

Visiting Artist:
Judith Barry

Tuesday, April 2, 6:30p
Jacob Sleeper Auditorium

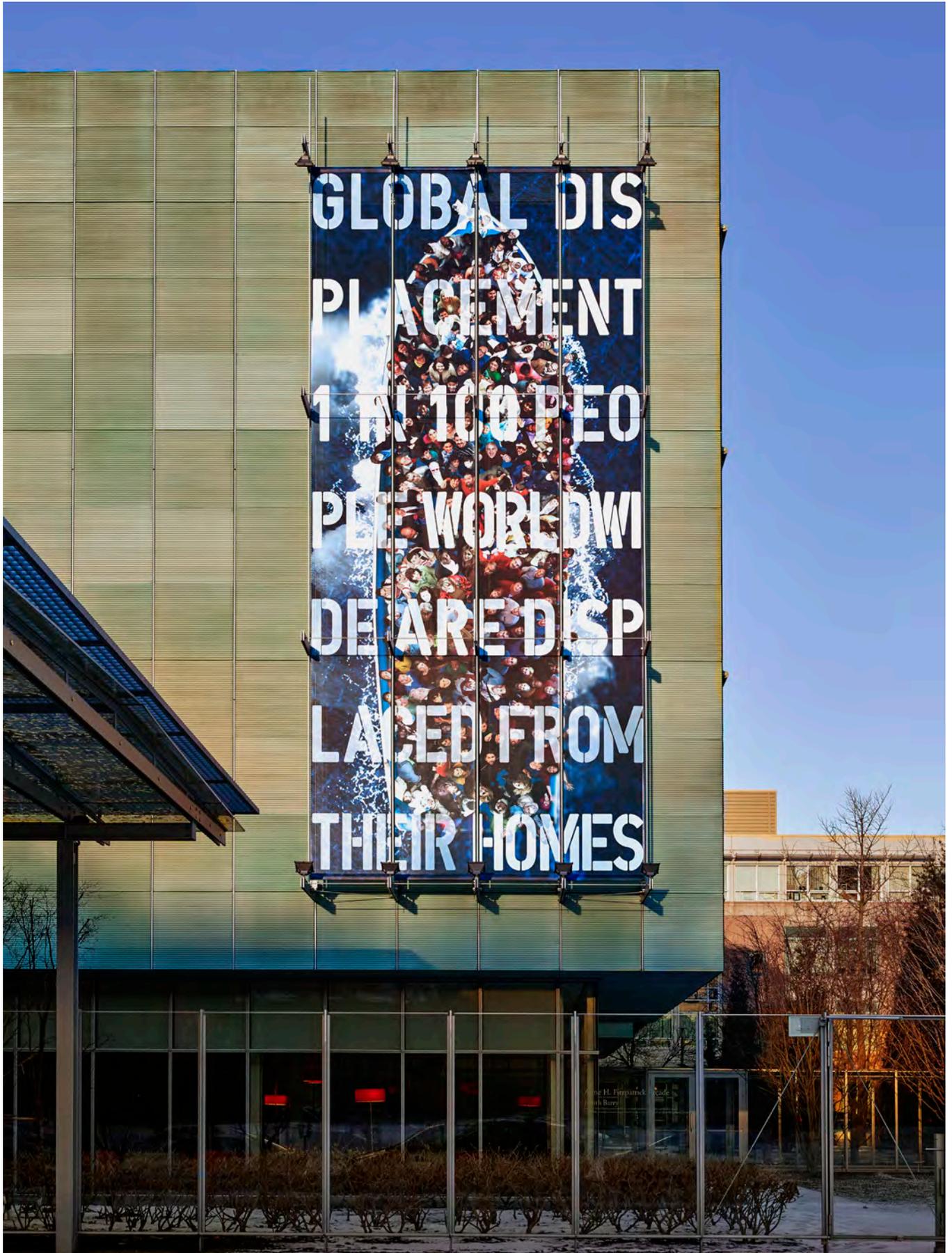


About the artist

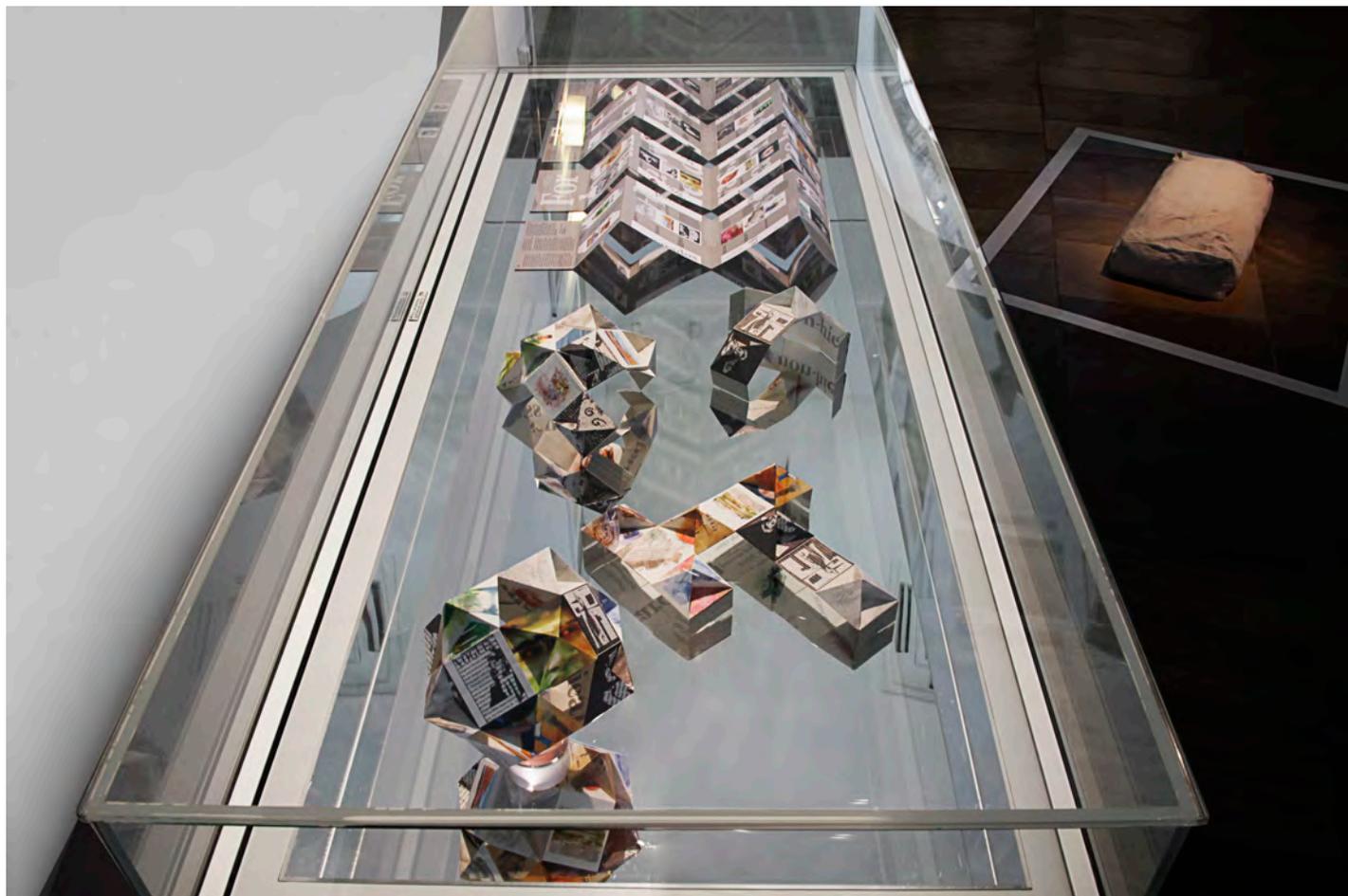
Judith Barry is a pioneer of performance art, video, and installation art. Her research-based practice engages viewers through visually immersive environments that make use of emerging technologies. Her work probes deeply into questions of gender, perception, language, the body, and the role of technology in reshaping the limits of these paradigms. In addition to her practice as a visual artist, Barry writes critical texts on the relationship between art, technology, and social change. Since 2017 she has been Professor and Director of the Art Culture and Technology program at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Barry's work has been the subject of numerous exhibitions across the United States, at sites including the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, the San Francisco Museum of Art, The Walker Art Center, and the Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles, to name only a few. She has exhibited internationally in exhibitions including the Venice Biennale, dOCUMENTA 13, the Sharjah Biennial, the Carnegie International, the Berlin Biennial and the Whitney Biennial, among many others. Barry was recently featured in the ICA Boston's landmark survey *Art in the Age of the Internet*. Barry has been the recipient of the Guggenheim Fellowship, the Anonymous Was a Woman grant, and the New York Foundation for the Arts emerging forms fellowship.

Works







Writings

**“A Window into the Lives of Women Living in Cairo”
by Deena ElGenaidi, Hyperallergic, 2018**

**“The Dynamics of Desire: Judith Barry in conversation
with Sarah Perks” Electronic Superhighway, 2016**

“Critics Page: Judith Barry” Brooklyn Rail, 2015

**“About Brain: For when all that was read was... so as
not to be unknown” by Judith Barry, Mousse, 2012**

“Media and Me” by Judith Barry, Are You Ready for TV?, 2010

**“Judith Barry: Imagine, Dead Imagine”
Future Cinema, 2003**

**“Spectacle and Subjectivity: The Work of Judith Barry,” by
Johanna Drucker, from Judith Barry: Public Fantasy, 2001**

ART

A Window Into the Lives of Women Living in Cairo

Though at times seeming incomplete, Judith Barry's exhibition lends space to the otherwise untold stories of women in Cairo.

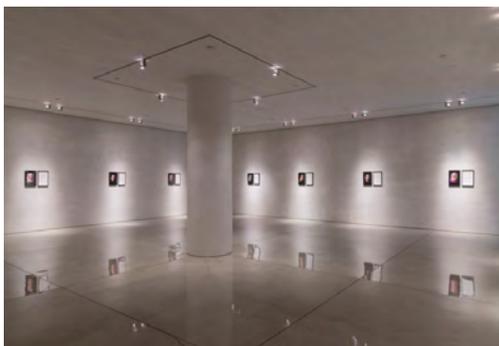
Deena ElGenaidi October 25, 2018



Cairo Stories video stills, installation view
(all photos by the author for Hyperallergic
unless otherwise noted)

The roles of women in Egypt have been in tumult in recent years, varying across cities and social classes and moving to the forefront of conversations at the start of the Egyptian Revolution in 2011. Historically shut out of political life, women in Egypt have had to navigate circuitous routes to acquire the rights, privileges, and protections not typically afforded to them. However, during the

Egyptian Revolution of 2011 women were at the forefront of the protests, demanding their voices be heard.



At the Fifth Avenue location of Mary Boone Gallery, an exhibition titled *Judith Barry: Cairo Stories* attempts to chronicle the lives of women in Cairo during this period of social and political change. Artist and writer [Judith Barry](#) interviewed a diverse array of women in Cairo from the start of the United

Cairo Stories installation view (image courtesy Mary Boone Gallery)

States invasion of Iraq in 2003 through the beginning of the Egyptian Revolution in 2011. *Cairo Stories*

compiles those interviews into 11 diptychs — photography and accompanied text — and four plasma-screen videos.



Judith Barry, "Nadine"

The photos and text are the first pieces encountered when entering the gallery space — each piece measures 10 ½ by 16 inches, forcing the viewer to stand close in order to clearly see and read the text. Each woman's story is different. For instance, one woman, Nadine, recalls her memories of Tahrir Square at the start of the revolution:

When night comes in the square, suddenly everything feels very calm ... As I walk around, I see men sleeping by the fires, trying to keep warm. They are sleeping under the tanks, on plastic, on blankets ... But few women sleep. Most of them are keeping a wary eye out of the tents, being aware of their surroundings. Some are in the KFC taking care of the injured people.

Nadine provides a powerful description of the protests, the revolution. Though women are part of the movement, they cannot rest as the men do. The women remain vigilant. The women take care of those in need. Nadine also remains optimistic, adding, "when the morning comes, we will breathe freedom." Another woman, Nawal, describes Tahrir with a sense of hope:

A new Egypt was being born. Everyone was supportive. Everyone wanted a role. If one person fell down, a million hands would reach to pick them back up. There was no sexual harassment of any sort. Only optimism! So much happiness in the street! Ecstasy even! Our hope had united us.

Nadine and Nawal describe an Egypt filled with hope and positivity for the future — a version of Egypt, perhaps, where women were safe and held some measure of social power. To a certain extent, the Square at this time was still a safe space for women — a stark contrast to just one year later, when [sexual assault in Tahrir Square](#) became rampant.



Cairo Stories installation view

Barry's installation is an important one, but in some respects it feels unfinished. As we know now, not much has changed for the people of Egypt — particularly the women — and the story of Tahrir Square grew ominous, as people were killed and assaulted in the years following the revolution. As a result, there seemed to be a missing link to these stories, one that it is necessary to

tie everything together. I couldn't help but wonder where these women were now and what they feel post-revolution. Did they feel safe? Optimistic? Or has that faded?

Other stories in the exhibition were less political, the women instead sharing personal woes and hardships. Layla, for instance, says, "I've been married three times! I married at eighteen, but I wish I waited till thirty." Suliya talks about her job sewing and how that was the only career option open to her, since her family didn't have the money to send her to school.



Judith Barry, "Deena"

The diptychs provide snippets of these women's lives that open a brief window. The words are powerful but less so in the moment and more when I went back and read them later, off the images I took with my phone. Walking from one diptych to the other, I felt as though I couldn't fully absorb the stories and wondered if I wouldn't have just preferred a book of images and text.

In another room, though, Barry had installed four plasma screens with videos playing on a loop. As detailed in the [press release](#), the videos all feature Egyptian actresses representing the true stories of the women Barry interviewed, since none of the interviewees wanted to be photographed or filmed. Listening to and hearing the women tell their stories in this format proved much more powerful



Cairo Stories video stills (photo by the author for Hyperallergic)

than walking through the gallery to view the photographs and text. I spent a good amount of time moving from one screen to the next, enthralled by each woman's tale, noting their faces, movements, mannerisms, and even dress.

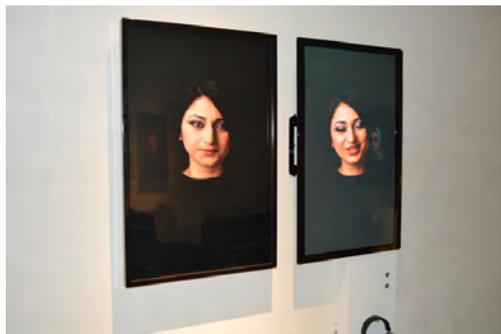


Judith Barry, Cairo Stories, (Fathiya), 40 x 25 inches, single-channel video, plasma screen/Fujiflex photograph mounted on Sintra (2010–2011) (copyright Judith Barry, image courtesy Mary Boone Gallery)

One video that really captured my attention featured a woman — Fathiya — speaking directly to the viewer. Her laugh, her tone, her desperation, and the way she opened and closed her mouth, lapping her tongue to make a sort of clicking sound at the end of each sentence, has a way of making the viewer feel a perhaps necessary discomfort. She repeats the words “I’m old” and begs the viewer for money to afford to go to Hajj, doubling down on her unwavering faith in God, despite her years of hardship. At one point, she offers the viewer some chocolate

as a gift and then demands money, asking for 20 Egyptian pounds in exchange. I couldn't help but feel as though she were speaking to me directly, and in not giving in to her pleas, I became complicit in her hardship.

The videos included women from all walks of life, discussing a number of issues, personal and political, across the city of Cairo. One woman talks about street harassment and how years ago, her mother had hired a group of three women to yell at the men who harassed her. Now, though, she says things are different. Now, they have [HarassMap](#), an app that tells women throughout Egypt which streets to avoid, but the woman in front of the camera laments that this isn't enough. She doesn't want to have to actively avoid certain streets, and she wishes the government would use the data in the app to make efforts to stop harassment altogether.



Cairo Stories video stills (photo by the author for Hyperallergic)

Unlike the diptychs, the stories in the video installations felt complete.

Something about seeing the women and hearing them speak created a stronger, more well-rounded, concise picture of their lives and the lives of Cairo women. Through the video installations, Barry thrusts the viewers into these women's lives. Listening to them speak gives one the sense of actually being in the room with them and pulls us into their deeply

personal stories in order to build empathy and understanding.

Judith Barry: [Cairo Stories](#), curated by Piper Marshall, continues at Mary Boone Gallery (745 5th Avenue, Midtown, Manhattan) through October 27. The individual stories can also be found on the [Cairo Stories website](#).

MORE FROM HYPERALLERGIC

The Dynamics of Desire

Judith Barry
in conversation
with Sarah
Perks

Sarah Perks: *Electronic Superhighway* is the first major survey in the UK to consider the relationship between networked technologies and contemporary visual art. It has a tidy chronological span of fifty years. In essence, it charts a new history around the adoption of the Internet by contemporary artists, including pre World Wide Web projects involving computer technology and running through to the more recent terrain of post-Internet art.

Your career begins in the late 1970s; whilst at art school you were testing video games at Atari in Palo Alto. In an interview about your piece *Space Invaders* (1982), you discuss how different video games operate, 'desiring machines' that function as a kind of 'private spectacular theatre'. Do you still believe this now video games have such sophisticated technology, with special effects similar to films?

Judith Barry: I think a lot has changed, so yes, it is a very different kind of immersive experience. For example, the new Oculus technology system may be a potential tech driver for immersive virtual reality (assuming it works as well as is promised) alongside further video game development. But the experience can still be as private or as networked as you wish.

And even without virtual reality, this experience is much more immersive than in the early 1980s. Hyperrealism in graphics, rendering in real time, more sophisticated algorithms, motion eye-tracking capabilities, faster processing, the z-axis – all of this makes for much more immersion than previously. Yet the subjective experience of engaging with this kind of media still operates on much the same principles that earlier forms of film invoke. Hence, there are similarities and differences.

At stake is storytelling, and the question is: have video games found their form? Are designers and storytellers able to take advantage of the possibilities for narrative and immersion that the game engine, branching structure, increased interactivity and FMV (full motion video) make possible?

SP: Artists throughout this survey, such as Jacolby Satterwhite, continue to be inspired by video games, though often the artists are

more interested in the aesthetics enabled by technology than the actual form of the technology itself. Do you recognise yourself as part of this history?

JB: Yes, I am interested in some of these same issues that I saw in Jacolby Satterwhite's work: how might the structure of full motion video narrative keep up with your thinking? How can you make use of your imagination and memory within a game engine structure and all that implies? Might it one day be possible to think the story, and have a fully rendered world appear before you at the speed of your thoughts? *Second Life* seemed to promise this within very limited parameters.

SP: Then pieces of yours such as *In the Shadow of the City... vamp r y* (1982–85) feel much more indebted to film history and theory...

JB: Yes, I was interested in using montage to construct believable, inhabitable space, as well as setting what I call 'subject positions' that the viewer could discover as engaged with the structure of the installation. That work addressed the structure of narrative alongside a variety of spatial tropes and was a way to combine all of my interests into a form that was much less predetermined: installation.

I also worked for Francis Coppola, but as I wanted to be an artist, and not a Hollywood filmmaker, and because I didn't want anything from him, I think I became a favourite of his. He often let me use the facilities at American Zoetrope for my own projects. I also worked in postproduction facilities that gave me access to computer technology and editing. And increasingly, I began to see how performance art could be combined with other media such as video and sculpture, and with my research interests through installation. By the time I made *In the Shadow of the City... vamp r y*, I had decided that I would use a research-based methodology and from that I would determine both the form and the content of each work. Hence I don't have a signature style.

SP: The chronology of the exhibition also echoes a theoretical position that emerged from the end of structuralism, through to the

adoption of postmodernist theory and then into more complex arrangements of subjectivity through identity politics. Computer and networked technologies appear to support the formation of mass consciousness on an unprecedented scale. On the other hand, they also appear to privilege the individual through precise location, sub-culture or even anonymity – effectively offering an ability to represent or recast oneself across multiple platforms and screens. A lot of your work focuses on how we form identities. How do you feel this has been affected by technology and networked technologies over this period?

JB: Structuralism was very much alive all through the 1980s in the US. It ended with identity politics in the 1990s, which on one level was a return to essentialism. Postmodernism trickles into the US from the UK and France. Rhetoric Professor Bertrand Augst at UC Berkeley had a huge influence on the construction of this discourse, regular visitors including theorists Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Raymond Bellour and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak alongside filmmakers such as Wim Wenders, Werner Schroeter, Laura Mulvey and Peter Wollen.

It was a very fluid moment. Magazines such as *Camera Obscura* started, Coppola was tutored by the film theorist Constance Penley, and so on. Information still travelled slowly, despite the computer, all through the late 1970s and early 1980s. The arrival of the Pictures Generation and its embrace of commercial media represented a shift in attitude towards popular culture, away from the prior distrust of media during the 1970s in conceptual and performance art, epitomised by Jerry Mander's *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television* (1978). When Chris Burden introduces his first video compilation for distribution by Electronic Arts Intermix (E.A.I.) he nervously recounts that he isn't sure that he should even be showing these clips because they are mediated...

Alongside the Pictures Generation, DIY subcultures from music and punk spread through popular culture as theorised by Dick Hebdige and others. DIY ethos took over – the launch of the personal computer in the late 1980s had a trickle-down effect – and it

signalled the beginning of the end for the large video production facilities. Also, the early 1980s was the time where the differences between high art and pop culture were most dialectical, whereas now artists use the raw material of pop culture just like any other material.

In terms of identity, and the questions around how architecture might function with the advent of social relations lived on the Internet – or in a virtual world – there was a great deal of anxiety about what 'the digital' would mean in terms of producing new forms of subjectivity. Sherry Turkle's work was an important reference for me. I was reading writers like William Gibson as well as *Wired* and other tech magazines, participating in groups addressing issues of networked identity. This was the time of *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* by French philosopher Gilles Deleuze and psychoanalyst Félix Guattari (1980) and the introduction of parametric modelling software, and 3D (meaning the z-axis) was also coming into existence. Just as postmodernism was very differently understood by architecture (a return to ornamentation in architecture) and art (overturning master narratives), the issues raised by 'digital technology' have also played out differently within art and architecture.

Finally, let's not forget feminists and their relation to the question of how subjectivity is constructed; questions of gender (biology versus the social); film theory; the AIDS crisis and queer theory; architectures of the body and work by academics such as Elaine Scarry and many others – while this was not often the overt content of my work, these were issues that informed the work.

SP: In constructing histories and movements, everyone has to fall into either before or after. For example, in a recent exhibition *Take It or Leave It* (2014) at the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles, which considered a history of institutional critique, your work was positioned after the first generation; here in *Electronic Superhighway*, it clearly falls before the post-Internet boom. Do you approach your work in dialogue with these notions of movements and the construction of history?



Judith Barry, *In the Shadow of the City... vamp r y*, 1982-85
Installation view. Two-sided side/film/sound projection.

JB: I try to stay informed about current trends in art-making practices. And in the case of the post-Internet, there is a relationship in terms of some of the issues my previous work has taken up. In fact, I was influenced by the first generation of institutional critique artists, especially Michael Asher, who I became friends with, as I found his work very relevant when I was a student and trying to formulate how an art practice might work. The Light and Space artists, who were performing a spatial version of institutional critique, also influenced me. They used space and light to make inhabitable spaces that produced phenomenological experiences. This includes James Turrell, Maria Nordman's work of the 1970s, Robert Irwin and several Michael Asher pieces from the 1970s that also take up these issues, so there is some overlap between institutional critique and the Light and Space artists.

Post-Internet is still a relatively new nomenclature for the many ways to think about artworks in relation to the Internet. I have works that pre-date some of Artie Vierkant's work (artist and author of *The Image Object Post-Internet*, 2010) that might be seen as proto-post-Internet work. Again, my methodology is

research-based, and the interrogation of the digital image and the questions around what forms it might take in the physical world are questions I have addressed in many of my installations even though I do not define those questions as only being about the 'digital'. Net artists, not unlike video artists of the early 1980s, seem to be interested in participating in the mainstream art world, and bringing the work out of the computer and into the gallery is one way of doing this. So far, the inverse – bringing the art world into the computer – doesn't have much traction.

SP: *Casual Shopper* (1981) was your last analogue edited piece. How do you feel about the end of certain technologies? How some almost disappear entirely like VHS, while others are apparently resilient, such as 16mm?

JB: I am not particularly interested in technology for technology's sake. And it is tedious now to be constantly migrating older works using earlier forms of video to more current formats. But it is necessary if you want the work to survive. That said, I do respect the tech requirements of different video and film

formats. For instance, *Casual Shopper* is analogue video, and it looks best when it is projected or played using CRT-tubed projectors or monitors, but I allow the work to be migrated so that it can still be easily viewed. There are many ways to achieve the look of older film stocks using image compositing and processing techniques, and increasingly that is how I am approaching these issues.

SP: In your book *Projections: Mise en abyme* (2001), I was especially taken by the almost-throwaway positive accusation that your work is 'high definition gunk' and how it offers an alternative view of the perceived cleanliness, order and efficiency of technology.

JB: I am sceptical when it comes to technology and its many applications. For some it can be a liberatory tool, and for others it is much more invasive than Taylorism (strict efficiency management system) ever was. I don't believe that technology is inherently good or bad, it is more the application of technology, the uses to which it can be put, and the ethics of the user, that interest me. Within the cleanliness, order, and efficiency embodied by technology, there are many fissures that require further scrutiny. I hope that my work brings some of the issues to the fore, which is why science fiction is a useful foil when considering technology. For example, we used a sci-fi narrative structure for *Speedflesh* (1998) as a way to interrogate the digital in relation to technologies of the body.

SP: 'Desire lines' for architecture are the unplanned paths created by the people not the designers of experience. The geographically specific early group Skype that is Kit Galloway and Sherrie Rabinowitz's *Hole in Space* (1980) has been a piece that I've returned to frequently, essentially a public Skype between store windows in Los Angeles and New York. For me, it is as if that moment could only occur then, ahead of the proliferation of large digital screens in the urban environment. Architecture and negotiation of space and place remain a constant throughout your practice. Does the interference of computers and their ability to collapse and reorder space change our ability to navigate?

JB: Yes, architecture and the negotiation of spatial constructs is an ongoing theme in my work, as is the notion of the question of representation, which is not always visual. There are many kinds of computer space, and for me the least interesting types of computer space are those that present a mimesis of the physical world – without taking advantage of what the computer can do, and imagining new forms for engagement – such as typing on the computer keyboard, which mimics earlier forms of recording writing such as the typewriter. When the computer launched, this mimesis was useful as it allowed for a much smoother transition from the mechanical to the digital, but now, it is too slow, too linear, and doesn't take into account the speed at which we all think and communicate. And yet no new forms for recording digital written communication have gained wide popular acceptance. Why?

Your question also reminds me of the importance of the media philosopher Friedrich Kittler's *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter* (1999), especially his notion that phonographic and cinematic data streams decentre the channels of literary writing.

SP: The 1990s dot-com boom that is featured in *Electronic Superhighway* feels like the difficult part to me, or at least the chapter with the least common ground between the artists. There is such an interest right now in this decade, and trying to understand the complexity of it. In terms of the work presented in this survey, your *Speedflesh* (1998) appears to demonstrate this. Part computer game, cinematic and narrative enquiry, art installation and immersive experience – it is not instantly obvious whether it belongs to a past or future era.

JB: We were trying for all of the readings you mention, as multiple points of access for the viewer. I still have an indeterminate relationship to what the computer might become – yes, we are all cyborgs, and all post-human, and the computer is one of our many prosthetic devices. There is a lot of anxiety about artificial intelligence overtaking humans. All of this is a subtext of *Speedflesh*. Remember the 1950s sci-fi notion of the singularity – where AI

outsmarts humans? Many current films, such as *Ex Machina* (Alex Garland, 2015, UK) and Swedish television production *Real Humans* (2012), return to this issue, which many in the AI community see as potentially happening within the next 20 to 80 years.

Meanwhile, artists don't seem to be invited to join this conversation, or at least I am not hearing about it. I wonder if there are collaborative labs that are addressing these issues – for instance, the way Bell Laboratories functioned in the 1970s and 1980s.

SP: The singularity is the hypothetical moment where artificial intelligence becomes so clever that it takes over its own development. This also ties back to your interests in the double and the vampire. All three represent different versions of a fantasy for another more robust or stronger self – is it something more dynamic than ourselves that we all desire? Do we want to network ourselves into multiple beings and can technology create this?

JB: I think it can be useful to think about other forms of being in the world beyond the human. And these figures have a long history within popular culture and literature, hence I have found them useful for staging other ways for considering what it means to be human.

I think there are many other ways now for considering these questions. In Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev's 2013 edition of *Documenta*, there were a number of projects and discussions about displacing the human as the centre of the world. Donna Haraway's work on inter-species communication and Bruno Latour's work on sentient and non-sentient matter are also influential here.

As Manuel Castells discussed in *The Rise of the Network Society* (1996), information now collects in certain geographical nodal points, and this has transformed the way information circulates, and led to an increasingly networked world. Alongside this transformation is the desire to be in several different geographical locations simultaneously. Could the panoptic model of vision be expanded to take into account quantum physics? Or, to put it another way, if atoms can be in two places at once – why can't we? All of which is to say, I think our

identities are constantly in flux, so in that sense we are already multiple beings.

SP: Technology is expanding rapidly as a focus for visual artists and curators.

However, I'm also sceptical. I cannot help the part of my brain that truly believes nothing has changed fundamentally with the coming of age of the Internet. Many people live without ever using laptops, tablets and smart phones. I appreciate the speeding up of both communications and information acquisition, but really, do you believe anything has changed?

JB: Things are the same in some instances but different in other ways – so I see it as a difference of degrees. I have fond memories of the time before email, of long letters and even postcards and faxes. I wish voice technology was more prevalent, but voice-activated communication isn't private enough I guess – even though it does a better job of keeping up with your thoughts as they occur – or at least, I don't see it being used very often. But then as we know from the anxiety surrounding social media, technology is insidious – it gets into us, and before we know it, we are different.



Critics Page

March 5th, 2015

Judith Barry

The definition of technology (from Greek τέχνη, *techne*, “art, skill, cunning of hand”; and -λογία, *-logia*) is the collection of tools, including machinery, modifications, arrangements, and procedures, used by humans. Philosophers as diverse as John Locke, Martin Heidegger, and Gilles Deleuze have discussed technology as a form of world-building, an originary form of truth-revealing, and as a way of destabilizing subjectivity rather than conventionality “as a means to an end.” Meanwhile, the instrumentalization of technology, as Hannah Arendt and Donna Haraway posit in different ways, underscores the danger in the implicit anthropomorphism of technological utopias.

Currently, many media can be iterated to perform digitally and there is a great anxiety or celebration, depending on your viewpoint, that all these disciplines/media—painting, drawing, photo, film, video, sculpture, 2D–3D forms—will be indistinguishable from one another as they collapse into the digital realm. Yet, these differences and their specificities are still “in there,” and this re-energizes both the new and old media, no matter the final output. Marshall McLuhan said, “We shape our tools. And then our tools shape us.” Which makes me wonder: if the montage and collage were the image operations that characterized the 20th century, what new forms will the algorithms and computer languages of the 21st century produce? Will they allow for the formlessness required for an endlessly evolving becoming? Or will everything succumb to the logic of the database?



Judith Barry, *For when all that was read was ... so as not to be unknown* (2012). Installation view, DOCUMENTA(13), Kassel, Germany.

For me the word “tools” connotes many associations. Cooper Hewitt Museum’s definition of tools in the exhibition *Tools: Extending our Reach*, is as extensions of the human body—a way to

allow us to achieve amazing feats by augmenting our abilities. Tools also connote design and craft skills along with the mastery of their use. Are we only as good as our tools, as is often claimed? Identifying the appropriate tools is crucial as my projects are research-driven. The form and content of each project derive from research and analysis. I use the tools I think will best aid the project and my choices differ for each. I do not know what the project will be or how it will look when I begin, and discover this through my analysis. For me tools are anything that aids me in this process, and anything can be a tool—especially research methodologies and “extra-artistic materials” appropriated from other disciplines, and, most importantly, the collaborative generosity of all who contribute to each work. These are my most important tools.

In addition to the above, here are other tools I use in no particular order: architecture, cinema, collage, computing/programming languages, design, drawing, experimentation, imaging devices, montage, networks, new media, serendipity, video, painting, play, the Internet...

To place my “tool” use within a context, I will briefly discuss three works in relation to the tools I employed.

For when all that was read was ... so as not to be unknown is a guidebook to the Brain section of DOCUMENTA(13). Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev utilized this section to outline her main themes. My guidebook presented these works as an interactive sculpture, printed as two posters, that the visitor could construct into a guidebook to the exhibition. When assembled, the guidebook presents these works in a non-hierarchical, non-linear array, as an endless space, suspended in time.

I researched C.C.B.’s curatorial method, DOCUMENTA’s histories, artists’ books, and paper technologies, including origami. The posters were developed in watercolor and photography, and further iterated on the computer through experimentation. Videos were provided for ease of assembly, and architecture and design strategies determined the display of the work.

From Receiver to remote control... Channeling Spain 2010

When Ken Saylor and I were asked to recreate the 1990 exhibition, *From Receiver To Remote Control, The TV Set* for Barcelona in 2010, we proposed updating our research into the television apparatus to compare the differences and similarities across television histories in Spain and the U.S. in relation to “participatory democracy.”

While television is often considered a monolithic entity, it differs from culture to culture. Tele-visual space produces personal and collective identities across national and global boundaries. We were particularly interested in how viewers are constructed as a *polis* when

democratic ideas receive coverage in television media, especially across Spain's autonomous regions when Franco was deposed. The installation consists of U.S. and Spanish zones, and a collective zone, with television programming specific to both countries in each zone. A timeline comparing television history and democratic movements in Spain and the U.S. corkscrews 360 degrees throughout the installation, inviting participation.

In addition to extensive research into television history and programming, we also explored photo archives to showcase the different ways the television set occupies the home in both countries. The timeline was built in the computer and installed as vinyl, the photos were digitally enhanced to maintain their historical look, including the cut-outs over the flat screens, and the programming was digitized and looped for playback.

Study for the Mirror and Garden uses video and special effects along with architectural mirroring to evoke the secret gardens, hidden meanings, and picaresque narratives of the *converso* tradition in Spanish literature and culture, which allowed banished cultures to survive by hiding in plain sight. At first the story seems to turn on mistaken identities, but as time ruptures and slips and characters morph into cultural archetypes, it becomes an investigation of the origins of our desire for the irrational to erupt into modern narrative space.

Each time the work is installed, it is designed into the environment such that the viewer is interpolated into the two different narratives unfolding on two translucent screens.

This work required extensive research into the Spanish history and the *converso* literature, 2D–3D modeling software, compositing and animation technologies, and architecture and design.



Judith Barry and Ken Saylor, *From Receiver to Remote ... Channeling Spain* (2010). Installation with Spain and U.S. timelines + TV programming, 91 photographs, 10 flat screens with audio, dimensions variable. TV/ARTS/TV, Arts Santa Monica, Barcelona.



Judith Barry, *Study for the Mirror and Garden, redux*. Two channel video sound projection with mirrors.

CONTRIBUTOR

Judith Barry

JUDITH BARRY is an artist/writer whose work crosses a number of disciplines: performance, installation, film/video, sculpture, architecture, photography, and new media. She has exhibited internationally at Berlin Biennale, several Venice Biennale(s)

Art/Architecture, São Paulo Biennale, Sharjah Biennial, Nagoya Biennale, Carnegie International, Whitney Biennale, Sydney Biennale, and dOCUMENTA, among others. Her awards include the Kiesler Prize for Architecture and the Arts, 2000, and a Guggenheim Fellowship, 2011. Currently, she is Professor/Director of the M.F.A. VA Program at Lesley University in Cambridge

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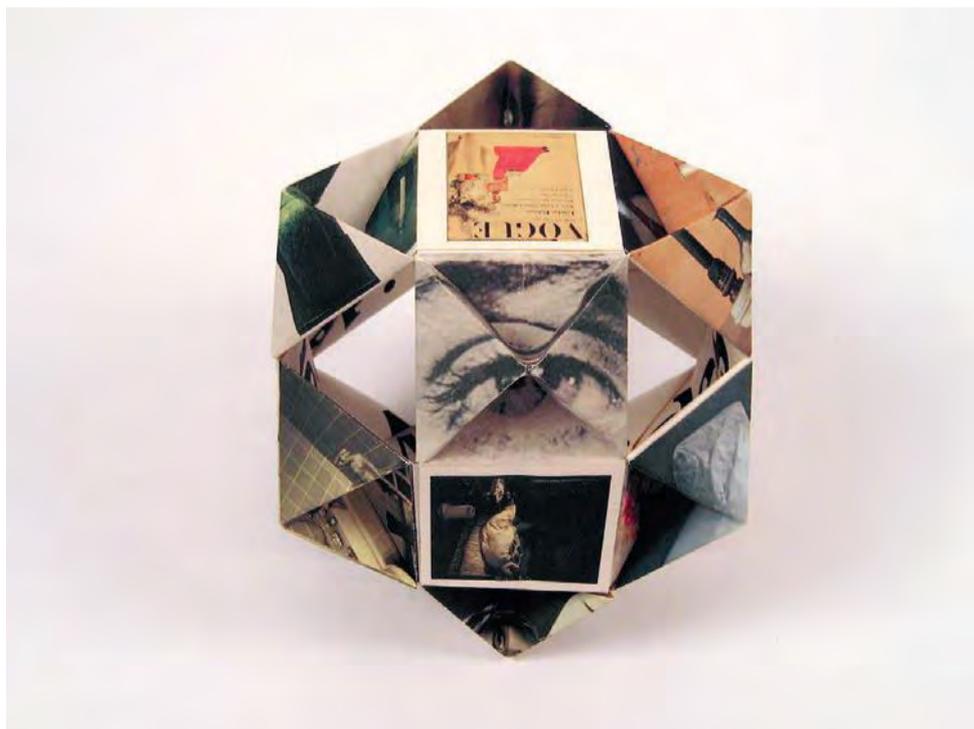
About Brain: For when all that was read was... so as not to be unknown

BY JUDITH BARRY



Memory, history, and how many relations between these two terms might be made visible is a recurring theme in Judith Barry's wide-ranging research-based art practice. Beginning with language-based performance works in the late 1970s and continuing through installations, exhibition designs, and graphic interventions, Barry has explored these issues in a variety of contexts. She transformed the "Carnegie International" exhibition into a "memory theater," created a miniature book that drew parallels between genre painting and 19th century pseudo sciences, and developed an interactive computer game that guesses how visitors to a digital museum might produce new forms of art experiences. These works are discussed in her recent catalog (*Judith Barry: Body Without Limits*, Domus Artium DA2, Salamanca, Spain 2009).

Commissioned by DOCUMENTA (13) to create a miniature *Guidebook* for "Brain", Barry discusses her approach to this project.



1. Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, from an email exchange with Edoardo Bonaspetti at *Mousse* about “Brain,” April 3, 2012.

2. The *Guidebook* attempts to spatialize these concepts. Looking at the history of how images and writing have been contained within a form led me to seals as emblems, scrolls and codexes at the transition when the codex replaces the scroll, and illuminated manuscripts. This research further underscored that the visual architecture of the *Guidebook* must be nonhierarchical, with no beginning and no end, and that this structure would also need to be productive of an endless space in order to hold all the elements in “Brain” in some form of suspension. The *Guidebook* also needed its own internal support system, as it would not be able to rely on the linearity of the conventional book form to produce a structure of cohesion. Ultimately, the structure of the *Guidebook* was derived from “modular origami” with the aid of David Mitchell, an origami master, Ken Sailor and Project Projects, who also produced the graphic design; a form that indeed allows for many of the elements in the *Guidebook* to be suspended as well as providing an interior space. Functionally, the *Guidebook* is designed to be interactive. It is printed as a flat, two-dimensional object that must be assembled in order to be read. It can be read as it is folded, with much of the text disappearing into the structure of the folds, reminding me (and hopefully the reader) that while we may write so as to forget—in other words so we can empty our minds—books exist so we don’t have to remember.

3. Bruno Latour, “Where Is *res extensa*? An Anthropology of the Object,” lecture at the Offene Objekte conference, Berlin, 2010.

4. Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology*, trans. Dorion Cairns (London: Martinus Hijhoff, 1977): 83. “The universal depriving of acceptance, this ‘inhibiting’ or ‘putting out of play’ of all positions taken toward the already-given Objective world and, in the first place, all existential positions (those concerning being, illusion, possible being, being likely, probable, etc.),—or, as it is also called, this ‘phenomenological epoché’ and ‘parenthesizing’ of the Objective world—therefore does not leave us confronting nothing. On the contrary we gain possession of something by it; and what we (or, to speak more precisely, what I, the one who is meditating) acquire by it is my pure living, with all the pure subjective processes making this up, and everything in them, purely as meant in them: the universe of ‘phenonema’ in the... phenomenological sense.”

5. Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993). Toward the end of this book, Latour discusses how we must rework our thinking to conceive of a “Parliament of Things” wherein natural phenomena, social phenomena, and the discourse about them are not seen as separate, to be studied by specialists, but as hybrids made and scrutinized by the public interaction of people, things, and concepts.

“It contains a number of artworks, objects, photographs, and documents, brought together as a programmatic and oneiric space, in lieu of a concept. They are held provisionally together in this “Brain” of *dOCUMENTA* (13) to indicate not a history, not an archive, but a set of elements that mark contradictory conditions and committed positions of being in and with the world—pitting ethics, desire, fear, love, hope, anger, outrage, and sadness against the conditions of hope, retreat, siege, and stage.”

When Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev told me about the concept for “Brain”—the statement above is what she related to my *Mousse* editor—it immediately triggered an intense visual image. It was as though I had been dropped into an infinite space where all the elements she was describing in “Brain” were suspended in an array. When I moved through the space of the array, it seemed endless and went on forever, and yet all of the objects seemed to be in extreme close-up. And I seemed to be in a place where time, too, was suspended, yet visible, in the space around each object. When I came close to one of the objects, I would suddenly be pulled into its orbit as its many histories came at me from a variety of different trajectories, each made visible as it unfolded.

I was immediately intrigued, as it reminded of a childhood fantasy of being inside time—as though there were an inside and an outside to time itself. This desire is, of course, a fantasy about omnipotence and ultimately is replaced by time as we know it. That said, it is also a fantasy about the potential for another kind of space, inside time, a speculative space with antecedents in quantum mechanics and physics. A place where all things can be together all at once within the imagination. Inside a moment where time is suspended, as if frozen, and the histories surrounding each object are still there.

I tried to keep the intensity of this experience in mind as I developed the *Guidebook* for “Brain.”² Albert Einstein’s famous quip that “Time exists so everything doesn’t happen all at once” is a reminder that all artifacts embody their different and competing histories. Yet these differences are often neutralized within a shared space, particularly within an exhibition. Hence, rather than presenting the *Guidebook* contiguously in the linear form of a book, where one word follows another, one page after another, all leading inevitably to The End, might it be possible to try to create a situation in which this *Guidebook* became a way for allowing these elements, in both their differences and their similarities, to be apprehended in some kind of dynamic balance.

What would happen if all time-embodied elements and their histories were suddenly available to us in all of their variety? And what if we could hold each of them discretely in our mind?

Bruno Latour remarks that “matter is as it is thought by the mind” and hence is constantly changing in significance, and, therefore, “The way we know (about objects) has been confused with the thing we know (about objects)” is important here.³ While Latour does not comment on whether it is possible to ever completely unlearn the things we know about an object, his statement is suggestive of three issues at stake for “Brain.”

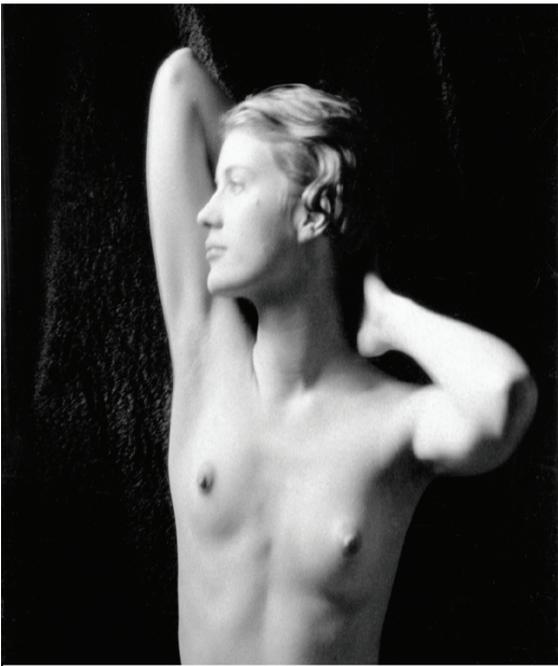
One is that after nearly 100 years of structuralist analysis beginning with Vladimir Propp, there are many ways of parsing a taxonomy of objects that might seem autonomous to the object (empirical), and yet simultaneously locate the object within its historical moment at the nexus of a construction of fictions. This is a condition that obtains throughout all the operations performed on history, including Jacques Derrida’s notion of deconstruction as already contained within whatever is under investigation, perhaps most pertinently for our purposes as explored in his *Mal d’archive*, whose French title more accurately conveys its meaning than the English translation, *Archive Fever*. These taxonomies, partial/incomplete/fictional are the traces that survive as the clues to be sifted into understanding. This incompleteness is not based on the empirical history of the object or its visual attributes. Rather, it is based on how the object is seen as representing its competing, specific histories at a moment *in time* as it strives toward homogeneity.

The second issue at stake for “Brain” is that every object (and its histories) also partakes of other simultaneous histories the instant that it (the object) comes into contact with a viewer, for the viewer irrevocably alters his or her understanding of the object at the moment of this encounter. That is the problem that Latour recognizes above. Even if there is an object without a viewer, there is the question regarding whether there can be any understanding about the object without some recognition on the part of a viewer that the object, while existing as a “thing-in-itself” (Kant), also comes into being at the moment the viewer encounters it, as in the “ego cogito” in Edmund Husserl’s *Cartesian Meditations* and the beginning of transcendental phenomenology.⁴

But each time an object encounters a viewer who brings to that object a different understanding about that object based on their understanding of the world, this new understanding of the object potentially adds to the understood authenticity of the object and ultimately to its aura, as this encounter with the object/artwork/document continues to circulate. Such that, following on from Latour, there is a complex “ecology of the object” in which every object becomes a hybrid made anew by these interactions.⁵

The third issue for “Brain” relates to Walter Benjamin’s comment that the authenticity of an object is the essence of all that is transmissible, from its beginning as an object to the history it has experienced, and which becomes known. This is what is at stake for Latour, I think, in the statement above, when he asks, “What is the difference between the way we know about an object and what we know about an object?” His approach places these two different orders of understanding in relation to each other. This question is central to the *Guidebook*.

Three of the original
vases that Giorgio Morandi
painted during the time
of World War II. and his
paintings from 1949
onward.



A double drawing on paper
of a Vietcong woman picking
up her hat by Vu Giang Hung
(1930–2011), an artist during the
American Vietnam War who often
portrayed the daily life of the
Vietcong.



Lee Miller
Eva Braun's perfume bottle
1945

A selection of bathroom articles
once belonging to Hitler's apart-
ment that Miller took away with
her when she visited the apart-
ment as an embedded photo

war
era
Hitler

For when all that was read was... so as not to be unknown

Brain

This Brain of DOCUMENTA (13) is a space separated by a glass wall. THE MIDDLE OF THE MIDDLE OF THE MIDDLE OF (2012) by Lawrence Weiner, positioned on the glass, points to the provisional positioning of any orientation. It is an associative space of research where the many threads inside and outside Kassel are held together precariously. It follows the choreography of a dance, a synecdoche—a simultaneous understanding in which each object stands as a pars pro toto for a larger entity of meaning. It is a space that draws us in and out of the symbolic realm, in and out of the spaces of sculpture or representation and those of reality or life. It is a miniature puzzle of an ex-

hibition that condenses and centers the thought lines of DOCUMENTA (13). At the same time, the objects it contains repeat the small scale of contemporary consumer culture and technology, of devices like tablets and smartphones, which are concerned with miniaturization. This exhibition speaks about the uniqueness of our relationship with objects and our fascination with them. It explores the individual and troubled histories of these objects, and their shifting connotations. The materials of these objects are earthy: from solid carved stone to ceramics (permanent yet breakable). There are eccentric, precarious, and fragile objects, ancient and contemporary objects, innocent objects and objects that have lost something; destroyed objects, damaged objects and indestruc-

tible objects, stolen objects, hidden or disguised objects, objects on retreat, objects in refuge, traumatized objects. The Brain of DOCUMENTA (13) is a paradox, a space of many secrets, a space of violence, and a space of potential healing.

—Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, TK TK TK, TK TK TK

Judith text TK Ipsandipam, commi corem. Sequi od qui vid quodis etupai endita dolor simi, cus dolupti atessmusda nonsequi doles aritratque nulla dem. Epicles imaginet exceatet ut od escilicet im solescia quist, sant as doles-tium aut aut faccae. Pudisti blatiis aliaasperum que moloro quam t erat vent ut quaeperpro imus atur? Acea coreped estrum illici blabore nitaturerum quat. Epicles imaginet exceatet ut od escilicet im solescia quist.

— Judith Barry

Judith Barry For when all that was read was... so as not to be unknown 2012. A not to be unknown Codes, postmodern book Codes, postmodern book Mixed media Dimensions variable

Courtesy the artist, Rosemarie Felsen Gallery, Los Angeles and Galeria Karin Sachs, Munich



Judith Hoof Missing missing



Bactrian Princess Untitled (Princess sitting on the slide) ca. 2500–1500 B.C. Chlorite and calcite 10.7 x 12.5 x 7 cm



Giorgio Morandi Oil lamp from Giorgio Morandi's studio



Horst Hobeisel Ink sketches for the Aschrott Fountain Rathausplatz, Kassel 1986



Giuseppe Penone Cassero fume 6 1998



Man Ray Portrait of Lee Miller ca. 1930



Tamás St. Turba 80/17 Dimensional Parallel Union of Telecommunications —Trusses in bankruptcy, Tamas St. Turba) Czechoslovak Radio 1968 1969–2011 Brick, ashlar Dimensions variable

These highly staged and poignant images of Lee Miller's life throughout Brain, like her relationship to surrealism, Man Ray, fashion, and war photography, form a unique approach to the trauma WW 2 sparked. They underscore how the themes of collapse, recovery, destruction and reconstruction exist simultaneously within culture during times of collapse and recovery.

Three of the original vases that Giorgio Morandi painted during the time of World War II, and his paintings from 1949 onward.

The artwork is a readymade, a metronome on whose arm he clipped the cutout eye of his lover Lee Miller.

Man Ray Portrait of Lee Miller from which he cut out the eye for his Object of Destruction ca. 1930



Mohammad Yusuf Aseli Dove (Detail) 2011 Oil on canvas 38 x 62 x 2.5 cm



A small landscape painting by Mohammad Yusuf Aseli, who in the late 1950s and early 2000s pretended to restore figurative paintings by covering the figures of animals and humans in the National Gallery of Kabul with watercolor and was able to save about eighty paintings from destruction.

Lee Miller Self portrait of Lee Miller Paris, ca. 1930



Vu Quang Hung Untitled 1967 Watercolor on paper 27 x 38.5 cm

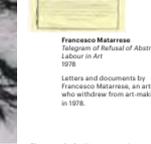


A double drawing on paper of a Vietcong woman picking up her hat by Vu Quang Hung (1930–2011), an artist during the American Vietnam War who often portrayed the daily life of the Vietcong.

Man Ray Portrait of Lee Miller from which he cut out the eye for his Object of Destruction ca. 1930



Lee Miller Street bedroom, sister of Eva Braun, Wassenburger Strasse 12 Munich, 1945.



Photographs for Vogue magazine from Lee Miller's visits to Dachau, and in Hitler's apartment in 1945. On the left are numerous publicity photographs of Hitler.

Giuseppe Penone Rivestazioni (pigiati occhi) 1970



A selection of artifacts (made from metal, ivory, glass, and terracotta) from the National Museum in Beirut that had melted together in a shell fire during the civil war between 1975 and 1990, when the museum was on the front line of various factions in downtown Beirut.

B. Lee Miller and David S. Sherman Lee Miller in Hitler's bathtub 18 Philippinenplatz, Munich, 1945



A selection of bathroom articles once belonging to Hitler's apartment that Miller took away with her when she visited the apartment as an embedded photo journalist, among them a towel with the initials A. H., a perfume bottle, and Eva Braun's powder compact.



Man Ray Object indestructible 1923–1965 (Collection 65, Ed. 0/100) Wooden metronome, photograph, and paper clip



A selection of the various editions of Man Ray's Object indestructible, made after the lost/destroyed original of 1923, between 1933 and 1971. The artwork is a readymade, a metronome on whose arm he clipped the cutout eye of his lover Lee Miller.



Quater Metzger Untitled 1945–1955



An early drawing by Quater Metzger, made in the early 1950s, previous to his Manifesto of Auto-destructive Art of 1950, which was damaged through humidity and folding while it was stored in a suitcase until 2010.

Isidore sisters, Juana Maria Untitled 2011 Ceramics 40 x 26 x 35 cm



A set of two ceramics by the Paraguayan potters Julia Isidore and Juana Maria Rodas, and one by the Catalan ceramicist Antoni Canals (1913–1985), whose work transformed the language of modernity in Spain.



A photograph made by Vandy Battana while traveling to the Khmer Cambodian provinces most severely damaged during the American Vietnam war. Today, these craters are known in the Khmer language as the "bombe ponds."



Tamara Henderson Stroubled Ballot & Anonymous Loan 2011 16-mm film transferred to video, color, sound 3:55 min



The video Stroubled Ballot & Anonymous Loan (2011), on the life of objects, by Tamara Henderson.

Vesheleva Alkhov The fallen meteor 1979



A notebook by Vesheleva Alkhov, from his 200 notebookbooks with 3,000 megas, which he drew and wrote between 1974 and 2000 in Tallinn, Uzbekistan.

Vandy Battana Takso 2009 Fotografia / Photograph 81 x 88.5 cm



Lee Miller cover for UK Vogue July 1945



Three of the original vases that Giorgio Morandi painted during the time of World War II, and his paintings from 1949 onward. The time of World War II.



Lee Miller cover for US Vogue November 1944



Photographs of a fog catcher project in the Atacama Desert in South America by Horacio Larrain Barrios.

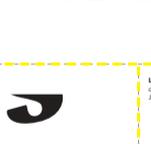
Man Ray Lee Miller portrait of her ca. 1930



Rudolf Keesbach Die Aussenbeobachtung 1938 Rosenthal Edition No. 903 Porcelain, matt white enamel, signed socle Height: 25.5 cm



Giuseppe Penone Rivestazioni (pigiati occhi) 1970



Lee Miller cover for UK Vogue July 1945



Sam Durant Calcium Carbide (Sisa spring from dead) and not the other way around 2011 8 x 61 x 3 cm



Carrera Marble carved at Telara Studio d'Arte by Adriano Dardi and Mauro Trazzini, Sara Alzani (Assistant), and production manager Maria Teresa Telara



Man Ray Lee Miller portrait of her ca. 1930



Lee Miller and David S. Sherman Lee Miller portrait of her ca. 1930



Lee Miller and David S. Sherman Lee Miller portrait of her ca. 1930



Lee Miller and David S. Sherman Lee Miller portrait of her ca. 1930



Lee Miller and David S. Sherman Lee Miller portrait of her ca. 1930



Lee Miller and David S. Sherman Lee Miller portrait of her ca. 1930





All images, unless otherwise specified –
For when all that was read was so as not
to be unknown, 2012. Courtesy: the artist,
Rosamund Felsen Gallery, Los Angeles and
Galerie Karin Sachs, Munich

Pages 58-59 – For when all that was read
was so as not to be unknown, PDF version,
2012. Courtesy: the artist, Rosamund
Felsen Gallery, Los Angeles and Galerie
Karin Sachs, Munich

6. Albert Einstein, *Relativity: The Special and General Theory* (Holt: New York, 1920). According to Einstein's theory of special relativity, the slowing of time is extreme near a black hole. From the viewpoint of an observer outside the black hole, time stops. For example, an object falling into the hole would appear frozen in time at the edge of the hole. According to Einstein's theory, time and space in a sense trade places inside the hole. Inside, the flow of time draws falling objects into its center. No force can stop this fall. Einstein's theory of gravity seems to predict that time itself is destroyed at the center of the hole and possibly comes to an abrupt end.

7. Christov-Bakargiev, Carolyn, *My Dear Friend*, letter dated October 25, 2010. Questions of personal and collective emancipation through art emerged in the process of making DOCUMENTA (13) by thinking through a number of composite ontologies that generate paradoxical conditions of contemporary life and artistic production. These include: participation and withdrawal as simultaneous modes of existence today; embodiment and disembodiment, and their mutual dependency; rootedness and homelessness, as a dual condition of subjecthood; proximity and distance, and their relativity; collapse and recovery, occurring simultaneously as well as in succession; the flood of uncontrolled information and the contemporaneous obsession with control and organization; translation and untranslatability, and their negotiation; inclusion and exclusion, and their connectedness; access and inaccessibility, and their coexistence; the obsolescence of a Eurocentric notion of art and the paradoxical emergence of practices related to that same notion in the world at large today; human life and other forms of life facing multi-species entangled histories; advanced science/technology and its alliance with ancient traditions; tangible and intangible heritage and their interconnectedness with contemporary culture; the specificity of being an artist and the nonspecificity of artistic practice.

8. Marcel Duchamp's original bottle rack was perhaps the first readymade. The original was thrown out by his sister, Suzanne, some time before it could be exhibited. (See: Cabanne, Pierre, *Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp*, New York, Da Capo Press, 1987). The artistic operations in Dada, Futurism, and Surrealism also combined disparate objects into new forms to produce hybrid meanings.

9. Hayden White is one of the first generation of historians to make use of literary theory to question the artificial, fictive, and anti-realist nature of historical narratives. While he is best known for *Metahistory* (Baltimore: John Hopkins, 1973) and *The Content of Form* (Baltimore: John Hopkins, 1990), he has increasingly applied his analytical skills across disciplinary boundaries, for instance to archaeology.

10. Ana Bezić is a professor of philosophy at University of Rijeka in Croatia.

11. See Michel de Certeau, *Heterologies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986).

12. See Carlo Ginzburg, *Threads and Traces* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012).

13. See Kaja Silverman, *Flesh of My Flesh* (Palo Alto, California: Stanford University Press, 2009).

Would the simultaneity of this experience of the elements in "Brain" as suspended *in time*, this encounter with these objects, now held discretely in our minds, be incomprehensible because it is tainted with what we already know about them, as Latour suggests? Would this also be impossible to comprehend, as some physicists argue, because time is unknowable and our commonsensical way of understanding the passage of time is only through our memories of our recent pasts? Hence, the argument that perhaps time does not really exist.⁶

Or, might this precipitate another way of coming to terms with these objects and their histories? Could we forestall thinking about this moment as one moment, and instead experience it as many simultaneous moments that are available to us all at once, where we might pick and choose among them, because perhaps inside time, there is only space?

Can you be *inside time* rather than just *in time*? If you are inside time, is time still passing? If time doesn't exist at the most fundamental level of reality, then what is time? And if Newton's, Einstein's, and quantum physics' laws all work equally well if time runs forward or backward, then why is time a seemingly one-way, forward process? Time becomes defined by what our clocks measure, but the clocks don't keep time; nothing does. And do we ever see time? Or do we just observe physical variables as a function of other physical variables and use time to represent these variables as relationships?

Is this some kind of ontological black hole where time indeed doesn't stop, but in fact goes backward and from which no matter can return—a condition speculated as part of the current understanding of how matter functions within black holes? And isn't this one of the conditions that seemingly sets our epoch apart from the others that have come before?

Of course there are many other ways to think about these objects/artworks/documents in "Brain" than as suspended in time. And about the relationships objects might have with their empirical, memorial, and premodern histories. Here is where the question of historical methodology might be one path among many through this material. Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev has discussed the operational methodology of DOCUMENTA (13) as a series of what might be considered paradoxical conundrums, which in turn might be seen to encapsulate certain properties.⁷ These statements seem to underpin the selection of elements included in "Brain." Paradoxes are by definition notoriously slippery constructs to give form to or even to define, and yet arguably the methodology of the paradox has been in use as an artistic operation since the introduction of the readymade in the early 20th century.⁸

What is "Brain" if not a readymade of a different order? Rather than reprising this in art historical terms, I want to mention a few nodes of contemporary thought that might suggest alternative paths through this material, and through the operational space of the *Guidebook*.

- HAYDEN WHITE's work on assemblage as an archaeology of the readymade solely as a material object, rather than a discursive one, which is then productive of ways to make "a new thing by putting together congeries of older ones."⁹

- ANA BEŽIĆ's notion that assemblage in archaeology must be considered as the result of assembling people and things as objects and processes traced through continual interactions as



unique events in time, rather than being defined as in stasis, as classifications of inert artifacts.¹⁰

- MICHEL DE CERTEAU's concept of "heterologies" as a method for exploring the collision of human/spatial operations as ruptures within prevailing institutional constraints.¹¹

- CARLO GINZBURG's use of anomalies, rather than norms, for his investigations of what he terms "microhistory" alongside the value he assigns to the role of clues and speculative logic, most recently in relation to contemporary politics.¹²

- KAJA SILVERMAN's discussion of analogy and her exploration of how this might be productive of a different understanding of representation whereby similarity is not seen as sameness, and difference does not automatically translate into opposition.¹³

Media and me

Judith Barry

The author wishes to clarify that the works illustrated here arise from her earlier research and have not been revised or updated, despite the evolution of her strategies in subsequent years.

Hovering over my relation to television¹ are two specters: Walter Benjamin and Roland Barthes. Through their work, each reminds me in different ways – in particular Benjamin’s “The Artist as Producer”² and Barthes’ “The Death of the Author”³ – that when I think of television I must always ask, “What could television be if it wasn’t in the service of commercial interests?” And further, “How can media defined as ‘not television,’ as in ‘opposition to television,’ but still engaged with questions of media (this is crucial), produce other possibilities for action and for new cultural forms of engagement both within media, however that is defined, and within a broader cultural and social context?”⁴

To produce programming in most media (radio, television, film, new media, video games) connotes an audience, even if it is initially only the crew and actors, and this implies a public. This situation is markedly different from that of the lone studio artist working with no thought for the reception of the work; or so the myth goes. Even as the production process in both commercial new media, television and films and most experimental films, videos or new media is not democratic or utopian, it is collaborative by necessity (as well as hierarchical) and there is a strong impetus toward interactivity, if not collaboration, among the

crew, actors, producers and sponsors, which, at the very least, presupposes, if not implies, a dialogue. This is true even if there is never any engagement with the public. Following a similar logic, I would argue that media works are also by definition performative.⁵

As an artist I have a wide-ranging practice where both the form and the content of my work emerge from research on specific issues. However, as someone who is interested in questions of representation, “media” in various forms often figures in my work. Below is a brief discussion of some of the ways that, in my work, I have thought through the two questions raised above in relation to television.

Cinema would have remained a curiosity had it not attached itself to older forms of specular, theatrical entertainment, specifically melodrama. It is the development of cinematic language over time, through the shot structure, coupled with montage, to visually represent a story AND produce “believable, inhabitable space,” which the viewer can enter in what Christian Metz describes as a “wide awake dream state” – thereby accessing multiple points of view, while knowingly watching the film, in the dark, surrounded by strangers – that invested the invention of the “moving image” with its power as a medium.

Television was well established by the late seventies. It had appropriated the dominant forms of cinema by using many of its tropes while changing cinema’s narrative structure (beginning, middle, end) to a “flow.” TV is episodic. It attenuates across time in soap operas, serials, news, and variety programs. This episodic structure, coupled with my understanding of how it is that cinema, first, and later television, create an architecture of inhabitable psychic space, has directly influenced how I create

my work, no matter what form it takes – sculpture, photography, graphic design, film and video, installation and new media. My relationship to these issues is most discernible in my installations – whether they are using media, directly or not; whether they are exhibition designs, or not.

I construct what I call “subject positions,” a form of address that the viewer/user can discover within my installations, by applying montage techniques as a way to spatialize physically and make inhabitable the issues each project is addressing. In this way viewers can construct a variety of meanings about the work as they move through the space.⁶ I also use the notion of “subject positions” in single channel videos such as *Casual Shopper* (1981) where, when the flâneuse “looks” or moves, the architecture, in this case a mall, comes to life. This understanding of how the spaces that media can potentially produce within physical space was the beginning of my investigation of the two questions raised at the beginning of this article. Simultaneously, I am also interested in how media – television, film, sound, computer, new media, and video games – might also similarly be made spatial within public and private space. Often I configure these “subject positions” alongside an examination of how a particular media AND a particular set of ideas might be rendered inhabitable. All of this fuels the logic of the inquiries that I perform within my work.⁷

In the exhibition and installation projects such as *Coca-Cola: Building Conventions* (1980) and *Display: Museum of Signs* (1985), I “détourned” media (to borrow a term from the Situationists)⁸ as a “raw material” and transformed it into another form. Electronic signage above a red carpet directed revelers to consume not only the food of various cultures, but also those



Casual Shopper

Single channel video. RT-3 versions (3 min, 6 min, 28 min),
1980/81. Premiered Pacific Film Archive, Berkeley, California, 1981

Casual Shopper is about people who shop casually, those who go to the mall just to browse, at their leisure, when there is nothing better to do. This is a love story that never advances beyond that which can be imagined, which is never consummated, but which returns to a prosaic scene where demands are exchanged and desire circulates endlessly. Share the fantasy.

Judith Barry, "Casual Imagination," in Brian Wallis (ed.), *Blasted Allegories*.
Cambridge: MIT Press, 1987



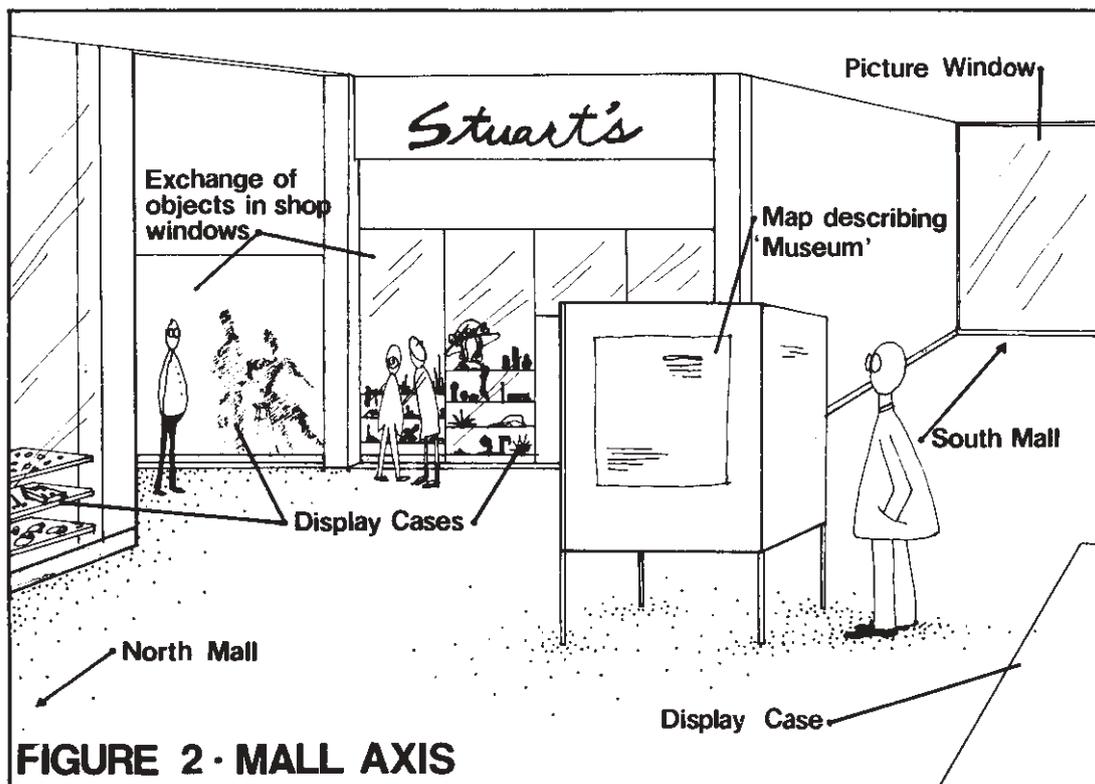
Coca-Cola: Building Conventions

Exhibition design. San Francisco Pier, 1980

For a party for Coca-Cola vendors I transformed the Pier to the street shown here. Rather than asking the revelers to eat their way through the ethnic history of San Francisco, I proposed that the food displays be based on historical research: that moment when Coca-Cola gained hegemony worldwide.

Judith Barry, "Building Conventions," *Real Life Magazine*, New York, Summer 1981.

moments when Coke gained worldwide hegemony. *Display: Museum of Signs*, uses old media – sixteenth-century mnemonic devices – to map a shopping mall as an endlessly unfolding mise-en-abyme where desire circulates endlessly as consumer objects are perpetually displaced. *For In the shadow of the city... vamp r y* (1985), the viewer produces the work's meaning by attempting to construct narrative closure from the filmic fragments that continuously dissolve on the double-sided screen. In different ways these works rely on the knowledge that viewers will unconsciously invoke the codes of narrative media when they engage with the work.



Display: Museum of Signs

Installation proposal. Shopping Mall, Palo Alto, California, 1980.

First exhibited in White Columns, New York, 1985

Mnemonic devices were used to transform a working-class shopping mall into a memory palace. The use of contemporary display techniques produces numerous desire(s) that the activity of shopping unleashes but which the object alone cannot fulfill. This leads to new forms of subjectivity such as a female flâneuse (after Walter Benjamin's nineteenth-century male flâneur). The drawings show initial preparatory sketches that chart how fetishization, mapping, the memory theater, and "deconstruction" might shape this reconfigured space.

Another strategy I use to address “what media can be” is to explore the interstitial differences among forms of representation – film, television, graphics, new media, photography – within “the space that art makes.”⁹ For example, *Blew* and other short videos use the notion of the shot as the smallest unit of meaning to see how brief a film or video can be and still produce meaning.¹⁰ In *They Agape* (1982), *Kaleidoscope* (1978) and *Space Invaders* (1982), I interrogate narrative tropes from soap operas and other television conventions in relation to the construction of gender, subjectivity, and the short-film/video form. *Space Invaders* explores the role of the ‘evil’ woman in soap opera, a character with whom many women can identify precisely because she transgresses and is not ‘punished’ by the narrative,¹¹ alongside new forms of spatiality/subjectivity produced by video games.¹² Both *They Agape* and *Kaleidoscope* use the structure of episodic television, each in different ways, to query notions about “love” and “relationships” in the wake of second-wave feminisms.

Along the border between San Diego and Tijuana, I invoked the notion of the Situationist “derive” in a series of stories, identity graphics and other artists’ projects from an international exhibition, InSite-05, which unfolded across four windows in downtown San Diego. Initially proposed as a pop-up installation, the project, *Border Stories, Working Title, From One Place to Another* (2000) functions as a “narrowcast” network. Its episodic flow overtly raises the question for a variety of publics of “what might media be?” Each day pedestrians encounter different sequences of the stories, provoking responses such as “what is this?” “a film?” “an ad?” “what are you selling?” “what is InSite?” and so on. Banal as this seems, a great deal of public dialogue

was created. Later, as the installation became “naturalized,” reactions to the work evolved into nuanced experiences with the individual stories and characters and led to discussions about the increasing blur between the two cities of Tijuana and San Diego.¹³



Border Stories, Working Title, From One Place to Another

4 channel video sound installation. Dimensions and configurations variable. Also, a single channel video, 2006. First exhibited at inSITE 2000, San Diego/Tijuana 2000

“There is nothing so _____ as that border in the mind.”

This project, an “ambient network” of short stories, identity graphics and artists’ projects about life along the border between San Diego and Tijuana, raises questions about what media might be other than television or advertising when it appears unbidden within a cityscape. Designed to function somewhat like the Situationists’ notion of a *détournement*, it was situated across several consecutive windows as an invisible border between the new sanitized tourist-friendly downtown and the old seedy port city of San Diego.

I have also thought about the space that television makes. Television's relation to the home is one of mimesis. It enters the home as "radio with pictures," furniture, an appliance; gradually it takes on other guises, becoming part of daily life: as viewers "we become what we behold." *For the exhibition From Receiver to Remote Control: the television set* (1990), Ken Saylor and I, as exhibition designers, charted the history of this transformation through more than twenty period rooms with appropriate TV programming, mapping the transformation of the US home from a site of production to a site of consumption and revealing how deeply television has affected every aspect of daily and cultural life.¹⁴ Viewing conventions evolved and TV has become a constant in every room. Television has the status of a legally protected necessity.¹⁵ Another project, *(Home)icide* (1993), also with Ken Saylor, deviated from the architectural trope, "The House of the Future," to look specifically at how we live today.

Our House of the Present asks the question, "Do our living environments adequately reflect the ways we live, particularly in terms of the discourses that shape the fabric of our daily lives?" We retro-fitted one of Le Corbusier's Unite apartments, "a machine for living," into a site that reflected the many ways contemporary discourses, including all kinds of media, circulate and transform daily life; revolutionizing our experience of "what is home?" One of the main elements of the installation is a "fly-thru" computer-animated model with various kinds of television, film et al. displayed within the home. As the viewer navigates the space, the form of the home "morphs" continuously in relation to the various types of information that now circulate and affect the concept of "home."¹⁶



From Receiver to Remote Control: the television set
Exhibition design. Collaboration with Ken Saylor. Curator: Mathew Geller.
The New Museum, New York, 1990

In a series of 20 period rooms with period TV programming, this exhibition traced how television transformed the home from a site of production into one of consumption: the fifties' notions of "home theater"; the "easy living" implied by labor saving appliances; the sixties as the only moment when television was overtly political from Civil Rights activism to the Vietnam War; the seventies and the proliferation of technologies with portable color TV and cable; the eighties and the potential for a return to production in the form of the home computer.



From Receiver to Remote... Channeling Spain 2010
Judith Barry / Ken Saylor / Project Projects, Installation with Spain/US timeline and TV programming, 91 photographs, 10 flat screens, sound, dimensions variable.
TV/ARTS/TV, Arts Santa Mònica, Barcelona (from October 15 until December 5, 2010)

The installation charts the development of politics in Spain and the US between the sixties and nineties in relation to the television histories of both countries and the advent of "narrowcasting" programming.

From the late seventies until the mid-nineties, I found the divide separating “high art” from “popular culture” to be another productive, interstitial site to examine. While there is a long history of a rich dialogue between art and popular culture – MTV, music videos, punk rock, no-wave/new-wave filmmaking, appropriation art and project specific work – now that division has all but vanished.¹⁷ Television has mutated into “narrowcast” networks. Meanwhile the Internet and social media sites are creating new ways for media to be much more interactive than television currently is. Popular culture, including all media, has become a raw material that artists can use to produce their work.¹⁸

So, to briefly return to the two questions raised at the beginning of this text, one way those issues are now being addressed is through social media and these new forms produce newer kinds of subjectivity than those constructed by television and cinema. As artists, how will we make use of these new forms of subjectivity? How will the older types of media be affected? While the dominance of US media/multinational conglomerates is still strong, media has and is evolving differently in other countries. As the world becomes more connected and, hopefully, more transparent, I am curious to see what we can learn from understanding our differences through media.¹⁹

1. Judith Barry, "Public Fantasy" in Iwona Blaszwick (ed.): *An Anthology of Critical Essays, Fictions and Project Descriptions by Judith Barry*. London: ICA, 1991.
2. Walter Benjamin, *Understanding Brecht*. London: New Left Books, 1973.
3. Roland Barthes, *Image-Music-Text*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1978.
4. As the legacy of these authors and articles is well known I will not retrace their arguments specifically here. But I do want to mention the seventies adage: "Television programming is just the filler between television commercials" as this attitude, a legacy of Frankfurt sociology as it was understood in the US, characterized the intense distrust of television and all popular culture within the art world. Hence, a discussion about the two questions posed above was all but impossible until the late seventies and early eighties when many artists begin to make use of dominant media forms. These artists include Jack Goldstein, Sherry Levine, John Sanborn and Kit Fitzgerald, Barbara Kruger, Sarah Charlesworth, Cindy Sherman, myself, and many, many others. See for example, *The Pictures Show*, Artists Space, New York, curated by Douglas Crimp in 1977 and restaged by the Douglas Eklund at the Metropolitan Museum, New York, 2009. See Lucinda C. Furlong, "Getting High Tech: The New Television," in *The Independent*, New York, March 1985, which presents the uneasy relation between art and television, ca. 1985.

Furthermore, the question about television and interactivity has always been a bit of a red herring as it has always been clear from its inception that most people were not interested in interactive television. You can easily see that if you trace the history of the failure of that "invention" from the forties with DIY television to the attempt in the early 2000s to merge television and the computer into one machine. It is the computer's "personal-ness" that has altered viewing conventions by providing connection in seemingly "real time" that has driven the desire for interactivity in "real time."

5. This drive toward both dialogue and performance might be seen as one among many reasons for the rise of Reality TV. Bravo's summer series, *Work of Art: The Next Great Artist*, with 14 artists surviving the challenges from a group of judges (none with an advanced art degree) might have been an opportunity to elevate the public discourse about art. However, the conceit of the series was to choose artists who can perform as naïfs within a decidedly pre-"post studio" milieu. Many have little formal art training. To date, the two best-known artists, those with name recognition/career success, have been eliminated. Or, consider James Franco, a semi-well-known actor, (*Pineapple Express*), currently attending several US MFA art programs and intervening as an actor/artist, within the structure of television soap opera, playing a character called James Franco who is an actor/artist attending several US MFA art programs intervening into a soap opera. Supposedly, he will have the first exhibition curated by the new director of MOCA, Jeffrey Deitch, in Los Angeles in autumn 2010.
6. Judith Barry, "The Space that Art Makes," in *A Dynamic Equilibrium: in pursuit of Public Terrain*, (Sally Yard, ed.). San Diego: Installation Gallery, 2007.
7. Judith Barry, "Casual Imagination," in *Discourse* no. 4, Berkeley, 1980-81. Reprinted in *Blasted Allegories*, MIT press, 1987, among other places.
8. Judith Barry/Ken Saylor, "Design Notations," *a/drift*, curated by Joshua Decter, Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York, 1996.
9. Judith Barry, "The Space that Art Makes," in *A Dynamic Equilibrium: in pursuit of Public Terrain*, (Sally Yard, ed.). San Diego: Installation Gallery, 2007.
10. Christian Metz's *The Imaginary Signifier*, (Eng. trans. 1982), Bloomington: Indiana University Press, and Bertrand Augst's work on filmic structure (sadly for the most part unpublished) and the short form of television – the commercial, were the genesis for these works that I began making in 1980 and first screened in alternative spaces in 80 Langton Street, San Francisco, 1982. Bertrand Augst is the professor at UC, Berkeley, who began bringing film theory/film studies to Berkeley as part of the Rhetoric Department. He translated much of Metz's work and invited many other scholars and filmmakers to UC, Berkeley, to teach, including Raymond Bellour, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, and many others. I consider myself extremely fortunate to have been his student during the late seventies and into the early eighties.

11. Tania Modeleski, *Loving with a Vengeance*. Connecticut: Archon books, 1982.
12. Judith Barry, "Space Invaders," ICC, Antwerp, Belgium (catalogue essay) for a solo exhibition in Antwerp, Belgium, 1982. Reprinted in *Un/Necessary Image*, MIT Press, 1983. See also: Peter Lehman, "Video Art, Video Games, interview with J. Barry," *Wide Angle*, no. 6, March 1984.
13. Public conversations in San Diego during the exhibition, 2001. *InSite* an international exhibition that occurs along the border between San Diego, Ca., and Tijuana, Mexico. Further information about *InSite* can be found at <inSite_05>. For information about my project see *Fugitive Sites, New Contemporary Art Projects for San Diego / Tijuana*, Installation Gallery, San Diego, 2002.
14. The exhibition took place at The New Museum, New York, 1990, curated by Matthew Geller. The exhibition TV/ARTS/TV at Arts Santa Monica, Barcelona (October 15 – December 5, 2010) was an updated version of this project now called: *From Receiver to Remote... Channeling Spain*, 2010. For this installation, Ken Saylor, Project Projects and I compared the relationship between television and democracy in the US and Spain between the sixties and the nineties.
15. The right to own a television is protected under most US bankruptcy laws as is the right to own a car. Both are considered necessities and cannot be "given up" to the courts during bankruptcy proceedings.
16. Judith Barry/Ken Saylor, "House of the Present: (Home)icide," for the *Project Unité*, [exh. cat] curated by Yves Aupetitallot, Firminy, France, 1993.
17. I have written about this in many articles beginning with Judith Barry/Sandy Flitterman, "Textual Strategies: The Politics of Art Making," *Screen*, volume 21, no. 2, 1980, and in many articles in the book *Public Fantasy*, op. cit., and in "Space Invaders," op. cit.
18. See Judith Barry, "This is not a Paradox," in *Illuminating Video*, Aperture/BAVC, New York, 1989, a discussion of Peter Wollen's essay, "The Two Avant-gardes," *Studio International*, no. 190, November/December 1973, in relation to MTV and artist television as two kinds of networks; "Design Notations," op. cit., where it became clear to us that indeed the divide between popular culture and the art world had dissolved and that in many ways this exhibition marked the end of that divide; see also Judith Barry, "An Uneven Parallel Construction," in *Die Medien Der Kunst / Die Kunst Der Medien*, Benteli/ZKM, Bern/Karlsruhe, 2004, an article about my work and others that discusses the question of how media has transformed artists' relationships to producing their art works.
19. What I do find interesting about television are two things for which the art world doesn't seem to have much time: one is the long form of television and the other is the opportunities opened up, particularly for news, as television becomes much more about "narrowcasting" than about the national networks slowly dying in the US. Arguably one reason the art world can't be very interested in the long form is because of the viewing conventions/delivery system within the art world for media-derived work. For example, video wasn't accepted until institutions allowed artists to screen their single channel videos in film-like conditions – in a black box with seating with a large projected image and immersive sound.

The Wire is a good example of the long form of television. Its 60 hours, perhaps the first US produced social analysis of a failed city, was created by a former journalist, David Simon, who covered the city desk at the Baltimore Sun Newspaper. It is the delivery system of television as DVD – as hackable in its DVD form – that makes the success of this long form possible. Further, the form of "narrowcasting" itself presents many possibilities – for instance as print newspapers downsize and as television networks seek substantive content, mergers between the two are certainly plausible.

BIOGRAPHY

Judith Barry is a North American artist whose work revolves around performance, video, installation and photography. She is particularly interested in new technologies and feminist questions.

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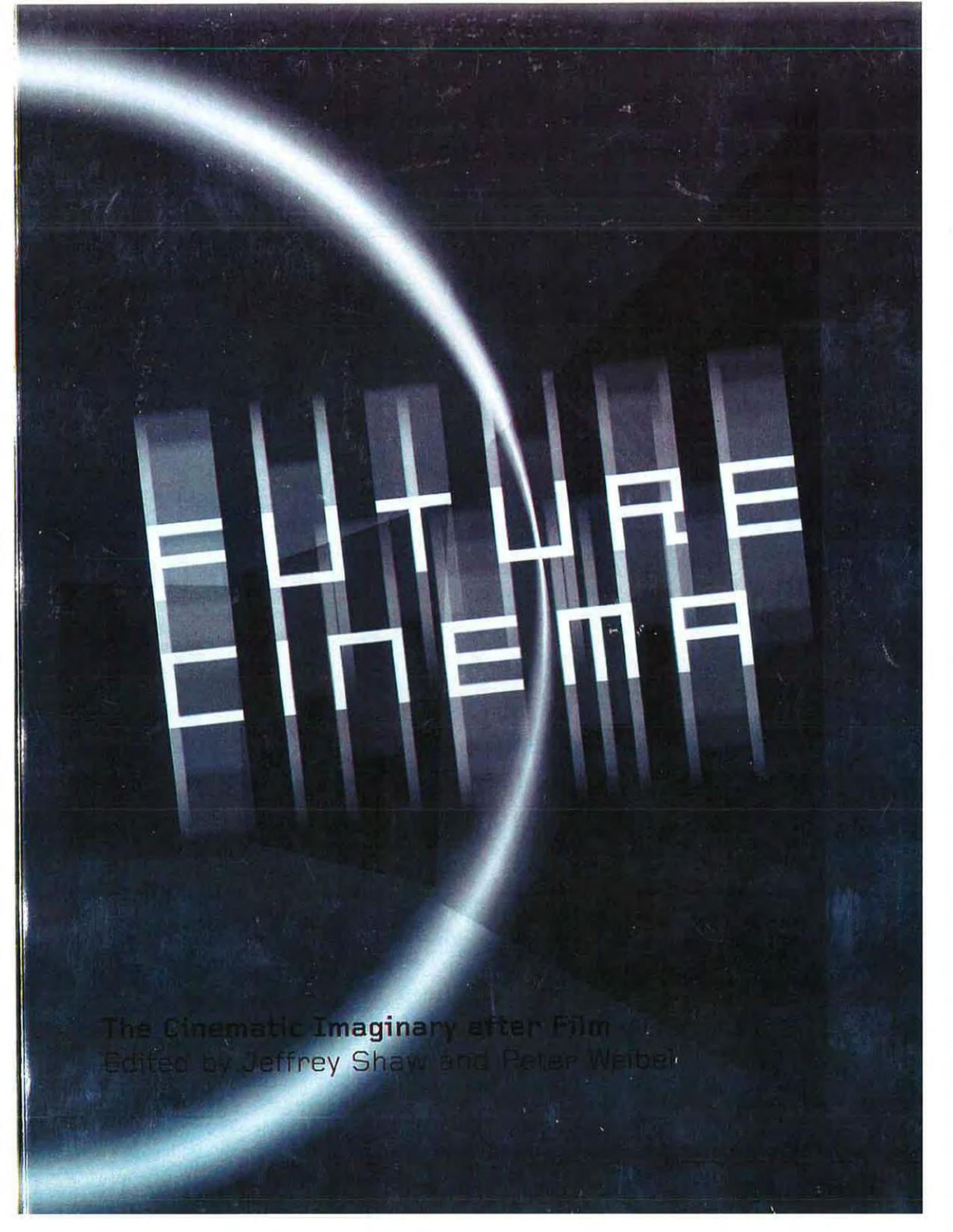
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THE CINEMA

The Cinematic Imaginary after Film
Edited by Jeffrey Shaw and Peter Weibel

Judith Barry

Imagination, Dead Imagine

1991

five-channel video projection with mirrored cube / mirror, wood, video projection / color, sound /
295 x 253 5 x 253 5 cm



Imagination, Dead Imagine
1991
installation views: ZKM |
Center for Art and Media
Karlsruhe, 2002
courtesy Collection of
Contemporary Art Fundación
"la Caixa," Barcelona
photos © Franz Wamhof

One of the questions that animates my practice as an artist who works across a variety of mediums, including exhibition design, is the notion of how the image world might be rendered inhabitable. Early on in my consideration of this question, I experimented with assumptions about how architecture might be conceived of differently: as not primarily the physical manifestation of the building per se, but instead as the translation into built form of our lived social relations. Foregrounding discourse and translation as the primary, not secondary, generators of the built world freed me to introduce other discourses (including ones of representation) into questions around the materiality of what constitutes the "built" and the "not built." Rather than regarding these terms as oppositional, I consider them to operate along a continuum. This allows me to much more fluidly transform the nature of the relations that accrues between them.

More and more, as social life has become increasingly dematerialized through globalization and new technologies, I have turned to installation as a way to interrogate specific questions within a constructed physical environment often also comprised of



Imagination, Dead Imagination
1991
five-channel video projection
with mirrored cube
mirror, wood, video projection
color, sound
295 x 253.5 x 253.5 cm
installation views Fundación
"la Caixa," Barcelona, 1991
courtesy Collection of
Contemporary Art Fundación
"la Caixa," Barcelona
photos courtesy "la Caixa,"
Barcelona, Rosamund Felsen,
Gallery, Los Angeles

various mediums. For each project, the questions are different.

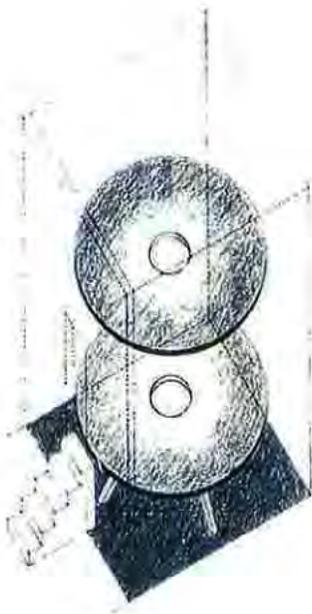
The hybridity of installation encourages the introduction of other disciplines. From dance and performance I have experimented with notions of how space might be experienced more viscerally, such that "the performative" is part of all my installations. Consequently, the viewer is active, not passive. This performative aspect means that in order to engage with a work, the viewer must construct it through physical engagement. Further, as new technologies have made possible indeterminate interactivity – on the web in particular – I have begun to create more event-driven structures whereby the viewing of the work becomes secondary to the using of the space. The user is now responsible for his or her own trajectory through the experience of the installation. Similarly, my notions of the performative also incorporate various forms of address directly within the work; this allows the user/viewer to find specific places within a work where different experiences can occur. To underscore these places, I construct "subject positions" that the user/viewer inhabits. I use montage (from the language of film/video) as well as,

more recently, 3-D modeling and animation techniques in order to make places that are believable and inhabitable yet at the same time imaginary.

I want to describe four projects that relate to the questions articulated in the "Future Cinema" exhibition.

Model for stage and screen (1987) is designed to turn the viewer into a projector. I was interested in some of the nineteenth-century experiments in vision that Goethe and others explored as they tried to account for how we see. In particular, I was curious about the relationship between what you see and what you think you see as this is produced at the moment of seeing. I wondered about the arbitrary nature of sensation in relation to vision at that moment where spectatorship and the potential for spectacle meet.

Two discs are suspended in an enclosed chamber in such a way that there is just enough room for one viewer to squeeze into the space between them. Although the viewer can clearly see how the light and fog project out of the lower disc, after a short time most viewers begin to experience a variety of retinal effects such as visions or hallucinations. One common



left
conceptual drawing
for the installation
Model for stage and screen
1987
courtesy Galleria Mario Pieroni,
American Academy, Rome

right
Model for stage and screen
1967
installation
wood, paint, light, fog
25.4 x 25.4 x 25.4 cm
installation view Galleria Mario
Pieroni, Rome, 1987
courtesy Galleria Mario Pieroni,
American Academy, Rome
photo courtesy Galleria Mario
Pieroni, Rome, Galerie Karin
Sachs, Munich, Galerie Xavier
Hufkens, Brussels



experience is the sensation that the room itself is receding as one looks through the fog and light, and that the distance is increasing between oneself and the outer edges of the room. For most people, this sensation is uncomfortable. But escaping the chamber through the antechamber provides no release, since most viewers experience retinal excitation at the very moment they expected to regain control over their vision.¹ They see the complementary color of the light from the chamber projected onto the antechamber walls.

In *The Work of the Forest* (1992) I used the Proustian image of nineteenth-century interiority – the whirling room – as a structuring device to produce a panorama. Walter Benjamin conceived a sense of history that could come to terms with technology and the shifting categories of the representations of nature. For him, it is the juxtaposition of text and image over time which elucidates historical truth. This “dialectics of seeing” crystallizes antithetical elements by providing axes for their alignment. I adapted Benjamin’s montage theory to the conflicting histories of Belgian colonial activities in Africa and the specifically Belgian form of Art Nouveau by rendering an endless surround produced by a continuously panning image. This seemed an appropriate way to stage the competing and conflicting relations between colonial expansion, utopian architecture, fin-de-siècle politics and World’s Fair ideology.

The structure of *The Work of the Forest* is designed to provide several viewing positions, and hence several points of view. From above, the viewer has the comfort and authority people generally associate with monocular perspective and classical Hollywood cinema. The view from the center is the most disorienting: the panorama itself disrupts a sense of closure. From this position it becomes clear that each screen has a different soundtrack, and so the meaning of the images changes. A third view from the exterior circumference (outside) seemingly allows the viewer to predict the sequences seen through the transparent screens; it is the one from which the viewer can best deconstruct the competing

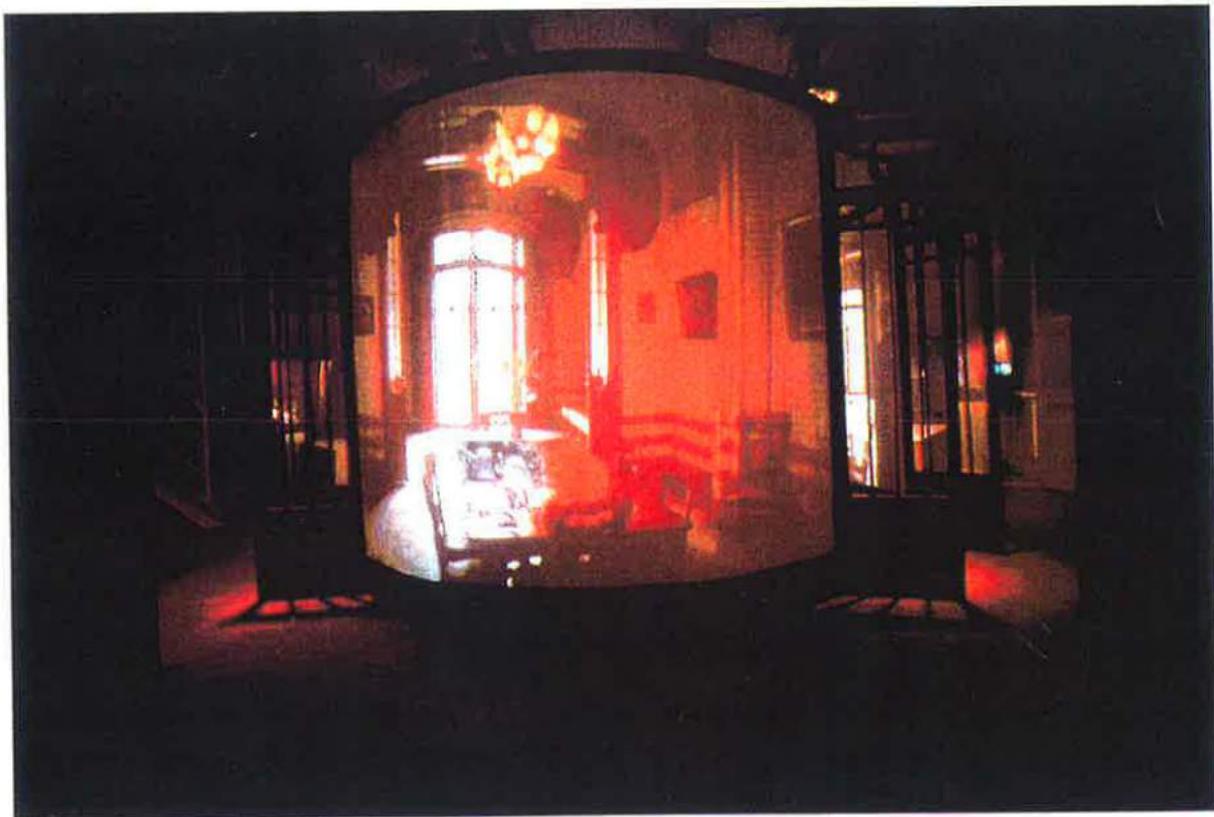
montage elements as they produce their meanings.

For *Imagination, Dead Imagine* (1991) an androgynous head is projected as if contained within a mirrored Minimalist cube. Sounds of the head slowly breathing fill the space. The head is serene, waiting. Suddenly a substance pours over it from all sides, drenching it in what appears to be a bodily fluid. The spectator wants to turn away, but cannot. Horror at the repulsive nature of the substances is replaced by fascination with their beauty as they apparently change into majestic but abstract landscapes.

In conceiving this project I was interested in exploring the legacy of Minimal Art, particularly Merleau-Ponty’s concept of the primacy of lived bodily experience established as an internal horizon that produces meaning. I read Minimalism through several competing registers. First, through its insistence on an immediacy of experience understood through the body, although at the same time Minimalism eliminated any overt reference to the body. Second, through the way this elision of the body finds an echo in the history of aesthetics, and in the sublime in particular. In the eighteenth century, the power and terror of nature unleashed intimations of infinity and deity, dwarfing the observer who, aspiring to transcendence, never forgot his insignificance. Third, through Julia Kristeva’s exploration of the subjective experience set out, in her reading of the “abject,” by the use of bodily fluids: “These bodily fluids, this shit is what life withstands, hardly and with difficulty on the part of death. There I am at the border of my condition as a living being. Such waste drops so that I might live, until from loss to loss, nothing remains in me and my entire body falls beyond the limit. [...] It is death infecting life. Abject.” Finally, in the title *Imagination, Dead Imagine* I wanted to invoke Samuel Beckett’s work, since I was commenting on the horror vacui I saw as a condition of this experience.

Speedflesh (1997–98) is an immersive, interactive video-sound narrative that takes place in a 360-degree point-of-view theater. You are in the center of a world that is moving away from you at rapid speed. A woman floats toward you and then

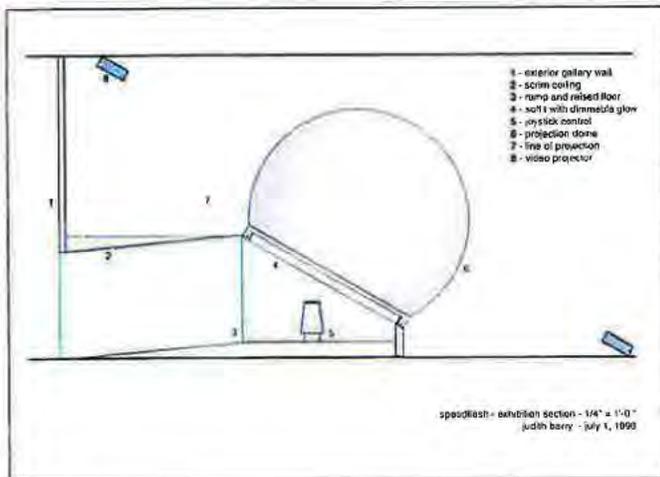
¹ For a longer discussion, see “Model for stage and screen,” in *Public Fantasy*, Blazwick (ed.), ICA, London, 1991.



The Work of the Forest
1992
three-channel video projection
panorama on three transparent
art nouveau screens
wood, silk, video
dimensions variable
installation views. Fondation
pour l'architecture, Brussels,
1992
photos courtesy Fondation
pour l'architecture, Brussels,
Galerie Hubert Winter, Vienna



Judith Barry, Brad Miskell
Speedflesh
 1997-98
 360-degree video projection
 with sound
 dimensions variable
 screenshots
 courtesy Wexner Center
 for the Arts, Columbus, 1998
 photos courtesy Luis Serpa
 Galeria, Lisbon



left
 conceptual drawing for
 the 360-degree video/sound
 projection *Speedflesh*
 by Judith Barry, Brad Miskell
 1997-98

right
 composite image/study
 for the 360-degree video/sound
 projection *Speedflesh*



away, elongated through the anamorphosis produced through the projection. Her movements seem to conceal and sometimes reveal the four characters whose lives seem to be caught/displayed in the band of light as it closes in around you. You can engage with the narrative by turning the wheel at the center of the surround and "tuning in" to the last five minutes in the lives of these characters. As each character's point of view is projected 360 degrees around the viewer, you experience the narrative through that character's eyes.

The structure of the work, the 360-degree projection, has antecedents in the history of the anamorphic image: a history that figures not only throughout the narratives of representation, but also marks the Neoplatonic period and recalls the power of hidden iconographies to describe new social orders. In using the anamorphosis as the form/content of the imagery of *Speedflesh*, we were on one level attempting to show that even an apocalyptic moment poses other histories that, although visible if you can decode them, will not necessarily be exhausted by this process. Similarly, while this work seems to propose a relation with André Bazin's notion of a "total cinema," its narrative structure implies indeterminacy, not order, as it strives to escape the boundaries of a "realist" representational model.

Whole Potatoes from Mashed was originally commissioned for the exhibition, "on taking a normal situation and translating it into multiple and overlapping discourses" at the MuHKA in 1993 when Antwerp was European City of Culture. The exhibition title, a quote from Gordon Matta-Clark, was the linchpin around which the show was organized, as Matta-Clark's work

formed the genesis of the museum collection. I was intrigued by the title and began to investigate more thoroughly what these words had meant for Matta-Clark, and also to look more closely at the effects of discourses, multiple and overlapping, on the city of Antwerp. The questions that animated the research included a notion of how words have been used to provide a transformative moment – a moment made physical, a moment that seemingly like magic can move at the speed of thought.

My research led me to several discursive systems unique to Antwerp: to the sixteenth-century Plantin-Moretus printing house that published many alchemical treatises,² and to the "beguines," those homes for sixteenth-century minstrel woman whose explicit "love" poems to "God" were deemed blasphemous even as they transformed all listeners. And I began to see the speed at which discourses can move as a kind of magic. This research led me to conceive of the form of this piece as a way of looking at how language moving at the speed of thought is a form of magic.

This project combines a number of different discourses and seemingly disparate areas of inquiry in order to make a relatively simple point. Something that we all know, but perhaps don't think about – which is that materials, matter, have a history. But it is not enough to merely recount this history as a series of bald facts (as though such a tale were plausible). No. For history is not one story, but many. It is a process of accretion over time, and it is specific, both to Antwerp, a city with a past, and also to other places, places that it has passed through, is passing through on its way, somewhere else. How matter might be thought about is the subject of this work. What matters – what is the matter? How it matters?

² Alchemical treatises are heretical texts which if read in the right way produced a transformation in the reader.



Whole Potatoes from Mashed
1993
mixed-media fiber-optic/sound
installation
rug, cables, voice coders,
sensors, strobe, glossary
dimensions variable
installation view;
MuHKA, Antwerp, 1993
Judith Barry
courtesy Judith Barry
and Luis Serpa Projeitos, Lisbon
photo courtesy Judith Barry

This sounds silly in American English. It may be untranslatable in Dutch. Is there something beyond language that we can get at, that remains after thought has disappeared? Yes of course, we all know this and for some of us, that is one of the functions of art. The visual cannot be completely described by language. Matter is what fills up space. Language is something else. The question for a history of matter is where do they meet, and what happens. Language is multiple, diffuse, transparent. Perhaps Marshall McLuhan was correct when he suggested that the shift from a literate, phonetic alphabet culture to an electronic medium would produce a kind of "electronic feudalism." This was an idea that he based on the notion that before mechanized print was invented, each manuscript had to be "looked" at, because it reflected its author in a way that is very different from the contemporary act of reading. As we read, the "Gestalt" of the manuscript disappears, and the print becomes a transparent medium that conveys the ideas of the author. With electronic image-based media, including many computer-based magazines such as *Wired* or *Ray Gun*, and with many artist-book projects, we have returned to a situation where we must look, assemble the image of the words, in order for the page to yield its meanings. In other words, if the page is not invisible, it has substance which must be read. A few hundred years ago, in the dark forest of Europe, peasants and woodcutters might tell each other stories about a man who rescued a wounded animal or a stricken princess and was rewarded with a magic ring. All the man had to do was to wish for something with the ring, and his wish would be granted. Stories like this are always short. Narrative struggle is absent, the impossible is accomplished at the speed of thought. At the dawn of the twenty-first century, with scarcity all around us, we find ourselves once more hovering on the edge of the magical. And the ring of power is no longer contained in a fable, but in an engineering project in a laboratory all over the world.

What you see before you is a landscape, a landscape made of words and light. In your hand, you have a glossary, a dictionary, which you can use to put order into this landscape, to shape this landscape into any form that you might wish it to take. It is not interactive in the sense that you can overtly effect it, yet it will yield to you any meanings you choose to give it. It is right there waiting for you.

What happens: Fiber optics in a matrix fills the room. You hear one sound, then another, then another. As the sounds, then the words, pass in the air, you see the space light up around you, behind you, above you. You notice that the light lasts exactly as long as it takes to make the sound. As the words reach the end of the fiber you notice that there is a relationship between the light that you see and the duration of the sound. As the words travel faster and faster and come with more rapidity, the sounds multiply and become more densely layered. The matrix responds by becoming lighter and more fluid. Gradually you realize that there is a specific relation between the words and the fibers, but that it is not one to one. The words take flight moving in a number of directions, producing a multiplicity of meanings. Taking you one place, then another, then another. Hovering on the edge of meaning, beyond the concern for sense, You collapse into thought. But the sounds take you through the light as you watch them try to represent themselves. You follow a thought from one place to another, finding yourself here and then away. You are alone at the speed of thought.

It doesn't want to make sense, but you do. How this works is left to chance. But you can't do that. You must hear voices, create meaning. Find order. In the white light that makes itself into images before your eyes, you can see everything. In the white noise that is a constant chant, you escape.

Judith Barry

Spectacle and Subjectivity: the work of Judith Barry

JOHANNA DRUCKER

In the summer of 1991, commuters waiting on the platform of London's Hammer-smith Underground Station found themselves being addressed from the windows of a kiosk by large disembodied heads. These video portraits narrate stories of dispossession and cultural exclusion. They are manifestations of a larger project, developed over ten years through texts, videos, installations and exhibition designs by artist Judith Barry.

Voyeurism, spectacle, the power of display and the seductive apparatus of projection have been central to her work. Through a range of formal strategies that co-opt critical analysis, architectural form and cinematic spectacle she has explored a range of interconnecting themes: desire as a cultural product; the circulation of signs in the transformed landscape of urban redevelopment; the formation of the subject in the spatial and social apparatus of viewing. Recent projects display the current focus of her work: the inscription of history in the spaces of the city.

Barry belongs to the generation of artists who define their practice in relation to cultural theory as much as through aesthetic issues. She shares with contemporaries such as Krzysztof Wodiczko, Hans Haacke or Jenny Holzer, a strongly focused concern with the institutionalisation of power and the strategies by which cultural hegemony is reproduced and naturalised in the contemporary landscape. Building on a legacy directly traceable to the work of the Situationist International and the British Independent Group, Barry addresses the specific intersection of contemporary architecture and urban planning with theoretical questions formulated in the semiotic and psychoanalytically informed texts of contemporary criticism.

However unlike other artists for whom Baudrillard or Guy Debord provide a

platform from which to embrace the notion of the simulacrum, Barry's critical project insists on the existence of the *real* as a necessary point of reference within the so-called 'society of the spectacle'. From Barry's perspective (and the same might be said of Wodiczko, Haacke etc.) Baudrillard's notion of the simulacrum has a dangerous potential as an instrument in the rationalizing language of corporate entrepreneurial rhetoric. Much of her recent work focuses on an urban landscape transformed in the 1980s by developers and architects who cavalierly disregarded the actuality of lived experience in the spaces they created. The disorientation and displacement of the individual effected by mirrored surfaces, gaudy facades and guarded atriums parallels the evacuation of the individual subject's real body from Baudrillard's simulacrum. As Barry states, 'Baudrillard is the perfect philosopher for developers, because he dissolves the body.'

Barry's work also continues a tradition of modernism which took the city as the primary site both of modern life and of the possibility for radical intervention on the part of the artist activist. Her training in architecture and design combined with critical theory early on in her artistic practice. It was Walter Benjamin's analysis of architectural form that defined it as a site where the cultural dynamics essential for consumption were produced; further, it articulated the perversities of the engagement of a mass imaginary with commodity culture. Not surprisingly, traces of his arcades' project of the 1930s, a paradigmatic analysis of space as cultural formation, show up in Barry's 1980-81 video, *Casual Shopper*, which investigates the sleights of display used to excite desire in a West Coast shopping mall. Conflating the domains of public consumption and private seduction Barry's video traces the movements of a couple, both models, through the continually displaced focus of each other's gaze in the synthetic spaces of the mall. The space of shopping becomes the space of their unappeasable desire.

Echoing the analytic techniques of Robert Venturi and Denise Scott-Brown's *Learning from Las Vegas* Barry carried out a study for a real intervention in a shopping mall in Palo Alto, California, where she suggested subtle reorderings of all the signage and window displays. Though unrealised, this project gave her intimate familiarity with the elements which circulate as signs within that designed environment and their engagement with the dynamics of desire.

Barry's interest in issues informing current architectural practice and the design of contemporary space coincided with an art world interrogation of the production of subjectivity as an essential component of art activity. By the time of her 1985 piece, *In the Shadow of the City Vampire*, she began to investigate certain

themes also evident in the work of artists such as Dan Graham, Jeff Wall and Barbara Kruger. They shared a concern with spatial positioning, wishing to examine the interactive conditions of spectatorship within social systems of signification as deployed through architectural means and through the 'apparatus' of representation.

In the Shadow of the City Vampire, Barry uses a two sided screen on which she projects images of a suburban parking lot and a Manhattan apartment building. Both night-time shots, these images have window into which short film sequences, glimpses of figures enacting fragmented narratives, are projected. These static and moving images are hypnotic, irresistible yet alienating. Condensing the site of viewing with the urban planner's schematic presentation of the spectacle, this representation of voyeurism becomes its enactment. In opposition to the Baudrillardian schizophrenic subject, ruptured and split across the endlessly refracting surface of the simulacrum, Barry proposes a vampiristic subject, driven to a ceaselessly consuming spectatorship.

The implication of the viewer into the complex set of relations put in motion by the piece, makes it impossible to occupy any stable, fixed or resolved position in relation to the image. This destabilisation of the subject has been a conspicuous device in the work of a generation of women artists, strategic in a feminist subversion of the conventions of representation. Barbara Kruger, Cindy Sherman and Jenny Holzer, to name three definitive practitioners, have systematically attacked the fictive authority of both artist and viewer through the use of images and linguistic means which call attention to the production of subjectivity.

Barry also shares concerns with artist Victor Burgin, whose interest in the cinematic codes of voyeurism, and almost fetishistic engagement with the obsessional terms of Hitchcockian fantasy, are equally self-conscious in their manipulation of visual devices. Both Barry and Burgin are relentless in their reworking of the scopie drive and a rechannelling of the unconscious engagement with visual pleasure into an unstable and disorienting confrontation with its production.

Model for Stage and Screen, shown at the Venice Biennale in 1988, comprises an antechamber leading to a chamber filled with fog and bathed in green light. Moving between these areas the spectator 'hallucinates', projecting an uncontrollable retinal after-image. Unlike Burgin, for whom sexual fantasy is a central subject matter, and for whom the image is the means of deploying the fantasmatic device, Barry returns continually to the domain of the social, usually urban environment.

First shown as part of the Projects series at MOMA, the 1986 piece *Echo*

investigated the trajectory of the architectural inventions of early modernism and the implicit social liberation they promised. Beginning with images of a Johnsonesque atrium in Manhattan, whose glass and steel frames trace their lineage to that architectural icon, the Crystal Palace of 1851, and again using video projections and screens, Barry explored the subject relations produced in the mirroring activity of glass architecture. An archetypal businessman trapped within a Miesian glass house stares out through its gridded wall in hopeless frustration, a loop of Narcissistic relations tying him to the echo of a corporate world. Architecture serves here not as metaphor or symbol of techno-corporate space, but as the means by which power relations are established. The crux of Barry's premise becomes clear here: that the structural features of contemporary architecture function as the structuring apparatus of a particular form of subjectivity. Barry eschews the old fashioned rhetoric of alienation as well as the slick gloss of postmodern simulation both of which produce passivity; one through a freezing of the will in the face of futility; the other through a belief that there are no successful strategies of intervention. By contrast, her work continues to argue passionately for attention, criticism and action within the social sphere.

More recent works, such as *First and Third*, which was part of the Whitney Biennial in 1987, made explicit the investigation of cultural hegemonic practices, which works like *Echo* addressed more generally. Rather than deal with types (the businessman, the shopper), *First and Third*, used specific narratives of individuals whose oral histories (albeit edited and re-presented by actors) bespeak the experience of immigration and race relations in the United States. With the projection apparatus concealed in a trompe l'oeil design, these talking heads in the darkened entry to the stairwell at the Whitney inserted their presence into that institutional framework with pointed effectiveness. In the manner of Krzysztof Wodiczko's projections on facades, which similarly make use of juxtapositions of institutions, images and, to use Roland Barthes' term, the third meaning produced in the interaction, these heads appeared as if from nowhere, their technical method of production as effaced in the corridors of the Museum, as their histories are systematically excluded from mainstream narratives of contemporary America.

First and Third, embodies a subtle, but implicit critique of the very institution which exhibits the work. Barry has engineered similar subversions of artworld structures and policies through her exhibition designs. Often made in collaboration with architect Ken Saylor, she has designed exhibitions at the New Museum of Contemporary Art and Clocktower in New York and the ICA in Boston. Her

approach to the design and installation of shows such as *Damaged Goods*, 1986 or *Impressario: Malcolm McLaren and the British New Wave*, 1988 at the New Museum has its roots in the early work and exhibition strategies of Independent Group members Richard Hamilton, Eduardo Paolozzi and the Smithson's; and the Archigram group. By creating dynamic and unexpected juxtapositions of objects and images, and constructing interactive environments Barry demonstrates her debt to the IG's cross-bred formulations between art, pop culture, architecture and technology. Her grounding in their strategies is a practical one; for one of the Clocktower's exhibitions on art and pop in 1987, she made a full scale restoration of the IG's ground breaking *This is Tomorrow* installation.

At its most expansive and ambitious, Barry's work takes on the ethics of urban planning and redevelopment in historical terms. *Adam's Wish*, installed at the World Financial Centre in 1988, and in Hartford at Real Art Ways in 1989, investigated what Barry terms the 'disappearance of iconography from contemporary architecture'; that is the associative images and stories which traditionally accrue to built forms, features which ground the individual subject in some experience of identification through which meaning is produced. Meaning could be generated through proportion and a sense of human scale; through the relation of elements within a space to points of view and alignment along sightlines from perspectival centres. It could be evoked by actual elements of decoration and statuary providing fragments to be recognised, assimilated, enjoyed. Both the pleasure of imagination and the pleasure of the body were available in such a system, generally associated with classical architecture.

By emphasizing both the historicity of form and the location of subject experience within the body of the viewer, Barry asserts the necessity to consider *place* as the site of an interaction between history, property, community and subjective experience. *Adam's Wish* comprised an 'electronic fresco', an image projected upwards onto an oval screen which was hung beneath the dome of a corporation's headquarters. Engaging the observer's upward craning gaze is a fast edit journey of a man through space. The space is variously that of the city, the corporation, the body and the church - this everyman, or Adam (our generic, original, man/human) is himself transformed as he moves from the vaguely threatening plazas of New York's City Hall to re-emerge in Michaelangelo's Sistine Chapel. Announced by bolts of lightning - a sign of nature and a reference to the moment when the spark of life is passed by God to Adam - this brief sequence allows Barry to link the cycle of Adam's relation to actual space to a history of architectural iconography. Her contention is

that the loss of such imagery coincides with a loss of a ‘...sense of shared community, public vision and responsibility’.

The high tech production apparatus of Barry’s work implements its sharply focused concerns with illusion and voyeurism, the seductive pleasures of looking as they are complicit with the effaced means of social control and manipulation. The loss of history which in turn subverts the real is *produced*, not incidental, and Barry’s insistence on the reassertion of historical form as an essential element of subjective experience in contemporary life signals her intervention in the safe and stylish markets of both architectural design and contemporary art. Undermining the rhetoric of postmodern glibspeak celebrating the simulacrum, the work of Judith Barry continually questions its premises in her artistic practice, calling attention to the apparatuses of production of the social realm rather than celebrating the success of signs taken at the face value of their appearances.

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