004: 131).


23 Although Andy Warhol, Gerhard Richter and On Kawara have all appropriated photojournalistic images for their art (see Rorimer 1991: 224-225 and Wall 1996: 146-147, 154) there are essential differences between the appropriation of images by Warhol and Richter as compared to the direct use of actual newspaper clippings by Kawara. Warhol and Richter, for example, appropriate only journalistic photographs into their work, whereas Kawara uses complete parts of the newspaper—the photographic image and the text that accompanies and contextualizes it. Also, Warhol and Richter insert the photojournalistic image into the picture plane itself by reprinting or copying it; Kawara uses the original newspaper as a material and dedicates a separate part of the work to it, the box in which the painting is placed when not exhibited, thus supplementing the painting and making the box part of the work's content.
hand-fabricated by the artist and lined with a news clipping chosen by him that was published on the day of the painting’s creation and in the city where it was painted. Sometimes the news stories are historically significant, and at other times, they are banal.24

The date painting included in this particular work, *May 15, 1981*, happened to have been made on the day that *The New York Times* reported “The Shooting of the Pope: Millions Pray for Fast Recovery.” The box, which houses the painting when not on view, is displayed here with its news-clipping lining.25 The newspaper’s art director has highlighted the gun used by the potential assassin by putting a white circle around it. The gunman and the intended victim were indelibly linked, by ink and by history.

Juxtaposing Kawara’s work with straight photojournalism makes a connection between the works of this conceptual artist and documentary news photographs. Actual newspaper clippings are a material part of Kawara’s work, but the artist did not first read the newspaper and then set out to commemorate an event. For the most part, the news articles were collected by Kawara’s wife for him to eventually make the boxes, which were constructed after the date paintings had been made.

The *TODAY* series is not a form of “history painting,” as Jeff Wall proposed in a lecture he gave at the Dia Center for the Arts (“Monochrome and Photojournalism in On Kawara’s Today Paintings”). Wall responded to my plan to juxtapose the date paintings of Kawara with photojournalism by developing an argument in which he placed Kawara’s work in the genre of history painting, wherein an artist decides to commemorate an event in history with a painting. As he put it, “In history painting, the floating and subjective character of the art of painting is disciplined by the ineradicable validity of the known occurrence, an occurrence that can be named just by the citation of a date — for example July 14, 1789, Bastille Day, a day that becomes a festival, a public holiday, and is singled out on calendars.”26

On this, I differ from Wall. Kawara rarely set out to make a painting to commemorate an occurrence, though he was conscious that on some of the days when he was psychologically inclined to make a date painting, an event of newsworthy consequence had happened. But each of those occasions is so unusual, he carefully noted them in what he calls his *JOURNALS* as exceptional.

Furthermore, the claim that this is history painting is undone by the fact that the newspaper iconization of an event is when the newspaper story comes out, which is the day after the event occurred. The date painting, which bears the same date of the news clipping, is therefore a record of the dissemination of the information about the event and not a commemoration of the event when it occurred. The dates recorded by

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24 For a further analysis of the interaction between the material qualities of Kawara’s painting and those of the his newspaper clippings see: Watkins 2002: 78.
25 As Karl Schampers stated: “In spite of their obvious mutual connection, On Kawara deliberately keeps the painting and the box separate. The fact that they are never exhibited together confirms their (relative) independence and autonomy. They remain two separate entities” (Schampers 1991: 199).
Kawara are not of the incident happening but of the media mythologization of it.

In my view, Kawara’s work is about locating himself in history. His subject is time—past, present, and future—and also places and situations.27 His own biography is described in days and not years, calculated for exhibition catalogues as up to the beginning of each showing of his work. His JOURNALS, which record colours and the titles of newspaper articles (which he refers to as “subtitles”), also include a category Kawara calls “Places.” In this, there is extensive photo-documentation he has taken of the New York City transit system, with particular attention to scenes in the subway cars, which are reminiscent of the subway pictures Walker Evans took years earlier.

Kawara’s archive makes clear that his priority is records, particularly his own system of keeping track of each item he makes. The people who are part of that record are entered as data. The moment that an event happened is of less importance than when the event was recorded. Each day is different, but, as a day, it is in the end the same as all the other days.

That said, what is seemingly dispassionate is not without its humanism. As is clear from the news articles, Kawara values everyday life and all people of all social strata. These paintings do not record world history as much as they portray a personal, internal, subjective history. They are a record of Kawara’s relationship to history as an anchor to locate his own place in time, and are not his interpretation of world affairs. In the process, he has provided a record, through the colour and size of the paintings, of those days in which he felt an intuitive inclination to make a painting (or several) of a certain type in keeping with his strict repertoire. The labour-intensive, meditative act of crafting a painting with a single date over the period of a full day implicitly proposes a separation between whatever was happening in the outside world, which could not be controlled, and the artist's spiritual relationship to himself and to existence, on which he imposed strict controls.

Kawara’s work, displayed alongside photojournalism in a fine-art context, makes a metaphorical analogy between a system of artistic practice and a commercial cultural system of mass media. It highlights the relationship Kawara had to such information in deference to his subjective inner life, while also raising the notion of consumption of information by the media and the impact of this on us all. Kawara copes by locating himself in the continuum of recorded time. The newspaper, in contrast, has a capitalist agenda.

Kawara’s work is not a commemoration of a historical event outside of one single fact—that On Kawara was alive at the time. So, not only are the Pope and his would-be assassin connected as a fact forever, the artist connects himself to moments in history at various points, when he chooses to locate himself in time.

As with the representations of Felix the Cat carried by Minnie Mouse and Paolini’s pair of classic Greek

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27 As Jonathan Watkins argues: “They [the TODAY series] make the same sense as the graffito ‘I was here’, written in the past tense as the writer projects him or herself immediately into the future, somewhere else, and this trace of a here/now-ness is left to be encountered by someone else” (Watkins 2002: 87).
sculptures locked in each other’s gaze, the date paintings also suggest both presence and absence. Viewers are in the position of looking at the dates back in time, seeing something that has been consumed, like yesterday's news, and encouraged to situate themselves in the context of what they see.

ON KAWARA
_I AM STILL ALIVE_
1986, 1987
from the _I AM STILL ALIVE_ series
1969 ongoing
07/10/1986
02/11/1986
10/11/1986
12/01/1987

[Figures 2.75–2.78]

Also exhibited in this gallery, in a wall-mounted vitrine, are four telegrams On Kawara sent to a friend, Harry Pollac, that are part of the ongoing _I AM STILL ALIVE_ series. Over the years, Kawara has sent telegrams intermittently to people he knows.28 The _I AM STILL ALIVE_ series began with the following three telegrams:

6 DEC 1969—I AM NOT GOING TO COMMIT SUICIDE DON'T WORRY
8 DEC 1969—I AM NOT GOING TO COMMIT SUICIDE WORRY
11 DEC 1969—I AM GOING TO SLEEP FORGET IT29

Until about fifty years ago, telegrams were the primary way in which important information was transmitted over long distances quickly. A telegram received was an object of significant import, announcing the death or birth of someone with whom the recipient was in a relationship. With the date-painting boxes lined with news clippings, Kawara has been interacting with systems of information transmission. But with the telegrams, he has been initiating his own connections to the outside world, rather than appropriating them, as he does with the clippings.

The four telegrams here each say “i am still alive.” These personal messages heighten one's consciousness of life, as well as the fact that death is forever a threat, either by accident or by intention, by oneself or by others. The concern is not only personal, for those who die, but also social, for those affected by their deaths. The recipients' anxiety after reading Kawara's telegrams is only intensified when, after a series of four giving the same message, they stop arriving altogether.30 Like the video thank-you note by Bruce Nauman, and

28 Kawara 1978.
30 Jonathan Watkins acknowledged this tension and locates it in the telegram's inherent pastness. When Kawara's addressee reads "I am still alive," he necessarily has to interpret this as "I was still alive." About the telegrams, he writes, "Their intrinsic obsolescence now matches the instant obsolescence of their message" (Watkins 2002: 87).
the personal notes sent on family-album postcards, these private missives by Kawara expand in meaning when displayed in public.

Another issue is the dynamic of power and risk. Who ultimately controls these objects? The telegrams, by virtue of their presence in this display, were at one time sold by the recipient. The artist, though he issued the telegrams, was not paid financially for what he himself considers to be artworks. Like the paradigm of the monk’s performance, Kawara’s telegrams are both a gift and a sacrifice, as well as a risk, as the gift may not be worth anything if the act is not valued and preserved.

Because society recognizes Kawara as a professional artist, copyright fees for the publication of the telegrams must be paid, which the artist receives. However, unlike works by Weiner, Kawara’s telegrams were never sold by him. They exist between art and ephemera, and as part of an open social contract. The fate of these items, like that of the photo-postcards and teddy bears, is in the hands of someone other than the sender, who can cherish them, discard them or potentially capitalize upon their value.

The theme of suicide implicit in Kawara’s telegrams is linked in this exhibition to Darboven’s *Ansichten* >82<, in which she commemorates the suicide of Albert Ballin. Murder is yet another connection between the works by Kawara and Darboven. The failed attempt on the life of the Pope, referenced in Kawara’s *May 15, 1981*, stands in contrast to the successful shooting of John Lennon referenced in Darboven’s *Ansichten* >82<. Their works are also united not only by their references to political history but also by virtue of their systemized, labour-intensive acts of art-making, in which they are both engaged. Darboven’s characteristic writing is countered in this exhibition with the careful crafting by Kawara of the date painting and its box.

Systems provide a comforting semblance of control over our lives. Darboven utilizes idiosyncratic, ritualistic writing, tangibly tracking her progress through life. Kawara immerses himself in several systems of painting, appropriation and intervention, reaching out to friends through series of postcards he sends that state what hour he awoke each day, in a series he calls *I GOT UP*. Darboven wrote, and Kawara painted, and both counted. Their work is compared in this show to society’s system of organizing information on a daily basis. Like the artists, the news media notes lives lived and lost, but with entirely different agendas than the artists’.

One of the notions raised by these works when brought together is how much control we really have over the course of history or even the story of our own lives. The exhibition makes the point, that in the end, we can each come up with a system to organize the information to which we are subjected, but the only thing we may actually choose to do that has any physical effect on the world is either to damage ourselves or damage someone else.
The gallery in which Kawara’s work is installed is quiet, but in the gallery adjacent to it, the sound level is at the legal limit of an outdoor rock concert. To reach this gallery, viewers enter a glass-panelled, sound-sealed door, walk down a corridor and open a second sound-sealed door.

The moment the second door is opened, viewers are confronted with a dark space that suddenly assaults their retinas with flashes of light, causing after-images, and their ears with a relentlessly pounding bass sound so powerful it vibrates their bodies. They are starting to experience *Box (Ahhareturnabout)*, made in 1977 by Irish artist James Coleman. This piece is a black and white film loop made from documentary footage of the famous 1927 historic boxing rematch between the Irish boxer, Jack Dempsey, and the American boxer, Gene Tunney. These fighters are legendary figures in the folklore of boxing. An Irish artist has utilized documentary footage to tell a story about an Irish boxer in combat with an American boxer.

In 1926, Dempsey was the world’s most famous heavyweight champion. He had successfully defended his championship six times over a period of seven years, winning himself the nickname of the Massana Mauler. Tunney, who had been invited to fight Dempsey, was a New Yorker, known for his high ideals and called the Dreamer. He was considered the underdog, and went into the fight with odds against him of 11 to 5. Even though Tunney won the fight, the fans resisted acknowledging his accomplishment as legitimate, convinced the win was a fluke. Dempsey’s fans resolutely clung to their hero, refusing to acclaim a new one in Tunney. And so a rematch was scheduled a year later, on September 22, 1927, at Soldier’s Field in Chicago. Dempsey was close to retiring from the ring. He needed to win this fight to end his career in glory. Tunney needed to win to authenticate his first win and prove himself to the skeptics.

The sportswriters declared the Dempsey/Tunney fight of 1927 as “The Second Battle of the Century.” It turned out to be one of the most famous events in boxing history. Central to the story is that before the fight, both boxers agreed on a rule: should a knockout occur, the one still standing must go back to a neutral corner before the counting could start. It was the seventh round. Dempsey was fading and Tunney was bashing blows at him. Dempsey surprised Tunney with a strong right punch to his jaw, which flung him against the ropes. Then a forceful left punch downed Tunney to the floor.

Dempsey was so stunned by his accomplishment, he hung over his fallen prey for four full seconds, frozen with disbelief. By the time the referee finally cajoled him to go back to a corner of the ring, in

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accordance with the rules, the official count to ten had to start again. By the count of nine, Tunney was up. By ten, the fight continued. Three rounds later, the match ended with Tunney triumphant, successfully retaining his title as champion over Dempsey.

However, once again the victory was controversial. The “Second Battle of the Century” had turned into the “Battle of the Long Count.” Dempsey’s fans dismissed Tunney’s victory as the result of a technicality. Tunney was never acknowledged for his victory. Dempsey’s knock-out of Tunney was applauded by his fans, who admired him as the true hero, the stuff of which mythology is made, and this became the final cultural reality.

What boxing folklore retained has parallels to the popular-culture reading of Adams’ documentary photographs. What was believed was what seemed to be true, in accordance with the appearance of what happened. Coleman explores that gap between perception and reality. He appropriated archival footage and turned it into a film loop, then added an unexpectedly loud sound track that accosts the viewer viscerally. He also interspersed clear film in the documentary footage, which allows the bright light of the projector to shine through at regular intervals. These white images (flashing in a darkened gallery) in the original footage are synchronized to each punch, overloading the retina—momentarily blinding it—and creating after-images to simulate the impact of each blow. At the same time, the viewer is pounded audially with deep, bass thudding sounds belted out at an astonishing one hundred decibels, loud enough to vibrate in one’s chest cavity.

Throughout and between the punches, a poignant audio narrative gives a fictional account, written by the artist, of Tunney’s inner thoughts: priming himself, defending his title, at once trying to hold onto his life and his title. His physical existence was at stake, as was his identity as a winner. The room in which the work is installed is small and claustrophobic, replicating the small boxing ring and the mindscape of Tunney, whose interior monologue provides an intimate, voyeuristic experience for the viewer. The intimacy of the physical presentation is matched by the intimacy of the monologue. However, the actual sounds of the public spectacle—the screams of the audience, the horrible sounds of the painful punches against living flesh—are not included in deference to the interior psychological reality portrayed as if in the fighter’s mind. The artist’s voice-over of Tunney’s struggle to survive and his fear of defeat plays between the punches. Tunney and

33 Benjamin Buchloh interprets this effect as follows: “As Coleman’s film loop follows mimetically an exchange of punches in rapidly alternating sequences of blackout and image-sound flashes...BOX reiterates the experience of the perceptual pulse in the spectator, pushing it almost literally across the threshold of physical discomfort, this pulse alternates with an iconic sign of two fighters exchanging actual punches. Not only does this correspondence generate an effect of the doubling of the semiotic as the physical (bordering on a pun), but it also situates the image of bodily performance within a very specific historical event and within the confrontation of two historically identifiable protagonists” (Buchloh 2000: 161-2).

34 As Anne Rorimer noted, the viewing experience combines an internal view of being inside his mind, hearing his thoughts, while at the same time offering an external view of watching the fight (Rorimer 2003: 9).
Dempsey appear doomed to stay locked in a perpetual limbo, an endless allegorical struggle for life and soul. Plato asked what does it mean to be, but the key question here is, “Who am I?”35

The Tunney/Dempsey rematch of 1927 was the first to be broadcast live on radio across the world. The New York Evening Telegram hooked up to seventy-nine radio stations in Africa, Latin America, Europe, and Australia. These connections made the story into a mythological fight. Coleman, by using the documentary as an armature, made a work that expresses the life and death struggle for identity.

Triumph is not only about the continuance of life but also about the survival of the spirit. People have killed and will kill for their identity. Triumph and defeat each provide identities that persist in history.

35 According to Jean Fisher, Coleman’s interest in the fight results from “a consideration that the challenge to a return bout precipitated a crisis in Tunney’s sense of identity—at that moment he was both ‘champ’ and ‘non-champ.’ As a consequence, it was his own sense of coherence that he was fighting to maintain in the second match” (Fisher 2003: 25).
Notes on the Exhibition

Passage Three

JEFF WALL
*Mimic*
1982
[Figures 3.1 – 3.3]

Consistent with the format of Passages One and Two, Passage Three also begins with an image of reflection that introduces a duality. *Mimic* by Jeff Wall is another work in *Partners* that acts as a prelude to a passage that progresses into a fugue of implications as the viewer moves through these three galleries and back again. *Mimic* is the manifestation of a minor gesture with major implications. A Caucasian ruffian, sauntering down the street, his girlfriend in tow, encounters a stranger of another race and bullies him, by making a hand gesture to his own face that mimics the shape of the Asian's eyes. The woman is oblivious to this move. The scenario has been choreographed to portray a racist act, captured by the camera. It places the viewer in a voyeuristic position, bearing witness. Gender politics are portrayed alongside race politics. This crude fellow has made clear his claim to dominance.

There is the notion of “self” and then there is the “other.” The intensity of the gap between the men is manifested by a simple hand gesture.¹ The man making the move and the man who is the recipient of the mockery set in motion dynamics in the relationships not only between one man and another, one race and another, and one gender and another but also the relationship between the photographer and the viewer. This is a work that contains a narrative with a moral core. Not only is the woman coupled with this man, making her an unwitting ally, but the men, too, are paired, by virtue of the recorded gesture of one to the other. There is a perpetrator, a victim and an oblivious accomplice. The viewer is then thrust into the position of picking an alliance with one or more, or none of the three, since what is displayed depicts both

¹ For Wall a gesture is “a pose or action which projects its meaning as a conventional sign.” To him, the gesture generates its power from its ability to manifest ideas as appearances, i.e. because of their visuality (Wall 2002: 76).
human nature (the tendency to identify with one, or some and not with others) and the basic social
dynamics of interactions.

As an accessory to the man, the woman, though she is unaware of the moral implications of having
made the choice to be with him, is a participant in the scene. In this way she is linked to the woman in the
other work by Wall, displayed here, *The Stumbling Block* (Figures 3.1, 3.4, 3.5), as well as to the citizens
of countries whose governments act on their behalf and without their knowledge, making them ultimately
complicit in acts they may not have knowingly chosen.

What we see is a large, sumptuous, colour photograph. However, when Wall began his work in the
form of backlit colour transparencies in 1978, he expressed ambivalence about the medium of photography.
His philosophical position was that painting was the foremost medium for the making of art. Convinced
photography was an inferior medium by definition, he attempted to tune his art practice to his philosophical
position about picture-making. In the mid-'80s, Wall started to make drawings, preparing to fulfill his
aspiration at the time to make paintings. Indeed, early works such as *Mimic* were originally installed almost
flush with the surface of the wall, their lightboxes hidden inside the walls so the pictures could lie flat against
the surface like paintings and less like the photographic signs seen in subways and airports. It was only later
that Wall changed the structure of his work to include the visible display of the boxes. Mimic was refitted
and has one of the original old lightboxes that marked this development. Wall also, at that time, had his works
hung high on the wall, to emphasize that they sat within the genre of historical narrative painting and to raise
viewers' consciousness of his photographs as compositions, not snapshots.

Wall's work persuaded me against his own hierarchy of artistic forms of expression. In 1995, I curated
his work and the *Untitled Film Stills* by Cindy Sherman in an exhibition, *Projections*, together with works by
Weegee, Brassai and Alfred Stieglitz. The show explored the similarities and differences between works by con-
temporary artists who used photography in a cinematic way and those made by straight historical
photographers. Weegee's and Brassai's work was much indebted to the imagination of the artist, in ways that
compared with Wall's work and Sherman's. Photographs by the historical photographers, while documentary
in source and appearance, were actually frequently staged. Juxtaposing Wall's work with that of Weegee,
Stieglitz and Brassai became an occasion where his work was placed directly in the context of the history of
photography, not just because of the common medium but also because of the shared perspectives on culture,
humour and picture-making that this Jewish artist shared with the three historical Jewish artists. Within a
year, Wall had built a darkroom, and, in 1996, printed his first large black and white photographs.

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2 For an exploration of this double bind, or more accurately what it means to be a painter who is a photographer, see: Duve 2002: 26-31.
3 For a philosophical interpretation of Wall's lightbox and for further analysis in this context of the differences between painting and
In *Mimic*, Wall has orchestrated a social incident. Conscious of each component, he lets the viewer know he is making a picture. It is clear that the orange and red colour of the cars down the street and the red “No Stopping” symbol on the street sign co-ordinate with the orange colour of the man’s shirt and the woman’s red shorts. The shadows behind the man and woman are long and strong, as befit the firm grounding of those who make up any country’s charter-culture elite. In contrast, the near absence of a shadow behind the Asian has him looking less rooted to the ground. The Caucasian has formally and territorially claimed not only the woman and the other man but also the street.

These shadows are reminiscent of those cast by the zeppelins, which were also declarations of territorialism. Wall’s work is a careful balancing act. It proposes a moral situation, but diplomatically. The artist’s restraint results in a picture that is not patronizing to the Asian, nor does it designate the bully as a Fascist, and it does not express an opinion about the woman. The artist says, essentially, “This is the picture. I am leaving you here. Where do you want to take it?” The picture does not pass judgement. The scene is set. The viewer completes it.

JEFF WALL
*The Stumbling Block*
1991
[Figures 3.1, 3.4, 3.5]

*The Stumbling Block* is a large colour photograph of a contemporary downtown cityscape from the New World. It happens to be Vancouver, but is generic and could be many other North American cities that have come to define the modern post-war world. It provides in this exhibition a graphic counterpoint to the pre-war European skyscapes displayed in *Ships (The Zeppelin Project)*, and a destination in the circular route of the ships of the Hamburg-American Line that appear to travel from one side of the gallery to the other and back again. Wall’s works bring out urban icons, indeed stereotypes of the Western world in both architecture and social dynamics.

In this fantasy photo, a prone man in a hockey-like costume provides a human stumbling block for a young woman. The image is staged so that she is photographed air-borne. At first glance, the woman has apparently been tripped up by the man. However, one could also read the woman as having chosen to stumble over this docile fellow. She could have walked around the stumbling block, but didn’t. The staged quality of the event fictionalizes it, making it into an allegory. In this conjured moment of urban life in downtown Vancouver, where none of the passers-by is much perturbed by the inconsequential tumble about to take place, viewers soon determine they have found themselves peering through the eyes of an artist.

Wall has portrayed a benign and gentle man who, because of his fantastic hockey outfit—which makes
mobility impossible—is incapable of harming anyone except by his passivity. While it initially appears to have some of the trappings of an impending traumatic event, it quickly dissolves into what appears superficially to be a comic shot, but presented as deadly serious. Wall’s wit is dry and his work diagnostic. He has created a prattfall emblematic of the absurdity of municipal life, with its blocked bureaucracy and many rules suspended in a legacy of politeness. And he has done it so that it appears real as well as realistically impossible. This hearkens back to the fantasy of Felix the Cat, who is both there and not there. As with the toy, there is a suspension of disbelief in Wall’s works.

The Stumbling Block captures the culture of Vancouver, with its multicultural heritage and its brand-new urban architecture, its keen enthusiasm for outdoor sports and its laid-back style. It also comments on relationships, specifically how we choose our troubles by virtue of our decisions, or inherit them by virtue of our place or our trust. The woman had the option of walking around the hockey-costumed fellow. But she didn’t. As Wall said, the fall will give her, like the Asian man on the right who has tripped moments before, “pause for thought.”

The tumble is an imagined performance. In Partners, it enlarges the repertoire of performances that each affirm individual identity and existence:

In my fantasy, The Stumbling Block helps people change. He is there so that ambivalent people can express their ambivalence by interrupting themselves in their habitual activities…. He does not give lessons or make demands; he is simply available for anyone who somehow feels the need to demonstrate—either to themselves or to the public at large—the fact that they are not sure they want to go where they seem to be headed. The interruption is a curative… the ills of bureaucratic society are cured by the installation of a new bureaucracy, one which recognizes itself as the problem, the obstacle.4

Just as Fabro’s sculpture makes a reference to the identity of Italy, and Cattelan’s Him makes reference to the identity of Germany, Wall’s picture is about the identity of Canada, which looks similar to, but is very different from, the identity of America. The history of this country is not associated with power and might. While Americans have the heritage of a gun-toting Wild West and the patriotic symbol of a high-flying eagle, Canadians, with their national symbol of the industrious beaver, have a history of relative order, and have tended to favour institutionalism over individualism. So this picture of a ludicrously passive government official wearing a badge, “Office of the Stumbling Department, Works Department,” is a biting cultural commentary on modern urban life, but in particular, the identity of the country in which Wall resides.

But it is also an allegory on the relationship of the individual to the state. As Jeff Wall wrote in 1991 (unpublished):

*The Stumbling Block* might be subtitled “An Incident in a Possible World.” This world is just over the threshold of ours—the threshold of time, maybe, or of some transformation of public life. Over there, the municipal authorities are asking, “How do we stop the juggernaut? How do we help citizens who need to make a change in their lives to stop going where they are going, to begin to go somewhere else, to live differently, and to help create a better world?” In my utopian fantasy of administrative genius, the government acts negatively and not positively, and so establishes the Office of the Stumbling Block. These new civil servants take no action and provide only the opportunity of an obstacle.5

The woman’s trust in the authority of the state is at least in part the reason for her fall. The reaction of indifference by those witnessing the event indicates they are kindred spirits in this acceptance, and partake in a partnership with her.

*The Stumbling Block* is the first major work Wall made with the assistance of computer technology. While the street scene of cars and passers-by was shot separately, the front five figures were photographed in a studio and subsequently integrated digitally into the background.

Wall has orchestrated an incident, but with certain classical pictorialist devices, in the way a painting would be composed. His works talk to an informed public, aware of classic compositions. He would not, for example, disrupt the composition of his works unexpectedly by placing a shadow in the centre of his picture, upending the composition in the way that Lee Friedlander would. This approach also applies to the content. Like Evans, he has made works based on a cliché. (One has only to think of *Shoe Shine*, by Evans, the photograph where newly shined shoes are lit with an outdoor fixture.) In the process of taking the title back to its literal meaning, Wall has imbued it with metaphorical meaning that is at once perceptive and farcical.

In Wall’s work, separate streams of artistic practice in photography, as well as artistic practice in high-art painting, converge. Stieglitz fought to have photography recognized as art by emulating painting. Evans took a different route and made art from facts, described to the point of transcendence. These very different photographers were appreciated as masters, but always within the realm of photography and not in the larger world of art. Wall’s work brings together the traditions of high-art painting and conceptual art with the traditions of photography, such that we no longer question if his pictures are photographs or art.

5 For a completely different interpretation that links this image with technology and postmodern society, see: Dickel 2001: 146-148.
This photographed image of a grey and white cat, sitting in profile, motionless, in front of a birdcage captures the essence of voyeurism — by the subject and by the photographer. A daguerreotype is a highly detailed image formed on a sheet of silver-plated copper. It was the first successful form of photography capable of producing permanent pictures of startling clarity. However, to accomplish a portrait, the sitter had to remain motionless for a prolonged period. This meant the picture could only have been accomplished with the co-operation of the cat—which required some manipulation on the part of the photographer.6

As a daguerreotype, this work highlights the historical impact of the invention of photography. As John Wood has commented in his book, *The Daguerreotype: A Sesquicentennial Collection*: “It was not just the nature of art that was transformed by photography; photography transformed the entire world. The only event we might compare it to is the invention of writing.”7 Apart from establishing an art-historical lineage, the cat daguerreotype initiates several other subjects for the viewer. The relationship of the cat to the bird is one of predator and prey. Although set on a domestic stage, the cat is portrayed in this picture as a force of nature. Riveted by the sight of the bird, the cat is bound to it, as if under a spell. Only the tip of its tail and the tips of its ears quivered during the exposure. All else was perfectly still.

The image of the cat, a stalker by instinct, transfixed before the birdcage, frozen in time, becomes, arguably, a symbol of desire. The tableau created by the photographer becomes a metaphor for the exploitation of instinct and desire. With the camera located on the floor, a birdcage had been placed to the left in the composition, so it was partially in the picture plane, housing an unseen but magnetically present bird. The cat was then allowed centre stage, controlled by the photographer who had harnessed the cat’s instincts and voyeuristically recorded his observation of the cat observing the bird. Because of the technical advances of the time, we are able to witness this potent moment plucked out of the past and preserved in perpetuity. By harnessing the cat’s instinctual urge to stalk the bird, the photographer’s product — a replication of the pursuit of the bird by the cat — highlights some of the central subjects in this passage for the viewer. An animal and a person are each looking at, and desirous of, something different.

The cat daguerreotype is not only a portrait of the power of desire and the use of power to manipulate desire, it is also a picture preserved in gold and burgundy velvet, in a decoratively embossed case that fits

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6 Foresta and Wood 1995.
comfortably in one’s hand and must be opened to see the picture. The scale and manner in which a daguerreotype must be viewed make the picture a decidedly intimate experience, created for private pleasure. Indeed, the precious materials of its frame locate it in the history of culture as being itself a small, cherished object of desire.\footnote{Walter Benjamin also refers to the handheld aspect of viewing: “Daguerre photographs were iodized silver plates exposed in the camera obscura, which had to be turned this way and that until, in the proper light, a pale grey image could be discerned. They were one of a kind; in 1839 a plate cost an average of 25 gold francs” (Benjamin 1999: 508).}

Indeed, this tiny photograph reinforces the notion of voyeurism that was initiated in this passage in the works by Wall, and links them to those that follow by Walker Evans and Paul McCarthy. But it also introduces the notion of surveillance as a form of voyeurism, a concept that is further amplified in the works by Evans and McCarthy, and then, later, in a reconsideration of Wall’s work on the return trip.

In addition, this small piece connects with another small object, displayed earlier in the show—the toy with Felix the Cat. Both cats have been co-opted. But the cat in the cage is a product of imagination, while the cat at the cage has been captured by imagination. The relationship between the cats seen so far also provides a paradigm of the divergent approaches by Wall and Evans.

The daguerreotype showing the cat’s predatory position in relation to the bird leads to a consideration of the stalking photographer’s relation to his subject, which then raises the notion of the exploitation of human instincts by power interests, be it for commercial gain, political power, religious power, media power, sexual power or cultural power—all of which are implicated in this cased image that raises an awareness in viewers of seeing, and, by extension, of the power of the gaze and the alienation that ultimately (as in Saloon by McCarthy) results from blindly acting out of instinct.

WALKER EVANS

*Self-Portrait*

1928

[Figure 3.9, 3.10]

The production by Walker Evans was enormous, not only in images but in variant croppings. (Indeed, Evans’ love of pictures extended to postcards, which he collected passionately. By his death he had accumulated 8,000 pictures, all categorized by type.) This exhibition includes only a few of his photographs, several of which are from a series of works.

The first photograph encountered by the viewer is *Self-Portrait*, taken from above with Evans appearing like an object—a lifeless doll, head bowed, eyes unconnected to the camera’s lens, lying on a crumpled bed sheet over a mattress on the floor. His hand is placed on what appears to be a camera positioned between his legs at his crotch, like a gun with the power to shoot.
These thirteen photographs of subway passengers are portraits of people who were surreptitiously photographed by Evans with a Contax camera concealed in his coat, in a work he later titled Many Are Called, a Biblical reference to Matthew 22:14, where Jesus comments, "Many are called, but few are chosen."9

Paradoxically, the copyright laws that protect artists’ and photographers’ rights (and those of their estates) functioned in this case to prioritize the rights of the subjects, setting up a different kind of partnership than have the copyright laws in earlier works in this show. Evans, in part, because he had not obtained any written releases from the passengers he portrayed in his subway photographs, waited until November 1966 before publishing the book, Many Are Called, twenty-eight years after the project began. In this way, he was able to avoid any violation of the sitters (or lawsuits from them). During the hiatus, the passengers would either have died or aged so much they would not be readily recognizable.

As with Thích Quảng Đức’s, there is a reversal of power, wherein the subject has a significant position of power in relation to the photographer, even though the photographer has the power to choose or not choose the subject. In other words, there is an implicit partnership between the subject and the photographer, but not one Evans was willing to acknowledge. His interest was in surveillance, in control over his subjects. To achieve candid performances, and the picture he aspired to create, he had to maintain secrecy. One of the by-products of the photographer’s interest in candour is the way it heightens the viewer’s consciousness of sight. One becomes very aware of the physical act of looking as well as the power implications in who sees and who does not.10

Many Are Called ultimately contained eighty-nine reproductions from the hundreds of pictures of subway passengers Evans took.11 Most of the portraits were of Caucasian passengers in groups of one, two or three. By the time the book was published, the project had become something different than Evans’ original intention. Seen from the perspective of the times in which the book came out (the 1960s), it became a document that was symbiotic with the works of a new generation of photographers such as Robert Frank, Diane Arbus and Gary Winogrand, who were each engaged in explorations of the post-war urban environment.

Now, years after the interest by this subsequent generation of artists, this body of work is presented in yet another context — juxtaposed to Jeff Wall’s work. Unlike my earlier juxtaposition of Wall’s work with

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11 Several photographs from this series are reproduced in Greenough 1991.
historical photographers Weegee, Brassai and Alfred Stieglitz in *Projections*, the link to Evans brings up new issues. On the surface, the peering eye of their respective cameras captures the social dynamics of people in public places. Wall’s works frequently depict the downtrodden. A parallel is Evans’ acceptance of the job of recording the Farm Security Administration’s relocation project, which was to provide a group of propagandistic photographs sponsored by the American government, intended to persuade people to leave the lands they owned and on which they had grown up to relocate to more fertile properties where they could prosper.

But neither Evans nor Wall had social welfare as a priority. Evans was preoccupied with picture-making, and took so much time taking his photographs that he did not fulfill his photo quota and was fired. He obsessively cropped his pictures, even entering the Library of Congress archives, where his photographs were preserved, to hand-crop the original negatives.

Wall also controls what happens in his pictures as much as he can. He poses and directs his subjects, and when necessary to realize a picture, hires professional actors and make-up artists, constructs elaborate stage sets and utilizes masterful digital technology. In their control of their pictures, Evans and Wall are united.

Wall’s pictures of life on the streets of Vancouver are paired here with Evans’ pictures of life in the subway cars of New York. Evans got the photographs he wanted and captured an essence in urban existence in America by surreptitiously shooting his subjects so they would not pose for the camera. Wall also exercised control, but used alternative means.

Though the subject of street photography and control over the image are similar, the differences are notable. Wall, like Darboven, is a romantic. He searches for an ideal—a higher virtue. Unlike Evans and August Sander, he does not elevate everyday people, but, rather, draws our attention to their suffering and exclusion from society. He portrays the modern world in allegories, in the tradition of the history of painting presented in places of worship, palaces and public places. Only recently has he begun to make works in dialogue with photographers he admires, such as Craigie Horsfield and, notably, the European painter/photographer of the 1930s and ’40s named Wols (Wolfgang Schulze).

With *Mimic*, Wall provides us with a stereotypical event we might see and that we know about, but are not likely to see caught by a camera. Or he fantasizes an event, as in *The Stumbling Block*. In both pictures, he has created the appearance of a chance encounter on the street and elevated each into a monumental moment. His pictures are carefully composed to be allegories for the further consideration of the viewer. Wall *makes* a photograph. He rarely *takes* a photograph.

Evans ultimately also made photographs, but he started by taking photographs, as he did not know what he was going to get when he set out to shoot. His source was reality. His pictures were not staged, but were
chosen from many, and cropped and printed, by dodging and burning, to highlight the areas of his focus.\textsuperscript{12}

Evans, in his series of subway portraits, provides us with an event we can see daily—the commuting of passengers. It is something one may see innumerable times, but because of the mind’s inclination to generalize repetition, one stops “seeing” people in the subway. Evans has taken pictures of ordinary people, with nothing spectacular about them and without particularly notable personalities, and has enabled viewers to see them as they have never before been seen. His work raises the viewer’s consciousness of the act of seeing. He pursued the mundane and managed to make it amazing.

While the pictures by Wall and Evans are thematically linked as street pictures, Wall’s construction is a context to create an allegory that makes the general specific. Evans’ works, in capturing what he sees, make the specific general. Wall presents what we know, and encourages us to think more about it as well as the implications of the way he has presented it. Evans finds something we think we know, and encourages us to look again and see something different.

Evans was ambivalent about the viewer, and made pictures for himself. Indeed, he shares this existential and personal pursuit in his art practice with On Kawara. Waiting thirty years to reveal a picture is not extraordinary for either of these artists, as the works were never initially made for other people. In contrast, Wall is a storyteller who addresses the viewer in the way a cinematographer does—conscious of the audience. He has a social purpose in portraying modern life that was not part of Evans’ agenda, which was to look closely at what was around him and learn from looking.

The progression in Passage Three moves from the voyeuristic, allegorical, staged scenarios by Wall, set up to be recorded by the camera, to scenes of surveillance by Evans, surreptitiously captured by a camera as if looking through a peep hole, searching to discover something not otherwise seen before, to the cat daguerreotype that makes emblematic the connection of looking and desire, to \textit{Saloon} by Paul McCarthy, in which the viewer is invited to enter the looking glass of the lens and bear witness to the sexy “set” itself, and experience in three dimensions a parable about culture, desire and human instinct.

\textbf{PAUL McCARTHY}
\textit{Saloon}
1995–96
\[\text{Figures 3.26 – 3.43}\]

While Evans’ photographs were taken from inside a public structure, Paul McCarthy’s work can be viewed only from outside a public structure—a saloon. Saloons were made primarily for cowboys’ recreation and to

\textsuperscript{12} Judith Keller in her article on this series discusses the numerous and sometimes radical cropping that Evans made in his later prints (Keller 1993: 152-165).
fleece them of their expendable income. West Coast American artist Paul McCarthy made a large sculpture in
the form of this bar-room, animated with moving sculptures and period ragtime piano music. Occasionally,
gun shots fire out loudly.

Saloon, with its theme-park structure, is located at the conclusion of the pictorial journey through the
photographs by Wall and Evans, but it can be heard from the moment one enters the first gallery of the
exhibition. This raucous music of the ’30s pervades the show as strangely as the classical music played by
inmates of the WWII concentration camps must have sounded to the others incarcerated with them. It is a lively
audio intrusion into the calm neo-Classical spaces. As well, the gun shots fire loudly and are heard throughout
the galleries, piercing the spaces unexpectedly and giving sound to the several other gun shots pictured or
referenced in the show. Saloon concludes the show with a very direct statement about frustration and desire.

Saloon, like so many of the works in Partners, is a tableau. It is composed of a painted stage-set
structure of a Western wooden bar-room. Viewers can see animated and automated figures by looking over a
pair of swinging saloon doors, and then through two open windows and a back door.

Two molded Fiberglas dance-hall girls gyrate and rock their rears, anuses aimed towards a partially
dressed cowboy with a hat and one leather glove, who masturbates while gazing not at either of them but
somewhere yonder. Meanwhile, the literally pig-headed, blue-eyed bartender repeatedly pours shots of whisky,
which he sends sliding like missiles down the length of the bar. Everybody in the set is moving and looking,
but blind to each other. The viewer is confronted with wide-open eyes, but soon becomes aware the eyes of the
standing figures are not trained on anything and simply do not “see.” Nor do any of the women’s butts connect
to the cowboy’s cocked cock. Everyone is alienated, performing a perpetual mating ritual that is never fulfilled.
At the back of the structure, a dance-hall girl on her knees rotates forward out the back door, poking her big,
painted Fiberglas, pussycat head at about the level of the viewer’s crotch and swivelling her head from side to side.

The figures are almost comic and made to look unreal, though the masterful molding of the cowboy’s
face makes it clear this is an ability the artist has, when needed. More realistic figures might enable one to
identify an actual person, which would let the viewer off the hook.

In this sculpture, McCarthy has addressed the stereotypical myth of the cowboy. The cowboy in
American culture is an icon of power and sexual prowess. He was always the good guy, who, in the movies,
got the girl. Anyone who grew up in 1940s and 1950s North America knew cowboys were heroes to be
emulated. The entire history of America is based on the mythology of a gun-toting cowboy forging ahead in
the uncivilized Wild West.14

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13 Ralph Rugoff also used the term “theme park” to describe McCarthy’s work, in a 1994 review of McCarthy’s sculptures (Rugoff 1994: 80-83, 118).
14 For further analysis of the imaginary aspect of “the western” especially in the cinematic representations of the theme, see: Lusted ca. 2003,
By choosing this character from fictionalized American history, McCarthy has undertaken to dissect this myth of power. This is a work that deals with what it’s like to be a man. It points out the confusion between a real cowboy and the myth. And, by analogy, it dismantles and diagnoses the whole myth of men who have grown up thinking of themselves as virile cowboys. This work looks at men lusting after women and what it is really like for most men—in particular, what the moment-to-moment phenomenon of sexual desire is for men.

The cowboy in *Saloon* is not mounted on his horse. This alone deprives him of a good measure of his power. Off the range (where he is “at home,” as in the popular song, “Home on the Range”) and in a saloon, he is just another guy. In reality, though, a cowboy is not a man but a boy. Though mythologized as being potent and able to get girls, the cowboy is only actually powerful on his horse. After all, a cowboy is merely a herder of cattle—a shepherd and not, in fact, the ranch-owner. He is not in a position of economic power. He is not inherently more powerful than men who have grown up wanting to be cowboys.

The relationship of the cowboy in *Saloon* to the two dance-hall girls is telling. The bar girl is there, either as employee of the bar or as a flirt. She wants to earn money or titillate men, but not necessarily to consummate a relationship—which is clear from her actions in the bar. The body language of the dance-hall girls is articulate about what they want. Both present their backsides, each directing their butts to the cowboy, round holes bared for potential penetration. This makes their gestures entirely sexual. There is no invitation to interact frontally, which would require and result in eye contact, of which there is none in this scenario. But they are each nowhere near him. The moment is never right. There is no connection. The cowboy is only in the same vicinity as the women—in the bar-room.

More often than not, the cowboy is facing the wall or looking out the window, indifferent to the women or any interaction between him and them. His gaze is generalized. He is wearing two holsters and two guns. But his hand is sheathed in a leather glove, rhythmically stroking his steel-rod simulation of a phallus. It is, notably, not a tube, which would suggest the possible discharge of fluids to one of the women. Instead, it is a solid rod. While there may be a technical explanation (that the mechanical function of the hand works better with a rod than a tube), a solid piece of steel has its own justification in adding to the sense of power: it looks like the piston of a machine. But again, the appearance of power is deceptive. There can be no successful connection to the girls without a tube to disseminate fluids. A tube would have suggested this as a possibility. The absence of one makes it definitive: it will never happen.

Indeed, there is every evidence the women do not even want it to happen. This may be a confirmation of the stereotypical notion that what attracts women is power of some sort, be it personal, physical, financial, intellectual. This dovetails with the stereotypical notion of what men desire for themselves: power. McCarthy is proposing that the traditional, stereotypical fantasy men have (if they admit it) is to impregnate as many
women as they can. But, he is saying, in reality, they are personally and culturally sabotaged, unable to
fulfill their sexual fantasies. Unless they have a special dose of power to do so, they are stymied.

The cowboy is therefore destined to be always in the position of wanting and never being able to
fulfill as many sexual couplings as he would, in his heart of hearts, really like. Without the power to make
sexual conquests, the everyday cowboy, as depicted in *Saloon*, has to resort to masturbation in order to satisfy
his desires. Though surrounded by bimbos, he is unable to make any connection to them sexually. He is in
their area, but lacks the power to connect to them.

Meanwhile, the ragtime music plays on gaily, though not continuously. And every once in a while, at
unpredictable, intermittent moments, startlingly loud gunshots fire. The gun never goes off at the same time in
the programmed sequence of moves by the figures, suggesting the cowboy never “scores.” Five shots bang out,
and then, seconds later, another two follow. But the cowboy has only a six-shooter. The seventh shot must be
the orgasm from the masturbation. The cowboy, again, is powerless, in that he never “hits the target.”

Yet the bartender makes it every time. He pours the shot into the glass and it always hits the glass
and he consistently shoots it down the bar. He is the opposite of the cowboy. He’s in the position of power—
he runs the bar. He’s the master. Why else would he be a pig?

The body language of each of the characters is noteworthy. Where, for example, is the pig’s hand?
What is it doing underneath the bar? Could he be doing something sexual? This ambiguous scenario is well
known in the field of television broadcasting, where newscasters are instructed always to have their hands
showing above the desk to avoid any lewd innuendoes.

The body parts are additional contributors to a reading of the work. While the man has five fingers,
according to the leather glove, the bartender and the blond bombshell have only three, and the pussy-headed
dance-hall girl is completely without hands. These decisions take the three non-cowboy figures even more out
of the real world and further into the realm of cartoon, isolating the cowboy as the primary protagonist for
the viewer’s identification. The body-to-head proportions are also somewhat distorted. While the bodies are
proportioned to be slightly smaller than life-sized, perhaps the size of people living in the period of history of
the fictionalized scene, the heads are significantly oversized.

There is also an aspect of sexuality in the Duchampian sense. *Saloon* brings to mind the splayed out
woman and the peep show aspect of *Étant Donné*, and also suggests *The Bride Stripped Bare by her
Bachelors, Even*, where there are nine bachelors but no groom. None of the bachelors “made it” with the
woman, any more than the cowboy does with the dance-hall girls.15

It is important for any discussion of this work to emphasize to anyone who has not seen *Saloon* in

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15 For another analysis of the relationship between Duchamp and McCarthy, see: Rugoff 1996: 74.
motion—which with its figures that fascinate visually as they rock, rotate, gyrate, and slide—that this is a work that only communicates in real time. Unlike the other tableaux in the show, this is not a tableau of frozen moments that could be captured in a handful of still photographs. The script of performances by the figures takes seventy-two seconds. In the course of the figures’ interaction, they act out different gestures that modulate in different ways, at different times. At every moment, the figures engage with each other in some identifiable manner. Each action changes the dynamics of the scene in subtle but significant ways. The work can only be studied in real time to identify and analyze the implications of each moment.

The dance-hall girl with the pussycat head has a particularly important function in the dynamic of this work and its relationship with the viewer. Upon first entering the gallery and looking through the saloon’s swinging doors, this figure is not entirely visible, as she is partially blocked by the bar, which acts as a barrier, as well as by the cowboy and the blond. In fact, it is difficult to see much through these doors, which are the first access viewers have to the action in the bar. It is not until they move around the entrance to the side of the structure that they can see what is taking place inside. The first sighting of the cat-headed woman is through the two windows of *Saloon*, where visitors can peer in from the side. And then one can only see her from the back, rotating to and fro, with her backside pointed in the direction of the cowboy.

This sets up a dynamic that is all the more powerful because it resonates with art-historical and pornographic overtones. More than the other single figures, the cat woman functions in the work as classical sculpture. Her relationship with the viewer is classic in that one has to move around the sculpture to see it. This figure invokes classic sculpture’s fourth dimension—time.

However, the artist provocatively plays with these aspects. Despite the conventionality of the cat woman existing as classical sculpture, she also comes out of the end of the bar-room, which then violates the convention. By this time, the cat-headed woman has become more of a pussycat at the height of a human crotch, reinforcing the slang term for female genitalia. She extends beyond the barrier of the bar, coming into the area that the audience inhabits, which increases the involvement with the viewer. By extending beyond the tableau, the cat engages in the viewers’ space beyond the wall, acknowledging that viewers cannot get into *Saloon*, not only because they are the wrong scale but because they are not invited into the bar. This precipitates a conflict as to what the viewer is expected to do. The cat crosses the line into the viewer’s space and, in the process, challenges the traditional dynamic of classical sculpture, as well as the dynamic initially set up by the work. The viewer is no longer looking into *Saloon* exclusively in the role of voyeur. The rules have changed, and, surprisingly, the object is now engaging the viewer, which raises the question of where the zone of the sculpture really ends, making ambiguous the point where the viewer and the object interact.

The cat’s extension beyond *Saloon*, projecting out of the sculptural building, also interferes with the viewer’s space and time, which is a completely private experience. It intrudes and looks around to see if
anybody is out there. In a sense, it acknowledges the viewer by looking for him or her. Unlike the previous, more public positions for viewing at the side, this is a much more private experience for the viewer. Tucked in the back of the structure, viewers at the side cannot determine how the viewer at the back is responding to the cat because he or she is shielded. There are no windows there, and the cat blocks the door.

From the window, the cat is encountered in a position of submission. However, if the viewer walks around and looks at the cat from the back door, it is in a position of dominance. The view from the inside is flipped. The dance-hall girl with the cat head pivots physically as well as psychologically, from a position of submission to one of dominance.

The cat coming out of Saloon references the cat in the daguerreotype. The private experience of viewing the daguerreotype in the 1850s is formally contrasted with the public display of primary instincts and another kind of relationship with an object. The pursuit is still on — the cat for the bird, the cowboy for the girl, and now, the cat for the viewer — each in a moment-to-moment relationship doomed to failure, with the viewing audience as voyeurs of these critical mises-en-scène of unfulfillable desire.\(^\text{16}\)

Saloon may well be one of the frankest expressions of male sexuality in contemporary art. McCarthy has given us, perhaps to our consternation, a complex work that is deceptively simple but perceptively diagnostic of a male perspective. In the process, he opens up for discussion one of the last male taboos — the contradictory nature of men’s sexual relationship with women. The cowboy in Saloon shows what he really is — a man with a perpetual desire to have sex with women, but who is unable, for a variety of reasons, to have it. McCarthy has taken the stereotype of the American cowboy, dismembered it, and then thrown it in the male viewer’s face, saying, in a sense, “You may want to think you are a cowboy, but you’re not.”

McCarthy confronts the viewer directly to deal with his tableau. He presents his work as if to say, “Here’s the situation. How are you going to react? Do you want to butt-fuck the blond, or have a drink at the bar, or simply stand at the window?”

The cat daguerreotype sets up the narrative in Saloon, which concludes with a cat at the back of the bar. The difference, of course, is that the cat in the daguerreotype is actually more sophisticated than the man in Saloon. The cat at least knows he cannot get the bird.

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\(^{16}\) To similar effect, Saloon and the daguerreotype were included in the curator’s exhibition, Observations, at the Ydessa Hendeles Art Foundation, Toronto, in 1997.
German entertainer Wolfram Harmuth has adopted the American-sounding stage identity of Chris Jones for his performances of songs that impersonate the style and sound of the American rock-and-roll singer, Elvis Presley. Harmuth is one of a league of Elvis impersonators around the world that keeps the legendary performer seemingly alive, more than a quarter of a century after his death.

The original performance of the song that mentions a teddy bear is formally commemorated in the exhibit, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, by a framed gold record of the hit, together with a photograph of Elvis. But apart from the thematic link, the larger purpose of including this performance is to explore the ongoing fantasy of the immortality of this famous person. (He was born on January 8, 1935, and died at his Memphis home, Graceland, on August 16, 1977, from an overdose of a prescription medication, apparently accidentally committing suicide.) Many fans perceive him as a Christ-like figure. Devotees make pilgrimages to Graceland, and the denial of his death persists in reputed “Elvis sightings.”

What comes to mind is the car that carried Thích Quảng Đức to his death, and that has one of Browne’s photographs of the monk’s performance of martyrdom mounted on it to this day. The automobile, an old grey Austin sedan, has become a shrine in communist Saigon that keeps alive his memory.

Like the phenomenon of the teddy bear and other twentieth-century icons, Elvis is both a product of promotion and of culture. As a myth, he is part of world memory — perfectly poised as the subject for people’s projections. His powerful legacy has been harnessed, and it continues — beyond national borders and on a global scale — to serve some fundamental human desire to cling to a source of comfort.
ILLUSTRATIONS
Partners
Curated by Ydessa Hendeles from her collection
November 7, 2003 – February 15, 2004
Haus der Kunst

Figure 1.0 Promotional poster for Partners
Figure 1.2 Invitation for Partners (inside verso)
Partners

Kuratirt von Ydessa Hendeles
mit Werken aus ihrer Sammlung


Eröffnung
6. November, 19 Uhr

mit einer Performance
Wolfram Harmuth alias Chris Jones
singt als Elvis Presley «Teddy Bear»

Vortrag
9. Dezember, 20 Uhr
Mieke Bal
Affective Syntax:
Translating Emotion and World Memory
Öffnungszeiten
Ausstellung Partners, Di-So 10-17 Uhr
Haus der Kunst, jeden Tag 10-20 Uhr

Haus der Kunst
Prinzregentenstraße 1
D-80538 München
Tel. 0049 (0)89 211 27 0
Fax 0049 (0)89 211 27 157
www.hausderkunst.de

Die Ausstellung wird unterstützt
von der Dr. Karl Wamsler Foundation.
Figure 1.5 Exhibition map for Partners
Figure 1.6  *Gallery in the Grosse Deutsche Kunstauattellung (Great German Art Exhibition)*, Haus der Deutschen Kunst, Munich, 1937
Figure 1.7 A vintage postcard-sized portrait of Szlamus Zweigel. The photo is dated: Warthenau, May 31, 1942
PASSAGE ONE
Partners

Ydessa Hendeles
Haus Der Kunst
Figure 1.11 Diane Arbus, *Self-Portrait with Camera*, February 1945 (installation view)
Figure 1.12  Diane Arbus, *Self-Portrait with Camera*, February 1945 (installation view)
Figure 1.13  Diane Arbus, *Self-Portrait with Camera*, February 1945
Figure 1.14 R.S. (La Isla Toys), *Minnie Mouse Carrying Felix in Cages*, ca. 1926–36, and John Swartz, *The Wild Bunch*, ca. 1900 (installation view)
Figure 1.15  John Swartz, *The Wild Bunch*, ca. 1900
Figure 1.16  John Swartz, *The Wild Bunch* (verso), ca. 1900

THE WILD BUNCH

Left to Right:
Standing: Wm. Carver; Harvey Logan
Sitting: Harry Longbaugh; Ben Kilpatrick, Geo. Parker, alias "Butch Cassidy"

[Signature]
Figure 1.17 R.S. (La Isla Toys), *Minnie Mouse Carrying Felix in Cages*, ca. 1926–36 (installation view)
Figure 1.18  R.S. (La Isla Toys), *Minnie Mouse Carrying Felix in Cages*, ca. 1926–36 (installation view)
Figure 1.19  R.S. (La Isla Toys), *Minnie Mouse Carrying Felix in Cages*, ca. 1926–36
Figure 1.20  R.S. (La Isla Toys), *Minnie Mouse Carrying Felix in Cages*, ca. 1926–36
Figure 1.21  R.S. (La Isla Toys), *Minnie Mouse Carrying Felix in Cages*, ca. 1926–36
Figure 1.22 Entrance to Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
Figure 1.23  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
Figure 1.24  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
Figure 1.25 Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
Figure 1.26  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
Figure 1.27  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
Figure 1.28  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
Figure 1.29  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
One of two teddy bears, made by Margarete Steiff GmbH, Giengen, Germany, ca. 1908, owned by Canadian brothers, John E. Cook and his younger brother, Lawrence P. Bentick Cook. The older brother, John, owner of the golden bear (shown here), was born in 1902. The younger brother, Lawrence, owner of the white bear (see fig. 1.30), was born in 1904. The teddy bears have lived with the family in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada since 1908.
Figure 1.30  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
One of two teddy bears, made by Margarete Steiff GmbH, Giengen, Germany, ca. 1908, owned by Canadian brothers, John E. Cook and his younger brother, Lawrence P. Bentick Cook. The younger brother, Lawrence, owner of the white bear (shown here), was born in 1904. The older brother, John, owner of the golden bear (see fig. 1.29), was born in 1902. The teddy bears have lived with the family in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada since 1908.
Figure 1.31  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
Three photographs of brothers John and Lawrence Cook with their two Stieff teddy bears.
Figure 1.32  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
Figure 1.33  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
Virginia's Bear.
Figure 1.34  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
A photograph of Virginia carrying her teddy bear while riding a horse, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada.
Figure 1.35  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
Willi’s Bear.
Figure 1.36  Ydessa Hendeles, Partners (The Teddy Bear Project), 2002
A photograph of Willi with his German bear, as well as a photo of Willi with his mother and a photograph of Willi’s mother with his father, who was a soldier in the German army in World War II, who never came home.
Teddy Bear Black, made in Germany in 1913 by Margarete Steiff GmbH for the English market to commemorate the sinking of the “Titanic” in April 1912.
Figure 1.38  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
Photograph of Teddy Bear Black with its original owner, Hester Drew, at age nine, taken in Bournemouth at her grandparents’ house, two weeks after her mother’s death in March 1919, in the influenza pandemic.
Figure 1.39 Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
Z.G. Weaver Jr.’s electric-eye bear.
Figure 1.40  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
Z.G. Weaver Jr.’s electric-eye bear with eyes lit up.
Figure 1.41  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
A cabinet card photograph of Z.G. Weaver Jr. and his electric-eye bear pictured with his father and family.
Figure 1.42  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
Sock Bear.
Figure 1.43  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
Photograph of Sock Bear with his original owner.
Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002

Victor, a Wilhelm Strunz bear (German), with a painting of his original owner, Jane, and her younger sister, Annie, and a miniature suitcase with umbrella pen and inkwell.

Marilyn Ross and Fiona Miller (twin sister artophiles) provided the provenance for this bear and the painting. Born in the late 1880s, a woman by the name of Emma lived in Nottingham and had two little girls, Jane and Annie. Annie, the younger of the two, was ill, and so her mother arranged special day trips for her children.

On one such occasion, the family travelled to the seaside resort of Mablethorpe, in Lincolnshire, as Emma felt the sea air would be beneficial. After some time on the beach, the sisters entered a small gift shop and were each allowed to choose an item to take home with them. Sitting high on a shelf was an endearing teddy that Annie fell in love with instantly. She also spotted a small metal suitcase (with “Mabelthorpe” painted on the side of it) and a tiny umbrella (which is actually a pen, serviced by an inkwell in the suitcase). She pleaded with her mother to have it too. To commemorate the passing of Queen Victoria, Emma suggested that they name the teddy Victor.

Annie’s health declined and she died at age five. Her older sister, Jane, took Victor into her own care, until her death in 1987. After that, an uncle took charge of the beloved bruin, and eventually passed him down to Jane’s cousin, Norma.
Figure 1.45  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
A teddy bear, made by Margarete Steiff GmbH, Giengen, Germany, called Oliver by his original owner.
Figure 1.46  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
Photograph of Oliver, the teddy bear, with his original owner.
Uncle Charlie’s teddy (originally owned by Charles Taylor).

Charles Taylor’s granddaughters, Gale (née Thibault) Costa and her sister, Wendy (née Thibault) Rosati, who were raised in the house next door to their grandfather (in which their mother had also grown up), provided the provenance. Often affectionately referred to as Uncle Charlie, Charles Taylor was born in Fall River Massachusetts, in 1903 and died there in 1989. He was a self-educated man who worked in the local mills throughout his working life. At home, he had a garden that was very much admired. He had a lifetime dedication to the Boy Scouts, and was deeply devoted to the Salvation Army, for which he played drum on Sundays. As his granddaughter, Gale Costa writes, “He loved God, nature and his family…. He was a tall, lanky man with a love of life…. His life touched many people in many ways.”
Two photographs of Charles Taylor as a boy with his teddy bear.
Figure 1.49  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
Three photographs of Charles Taylor later in life.
Daniel Agnew provided the provenance. This Steiff teddy bear was owned by Karen Laurentze Grunthe, who was born in Denmark in 1913. She died in 1934 from a sudden illness. As an only child, her parents were devastated, and this bear sat in pride of place in their home until their deaths in the early 1960s.
Figure 1.51  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
Two postcard photographs of Karen Laurentze Grunthe and her teddy bear.
Figure 1.52  Ydessa Hendeles, Partners (The Teddy Bear Project), 2002
Figure 1.53  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
Elsie’s Bear and cat-on-wheels toy.
Figure 1.54 Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
Two photographs of Elsie with her teddy bear and cat-on-wheels toy.
Figure 1.55  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
Figure 1.56 Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
Teddy Bear Purse.
Figure 1.57  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
Photograph of Teddy Bear Purse with his original owner.
Figure 1.58  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
Figure 1.59  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002

Miniature Chad Valley teddy bear, named Sneezy, originally owned by Ted Able.
Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
Two photographs of Ted Able and his teddy bear, Sneezy, during World War II. Sneezy was given to Ted by his mother on his departure overseas in 1941. Ted and Sneezy returned safely after the war. Sneezy remained in Norfolk on his owner’s bedside table until 1991, when Ted died at 81 years old.
Figure 1.61  Ydessa Hendeles, Partners (The Teddy Bear Project), 2002
Figure 1.62  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002

Ruth Aanon’s Bear, made by the Ideal Toy Company, USA, ca. 1903.

Provenance: Two teddy bears were given to the Aanon sisters of Easthampton, Connecticut in 1905. This bear belonged to Ruth, the younger sister, born in 1900. The other bear, with a black knit nose, was owned by Zenobia, the older sister, and is currently residing in Albany, New York.
Figure 1.63  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
Two photographs of Ruth Aanon and her older sister, Zenobia, with their teddy bears.
Figure 1.64  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
Two photographs of Ruth Aanon and her older sister, Zenobia, with their teddy bears.
Figure 1.65  Ydessa Hendeles, Partners (The Teddy Bear Project), 2002
Figure 1.66  Ydessa Hendeles, Partners (The Teddy Bear Project), 2002
Figure 1.67  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
Figure 1.68  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
An early German bear, circa 1908, possibly made by Bing, with white mohair, black boot-button eyes, brown horizontally stitched nose and claws, swivel head, elongated jointed shaped limbs and hump, 14 inches (35.5cm) tall. Named Uncle Edward, this bear was originally owned by Alfreda Alice Annie Elderfield (1907–1994), from Hither Green Lane, S.E. London. The bear was a first birthday present from Alfreda’s parents.
Figure 1.69  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
Two photographs of Uncle Edward with his original owner, Alfreda Alice Annie Elderfield (1907–1994), from Hither Green Lane, S.E. London. The bear was a first birthday present from Alfreda’s parents.
Teddy Doll, 1908. An American-made hybrid toy with traditional features of a teddy bear (hand-made excelsior-stuffed body and swivel head, with jointed limbs and a growler inside, covered in mohair plush and felt), but with a bisque doll’s face in the form of a human child.
Figure 1.72  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002
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Figure 1.83  Ydessa Hendeles, Partners (The Teddy Bear Project), 2002

Dulcie Peel’s Bear.

Daniel Agnew provided the provenance. Dulcie Peel’s big Steiff bear sits here on the original Thonet child’s chair on which he was photographed, in front of the entrance to Dulcie’s home in Fern Hill, in Laugharne, South Wales, in 1906 [see figure 1.84]. Dulcie Peel was born in 1901.
Figure 1.84  Ydessa Hendeles, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, 2002

Two photographs of Dulcie Peel, with and without her bear.
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Figure 2.36  Associated Press, Hindenburg disaster, 1937 ("FLAMING SHIP HITS THE GROUND. Lakehurst, N.J., May 6–The flaming Hindenburg hits the ground after an explosion in mid-air destroyed the giant German lighter-than-air ship. The crew was making ready to nose her into the mooring mast at the Naval Air Station here when the explosion occurred. Fate of her 31 passengers and 69 crew was undetermined.")
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Figure 2.38  Associated Press, Hindenburg disaster, 1937 (Top: “CLOSE-UP OF THE FLAMING WRECKAGE SHOWN. Lakehurst, N.J., May 6—The majestic Hindenburg, giant German zeppelin, is seen in a close-up of the flaming skeleton after she caught fire and exploded in mid-air. Fate of the 100 members of crew and passengers was undetermined.” Bottom: “BURNING SHIP SHOWN FROM DISTANCE. Lakehurst, N.J., May 6—The flaming skeleton of the ill-fated zeppelin, Hindenburg, which had just completed its first transatlantic voyage of the year, is shown in a picture taken from a distance. The Navy Department reported early tonight that it was informed at least 48 persons were known dead.”
Figure 2.39  Associated Press, *Hindenburg disaster*, 1937  (Top: “Lakehurst, N.J., May 7 – Tangled aluminum girders of what was once Germany’s silvery ‘queen of the skies’ remained at glowing hot temperature hours after the hydrogen-filled bag exploded in mid-air. The Hindenburg had just completed its first transatlantic trip of the season and was nosing toward its mooring mast.” Bottom: “NAVY MEN GUARD WRECKED ‘HINDENBURG’. Lakehurst, N.J., May 7 – Sailors march out to guard the twisted ruins of the zeppelin Hindenburg today. The huge German airliner crashed to the naval air station last night seconds before she was to anchor to her mooring mast.”)
Figure 2.40  Associated Press, Hindenburg disaster, 1937 (Top: “EARLY MORNING VIEW OF WRECKAGE. Lakehurst, N.J., May 7 – Here is a striking view of the wreckage of the giant airship, Hindenburg, taken shortly after dawn today. The ship exploded and fell to the ground in flames last evening.” Bottom: “SEARCH HINDENBURG WRECKAGE. Lakehurst, N.J., May 7 – Navy men today searched the debris which yesterday had been the transatlantic flying airship Hindenburg for bodies and valuables.”)

Figure 2.41  Associated Press, Hindenburg disaster, 1937 ("SURVIVORS NAMES POSTED ON BOARD. Lakehurst, N.J., May 7 – Here is the bulletin board on which the names of survivors of the Hindenburg disaster are being posted as quickly as they definitely are ascertained to be among the living. Grouped around the board are anxious relatives and friends of persons listed as missing. The death toll in the crash of the airship exceeded 30.")
Figure 2.42  Associated Press, Hindenburg disaster, 1937 (Top: “INQUIRY BOARD INSPECTS WRECKAGE. Lakehurst, N.J., May 10 – Following hearing the testimony in the Hindenburg disaster investigation the U. S. Department of Commerce Inquiry Board inspected the wreckage of the giant German airship.” Bottom: “SURVIVORS OF HINDENBURG CREW. Lakehurst, N.J., May 9 – Surviving members of the crew of the ill-fated zeppelin Hindenburg photographed today at the Naval Air Station here. Center (white cap) is Rudolph Sauter, chief engineer. Front row (black cap) Heinrich Bauer, watch officer. Youngster (center front row), 18-year-old Werner Franz, cabin boy. Several members of the airship’s crew are wearing U.S. Marine summer clothing furnished them to replace clothing burned from many of their bodies as they escaped from the flaming dirigible.”)

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Exhibition List

Passage One

Diane Arbus (Diane Nemerov Arbus)
   Self-Portrait with Camera, February 1945
   vintage gelatin silver print
   3 x 2 3/8 inches (7.6 x 6 cm)

John Swartz
   The Wild Bunch, ca. 1900
   vintage gelatin silver print
   6 1/2 x 8 1/2 inches (16.5 x 21.6 cm)

R.S. (La Isla Toys), Spain
   Minnie Mouse Carrying Felix in Cages, ca. 1926–36
   lithographed tin, key-wind clockwork toy
   7 x 3 1/2 x 3 3/4 inches (17.8 x 8.9 x 9.5 cm)

Ydessa Hendeles
   Partners (The Teddy Bear Project), 2002
   3,000+ framed family album photographs, antique teddy bears with photographs of their original owners and related ephemera, mahogany and glass display cases, eight painted steel mezzanines, six painted steel spiral staircases, sixteen painted portable walls, hanging light fixtures and custom wall lighting
   installation dimensions: 567 x 370 x 194 inches (14.4 x 9.4 x 4.9 m)
   and 370 x 370 x 194 inches (9.4 x 9.4 x 4.9 m)

Maurizio Cattelan
   Untitled (taxidermied dog), 1998
   taxidermied dog from a Paris pound
   8 x 21 x 12 inches (20.3 x 53.3 x 30.5 cm)
   unique

   Him, 2001
   polyester resin, clothing, leather boots, human hair
   23 5/8 x 15 x 23 inches (60 x 38.1 x 58.4 cm)
   edition 2 of 3 + 1 AP

Passage Two

Giulio Paolini
   Mimesi, 1975–76
   plaster casts, wooden plinths
   2 plaster casts: 64 3/8 x 19 5/8 x 17 1/4 inches (163.5 x 49.8 x 43.8 cm)
   2 wooden plinths: 23 5/8 x 19 5/8 x 19 5/8 inches (60 x 49.8 x 49.8 cm)
   edition of 3 + 1 AP
Passage Two (cont.)

Hanne Darboven

*Ansichten >82<*, 1982
index and 53 panels: ink, lithographed photographs, and collage on paper in wood-framed units
162 sheets: 19 1/2 x 27 1/8 inches (49.5 x 69 cm) each (three sheets per panel)
54 panels: 59 x 27 inches (150 x 70 cm) each

Ydessa Hendeles

*Ships (The Zeppelin Project)*, 2002
64 chrome pigment digital prints made from selected cigarette cards from *Zeppelin-Weltfarhten*, 1932, 1933
8 x 10 inches (20.3 x 25.4 cm) and 10 x 8 inches (25.4 x 20.3 cm)

Associated Press

*Hindenburg disaster, Lakehurst, New Jersey*, 1937
18 vintage gelatin silver prints in 10 matted and framed units
8 5/8 x 6 9/16 inches (21.9 x 16.7 cm) to 12 x 8 3/8 inches (30.5 x 21.3 cm)

Luciano Fabro

gilded bronze, steel cable
36 x 17 1/2 x 1 3/4 inches (91.4 x 44.5 x 4.4 cm), excluding steel cable
edition 1 of 3

Lawrence Weiner

*Catalogue #471*, 1980
green vinyl lettering
dimensions variable; character height as installed: 4 7/8 inches (12.4 cm)
unique

Malcolm Browne

*Sacrificial Protest of Thích Quảng Đức*, June 11, 1963
9 vintage gelatin silver prints,
1, 2, 5, 8: 10 7/8 x 13 1/2 inches (27.6 x 34.3 cm) each
3, 4, 6, 7, 9: 13 1/2 x 10 7/8 inches (34.3 x 27.6 cm) each

Eddie Adams (Edward T. Adams)

*Murder of a Vietcong Suspect by Saigon Police Chief (Vietnam)*, February 1, 1968
8 vintage gelatin silver prints
1, 2, 3, 4, 7: 6 1/2 x 8 1/2 inches (16.5 x 21.6 cm) each
5, 6, 8: 8 1/2 x 6 1/2 inches (21.6 x 16.5 cm) each
from the collection of Eddie Adams

Bruce Nauman

*Thank You*, 1992
laser video disc with audio, 21 inch (53.3 cm) video monitor, laser disc player, metal stand
54 x 30 x 20 inches (137.2 x 76.2 x 50.8 cm)
gift from artist

On Kawara

from the *Today* series, 1966–ongoing
Combination text and photograph: "Shooting of the Pope: Millions Pray for Fast Recovery," photograph of would-be assassin, his gun, Pope in Popemobile
canvas: 8 x 10 inches (20.3 x 25.4 cm)

*I AM STILL ALIVE*, 1986–87
from the *I AM STILL ALIVE* series, 1969–ongoing
4 telegrams, addressed to Harry Pollak:
07/10/1986: 10 x 8 1/4 inches (25.4 x 20.9 cm)
02/11/1986: 10 1/4 x 8 1/4 inches (25.4 x 20.9 cm)
10/11/1986: 11 1/4 x 8 1/4 inches (28.6 x 20.9 cm)
12/01/1987: 12 1/8 x 8 1/4 inches (30.8 x 20.9 cm)
4 original windowed envelopes: 4 1/2 x 9 inches (11.4 x 22.9 cm) each
Passage Two (cont.)

James Coleman
*Box (Ahhareturnabout)*, 1977
black-and-white 16mm film loop with synchronized sound, 16mm film projector, film looper, sound system, projection stand
7 minutes in duration
installation dimensions 370 x 157 inches (9.4 x 4 m)
edition 2 of 3

Passage Three

Jeff Wall
*Mimic*, 1982
cibachrome transparency in lightbox
78 x 90 1/8 inches (198.1 x 228.9 cm)
unique

*The Stumbling Block*, 1991
cibachrome transparency in lightbox
90 x 132 inches (228.6 x 335.3 cm)
unique

Photographer unknown
*Cat and Cage*, ca. early-middle 1850s
quarter-plate daguerreotype
image size: 3 x 4 inches (7.6 x 10.16 cm)
union case: 4 x 5 x 1 inches (10.1 x 12.7 x 2.54 cm)

Walker Evans
*Self-Portrait*, 1928
vintage gelatin silver print
6 3/4 x 4 3/4 inches (17.1 x 12.1 cm)

Selection from *Many Are Called*, 1938–1941
13 vintage gelatin silver prints, one posthumous gelatin silver print
5 x 6 1/4 inches (12.7 x 15.9 cm) to 8 1/4 x 12 1/4 inches (20.4 x 31.1 cm)

Paul McCarthy
*Saloon*, 1995–96
freestanding enamel and latex painted and urethaned wood construction, support steel structure, 4 pneumatically driven painted Fiberglas and polyester resin figures with wigs, clothing, and accessories: cowboy (gunfighter), dance hall girl, bartender with pig head, dance hall girl with cat head, pneumatic cylinders and components, hose, air-compressors, programmable logic controller, electric switches, sound generated from pre-programmed compact-disc player
139 x 191 x 110 inches (353.1 x 485 x 279.4 cm)
unique