

**PERSONALSTRUCTURES**  
**TIME·SPACE·EXISTENCE**



# **PERSONALSTRUCTURES**

## **LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA 2011**

**PALAZZO BEMBO**

## COLOPHON

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Translation:

Text Roman Opalka: Valeria Iacovelli, Italy

Text Thomas Pihl: Elizabeth Volk, Germany

Text Maik Wolf: Nathan Moore, Germany

Text Xing Xin: Cao Yang 曹阳, China

Print: Krüger Druck + Verlag, Germany

Edited by: GlobalArtAffairs Foundation

[www.globalartaffairs.org](http://www.globalartaffairs.org) · [www.personalstructures.org](http://www.personalstructures.org)

Published by: GlobalArtAffairs Publishing, Bonn, Germany

Distributed by: Cornerhouse Publications, [www.cornerhouse.org/books](http://www.cornerhouse.org/books)

ISBN: 978-3-941763-09-8

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May 1, 2009

**Could you have done anything to  
get more satisfaction out of your  
own existence?**

Rene Rietmeyer — Artist, Miami, USA

## **INTRODUCTION**

By Karlyn De Jongh & Sarah Gold

# INTRODUCTION

By Karlyn De Jongh & Sarah Gold

## The making of PERSONAL STRUCTURES, Venice 2011

The following words summarize some events that occurred from 2005 until 2011. They explain how this project came into existence and about difficulties and beautiful things that came our way until the realization of this exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES as part of the 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011.

In February 2005 I, Sarah, met the artist Rene Rietmeyer at the Rotterdam Art Fair. I had just finished my Masters in Art History and I was working as an assistant curator for the Caldic Collection in the Netherlands. Rene Rietmeyer is the initiator of the project PERSONAL STRUCTURES. He gave me a copy of the first publication *PERSONAL STRUCTURES: Works and Dialogues* (2003) and told me to contact him. I was 26 years old at the time and this seemed an interesting opportunity: to be able to organize exhibitions and have the chance to work at an international top level. We started to cooperate, held a symposium at the Ludwig Museum in Koblenz, Germany, that first year and published a little book about it. Besides that we organized several exhibitions in Europe, USA and Japan.

Rene liked the idea of organizing symposia, where artists can speak for themselves, and wanted to publish the spoken thoughts in significant publications. We felt that there was a necessity to do so; according to my opinion words from a direct source give a better insight than interpretations of an art historian. So we decided to ask artists whether they would be interested to participate in future symposia which we were to organize.

On the first of July 2006, when Rene and I were on our way to Moordrecht in the Netherlands for an erotic evening, Rene explained to me why Time, Space and Existence are the most fundamental subjects he can think of and that they are essential for his work. We came to the conclusion that Time, Space and Existence must be the most interesting philosophical subjects of mankind. Probably long before these topics were discussed under a Greek olive tree, the thoughts about them have been visualized in art works. So, driving in the car, we decided to organize symposia, to which we would invite artists to participate who have Time-Space-Existence as an important aspect in their work. They were to speak about their life and work in relation to these topics, and we would publish a book about that.

We started discussing our idea the days after, and one evening whilst sitting in a bathtub, we decided to separate the topics. We agreed to organize one symposium about Time, for which Amsterdam seemed to be a good location, to discuss Space in New York City, and for Existence I suggested an environment like Japan, for instance Tokyo.

We were able to arrange a symposium and exhibition date at the oldest art society in Amsterdam, Arti et Amicitiae, and started looking for artists who could speak about Time.

That winter we stayed in Miami Beach, Florida, USA, where Rene at that time had one of his studios. We had organized some exhibitions in Florida and had to be present at the art fair in Miami in order to earn some extra money to finance the beginnings of our project. We knew that we had no financial support to expect from anywhere and the finances would solely have to come out of the sales of Rene's art works.

As usual money was scarce, but we started nevertheless and, back in Europe, we had a meeting with Joseph Kosuth in Vienna, Austria. During that discussion Joseph said that he would be interested in coming to Tokyo and speak about Existence. He suggested to organize the symposium in 2008 during Sakura, the cherry blossom time.

But before going to Japan, we had to make our first symposium and exhibition in Amsterdam reality. The Symposium was scheduled to take place on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of June 2007. One month before the symposium, I, Karlyn, joined into the project. Sarah and Rene were looking for a second curator for Amsterdam. It was the 14<sup>th</sup> of May when I met them for the first time—after responding to an ad on the website of Leiden University in the Netherlands, where I was doing a Research Master. That day Sarah and Rene asked me whether I wanted to work with them and I said “yes”. After having almost all speakers for the symposium and no budget left, I, Sarah, made a call from a public phone in Vienna to Lawrence Weiner in New York. I told him that I had dreamt of him being present in Amsterdam and he said in his ever so deep voice: “Everything is possible in this life.”

It was very special to bring all these sincere people together and to hear them speak; some of them had not seen each other for decades. Michel Baudson and Roman Opalka for example, or Lawrence Weiner, Jo Baer and Klaus Honnef. Although our event was only a few days after the opening of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Venice Biennale, they all had come to us in Amsterdam.

After the symposium, we kept in contact while I, Karlyn, finished my studies and went to Italy for three months, to work at the Venice Biennale. I remember well, that one evening in September 2007, the three of us met in Venice. I was not actively involved in the project at the time, but we spoke about future plans while we were walking over the quay along the Bridge of Sighs to San Marco square. Sarah and I had just visited some Biennale

exhibitions together and spoke about how nice it would be to have our own PERSONAL STRUCTURES exhibition some day as an official part of the Biennale. At that time, it was just a dream.

As always Rene and I, Sarah, were struggling for money but we knew that, since our project was getting more complex, we needed to involve more people. In December 2007, we invited Karlyn to come to visit us in Miami, where we were attending the art fair. During that stay, Rene placed some installations in collections. Now we were financially secure (for the moment) and asked Karlyn to become part of our project.

We would have preferred to do the next symposium about Space in November in New York, but we were totally broke again and could only continue because in that September a Belgian collector, Andre Carez, bought a large installation from Rene. We were able to pay all our bills and visited Joseph Kosuth in Rome to discuss the Tokyo symposium. Google showed us that in Tokyo the cherry blossom time was most likely to begin in the first week of April. With the help of friends we were able to get a date scheduled at the Setagaya Art Museum for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> of April 2008.

In March, we flew to Tokyo together. We had rented a traditional Japanese house with sliding doors, paper walls and an old Japanese toilet and bath system. Japan was a completely different experience. We noticed that what we consider to be logic is not universal and that sometimes you have to accept not to understand the argumentation for certain decisions.

During the whole period when we were in Japan preparing our symposium, it had been very cold and wet and the trees did not show any sign that they were to blossom soon. Also, for some weeks we had not heard from Joseph Kosuth. I, Sarah, was very happy when on the 31<sup>st</sup> of March, my cell phone rang and I heard Joseph saying “I am in Tokyo, let's meet”. The next day, out of nowhere, the cherry blossoms opened up everywhere: Sakura had started.

The two days of the symposium were very interesting in an unusual way. We were unable to understand most of the contributions because our speakers mainly spoke Japanese. Besides that, we were not even able to interpret the expressions and gestures correctly, since Japanese have such a different culture. What we remember most from those two days was Toshikatsu Endo, who represented Existence merely by the sound of his voice and his being—and the lunch breaks with everybody eating sushi and sashimi in the museum park under the cherry blossoms. We stayed in Japan for some more days after the symposium, and it was during that time, walking between the cedar trees of the Old Tokaido route and experiencing space on the lake by Mount Fuji, that we really felt Existence in Japan.

After returning to the USA, we were broke as usual. I, Sarah, managed to place some works of other artists in collections and Rene worked on a large installation for a public space in Japan. We recovered financially, but in September 2008 the artworld almost came to a financial standstill.

Different people advised us that it would be wise to postpone the last symposium and the printing of our book *PERSONAL STRUCTURES: TIME-SPACE-EXISTENCE*, but we felt that if we would do that, we might never be able to continue and complete this project. So, all of us decided not to stop, but spend as little money as possible and continue to give this project our best efforts, the maximum of our capabilities.

I, Sarah, got into contact with Eungie Joo, a director at the New Museum in New York, and she arranged that her museum would host our symposium about Space on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> of April 2009. At that time, we did not have any fixed speakers yet, but after some telephone calls we were able to invite a very interesting group of artists. Unfortunately Rene and I were not able to attend the symposium we had organized. In real life we were living like nomads and therefore we were not able to get the visa in time which the USA required to “work” at our symposium. But nevertheless, through communication via Skype from a holiday home in the Netherlands and with the help of Karlyn, who was able to be present in New York, it became a fantastic event. Robert Barry, Peter Halley, Richard

Tuttle, Keith Sonnier and all the others, they had taken this symposium serious. Rene and I could only follow it from a distance.

Now we had completed all three symposia and had recorded a lot of spoken text. It was time to settle down somewhere in Europe in order to finish our publication. Rene had been invited to participate at the 53<sup>rd</sup> Venice Biennale, therefore we decided to rent an apartment in Venice. Also, we had been asked to organize a small symposium during the opening of the Biennale where we invited Marina Abramović; her appearance was very impressive.

Being so closely involved, it was a good chance for us to learn about several aspects of the Venice Biennale. Many artists were there, either for the openings of their exhibitions or to just be present. We met many of the artists of our project like Lee Ufan, Miyajima, Kosuth, Dan Graham and others, and we also made new contacts, for example with the collector Gerhard Lenz and the artists Fred Wilson and Xing Xin.

In October 2009 we completed the publication *PERSONAL STRUCTURES: TIME-SPACE-EXISTENCE*, and it became time for new projects. Sarah, Rene and I started living together in Venice and the idea of organizing an exhibition as part of the Venice Biennale came to the foreground again. It seemed an excellent opportunity to pursue our wish to create more international awareness about Time, Space and Existence. The Venice Biennale: you can reach 100,000's of people from all parts of the world who are all interested in contemporary art. Sarah and I, however, had never organized a very large and complex exhibition before. The city of Bregenz in Austria gave us the chance to try and learn, and in January 2010 we organized an exhibition there, presenting 27 artists. It became a wonderful exhibition in a large beautiful Palais, which almost nobody visited—but we learned a lot.

After Austria, we started with the realization of our series *PERSONAL STRUCTURES ART PROJECTS*. These Art Projects ran parallel to all the other things we had to do, such as earning money to finance our projects. They were very interesting and resulted not only in beautiful

books, but also in a more intensified relationship with the artists involved. Take Lawrence Weiner for example: Sarah and I spent 24 hours with him on his houseboat in the harbor of Amsterdam. Or with Hermann Nitsch, who staged Sarah and me as models in his *130<sup>th</sup> Aktion* in Naples: naked on the cross, being ‘fed’ blood. It was after our Art Project with Lawrence Weiner that we took the first steps for this Biennale exhibition: an appointment with Paolo Scibelli, director of Collateral Events at *la Biennale*. It was a very promising meeting. We showed him the big, red book we had published and told him about our dreams. Paolo Scibelli gave us all the support and hope he could and told us about the procedure for making an application. “First, you need a space.”

We started to search, but finding a suitable exhibition space was not easy. There was the option to take over the Scottish pavilion, but we were not totally convinced whether it would fit our goals. We had also seen a larger, much more expensive, but better located space, which had never been used as an exhibition space before and was in a horrible state, but we liked it best: Palazzo Bembo.

In May 2010, it was still a financially difficult time for us and we also owed the printing company a large amount of money for the publication of our last book. Nevertheless, we went to Naples, for our Art Project with Hermann Nitsch. It was an intense week, with many unusual experiences. And directly after that week we needed a short break and the three of us drove with our old car to Sicily. There we decided to go for the full risk, to rent Palazzo Bembo.

Back in Venice, in the beginning of June, we went to Rialto Bridge to look at Palazzo Bembo. We were standing there, the three of us together. It was a special moment, knowing that it was the start of an enormous project. I can still hear Rene say “Don’t worry, the only bad thing that can really happen is a natural disaster.”

Now that we had decided to dedicate ourselves to this exhibition in Palazzo Bembo, the next step was to get the space secured. After eight months of negotiations, we finally signed the lease contract in February this year.

It was still a long way to get where we are today. Being totally broke and starting a project like this, seemed very naïve. Although not even having been able to pay off the previous publication, we went ahead. During our many long drives through Europe in order to visit our contacts, we developed the structure of our exhibition. We decided to present solo statements; artists would get their own room to show whatever they wanted to present. And although we did not have the space secured yet, we could not stay put any longer. We had to start asking artists if they would be interested to participate in our Palazzo Bembo project and to make arrangements with them. We spoke, we wrote, and ended up with an initial first list of names. It was diverse as always, artists from all over the world and of different ages: Peter Halley from the USA, Toshikatsu Endo from Japan, Andrew Putter from South Africa, the 29-year-old Xing Xin from China and even Carl Andre.

By the end of October 2010, the first artist came to see the space: Roman Opalka. The Palazzo was still in a disastrous condition. But Opalka seemed to have ‘Venice experience’ and said that this was quite ‘normal’—he seemed very positive. Days later we had a meeting with Joseph Kosuth in his Rome studio. We explained our plans for Venice to him. He did not say “yes”, but he did not say “no” either. He suggested to, just in case, reserve a space for him.

Shortly after that, Lee Ufan was to visit Venice and again it looked to become an interesting encounter. We did not really know Lee Ufan very well yet and we could not foresee how he might react, seeing the Palazzo. Arriving from Paris with an enormous delay because of a snowstorm at the airport, it did not seem a good situation to convince Lee Ufan to participate, but he seemed fine. We had coffee together at Hotel Monaco and explained our project, after that we went to the Palazzo to look at the space. Since we still had not officially rented the Palazzo, nothing had been done yet to continue the renovations. But it did not seem to bother Lee Ufan. He climbed over scaffolds, slid through narrow hallways, until he had seen several rooms. He seemed to like the Palazzo and chose a corner room stat-

ing that he wanted to cover the floor with white marble stones, combining it with a painting and a 'medium size' stone. He also understood very well our intentions and situation and indicated that he would support our project as well as he possibly could.

With the upcoming deadline for the Biennale application, the organizational work became more intense. We worked non-stop. There were many new aspects we had to deal with and they all seemed necessary steps in order to get to where we are today. At the end of December, we were 'prepared' for the Biennale. While I stayed in Venice to finish our application, Sarah and Rene went to Belgium to meet with a collector. What at first seemed to become the placing of 'just' one installation, turned out to be a very good day for our project. With the help of the collector Andre Carez, Sarah was able to place several of Rene's installations in different homes. We were able to pay off all our debts and we became financially stable enough to start losing money on our Palazzo Bembo project. Again Andre Carez, this time with the help of his friends, rescued us and our project.

During the preparations for our exhibition, at the beginning of January 2011, the three of us went to Tenerife for our next Art Project with Arnulf Rainer. On our bed we had made photos requested by Rainer, showing Sarah and myself dancing together naked, with a veil. After giving him the photos for this first session to draw over in Tenerife, the series started to develop. Rainer developed new ideas, had new requests. We made many more photos on Tenerife, and he used them all. Even when we were back in Venice again, the requests kept coming. The best, he said, would of course be if we could return to Tenerife...

It was also right after our return to Venice that the contract for Palazzo Bembo reached its final state: we were invited to come to Vicenza, Italy, to sign it. There we met Maurizio, the main owner of Palazzo Bembo, for the first time. It became an interesting relationship with potential for the future. The next day, 3 February 2011, I called Paolo Scibelli in his Biennale office. "I was just about to send

you your confirmation." That was fantastic news! We had become an official collateral event of the 54<sup>th</sup> Biennale di Venezia, and we had just leased Palazzo Bembo the day before.

A few days later, we drove 1400km to Cholet in France to see François Morellet. It was a very beautiful and at the same time sad meeting, knowing that he would probably not live long anymore; we had met him thirty years too late. When we told him about the possibilities to organize additional Biennale exhibitions in the years to come, Morellet seemed very conscious of the fact that he would not be alive to experience that. We said goodbye and drove away with a big plastic tube containing his work *Lamentable*—the first artwork for our exhibition.

At the end of February, Sarah and I went back to Tenerife for our second meeting with Arnulf Rainer. This time we mainly had to work on our additionally planned Art Edition with Rainer, and to make the film that would be included in our Art Project. It was during this week in February that we realized how global our project actually is. We received an email from Judy Millar. "A major earthquake has destroyed the city of Christchurch here in New Zealand the day before yesterday—unfortunately my work was being made in the city and..." You believe it happens far away, but it does have an impact on our project, our own lives as well. It became even more dramatic when a few weeks later Toshikatsu Endo brought his 2000 kg weighing wooden sculpture, together with the very fragile work of Tatsuo Miyajima, in a container to the port of Yokohama in Japan. One hour after the container was placed there, the natural disasters happened. First the massive earthquake and then the tsunami. Via internet we followed the news and saw many videos of containers being swept away. Many people died, and we heard nothing about our container for over a week. Then the Japanese sent us an email, the container was to leave the harbor on the 26<sup>th</sup> of March.

At the end of March, we had to submit our final list of all the participating artists of our exhibition to the Biennale. We contacted all the artists again to make sure everything would go well and to confirm. Weiner, flexible as always, immediately sent the instructions for the

production of his artwork. Marina Abramović sent an email that we could show her film *Confession* and even Carl Andre promised by telephone one of his latest works. Everybody confirmed and finally, last but not least—one week after the deadline we had given him—Kosuth informed us "...in any case, do know that I will participate in your show. This is what I've been wanting to tell you."

In the weeks before the opening, our days were filled with arranging many different things: furniture, marble stones, hidden frescoes, new walls, permissions, installing light for the whole space, banners, the first catalogue, preview parties, press activities, getting the right audio and video equipment, renting additional apartments, artwork transportation, storage and so on. With the assistance of several students from IUAV, the university in Venice, we managed to transform Palazzo Bembo into a high quality exhibition space.

Then, the artist Yuko Sakurai arrived from Paris, and she immediately started to create her works in the room dedicated to her. Judy Millar from New Zealand and her assistant also worked non-stop for two weeks to install her 'painting in space'. SASAKI arrived from Los Angeles, Toshikatsu Endo from Tokyo and also Andrew Putter from Cape Town and Johannes Girardon from New York came to construct their individual installation. Rene also painted his Boxes in his room and he finished just before the arrival of his artistic sparring partner Joseph Kosuth, whose ego was immediately very present. Lee Ufan came to place his stone, painting and metal plate and arranged the lighting—and returned several times for new encounters and adjustments. Peter Halley, Arnulf Rainer, herman de vries, Tatsuo Miyajima... all came to Palazzo Bembo. It was beautiful to see our exhibition grow like this. Walking through the exhibition and seeing all these artists working... Or experiencing encounters between artists who had never met before or had not seen each other for many years—Kosuth and Peter Halley or Lee Ufan and Toshikatsu Endo, Lee Ufan and Arnulf Rainer... seemingly from different worlds. With surprise visits from several artists, such as Günther Uecker and Gotthard Graubner, creating the exhibition became even more special.

31 May 2011, the night of our VIP preview opening. Besides the Chinese artist Xing Xin, who would spend the next 30 days exhibiting himself in his prison, almost all of the exhibiting artists were present. We had organized drinks and snacks in the courtyard and our exhibition was flooded with people. We counted almost 1500 visitors and for a moment we had to close the doors to stop people from entering the Palazzo.

In the days after, they all came: the Board of Trustees from the Guggenheim in New York, from K21 in Düsseldorf and the Städel Museum in Frankfurt, Germany. The president of Austria, several groups of collectors and also Fumio Nanjo with his Board from the Mori Art Museum in Tokyo. Curators, museum directors, journalists and critics, artists, everybody came to see our exhibition. Particularly special was the day we had organized a brunch for Andre Carez and his friends from Belgium, who had financially rescued us last December. While we were drinking a Bellini on the balcony overlooking the Grand Canal, Gerhard Lenz and Roman Opalka joined us. It would be the last time we would see Roman before he died one month later on 6 August. Time passing.

Today is Saturday 10 September 2011. We are now approximately half way through the exhibition. Although we are still under considerable financial pressure, so far the exhibition has given us what we had been hoping for, an exciting and interesting life. And we feel that we have achieved all we could achieve within our intellectual and financial possibilities, in the most honest and sincere way we are capable of. Of course, there are artists who should have been included in our exhibition, but if we survive, we hope to be present during the next Venice Biennale as well—at Palazzo Bembo.



## THE ARTISTS

# MARINA ABRAMOVIĆ

By Karlyn De Jongh & Sarah Gold

*Marina Abramović (\*1946 in Belgrade, Serbia) has been a performance artist since the early 1970s. Using her own body as the subject as well as the medium for her work, she has pioneered the use of performance as a visual art form. Her works are an exploration of her own physical and mental limits. At the PERSONAL STRUCTURES symposium at the Venice Biennale 2009, Abramović tells about her work:*

“Performance is one of the most difficult art forms: you have to deal with presence. You have to be there, here and now, 100 percent. If you’re not there 100 percent, the public is like a dog: they could sense an insecurity and just leave. What I mean is: you can perform in front of a public with your body, but your mind can be in Honolulu. The idea is how to actually create a piece so that the consciousness, your body and the moment of Now is there. Then you really have something; then you really have a dialogue. Not only you, but also the public has to be there. This is why in staging dangerous moments, or staging things that even the artist has never done, there is fear because he doesn’t know how he is going to succeed. That keeps you in the present time, you’re not going to wander somewhere else, because you’re there with the artist and the artist is there in the space too. So it’s about here and now. You know: the past we know, it’s already happened; the future is not clear. But the present is the only thing we can deal with.

There is a beautiful sentence from Bruce Naumann that he always likes to say: “Art is a matter of life and death.” It sounds melodramatic, but it is so true. If you take whatever you do as a matter of life and death, being there 100 percent, then things really happen. When it is

less than one hundred percent, it is not good art. It’s so hard to do it, but it is the only way. And this means: no compromises.

Time and space are quite important. If you’re talking in the here and now, the actual time should not exist. So, at the same time you have a contradiction. Because you have to have a space where things have to happen in order to determine this space inside where things happen. And then you have to allot a certain amount of time that you are going to give to yourself to make things happen, in which things are going to happen. If I say, for example, I will be performing for ten hours, I don’t even know what it looks like, ten hours. So you enter a kind of unknown construction, which you created for yourself. But then you have to have the willpower to actually keep your word. No matter how difficult it is. You give it a certain time. You don’t give up; you do it, no matter what.

The moment I decide I’m entering this construction I make, you’re not your little self anymore. When I cut myself, cutting garlic in the kitchen, I cry. But if I do it in front of the public, I do it for a purpose. I do it for the idea... I’m doing it with the purpose of giving the message to others. You’re actually unhurt. You’re totally protected. [...] Everything is about mind. The body is a tool. And the mind controls it. Our mind is the subject we need to understand, how to use it. We have to ask: “Why am I doing this?” [...] if you do things you fear and you do things you don’t know, there is a very big chance that you will actually open up your consciousness. If you’re afraid of pain, this is exactly what you have to do to find out what this pain is. When you open the door to pain, you’ll find out that you actually might be able to control it. You’ll be free from the fear of pain—which is a great feeling.”





# CARL ANDRE

By Peter Lodermeier

*Carl Andre (\*1935, Quincy, MA, USA) is one of the leading representatives of Minimal Art. His radical sculpture and poetry have fundamentally shifted the definitions and boundaries of art. Typical for his sculptures since the early sixties are prefabricated elements, such as bricks, metal plates or wood beams, arranged in geometric shapes and mostly displayed on the floor. From 1960 to 1964, Andre worked as a shunter for the Pennsylvania Railroad, an experience which was to influence his work as well as his self-image as a working artist. Carl Andre lives and works in New York City.*

#1: The only way we can 'perceive' time is change. For the public, the most obvious change in an artistic career is success. I like what seems to me to be your honest and heartfelt statement about Konrad Fischer, that without him, your "life as an artist would have ended long ago." Today, your work is shown in all important museums all over the world and is part of art history. What impact has this change from an unknown, ambitious artist to a 'classic' had on you artistically and personally?

#2: A few weeks ago, I listened to a young artist from Vienna give a lecture with the interesting title: *All I don't know about space*. As a sculptor, you worked with space for more than 4 decades. What are the most important things you have learned about space and what do you still not know about it?

#3: In the Author's Statement of the publication *Cuts. 1959-2004* (MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 2005), James Meyer writes on the "anti-humanist thrust" of your work as well as your "anti-anthropocentric" practice (p. 17). One of his arguments is that your art exists in the

room with us but does not exist for us. Do you agree with him? Is it possible at all that art is not for us? In an interview with Barbara Tuchman you said once "Man is the measure of all things" (*Cuts*, p. 231). This is the classical statement of antique humanism (Protagoras). What are your thoughts about the relation of art and (anti-)humanism, art and (anti-)anthropocentrism?

#4: In 1979, you called your quest to develop an art "utterly free of human associations" "absurd", but, at the same time, you claimed that it has been exactly the "absurd impossibility of that quest which made my work possible." (*Cuts*, p. 291). It seems that contradictions and absurdity can be an extremely fruitful source for an artistic oeuvre. Absurdity is a keyword of existentialist philosophers: they talk about the absurdity of life, death, and existence as a fact we as human beings have to deal with. What are your thoughts concerning absurdity as an artistic as well as existential precondition?

#5: Another contradiction is that your work, on the one hand, is considered one of the most advanced positions in contemporary sculpture and, on the other hand, as you put it in 1982, it is "intensely conservative in that its form can be traced back to the earliest Neolithic structures" (*Cuts*, p. 174). You also claimed that the "earliest experiences" from your childhood "are the quarry of my art." Is there any progress in art? Or is (good and relevant) art always just about the anthropological basics, about the earliest personal as well as generic experiences?



1. I CERTAINLY WAS UNKNOWN BUT I HAVE HAD ONLY THE AMBITION TO MAKE THE BEST WORK POSSIBLE. I HAVE NEVER ASPIRED<sup>D</sup> TO BE FAMOUS. FAME BELONGS TO OTHER PEOPLE, NOT TO ONE'S SELF.
2. I THINK THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A SPACE & A LIFE-SUPPORTING ENVIRONMENT. AN ASTRONAUT WHO FALLS OUT OF HIS CAPSULE STILL ~~IS~~ IS IN SPACE BUT HAS LOST HIS LIFE-SUPPORTING ENVIRONMENT.
3. LIFE IS WHAT MAKES ART POSSIBLE. NEITHER GOD NOR NATURE IS INTERESTED IN ART OR MAKING ART. ART IS SOLELY A HUMAN ACTIVITY.
4. ART IS NEITHER ABSURD NOR RATIONAL. ART IS THE ARTIST'S ATTEMPT TO LEAVE SOME EVIDENCE OF THE ARTIST'S EXISTENCE.
5. HENRY MOORE SAID THAT ART-MAKING<sup>I</sup> IS THE RECAPITULATION OF OUR EARLIEST EXPERIENCES. THE ARTIST MERELY CONTINUES AN ACTIVITY WHICH EVERY CHILD PRACTICES AT SOME TIME OR OTHER.

@ carl zudre  
DÜSSELDORF  
20 JUN 2008

P.S.: BRANCUSI ONCE SAID THAT ALL PEOPLE TRY THEIR HANDS AT MAKING<sup>OF</sup> ART AT ONE TIME OR OTHER BUT FEW KNOW WHICH<sup>A</sup> THEIR WORKS ARE ART.



## HERMAN DE VRIES

chance changes  
change chances

the process of being  
the process of destruction  
(de struction)  
the process of becoming

the being of process  
de struction as process  
(as part of "the process")  
becoming of being  
being of becoming

the process as process  
the process as being  
the being as process

de struction  
and re ligious

(re ligious as  
be coming being)  
and being as...





## TOSHIKATSU ENDO

By Karlyn De Jongh

*With his work Toshikatsu Endo (\*1950, Japan) addresses human existence. The artist wishes to return to the side of today's life that seems to have disappeared; his art is a device to go back to the essences of human existence. With materials, such as bones, wood, water and fire, his mostly circular sculptures have a primal feel to them. When standing in or in front of Endo's work, you know you are confronted with ancient times.*

*Karlyn De Jongh: What does an encounter with your work look like for you? How do you yourself deal with your work? How do you encounter your own sculpture?*

Toshikatsu Endo: For me, the creation of my work is an act that connects the most important elements of human existence. In that way it is a correspondence. I think that for us who live today—not only for art—that our entire surrounding environment is inside of modernism and therefore we live parallel to the context of modernism. As for the material and how it refers to ancient contents: I talk about this from my modernist perspective.

Well, although I indicated the above as a prerequisite, I carefully avoided connecting the context of leading edge contemporary art with the basis of my own expression. For me it is opposite: I try to look at the foundation from the point of the primitive or origin, the place of mankind. This is because the matter of leading contemporary art has the possibility of falling into an extremely peripheral situation, and is like the media that include general aspects of mankind.

Of course, even though I explain the primitive life of mankind, it is impossible to experience it in reality and it remains in an imaginative

range. Because I look at contemporary art from a primordial viewpoint, I got the confidence that it is a considerably rich and effective critical perspective. That's why, for my artwork, I use the element of origin from the maximum limit of my thoughts. In fact, earth, air, sun, water, fire, man, woman, life, death, sex, etc... they are the pure essence and I start facing them with imaginative power. Because of that I came to think of my sculpture as a device for gathering together these essences.

*KDJ: Your work has an element of sacrifice. Making your work, do you feel that has to do with sacrificing your own life as an artist, too? How do you feel about the act of making art?*

TE: Sacrifice is not a necessary condition for artistic expression. Rather, I would say that there is not so much art that contains an element of sacrifice. But from the beginning of my art creation, I wanted this element of sacrifice; I wanted my art expression to be the medium that reaches into the deepest part of human's animalistic side. As a result of my search, I went into the direction of questioning life, death and religion and I even went to the basis of human life: to the matter of sacrifice.

Sacrifice is happening in a community kind of place that is prescribed by a synergetic imagination. That's why sacrifice does not work out by peering off from the community: if you try to use the phenomenon of sacrificial ceremony as a matter of art expression or if you try to make an individual object. And also, in today's world, the ritual of the typical sacrifice has been already lost. From that point, I considered sacrifice as the only possible matter. The space-time of sacrifice had lived realistically. I got into its imaginative power and then it influenced my work as one of representational expression.



But a request for sacrifice has not been completely lost. Sacrifice is a matter of community, so until there exists a community, the sacrifice mechanism exists in a latent way. And it appears with death, life, anima, sex, and around eroticism. By the way, I am not sure if the artist can continuously make art in which he is taking himself as the object of sacrifice.

*KDJ: Sacrifice is often related to a hope for something to happen in the future. What is it that you hope for? What drives you in making your work?*

TE: Without any exception, artworks have the desire to go beyond the dimension characterized by the daily. And they approach the dimension that becomes inevitably holy. So for me, going deeply into sacrifice is one of the opportunities to get close to the dimension that goes beyond daily life, towards transcendence.

In ancient times, sacrifice existed as a kind of system to defecate the dirt that accumulated inside the whole community. In ancient times, sacrifice was important and incorporated in the society. It was also a mysterious mechanism. But today, the inevitable form of sacrifice is hidden in a disassembled way behind our complicated society. That is why, the factum of my art is a temporary device, which has the wish to return—even only a little—to the side of today's life that has disappeared: memory and soul.

*KDJ: It seems that Void—which is also the title of your large wooden circle that you show in our exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES—is for you a place where you can experience life and death. What do you do when you—symbolically—burn this Void? Do life and death come to a standstill for a moment? Does the ecstasy you feel relate to a reviving of your animalistic side? What about the experience of death?*

TE: I suppose, the 'Void characteristic' is a hidden and enclosed part of the real world and is itself 'external'. The act of burning the 'Void' is a metaphor for approaching the action of sacrifice.

Of course, in reality it is impossible to burn the 'Void', because it is a non-physical existence. I create the 'Void' to symbolize the object as

sculpture. Then I burn it. I desire to change the object from a daily thing into a non-daily transcendent existence. I do this through the realistic process of creation, burning the piece and destroying it. These are never feverish actions. Rather, the process is intended calmly and realistically and by carefully avoiding danger. But at the same time, it is true that I get the feeling of a vague affection of ecstasy in the center of my body and my brain. This feeling is existence as a multidirectional and polysemous matter, by getting closer to the place where death and trance coexist impartibly. This momentum causes the chemical reaction between body and language.

*KDJ: You have spoken about Eastern and Western culture, that with regard to the Void there are many similarities and that they have the Void in their centre. Would it ever be possible for a person to become the Void? Is there for you also an ethical aspect related to this, a question of how to live?*

TE: Hypothetically spoken, to embody the 'Void characteristics', a person must be completely covered by silence. My image of 'Void characteristic' is the place to accomplish a complete absence of volition, thought and emotion. Even of Jesus and Buddha, we cannot say that their existence is one of complete silence. So, we could say they are incomplete as embodying or personifying the meaning of the 'Void characteristic'.

My 'Void theory' is a kind of communal theory. For that reason, the meaning of the 'Void characteristic' is not just 'Void' itself. It is the imaginative power by the members of the community who surround the 'Void'. In fact, the 'Void theory' is a fantasy of harmony happening inside the community. That 'Void' is the complete 'Void': it becomes a dimension that is the situation of complete non-existence and non-volition.

My 'Void theory' does not materialize specifically in the realistic world. In the end, it is an ideal shape or matrix. So, that is why it does not completely materialize in my sculpture either. In theory, my way of sculptural expression is an act of accumulating value. It is not more or less than that.





## JOHANNES GIRARDONI

By Karlyn De Jongh & Sarah Gold

Johannes Girardoni is an Austrian-born, American sculptor and installation artist. Girardoni's works are reductive investigations at the intersection of light and material through which he explores the continuously shifting relationship between reality and image. Girardoni is best known for his *Light Reactive Organic Sculpture*, in which the primary material vocabulary—found wood, beeswax, pigment—and its physical constellation, become both the carrier of an explicitly painterly event, while also being the foundation of an immaterial phenomenon. The works are often examinations of phenomenological processes, where a hollow or empty space—a tangible emptiness—turns out to be the actual center. Opposites and contradictions form fundamental structures in Girardoni's work. His orchestration of material and light, presence and absence, things found and things formed, all resist clear fixation, thereby maintaining and creating works with their own non-derivable reality.

Among Girardoni's recent works are site-specific sculptures and installations that blur the boundary between the disciplines of architecture and sculpture, re-orchestrate the "materials" of light and sound, and manipulate *presence* and *representation*. After spending time in West Africa on a research expedition with architects and scientists in 2008, Girardoni's focus shifted to a critical inquiry of contemporary culture. The core of this discourse takes place at the intersection of digital information and analog material. The works draw attention to how our understanding of reality in the digital age increasingly appears at the interface of real and virtual content. Girardoni's new over-painted, photo-based works titled *Exposed Icons* segue into this inquiry. These

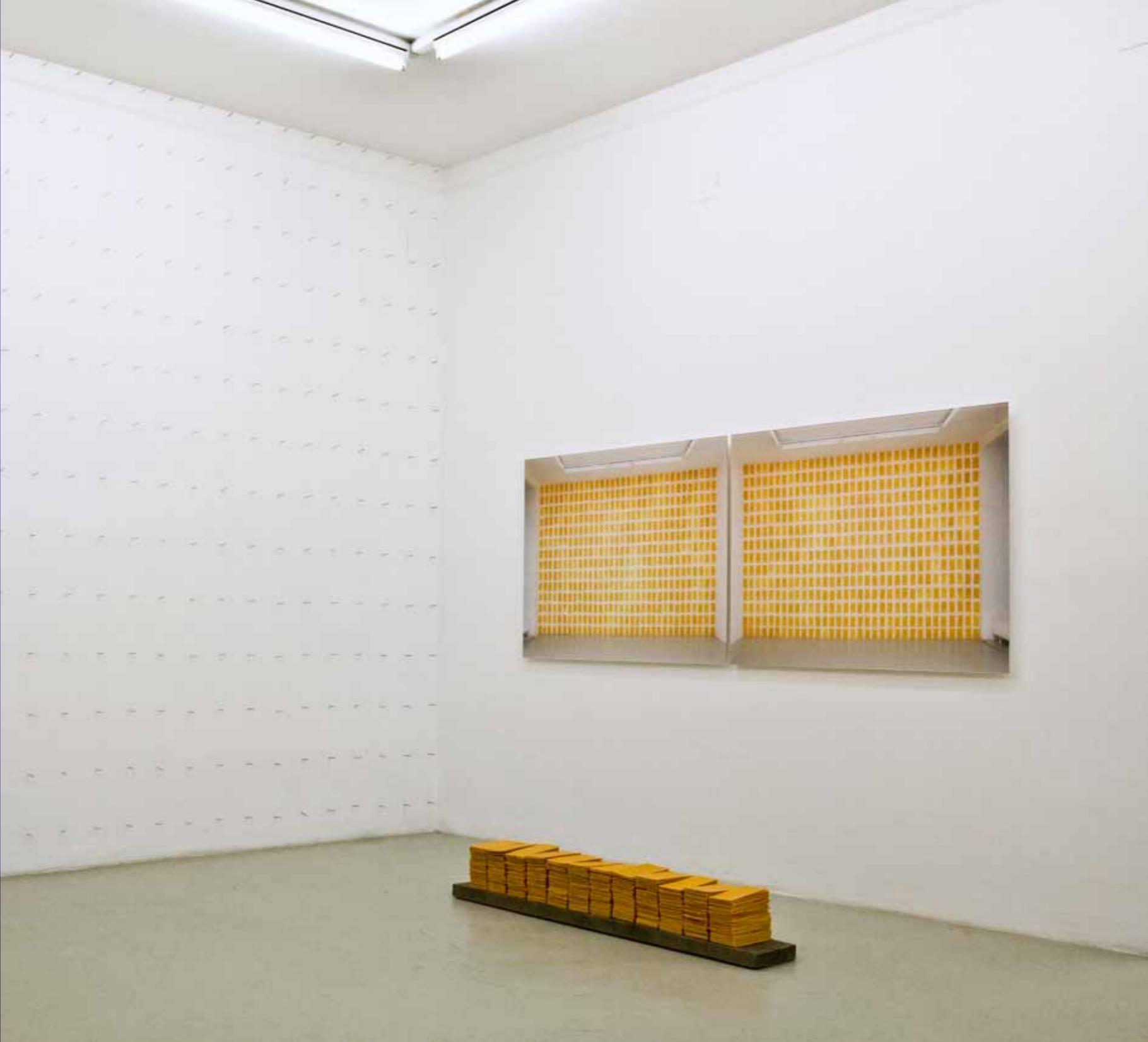
works question the integrity of the photograph as a carrier of archived information by deconstructing imagery of advertising billboards and using both digital pigment and material paint, to compress the virtual information of the photograph and the physical structure of the paint into a single pictorial architecture.

Girardoni's recent projects span a wide array of media, but the core of his inquiry is rigorously situated at the intersection of light and matter, and intends to blur the line between material and virtual content. In his new sculptures and installations, Girardoni investigates the boundary of manufactured states and perceptual events by transposing electromagnetic waves of light onto the mechanical waves of sound through *Spectro-Sonic Refrequecers*, in effect making light audible. Girardoni immerses viewers in environments that integrate natural phenomena and digital information in subversive ways. The physical and virtual architecture of his work explores the limits of our sensory apparatus through an interface of digitally reconfigured information and naturally occurring perceptual phenomena. In the current cultural context, where the real and the virtual have started to converge and cross-pollinate in unprecedented ways, Girardoni confronts a new reality with constructs that combine digital and material expression in spatial, atmospheric and conceptually immersive work. Girardoni deliberately places the viewer at the center of these constructs and proposes a shifting definition of perception.

The artist lives and works in New York and Los Angeles.







## PETER HALLEY

By Karlyn De Jongh

For Peter Halley (\*1953, New York, USA) space has always been the subject of painting—painting, which he understands as anything that involves an image. According to Halley, we live increasingly in a 2-dimensional world of images. The flatness of painting reflects this; the imagistic world is less affected by our physical or 3-dimensional spatial experience.

Halley's work is autobiographical and has a lot to do with New York, the city he moved to in 1980. During this time, Halley had a distinct sense of isolation. That partly had to do with living alone and finding himself isolated from others. The space of New York became the primary drive of his work. The paintings Halley made in 1980 had cinder block walls and addressed a walled-up space, a denial of the infinite or transcendental space of 'Abstract Expressionism' and 'Color Field Painting'. At that time, for Halley, there was a transition from an interest in the natural world—the expansive American landscape, a probing into what physical or natural space was about—to an inquiry into social space. Halley's work is an inquiry of social space: a space that we humans create, rather than the natural space created around us.

In the mid-1980s there was a transformation of the space he felt he was in: it was the first time that the flow of information or communication emerged above the ground line. It was in those days that Halley heard of Jean Baudrillard and his emphasis on the hermetic self-referentiality of our social or technological situation: the way we are in fact more-and-more separated from the forces of the natural world: if we want cold air, we turn on air-conditioning.

Halley became interested in our spatial experience and our psychological experience in society, which to him is determined by physical isolation. Being in a car or at home in front of the computer, we may be interacting with other bodies, but these are not physical, social experiences. According to Halley, our spatial experience in our society is not a free determination of how we use space, but is more-and-more governed by the social structures that have been built by others—be they streets, highways, or any other kind of transportation system. He believes we spend a lot of time in isolated situations—in cars, office cubicles, etc—which seems to be in contrast to the history of the city: a city is a gathering place. That idea of the heterogeneity of the city is essential to the development of humanism. Isolated space and the idea that you communicate or connect with others, but only through predetermined networks, had become an obsession with him. Halley's concern with how communication goes in and out of these 'prisons', has become the basis of his exploration of space for the last thirty years.

Peter Halley started painting during the time of the telephone monopoly and cable TV. Now, we have a fully developed Internet and with it come these entire social networks, this multi-modal access to information and to each other. Halley thinks that in some ways his works tend to reflect his personal experience as he goes through life: as decade follows decade, our lives become more complex and multi-connected. At the same time, he believes that his attention to this subject also reflects the proliferation of communication, as seen in the last fifteen years.



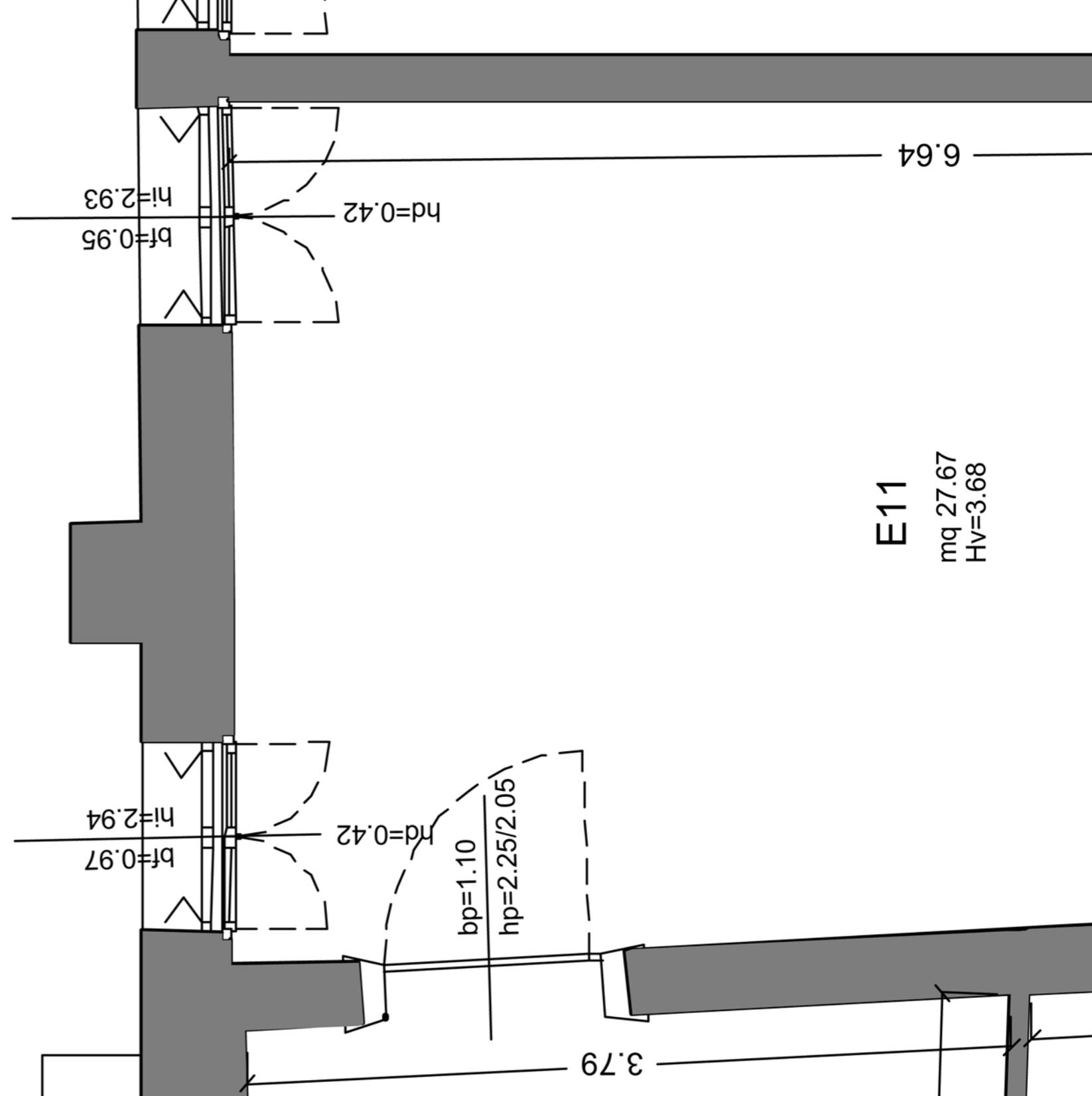


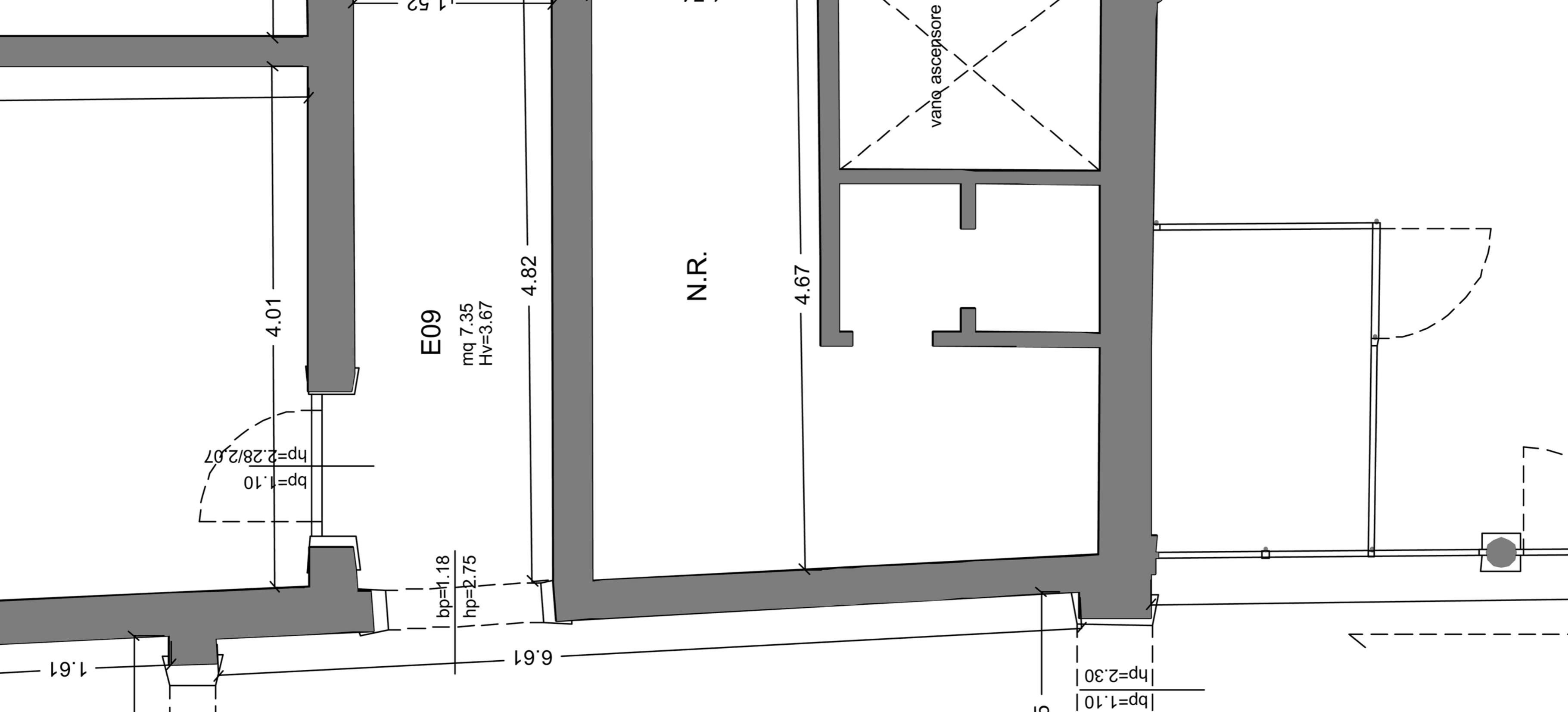


JOSEPH KOSUTH

## 'The Mind's Image of Itself'

When the book comes to the pages that correspond to the end of the building it is modeled upon, it has automatically come to an end. To go on would spoil the design. The analogy between the abstract structure of the written contents and the solid object on whose shape it has been projected gives the book a strange transparency. The reader looks through the words, or past them, and, visualizing the object, can intuit the depths of the analogy. *Mary Douglas*









## MELISSA KRETSCHMER

By Stella Cervasio

### THE DULL SHADE OF THE TREES IN THE GARDEN

The excessive use of consonants in the English words “structure” and “texture” represents the tautology of a linear stratification (texture) built also through overlapping, which creates volume, generates thickness (structure). Colliding consonants, without airy vowels, indicate the “substance”, the privilege of the matter. While the texture is the time winding into the space, the narration (text), the structure is the building, the supporting framework. Both are represented in Melissa Kretschmer’s works.

Two very biographical facts bind the artist to her way of working. Kretschmer, born in Santa Monica, comes from a real “empire” of light—every image that California, as geographical place, evokes is never “dull afternoons with no joys no pains” (Zucchero Fornaciari, *Donne*, a song, famous in 80s), on the contrary, it recalls sparklings filtered across the indented palm leaves which break and reconstruct, refract the blue. One day Melissa—we have not to forget that in Greek Melissa means bee—probably wondered if it was possible to reproduce the light in a picture. Surely she had had a series of successful attempts (of different kind, from the Michelangelo Merisi’s characters rising from the dark, till *Wolken* (Clouds) by Gerhardt Richter made in 1970, where light oddly seems to come from the outside to enlighten a magic sky and clouds passing by). “I understood that art itself is a form of light”, Kretschmer said in 2008 explaining the installation *Plane Series*, a cycle of wall works made of wax, graphite, paper and thin plywood layers, half way between writing and sculpture, where

beeswax replaced glass, the material she used in previous works for its solidity and transparency. The wax, painted on wooden or paper sheets, reaches different levels and types of brilliance, making it difficult to perceive the thickness, which can only be caught from the section of the picture. The work so becomes a palimpsest, where we can read the “days”, unit of measure of time used in frescos of Renaissance, for which work is the main link to the world and its representation. Karlyn De Jongh and Sarah Gold, curators of *PERSONAL STRUCTURES* in Palazzo Bembo, invited Melissa Kretschmer because she works with the pair “matter/light”, where “matter” is meant as a non-reflecting, blind, matt material. Kretschmer considers light and shade as agents which allow to reveal or hide the process she uses to build the structure of her jobs. In her recent works the use of laminated wood is characterized by a single tone for each foil (again a stratification, a palimpsest), colour—that Kretschmer never adds to the matter, leaving the original one, at most, the colour derived by the rising in temperature (wax heating)—is the result, as usual, of an overlapping, again a creation of a palimpsest, which, according to the artist, communicate the sense of time.

The smell of beeswax is not actually a sweet smell, its intensity depends on the temperature, and leaves its mark and stays on mind. We could define it a smell that can characterize a place, without imbuing walls and furnishings. Once the work has been removed, it disappears. As regards to the colour: Kretschmer does not “use” it, rather she “reaches” it, as if it were more an effect than



a defined unmistakable sensation. The yellow from wax, the greenish from glass or silicone are more additional, “multilayer colours” than a single and artificial colour, so they are closer to “naturalness”, “in my mind, this is something different from what we can get through different coats of colour”, the artist explains.

Glass, silicone, wood, wax contribute to create “sensible pictures”. The visual, tactile, olfactory and malleable warm of wood, silicone and beeswax are memory and nature. Another bees product, the honey, was the metaphor Joseph Beuys used in *Dokumenta of Kassel* in 1977 to recreate the energy transmissible thanks to a social order and an assembly line, those of the bees, perfectly organized.

The rigid cold of the glass is replaced with sheets made by overlapping materials in the architectonic void of the Saint Peter Church in Cologne, where Melissa Kretschmer worked in 2004 for the exhibition *Silent Spaces-Sacred Light*. Here, the multilayer of wax becomes a filter transforming the light itself in matter, “shooting it” in different directions inside the frame, to create peculiar iridiscences of objects with a faceted volume, producing colour shades always without artificial external intervention, in a new dialogue with the floor on which the light is reflected. The glass wall, from bi-dimensional becomes a projection in an utopian volume, reaching the area outside of the sacred space, of the saints and statues “enclosure”, allows, now and then, the dull shade of the trees in the garden to enter. “The physiological shield through which the light arrives to the human brain is not transparent as a window glass; instead it is involved, as a filter, in a set of specific twists”. This is what the American critic Rosalind E. Krauss writes about one of the basic canonical and theoretical “places” of contemporary art: the grid. (In *The originality of the avant-garde and other modernist myths*, 1985). Then Krauss quotes the paintings *View from the painter’s studio* by Caspar David Friedrich (1805-6) and Odilon Redon’s *Le Jour* made in 1891, both representing two windows with splitted glass (actually a grid)

viewed “simultaneously as a transparent and matt object”. What above all is important here, is not the glass, the matter, but the “partition” which does not recreate an order in a separate world but links its world to the audience’s world. According to Krauss, art through the grid watches and is watched, uninterruptedly, as Alice, in and out of the mirror. In such a way, also the contemporary, often read as outsider in the common sense, communicates directly with everyone is in front of it, acting as a transmitting screen as well.

It happens to think of the Californian artist asking the glass maker near her studio in Brooklyn for the glass left over, and of the craftsman that regularly meets her requests, giving her the glass he keeps in a container in the back-shop. Or of the small shop in the suburbs of Cologne selling the complete range of bees products, where also Beuys took his provisions, and where Kretschmer could purchase some blocks of wax for her job in Saint Peter. Also this is part of the work “making”, since, as the artist stated, if we have to find a meaning in what she does, this lies in the working process her works come up.



## LEE UFAN

By Karlyn De Jongh & Sarah Gold

Painter, sculptor, writer and philosopher Lee Ufan (\*1936, South Korea) is about Encounter. He focuses on the relationships of materials and perceptions; his works are made of raw physical materials that have barely been manipulated. Lee Ufan's often site-specific installations centralize the relationship between painted / unpainted and occupied / empty space. With his work, Lee Ufan addresses Encounter in its relation to life in general, not only in its relation to art. Therefore, according to Lee Ufan, having an encounter with his work is not just an encounter with his work: it is an encounter with the world. This is his idea of 'being there' at a particular space at a certain moment. Through the relationship between the works and the spaces in which they are placed, he invites the viewer to experience "the world as it is."

Lee Ufan was born in Korea and went to Japan when he was nineteen years old. During his life, he has been in many different countries and says he feels like a foreigner each time—wherever he is. "I am a stranger, and due to this, my ability to communicate is disrupted: this in turn brings discomfort, and leads to misunderstandings. I have lived under these circumstances for a long time: that is 'encounter' for me. [...] Encounter is dealing with others; it is a very simple thing." Having an encounter, happens every time when experiencing something that is outside of yourself. It starts in the very moment of contact—when you meet other people, when you look at the moon or at a building. Facing other people is simultaneously a passive and active encounter: you encounter the other, but the other encounters you too. The artist explains that the concept of Encounter is not necessarily about verbal communication. Neither is it about the differences in meaning between East and West.

Lee Ufan prefers to start from 'normal' things. Encountering something is dealing with 'Otherness'. Lee Ufan remarks that humans usually want to perceive and understand the other with all the knowledge they have gained. "But in reality, you feel a distortion, a gap between knowledge and reality. You see the separation in between them and you start becoming aware of the unknown." The artist gives the example of encountering a stone. "We can understand a stone with knowledge, by analyzing it. But when you see a stone, you do not know at all; we often have the feeling "what is that?" This is not simply "I do not know"; rather, this is an unknown character. An unknown character always invites me to learn more about things in one or another way."

The unknown of the encounter with the other, is in the relation. You experience the relation between yourself and the other. For his work, Lee Ufan therefore often uses the combination of materials that centralize this 'relation' and create the feeling of distortion—the feeling of 'what is that?'. For example, the combination of a steel plate and a stone, which is a combination between nature and something that is created by human beings in an industrial society: "A stone is not man-made. Stones lay around anywhere by mountains and rivers. Whether you are from Africa, from Paris, or from America, everybody knows; stones are from nature, and a steel plate is industrial. I have thought about what the viewers can feel and see. I try to make the viewer feel the combination of things, those made by our industrial society and those that are from nature." With the combination of these materials Lee Ufan creates space. "Normally, in modern art, the work is the object



itself. My art is not a painting and not a sculpture. I don't make just objects, I create space: 'Ba' and 'being there'. What is going to happen with the stone and the steel plate, what I can feel with them being together, that is very important." Being influenced by his surroundings, means that Lee Ufan's work is decided in relation to a particular location, a particular space. "Normally fine spaces exist everywhere, be they a mountain, a riverside, a gallery, a home, etc. But this is very complex, and raises many difficult questions. That is why the way my work relates to the space in which it will be presented is the most important aspect I consider. But the truth is, anywhere is fine. I do not place my completed work on the spot; my work is made ready through its relation with the space where I want to place it. The relation itself is infinite."

One learns with age and acquires more knowledge, but even Lee Ufan, having seen many stones, steel plates and having created many paintings, still has encounters when he makes a work. "When I make a painting, I also have small encounters: a feeling of subtlety, questions and other things come up. 'Encounter' is non-continuous: always changing. It is important that it is a passive and active thing. That is the reason why I want to paint a multitude of seemingly the same paintings, endlessly. For me, perfection does not exist, nor can a work be controlled one hundred percent. I cannot know what will happen at the moment I start working in a certain location." When making work, Lee Ufan says he uses his body as a channel. The body is influenced by its relation to the surrounding: whether it is cold outside, whether the work is made in a large or a small space. Being influenced by his surroundings, means that Lee Ufan uses much more than only his knowledge to create art. "I paint my relation to the outside naturally through this intermediate connection. My body is not mine, and my body is not just inside or outside, it is in between." Lee Ufan remarks that this understanding of the body comes from the Asian understanding that 'body' is not just 'myself', but that it includes the relations with the outside. In its contact with the outside, the body becomes something 'in the middle', or 'in between'.

Lee Ufan prefers what he calls a 'fresh encounter', one that is not colored by previous knowledge or expectations of how something 'should be'. When he came to visit Palazzo Bembo to look at his space in December 2010, Lee Ufan told us an anecdote about an exhibition he once had in France and how he used to be when he was young. To make his work for this exhibition, he traveled the country in search for a stone. Looking for a stone, however, Lee Ufan admits he somehow could not find any—until he saw one in what appeared to be a Japanese garden. Later, he realized that at that time he was still too much influenced by his culture: a stone from the mountains in France did not feel like a stone to him; he was looking for something he knew; other stones did not feel 'right'. Nowadays, Lee Ufan chooses stones that are from the region or country where the work is exhibited—like the Carrara Marble we have in Palazzo Bembo. The feeling Lee Ufan described in the anecdote is exactly the feeling he wants to distance himself from. He wants himself and other people, to have a fresh encounter with the world around him. Lee Ufan explains: "If we do not know about Christianity and Greek mythology, we cannot understand western art. When I just look at the painting itself, I cannot understand it at all; it requires a broad depth of prior knowledge. Modern art also has many rules and artists are creating works by using those rules. I want to be different from those rules; I want to be free. This is why I want to have reactions from African, American, European and Asian people encountering my work like, "Wow, what is it?" The meaning does not matter, but I want to have these fresh moments; they are very important for me."





## MA JUN

I was born in 1974.

Our generation has grown up while China opened up and developed a reform policy. As a matter of fact, Western consumer tokens such as a television sets, cars, radio recorders and Coca Cola are deeply rooted in our memory, and they represent a world that is totally different when compared to China. Only traces of the traditional Chinese culture are remaining in our souls, and we have been pushed toward the new world, too. My personal view at this phenomenon implies a crisis here. I see Western capital flowing into China by the vehicle of culture, with a new set of values that can lead an unconscious consumer toward this direction toward it, and finally our values and sense of our own traditions have gradually subverted, but we cannot help it.

To consequentially represent traditional Chinese culture, my choice is porcelain in order to correspond with a modern Western audience. Porcelain is manufactured in a process of 72 steps, from milling the needed stones, to crushing these with wood, to grinding that powdered rock into clay with flowing water, decorating its surface with mineral pigment at the end and then transforming this into porcelain through the use of fire. This resembles a process of man becoming one with nature, by making porcelain that is so adored by the Chinese people. In ancient times of China, porcelain could be seen as the vehicle in Eastern philosophy to export culture. In the way that the Western idea of consume as an import goes the two represent completely different ways. I challenge this modern Western consumer with choosing the path of porcelain, drawing

them back into the ancient China in an intentionally humorous way. This sense of humor depicts the current condition in China as well.

The images on the porcelain object represent spirit, in the same way as the nine dragons can be seen as an allegory of mystic powers and respect for nature; that depicted landscape stands for harmony between humans and nature, and a butterfly is taken on as an ancient symbol for beauty. By designing this TV and making it appear as if made from porcelain, the material gains an exceptional aesthetic value. By upscaling it in a relation of one to ten, the borders between reality and electronical representation of that landscape on a TV screen become a challenge to the viewer. Are we watching TV or enjoying the ancient techniques of glazed porcelain?

It is in fact my intention to address the awkwardness of a situation that can still regain its harmony by the use of imitated porcelain: we cannot return to the age of pre-industrial culture, and must also, at least partially, sacrifice aspects of our own culture if we follow the path towards globalization. What does that say for our position? My standpoint resembles the one of Tai Chi: If I encounter a great strength in an area, I don't just fight back or succumb, but instead I counteract it with an equally mighty power. In my opinion it is necessary, if we accept the changes brought about by another culture being imposed on ours, that we won't forget our own, but have an interaction between the two cultures stimulated more deeply.



## TONY MATELLI

By Elizabeth Balogh

"If nature abhors a vacuum, so too does *la grandeur-nature* (life size). Without weight or measure, there is no "nature" any more, or at least no idea of nature. Without a distant horizon, there is no longer any possibility of glimpsing reality; we drop into the time of a fall akin to that of the fallen angels and the earth's horizon then becomes just another *Baie de Anges*. Philosophical let down in which the idea of nature of the age of enlightenment is eradicated, along with the idea of the real in the age of the speed of light..."

— Paul Virilio, *Open Sky*

And so *Josh* floats in this eery new universe, devoid of gravity. Here... but not... unbound from the pull of the earth, but trapped within his own weightlessness. It is an apt vision for the predicament the contemporary world has posed. Through *Josh*, Tony Matelli shows us that humanity's isolation is ubiquitous. Without the attraction of the earth and without the comfort of its weight we all become inert. Floating is a solitary excursion.

Tony Matelli has been effectively holding up a mirror to our insecurities, vanities, fears and dilemmas for years. He reminds with an acerbic wit, that best laid plans (of mice, men and monkeys) often go awry. Whether it be a house of cards, or burning 100 dollar bills, Tony Matelli's vocabulary exploits universal themes, heralding the randomness of the unknown, while the obsessive attention to detail evidenced in his process, belies his belief in the folly of control.



## JUDY MILLAR

By Robert Leonard

Judy Millar: For this exhibition, I've been given a small room with two beautiful windows, which open out onto a canal. I'm making a two-sided painting that forms a big springy strip. The room is about 6m long but the painting is 20m long. Since the painting is too big for the space, there'll be a tussle. The painting will be forced to lift itself up into the air, go out of the window, and come back in. It'll double back on itself and loop around. It'll be delicate but cumbersome, a physical gesture in real space but also a bearer of illusionistic painterly space.

*Robert Leonard: You've been blowing up "the brushstroke" for a while now.*

JM: It started with *Giraffe-Bottle-Gun*, my 2009 Venice Biennale show. I made small paintings, then enlarged the imagery to ten times the size. I used a billboard printer—an advertising tool—to do it. I wanted the work to advertise itself. I wanted to amplify everything.

*RL: But the new work is painted, right?*

JM: The orange bits are painted but the black bits are printed. Both have been up-scaled, but to different degrees and in different ways. I've been developing big brushes with multiple heads so that I can make giant gestures. I'm trying to find a bigger dimension for myself.

*RL: With the up-scaling and the use of printing, are you trying to denature or dehumanise the brushstroke?*

JM: I'm not trying to dehumanise it, if anything I'm trying to rehumanise it. I'm trying to give it more authority. Despite the absurd scale, you still read the work through your body.

*RL: In this work, your painterly marks piggyback on a support that is itself akin to a painterly mark—a flourish.*

JM: Exactly, it's gesture in real space that carries other gestures on its surface. The illusionistic surface distorts your sense of the real physi-

cal form, and vice versa. By manipulating the support structure itself, I'm dismantling the usual image/support hierarchy.

*RL: I'm reminded of the plastic toy-car track that I had as a child. I would bend it into curves and loops and send my cars careering down it. Your support will operate as a track for vision.*

JM: The eye is forced to follow the track. I can control the eye; slow it down on the curves and speed it up on the flat. Space will turn into time, and time into space. What was behind will suddenly be in front, edges will become lines and lines will become edges—everything will be turned inside-out.

*RL: Because they are so antithetical, I was reminded of Lynda Benglis's paint pours from the late 1960s. She let paint fall from the can onto the floor, whereas your piece is perky, springy, alert. It isn't paint-doing-what-comes-naturally.*

JM: I've never been one of those materialists who think paint is more interesting in the can. For me, painting is not about paint, or even about paint on a support. For me, it is about structures: illusionistic structures, logical structures, worldly structures, all sorts of structures. I'm not interested in paint simply as a material.

*RL: So why paint?*

JM: I stay interested in painting: it's a way of collapsing the separation of the mental and the bodily that I experience in so many other parts of life.

*RL: So, you're affirming rather than critiquing painting.*

JM: I'm questioning and hopeful. I'm asking what can painting still say, and hopeful that it can still say something.





## TATSUO MIYAJIMA

By Karlyn De Jongh

Tatsuo Miyajima (\*1957, Japan) has focused on time since the 1980s. Time is important for Miyajima to discuss what he calls 'The Life', which is ongoing, combining life and death and concerning nature—humans, animals, stones. These aspects of 'The Life' are visible in Miyajima's three central concepts: 1. Keep changing; 2. Continue forever; 3. Connect with everything. Also important to him is the concept 'Art in You', holding the viewer a mirror and inviting him to contemplate about 'The Life'.

Miyajima's diverse work started with performances, solidified as he began to make sculptural installations, and then changed again with his public projects, such as *Pile Up Life*, and his wall installations, such as *Warp Time with Warp Self, No. 2*. Despite the variations, Miyajima's work is immediately recognizable. Most are made with LEDs of numbers that count 'up' from 1 to 9 or 'down' from 9 to 1; zero is not shown. At the point zero is expected to appear, there is a moment of darkness. In this way, as Miyajima explains, this numerical absence enlists the participation of the viewer. As he indicated in an interview for PERSONAL STRUCTURES:

"One other thing [...] is to emphasize the deleting of the zero. For example, 9, 8, 7... the numbers go down in order. Zero will arrive naturally by prediction. At the moment the zero should come, it gets dark (no number). So, you can come up with the thought why there are no zeros. There, you can think about zero. So, the numbers go down in order and go up in order, that is very important and, in fact, that is my expression to let the audience consciously experience 'Ku'."

In Miyajima's conception of time, the visible numbers 1 to 9 represent life, while zero functions as its counterpart. Zero is the moment of death; since death is not visible, a moment of darkness represents it. But nothingness is only one of zero's meanings in Miyajima's work. In stark contrast, zero's other meaning is 'vast quantity,' by which the artist indicates future possibility and potential. The moment of darkness is thus equally the possibility of a new beginning, a new life. Additionally, the vastness of zero denotes an unimaginable infinitude, possible but inconceivable. Reflecting that zero means both the nothing and the plus, Miyajima returns to its original meaning. In a talk at TATE Modern in London in April 2010, he explained death as a state of sleep, a preparation for the next birth.

Miyajima uses numbers to express movement and change because, according to him, numbers are universally understandable. The LEDs comprising an installation—sometimes as many as 1000 different lights—show various, predetermined speeds. Counting, he claims, gives one the feeling of "the passage of time," a 'rhythm by counting speed.'" Each countdown or enumeration of numbers represents the life of an individual. The variations in speed simulate the differences between individual lives: some people's lives last 100 years; others "die" young.

Miyajima rejects an exclusive conceptualization of his idea that 'time is life,' he insists it be taken realistically. "My work [...] does not indicate 'Time,' 'Space' and 'The Life'; my works try to live with 'Time,' 'Space' and 'The Life.'"





## FRANÇOIS MORELLET

"I believed in God until I was twenty, then in progress until I was forty and then... in nothing at all. My first 'electric works,' which were created when I was about thirty-seven, are therefore more or less guaranteed to be without transcendence; they neither glorify God nor the electricity fairy and only touched upon the sciences of the future such as kinetics, cybernetics, computer technology or quite simply mathematics. [...] At that time I was also entertaining myself by conjuring up, by means of mechanical combiners, equally thrown together, a succession of neon shapes and letters, fixed onto three panels. It looked as though this swift, confusing scroll of images was dictated by chance. But as my technical equipment did not stretch to a truly random system at that time, it was actually only a parody of chance that made those geometric shapes succeed each other irregularly—and the four words cul – con – non – nul [arse, cunt, no, useless]."

— *Esthétique électrique et pratique éclectique*, 1991

"For about twenty years, I doggedly produced systematic works, the constant guiding principle being to reduce my arbitrary decisions to a minimum. In order to channel my sensibility as an 'Artist,' I did away with composition, removed any interesting aspects from the execution and rigorously applied simple, straightforward systems that could either develop by fluke or by means of audience participation. These 'works of art,' in reaction to the flood of messages conveyed by the vogue for Expressionism and Lyrical Abstraction twenty years ago, were a complete flop when they were first presented in a range of specialised venues. They occasioned no comment. In the recent past, however, even though they cannot be ranked among the new fashionable trends which, more than ever before, cultivate the myth of the 'Artist' (now it is no longer his gestures that are analysed and admired but his attitudes, his body, his concepts), they are triggering increasingly substantial and positive comments. Analysis spe-

cialists see in them rigour, joy, nihilism, anguish, virtuosity, asceticism, etc. [...] The plastic arts should allow the spectator to find what he wants, in other words what he brings to them. Artworks are picnic areas, places where you take potluck, consuming whatever you've brought along. Pure Art, Art for Art's Sake, is there to express nothing (or everything)."

— *Du spectateur au spectateur ou l'art de déballer son piquenique*, 1971

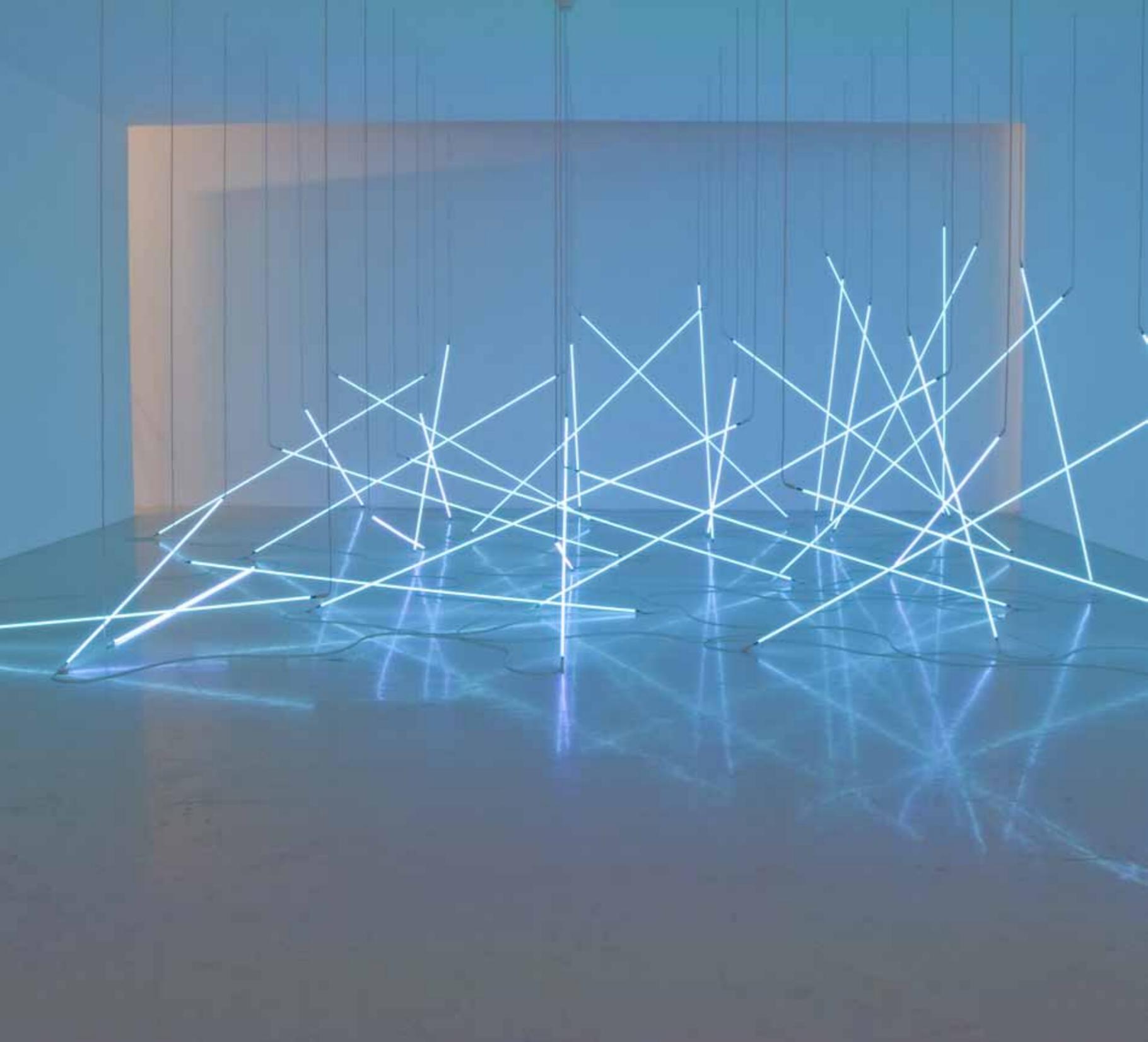
"Over the last seven or eight years, I have ceased to regard my 'pictures' as perfect geometric planes (immaterial and infinite), which needless to say they had never been in the first place. I have turned towards all the basic material limitations: the thick, heavy picture that requires hanging. Following the limitations of geometry, I started concentrating on the geometry of limitations. One of the limitations I played with a great deal was the overwhelming presence of the wall/floor couple, the verticality-horizontality with which the canvases usually comply in the most docile manner. It was sheer delight to make the modest 'picture-neutral medium' disobey, turning it, with its unusual position and slant, into a work of art, and reduce the pretentious 'information bearing painting' to an unassuming role of horizontality-verticality indicator."

— *Depuis sept ou huit ans*, 1982

"What are the qualities of this Baroque art from Bavaria-Austria (to put it simply) that so appeal to me, that I endeavour to transpose into my work? Humour, frivolity, joie de vivre, which are all impossible to find to this degree in any Western church. [...] And also a wonderful disrespect for architecture, with its clever lack of balance and its volumes, which counter one another by ignoring and severing any symmetry. To such an extent that an ordinary item of architecture can be 'Baroqued' with equal nonchalance and success."

— *BarockKonKret*, 1994





# HERMANN NITSCH

By Karlyn De Jongh & Sarah Gold

*In May 2010, Karlyn and Sarah were 'crucified' in Hermann Nitsch's 130<sup>th</sup> Aktion, in Naples, Italy. In the week before the actual event, they took part in the rehearsals and met Nitsch every day to talk with him about experiencing life and his Orgien Mysterien Theater. On the day of the Aktion, Karlyn and Sarah were blindfolded, naked, bound to their crosses, to feel, hear, taste and smell all that was happening to them in the Museo Hermann Nitsch. The following text is an excerpt from the interviews that were published in their book HERMANN NITSCH: UNDER MY SKIN.*

*Sarah Gold: Nitsch, you have told us that your mother used to ask you: "Why are you doing this nonsense?" Do you have any idea why you made this so called 'nonsense'?*

Hermann Nitsch: In a positive way, you come very close to me now. Now I will not answer you with academic rubbish. I made it because I was convinced that it was necessary and still is. To work in this way and to question the world in this way. Christ said: "What is truth?" It was Pontius Pilate. The fact that he washed his hands and really did not want to have anything to do with politics and, then plainly asks: "What is truth?" I want that too. I have always fought for the truth. One cannot reach the truth, but you can move in the direction of the truth. I never wanted to improve the world as a whole for that, the world is far too great, too complex. You can only extract great moments from the world, in terms of large, deep experiences that penetrate into being. But Being is actually the thing in itself. Since everything is inside of it: the terrible abyss, the glorious splendor, the greatest moments of joy and the deepest holes. I have always fought. I would say, it was for the truth of Being.

*Karlyn De Jongh: Now you have been creating your work for about 50 years. Having lived in Vienna I am of the opinion that the Viennese Actionism was*

*destined to arise there, have you been able to change something? Have you in your environment, or perhaps even to a larger extent, made a difference?*

HN: Look, a great example for me is Freud. Whether the therapeutic success of Freud was really so great is a question I do not want and even cannot answer. But he had a great influence on our whole culture, even on mythology and theology. Actually, he preventively has eliminated dispositions towards the classic Freud Neurosis through his educational work. In this sense, he was therapeutic in insight therapy and that is for me also the case. I do not believe in an improvement of human beings, or an improvement of nature. But I think that we can use the conditions that we have better and more intense and that everyone by himself, can intensively develop his Being.

*SG: Now, from today on, you will live maybe 10 years more... These last 10 years, what can you still give us as a final acchord?*

HN: I would like to make the most beautiful thing I am perhaps still able to make. I would like my work to become more colorful in every respect, and more undogmatic, unspeakably a message of Being. That Being says: "Come to me," you are created to be and experience it. You do not experience it in hell, not in distress and not in pain, but you experience it in the greatest joy. Just look at the suffering and the Cross, the tragedy, the tragic and death, in the eye. The images of wars and Holocaust unfortunately, that all belongs to Being. I would like to be on the side, just because I have intimately and altruistically experienced Being. In that moment I am then fully there, when I am completely in luck, then I do not understand humanity. Another 10 years? Visions for the future, I am not really as interested in them as I am in experiencing the moment, the now, the experience.







# ROMAN OPALKA

By Bruno Corà

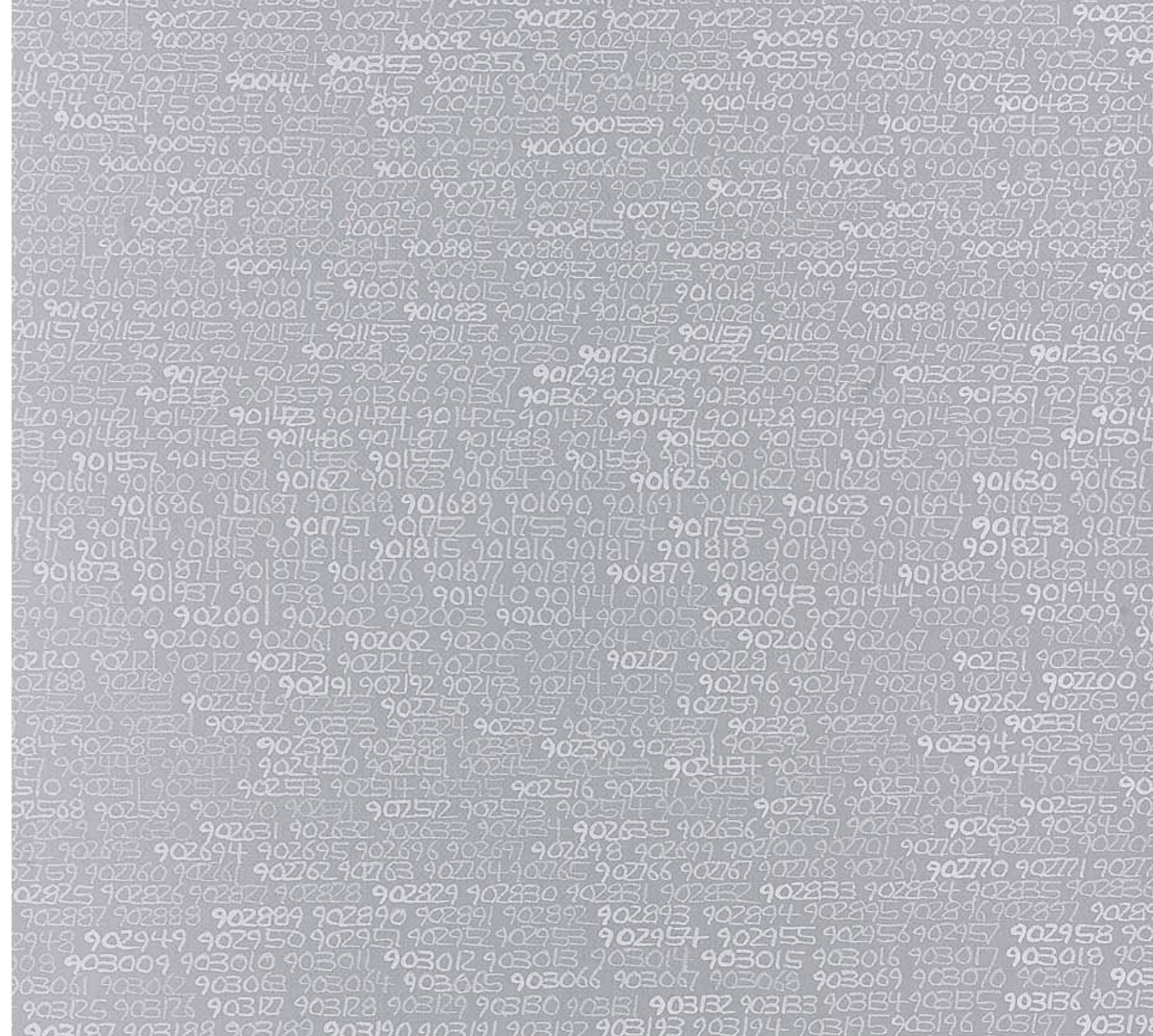
## Standing before Time

We may not objectively recall any analogies or comparisons—although others have thought it possible to try—as examples for the gesture made by Roman Opalka in 1965, when he started tracing the number 1 by applying white colour with a thin brush at the upper left corner of a black-coated canvas; he thus initiated the most radical and elementary visualization of the measuring of time to infinity ever produced until then. This is a well-informed statement, not oblivious to the fact that the existential relationship with the time dimension, inseparable from space, has been—in every age—at the heart of an immense amount of speculative activity of aesthetic, poetical, pictorial, literary, as well as scientific nature. Yet, in each of those endeavours, often requiring years of effort and intense elaboration—just limiting our gaze to the 20th century, we may think of Marcel Proust's *Recherche*, Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time*, Jorge Luis Borges's *A History of Eternity* and *A New Refutation of Time*, or James Joyce's *Ulysses* and, finally, Paul Ricoeur's *Time and Narrative*—the identification of time was performed through a process of phenomenological synthesis; in each of these cases the essential individuation of time was attempted and defined through a formulation whose character was either metaphorical and poetical, or logical and philosophical, or finally scientific. But, as Opalka himself observed, “every thought is victim of its own formulation”. Therefore, what came to be highlighted of the time - space dimension in these several experiences—though indeed with extraordinary ability and perceptiveness—was fundamentally an attribution of time based on parameters that mimic and evoke the human existence. In other terms, the time referenced in these experiences was in each case the time

‘lost’ or ‘re-gained’ or ‘lived’; or, in an Augustinian sense, the time ‘of the soul’, ‘memorable’, ‘eternal’, and ultimately ‘divine’. Unlike all these extraordinary ‘apertures’, the one operated by Opalka has a temporally semiological value given by the total dissolving between the instantaneity and duration of life itself and by its objective measurement made by Opalka as he marks on the canvas, and through other means, the unfolding of time as this occurs.

The choice to measure temporality through a sequence of numerals coexisting with each other, while the voice pronounces them and a magnetophone records them, along with Opalka's photographic self-portraits at successive ages, offers an ideally ever-lasting image. The irreversible decision taken once and for all by the young Opalka to commit to a single criterion for measuring time through his entire life, thereby creating a conceptual relation with infinity, allows no alternatives or digressions, since such choice commands its author an inflexible tautological praxis.

If Titian was able to evoke the stages of youth, virile maturity and old age in a single pictorial solution as in the oil painting *Allegory of Time governed by Prudence* (1565-1570 ca) where the temporal dilemma is resolved in a single image, for Opalka no allegory is any longer possible: every instant, beside being uttered by his recorded voice, is painted on canvas in the form of a sequence of numerals and also fixed as the effect of time on his own face photographed during each painting “session”. The liturgy of measuring and recording the temporal instant as it passes alongside Opalka's own existence recalls nothing else but its own evidence: the artist and his age, the



numbers of temporality uttered by him and traced with colour on canvas, the photograph of his face continuously changing.

The 'ecstasies' of temporality, the past, present, and future, occur simultaneously in Opalka's work. Each of Opalka's *Details* belongs to an indissoluble 'continuum'; but being part of an infinite ideal series, each *Detail* has the effect of immediately recalling the series' principle and essence. In Opalka's work, without eliminating the diversity that indeed exists between one piece and another, just like the phenomenal reality appears different in itself, the aspect that distinguishes one work from another is nonetheless almost imperceptible. Only at significant intervals, two canvases—and so two photographic self-portraits—present chromatic variations that can be easily appreciated, especially in the 'canvases' background; in the inexorable journey that accompanies the numbers toward their white on white destination.

Much more radical and extreme than Andy Warhol's cinematic attempt to make the time in which events or actions occur coincide with the time of the movie's execution and fruition, Opalka's gesture does not measure the course of time only once; instead, he chants it obsessively throughout his entire life. Therefore he does not reproduce the world's events in real time, but time itself in its never-ending flowing.

We cannot live of the past, nor of the future, nor of the present, but only of the 'passing' of temporal stages, since even those who claim to be living of the past, or future, or of the present, are never really in any of these conditions.

If, then, in every present we experience a "passing" and if language implies a succession which may only be temporal, the real linguistic discovery in Opalka's art consists in having initiated, through the use of mathematical figures, the formalization in signs of the visualization of eternity. The numerical series and the consecutive self-portraits induce in the viewer a feeling of super-temporality, an emotional perception which rapidly ingenerates dismay and leads to the unconditional abandonment of any attempt to follow the figures of time, inviting individual reasoning to leave this sort of counting aside and ponder the eternal.

According to Lucretius (*De rerum natura* I, 830), just like Anaxagoras believed gold to be made of gold particles and fire of sparks, so time could not but be made of consecutive elements of time. In light of such fundamental principles, Opalka has pushed language as far as to visualize time in relation to his own existence by individuating a form that offers an analytical image of time. He this way removes the possibility of symbolic and synthetic metaphors, while at the same time producing a measurement of real extent.

Standing before the canvas just like the Auriga of Delphi stood before history and before the race of Time, as Opalka pronounces and paints the numbers while being portrayed by a lens, similar to an astronaut travelling through the cosmos toward another solar system, he is himself the image of man in the act of measuring his own existence within the space-time of eternity.

The surface of a *Detail* by Opalka, with the different intensity in the numbers' colour, which allow to distinguish the beginning of the pictorial act of 'writing' through the exhaustion of colour itself, suggests the image of an instant made of small waves spuming on the oceanic expanse of time.

Observing Opalka's work we are reminded of a verse from Leopardi's *The Infinite* in which he evokes the image of the mind shipwrecked in the sea. But far from being a 'sweet' shipwreck, the feeling arising here is dramatic and of vertiginous anxiety, because it originates questions about the sense of life and death to which there are no possible answers.

Opalka's work, new sphinx of our era, poses the question of the time of life in the indifference of its naked textuality, from the distance of his conception of art and from its progressive incipient undecipherability.

One has the impression that in those *Details* the very sense of art is being overcome and that, from this, a new cognitive 'aperture' might be springing.



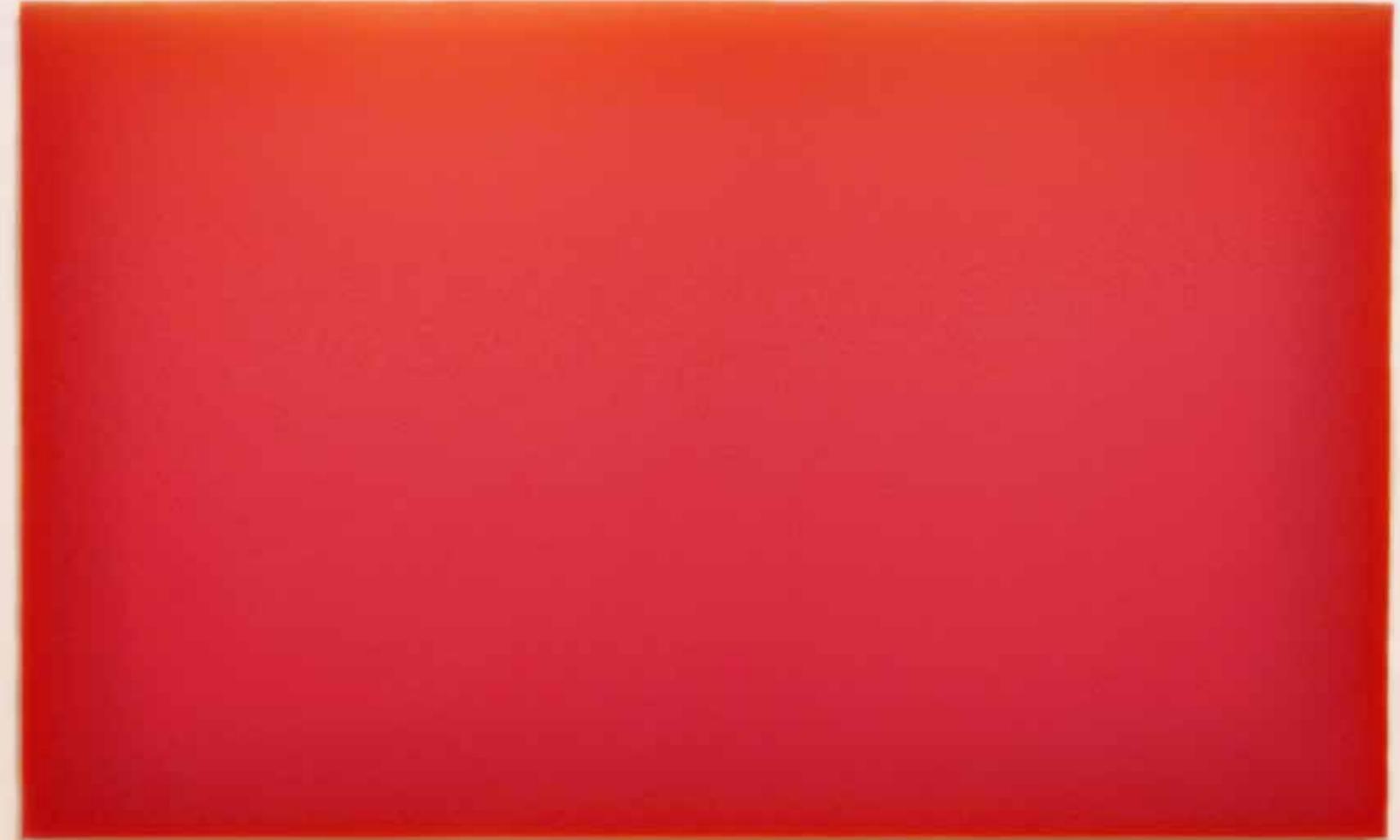
# THOMAS PIHL

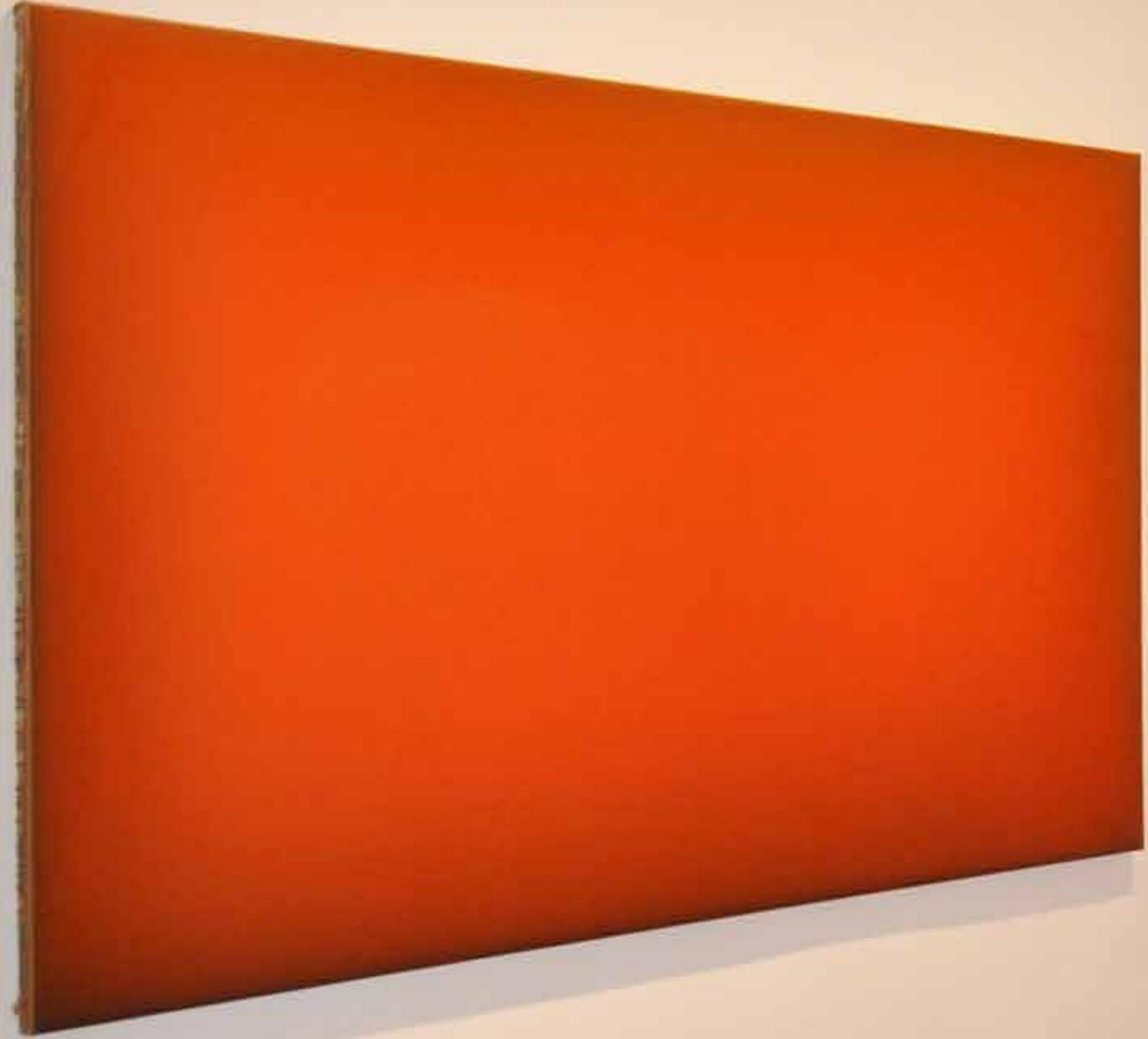
By Peter Lodermeier

What is the point today of a kind of painting that shows us large areas of homogenous fields of color seemingly without texture? Would it be for meditation, introspection, a subjective experience of color as a space for escape and meditation? The extent to which such clichés suffice for doing justice to the broad spectrum of what is vaguely referred to as “color-based painting” need not be discussed here. They do not apply here. For Thomas Pihl is an artist aware of the fact that our everyday culture is obsessively reliant on visual stimulation and information by the mass media. Economic and political interests inevitably pervade the aesthetics and transform our perceptions with their respective manipulations. This conviction that a socially “neutral” aesthetics does not exist enters into the way he creates his works. In order to penetrate to this critical core of Pihl’s painting, however, the viewer must commit himself with the hard currency of the scarcest commodity known to our hyper-commercialized, globalized contemporary culture: time. Pihl’s paintings demand patient, precise, and self-reflective viewing, a slowing down of our gaze.

This poses a challenge to our perception that has been trained to grasp information quickly. In the museum world, exhibition pieces with a viewing duration of more than 20 seconds are regarded having great “holding power”. Pihl’s paintings require a distinctly longer time before they reveal themselves as complex pictures that modify our perception. First we see seemingly perfect, oblong rectangular fields of color of uncertain spatial depth and a gentle, diffuse glow. In this respect, they meet our contemporary expectation of a paradigmatic picture form: What Leon Battista Alberti’s ‘open window’, once was since Renaissance times in terms of the picture concept, is today the smooth, radiant screen, which generates worlds of images addictively consumed. In an age of digitalized, commercialized aesthetics, an “image” is the thing that shows up on monitors.

In formats of 60 x 96 inches, Pihl’s paintings display roughly the same proportions as the human binocular field of vision with a scope averaging about 130° x 180°. This means that the works completely fill up our field of vision if we assume the correct distance to them. Pihl prefers hanging his works low, their upper edges approximately at eye level. This deviation from the standard turns out to be advantageous for our gaze: Our heads relaxed, the gaze of a person standing up straight falls to about 25° below the horizontal edge. The longer we gaze, the more multi-layered the color planes seem. And here, the multi-layered character is not only evident in the fact that the pictures consist of several layers of poured, transparent acrylic paint and that we only slowly become conscious of the colors that emerge from the depths. Of multi-layered complexity is also the emotional reference to the colors. The colors are increasingly intangible, eluding precise definition and, because of this ambivalence, they do not correspond to clear emotional qualities. Over time, due to the way the color appears to vibrate, our gaze loses its grip. It is all the more astonishing when the eye suddenly perceives a tiny irregularity, and the painting immediately regains a comprehensible material surface. This proves that the surface certainly does not display the perfection and smoothness of technically produced pictures, but rather it is characterized by material “blemishes”. Due to the fact that Pihl takes up the seductive and aesthetic attractiveness of contemporary picture aesthetics (even as he undermines the subtle expectations we connect with it), he manages to offer much more than mere “information”. His works avail us to experiences that whet and intensify our perception, an indispensable instrument for a conscious and critical navigation through the hyper-aestheticized civilization we live in.





## MIRIAM PRANTL

Around 1920 Duncan Grant, Leopold Survage, Hans Richter along with other artists, tried to bring movement and light into panel painting. Grant was one of the British Vorticists, who created horizontal scroll-images that were viewed through a square opening, behind which, the picture was moved across two reels, while music was played. Their idea was to introduce music and movement, two types of time into a spatial image. Robert Delaunay brought together the interaction of light, time and colour into a theory of simultaneity, into a musical sense of colour and visual perception. Delaunay was convinced that, "simultaneity in light means the harmony and rhythm of colour that grasp the human eye." — "Light art from artificial light", Peter Weibel

The idea of combining different sensorial impulses, with the aim of deepening the experience of perception in space, is an important aspect in all of my work. To play off simultaneously different dimensions and attributes of space in my work, I have to examine each dimension separately. In one sense, going through the eye, the visual, entering the sensory body to construct different perspectives and spatial concepts, in order to open up space into time.

**Networks:** This series of paintings ("networks") are like blueprints, a preparation and starting point in emerging from the two-dimensional space into an idea of a three-dimensional visual space. Using a grid to construct a series of coordinates, which allow me to visually manoeuvre within the flat surface of the painting.

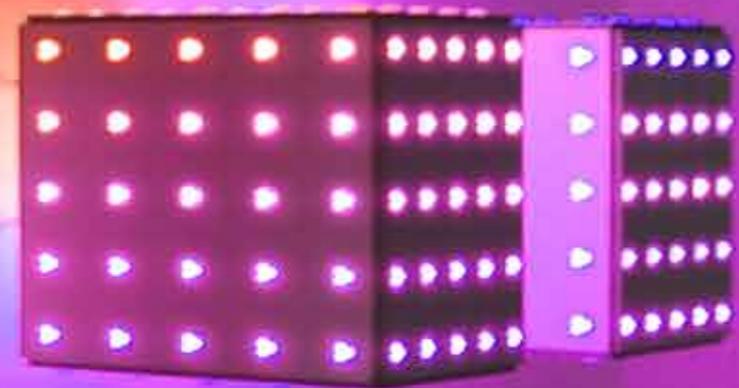
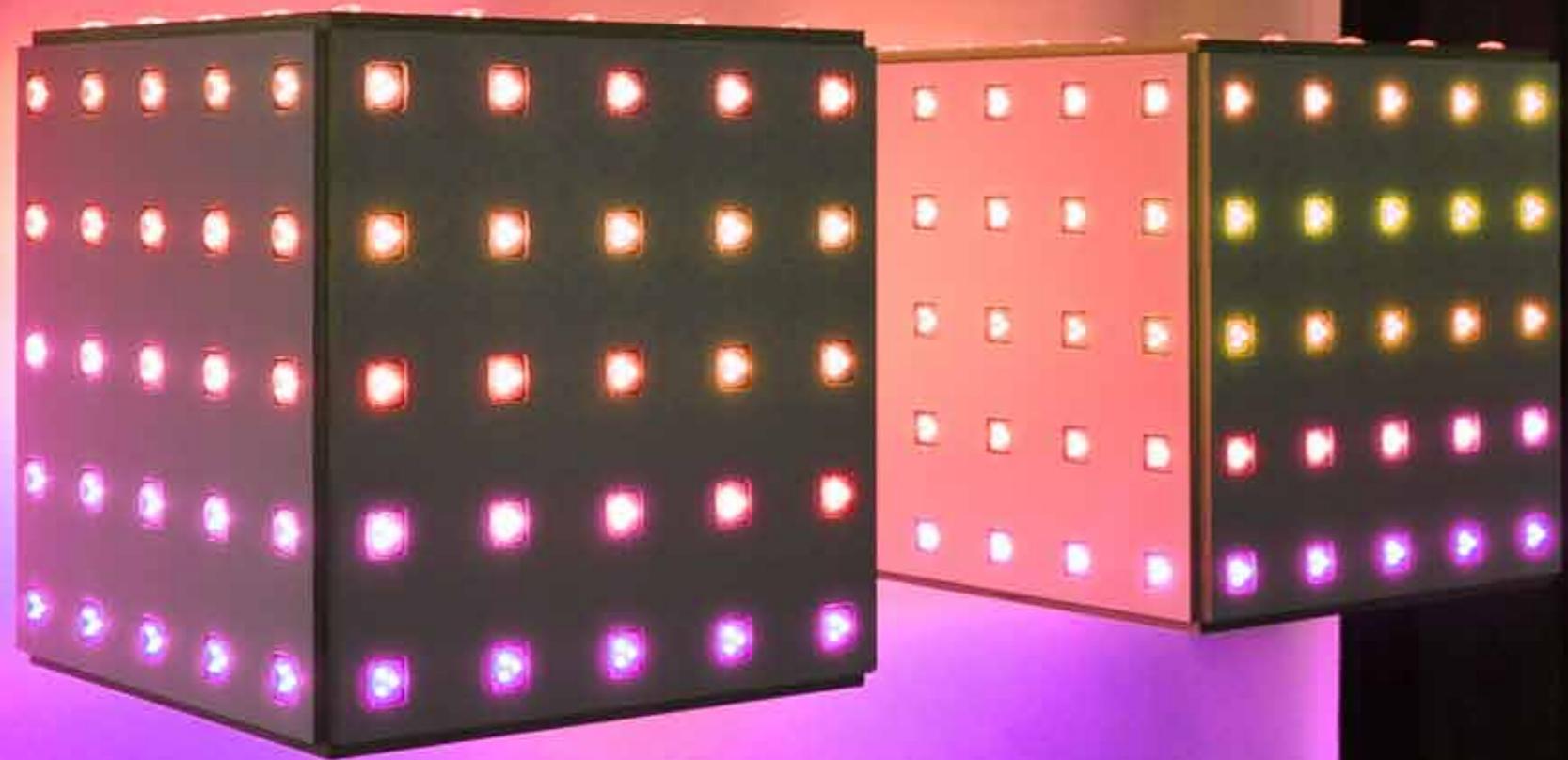
**Integrals:** In the next work group of paintings ("integrals"), I attempted to construct the fineness of space and to create spatial subtlety, bring-

ing vision and feeling into a dialogue, and at the same time finding an equilibrium between physical reality and notional spatiality.

**Manifolds:** In this series of paintings ("manifolds") I didn't endeavour to manifest space and light behind the grid of the painting, as in the previous work groups, or to navigate through these virtual spaces, but rather, I wanted to move back out, in front of the grid, hovering just above the surface of the panel. In order to do so, I used strong coloured grids and strips, which are applied on top of the canvas like super flat reliefs. The flat reliefs follow the law of three-dimensional space and start to interact with the space in front of them.

**Lightpainting:** In my light-installations I want to bring space, colour, light and time together and to link them into a network of perception. The colour dissolves the outlines of the space, the programmed sequences of the light-strips translate time into moments of colour and slowly changing colour combinations, which enhance the immaterial quality of the created space. Filmed sequences of light are projected, defining the space. Short self composed musical soundtracks, support the rhythmical flow of the film and light sequences, like the breathing of space in time. The light and colour space is a system of energy, a system of coordination, which allows our awareness to reform, to enter the energy of colour and light and to merge with it. The experience of our awareness, permeating with the frequencies of light, colour and sound, reminds us that we also consist of the same intrinsic quality. Jacob Liebermann, the pioneer of light therapy, says: "Light is the medicine of the future, we heal ourselves with the same essence of which we are."





## ANDREW PUTTER

### Secretly I Will Love You More

For most of my life, I have lived in a suburb of the city of Cape Town, South Africa, within a thirty-minute walk of where I was born. Much of the work I do as a creative person is based on exploiting the latent potential of this out-of-the-way place I call home. Before 1652—when Dutch colonists arrived at the bottom of Africa where Cape Town now stands—the area had been the ancestral home of the Cape Hottentots. Within fifty years of the Dutch arriving, the ancient culture of the Hottentots (who called themselves Khoikhoi) had been all but extinguished in their encounter with the Europeans. Over the centuries, the pre-colonial life of the Cape Khoikhoi has been erased from popular memory. They have been forgotten.

My artwork at the Venice Biennale draws on the secret utopian potential of the historical encounter between the Hottentots and the Dutch at the Cape in the 1600s.

Shortly after her arrival in 1652, Maria de la Quellerie—wife of the first Dutch commander at the Cape—took Krotoa, a Khoikhoi girl-child, into her home to live with her family. Krotoa had learnt to speak Dutch by talking with sailors who had come past the Cape on their way to the East. Even though a child, she played an important role as an interpreter between her people and the Cape Dutch. (Sadly, her role between cultures ultimately led to her rejection by both the Khoikhoi and the Dutch, and she died abject and destitute).

My artwork begins by imagining that Maria de la Quellerie loved little Krotoa so much that she learnt to speak the child's language.

In the artwork, Maria sings a gentle Khoikhoi lullaby to an out-of-frame, sleeping Krotoa. The lullaby is full of the characteristic click-sounds still found in Nama, an endangered Khoikhoi language spoken in present-day Namibia.

We have no record of any Dutch colonist ever learning to speak the language of the Khoikhoi people whose ancient territories they annexed at the Cape. It was always the other way around: the Khoikhoi were forced to speak Dutch. Due to these—and related—pressures the language of the Cape Khoikhoi has long been extinct.

In the artwork, we catch Maria in a moment of reverie and realization, singing of her profound connections with this strange pseudo-daughter and the exhilarating potential that exists between two people facing each other across incommensurable cultural universes.



**Lyric for *Secretly I Will Love You More***

**(written by Andrew Putter)**

Do not fear me little one –  
welcome into our home!  
How beautiful you are,  
little shiny one, with your woolly hair,  
smelling of sweet buchu.  
Your differences from me make you so precious!  
Your smallness belies your significance.  
Meeting you has changed us forever.  
I will love you as I love my own children:  
Secretly I will love you more.  
The warm summer wind blows and it makes me dream.  
I dream of your people and my people changing each other.  
Welcome into our home precious child.

**Nama translation of lyric for *Secretly I Will Love You More***

**(by Pedro Dausab)**

Ta !ao ti ꞑkhariro –  
//Kore //kare-he sida oms !nâ.  
Mati koses a exa nparas !abuxa /ûn/kha  
ꞑkhon buxuba rahâm.  
Sa !kharasasib ge.  
//n\_tikose sasa ra !gom/gausa kai.  
Sa !kharisib ge ra sa !gom /gausasiba ra ꞑhûmi kai.  
Sasa /hau-us ge sida huka-/gui ra /khara/khara.  
O ta ni /namsi ti oâna ta /nam khemi:  
ꞑGan!gâsa se ta ni /namsi !nasase.  
/Gamsa //khanab di ꞑoab ta !gom tsî ra //habo kai te.  
//Hawo tara o ti khoïn tsî sa khoïn xa ra !n /khara.  
//Ore //hares sida oms !nâ !gom/gausa /\_oa.



## ARNULF RAINER

By Karlyn De Jongh & Sarah Gold

*Since the early 1950s, the idea of over-painting has been central to the work of Arnulf Rainer (\*1929, Austria). In search of improvement, he works over pictures, books, photographs, etc—existing images of others as well as his own. In this way, he explores human expressions, posing existential questions. Rainer believed that in order to understand the innate human condition, he had to access it, taking his own body and that of others as a vehicle.*

*Karlyn De Jongh: Using the pseudonym Jaroslav Bukow you once stated: “the act of painting determines the work.” When you paint it seems that you need a lot of energy. In this context you have spoken of rage and anger. You are now 81 years old. What is your act of painting like now? Can you still summon the same fight and controversy? How do you go on working?*

*Arnulf Rainer: By strategies of slowness, by a row of works done at the same time. The brain recuperates by always forming the works differently. The change in physiognomies then has a refreshing effect.*

*Sarah Gold: In 1949 you discovered the ‘filling’, in 1950 the ‘over-filling’, in 1951 the ‘cutting-down’ and reworking of a picture, and in 1954 the ‘over-painting of your works’. I read that these strategies helped you to overcome the dilemma you found yourself in over and over again while you worked. What did you feel or do you still feel to be, your dilemma?*

*AR: That I become exhausted more quickly, particularly in terms of attentiveness. The convergence between hand, eye and visual longing does not always match up. Especially when you can't concentrate enough anymore.*

*SG: You regard art as something that should broaden us as human beings. What would you like for people to learn, see, feel, sense...?*

*AR: That people compare my paintings with the many others and in doing so, experience other paintings, or mine, in a new way.*

*KDJ: Because of the continual overpainting it seems that your works are in motion, as if they change in time. One could say that your works live. Does that mean that your own death will be the death of your works?*

*AR: I don't know. But it is a known fact that artworks change through the reflection of other works.*

*SG: Is there life after death or does death really mean death?*

*AR: Neither the one nor the other. These are earthly terms. They do not apply.*

*KDJ: Your works seem to be in a constant state of development; they continue to grow. Is this something that can go on and on or will you end it at some point? In your opinion, does the painting itself also develop? Or is the overpainting itself the development?*

*AR: One flees from one insufficiency to the next. Centrifugal force is how it is referred to in physics.*

*SG: You made a statement in 1952 about “painting in order to leave painting”. Has the meaning of these words changed over time?*

*AR: Obviously. I have not been able to leave it yet.*

*KDJ: In an article from 1970 you wrote: “Normal life [except for art] gives me nothing and does not interest me.” What does art mean to you? What does art give you? Is being an artist the most important thing in your life?*

*AR: Of course. Life, as it appears, is a pale reflection of art, of artistic creation.*







## RENE RIETMEYER

By Karlyn De Jongh & Sarah Gold

Rene Rietmeyer (\*1957, Netherlands) creates abstract, three-dimensional wall objects, which he calls "Boxes". These Boxes address his own, personal existence within time and space. For many years, Rietmeyer has been mainly concerned with the subjects Time - Space and Existence. His work is about expressing his existence, about living out the consequences of his thoughts, about living a conscious life, and creating an awareness about this in others.

In his work, Rietmeyer focuses on his own personal life, his own existence, and is unapologetically straightforward about this: "My objects become what they become. Always. They do not aim to be "beautiful" or "ugly". Each Box I make is a honest result of me, a reflection of my existence, of me at that moment in time and space, an object from that specific time in my life." Although being concerned with several topics at the same time, Rietmeyer states: "Ultimately, my work is nothing other than the proof of my existence."

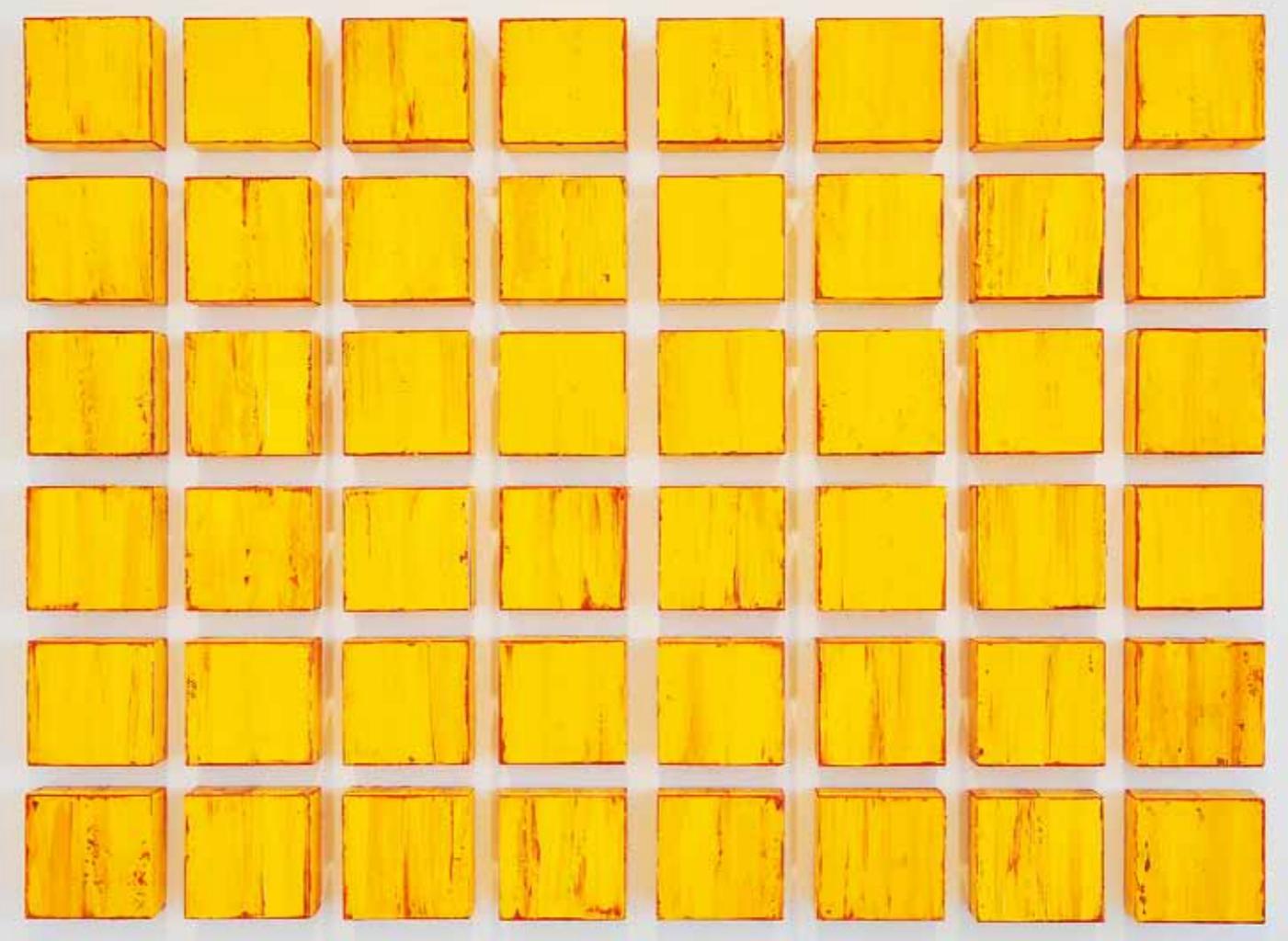
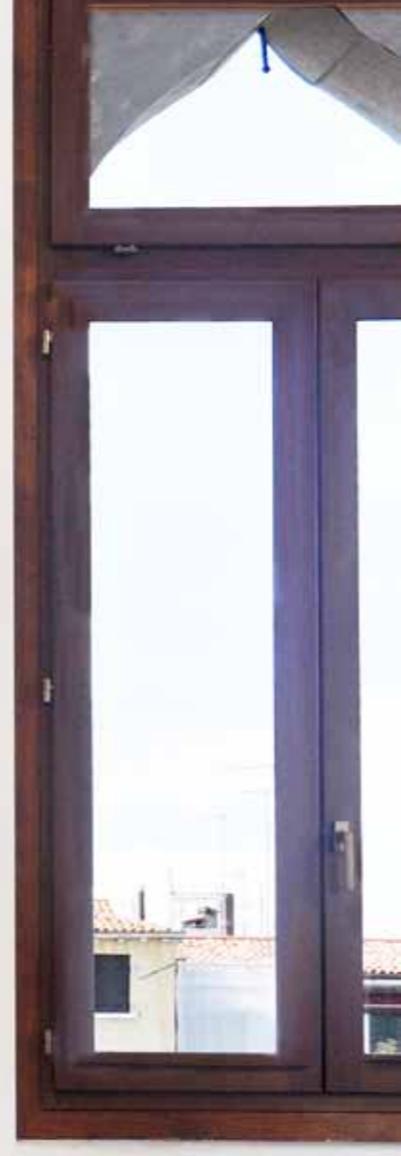
Rietmeyer's Boxes contain his thoughts and express his experiences of a certain region or, as with his *Portrait of JK and Rome 2010*, a specific person he met at a particular place and time. They address serious topics, without denying the artist's emotional relationship to his surroundings. These emotions are expressed through the abstract means of a.o. form, color, texture, composition, and choice of materials. *Portrait of JK and Rome 2010*, for example, comprises a bold statement with an initial vibrant red surface color that is covered with a thick, strong white. According to Rietmeyer, this type of portraiture is not so radically different from the paintings of Van Gogh or Nicolas de Stael. Only abstract language itself has developed through time.

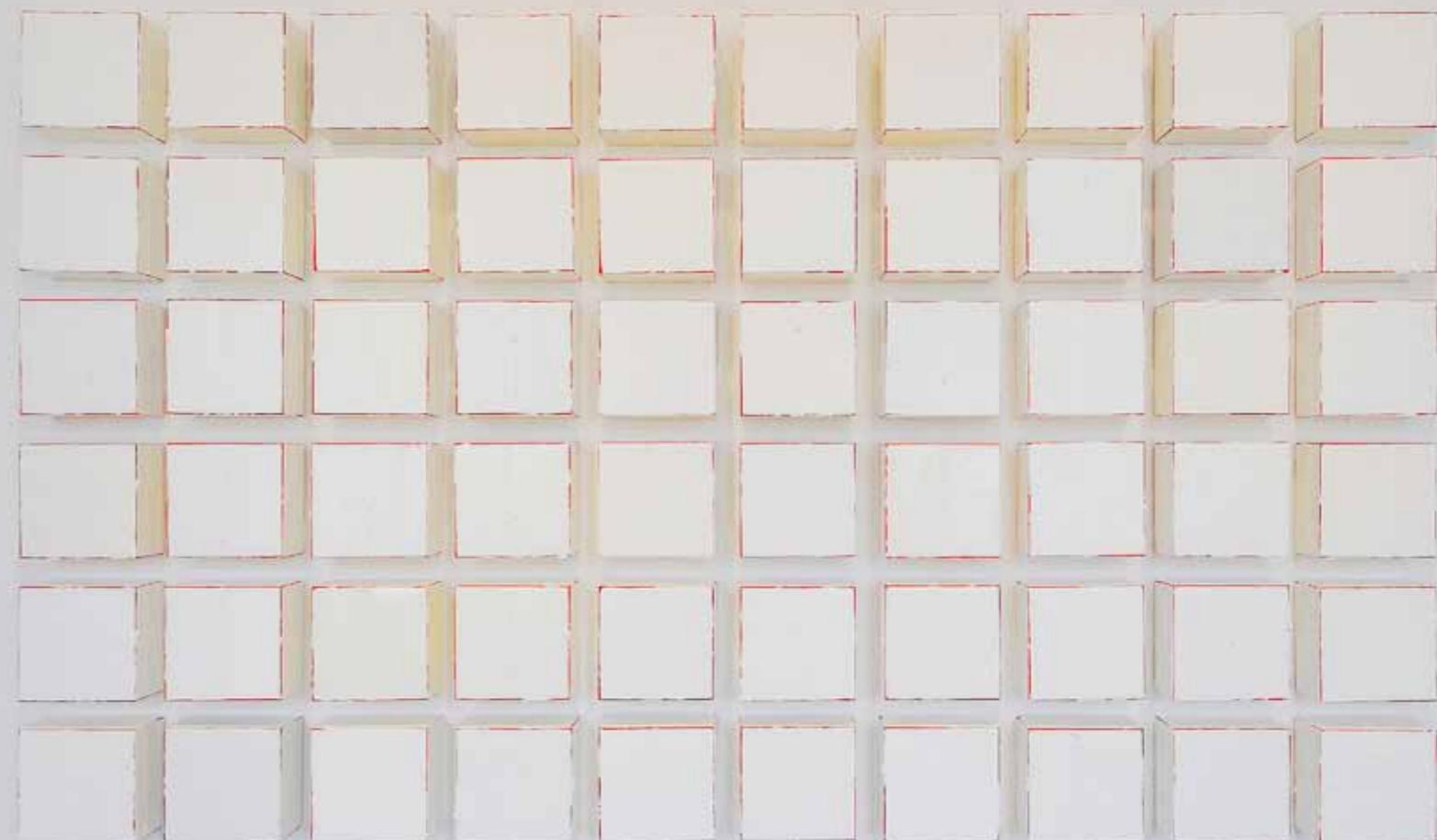
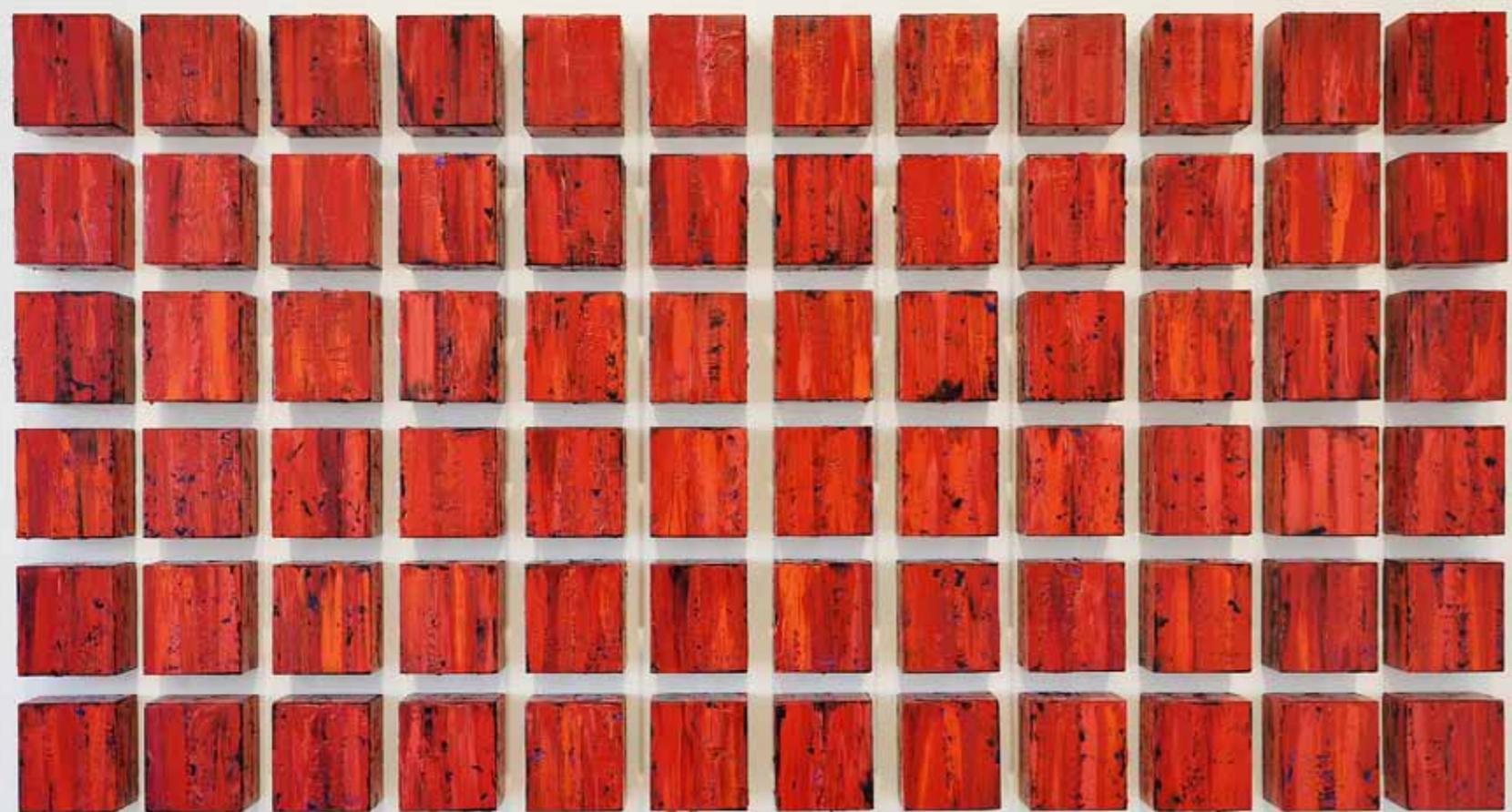
The artist considers each Box, each work, as a unique moment of his autobiography, an experience of a specific moment in time and space captured, made visible, preserved. The Boxes reflect an accumulation of impressions of a specific time and location— influenced by many other factors, such as whether it was hot or cold, his own physical state, if he could afford bad or good quality materials, etc. The Boxes are a combination of predetermined choices and the situation during the actual making of the work.

Besides these particular moments in his life, Rietmeyer concentrates on the passing of his lifetime. This tension between moment and passage brings with it an awareness of how short life actually is. He described this awareness as we were standing together in front of the house of the American artist Robert Rauschenberg in Captiva Florida, USA, in 2008, just a few days after his death: "An intense consciousness about Time, Space and Existence puts your own existence in a larger perspective, shows you how small you are, makes you realize the importance and beauty of being alive and makes you aware and accept the 'finalness' of death." Rietmeyer related how Rauschenberg once told him something that had left a deep impression: when Rauschenberg was younger, he had believed that there was not enough world for him to discover. During his conversation with Rietmeyer and conscious of the fact that he would soon die, Rauschenberg admitted: "I am running out of time." Rietmeyer adds: "Time itself does not stop. We just cease to exist." The Boxes will remain much longer.









## YUKO SAKURAI

I use “name from the place” for the titles of my works; My art is an expression of myself and of my memories from my travels and influenced by my daily life through time. When I travel, I use all my senses to experience each specific place and to internalize it. This means using sight, sound, smell, touch and taste along with all my emotions that are attached to that place. This sensitivity depends on the consciousness of my own life. I try to discover as much as I can and I am consciously using my curiosity to get more information. After traveling and when I find myself in a quiet place, I then recall those experiences and feelings from where I was. After that I start to analyze myself through those experiences and feelings in order to create an artwork: its size, shape, color, texture, layer, brush or pallet knife—these are some of the questions that I ask myself. I transform my thoughts in my art with these methods. I use my memory to create my artwork; however, these memories have been distilled by the self-analysis that is a crucial part of my creative process—therefore, I am also able to continue discovering myself through my art. It is important to note that I do not have any fixed rules or concepts for my choice of color, shape, size or any other formal element—I keep myself open to all options.

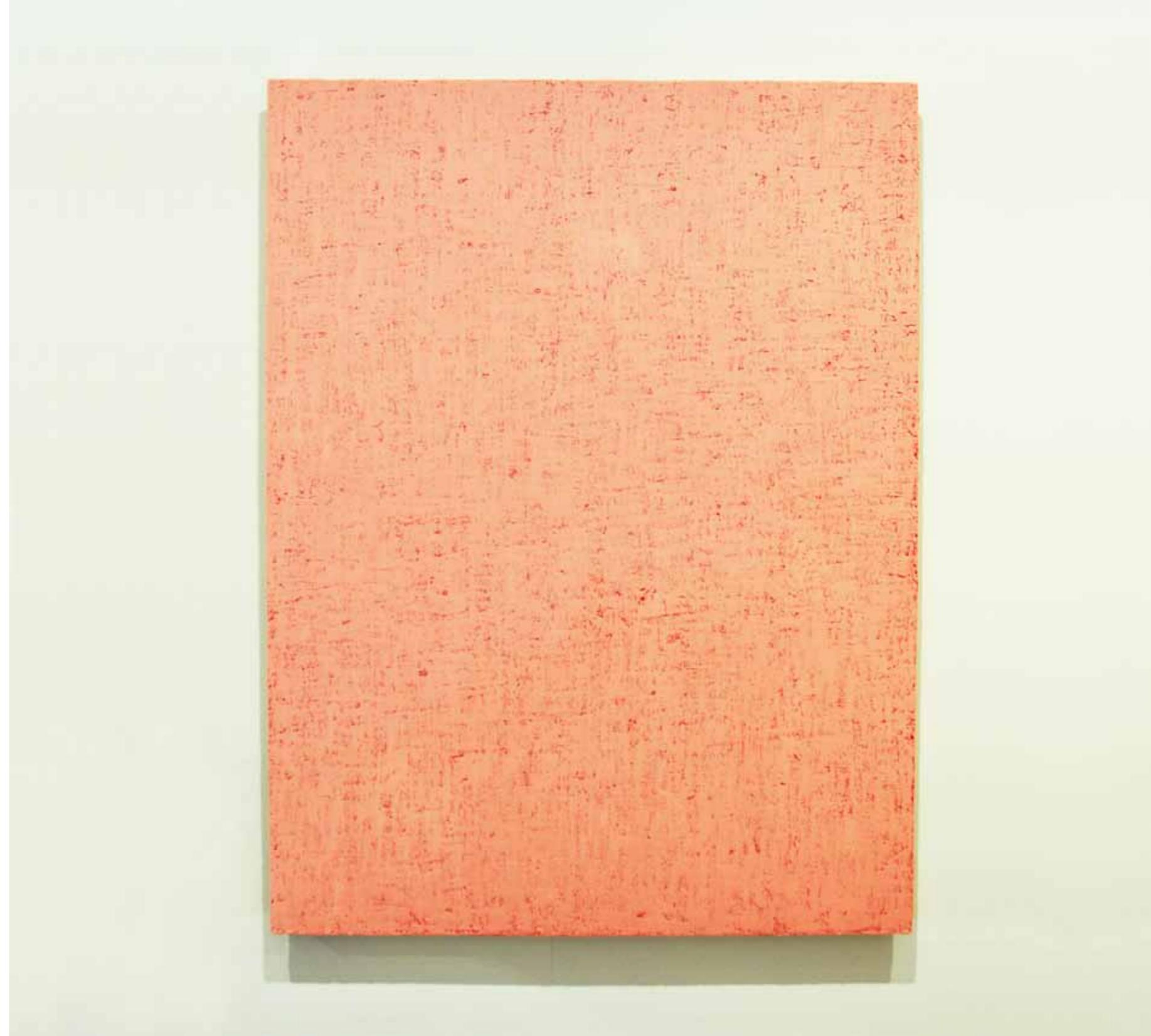
All the materials that I use, have their specific volume and character. I want to be aware of those elements in my work. It is for this reason that I consider myself neither “monochrome” nor “minimalist”. Nor do I think I am a painter; I am a creator of three-dimensional objects.

When I apply a layer of paint on a surface, I am in a very strong state of concentration. I have to plan beforehand how I envision

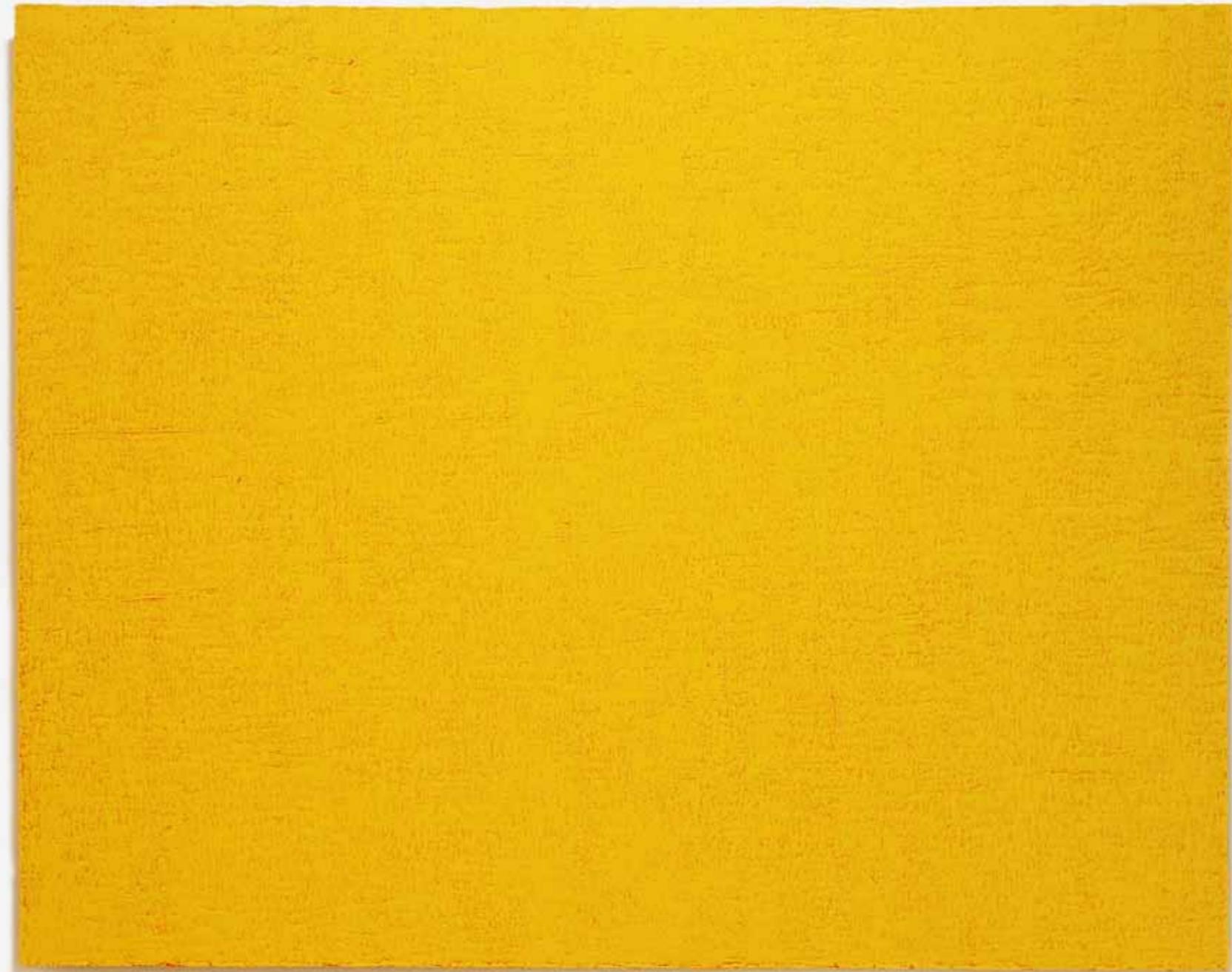
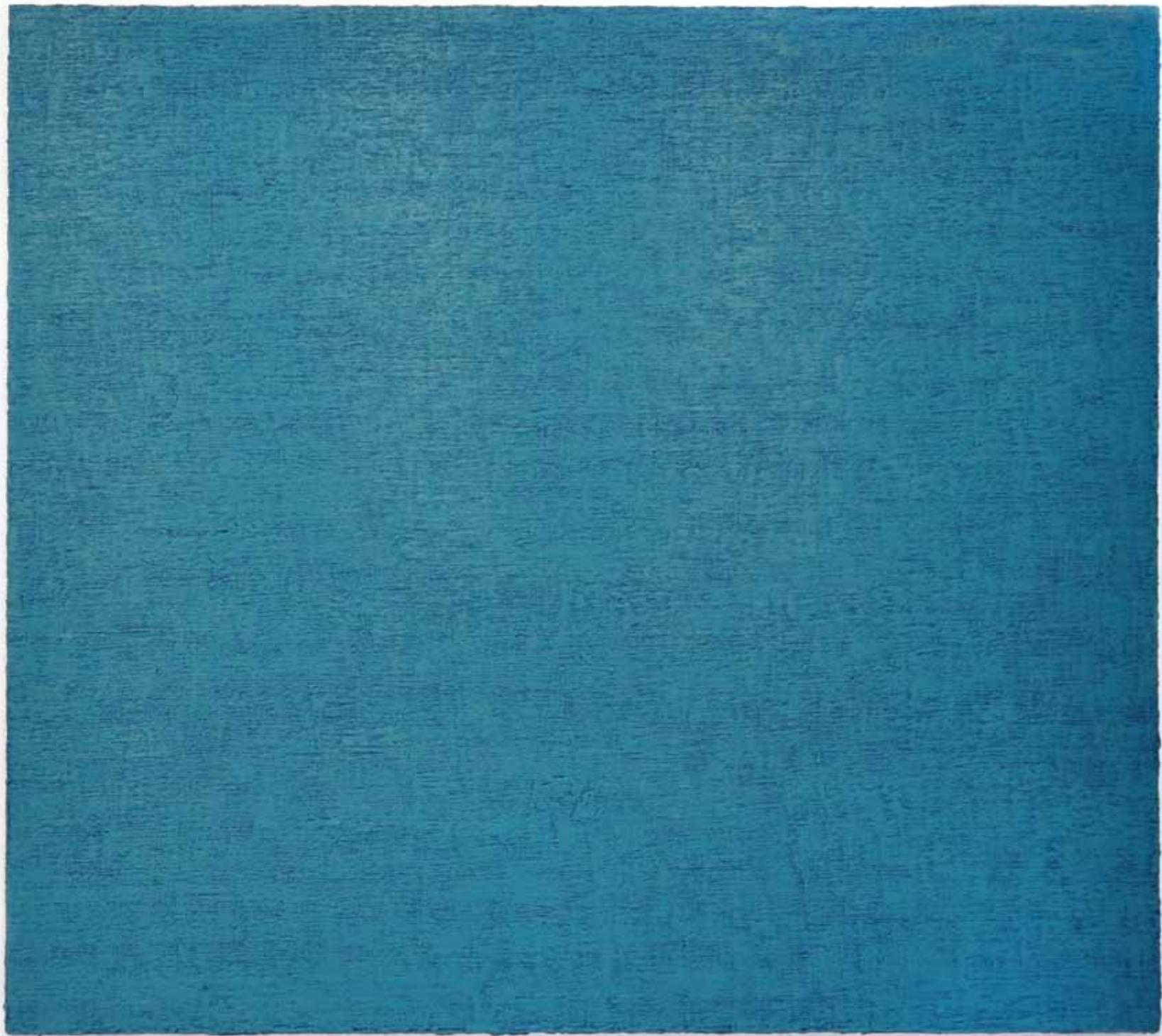
the end result; however, a lot also depends on the moment and the particular situation I am in when I am creating. Light, temperature and also my personal emotional condition are important, among other factors. I like to have good planning and to control my work, but it is also very important for me to have flexibility; to be able to adapt to the situation of the present moment. This is especially important as my works are travel documents that are based on experiences captured in the past but expressed in the present; my work is not just a time document as memory, it also includes the time that has passed since the moment of experiencing until the moment of creating.

My work is a kind of meditation. Each stroke is done very carefully and I continue it until the next stroke, until I finish one layer—I do not stop in between strokes. I create a color for each layer by mixing different colors. Even works that have the same title are very different from each other.

Having good light is very important for my work, because of the subtlety and the delicate nature of the surface, textures and colors that I use. Therefore, I prefer to use natural light and for that reason I do not often paint in the evening. I also prefer natural light for the placement of my work. The natural difference of the light moving through time allow my works to express a different atmosphere and I like to experience the movement of life through the light on my works, I want to experience the passage of time.







## SASAKI

SASAKI is the winner of the Global Art Affairs Foundation Prize 2010

### HEARTBEAT VENICE BIENNALE 2011

HEARTBEAT DRAWING as a Heartbeat-Portrait aims to raise your consciousness and to make you listen to your heartbeat. In addition it is about the visual act of drawing. This concept is expressed in my art. *HEARTBEAT VENICE BIENNALE 2011*, this performance is all about harmonizing the heartbeat, between the visitor whose heartbeat I draw, and myself, SASAKI. It is the process of a live performance in an environment with the sound of the heartbeat, which is composing the artwork. Spiritual interchange occurs between the artist and the visitor, who are both experiencing time and space.

HEARTBEAT DRAWING gives the opportunity to purely sense the simultaneous existence of people from all over the world, a method that can be undertaken by anyone anywhere, it is the power of the heartbeat. By simply placing your hand on your chest, you can feel the rhythm, the beat of your life. Since 1995, HEARTBEAT DRAWING has been consistently capturing this rhythm in real time in the form of drawing. But rather than drawing, it is more close to the nuance of inscribing, of pounding something out. The number of beats that have been inscribed by me until today reaches over 20 million. The visualized beats, the red rhythm of the work, captures a specific time and place, a specific context and functions as a device to visualize a complicated information resource. Each slightly different wave is a confirmation of life, and expresses a pure way of being. The work of HEARTBEAT DRAWING continues to add value to the existence of every beat. HEARTBEAT DRAWING continues as an art to draw attention to the fact that we are all born within the ecosystem of the earth.

The art of HEARTBEAT DRAWING is to enable you to sense that all over the world there exists a simultaneous pulsating rhythm of each person's heart, a harmony of sound that exists in one moment, and in this moment the commonality of the world is formed. From this small awareness we are led to the consciousness of our basic human equality. This is a unique expression of reality.

Ever since 1995, SASAKI has been obsessively continuing to produce HEARTBEAT DRAWING, in which he records the heartbeats. Today people from all over the world have in their possession more than 5 million heartbeats, drawn on over 300 artworks. In total there have been depicted more than 20 million heartbeats, on over 1600 artworks until today and that number is still growing. To be sharing the drawings of people being at a specific time in a specific space, is an important part of the concept of the HEARTBEAT DRAWING project. The drawings are originally created with pen or air-brush in red ink or another material. SASAKI is solely devoted to inscribe and record the heartbeat. Each individual drawing is a fragment of his entire activity and shows fine lines of red ink, forming a dense sort of net. Suggesting the unlimited expanse of life.

"Beat of the Heart", the fundament on which life in this world is given continuity, is the essence of "life" as we know it. It is the proof of living in the 'now' and the bond "shared" by most forms of life. "Sharing-Owning" of the Drawing is about participating in the ever-expanding project of SASAKI, where one shares "life" with others as a continuous element. HEARTBEAT DRAWING project is progressing with each heartbeat of each human being in this world.





## SEO

### Personal Cosmos

The question for the origin of physical energy has concerned me since I can think. In the microcosm of my childhood, the question was obvious since my irrepressible inner energy significantly distinguished me from all other family members. And since that was so unusual, I was often confronted with remarks of influence of the universe on me personally from parents, teachers and later also professors.

Gravitation is considered one of the four fundamental forces of nature. Not only does it cause mutual attraction of matter as well as other forms of energy, due to the equivalent of mass and energy. It determines the spacious allocation of matter in the universe, and also the earth's orbit around the sun and accordingly that of the moon around the earth. Also in astronomy and cosmology, gravitation plays a mighty role.

Many creatures' energy is directly influenced by the terrestrial magnetic field. Thus, for example bees, migrating birds, ocean turtles and most kinds of fish navigate along those magnetic curves. A logical conclusion has to be that also human beings are guided, steered and irritated by those powers.

Within the fragmentality of my art, I manage to visualize an energy flux of my own creation. This applies to earlier works, where I especially broached the issue of erotic energy, as well to the cycle *Crossways Against the War* of 2009 and 2010, where I was concerned with the most negative forms of energy and made the brutality and results of warlike operations apparent. But also the fascination that goes along with them.

Another stage of development of my Energy Fields for the project *Personal Cosmos* now assembles the junction of negative and positive energies. Due to their consequential abstraction, this aspect becomes especially apparent in the works specifically created for this installation. In another part of the installation, as a central theme I pick up the impact of two primordial energies clashing, of light with minerals. The interpenetration of light through crystalline consistency creates a parallelism to the big bang's expansion into space. Sound as a further carrier of energy visualizes this confrontation and embraces the volume of forces. An important aspect for me here was to commit myself to the given spaciality and to respectfully fit the dimensions of the light/sound/crystal installation into the predetermined architecture in a relation of one to three.

The vibrations in my universe are equalized with the cosmic sound of rotation in our outer space. I have an especially strong emphasis to pinpoint the universal phenomenon of energy and radiance, to show my personal existential orientation and the influence of those powers, also to gain clarity on how dependent the biggest is on the smallest as well as the smallest is on the biggest.

My art will always be a consolidation of those elements.



## LAWRENCE WEINER

By Karlyn De Jongh & Sarah Gold

Lawrence Weiner (\*1942, Bronx USA) has been making what he calls 'sculptures' since the 1960s: wall installations consisting of words, often in bright colors. The basis for his installations is the idea that language is material. Weiner's installations are flexible: size, language and color are variable; how they are depends on the location. Weiner maintains that: "ART IS THE EMPIRICAL FACT OF THE RELATIONSHIPS OF OBJECTS TO OBJECTS IN RELATION TO HUMAN BEINGS & NOT DEPENDENT UPON HISTORICAL PRECEDENT FOR EITHER USE OR LEGITIMACY."

Making art is Lawrence Weiner's way to judge his relationship to the rest of the world. It is a need. Placing his sculptures into the world and letting them adapt into their situation, gives him an insight in how things work. For Weiner, art is about this: somebody noticing a structure. It is this conversation with one's times that the artist considers to be his most important task. He remarks: "the whole point of an artist is to develop not as themselves, but develop in their practice with a relationship to the world as it is changing."

Making an installation, for Weiner, is about finding a work that is in dialogue with the world at that particular moment. It is about finding a basic, universal problem. Making an installation is asking a universal question in a way that, once people realize that it is a question, they can answer it in relation to themselves. Weiner notes that when creating an installation, he does know what to say. The problem for him consists in finding out how to phrase the question; the problem is to find out what syntax to put it in. Each situation is new and requires its own syntax.

According to Weiner, an exhibition is a placement in the world; it is a participation in the world. This participation is two-sided and concerns not only the making of the work, but the viewing as well. Weiner's instal-

lations challenge the viewer to think about how he can incorporate the work and the questions they provoke into his own life. The questions posed by the artist, should be answered by the viewer. For Weiner, this conversation with the public is most important. The reason being: when the viewer incorporates the work into his life, it functions as art.

Weiner chose to become an artist, because he wanted to be useful for society. He wanted to change people's perceptions of themselves and their own values. However, making work that changes people's perceptions of themselves comes with a responsibility. Weiner seems to feel this responsibility every day. He struggles with the problem of finding the right way to say what it is you want to say as well as having the awareness that what you say can have a great impact. He adds that art is a fight: it is about taking people's dreams away. The artist feels that when you change a basic perception of reality, you change somebody's entire sense of themselves. Weiner believes that his work made—and continues to make—it possible for people to have a better appreciation of the world and a better appreciation of their life.

Weiner's installations are open for interpretation: each person understands the work differently and that is exactly what he wants. Keeping it open, the viewer can adapt it to his own abilities, by trying to place it into his life. Weiner says his work is about creating an awareness that you too can understand the world. The greatest joy for him is "when somebody enters an exhibition and goes on: "what is this shit?" and then all of a sudden you hear this strange: "oh, I get it." To Weiner, it does not matter what the answer of the viewer is or whether he likes the work or not. It is about there being an answer. Because: when there is an answer, the work is successful: it becomes part of the place.



MORE SALTPETER THAN BLACK POWDER

MORE SILVER THAN GOLD

ENOUGH (SALTPETER) TO MAKE IT EXPLODE

ENOUGH (GOLD) TO MAKE IT SHINE

MORE THAN ENOUGH

MORE THAN ENOUGH



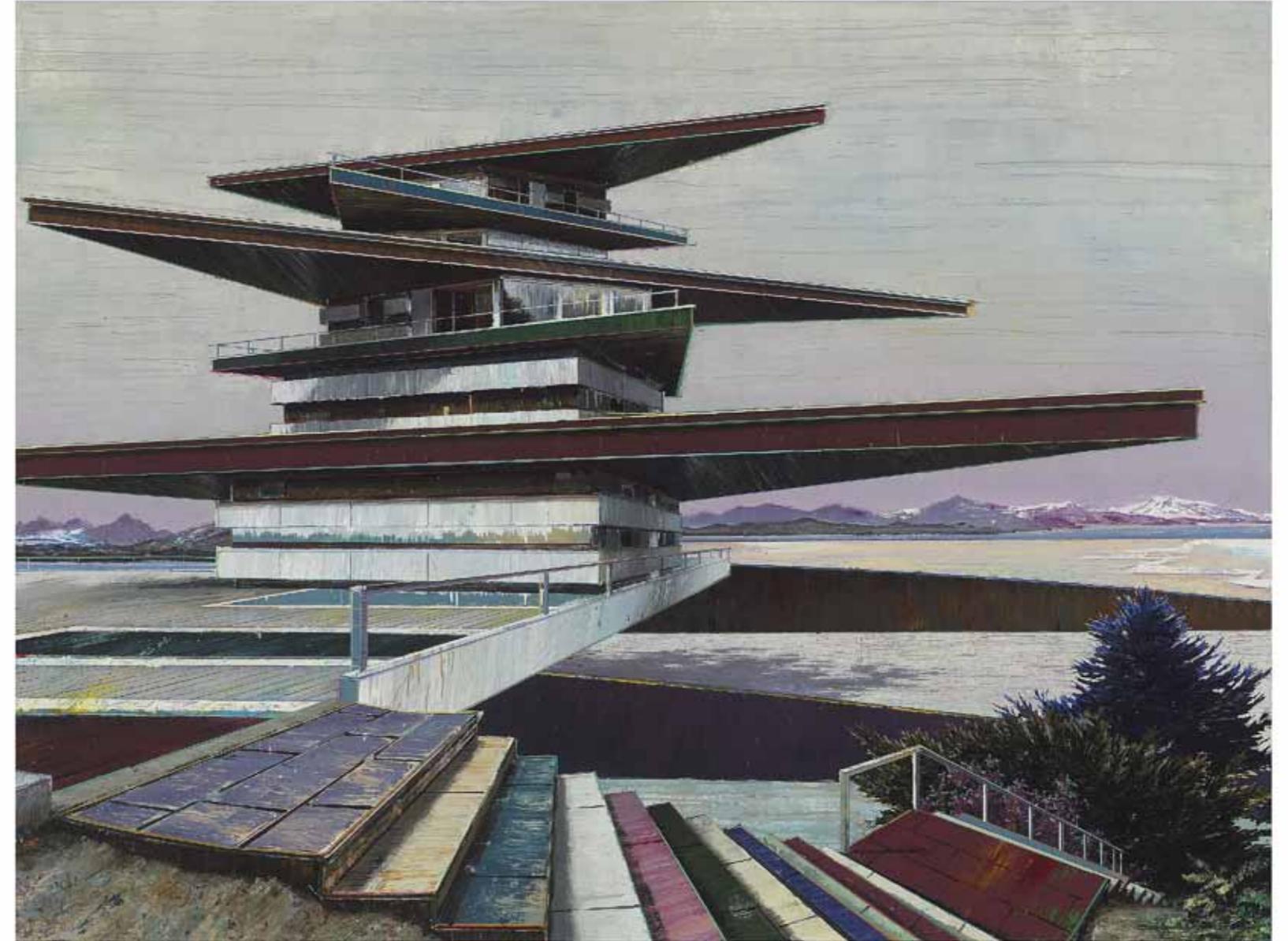
# MAIK WOLF

By Martin Engler

## The World as Dream and Composite

Something hostile to life and exceedingly cold comprises the grounds of Maik Wolf's pictorial worlds. Oddly erroneous colours illuminate glowing vedute that reveal surreal buildings among unpeopled astral landscapes. The terrain is inhospitable; the architecture is aggressive. The paintings linger within nocturnal shadows even after being graced by the ancillary presence of the *Tag* [Day]. On the horizon in *Monolith 2*, a range of mountains gleams in pinkish and violet tones. The expansive plane before them is dominated by an enthroned and tremendous architectural massif, which juts from the dizzying heights of its foundational platform through the depth of the pictorial space. Like a toy cast aside by a cyclops, the building stacks itself monumentally skyward, without revealing whether the beholder is confronted with spatially palpable architecture or faced with a mere model. Prominent horizontal building-slices measure the pictorial space between the horizon and the picture plane, even grazing the latter's left edge to burst the format's boundaries. What seems by contrast to be an almost handcrafted stairway pushes the building even higher upward, while anchoring it in the depths of the ground plane. At the unseen foot of the stairway, below the picture's edge, a couple of lonesome trees push their way into the field of view. The building above the abyss thus wins still more loftiness, appearing to be located—and with it, the beholder—among a life-threatening area, high above the timberline. These pictures and the worlds they project are somnambulist inventions—fragmentarily fomented dreamscapes, which, at first, are reluctant at revealing their true significance: a world as composite and conception—an amalgam of various disparate spaces and realities. Indeed, they are comprised of grandiose stage sets, projection spaces,

panoramic backdrops and painted facades—all bound to the task of yet finding their story. They are the eversions of fantastical dream worlds. In *Mausoleum 4*, a Böcklinist *Isle of the Dead* rises up from a labyrinthine necropolis. In place of water, the dead are now separated from the living by gaping cement burial chambers enshrouded in nighttide tenebrosity. The island itself has mutated into an architectural hermaphrodite, crowned with bonbon-coloured cypresses below the expanse of an altogether unearthly firmament. One is confronted again with this coldness, this feeling of being engulfed by another world, or another planet—as though immersed in time-travel pictures of dream-world interiors, where the laws of the world, along with tectonic and spatial integrity, are superseded. Both the painter and the beholder are transformed into astronauts, travelling to far-away worlds, which are only—or rather expressly—dreams, residing closer to home. Foreign elements are paired with nigh and trusted ones—science-fiction worlds with romantic death-cults, alpine mountain-panoramas with interstellar iciness. And then unexpectedly—this world of *Shadow Wanderings* is dismantled back into its disparate pieces of scenery; the dream dissolves, and the painterly invention congeals. What then become visible are the abstract spaces behind the dreams—abstract layering and sculptural abbreviation, between which landscapes burgeon. Colour and body now insist upon their autonomy anew, revealing painting that has discontinued any telling of stories. The previously navigable, once safely-entered spaces have become fields of absolute ambiguity. Topographic and content-related assuredness is now obtained only on a local and provisional level: landscapes unfolding into spatially dominant metaphors that still search for their significance within the picture.



## XING XIN

I name this work, "2011, I exhibit myself in a western exhibition": in the exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, as part of the 54<sup>th</sup> Biennale di Venezia 2011, I exhibit myself. In the scene, I'm locked in a small, empty room, behind iron "prison" bars. I'm only wearing tailored trousers, being half naked to the waist; my tailored shirt and coat are tidy hung on the wall. Every day from 10 am to 7 pm (opening hours of the exhibition at Palazzo Bembo), I stay here, doing nothing. People are free to look at me, a Chinese artist, a Chinese. At 7 pm, I put on my tailored shirt and coat and leave my room. People are still free to look at me, I'm still the artwork itself. The next morning, at 10 am, I'll enter the room again. This action will span 30 days.

This is a work of simplicity, as what I do is simply to exhibit myself. However, it is saturated with my current thought about 'living space' and my own existence today.

Flourishing and prosperous China is today. Considering the past century, hardly anyone could resist the urge of going with the favorable wind of the current economy. With the continuing Reformation and Opening Policy, the world economy battles to gradually take a place in this nation, China, which for decades had applied planned economy policy. The ups and downs of the stock market and real estate constantly feed people's appetite for money, while the accelerating inflation triggers their discussions and participation on "economics"! (Hereby, I don't mean to question the rightness of reformation and opening, with which I actually agree, our Chinese society, ideology, etc. will therefore become more humanistic.)

As you can imagine: when even the chitchat on every family's dinner table—I mean EVERY family—were occupied with investment, rewards, and benefits, where could we still make our serenity? The schools? Of course not! In these times, professors deservedly cast their green eye to the colleagues overseas.

As a "human", I cannot agree that only this is the value of my life! Knowing this, makes me feel depressed! Therefore, I chose my life, chose to be an artist! I fight, fight with the unseen. I'm perplexed, by my family, my lovers, and my friends!

As an artist, I constantly feel lost and I feel I am facing horror! I'm lost, in the Chinese contemporary art world, which only seems to be dealing with the total, instead of treasuring any individuals to light the world. I believe: I am human. In my eyes, the flourishing of contemporary art is nothing more than a mixture between the curiosity of the Westerners and the speculations of the New Rich in the East!

In this society where humanity encounters economics, in these times when speculation invades, I force to engage myself with the Allies: "The fact is, that since the moment that I was born, I only wish to fight my way through the noise; thus to become free and easy, until my whole life will be over, will be lit!"





## ZOU CAO

By Eugenia Hu

Both China and Chinese landscape painting stand for the Chinese traditional culture and art, and they also represent the typical character of their mind and culture. In fact, Chinese traditional art emphasizes on the integration of subject and object, which means its prominence is the close relationship between humans and nature instead of conquering nature by force. Without doubt, this can be seen from a statement of Zhuang Zi: "I forgot myself as a subject and then I transfer into the unity of nature and people." Therefore, the most outstanding achievement in Chinese traditional art is landscape painting. It describes the human race both to indulging and merging itself into nature, in order to experience world and life. Furthermore, China might also represent the Chinese traditional culture and art, and the West gains a deeper knowledge about the nation, based on the China of old times. However, with Chinese thought on Chinese traditional culture and art in contemporary China, collapsing with the influence of multiple elements in history and politics. Without any doubt, people always fully accept Chinese traditional culture without really understanding it. Consequently, Zou Cao creates the artwork *Be Careful*. In this sculpture, the artist has used fragmented porcelain to recreate the *Fu Chun Mountain Painting* by Huang Gongwang from Yuan dynasty. (This is one of the most well-known and representative artworks in Chinese traditional landscape painting). As the original topic, we must be "careful to touch it; otherwise it will hurt our fragile body". This can be seen to reflect an introspective and respect from the artist and his ironic and critical attitude towards Chinese contemporary culture.

From a deeper perspective on it, moreover, the transformation of modern Chinese history, politics, and culture, based on the establishment of the new China, can be traced back to the era of Chairman Mao Zedong. Mao

resorted to violence to create a new political power but destroyed the traditional culture through Cultural Revolution. It can be seen that the typical porcelain statue of Mao, may demonstrate Mao's well-known statement: the successful figure can be found in the present instead of those in the past when he takes on an introspective sight on the past, the present and the long line of Chinese emperors. To the viewer, it can also present an insight on various situations of contemporary politics and culture, having been represented by Mao in China.

Mao is still omnipresent in Chinese culture and society today, he continues to be honored and loved with the deepest respect. The mountain consists of a multitude of fragments, with Mao as the unique gem on top of everything. Zou Cao's work, *Be Careful* envisions this relationship between the Chinese People and their hero quite candidly; within a seemingly fragile depiction of landscape he incarnates the people in their various ethnical groups, and above everything hovers an invulnerable luminary Mao. Within this area of conflict between a bruised people and the untouchable "deity", a new reasoning emerges, leading to a shift of coordinates. The reflection of this change is found, in addition to the mentioned irony, an explicit criticism of the intangibility of nature that emblematically represents mankind for Zou Cao.

In the space that shows this artwork, there is fragmented porcelain on the floor. The sound of this porcelain can be heard by visitors when they walk on it, this can stimulate visitor's hearing. Furthermore, this hearing stimulation can have impact on the mind of the visitors, it reminds them that they must be careful. The visitors can sense this impact on the mind—must be careful. And this can directly transform the visitors from a negative visitor into positive participators.





September 30, 2008

**I COLLECTED SEVERAL WORKS BY  
ON KAWARA SINCE THE BEGINNING  
OF THE 50'S. HAVING SEEN IN JAPAN  
THE CULTURE OF THE ZEN, OF THE  
BUDDHISM, WHICH I LIKE VERY MUCH.**

**I HAVE THE FEELING ABOUT THE  
EXISTENCE OF A STRONG, BUT HIDDEN  
RELATIONSHIP WITH THE WORK BY ON  
KAWARA. I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW IF  
MY INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT.**

Giuseppe Panza — Collector, Massagno, Switzerland

**IN ADDITION**

## ANNA LENZ

No matter where we travelled—since 1960, a camera came along every time...

As our life basically always revolved around art, and my husband Gerhard Lenz and I, being art collectors, also lived every day with art, this became the overall focus of my photography. It emerged into expressive series of encounters with artists in their studios, of many art festivities and cultural tours, and in particular series of our exhibitions.

For almost 40 years, we presented our ZERO-collection in various museums in cities all over Europe, a.o. Moscow, Warsaw, Madrid, Zagreb, Salzburg and Munich. A total of thirteen times, especially selected works went on tour, and every time my camera captured what were for us unforgettable moments: from the transportation and installation of the works, to the opening of the exhibitions.

It is nice that my photographs, which originally and to a large extent developed within the context of exhibitions, are today actually themselves shown in an exhibition; now it is complete.

The title *Personal Structures: Time · Space · Existence* refers to issues that play an important role also in my photographs: they document personal relationships, the passage of time, processes, places as well as various forms and states of being.

So many artists who are represented in our collection, we call our friends. They were always involved in our engagements and exhibitions and most of the time, they were present in large numbers.

Some of them no longer are alive; they are of course present in our collection through their works and alive through the photographs.

I am specifically referring to the portraits of Jef Verheyen and Karl Prantl that are exhibited here, showing the artist as he is—through the photographs you suddenly feel their strong presence again. Especially with the portraits, I think it is important to let the artists be. It seemed best to me, to observe people and things from a distance, not to stage and therewith show direct involvement.

Over the years, people forget so much, that we often confuse things in retrospect, and keep coming back to the same questions: Which works were exhibited where? What were the rooms like? And the lighting? How and when did the stones of Karl Prantl come in place?

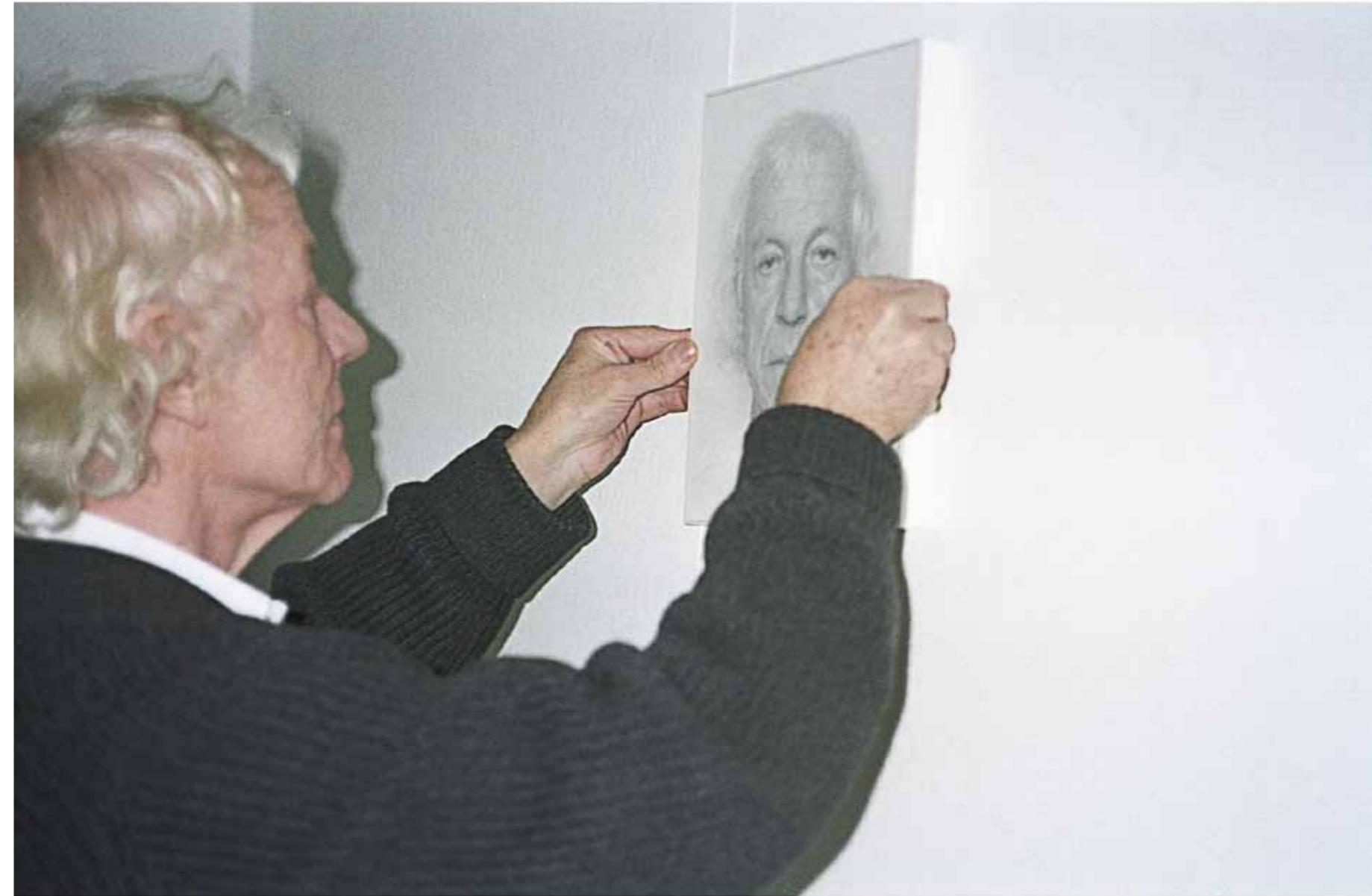
I therefore consider my pictures and series to be a form of diary. They document the history of our collection, and with it the history of the artworks and artist as they were with us.

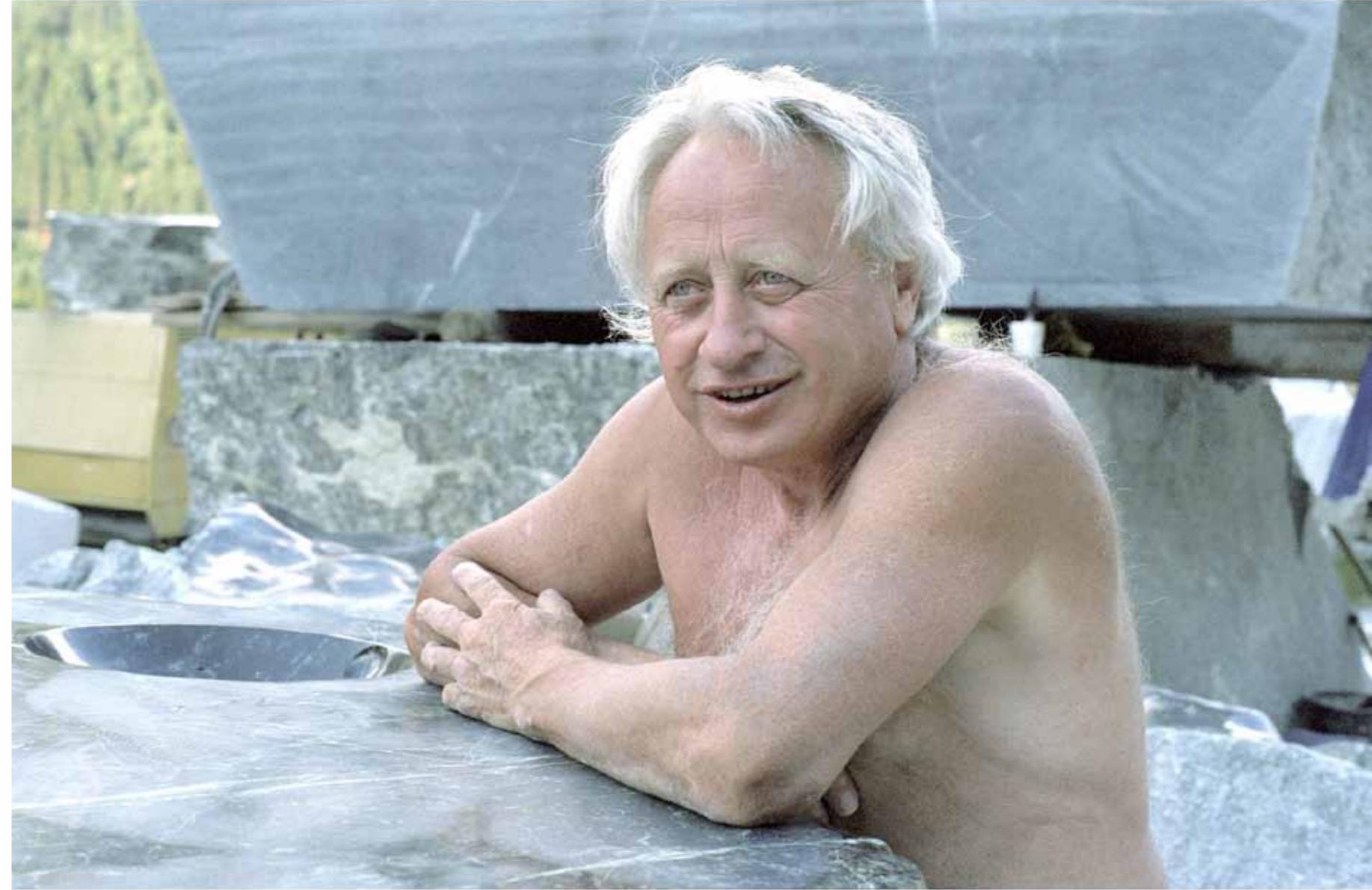
What can photographs accomplish, what do they mean to me?

They let us understand and process things. They let us discover or rediscover and, above all, remember. By taking pictures, precious moments can be saved, moments that would otherwise be lost forever, as if they never existed. From this perspective, the quality of each single photograph is secondary. First they are meant as a time document, they are true to life.

Motto for me and my camera was and is:

“Make that visible which without you might never have been perceived.”  
(Robert Bresson)





## ON KAWARA

By Karlyn De Jongh

On Kawara (\* 1933, Japan) has been making artworks that address time, space and existence since the early 1960s. Unlike the other artists in this exhibition, On Kawara is presented here through questions. The questions provide information about the artist's life and work. I have been collecting these questions for a period of two years, from 2007 until 2009. It turned into a separate project called *Unanswered Questions to On Kawara*, and resulted in a collection of questions posed by 79 people who know the artist or his work very well.

The project started in April 2007. We wanted to include On Kawara in our book *PERSONAL STRUCTURES: TIME SPACE EXISTENCE*. But, how to accomplish this? On Kawara seemed to have never published any personal written statements. He gives no public speeches or interviews. We, from our end, didn't want an art historian to write about his work; we wanted to get closer to On Kawara. Rene Rietmeyer suggested we ask people who know On Kawara personally—or at least know his work—to submit a question and then, when all had been gathered, to try to hand them over to On Kawara. We decided that, in the expected event he would not answer them, we would publish these questions as: *Unanswered Questions to On Kawara*.

*Unanswered Questions to On Kawara* became my project. From the very beginning it intrigued me, although I have to admit that at first, the idea to collect questions for On Kawara was abstract to me. I knew about his work: the *Date Paintings*, the telegrams, the series *I met*, and the postcards *I got up, One Million Years...* But I had no clue concerning just who On Kawara is. What is his work actually about? I started doing my homework: To whom did he send his telegrams? Who received postcards? Who did he meet? Who wrote about him? Which museums have his works in their collection? What galleries handle his work? I came up

with a long list of people from all over the world—Africa, Asia, Europe, North and South America—and I started contacting them.

In general people's reactions were very different: some were enthusiastic, others neutral, yet others were even angry, and—for whatever reason—from many people I received no reply at all. But over the course of time, I did manage to collect a total of 78 questions. They were from many different people, such as Fumio Nanjo, Paula Cooper, Giuseppe Panza and Lawrence Weiner. Others, such as Kasper König and Franck Gautherot, did not want to give a question and sent me a statement instead.

I had promised Rene Rietmeyer the last question: "Could you have done anything to get more satisfaction out of your own existence?" It was 1 May 2009, almost exactly two years after the first question from Klaus Honnef. I was in New York, USA: the time was right to make an attempt to contact On Kawara.

I knew from Thomas Rieger of Konrad Fischer Gallery, that On Kawara lives on Greene Street; it was the only information I had. Going to On Kawara's apartment was the only possibility for me to get in contact with him. During that week, I went to On Kawara's apartment several times: he was not at home. On my last day in New York, it was Thursday 7 May 2009, I had to do it; it was my last chance. I went to Greene Street, holding the questions in my hand. As I approached his apartment block, an older Japanese man and woman crossed the street. They were accompanied by a younger man who was carrying suitcases. They got into a car and drove away. I am sure it was On Kawara; I missed him.

Since then, I made several attempts to get a sign of life from On Kawara. But still, no answer.

# September 2, 2008 When will you call me?

## Joseph Kosuth — Artist, Rome, Italy

October 28, 2008

**DEAR ON KAWARA**

**IS THIS DAY DIFFERENT THAN ALL  
OTHER DAYS?**

Lawrence Weiner — Artist, New York, USA

January 16, 2009

なぜ、数字を用いるのでしょうか。数字にこだわるのは、数字に信仰があると私は考えるのですが、温さんはどう思われますか。

Lee Ufan — Artist, Paris, France

## THE MAKING OF

By Valeria Romagnini & Giovanni Dantomio

During the preparation of our exhibition, we have been through many different situations while we hosted many of the artists. Having the chance to work with so many of them in our palazzo, we gained countless experiences. In this short period of time we worked with artists coming from different parts of the world; helping to create, construct and install their work of art in their room. Artists such as herman de vries, Judy Millar, Toshikatsu Endo, Thomas Pihl, Rene Rietmeyer, Yuko Sakurai, Joseph Kosuth, Lee Ufan and many others.

We are part of a group of students of the IUAV University of Venice, assisting with the set up and handling of this exhibition. It was the end of April when we finally started working for real on the installation of the artworks at the palazzo and were able to create the exhibition.

These six weeks before the opening were a rush against time. We still have not had enough time to realise, to be completely aware, of the intensity of this period in our life. Perhaps it could be best remembered as a very important time concerning the experience of art and life itself; being totally focused on and living within the artworld.

In order to document these interesting moments, Giovanni Dantomio was asked to record the set up, the creation, the making of the exhibition. A video, which would show the process and steps, that we had to take together with the artists in order to come to our final presentation. We thought of *The Making Of* as a good tool to give the visitors of our exhibition an interesting insight, as realistic as possible a view of how it actually was, of all the things that happened during that period of time in the palazzo.

It became an honest documentation of a topic that we take seriously, time passing, from another rare perspective, an unusual sight, a way to show the spectators the way we and the artists worked. For us it became a documentation to remember the presence and the relationships with the artists who worked here with us. A recording of how things came into existence, showing the truth behind the curtain in order to let everybody understand and perceive the process of the whole experience. The artists often thought of being unreachable entities, themselves being perceived as “far away” persons, but here, in reality, proving to be approachable human beings.

Making the video, my goal was to represent a particular vision, to create an extract, which does not claim to be comprehensive but at least representative of what happened in those very busy weeks. I did not chose any musical surrounding while editing the final video because I found it more realistic to hear the noises of the work itself while hearing in addition sometimes the *gondolieri* singing out loud in the narrow canals next to our palazzo. It shows very well how the relationship of our exhibition with such a particular city as Venice actually is. Without understanding Venice, one can never truly comprehend how complicated it is here with shipments; getting the artworks through the canals, under the bridges and through the narrow alleys, and then finally bringing the artworks on their place in the rooms of the palazzo. However, in the video, I mainly focussed on the construction of the artworks by the artists themselves, trying to catch the core of these encounters, the dialogues, the interaction, the smiles and being human of the artists and all the people involved.







**CAPTIONS**

## CAPTIONS

4 Palazzo Bembo, Venice, Italy. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation

8 An Unanswered Question to On Kawara by Rene Rietmeyer

16 Rene Rietmeyer painting his *EL HIERRO 2011* boxes, 22 May 2011. Photo: Martina Grifoni

19 Marina Abramović, *CONFESSION*, 2010. Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. B&W DVD Loop. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: the artist and Lisson Gallery

20-21 Marina Abramović, *CONFESSION*, 2010. 2 stills of her installation at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. B&W DVD Loop. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: the artist and Lisson Gallery

23 Carl Andre, *Crux 14*, 2010. Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Hot rolled steel, 14 unit Greek Cross on floor, 0,5 x 50 x 50 cm each, 0,5 x 350 x 350 cm overall. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Galleria Alfonso Artiaco, Napoli

24 Carl Andre, facsimile of the handwritten answers to the questions of Peter Lodermeyer by Carl Andre, 20 June 2008

25 Carl Andre, *Crux 14*, 2010. Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Hot rolled steel, 14 unit Greek Cross on floor, 0,5x50x50cm each, 0,5x350x350cm overall. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Galleria Alfonso Artiaco, Napoli

27 herman de vries, *burned*, 2007. Burned trunk of an oak, vitrine, 47x78x47cm

28 herman de vries, *this is*, 2009-2011. Old weathered part of a beech, vitrine, 20 x 160 x 40cm

29 herman de vries, *life*, 1996-2011. Animal bones, collected in the woods, vitrine, 58 x 35 x 35cm

31 Toshikatsu Endo, *VOID 2010*, 2010. Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Wood, tar, iron, (fire), 380 x 380 x 220h cm. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Toshikatsu Endo.

33 Toshikatsu Endo, Event for *Fountain*, 1991, wood, tar, fire, 75x130cm (29.5x 51"), by location the situation changes, Okazaki city, 1999, Japan

34 Toshikatsu Endo, Event for *FOUNTAIN*, 1991. Wood, tar, fire, earth, air, sun, 95x1930x95h cm. Photo: Mitsuhiro Suzuki. Courtesy: MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART TOKYO. Copyright: Toshikatsu Endo

35 Toshikatsu Endo, event for *Trieb-CANAL*, 2010. Wood, tar, iron, fire, earth, air, sun, 200x710x220h cm. Photo: Toshikatsu Endo. Courtesy: Toshikatsu Endo. Copyright: Toshikatsu Endo

37 Johannes Girardoni, *The (Dis)appearance of Everything*, 2011. Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Resin, LEDs, Spectro-Sonic Refrequencer (V.2.0). Photo: Johannes Girardoni Studio. Courtesy: Johannes Girardoni Studio

38 Johannes Girardoni, *The (Dis)appearance of Everything*, 2011. Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Resin, LEDs, Spectro-Sonic Refrequencer (V.2.0). Photo: Johannes Girardoni Studio. Courtesy: Johannes Girardoni Studio

39 Johannes Girardoni, *Peak Light Extractor - Grey/Yellow*, 2011. Resin, pigment, LEDs, wood and enamel, dimensions variable. Photo: Johannes Girardoni Studio. Courtesy: Johannes Girardoni Studio

40 Johannes Girardoni, *The Passage Room*, 2009. Scrim Frames, Exposed LEDs and Spectro-sonic Refrequencer, dimensions Variable. Location: ACFNY New York, USA. Photo: David Plakke. Courtesy: Johannes Girardoni Studio

41 Johannes Girardoni, *In Front of the Plane Nr. 8*, 2008. Beeswax, Pigment, Wood and Nails with 2 Digital C Prints, dimensions variable.

Location: Feichtner Gallery, Vienna, Austria. Photo: Philipp Forstner. Courtesy: Johannes Girardoni Studio

43 Peter Halley, *Judgment Day* (Detail), 2011. Wallpaper installation of digital inkjet prints. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Peter Halley

44-45 Peter Halley, *Judgment Day*, 2011. Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Wallpaper installation of digital inkjet prints, 1184 x 699 x 410cm. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Peter Halley

46-47 Peter Halley, *Judgment Day*, 2011. Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Wallpaper installation of digital inkjet prints, 1184 x 699 x 410cm. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Peter Halley

48 Joseph Kosuth, *The Mind's Image of Itself*, 2011

49 Joseph Kosuth, *Use of the Palazzo Bembo floor plan*, 2011

50-51 Joseph Kosuth, *Use of the Palazzo Bembo floor plan*, 2011

52-53 Joseph Kosuth, *Use of the Palazzo Bembo floor plan*, 2011

54-55 Joseph Kosuth, *The Mind's Image of Itself*, 2011. Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Wallpaper, 664 x 401 x 368cm. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Joseph Kosuth

57 Melissa Kretschmer, *Cadence*, 2011. Beeswax, graphite, gouache, Dura-Lar film, paper on plywood, 36x42cm. Courtesy: Galleria Alfonso Artiaco, Naples

59 Melissa Kretschmer, *Timbre*, 2011. Beeswax, graphite, gouache, Dura-Lar film, paper on plywood, 34x33cm. Courtesy: Galleria Alfonso Artiaco, Naples

61 Lee Ufan, *Relatum*, 2011. Detail of the installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Lee Ufan

63 Lee Ufan, *Relatum*, 2011. Detail of the installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Lee Ufan

64-65 Lee Ufan, *Relatum*, 2011. Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Carrara marble split, a metal plate, a painting (oil on canvas) and one medium size stone, 658x453x374cm. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Lee Ufan

67 Ma Jun, *New China Series*, 2005-2009. Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Different porcelain objects, dimensions variable. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Galerie Michael Schultz

69 Tony Matelli, *Josh*, 2010. Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Silicone, foam, steel, hair, urethane, 74 x 30 x 22 inches. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Leo Koenig, Inc.

71 Judy Millar, *Il Passaggio della Fortuna*, 2011. Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Paint, sulvant, ink, vinyl and wood, 2000 x 191cm. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Judy Millar

72-73 Judy Millar, *Il Passaggio della Fortuna*, 2011. Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Paint, sulvant, ink, vinyl and wood, 2000 x 191cm. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Judy Millar

75 Tatsuo Miyajima, *Warp Time with Warp Self No 2*, 2010. LED, IC, electric wire, mirror, 105 x 150 x 15.5 cm. Courtesy: SCAI THE BATHHOUSE. Photo: Nobutada Omote

76-77 Tatsuo Miyajima, *Pile up Life No 5 (Katrina) & 6*, 2008. Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Light Emitting Diode, IC, stone (pumice), electric wire, both objects h. 84 x w. 64 x d. 64 cm. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: the artist and Lisson Gallery

79 François Morellet, *Lamentable*, 2006. Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. 8 red neon tubes, 190cm each, height 358cm, artist's studio collection. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: GALERIE AM LINDENPLATZ AG.

80 François Morellet, *L'Avalanche*, 1996. 36 blue neon tubes, white high voltage wires, 400 x 400 cm. Collection of the artist for this version. Courtesy: GALERIE AM LINDENPLATZ AG.

81 François Morellet, Karlyn De Jongh and Sarah Gold at Morellet's studio in Cholet, France on 8 February 2011. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation.

83 Hermann Nitsch, *130. Aktion*, 2010, Naples, Italy. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Museo Hermann Nitsch.

84 Hermann Nitsch, *130. Aktion*, 2010, Naples, Italy. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Museo Hermann Nitsch.

85 Hermann Nitsch, *130. Aktion*, 2010, Naples, Italy. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Museo Hermann Nitsch.

86 Hermann Nitsch, *130. Aktion*, 2010, Naples, Italy. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Museo Hermann Nitsch.

87 Hermann Nitsch, *130. Aktion*, 2010, Naples, Italy. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Museo Hermann Nitsch.

89 Roman Opalka, *OPALKA 1965/ 1–∞*, Detail 893147–918553, (detail), undated, acryl on linen, 196x135cm (77x53"). Courtesy: Sammlung Lenz Schönberg, Austria

91 Roman Opalka painting in his studio on 9 June 2010, at 19:11 o'clock. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation.

93 Thomas Pihl, *Untitled (Venice) No.1*, 2011. Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Acrylic paint on Canvas, 60 x 96 inches. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Thomas Pihl and Galleri SE, Bergen

94-95 Thomas Pihl, *Untitled (Venice) No. 3 and 2*, 2011. Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Acrylic Paint on Canvas, 60 x 96 inches each. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Thomas Pihl and Galleri SE, Bergen

97 Miriam Prantl, *MANAS*, 2011. Detail of installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Wood, LED pixel, sequencer and PNG film, 50 x 50 x 50 cm. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: GALERIE AM LINDENPLATZ AG.

98-99 Miriam Prantl, *MANAS*, 2011. Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. 4-part installation of wood, LED pixel, sequencer and PNG film, 50 x 50 x 50 cm each. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: GALERIE AM LINDENPLATZ AG.

101 Andrew Putter, *Secretly I Will Love You More*, 2007. Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Video installation, 540 x 193 x 360cm. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: the artist.

103 Andrew Putter, *Secretly I Will Love You More*, 2007. Video installation, variable dimensions. Courtesy: the artist.

105 Arnulf Rainer, *Untitled*, without year. Oil on wood, 195 x 122 cm. Photo: Robert Zahornicky. © Arnulf Rainer

106 Arnulf Rainer, *Untitled*, without year. Oil on wood, 193,5 x 101 cm. Photo: Robert Zahornicky. © Arnulf Rainer

107 Arnulf Rainer, *Untitled (Kopf)*, 2010. Oil on wood, 29 x 25 x 65 cm. Photo: Robert Zahornicky, © Arnulf Rainer

108-109 Arnulf Rainer, Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. From left to right: *Untitled (Kopf)*, 2010. Oil on wood, 29 x 25 x 65cm; *Untitled*, undated. Oil on wood, 195 x 122cm; *Untitled*, undated. Oil on wood, 193,5 x 101cm; *Untitled*, undated. Oil on wood, 195 x 102cm. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. © Arnulf Rainer

111 Rene Rietmeyer, *EL HIERRO, SPAIN, FEBRUARY 2011*, 2011. Oil on wood, 25 x 22 x 15cm. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Rene Rietmeyer

112-113 Rene Rietmeyer, "*EL HIERRO, Spain, February 2011*", "*Portrait of JK and Rome 2010*" and "*Naples, Italy, May 2010*", 2011. Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Rene Rietmeyer.

114 Rene Rietmeyer, *Portrait of Sarah and Karlyn, Venice 2011*, 2011. Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Oil on wood, each Box 25 x 25 x 15 cm. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Rene Rietmeyer

115 Rene Rietmeyer, *Naples, Italy, May 2010*, 2011. Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Oil on wood, each Box 25 x 25 x 12 cm. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Rene Rietmeyer

116 Rene Rietmeyer, *EL HIERRO, Spain, February 2011*, 2011. Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Oil on wood, each Box 25 x 22 x 15 cm. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Rene Rietmeyer

117 Rene Rietmeyer, *Portrait of JK and Rome 2010*, 2011. Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Oil on wood, each Box 25 x 25 x 19 cm. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Rene Rietmeyer

119 Yuko Sakurai, *Ise*, 2011. Detail of 3-part installation at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Oil on wood, 160 x 120cm each. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: the artist

120-121 Yuko Sakurai, "*Ise*", "*Tsuyama*" and "*Tsumekizaki*", 2011. Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. All works oil on wood. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: the artist

122 Yuko Sakurai, *Tsumekizaki*, 2011. Detail of 2-part view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Oil on wood, 160 x 140cm (the other part: 160 x 180cm). Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: the artist

123 Yuko Sakurai, *Tsuyama*, 2011. Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Oil on wood, 160 x 200 cm. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: the artist

125 SASAKI, *HEARTBEAT VENICE BIENNALE 2011*, 2011. 10 day performance in which SASAKI draws with air-brush the heartbeats of 299 visitors to the exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011, 3 minutes each, and stacks them on each other. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: SASAKI

126-127 SASAKI, *HEARTBEAT VENICE BIENNALE 2011* (Detail), 2011. 10 day performance in which SASAKI draws with air-brush the heartbeats of 299 visitors to the exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011, 3 minutes each, and stacks them on each other. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: SASAKI

129 SEO, *color fever #4*, 2011. Papercollage on canvas, 170 x 170 cm. Courtesy: Galerie Michael Schultz. Photo: Bernd Borchardt

131 Lawrence Weiner, *MORE THAN ENOUGH*, 2011. Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Language, mirrored silver vinyl with matte black & red vinyl, 502 x 393 x 360cm. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: the artist

132-133 Lawrence Weiner, *MORE THAN ENOUGH*, 2011. Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Language, mirrored silver vinyl with matte black & red vinyl, 502 x 393 x 360cm. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: the artist

135 Maik Wolf, *Cluster 10 / Monolith 2 / Tag*, 2010. Oil on Canvas, 190 x 250 cm. Courtesy: Galerie Michael Schultz

137 Xing Xin, *2011, I Exhibit Myself In A Western Exhibition*, 2011. A 30 day performance in which Xing Xin is exhibited as a prisoner in Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Xing Xin. © Xing Xin

138-139 Xing Xin, *2011, I Exhibit Myself In A Western Exhibition*, 2011. Relics of a 30 day performance in which Xing Xin was exhibited as a prisoner in Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Xing Xin. © Xing Xin

141 Zou Cao, *Be careful*, 2011. Detail of installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Fiber reinforced plastics, porcelain, glue, 523 x 503 x 358cm. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Galerie Michael Schultz

142-143 Zou Cao, *Be careful*, 2011. Installation view at Palazzo Bembo, exhibition PERSONAL STRUCTURES, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale 2011. Fiber reinforced plastics, porcelain, glue, 523 x 503 x 358cm. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation. Courtesy: Galerie Michael Schultz

144 An Unanswered Question to On Kawara by Giuseppe Panza

147 Anna Lenz, *Roman Opalka Warschau*, 1992. © Anna Lenz

148 Anna Lenz, *Günther Uecker 20er Haus Wien*, 1992. © Anna Lenz

149 Anna Lenz, *Karl Prantl Steinbruch in Huben, Osttirol*, 1988. © Anna Lenz

151 An Unanswered Question to On Kawara by Joseph Kosuth

152 An Unanswered Question to On Kawara by Lawrence Weiner

153 An Unanswered Question to On Kawara by Lee Ufan

155 Toshikatsu Endo installing his work. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation

156 Lee Ufan with his work *Relatum*. Photo: Global Art Affairs Foundation

157 Judy Millar installing her work. Photo: Martina Grifoni

158 Joseph Kosuth sitting in his own space in Palazzo Bembo. Photo: Martina Grifoni

164 An Unanswered Question to On Kawara by Paula Cooper

July 10, 2008

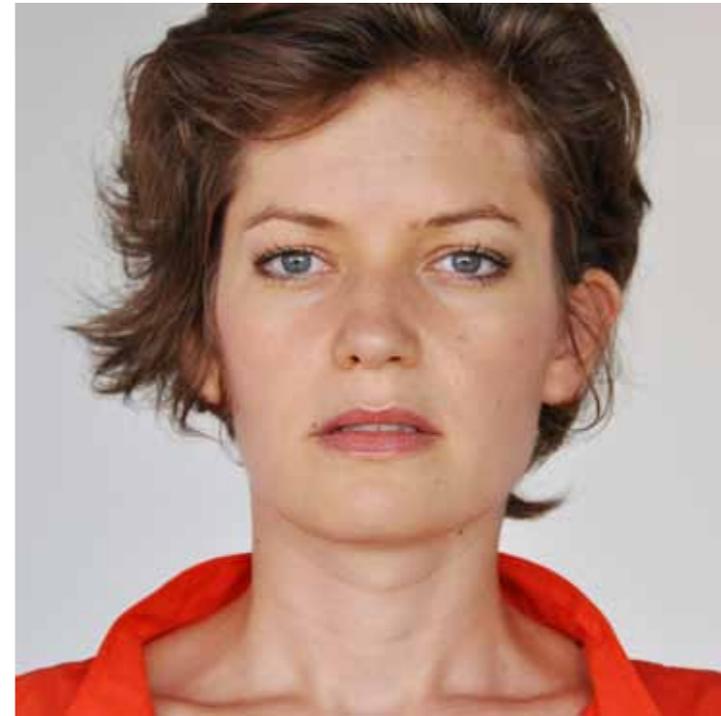
**What and how was the transition  
from the early paintings to the  
Time Space Existence work?**

Paula Cooper — Director, Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, USA

**CURATORS**

Karlyn De Jongh

Sarah Gold



### **Karlyn De Jongh**

Karlyn De Jongh (\*1980, Netherlands), independent curator and author. Study of Fine Arts in Amsterdam and Rotterdam, Netherlands. Received M.A. in Philosophy and M.Phil. in Art History and Theory at the Universities of Leiden, Netherlands and Santa Barbara, CA, USA. Since 2007, working with the project *Personal Structures*.

[Photo: Palazzo Bembo, Venice, Italy, 14 September 2011, 5:13 pm]



### **Sarah Gold**

Sarah Gold (\*1978, Netherlands), independent curator and author. University education in Germany (Heidelberg) and received her M.A. degree in Art History from the University of Leiden, Netherlands. Worked as an assistant curator at the Caldic Collection in the Netherlands and is engaged in the project *Personal Structures* since 2005.

[Photo: Palazzo Bembo, Venice, Italy, 14 September 2011, 5:17 pm]

