

**Visiting Artists:
Mary Reid Kelley
& Patrick Kelley**

**Monday, March 27, 6:30p
Sleeper Auditorium**



About the Kelleys

Mary Reid Kelley and Patrick Kelley are a husband-and-wife collaborative duo whose work collides video, performance, painting and writing. Their highly theatrical vignettes performed by the duo feature her scripts, painted sets and costumes and his videography and editing to explore gender, class, and social norms within history, art, and literature. The artists' use wordplay, punning and rhyme as a humorous and incisive means of deconstructing how history is written and represented.

Their short films focus on historical moments of social upheaval, often uncovering the stories and voices of historically underrepresented figures. Female protagonists such as nurses, prostitutes, and factory workers relate to their larger social histories through philosophical references, euphemisms and bawdy puns, all set within the parameters of rhyming verse.

Mary Reid Kelley earned a BA from St. Olaf College and an MFA from Yale University. She is the recipient of the MacArthur Foundation Grant, has received awards from the American Academy in Rome, the Rema Hort Mann Foundation, and the College Art Association. Major exhibitions include Salt Lake Art Center, SITE Santa Fe, Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston, and ZKM Museum of Contemporary Art in Karlsruhe, Germany.

Patrick Kelley earned a BFA from St. Olaf College and an MFA from Cranbrook Academy of Art. He has taught Photography, Video and New Media courses at the University of Minnesota, St. Olaf College, St. Mary's College of Maryland, and Skidmore College in New York. His works have shown at the Bibliothèque Publique d'Information-Centre Pompidou, Paris, France, the Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, Germany, and the Minnesota Museum of American Art.

Works





Press

Mary Reid Kelley's Dionysian Revelries
Artnet, October 2015

A Wandering Will: Mary Reid Kelley
Discusses Swinburne's "Pasiphae"
Los Angeles Review of Books, May 2015

The Myth of Mary Reid Kelley
W Magazine, September 2014

Mary Reid Kelley Discusses Her Latest Exhibition
Artforum, August 2013

Finding the Reason in Mary Reid Kelley's
Mad Rhymes About French History
Artinfo, January 2012

Mary Reid Kelley, in Plain Frenglish
Art in America, November 2011

Verbal Play and Venereal Disease:
A Q&A with Mary Reid Kelley
Artinfo, June 2010

Mary Reid Kelley's Dionysian Revelries - artnet News

Mary Reid Kelley's Lush Videos Take On the Minotaur and Nicki Minaj

Reid Kelley lets puns destroy language from within.

[Brian Boucher](#), October 23, 2015



Mary Reid Kelley with Patrick Kelley, *The Thong of Dionysus*, 2015, Quicktime file.

Courtesy of Fredericks & Freiser, New York.

Linguistically intoxicating and rich with mythical and modern resonance, [Mary Reid Kelley](#)'s latest show pays tribute to inspirations from Euripides to Lil' Kim, from Rose Sélavy to Nicki Minaj.

On view at New York's [Fredericks & Freiser](#), the show centers on the artist's latest video, *The Thong of Dionysus*. It's the third in a trilogy devoted to the Minotaur, the half-man-half-bull of Greek mythology who is the son of a Minoan goddess and a beast.

Nothing is sacred for Reid Kelley (as it was not for the Greeks, whose gods were petty, vain, and conniving). She makes the Minotaur female and has all of her female characters, including the Minotaur's half-sister, Ariadne, and its mother, Pasiphae, sport long, dangling pubic hair. By switching the creature's gender and playing it herself, she told artnet News in a phone interview, she has, like [Pablo Picasso](#) before her, made it a vehicle for a kind of self-portrait.

Reid Kelley collaborates on her videos, all in rich black-and-white, with her husband, Pat Kelley; she writes the

librettos, dons the costumes, and steps before the camera, while he shoots the videos after digitally creating the backgrounds from Reid Kelley's drawings.

The 9½-minute *Thong of Dionysus* starts with the titular character extolling the virtues of wine. Reid Kelley's trademark punning starts right up, with animated vases taunting, "You're vial, Dionysus!" to which he retorts, holding up his own vessel, "No, ewer!"



Mary Reid Kelley with Patrick Kelley, Still from *The Thong of Dionysus* (2015).
Courtesy of Fredericks & Freiser, New York.

"We wanted a more fantastical visual process, so his world is animated, active, crazy," Pat Kelley told artnet News in a phone call about the video's depiction of the god of wine and ritual madness. "That was really fun because we pulled out more trickery in service of the character."

Soon enough, Reid Kelley's verse ties the isles of Cyclades to "sick ladies," and Dionysus proclaims, "I amphora set of priorities," the first being to "join a drunken sorority." Priapus, the god of male genitalia, meanwhile wanders the labyrinth, with a banana, a fish, a zucchini, and the head of a cock (the feathered kind!) poking out of his jockstrap.

Ariadne, meanwhile, floats in the ocean and washes up on Naxos; when she tries to kill herself with the wrong weapon, a trio of Maenads points out, "That blade's made of rubber, you tragic line flubber / oh why don't you Euripides shit up?"



Mary Reid Kelley with Patrick Kelley, *The Thong of Dionysus*, 2015, Quicktime file.

Courtesy of Fredericks & Freiser, New York.

Just as she's feminized the Minotaur, and emphasized the female characters in the myth, Reid Kelley has long explored the fraught place of women in society. In her [2009 debut show](#) at the gallery, she looked to World War I in one video devoted to a woman working in a munitions factory and another to a nurse at the front; in [her 2011 outing](#) here, she rolled back the clock to the mid-19th century, focusing on a Parisian prostitute.

Since that first New York outing, the 36-year-old Reid Kelley, who earned an MFA from Yale, has shown at venues from the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, to ZKM Karlsruhe, Germany, and she's won the Rome Prize, a Tiffany award, and a Guggenheim Award. This November, she'll give a performance at London's Tate Modern.

In her newest videos, she reaches back yet farther into history. Her older subject, though, lets her pivot to modern interpreters of ancient tales, like writer Jorge Luis Borges, who penned a short story about the bull-headed beast. He's one of a cast of characters that appears in the new show in photographs of Reid Kelley's painstakingly constructed and painted models of historical and literary figures.

Most of them have in some way treated the Minotaur myth, and their artworks and writing served as resources in Reid Kelley's research. There's Picasso, who identified with the creature's prowess, and Euripides, who wrote a play centered on the ill-fated hybrid. Others, like rappers Lil' Kim and Nicki Minaj, are there for the inspiration they've provided Reid Kelley.

"The most concrete thing I learned from them was how to rhyme on the inside of a line," she told artnet News. "In *Anaconda*, when Nicki said, 'Boy toy named Troy, used to live in Detroit,' it was kind of an epiphany. The first lines in *Thong of Dionysus*, 'Picture a pitcher bewitched with / an image adapted by jerks,' are adapted from a T.S. Eliot poem. So it's a cross between Nicki and T.S. Eliot." In their boasts about their lush lifestyles, too, the rappers are aligned with Dionysus's excesses.



Mary Reid Kelley, *Nicki Minaj*, 2015, pigment ink print on archival paper.
Courtesy of Fredericks & Freiser, New York.

But all of this isn't just about linguistic fun and drinking too much, either, Reid Kelley pointed out. The Greeks were a warring people. And while the Minotaur myth doesn't have any named author, she says, we know enough about it to know the creator's motive. "It was made up by the Athenians, who benefited by the demise of the Minoans," she said, "by saying their queen fucked bulls."

Mary Reid Kelley's "The Thong of Dionysus" is on view through November 14, 2015.

At Bureau, Roman Stańczak Beats on Expressionism

THE DAILY PIC: The sculptor shows that distress can be just a carpenter's trick.

[Blake Gopnik](#), October 23, 2015

A Wandering Will: Mary Reid Kelley Discusses Swinburne's "Pasiphae" - Los Angeles Review of Books

MAY 25, 2015



Mary Reid Kelley with Patrick Kelley, Swinburne's Pasiphae, 2014. HD video, black and white, sound. 8:58 min. Courtesy of the artists; Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects; Fredericks & Freiser Gallery, New York; and Pilar Corrias Gallery, London.

*O crowned head of my child Pasiphae,
What god is this that drives thee without sail
Before the wild winds of a wandering will ...?*

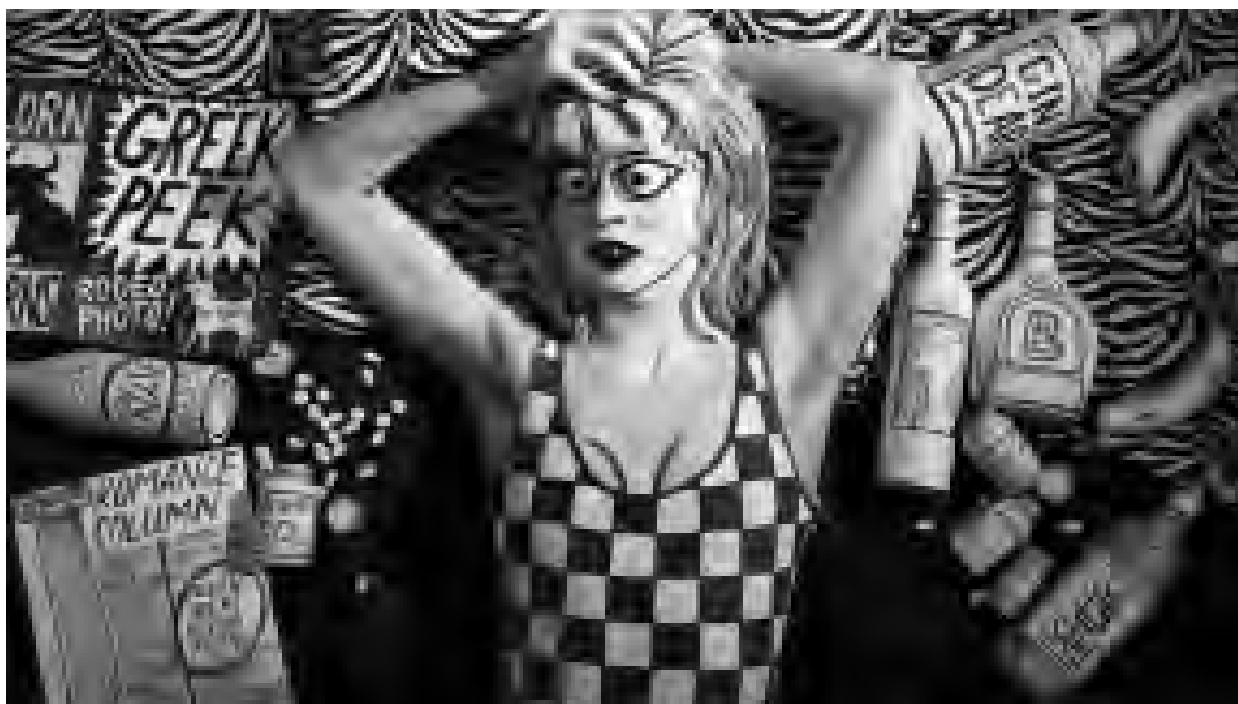
— Algernon Charles Swinburne, *Pasiphae*

IN THE 1860s, the Victorian poet Algernon Charles Swinburne penned a fragment of verse that was as obscene as it was ornate, and never to be published in his lifetime. Styled as a passage from a lost Greek play, *Pasiphae* takes the form of a dialogue between Daedalus — the mythic artistic genius — and Pasiphae, queen to King Minos in Crete. With increasing fervor, they revel in Daedalus' contrivance of a wooden cow — a "cunning carven beast" — within which Pasiphae will secrete herself and satiate her lust for a beautiful white bull. Even now the work retains the power to unnerve, grappling with forbidden sexual longing and the feats of perverse ingenuity it can inspire. Whimsical as the poem is in style and tenor — a screed of expostulation and florid innuendo — its evocation of Pasiphae's erotic ecstasy retains a disquieting sensuality. Daedalus foresees the "Sweet stings & pleasurable warm violences" that the queen will enjoy, the "shoots of fluid flame through the aching blood." Far

from turning us away, the poem's aberrant subject draws us stealthily into sympathy with the tormented queen.

American artist and filmmaker Mary Reid Kelley has magnified this quality of fascinating aberration in *Swinburne's Pasiphae* (2014). Her nine-minute melodrama, for which Swinburne's text serves as the screenplay, is the second in a trilogy of films based loosely on the story of the Minotaur (the monstrous fruit of Pasiphae's lust), made in collaboration with artist Patrick Kelley. Shot in stark, metallic monochrome, it draws us into a comic-book realm decked out in clunky black-and-white paintwork. Figures totter and gesticulate like marionettes, endowed with Ping-Pong balls for eyes and bearing doodled black lines across their bodies. Reid Kelley plays all the parts — a handyman Daedalus, a swimsuit-clad Pasiphae with braided hair, a cat-suited Minotaur — while intoning Swinburne's verses through a mask or painted teeth. "I see myself as working within an essentially grotesque tradition," she explained to me in an email correspondence last year, adding that "the grotesque had an enormously important role in the classical world — the satyrs, priapic gods, Dionysian drunkenness — although due to some very careful rebranding in the Enlightenment and Victorian eras, that's not what classical means to most people."

Like Swinburne's poem, Reid Kelley's art is undergirded by a "wandering will" or aberrant impulse (invoking the literal meaning of the Latin *aberrare*, to wander or stray) — grappling with the self as a fluid, unstable, and potentially deviant entity. Through the myth of the Minotaur's conception, she veers away from the classical world's connotations of order and rationality. *Swinburne's Pasiphae* is overtly, luridly stagey — achieving a suitable sense of what Swinburne's biographer Cecil Lang called "Algernonic exaggeration." The counterfeit cow is akin to a pantomime contraption; Daedalus's workshop is evoked by a backdrop, filled with clumsy graphics of tools. Beneath the film's ludic veneer, however, there is an atmosphere of reality gone dangerously awry, as if distorted by delusion and neurosis. Reid Kelley's sense of a darker side of the classical — one of sexual profligacy, intoxication, or ecstatic frenzy — looks back to the dichotomy Nietzsche expounded in *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872) between the "Apollonian" face of ancient Greece (what Walter Pater had termed the "sharp, bright edge of high Hellenic culture"), and the darker "Dionysian" subcurrent of irrationality and chaotic subjectivity.^[1] In Kelly's view, "Apollonian interpretations of the classical world are ubiquitous" — too ubiquitous: we have tended to brush Dionysus under a carpet of sweetness and light.



The extremes of sexual deviancy remain a largely taboo area for contemporary art — often shied away from entirely, or sublimated through bombastic caricature, as in the sculptures of Paul McCarthy or the Chapman Brothers. The question of what qualifies as deviancy is, up to a point, a historically specific one: as Reid Kelley proposes, “many subjects that Swinburne’s audience would have seen as very risqué (such as lesbians, or spanking — favorite Swinburnian topics) are nearly ubiquitous in contemporary art,” and she draws a distinction between “extinct taboos (gay sex) and live ones (bestiality).” Jocose as her film appears, Reid Kelley uses the smokescreen of a mythical story and fanciful stagecraft to broach the inexpressible “live taboos” of modern society — just as Swinburne and his peers did. She impels us to see sexual transgression not as an eccentricity of myth but as a fact of everyday life, as real now as it was in prehistoric Crete. In her exhibition last autumn at London’s Pilar Corrias gallery, *Swinburne’s Pasiphae* appeared alongside a collection of dioramas of props from the film. One of these, *Pasiphae’s liquor cabinet* (2014), evoked the queen’s guilt-ridden lust in the form of a shelf cluttered with potions and panaceas — her torment reimagined comically as a modern, pill-popping dilemma. A sequence of cartoons meanwhile channeled the ancient zoophilic narrative into the guise of “Lonely Hearts” adverts in lifestyle magazines, with some appalling classicizing puns thrown in for good measure (“QUEEN SEEKS BOVINE FRIEND,” “I AMPHORA NEW ROMANCE”).

The point of *Pasiphae’s liquor cabinet* seemed to be that, however preternatural and arcane the story, its core themes — of forbidden desire, the craving for satisfaction, and the basic fact of sexual peculiarity — are all too real, discernible everywhere amid the trivia and neuroses of modern life. Reid Kelley concedes that “the one element of the story that still seems archaic is the bestial coupling,” although she regards this residual element of incongruity as revealing much about modern attitudes in itself. Indeed, the strangeness of Pasiphae’s coupling with the bull has perhaps been given an added twist by science, liable to seem even more grotesque in the eyes of a contemporary audience versed in the rationale of evolutionary theory. “It’s not just taste that’s intervened,” she explains, “but science, Darwin, genetics. The acquisition of this knowledge hasn’t made us better at tolerating difference, which is what the Minotaur ultimately represents.”

Given that sexual aberration — whatever its form — is a fact of life as much as a figment of myth, it is hard not to

think of Pasiphae's aberrant fictional passion in relation to Swinburne's own life and his notorious peccadillos. Reid Kelley points out that "the exact dimensions of Swinburne's sexuality are impossible to know, thanks mostly to Victorian sensibilities — including his own: he was equally a libertine and a gentleman." Swinburne's milieu (which included Charles Baudelaire, Walter Pater, Simeon Solomon and the Pre-Raphaelites) might well be summed up in similar terms — imaginatively licentious yet bound by the politesse of the day. It is clear, however, that "Swinburne was certainly a sexual outcast," Reid Kelley says, "which makes me sad because I think he would have been much happier partnered. I wish he could have lived in our pro-kink era of Craigslist and OK Cupid." She speculates that "the dramatic appeal of the cursed, willful Pasiphae must have been obvious to him — he never missed a chance to enshrine sexual taboo in verse."



Certainly, Swinburne is now remembered as much for his alcoholic excesses and erotic aberrations (he peddled a rumor that he had engaged in pederasty with a monkey and then eaten it) as for his verse and criticism. His alleged homosexuality may have been more affected than practiced, but he was clearly a masochist — as vulnerable as Pasiphae to "the sharp goad of an amorous will [...] biting her flesh with teeth / Immedicable."^[2] "He visited a brothel in St John's Wood for regular spankings," Reid Kelley recounts, "and the one romantic liaison he had (it was with an actress — [Dante] Rossetti set it up so Swinburne could lose his virginity) did not last long." Indeed, the actress friend supposedly reported back to Rossetti: "I can't make him understand that biting's no good."

That culturally contingent question of what is "good" or "no good" — either in art or sexual etiquette — is posed by the myth of Pasiphae. In both Swinburne and Reid Kelley's treatments of the story, the theme of sexual transgression is intimately bound up with that of artistic licence, with Pasiphae and Daedalus straying — in nature and artifice respectively — beyond what is conventionally appropriate. What are the proper limits for art? Daedalus's "marvellous handicraft" is, in one sense, as aberrant as the unnatural lust it seeks to abet, but it also commands admiration precisely because of its dubious purpose. It offends against — and trumps — nature through a diabolical sleight of hand.^[3] As Daedalus himself comments in Swinburne's poem, it is "no small subtlety [...] To have wrought in wood such likeness of a life." His art sets itself apart from ethical qualms (compare

Oscar Wilde's *fin de siècle* dictum: "There is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book. Books are well written, or badly written. That is all." [4] Daedalus was traditionally a figure who went beyond limits — an artist of overweening and unchecked imaginative power. Pasiphae's remark that the gods "over-gave of gifts" when they bestowed his talents finds corroboration in ancient presentations of Daedalus as a demiurge. Plato tells us in *Meno* that when his figures "are not fastened, they play truant and run away; but if fastened, they stay where they are." [5]

Renouncing the emotional reserve and technical refinement of much contemporary video art, Reid Kelley's film shares something with Daedalus' — and Swinburne's — daring lack of inhibition. We sense the artist's imagination wandering (erring) unfettered by regard for decorum. The prolific allusions embedded in *Swinburne's Pasiphae* are evidence of an errant, fitful impulse — down to the strange potpourri of historical riffs compressed within Pasiphae's garb. Reid Kelley has explained how "the shape of her eyes comes from Minoan frescoes. The hairdressing supply store that I purchased her wig from described it as 'perfect for Bo Derek or Cleopatra' — just right for a century-spanning femme fatale." [6] Meanwhile, the queen's checkered swimwear simultaneously aligns her with the tragicomic figure of the harlequin — Picasso's morose clowns or the cavorting players of the *commedia dell'arte* as imagined by the younger Tiepolo.

In its eclecticism, *Swinburne's Pasiphae* plays out the idea that art — like Daedalus's tethered statues — is ever striving to break away from itself, to outstrip its own histories and traditions, while remaining incapable of breaking the bonds that tie it to the past. Literary and artistic retranslations pile up in lurid array — heaped up on a pyre — with no single voice amid the throng "winning out." Reid Kelley speaks of the influence of "the first few decades of film, when it was very entwined with current stage and theatrical practices (Weimar probably being the best example)" — again alluding, via the dramaturgy of Brecht or Artaud, to the improvisatory style of the *commedia dell'arte*. One genre refers, in this way, backwards and outwards to multiple others. And by dint of this polyglot referentiality, the film is once again faithful to the fizzing erudition of Swinburne's verse — to those intertextual caprices and nuances that, as Reid Kelley relates, made his writing such an anathema to Modernist critics: "too diffuse, too non-specific, too avid and frequent in its literary allusions, too close to parody." In a characteristically backhanded compliment, T.S. Eliot surmised: "Only a man of genius could dwell so exclusively and consistently among words as Swinburne." [7]

To watch *Swinburne's Pasiphae* is therefore to be jolted again and again between filmic styles and historical moments. At various points, animated paintbrushes and rulers gambol across a black field — spelling out punning and anagrammatic title cards ("HER DESIRE" slipping back and forth into "HERD SIRE") in accompaniment to Swinburne's verses. Like the cow itself — a hollow wooden core finished in hide — the film thus consists of layers of artifice that abrade one another even as they hold together (Swinburne's elevated language sounding all the stranger in Reid Kelley's limpid American vowels). *Swinburne's Pasiphae* has about it a sense of sprawling chaotic timelessness. As we flicker between the voices and epochs of Swinburne, Reid Kelley, and the vague "mythic" time of their characters (located three generations, at least, before the Trojan War), it becomes difficult to determine who the real subject of *Swinburne's Pasiphae* is — Swinburne or Pasiphae or Reid Kelley herself. Perhaps it is all three. If Swinburne's poem stands as a "lens" through which Reid Kelley re-examines the story, then by the same token her film presents a lens through which we view his verse (and through which that verse is inevitably distorted) — or more accurately, a shifting carousel of different lenses, each offering a new distortion.



While erring against (even gently lampooning) Swinburne's poem, Reid Kelley inevitably reaffirms it. *Swinburne's Pasiphae* reminds us of the double-edged nature of artistic influence — a force to be resisted as much absorbed. In Reid Kelley's art, we find a playing out of Pater's proto-Modernist belief that "the composition of all ages is part of each one of us."^[8] The Minoan cycle myths have continually been recast and adapted in art and text; and of course, the very idea of aberration spawning aberration in an unstoppable chain is a narrative theme within ancient mythology.^[9] There is no original version of the Minoan cycle of myths, and it has been claimed that the story of the Minotaur has its basis in some conceivable reality — the "Bull of Minos" was just a bull, or a man so ferocious as to seem like a bull — but myth has naturally deviated from reality, often through the erroneous accounts of onlookers.^[10]

Reid Kelley has noted of Swinburne's poem that "mythological characters like the Minotaur, Daedalus, and Pasiphae are authorless free agents of ideas, cyclically pressed into service by centuries of artists and writers" — although she also stresses that "there are distinctions to be made in the long blur of historical time into mythological time." She points out, for example, that "monsters like the Minotaur or the Sphinx seem to be in a more purely mythological category than figures like Daedalus or King Minos or Theseus, who might be amalgamations of real people. Then there are people like Homer or Jesus, who probably existed — it's interesting how writing, or records of their thought, is a crucial distinguisher here."

In tandem with the trilogy of films inspired by the Minoan myths, she is producing a sequence of black-and-white photographic portraits of her key influences from the 19th century — Baudelaire, Poe, Swinburne — recast as puppets. It is as if the luminaries of the *fin de siècle* have become characters in a Plasticine animation. "The motivation in making the portraits was the chance to spend more time with people I think of as my artistic or intellectual heroes," Reid Kelley explains. "Identifying someone as a hero does seem to move them into a mythologically tinged category, particularly with thinkers like Swinburne and Baudelaire whose biographies abound with very colorful anecdotes."

Indeed, almost all acts of memory or interpretation entail a degree of estrangement from reality, or what we might call mythologization. The unreality of myth is itself nicely reflected in the faux-naïve stagecraft of *Swinburne's*

Pasiphae, elaborate in its very woodenness and suggestive of a childish simulacrum of the world. Daedalus's workbench (preserved as a sculptural assemblage in the Pilar Corrias exhibition) bears an array of tools — paintbrushes, a hammer, a tape measure — that have been papered and painted to become counterfeit versions of themselves. Reid Kelly insists almost *ad absurdum* in this way on the manufactured surfaces of things; and her “dressed-up” world is moreover mirrored in the transvestitism of her performances. As Daedalus, with close-cropped blond hair and a workaday apron, she becomes a kind of DIY-store tomboy. The Minotaur is a spandex-clad female with an upturned shopping bag for a head.

Through a conflation of eruditely couched eroticism, archaic mythology and surrealist masquerade, Reid Kelley has produced a work of art as hybrid and incongruous as the creature of the Minotaur. It is easy to see the piece as an allegorical mythological recycling, a postmodern exercise in playful artifice; indeed, whereas Daedalus's cow was intended to deceive, Reid Kelley's piece revels in its own air of confection. And yet to regard her micro-drama as no more than a “magic lantern” of genres and styles is to overlook the emotional puissance of its accrued layers. To return to the question of Daedalus's artistry and its notional amorality, it is significant that while his creation transcends the bounds of what is conventionally “good,” it also generates empathy between Daedalus and Pasiphae. The creation of the cow is an act of compassionate understanding. As the literary critic Catherine Maxwell writes of Daedalus (and Swinburne through him), “he has imaginatively entered [Pasiphae's] psyche and experienced her physical cravings”; he “performs an unexpectedly graphic version of erotic sympathy that looks like a parody of the conventional Victorian sympathetic ideal.”^[11] Transgressive art therefore becomes a way of embracing and understanding (perhaps even facilitating) what is taboo, forbidden or ineffable in human experience.

This quality of imaginative sympathy emerges most clearly in the final phase of *Swinburne's Pasiphae*, as Pasiphae and Daedalus's playful conversation gives way to the ruminations of a third unseen character — the oracular Nurse who foretells the sad consequences of Pasiphae's passion. We witness the Minotaur pacing the labyrinth, its bare-bricked walls evoking the deadening uniformity of a prison or similar institution. The very scenography seems to grow more desultory, the pictographic world of black-and-white dissolving into a murkier liminal gloom. The film suddenly errs against its own mood of frivolous referentiality. We are confronted by a spectacle of frenzied loneliness — the Minotaur frenetically running back and forth through corridors, driven to distraction by its own whirring thoughts. Nurses in Greek tragedy are often blundering (if well meaning) fools, but this one speaks with sober objectivity when she avers that Pasiphae's “wandering will” is set to find no rest: “Nor now is night well over here.” Aberration will only perpetuate further aberration, of greater or lesser varieties — for one, the annual sacrifice of young Athenians (50 youths and 50 maidens) to the beast. A modernist note of plangent foresight intrudes here; the Nurse's prophecy shares the grim portentousness of Yeats's “A shudder in the loins engenders there / The broken wall, the burning roof and tower” — verses that look ahead to the destruction of Troy in the moment of Helen's conception, as the swan rapes Leda.

In its final self-subverting lurch from masquerade into profundity, *Swinburne's Pasiphae* pulls off a classic camp twist. Two of the “Camp Rules” enumerated by Richard Core in his 1985 tome, *Camp: The Lie That Tells The Truth*, aptly describe the effect of Reid Kelley's work: “CAMP is a biography written by the subject as if it were about another person.”

“CAMP is a disguise that fails.”

The overtones of camp playacting and grotesquery in Swinburne's *Pasiphae* may seem *démodé*, but they are precisely what allow it to evoke something of the nature of experience — in particular the experience of difference and aloneness. Reid Kelley sees this quality of inexpressible aloneness as summed up in the figure of the Minotaur: "The Minotaur is the ultimate unwanted being." As the ultimate inescapable interior, moreover, the labyrinth is a mirror of the self — a place of endless deviations, of illusion and disillusionment suspended in perpetual oscillation.

But whose interior is evoked in the Nurse's speech? Swinburne's poem and, latterly, Reid Kelley's film perhaps speak, through their artful disguises, of the outsiderdom of being an artist. Pondering whether Swinburne himself is the true, agonized subject of the poem, Reid Kelley comments: "I think it's an open question which character in the fragment he identifies with more: the powerful but out-of-control genius (Daedalus) or the sexually tormented, doomed queen on the edge of destruction." Core's dictum about a biography "written by the subject as if it were about another person" implies the self-estrangement — the erring of the self from the self — entailed by much art. In the end, the nagging sense of one's difference or deviancy (erring from the proper path) is a criterion of both camp and art: "Throughout history," Core writes, "there has always been a significant minority whose unacceptable characteristics — talent, physical unconventionality, sexual anomaly — render them vulnerable to the world's brutal laughter. Hiding their mortification behind behaviour which is often as deviant as that which is concealed is the mainspring of camp."[\[12\]](#)

Core might easily have been writing about Swinburne and his self-conscious otherness. "I think Swinburne identified with *Pasiphae* intensely," Reid Kelley says. "He dwells on her insomnia in particular with such vehement, personal empathy." It is important, of course, that we avoid constructing an elaborate psychobiography of Swinburne — Reid Kelley pointedly remarks that "there are people about whom we know a great deal, but critical chunks are missing — Austen and Byron, for example, both of whom had letters and writings burned in order to preserve a reputation." Yet it is no accident that Swinburne's poem was left unpublished: it was utterly unpublishable, and can only have been written for essentially private purposes — as an interior monologue or "dialogue of the mind with itself."[\[13\]](#) Its final evocation of isolation and self-scrutiny, while expressed through a fanciful mythical narrative, turn us back inevitably to the author of the aberration.[\[14\]](#)

And to turn back to the metaphor of *Pasiphae*'s cow, it is telling that it dazzles and, to some extent, deceives without allowing us to forget the human subject at its core. "In what way," *Pasiphae* asks, "having put this strange shape on, / I may fare heifer-wise beneath a bull, / Being clothed with cow & quite dis-womanized?" The Minotaur story's themes of unholy desire and diabolical invention lend themselves to precisely the kind of camp re-enactments produced by Swinburne and Reid Kelley. Poem and film alike are whimsical pretences that employ the strange and aberrant tale of *Pasiphae* as the vessel for something more real. As we witness the wandering monster at the close of Reid Kelley's film, the inability of the wandering self to escape *from itself* emerges as her (and Swinburne's) underlying concern. Concealment, whether a lurid mask or a louche metaphor, paradoxically entails an emotional revelation, and each artist's elaborate artistry thereby amounts to a disguise that necessarily fails. Art needs to err — against taste, against conventional morality, and ultimately against its own elaborate devices and affectations — in order to grasp the most fugitive aspects of human thought and experience.

Hammer Projects: Mary Reid Kelley opens at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, on May 23.

The Myth of Mary Reid Kelley

September 15, 2014 4:41 pm



Still from Swinburne's Pasiphae (2014, HD video) by Mary Reid Kelley with Patrick Kelley. © The artist. Courtesy Pilar Corrias, London

Mary Reid Kelley's films are deliciously clever and as strong-flavored as liquorish. In the black and white of a cartoonist's pen and paper, the artist ignites the subjects of history painting and myth with feminist sparks and comic-strip humour. Her characters have bug eyes like the Simpsons and spout rhyming couplets pungent with word play, while set design (brought to life on a computer by her husband Patrick) and costumes crack visual gags. To date they have included a Parisian prostitute waxing lyrical on the French revolution and dead-end decadence, and macho classical heroes cast as jock-like basketball players for the church team.

At Pilar Corrias gallery in London, the second installment in a trilogy exploring the myth of the Minotaur and its bull-loving mom Pasiphae (after Priapus Agonistes, which debuted at last year's solo at the ICA, Boston) confirms Reid Kelley as one of the most distinctive younger artists (actress, writer, costume designer etc.) to break-out in recent years.

In place of her own piquant dialogue, here she's adapted Pasiphae, a recently discovered secret racy play by the Victorian poet Algernon Charles Swinburne, in which the artist Daedalus creates a wooden cow costume for the bewitched queen so she might seduce a bull—consequences be damned.

“The basic narrative attempts to answer the question ‘how does evil get into the world?’” reflects Reid Kelley. “And like Adam and Eve—which this myth predates considerably—the answer is, because a woman couldn’t control herself. In the Old Testament, she just has to eat a apple and in this myth, she just has to fuck a bull.”

In the artist’s 21st century interpretation Pasiphae is a black-toothed bathing beauty, flicking through bovine beefcake magazines and easing her cursed desire with booze and pills. “I think of her very much as a Pamela Anderson-style ‘90s California beach goddess,” says the artist. “The shape of her eyes comes from Minoan frescoes. The hairdressing supply store that I purchased her wig from described it as ‘perfect for Bo Derek or Cleopatra’ —just right for a century-spanning femme fatale.”

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The Minotaur meanwhile, whose goofily innocent face stares from a rip in a paper bag, is reimagined as Ariadne’s ugly sister. “I wanted to use the Minotaur like Picasso, as a very personal, autobiographical symbol,” she says. “I think the essential point is its abandonment: cast out from its family, deluded, knowing nothing but destruction. And I do think women can be as destructive as men—that’s part of my feminism, and why I wanted to be the monster myself.”

Mary Reid Kelley: Swinburne’s Pasiphae, to 4 Oct, at [Pilar Corrias](#), London.

Photos: The Myth of Mary Reid Kelley



Mary Reid Kelley discusses her latest exhibition



[Mary Reid Kelley](#) with Patrick Kelley, *Priapus Agonistes*, 2013, HD video, sound.

[Mary Reid Kelley](#) works primarily with film, creating narrative videos that pun on historical and myth-based spiels in a sharp black-and-white aesthetic. Her latest exhibition, at [Boston's Institute of Contemporary Art](#), presents four films, created between 2008 and 2013, that all deal with moments of historical change for women—in one a Parisian prostitute quips on the French Revolution and cosmetics before being sent to an asylum; in another, Kelley takes up a Greek Minotaur myth, casting a fertility god as a volleyball player. The exhibition is on view through October 27, 2013.

I HOPE FOR MY FILMS to be experienced not on an individual level but on a group level, as this dynamic affects the meaning of the work. People often don't trust themselves to recognize what they see or what they hear. We're constantly on the lookout for each other's opinions to guide our own, especially in the realm of language. This is most obvious in wordplay: People may not have the confidence to believe that a certain phrase is actually a joke, but when one person starts giggling, then other people do as well, and it starts to clue even more people into what is happening.

Installation is then crucial—here I've put these films together to facilitate a collective experience. My hope is that people will be not just listening to my script but also listening to each other; sharing the experience with a wider audience makes the work vastly richer. It's just like history—a group undertaking that, like language, we author together, under each other's watchful eyes. This is why I am drawn over and over again to an aesthetic that is two-dimensional, cartoonlike, a cardboard cutout—both visually and politically. This departure from naturalism allows a greater number of people to identify with it. In my work, I am always looking for collective elements of recognition, so people can see themselves in the characters I create. I think that's a primary impulse that people have when encountering anything new—relating it first and foremost back to themselves. There are always worn-out grooves between the individual and the group; these are what I look for when creating my own work, which is why I aim to

create characters that are not individuals but archetypes or even clichés.

The other day I was listening to one of my favorite rap artists, [Lil' Kim](#)—I think she's a genius—and I was really admiring how she rhymes complex brand names with other words. If you make a really complex rhyme on Louis Vuitton or Gucci—a double or triple rhyme—you're drawing that status to yourself. You're owning it. So, not only is she listing things that she owns, or that she wears, by rhyming it, but she's intimately linking it to her own self. This is similar to the rhetoric of *Beowulf* and the *Iliad*—two works I have drawn on in my own practice. In these texts, characters give their origin myth, their origin speech, talk about where they're from, the specific neighborhood, and then—in these two cases—kills someone else and takes his high-status goods, like gold or armor. We still create and depend on origin myths. Every time someone runs for public office, they make their debut by at least one or two biographies that establish a heroic origin myth—Obama's *Dreams from My Father*, for instance. This happens not only in the case of individuals but also nations, which is one of the reasons I am continually drawn to war and conflict, which formulate origin mythology like few other events do. [Chris Hedges](#) says that war is a force that gives us meaning, and I come back to this a lot, though it's an extremely troubling thought.

Finding the Reason in Mary Reid Kelley's Mad Rhymes About French History

BY BEN DAVIS | JANUARY 06, 2012



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Installationsansicht von Mary Reid Kelleys Videoarbeit „The Syphilis of Sisyphus“, 2011
(Courtesy Fredericks & Freiser)

It's "The Cabinet of Doctor Caligari" meets Dr. Seuss. No: It's "Les Miserables" meets Ryan Trecartin. It's the antic, instantly recognizable world of Mary Reid Kelley, who is just about to close her second solo show at Fredericks & Freiser in Chelsea. Reid Kelley (b. 1979) has been [touted as an artist to watch](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/03/arts/design/03emerge.html?pagewanted=all) (<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/03/arts/design/03emerge.html?pagewanted=all>) by super-critic Roberta Smith and [praised](http://www.frieze.com/issue/article/so_it_goes/) (http://www.frieze.com/issue/article/so_it_goes/) by super-curator Robert Storr. She graduated in 2009 with an MFA from Yale's famous painting department, but is really best known for her videos, which pull off the neat trick of being engaging and estranging all at once.

The current show is titled "The Syphilis of Sisyphus" (Reid Kelley seems to have a thing for venereal disease — a previous video featured a musical number about the clap titled "Roll Back the Foreskin"). A back room showcases concept sketches and costumes, but the centerpiece is her 11-minute film, a burlesque of French history. Everything here is black-and-white. The characters, principally a "grisette"



(that is, the archetype of a 'woman of lowly condition' from bohemia) played by Reid Kelley and four "saltimbanques" (harlequin-like tumbler-performers), are all done up in weird black-and-white makeup, with black-and-white period costumes and cartoony patches over their eyes that turn their expressions into masks. The sets are similarly stark, with lots of exaggerated theatrical painting. And, oh yes, the dialogue is all verse, rhyming doggerel chockablock with brainy wordplay. (The gallery offers the printed text in a nicely designed pamphlet, for your appreciation.)

The action begins with Reid Kelley's grisette, Sisyphus, at the mirror, pondering aloud the fate of woman. It ends with her character being dragged off by the "Morals Police," apparently consigned to be a test subject at La Salpêtrière Hospital, where French neurologist Jean-Martin Charcot infamously submitted female patients to his studies of hysteria. In the middle section, Reid Kelley's monologue is interrupted by the saltimbanques, who act out exaggerated vignettes about the lights of French history: Diderot, Marie Antoinette, Robespierre, Marat and Charlotte Corday, Napoleon, Marx and Engels, Baron Haussman, and a pair of mincing dandies.

Reid Kelley's verse is not Molière, but it is pretty amusing, and a lot of the pleasure of "The Syphilis of Sisyphus" is just surfing the tide of language, particularly if you have any interest in the particular history she is riffing on. Wandering Paris's streets and pondering why more women don't take revolutionary steps to better their condition, Sisyphus quips that "rational girls / prefer necklace to headless"; later, standing before the male spectators in Charcot's theater of hysteria, she declares herself in favor of "a womb of one's own."

The big debate about Reid Kelley's work, thus far, seems to be how seriously to take it. Is she just messing around with intellectual references, or is she using the past to say something about the present? In Frieze, Storr described her previous videos as a response to "our current multi-fronted conflict and the sexual politics of warfare." In Art in America, Brian Boucher [countered](http://www.artinamericamagazine.com/reviews/mary-reid-kelley/) (<http://www.artinamericamagazine.com/reviews/mary-reid-kelley/>) that Reid Kelley's interest seemed to be primarily "historical," not contemporary. [Interviewed by Emma Allen](http://www.artinfo.com/news/story/34917/verbal-play-and-venereal-disease-a-qa-with-mary-reid-kelley/) (<http://www.artinfo.com/news/story/34917/verbal-play-and-venereal-disease-a-qa-with-mary-reid-kelley/>), the artist, for her part, stated, "I don't think I am trying to make a particularly detailed analysis or a metaphor," but added that she was "aware" of the contemporary resonances. So, it's somewhere in between then.

When it comes to “The Syphilis of Sisyphus,” you could see how the extremists and sybarites of French history might somehow reverberate in the present. But I’d say that the film is about the present in a different way, less in its specific references and more in its whole absurdist sensibility. If you unpack Reid Kelley’s rhymes, you find that their theme is women’s need to escape the position assigned to them by history and nature. The aesthetic of the film — with its cross-dressing, flamboyant artificiality, and use of alienating effects — is a formal way of amplifying this sentiment: It’s not about looking for meaning in historical material, but about playing around with it.

Since we’re dealing with French intellectual history, the name “Sisyphus” is probably a nod to “The Myth of Sisyphus,” existentialist Albert Camus’s [famous essay](http://dbanach.com/sisyphus.htm) (http://dbanach.com/sisyphus.htm) on the “absurd.” Which makes a lot of sense. Camus used the fallen Greek king’s torment in Hades of eternally rolling a rock up a hill as a metaphor for modern man, whom he believed is doomed to activity without meaning. Rather than strive for significance, however, the key for Camus was to embrace the essential meaninglessness of history and carry on anyway. “The struggle itself toward the heights is enough to fill a man’s heart,” he wrote. “One must imagine Sisyphus happy.” Reid Kelley’s film, too, is absurd history, both in its highbrow screwiness and in its cheerful sense of the fundamental pointlessness of it all.

Mary Reid Kelley’s “The Syphilis of Sisyphus” is on view at [Fredericks & Freiser](http://fredericksfreisergallery.com/) (http://fredericksfreisergallery.com/), November 11, 2011-January 7, 2012.

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RECOMMENDED

Mary Reid Kelley, In Plain Frenglish - News



While installing a show that opens today at New York's Fredericks & Freiser Gallery, artist Mary Reid Kelley and her collaborator/husband Patrick Kelley offered *A.i.A.* a preview. The show includes a new video starring the artist and several works on paper that, animated into 3D, were used in the video as sets.

The 32-year-old artist, who earned an MFA from Yale in 2009, was until recently a resident of Saratoga Springs but had just flown in from Italy, where she is residing after winning the Rome Prize.

In her 2009 [exhibition at this gallery](#), Reid Kelley showed two short black-and-white videos in which she played a World War I sailor and soldier, and a nurse on the Western front. Before hand-drawn backdrops, with faces painted white and eyes obscured by what seem like halved ping-pong balls, her characters deliver original rhyming dialogue, laden with puns and based on WWI-era patriotic doggerel. In *Sadie, the Saddest Sadist* (2009), a sailor assures Sadie that "Britannia rules the waves," and later justifies misbehavior with a switcheroo: "Britannia waived the rules."

The Syphilis of Sisyphus, the 11-minute video in the upcoming show, is in much the same style but reaches farther back in time. The main character, Sisyphus, played by Reid Kelley, is a mid-19th-century Parisian prostitute.

"Making the sets from Mary's drawings," said Patrick, an art professor who most recently taught at Skidmore, "we used a lot more 3D animation than in the previous works. That was my contribution. But we didn't want it to be in the foreground—literally or figuratively." Reid Kelley added, "We put the character in an artificial environment, because in her monologue, she's promoting beauty and artifice and denigrating the natural world."

As the video opens, Sisyphus puts on makeup at her vanity, saying, "Nature sold me a lie, / and I've kept the deceit / On my face to remind me: / Her falsehoods repeat / Like the seasons renew." She emerges into the streets of Paris, where a troupe of street performers mock worthies including "Twinkletoe, Twinkletoe, Denis P. Diderot," "Jellytart, Jellytart, General Bonaparte" and the "Mathema-Titian-Haired" Marie-Antoinette. When Sisyphus joins in a battle, wielding loaves of bread ("Don't you know your own mother?" says one performer, "'Twas I who baguette you!"), she is remanded to a hospital by the morals police.

Sisyphus's climactic address to the physicians is packed with double entendres. "My tongue's S'il-vous-plated!" she proclaims, inviting them to study at her university: "So please, enroll now! For you well can afford / The tuition that flows through Unbillable Cords / To a cloister that's moister, a womb of one's own, / My Sorbonne in the oven is nationally known."

Throughout, the lines are similarly packed with rapid-fire bilingual wordplay; a booklet will allow visitors to read along. "The meter is different from the verse in *Sadie*, which was written in iambic meter," Reid Kelley explained. "*Syphilis* is in a dactylic meter, which makes it more crammed and relentless."

The artist became interested in verse only in recent years. "I only started doing poetry when I got into the First World War as a subject, and realized what an important medium it was for responding to the war." Her own writing of verse also has inspirations closer to home. "My grandparents often wrote comic verses. In earlier times it was something normal people did. I don't necessarily think of myself as writing capital-P poetry. I think of it as versifying."

The video takes place in 1852, which was the year of a coup by Napoleon III that ousted the republic. For Reid Kelley, this backdrop of political upheaval, and the way the resulting disillusionment drove artists away from political involvement, holds parallels with modern times. "After that you don't get any more works like Delacroix's *Liberty Leading the People*," she says. "There was no longer the belief that art had something to contribute—and that politics was worthy of that contribution. So in making this piece I was thinking about being an artist and being interested in politics, and how disappointing it can be." Compared to the 19th century, syphilis may be largely under control today. Political disappointment is another story altogether.

Verbal Play and Venereal Disease: A Q&A with Mary Reid Kelley

BY EMMA ALLEN | JUNE 16, 2010



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Mary Reid Kelley, who graduated from **Yale University's** MFA program in 2009, has already received solo shows at **Fredericks & Fresier** gallery in New York and at **Susanne Vielmetter Projects** in Los Angeles. Her video works, mostly situated in a dark and surreal World War I-era universe, feature stylized figures rendered in live-action stop-motion animation, and songs that are both haunting and hilarious. The films engage with our evolving (but also sometimes too-static) understanding of language, historical narrative, sexuality, and gender — especially in times of war. Lauded for her three videos, *Sadie*, *The Saddest Sadist* (2009), *Queen's English* (2008), and *Camel Toe* (2008), the artist spoke with **ARTINFO** about her newest work, *You Make Me Iliad*, which will appear in the 2010 **Santa Fe Biennial**, opening this Friday.

ARTINTO: At the Santa Fe Biennial, are you showing the videos that you've been exhibiting in Los Angeles and New York?

Kelley: No, what we're doing in Santa Fe is a brand new commission. [Sarah Lewis](#) (<http://www.artinfo.com/search/results/?query=Sarah+Lewis>) and [Daniel Belasco](#) (<http://www.artinfo.com/search/results/?query=Daniel+Belasco>) are the curators of the biennial this



year and they commissioned me last June — pretty much directly a year ago — to make a video for the biennial. They said I could do whatever I wanted, so I ended up making a new piece for it. It's live video and stop-motion animation. Similar to the one that you probably saw [*Sadie, The Saddest Sadist*].

Have you been traveling at all? You were a recipient of both the Alice Kimball and Schoelkopf travel grants.

The Schoelkopf is given between your first and second year at Yale so I went to France and Belgium, and I had a pretty defined project, which was to go to about 44 graves of soldiers who had died in World War I. They're all Yale students, and I kind of picked them out of the Woolsey Memorial Hall. There are like 221 names of Yale students and alumni and they're all men and about 44 of them are still buried in Europe, because the United States government gave families a choice if they wanted to bury people abroad or bring them home. So there are about 44 between France and Belgium. We kind of went on a scavenger hunt to find them all.

Were you successful? Did you find them all?

Yes, we found most of them. It was a really good experience. One of them, one of the people that we found, had his name misspelled on his cross. It was a great trip. The trip that we just returned from, actually was three days ago, was a longer trip to Italy.

It seems like you are really interested in written documentation about the historical themes that you play off of in your films. Are there any interesting documents that you've gathered recently that you're using for the commission at Santa Fe?

While *Sadie* was focused on a female munitions worker, in the new piece, which is called *You Make Me Iliad*, I look at another job (if you want to call it that) for women that I was interested in from the war, which was prostitution, which happened on an enormous scale on both sides of the Western Front. And you know it's everywhere — if you read memoirs like in **Robert Graves** *Good-Bye to All That*, he talks about it. But it's really bad because there are no primary sources left. There are no diaries; there are no letters; there's no writing. I even asked a teacher that I had at Yale named [Jay Winter](http://www.artinfo.com/search/results/?query=Jay+Winter) (<http://www.artinfo.com/search/results/?query=Jay+Winter>), who was really great and supportive of me, and I asked him: "Am I missing something? Is there something that I don't know about?" And he goes, "not *really*." There are a few photographs — presumably taken by soldiers — with women there and

you can kind of figure out who they are and what they're doing there. It was almost the absence of anything tangible about these women that defined the new piece. That said, the prostitute's not the only character in the piece. One of the other characters is a medical inspection officer who's German. And the female character is a Belgian prostitute. But the medical officer in the film is performing what was known to the men at the time, euphemistically, it was called a "Tail Parade." It was basically a genital inspection to prevent venereal disease from spreading. Venereal disease was a huge problem.

Yes, Sadie is afflicted after a sexual encounter.

Yeah she gets the clap. This happens in the new video, the "Tail Parade," but it's not graphic. This is after the point in the video where there's singing. My younger sister actually performed in the role as the medical officer, and she's a really bombastic soprano. I wrote the lyrics in the form of a waltz and she put it to music. It's called "Roll Back the Foreskin." She does this amazing, dramatic ballad.

The ultimate family bonding experience.

It really was!

I read that when you showed some of the videos at Fredericks & Freiser you gave out booklets with the lyrics? Is that something you're going to continue to do? It seems interesting that the text becomes a separate art object. Was it for comprehension's sake or some other reason?

Yes, there is a text-based object that goes along with the new piece. Where before there were booklets, this is a poster. Since the characters are German in the new piece I tried to draw more from German cinema in the 1920s, Weimar Republic cinema, and I thought that a poster would be appropriate. It's kind of a comprehension buttress, I guess, because some of the word-play, different kinds, some work better to the ear and some work much better when you're reading them. Plus, it goes by really fast, and I wanted to give people a chance to read it, if they were so inclined. I think that if you put looking and reading together the whole experience becomes much more saturated, much more dimensional. I think that films with word-play offer a material way to approach language.

In the *Art in America* piece about your work, it's posited that the films are not a commentary on current wars or current life, but are focused exclusively on history and narratives of history. Do you think they function as contemporary critique as well?

I clearly remember that statement by [Brian Boucher](http://www.artinfo.com/search/results/?query=Brian+Boucher) (<http://www.artinfo.com/search/results/?query=Brian+Boucher>). I think it would be ridiculous to watch the films and not connect them with ongoing violence in the world. And definitely, if you're American, that's part of it. But I don't think I am trying to make a particularly detailed analysis or a metaphor. So I guess when Brian said that in the article, in a way I kind of appreciated it, because I thought he was trying just to take it on its own terms as history. And I wouldn't want somebody to just think it was about a metaphor of the current crisis, but I think that the metaphor obviously enriches it, and as the maker of the work I'm not outside of that, I pay attention to that.

I've never seen any of your drawings, but they're up on your Web site. I was wondering if you're still working on those, or how they relate to the work that you're doing now.

I am still making drawings. The new piece has quite a few drawings in it. The backgrounds are more elaborate, more detailed. I made a lot of drawings for those. I'd also love to do more of the rubbings that I have done in the past. So much of being able to make them is tied to physical opportunities. I mean, Yale was totally covered in stuff that you can make rubbings on. There were plaques and carvings everywhere.

In a *New York Times* article from earlier this year, you were dubbed one of the decade's performing artists to watch — who else would you have included in that list of young artists that you find interesting now?

I thought it was pretty comprehensive. I like [Natalie Djurberg](http://www.artinfo.com/search/results/?query=Natalie+Djurberg) (<http://www.artinfo.com/search/results/?query=Natalie+Djurberg>) a lot. She probably doesn't count. People have compared my work a lot to Ryan's [[Ryan Trecartin](http://www.artinfo.com/search/results/?query=Ryan+Trecartin) (<http://www.artinfo.com/search/results/?query=Ryan+Trecartin>)] work, I guess because of the language. The last time that I was totally jumping up and down looking at a piece of contemporary art was the **Marianne Vitale** piece that was in the **Whitney Biennial**. It gave me almost this *sick* feeling in my stomach — it was just so good.

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