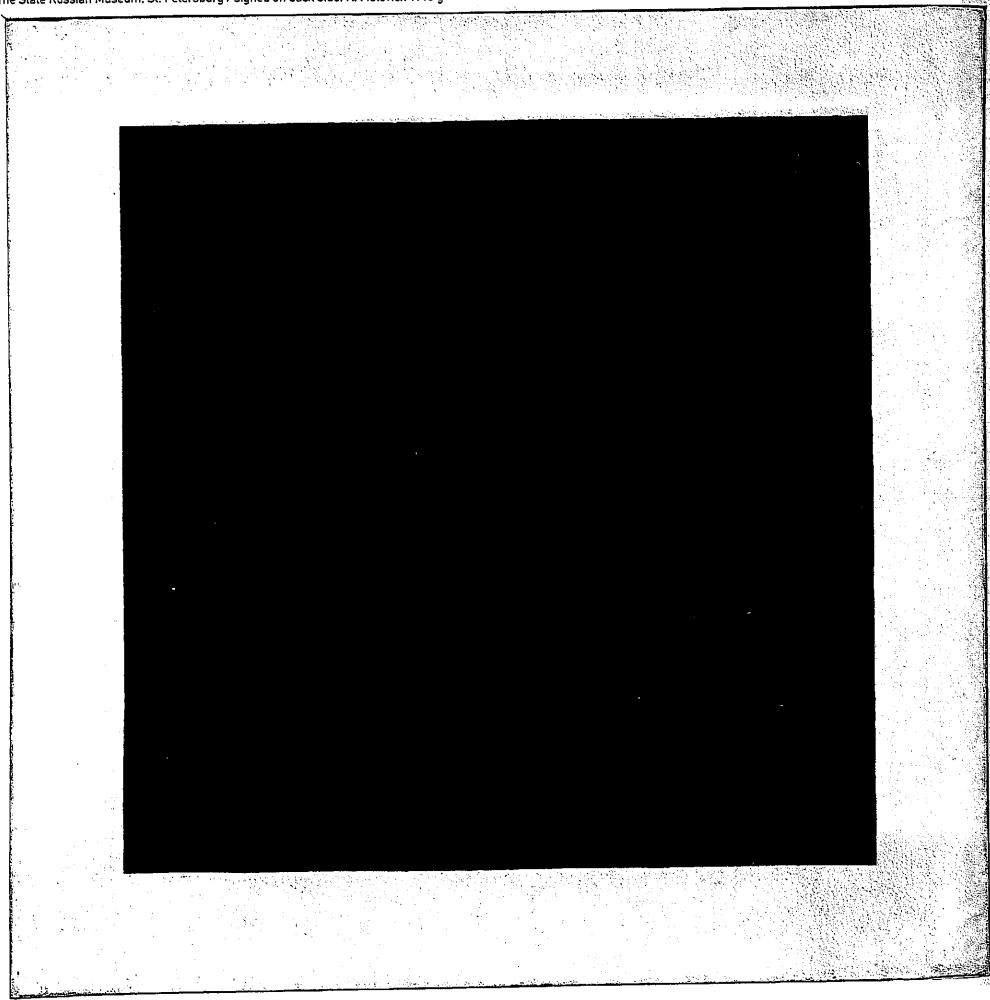


Iconoclasm - Beyond the image
PETER WEIBEL
Cambridge, MA

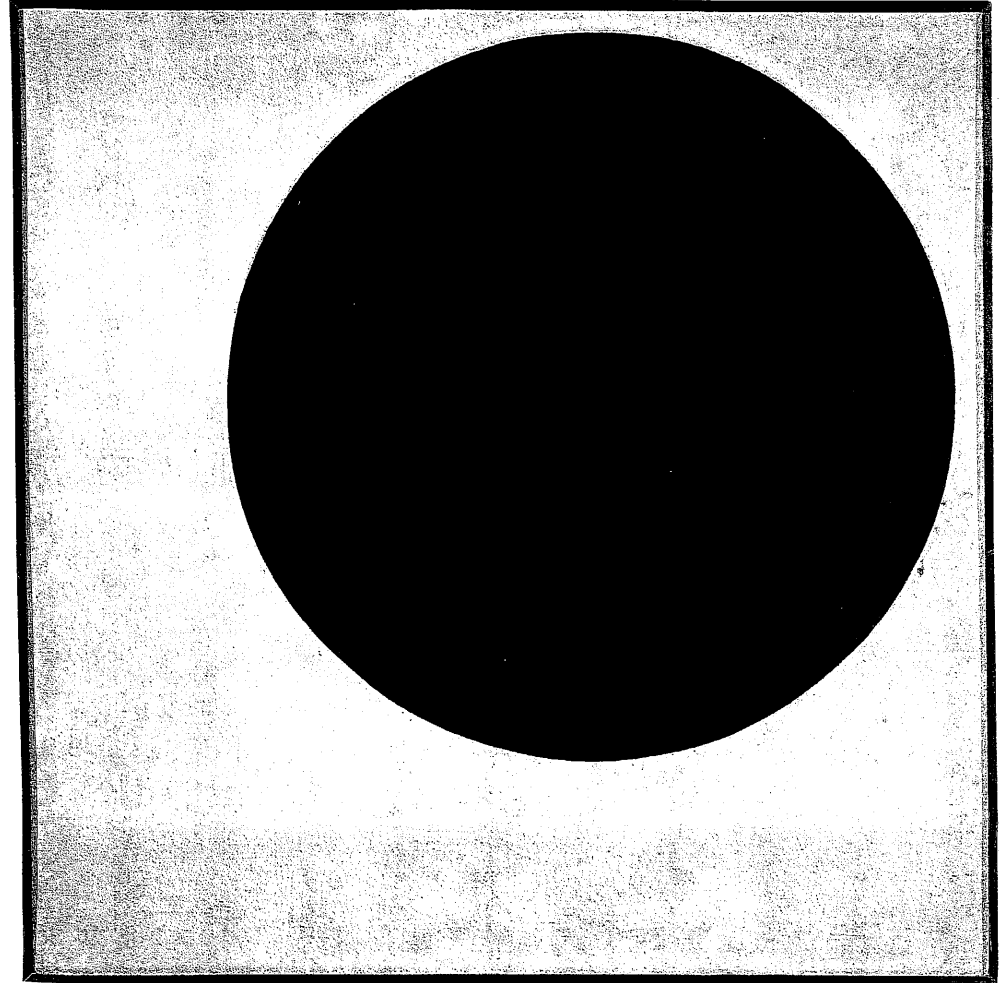
Kasimir Malevich / Black Square / c. 1923 / oil on canvas / 41.7 x 41.7" /
The State Russian Museum, St. Petersburg / signed on back side: K. Malevich 1913 g



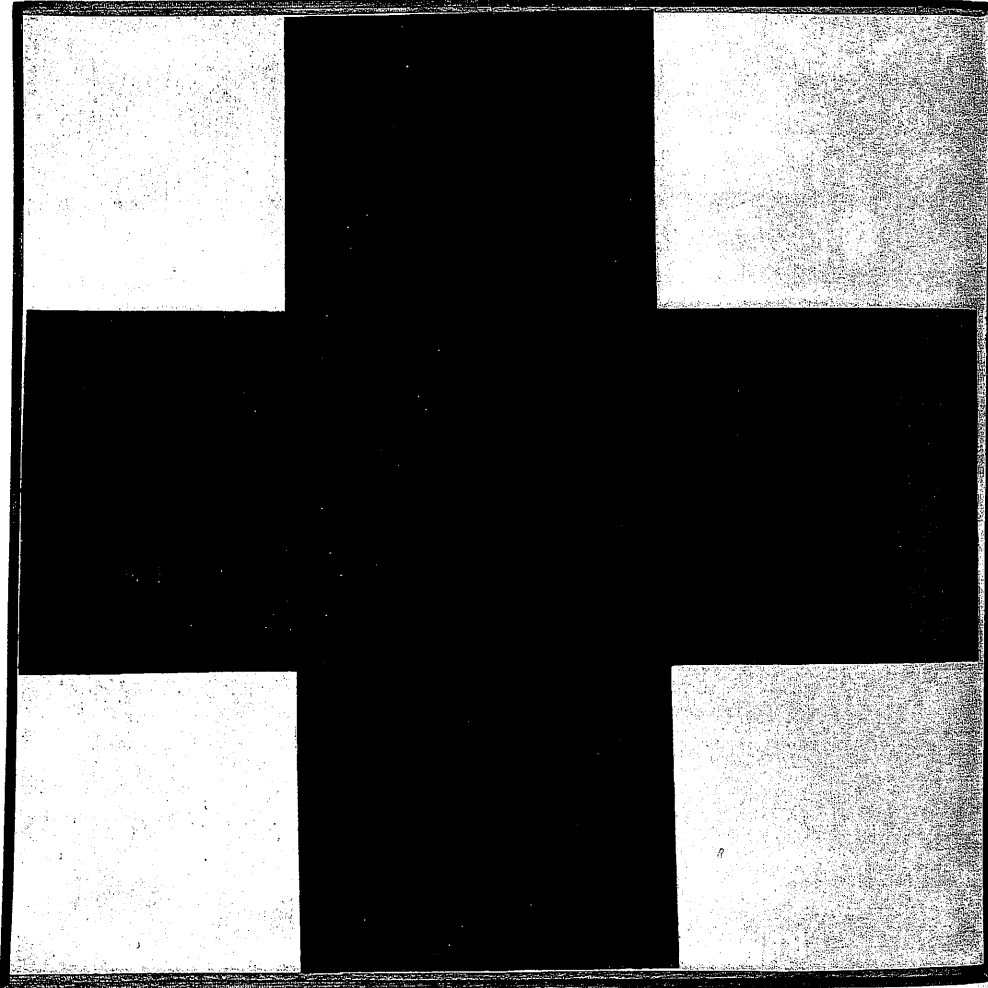
in science, culture, and art: Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel (eds.)
2002
AN END TO THE "END OF ART"? / ON THE ICONOCLASM OF MODERN ART (2002)

S. 570-670

Kasimir Malevich / Black Circle / c. 1923 / oil on canvas / 41.3 x 41.3" /
The State Russian Museum, St. Petersburg / signed on back side: K. Malevich 1913

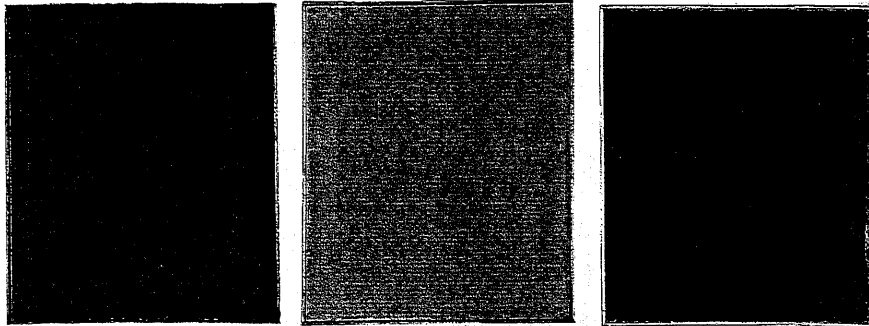


Kasimir Malevich / Black Cross / c. 1923 / 41.7 x 41.7" /
The State Russian Museum, St. Petersburg / signed on back side: K. Malevich 1913 g



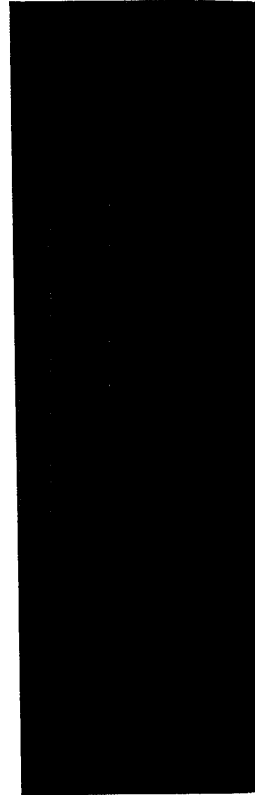
Aleksandr Rodchenko / Black on Black / 1918 / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002



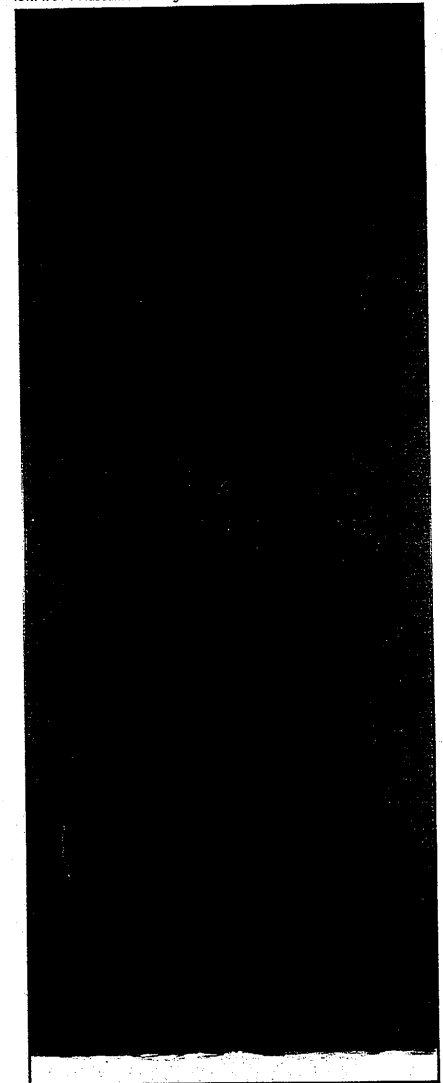


Aleksandr Rodchenko / Pure Red Color, Pure Yellow Color, Pure Blue Color / 1921 / oil on canvas / 3 plates / each 24.4 x 20.7 / Rodchenko-Archive, Moscow

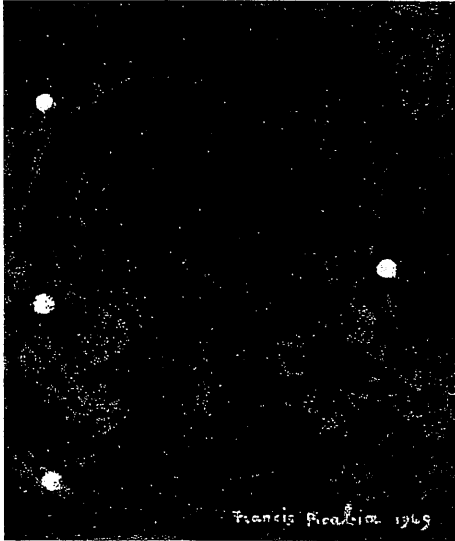
Paul Manship / Untitled / 1922 / oil on wood / 45.3 x 14.2



Barnett Newman / Prometheus Bound / 1952 / synthetic resin on canvas / 131.9 x 54 / Museum Folkwang, Essen / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002



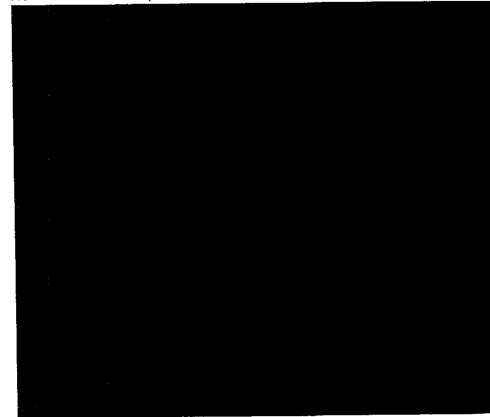
Francis Picabia / Le noir des noirs [The Blackest Black] / 1949 / oil on cardboard / 25.4 x 21.26" / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002



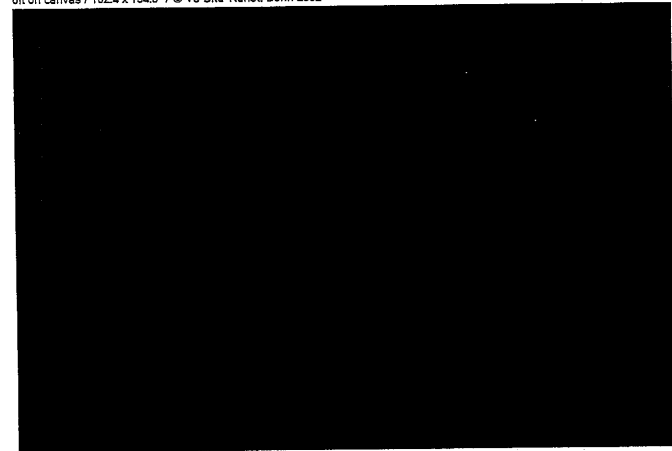
Robert Rauschenberg / Black Painting / 1951-1952 / oil on newspaper on canvas / 71.5 x 52.75" / Robert Rauschenberg / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002



Francesco Lo Savio / Composition / oil on canvas / 43.3 x 51.2"



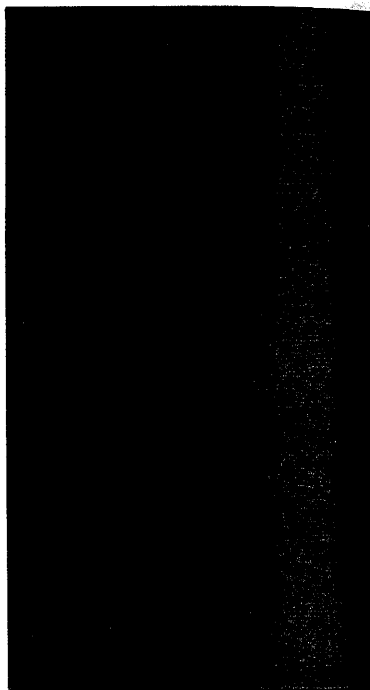
Antoni Tàpies / Black Room / 1960 / oil on canvas / 102.4 x 154.3" / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002



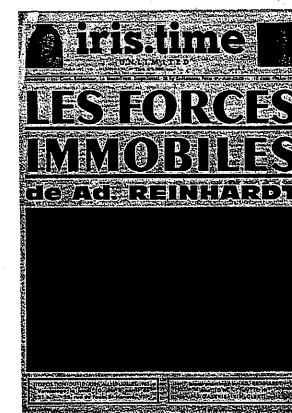
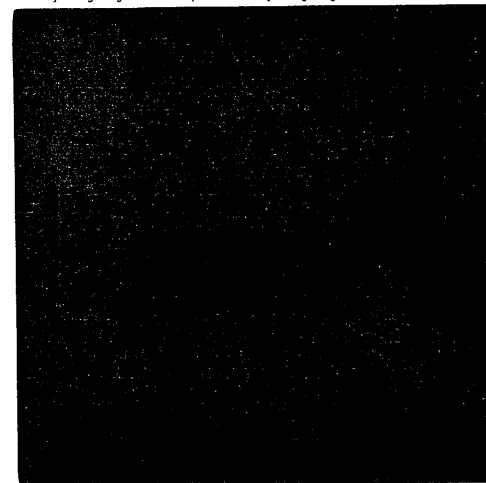
Ad Reinhardt / Black on Black No. 8 / 1953 / fabrics / 81.3 x 61.3" /
Neue Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz, Collection Ploil, Vienna



Ad Reinhardt / No 16 / 1955 / oil on canvas / 80 x 42" /
Collection Ploil, Vienna / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002



Ad Reinhardt / Abstract Painting / 1960 / oil on canvas / 15 x 15" /
courtesy Georg Kargl, Vienna / © photo: courtesy Georg Kargl, Vienna



Ad Reinhardt / Iris, time / 1963 /
newspaper / courtesy Georg Kargl, Vienna /
© photo: courtesy Georg Kargl, Vienna

[illegible][illegible]

reine 1 : Je n'ai plus rien à te dire.

reine 2 : Après toutes les réponses à contre-temps, et la jeunesse qui se fait vieille, la nuit retombe de bien haut.


SILENCE DE TROIS MINUTES
DURANT LEQUEL L'ÉCRAN NOIR.

reine 2 : Nous vivons en enfants perdus nos aventures incomplètes.

SILENCE DE VINGT-QUATRE MINUTES
DURANT LEQUEL L'ÉCRAN RESTE NOIR.

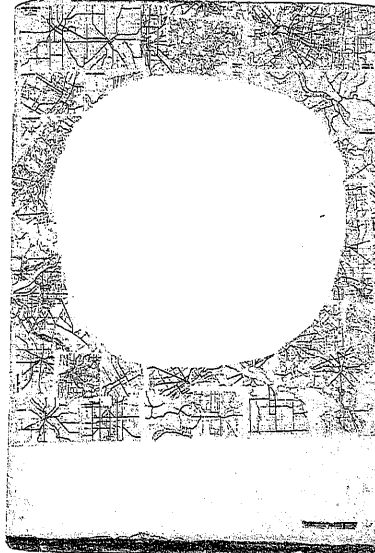
L'INSTITUT SCANDINAVE
DE VOYALIERES COMPARE

publinter

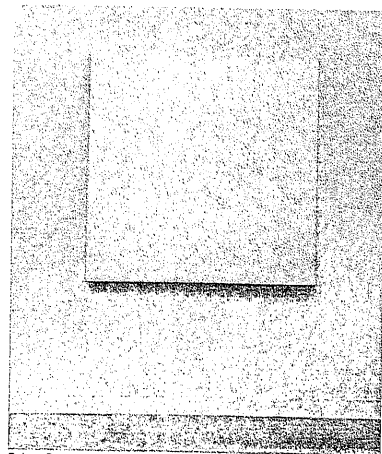
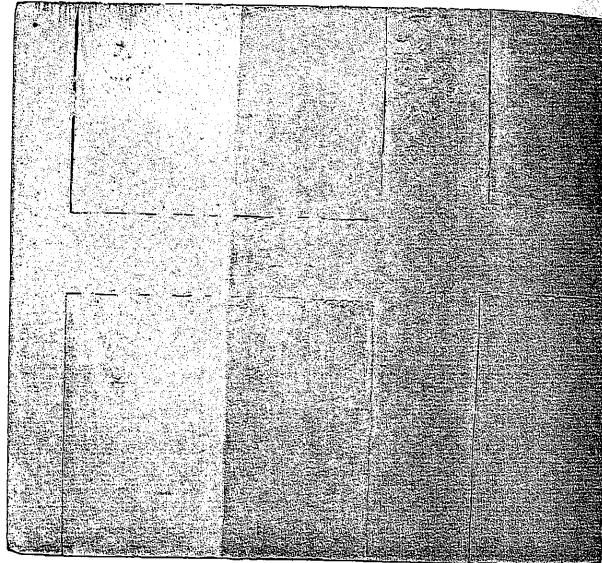


CONTRE LE CINÉMA

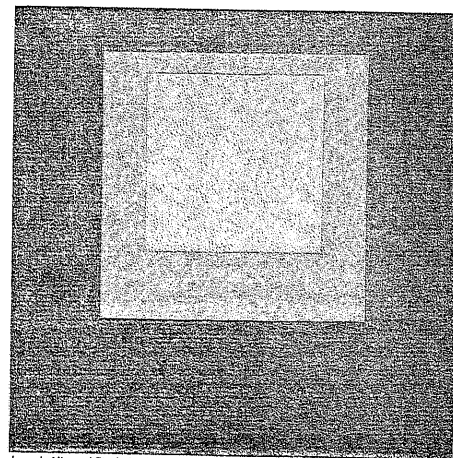
Robert Rauschenberg / Mother of God / c. 1950 / oil, enamel, printed maps, newspaper, and copper and metallic paints on Masonite / 48 x 32.1" / Collection Robert Rauschenberg / © photo: David Heald



Robert Rauschenberg / Crucifixion and Reflection / c. 1950 / oil, enamel, water-based paint, and newspaper on paperboard, attached to wood support / 47.75 x 51.1" / The Menil Collection, Houston / © photo: Dorothy Zeidman, New York

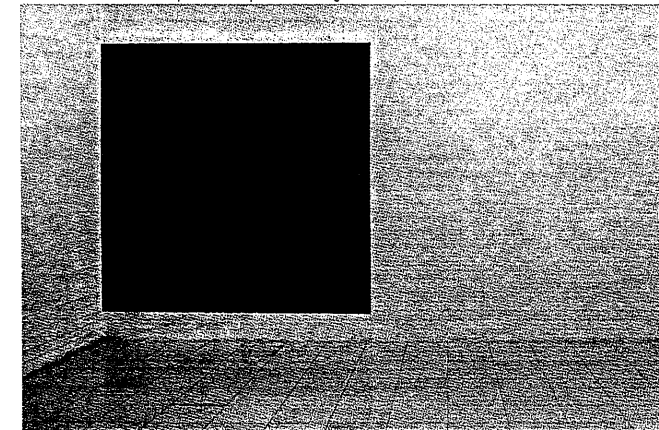


Robert Rauschenberg / White Painting (one panel) / 1951 / oil on canvas / 48 x 48" / Collection Robert Rauschenberg / © photo: Glenn Steigelmann, New York



Joseph Albers / Study for Homage to the Square: White Signal / 1961 / oil on hardboard / 31.9 x 31.9 x 2" / FER Collection / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002 / © photo: FER Collection, archive

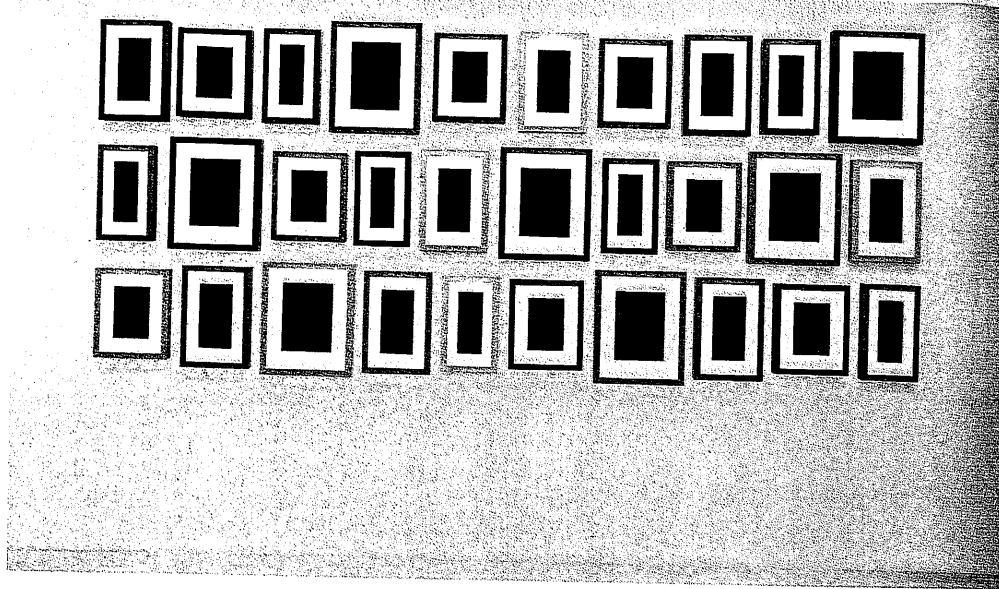
Richard Serra / Left Corner Square / 1979 / paintstick on Belgian linen / 109.5 x 109.5" / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002



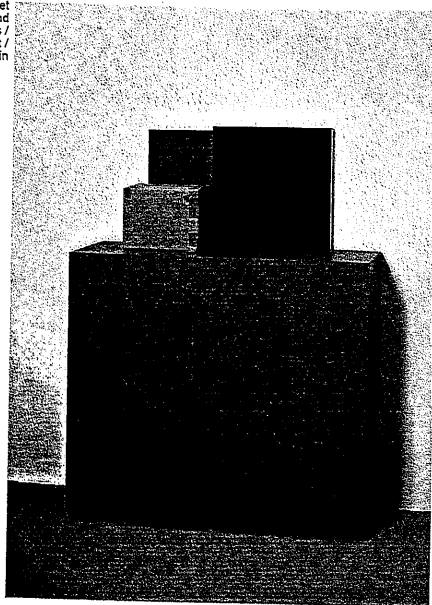
Francesco Lo Savio / Metallo nero opaco uniforme, piano parabolico con articolazione / 1962 / steel plate, lacquered / 70.9 x 31.5 x 3.5" / Galleria La Salita, Rome



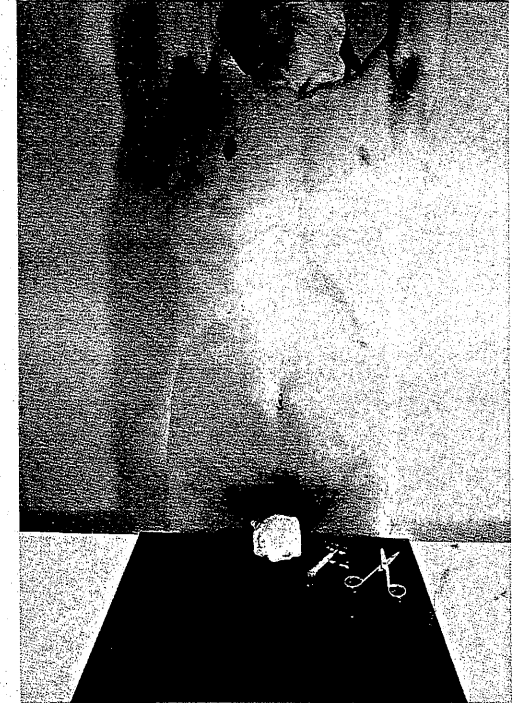
Allan McCollum / 30 Plaster Surrogates / 1982-1990 / acrylic on plaster / 189 x 67" (installation) / frames from 16.1 x 13.2" to 20.1 x 16.1" / Sprengel Museum, Hannover / © photo: Michael Herling and Aline Gwose



Imi Knoebel / Schwarzes Quadrat auf Buffet / [Black square on buffet] / 1984 / fiberboard and acrylic on fiberboard and cardboard / four parts / 84.6 x 65 x 20.3" / Collection Froehlich, Stuttgart / © photo: Jochen Littkemann, Berlin



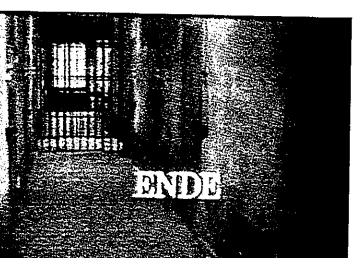
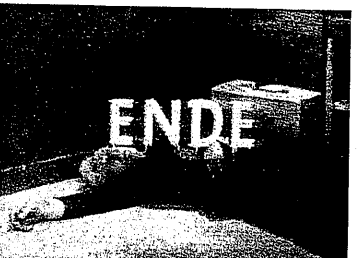
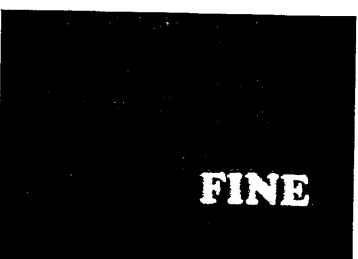
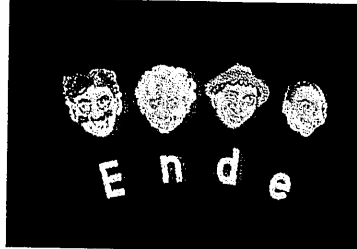
Rudolf Schwarzkogler / action / Vienna, May 1965 / from: Peter Weibel (ed.), Wien, Bildkompendium Wiener Aktionismus und Film, Kolkunstverlag, Frankfurt 1970, p. 117



Young Hay / Bonjour Young Hay / (performance after Courbet), Hong Kong Trip / 1995 / gelatine silver print / 63 x 47.2" / Prüss & Ochs Gallery, Berlin / © photo: Kith Tsang



Timm Ulrichs / *The End* / 1970/90/97 / video film on DVD, color and black-and-white, silent / 6.09 min / three parts / Timm Ulrichs / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002



AN END TO THE END OF ART? ON THE ICONOCLASM OF MODERN ART

Peter Weibel

»And do you see, I said, men passing along the wall carrying all sorts of vessels, and statues and figures of animals made of wood and stone and various materials, which appear over the wall? Some of them are talking, others silent. You have shown me a strange image, and they are strange prisoners. Like ourselves, I replied; and they see only their own shadows, or the shadows of one another, which the fire throws on the opposite wall of the cave?«¹ PLATO

»La chair est triste, hélas! et j'ai lu tous les livres.
Fuir! Là bas fuir! Je sens que des oiseaux sont ivres
D'être parmi l'écume inconnue et les cieux!
Rien, ni les vieux jardins reflétés par les yeux
Ne retiendra ce cœur qui dans la mer se trempe
O nuits! ni la clarté déserte de ma lampe
Sur le vide papier que la blancheur défend
Et ni la jeune femme allaitant son enfant.
Je partirai! Steamer balançant ta mâture
Lève l'ancre pour une exotique nature.«²

STÉPHANE MALLARMÉ

The Political Reasons for the Iconoclastic Urge

Ever since the iconoclastic controversy of the eighth and ninth centuries in Byzantium, the questions of what an image is, what it is for, and what functions a picture serves seem to have divided the audience into two camps: iconoclasts and iconophiles. In the modern period this split has been accompanied by a parallel classification: radical progressivism and naïve conservatism. Since the Byzantine iconoclastic controversy, the iconoclasts who wanted to purify the Church by eliminating idolatry are considered by their later day descendants as radical and progressive and the iconophiles, who wanted to maintain the traditional liturgical practices, are considered conservative. At least that is the official version, which this exhibition and this catalog show to be largely an illusion (see Koerner, Mondzain – in this catalog). The following essay attempts to uncover the roots of image destruction and image worship, but its actual goal is to uncover the roots of this perspective which has always given iconoclasm the reputation

of being radical and progressive and idolatry the reputation of being conservative and backward (see Koch). Can this split in the view of the image be explained from the world of the image itself? Or is it more likely that the cause of this political labeling – what is progressive and what is conservative – can be traced back to a character attribution from beyond the field of the image, as already supposed by Jaroslav Pelikan.³

What political conflict lies behind the iconoclastic controversy? What political situations are hidden behind the iconoclasts and the iconophiles? What political purposes are served by the reverence, disrepute, and repeal of the picture's functions? Is there a politics of representation? Is the power of images derived from images of power, from their function in providing the representation of power?

In seventeenth-century England, the relationship between the function of the image and its corresponding social movement remained fairly undisguised. In the English civil war, the conflict over images lay behind the struggle between the monarchists and the reformers.⁴ Also, England's eigh-

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Plato, *Politeia*, VII, Book, 515b.

Stéphane Mallarmé, *Brise marine*, 1866.

A social movement in disguise that uses doctrinal vocabulary to rationalize an essentially political conflict, in *The Spirit of Eastern Christendom (600-1700)*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1974, Chapter III.

See the chapter *Iconoclasm and Idolatry*, in Christopher Hill, *Milton and the English Revolution*, Penguin Books, London 1977. See also Trevor Cooper (ed.), *The Journal of William Dowling: Iconoclasm in East Anglia During the English Civil War*, reprint: Boydell and Brewer, Woodbridge, 2001.

teenth-century aesthetic practices were, according to Ronald Paulson – bound to the dialectics of image breaking and image remaking, to the aesthetics of revolution and restoration.

The French Revolution was of course the century's best-known form of active iconoclasm. As one Jacobin Club prescribed:

"Destroy these signs of slavery and idolatry which only serve to perpetuate ignorance and superstition. Replace them with images of Rousseau, Franklin, and all the other great men, ancient and modern, which will fill the people with a noble enthusiasm for liberty."⁵

The idea of revolution would henceforth parallel the idea of iconoclasm and be equally as ambiguous (see Gamboni). The revolutionary often thinks of himself or herself as a true iconoclast. Since the French revolution, the breaking of images and destruction of idols has been linked to the rhetoric of progressive revolutionary politics, liberty, and enlightenment: reason rather than superstition. Those who maintained political systems not only held onto the political status quo, but also to the visual status quo. The reformers, on the contrary, wanted to destroy actual political power along with the images of political power (see Christin, Pietz, Corbey).

These well-known facts already contribute to the answer to our critical question of where the ideologizing of the pictures comes from. It appears that, consistently throughout history, political reformers and reforms wanted to destroy the pictures and statues of the previous political class. This law seems to reign until today, from the razing of the Vendôme column on 16 May 1871 (see Gamboni) to the widespread destruction of Lenin and Stalin statues in post-communism and the destruction of the Buddha statues by the Taliban (see Centlivres, Clement, Frodon). Iconoclastic conflicts, which we call iconoclashes, thus correlate with social conflicts. *The representation of politics is present in the politics of representation.* Perhaps this perspective can provide an answer to our

question: why is iconoclasm considered progressive and iconophilia restorative?

But do iconophile strategies in fact always aim at re-establishing historical political situations? Is the critique of the conditions of picture production always synonymous with the progressive critique of the conditions of political construction? Can image smashers be politically anachronistic and conservative? Might it be possible that restoration, seemingly bound to the re-establishment of historical, political, economic, and social conditions, is at the same time aiming at the dissolution of historical pictorial conditions? Is every admirer of painting a political reactionary? Or can, on the contrary, an abhorrer of painting also belong to the reactionary camp? Such comparisons between aesthetic and political reaction or progressivism appear to necessarily accompany the aesthetic, ideological, and political debates over the function of images from Byzantium, to the realism conflict of the 1920s up through the discussions about abstract painting.

"The essence of English iconoclasm was the substitution – on the walls of churches as well as in books – of words for visual images. Words – whether seen, spoken, or imagined – were privileged, while visual images were marginalized and discredited [...] One paradigm for English iconoclasm then was the replacement of visual images with words. But words too could be raised to the dangerous status of the image."⁶

Another paradigm present in English iconoclasm was the destruction of the intervening medium. Set against the world of idols and phantoms it is important that there is nothing that mediates between you and God's work. As the Bible states: "Ye shall destroy their alters, break their images, and cut down their groves" (Exod. 34:13) (see Mondzain).

In present times, when pictures hold a power unimaginable for the ancient idolaters, the mechanisms of the picture are more indeterminable than ever. The more power pictures

⁵ Ronald Paulson, *Breaking and Remaking, aesthetic practice in England, 1700-1820*, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick a.o., 1989, pp. 16-17.

⁶ Quoted in Albert Mathiez, *Les origines des cultes révolutionnaires*, Société nouvelle de librairie et d'édition, Paris, 1904, reprint: Slatkine – Megariotis, Gent, 1977, p. 115.

have, the less we seem to know about how they operate (see Koerner). That is what also seems to assuage a portion of their power. Thus we repeat an argument of the Enlightenment that knowledge of the production of images breaks the power of the images, that enlightenment about the ways an image functions, banishes the political and epistemological claims that arise from it. In the age of Enlightenment, the picture was a perfectly transparent medium through which reality was represented in a way that made reality understandable. Today, however, many theorists who criticize the media agree in the tradition of Plato that images are prisons that block, deceive, and misplace an understanding of the world. Images have become riddles and problems, rather than a transparent "window" to the world, as Leon Battista Alberti defined the image. Images today are considered regimes of signs that make representation impossible, mechanisms that present representations, which deceive and misplace.⁷ The critique of visual representation, which means the difficulty or even impossibility of seeing the world correctly, had its apotheosis in the later work of Wittgenstein when he claimed that even words could not adequately represent the world. Representation is replaced by the convention, the agreement on the use of words.⁸

But the empiricist English philosophers from Francis Bacon to John Locke went even further. Locke's first insight was that all experience enters through the senses; the second was that words are no more transparent than images, that both words and images are only conventional signs for reality. For Locke, idols are the innate ideas of scholastic philosophy and true images are the direct impressions of the senses, whereas for the Platonists, idols were merely false images of sensory appearance. The danger appears where images or words are used to represent, interpret, or communicate the results of the senses and intervene between ourselves and nature or God, thereby taking their place, thus becoming idols (see Tresch). This ban of images and this Puritan

substitution of images with words is still dominant in contemporary British art, for example in the work of the group "Art & Language." In the eighteenth century, iconoclasm comes to speak not only for Protestantism, but also skepticism and subversion, whereas iconolatry (idolatry) becomes associated with institutional authority or religion in general. Idolatry in art became a designation that extended from an old master painting to a canonical sculpture. The iconoclastic mind carried within it the seeds of civil rebellion and vice versa. One of our initial questions can thus be answered: social movements frame the perspective from which the function of images is evaluated. But the reverse is also true, as we will see, and image theories play very strong roles in political movements (see Konchok, Stoddard).

The »End of Art« as Declared by Philosophy

The politics of representation is in no way limited to political symbols or to the field of art. It has one of its bases in philosophy, and it is there that the theme of the "end of art" has been articulated most explicitly. This is not surprising since ideas, idols, images, and representations are all related terms. The term "ideology" itself has its origins in the term "idea." And it is precisely the mutual definition of idea and image that lies at the base of the conflict between iconophiles and iconoclasts. In the history of philosophy, the science of ideas is difficult to separate from iconology. Ideas are understood as images. The question is: what is the role of images of ideas?

Emmet Kennedy named Destutt de Tracy as the founder of the concept of ideology.⁹ The modern origins of pictorial critique and the connotation of political progressivism can be located in the Enlightenment and also in the iconoclastic conflicts of the French Revolution and its aftermath, with the destruction of the Vendôme column as its visual symptom. During the French Revolution, intellectuals first used the term "ideology" to invent a classical science of ideas in which

⁷ In A Philosopher in the Age of Revolution: Destutt de Tracy and the Origins of Ideology, American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, 1978, p. 255.

⁸ In art, no one less than René Magritte pointed out the crisis of the image and the crisis of representation through his wavering meanings. It is not a surprise that one of the most important poststructuralist critics of representation, Michel Foucault, reflects in his theory not only on a picture from Velázquez, *Las Meninas*, but also on the pictorial world of Magritte. See chapter *Las Meninas*, in Michel Foucault, *Les mots et les choses*, Gallimard, Paris, 1966, and Michel Foucault, *Ceci n'est pas une pipe*, Gallimard, Paris, 1974.

⁹ See Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Image*, Harper & Row, New York, 1961; Roland Barthes, *Image-Music-Text*, Hill & Wang, New York, 1977; Bill Nichols, *Ideology and the Image*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1981.

social affairs would gain the certainty of materialist empirical science. An "ideology" of all things seemed to be the right method to differentiate true ideas from false ones, by determining which ideas have a true and real relationship to external reality. Therefore, "ideology" was about those ideas that have the ability to represent reality in a realistic way; it was not about utterly denying the image this ability. Ideology was originally a science that believed in the representational ability of the image. It was a matter of separating the right images from the wrong ones. In this respect, the iconoclastic science of ideas took ideology as its own idol. The first contradiction can be noticed here. That is the swaying ambivalence that this catalog constantly points out (see Latour): iconoclasm at the service of idolatry.

The view of ideology as a method of differentiating between false and true images goes back to Francis Bacon and Descartes. Francis Bacon wrote in 1620 in *The New Organon*:

"The Idols and false notions which are now in possession of the human understanding, and have taken deep root therein, not only so beset men's minds that truth can hardly find entrance, but even after entrance is obtained, they will again in the very instauration of the sciences meet and trouble us, unless men being forewarned of the danger fortify themselves as far as may be against their assaults."¹⁰

Between 1790 and 1830, a reaction to the Enlightenment formed in Germany. Drawing on medieval art, Dürer, and the Renaissance, particularly Raffael, an emotionally bound subjectivity was rapturously acclaimed. The marriage of art images and religion was proclaimed and aesthetic genres such as Lessing's were rejected. In artworks, the borders between the genres dissolved. Romantic poets and painters rejected classicism and rationalism and the calculations of reason and rationality of German idealism that found their culmination in Hegel's conceptual system. They discovered the directness

of the view. They discovered the power of the image against the hegemony of the concept, as is clearly expressed in the lines from Novalis:

If numbers and figures no longer
Held the keys to all creatures,
If they sang or kissed
Deeper than the learned know,
If the world lived freely,
And life was recommenced in the world,
If then light and shadow again
Became true clarity,
And we saw in tales and poems
The true world history,
Then from a secret word
All false being would flee.¹¹

Access to the world and to understanding of the world is achieved in opposition to Plato's rejection of the image through the image itself. Contemplation is the window to the world. Art works teach us to see, and even more, to see for the sake of seeing.¹² This romantic reaction was the absolute opponent to German idealism, which relied heavily on the power of conceptually rational thought. In the *Phenomenology of Mind*, which Hegel completed in Jena in 1806, he wrote: "The element of truth is the Concept, and its true form the scientific system."¹³ Hegel probably recognized himself to be an opponent to the Romantic conviction that "the Absolute [...] is not to be grasped in conceptual form, but felt, intuited; it is not its conception, but the feeling of it and intuition of it that are to have the say and find expression."¹⁴ In his confrontation with the positions of Schelling, Schlegel, and the Romantics, Hegel gained the standpoint that the knowledge of truth is only possible through the medium of a systematically developed concept. Hegel accused the Romantic attempt to rehabilitate the image and direct contemplation with a lack of concept:

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¹⁰ This poem may be found in the notes to the continuation of Novalis' novel *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*, in *Novalis. Schriften. Band III: Das philosophische Werk II*, Richard Samuel, Hans-Joachim Mähl, and Gerhard Schulz, (eds), W. Kohlhammer Verlag, Stuttgart, 1968, p. 675.

¹¹ Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Mind*, Harper & Row, New York and London, 1967, p. 70.

¹² August Wilhelm Schlegel asks in *Die Gemälde. Gespräch* regarding the images of the people of Dresden, "When will you see for the sake of seeing?", *Athenaeum*, 2 volumes, vol. 1, Berlin, 1799, p. 62.

¹³ Francis Bacon, *The New Organon* (1620), quoted from William J.T. Mitchell, *Iconology. Image, Text, Ideology*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1986, p. 164.

¹⁴ Hegel, op. cit., p. 71.

"In the contrast and opposition between these two aspects (the initial and the developed stages of science) seems to lie the critical knot which scientific culture at present struggles to loosen, and about which so far it is not very clear. One side parades the wealth of its material and the intelligibility of its ideas; the other pours contempt at any rate on the latter, and makes a parade of the immediate intuitive rationality and divine quality of its content."¹⁵

Here we can recognize our matrix of the organization of ideology and image. The Enlightenment insisted on the concept and rationality and accused Romanticism of mere appearances and sacredness. Here we can see the two vanishing lines of history: the history of materialism versus the history of sacredness. Hegel set the course for the rational direction of philosophy in the nineteenth century, and thereby assured the triumph of pure reason, the victory of science over the humanities. His conflict with Romantic art, due to his primacy of concepts, finally led him to first express the dictum of "the end of art" that was so decisive for the modern era.

"In all these respects art, considered in its highest vocation, is and remains for us a thing of the past. Thereby it has lost for us genuine truth and life, and has rather been transferred into our *ideas* instead of maintaining its earlier necessity in reality and occupying its higher place."¹⁶

The crisis of art thus began at that moment when philosophy denied it the role of a medium of knowledge and truth, of a medium with whose help the world could be recognized and explained. Based on Hegel's experience with the Romantic concept of art, art was obviously, according to philosophy and religion, no longer a transparent window to the world, but rather, an opaque steamy window, obscured by what the

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Romantics claimed to be a "direct knowledge of the absolute" (Jakobi) which for Hegel was mere supposition. As I will show, art internalized these externally imposed dictates and in a series of manifestos during the twentieth century, continually proclaimed a crisis of representation and the end of art.

From the complementary histories of the conflict between ideology and image, we can derive the theorem that *the discourse of the crisis of representation and the discourse of the end of art are mutually dependent*. Both crises appear at exactly the same historical moment.

Nearly every critical thought on culture cites the Marxist concept of ideology. The key text on ideology is *The German Ideology*, written by Karl Marx between 1845 and 1847, and first published after his death. In this text, Marx employs the term "ideology" to analyze the working methods of the mind and consciousness, and to drive out the influence of idealistic philosophy. Interestingly, as W. J. T. Mitchell has so clearly pointed out,¹⁷ Marx compares the function of ideology to the mechanisms of a camera obscura:

"If in all ideology men and their relations appear upside-down as in a *camera obscura*, this phenomenon arises just as much from their historical life-process as the inversion of objects on the retina does from their physical life-process."¹⁸

The camera obscura as a metaphor for ideology is to some extent enticing because the conceptual machine of ideology is based on the camera as an image machine. From that, it is possible to conclude that ideology itself is an image machine, *a machine which produces pictures*, pictures of the world, representations of the world under the dictates of ideology. Ideology thus colors the window to the world.

The camera obscura metaphor thus repeats the cave metaphor from Plato. Sensations are the windows through which the light of the world penetrates into the dark room. If Locke had a positive understanding of the camera obscura,

¹⁵ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology*, in *Collected Works*, vol. 5, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1976, p. 36.

¹⁶ Hegel, op. cit., p. 77.

¹⁷ Hegel's Introduction to Aesthetics: as the introduction to the *Berlin aesthetics lectures of the 1820s*, translated by T. M. Knox, with an interpretative essay by Charles Karelis, Clarendon Press, Oxford and Oxford University Press, New York, 1979, p. 11.

¹⁸ In Mitchell, op. cit., p. 160-208. My argumentation owes a lot to this text.

Marx had a negative understanding of it. Like ideology, it delivers the mechanisms of illusion: phantoms, chimera, ghosts, and shadows of reality. Marx used the camera obscura to ridicule the illusions of idealistic philosophy. In his philosophy, he wants to set right again the relations that appear upside down in a camera obscura. From that he derives his claims – in an iconoclastic strategy – of anchoring the inverted images of ideology (the upside down images of the camera obscura), in the historical life process and rectifying them.

Mitchell lists three iconoclastic strategies. The first strategy is not to trust any representation; to turn back all mediations. This call for direct positive knowledge is, however, very problematic when it meets with Locke's model of empirical observation. The question becomes, how to maintain true images, versions, and representations of the world and likewise avoid the camera obscura, the instrument of mediation (see Schaffer). Is it at all possible to maintain pure unmediated direct knowledge (see Galison, Rheinberger, Macho)? Radical iconoclasm believes in the possibility of seeing without eyes, of maintaining pictures of the world without instruments. If it is not possible to cast a direct glance at reality, is the alternative to work through ideology through a process of critical interpretation?¹⁹

The third option, which avoids the dilemma of the idealists with their shadow world and the empiricists with their direct representation, is historical materialism, which recognizes both the shadow of illusion and direct representation as historical products. Only through the reconstruction of the material history of production from which pictures and ideas arise can ideology be rectified. The dead facts of the empiricists and the imagined activities of the idealists cease through the connection of the images with the material conditions of their production. Historical experience thereby becomes the ultimate signifying practice. Marx does not see himself as external to this historical process, but rather as a conscious agent for a certain class, namely, the class of the proletariat

that does not hold authoritarian power. Is history now the new idol of the mind?

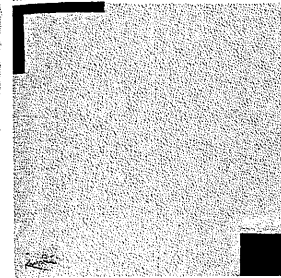
It is thus possible to say that the iconoclastic conflict is an ideological conflict. But it is not only a conflict *about* the ideology of the image, about the representation of the world through images, but a conflict about the composition of the world itself, and thus *a social and political conflict*. And once again the question arises: why are those who worship images, based on their ability to correctly represent the world, described as naïve and reactionary, whereas those who destroy images because of their inability to correctly represent the world are valued as progressive and advanced? Those who want to glance behind the images, behind the mechanisms and conditions with which and under which images represent the world, are considered to be critical minds and fighters of ignorance (see Koch). Those who want to leave the images as images, trusting the images themselves with the power of enlightenment are considered anti-Enlightenment and obscurantists in spite of everything that is shown in this catalog and in the exhibition.

Therefore the question arises once again; where does the judgment on iconoclasm and idolatry come from? Why do the supposed iconoclasts believe that they are critical of the power of the image? And why are the supposed idolaters thought to be in a kind of unconditional surrender, in love with the images? Our argument is that it is in the special and limited case of painting and its modernist history that one can more clearly see the roots of "the end of art" argument.

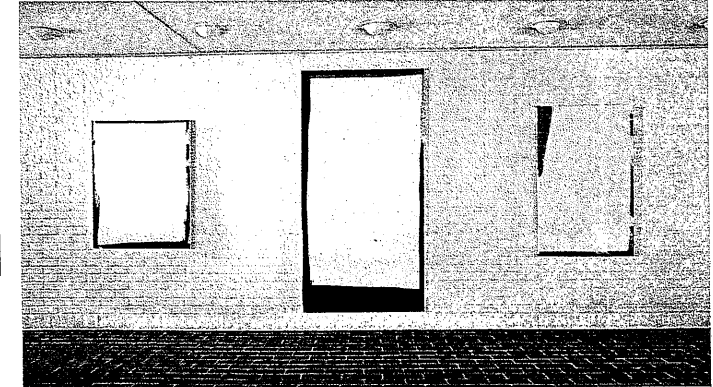
The »End of Art« as Declared by Art

This exhibition makes clear that the word "image" includes all sorts of representations and mediations (see Latour). The case of painting in the Western tradition is so striking that it will be followed in some detail, even though the general outline is well known. Here, the death of art is a consequence of

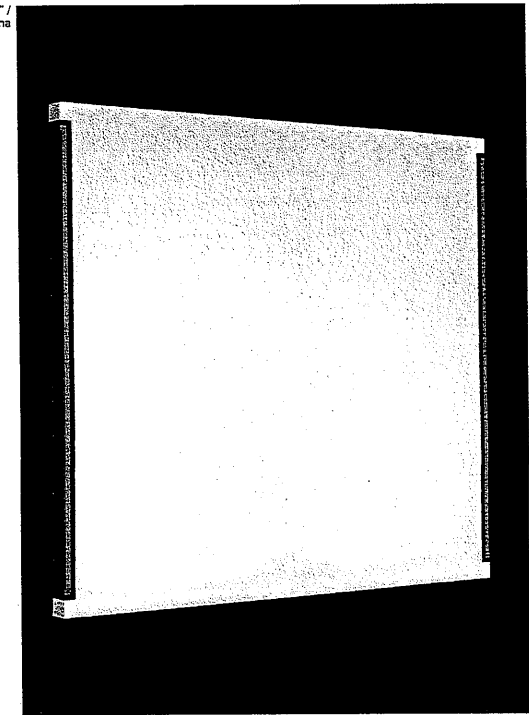
František Kupka / Abstraction / c. 1932 / gouache on paper crème / 11 x 11" / Musée national d'art moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris



Sam Francis / Edge Painting / 1968 / oil on canvas / 42.1 x 31.9" / Louisiana Museum of Modern Art / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002

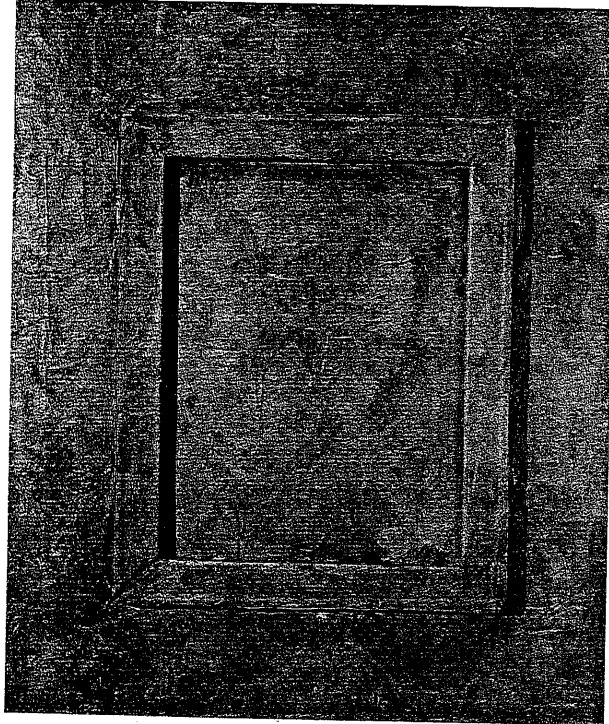


Jo Baer / Untitled / 1949 / oil on canvas / 36 x 39" / courtesy Galerie Meyer Kainer, Vienna

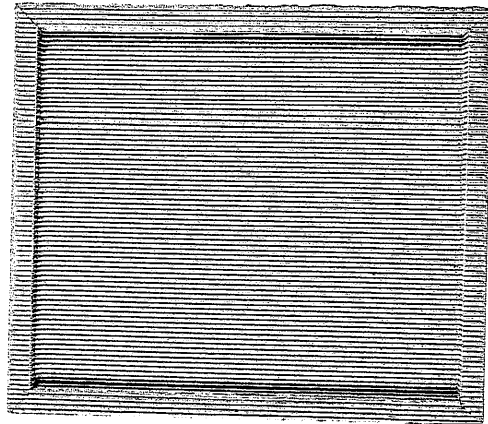


¹⁹ To draft a hermeneutics of suspicion like Boris Groys has recently done in *Unter Verdacht: eine Phänomenologie der Medien*, Hanser, Munich, 2000.

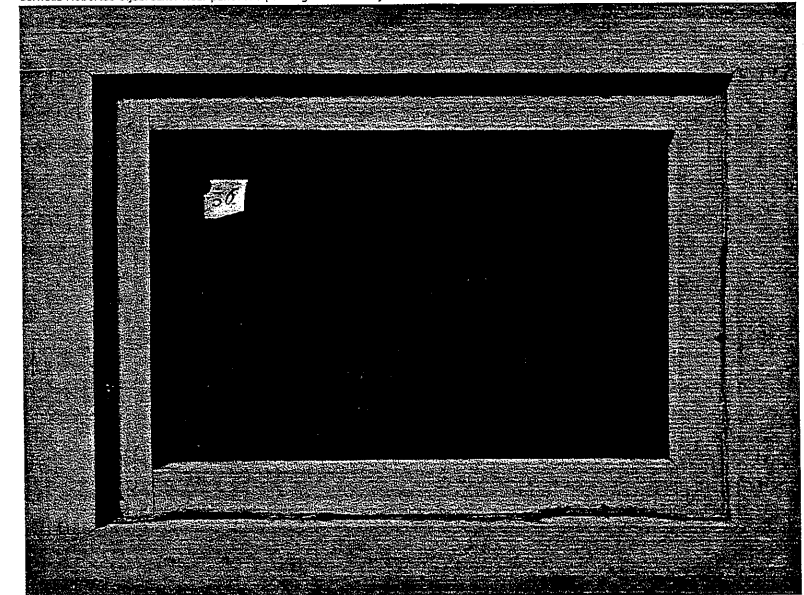
Jasper Johns / Canvas / 1956 / encaustic and collage on wood and canvas / 30 x 20" / Jasper Johns / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002



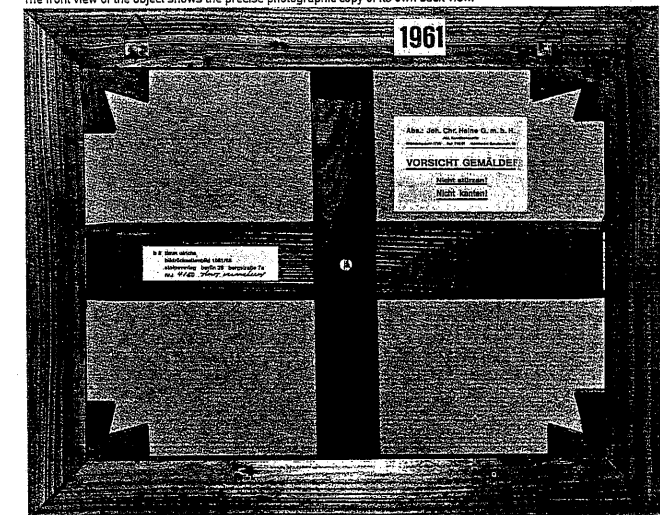
Fabio Mauri / Disegno / 1960 / cardboard on wood / 26 x 29.5" / Fabio Mauri



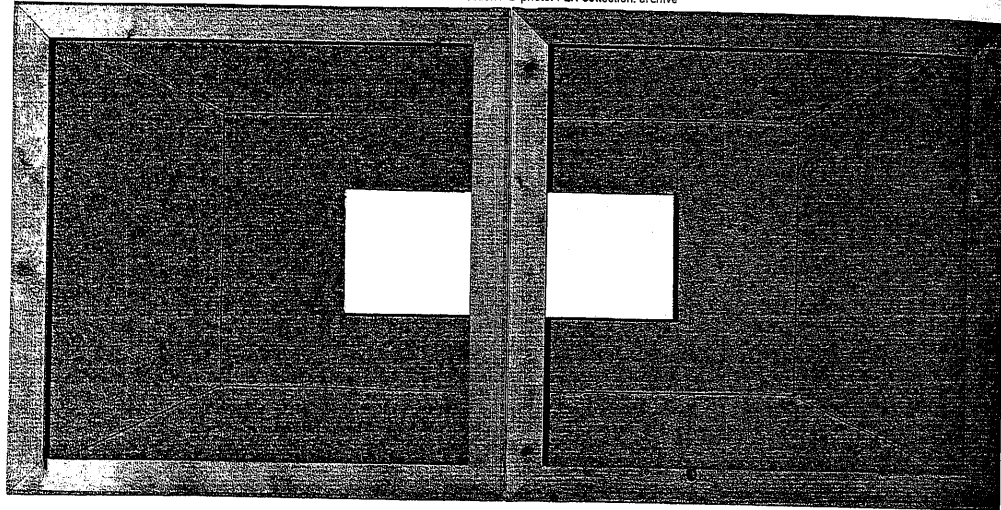
Cornelis Nobertus Gijssbrecht / Rear panel of a painting / 17th century / oil on canvas / 21.3 x 25.6" / Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen



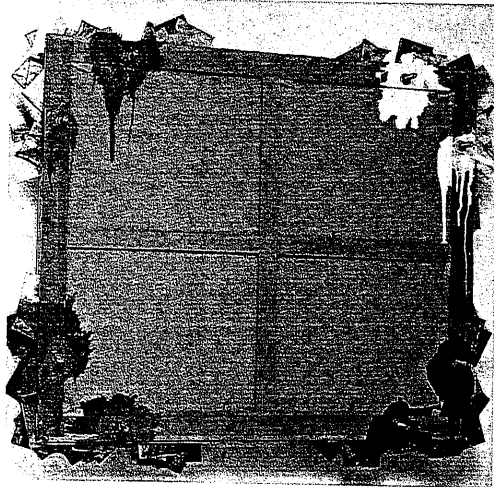
Timm Ulrichs / Bildrückseitenbild (Picture of the back of a picture) / 1961-1968 / photograph on canvas on stretchers (front view) / fabric tape, labels, hanger (back view) / 15.7 x 19.7" / edition of 50, numbered and signed pieces / Collection Hüper, Timm Ulrichs / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002 / © photo: Folo-Wolff, Hannover
The front view of the object shows the precise photographic copy of its own back view.



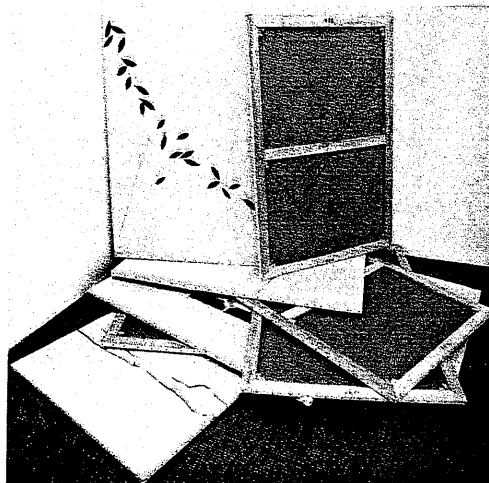
Giulio Paolini / Chimera / 1975 / pencil, acrylic, frame on canvas / 31.5 x 63" / FER Collection / © photo: FER Collection, archive



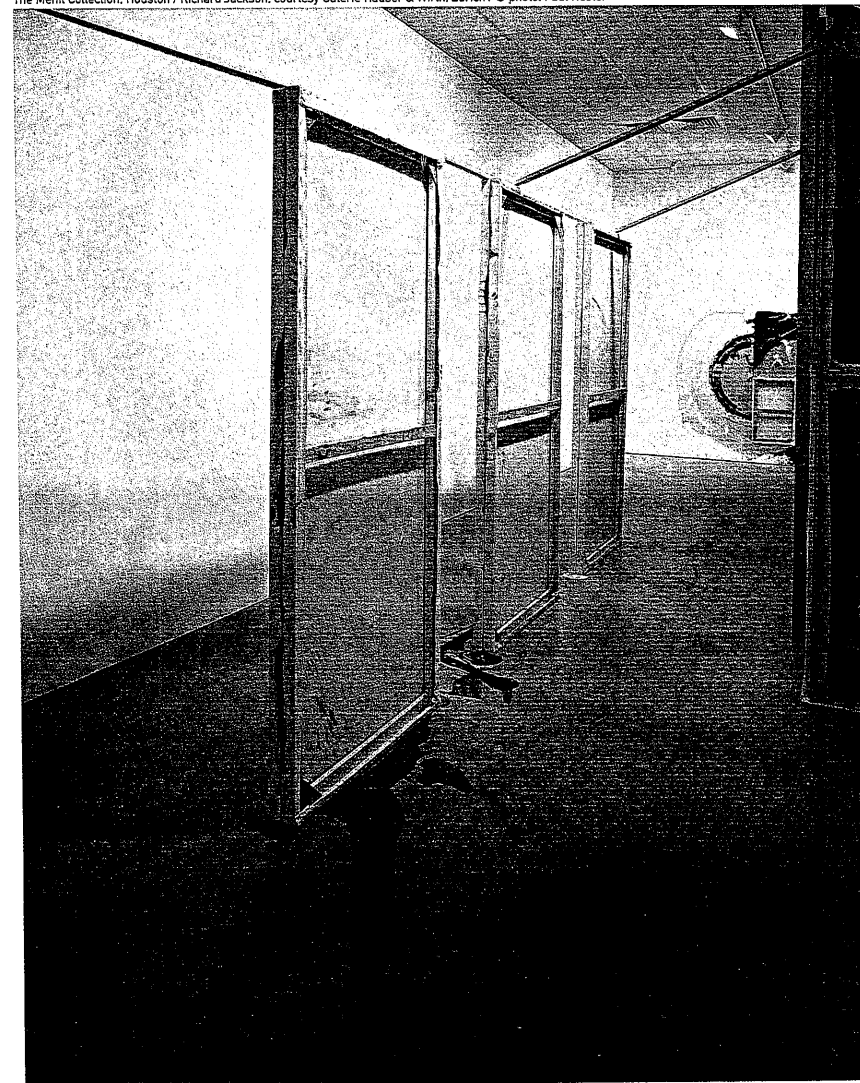
Ger van Elk / Paysage saignant (Pressure sandwich) / 1991 / Collection Liliane & Michael Durand-Dessert, Paris / © photo: PPS



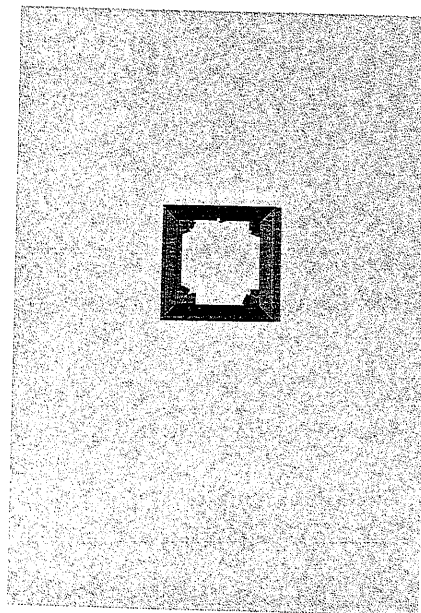
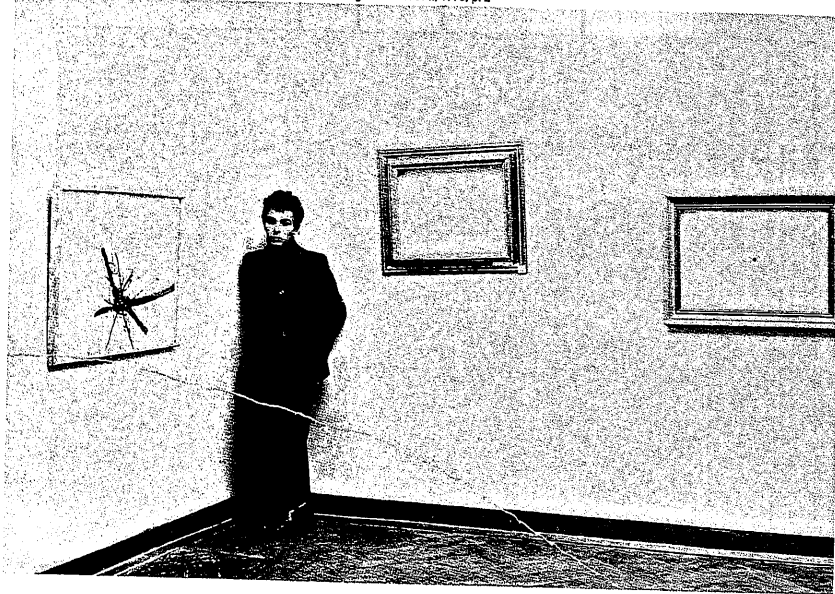
Giulio Paolini / Mnemosine / 1979-1980 / nine canvases / drawing, collage / each 47.2 x 31.5" / courtesy Galerie Löhrl, Mönchengladbach / © photo: Paul Maenz, Berlin, archive



Richard Jackson / Untitled / 1971-1988 / free-standing constructed painting of three paired canvases / each pair 95 x 42 x 2" / installation view The Menil Collection, Houston / Richard Jackson, courtesy Galerie Hauser & Wirth, Zurich / © photo: Paul Hester

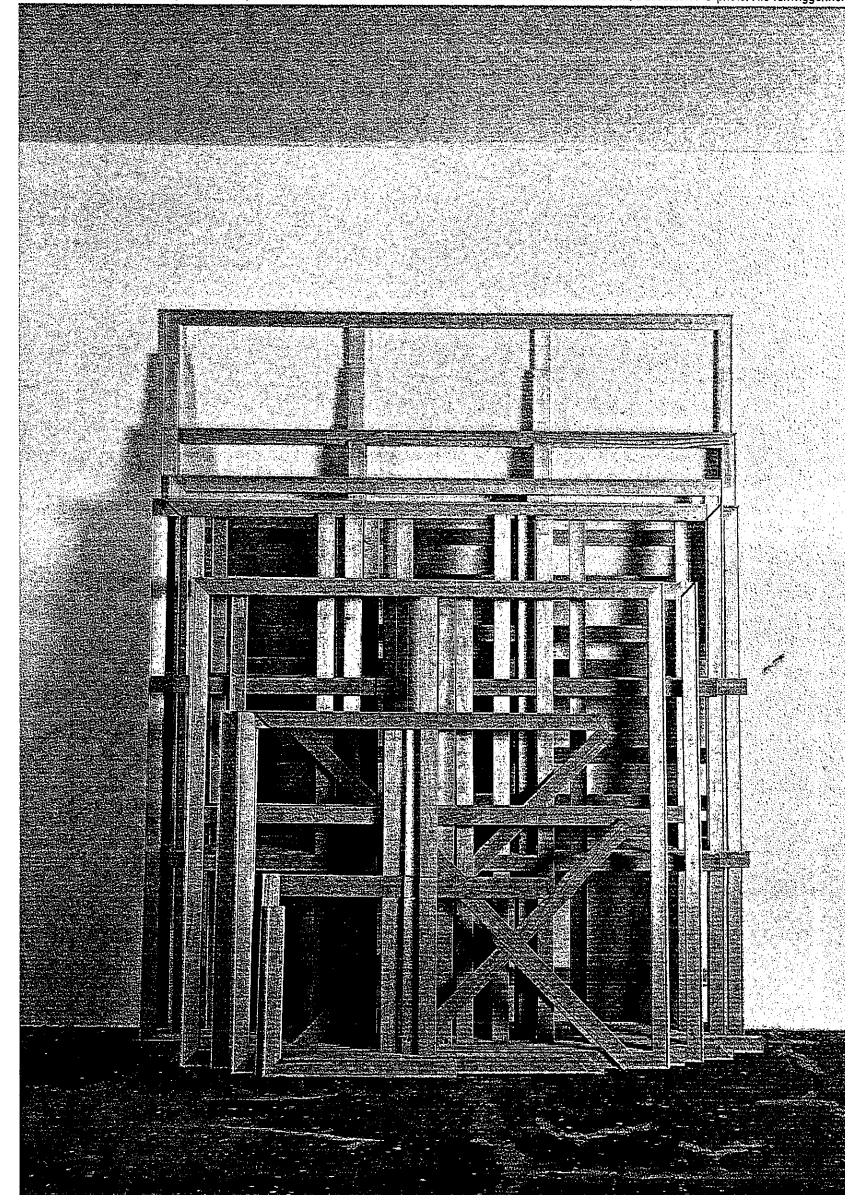


Arnulf Rainer / The empty painting / 1951 / exhibition Künstlerhaus Klagenfurt / photography with Arnulf Rainer, torn into two pieces by the artist / from: Peter Weisel (ed.), Wien, Bildkompendium Wiener Aktionismus und Film, Kohlkunstverlag, Frankfurt/M., 1970, p. 2

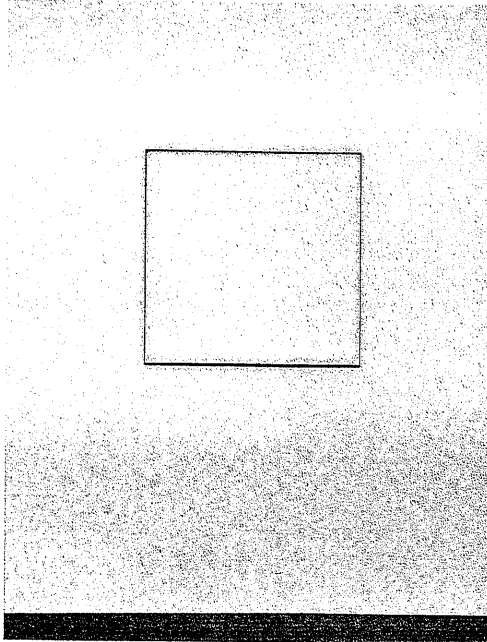


Imi Knoebel / Keilrahmen [Stretcher] / 1968 / wood, paint / 11.8 x 11.8" / Carmen Knoebel, Düsseldorf / © photo: Nic Tenwiggenhorn

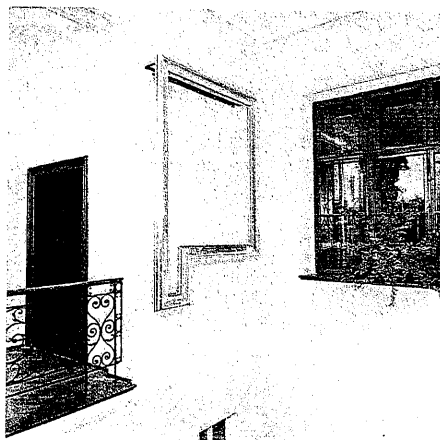
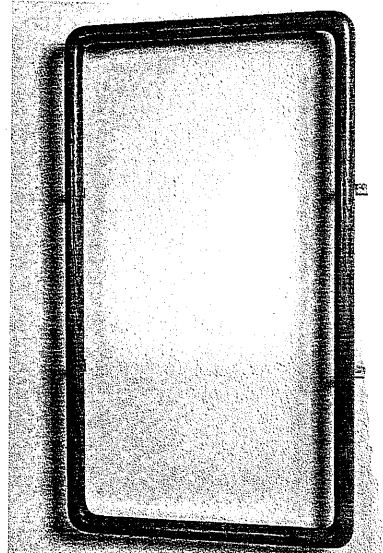
Imi Knoebel / 30 Keilrahmen [30 stretchers] / 1968-1969 / installation / wood / 94.5 x 114.2 x 31.1" / Carmen Knoebel, Düsseldorf / © photo: Nic Tenwiggenhorn



Reiner Ruthenbeck / Rotes Bandquadrat mit Metalstab (Red Square with metal tool) / 1988 / ribbon, metal tool / Collection Felckenberg, Hamburg / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002

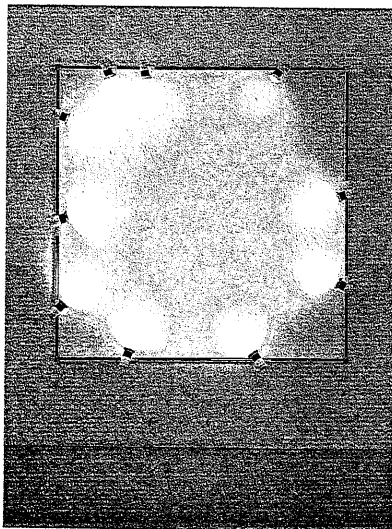


Richard Artschwager / Handle / 1962 / Kasper König, Cologne / © photo: Achim Lengerer

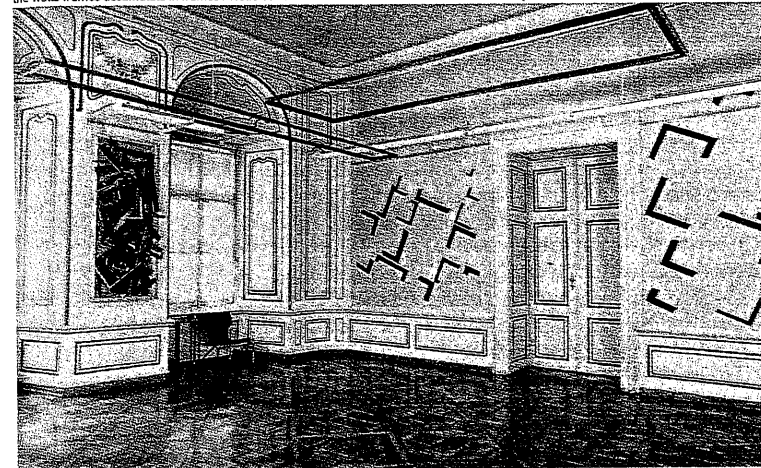


Christian Eckart / Eidolon No. 1102 / golden frame, 23 carat / 96 x 66.1" / Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac, Salzburg

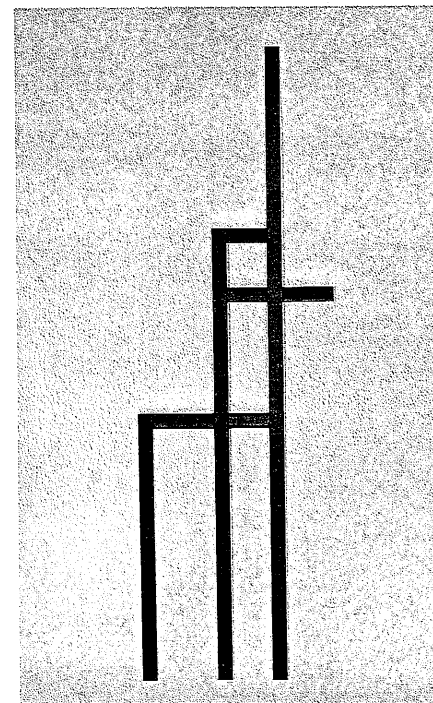
Bertrand Lavier / Concorde / 1987 / light runners, beams / from: Bildlicht. Materiel zwischen Material und Immaterialität, exhib. cat. Wiener Festwochen, 1991, Europaverlag, Vienna, 1991 / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002



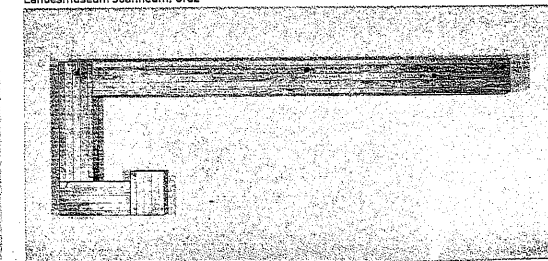
Peter Weibel / exhibition: painting between anarchism and research / 1992 / empty cross shaped frames hanging on the ceiling, on the walls frames accumulate in frames / Neue Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz / © photo: Peter Weibel



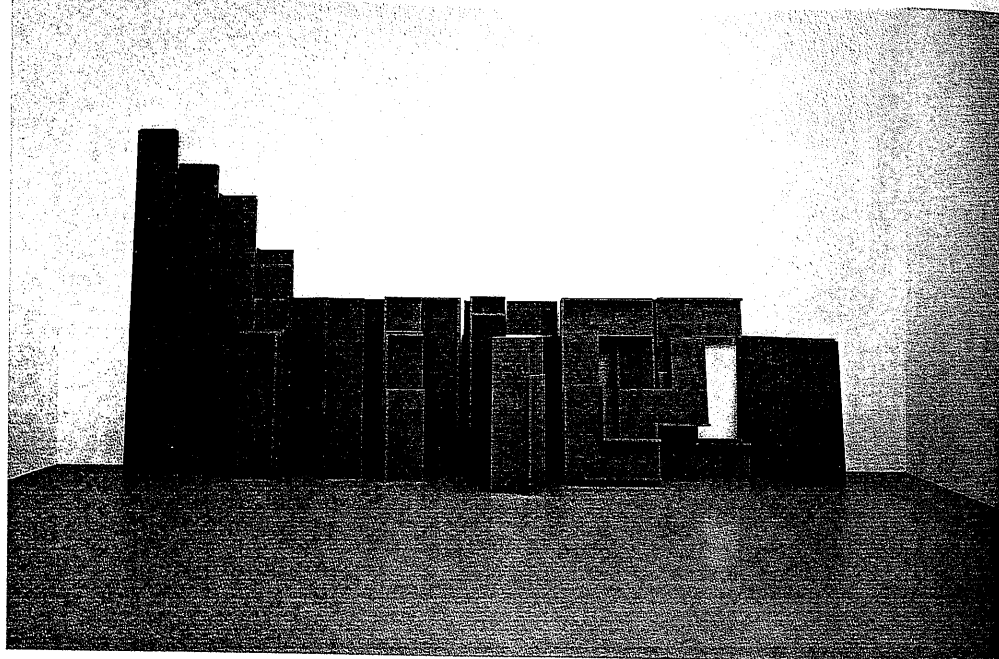
Peter Weibel / Frame Conditions, reflecting the evolution of an electric collapse / 1991 / steel band, soldered (gelötet) / 21.1 x 67.2 x 0.2" / Neue Galerie im Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz / © photo: Kolnegg, Neue Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz



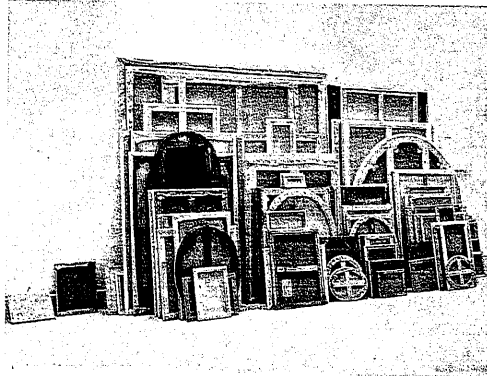
Peter Weibel / Frame Conditions, reflecting the number of visitors of a day, a week, a month, a year in the Neue Galerie / 1991 / wooden frame, glued spruce wood / 73.6 x 24.8 x 5.5" / Neue Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz / © photo: Kolnegg, Neue Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz



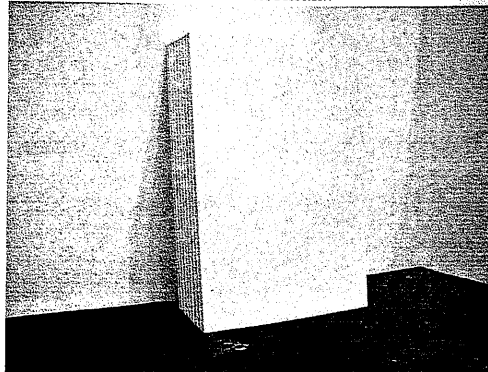
Franz Erhard Walther / 40 Sockel (40 plinths) / 1978 / installation / cotton, wood, glue / 148 pieces, each 14.6 x 3.5" / approx. 393.7 x 141.7 x 39" (installation) / Franz Erhard Walther, courtesy Galerie Vera Munro, Hamburg / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002 / © photo: Jens Rathmann



Claude Rutault / dlm 126 bis / 1984 / 88 canvases / Musée d'art moderne et contemporain, Strasbourg / Collection Broly, Paris / © photo: Richard Decker, 1998



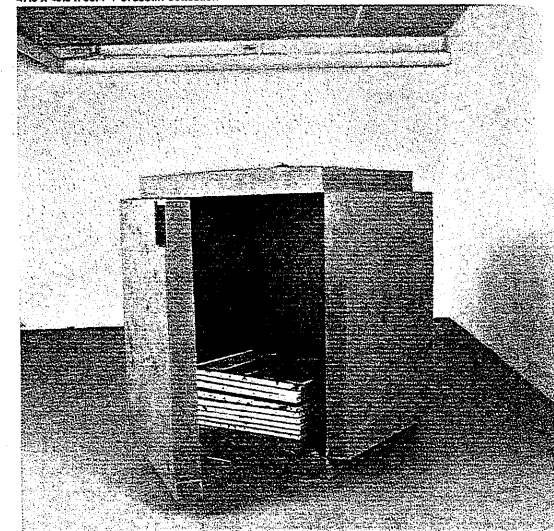
Imi Knoebel / Weiße Wand [White wall] / 1975-1976 / ampheelin on wood / eight parts / 64.6 x 95.5 x 22.1" / Carmen Knoebel, Düsseldorf



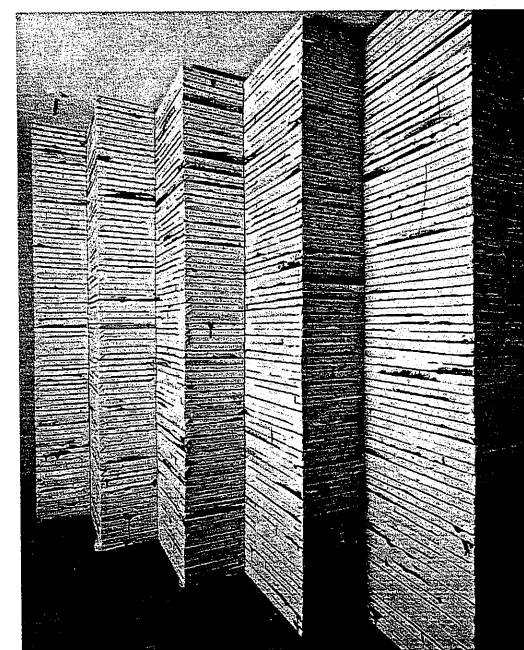
Peter Weibel / Am Boden gestapelte leere Graphikmappen aus den Beständen des Museums (Empty print books piled on the floor from the museum's collection) / exhibition: Malerei zwischen Anarchie und Forschung / 1992 / Neue Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz / © photo: Peter Weibel



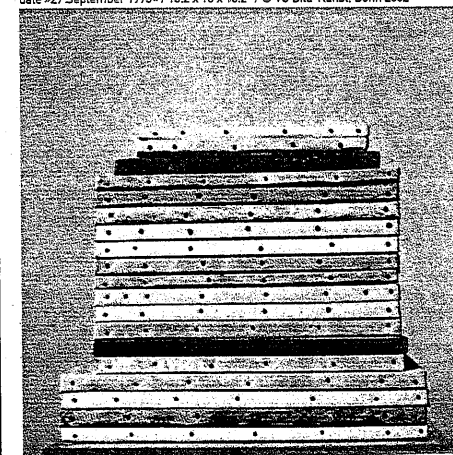
Martin Kippenberger / Orgon-Kiste / 1982 / dispersion, wood, metal, oat flakes, oil paint, canvas / 47.3 x 43.3 x 35.4" / Grasslin Collection



Richard Jackson / Untitled (stacked painting) / 1987 / canvas, wood, acrylic paint / 120 x 180 x 96" / courtesy Tschudi Gallery, Glarus

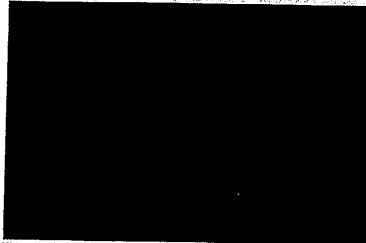


Marcel Broodthaers / Dix-neuf petits tableaux en pile / 1973 / installation with 19 canvases on stretchers, the edges painted, inscribed with date «29 September 1973» / 15.2 x 18 x 15.2" / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002



Endre Tót / Gorbatschow in New York / 1991 / acrylic on canvas /
33.9 x 48.4" / courtesy Galerie Berndt, Cologne

Gorbatschow in New York

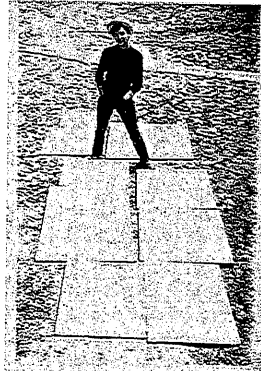


Mielnik Garbatschow treibt sich mit US-Präsident Ronald Reagan und UN-Vize George Bush vor der Freiheitsstatue.

Installation view of Robert Ryman's exhibition in the Kunsthalle Basel, June 1975 /
© photo: Christian Baur

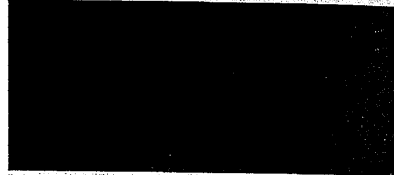


Ewa Partum / Present, Absent / 1965



Endre Tót / Dada-Messe in Berlin [Dada-fair in Berlin] / 1989 / acrylic on canvas / 49.2 x 79.1" / Collection Speck, Cologne

Dada-Messe in Berlin



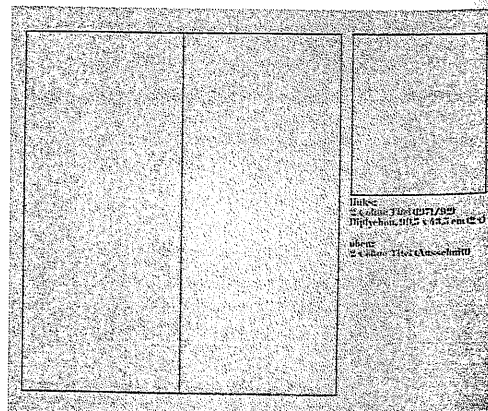
Dada-Mosse in Berlin: (v. l. stehend) Hansmann, Burchard, Baader, Wieland und
Margarete Herzfeld, Grunz, Heartfield. Sitzend: Hück, Schmalhausen.

Endre Tót / Die abwesenden Bilder [The absent pictures] / 1971-1992 / acrylic on canvas / 94,5 x 59,1"

Die abwesenden Bilder

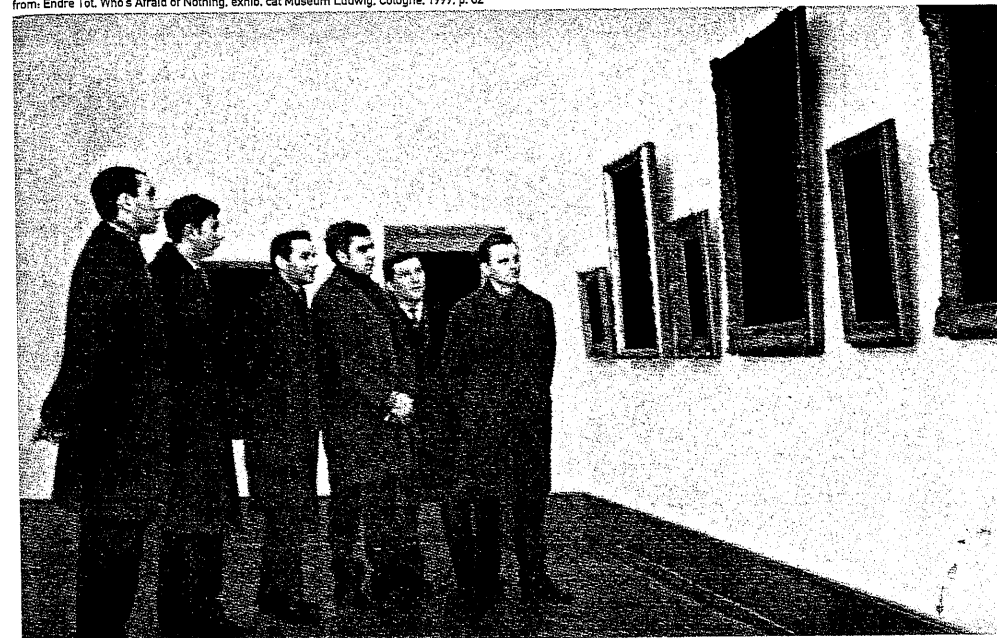


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Endre Tót / A Visit to the Museum (Blackout Paintings Cabinet) / 1972 /
from: Endre Tót. Who's Afraid of Nothing, exhib. cat Museum Ludwig, Cologne, 1999, p. 82

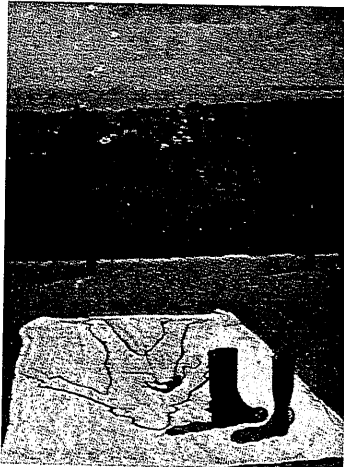


John Isaacs / Ah! Donald Judd,
my favourite! / 1991/1999 /
gelatine silver print / silk screen
on baryt paper / 20.8 x 17"
(framed) / Fluid Editions, Basel



Ah! Donald Judd, my favourite.

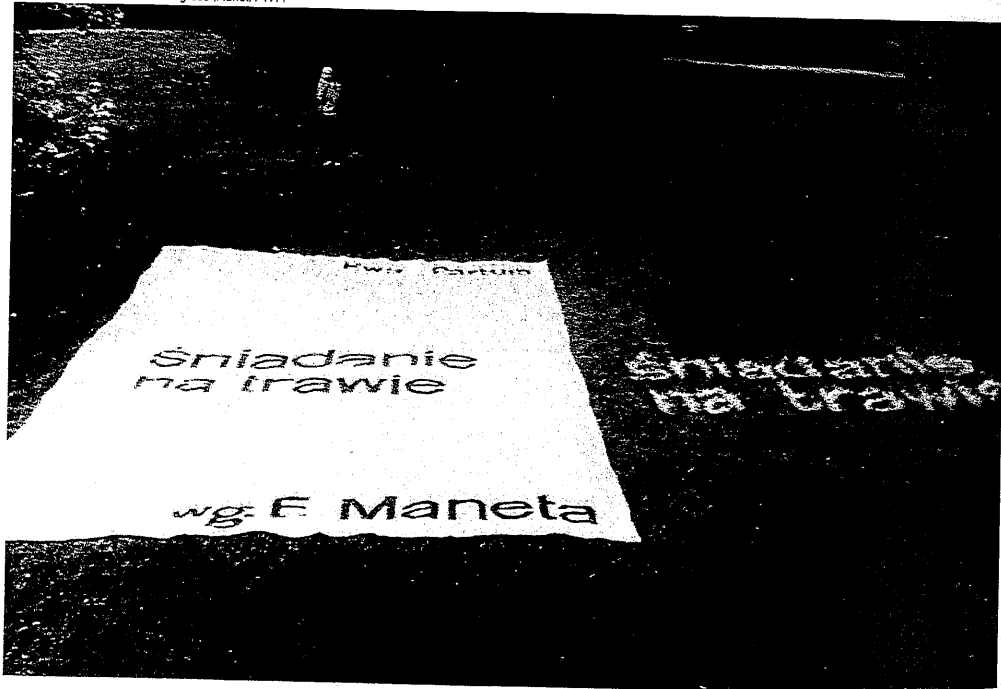
Ewa Partum / Absent / 1965



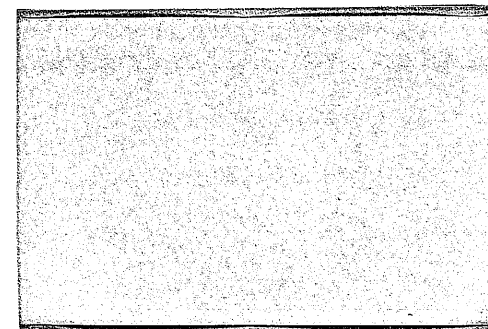
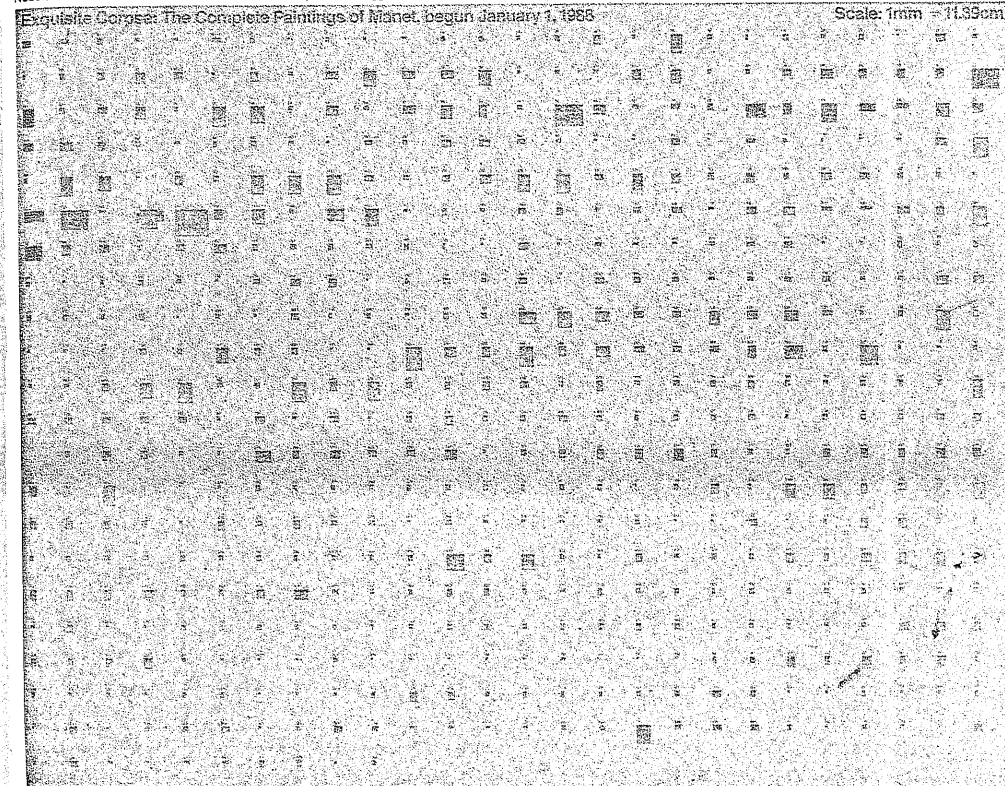
Ewa Partum / Present / 1965



Ewa Partum / Breakfast on the grass (Manet) / 1971

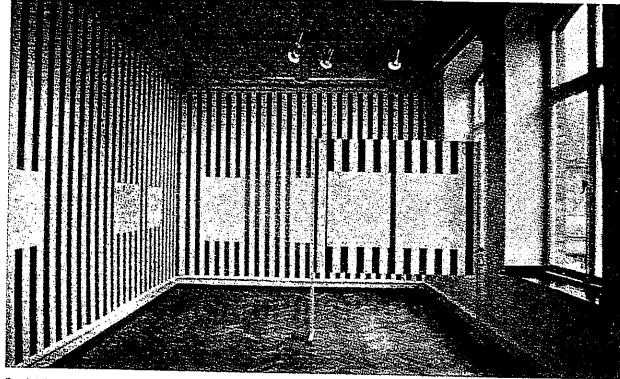


Stephen Prina / Exquisite Corps. The Complete Paintings of Manet / 1988 / silkscreen on cardboard / Neue Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz / © photo: Kolnegg, Neue Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz

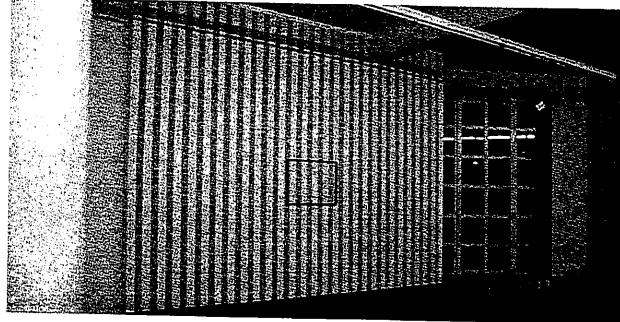


Stephen Prina / Exquisite Corps. The Complete Paintings of Manet / 1988 / silkscreen on cardboard / detail / Neue Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz / © photo: Kolnegg, Neue Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz

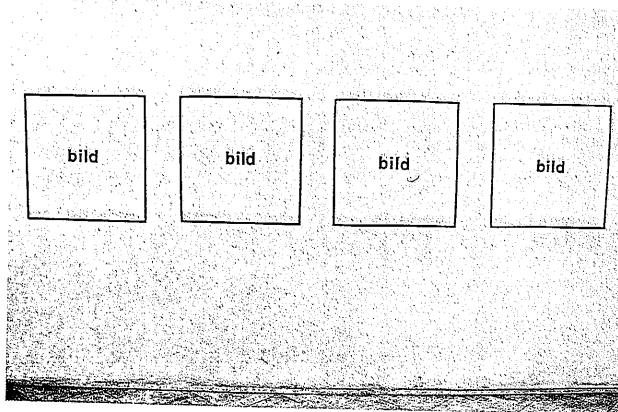
Daniel Buren / Second episode; from now on, work in situ / November – December 1975 /
Städtisches Museum Abteiberg, Mönchengladbach / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002



Daniel Buren / Inside and outside the frame / 1970 / dimensions variable / Collection FER /
© photo: VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002



Timm Ulrichs / »Bild=Bilder (=Picture=pictures) / 1966 / black adhesive plastic letters, adhesive tape /
size variable / installation view / detail / Städtisches Museum Leverkusen, Schloß Morsbroich /
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002 / © Holger Schmitt, Leverkusen



Daniel Buren / Demultiple (instruction) / 1973 / 11.8 x 19.7 /
Collection Speck, Cologne / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002 / © photo: Lothar Schnepf, Cologne

DANIEL BUREN
DEMULATE

HINWEIS FÜR DIE ANBRINGUNG

1. Sie haben ein Malerei-Feldstück erhalten. Es hat die Nummer 29/L 50000. Auf dem Foto sehen Sie, wie es sich in das Gesamtstück einordnet.
2. Dieses Teilstück ist ein schuhdeckengroßer Teil einer Malerei auf Stoff mit vorgegebenen weißen und orangen vertikalen Streifen im 1/2 m Breiten. Die beiden äußeren weißen Streifen sind auf der Vorder- und Rückseite mit weißer Acrylfarbe übermalbar. Vor dem Auseinanderbrechen war das Gesamtstück 340 cm hoch und 422 cm breit.
3. Wenn Sie ein Malerei-Feldstück aus der linken Hälfte des Gesamtstücks (L) gewählt haben, müssen Sie Ihr Stück beim Anbringen an der Wand in der linken Zimmerecke ansetzen. Die Höhen-Platzierung Ihres Stückes muß unbedingt übereinstimmen mit der Maßangabe, die – zusammen mit der Nummer – Ihrem Stück beigegeben ist. Sie gibt die Entfernung zwischen dem Boden und der unteren linken Ecke Ihres Stückes an und wird gemessen vom Boden bis zur unteren linken Ecke des Stückes. Wenn Ihr Stück angesetzt wird, entscheidet es sich selbstverständlich von links nach rechts. Seine Lage in der Wand gemessen bestimmt sich dadurch, daß die Streifen senkrecht zum Boden stehen sollen – wenn Sie wollen – parallel zur linken Mauerlinie laufen.
4. Wenn Sie ein Malerei-Feldstück aus der rechten Hälfte des Gesamtstücks (R) gewählt haben, müssen Sie Ihr Stück beim Anbringen in der rechten Wand Ecke ansetzen. Für die Höhe und die Verfahrungsweise gilt entsprechend (rechts statt links) das unter 3d) Gesagte.
5. Der Aufkleber gibt Ihnen nicht nur die Nummer Ihres Stückes (und seine Position im Gesamtwerk) sowie seine Entfernung vom Fußboden an, sondern bezeichnet auch, was als Vorder- bzw. Rückseite gemeint ist. Die Seite mit dem Aufkleber bezeichnet die Rückseite (unsichtbar), die andere die Vorderseite (sichtbar).
6. Sie sollten Ihr Malerei-Feldstück so wählen, daß Sie es der Höhe nach richtig positionieren können in dem Raum, für den Sie es vorgesehen haben. Selbstverständlich kann jemand mehrere verschiedene Malerei-Feldstücke beziehen, gleich ob sie zusammenhängen oder nicht. In jedem Falle müssen sie entsprechend der oben aufgeführten Anweisung angebracht werden.

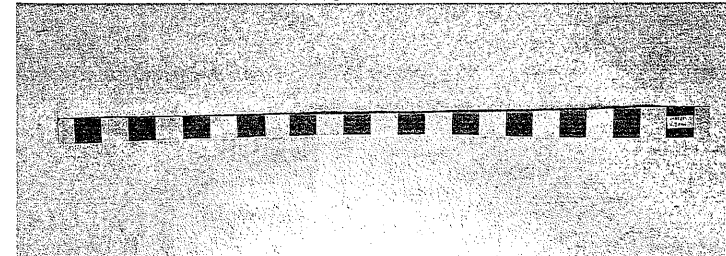
L R

Alle Stücke mit dem Buchstaben L müssen in der linken Zimmerecke angebracht werden.

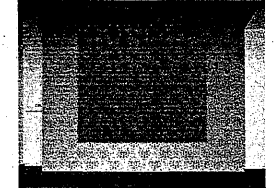
Alle Stücke mit dem Buchstaben R müssen in der rechten Zimmerecke angebracht werden.

Beispiel:
Untere Teil des Stückes No. 56, von dem aus die Entfernung zwischen Boden und Stück gemessen wird.

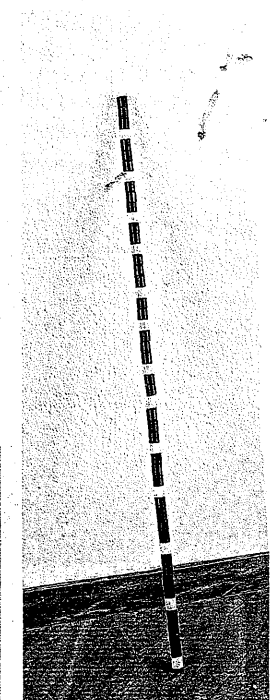
Daniel Buren / Demultiple / 1973 / acrylic on marquee fabric / 83 x 3.9" / Collection Speck, Cologne /
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002 / © photo: Lothar Schnepf, Cologne



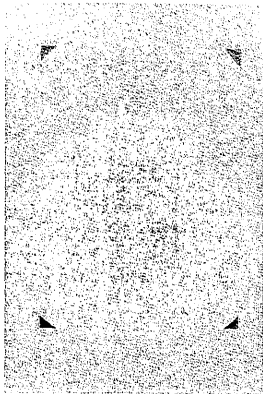
Maria Eichhorn / Wand ohne Bild (Wall without picture) / 1991 / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002 /
© photo: Jens Ziehe



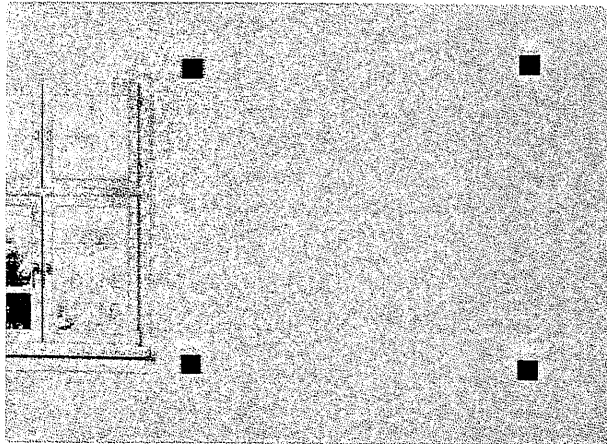
André Cadere / Peinture sans fin (Painting without end) / 1974 / wooden bead-molding, polychromed from 52 individual parts /
0.8 x 47.5' / Neue Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002 / © photo: Kolnegg, Neue Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz



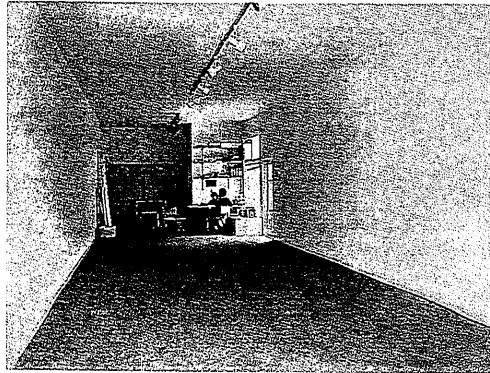
Maria Eichhorn / Vier Ecken eines entfernten
Blattes Papier / Four corners of a removed
piece of paper / 1991 / adhesive tape, paper /
courtesy Galerie Barbara Weitz, Berlin /
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002



Robert Barry / Painting in Four Parts / 1967 / oil on canvas over wood /
four parts / each 4.1 x 4.1" / FER Collection / © photo: FER Collection, archive



Michael Asher / installation view in Claire Copley Gallery, Inc., Los Angeles / 1974 /
© photo: Gary Kruger



the death of painting. It is not about a death which was announced from the outside, but, rather, *from within*: from the painters themselves. We are dealing more precisely with what could be called *the suicide of art*. The death of painting that the painters themselves called for, took place in three steps which can be described through the triangle of Van Gogh-Malevich-Duchamp: from making colors absolute to the self-dissolution of painting.

Van Gogh and his famous proclamation "the painter of the future will be a painter of colors" can stand for making colors absolute (dispensing with local colors that represented the colors of objects). When colors were no longer obliged to represent objects, then, in a next step, the painting was not obliged to represent objects at all. The painting became a flat screen for colors, even for only one color. Kasimir Malevich's declaration of the end of painting, of painting as a "prejudice of the past," in his famous picture *White Square on White Ground* (1918), set a date for the end of color painting and the beginning of non-representational (object-less) painting. Duchamp actually scoffed at painting as mere retinal stimulation and gave it up completely by introducing artworks that were objects not produced by the artists: the ready-mades.

This *internal* death of painting as the beginning of the end of art is not the same as the death of painting proclaimed at the advent of photography. Flaubert in his *Dictionnaire des idées reçues* had already denounced as commonplace the view that photography "détrônera la peinture."²⁰ Naturally, it is evident that the paradigm of photography, which has reigned for more than 150 years, produced a crisis of representation for painting in more radical terms than ever before. It is also evident that this crisis led to the end of art in its historical form. We can refer to this epoch, this period, this ensemble of strategies that tried to cope with the crisis of representation under the paradigm of photography as *modern art*. The method of modern art's dealing with the crisis followed in the tradition of iconoclasm.

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This process of self-dissolution follows that dialectic of the modern era, which can be explained in three steps: first, how paint as a medium of painting can be analyzed and given new emphatic accents, i.e., in impressionism; second, how paint becomes independent, leaves behind the laws of local colors and receives its own absolute status, i.e., from Symbolism to Suprematism; and third, how paint as a material (Faktura) is replaced by other materials such as aluminum for white.

The Emancipation of Color

The dethroning of the object was brought about by pure colors becoming independent. The colors' becoming absolute formed the first non-classical, anti-objective transformation of the Cartesian coordinate system of panel painting. In place of the object, the historical point of reference, color was put in as the new reference point.

Because color was considered the source of painting until Malevich, and Kandinsky could still not imagine painting without color in 1938, it was possible to say that painting without color is not painting. "We will never have the possibility of creating a picture without 'the color' and without 'the drawing'," Kandinsky wrote about concrete art in 1938. Kandinsky was not right. We could not only make pictures, but even paintings without color and without paint. Historical painting, as painting identical to color, bade adieu with the elimination of color in the picture.

The dissolution of the representative responsibility of painting and the crisis of representation in art already began as early as the nineteenth century with the shedding of certain artistic pictorial strategies such as perspective and the attempts at primacy or liberation of individual constitutive elements of painting such as light, color, and surface in what was still representative painting. The liberation of color and light were certainly the most spectacular and dramatic moments in the nineteenth century's freeing of the picture from the dictates of

²⁰ After he investigated photography commissioned by the French Academy for Daguerrian photography, Paul Delaroche announced painting's death in 1839: "From this day on, painting is dead." This proclamation was only an echo of the thesis which had already been expressed in 1622 by Constantijn Huygens on the occasion of the camera obscura and its mimetic perfection: "Toute peinture est morte."

representation. Making colors absolute worked as a motor to decisively push forth the abstraction of painting and most powerfully repeal the dictate of the object from painting.

In 1874, in the studio of the photographer Nadar, Claude Monet exhibited his picture *Impression d'un soleil levant* which gave a name to the new art movement. Through the dismantling of light, the natural phenomenon is presented as a play of colors according to subjective feeling. Impressionism discovered the independent status of colors and through that, local color lost importance. To the same degree, also *the object lost importance*. Monet repeatedly painted well-known variations of the same motif. Painting was positioned more prominently than the motif, color more prominently than the object. Color's breaking free from local color – obliged to the representation of an object – to an autonomous color based on its own laws, representing only itself, also meant the independence of the image as compared to the reproduction of visible nature. It is color that transforms a reproduction into an image. Since the Impressionists, the image as pure color image has tended to no longer need a concrete cause. For the first time, the autonomous colors make the image independent of the object. Using a haystack picture from Claude Monet, Kandinsky quite beautifully described how the splendor of colors displaced the objects:

"At the same time (1895) I experienced two events which were to mark my entire life and at the time shook me to the core. That was the French exhibition in Moscow – primarily the *Haystack* from Claude Monet. Previously I only knew realistic art ... and suddenly for the first time I saw a picture. It was the catalog that told me that that was a haystack. I numbly felt that the object was missing in this picture. Painting received a fabulous power and magnificence. Unconsciously, the object was also discredited as the inevitable element of the picture."²¹

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The painterly strategy of Impressionism suppresses the characteristics of the objects and the reference to the objects. "Color interaction consumes object distinction," wrote Max Imdahl in *Farbe* (Color), his 1987 epochal study.²²

The more that colors turned away from the object and the more they became self-referential and became color as color (and did not remain object color or local color), the more they discredited the object. This autonomy of color ("la couleur pour la couleur") also celebrated the pure brush stroke. Thus the independent spot, the stroke, became visible. The term *tache* (spot, stroke) first appeared in the critique of the impressionist paintings. Later, making it absolute, the term would nourish an entire movement, Tachism. The impressionist pictures were accused of not having any objects or persons, only "taches."²³ Maurice Denis painted a picture in 1890 with the title, *Taches de soleil sur la terrasse*. This surfacing of new painterly features and criteria were typically felt as a loss since the old features did, in fact, actually disappear.²⁴

Painters tirelessly preached the abstraction of color from the object. For instance, Vincent van Gogh:

"I am thoroughly occupied by the laws of color – if only they had been taught to us in our youth! That the laws of color, which Delacroix first determined are of light is utterly clear. The true painters are those who do not make local colors, that was what Ch. Blanc and Delacroix talked over one day. ...

The painter of the future will be a colorist, the likes of which has never been seen."

Painting, as it now is, promises to become more subtle, more music and less sculpture, finally, it promises color; if only it fulfils this promise, of bringing forth a color which is tied with feelings like music with arousal.²⁵

"La couleur pure! Et il faut tout lui sacrifier," Gauguin answers the poet Gauthier. Above all, the object was sacrificed

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Max Imdahl, *Farbe. Kunsttheoretische Reflexionen in Frankreich*, Fink, Munich, 1987.

²¹ Refers to the picture *Boulevard des Capucines* (1873) by Claude Monet, which was not only painted from specific formal elements of photography of the time, but was even painted from the studio of the photographer Nadar, where, incidentally, the first impressionist exhibition took place, the critic Louis Leroy wrote that the people on the boulevard were mere "taches."

²² Even Théophile Gautier criticized: "L'art vit de sacrifice [...] mais supprimer tout est trop. Se borner à poser des taches, comme on dit aujourd'hui [...] c'est vraiment trop simplifier la mission de l'artiste." (in Max Imdahl, op. cit., p. 23.) The investigation of color by Michel Eugène Chevreul *De la loi du contraste simultanée des couleurs*, published in 1839, greatly influenced the French painters of the nineteenth century and brought in new terms: retina, light, and simultaneous contrast.

²³ Maurice Denis, *Nouvelles Théories sur l'Art Moderne sur l'Art Sacré 1914-1921*, quoted after *Vom Licht zur Farbe: nachimpressionistische Malerei zwischen 1886 und 1912*, exhib. cat. Städtische Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, 1977, p. 37.

²⁴ Wassily Kandinsky, *Reminiscences*, 1913, in *Kandinsky - Complete Writings on Art*, Kenneth C. Lindsay and Peter Vergo (eds), Faber & Faber, London, 1982, vol. 1, p. 363.

for color. Gauguin thus stated in another context: "Do not work after nature. Art is abstraction."²⁶

Seurat defines painting as a synthesis of "phénomènes de la durée de l'impression lumineuse sur la rétine."²⁷ This definition of painting as a retinal experience later inspired Duchamp to attack painting as pure retinal stimulus.

According to Maurice Denis, "[i]t is not the rendered object which should be the artist's expression, but, rather, the means of expression (lines, forms, volumes, colors). The picture is again – according to my definition from 1890 – a surface with a color arrangement according to a certain principle."²⁸

Subsequently, the material means of expression such as frames and canvases were also thematized. In the end, not only the frames of pictures but even the institutional framework conditions of art came to be absorbed by the field of expression. In the twentieth century the analysis of the means of art progressively replaced the rendered, represented object as a medium of expression. *The analysis of the means of representation became the object of representation* thus proving modern art as an iconoclast activity from a historical point of view and thus defying any definition of modern art as being either iconoclast or iconophile (see Gamboni) from the point of view of this exhibition.

Similar to the literature of the modern era, the analysis of the world was accompanied and replaced by an analysis of the means implemented for an analysis of the world. In the modern era, painters and writers increasingly analyzed and represented the conditions of representation itself. In a type of laboratory situation, the critique and crisis of representation became the medium of representation in modern art. With that, art merely followed the logic of the path of color abstraction that it had already taken in the nineteenth century. This path was not taken entirely voluntarily, but, rather, accelerated under the historical conditions of the paradigm of photo-

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²⁶ Quoted after, Walter Hess, *Dokumente zum Verständnis der modernen Malerei*, Rowohlt, Hamburg, 1956, p. 31.

²⁷ Georges Seurat, Letter of 28 August 1890 to Maurice de Beaubourg, in *Klassiker der Kunst*, Luzern, Stuttgart, and Vienna, 1972, p. 90.

²⁸ Initial publication under the pseudonym Pierre Louis in *Art et Critique*, 23 August 1890. Reprinted in Linda Nochlin, *Impressionism and Post-Impressionism 1874-1904: Sources and Documents*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, 1966, p. 187.

graphy. Thus, another interpretation of the same history is possible (see Lowe): far from showing a distance to objects and a search for purity, the painters, on the contrary, show an ever more attentive interest in the mediations of the painting medium itself. Although iconoclasts in one sense, the same painters can be read as iconophiles in another, since they remain passionately attached to the transformative power of the mere medium.

Emancipation of Surfaces

The first transformation of the panel painting occurred when color, rather than object, became the reference point for painterly consideration. In a second transformation, color itself was seen in reference to the surface. The object was sacrificed to color and thus color needed a new point of reference. The surface became the new field of reference for color.

In 1929, Henri Matisse described in retrospect the development of color and surface:

"Then one also comes across Gauguin and van Gogh. Here are original ideas: construction with color surfaces. Looking for the most effective color affects – the material is irrelevant. Revolt against the spread of a local color in light. The light is not suppressed, but finds itself in harmony with luminous color surfaces."²⁹

The construction of an autonomous surface through the pure means of color replaced reproduction of the world. The ability to construct the image, the construction of the image as surface, had already begun with the discovery of perspective in the Renaissance. With the identification of the image as a pure color surface, which repealed the obligation of objective presentation, the picture's task of representing the world was relinquished.

The actual radical subversive function of the colors, which had become independent and absolute, was not so

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²⁹ Quoted in: *Vom Licht zur Farbe*, op. cit., p. 59.

much the expulsion of the object from the image, but the simultaneous banning of the form and the retreat to the surface. That formed the actual explosive material for the painting of the twentieth century and the exit from the canvas. The end of painting was achieved to a certain extent through this non-objective painting, where color is simultaneously form, surface, and content. *With the loss of the object, painting was also lost from historical sight.* The image as pure color surface became an object itself, *an image object*.³⁰

The abstraction of color from the object, which led to the dispensing of the object from the image and to non-objective, abstract painting forms the first step of abstraction. Banning the object from the image resulted in two things: first of all, the surface became a new field of reference for color, and second, with the object and with the limitation of the color design to the surface, the form derived from the object was relinquished. In this second step of the self-dissolution of painting, the abstract formal language of geometry came into contact with the abstracted (locally foreign) color, to create non-objective abstract images with geometric forms. Soon, however, surface and form became more important than color. Mainly, the materiality of color ("Faktura") and surface became more important than color. In a recent accent shift, not only the historical elements of painting such as the object were completely omitted, but also the central elements such as color and form. Through recourse of pure color to pure surface, the image would soon become pure surface design without color. Following the total absoluteness of color was the total absoluteness of surface. The monochrome image announced its arrival. Dispensing the color from the image, for example in the monochromes of Rodchenko or the achromatic paintings of Manzoni, forms the third step of abstraction, which brought painting *even closer to the border of its elimination*. Monochrome paintings could only be colored at the edges. Surface design without painted color allowed making paintings without paint and color, allowed

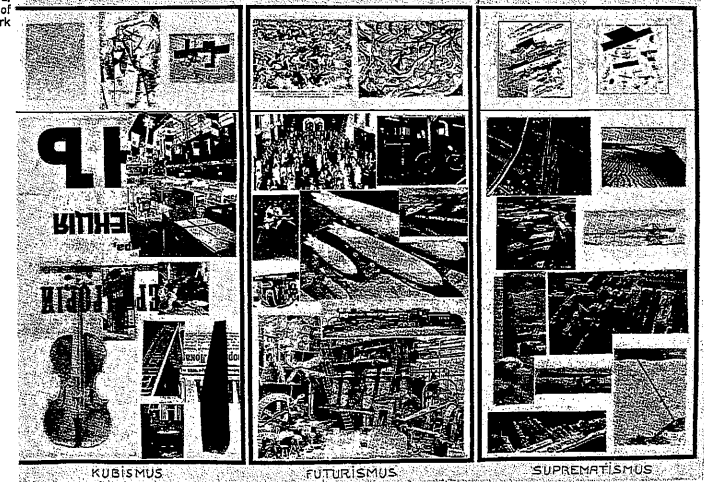
mere surfaces of wood, metal, marble, or cardboard to hang or lean on the wall as paintings. The paint-less or monochrome easel-painting could be cut or drilled or torn, attacked by fire or acid. Finally only the empty frames of paintings, or just the backs of paintings would be shown. Even the surface of the canvas could be replaced by the surface of the skin. Monochrome painting on the body followed the exit of the canvas. Naked bodies covered with paint covered the canvas. Painting as the arena of action (Action Painting) became a bodily action on the canvas and finally a painting on the body, an action without canvas. Centered on the artist's body, even the products of this body (like feces) could find the social consensus to be accepted as artworks. Naturally there was a period when a social consensus was not found. The iconoclastic impulse of modern art (the progressive version of iconoclasm) provoked an iconoclastic impulse against modern art (the conservative version of iconoclasm). In the totalitarian systems of Stalin and Hitler, the war against the image and against representation of modern art was answered by terror against modern art in favor of the image and representation. The rhetoric of liberation, one of the basic axioms of modern art, could be founded on this attempt at its annihilation by totalitarian systems. Again we see ideological reasons for the war between iconoclasts and iconophiles.

Will the Last Painter Please Turn off the Light When Leaving Art?

There are still several steps from the non-objective world to the colorless world. Malevich's Suprematism redeemed true non-objectivity (*Black Square on White Ground*, c. 1915), which was followed quite shortly by the state of non-color (*White Square on White Ground*, 1918) (see Lowe). Suprematism, like all other painting theories of the time, naturally saw the origins of painting in color, but Malevich, in his struggle against the object, also attacked as enemy the new deputy of

³⁰ Delaunay already perceived that the pure color surface forms the transition from "the deformation of the retinal reproduction" (Cézanne) to the first laws, which would transform the entire structure of the image—where the image appeared as itself, as "image object." (Delaunay, 1923-24).

Kasimir Malevich / Analytical chart / c. 1925 / cut-and-pasted photomechanical reproductions, printed papers, pencil drawings on paper and transparent paper, gelatine-silver prints, wood, and ink on paper / 25 x 32.5" / The Museum of Modern Art, New York

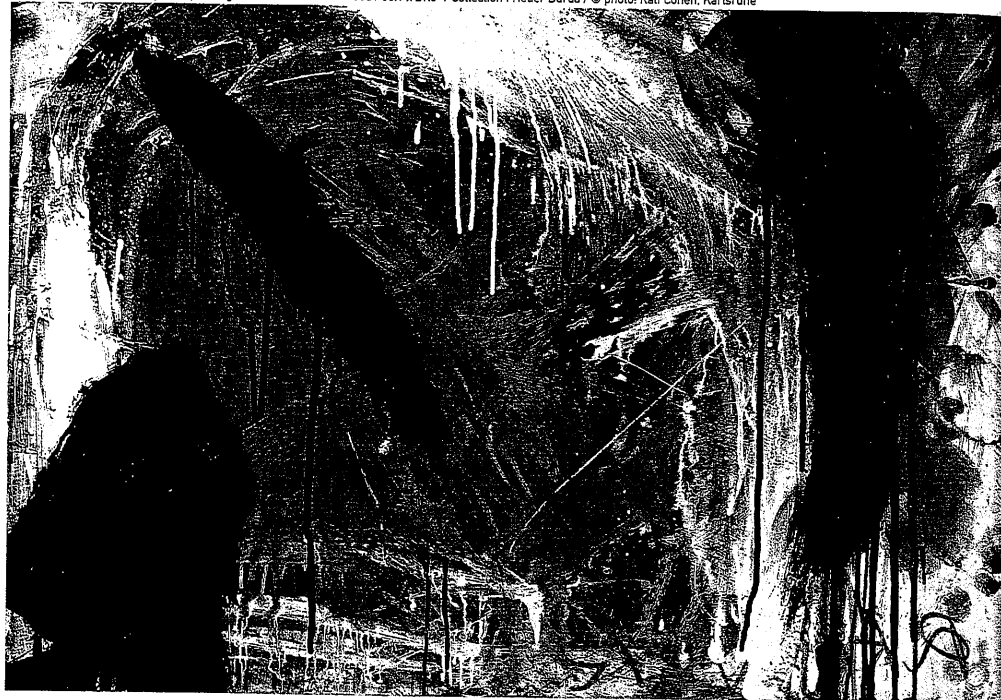


the object: color. His first suprematist image thus consists of the non-colors black and white and his second important image consists of only white. Malevich equates non-objectivity with non-color (white): the "white world of suprematist non-objectivity." Thus, for Malevich, non-objectivity also secretly meant non-color. "Suprematism as a non-objective, white equivalent" landed in the "desert ... in nothing, in non-objectivity."³¹ On 17 December 1915, these works were presented for the first time in St. Petersburg in the "last futurist exhibition 0.10." The exhibition's title was *Zero Ten*, because ten artists showed zero forms of pictures, hence the word "last" in the description: these were last pictures. *One could apparently go no further than to reduce painting to these basic forms and colors.*

The (geometric) forms and colors, reduced practically to non-entities, created nonentity pictures, zero pictures. That is also where the name "zero movement" came from about fifty years later. This object of the zero zone was still capable of intensification. In 1918, Malevich created his picture *White Square on White Background*. That same year Rodchenko painted *Black on Black*. Both were shown at the 1919 exhibition *10. Staatliche Kunstausstellung*. The difference between the color form and color surface had been wiped out or was hardly noticeable. One single color dominated the field. The color zone and the image zone, color field and image field became identical. A monochrome color field came into existence. White on white or black on black meant the final non-object and non-color as a common fate. Non-objectivity

³¹ The monochrome white or black pictures in the 1950s and 1960s from Fontana, Manzoni, and the zero movement (Reinhardt, Ryman, Rauschenberg, etc.), follow Malevich into his colorless, objectless world. Malevich uses only three basic forms (square, circle, cross) and three basic colors (black, white, red) in his work.

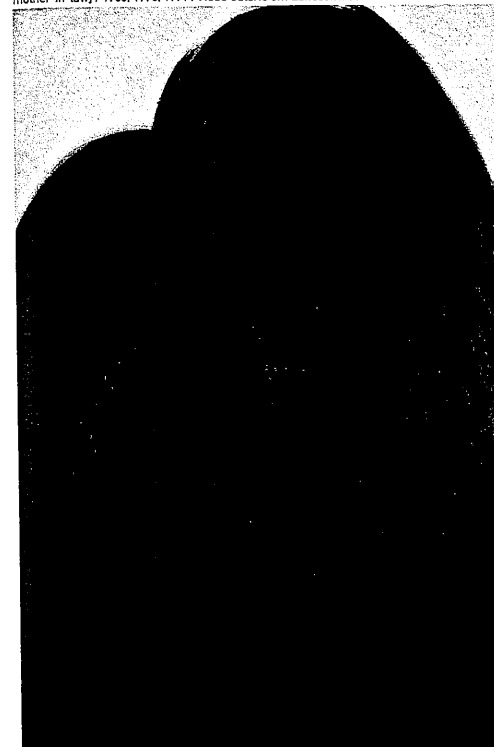
Arnulf Rainer / Übermalung [Overpainting] / 1984-1988 / oil on wood / 30.1 x 21.3" / Collection Frieder Burda / © photo: Ralf Cohen, Karlsruhe



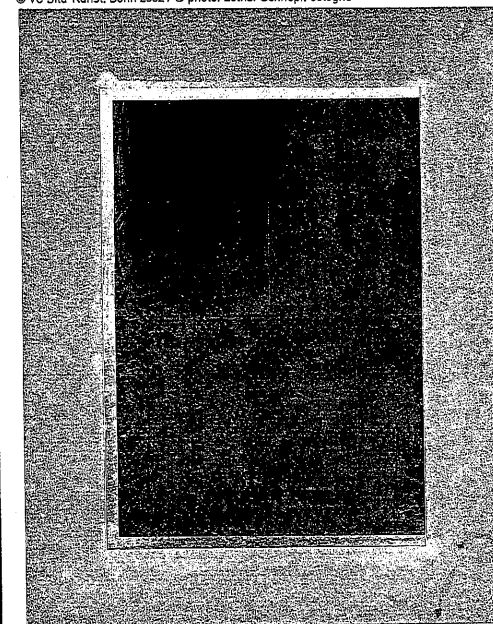
Wolf Vostell / Mozart Partitur [Mozart score] / 1982 / piano minuet, ink, paint / 29.5 x 7.5" / Collection Feilisch, Remscheid / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002 / © photo: Studio Müller & Schmitz, Remscheid, Collection Feilisch, archive



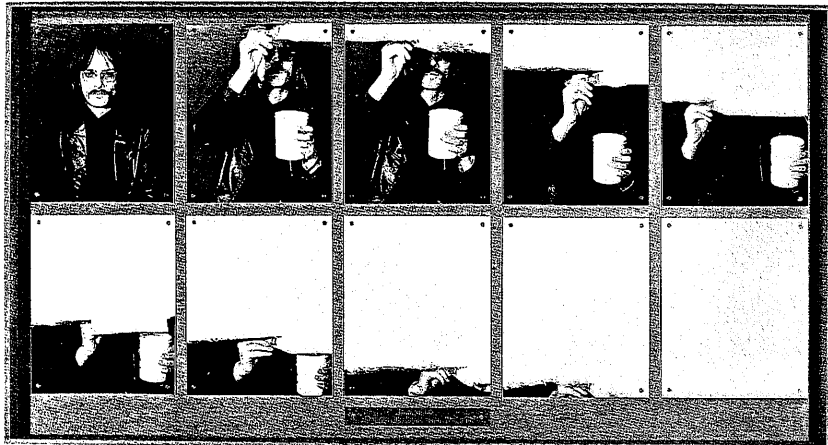
Arnulf Rainer / Übermaltes Schwiegermuttermonument [Overpainted monument to a mother-in-law] / 1960, 1970, 1971 / Neue Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz



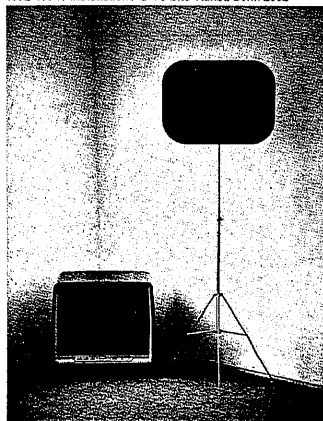
Joseph Beuys / Cosmas und Damian [Cosmas and Damian] / 13.7 x 17.5" / photos on cardboard, silver-bronze, brown oil paint / Collection Speck, Cologne / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002 / © photo: Lothar Schnepf, Cologne



Timm Ulrichs / Selbstauflösung durch Malerei [Self dissolution through painting] / 1973-1976 / heavy paint-overpainting of a sheet of glass as a sequence in 10 photos laminated onto cardboard / each 11.8 x 9.4" / wooden frame painted grey / 28.8 x 52.8 x 1.9" / with engraved aluminum title-sign / Staatsgalerie Stuttgart / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002 / © photo: Foto-Hoerner, Hannover



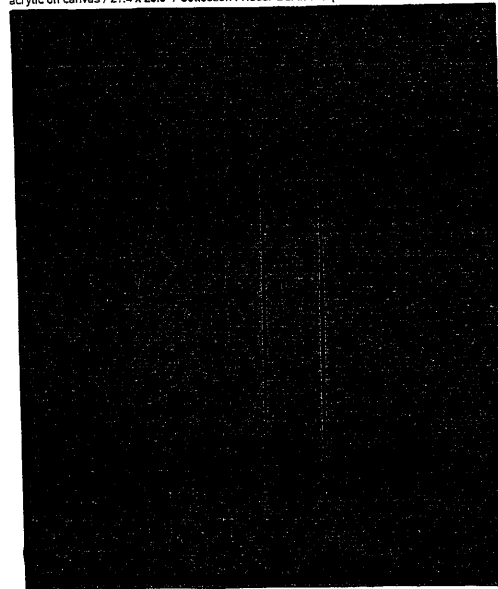
Reiner Ruthenbeck / Objekt zur teilweisen Verdeckung einer Video-Szene [Object to partially cover a video scene] / 1972-1974 / installation / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002



Reiner Ruthenbeck / Objekt zur teilweisen Verdeckung einer Video-Szene [Object to partially cover a video scene] / 1972-1974 / stills from the video / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002



Lucio Fontana / Concetto spaziale, ATTESTE «Questa mattina mi sono ... ed mal di denti» [spatial concept, sentence «this morning I ... and had a toothache»] / c. 1967 / acrylic on canvas / 21.4 x 25.6" / Collection Frieder Burda / © photo: Ralf Cohen, Karlsruhe



Alberto Burri / Combustione [Combustion] / 1963 / plastic and combustion / 78.3 x 97.6" / collection Alberto Burri



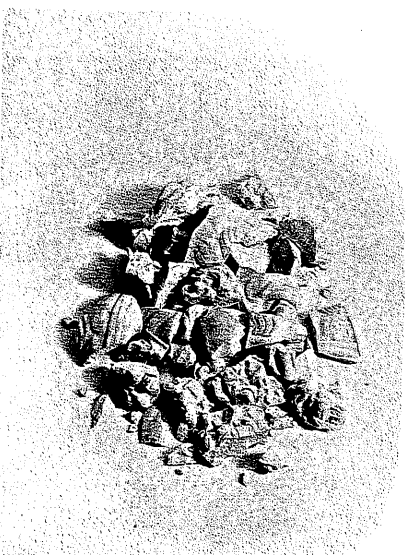
Alberto Burri in atelier / 1960 /

Gustav Metzger / South Bank Demonstration, London 1961 / reconstruction Los Angeles 1998 / © photo: Francesco Conz



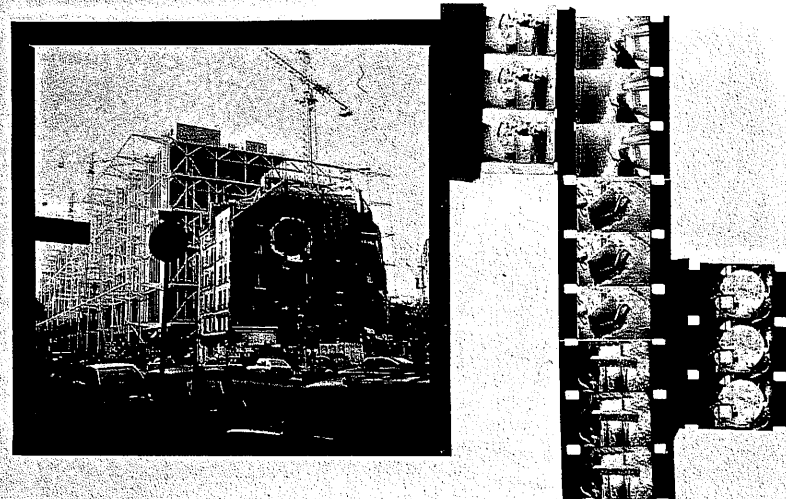
[illegible]

Raymond Hains / Palissade de
trois planches [Fence with three
planks] / 1959 / Poster fragments
on original boards of a fence /
39.4 x 25.2 x 0.8" / Museum
moderner Kunst Wien, Vienna,
former Hahn Collection /
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002



Giulio Paolini / Proteo I / 1971 /
fragments of a plaster bust /
3.9 x 7.9 x 3.9" /
Kunstsammlungen zu Weimar.
Neues Museum, Weimar

Gordon Matta-Clark / Conical Intersect / 1975 / cibachrome / 30 x 40" / David Zwirner, New York / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002



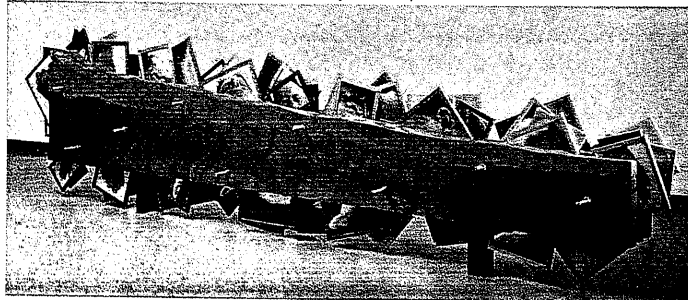
Gordon Matta-Clark / Conical Intersect / 1978 / three color prints / each 16 x 20" / detail (one print) / David Zwirner, New York / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002



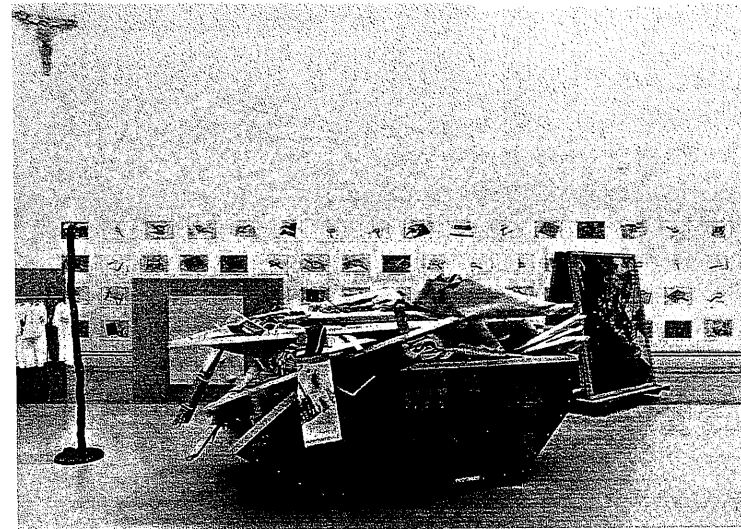
Cerith Wyn Evans / Allen Jones Pirelli Calendar / 1973 (penetrated 1999) / 12 works in frames / 15.7 x 22.8" / Galerie Daniel Buchholz, Cologne



Ger van Elk / Pressure Sandwich Sculpture II / 1990 / Art & Project, Slootdorp

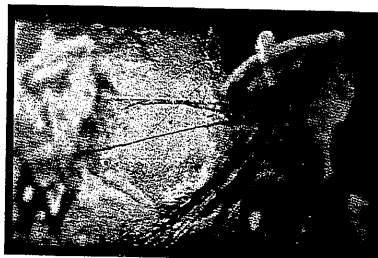


Martin Kippenberger / Untitled (Container) / 1991 / Installation view San Francisco Museum of Art, S.F. / from: Ulrike Lehmann and Peter Weibel (ed.), Ästhetik der Absenz, Klinkhardt & Biermann, Munich and Berlin, 1994



Martin Kippenberger / Zerschnittenes Acryl-Bild (Sliced acrylic picture) / 1991 / oil on canvas / part of a 188.1 x 118.1" picture, photograph that was slit apart at the Kölischer Kunstverein / 20 x 15.4" / Collection Speck, Cologne / © photo: Lothar Schnepf, Cologne





Rudolf Herz / Dachau.
Museumsbilder 1975-1996, Nr. 1-4 /
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002

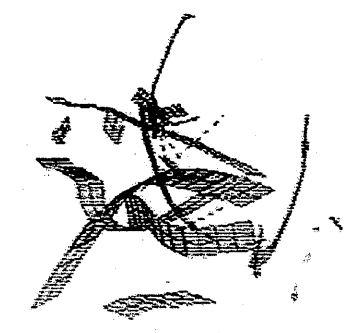
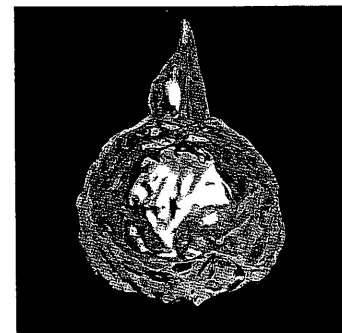
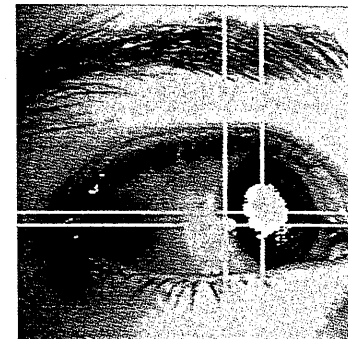
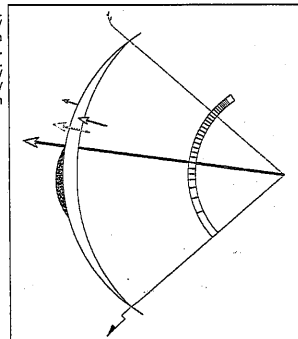


Richard Azzel, Robert Koch, Márton
Férenszelyi, and Zoltán Szegedy-Masák /
ExAltarcation / 2002 / multi media
installation / 394 x 394" / detail, stills

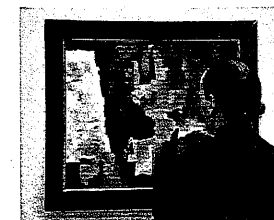
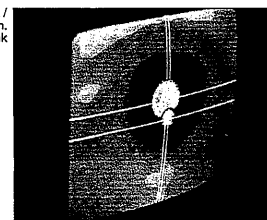


This interactive installation explores the moment of iconoclasm within the image itself. Instead of positing an observer who defaces the world of the observed, it figures the icon as an interface, a breach, a fold, between two interdependent worlds of seeing and being seen. The icon-as-interface is not an object found or made, but an event that actively generates the worlds it connects. It is the breaking, the folding, that brings these worlds together and holds them apart. It is the axis of a conversation, turning to and through the other in a dialogue of interproductive gazes. The installation space is conceived as an altar where the movements of the visitor alter (break and remake) the images encountered and even the installation space itself. Entering the installation, the visitor picks up a wireless tracking device that can function both as a creative tool and as a destructive weapon. (<http://www.c3.hu/~szmz/exaltarcation/dccs/exaltarcation.htm>)

Axel Roch / «J'voyure en surveil» - Pour Petit a.
[«J'voyeur and surveil» - for little a.] / 2002 /
interactive installation / linux based PC with
AMD - 2 GHz and GeForce3, eye/gaze-tracking system.
Infrared 50 Hz, polystyrol and reflective object,
mirror, data-projector XGA / 197x 138 x 236" /
sound: Olaf Geuer / 3d-rendering: Jordi Moragues
© Axel Roch



Joachim Sauter and Dirk Lüsebrink /
Zerseher [The De-Viewer] / installation,
DVD / Joachim Sauter, Dirk Lüsebrink



Lucio Fontana / Concetto spaziale I Attesa / 1960 / mixed media on canvas / 51.4 x 38.2" / Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven



Günter Brus / Der helle Wahnsinn (Selbstverletzung) [Sheer madness (self-inflicted injury)] / Aachen, 1968 / from: Peter Weibel (ed.), Wien, Bildkompendium Wiener Aktionismus und Film, Kohlkunstverlag, Frankfurt/M., 1970, p. 62



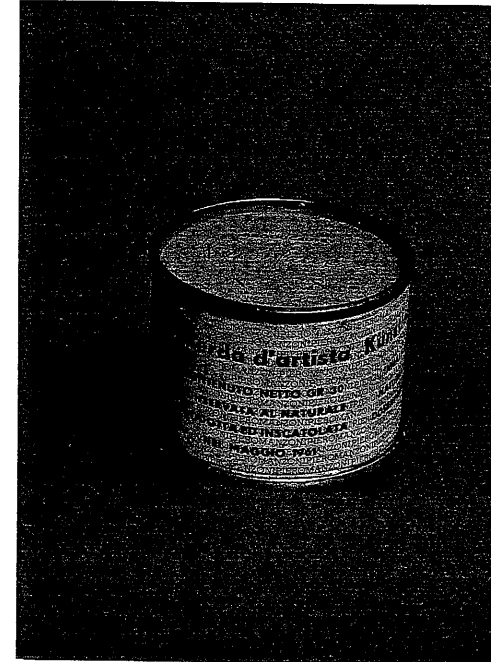
Günter Brus / Selbstbemalung [Self-painting] / 1964 / from: Peter Weibel (ed.), Wien, Bildkompendium Wiener Aktionismus und Film, Kohlkunstverlag, Frankfurt/M., 1970, p. 56



Günter Brus / Wiener Spaziergang [Vienna promenade] / police sentence: »in that they were painted over with white paint« / 1965 / from: Peter Weibel (ed.), Wien, Bildkompendium Wiener Aktionismus und Film, Kohlkunstverlag, Frankfurt/M., 1970, p. 58



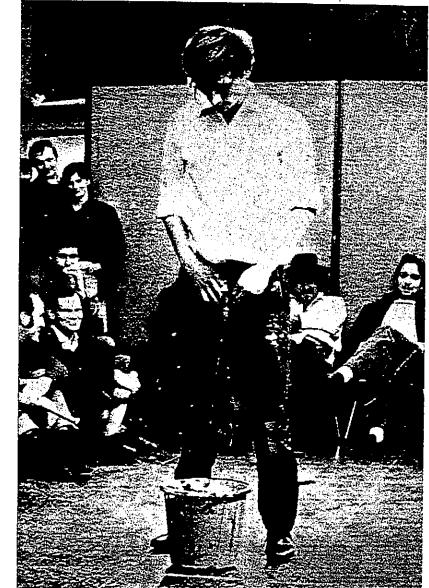
Piero Manzoni / Merda d'artista 078 / 1961 / metal can / height 1.89", diameter 2.55" / Archivio Opera Piero Manzoni, Milan / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002 / © photo: Grazia Bacchi, Milan



Günter Brus / Der helle Wahnsinn (Exkretion) [Sheer madness (Exkretion)] / Aachen, 1968 / from: Peter Weibel (ed.), Wien, Bildkompendium Wiener Aktionismus und Film, Kohlkunstverlag, Frankfurt/M., 1970, p. 62



Günter Brus / Der helle Wahnsinn (urinieren) [Sheer madness (to urinate)] / Aachen, 1968 / from: Peter Weibel (ed.), Wien, Bildkompendium Wiener Aktionismus und Film, Kohlkunstverlag, Frankfurt/M., 1970, p. 63



demonstrated the fate of the absolute color, which had originally expelled the object: the expulsion of color itself. This also induced the end of painting that had stood under the primacy of color.

With his book *Suprematism: 34 Drawings*, originally published in 1920, Malevich, gave painting the ultimate death-blow. To him, painting had reached its nadir and had set out on a "lonely path." The "suprematist machine," a new satellite, was to replace painting. Yet, the critical point was that Malevich not only expelled the object from painting, but in a radical consistency expelled the color as well: *White on White* (1918).

In response to the question of what a suprematist canvas was and what there was to see on it, Malevich answered:

"A suprematist canvas is a representation of white – but not blue – space. The reason for this is clear: blue does not provide an actual representation of the infinite. Infinite suprematist white enables the shaft of vision to advance without meeting a boundary."

White, as the representation of infinity, dissolves the objective world, but also all of the local and absolute colors. The path is revealed from the white painting all the way to and over the white wall to the white cube of the gallery. The world of white extinguishes all colors and apparently also painting altogether. The non-objective world of white is the desert in which painting is dying. "There can be no question of a place for painting in Suprematism. Painting has long since been overcome, and the painter himself is no more than a prejudice of the past." (Malevich, 1920). Painting dies as a "prejudice of the past," under the dictates of color, first expelling the object and then the form and finally itself.

In 1920, Constantin Umanski published *New Art in Russia* 1914-19, in which he wrote that Suprematism is a "consistent spatial painting ... [and is] searching for the zero

degree in art." This dates the beginning, eighty years ago, of the rhetoric about the last painting, the zero degree in art, defined by a rejection of any traditional means of artistic expression.³² Not only painting was annulled, but with it representation, and finally, art itself. At the end of the color painting, which Van Gogh had so enthusiastically desired could be heard the battle cry for "No more representation."

In 1921, in the exhibition $5 \times 5 = 25$, Rodchenko showed for the first time images which Nicolaj Tarabukin called the "last pictures" of art history or "the painter's suicide" and the "end of painting." These Faktura images radically broke with the habits of traditional and modern color images. The term faktura (form, fabric or texture), describing a Russian concept of a culture of materials, was first introduced in 1914 by Vladimir Markov (nom de plume for V. Matyeff) in his book of the same title. With "Faktura" the author examines the substance of the surface as an essential part of its texture and material properties.³³ After his paintings of 1918, (*Black on Black*), Rodchenko put an end to his period of Faktura images, which only consisted of color and surface, lacking any sort of geometry or form; the first monochrome paintings of art history in the primary colors red, yellow, and blue emerged. The end of color painting became reality. In 1939, Rodchenko wrote about these three paintings from 1921:

"I have brought painting to its logical end and have shown three paintings: one red, one blue and one yellow. I have done this in the knowledge that: everything is over. These are the primary colors. Each surface is a mere surface and there shall be no more representation. Each surface is filled to the border with one singular color."³⁴

The slogan "No more representation" (Rodchenko) or the rejection of the representative function killed the object and created pure color for the sake of pure color. In taking color

as the sole theme of the surface, not only the boundaries of the surface, but also of painting had been reached.³⁵

This spell on representation, radically dictated by Rodchenko, is answered by Rodchenko in a materialist way, offering us the pure materiality of color, the "Faktura." Thereafter, he left painting completely and started to work exclusively with photography. But then he left art altogether and aimed to produce something that has a use value for the masses and the workers in the sense of Marx. In 1925, Rodchenko moved beyond two-dimensional work to design a three-dimensional structure, a model workers' club. As his partner Stepanova wrote:

"The fundamental requirements to be met in each object for the workers' club:

- 1) Economy in the use of the floor-area of the club-room and of the space occupied by an object with maximum utility.
- 2) Simplicity of use and standardization of the object; it must be possible to increase the size or the number of its component parts."³⁶

Rodchenko's interest in the material aspects of art had already led him as early as 1918 to produce special constructions. This material-based approach, focussing on the object and on technical experiments, led in 1921 to the formation of the First Working Group of Constructivists. With the constructivists began a new approach to end the crisis of representation and to find a useful solution for this crisis. Instead of representing things in a painting, the artists started to construct and produce the things. The production of useful things, whether furniture or photographs, replaced representation. The movement of the Productivists (Tatlin) followed the Constructivists. At a 1920 Dada exhibition in Berlin, John Heartfield and George Grosz unveiled a placard claiming: "Art is dead. Long live Tatlin's new machine art." Modern art is therefore not only iconoclastic, abolishing painting, image making, and

representation, but going so far in its iconoclasm to construct and produce objects (furniture, clothing, kitchenware, and houses). So modern art finds in itself a solution to the crisis of representation. This solution is not iconophilic, but anti-iconoclastic, because it does not stay within the limits of iconoclasm. So modern art is iconoclastic and at the same time, as a consequence of this iconoclasm, it propagates a non-iconoclastic solution to the iconoclastic fallacy and trap. This construction of useful things follows the practice of Brancusi (who already in 1914/15 produced benches) and anticipated the sculptural furniture of Artschwager and his followers in the 1980s: sculpture as object, object as furniture.

The Theme of "the End" in the Nineteenth Century

Rodchenko's refutation of representation – without the aspect of its material solution – can be seen as the end of a non-representational strategy which began in the nineteenth century.

In the nineteenth century, the void, the zero, the blank, the white were part of the aesthetic program as the following famous verses of Mallarmé celebrate: "La chair est triste, hélas! et j'ai lu tous les livres. Fuir! la-bas fuir!" Art is similar to a ship at sea that needs to be dismantled constantly (risking submersion), to ensure progress along its prescribed route. A cult of the void extends around the blank page of the nineteenth century, through to the sparseness of twentieth century art galleries, a cult of ultimate purity and perfection. Since the nineteenth century, an aesthetic of absence and a poetry of the void has emerged, flourishing to this day, with the topicalization of the blank page.³⁷ "The empty page defending its whiteness" (Mallarmé) stood at the beginning of the white painted canvas and the white cubic space of today's art gallery, "the white cube" as coined by Brian O'Doherty. Spleen, repulsion, silence, emptiness, the desert, holes,³⁸ empty souls accompany as "cri sincère et bizarre de la fin"³⁹ the poems of the French Symbolists (Baudelaire, Mallarmé,

³² The best explanation of the term "Faktura" in English is from Margit Rowell in her excellent article Vladimir Tatlin: Form/Faktura, in October, no 7, winter 1978, pp. 83-108.

³³ Alexandr Rodchenko, 1939, quoted in A. Moszynska, Purity and Belief. The Lure of Abstraction, in C. Joachimides and N. Rosenthal (ed.), The Age of Modernism: Art in the 20th Century, Gerd Hatje, Stuttgart, 1997, p. 204.

³⁴ Umanski then quite rightly lists the relevant successors to Malevich as: Olga Rozanova (who died tragically much too early in 1918), Ivan Kliun, Nikolai Punin, Rodchenko, and others.

³⁵ Quoted in Peter Noever (ed.), Aleksandr M. Rodchenko and Varvara F. Stepanova, R/d Zukunft ist unser einziges Ziel..., Prestel, Munich, 1991, p. 181.

³⁶ "On sterile desert of pain. My empty soul. Whither to flee? [...] The deep blue holes [...] here, the skies are dead." Stéphane Mallarmé, L'Azur, 1866, in Henry Mondor, Vie de Mallarmé, Gallimard, Paris, 1941, p. 105.

³⁷ Tarabukin wrote: "The last picture executed by a painter demonstrates eloquently that painting as an art of representation – which it has been always until now – has arrived at the end of the road." (Nicolaj Tarabukin, From the East to the Machine, Moscow, 1923, p. 64).

³⁸ For example, Peter Brook lectured on theater as "The Empty Space." Robert Hughes reviews James Turrell's light projections as "Poetry out of Empiricism," in Time Magazine, Los Angeles, 5 January 1981, vol. 117, no. 1, p. 81, also referring to Mark Rothko and Barnett Newman whose paintings had been censured as being "empty." / cf. Mair Ronnen reviewing James Turrell in Jerusalem Post Magazine, New York, 8 October 1982, p. 14: "Something out of Nothing." / Markus Bröderlin calls Gervald Rockenschau's art "The Nucleus of the Void." In Gervald Rockenschau, Verlag Munro-Verlagsg, Hamburg, September 1990. / Ernst Hermann's sculptures are reviewed in Kunstforum, vol. 105, January/February 1990, p. 222, as "The wide expanse of emptiness." / Brian O'Doherty's comprehensive elucidation "Inside the White Cube: Notes to the Gallery Space, Part Three: Contact as Contact" in Art Forum, New York, November 1976, has become paradigmatically significant. / In the magazine Der Spiegel, Hamburg, June 1991, p. 220, Jean Baudrillard sees himself as "the janitor of theoretical emptiness."

³⁹ Mallarmé in a letter on "L'Azur", in Mondor, op. cit., p. 105.

Rimbaud, Verlaine). The idea of the ultimate end has always been close relation to concepts of emptiness and purity.

Balzac's novel *The Unknown Masterpiece* describes the fate of purity and perfection as early as the mid-nineteenth century as ending in emptiness and void.⁴⁰ The painter Frenhofer confronts two of his pupils with a portrait *Catherine Lescault* on which he has been working for years.

"Aha," he exclaimed, "you didn't expect such perfection! You are facing a woman in the flesh, yet seeking a picture. Such is the depth on this canvas, so real its air that you cannot tell its difference from the air we breathe. Where is artifice, Art? 'Tis lost, gone!" "Can you see something?" Poussin turns questioningly to Porbus. "No. And you?" "Nothing, either."

Already in the nineteenth century, the vanishing of art was well articulated.

Painting and the Semiotic Rupture

In what initially came as a shock, the crisis of representation and the declared end of painting as a consequence of the prior emancipation of its specific elements (such as color, plane, and form), culminated in a tremendous liberation for the arts in the twentieth century. It had obviously been necessary for twentieth century art to rid itself of all the ballast of previous artistic conventions through a break with easel painting. Thus object art, media art, installation art, concept art, Happening, body art, action art, and performance art in all their infinite variety came into being. The "end of art" as already pronounced by Hegel, was instigated when a particular world order disintegrated, the order of things being replaced by the order of the sign through the Industrial Revolution. That semiological rupture⁴¹ could be said to consist of an existential denial we might describe as the crisis of representation.

41 40

— Michel Foucault, *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1977, p. 92.

— Michael Wetzels, *Verweisungen. Der semiologische Bruch im 19. Jahrhundert*, in Friedrich A. Kittler (ed.), *Arsenale der Seele. Literatur- und Medienanalyse seit 1870*, Fink Verlag, Munich, 1989, pp. 71-95.

— Inspired by E.T.A. Hoffmann's *Der Baron von B.* (1819), in E.T.A. Hoffmann, *Die Serapions-Brüder. Gesammelte Erzählungen und Märchen*, vol. 3, Insel Verlag, Frankfurt/M., 1983.

Under the pressures of the technological revolution we have been compelled to review our conceptions of the human mental and physical facilities and their corresponding dimensions in the imaginary, the symbolic, and the real. Particularly the transformation of the body and its exteriorization into technological media, and the transformation of matter into waves of energy and immaterial signals have transformed art. The options at our disposal are, on the one hand, the resistance to dematerialization and an insistence on the corporeal, or, on the other, the unraveling of linguistic construction and symbolic order in a concern with phenomena of immaterialization. All these options have been resoundingly celebrated in and orchestrated by painting.

But painting is only one type of image, one type of mediation, one type of representation. There are many others that have been subjected to the iconoclast's powerful hammer. Encountering the cult of emptiness as early as the nineteenth century, it becomes obvious that the Industrial Revolution through its "telemachines" (telegraph, telephone, television, and radar) had indeed beamed actual holes through space. Not only is the film strip perforated, but the whole of society. The assembly line of time produced a new synchronicity and a new simultaneity.

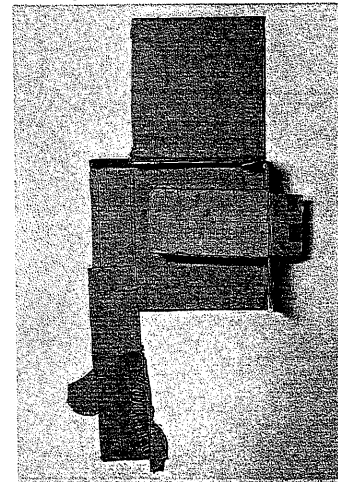
It is precisely the foundations of modern art and literature in their reasoned autonomy that made a point of their conditions of method, material, origin, and tradition: making art an object of art, which in itself threatens the very existence and autonomy of modern art. Michel Foucault writes: "Flaubert is to the library, what Manet is to the museum. They both produced works in a self-conscious relation to earlier paintings or texts – or rather to the aspect in painting that remains indefinitely open. They erect their art within the archive."⁴² Already at the very onset of modernism, triggered by the Industrial Revolution, the seed of its demise is sown. The examples of Mallarmé, Flaubert, Manet, and

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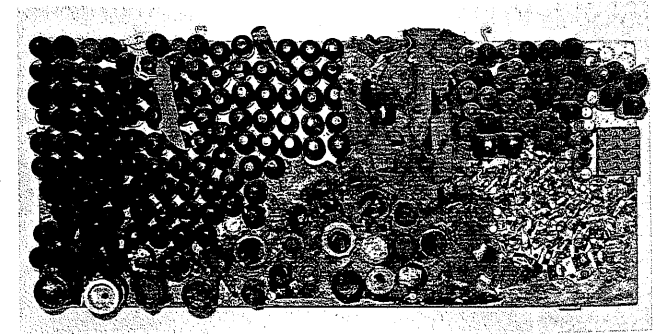
Arman / Poubelle / 1964 / plexiglas on wood panel / Collection Feilisch, Remscheid / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002



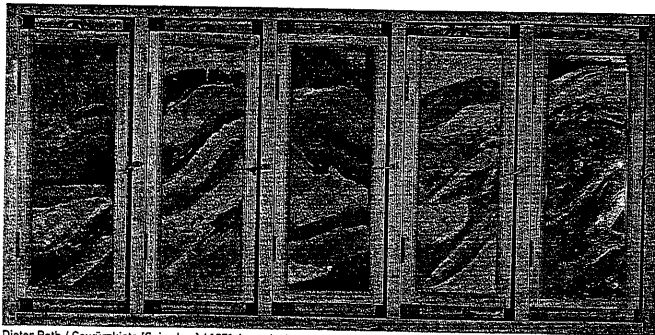
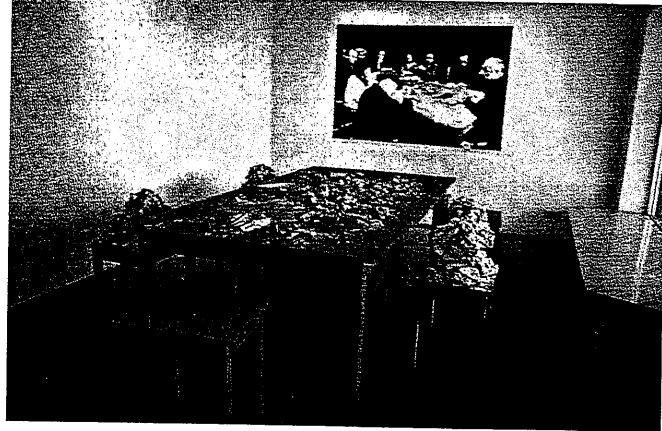
Robert Rauschenberg / Dairy Cage Open / 1971 / Collection Falckenberg, Hamburg / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002



Daniel Spoerri / Palette pour Grégoire Müller [Palette for Grégoire Müller] / 1992 / assemblage with color tube, empty turpentine bottles, cleaning rags, etc. on wood / 36.2 x 84.3 x 7.9" / ZKM | Center for Art and Media, Karlsruhe / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002



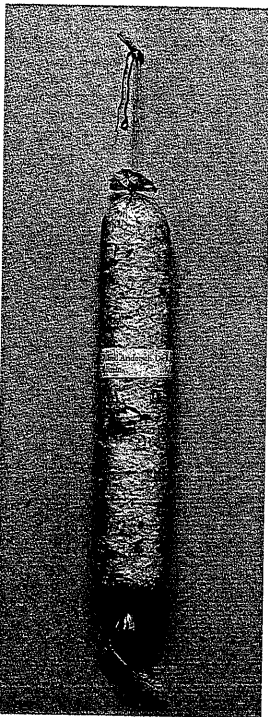
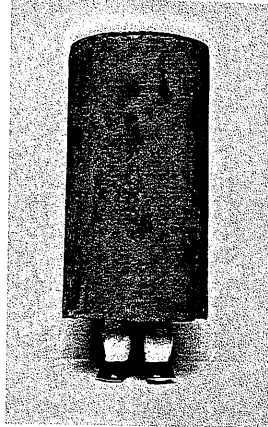
Huang Yong Ping / Devons-nous encore construire une grande cathédrale? [Do we have to built another cathedral?]/ 1991 / table, stools, photograph, black-and-white, torn up paper / dimensions variable / Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris



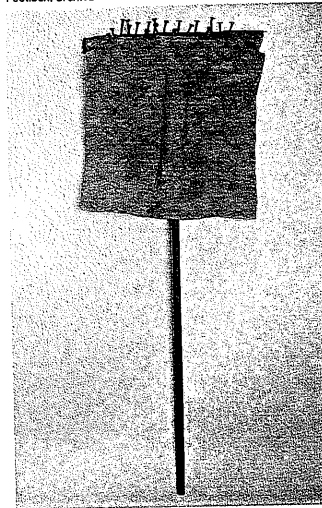
Dieter Roth / Gewürzkiste [Spice box] / 1971 / wood, glass, five spices in separate compartments / 61.8 x 30.7 x 2.8" / Neue Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz, Collection Ploil, Vienna / © photo: Kolnegg, Neue Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz

Dieter Roth / Literaturwurst / 1967 / torn novel «Die Rote» of Alfred Andersch, spices, gelatine, artificial intestine / 24.8 x 2.4" / weight 410 g / Collection Cramer in the Hamburger Kunsthalle

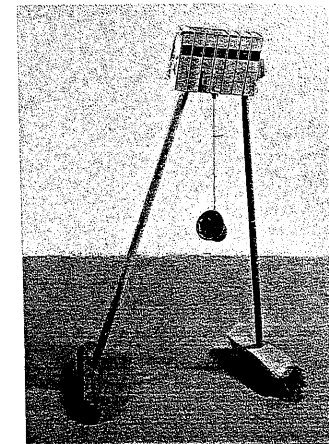
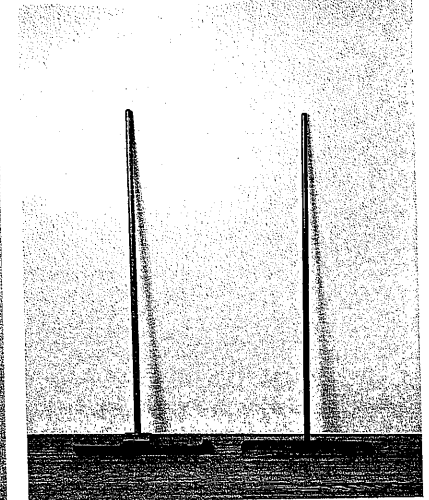
Dieter Roth / Untitled (doll in chocolate) / doll, milk chocolate / 4.7 x 11.8" / Collection Ploil, Vienna / © photo: Christof Hierholzer, Karlsruhe



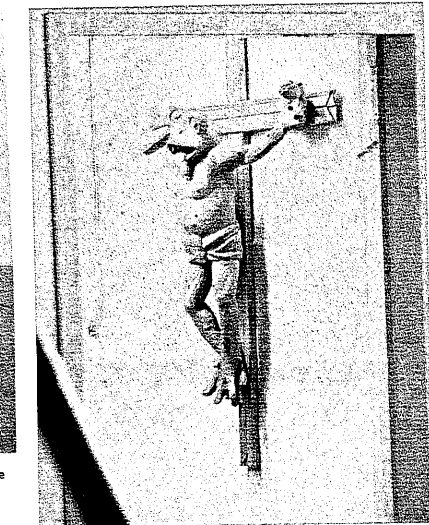
Günther Uecker / Die schöne Helena [The beautiful Helena] / 1982-1983 / broom, cleaning rag, nails from the Roman Age / 21.7 x 57.5 x 5.1" / Collection Feilisch, Remscheid / © photo: Studio Müller & Schmitz, Remscheid, Collection Feilisch, archive



Joseph Beuys / Silberbesen und Besen ohne Haare [Silver broom and a broom without bristles] / 1972 / wooden broom with silver sheath and copper broom, felt lining / 20.1 x 54.7" / 20.1 x 51.2" / Collection Froehlich, Stuttgart / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002 / © photo: Uwe H. Seyl, Stuttgart

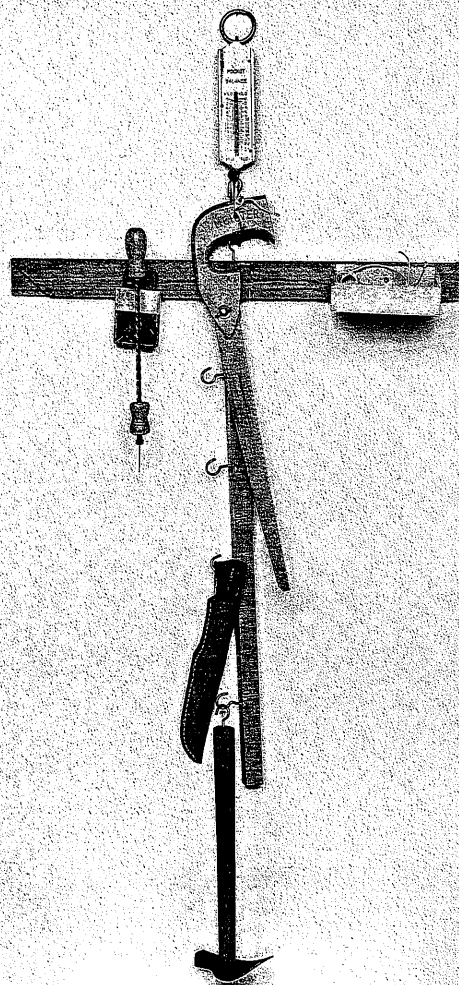


Georg Herold / Handke and Fusske / 1982 / books, two brooms, flowerpot / 46 x 31.5 x 16" / part of the installation «Deutschland komplett», 1998 / Collection Falckenberg, Hamburg / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002



Martin Kippenberger / Was ist der Unterschied zwischen Casanova und Jesus: Der Gesichtsausdruck beim Nageln [What is the difference between Casanova and Jesus: The facial expression while being nailed] / 1990 / wood / 49 x 39 x 7.5" / Collection Falckenberg, Hamburg

Robert Filliou / Tool cross / 1969 / tools / 19.7 x 43.3 x 4.7" / Collection Feelisch, Remscheid /
 © photo: Studio Müller & Schmitz, Remscheid, Collection Feelisch, archive



Malevich perform within this self-inflected curve of art, in this self-reflective discourse of art.

The crisis of representation, which produced abstract painting in the first half of the twentieth century, has produced the crisis of abstract painting in the second half of the twentieth century. In *The Crisis of the Easel Picture* (1948) Clement Greenberg wrote:

"... here in America it is practised by artists so various in their provenance and capacities as Mark Tobey, Jackson Pollock, the late Arnold Friedman, Rudolf Ray, Ralph Rosenberg, Janet Sobel. [...] What, at least, it does mean for the discipline of painting is that the future of the easel picture as the vehicle of ambitious art has become very problematical; for in using the easel picture as they do – and cannot help doing – these artists are destroying it."⁴³

The crisis of representation that produced the most significant signature of modern art, the abstract painting, in the end produced the crisis of the easel picture itself, which could be interpreted as an iconoclastic gesture. But inside the evolution of modern art, there have always been suspensions of these gestures, for example, Surrealism, which not only believed in the power of images to represent, its members even believed in the possibility to represent the unconscious by images. And yet another answer to the iconoclasm of modern art were the constructivists who wanted to produce useful things for the masses, or the Bauhaus for its tendency towards industrial design.

Mikhail R. Bakhtin's theory of an endless contextuality, freeing literary works from their formal limitations, opens the possibility of a new practice opposed to this closed self-reflective discourse of art.⁴⁴ According to Bakhtin, the origin of a text is only one link in a chain of possible transmissions of antecedent texts. Beheading the classic autonomy of text and author delivers the text into an endless space for interpre-

tation. The guillotine of modernity in its introspection as a self-demeaning process is lifted, and can actually be transformed into a flying-machine to escape from the labyrinth of self-reference. Bakhtin emphasizes interpretation as the origin of the text, which is equal to the creation of a text. Therefore, the reader is equal to the author, as later will be the case with the observer creating the artwork by interaction. The closed object and the closed text start to become an open practice. Applying Bakhtin's theory to painting would actually ensure the continuity of the last painting. The monochrome painter Marcia Hafif has expressed this quite vividly in her text *Beginning Again*:

"The notion that this was the last painting was not difficult to hold. And this greater consciousness could allow parody and the easy summation of painting, including the idea that it was actually possible for its relevance to have expired. Art could merge with other disciplines – science or religion – and cease existing as an independent activity. The idea of the end of painting had been around for a long time, long before Ad Reinhardt talked about the one size, the one color ... What is there when we have taken everything away? What happens when there is very little to see? Painting has long flirted with emptiness. Think of Malévich, Humphrey, Reinhardt, Marden, Ryman. It is not a difficult task to distinguish between these 'empty' paintings. The removal of known subject matter opened the way for other content to enter in."⁴⁵

Painting was thinned out, leaving mere traces of pictorial activity in painterly synonyms of gleaming, empty, pure, and abstract canvases as ideals of the twentieth century. Naturally the reverse was now also possible – dirty canvases, crammed with paint and real material elements, traps for a vast variety of objects of everyday life, from Pop to New Realism. Once more the almost empty monochrome canvas actually provided

⁴³ See Michael M. Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability. Essays by M.R. Bakhtin*, University of Texas Press, Austin, 1990.

⁴⁴ The Crisis of the Easel Picture, in *Partisan Review*, April 1948 and also Clement Greenberg, *Art & Culture: Critical essays*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1961, pp. 223-225.

⁴⁵ Marcia Hafif, *Beginning Again*, in *Artforum*, New York, September 1978, reprint in Richard Hertz (ed.), *Theories of Contemporary Art*, Prentice Hall, New Jersey, 1988, pp. 10-15.

room to be occupied by things concrete. Material pictures and material painting were to dominate the second half of the century as much as color and form had dominated the first. The other dominant artistic tendency, arising from transcendentalism, would be their immaterialization and dematerialization. Besides these transformations of the painterly image, modern art developed other forms of art beyond painting as an answer to the crisis of representation that photography caused for painting. These new forms of art, from object art to media art, from body art to installation art, still carry forth iconoclastic impulses, but at the same time impulses to transcend iconoclasm. Painting lost its pivotal role in the field of art in the course of its transformations. At the same time, these transformations have initiated art's most radical evolutions into new domains and practices.

Under historical criteria we have so far witnessed a progressive rejection of the representative function of art, creating a rhetoric and aesthetic of absence, from the blank page via the bare plane to the empty canvas, hence from an empty frame to an empty room, seemingly edging painting closer to dematerialization. Self-doubt to the point of dematerialization is the logical force inherent in art, and advancing its development. Painting constitutes a turning of the page, every last picture representing one turn, amounting to the sort of catastrophe that is necessary to keep alive a dynamic system. Every painting could be a last picture, but every painting builds on its last predecessor-picture. I can add another last picture to every last painting, just as I could add the number "1" to any number. As any picture could be defined in terms of the sum of its predecessors, we arrive at an infinite succession of pictures that cannot be closed. Just as there is no last number, there is no last painting. The vanishing of art (in its historical appearance) belongs to the internal logic of art itself. Self-dematerialization then, is nothing more than a rejection of a historical self, of what had traditionally been seen as relevant and constitutive for art. This self-criticality as axiom

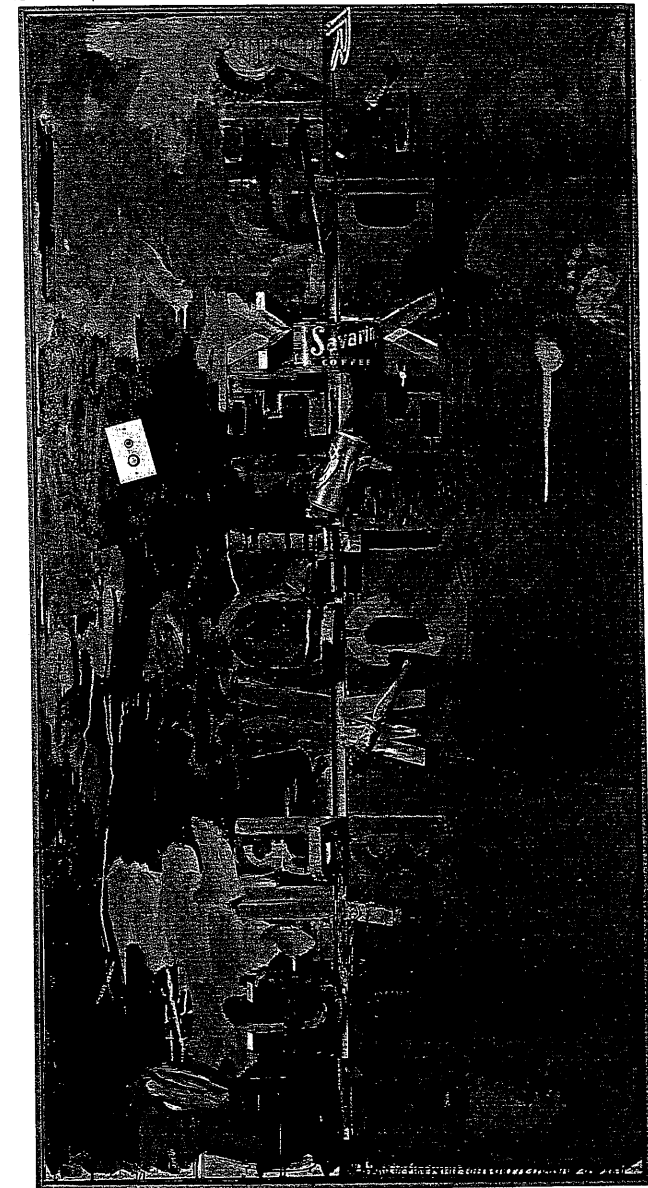
of modern art logically creates anti-art as a *wiedergänger* movement questioning art itself. Thus, only historical means and methods are being dispensed with in exchange for new, stronger ones. This exhibition shows some escape routes and cornerstones not only for painting after the last picture, featuring possible paintings *after* the last painting, but above all art after the end of art; art produced by iconoclastic gestures aimed to end art. This art after the end of art opened the way to new practices of art. Modern art is constantly questioning its own *raison d'être*. This self-criticality can be interpreted as iconoclastic, but, actually, it is the motor of its evolution and transformation. Therefore, the iconoclastic hammer does not destroy art, instead, paradoxically, it creates new art.

Open Practices as Art

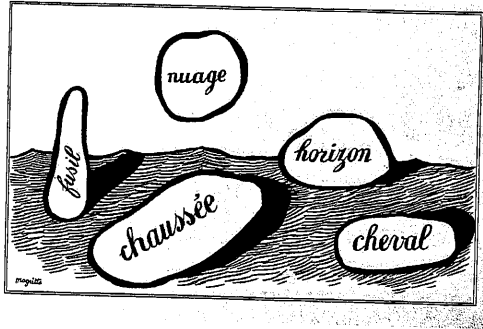
Twentieth century art appears under the control of the authoritative paradigm of photography. Artistic practices derived from the primacy of photographic methods have not only led to fundamental changes in painting and sculpture but also to very new art forms such as film (see Groys) and have, above all, fundamentally changed our conceptions and practices of art (see Belting, Himmelsbach). The performative conditions of art "in the age of its mechanical reproduction" (Walter Benjamin) do not apply to photography alone, but have also forced the already existing historical art forms, sculpture and painting, to make new decisions that have decisively transformed them. Thus the impact of the radical change following Duchamp's ready-mades in 1913 cannot be explained merely in a nominal sense as a discursive operation on the meaning and institution of art. Nor can this impact be explained as a simple proposition declaring, "This is art," the standpoint expressed in the books of Thierry de Duve.⁴⁶ Rather, the truth of the Duchampian gesture is legitimated through references to new modes of production that had already existed for 100 years during industrialization and new

— Thierry de Duve, *Nominalisme pictural*, Paris, 1984; Thierry de Duve, *Kant after Duchamp*, MIT Press Cambridge, MA, 1996.

Jasper Johns / Field Painting / 1963-1964 / oil on canvas with two objects / 72 x 36.6" / Jasper Johns / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002



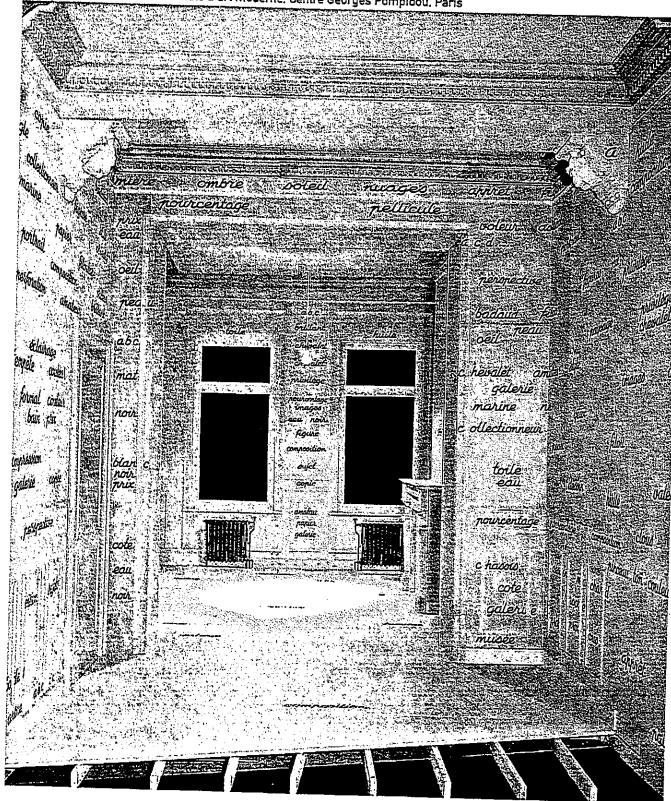
René Magritte / L'usage de la parole / 1927 / ink / 17.7 x 11.8" / private collection, courtesy Galerie Christine et Jay Brachot, Brussels



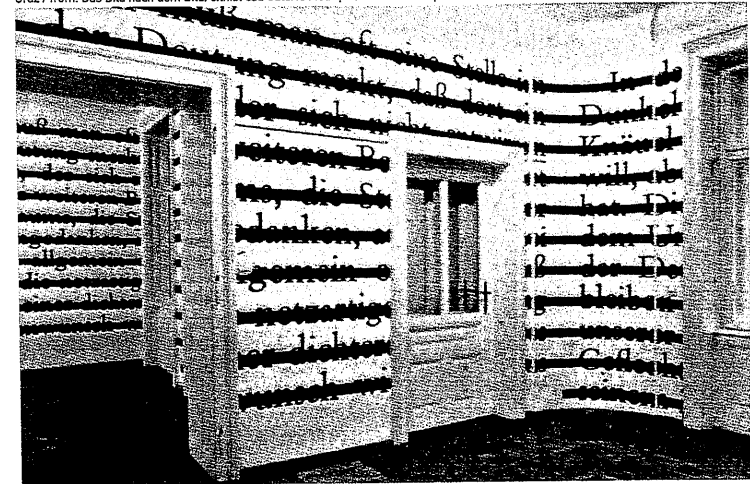
René Magritte / La Trahison des Images / 1948 / oil on canvas / 5.3 x 6.5" / private collection, Geneva



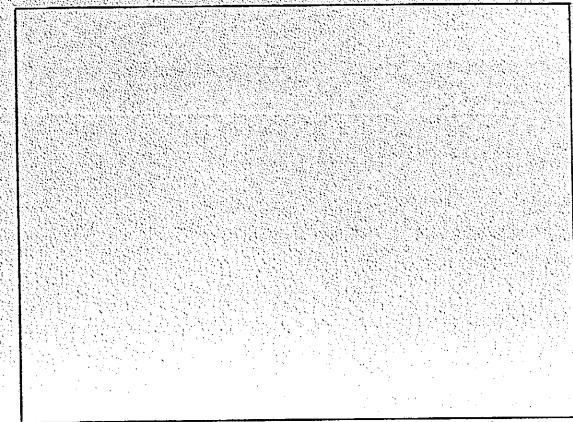
Marcel Broodthaers / La Salle Blanche (The white room) / bois, photographies, ampoule, inscriptions peintes, corde / 157 x 132 x 259" / Musée nationale d'art moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris



Joseph Kosuth / Sigmund Freud Wohnung (Sigmund Freud apartment) / Vienna / 1989 / Galerie Pakesch, Vienna / Tapete: Edition Atelier, Graz / from: Das Bild nach dem Bild, exhib. cat. Galerie Metropol, Vienna, 1991, p. 188



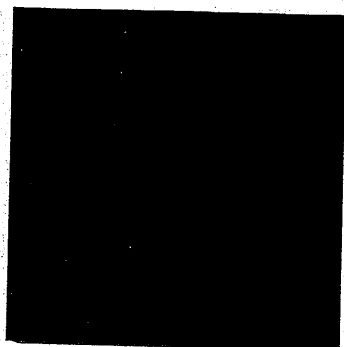
Arabian politicians / from the artist book, 1/2 Dozen Incomplete Visual Informations / 1974 / from: Endre Tót, Who's Afraid of Nothing, exhib. cat. Museum Ludwig, Cologne, 1999, p. 82



● زومت ليبيا ليس صورة الميجستاتر الثقافي مناسا استقبال قبل سدة الوند القلبي برناسة السيد مودة طرس مودة والذي كان يضم الدكتور صالح ميدالله سرية المنم الرئيسي لاجوم على الكلية العسكرية في القاهرة . وكان بيان ليس قد سمر يوم ليس الاول اعلان ان الرئيس الثقافي التي مرة واحدة بالدكتور سرية مناسا استقبله مع اعضاء الوند القلبي .

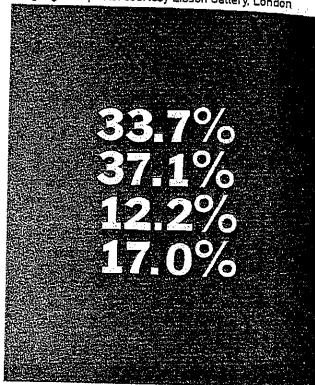
الصوره قـ و احمو نه الثقافي مع اعضاء الوند القلبي ويس بينهم الدكتور سرية .

Mel Ramsden / Secret Painting / 1967-1968 / liquitex on canvas, text board / 48 x 48", 35.8 x 35.8" / courtesy Galerie Bruno Bischofsberger, Zurich / © photo: Galerie Bruno Bischofsberger, archive

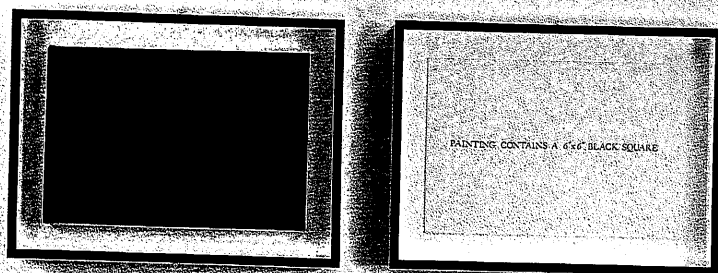


The content of this painting is invisible; the character and dimension of the content are to be kept permanently secret, known only to the artist.

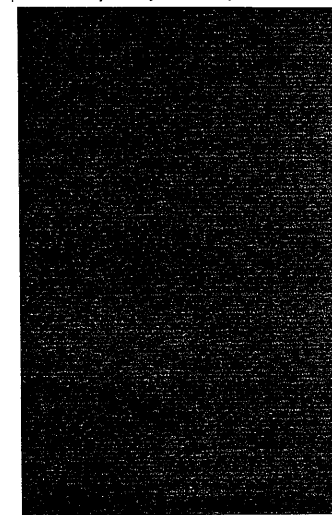
Art & Language / 100% Abstract / 1967-1968 / acrylic on canvas / 24.2 x 27" / Collection Art & Language / © Art & Language / © photo: courtesy Lisson Gallery, London



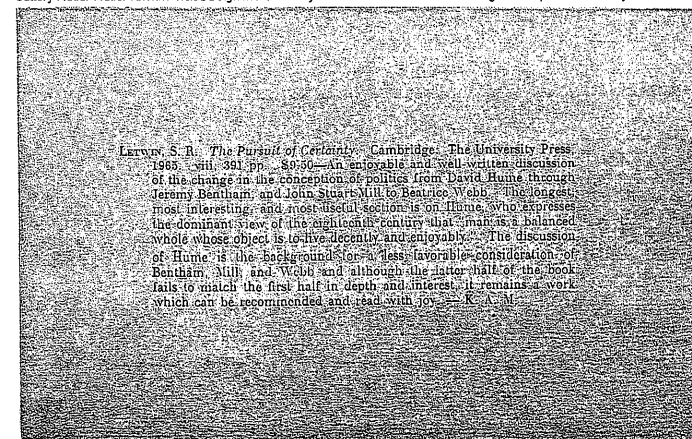
Art & Language / Guaranteed Painting / 1967-1968 / liquitex on canvas and photostat / two parts, each 12 x 17.7", framed 16.7 x 22.4" / Collection Art & Language / © Art & Language / © photo: John Riddy, courtesy Lisson Gallery, London



Art & Language / Painting - Sculpture / 1967 / acrylic on hardboard / two parts / each 24 x 15.5" / Collection Art & Language / © Art & Language / © photo: John Riddy, courtesy Lisson Gallery, London

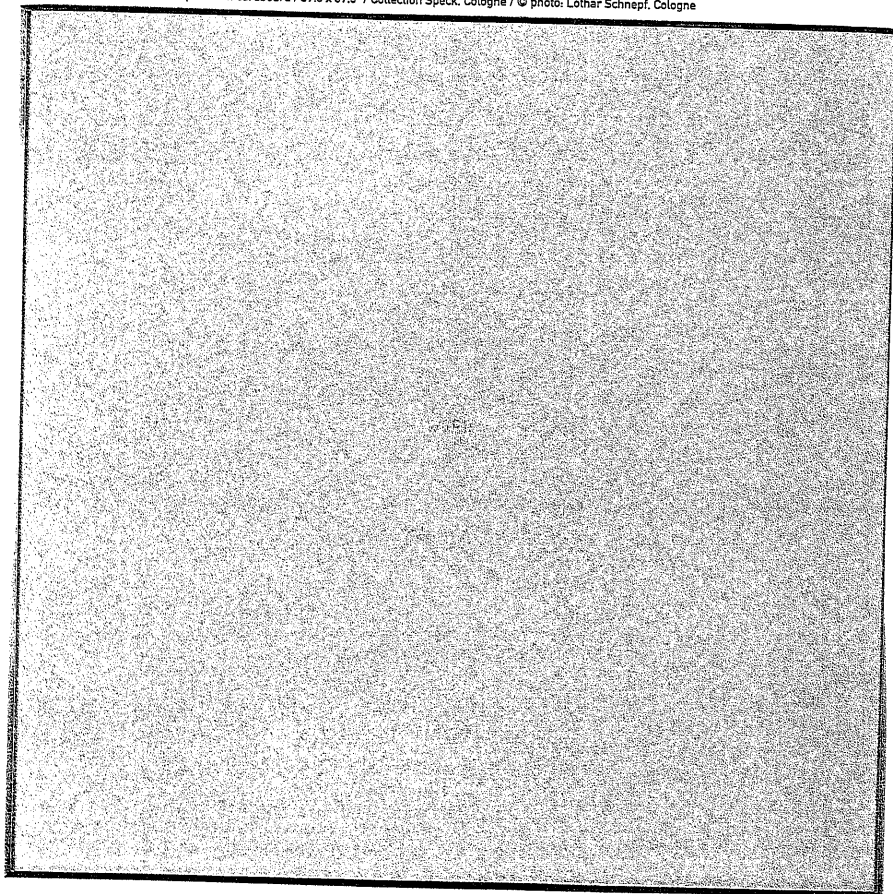


Art & Language / Abstract Art No 7 / 1967-1968 / silkscreen on canvas / 24 x 15" / Gallery Muller Muller Knokke-Heist, Belgium / © Gallery Muller Muller Knokke-Heist, Belgium / © photo: Felix Tirry

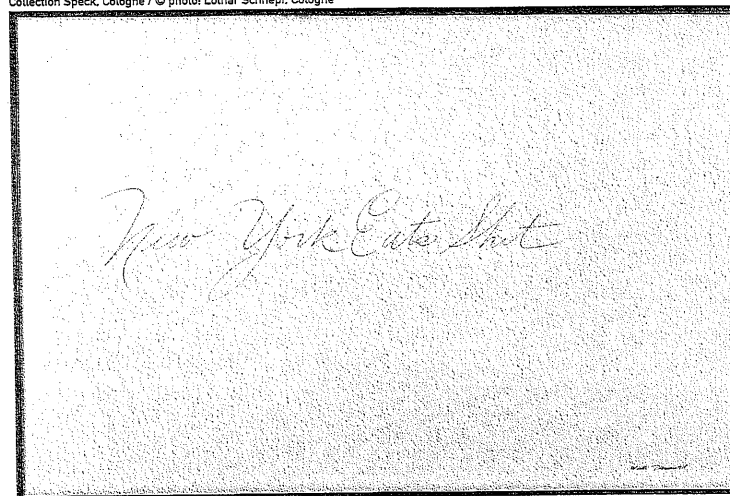


Larvor, S. R. *The Pursuit of Certainty*. Cambridge: The University Press, 1963. viii, 381 pp. \$9.50. An enjoyable and well-written discussion of the change in the conception of politics from David Hume through Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill to Beatrice Webb. The longest, most interesting, and most useful section is on Hume, who expresses the dominant view of the eighteenth century that "man is a balanced whole whose object is to live decently and enjoyably." The discussion of Hume is the background for a less favorable consideration of Bentham, Mill, and Webb and although the latter half of the book fails to match the first half in depth and interest, it remains a work which can be recommended and read with joy. — R. A. M.

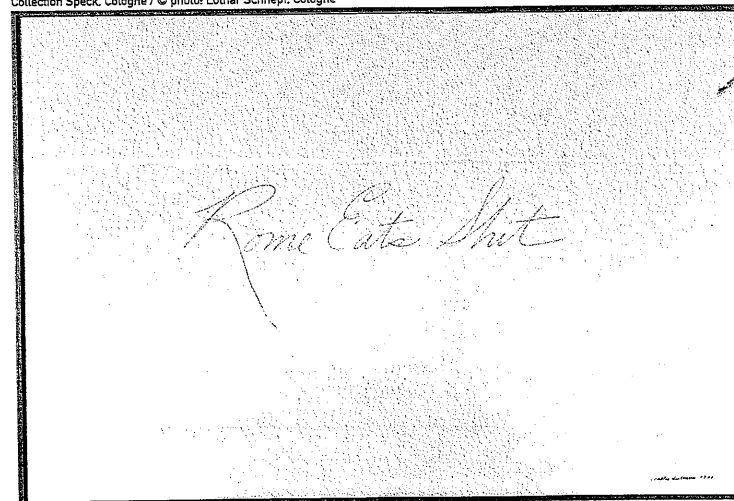
Walter de Maria / Word / 1963 / pencil on cardboard / 39.6 x 39.6" / Collection Speck, Cologne / © photo: Lothar Schnepf, Cologne



Walter de Maria / New York Eats Shit / 1970 / pencil on drawing board / 59 x 39.4" / Collection Speck, Cologne / © photo: Lothar Schnepf, Cologne

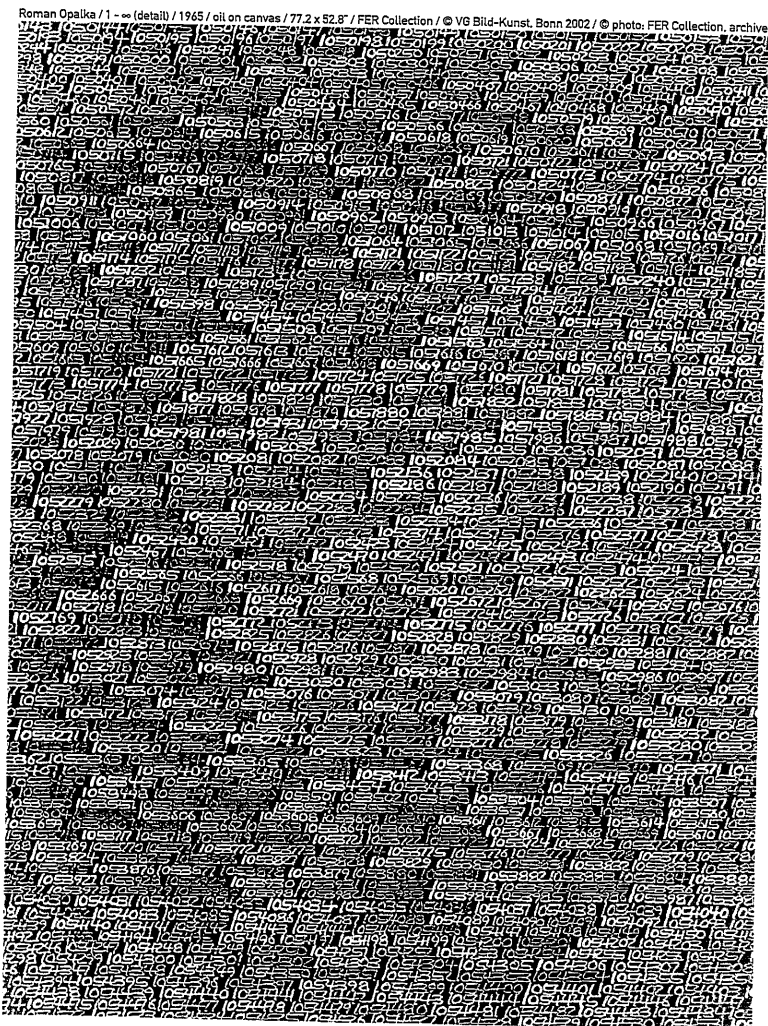


Walter de Maria / Rome Eats Shit / 1970 / pencil on drawing board / 59 x 39.4" / Collection Speck, Cologne / © photo: Lothar Schnepf, Cologne



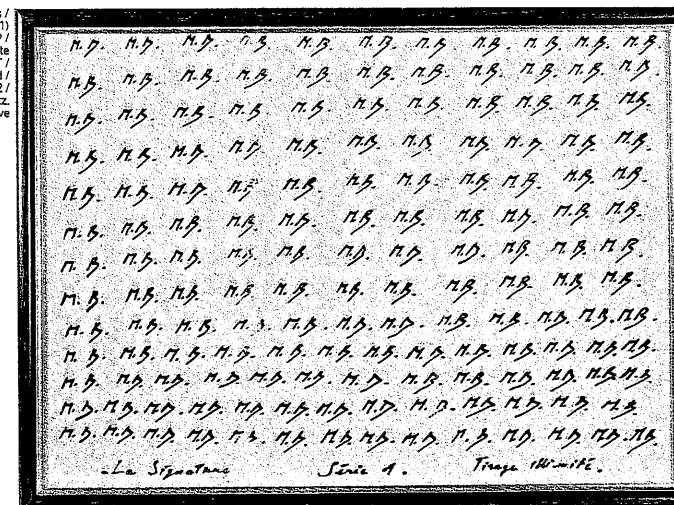
John Baldessari / Everything is purged / 1964-1968 / from: Bildlicht, Malerei zwischen Material und Immaterialität, exhib. cat. Wiener Festwochen 1991, Europavertag, Vienna, 1991

EVERYTHING IS PURGED FROM THIS PRINTING
BUT ART. NO IDEAS HAVE ENTERED THIS WORK.

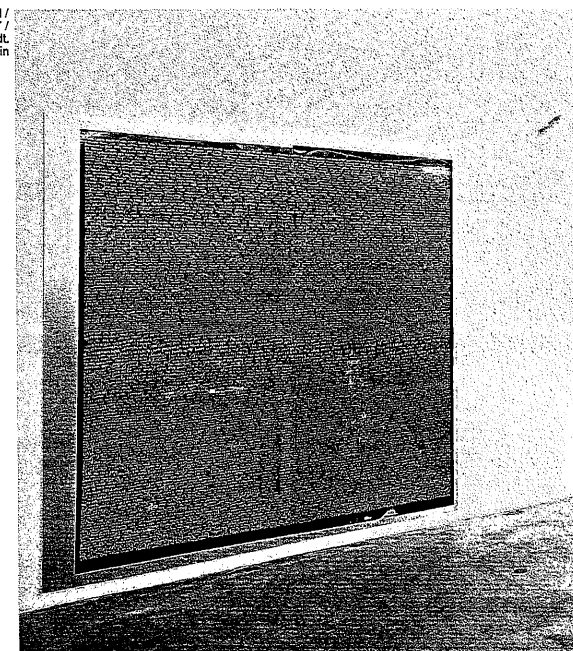


Roman Opalka / 1--∞ (detail) / 1965 / oil on canvas / 77.2 x 52.8" / FER Collection / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002 / © photo: FER Collection, archive

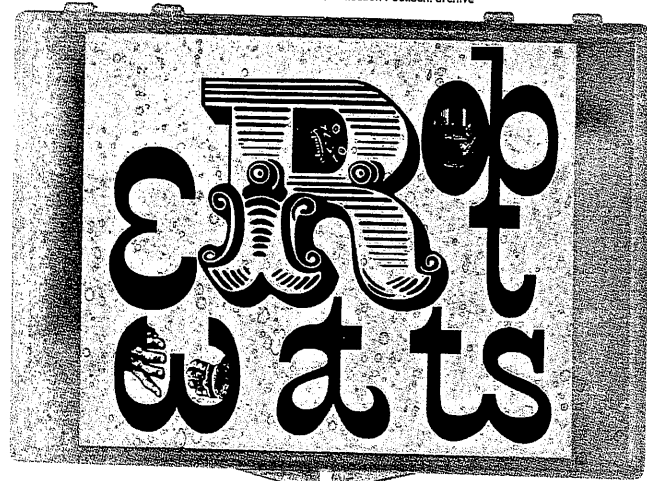
Marcel Broodthaers /
M.B. (La signature série 1)
[The signature series 1] / 1969 /
black and red silkscreen on white
tracing paper / 29.5 x 21.7" /
Collection Feilisch, Remscheid /
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002 /
© photo: Studio Müller & Schmitz,
Remscheid, Collection Feilisch, archive



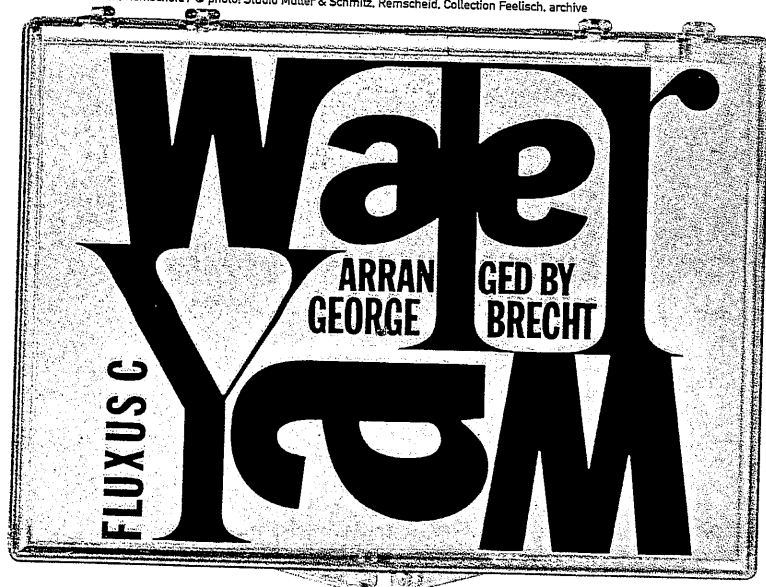
Fiona Banner / Arsewoman in Wonderland /
2001 / silkscreen on aluminum / 112.2 x 112.2" /
Jack Helgesen, Oslo / © photo: David Brandt,
courtesy Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin



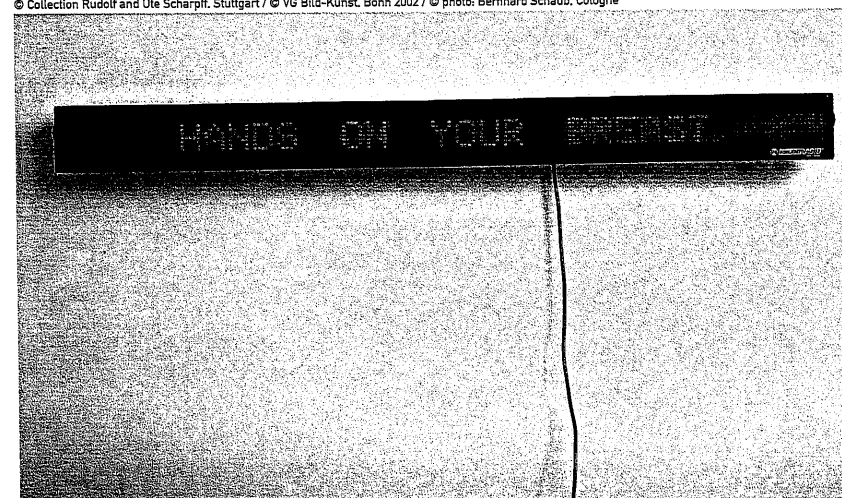
Robert Watts / Events / 1964-1965 / transparent box / 7.2 x 5.1 x 1.2" / Collection Feelsch, Remscheid / © photo: Studio Müller & Schmitz, Remscheid, Collection Feelsch, archive



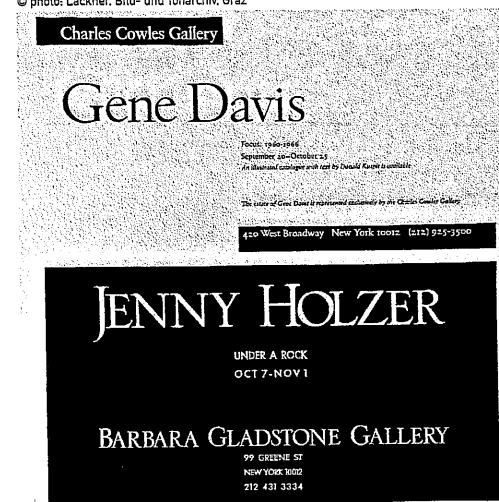
Georg Brecht / Water Yam / 1963-1965 / plexiglas tin with sticker / approx. 19.7 x 7.9 x 11.8" / Collection Feelsch, Remscheid / © photo: Studio Müller & Schmitz, Remscheid, Collection Feelsch, archive



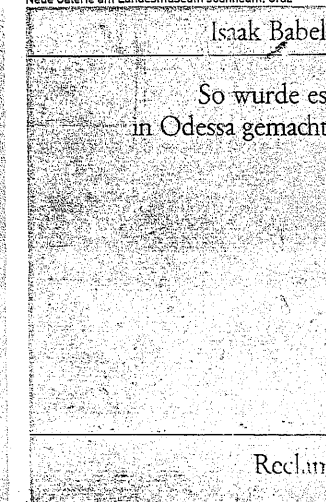
Jenny Holzer / More Survival / 1985 / electronic led sign with red diodes / 5.5 x 60.6 x 4" / Ute and Rudolf Scharpf, Stuttgart / © Collection Rudolf and Ute Scharpf, Stuttgart / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002 / © photo: Bernhard Schaub, Cologne



Simon Linke / Gene Davis / Jenny Holzer (Artforum) / 1986-1987 / oil on canvas / 72.1 x 72.1" / Neue Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz / © photo: Lackner, Bild- und Tonarchiv, Graz



Peter Zimmermann / Isaak Babel. So wurde es in Odessa gemacht (Isaak Babel. That is how it is done in Odessa) / acrylic on canvas / 23.6 x 15.8" / Neue Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz, Collection Weibel / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002 / © photo: Kolnegg, Neue Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz



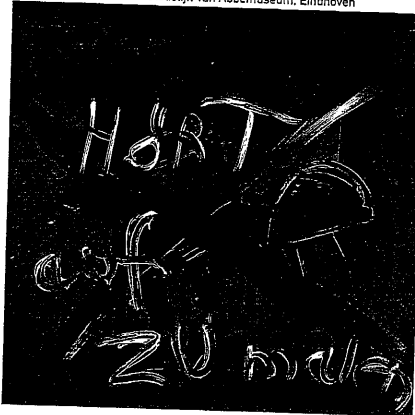
Joseph Beuys / Der Fehler beginnt schon dann, wenn jemand Leinwand und Farbe kauft
[The mistake already begins when you buy canvas and paint] / 1985 / poster / offset /
33 x 23.4" / Edition Staeck, Heidelberg / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002

MANIFEST

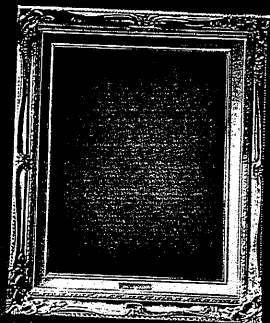
Der Fehler fängt
schon an,
wenn einer
sich anschickt

Keilrahmen
sind
Leinwand
zu kaufen
Joseph Beuys
1. 11. 1985

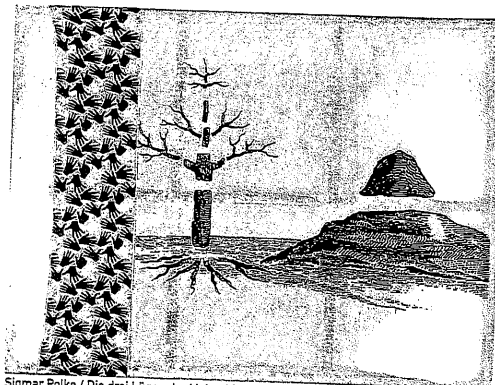
Jörg Immendorf / Hört auf zu malen (Stop painting) / 1966 / synthetic resin
on canvas / 53.1 x 53.1" / Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven



Klaus Staeck / ... es darf
ruhig etwas mehr kosten
[... it can easily cost a
bit more] / 1988 /
postcard / 5.8 x 4.1" /
© VG Bild-Kunst,
Bonn 2002 / © Edition
Staeck, Heidelberg



Ich suche etwas Passendes
für diesen Rahmen



Sigmar Polke / Die drei Lügen der Malerei [The Three Lies of Painting] / 1994 /
synthetic resin on polyester fabric, partly printed / 118.1 x 90.6" /
Gallery Michael Werner, Cologne and New York / © photo: Lothar Schnepf, Cologne

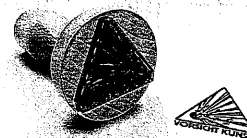
Joseph Beuys / Hiermit trete ich aus der Kunst aus [I hereby resign from art] / 1985 / postcard /
5.8 x 4.1" / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002 / © Edition Staeck, Heidelberg

Hiermit
trete ich
aus der Kunst aus
Joseph Beuys

Timm Ulrichs / »Ich kann keine Kunst mehr sehen!« 11.3.1975 [I can't stand
seeing art any more. 11 March 1975] / 1975 / poster and postcard edition /
Timm Ulrichs / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002 / © photo: Ellen Poeschke, Berlin
Demonstration as »sandwich man« with a blind man's cane and arm band /
Internationaler Kunstmarkt Köln 1975, fair grounds, Cologne-Deutz



Klaus Staeck / Vorsicht Kunst [Beware of Art] / 1982 / chop /
© photo: Christof Hierholzer, Karlsruhe / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002



Ben Vautier / No more art / 1985 / postcard / 5.8 x 4.1" /
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002 / © Edition Staeck, Heidelberg

no more
art

Marcel Duchamp / To be Looked at (from the Other Side of the Glass) With One Eye. Close to, for Almost an Hour / 1918 / "391". Paris, no. 13. July 1920, p. 2



Joseph Beuys / »Das Schweigen von Duchamp wird überbewertet« / 1966 / paper, brown oil paint, ink, chocolate, felt, photograph / pasted / 61.2 x 70.1 x 0.8" / Stiftung Schloß Moyland, Collection van der Grinten



Joseph Beuys / Sich selbst [Iself] / 1977 / postcard / 5.8 x 4.1" / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002 / © Edition Staeck, Heidelberg

*wer nicht denken will
fliegt raus*

Georg Brecht / No smoking / 1961 / steel plate with letters / 31.5 x 13.8" / Collection Feilisch, Remscheid / © photo: Studio Müller & Schmitz, Remscheid, Collection Feilisch, archive

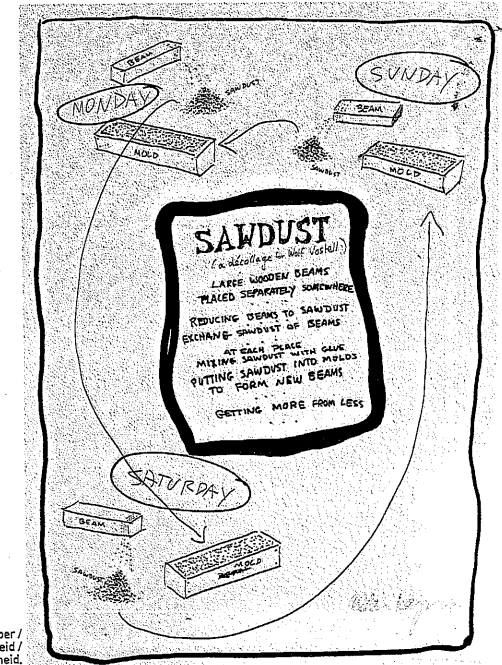


Georg Brecht / No Smoking Event / event card from Water Yarn / Collection Feilisch, Remscheid

NO SMOKING EVENT

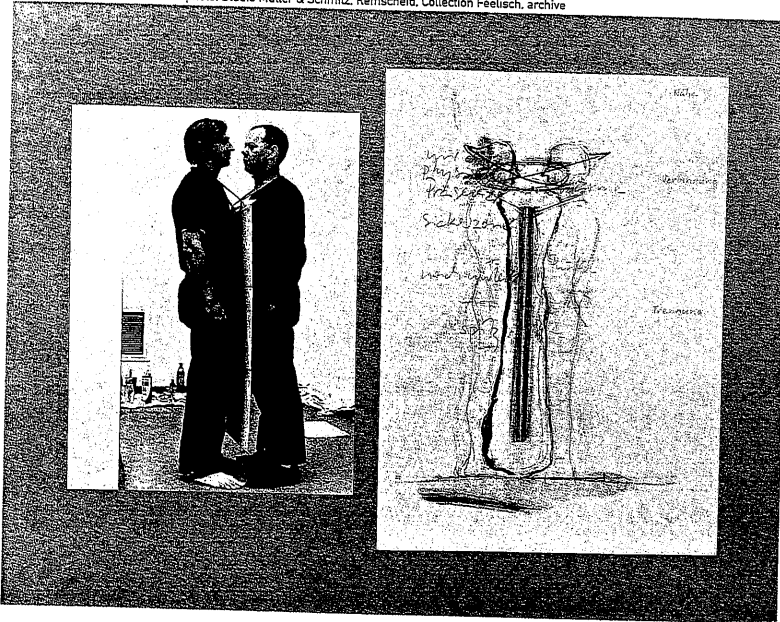
Arrange to observe a NO SMOKING sign.

- smoking
- no smoking

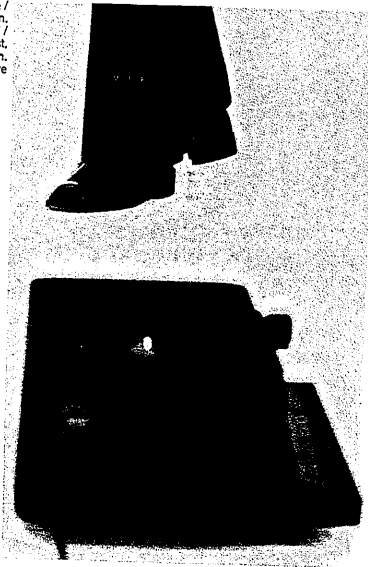


Allan Kaprow / Sawdust / 1970 / offset on paper / 16.9 x 24" / Collection Feilisch, Remscheid / © photo: Studio Müller & Schmitz, Remscheid, Collection Feilisch, archive

Franz Erhard Walther / Objekt für Wechsel (1. Werksatz) [Object for change (1. set of tools)] / 1967 /
typewriter paper, photograph, black-and-white / 23.6 x 15.8" / Collection Feelsch, Remscheid /
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002 / © photo: Studio Müller & Schmitz, Remscheid, Collection Feelsch, archive



Giovanni Anselmo / Invisible /
1971 / Installation / slide-projection,
showing the word "invisible" /
FER Collection / © VG Bild-Kunst,
Bonn 2002 / © photo: FER Collection,
archive



Valie Export and Peter Weibel / tapp and tastfilm / Munich, 14. November 1968 / images from the premiere /
from: Peter Weibel (ed.), Wien, Bildkompendium Wiener Aktionismus und Film, Kohlkunstverlag, Frankfurt/M., 1970, p. 196



Valie Export and Peter Weibel /
Aus der Mappe der
Hundigkeit [From the Portfolio
of Doggedness] / 1967 /
photograph, black-and-white /
19.7 x 15.9" / Generali
Foundation, Vienna /
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002
(Valie Export)





Jeffrey Shaw / *The Golden Calf* / 1995 / installation / pedestal and portable LCD monitor / 19.7 x 39.4 x 19.7" / Jeffrey Shaw / © photo: Jeffrey Shaw

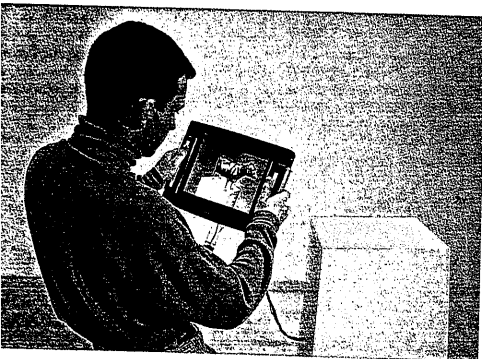


image-manufacturing processes and reproduction techniques such as photography. Photographs, through the invention of the negative, could now be industrially produced as serial products that no longer required the signature of the artist nor even the handwork or hand of the artist since the device was capable of producing the image on its own, as the title of the famous lecture by William Henry Fox Talbot in London on 31 January 1839 underscored: "An account of the art of photogenic drawing or the process by which natural objects may be made to delineate themselves without the aid of the artist's pencil."

From this point on, it was clear that, through the logic of art, artists were forced to carry this process over into *other forms of image production and of art production in general*. Not only pictures, but also sculptures could be produced without the artist's hand or tool, as Duchamp's ready-mades proved. In 1977, Jean Clair⁴⁷ and Rosalind Krauss⁴⁸ noted from different perspectives that parallels could be drawn between the production process of the ready-made and photography. The print, the proof, and other image production procedures, which had been devalued, gained a new, primary position with photography. This was first pointed out by Rosalind Krauss and later by George Didi-Huberman in a comprehensive publication and exhibition in Paris in 1997.⁴⁹ The print as process has obviously made an essential contribution to modernity in sculpture and, in this light, it is obvious that Duchamp's entire sculptural work shows evidence of indexical processes, prints and traces from the famous *Dust Breeding* (1920), which Man Ray photographed on *The Large Glass*, to the work *Female Fig Leaf* (1950) and the foam rubber breast on black velvet (1947) with the title *Please Touch*. Thus Duchamp radically enlarged the register of sculpture by introducing *the object in place of the sculpture*. The painters themselves reacted to the end of painting. Painters, not sculptors, introduced the object into art history in an attempt to solve the crisis of representation that has

produced the end of painting. Also in the realm of sculpture they produced the end of representation through a paradigmatic shift from the classical anthropological sculpture representing the human body, to the object that does not represent anything, but, merely exists. The ready-made and the object as sculpture are in the same horizon as Rodchenko's battle cry "no more representation." Common objects and industrially produced use objects were seen as sculptures, ready-mades that allowed the industrial fabrication of serial objects without the hand of the artist. Duchamp has drawn the artistic consequence of the photographic paradigm without becoming a photographer.

Surrealism was of special importance for the dialectical development of the object (see Sloterdijk); similar to the collage, the surrealists combined real and painted objects. They used manufactured commercial objects but also mathematical and other scientific models and even objects of nature, so-called "found objects," "objets trouvés." These objects were either transformed by the artist or combined with other objects; finally, there were also objects with symbolic functions that were fabricated by the artist. The development of the object thus occurred along two axes: usefulness and uselessness. The sphere of objects can thus be divided into functional and non-functional realms. As the term "use object" already suggests, objects are normally useful. Likewise, art objects are not useable in an everyday sense. Thus Duchamp provocatively suggests using a Rembrandt as an ironing board (see Gamboni). A sculptural strategy for the future consisted in making art objects useable, in direct opposition to their historical function. The Surrealists exerted their strategy by making common objects useless and unusable, for example fixing nails into an iron, such as Man Ray's renowned *Cadeau* (1921) or Meret Oppenheim's *Fur Cup* (1936).

The development of the object as sculpture thus followed that paradoxical dialectic of making hitherto unusable art works useful and useful objects unusable. Brancusi,

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— Georges Didi-Huberman, *L'empreinte*, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, 1997.

— Rosalind Krauss, *Notes on the Index: Seventies Art in America*, (Part 1), October, 3, Spring 1977, pp. 68-81; and Krauss, *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths*, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 1985, pp. 196-209.

— Jean Clair, *Duchamp et la Photographie*, Chêne, Paris, 1977.

whose friendship with Duchamp was so close that Duchamp acted for decades as his agent and dealer, played a significant role in this counter movement in the transformation of sculpture. It is well known that Brancusi used the pedestal, which, depending on the organization of the studio, could be employed as furniture or sculpture. The pedestal could stand on its own as a sculpture, or serve as a base for another sculpture or even a seat. However, less commonly known is that, as of 1914, Brancusi produced wooden furniture for his atelier in a free interpretation of a rustic Romanian style and exhibited it – not as furniture, but as sculpture equally important to his bronze or marble pieces. The benches thus overstepped their function as subordinates to sculpture to the extent that the artist photographed them and presented them as autonomous sculptures.⁵⁰ In contrast to Duchamp, Brancusi produced his artworks by hand, thereby asserting the proposition that all objects made by Brancusi, whether abstract geometric sculptures or furniture pieces, are art works. By using the furniture functionally within the framework of his studio, but then transforming its function to a pedestal for his sculpture for his exhibitions, Brancusi produced an important contribution in the transition of the sculpture to a useful object.

Following the material investigations of the objects was the counter movement of the "dematerialists." The material-bound object-like paradigm was abandoned through the term "conceptual art" or "post-objectiveness." Fundamental to the idea of conceptual art is the insight into the linguistic nature of all artistic statements, regardless of the elements used in production.⁵¹ They replaced the conventional methods of painting and sculpture with linguistic operations in the field of visual representation.

The results of the expanded view of conceptual art, namely, land art, process art, behavior art, etc., were, in principle, documented through photography. Thus the photographic paradigm once again shifted into the position of painting and sculpture, even in those movements which were

keen on expanding or even abandoning the referential framework and the practice of painting and sculpture under the heading: "departure from the image." Parallel to this expansion of the idea of art in the 1960s, it was primarily Fluxus, Happening, and Actionism that transformed the concept of sculpture. Interestingly, the otherwise antagonistic forms of concept art and action art have a common artistic practice in one field, namely, the "propositions," "instructions," and "statements."⁵² In *Art after Philosophy* (1969) Kosuth wrote as an answer to Hegel's dictum *Philosophy after Art*: "A work of art is a kind of proposition presented within the context of art as a comment on art."⁵³

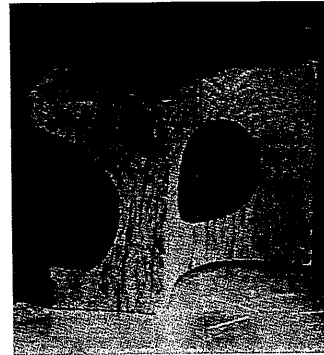
These techniques of instruction were addressed to the viewer of art, from which the model of audience participation in the construction of the artwork developed in the 1960s in various forms. One of the earliest artists of the neo-avant-garde to use instructions to an anonymous audience as artform was Yoko Ono.

"Painting to Hammer a Nail
Hammer a nail into a mirror, a piece of glass, a canvas, wood or metal every morning. Also, pick up a hair that came off when you combed in the morning and tie it around the hammered nail. The painting ends when the surface is covered with nails."⁵⁴

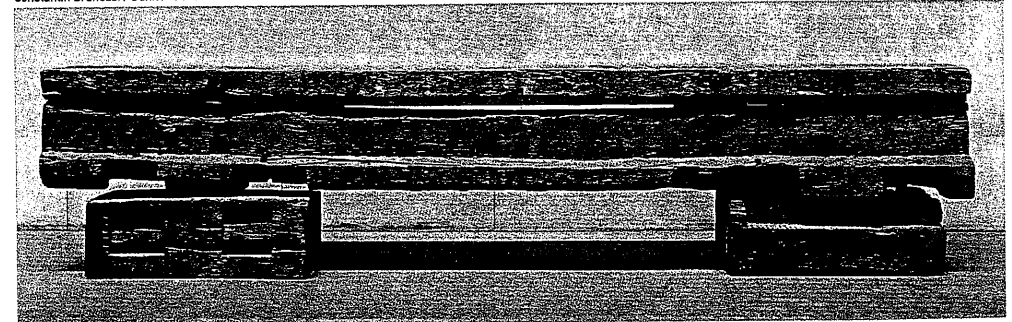
"Painting to Hammer a Nail
Hammer a nail in the center of a piece of glass. Send each fragment to an arbitrary address."⁵⁵

Robert Morris, in his 1971 retrospective at London's Tate Gallery, developed sculptures specifically for audience participation: plywood constructions on which visitors could walk,

Constantin Brancusi / Stool / c. 1920 / from: Peter Weibel (ed.), Erwin Wurm, exhib. cat. Neue Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz, 2002



Constantin Brancusi / Bank / c. 1915 / wood / 27.5 x 124.5 x 9" / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002



Marcel Duchamp / Fountain / 1917 / inscribed porcelain urinal on its back / signed as R. Mutt / © photo: Alfred Stieglitz, reproduced in The Blind Man, 2, May 1917



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– As appears in the title of the book from Lawrence Weiner, *Statements*, Seth Siegelau Gallery, New York, 1968.

– In addition to Lawrence Weiner, Douglas Huebler, and Sol LeWitt, also worthy of mention are the works from Joseph Kosuth and Art & Language who described themselves as the purely analytical branch of conceptual art because they did not produce any materials, drawings, or paintings, but rather, carried out investigations of art and its conditions purely through language analysis. (Kosuth 1965: "Works of art are analytical propositions.")

– Yoko Ono, Spring 1962.

– Yoko Ono, Winter 1961.

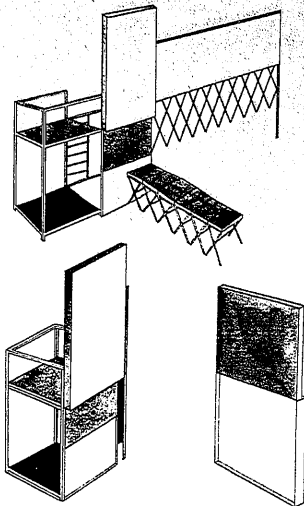
– Brancusi also began the genre of the furniture sculpture, which Richard Artschwager completed in the 1960s. With sculptures such as *Socrates and Cup* (1922) and *Arc* (1914-1916) Brancusi made use of objects unusable and sculptural art works, such as his benches (1914-1916) useable.

– There are numerous written instructions from the Fluxus and event artists: "Draw an imaginary map" wrote Yoko Ono in 1962. The famous telegram that Robert Rauschenberg sent to Iris Clert in 1961 as a contribution to a portrait exhibition stated: "This is a portrait of Iris Clert if I say so."

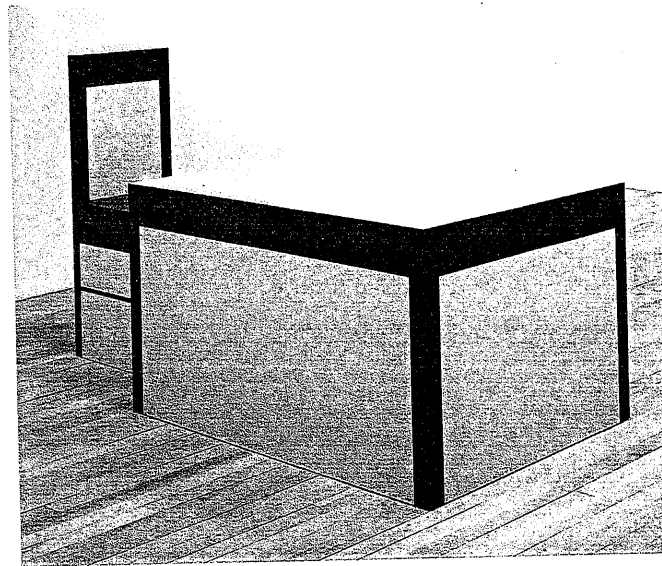
Aleksandr Rodchenko / Worker's Club / 1925 / shown at the international exhibition of applied arts in Paris / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002



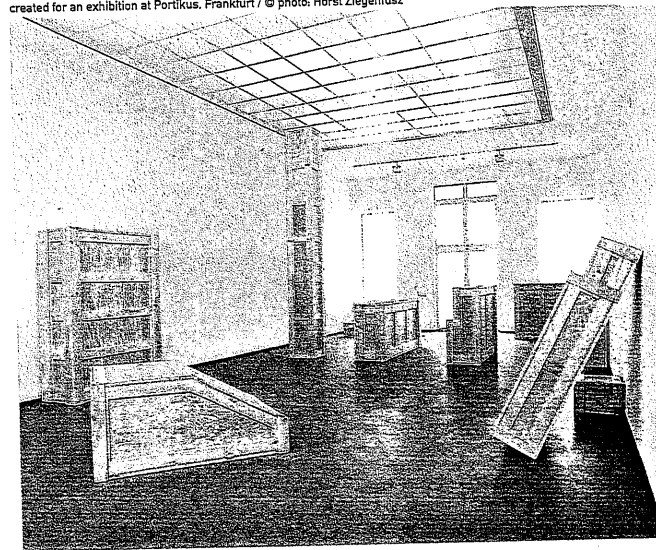
Aleksandr Rodchenko / Design for the furnishing of a Worker's Club / 1925 / colored ink, paper / 14.4 x 9.8" / shown at the international exhibition of applied arts in Paris / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002



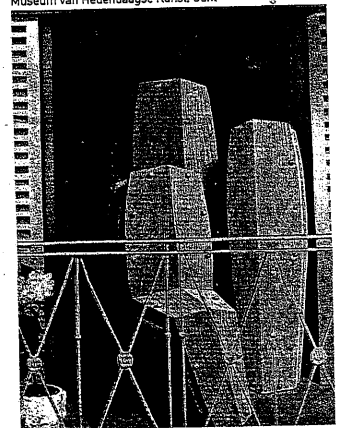
Richard Artschwager / Table and Chair / 1963-1964 / Tate Gallery, London, purchased 1983 / © photo: Tate Gallery, London



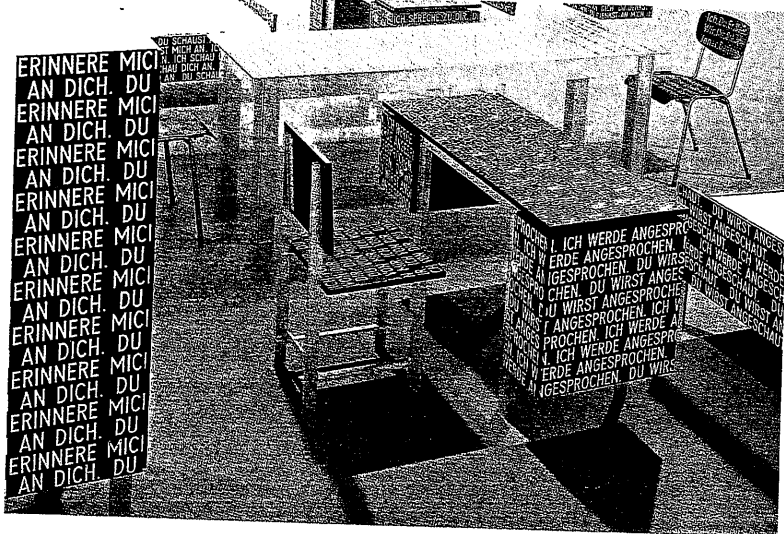
Richard Artschwager / Archipelago / 1993 / installation view / wood / created for an exhibition at Portikus, Frankfurt / © photo: Horst Ziegenfuss



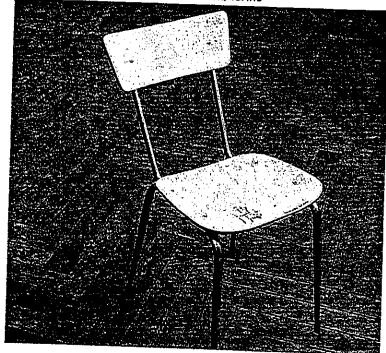
René Magritte / Perspective II, Le Balcon de Manet / oil on canvas / 31.9 x 23.6" / Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst, Gent



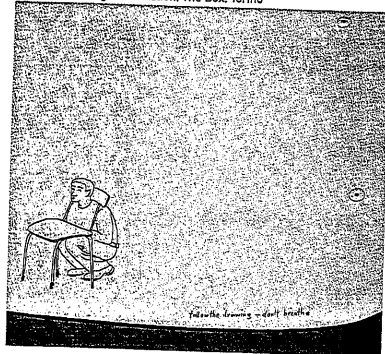
Thomas Locher / Wer sagt was und warum / 1992 / installation view.
Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne / © Alistair Overbrück, Cologne



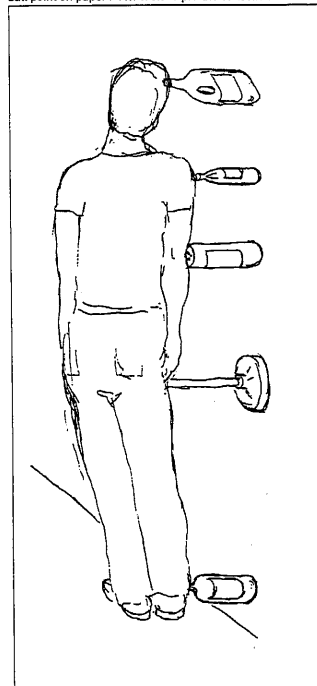
Erwin Wurm / The Three Philosophers / 2001 / detail: one chair /
3 chairs, drawing / installation, The Box, Torino



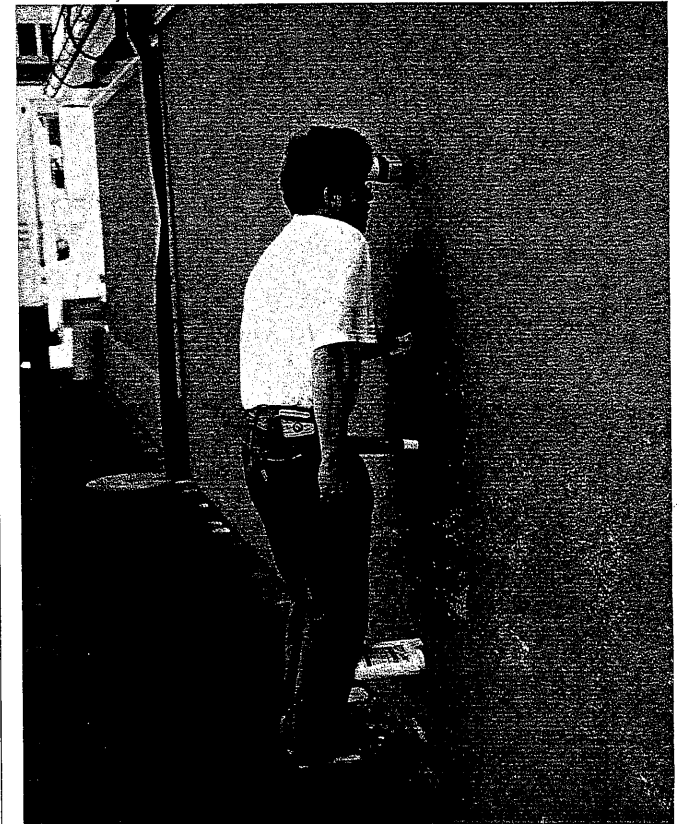
Erwin Wurm / The Three Philosophers / 2001 / detail: one drawing /
3 chairs, drawing / installation, The Box, Torino



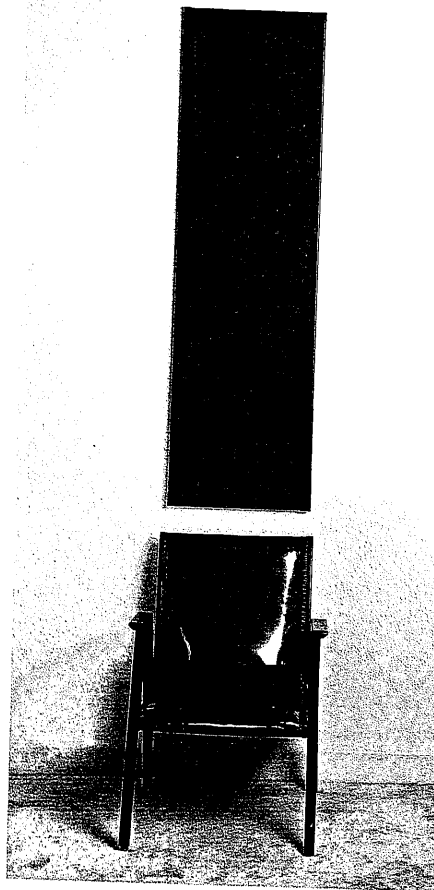
Erwin Wurm / Instruction Drawing (5 Objects) / 1998 /
ball point on paper / 11.7 x 8.3" / private collection



Erwin Wurm / 5 Objects / 1998



John M. Armleder / RAL 3000 / 1987 / wooden chair with red plastic cover,
acrylic on canvas / 21.7 x 35.4 x 23.6" (chair), 17.7 x 63" (canvas) /
Collection Feilisch, Remscheid



ropes, on which they could balance, and wooden walls they could lean against. After the innovative decades of the 1960s, sculpture was completely transformed and changed into almost its opposite: dematerialized and made semiotic. It was staged under very new conditions on the one hand as a medium of reproduction under the photographic paradigm (land art, etc.), on the other hand as a model of participation. The human body was no longer represented in an anthropomorphic sculpture (or even abstracted like in a Moore sculpture), but utilized for sitting, walking, sleeping, eating, pissing, using objects in various ways.

In his 1968 *Objects, to use*, Franz Erhard Walther presented a whole volume in which the activities of persons using prescribed objects results in a new definition of sculpture.⁵⁶ In the series *One Minute Sculptures* featuring the artist, Erwin Wurm, and others, human bodies, in association with objects and in positions they could only assume for minutes, became the ideal extension of sculpture into the media of photography and video. The elements that he uses are objects, bodies, and media, but the way in which he combines these elements and actualizes them has a linguistic nature. He continually uses the methods of contiguity (tangibility, jointure) and metonymy. *Sculpture as a behavioral form replaces abstract sculpture and the sculpture as object.* Visitors' and spectators' use of objects – like furniture – as sculpture opens a new range of artistic practices beyond the crisis of representation. The sculptural forms of enactment, and the new media works with interactive and participatory behavioral patterns are the innovations of the twentieth century. Thus we are able to speak of three great metamorphoses of the plastic form in the twentieth century: *sculpture, object, and enactment.*

One of modernity's consequences is the aesthetic reflection upon its own nature: the critique of modernity is an integral part of modernity itself. In its striving for transparency under rationality and the terms of the European Enlightenment, modernity continuously feels the need to justify itself.

Hence, novelty for its own sake is less a characteristic of modernity than is radical reflexivity, which ceaselessly revises the conventions and agreements regarding the nature of art and modernity. Indeed, with the advent of modernity, reflexivity takes on a new character. It does not help to stabilize the concept of art, as is often hoped for or expected, but, rather, contributes to its instability and uncertainty, as this catalog should make clear (see Belting, Sloterdijk, Gamboni). In the 1960s, the first world political opposition against the exploitation of the third world created a context which brought about a radical revision of the conditions and conventions of European society and history and the art of modernity. During these years, critiques of the aesthetic practices of modernity and of the object status of the work of art began to run parallel to political critiques and emancipation. A renegotiation of the concept of art began.⁵⁷ Reflecting the history of modernity and the immediate historical political past, the traumas of Stalinism and Fascism, the Holocaust and the atomic bomb, a radical iconoclasm returned in the theater of the absurd and in critical theory. Theodor W. Adorno made his famous 1949 statement against representation after the holocaust:

"Cultural criticism finds itself faced with the final stage of the dialectic of culture and barbarism. To write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric. And this corrodes even the knowledge of why it has become impossible to write poetry today."⁵⁸

The holocaust researcher, Raul Hilberg, follows the same reasoning. A real object instead of a visual representation re-enacts the Germany of Hitler:

"(...) a can of Zyklon gas (...), with which the Jews were killed in Auschwitz and Maydanek. I would have liked to see a single can mounted on a pedestal in a small room, with no other objects between the walls, as the epitome of Adolf Hitler's Germany, just as a vase of Euphronios was shown at one time by itself in the

⁵⁶ Walther writes: "The pieces are a kind of pedestal and the persons standing on them can be seen as sculptures. Correlates of activity, referring to position, space, and time, change. Meaning is first produced in the handling of these." (Franz Erhard Walther, *Objekte, benutzen*, König, Cologne, 1968).

⁵⁷ Theodor W. Adorno, *Cultural Criticism and Society* (1967), *Prisms*, trans. Samuel and Sherry Weber, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 1981, p. 34.

⁵⁸ This brought consequences such as the de-framing of images, the departure from the image, the "dematerialization of the art object" (Lucy R. Lippard, *Six Years. The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972*, Praeger, New York, 1973) and the deconstruction of the "white cube."

Metropolitan Museum of Art as one of the supreme artifacts of Greek antiquity."⁵⁹

Again we see political reasons for the iconoclastic urge, which I have described as paradigmatic in the beginning of this essay. A horizon beyond the status quo in society and in art emerged. Within this horizon new strategies and practices beyond the limits of art and beyond the limits of society were developed. To move beyond the crisis of representation and beyond the image wars became the program for a new way of life.

The tendency towards the conceptualization and imaterialization of the art object was also formulated by Umberto Eco with his theory of the *Open Work of Art* (1962).⁶⁰ Eco describes the transformation of the work of art during the shift from the machine-oriented industrial age to the post-industrial age of cybernetics and information and communications technologies. The artwork of modernity is an autonomous aesthetic object, a closed system. The dissolution of the object status of the work of art brought to an end the age of modernity. After modernity, art became an open system. Its playing field has shifted from purely aesthetic rules of object construction to the framework of social practices, for example, action-determined events and situations, from Fluxus to Happening, from Actionism to Performance. The sphere of art thus expanded in numerous ways. In the context of the aforementioned reflexivity, *the author, the work of art and the viewer, in other words, the three constants of classical art, were radically subverted and transformed.* Groups, collectives, algorithms etc. replaced the single subject of the author. The artwork as object was supplanted by open events, actions, processes, games, action instructions, and concepts. The passive observer became co-creator, player, and participant. The boundaries between the diverse social actors in the art fields as well as between aesthetic and non-aesthetic objects and events became porous and invisible. The aesthetic was no

longer disassociated from the cognitive or the social and political; as a result, economic and ecological, political and social, cognitive and scientific agendas returned to the sphere of art.

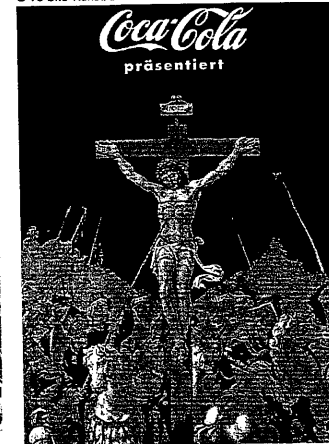
When a signifying chain operates over a closed object field – for example a number of apples as the well-defined selection from the world of objects – this chain produces a semantic closure which corresponds to the material closure of a work of art, i.e., framed, on a pedestal, cast in iron, sculpted from marble. Artistic practices which were subjected to the influence of chance during production and reception – for example to the freedom of the interpreter – brought about an opening of the closed, signifying chain which until now had defined both the meaning of a work of art and its identity as such. The signifying chain became unchained. The elements of the chain loosened and fell apart. The strict differentiation that had prevailed between the sphere of high art and that of low everyday life, between artist and consumer, between aesthetic communication and social agency, became fluid and diffuse. Modernity's system of representation allowed only objects to be real, not people and actions. The media-supported second modernity focused on the introduction of real actions and people into art's representational frame.

The art community has long given real objects the status of art; it has refused, however, to lend actions the status of art. It is interesting to observe that the institutions of the art community can agree that a stove can be an art object, not, however, the act of cooking. A real bed can be an art object, however not the act of caring for a sick person in that bed. The art of open practice radically calls such distinctions into question. Fluxus, Happening, and Action Art are the first artistic strategies that replaced representation with reality on several levels. The image of a dog was replaced with a real dog, the image of a breast was replaced with a real breast. Real people could touch this breast. The painting became a painter painted white and walking through the streets of Vienna. The

Klaus Staack / Auf der Barrikade (1789-1989) [On the warpath (1789-1989)] / 1988 / postcard / 5.8 x 4.1" / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002 / © Edition Staack, Heidelberg



Klaus Staack / Coca-Cola / 1994 / postcard / 5.8 x 4.1" / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002 / © Edition Staack, Heidelberg



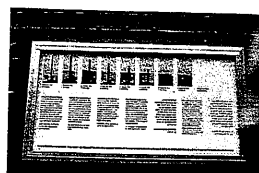
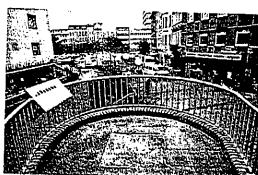
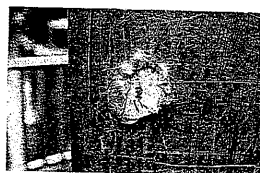
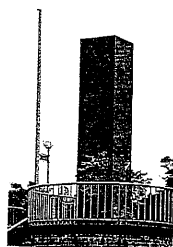
Klaus Staack / Zurück zur Natur [Back to nature] / 1985 / postcard / 5.8 x 4.1" / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002 / © Edition Staack, Heidelberg



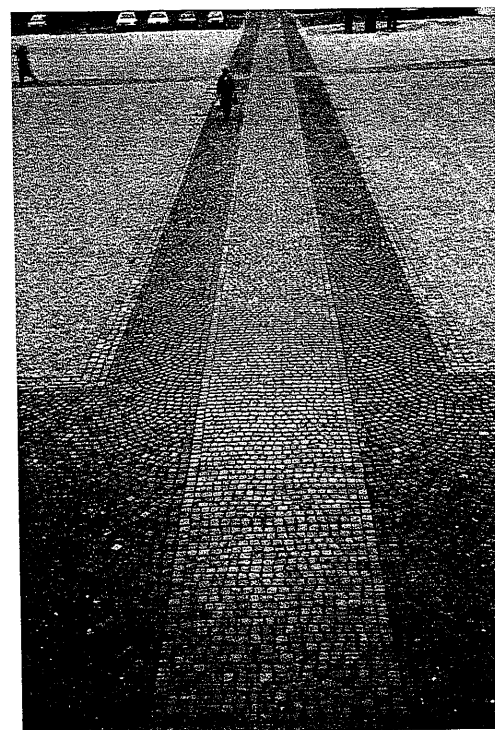
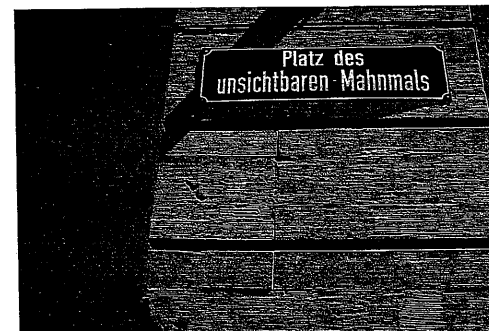
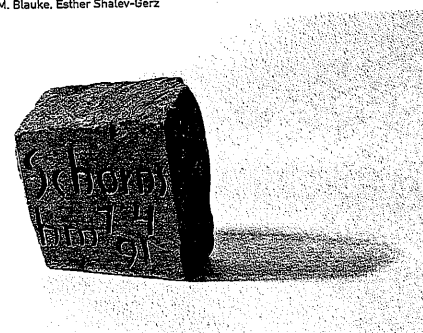
⁵⁹ Raul Hilberg, *The Politics of Memory: the journey of a Holocaust Historian*, Chicago, 1996, pp. 130-131.

⁶⁰ Umberto Eco, *Opera aperta*, Bompiani, Milano, 1962.

Jochen Gerz / Harburger Mahnmal gegen Faschismus [The Harburg monument against fascism] / 1986 / 15 out of a series of 80 slides / Atelier Gerz / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002 /
© photos: Petra Bopp, Ellermeyer, André Lützen, Esther Shalev-Gerz



Jochen Gerz / 2146 Steine – Mahnmal gegen Rassismus [2146 Stones – Memorial Against Racism] / 1993 / four photographs / each 15.6 x 11.8" / Atelier Gerz / © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2002 /
© photo: M. Blauke, Esther Shalev-Gerz





Rudolf Herz / Lenins Lager. Entwurf für eine Skulptur in Dresden (Lenin's camp. Model for an Sculpture in Dresden) / 1991 / granite / Collection Kurtze / © photo: Hans Döring

The Dresden city councilors have decided to remove from their city-scape the monument to Lenin, which has become unpleasant, and to offer it as a gift. The results of the cleansing action are evident. The reviled monument will be removed from sight and memory, thereby eliminating an important starting point for the controversial discourse about the most recent past. This situation has given cause for the development of the sculpture »Lenins Lager. Entwurf für eine Skulptur in Dresden.« The concept aims at maintaining a constant public presence of the Bildersturm, and simultaneously preserving the monument from its final elimination. »Lenins Lager« consists of the single stone blocks that were originally placed together with the monument. The red granite blocks will be dismantled and assembled together in a narrow space as a sculptural object. This arrangement recalls a museum depot or an archeological expanse of rubble: the state between deconstruction and museum-like reconstruction. »Lenins Lager« is a heretical critique of state politics' reappraisal rituals after the fall of the GDR, an objectionable keepsake with political and aesthetic sources of friction. It should find a home at the monument's former site in front of the train station. Rudolf Herz. 20 November 1991



Rudolf Herz / Melancholic Sculpture / 1996 / installation view Badischer Kunstverein, Karlsruhe, 1996 / © photo: Hans Döring

image of pain became real pain. Out of this refusal to represent, actual sexual and political actions developed. Not only in painting as image art, but even in the art of cinema as image medium, the image was replaced by real activities in the expanded cinema movement, performances with cinematographic means on open stages. The introduction of the body into the art system was the guarantee that art took place in real time and in real space. As iconoclasts, these artists believed in the romantic tradition in the possibility of an unmediated approach to reality, similar to the Situationiste Internationale. At the same time, the departure from the picture was documented and depicted by photographs. In the end, the departure from the picture through action ended in a further picture, even if the picture was not a painting but just a photograph. So even action art could not dispel the authoritarian paradigm of photography. The ambivalent character of iconoclastic art is again evident. What can be said in favor of all forms of action art is that it created an algorithmic art, that is the art of instructions for participatory spectators, be it in theatrical plays or in media based interactive installations. Through these practices, it became possible for social enactments to gain the status of art.

These practices replaced the closed aesthetic object with open signifying fields and practices, allowing plural and multiple relations to be created by the viewer. Hence they exceed not only the object status of art, but also radically transcend the horizon of symbolic representation. Real actions replace symbolic ones. The de-representation of the work of art follows the deframing of the image. The critical transformation of modernity has reached a decisive turning point – the freeing of social actors and agents. The crossing of the boundary of the symbolic, the replacement of the object with practices and acts of communication, enables art to act aesthetically in the social realm; whereas until now it could only act socially in the aesthetic realm. Open practices replace the open work of art.

With these new practices, the crisis of representation is dissolved. We saw the evolution of modern art as a continuous reflection of the end of art as a consequence of the crisis of representation, beginning in nineteenth century and dominating twentieth century art. Now with these new practices we observe the advent of the end of the crisis of representation and therefore the end of modern art, which was the product of this crisis. Iconoclasm as axiom of modern art comes to an end. "Farewell to an idea" is therefore the correct prognosis to the fate of modern art as T. J. Clark has formulated it.⁶¹

The end to the rhetoric of the end of art,⁶² to the deconstruction of art as a rhetoric of liberation, freeing art from all its constraints, is supported and derived by an epistemological shift in image making. For hundreds of years painters were the sole experts able to make images, art had the monopoly on image making. After the invention of photography the monopoly collapsed and there arose a great number of other experts with the ability to make images. In the universe of the technical image, image production from that class of experts formerly called "artists" became marginal compared with the image production of mass media such as magazines, television, and cinema. A new class of experts, in particular the natural scientists, from astronomy to medicine, can create with the help of computers and other new tools new images from the hitherto invisible. The images of science have the tendency to believe in the power of images, to believe in the faculty of representation of the image. Science once had an iconoclastic tendency, a line of thought that intensified around 1800 with Lagrange who rejected every image and every graphical symbol in order to achieve the ideal mathematical form.

"One will not find figures in this work. The methods that I expound require neither constructions, nor geometrical or mechanical arguments, but only algebraic operations, subject to a regular and uniform course."⁶³

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— Timothy J. Clark, *Farewell to an Idea: Episodes from a History of Modernism*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1999.

— See Arthur C. Danto, *After the End of Art*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1997, and Hans Belting, *Das Ende der Kunstgeschichte? [The End of Art History?]*, Deutscher Kunstverlag, Munich, 1983, and its revised version: *Das Ende der Kunstgeschichte: eine Revision nach zehn Jahren*, Beck, Munich, 1995.

— Joseph-Louis Lagrange, *Mécanique analytique (Analytical Mechanics)*, Berlin, 1788, Preface.

With the advent of the fractal, we experienced a triumphant return of the image to mathematical sciences.⁶⁴ From mathematics to medicine, from computer supported proof methods to computer tomography, we see an iconophilic science trusting the representative power of the image. We therefore live in a period where art, as the former monopolist of the representative image, has abandoned this representative obligation. Even all media theory is critical of the role of technical images in art and entertainment, yet science, in contrast, fully embraces the options which technical machine based images offer for the representation of reality. Through science, the

image is developed one step further, in a useful way. Therefore, it could be the case that mankind will find the images of science more necessary than the images of art. Art is threatened with becoming obsolete because of its obsolete image ideology, and it is threatened with being marginalized if it does not try to compete with the new pivotal role of the image in the sciences by also developing new strategies of image making and visual representation. Art must look for a position beyond the crisis of representation and beyond the image wars, to counterpoint science. |

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⁶⁴ Benoit B. Mandelbrot, *The fractal geometry of nature*, Freeman, San Francisco, 1982.

OF EXACTITUDE IN SCIENCE

»In that Empire, the craft of Cartography attained such Perfection that the map of a Single Province covered the space of an entire City, and the Map of the Empire itself an entire Province. In the course of Time, these Extensive maps were found somehow wanting, and so the College of Cartographers evolved a Map of the Empire that was of the same Scale as the Empire and that coincided with it point for point. Less attentive to the Study of Cartography, succeeding Generations came to judge a map of such Magnitude cumbersome, and, not without Irreverence, they abandoned it to the Rigours of sun and Rain. In the western Deserts, tattered Fragments of the Map are still to be found, Sheltering an occasional Beast or beggar: in the whole Nation, no other relic is left of the Discipline of Geography.« ||

JORGE LOUIS BORGES, FROM A UNIVERSAL HISTORY OF INFAMY, 1954