

Disturbances

Critical Art Ensemble Disturbances

Contents

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= STEYR =

♣ **Stadttheater (072 52/532 64)**: **Immer Ärger mit Sgt. Bilko**, 18, 20 ♣ **Kino 2: Zwielicht**, 20 ♣ **Zentral (520 05)**: **Werner – Das muß kesseln!**, 18, 20

= WELS =

♣ **Traunpark-Kino (072 42/420 29)**: **Immer Ärger mit Sgt. Bilko**, 18.15, 20.30 / **Der Hexenclub**, 18, 20.15 ♣ **Zentral-Kino (072 42/472 41)**: **Werner – Das muß kesseln!**, 18, 20.15 / **Zwielicht**, 17.30, 20

SALZBURG

= SALZBURG-STADT =

♣ **Central-Kino A (0662/87 22 82)**: **Werner – Das muß kesseln!**, 15, 17, 19, 21 ♣ **Central-Kino B**: **Eins und eins macht vier**, 15.30 – **Leon – Der Profi**, 17.30, 20 ♣ **Das Kino (06 62/87 31 00)** – **Saal: Teufel in Blau**, 17.45, 20 – **Killing Zoe**, 22.15 ☐ ♣ **Gewölbe: Hier spricht Denise**, 17.30, 19.30 – **Liebe Lügen**, 21.30

MUSEUMSQUARTIER HALLE (0662/87 22 82): „Angelo Soliman“ (Bert Gstellner, Tanz) (tele), ● **21.00**

RAIMUNDTHEATER (599 77-0): „Die Schöne und das Biest“, **19.30**

RATHAUSPLATZ (40 00-81 00): „Film-Festival“ (Beginn bei Einbruch der Dämmerung, Eintritt frei), ca. **21.00**

SCHLOSSPARK SCHÖNBRUNN (513 08 51): **Römische Ruine: „Die Zauberflöte“** (W. A. Mozart, Lit: Johannes Wildner), **20.00**

SCHÖNBRUNNER SCHLOSSTHEATER (513 60 72): „Sissy“ (Aufführung der Kammeroper; Ernst und Hubert Marischka, D: Walter Kobera, R: Markus Kupferblum), **19.30**

SEVERINGER STEINBRUCH (368 22 67): „Robin Hut oder der Aufstand in Kottlingbrunn“ (Herwig Seeböck), **20.00**

THEATER BÜHNE 21 (278 54 04): „Katerzungen“ (Miguel Mihura, R: Gerald Pichowetz), **20.00**

VIENNA'S ENGLISH THEATRE (402 12 60): „My Cousin Rachel“ (nach Daphne du Maurier, von Diana Morgan, R: Adrian Reynolds; mit Kate O'Mara), **19.30**

WIENFLUSS-KAVERNEN (214 55 62): „Seltsame Unruhe“ (Erwin Pipilits, R: Erwin Pipilits), **21.00**

FESTIVALS

KÄRNTEN

SCHLOSS PORCIA Spittal an der Drau (04762/31 61): „Der zerbrochene Krug“ (nach H. v. Kleist, R: Peter Päd), **20.30**

Schnitzler, R: Beverly Kiesler), ☐ **19.30**

KLOSTERNEUBURG Sommerspiele im Stift (02243/ 444-351): „Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor“ (Otto Nicolai, D: Andreas Stoehr, R: Kurt Sobodka), ● **20.00**

STADTTHEATER BERNDORF Kislinger Platz 6 (02672/ 823 18): „Oh, Du mein Oesterreicher“ (F. Dvorak), **19.30**

WALDVIERTLER HOF THEATER 3944 Pürbach 14 (028 53/ 784 69): „Der Talisman“ (J. Nestroy, R: W. Prinz), **20.15**

OBERÖSTERREICH

URSULINENHOF 4020 Linz, Landstraße 31, (0732/ 582 88): „Das Orchester“ (Jean Anouilh), **20.30**

SALZBURG

SOMMERSZENE SALZBURG (0662/ 84 34 48): **Pernerinsel: „Sécheresse et pluie“** („Compagnia Ea Sola“), **20.00**

STEIERMARK

OPERNHAUS GRAZ (0316/ 80 08, 80 00): „Galaabend II“ (Bolschoi Ballett), **19.30**

SCHLOSSBERGBÜHNE KASEMATTEN Graz (0316/ 80 00): „Die Fiedermaus“ (Johann Strauß, D: Wim van Zutphen, R: Marc Günther), **20.00**

● Premiere / ☐ Voraufführung

☐ Wiederaufnahme / Angaben ohne Gewähr

CHUNGKING EXPRESS (HK 1994, R: Wong Kar-wai) ♣ **7., Erika (523 13 83)**, 21.15

CONFESSIONAL (Kanada 1995, R: Robert Lepage) ♣ **1., Actors Studio 2 (533 52 32)**, 20.45

DEAD MAN WALKING (USA 1995, R: Tim Robbins) ♣ **1., Actors Studio 1 (533 52 32)**, 17.45 ♣ **9., Auge Gottes D (317 63 44)**, 20.45 ♣ **10., Kepler 3 (604 31 90)**, 18.15, 20.30

♣ **DRACULA** (USA 1995, R: Mel Brooks) ♣ **1., Cine 3 (533 24 11)**, 15.30 ♣ **9., Kolosseum 6 (317 81 06)**, 16.30, 18.30 ♣ **14., Gloriette C (982 54 34)**, 16.30, 18.30 ♣ **21., Gloria Center 3 (278 14 32)**, 18.15, 20.15

♣ **DER DRITTE FRÜHLING** (USA 1996, R: Howard Deutch) ♣ **1., Elite 3 (512 21 76)**, 17.15, 19

♣ **DUNSTON – ALLEIN IM HOTEL** (USA 1995, R: Ken Kwapis) ♣ **1., Cine 2 (533 24 11)**, 15.30, 17.15, 19, 20.45 ♣ **9., Kolosseum 4 (317 81 06)**, 16.15, 18.15, 20.15 ♣ **10., Edison B (604 15 89)**, 17, 18.45, 20.30

♣ **14., Gloriette A (982 54 34)**, 16.15, 18.15, 20.15 ♣ **21., Gloria Center 2 (278 14 32)**, 16, 18, 20

♣ **ECHTE KERLE** (D 1995, R: Rolf Silber) ♣ **1., Cine 1 (533 24 11)**, 16.30, 18.30, 20.30 ♣ **1., Tuchlauben B (533 22 33)**, 17, 19, 21 ♣ **6., Apollo (587 96 51)**, 17 ♣ **9., Kolosseum 2 (317 81 06)**, 16.30, 18.30, 20.30

♣ **10., Edison A (604 15 89)**, 16.45, 18.30, 20.30 ♣ **14., Gloria Center 3 (278 14 32)**, 16, 18, 20

♣ **DELUSIONEN** (D 1995, R: Michael Schaak) ♣ **1., Artis 1 * (53 56 570)**, 15.30, 17.15, 19, 21 ♣ **6., Apollo (587 96 51)**, 15.30, 17.15, 19, 21 ♣ **9., Auge Gottes A (317 63 44)**, 15.30, 17.15, 19, 21 ♣ **10., Edison A (604 15 89)**, 16.45, 18.30, 20.30

♣ **DIE WIEGE DES BÖSEN** (USA 1974, R: Larry Cohen) ♣ **7., Star (523 46 83)**, 18.30

♣ **WO DIE LERCHEN SINGT** (D 1936, R: Geza von Cziffra) ♣ **7., Bellaria (523 75 91)**, 16, 18, 20

♣ **WORKAHOLIC** (D 1996, D: Tobias Moretti) ♣ **6., Apollo (587 96 51)**, Galapremiere 20.30

♣ **ZWIELICHT** (USA 1996, R: Gregory Hoblit) ♣ **1., Gartenbau (512 23 54)**, 15, 17.30, 20.15 ♣ **6., Apollo (587 96 51)**, 15.30, 18, 21 ♣ **9., Kolosseum 1 (317 81 06)**, 15.30, 18, 20.30

♣ **DAS GLÜCK LIEGT IN DER WIESE** (F 1995, R: E. Chatiliez) ♣ **1., Opem (586 43 03)**, 16.15, 18.30, 20.45

♣ **GUANTANAMERA** (D/E/Kuba 1995, R: T. G. Alea, J. C. Tabio) ♣ **1., Actors Studio 3 (533 52 32)**, 18.15 ♣ **1., Elite 3 (512 21 76)**, 21

♣ **HER HEXENCLUB – THE CRAFT** (USA 1995, R: Andrew Fleming) ♣ **1., Cine 3 (533 24 11)**, 17, 18.45, 20.30 ♣ **6., Apollo (587 96 51)**, 16.15, 18.15 ♣ **9., Kolosseum 7 (317 81 06)**, 16.45, 18.45, 20.45 ♣ **21., Gloria Center 1 (278 14 32)**, 16.30, 18.30, 20.30

♣ **IMMER ÄRGER MIT SERGEANT BILKO** (USA 1995, R: J. Lynn) ♣ **1., Artis 4 (53 56 570)**, 17, 19, 21 ♣ **1., Elite 1 (512 21 76)**, 16, 18, 20 ♣ **6., Apollo (587 96 51)**, 17, 19, 21 ♣ **9., Kolosseum 3 (317 81 06)**, 16.15, 18.15, 20.15 ♣ **10., Edison C (604 15 89)**, 16, 18, 20

♣ **JUMANJI** (USA 1995, R: Joe Johnston) ♣ **14., Gloriette C (982 54 34)**, 14.30

♣ **LAST DANCE** (USA 1995, R: Bruce Beresford) ♣ **1., Elite 2 (512 21 76)**, 16.15, 18.15, 20.15 ♣ **9., Kolosseum 5 (317 81 06)**, 17.30, 19.15, 21

♣ **LEAVING LAS VEGAS** (USA 95, R: M. Figgis) ♣ **1., Artis 6 (53 56 570)**, 20.30 ♣ **9., Auge D (317 63 44)**, 18.15

♣ **LÉON DER PROFI – DIRECTOR'S CUT** (F 1994, R: Luc Besson) ♣ **1., Artis 2 (53 56 570)**, 17.30, 20.15

♣ **LIEBE LÜGEN** (CH/A 1995, R: Christof Schertanleib) ♣ **7., Erika (523 13 83)**, 19.30

♣ **MEIN MANN** (F 1995, R: Bertrand Blier) ♣ **1., Künstlerhaus (505 43 28)**, 17, 21

♣ **MISSISSIPPI DELTA** (USA 1995, R: Phil Joanou) ♣ **1., Artis 5 (53 56 570)**, 18, 20.30 ♣ **6., Apollo (587 96 51)**, 18 ♣ **9., Auge Gottes C (317 63 44)**, 20.15

♣ **MOONLIGHT & VALENTINO** (USA 1996, R: David Anspaugh) ♣ **1., Tuchlauben A (533 22 33)**, 16, 18.15, 20.30 ♣ **9., Auge Gottes E (317 63 44)**, 17, 19, 21

♣ **MÖLLERS BÜRO** (A 1985, R: Nikl List) ♣ **1., Am Graben Kino (533 50 23)**, 19

♣ **NACH FÜNF IM URWALD** (D 1996, R: Hans-Christian Schmid) ♣ **1., Actors Studio 3 (533 52 32)**, 16.15, 20.15 ♣ **9., Auge Gottes C (317 63 44)**, 18

♣ **NICHT SCHULDIG** (USA 1996, R: Brian Gibson) ♣ **1., Artis 5 (53 56 570)**, 15.30, 18 ♣ **1., Cine 4 (533 24 11)**, 15.30, 17.45, 20 ♣ **10., Kepler 1 (604 31 90)**, 18, 20.15

♣ **POWDER** (USA 1995, R: Victor Salva) ♣ **1., Imperial * (533 32 23)**, 18

♣ **THE ROCK** (USA 1996, D: Sean Connery) ♣ **6., Apollo (587 96 51)**, 21

♣ **DIE SCHUTZENGELE** (F 1996, R: Jean-Marie Poiré) ♣ **10., Kepler 2 (604 31 90)**, 18.30, 20.30

♣ **DIE SCHWANENPRINZESSIN** (Zeichentrickfilm) ♣ **14., Gloriette A (982 54 34)**, 14.15

♣ **EIN SCHWEINCHEN NAMENS BABE** (A/USA 1995, R: Chris Noonan) ♣ **6., Flotten 4 (586 51 52)**, 16.15 ♣ **10., Kepler 2 (604 31 90)**, 14.30, 16.30

♣ **SINN UND SINNLICHKEIT** (USA 1995, R: Ang Lee) ♣ **1., Actors Studio 2 (533 52 32)**, 15.45

♣ **TEUFEL IN BLAU** (USA 1995, R: Carl Franklin) ♣ **7., Admiral (523 37 59)**, 20

♣ **TOY STORY** (USA 1995, Computeranimation) ♣ **1., Elite 3 (512 21 76)**, 15.30 ♣ **6., Apollo (587 96 51)**, 15.15 ♣ **9., Kolosseum 8 (317 81 06)**, 16.15, 18 ♣ **10., Kepler 3 (604 31 90)**, 14.15, 16.15 ♣ **14., Gloriette B (982 54 34)**, 14, 16 ♣ **21., Gloria Center 3 (278 14 32)**, 16.15

♣ **12 MONKEYS** (USA 1995, R: Terry Gilliam) ♣ **1., Actors Studio 2 (533 52 32)**, 18.15

♣ **WEG DER TRÄUME** (USA 1994, R: John Duigan) ♣ **1., Urania (715 82 06)**, 17, 19, 21 ♣ **9., Kolosseum 6 (317 81 06)**, 20.30

♣ **WERNER: DAS MUSS KESSELN** (D 1996, R: Michael Schaak) ♣ **1., Artis 1 * (53 56 570)**, 15.30, 17.15, 19, 21 ♣ **6., Apollo (587 96 51)**, 15.30, 17.15, 19, 21 ♣ **9., Auge Gottes A (317 63 44)**, 15.30, 17.15, 19, 21 ♣ **10., Edison A (604 15 89)**, 16.45, 18.30, 20.30

♣ **DIE WIEGE DES BÖSEN** (USA 1974, R: Larry Cohen) ♣ **7., Star (523 46 83)**, 18.30

♣ **WO DIE LERCHEN SINGT** (D 1936, R: Geza von Cziffra) ♣ **7., Bellaria (523 75 91)**, 16, 18, 20

♣ **WORKAHOLIC** (D 1996, D: Tobias Moretti) ♣ **6., Apollo (587 96 51)**, Galapremiere 20.30

♣ **ZWIELICHT** (USA 1996, R: Gregory Hoblit) ♣ **1., Gartenbau (512 23 54)**, 15, 17.30, 20.15 ♣ **6., Apollo (587 96 51)**, 15.30, 18, 21 ♣ **9., Kolosseum 1 (317 81 06)**, 15.30, 18, 20.30

Fremdsprachige Filme

♣ **BEFORE SUNRISE** (USA 1995, R: Richard Linklater) ♣ **1., Künstlerhaus (505 43 28)**, 19

♣ **THE BIRDCAGE** (USA 1996, D: Robin Williams) ♣ **6., Flotten 4 (586 51 52)**, 18.15, 20.30

♣ **BRAVEHEART** (USA 1995, R: Mel Gibson) ♣ **6., Top 3 (587 55 57)**, 21.30

♣ **THE COOK, THE THIEF, HIS WIFE AND HER LOVER** (GB 1989, R: Peter Greenaway) ♣ **7., Star (523 46 83)**, 20

♣ **THE CRAFT** (USA 1995, D: Fairuza Balk) ♣ **6., Flotten 2 (586 51 52)**, 16.45, 18.45, 20.45

♣ **DEAD MAN** (USA 1995, R: Jim Jarmusch) ♣ **1., Kruger (512 87 67)**, 20.45

♣ **DEAD MAN WALKING** (USA 1995, R: Tim Robbins) ♣ **6., Top 2 (587 55 57)**, 18, 20.15, 22.30

♣ **DEVIL IN A BLUE DRESS** (USA 1995, R: Carl Franklin) ♣ **1., Burg Studio (587 84 06)**, 19, 21

♣ **DOWN BY LAW** (USA 1986, R: Jim Jarmusch) ♣ **1., Am Graben Kino (533 50 23)**, 21

♣ **DUNSTON CHECKS IN** (USA 1995, D: Faye Dunaway) ♣ **6., Flotten 3 (586 51 52)**, 16, 18, 20

♣ **EN AVOIR (OU PAS) – HABEN (ODER NICHT)** (F 1995, R: Laetitia Masson) ♣ **7., Filmhaus am Spittelberg (522 48 16)**, 19.15, 21

♣ **LA FLOR DE MI SECRETO – MEIN BLÜHENDES GEHEIMNIS** (E/F 1995, R: Pedro Almodovar) ♣ **9., Votiv Studio (317 35 71)**, 21.45

♣ **FROM DUSK TILL DAWN** (USA 1996, D: H. Keitel) ♣ **6., English Cinema Haydn (587 22 62)**, 15, 17, 19, 21

♣ **GIRL 6** (USA 1996, D: Naomi Campbell) ♣ **6., Top 1 (587 55 57)**, 22.15

♣ **GUANTANAMERA** (D/E/Kuba 1995, R: T. G. Alea, J. C. Alea) ♣ **9., Votiv Studio (317 35 71)**, 17.45, 19.45

♣ **HEAVEN'S PRISONERS** (USA 1995, D: Alec Baldwin) ♣ **6., English Cinema Haydn (587 22 62)**, 20.30

♣ **THE JUROR** (USA 1995, D: Demi Moore) ♣ **6., English Cinema Haydn (587 22 62)**, 18.15

♣ **LEON – DIRECTOR'S CUT** (F 1994, R: Luc Besson) ♣ **6., English Cinema Haydn (587 22 62)**, 15.15, 20.15

♣ **MOONLIGHT AND VALENTINO** (USA 1996, D: Bon Jovi) ♣ **1., Burg (587 84 06)**, 16.45, 18.45, 20.45

♣ **OPERATION DUMBO DROP** (USA 1996, D: Ray Liotta) ♣ **6., Top 2 (587 55 57)**, 16

♣ **POWDER** (USA 1995, D: Jeff Goldblum) ♣ **1., Burg Studio (587 84 06)**, 17

♣ **PRIMAL FEAR** (USA 1995, D: Richard Gere) ♣ **6., Flotten 1 (586 51 52)**, 15.30, 18, 20.30

♣ **THE ROAD TO GOD KNOWS WHERE** (BRD 1989, R: Uli M. Schuppel) ♣ **7., Star (523 46 83)**, 22.15

♣ **SGT. BILKO** (USA 1995, D: Steve Martin) ♣ **6., Top 1 (587 55 57)**, 16.15, 18.15, 20.15

♣ **SENSE AND SENSIBILITY** (USA 1995, D: Emma Thompson) ♣ **6., English Cinema Haydn (587 22 62)**, 17.45

♣ **SMOKE** (USA 1995, R: Wayne Wang, Paul Auster) ♣ **7., Admiral (523 37 59)**, 18.15

♣ **STRANGER THAN PARADISE** (USA 1984, R: Jim Jarmusch) ♣ **1., Kruger (512 87 67)**, 19

♣ **THINGS TO DO IN DENVER WHEN YOU'RE DEAD** (USA 95, R: G. Fieder) ♣ **6., Top 3 (587 55 57)**, 17, 19.15

♣ **WALLACE & GROMIT UNTER SCHAFEN** (USA 1995, R: Nick Park) ♣ **7., Admiral (523 37 59)**, 21.45

♣ **Filmcasino * (587 90 62)**: SOMMERKINO: *Taipei Stories – Neues taiwanesisches Kino: THE TERRORIZERS* (1986, R: Edward Yang), 20 ● – **VIVE L'AMOUR** (1994, R: Tsai Ming-Liang), 22 ●

♣ **Schikaneder (581 84 80)**: SOMMER-NACHT-KINO: **HAROLD & MAUDE** (USA 1971, R: Hal Ashby), 20.15 – **THEMROC** (F 1972, R: Claude Faraldo), 22.30 – **STUMME ZEUGIN** (D/Rußland 1994, R: Anthony Waller), 00.30

♣ **Stadtkino * (712 62 78)**: KINOSOMMER: **THE NEON BIBLE** (GB/

Preface

When Critical Art Ensemble (CAE) first met our soon-to-be publisher Richard Embray, we told him that we were interested in doing a comprehensive review of CAE's work over the past twenty-five years. Having familiarized himself with our history prior to the meeting, he diplomatically indicated that our ambitions were misguided. One volume could not contain that much material without becoming a dull, unwieldy reference book. When put this way, we had no choice but to rethink our plan of action. We certainly did not want this project to be the big book of collected facts about CAE, or some kind of historical treatise; rather, we hoped for a book that would deliver more than just documentation. We wanted to represent the interiority of the group in order to answer questions about what we were thinking, what motivated us, and what brought us pleasure, power, and satisfaction. We wanted to make an argument for why an inventive, curious person would want to choose a cultural path that defies or is even hostile to enterprise, competition, and profit, and instead engages with autonomy, cooperation, and joy.

The pros and cons of such a choice are clear. On the one hand, like so many people who have chosen to engage guerrilla art, interventionism, tactical media, culture jamming, cultural activism, or whatever term one prefers, there is no commercial reward, and this means working straight jobs to live day to day. Having long been opposed to desperate labor, we find this situation unfortunate. As if this was not punishment enough, we also have to cope with disciplinary agencies that are less than appreciative when the status quo is disturbed. On the other hand, while our jobs may be poor in pay, they are rich in time, so we have the freedom to travel, research, experiment, invent, interact, and disturb, and in the majority of cases are able to convince some institution to pay for it all. When the process is working well, we are able to lift ourselves out of the relentless alienation and unnecessary conflict inherent in the pitiless world of capitalist competition and accumulation, while at the same time working with others to achieve their vision of autonomy, cooperation, and conviviality.

For this book, we have chosen a healthy number of our favorite projects and events. We have also tried to include the negative consequences and outcomes of our actions (many of which we would not wish on our worst enemy). With these narratives, images, and documents, we invite our audience to decide whether we have made a persuasive argument for the path we have chosen.

Introduction

Three Keys and No Exit: A Short Introduction to Critical Art Ensemble

Brian Holmes

The scene is a tranquil park in the city of Halle, Germany. Emergency vehicles are stationed around the perimeter. At the countdown, the onlookers cover their ears. The explosion sends a starburst of whitish dust into the air. It hangs there for a moment, then falls slowly to the ground in an eerie cloud, from which two figures in bright yellow hazmat suits emerge. They move quickly, scanning the soil with technical instruments. Incongruously, they bring out a podium and a microphone. A nuclear physicist steps up. Speaking as a scientist, he explains how little risk there is of ever really being confronted by a “dirty bomb.” So far, they’ve been known only in the scare accounts of government intelligence services. Still the two figures go on scanning the grass, cordoning off small areas with red tape that reads DANGER. The performance is entitled *Radiation Burn: A Temporary Monument to Public Safety*. A mix of fear and pleasure, authority and equality, irrationality and knowledge, is often found in the work of Critical Art Ensemble. These admixtures are not simple binaries, resolvable into good and evil. Instead they form the threshold of the work, condensing the ambient confusion of contemporary society and establishing the conditions for a cultural experiment. What’s at stake, when that threshold has been crossed, are the discursive and affective postures that each participant will adopt with respect to the promises and risks of specific technologies. Will s/he follow the cues that have been laid down over the course of years or even decades by the government, the corporations, the media and the military? Or will s/he find the resources needed to resist the social norms, pursuing a different line of questioning and developing an autonomous position? What kind of impact can a cultural experiment have on the political relations of everyday existence?

For twenty-five years, CAE has been exploring and modeling the possibilities for resistant activity within the capitalist democracies. They have done so by any media necessary. Road trips, group exhibitions, activist campaigns, websites, posters, videos, theory books, poetry, pamphlets, performances, tours, test kits, tarot cards, amateur laboratories, historical reenactments, assorted gizmology and even the formation of an esoteric cult have been on the agenda—as well as some unwanted encounters with the law. By flaunting chronology and freely recombining their own history, they have transformed the well-policed genre of the career retrospective into a kind of memory palace for the latest generation of political interventionists. The timid may get lost in the labyrinth; but its message seems to be that the most engaging art and the most challenging critique emerge from a heterogeneous assembly. As a fan and a fellow traveler to political destinations far left of center, I’ll focus on three keys to the work of Critical Art Ensemble.

I. Plagiarism

Pancapitalism, endocolonization, sight machine, nomadic power, data body, technocratic avant-garde, performative matrix: from the beginning, CAE has deployed an unusual vocabulary for the description of contemporary society. The images that accompany these terms are often montage pieces, pseudo-archaic drawings or subverted advertisements. At first glance it looks somewhat delirious; but in fact, there is a method. Ushering the poet Lautréamont into the digital age of freely copied and edited material, the group claims the right to plagiarism. Bureaucrats call that “stealing.” But in the logic of ensembles, words and images have their only meaning in context, and their only value in liberation.

The net artists of the early 1990s will be remembered for rediscovering the use value of knowledge, at the very moment when it became the leading global commodity. Hacking, subvertising, file-sharing, warez, email lists like Nettime, electronic billboards like CTheory and performance sites/access providers like The Thing in New York or Public Netbase in Vienna provided the context for CAE’s early appearances. But the AIDS activists who came just one generation earlier, and with whom CAE also collaborated, made the same bid for direct use value under more difficult circumstances, struggling against panic and extreme homophobia to force changes in research and treatment protocols, insurance law and public health policy. The plagiarist aesthetic evolved at the juncture between possibility and urgency, leaving an explicit visual trace in a series of video shorts with zany imagery, copiously documented in this volume. A productive vein of writing opened up at the same time, with *The Electronic Disturbance* (1994).

Among the early inspirations were Baudrillard, Burroughs, Bataille, Warhol, Artaud, Deleuze and Guattari, Virilio, and Arthur and Marie-Louise Kroker. A subtler plagiarism extends to the entire dadaist wing of the historical avant-gardes, and to the intellectual traditions of the sociology of power. Material is recognized for its timeliness, seized at the point of its applicability, then often warped beyond recognition. Footnotes are considered superfluous. The point is not just to sample and replay existing tropes, but to update and repurpose them. Therefore the books and artworks can always be taken at face value: they pertain directly to real situations. But a closer look, a second read and some searching on the net will reveal subtexts, side arguments, and meta-polemics for use in diverse contexts.

Take for example Deleuze and Guattari’s *A Thousand Plateaus*, which CAE appreciated enough to transform almost completely. First move: the territorial state-machine, with its normalized environments and institutions, is recast into the generic image of the bunker (the defensive refuge of archaic social forms). To it is contrasted, not the romantic freedom of the wandering nomad but the real omnipresence of nomadic power, wielded through the vectors of surveillance and spectacle by militarized cyber-elites. The body without organs (BwO) is accepted as the primary object of desire, but stripped of its mysteries and potentials. It becomes the data body, a rationalized image of the self reduced to vital statistics under someone else’s control. The existential predicament of pancapitalism is schizophrenia, but CAE frames it in the sharpest of political terms: the schizophrenia of pancapitalism is the radical split between mesmerized national populations trapped in archaic institutions and transnational power brokers enjoying privileged access to data banks. Postmodern cybertopias are laid immediately to rest. Yet the group retains D&G’s vision of the *nomos* as “explosive and unstoppable moments of excess, waste, sacrifice, abjectivity, spontaneity, mania, and uselessness.” For the vanguards of the technocratic classes, two strategies emerge: directly attacking the computerized vectors of the cyber-elites, or using symbolic irrationality to unleash “panic in the bunker.”

How to do both at once? Let’s go a little further.

II. Recombinant Theater

CAE took to the stage with performative critiques of networked alienation. They recognized that the actors of daily life were impacted by the strategies of nomadic power, whose sources remained out of sight, far from the usual arenas of conflict. So they dreamt of a recombinant theater, where the performative matrix would stretch beyond the immediacy of controlled gesture, to the virtual worlds of the database.

This theater was modeled on the exploits of a hacker, using coding techniques to dismantle repressive data bodies. The performance, in the initial theory, should be the hack itself; and it should end when the performer shuts down the computer. There was as yet no way to imagine how this would look on stage, how it would be accessed by the public, how it would function in the cultural arena. But CAE always envisaged a range of resistant activities, and allowed itself to explore freely. Then in 1995, molecular biologists used informational models to sequence the genome of a living being. The notion of the data body suddenly became quite literal. Investors rushed to cash in on the hastily formulated promises of recombinant DNA. It was in this atmosphere that CAE launched a remarkable series of participatory installations, the first of which was entitled *Flesh Machine* (1997-98).

It begins with a lecture by a representative of a fake company, BioCom, who explains the two goals of the organization: “To completely invade the flesh with vision and mapping technologies . . . and to develop the political and economic frontiers of flesh products and services.” Yet this is not a tactic of over-identification where the artists push official rhetoric to absurd or grotesque extremes (as they would later do, quite hilariously, in *The Cult of the New Eve*). After a brief introduction to corporate projects in the life sciences, the public is invited to sit down at computers and take a real screening test for prospective donors of DNA. Such exams are used to select “high quality” stock for artificial reproduction. Performed collectively by the audience in response to a found script, the test-taking exercise reveals the deep eugenic bias of the human genetics industry. What is being confronted is exactly the kind of regulatory framework, enabled by statistical calculation, that Michel Foucault identified as the basis of biopower. Those who pass the test—the brightest and the whitest—are requested to let a blood sample be taken by waiting technicians, who spin it through a centrifuge and return the purified genetic material in a small, eminently fetishizable plastic vial. The lab technicians also take samples of cheek cells, which are placed in a functioning cryogenic chamber that will freeze the DNA for future improvement of the species. In a self-reflexive atmosphere fostered by the public character of the event, *Flesh Machine* exposes social subjects to technologies that could literally shape the destiny of the human race.

The question of the dominant codes, raised by Baudrillard in the 1980s, is still at the forefront. But now it is directly connected to the equipment and the organizational structures whereby the code is unleashed on populations and the knowledge-machine of pancapitalism becomes flesh. The amateur scientist, rather than the hacker, has become the central figure. Artists and viewers merge into a single (though internally differentiated) assembly. The point is to model and enact the possibility for grassroots critical assessments of technoscientific processes unwrapped from the veils of jargon, publicity, salesmanship, manipulation and authority. Indeed, this is the preeminent activity of civil assemblies in the context of what Ulrich Beck, in an important 1986 book, called “the risk society.”

The fascinating thing about CAE's performances is that they are no longer representations but proving grounds, where emerging technologies can be observed, manipulated and assessed by a public for their benefits and possible risks. This is a crucial step, lowering the theater to ground level, opening its doors to the laboratory and bringing direct action, with its urgent relation between truth and effectiveness, to the center of the cultural field. There are, of course, remaining elements of dramatization, which contribute to the readability of the pieces as a whole. In *GenTerra*, for example, participants are asked to spin what suddenly looks like a roulette wheel of petri dishes, in order to determine which strain of the bacteria that they have just cultivated – whether natural or modified – will be released alive into the environment. The important thing is that acts of recombinant plagiarism are being carried out by an engaged public, able to appropriate scientific equipment and processes in an amateur way. The hidden code is exposed (and potentially even altered) by hands-on intervention in a context that also acts to reveal the intersection between esoteric technology and social reality. The cultural experiment succeeds when it is able to loop technopolitical critique through the virtual layer of expertise and back into the fabric of everyday life, where it sets off, not panic, but intense questioning.

Where panic would enter the story, and how intense the questioning would become, was not foreseen.

III. Cultural Resistance

In the book *Molecular Invasion* (2002), CAE carries out lucid discussions of the difficulties facing any resistant agent who approaches biotechnology. To separate the risky aspects of biotech from the broader and potentially beneficial range of genetic research, s/he must first calm the regressive fears of the public. Yet this is also a primary goal of the corporations. How not to do their work for them? A short text entitled "Transgenic Production and Cultural Resistance" develops a seven-point plan: "Demystify transgenic production and products; neutralize public fear; promote critical thinking; undermine and attack Edenic utopian rhetoric; open the halls of science; dissolve cultural boundaries of specialization; build respect for amateurism." But the next essay candidly remarks that "using resistant cultural production in the hopes of building a democratic popular front is more or less a utopian strategy. Other methods of direct resistance by small collectives and resistant cells have to be developed as well."

The solution—fuzzy biological sabotage treading the murky lines of pancapitalist property law—was put into play in the installation *Molecular Invasion*, a public attempt to reverse-engineer GMO corn, soy and canola by spraying the developing plants with otherwise harmless substances that would only inhibit the expression of the modified gene (a gene resistant to glyphosate, the active ingredient of Monsanto's immensely profitable herbicide Roundup). The gallery is now quite literally the site of a laboratory trial. The same holds true for *Free Range Grain*, a facility to test food products for the presence of transgenics. Yet all of this would only create further difficulties.

Free Range Grain was confiscated in May 2004, just days before a scheduled showing at Mass MOCA, when the Joint Terrorism Task Force raided the home of CAE member Steve Kurtz. Also confiscated were the lab materials for *GenTerra* and the seeds for *Molecular Invasion*. The raid was called when emergency personnel saw technical equipment in the Kurtz home after the untimely but entirely natural death of Hope Kurtz, Steve's wife and fellow CAE member. All the confusion could and should have dissipated when the authorities recognized that Kurtz was a university professor and an internationally respected artist, working on biology-related subjects for years. Yet what undoubtedly motivated Assistant U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul to convene a Federal Grand Jury on charges of bioterrorism against Kurtz and the scientist Robert Ferrell, a CAE collaborator, was the nature of the art itself. And particularly, the preparatory research for two historical reenactments, *Marching Plague* and *Target Deception*, both of which concern the biological warfare programs of national states. This research and the manuscript of the accompanying book, *Marching Plague*, were also seized.

Few were aware of the massive build-up of federally funded Biosafety Level 3 and 4 laboratories in the period after 9/11 and the anthrax attacks. CAE was obviously among those few. The research labs run what are essentially weapons production programs, under the theory that a population can only be protected by developing the deadly strains that an enemy could potentially use. The theory receives a perverse twist when one realizes that the 2001 anthrax attacks in the U.S. were carried out with a variety known as the Ames strain, initially developed at Fort Detrick, Maryland. Conscious of how insane such bioweaponry programs are, and how vast is the international network of economic and political interests that sustains them, CAE determined to work on reenactments of two open-air bioweapons testing experiments carried out in the past by the American and British militaries. In both cases CAE would release harmless aerosol sprays and test their dispersion patterns to show their ineffectiveness, just as the national militaries had done. The larger idea was to shine a critical light on the expanding biowar complex, and to underscore its useless and dangerous folly. Both projects were delayed, but not stopped, by the four-year investigation and trial of Kurtz and his scientific collaborator, Dr. Robert Ferrell. The projects are both documented in this volume.

What is the significance today of the anguishing four-year prosecution by the U.S. government? Just another bungled anti-terrorist operation, with charges reduced to mail and wire fraud before being laughed out of court by the judge? To answer the question, one should consider the human network activated by this process. Thousands of people partook in demonstrations, dozens of lectures and events were held in support of Kurtz and Ferrell, innumerable articles were published, some \$350,000 was raised for the two men's legal defense—particularly through solidarity from fellow artists—and the film *Strange Culture*, by Lynn Hershman-Leeson, was produced and distributed in support of the defendants. Only two years after the raid, new work was already being presented to a far larger audience. As Claire Pentecost, a member of the CAE Defense Fund, said at the time: "It was quickly apparent that the case was giving us opportunities to speak publicly about the very issues that CAE's art activities intended to bring to the public." In fact, those four years of excruciating repression saw a tremendous expansion of the heterogeneous and challenging assembly constituted over the course of CAE's long career. While unleashing panic in the judicial bunker, the group succeeded in establishing an effective precedent for future acts of large-scale cultural resistance.

This book is a joyful, hilarious, generous, razor-sharp invitation to go on creating that future.

No Exit

CAE's work is full of pranks, surprises, stagecraft, rhetorical gestures, fictionalized images, sexual innuendos, wild metaphors, experimental group processes and aestheticized objects. It is art, with all the imaginary flights and poetic license that the genre implies. Why then does it appear so much more critical (and sometimes even more strictly accurate) than the majority of "Science, Technology and Society" studies—even those by academic stars like Bruno Latour?

The question can be answered in two ways. First, CAE has drawn on modern sociology to forge a concept of domination similar to that of Sheldon S. Wolin in his book *Democracy Incorporated: Managed Democracy and the Specter of Inverted Totalitarianism* (2008). Wolin shows how a nominally democratic society, that of the United States, can achieve quasi-totalitarian levels of control without an all-powerful leader, a formal apparatus of censorship, an omnipresent secret police or a constant ideological mobilization of the citizenry in parades, rallies, military reviews etc. Instead, the effect is achieved through the subordination of government to corporate imperatives, the expansion of sovereignty to global dimensions that are inaccessible to an uninitiated public, the proliferation of secret bureaucracies and states of exception, and an "art of opinion construction [that] combines advanced technology, academic social science, government contracts, and corporate subsidies." Citizens can relax, disengage, zone out and mind what appears to be their own business, within a larger regulatory framework that orients the superpower toward continuous economic expansion, whatever the human and ecological costs. Protest movements can vent in the street. Non-compliant individuals or groups can be silenced economically, legally or by raw force. Elections can be rigged when necessary. War against a racialized enemy is an extremely effective means to secure the support of a pseudo-majority. For CAE—and perhaps now, for an entire generation—this is a common-sense appraisal of the existing social order. Nothing less is meant by the word *pancapitalism*. The presence of this common sense lends extreme acuity to CAE's analysis of the two major technopolitical systems whose development the collective has tackled, namely the Internet and biotech. The absence of such an analysis of managed democracy hobbles academic critique and restricts it to sanitized zones of officially sanctioned unreality.

Yet the ideals of disinterested science, technological progress, egalitarian distribution and democratic deliberation do not simply disappear. What CAE has done across its twenty-five years is to occupy the classical Enlightenment public sphere and develop its critical potentials, notably through a strong relationship between university-based research and museum-based display and social experimentation. Simultaneously, however, the group has insisted on the incapacity of this classical public sphere to fulfill our democratic ideals; and it has suggested transgressive yet profoundly ethical courses of direct action, not on the street but within the technical and discursive arenas where social development is effectively managed. In this way CAE has been able to provoke a direct confrontation with the instances of political power, overcoming the gap between words and deeds that paralyzes contemporary democratic practice. This is the second explanation for the group's critical force. The ethical act opens the possibility of a counter-public sphere that is not merely formal, since it is directly constituted by those who occupy it. From this position, some degree of grassroots political power—a resistance power, as CAE stresses—can be generated.

It's about time. As I write this text in early 2012, barely a year after the performance of *Radiation Burn*, the image of hazmat-suited figures scanning the ground with technical instruments evokes something quite different than a supposed terrorist's dirty bomb. It evokes Japanese citizens with their Geiger counters, engaged in the daily acts of amateur risk assessment imposed upon them by the follies and failures of the corporate state. How could such events have come to pass? The history of Japan's nuclear program reveals a pivotal figure who helped convince the population to forget Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and accept "atoms for peace": the newspaper magnate Matsutaro Shoriki, a fiercely anti-Communist war criminal who subsequently organized Japan's first professional baseball team and launched its first television network. According to Waseda University professor Tetsuo Arima, Shoriki collaborated with the CIA in its efforts to open up new markets for the two nuclear giants, General Electric and Westinghouse. Nothing has prepared ordinary citizens to confront the complex and deadly legacies of such manipulations, or to engage in a life-or-death struggle against invisible threats whose existence is routinely denied. Yet they carry out the struggle, with remarkable intelligence and tenacity.

For a rising generation of artists and intellectuals across the world, disabused of their illusions, fully aware of the transnational powers of the corporate state, and filled with the desire to make any knowledge they acquire directly useful to people on the ground, the twenty-five-year run of Critical Art Ensemble will be a great inspiration.

01. Ensemble

While at university in the 80s, the members of Critical Art Ensemble (CAE) were all taught modernist ideas about art and artists that stretched back to Abstract Expressionism. Entrenched in educational institutions at that time was the idea that art was a gesture of individual expression manifested through the filter of aesthetic genius. We had two major problems with these assumptions. The first was that we could not figure out why someone's individual artistic expression would be of interest to anyone else but the person producing it. Coming of age at the height of the Neo-Expressionist movement only made us wonder all the more. Engagement with politics through cultural action that we had seen in the work of the feminist art movement, the Situationists, the Living Theater, Theater of the Opressed, Guerilla Art Action Group, and Group Material seemed so much more compelling and relevant. An even bigger problem was the exclusionary clause about artists having to be geniuses. That principle left us out.

At this point, we were only skeptical—the art school tattoo does not easily wash off—so we created a compromise between the principles we had internalized from our education and the principles emerging out of our skepticism. The problem of genius we addressed with the idea of aggregate intelligence. If we could get enough bright people (albeit not of genius caliber) working together, could we raise the quality of work above what each of us could accomplish on our own? Steven Barnes and Steve Kurtz were already convinced of this, and had learned that spreading expenses was a far more efficient way to accomplish material goals. The problem was how to convince others who had internalized the traditional art world mythology. The initial answer was an ensemble—we would have many of the advantages of group production, but still maintain individual expression as well. Like a jazz ensemble, we would pick a theme, and each member could riff on it in their own “unique” way using their specific medium.



We also began to discover that we required more than good group mechanics to sustain a collective over the long term—we needed social glue as well. From the beginning, we were bonded by our common belief in the necessity for cultural resistance to authoritarian tendencies in culture and to the injustices of capitalism. However, a common perspective was still not enough. We had to address the nonrational elements of group dynamics. The group had to stay small enough that everyone felt their voice was heard, and could see themselves in the process and the product. Most importantly, we had to find pleasure in what we produced with each other. The practice could not be reduced to production and service, nor could it only be nonrationally motivated by rage, anxiety, and dread, which appeared to us as an obvious recipe for burn out.

Finally, we had to address the issue of power dynamics in the group. The standard model of the time was one of equality: everyone did the same amount of work, and had equal input into group decisions. CAE rejected this model, believing people are not equal in the way they find pleasure in production and service: the differences can be extreme. We believed that individuals should be able to bring themselves to the process as a person and not be reduced to a mechanism of labor fulfilling a quota. Work process had to emerge through interactions over time, rather than through contracts, rules, and regulations, however consensual such agreements might be.

The other critical element of group power dynamics was decision making. We decided on a floating hierarchy in which the person with the most expertise in a given area would have the power to make final judgments on a project or on a specific element of a project. For example, the designer would have the last word on design questions. This kept the decision-making process efficient, but without introducing the variety of alienations common in the industrial and postindustrial division of labor.

All of these principles have stayed with us over the years, and have contributed to CAE's longevity, its stability, and its productivity.



We assembled members so that our skill bases did not overlap. This solution worked for a short period of time, but among those remaining after the first year (two of the original seven) as well as among the new recruits (Hope Kurtz, Dorian Burr, Ricardo Dominguez, and Beverly Schlee) the idea began to take root that we had to be more of a collective than an ensemble. The individualism had to be abandoned, because it created too much friction through competition rather than producing the needed cooperation. While in practice, the ensemble model continued in an ever-diminishing capacity into the mid-90s, collective projects became an ever-increasing part of our practice. At the same time, the organic model (interdependence through specialization aimed at creating an entity greater than the sum of its parts) continues into the present. The modernist tattoo was slowly washing off.

CRITICAL ART ENSEMBLE

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INFORMATION



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222-5143

Ensemble—Ensemble

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Video Shorts

1.1 | 1986-90 | Screenings

CAE is often asked, "When did the collective begin?" We have two answers to this question. One is "1986," and the other is "1987." In 1986, the name CAE was coined to serve as an authorial label for the videos produced by Steven Barnes and Steve Kurtz. By using a collective signature, everyone who worked on the videos could make a claim of authorship, and the usual hierarchy of film labor was eliminated. A year into the video project, Barnes and Kurtz decided it would be a good idea to expand the practice beyond video, and to create an ensemble of many different specializations for the purpose of producing work that was not afraid to manifest its politics. This expansion, which resembles CAE's current form, occurred in 1987. The video project continued for another 3 years.

CAE's video shorts were concerned with finding a visual language for theoretical abstractions. Most members of CAE were closing out their university years, and had grown frustrated with the arcane and limited nature of postmodern discourse in the public sphere. (These were the years of hypertheory where jargon, neologisms, and ambiguities ruled the production of humanistic academic meaning.) This discourse, while normative to us, seemed to have no meaning beyond university humanities, art, and social science departments. In our experience, people outside these specialized fields of knowledge production were mostly hostile to this type of theoretical posturing. And if that weren't enough, we couldn't determine how to transform it into anything with an on-the-ground use. The video shorts were an attempt to translate poststructuralism and postmarxism into consumable, concrete iterations of the abstract. Moreover, they were a way to see whether these theoretical concepts had any value outside the ivory tower, and whether they would be positively received by an uninitiated public if they were represented in a manner that did not appear as academic gibberish. If so, perhaps we could move to the next step, and find use in them? The moment was very difficult for us, since we were coming out of arts and humanities, and hence were invested in theories of the given disciplines, while simultaneously observing that their value for communication stopped once outside its walls. CAE made 25 of these videos before reaching the point where it was time to stop representing, and time to start doing.

Jan. 31, Sunday @ 7:30 p.m. Books & Books



Steve Barnes & Steve Kurtz: Video-Movies From Tallahassee

Billed as "bargain basement" filmmakers, Steve Barnes and Steve Kurtz will introduce *Luxury Vixens* (1987) and *The Absence* (1986), Super 8mm transferred to 3/4" videos made under the banners of the Critical Art Ensemble and Theatre of Exploitation. The low tech, anyone-can-do-it video movies investigate "the image as an alternative to language," and comment upon theoretical stances practiced by such motion picture eccentrics as Sergei Eisenstein and Andy Warhol and the more conventional collective visions of Hollywood westerns and broadcast television advertising. **Barnes and Kurtz In person.**

Join the Alliance for Media Arts. \$25 annual membership includes \$1 off single admission.



ADMIT ONE 4

1988
Dallas Video Festival

Friday, Nov. 11
DAY PASS

Harvard Film Archiv



Les Oeuf à la Coque de Richard Leacock

Videomakers Valerie Lalonde & Ricky Leacock In Person

Thurs, Feb 13 8:00

Special Event — \$6.50 Admission

Directed by Ricky Leacock & Valerie Lalonde, 1991, France, 84 minutes

Cinema verite pioneer Ricky Leacock returns to Cambridge with collaborator Valerie Lalonde to present their first video-8 observation, *Les Oeuf à la Coque de Richard Leacock*. Described by Leacock as "ordinary people doing what ordinary people do... basically a video about nothing in particular," it realizes fifty years of Leacock's experimental approach to the documentary. "For the first time we can work as Flaherty liked to work, shooting whatever we choose, as much as we choose, when we choose. Editing at home so that we can go over and over our material, shoot some more, come back to look, edit again and again." Also Roger Tilton's *Jazz*

Opening Reception

An Evening at Home with Television

By David Hynds and Mike Williamson.

Thursday, Nov. 10



Critical Arts Ensemble

Friday, Nov. 11

Plaza of the Americas

Written by Octavio Solis performed by Amy Massingale.

Saturday, Nov. 12

Castro-Alamo Gateway

Directed by George Kuchar, 1991, USA, 15 minutes

Winter Hostilities

Directed by George Kuchar, 1991, USA, 15 minutes

Critical Art Ensemble Anthology

10 clips by various CAE artists, 1987-1991, USA, 30 minutes

Like everyone else, filmmakers have discovered the camcorder as a valuable tool to capture those precious moments of indiscretion and frivolity. But they have also made use of video's intimacy as a means for reflecting upon issues dear to their hearts. Joe Gibbons renown for his Super 8 psychodramas uses a pixel camera to teach his dog some tricks; photographer/filmmaker Robert Frank lets us in on his personal life as an artist; George Kuchar, acknowledged master of the Sony 8 camcorder, presents a nonstop flow of words, images and music edited in camera during his travels throughout the day; and the Critical Art Ensemble, a media arts collective residing in Tallahassee, Florida, spew forth revelations regarding life in the modern age.



filmmaker M.M. Serra takes video into the uncharted realms of self discovery through psychoanalysis. She discovers an alter named Mary Magdalene who holds a very sad secret involving sexual abuse.

The Face of Death

Boston Premieres

Fri, Mar 13 7:15 / 9:15

Sat, Mar 14 4:30 / 7:15 / 9:15

Sun, Mar 15 4:30 / 7:15

Thanatopsis

Directed by Beth B & Lydia Lunch, 1991, USA, 11 minutes

Belladonna

Directed by Beth B & Ida Applebroog, 1989, USA, 12 minutes

Kali Film

Directed by Wilhelm & Birgit Hein, 1987-88, Germany, 75 minutes

Beth B, know for her Super 8mm collaborations with ex-partner Scott B, shapes two distinct works (one with poet/actress Lydia Lunch, the other with painter Ida Applebroog) outlining the testosterone-tainted world order — new, old or otherwise. German filmmakers Birgit and Wilhelm Hein have extracted the most tawdry exploitation fare — porn, splatter, female prison movies, and gruesome Third World war films — and welded these sometimes unwatchable images into an epic collage honoring the Hindu goddess of maternal tenderness and cosmic destruction. Scored with music from *The Four Seasons* and *New World Symphony*, the video explores the

This interactive video environment will utilize multiple video decks and monitors. It will be controlled by a small computer that will coordinate the video monitors in response to human presences. This will be set in an abstract house construction in which the monitors provide many elements from the home, from a sleeping cat to a view through the window. This installation will be running throughout the festival.

Showing on the screens throughout the club will be a program of independent video artists from around the country. These will include Leslie Singer, Joe Schwind, S'pool, David Hyde, Lloyd Dunn, and Dan Plunkett's ND Magazine.

Critical Arts Ensemble from Tallahassee, Florida, will present a live performance that utilizes multiple monitors, computer, poetry, and performance. In addition to the performance, the Critical Arts Ensemble will be presenting video art in the screens throughout the club.

A one-woman, one-act play on the subject of presidential assassination. The background set consists of three television monitors that play video dealing with the assassination of President Kennedy. This creates an environment for the performance through synchronicity.

Artaud's Thoroughly Modern Excess



Baudrillard's Lasso



Foucault's Paradox



Godard Revisited



Crystals and Praxis



Excremental Culture



Homo Duplex



Hyperbole and Insubordination



Hysterical (Re)marks



Ideological Virus



Less Than Utopia



Misappropriation



An Immortal's Distractions



Isou's Chisel



Sign of Desire



Speed and Violence



Political Art in Florida

1.2 | 1988 | Live, Multimedia Production



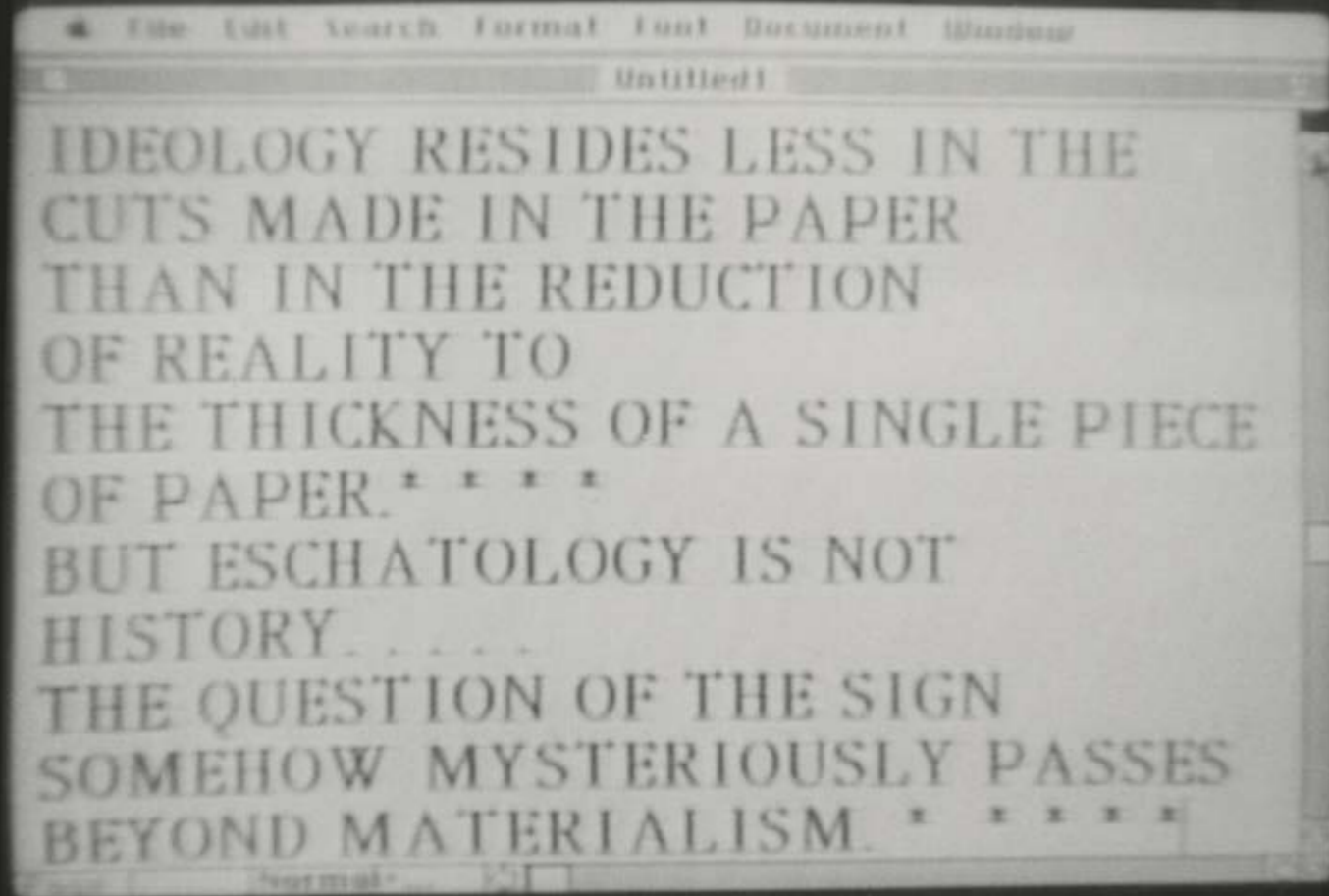
CAE's early projects were primarily learning experiences. We knew what we wanted to do: produce projects, gestures, speech, and texts that uncovered, subverted, or disrupted authoritarian cultural tendencies—but no immediate model was available to us. At Florida State University, those who thought that art and politics could mix were pariahs, and we were far from any cultural capitol where such actions were happening on a regular basis. Off campus was a wasteland with regard to the project we had set for ourselves. Primarily on our own, we began with the basic questions enveloped in what was now a practical rather than a hypothetical situation: How do we work as a group? How do we produce a multimedia event? How do we keep the interrogation of politics and economics from becoming propaganda, punditry, or didacticism?

So for our first live, multi-media production, we decided to bring in some consultants. We asked Group Material if they would send a representative, and much to our shock Doug Ashford came to Tallahassee to give a lecture at the event. In 1988, Group Material was at their peak—they were the art world equivalent of The Clash, so we had someone with a lot of experience with whom to trade ideas, as well as a great draw that would get people in the door of the event.

Much to our relief, we filled the rented warehouse and raised enough money to pay GM's expenses and a small honorarium. Yet in spite of all this we were only somewhat satisfied. Our process was moving forward, but our fundamentals still required work.

ABOVE: Doug Ashford lecture.





Critical Art Ensemble Presents.

POLITICAL ART IN FLORIDA (?)

- 1..... Lecture: Doug Ashford of Group Material
- Break
- 2..... Videos: Recent Works/Jim Roche 30 min
- 3..... Duration Performance: Eve Reconstructs, Reconstructs, and Telecommunicates 10 "
- 4..... Slide/Music Performance: Misappropriated Kabuki The Dialectic of the Fetish 10 "
- 5..... Film/Video:
 - a. Collective Oedipal Revolution 3 "
 - b. Baudrillard's Lasso 3 "
 - c. An Art Film 8 "
 - d. Limnologic Jargon 5 "
- Break
- 6..... Slide/Tape: Paul Rutkovsky 15 "
- 7..... Hypertextual Poetry in Three Dimensional Space 15 "
- 8..... Music Performance: Kick Me Jesus Bell Pieces A Short Piece for Violin and Percussion 10 "
- 9..... Simulationist Chevrolet: - A Piece for Film and Painting 10 "
- 10.... Eve Reconstructs, Reconstructs, and Telecommunicates End 10 "

Critical Art Ensemble: Steve Kurtz, George Barker, Steve Barnes, Claudia Bucher, Greg Carter, Dorian Burr, Hope Kurtz Musicians: George Barker and Robert Chastaine Very Special Thanks to Paul Rutkovsky, without whom this show would not have been possible. Special Thanks to Steve Bradley, Mike Dorian, Patrick Parrish, Ron Sentowsky, and Ken Beattie & Southern Lights and Sound.

Political Art in Florida

(?)



Group Material
Paul Rutkovsky
Jim Roche
Critical Art Ensemble

Friday February 19th 1988 • The Warehouse 706 W. Gaines

Live Art

1.3 | 1988 | Live, Multimedia Production



After *Political Art in Florida* and some other smaller events, CAE began to wonder how far from campus we had actually moved. We needed a very different environment. Not being afraid of extremes, we decided our next show would be in Jackson, Mississippi at Pappy's Blues Bar. Pappy was of the opinion that as long as we did not disrupt his weekends (when he made most of his money), he didn't care what we did. The clientele was primarily black and a generation or two older than us (jazz and blues were definitely not the sound of urban youth). We decided to resist specificity and present the same pieces we would do in an "art" venue, and see what the result was. To our surprise, it went quite well. We had more serious conversations about cultural politics at this event than we had had at any other. It was our "Mohammed

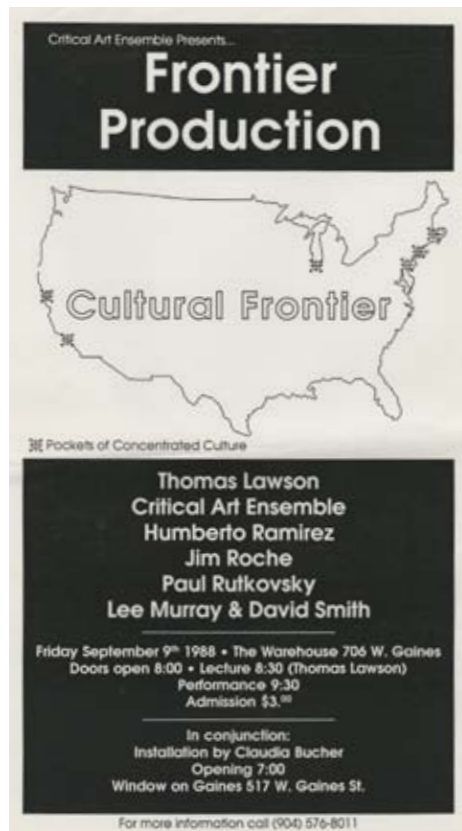
must go to the mountain" moment. Although we continue to recognize the importance of presenting research, trading tactics, and refining discourses with our peers (what some would cynically call "preaching to the choir"), we understood that day the necessity of going to the audience we wanted rather than trying to bring them to us through whatever seduction mechanism we thought functional.

Shortly after this show, CAE's sound artist George Barker and performance artist Claudia Boucher quit the group. After a year, we still hadn't fully grasped the means by which collective action could be sustained. Ricardo Dominguez replaced Claudia, but we didn't recruit another sound person. The group was leaner and traveled more easily.



Frontier Production

1.4 | 1988 | Live, Multimedia Production



Frontier Production was the next major home event, and we produced it for three reasons. The first two were practical. One, a new performance artist had joined us and we were eager to see what he could do, and two, we had an opportunity for Thomas Lawson to come lecture, and perhaps begin an exchange with his magazine *Real Life*. The final reason was simply to make a statement for the record about where we thought more cultural activism was needed. We believed that the places to go were those with a dearth of cultural activism. The urban cultural centers were overdeployed, and didn't need more cultural workers like us, while everywhere else appeared to us as cultural frontier waiting to be developed. We didn't believe that urban centers should be entirely ignored or boycotted. They had many politically charged sites meriting attention, and we also needed to go there to congregate with our peers. However, we believed that if a practice only occurs in a cultural center, that practice is at best severely lacking, and at worst, disingenuous as cultural activism. We also decided never to headquarter in a cultural center.

Lawson gave an inspiring lecture. We ended up exchanging interviews: Lawson interviewed CAE for *Real Life* and CAE interviewed Lawson for *Art Papers*. More importantly, the principles developed around the project continue to be foundational for CAE to this day.





Critical Art Ensemble presents

FRONTIER PRODUCTION

Thomas Lawson:	Drawing		
Humberto Ramirez:	Painting		
1	Thomas Lawson	Lecture	50 minutes
Intermission—10 minutes			
2	Paul Rutkovsky	Man Box Yellow Box on Green Table (Video/sculpture)	15 "
3	CAE	Hypertextual Poetry	15 "
4	CAE	Identity Crisis (Slide/video)	10 "
Intermission—10 minutes			
5	CAE	Case #43 (Performance)	6 "
6	CAE	An American Dream (Dance)	8 "
Intermission—5 minutes			
7	Jim Roche	Too Much Stuff Jaw Wired Shut Little Bit of Jesus High Octane Generation (Video)	25 "
8	CAE	Resistance '88 Mirror of Reduction Giftwrapped Aporia (Video)	8 "
9	Lee Murray & David Smith	Continuous Entertainment (Video)	30 "

END

CAE is: Steve Kurtz, Steve Barnes, Dorian Burr, Hope Kurtz, Rick Dominguez, Jennifer Canterberry
 Additional Performers: Melanie Kiltakis, Pam Pietro, Joel Whitaker
 Special THANKS to: The Warehouse staff, Mike Dorian, Ben Wentworth, Steve Bradley,
 Tallahassee Camera Center

Cultural Vaccines

1.5 | 1989 | Fundraiser

Cultural Vaccines was CAE's final project in Tallahassee, before taking to the road for the next two decades. While we were interested in making work addressing the AIDS crisis and, moreover, had great support from Felix Gonzales-Torres and Gran Fury (including a lecture by Donald Moffitt), we had another agenda for this event. Unlike *Political Art in Florida* or *Frontier Production*, this project was not an end in itself. We used it as a fundraiser for Tallahassee AIDS Support Services, but our ultimate goal was to get as many people as possible who were concerned with the AIDS crisis under one roof, and then organize them into the first AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACTUP) chapter in Florida. CAE had no illusions about what this chapter could do. We were on the frontier, so there was no critical mass of angry people ready to shut down the town like there were in San Francisco or New York City. At that time, the discussion about AIDS in most of the South was Christian dominated, so to see billboards saying "AIDS Judgment has come!" was not unusual. If we could produce some anti-spectacle, get some supermarkets to carry condoms, or mobilize people for national actions, we were making progress.

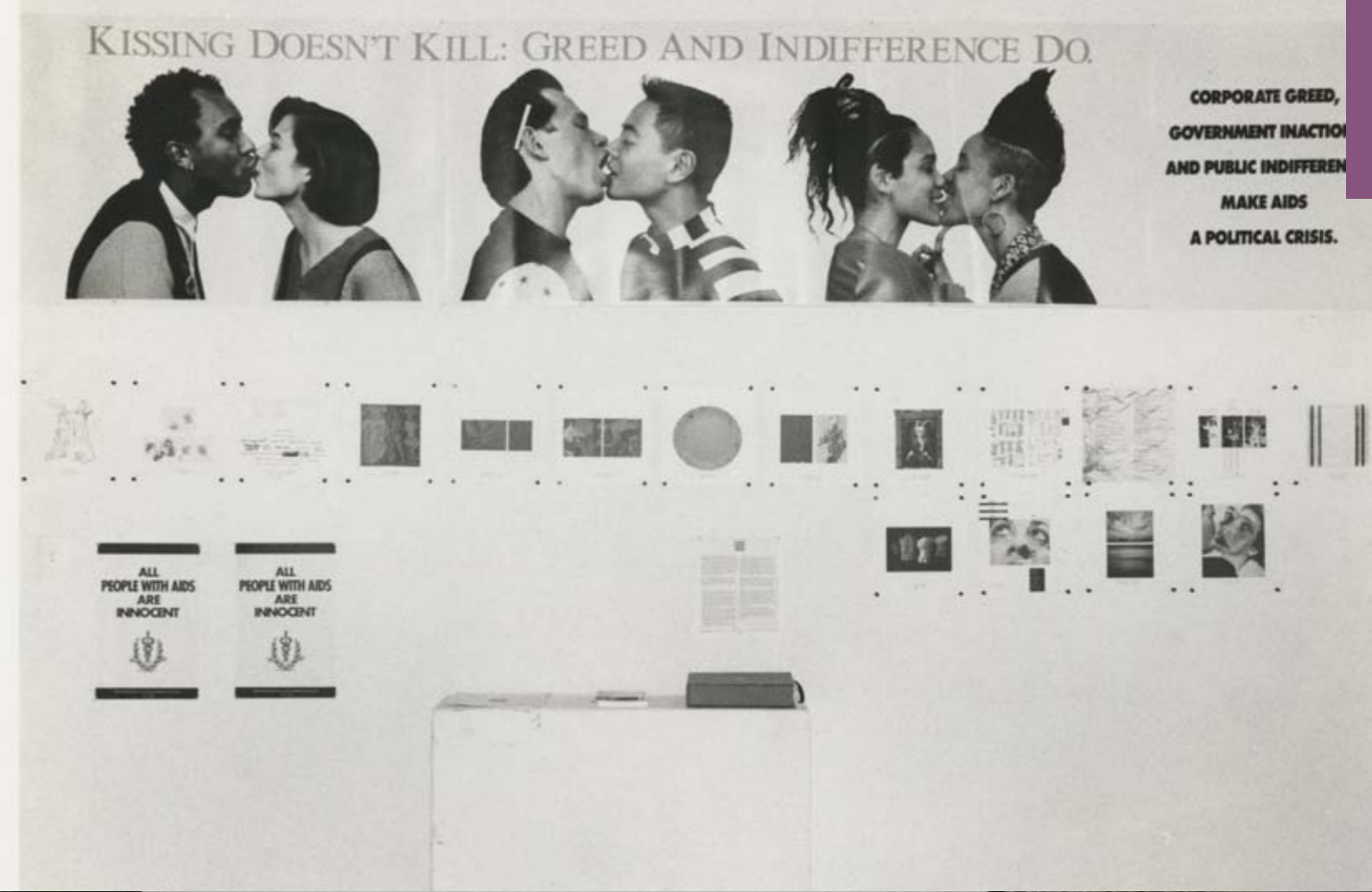
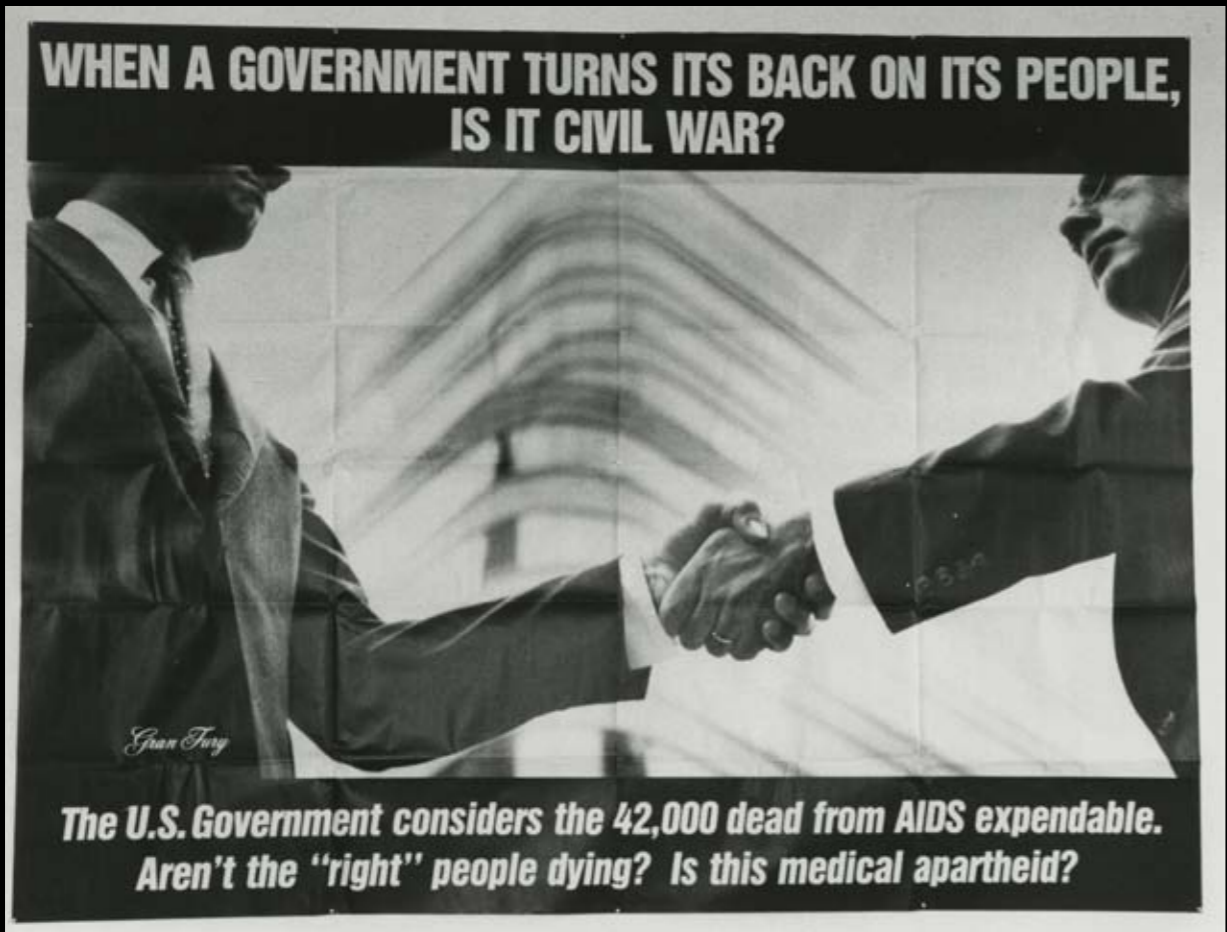


In spite of our success in contributing to the organization and maintenance of the chapter, we quickly tired of making agitprop and protest signs. We didn't want to burn out. We wanted a long-term collective relationship. We wanted to research new tactics and techniques for resistance. We wanted to use the full spectrum of our intellectual and inventive abilities in order to become a generalized research and cultural production wing for the Left. Shortly after *Cultural Vaccines*, we worked with the sex workers union Prostitutes of New York (see page 106) but in a more indirect way. CAE's affiliation with traditional activism was over. We never tied ourselves to a specific group or campaign again.

By 1990, our on-the-job training was also over. We knew who we were, what our interests were, and how to develop them.

PAGE 43 TOP: Gran Fury posters. | PAGE 43 BOTTOM: Wall of art made by local people concerned about the AIDS crisis.





Critical Art Ensemble presents ...

Cultural Vaccines

A benefit exhibition for Tallahassee AIDS Support Services

Exhibitions

Poster Installations Gran Fury
Critical Art Ensemble

Light Boxes Don Moffett

"1988" Stack Sculpture Félix González-Torres

"Community Forum" The Community of Tallahassee

Lecture Don Moffett

Performances

Deathmatch Theater of the Oppressed

AIDS Poetry
"CV6"
"Sex and Politics" Critical Art Ensemble

Videos

"They are lost to vision altogether" Tom Kalin

"ACT UP at the FDA" Ellen Spiro

"NYC, 1987" Testing the Limits

Deep Dish TV—
"Angry Initiatives/Defiant Strategies" Produced by John Greyson

Critical Art Ensemble is:
Steve Kurtz, Steve Barnes, Dorian Burr, Hope Kurtz, Rick Dominguez, Bev Schlee

Thanks to:
Ruby Fruit Books, Paul Marino, Susan Taylor, Kari Schmidt, Paul Rutkovsky, Nan Goggin, Tim Keating, Deborah Lagrassie, Steve Bradley, Rick Batten, Ken Beattie, Patty Gordon-Dominguez, Katho Kempse and Jones Intercable, Dave Crook, Elizabeth Burr, Andrew Kouroupis, and the TASS Volunteers.

Special thanks to Group Material and to Don Moffett. Without their help, this exhibition would not have been possible.

Critical Art Ensemble Presents...

Cultural Vaccines

A benefit exhibition for
Tallahassee AIDS Support Services

The Community of Tallahassee

Gran Fury

Don Moffett

Theater of the Oppressed

ACT UP

Félix González-Torres

Deep Dish TV

John Greyson

Testing the Limits

Critical Art Ensemble

Gallery 621 at Railroad Square
Saturday October 21st

Doors open 8:00
9:00 (lecture by Don Moffett)
9:30 (Theater and Performances)
11:00 (Video)

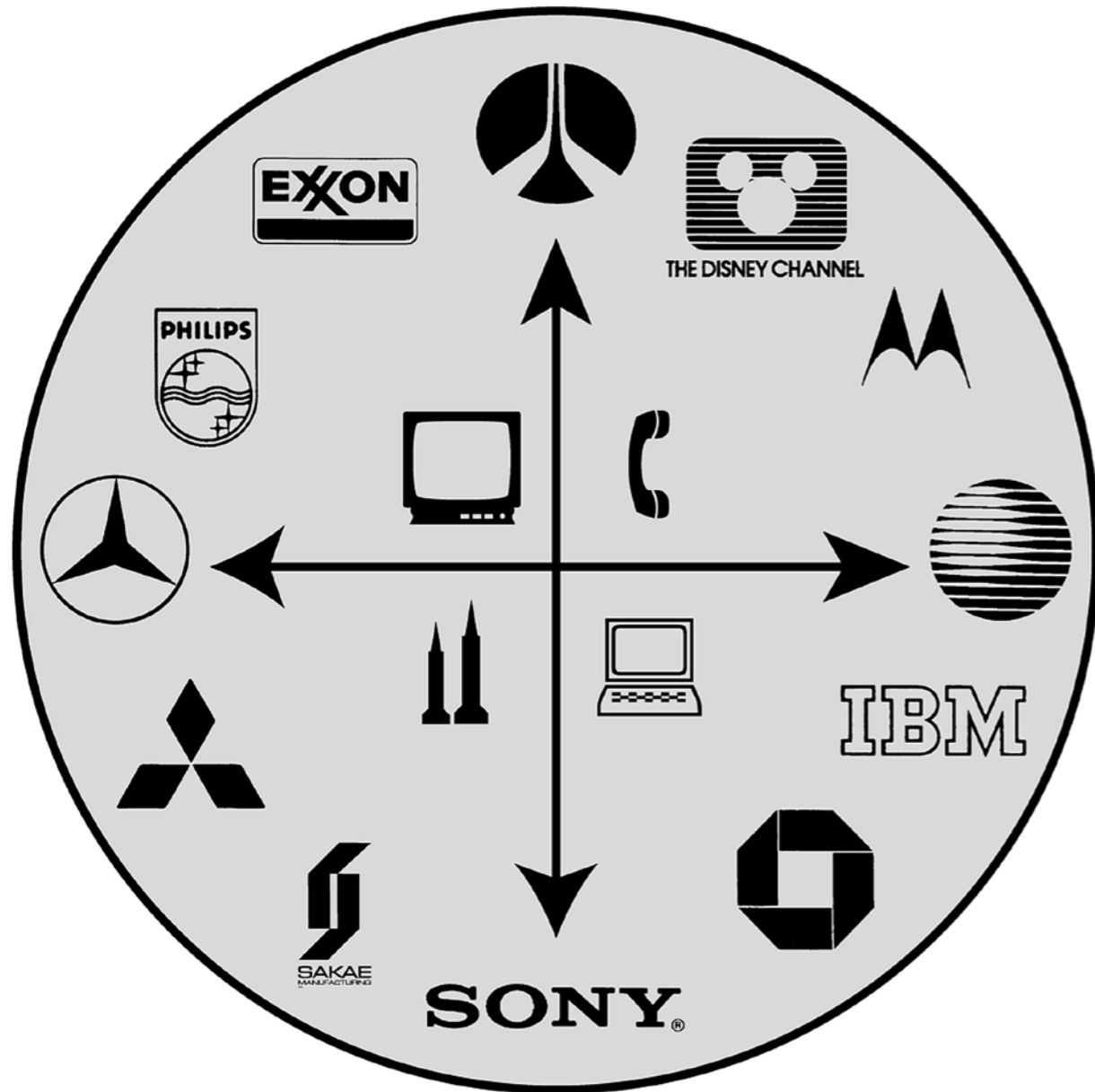
Admission - \$3.⁰⁰
All profits and extra donations go to TASS.



02. Dominion

CAE shall contain ourselves to a single statement: The status quo is wrong.

Welcome



To a World without Borders

Vote Generic Centrism



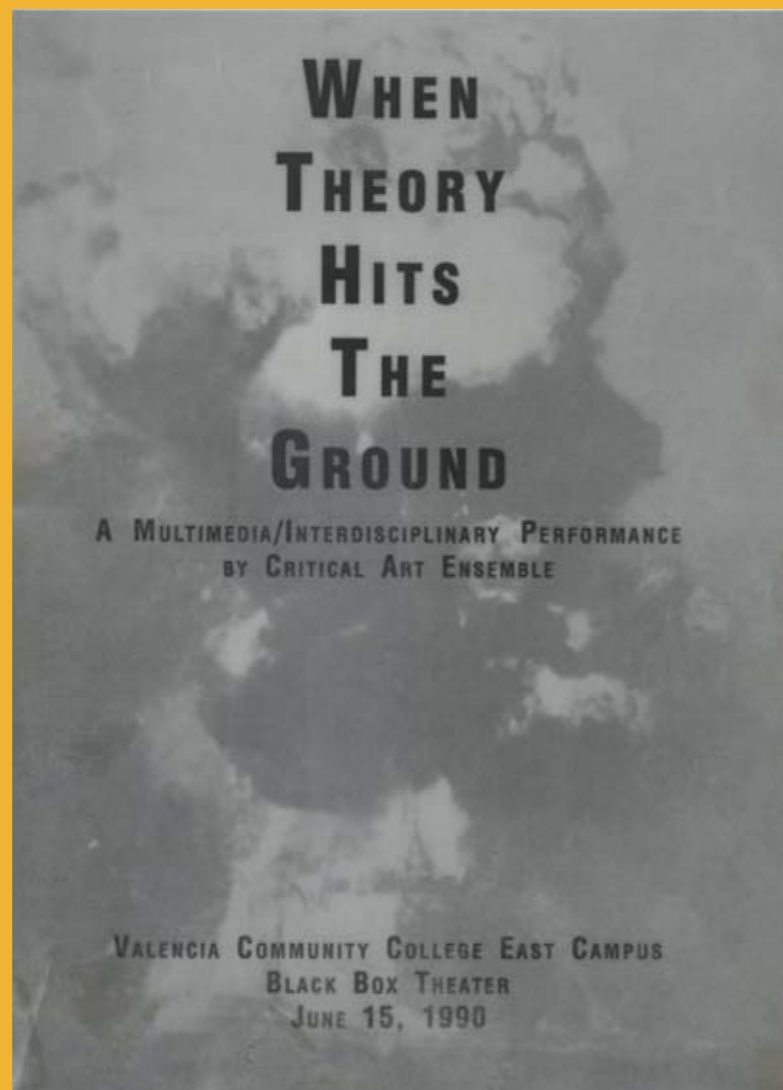
"We promise to maintain exploitive social relationships.."

Body Count and Flesh Frontiers

2.1 | 1995-6 | Lecture-Performances

Beginning in 1995, CAE toured heavily on the new media festival circuit in Europe. We were generally asked to perform and to speak, so we decided to combine the two activities as a way to either demonstrate or recreate the conditions and practices we were theorizing. Most of these performances centered on the relationship between technology and the body. During this period, most of the discourse on new technology was quite utopian, but CAE did not see it that way. For CAE, new communication and information technology (ICT) took more than it gave by transforming humans into perfect work/consumptions machines within the intensely mediated environment of the technosphere. ICT did have the potential for utopian consequences, but in the time of late capitalism no amount of technology would change its savagery, or the sad living conditions of the great majority of the world. The consolidation of wealth and power into the hands of the few would continue unabated. ICT would only increase the velocity and the scope of this redistribution.

In 1996, while at the Next 5 Minutes tactical media festival in Amsterdam, CAE realised we had had enough of festival culture and the critique of ICT. We decided to drop the "ensemble" model of presentation (see page 20), and to only do integrated projects. In terms of a new field of exploration, we would move into the critique of biotechnology. Since we were already involved with body issues, it was an easy jump to the theorization and interrogation of assisted reproductive technologies. CAE gave one last lecture-performance that functioned as an introduction for *Flesh Machine* (page 216) which concluded in 1998.



Valencia Community College
C/O: Qurentia Throm
Bldg. 3, #106 - A
701 W. Econlockhatchee Tr.
Orlando, FL 32825

July 10, 1990

Dear Ms. Throm,

It is with an overwhelming feeling of disappointment that this letter is written. After having attended many outstanding performances at Valencia Community College, it is hard to fathom how a "performance" as tasteless as, When Theory Hits The Ground, by the Critical Art Ensemble, was given billing, on June 15th, 1990. Although this group presented some very creative and innovative concepts, an amazing 30-40% of the presentation was vulgar, obscene, and pornographic! As a student attending a function at an institute of higher learning, I expected to be stimulated and educated, not insulted and disgusted.

I ask you, where is the art in a man who is kneeling on the floor, in front of a chair with an empty jar, who proceeds to unbutton his pants, pull out a hot dog representing his genitalia, and "dismembers" himself, placing it in the jar? The audio background chants "Cut off the cock, sew up the cunt." What kind of performance is this? Although this is probably the most grotesque representation, it was not an isolated incident. Pornography and obscenity were threaded throughout its entirety.

I am well aware of constitutional priveledges. As Americans, it is indeed our inalienable right to choose what we read, see, participate in and support. However, it is highly unfortunate and extremely sad, that this is the kind of message supported by Valencia Community College, the Florida Department of State, the Florida Dance Association, and Southeast Bank Corporation!

*This was also sent to
the President of V.C.C.
& to Southeast bank.*

Concerned,

Sandra M. Hoffman

Sandra M. Hoffman

RECEIVED

Humanities, Visual and Performing Arts

SH/pjs

w/attachment: When Theory Hits The Ground Program

JUL 16 1990

QURENTIA THROM



Has it changed your life yet?



Address to VIPER

Video Performance Festival, Lucerne, Switzerland, 1996



Good Evening Ladies and Gentleman. When Critical Art Ensemble (CAE) was asked to address the topic of the fate of the body in electronic culture, the collective felt overwhelmed by the breadth and scope of the issue. Currently, there are so many new body forms that are dependent on complex technology that we knew we could not begin to speak of all them. Every day, new hybrids, mutants, organic platforms, digital doppelgängers, engineered surrogates, and a variety of simulated flesh products appear on the cultural horizon, if not in our everyday lives. CAE finally decided that the best way to engage this subject matter was to attempt to isolate the body types that are having the greatest direct material impact on the lives of those enveloped in technoculture. Using this criterion, CAE narrowed the list of possibilities to four. These are the designer body, the civilian cyborg, the data body, and the virtual body.

But before we go on to explore these body types, CAE would like to mention two significant body manifestations that did not make the list. First and foremost is the screenal body. This is the body representation of mass media. The screenal body is a perfectly and endlessly reproducible dry surface that negates any sign of the organic. Its functions are to mediate the relationship between mind and body by acting as an ideological filter wedged along organic borders, and to demonstrate “normal” and legitimized social behavior. While the screenal body has a tremendous direct material impact on those who exposed to electronic mass media, it has been adequately dissected by critical discourse, thus making a new visit of less interest.

Second is the military cyborg. This body type has been developing for centuries, although it is currently approaching a level of complexity and sophistication that is on the verge of setting a new and irreversible standard of body normalization and instrumental human behavior. Be that as it may, this form of cyborg is specialized in function, and remains within the confines of military culture. However, CAE does want to note that almost everyone within technoculture is likely to have some interaction with one of these cyborgs in the course of his or her life.

On the other hand, the civilian cyborg is all around us. This is the cyborg that many of us in this room are destined to become, if we have not already done so. The civilian cyborg is not as advanced a form as the military cyborg, but it is greater in number. These cyborgs are generally equipped with laptop computers and cellular phone. They can be activated for purposes of production or consumption 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, or they can be left dormant until needed. The organic platform craves its technological superstructure, and when separated from it for too long, will demand to be united with it again. If you are a regular attendee at conferences and exhibitions such as this one, you have probably witnessed people searching for a techno-interface in order to check for their activation code. This activity usually takes the form of an individual needing to know how to telnet on a given computer system, so he or she can check his or her e-mail.

CYBORG AS BUREAUCRAT

You know, I always thought technology was going to make my life easier. I'm told that the dawn of the information age is upon me, and that information technology will be designed for premium convenience. But whose convenience? Not mine. Convenience really means “efficiency”, and that always means more work. I turned in my typewriter for a powerful computer believing that I would have more free time to spend with family and friends. Then the office raised the rate of production. Not only do I have to work harder, but I have to use my holiday time to attend computer classes in order to keep up with the latest software.

The corporate futurologists talk of evolution, revolution, new horizons, and global vision. Well, their global vision is blinding me. My computer has a program that counts my keystrokes. It watches me all the time, and tells me when I am not working hard enough. It's like the computer is my boss. Every time I leave my computer, I return to find the message “insufficient data entry” posted on the screen. What's really frightening is that I've actually begun to care. I hesitate to leave my work station for any reason. I question, and even ignore, my own needs and desires, and instead concern myself with the demands of my computer.

Perhaps if I go on-line I'll find someone to talk to, and to commiserate with. But this technology connects me to a thousand voices I cannot hear. I reach out and touch no one. Sure, it's a world without borders but it's a world without people too. I am separated from others more than I've ever been. Text on a screen is poor company. This new day isn't exactly how I imagined it. It certainly isn't how the corporations described it. They just want to plug me in, and I can't unplug myself. I'm hooked-up, inserted, unfulfilled, but ready to go. Just another office drone.

Perhaps the only release is self-sabotage--to short-circuit the fear that keeps me tied to my machine. I hack myself to reestablish the boundaries between my flesh and their technology.

Civilian cyborgs have their problems too. While bodies as organic platforms tend to be superior to electro-mechanical platforms, because bodies have greater abilities for complex tasks, they still have numerous liabilities due to predetermined physical limitations and libidinal impulses. The body also often fails to meet the demands of its technological interface or the ideological imperatives of socio-economic space. Feelings of stress, tension, and alienation too often compel the body to act out nonrational behavior patterns that are perceived by power vectors to be useless and counterproductive. Many strategies have been used by pancapitalist institutions in an attempt to keep the body producing and consuming at maximum intensity, but most fail. One strategy of control is the use of legitimized drugs. Sedatives, anti-depressants, and mood stabilizers are used to bring the body back to a normalized state of being, and to prevent disruption of collective activity. Unfortunately, social control drugs rapidly reach a point of diminishing returns, and damage the platform before it has completed its expected productive life-span.

In order to bring the body up to code, and to prepare it for the rapidly changing and pathological social conditions of technoculture, a network of pancapitalist institutions with knowledge specializations in genetics, cell biology, neurology, biochemistry, pharmacology, embryology, and so on have begun an aggressive body invasion. Their intention is to map and rationalize the body in order to extend authoritarian policies of fiscal and social control into organic space. We know this network as the flesh machine. Its primary mandate is to eventually design and engineer organic constellations with predispositions toward certain task-oriented activities, and to make considerable profits in the process. To seduce the public into desiring designer bodies, spectacle has been deployed that insists upon utopian consequences of aestheticized body production, and also insists that the body can best meet social standards through scientific/medical intervention. Eugenics in the age of pancapitalism will not be conducted by force as in the past; rather, pancapitalist institutions have learned that eugenic ideology, products, and services can be deployed by simply manufacturing the desire for them.

PERFORM DESIGNER BODY

Welcome ladies and gentlemen to a celebration of new and exciting breakthroughs in reproductive technology. As we know, reproductive technology is not just a specialized field, but a marriage of science, engineering, and business dedicated to bringing growth, order, and security to the economy. Imagine a citizen at ease with unstable and intensely demanding social conditions. Imagine a citizen whose biological functions require only a five-minute interruption of productive activity once or twice a day. Imagine a citizen whose pleasure centers are stimulated by repetitious labor, and by accelerated consumption. Imagine.

No, we have not accomplished these goals yet, but we have made tremendous progress in laying the foundation for the future I have described. We have been able to create a very successful market in spite of our admittedly unreliable products and services. But even our most imperfect products bring genetic understanding to the buying public. I'd like you to take a look at two of the products and services which we feel illustrate the best potential for return on your further investment.

First the sperm bank. Sales in sperm banks are steadily increasing. In particular, sperm from intelligent donors has been in constant demand and represents the high end of the product line. Now we know that choosing an intelligent donor in no way insures the production of an intelligent child. The client would do just as well selecting a donor at random. The important thing here is that the client is learning to think eugenically, and is paying a higher unit price to do so.

Consider assisted pregnancy, our most profitable product line. Our clinics are bursting with clients for whom cost is no object. And even though we only deliver a one-in-three chance of conception, a typical consumer could eagerly engage as many as 12 cycles, and may still go home with nothing to show for her endeavor. At a base price of \$10,000 per cycle, just imagine what our profits will be when our success rate exceeds 80% to 90%.

The current market situation is certainly profitable; however, our future strategy is to develop a more reliable product line with a lower price, because our final goal is to serve the entire market population. Only then can we truly accomplish the creation of this new citizen. But only with the help and cooperation of investors such as yourselves will we be able to develop and deploy the technology necessary to capture this exciting new market. Our marketing strategy is this: first we seduce the consumer by promising a healthier baby. By using medical tests at the four-and-eight-cell stages (such testing will only be available when our service is used), defective genes can be identified and an unhealthy creature can be disposed of. Then, through the use of aesthetic appeal (a promise of a baby with the appearance desired by the client), we will take the patron a step further into the engineering process. And finally, through the promise of giving the child the best possible economic and social advantages by engineering its biological predisposition, we will take the client into complete eugenic consciousness.

Purchasing reproductive services will no longer be a last resort for a couple having trouble conceiving, but will be a common practice for all consumers who want their child to have all the advantages of prenatal design. And remember, the social perception of what is aesthetically, physically, and mentally advantageous is determined by the economic system that we control.

Together with our expertise in biotechnology and your financial and moral support, we can create a better citizen for a better future.

Imagine.

Thank you.

To be sure, social control is not limited to biological control. It is also necessary to have perfect vision of the environment which surrounds the individual, and the surveillance and recording of an individual's activities in this environment. The total collection of an individual's files is a person's data body. The data body has always had a social presence, but now that computers offer infinite storage space and rapid information retrieval, the power of the data body has grown exponentially. No detail of a person's life is too small to be recorded and preserved. Within the instrumental world of pancapitalism, the data body is the body of legitimation; it validates the social presence of people. It makes them real to the institutions with which they must interact. It is uncertain when this ontological shift occurred that made data become the primary validator of life, and flesh became its representation, but it has happened.

The realization that reality was taking a peculiar turn came to me while I was taking a drive with a friend who was a pre-op transsexual. She had gone through all the processes of gender reassignment, such as hormone treatments and breast implants, and was finished with the process except for the final genital reconstruction. During

this time in her gender shift, she took great delight in driving topless in her open convertible. I thought this to be very courageous, since, in the US, it is illegal for women to expose their breasts in public. One afternoon as I was driving with her, she caught the eye of a local constable who proceeded to stop us. I was convinced that she was going to be taken to jail. The police officer approached, and after a brief lecture on the illegality of indecent exposure, he went back to his car with her driving papers in hand to look on the computer to see if she had any outstanding warrants. By this time my friend had stepped out of her car and was standing by it wearing nothing but her leather miniskirt and high heels. As the police officer approached her, I felt that her arrest was imminent. Much to my surprise, however, the officer returned her papers and said, "Sorry for disturbing you, sir. Have a nice day." She got back into the car, turned to me, and said, "It happens like this every time." Apparently her data body had commanded this cyborg cop to ignore the overwhelming empirical evidence that she was female. The screenal data validated her being as male, and since no experiential knowledge could contradict its directives, she was free to drive on.

PERFORM DATA BODY

I am not real. I am redundant. I am simulation living in physical space. My function is to mediate the intersection between information and production. What is real? Real is the information that validates my existence as cyborg. Real is my data body--the flow of files which represent me. Correction. I represent them. The data is the original; I am the counterfeit. Look at all files that intersect my organic subjectivity: Credit files, travel files, education files, medical files, employment files, communication files, political files, tax files, investment files, consumption files, files onto infinity. Were it not for these digital abstractions, I would have no existence in the realm of the social. These files explain to others the nature of my social role and cultural identity. As an individual my input is considered contaminated. Desire is to be programmed into my life by those who control my data body. My being-in-the-world is reduced to the political and economic result of my daily activities. All my actions are carefully surveyed and statistically scrutinized to make certain that I follow the commands of my program, and that I do not exceed the program's parameters.

When I came to this territory, I was stopped by an official at the airport. He took my passport, and scanned it. I cannot say specifically what he discovered, but I am sure that my data body assured him that I, this organic mass before you, was permitted to cross geographic borders. Nothing I might say was of the least significance to the official. Cyborgs have no common language. But we can interface with the data body, so we are never alone. Is this not better living through technology?

Virtual space offers the greatest potential for a utopian environment for body manifestation. Allegedly, in virtual space we will be able to reinscribe our flesh with whatever coding system we desire. We will be able to try on new body configurations. We will be able to experiment with immortality by going places and doing things that would be impossible in the physical world. For this virtual body, nothing is fixed and everything is possible. Unfortunately, this multi-sensual wish machine never seems to come into being; it is always becoming. The continuous nonappearance of the virtual body is not surprising, for what could pancapitalism possibly gain by presenting a wish machine to the public? It would only serve to undermine the consumer starvation that the institutions of pancapitalism have worked so hard to develop. Is it any wonder that corporate and government investment in immersive virtual technologies has almost stopped? Virtual reality as a posthuman habitat exists only as a myth, yet even in this ideational state, it has great material impact. It allows the public to optimistically wonder what technology will eventually allow people to do, and by extension, builds the desire for the cyborg technologies that are offered to the public. Virtual reality is a dissipated referent of idle fantasy akin to the following:

PERFORM TONGUE SPASMS

MOUTH The mouth fragments the body. What remains? The brutal acoustics of speech cataloged as reason. The oral cavity is colonized by language, rendering the body silent and incapable of communicating with biological gestures. What remains? Spasms.

BYTE The screenal tongue floats freely from its pillars. A sliding surrealistic appendage.

EYE The eye spasms before the virtual tongue, blinding the dominant need for vision. What remains after the system digests everything? A nomadic tongue riding the waves of its digital secretions. As the tongue wanders and drifts, the body is continuously transformed into new ways to manifest information. What remains?

BYTE The tongue no longer occupies one place.

NIPPLE The nipple resides in the matrix of surgical implants, where the counterfeit is valued more than the original. What remains? A network plurality in which one is too few and two is only one possibility. As screenal tongues cleave and suck the pacifiers of unreal ideologies and unreal referents, the truth of the techno-democracy reveals itself as an electronic cancer causing the subject to confuse deprivation for desire and work for labor.

BYTE Cyber saliva slides in little jerks punctuating farts and knuckle cracks.

HAND The spasm of digital touch legitimizes the violence of information. Both the left and right hand are driven by the ritual of representation and sacrifice before the keyboard of acceleration. What remains? Hyper-real hands, sociologically unconscious desiring machines, permanently possessed. What remains?

BYTE The sex speaks of a language based on lubricants, a different kind of saliva.

GENITALS The virtual tongue fuses with the hot and cold units of pleasure. Gendered flesh begins to merge and engage in conversations on deviance and transgression. Diseased rumors float back and forth between nano dicks and macro cunts. What remains? A discharge of blind desire moving in and out of virtually gossiping genitals.

BYTE Would the virtual tongue multiply and separate toes or simply lick between them?

TOE The big toe is the horror of a base materialism that spasms beyond suitable discourse. Toes lead an ignoble life always standing in the dirt of data debris, and holding the subject above the stacks of junk information. The toe is the interface of a slave. What remains after the system digests everything? The hateful deformity of pure labor, caught in the lost cause of revolution, flicking mud at the virtual body above it. What remains? The subject's abandonment in a progress that never arrives.

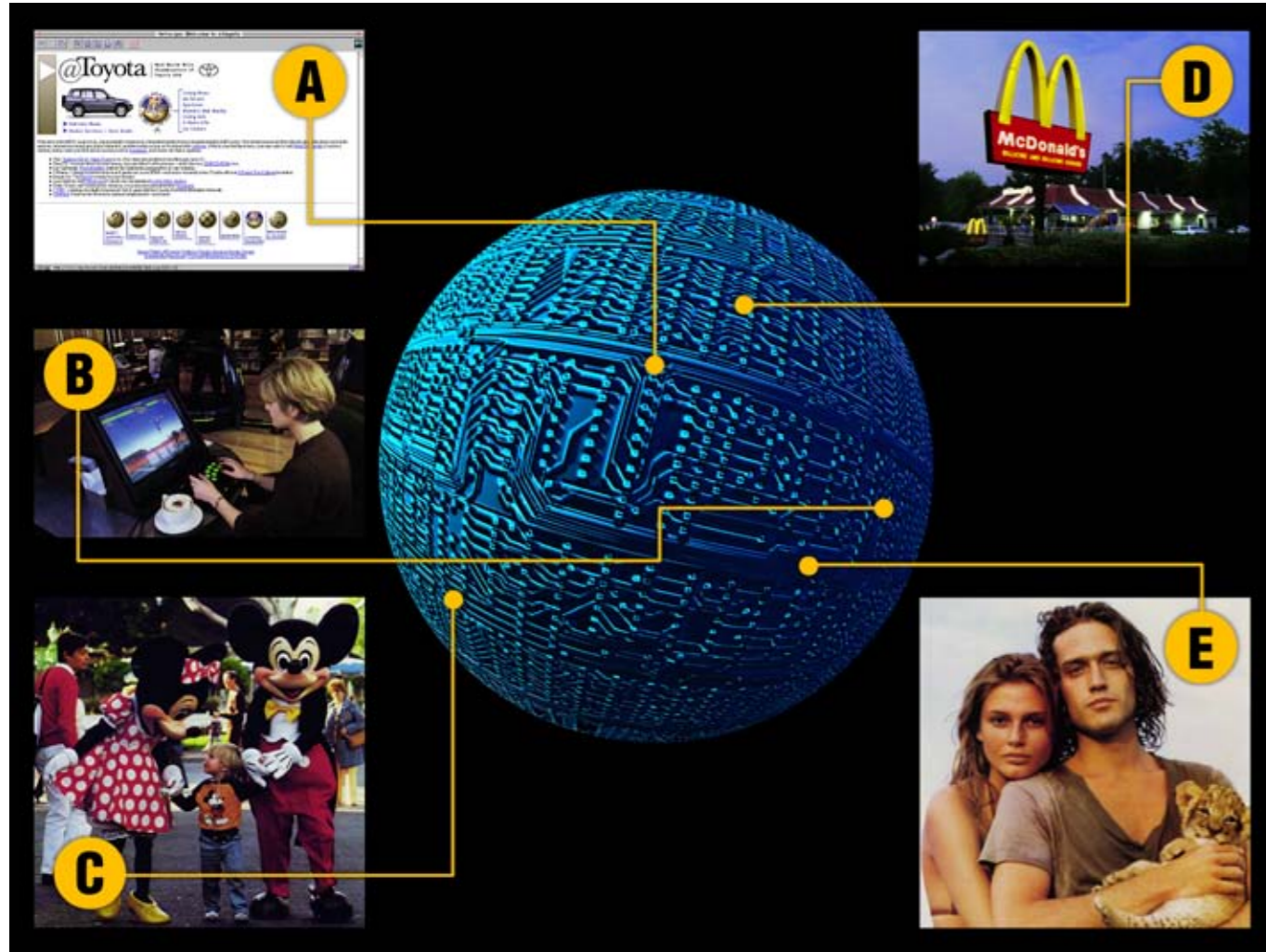
BYTE The spasm of the digital body breaks open the orifice of profound physical impulses.

ANUS The anal night calls the virtual tongue to leave the mouth and enter it, red and obscene. An eruptive force of tremendous power that demands indecent rupture and debauched hacking. What remains? A reality of farts, of breathless interruptions that reorder the body and begin to speak. A revolutionary breakthrough of a post-biological sound. What remains after the system digests everything? Virtual gas.

The fate of the body in the age of pancapitalism looks very bleak. We are currently witnessing an ongoing process of aggressive body invasion, guided by authoritarian demands for thoroughly rationalized flesh and instrumental human behavior. The complex technology of the body has turned against the individual and her nonrational needs and behaviors, not because technology, or the human relationship with it is in and of itself flawed, but because the design of technology through the ideological filters of capital has the interest of no one at heart--it cares only for the perpetuation, fortification, and expansion of the system.

Shareholders' Briefing

2.2 | 1996 | Installation and Performance



Shareholders' Briefing was originally made for the Radical Images exhibition (aka the second Austrian Triennial of Photography) at Neue Galerie in Graz. This performance was our first to feature a character with a context and history, as opposed to our usual "every person" persona. For this project, we imagined what the discourse might be like among the financial elite with regard to the development of new technology. To speak in this manner, we created a theatrical space where we treated our audience as shareholders in a science fiction multinational corporation called Machine World Industries. Inside what appeared to be a former palace, we furnished the baroque room with chairs, a podium, and visual aids. When the audience arrived, we handed out the company's annual report, and performed highlights from it. The language was completely bereft of any humanistic compassion and spoke from a fully instrumental perspective geared only toward making profits and controlling markets and the people in them.



Final Shareholders' Briefing for the Fiscal Year 1995–96



INTRODUCTION

The Board of Directors of Machine World is pleased to report to our shareholders that the past fiscal year has yielded excellent results. Each of the three Machine World divisions has performed above and beyond our expectations. We are indeed on the cusp of establishing the global capitalist dynasty that we have dreamed of since the beginning of the post-war era. The former Soviet Bloc is on the verge of total colonization, and significant advancements have been made in opening the Chinese markets. Third world territories have surrendered their labor pools, and their markets are open for dumping excess low grade or obsolete industrial and consumer products. By remaining true to our imperatives of production, consumption, and control, during this past year we have brought about another tremendous advance toward the establishment of a mechanized world under pancapitalist authority.

ANALYSIS BY DIVISION

I. THE WAR MACHINE

This division has always performed well, and receives the largest investment share. Let us review some of the highlights.

[A] Targeting systems have vastly improved over the past ten years. Of particular interest are the advancements in night vision technology for manned weapons and video vision for unmanned weapons and spy technologies. Special recognition goes to Japan for hardware development and to the US for software development, as well as to France and Germany for their contribution to field weapons development. With these advancements the associated capitalist countries of Europe, the US, and Japan can field an undefeatable army in any theater of operation.

[B] Post 1970s military satellite technology (those after the KH11 and Corona satellites; newer systems are classified) in conjunction with a variety of sky and ground imaging technologies are providing military and police agencies with enough global vision to maintain control both within and beyond capitalist borders. These agencies now have the luxury of just-in-time pre-emptive strikes.

[C] The Internet is the foundation for information exchange among multinational corporations and military alliances. Overwhelmingly, this computer network is being used to promote pancapitalist imperatives, and to homogenize capitalist cultures. Significant steps are being taken to maintain its integrity and security. However, the Board is concerned with the successful appropriation of its functions by political malcontents, and with its possible use as a site for civil disobedience and unrest. We would like to recognize China's effort to register all Internet users with the police, and to urge a similar policy be adopted in Europe and the US. The Board would also like to register its appreciation for the unrelenting intolerance that US courts have shown for computer criminals. Other strategies for better net control are also being developed (see IIA).

[D] All vehicles for endocolonization are (or will soon be) completely wired. This allows police officials instant access to individual data profiles. Our future hope in this area of surveillance is to develop a complete data base containing all of each citizen's electronic files, and make the database available to all friendly military and corporate institutions world-wide. Total population mapping would not only yield better social control, but would also contribute to better market management.

[E] The Board is pleased to announce that each organic military unit is no longer a soldier, but a "weapons system." The vision, communications, and attack technologies of each weapon system are fully integrated, and custom-fitted to their organic platform. Each system can function autonomously while simultaneously complementing various networked activities. Currently, this advancement represents the state of the art in cyborg development.

II. THE SIGHT MACHINE

While many of the functions of the Sight Machine intersect the War Machine and the Flesh Machine, the Board wishes in this section to focus on developments within the realm of market imaging and mapping.

[A] Overwhelmingly, the World Wide Web is being used as it was intended; that is, to promote and distribute consumer products. Like the Internet, however, this service has also been appropriated by various political malcontents to distribute information that contradicts or even attacks pancapitalist imperatives. To overcome this problem, the Sight Division is developing a unidirectional home entertainment system. After purchasing this system, patrons will be able to subscribe to cable television, home video and music networks, home shopping networks, and the WWW, but will have no means by which to transmit any information other than purchase information. This way the development of resistant culture on the WWW can be slowed until the system is properly regulated, and nonessential individual users are expelled from the transmitting system. Currently, a modest amount of social order must be sacrificed in order to establish fiscal stability in cyberspace.

[B] Civilian cyborg development is proceeding at a reasonable pace. The goal is to develop production/consumption systems that parallel the weapon systems of the military. The production cyborg will function as a permanent work system. S/he will desire to carry her tools of production (computer, phone, fax) with h/er at all times. Not only will this cyborg be on call 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, s/he will also pay for the products s/he needs to work. To help expedite this development, the Sight Machine is deploying the usual utopian promises of convenience, community, and democracy through all available media systems. Utopian promises are then reinforced with anxiolytic images, which stress the need for technology in order for one to stay ahead of the competition. This representational strategy is producing the best results in the US and Japan.

[C] Disneyworld is the perfect microcosm of the pancapitalist vision for the world. At Disneyworld, participants are locked into a state of permanent consumption, market image envelopment, passive participation, and perfect order. (Disneyworld is the architectural model on which the unidirectional home entertainment system is based. Through the seduction of entertainment value, domestic space will be colonized). The Board is happy to announce its plans for East Eurodisney. Construction will begin as soon as East European currencies stabilize.

[D] McDonald's must once again be recognized for its unrelenting exploration of economic frontiers. It is the ultimate economic entry vehicle, through which the cultural waters of any developing economic territory can be tested. McDonald's consistently offers representative data on whether a given culture can be assimilated to capitalist products, images, architectures, and management systems.

[E] Body image is currently the best example of a mass supplanting of physical reality with a representation of it. Bodies developed in the virtual space of the image continue to act as the foundation for public body presentation. Since this body image cannot be physically replicated, we can expect a continuous hunger in consumers that will never be satiated, resulting in an infinite flow of consumer purchases of body-related products.

III. THE FLESH MACHINE

The Flesh Machine is the most underdeveloped of the three divisions; however, it seems to be on the verge of fiscal maturity. Investment share in this division is steadily increasing, and it is expected to be the key division in the future.

[A] The visualization and mapping of DNA strands was a significant step forward in opening the body to rationalized authority. Currently, the Human Genome Project is providing a more comprehensive map of flesh production. With visualization accomplished, full control of flesh development becomes possible. Many methods for the psychological and sociological normalization of the body will become obsolete, as the flesh will be configured in real time and space in accordance with the imperatives of pancapitalism.

[B] The market for organ replacement is only in its infancy. The two most common methods for organ replacement—using artificial organs and harvesting organs from braindead humans—have yet to come to full fruition. Artificial organs are still experimental, and as yet, are not reliable products. Organ harvesting delivers a reliable product, but there is not enough product to meet the demand. Current research suggests that the best option for overcoming these pitfalls is to develop transgenic creatures from which organs can be harvested. Baboons and pigs are the best candidates for experimentation. Through interspecies gene splicing, organs that are compatible with human bio-systems can be farmed at a rate that will meet the demand.

[C] New imaging technologies better allow body images to be disassembled and reframed. Interior body space can now be represented in whatever way best fulfills the needs of the market. For example, through sonographic imaging, uterine space can be represented as a part of the wholistic bio-system of the woman, or as an independent space belonging to the fetus. Thereby, media can be produced to reinforce whatever political position is the most advantageous. With this new imaging technology, we not only control the flesh, but also, the public perception of it.

[D] Reproductive services and products represent another market bonanza. Currently, reproductive products are notoriously unreliable, and yet, this division is unable to meet market demand. Consequently, the price of such flesh products is incredibly high, and yet they are without guarantee. For example, in vitro fertilization costs around \$5,000 (American) a cycle simply for the basic service. Consumers can purchase services for as many as 12 cycles. At the end of the treatment, there is at best only a one in three chance of a successful pregnancy for women under 40. Most customers get nothing from the process. Considerable research is now being conducted to make the products more reliable in order to lower the price, and move these services and products out of the luxury market. By successfully broadening the target base for reproductive services, not only will higher profits be realized, but the consumer populations will be socialized to think eugenically about reproduction. Since the image of the body is already under the control of the Sight Division, encouraging the consumer population to desire and design flesh that will best serve pancapitalism should be no more difficult than convincing the consuming public to buy conditioner with their shampoo.

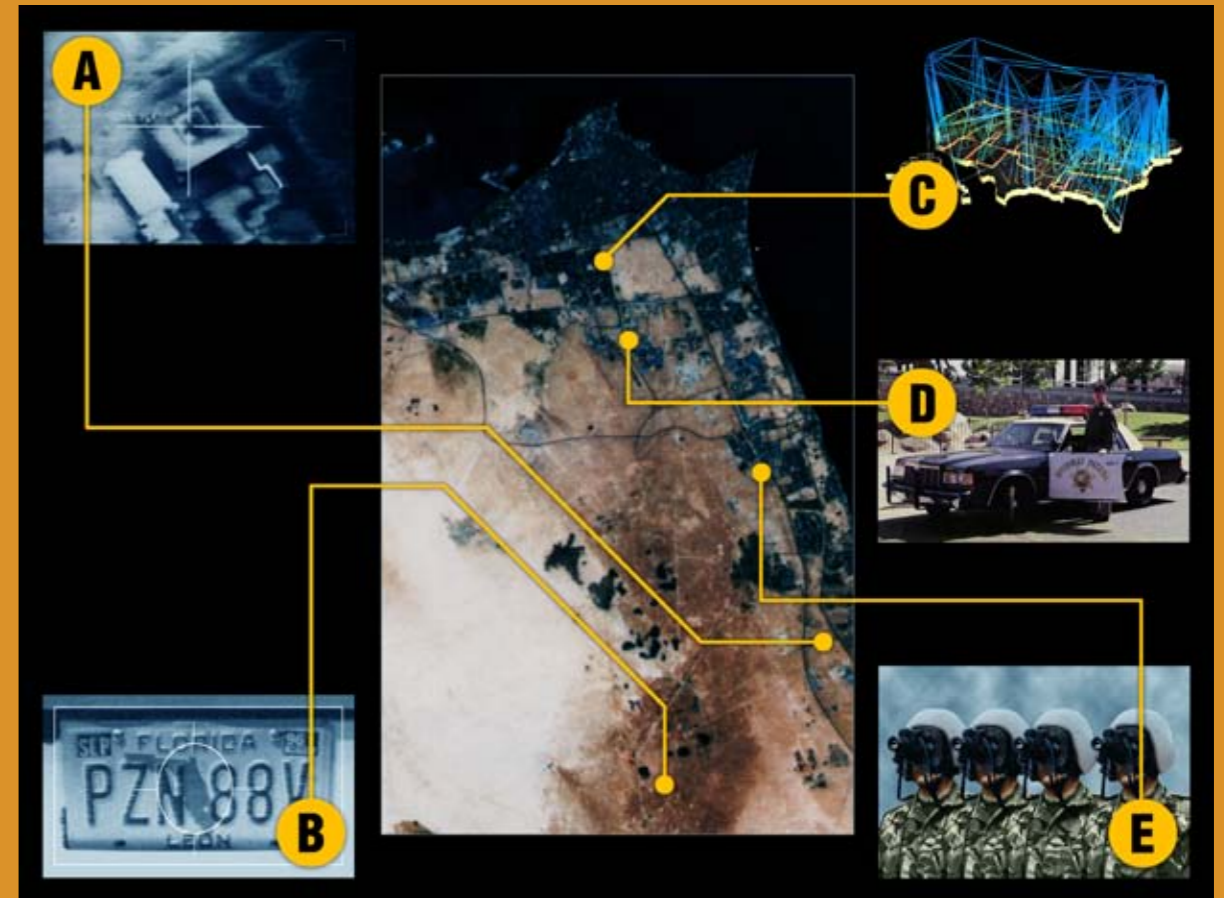
[E] Progress in visualizing and mapping the brain has been slow. This flesh frontier has only been modestly explored. There is an awareness that this area will be the key site of contestation in the future of pancapitalist body colonization. Our hope is that positron emissions tomography will hurry the progress in developing an understanding of brain development and decay. Current research is successfully being conducted under the authority of medical benevolence; however, we are concerned that its legitimacy may suddenly crash. The violent conflicts between rival political factions over uterine space are indications of the future that may be awaiting in regard to the surveillance of brain activity.

[F] Considerable research is also going into less intrusive ways to monitor the body. Mandatory blood tests for AIDS or urine tests for drugs have met with considerable resistance from the public. While mandatory testing is a helpful tool in maintaining social order, we have yet to find a way to implement the tests in a manner that is not perceived by the public as malevolent, and as an invasion of privacy. Our strategy here is to withdraw from these body outposts, and to develop vision engines that scan for bodily deviance and health infractions. These engines could be placed at public sites where individuals normally accept surveillance—airports, for example. As with all flesh products and eugenic processes, the public must be seduced into desiring them. Direct force in the form of mandatory compliance should only be deployed when absolutely necessary.

CONCLUSION

The upcoming year (and for that matter, the upcoming century) will be a profitable one for you, our shareholders. We expect a tremendous array of new services and products for the consumer, lower labor costs, and greater efficiency in production techniques. In conjunction, we expect a stable and secure social order that will be good for business and for our investors.

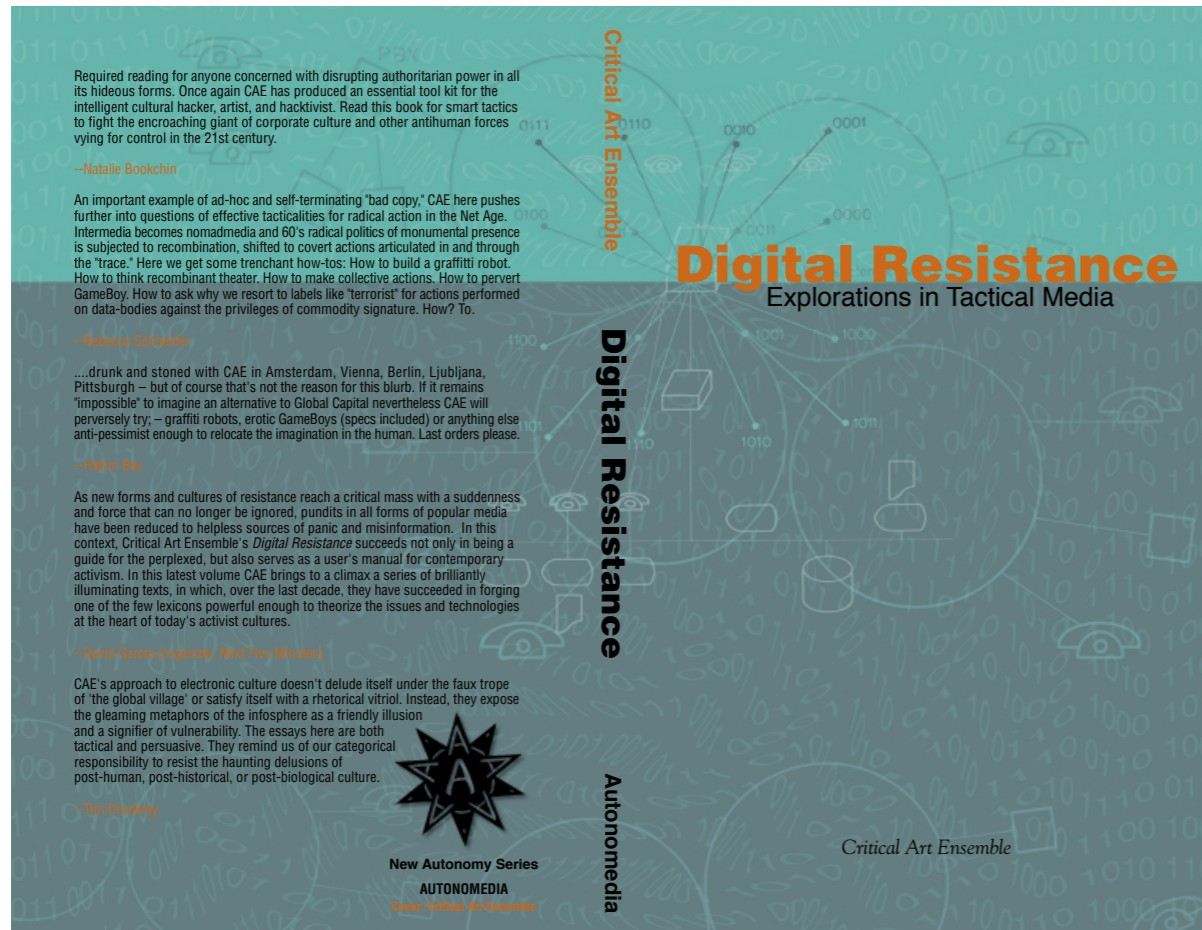
We hope to see you at next year's meeting!



Digital Resistance

Explorations in Tactical Media

2.3 2001 Theory

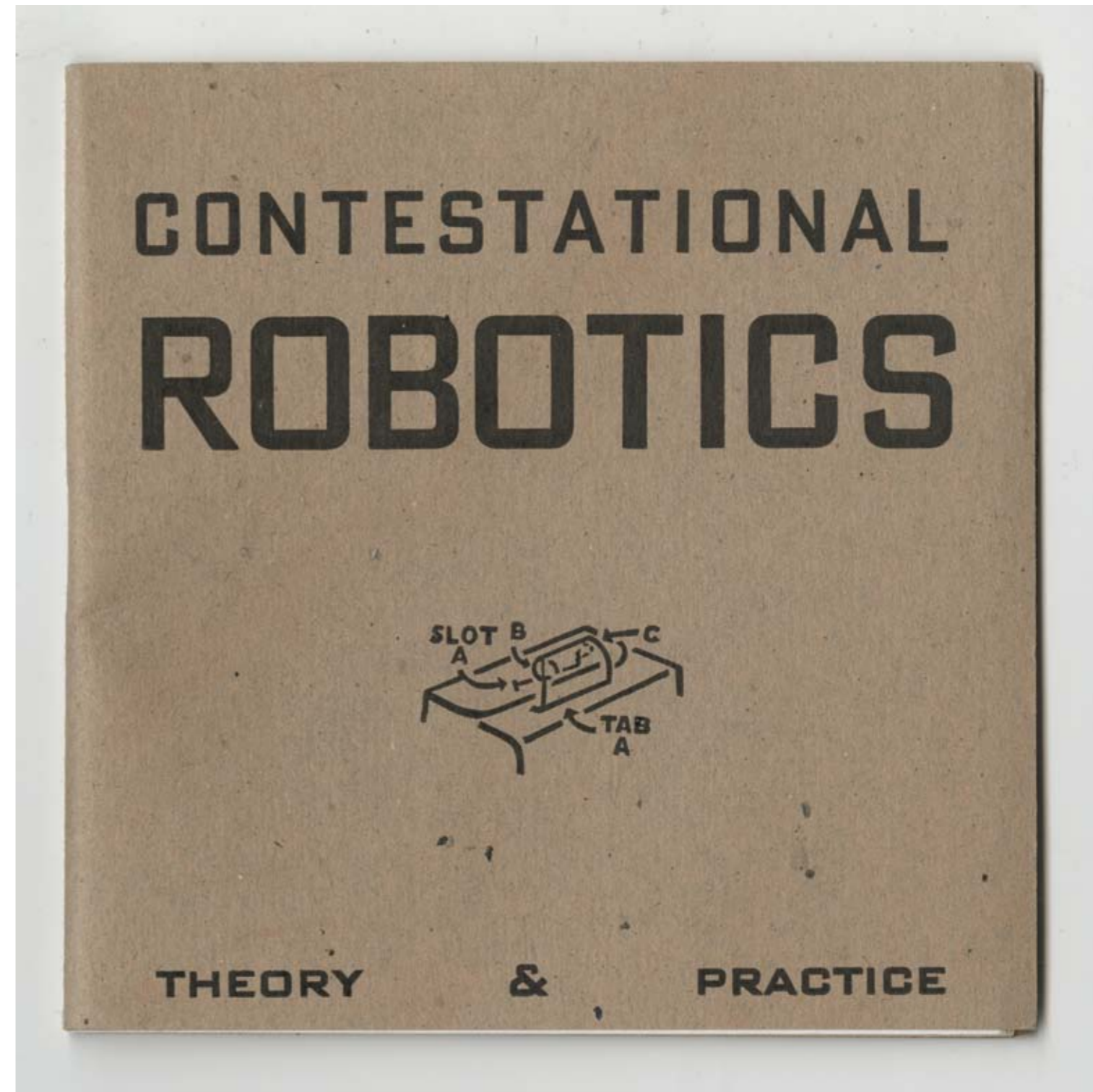


By 2001, CAE had written enough articles and essays to gather into another book. Unfortunately, the essays did not fit together very well. The subject matter was quite diverse, ranging from transgenic production to contestational robotics to digital cosmology. We seemed to have the beginnings of several books—until we decided to arrange them in a manner that would explain and illustrate the uses of the emerging practice of tactical media.

Tactical media is not a monolithic model, but a pliable one that asks to be shaped and reshaped. It contains many different and often contradictory conjectures, but it has a few principles that seem to have general value (although there are always exceptions). First, tactical media is a form of digital interventionism. By this we mean that it challenges an existing semiotic regime by replicating and redeploying it in a manner that offers participants new ways of seeing, understanding, and (in the best case scenario) interacting with given systems. Second, the tactical media practitioner uses any media necessary to meet the demands of a given situation. While practitioners may have expertise in a given medium, they do not limit their ventures to the exclusive use of one medium. Whatever media provide the best means for communication and participation in a given situation are the ones that they will use.

In other words, the situation determines the media. Third, those involved in tactical media may be any kind of cultural hybrid. Artist, scientist, technician, craftsman, theorist, activist—all can be mixed together in combinations of different weights and intensities. Fourth, tactical media is ephemeral. It leaves few material traces. As the action comes to an end, what is left is primarily living memory. In the negative, tactical media fights monumentalism—works that dominate space in perpetuity for a singular (ideological) purpose in an effort to homogenize diversity and represent the contingent as the universal.

While so much of dominant culture functions as weapons of mass distraction or as information delivery systems that shout justifications for the necessity of capitalism, it can never precisely blanket its own territory. Unregulated and underpoliced spaces offer opportunities for acts of defiance, but they require the defiant to adapt to the opportunity offered. Out of the need for adaptation—that is, to change one's role and processes of production, and to shift materials and media as necessary, emerges a rich and diverse cultural ecology. In *Digital Resistance*, CAE attempted to embody this ecology in both practical and theoretical terms.



Marching Plague

2.4 | 2005–6 | Performance, Installation, Video, Book

Marching Plague was an unusual project for CAE in that it existed in a number of media, including a performance, an installation, a video, and a book. In each case, the project attempted to show how germ warfare programs moved from being a possibility of real concern into failed programs resurrected due only to their value as propaganda.



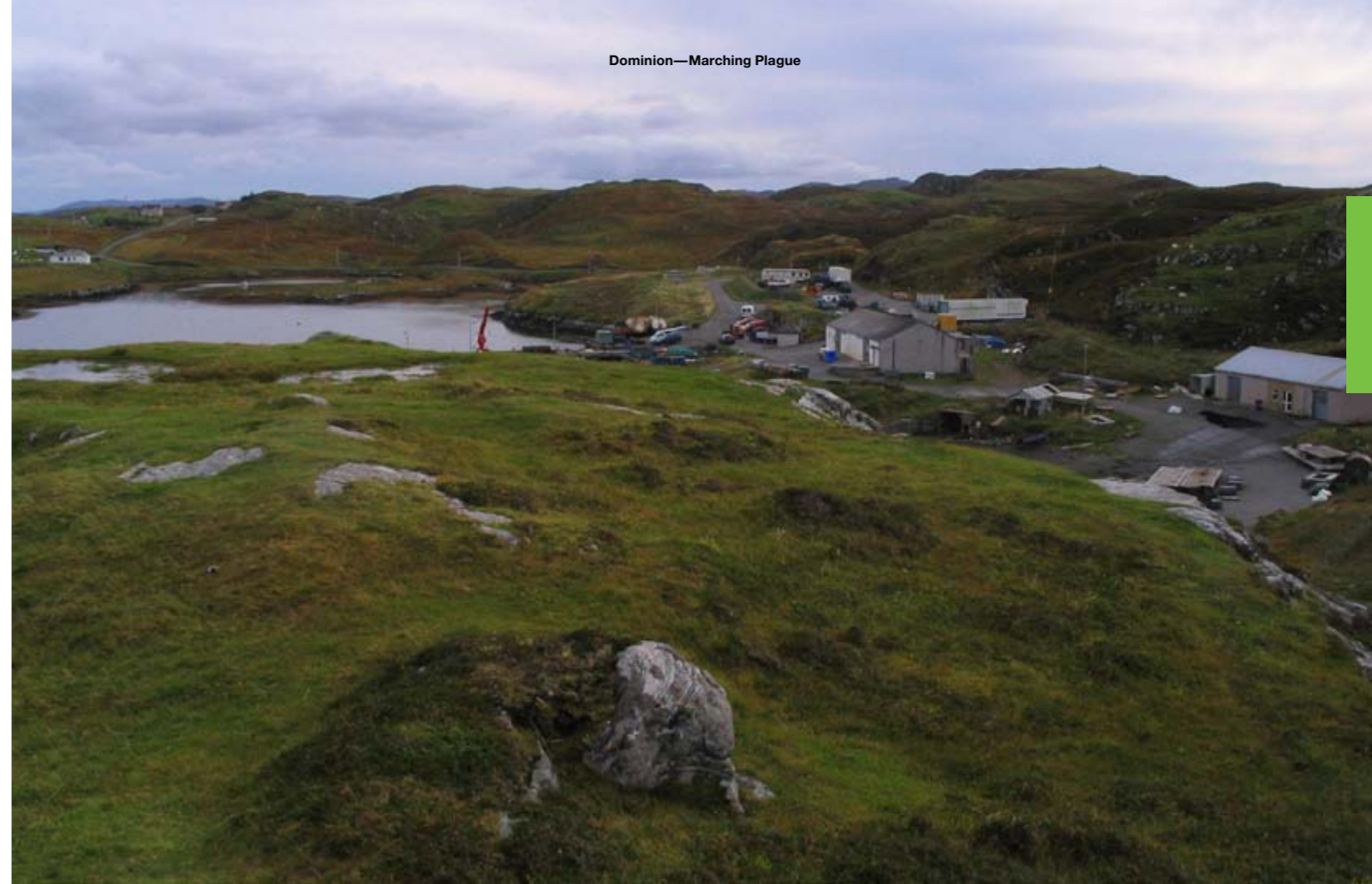
Our second response was to recreate some of the incredibly absurd experiments that had been carried out while various militaries investigated germ warfare. Helping us to accomplish this mission was the London-based art and science production and curatorial group, The Arts Catalyst. If we were going to be working in the United Kingdom, the Isle of Lewis plague experiments conducted by the British military in the early 50s would make our point perfectly. Having realized that the germ warfare program was a failure, the British military decided to give it one more try in the hope of creating a ship-to-ship tactical weapon. Moving out to the desolate seas off the Scottish coast, they launched harmless bacteria (followed by actual plague) at a pontoon filled with guinea pigs and monkeys. The experiment did not turn out well unless one was a monkey or a guinea pig, as they remained unharmed. When CAE went to the Isle to do the same, sans monkeys and plague, we fared no better. Our experiment was probably the only one ever done in the hopes of replicating a negative rather than a positive result. It revealed that germ warfare was still a failure, and the antics passing for scientific study still as absurd.

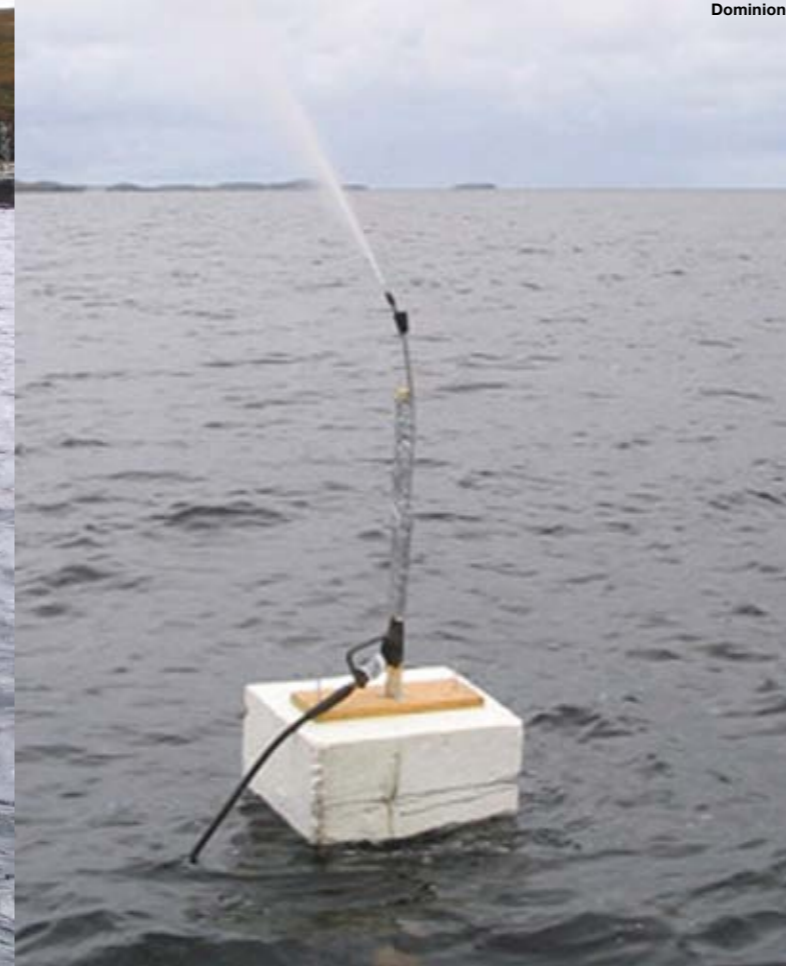
As might be expected, the FBI and the Department of Justice did not care for this project upon discovering it halfway through its initial production. The Department of Justice charged Steve Kurtz with mail fraud for allegedly transferring the bacteria in a manner not in keeping with a material transfer agreement. As it turned out, Kurtz had not done anything illegal and the case was dismissed. More annoying, however, was the confiscation of the book manuscript along with all the notes and books associated with the project. The book had to be rewritten from scratch, and was completed two years later in 2006.

PAGE 65 TOP: *Marching Plague* launch site. | **PAGE 65 BOTTOM:** CAE member grows *Bacillus subtilis*, a harmless bacterium used as a simulant in the recreation. | **PAGE 66 TOP:** Guinea pigs are deployed on a pontoon, with an SPCA member. | **PAGE 66 BOTTOM LEFT:** Bacteria are loaded into the spray gun. | **PAGE 66 BOTTOM RIGHT:** Wind direction and power are assessed to establish a line of fire. | **PAGE 67 TOP LEFT:** The bacteria are sprayed through a high powered atomizer. | **PAGE 67 BOTTOM:** The guinea pigs are collected for testing.

By 2004, we could take it no more—the transformation of the US by the neoconservatives into a regime of permanent war at home and abroad had to be addressed. However, we did not want to go down the well-worn paths of civilian deaths and torture camps that were already receiving a reasonable amount of attention. We asked ourselves which issues were important, but not drawing much cultural interest. The hysteria fueled by the propaganda campaign following the 2001 anthrax attacks seemed like a perfect subject that could expand our past explorations in biotechnology. Shortly after the attacks, Bush announced he would reinstate the American germ warfare program. Not only was this move a waste of taxpayer money, it also violated international law. The program had been eliminated in accordance with the creation and ratification of the Biological Weapons Convention (1972/75).

CAE had two responses to this problem. The first was to show that germ warfare programs have been an epic failure since first begun in Japan prior to World War II, and that the people killed by weaponized germs outside the lab were exclusively citizens of the nations that created them (a case in point is that the deaths from the 2001 anthrax attacks in the US were due to germs developed by the US military). Through the installation, book, and portions of the video, we were able to reasonably represent this element of history.





VLA Ref. No. 14-M0338-10-05

Agency

Sender's Ref. Not Given

Owner The Arts Catalyst
CPHH Not Given
Date Received 14/10/2005
Date of Sampling 14/10/2005
Case Vet Nicola Triscott
Species / Breed Environmental Other / Not Given
Sex / Age Not Given / Unknown
Samples Culture Bacterial / Viral / Fungal x 7

Report 1 (Final)

All plates contained confluent mixed growths of bacteria. Subcultures were made from this growth and any bacillus identified.

B. subtilis was recovered from guinea pig 4, Nicole and control.
B. cereus was recovered from guinea pig 2 and Fiona.

No bacilli were recovered from guinea pig 1 and 3.

In view of the nature of this work I have reduced the charge to £21.60 + VAT per sample.

[Signature]

B Hunt
Responsible Officer
20/10/2005

26 OCT 2005

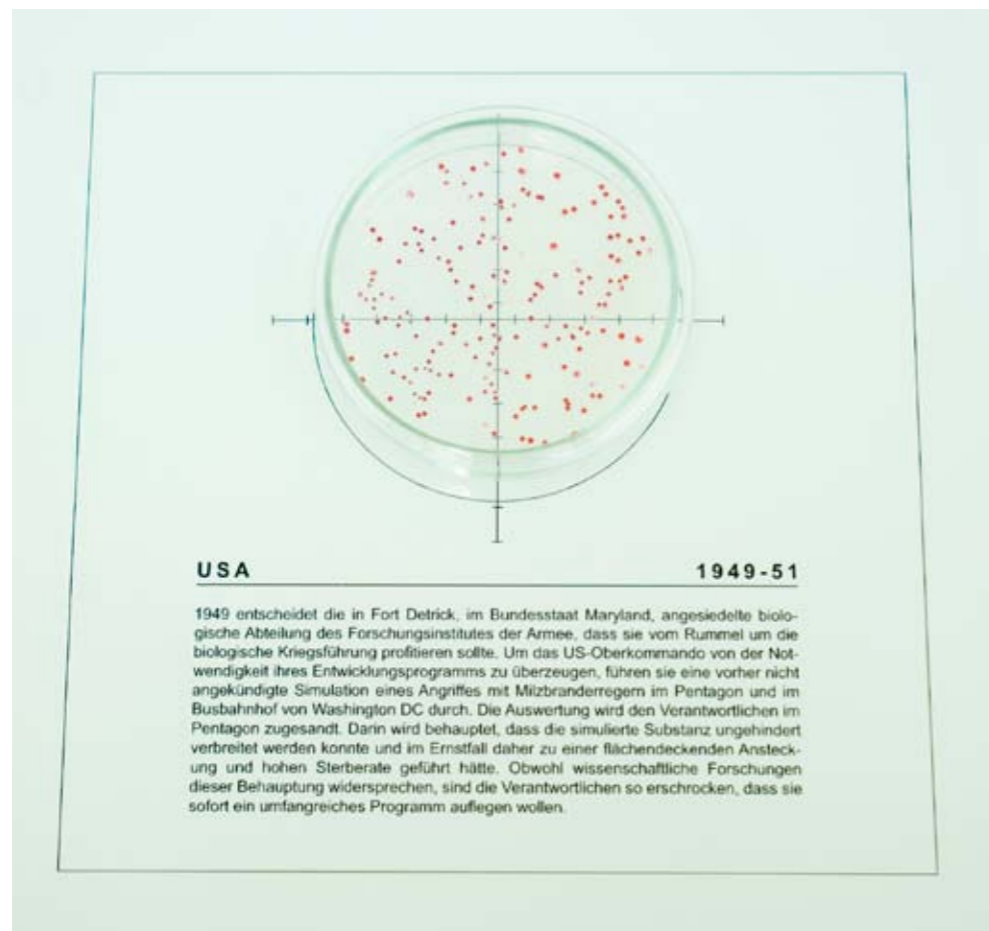
FAXED
26 OCT 2005

The charge for this laboratory work is £151.20 plus VAT if applicable. This will be included in your monthly statement.
Service Charge Code(s): T00099 x 7

UKAS
1193



Germes of Deception



Germes of Deception (the installation component of *Marching Plague*) recreated a 1949 experiment conducted by the US military that secretly tested dispersal rates and patterns through the Pentagon's ventilation system. In the recreation, CAE placed bacteria sensors around the gallery on top of glass plates etched with a timeline of the history of germ warfare programs. We then sprayed *Serratia marcescens* through the vents using an atomizer. The distribution pattern became visible over the course of the installation as the bacteria grew on the plates.

JAPAN 1930-31

Professor of Epidemiology for the Tokyo Army Medical School Ishii Shiro convinces the high command of the Japanese Imperial Army to launch a biological weapons development program. His arguments are that "Russian spies" had conspired to spread anthrax, cholera and dysentery in Manchuria, and that the Chinese had poisoned wells with cholera. These events are never proven, but even the thought of such an occurrence convinces the high command to act. This strategy of fear becomes the standard for the launch of most of the West's major germ warfare programs.

JAPAN 1943

In spite of having created the largest, most expensive germ warfare program in the world, the Japanese never make a weapon that they can successfully use. The field tests are all either complete failures, inconclusive, or the weapons kill as many Japanese troops as they do enemy troops. By 1943 the program is considered a failure. Dwindling resources are thought to be better used elsewhere.

UNITED KINGDOM 1940

The British High Command launches a massive offensive biowarfare initiative. Its concern is over intelligence that the Germans have an extensive biological weapons program. The intelligence is never authenticated, and turns out to be completely mistaken, yet the fear generated is strong enough to produce nearly 20 years of heavy investigation into biological weapons by the British, in cooperation with the US and Canada.





CANADA 1941

The Canadians begin a germ warfare program in alliance with the US and the UK. The program is launched because of intelligence stating that Germany is preparing botulinum toxin for use against military and civilian targets. The information is incorrect. The Canadians are also afraid the Japanese might use balloons to launch biological warfare attacks on civilians. This threat never materializes.

GERMANY 1942

At the start of WWII Germany states that it will not use biological weapons. In 1942 Hitler explicitly orders that no biological weapons program (not even retaliatory weapons) be pursued. This order is repeated again in 1943. Germany is the only primary combatant nation to respect the Geneva Protocol's prohibition against bacteriological warfare programs.

USA 1949-51

In 1949 the biological wing of the army research unit at Fort Detrick, Maryland decides that it should cash in on the germ warfare gravy train. To convince the US High Command of the necessity of the program they run an unannounced anthrax simulation in the Pentagon and in the Washington DC Greyhound bus station. The report is submitted to Pentagon officials claiming perfect distribution of the simulant and implying this would yield perfect infection and mortality rates. While scientific research completely contradicts this claim, Pentagon officials are sufficiently frightened to want an advanced program started immediately.

UNITED KINGDOM 1952

The British germ warfare program is an abysmal failure. The weapons are found to be completely unreliable and of little use on land. The only possibilities are in enclosed areas and on ships. In 1952, sea tests begin at the Isle of Lewis in the Hebrides. The results are inconclusive. Tests on the sea and simulations in the underground continue for another 14 years. After wasting millions of pounds, no functional use for this weaponry is ever found.

USA 1969

Richard Nixon cancels the germ warfare program as a failure. The program virtually dies, but only after millions of tax dollars are wasted. No functional weapon is ever developed or used. Nixon then begins an initiative to create a global ban on biological weapons. The Biological Weapons Convention is created in 1972 and activated in 1975. The document is principled but unenforceable. The US has been in direct violation of the treaty it created since 2001.

1977 USA/USSR

The last case of smallpox is recorded. The most deadly human disease in history is considered wiped off the face of the earth. Unfortunately, viable samples of smallpox remain in the arsenals of the USA and the USSR (and present day Russia).

USSR 1979

The greatest number of people ever killed by anthrax is not the result of a terrorist attack, but of a military accident in the victim's own country. In April 1979, the Soviet biowarfare unit Compound 19 at Sverdlovsk (home to a large-scale military weapons manufacturing site and a city of 1.2 million people) notices that a neighboring population has an outbreak of anthrax. What actually happened is uncertain. Seemingly, 66 deaths occurred in a 4 km swath downwind from Compound 19. The US military and various intelligence corps believe that an anthrax aerosol was accidentally released. While the deaths are tragic, they are very light compared to the death rates predicted (hundreds of thousands of deaths) by those invested in the program.

USA 1997

In 1997, the US Secretary of Defense William Cohen makes a dramatic appeal to rejuvenate the bioweapons program by appearing on television holding a five pound bag of sugar and declaring this amount of anthrax sprayed from an airplane over Washington DC would result in the death of 50% of the population. His numbers are fabricated, and are disputed by the World Health Organization. This time the program is not revived.

USA 2001

In July President George Bush rejects 26 years of negotiations over the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, and refuses to accept the verification protocols. The treaty remains a principled but unenforceable document.

USA 2001

Military grade anthrax spores (originating from US stockpiles) are sent to several journalists and politicians. Five deaths result from the events. The government and military are quick to exploit the fear generated. The program is fully revived, and the budget increased from millions of dollars to billions of dollars. The exact size of the increase is still unknown. Assets once used to fight emerging infectious diseases that kill, not five, but millions of people each year are redirected to a useless germ warfare initiative.

USA 2004

While researching a project examining germ warfare technology as a useless technology, as well as the cost of its development to global public health, CAE member Steve Kurtz is "detained" for bioterrorism by the FBI. He is subsequently charged with mail and wire fraud. The Justice Department's attempt to fan the flames of public fear by claiming that terrorists could be anyone (in this case an artist) fails to generate a sympathetic public response, yet the prosecution continues.

GERMANY 2006

While at Halle 14, Critical Art Ensemble releases 2 ml of *Serratia marcescens* (a simulant historically used by various military organizations for coverage testing) to see if the gallery would be a functional site for the use of anthrax by terrorists. Petri dish sensors placed throughout the gallery indicate that this small amount has contaminated the whole space. Does a perfect distribution rate indicate a perfect infection rate and consequently a perfect mortality rate? Intuitively one might think yes, and this is how this pseudo-scientific exercise has historically been used to con the unsuspecting. In actuality, the history of germ warfare testing and accidents have shown that a high or even a modest mortality rate is extremely unlikely.

GERMANY 2006

Ever wonder why terrorists have, with only one exception, used explosives rather than germs? Try our bomb simulator and find out. For practicality, efficiency, cost, and reliability, explosives are the best.

2.5 Public Misery Message
Text & image to come

2.5 Public Misery Message
Text & image to come

2.5 Public Misery Message
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03. Fear

All of the projects contained in this section were begun, if not completed, during the second Bush era. For more than a decade after the collective's formation, the topic of fear never crossed our minds as a significant subject needing to be addressed. During that time period, CAE was primarily concerned with friendly fascism, which was then far more common, and which only demanded that citizens follow the dictates of authority, work, and consumption, in exchange for the maintenance of order and security for both person and property. Even when "terror" struck (in Beirut, Somalia, Oklahoma City, or even the first terror attack on the World Trade Center), the public was told to stay calm and to feel safe, because the culprits would be caught, and our weapon systems would protect us from anything truly dangerous.



Then came the rise of the neoconservatives—a mid twentieth-century throwback—concerned with “full spectrum domination” for the purpose of the nationalist cause of a US empire in a “new American century.” The goal was to conquer and reconstruct nations as cultural mirrors of America structured by US economic and political interests, and unlike their predecessors, who expressed dominance primarily through economic pressure, the neoconservatives wanted to dominate with old-fashioned military might. No popular support existed for this delusional agenda, but after 9/11, the neoconservatives saw an opportunity and took it by marshalling and deploying as much fear as they possibly could. Using complicit news media resources, they remade the former consensual hallucination of safety and success into one that viewed the world as spiraling out of control. Threats were everywhere. Nuclear attacks by terrorists were not only possible; they were probable. Terrorists were everywhere, not just in nations in need of invasion, but in all probability, right next door to you; sleeper cells and “homegrown” terrorists could be anywhere. Under such conditions, security could not be guaranteed, but if authority could be centralized in the executive branch, and unregulated force could be used internally and externally at the pleasure of this authority, there would be a chance that security could be restored.

Fighting this neofascist madness became CAE’s primary mission. We wanted to do what ever we could to undermine their narratives, to show that what they claimed were the most probable outcomes of history were actually the least probable, to call attention to their hostility to facts, and to rebut their delusional form of ethnocentrism on every front. So many of the projects we did during this period seemed always to return to deflating an overblown environment of panic fueled by fear. We received considerable push back from the government for our activities, but they never could shut us down.



ABOVE: Poster for the 2006 Whitney Biennial. | OPPOSITE: Fulfilling the government fantasy of a sleeper cell, CAE member plays dress-up.



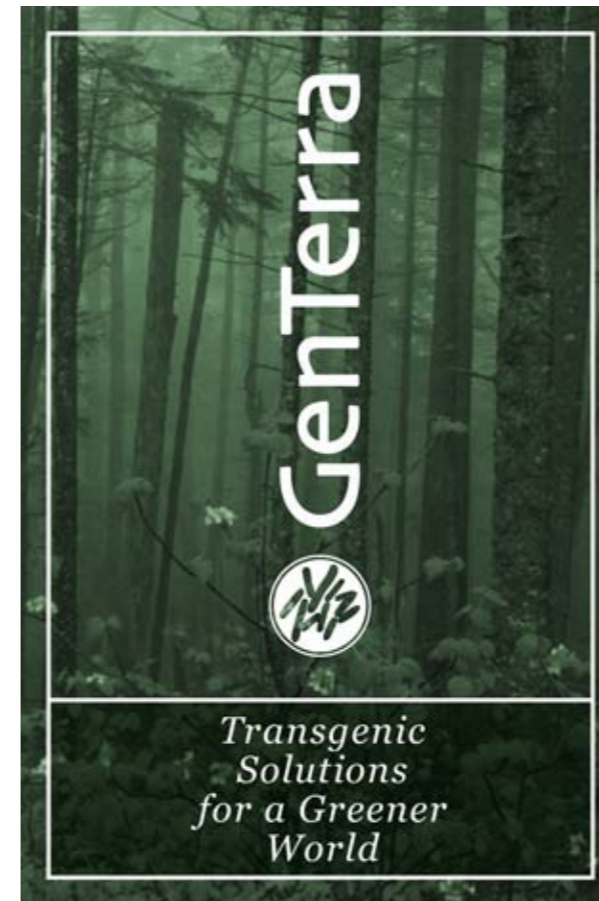
For *GenTerra*, CAE mixed the strongest false fear cocktail we could while staying within standard safety parameters. The difference between CAE's use of fear and various authorities' use of fear to manipulate the public was key: our goal was not to use the irrational state produced by this emotion as a vehicle to propel people toward ideas and practices that a rational person would never accept; rather, we would use the fear as a device of engagement that at the end of the participatory process would neutralize itself, allowing an illuminated reason to return.

The primary aim of *GenTerra* was to stimulate public discussions on the risk of engineering and releasing transgenic organisms. The situation at that time was quite bleak. On the one hand was the corporationist position, which argued that whatever potentially profitable GM product *could* be engineered *should* be engineered, and any potential problems could be fixed as they occurred. On the other hand was the green position that all Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) were living pollutants for profits, and that a ban should be put in place for an indefinite period to allow for serious cross-temporal safety studies. The latter was a notably far less reckless plan, but one outside the realm of practicality—the genie

was out of the bottle, and could not be put back. CAE was of the belief that these new products had to be taken on a case-by-case basis. Rather than wasting energy on a never-to-be obtained moratorium, we could focus on key polluting products. Before such campaigns could begin, however, a more fundamental step had to be taken: we would have to teach people the basics of the science behind GMOs. But how could we get people interested in a discussion they believe they hold no stake in—something which is only compounded by a collective feeling that GMOs are unnatural, scary, and better left to scientists?

ABOVE: Bacteria release machine at St. Norbert's Art and Cultural Center. | OPPOSITE BOTTOM: Participant finishes streaking a petri dish at Le Magasin National Centre for Contemporary Art in Grenoble, France.





CAE's answer was to use this fear *for* the public instead of *against* the public. We decided to release “transgenic” bacteria in public places. We were doubling down on our fear quota—GMOs and bacteria. GMOs are scary because Western mythology relentlessly tells us that humans should not modify or rearrange the natural order. All our myths warn us about what happens when humans appropriate creation from the God(s)—monsters are made and horrible deaths follow. (This mythic commandment prohibiting reworking the “natural order” has always been useful as a means of social control.) Combine the sinfulness of the GMO with bacteria—a feared creature responsible for putrefaction, infection, and illness—and we had isolated the horror of the “real.” So many authorities, including parents, teachers, doctors, and the four billion dollar (in the US alone) disinfectant industry, repeatedly warn us of the evils of germs, neglecting to mention that they are the foundation of every ecosystem, great or small, or that we have more bacteria in us and on us than we have bodily cells. CAE was stocked with such information about bacteria, GMOs, and environmental risk. These are, admittedly, boring topics for the general public—yet the specter of a “transgenic”* bacteria release into the immediate environment rapidly generates interest. Participants spent serious amounts of time discussing and poring over supplied information on GMOs and risk assessment in order to decide whether they should stay in the space, release the bacteria, or if they were willing to take some home with them and introduce it into their domestic space. Whether anyone became an environmental activist after going through this process is anyone’s guess, but CAE feels confident that participants left the performance less afraid and more informed than when they arrived.

*We have transgenic in quotes because we only artificially put some DNA fragments (as opposed to a gene) into crippled gut E coli (the kind that helps humans digest food; not the kind that makes them ill). The creatures were transgenic only in the most generous sense of the term, and posed no threat to anything or anyone.

OPPOSITE TOP: Participants examine wild and transgenic bacteria. | TOP LEFT: Poster for GenTerra. | ABOVE: GenTerra screen shots

Target Deception

3.2 | 2008 | Intervention



CAE was always stunned by the amount of fear that was generated in the US and UK by the 2001 anthrax attacks. In the US, the government actually encouraged people to seal off their homes with plastic sheets and duct tape (as if this would help to keep bacteria out of the house), fueling hysteria with talk of “weapons of mass destruction.” The news media were thrilled with the horror fantasies the government gave them, such as the potential for a crop duster armed with deadly germs to spray a major city like Washington DC with disastrous consequences. The paranoid fantasy engine of the US government was in overdrive, and citizens were eager to internalize the message. No one stopped to wonder why, if weaponized germs posed such a threat, only five deaths occurred during the 2001 anthrax scare after thousands were exposed. The actual death toll hardly indicates a weapon of mass destruction—gangsters armed only with pistols have caused more mayhem.

In this context, CAE was invited to Leipzig by Frank Motz at Halle 14 to do a performance deconstructing these fantasy scenarios. Normally, we would engage the relevant history of the place we were performing in order to develop the narrative for the action. In this case, the context was difficult, because the Germans never had a germ warfare program. One was suggested to Hitler, but he was not attracted to the idea, and twice gave orders that such initiatives were not to be pursued; after WWII, the Germans honored their treaties. We were thus in the position where we would have to construct our own fantasy, but we still wanted it to have a loose historical precedent. We thought the San Francisco urban experiments of the 1950s conducted by the US military might provide a model. We proposed attempting to hit our human guinea pigs (HGP)

from the City Hall tower with some harmless bacteria (*Bacillus subtilis*) while they surrounded the American consulate. Much to our surprise, the City Hall allowed us to execute this plan. We were also very lucky to get plenty of volunteers to act as targets. (Our HGP idea was based on an actual group of Seventh Day Adventists who volunteered to be US military test subjects for infection rate testing, antibiotic testing, and weapon efficiency testing in the field.)

On an overcast and damp afternoon, our human guinea pigs surrounded the consulate, and bacteria were shot from the tower. The HGPs were led by a fine marching band that kept the time and entertained troops and onlookers alike. After the initial action, we returned to the main square, took samples from the HGPs, and had them tested at the Institute for Microbiology. The experiment was a failure as usual, as none of the bacteria was detected on the HGPs. The project was a lesson in the delight of failure.

ABOVE: Leipzig City Hall is the launch site for *Target Deception*. The targets are the Human Guinea Pigs surrounding the American Consulate. | **OPPOSITE:** Growing bacteria. | **PAGE 90 TOP:** The Human Guinea Pig Corps. | **PAGE 90 BOTTOM:** Joachim Gall & seine Musikanten lead the Guinea Pigs to the consulate. | **PAGE 91 TOP LEFT:** The consulate is surrounded. | **PAGE 91 TOP RIGHT:** The bacteria are launched from the City Hall. | **PAGE 91 BOTTOM LEFT:** The Human Guinea Pigs retreat from the consulate and line up for inspection. | **PAGE 91 BOTTOM RIGHT:** Bacteria samples are taken from the Human Guinea Pigs for testing.





Radiation Burn: A Temporary Monument to Public Safety

3.3 | 2009 | Intervention

When Barack Obama was elected president, CAE believed the rhetoric and spectacle of fear would finally be ratcheted down, and there would again be the possibility of reasonable discourse. To an unsatisfying degree, this did happen, but one cornerstone symbol in the spectacle of fear remained the same: the radiological dispersive device (RDD), more commonly known as the “dirty bomb.” CAE felt compelled to address this issue.

The RDD has a mythic narrative that is perfect for scaring an uninformed population. CAE would call it a jewel in the crown of fear production second only to nuclear attack. Three key associations have been meticulously maintained by various governments, particularly the US. First, an association with weapons of mass destruction (WMD) has been continuously reinforced even though the RDD could never come close to replicating the scale of a WMD like an atomic weapon. Second is an association with mortal danger. While people tend to know very little about the science of radiation, they know they are afraid of it. Decades of mutants, monsters, and cancers have convinced us that any brush with radiation is deadly. Third is an association with plausibility—that is, the idea that a nonstate actor could acquire the knowledge, the technical skills, the equipment, and the explosive and radiological materials, and that they could construct the bomb, transport it, deploy it, and detonate it. As Bush administration officials liked to say, “It’s not a matter of *if*, but *when*.”

CAE thought it might be enlightening to represent the current mediascape regarding the RDD. We decided to copy one of the many security simulations that are performed by the military in conjunction with emergency services. The simulation was quite a spectacle, complete with fire brigade, medical services, and police. We planted our bomb in the middle of a public park. We had a demolitions expert cover it in a lightweight dust that would behave in a manner similar to radioactive dust, and construct the bomb to blow the dust straight up in the air, so as to get maximum coverage of the park. It was quite a shock for park enthusiasts to see and feel the explosion. As the dust settled, we moved a podium out to ground zero, followed by a nuclear physicist who assessed the likelihood of this scenario ever happening. His position was that the probability was very low that a nonstate actor could do such a thing, because the task was far too difficult and dangerous. As for state actors, they have much better weapons. You never hear of militaries stockpiling dirty bombs (although they have been used for dispersion testing). As the physicist gave his reassuring assessment, emergency service lights flashed and hazmat-clad performers tested for radiation, marking the path of the dust with danger tape. A voice of reason was there to be heard, but the spectacle of fear surrounded it. CAE hopes that overall this project was perceived as a form of theater of the absurd, but one never knows. Some people truly cherish their fears.



PAGE 93: CAE sets off a mock “dirty bomb” in a public park in Halle, Germany. | PAGE 94: CAE members move onto the field to mark the trajectory and coverage of the dust. | PAGE 95: The general audience, police and other emergency personnel prepare for the blast. | PAGES 96-97: A nuclear physicist proceeds to ground zero and explains why the probability of this actually happening is near zero as CAE members continue to tape off the “contaminated” areas.







Mythic Weapons and State Propaganda

3.4 | 2010 | Pamphlet

Mythic Weapons and State Propaganda was a pamphlet commissioned by Printed Matter, NYC. The pamphlet was a summary of the weapons research CAE had been doing over the past four years. In the work, we distinguish between two systems of propaganda that make use of weapons. The first type is the “Big Brother” system. The political father figure assures his children that they are safe, because of a given weapons system. This style was typical of the Reagan-Bush era: Star Wars and the Patriot Missile are good examples. Star Wars, the anti-ICBM (intercontinental ballistic missile) laser weapon system, didn’t even exist, and what little research was done was a complete disaster in terms of weapons production—yet it seemed to make people feel more secure. The Patriot Missile actually existed, and was deployed in Israel for Gulf War I, but did none of what Bush claimed it could. Although the weapon success record was extremely poor, the news media assured everyone that it worked better than expected, so people felt safe.

The second type is the system used to disturb citizens. In this case, weapons held by the “enemy” are highlighted. They are small, portable, and most importantly, unstoppable. Examples include weaponized germs, “dirty bombs,” and most feared of all, the “suitcase” nuclear bomb. The hope is that if the public becomes hysterical enough, it will accept initiatives and laws no reasonable person would accept. The construction of this environment of panic is a tremendous trick, in that it must make the unreal real, or at the very least, transform the highly improbable into a certainty. This is the system preferred by the second Bush Administration, and it worked quite well during Bush’s first term. Indeed, people were afraid and allowed the erosion of personal rights, massive redistribution of wealth in favor of the rich, and successive adventurist military blunders in the Middle East.



The Super Secret Silent Soviet Sub

The first flicker of the neoconservative narrative revealed itself during the Ford administration. Donald Rumsfeld and Dick Cheney had successfully undermined Henry Kissinger’s influence in the executive branch. They immediately launched their fear narrative with the Soviets as the chosen enemy.

Rumsfeld set the tone with statements such as this:

The Soviet Union has been busy. They’ve been busy in terms of their level of effort; they’ve been busy in terms of the actual weapons they’ve been producing; they’ve been busy in terms of expanding production rates; they’ve been busy in terms of expanding their institutional capability to produce additional weapons at additional rates; they’ve been busy in terms of expanding their capability to increasingly improve the sophistication of those weapons. Year after year after year, they’ve been demonstrating that they have steadiness of purpose. They’re purposeful about what they’re doing.

The problem was that none of this was true. CIA evidence indicated the USSR was unraveling from the inside, was weakening militarily, and was on the verge of collapse. The neoconservatives approached friend and ally Paul Wolfowitz to create a team whose objective would be finding evidence to contradict the CIA’s findings. The result was Team B. The research team found no evidence for Rumsfeld’s claims, but they knew how to spin, and they fanatically believed in the need for their vision of the world.

Among the team’s interests were submarines capable of functioning as strategic underwater missile platforms. These weapons systems were critical in maintaining the policy of Mutually Assured Destruction. At this time, the Soviet subs were faster, but the Americans had better detection systems. Each had its own advantage. The neoconservatives were certain that the Soviets had produced a non-acoustic form of propulsion that confounded US sonar, thus upsetting the balance. This thesis took popular form in the book and film *The Hunt for Red October* with what the book’s author called “caterpillar drive” (properly known as magnetohydrodynamic drive).

No evidence for this undetectable submarine ever emerged, but the neoconservatives were not unnerved and continued to make the claim. For justification, they used the argument from cryptozoologists that absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. Rumsfeld would echo this argument almost three decades later when WMDs were not found in Iraq. While there is a logic to the argument that might make sense were one searching for the Loch Ness monster, it is rather thin as a sole basis for the production of military policy.

In spite of the entrance of this weapons system into the American imagination, the campaign generally failed to make the neoconservative narrative hegemonic. However, it worked well enough within conservative culture to further fuel an already strong neoliberal desire for the expansion of the military, for covert violent interventions around the world, and for...

Mythic Weapons and State Propaganda

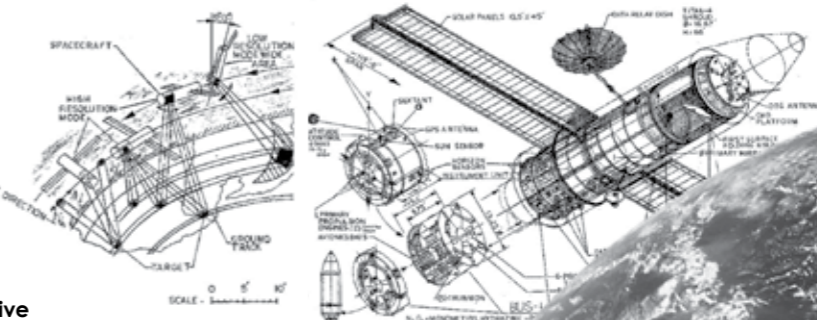
Critical Art Ensemble

Every decade seems to have a weapon around which mythic narratives are constructed about the state of the world, the legitimacy and illegitimacy of violence, and people’s relationship to security. Sometimes these weapons have a referent, and other times they exist only as an idea planted in the mind of the population. Usually their material function is not important. What is significant is the capacity of the idea to represent as self-evident vast amounts of dominant, conservative ideology.

In the US, two fundamental forms of political narrative have developed over the past thirty-five years—one representing neoliberal positions and one representing neoconservative positions. Most prevalent in the ‘80s and ‘90s was the neoliberal myth of military violence. To the neoliberals, a culturally iconic weapon should function to soothe the public. It should make people feel that they are safe in their homes, that their investments are secure, and that the world is basically a stable place. The weapon should be defensive, and outshine any weapons systems designed for offensive aggression. The weapon should be produced in the US by Americans in order to demonstrate American technical leadership as well as the unwillingness of the US to intervene in the economies or the governments of other nations. If hyped correctly, the icon should gently convey a benign paternalism that citizens will be pleased to follow.

The second narrative form was successfully deployed by rival neoconservatives in 2001 (although it had been on the backburner since the mid ‘70s) and stood very much in contrast to the neoliberal one. To this group, a culturally iconic weapon should function to alarm and scare the public. It should represent a world that is unstable and conflicted—a place where neither person nor property is safe without the use of all available military assets. This weapon should be offensive and outshine any American defensive weapon system. It should be produced outside the US by people of other religions and ethnicities or inside the US by foreign agents. It should demonstrate the powerful desire of the “jealous” and the “hateful” to intervene in the American way of life—a force which cannot be stopped without an extraordinary restructuring of government and civil society. Hyped correctly, it should produce in the American public a desire for strong, unyielding, all-powerful leadership that cannot be questioned.

Neoliberals and neoconservatives have been struggling for the past thirty-five years to make their ideological narrative dominate all others, and will probably continue into the future. The following is a short list of key weapons chosen to carry the ideological burden.



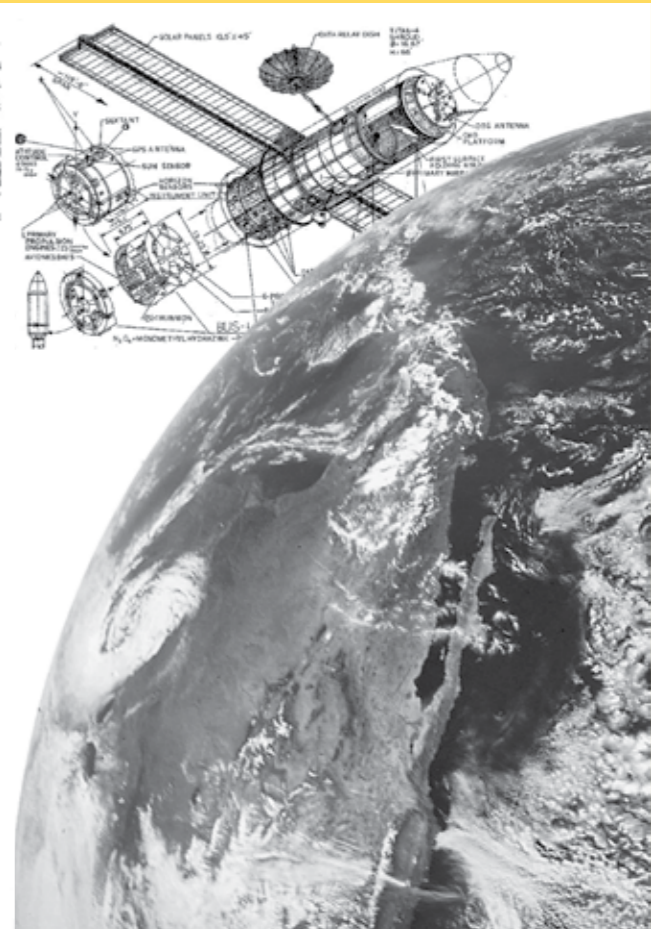
The Strategic Defense Initiative

The Strategic Defense Initiative (Star Wars) was a neoliberal weapon system—a way to expand the military through the gentle reassurance that the world could be protected from the “Evil Empire” if only research into a nuclear explosion-powered X-ray laser were undertaken. Father of the hydrogen bomb Edward Teller alerted the Reagan administration that the prototype of such a weapon had been developed and flatly stated that Star Wars could be built to the size of an executive desk.

During the Reagan administration, the public fascination with the idea of a laser weapon system for peace was exploited to fund all types of related systems that might possibly be used for Star Wars—including ground systems, rail guns, chemical lasers, and “Brilliant Pebbles.” Unfortunately, none of these systems alone or in combination were capable of creating a web of protection for the US. Some, like the rail gun that would destroy itself after a single shot, would almost be funny if the waste weren’t so excessive.

While a few useful technological spin-offs may have come out of all this research (primarily for the military, but also one or two things like medical imaging devices that benefited the civilian sector), it was mostly tremendously expensive vaporware. Star Wars was equally absurd from a military perspective because the tactics necessary to confound the US defensive web were quite inexpensive. Moreover, the possibility that the Soviets could launch a preemptive attack before the system went on-line began to rise in probability. Even more absurdly, *Pere* Reagan attempted to assure the Soviets that he would share the technology. Only skepticism followed, with Gorbachev reasoning that since the US hadn’t shared any other technology, it seemed unlikely to share its best, cutting-edge technology.

One weapon system emerged out of SDI research that is still being used to this day, and it has certainly had its moment in the sun as a mythic weapon...





Patriot Missile in ATK Thiokol Rocket Park - Corinne, Utah



Patriot PAC-3 missile found at Scrap All, an Ybor City scrap metal business in Tampa FL.

The Patriot Missile

After the disaster of Vietnam, the first neoliberals were reluctant to wage full-scale wars. For Reagan, "low intensity" interventions like the invasion of Grenada were fine, but his preference was to send money, arms, and advisors to nations he thought needed regime change. Bush Senior planned to follow this policy, and was also willing to fight small battles as long as they wouldn't cost too many American lives. Unfortunately, Panama would not be his only military problem—the first Gulf War was going to require a major military commitment.

It was at least the kind of war Bush Senior liked: one that protected US corporate interests and (theoretically at least) promoted stability in the region. The area could be returned to the status quo, and the appearance of full withdrawal could follow. The neoliberals believed that most Americans, even those still bruised by the Vietnam quagmire, would go along with this—and they did. Bush received his highest approval ratings during and immediately after the Gulf War.

In the lead-up to the war and especially during the war, Americans needed some consolation, some proof that that everything would be OK. The Patriot Missile was there to do its part. Not as a weapon, but as a propaganda device, something that could be used to portray American military aggression as a defensive maneuver to protect Kuwait and Israel from the Iraqi invader. It was the perfect counter to Iraq's SCUD missile, which represented illegitimate violence and arbitrary killing. Oddly enough, both of these weapon systems were more or less junk, but they made for a great Manichean narrative about the war that US media could not get enough of.

This strategy marked a slight change in the tactics of myth production used with Star Wars and the Soviet Sub: in this case there was an actual, deployed weapons system called the Patriot Missile. The videos were impressive and so were the claims. The US Army boasted an initial success rate of 80% in Saudi Arabia and 50% in Israel. Those claims were eventually scaled back to 70% and 40%. However, when President George H.W. Bush traveled to Raytheon's Patriot manufacturing plant in Andover, Massachusetts during the Gulf War, he declared that the "Patriot is 41 for 42: 42 Scuds engaged, 41 intercepted!" The President's claimed success rate was thus over 97% during the war. Yet on April 7, 1992, Theodore Postol of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Reuven Pedatzur of Tel Aviv University testified before a House Committee that, according to their independent analyses, the Patriot system had a success rate of below 10%, and perhaps even zero.

Once a weapon is in the military system it stays for years, no matter what the cost and no matter how useless it may be. The Comanche Helicopter, the Crusader Armored Vehicle, and the V-22 Osprey are all good examples of vaporware costing billions of dollars. The Patriot Missile is still screwing up in Iraq, but with much less fanfare—a fact which came to light again in 2007 when the family of a Navy pilot who was killed by a Patriot sued the systems manufacturer Raytheon. The "improvements" to the weapon system were apparently not good enough: the Patriot Missile still cannot distinguish between friendly and enemy aircraft.

And speaking of weapons that can't distinguish friend from foe...

Anthrax

The Reagan/Bush/Clinton years of neoliberal rule came to a close at the end of the century, and with them the use of mythic weapons that made Americans feel good about themselves. The neoliberal era was characterized by the paternalism of a military state dedicated to making us feel that we were secure in our homes, that our investments were safe in a stable world, and that we could accept with modest ambivalence the many US-installed dictators protecting capitalist interests with an iron fist around the globe. That was all to change once the neoconservatives came to power and the 9/11 tragedies gave them the opening to launch a massive terror campaign on US residents and the world. Now, nowhere was safe, and everything and everyone should be feared. In the US, this was not the kind of agitation that leads to organized productive action or even raw fight-or-flight, but the kind that separates people and leads them to shut down rationally and surrender their agency. The neoconservatives could now push their agenda with minimal resistance and maintain a military state of perpetual war. To maintain this high level of popular catatonia they needed fresh, scary threats that could happen to anyone, anywhere, at any time.

The Bush administration realized very quickly that germs are really scary. We are socialized to have a nonrational fear of them from the time we are children. Parents, teachers, medical professionals, health and safety bureaucrats, and the multi-billion dollar sanitizing industry remind us again and again that germs are harmful. Moreover, on an experiential level, we all know how unpleasant it is just to have the flu, so anyone can easily imagine the horror of having inhalation anthrax.

When the anthrax attacks occurred in 2001 on the heels of 9/11, the Bush administration saw an opportunity to exploit a specific threat that everyone knew about. Panic could be encouraged, and with that panic, a new, mostly government-funded, multi-billion dollar "biodefense" industry could be launched. The anthrax attacks should have demonstrated what poor weapons germs actually are: of the thousands of people exposed, there were twenty-two infections and five deaths. This is far from an efficient weapon, let alone the Weapon of Mass Destruction it was made out to be. Yet the Bush administration encouraged panic, with both the White House and FEMA recommending that Americans buy duct tape and plastic sheeting to seal their homes in case of a large-scale attack. Despite immediate criticism from scientists and widespread ridicule, the White House and the Department of Homeland Security still feature this suggestion on their web sites. Of course plastic and tape will not stop bacteria, but what makes this even more amusing is that if anyone were actually successful in creating an airtight room, the occupants would suffocate. The Bush administration was in effect inviting everyone to their own suicide party.

Unfortunately, another propaganda victory for the Bush administration emerged out of this sad event: the belief that the military and civilian health agencies have the same interests, with biodefense being the top goal. But while the military's interest is to focus on rare, scary diseases like the



Ebola virus, smallpox, and anthrax, the focus of civilian interests could not be more different. The finite resources that once went to study and treat real public health crises that kill millions of people each year—illnesses like AIDS, malaria, hepatitis, and tuberculosis—are being redeployed to research military applications of exotic diseases. Gullibility has won out over skepticism, and fiction has overcome reality. As with...

The Dirty Bomb

The dirty bomb is another perfect neocon-style mythic weapon. First, it raises the fear level. Radioactivity is really scary. It produced Godzilla. It melts your skin, and you die a horrible cancerous death. Second, it appears to be such a plausible device: all one has to do is get some dynamite and a heaping helping of a radioactive substance, put it in a suitcase, and detonate it in a dense urban area. The radioactive substance is blown throughout the city and everyone gets radiation poisoning or cancer, just as with fallout from an atom bomb. Third, the materials are easy to acquire. Fourth, the bomb is portable and therefore impossible to stop. Finally, anyone could make it with minimal training. All the mostly fictional ingredients neoconservatives look for when constructing a mythic weapon are there to be abused. All it took was John Ashcroft to legitimize the dirty bomb with his claim that a "known terrorist," Jose Padilla, was "exploring a plan" to build such a bomb. The fantasy became entrenched in the great American imagination where it would grow until it was the unquestioned fear-producing juggernaut it is today.

In fact, Padilla was never going to build a dirty bomb. Although the government's claim that he might be planning to build one was used to justify his 3-year long illegal detention and torture, prosecutors never charged him with any plot involving a bomb, "dirty" or otherwise. The Department of Justice narrative about Padilla was as fictional as the bomb itself. Ashcroft was later reprimanded for it.

To clear the air, and for the benefit of frightened juries everywhere, the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission's website states:

Most RDDs [Radiological Dispersal Devices] would not release enough radiation to kill people or cause severe illness—the conventional explosive itself would be more harmful to individuals than the radioactive material. However, depending on the scenario, an RDD explosion could cause fear and panic, contaminate property, and require potentially costly cleanup. Making prompt, accurate information available to the public could prevent the panic sought by terrorists.

[All said without irony.]

Continuing: *A dirty bomb is in no way similar to a nuclear weapon or nuclear bomb... A dirty bomb is not a 'Weapon of Mass Destruction'...*

Manhattan Project nuclear scientist Theodore Rockwell has this to say:

[I]t is well documented by all our official agencies that the radioactivity in dirty bombs is unlikely to seriously hurt anyone. People not injured by the conventional explosion itself could walk away and be out of danger. If concerned about possible contamination, they could remove their clothes and take a shower.



The bottom line here is that in order to make a dirty bomb that is actually more than just a conventional explosive, it would take massive amounts of radioactive material that would never fit into a cargo container, much less a suitcase. Compounding the problem is the fact that the more radioactive material is spread out, as it would in the bomb's explosion, the weaker it becomes. The logistics of making, placing and detonating such a weapon are far beyond the resources of a terrorist like bin Laden, let alone a jihadist dreamer like Padilla.

We need to focus on the real problem—which is not so much the fictions that mythic weapons promote, but the realities they cover up. What all mythic weapons have in common is their role in the production of cultural/ideological conditions in which it is easier for the ruling class to concentrate wealth in their own hands, to create a police state that makes sure they keep it, and to fortify a system in which it is increasingly harder for people to push back. The real narrative, as opposed to the very complex fictional one, is actually quite simple.

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04. Resistance

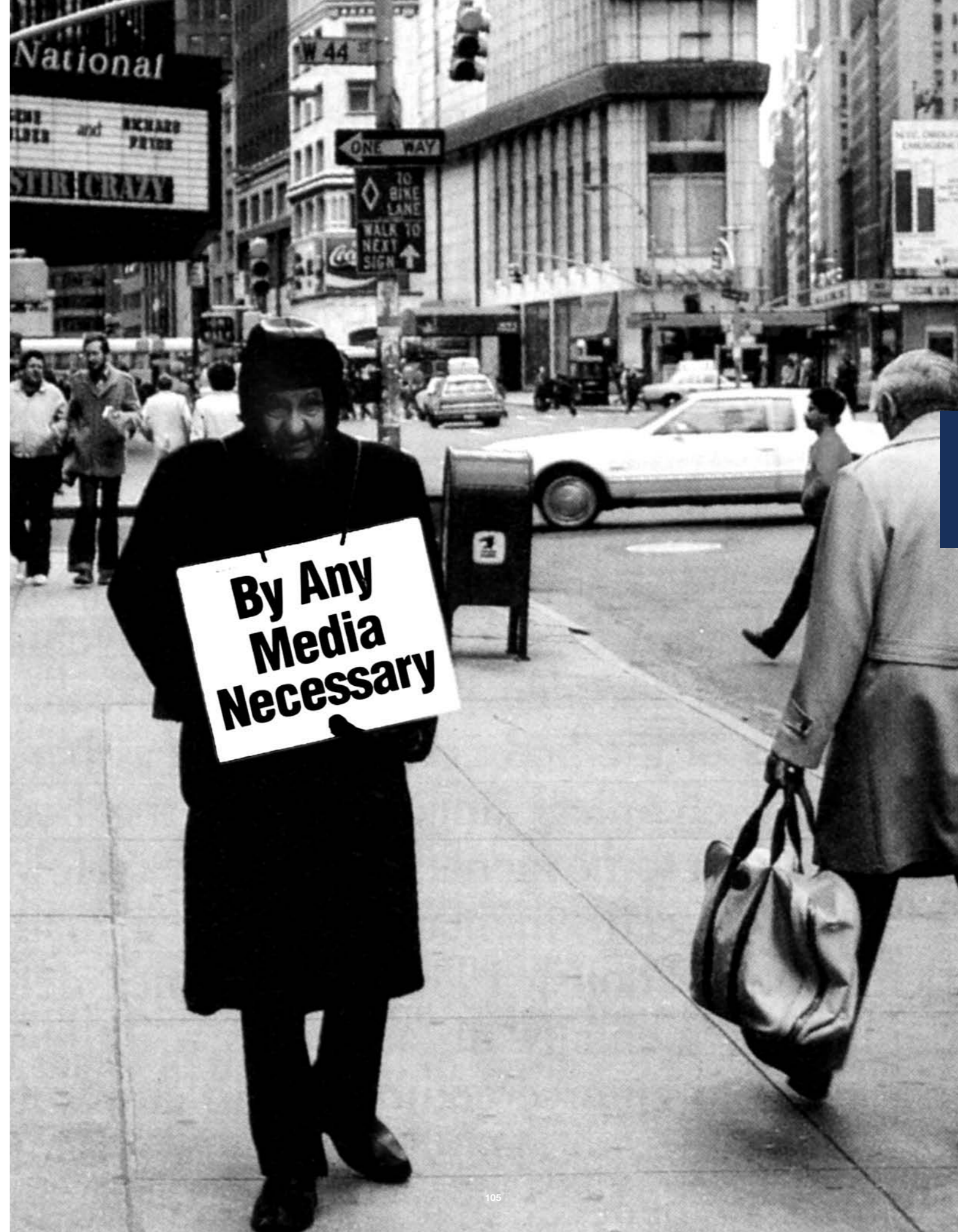
CAE has never had tremendous enthusiasm for the overly mythologized 1960s, but we have copious respect for the understanding that within technocratic society a political movement cannot be successful without a parallel cultural movement. Prior to the 60s, the Left was dominated by orthodox Marxist theory. Revolution was produced by an irreconcilable contradiction between the emerging form of production and the outdated form of state governance. As the economy bifurcates, leading to the simultaneous existence of two economic systems (for example, agrarian feudalism and industrial capitalism), classes allied with the new system come to realize that the interests the state protects and promotes are those of the outdated economy which are at odds with its own.

Given the superiority of the newer economic form to better marshal power through material means, the decadent state representing the needs of the old economy is violently dismantled and re-constructed to serve the needs of the new economic form. Hence culture as ideological development, aesthetic development, and aggregate social behavior were considered to be overdetermined manifestations of the dominant order, mirroring and legitimizing its existence and needs. Culture was not something to be concerned about—if anything, it was a set of social constellations meriting mere suspicion.

While there were some visionary predecessors, including Walter Benjamin and Max Weber, who believed that culture had a degree of causal independence and explicitly rejected economic determinism, it wasn't until the 60s that groups such as the Diggers, Provos, and Situationists applied this notion for resistant purposes. Culture could have a resistant function that would keep minority politics robust. Free stores, psychedelia, Woodstock Nation, flower power, free love, rock-and-roll, and so on, acted as temporary alternatives to the mainstream. It was part of a groundwork that enabled thoughts and actions counter to the interests of authoritarian structures. An even grander lesson at work here is that cultural practices can and should be appreciated for their temporary value. While flower power is now irrelevant, if not laughable, this does not mean it was meaningless in its historical moment. The work that interests CAE is not that which has allegedly "stood the test time of time"—which all too often means it acts as the legitimizing mirror the Marxists warn us about. Ephemeral cultural practices that consistently recombine, remix, and dissipate only to pop up again in different forms and in different places are the most powerful types of counter-spectacle and subversive speech.

In light of these beliefs, CAE is often asked: "When has an artwork ever made a difference?" Although usually asked with genuine intentions, we believe this is a pernicious question born of the current economy's need for subjects without agency. The answer is that no artwork has made a difference—but this is the answer to the wrong question, which has already determined the failure of its object. The better question is, "What can an *aggregate* of actions do *over time*?" No individual is powerful enough to effect change on his or her own (contrary to what some ideologies of individualism suggest). Only groups of people over time have made change. No one believes one demonstration will stop a war, or one die-in will stop the AIDS crisis. Many actions over time are what will ameliorate an unacceptable situation. The same can be said of culture. A single project can at best only restructure a limited situation, while it is the aggregate of politicized cultural actions that can create a break or shift in culture as a whole.

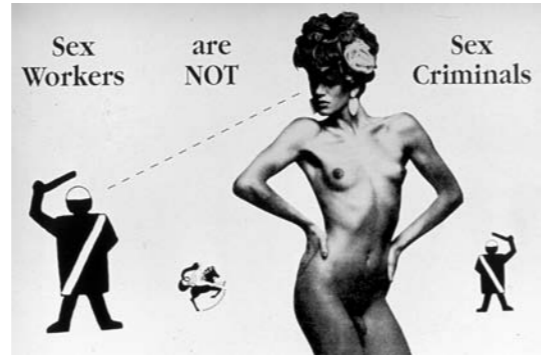
The construction of a cultural track that parallels the political track of anti-authoritarian resistance has always been CAE's major concern and course of action.



New Sex Experts

4.1 | 1990 | Agitprop, Publishing, Exhibition

New Sex Experts was part of an ongoing exchange CAE had with the organization Prostitutes of New York (PoNY) in the early 90s. We made agitprop for them; did the cover graphic for the premier issue of their magazine *The PoNY Express*; got their writings published in *Art Paper*, and connected them with Gran Fury for a window installation at the New Museum. The best part for CAE was getting sex worker, Mapplethorpe model, and correspondent for *Adam* (a popular porn magazine) Veronica Vera on the Florida State University Visiting Artist Series. She gave an insightful talk to a packed house (and, of course, enraged the anti-porn feminists).



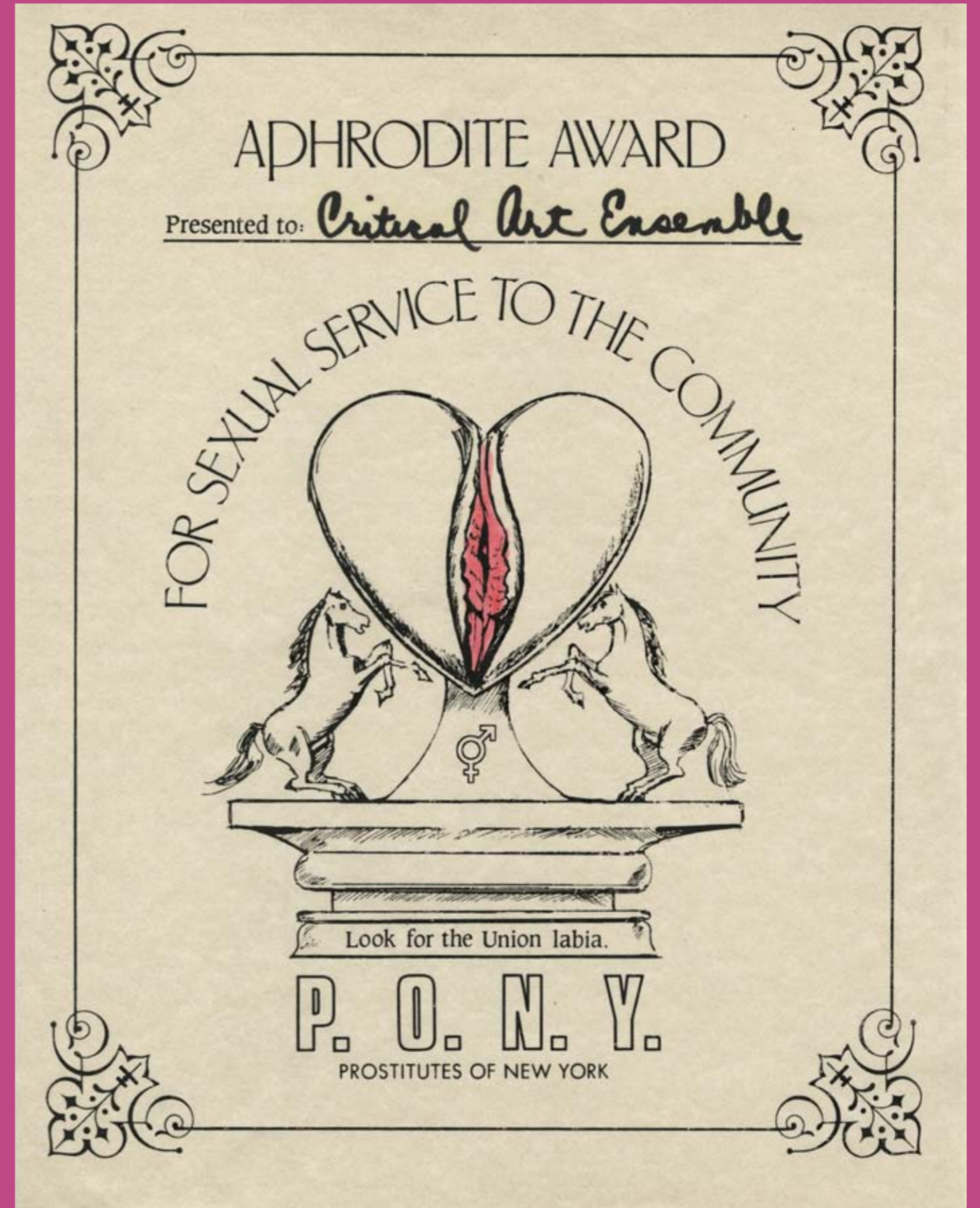
In the late 80s and early 90s, NYC sex workers really needed all the allies and platforms they could get to voice their positions and needs. NYC was in the middle of a "clean up the streets effort" that lasted for about twenty years. The sex industry was in the crosshairs: lots of police raids, and sex workers were turning up dead. CAE has no way of knowing, but the street hustlers were of the opinion that police were behind the killings. PoNY was formed not only for worker solidarity (particularly for those working clubs), but also as a means of protection. While the experience of working with PoNY oscillated between enlightening and depressing, empowering and enraging, we surely got our labor's worth from the on-the-ground schooling PoNY gave us in regard to the structure and dynamics of the sex industry, associated law, and what had to be done to improve the situation. Their primary demand was the decriminalization of prostitution, and this struggle still continues.

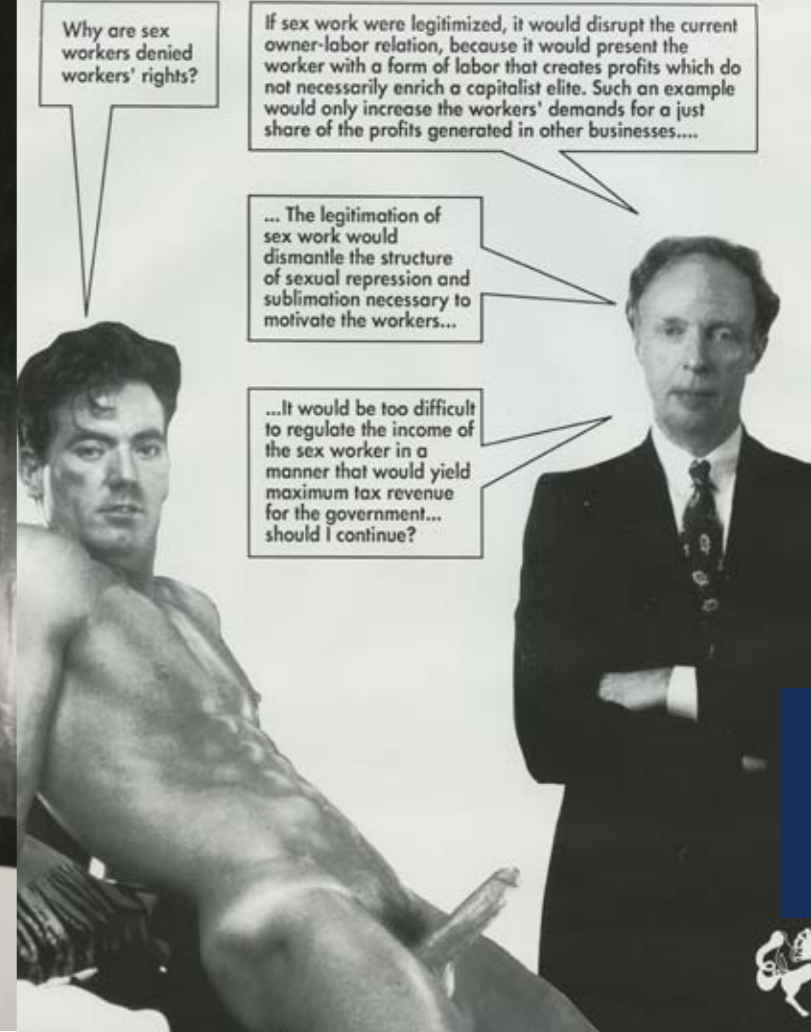


The following day CAE and Veronica opened *New Sex Experts*, in which we exhibited the agitprop at the popular alternative space Window on Gaines. Since we couldn't show it legally in public, we had to exhibit it as an old fashioned peep show, so people could see it from the street without seeing it on the street. Veronica had also gathered quite an impressive display of artifacts drawn from sex worker resistance nationwide.



PAGE 109 BOTTOM: Veronica Vera and her Tallahassee girls. CAE member Hope Kurtz on the far right.





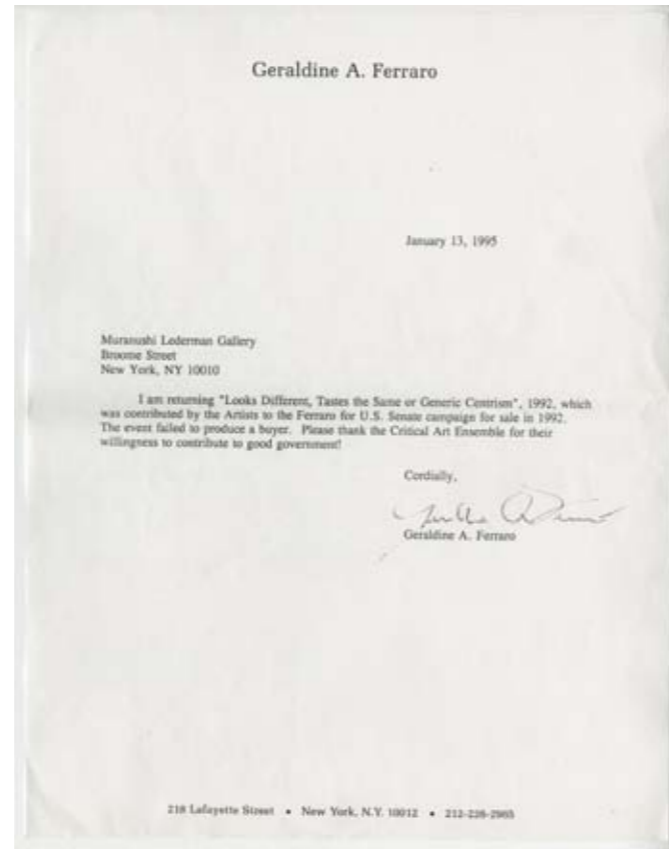
Looks Different, Tastes the Same

4.2 | 1992 | Intervention

This project came about because we were in the right place at the right time. During a visit to Muranushi/Lederman Gallery in NYC, Yvonne Muranushi told CAE she had been asked to donate a piece from one of the artists she represented to an auction at Metro Pictures to raise money for Senate candidate Geraldine Ferraro. She didn't think anyone would do it. CAE's reply was swift: "We'll make something for the auction!" At this point in time, CAE hated electoral politics. Elections were about choosing a right-wing tinged centrism that in no way represented any of our positions or desires. Although we respected Ferraro for her contributions to feminist politics on the ground, our dislike of the parties and the system won the day.

In the lead-up to the auction, Ferraro had been speaking all over NYC about her support for the arts, and arguing that censorship of arts by government officials was unacceptable. She called the auction *A Night of Free Expression*, so we thought that whatever we contributed would have to be shown. CAE's project consisted five photographs and a text arranged in a triangular form. The first two at the bottom were Ferraro's campaign photo, and that of her opponent Al D'Amato; the second two, a photo of a can of "Classic" Coke, and another of a can of Pepsi ("the choice of a new generation"); and at the top of the triangle was a photoshopped hybrid of the two candidates. The text read, "Looks different, tastes the same." We delivered it to Metro Pictures, whereupon it was immediately censored. The Ferraro staff refused to show it. In a truly inspired moment, Yvonne called the *New York Post*—a right-wing, Rupert Murdoch-owned gossip rag that shouldn't be dignified with the designation of "newspaper." The *Post* loved the story and immediately went to work calling Ferraro's election headquarters wanting to know why the piece was censored. Ferraro laughed it off, claiming that her staff had made a mistake, and of course the piece would be shown. And it was, in a very central location.

Muranushi/Lederman closed its doors shortly after this project. Some months later, the business that moved into the storefront found a package of photos on its doorstep. Our project had been returned. The business called Yvonne and she collected it for us. The text photo was missing, so what we reproduce in this book is partly a remake of the original work.



Gerry & the art of being wise

Page Six
 By FRANK DIGIACOMO and JOANNA MOLLOY
 With Florence Anthony

Bloc party
 SOME of America's leading investigative reporters got on a plane for Moscow here yesterday to link up with their counterparts who once toiled behind the Iron Curtain. Carl Bernstein and friend Faye Wattleton, the L.A. Times' Robert Scheer, Nation editor Victor Navasky, investigative reporter David Weir, InterNation's Mark Dowie and a dozen others will trade techniques and offer suggestions on how the former East Bloc reporters can have their own private Watergates. "I think we'll learn more from them than they will from us," says Dowie, who uncovered the Pinto and Dalkon Shield scandals. "Some of them have been working underground in countries where there's no such thing as a public record." The planeload of journalists seems to list a bit to the left, doesn't it? "The Right doesn't have any investigative reporters," says Dowie. "They're all pundits."

Princely sum
 HAS Prince struck a royal new

"FREEDOM of Expression '92," trumpeted the invitation to the art auction for Geraldine Ferraro and the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee. But a Florida artists' group that had been asked to contribute a piece found that that freedom didn't extend to them. Though Ferraro overruled her underlings' decision after PAGE SIX made inquiries, initially the Critical Art Ensemble's offering was rejected — because it hinted that the Senate candidate is about as different from her bitter rival Sen. Al D'Amato as Pepsi is from Coke. The piece was one of several gifts bestowed by high-profile artists — including Ross Bleckner, Eric Fischl, Jenny Holzer, Lois Lane, Robert Rauschenberg, Claes Oldenburg and Roy Lichtenstein — for the Sept. 9 Freedom of Expression '92 benefit auction, slated for the Metro Pictures Gallery in SoHo. Entitled "Looks Different, Tastes the Same," the Floridians' piece consists of five photographs, arranged in a pyramid. The bottom tier features a photo of Ferraro

on the left and D'Amato on the right. The next tier shows a can of Pepsi, supposed choice of the new generation, positioned above Ferraro's head. A container of "Classic" Coke appears above the incumbent D'Amato's mug. Topping off the triangular structure is a computer-generated picture made up half of Ferraro's face and half of D'Amato's. Yesterday, the Muranushi-Lederman Gallery, which reps the Tallahassee-based Ensemble here, was contacted by Ferraro fundraiser Joe Vivalo and told that the piece had been rejected, said gallery owner Yvonne Muranushi, as "an inappropriate image." "I think it's rather a shame," says the Ensemble's Steve Kurtz, especially in light of the Ferraro quote that appears on the invitation. "This past decade has seen an erosion of fundamental rights in America," it reads. "In the Senate, I will work to defend America's embattled freedoms: freedom of choice, freedom of speech and freedom of expression." "We thought, 'Great, if this politician truly

has the courage of her convictions, we'll gladly give her the money and the labor." But they weren't exactly out to flatter. "The rich will continue to get richer. There will be more homeless," says Kurtz. "We'll see fundamentally the same things [no matter who wins]. It's who makes the best media spectacle. "For saying that ... we got our piece thrown out. I hardly call it ... free expression." Initially, Ferraro's Frank Wilkinson told us "This is an event to benefit Gerry Ferraro's campaign and the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee. We didn't feel that this piece was going to benefit either one." But after we started calling some of the artists involved to explain what had happened, the gallery got another call from Gerry's kids. They wanted the artwork brought back in. Ferraro issued a statement to us: "My staff is losing its sense of humor. We're hoping the piece sells for a lot of money and helps me defeat D'Amato." PAGE SIX gets results.



The Electronic Disturbance

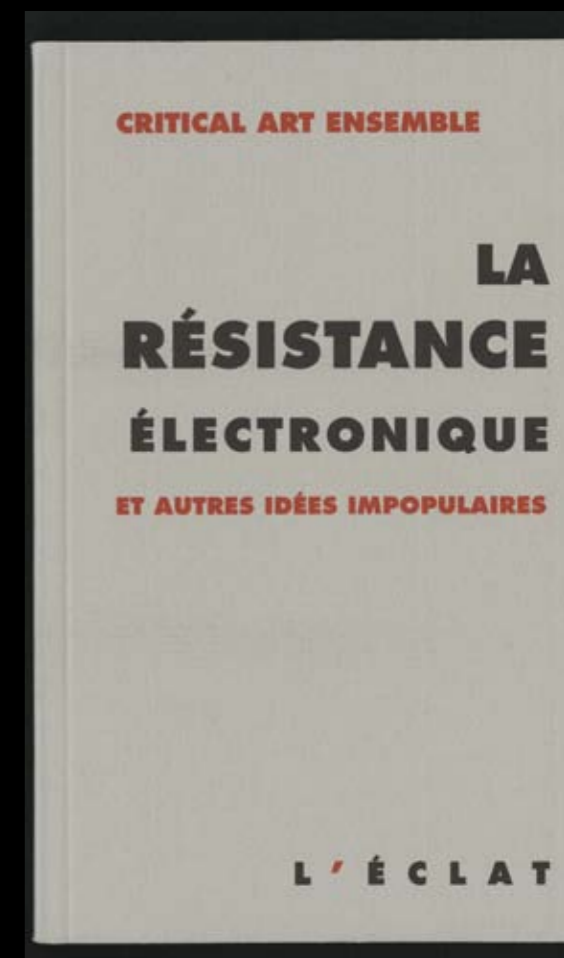
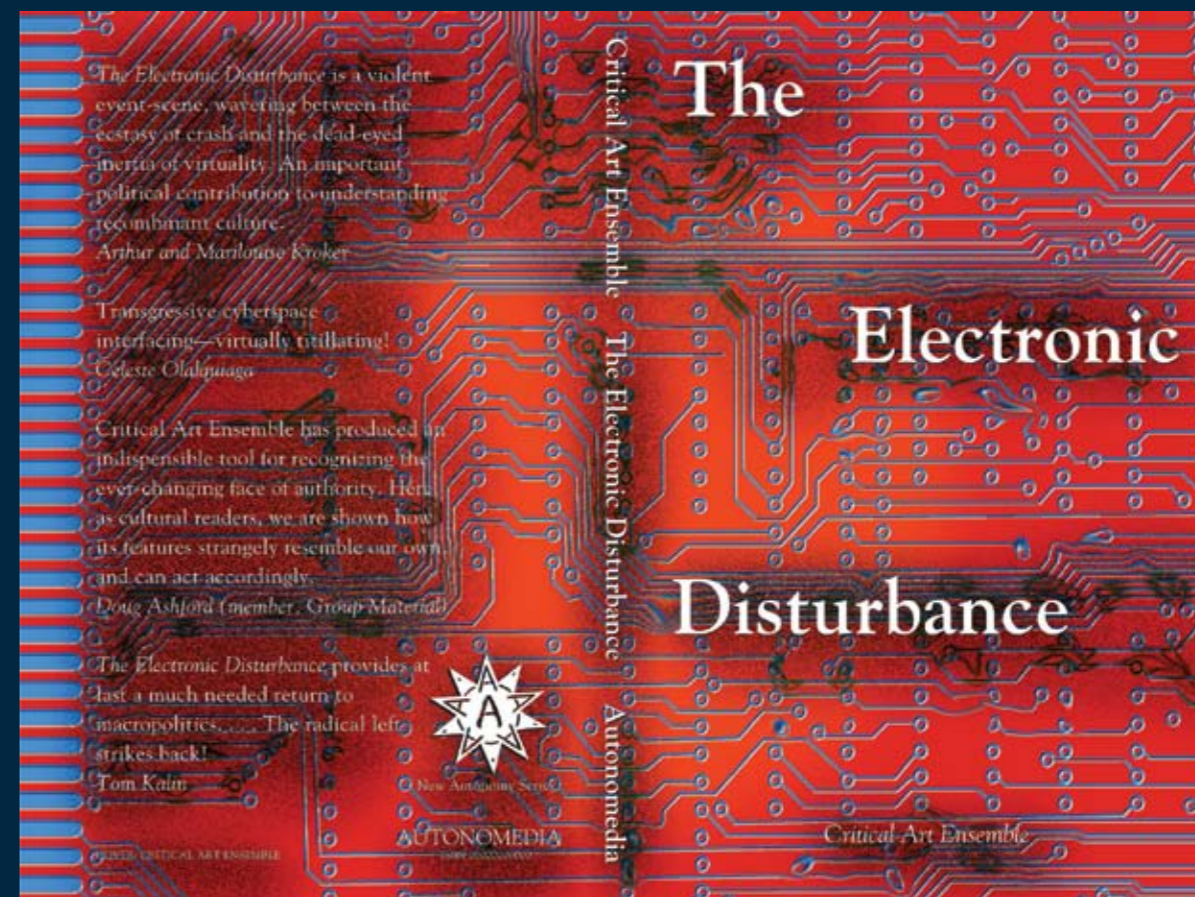
4.3 | 1994 | Theory



The Electronic Disturbance was CAE's first book project. In it we described how digital networking would enable capitalism to reconfigure power relationships, and what cultural workers would have to do to mount a resistance to these new forms. It punctured a hole in the techno-utopian bubble enveloping Internet culture.

This was a difficult project to get off the ground, not for lack of ideas or ease of writing, but because it seemed to be a message no one wanted to hear. The early 90s were the peak of identity politics, and our interests in macro politics intersected poorly with such issues. The street activists did not seem particularly interested in digital culture, especially after the positive achievements gained through traditional street protest around the AIDS crisis. CAE couldn't find a publisher (although at this point it was more of a pitch than a manuscript). Then Lou Acierno of Rehab Video and ABC No Rio suggested we take it to Autonomedia/Semiotext(e). He introduced us. At first, Autonomedia was very skeptical. They came to a performance we did at NYU to see what we were about.

They liked it, and they agreed to work on a video project with us (*Apocalypse and Utopia*, page 242). Finally, they said OK, let's see the manuscript. The text was almost a manuscript by this time, so we had some decent pages to show them. To CAE's great fortune, Autonomedia member Steven Englander volunteered to be the project editor. The project went through in spite of worries that it would not sell. When it finally appeared in 1994, much to everyone's surprise it sprang to number four overall (number one in nonfiction) on the [*Village*] *Voice Literary Supplement* alternative bestseller list. The book was rapidly translated into Italian and French, and some of the chapters into German. Apparently, an undefined demographic was waiting for this very discourse.



Useless Technology

4.4 1994 Newspaper Insert

In 1993, Arthur Kroker asked CAE to contribute an article on the topic of "pure technology" to an upcoming issue of the tech and media theory journal *CTheory*. From CAE's perspective, in order to purify technology it would have to be separated from function, and in order to separate it from function it would have to be separated from the sphere of human intention. It would then be pure, because all it could do is exist. CAE had always assumed all technology was functional, but this assumption began to rapidly dissipate once we began to view it through the lens of purity. We began to catch glimpses of purity in elements of technology that surrounded us on a daily basis, hiding amongst larger, functional items. For example, we came across a VCR that could be programmed a year in advance. This function never could or would be used to its full potential. It was a completely nonfunctional part of the machine, there only to exist. It was the appendix of the VCR. We began collecting more examples, until we discovered that the largest, most complex technological system known to humankind was itself useless. The intercontinental ballistic missile system was not built to be used. In fact, if it were ever used, it would completely fail as a technology in the era of deterrence. Its success totally rested on the uselessness (purity) of its existence.

By this time, we had quite a catalog of items, and we thought we should share them with world—not just in an academic journal, but also in a more popular form. Being a catalog, the form chose itself, only we would narrow it further to a newspaper insert. As a mundane object that was easy and amusing to read, it was ready for delivery to the public. Our problem, however, was that after printing it we had no money to pay a newspaper to distribute it. The one asset we did have was a lot of labor, so we could put it in newspapers ourselves. Together with other volunteers interested in the action, we went to as many coin-operated newspaper dispensers as we could, put in a coin, took out all the papers, added an insert into each paper, and placed the papers back into the dispenser. So, somewhere between the laundry detergent coupons and the "big sale" adverts, a deviant curiosity lay in wait in the form of an insert that had the potential to disturb common assumptions about the purpose of technology.

The Critical Art Ensemble
Techno-compiler presents

Super Savings Closeout SALE!

Useless Technology

"Technology so pure that its only function is to exist."

The Pershing II Missile Guidance System
Here, the limits of excess go far beyond the visible. This terminal guidance, all-weather precision radar/video synchronization unit lives a godly life of state of the art uselessness. The real deployment of power flows to elsewhere, in the unseen, non-rational margins of existence. *From Lockheed* \$1M

Many items previously thought to be Apocalyptic or Utopian NOW TOTALLY USELESS!

Personal grooming that's technological if not useful.
The Panasonic Nose Hair Trimmer's special design lets you trim safely and easily. The attempt to return to nature technology backfires, and the spiraling circular blades rotate quickly to trim nose hairs, without sticks or cuts. The trimmer and the simple technology that will not distract from daily tasks is too easily rechanneled into spectacular products that rarely deliver the convenience so desperately sought. Takes one AA battery (not included). *From Panasonic* \$15.95

Sony Hi-Fi Stereo VCR With VCR Plus Programming
Driven by spectacularized images of desire, consumers want more for their money even if they can't use what they get. SONY corporation delivers with a hi-fi stereo VCR with VCR plus programming, cable remote, cable box controller, 182 channel capability, 12 event/1 month timer. The double handles 13 essential functions and there's even a pop double TV/VCR remote. *From Sony* \$299.95
"Programming manual requires reading with lateral skill."

MK 21 Advanced Ballistic Missile Reentry Vehicles
The combined weight of 10 MK 21's is such that the plan to deploy that number on each MX, not only would have reduced the missile's anticipated range by 900 miles, but also would have violated SALT II by exceeding the treaty's maximum allowable throw weight. This ideal of destruction is never hungry, and is willing to eat all resources. At a cost of \$1.752 million each, these useless missiles helped send the USSR into a state of bankruptcy. After all, the fall of the USSR had little to do with ideology. *From U.S. Government* \$1,752,000.00

I'm Bored!
Get your system **TELEPHONED** at **1-800-USELESS**
Overnight Delivery **Only \$1.00**

W-53 Thermonuclear Warhead

Proper adherence to the codes of uselessness can get you access to the W-53 Thermonuclear warhead, weighing in at 8,300 lbs and a yield of 9 megatons. As a special Bonus Offer, with every purchase of a W-53 you can get a W-80 Warhead for half price! *From U.S. Government* \$1M

W-80
200,000 lbs
10 megatons

EMR 750 Towel Warmer
Everyone needs to be pampered with a lovely towel on a cold morning. Make the technology that created the electric EMR 750 won't liberate us from the forces of production, but their again maybe it will—your choice! Choose a chrome or gold plated finish, or any custom color that coordinates with your bath. *From Home Inc.* \$149.95

Don't fall asleep at the wheel of advanced technology.
Long hours on the road and low-angle driving can cause drivers to lose concentration and feel drowsy. The Drowsy Alarm keeps you awake and alert. This simple, compact device fits comfortably over your ear and emits an audible alarm if your head drops forward as you drive. Requires one button cell battery (included). *From Drowsy Inc.* \$22.95

Shiatsu Manager
Our most popular manager. Powerful rollers provide the increased elevation that Marx believed in the epoch of capitalism. Feels like real hands. *From Shiatsu* \$99.95

Every purchase registers you to WIN A Free Visit to the USS Arizona!
The USS Arizona, a proud monument to uselessness, rests silently in beautiful Pearl Harbor. A functional item made useless through sacrifice, the Arizona invites us to ponder the metaphysical moment of profound loss through artificially created memory.

ADI Space-based Laser
The entire piece of Reagan's grand monument to the cosmos. Now you too can share in this material form of excess. *From U.S. Government* \$1M

Available to you due to the lack of competitors for Hegelian Mastery of the Globe.

Smart Rocks
This Smart Rock or Smart Bullet is the most fully developed technology for destroying missiles and warheads. Now the desire of the bourgeoisie to subvert themselves to the universe has become stable. *From U.S. Government* \$1M

Jen Air 156 Range
The Jen Air 156 Range offers you dozens of options that transcend human use. This delectable of excess includes a three draft ventilator with a 400 cubic ft. per minute internal blower, halogen light, cold, radiant and solid elements, convection and thermal oven, 3 different optional doors, and a versatile cook top system so you can design the style of cooking machine you want. *From Jen Air* \$1,299.95

KitchenAid Stand Mixer
For the bargain-hungry consumer, KitchenAid offers this 200 and 1700 watt mixer. Glossy green and chrome-plated, this mixer is laden with many extra features. Your choice of 12 different mixing speeds, from lightly mixed to very mixed. Enjoy world-class consumer production with KitchenAid. *From KitchenAid* \$299.92

Buick Park Avenue
This vehicle may be superior in its capacity as transportation, but we have loaded this car with numerous features that serve no purpose at all in making up for this oversight. At the heart of the Park Avenue is a super fuel injected V6 engine, revolutionary wheel suspension, standard anti-lock brakes, and a hand-held air bag safety feature. Also included are 2-speed power windows, power locks, mirrors, antenna, airlocks and lights, as well as climate control and a 6 speaker electronically tuned AM stereo FM radio and cassette deck. This form of excess is the privilege of those who enjoy the surplus of production. *From Buick* \$22,000.00

Hopitech Magnetic Resonance Imaging Device
This state of the art medical technology delivers a corporate promise, since it is the perfect medical sight machine. The Hopitech MRI device articulates the space of the body with such clarity that there can be no place for a biological boundary to hide. When used exclusively the MRI protects capital and increases profit. *From Hopitech* \$200,000.00

Ferberware Electric Peeler
The Electric Peeler from Ferberware provides the convenience that most consumers desperately desire. But before you know it, this device will be collecting dust in a closet or cabinet along with your home paint roller and electric staple stick, thus becoming another piece of useless technology. Comes with a built in potato eye remover, 6 ft. cord, low voltage adapter, removable stainless steel blades. Adjustable for right or left hand use. *From Ferberware* \$29.95

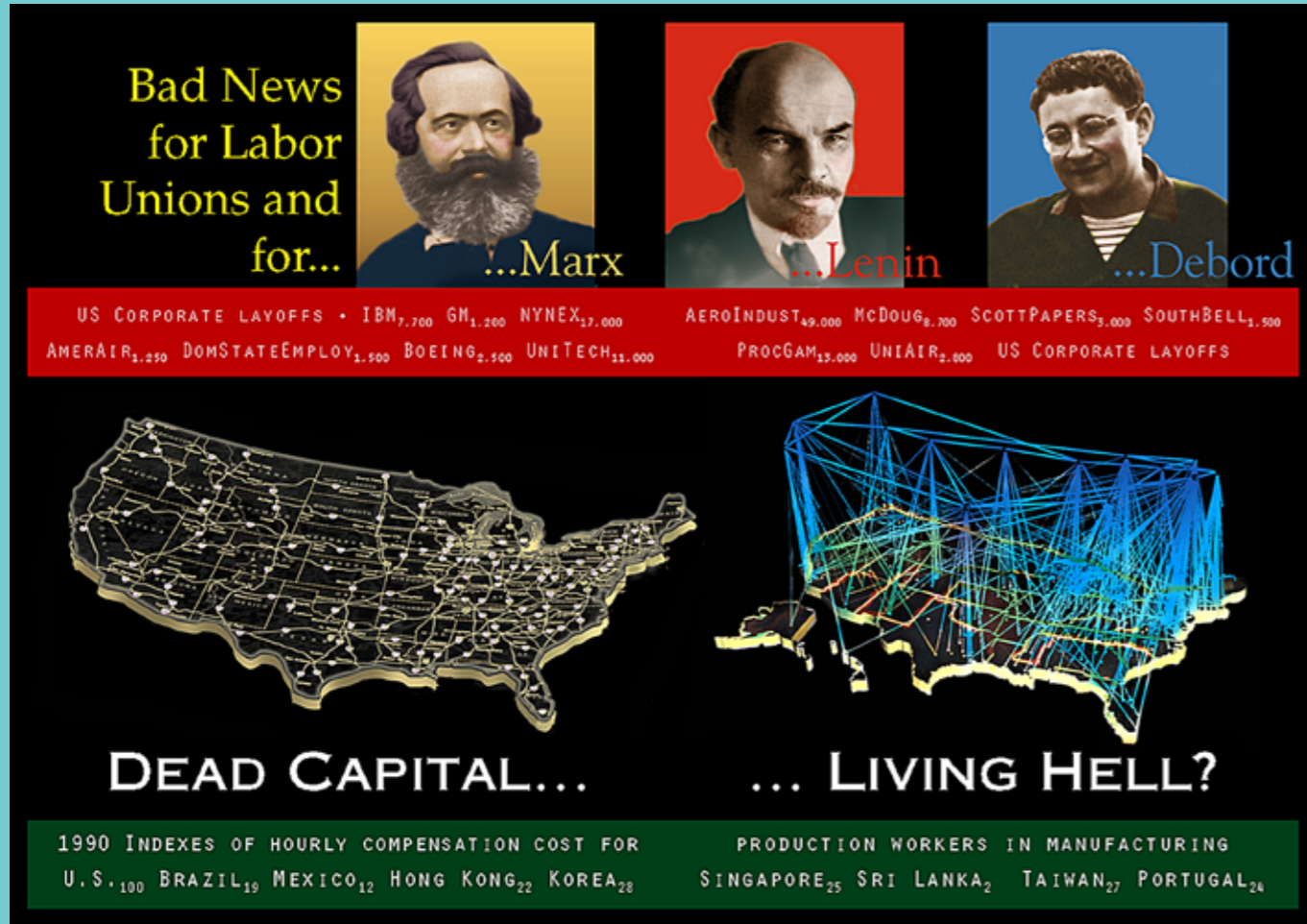
Homing Overlay Experiment IV
To computerized extreme excess, you must go beyond computerized consumption. Imagine using kinetic energy weapons to destroy increasing numbers before they overtake the earth's atmosphere! *From U.S. Government* \$1M

Intercom Doorchime
The Intercom Doorchime is the first true opportunity to test the limits of uselessness. Although the bourgeoisie has never achieved the parity of uselessness of previous letters classes, the Intercom Doorchime allows them to come very close. The Doorchime consists of two pieces, a transmitter (doorbell unit) and a receiver. Simply mount the doorbell unit by any door and carry the receiver with you everywhere you go in your house. Now the family bell rings. When a visitor rings the doorbell, your receiver chirps up to 150 ft. away, thus becoming an item of secular transcendentalism, accumulating status by controlling the lives of you and your family. *From Intercom* \$99.95

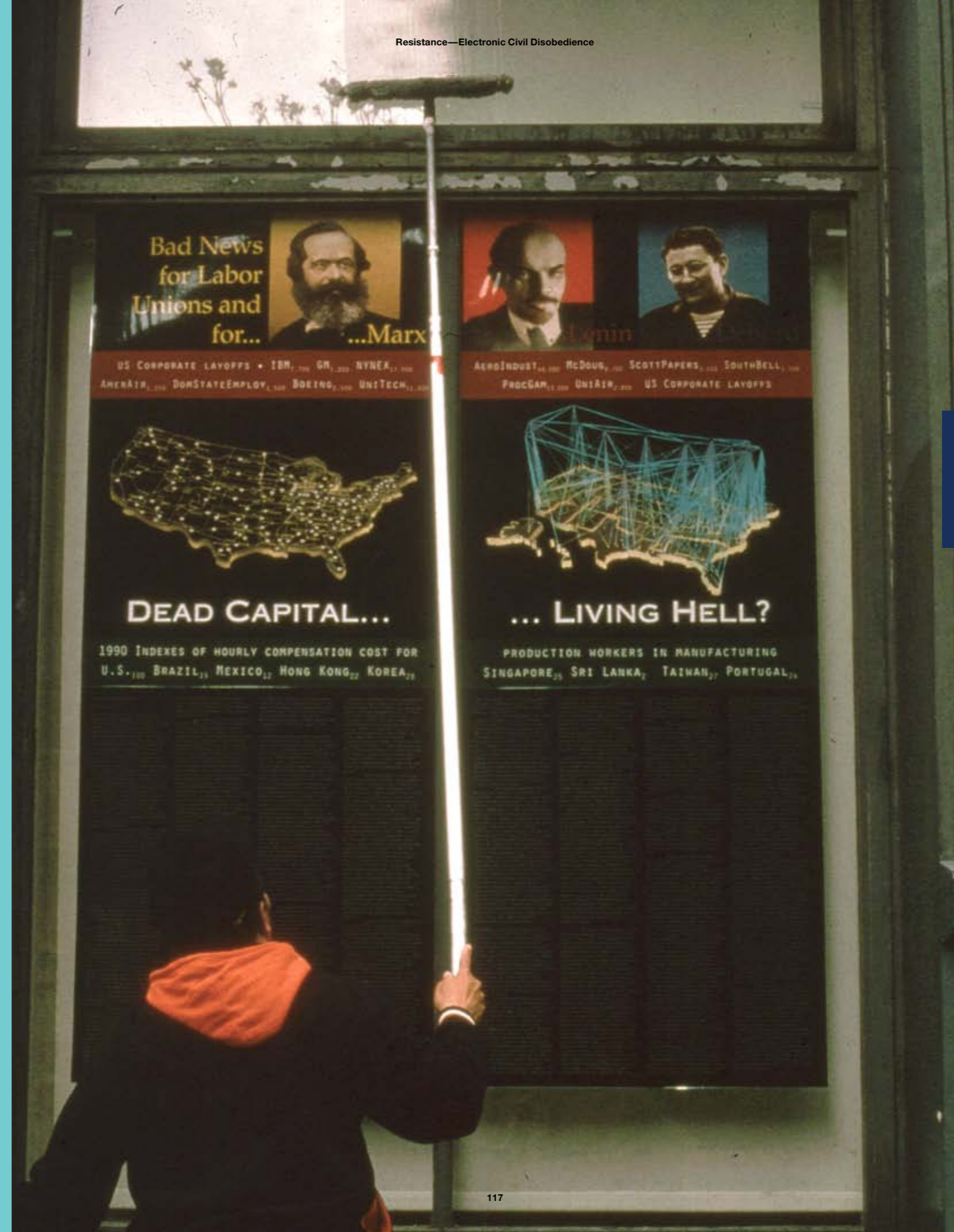
100 KW Nuclear Power Source
A limiting factor in any space-based anti-missile system is a continuous supply of electrical power to operate the system. The Defense Department, NASA, and the Department of Energy are working on a 100 kilowatt nuclear power source. Purchase one in advance and become part of a national monument to uselessness. *From U.S. Government* \$1M

Electronic Civil Disobedience

4.5 | 1994 | Window Installation

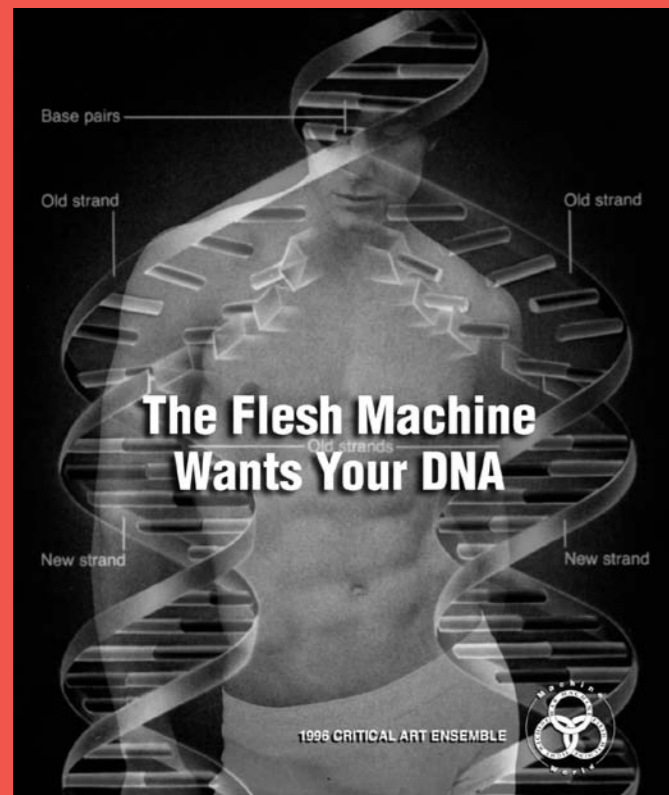


Electronic Civil Disobedience (ECD) was made as a window installation for Printed Matter in NYC. In keeping with the theme of the shop, we thought some printed format was necessary. We always liked the act of public reading that was common in the former Eastern Bloc. Newspapers were tacked to bulletin boards, so everyone, regardless of income, had access to the news. The act of public reading seemed so un-American. In the land of logos, brandings, and slogans, who would stop in front of an artist bookstore in the middle of to read an extended article? The sheer perversity of it convinced us that this should be the form of the installation. But what text would we use? We had fortunately just completed the first chapter for the book *Electronic Civil Disobedience*, so this seemed like a good opportunity to observe public reaction. We also thought it would be good to have a positive piece, although we also added some image and textual features that were more pessimistically critical than inspiring. CAE did end up cheating a little on this project, as we made a pamphlet one could get inside the store (although we did not announce it).



Machine News

4.6 | 1996 | Newspaper Intervention



Machine News was a satellite project to Shareholders' Briefing, which was made for the Radical Images exhibition (page 22). It came about when the Museum in Progress and the newspaper Der Standard (both headquartered in Vienna) approached CAE to produce a silent intervention in the paper by introducing material that would blend with the news of the day. CAE created items regarding the technological developments in the War, Sight, and Flesh Machines, and put them into the appropriate sections of the paper: War in the news section; Sight in the entertainment section; and Flesh in the sports section. In the end, this project was an opportunity to produce limited counter-spectacle in a fairly tightly controlled media sphere.

RADICAL

SECOND AUSTRIAN TRIENNALE ON PHOTOGRAPHY 1996

FAISAL ABDU'ALLAH & CLIVE ALLEN (GB) • ART IN RUINS (GB) • GILLES BARBIER (F) • RICHARD BILLINGHAM (GB) • SABINE BITTER / HELMUT WEBER (A) • ANNA+BERNHARD BLUME (D) • HENRY BOND (GB) • ALAIN BUBLEX (F) • DANIELE BUETTI (CH) • MANUELA BURKART (D) • HELEN CHADWICK (GB) • CRITICAL ART ENSEMBLE (USA) • PÉTER CSIKVÁRI (H) • THOMAS DEMAND (D) • DARKO FRITZ (CRO) • RAINER GANAHL (A) • G.R.A.M. (A) • MICHAEL HOFSTETTER (D) • GERALD VAN DER KAAP (NL) • ALI KEPENEK (D) • IVANA KESER (CRO) • JÜRGEN KLAUKE (D) • ALLAN McCOLLUM / LAURIE SIMMONS (USA) • JOHN MILLER (USA) • CHRISTOPH NEBEL (A) • SHIRIN NESHAT (IR/USA) • TONY OURSLER (GB/USA) • BEATE PASSOW (D) • JACK PIERSON (USA) • RICHARD PRINCE (USA) • SOPHIE RISTELHUEBER (F) • UGO RONDINONE (CH) • KLAUS SCHERÜBEL (A) • BRUNO SERRALONGUE (F) • ANDRES SERRANO (USA) • CINDY SHERMAN (USA) • MARTIN SJOBERG (SWE) • SVEN WESTERLUND (SWE) • STEPHEN WILLATS (GB)

ORGANISED BY THE FEDERAL MINISTRY OF SCIENCE, TRANSPORT AND ART, THE AUSTRIAN TRIENNALE ON PHOTOGRAPHY IS A MAJOR INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION WHICH PROVIDES AN OPPORTUNITY EVERY THREE YEARS TO QUESTION AND DISCUSS CURRENT POSITIONS IN PHOTOGRAPHY. IMPORTANT AS IT IS FOR THE AUSTRIAN PHOTOGRAPHIC PROFESSION, IT HAS SIGNIFICANCE FOR A FAR WIDER PUBLIC. WHILE THE POINT OF DEPARTURE FOR IDEAS INVESTIGATED AT THE 1993 EXHIBITION WAS WAR, THE TOPIC FOR 1996 IS RADICAL IMAGES. IN THE 90S THE DEBATE IN THE ARTS HAS SHIFTED TO CONCERNS ABOUT THE CONTEXTUAL AND SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF ART, AS WELL AS ABOUT MODES OF CRITICISM, OPPOSITION AND RESISTANCE. THE DEBATE CAN BE REGARDED AS A REACTION

Graz, 15 June – 28 July 1996

Neue Galerie, Sackstrasse 16 Künstlerhaus, Burgring 4

Opening: Friday 14 June, 18 hrs, Neue Galerie, phone 0043 316 829155

The artists will be present. A performance will be given by Critical Art Ensemble.

The exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue in two volumes. Vol. 1: Background materials and theoretical writings. Vol. 2: Descriptive catalogue of the exhibits and critical essays. Edition Camera Austria.

Hours of Opening: Tuesdays to Saturdays 10–18 hrs, Sunday 10–13 hrs. From 7 July Saturdays 10–13 hrs only.

During the period of the exhibition the Seegang Society is putting on work discussions and a light-hearted programme for schools. Advance booking – Neue Galerie, phone 0316/82 91 55, Frau Windischbacher.

On 14 and 15 June, a Symposium and Round Table with the artists will be held at Neue Galerie.

AGAINST THE POST-MODERN VIEW THAT ALL THE ITEMS IN THE STORE OF SIGNS – ARTISTIC, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL – ARE OF EQUAL VALUE, AND AFFECTS CONTEMPORARY PHOTOGRAPHY IN A PARTICULAR MANNER. IN VIRTUAL REALITY, WHERE PICTORIAL FORMS OF OUR OWN DESIGN ARE PERMANENTLY AVAILABLE IN DIGITAL SPACE, THE TRADITIONAL FORMS (DOCUMENTARY AND STAGED) IN WHICH PHOTOGRAPHS PRESENT REALITY MAY LARGELY FADE AWAY, AND THEIR STATUS, WHETHER IN MEDIA PRODUCTIONS OR IN ART, HAS ACCORDINGLY COME INTO QUESTION. THE TITLE RADICAL IMAGES SERVES AS A SCREEN ON TO WHICH VARIOUS FRACTURES, DISRUPTIONS AND QUESTIONINGS, IN THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL SPHERE AS WELL AS IN THAT OF ART, CAN BE PROJECTED. THIRTY-EIGHT INTERNATIONAL ARTISTS HAVE BEEN INVITED TO CREATE NEW WORK, BASED ON THEIR PREVIOUS OEUVRE BUT SPECIALLY PRODUCED FOR THE TRIENNALE AND REALISING ITS THEME. AT THE CENTRE OF THE CONCERNS ADDRESSED BY ARTISTS AND CURATORS ALIKE WAS THE QUESTION OF HOW PHOTOGRAPHY IS TO RADICALISE ITSELF IF IT IS TO CONTINUE TO PLAY A PART IN THE CONSTRUCTION AND INTERPRETATION OF CONTEMPORARY REALITY. SEEN FROM THIS ANGLE THE ROLE OF PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGES IN SYSTEMATICALLY MEDIATING BETWEEN THE WORLD AROUND US, SOCIETY AND THE INDIVIDUAL BECOMES CENTRAL TO A DEBATE THAT IS NOT CONFINED TO ARTISTS BUT CONCERNS CULTURE AS A WHOLE. RADICALISM, IN THIS CONTEXT, REFERS NOT MERELY TO CONTENT BUT ALSO, AND PRIMARILY, APPLIES TO METHOD AND TO THE CONCEPT OF THE IMAGE. IT RECOGNISES THAT THE ARTIST'S PERCEPTION OF THE WORLD NEEDS CONTINUALLY TO BE UPDATED. AT PRESENT RADICAL IMAGES ARE POSSIBLY ALONE IN CONTRIBUTING DOCUMENTS AND INTERPRETATIONS BASED ON THIS PERCEPTION TO THE VAST PICTORIAL AND MEDIA ARCHIVES THAT EXIST TODAY.

CURATORS: WERNER FENZ (NEUE GALERIE), REINHARD BRAUN (CAMERA AUSTRIA). – THE TRIENNALE IS ORGANISED BY THE FEDERAL MINISTRY FOR SCIENCE, AND ART, WITH THE SUPPORT OF LAND STEIERMARK AND THE CITY OF GRAZ.

IMAGES

fuhr, befallig nickenden EU-Kollegen vorgetragen, wie er es anstellen wolle, daß Österreich im kommenden Jahr die gestiegenen Maastricht-Bestimmungen für den Beitritt zur europäischen Währungsunion wohl auch erfüllen kann.

Zur Erreichung dieser glückhaften Mitgliedschaft, so las ich mit großem Interesse weiter, sei es allerdings nötig, daß wir letzten Österreichern den Sozialstand unzureichend angehoben, so fein und klug sanierten Budgets noch um weitere 100 Milliarden Schilling reduzieren. Als ich mich an diesem die

LESERSTIMMEN

Arme Lehrer

Betrifft: Sonderbeilage „Die neue Rechtsrechnung“ STANDARD Nr. 2300, 2. 7. 96 Viele arme Lehrer wird ob der Rechtsreibungsreform eher der Schlag treffen, als daß sie ein Kuss der Muse Germania erfährt. Was lange währte, ist endlich total versandet. Es ist doch wahrhaftig zum Kaffeeklatsch-Kaum und Auf-den-Teppich-Klopfen! Belämmert drückblickenden Hühnerauges grüßt Sie

unveränderten Gebühr von 200 S/Monat auskommen. Eine Erhöhung ist derzeit nicht geplant.

Michael Grimm
Premiere, 1071 Wien

Laustige Tiroler

Betrifft: ÖfF am Samstag Das „Österreichbild“ am Samstag (6. Juli) zeigte uns, wie man in Südtirol aus holländischen Schweinen, original Südtiroler „Gasser“ Speck macht. Das hauptabendliche „Oh da mein Österreich“ vom urigen original Tiroler Achenauer mit seiner heiligen Bergwelt zeigte uns, was man so ist: original Südtiroler „Gasser“ Speck an holländischen Schweinen, verzehrt von original Tiroler Bergfexen und Hüttenwirten. Wir Tiroler sind lustig, wir Tiroler sind froh, wir verkaufen uns selber und schlafen auf Stroß.

Dietmar Niesner
6200 Jenbach

Bezahlt wird erst nach „Lieferung“

Einfach zum Nachdenken: Akademikerabgabe statt Studiengebühr

Robert Prethaler
Alle Überlegungen in Richtung „Studiengeld“ führen dahin, daß jene, die direkt von den Universitäten profitieren, also die Studenten, einen höheren Beitrag zu deren Finanzierung leisten sollen als der Rest der Gesellschaft, der ja nur indirekt Nutznießer der Hochschulen ist.

Immer wieder wird in diesem Zusammenhang auch das Modell des Studienkredits in die Debatte geworfen, das darauf abzielt, den Studenten Geld erst dann abzurufen, wenn sie beginnen, zu verdienen. Der Haken dabei ist, daß während des Studiums noch unklar ist, ob, wann und wieviel jemand später aufgrund seiner akademischen Ausbildung verdienen wird. Klar ist nur, daß der Start ins Berufsleben, der meist mit Wohnungssuche, Familiengründung etc. einhergeht, mit Schulden belastet ist. Seitensamerweise wird ein naheliegender Ansatz, der in einer ähnlichen Richtung zielt, nicht diskutiert: Viel einfacher nämlich, als den Studenten in die leere Geldbörse zu lassen, wäre es, den im Berufsleben stehenden Akademikern eine Abgabe dafür abzuverlangen, daß sie nachweiselich von ihrem absolvierten Studium profitieren. Ist diese Abgabe z. B. ein geringer prozentualer Anteil am tatsächlichen Einkommen,

den während des gesamten Berufslebens von jedem Akademiker zu entrichten ist, und kommt er zweckgebunden den Universitäten zugute, so ist damit auch das Problem der sozialen Treffsicherheit fast automatisch gelöst. Das Modell ist insofern gerechter, als erst bezahlt werden muß, wenn die Bildung „gelieft“ ist, und weil dabei auch jene zur Kasse gebeten werden, die in den letzten Jahrzehnten



Ein Projekt des museum in progress im Rahmen des Kuratorenprogramms des Bundesministeriums für Wissenschaft, Forschung und Kunst und der Tageszeitung DER STANDARD.

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SIGHT MACHINE PRODUCTIONS Cinema
You Will Never Leave Your Seat Again
THE SPECTATOR
14:00 17:00 19:30
museum in progress

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ierre de Coubertin die Spiele wiederbelebte er einen Gedanken tonio Gramscis Genozizen auf die griechennte wurden für poli-awecke vorgeschoben. Angesichts Tausender arbeitsloser Akademiker ohne jede Aussicht, in absehbarer Zeit einer ausbildungsaquivalenten Erwerbsarbeit nachgehen zu können, schlägt ein derartiger obsoleter Bildungsumanismus freilich in einen Zynismus um, der die Betroffenen fast jenseitig marktwirtschaftlicher Faktizität unterwirft, von der sie doch durch ihre umfassende Persönlichkeitsbildung emanzipiert werden sollten.

Klaus Nüchtern studierte Anglistik und Germanistik an der Universität Wien und ist (derzeit karrierefrei) Kulturredakteur des „Falter“.

(Tokio) war Judo, von beinahe allen Spuren japanischen Erbes gesäubert, als Verbeugung vor den Gastgebern Teil des Programms, 1968 (Mexiko) draußen, 1972 wieder drinnen. Als Teilnehmer wird auch nur der akzeptiert, der sich in den Kanon der modernen Sportarten fügt, traditionelle, bodenständige Wettkampfformen werden im sportlichen Säkularisierungsprozess verdrängt. Sportler müssen von einem westlichem Selbstverständnis entsprechenden und vom IOC anerkannten Nationalen Olympischen Komitee (NOK) nominiert werden.

Westlicher Kanon
„Bis nach 1945, als eine weltweite Dekolonisierung einsetzte, kämpften die meisten afrikanischen und viele asiatische Aktive unter der Ägide europäischer NOKs um olympisches Gold“, schreibt Allen Guttmann (in: Olympische Spiele – die andere Utopie der Moderne, S. 146, edition suhrkamp, 1996). Erst 1960 errang der erste Schwarzfrikaner eine Goldene der Äthiopier Abebe Bikila im Marathon. Manchmal gerinnt Hege-monie zu tödlichem Herrenmenschen-tum: Jesse Owens (Sieger über 100, 200, 4 x 100 m und im Weitsprung), Star des „Festes der Völker“ – so



hieß der erste Teil des Olympia-Films von Leni Riefenstahl – anmietet 1936 den Berliner Volksmund: „Dem Führer zeigt die Leni dann, was deutsche Filmkunst alles kann; da sah er dann im Negativ, wie positiv der Neger lief.“ Schwarze, so erinnerte sich Albert Speer, waren für den „Führer“ eine Spezies, „deren Vorfahren aus dem Dschungel stammten“, die „primitiv-athletischer gebaut seien als die zivilisierten Weißen, sie seien eine nicht zu vergleichende Konkurrenz, und folglich müsse man sie von zukünftigen Spielen und sportlichen Wettbewerben ausschließen“.

Ein Muskel mit eigenem Herzen

Der Wiener Sportclub Hakoah – von Deutsch bis Torberg

Die Nürnberger Gesetze galten, Konzentrationslager standen, Hitler entsandte „Halbjuden“ wie die Fechterin Helene Mayer, Olympiasiegerin von 1928. „Volljuden“ wie Margarete Bergmann, Rekordhochspringerin (1,60 m), nicht.

1936 saßen die Turner und Cousins Alfred und Gustav Felix Flatow, 1896 Olympiasieger, als Ehrengäste im Stadion, 1945 starben sie in Auschwitz und Theresienstadt.

Die moralische Kraft der Hakoah zeigt die Geschichte

Micki Hirsch, der 1932 zwei Bronzene im Ringen gewann, ist mit dem verhinderten Fußballer und erfolgreichen Wasserballer Friedrich Torberg der berühmteste Kämpfer der Hakoah. Zu Zeiten der Monarchie war die Hakoah der größte Sportverein, heute ist sie eine Plattform der Integration.

ihre aberkannt. 1995 wurden die drei Sportlerinnen rehabilitiert, ihre Leistungen wieder in die „Immerwährenden Wertungstabellen“ eingetragen. Judith Haspel, die heute in Israel lebt, im Jubiläumsbuch „Hoppauf Hakoah“: „Mir erschien es als unmöglich, in Hilderdeutschland teilzunehmen und in Schwimmbädern zu schwimmen, an denen die Aufschrift 'Hunden und Juden der Eintritt verboten!' nur für die Zeit der Olympiade abgenommen wurde.“ 1938 wird mit dem Anschluß Österreichs an das Deutsche Reich der Hakoah-Platz arisiert. Eine Rückgabeinitiative scheitert an bürokratischen Hindernissen im von Wolfgang Schüssel „geführten“ Wirtschaftsministerium. In Wien sporteln heute schon wieder ein paar hundert Kinder der Hakoah, „aber Spitzensport ist für uns nicht mehr drinnen“, sagt Vereinspräsident Karl Haber. (uwo)

Deutsch weigerte sich 1936 aus Gewissensgründen, an den von Berlin teilzunehmen.
Morgen: Das gute Geschäft mit Olympia.
Foto: Hakoah

Starke Leistungen, aber kein Quotenplatz

Er turnt mit der um die Wette, hat er absoluten Spitze doch das nützt alles er Oberösterreich ican, ein gebürtiger wird sich, wenn ich ein Wunder in es Maltheus eines nten passiert, die ne Turnerei nur im an anschauen können, 24 Jahre alt, euer auf seinem Geletpferd, einen dritten in einem Grand-Prix-turte jedes Mal im r besten acht, wird fig als Nummer sie- feltrangliste geführt. schön und eine stung aber für eine ulifikation nicht- ch, denn dafür zählt allein ein Quoten-

platz, und den hat Österreich nicht geschafft. Die einzige Gelegenheit dafür gab's bei der Weltmeisterschaft 1995, und zwar im Mehrkampf. Mircan verletz. Thomas Zimmermann verfehlte die notwendige Placierung um ein Zehntel eines Punktes. Vorrang haben im Turnen Länder mit Mannschaften, die ersten zwölf der WM sind in Atlanta jeweils siebenköpfig vertreten, drei Einzelturner dürfen jene schicken, die die Ränge 12 bis 15 belegen, zwei jene, die 16. bis 18. wurden, einen jene, die 19. bis 21. wurden. Dazu kommen die zehn besten Einzelturner im Mehrkampf. „Die Hoffnung darf man zwar nie aufgeben“, sagt Robert Labner, der Sportkordinator in Österreichs Fachver-

band (ÖFT), „aber realistisch betrachtet ist die Sache gelauten. Die Chancen sind marginal.“ Denn das Training in Atlanta beginnt am Freitag, Mircan, für den die olympische Absenz sportlich katastrophal ist, da seine Karriereplanung auf Atlanta ausgerichtet war, würde nur vom Ausfall eines Einzelturners profitieren, denn einer qualifizierten Mannschaft steht es zu, Ersatz zu stellen. Das Ansuchen für eine der sechs Wild Cards schlug fehl, die sind eher für Drittweltländer gedacht. Nordkoreas Seitpferdeweltmeister ergatterte eine, sein Team war bei der WM nicht angetreten, da dies während der jahrelangen und nun prolongierten Trauerfeiern für den vor zwei Jahren verstorbenen Dikator Kim

Il Sung nicht statthaft gewesen wäre. Österreich sandte zuletzt 1991 ein komplettes Team zu einer Weltmeisterschaft, das wurde in Indianapolis 21, vier Nationen waren schlechter. Heute wären 15 Länder schlechter, gleiche Placierung vorausgesetzt. Seit die alte Garde zurückgetreten ist, klappt ein Loch. Die Zukunftshoffnung trägt ein junges Team. „Im Turnen braucht es sechs bis sieben Jahre Vorlaufzeit, um international her-zugbar zu sein“, sagt Labner. Österreich sollte 1997 wieder eine Mannschaft zur WM schicken, die nach einer Lernphase konkurrenzfähig sei könnte. Schließlich zerfallen im ehemaligen Ostblock die diesbezüglichen Strukturen. (bez)

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The Flesh Machine Wants Your DNA
museum in progress

Child as Audience

4.7 | 2001 | Music CD and How-to Booklet



Child as Audience was the end product of a series of conversations between CAE, the tactical media group Carbon Defense League (CDL), and grindcore band Creation is Crucifixion (CIC). The interaction began when a member of CDL told a CAE member that his group had hacked a GameBoy and was able to put a game of their own making on the proprietary hardware. CDL/CAE decided to devise a game for this purpose, and the initial conversation centered on what the game's narrative should be. We came to the conclusion that the game should be based around ideological and repressive state apparatus, with a Reichian reward system (a winning player arrives at a free brothel designed to undermine youth sexual alienation). The player's opponents are those who play key roles in socializing kids to accept a dismal life in the capitalist state, as well as those who enforce it—parents, clergy, teachers, police, etc. The most deadly opponent was the free-floating specter, guilt. The player's allies are all the people children are told to avoid: junkies, criminals, prostitutes, etc. A player's goal is to reach the brothel before getting busted for truancy, made immobile by guilt, or enslaved by a minimum wage job.

The game was certainly attractive to teenage boys, but the problem of distribution was rapidly recognized. How do you get it to the intended audience? Kids are always the most difficult demographic to approach: partly, because of youth's general suspicion and antipathy to adult intervention (interference), and partly because of the policing of children by the adult world. Interaction with a youth audience is a bit of a conundrum. Interventionists can find themselves in real trouble very quickly if the approach is suspected to be for less than honorable reasons. CIC was the answer to this problem. While certainly older than the audience we wanted to develop, they could interact with young people without raising any concerns, since the normal distribution trajectory of youth-oriented music moves from older to younger. To take full advantage of this opportunity, the group asked CAE to record a series of spoken word pieces on the exploitation of child labor that were sprinkled in among the CIC songs. The final product, sold as a piece of merchandise primarily to teenage boys during CIC tours, was a box set of the CIC/CAE sound work, along with instructions from CDL on how to hack your GameBoy and where their game could be downloaded.

SEPTEMBER 1 . 2001 BOOK RELEASE PARTY

C CRITICAL ART ENSEMBLE | CARBON DEFENSE LEAGUE | CREATION IS CRUCIFIXION
 SHOW WILL BEGIN PROMPTLY AT 6:00PM

CHILD AS AUDIENCE
 [WHERE TECHNOLOGY AND ANARCHY FUCK]

Now this is what I call Multimedia! The Critical Art Ensemble (of Electronic Civil Disobedience) team up with other technologically inclined troublemakers for a book and CD package. The book chronicles (in four languages) the how to dos and why to dos of hacking and reprogramming childrens video games. With a political and educational vengeance, the group takes apart the mindless crap embedded in the "Gameboy" and replaces it with interactive masturbation and street crime fantasies. CD contains software, schematics, and codes to duplicate the procedure plus ripping tracks from the band Creation is Crucifixion. All packaged in a fancy printed cardboard box. The most creative thing I've seen in years!

- ak press July 2001

PERFORMANCES BY
SPONSORED BY HACTIVIST.COM AND AK PRESS

CREATION IS CRUCIFIXION
 noise experiments and technical grind - one of the final shows before leaving SF for 6 months

THE CONTROLLING HAND
 progressive music from most of the members of Man is the Bastard - from southern cal

AMPS FOR CHRIST
 homemade caveman electronics from former MITB noiseman Henry Barnes - from southern cal

KALMEX AND THE RIFF MERCHANTS
 West Bay Coalition - ex members of some of the bay areas most substantial and influential PV bands

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION WITH
\$6

CRITICAL ART ENSEMBLE
 Autonomedia Collective - international critical theory and performance arts group (www.critical-art.net)

INSTITUTE FOR APPLIED AUTONOMY
 contestational robotics group - creators of the GraffitiWriter robot (www.appliedautonomy.com)

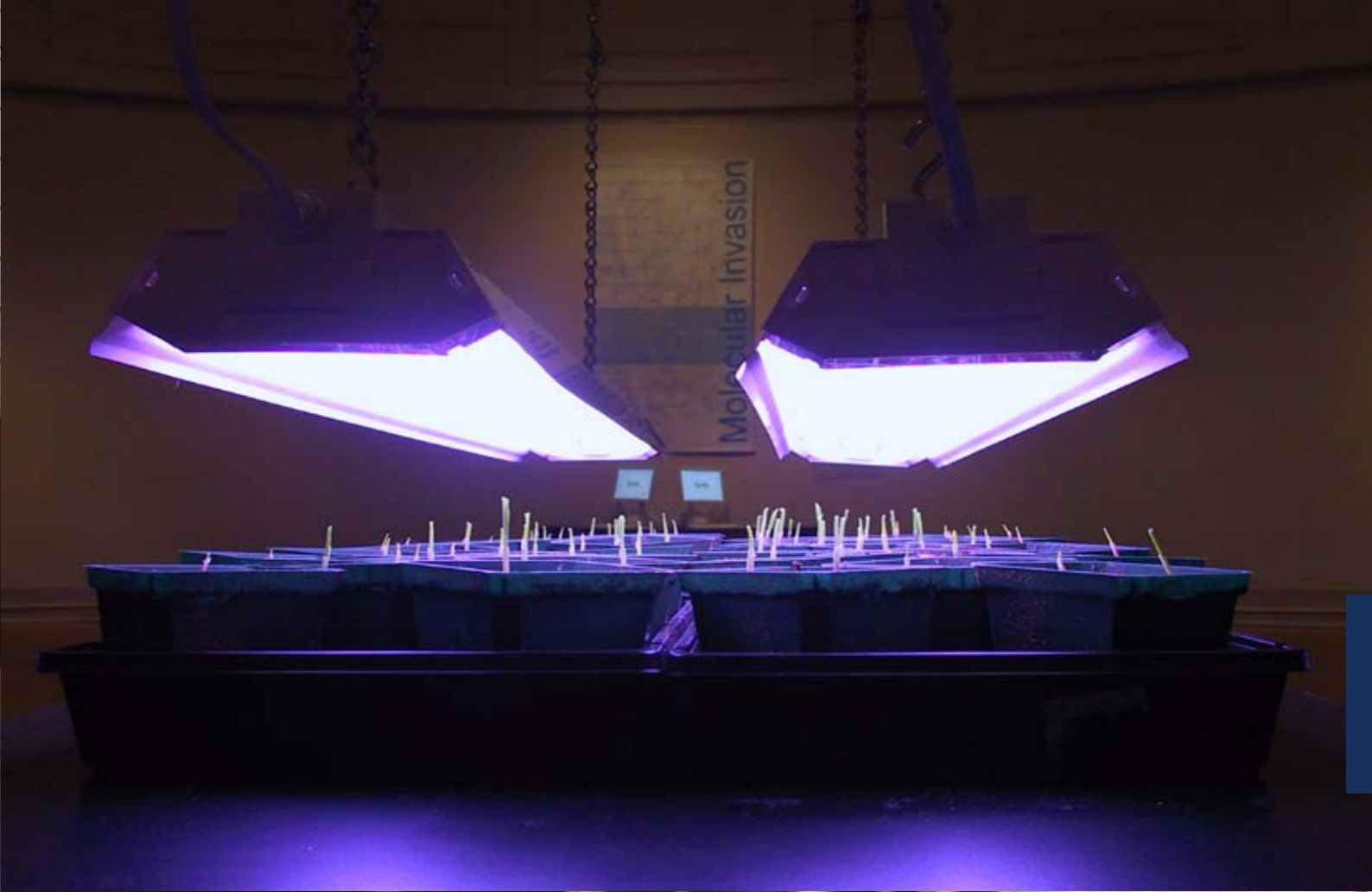
HACTIVIST / CDL
 collective of tactical media activists - based in SF (www.hactivist.com)

The Child as Audience project is sponsored by Autonomedia Collective, rTMark, and hactivist.com.

More event information can be obtained from www.hactivist.com

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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

INSIGHTS

BY SUSAN R. MORRISSEY AND AMANDA YARNELL

AMATEURS ATTACK SCIENCE WITH SCIENCE

Crop experiment in art museum raises public awareness about genetically modified plants

AN ART MUSEUM IS A STRANGE place for a scientific experiment. But at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., students from the museum's College of Art nurtured corn, canola, and soybean seedlings for an experiment designed to "reverse-engineer" crops that have been genetically modified to be herbicide-resistant. Museum patrons were able to observe the progress of the experiment throughout the month of November.

As chemists, we were intrigued by the idea of artists carrying out a science experiment. After all, it's not every day that you see a chemical structure on an art exhibit flyer.

Our curiosity led us to the exhibit's source: Buffalo-based Critical Art Ensemble (CAE), a self-described group of tactical media artists. Combining science, sociology, activism, and art, CAE's work is meant to challenge its audience's ideas and perspectives about the interface of science and society. The Corcoran exhibit, dubbed "Molecular Invasion," aimed to generate discussion about the political, economic, and ecological consequences of transgenic food products. CAE does not oppose the creation of genetically modified organisms, but rather takes issue with the regulation and marketing of these products.

The group chose Monsanto's Roundup Ready product line to make its point. Roundup Ready crops have been modified to resist the effects of N-phosphonomethylglycine—also known as glyphosate. Marketed by Monsanto as Roundup, this broad-spectrum, nonselective herbicide kills plants by inhibiting 5-enolpyruvylshikimate-3-phosphate (EPSP) synthase, a key enzyme in the biosynthesis of aromatic amino acids. Roundup Ready plants withstand glyphosate's ef-

fects with the help of an engineered bacterial version of EPSP synthase that is only weakly inhibited by glyphosate.

Monsanto's tight control of all things Roundup has left CAE looking for ways to turn these plants' strength into a weakness. To our amazement, this group of nonscientists managed to unearth from the mountain of literature related to Monsanto's Roundup Ready products a small molecule that they think might be the key to reverse-engineering the modified plants.

By treating the plants with pyridoxal-5-phosphate (PLP), CAE hoped to make the engineered crops once again susceptible

original in vitro study to Roundup Ready plants obtained without the firm's knowledge. But both plants treated with PLP and the herbicide and those treated with the herbicide alone died—so it's impossible to say whether PLP had the desired effect. CAE's Steve Kurtz chalks up this apparent failure to the immaturity of the seedlings. The group is now repeating the experiment with fully mature plants—but in a greenhouse, not an art museum.

However, CAE maintains that the exhibit's main goals have still been met. "We wanted to show that amateurs such as ourselves could enter into the scientific process, and especially its public representation," Kurtz says.

Small molecules able to counter genetic modifications, CAE says, would be useful for combating unwanted genetically engineered plants. A case in point is that of Canadian organic farmer Percy Schmeiser, whose canola crop was allegedly contaminated by wind-borne pollen from a neighboring field of Roundup Ready canola.

Monsanto has sued Schmeiser for patent infringement.

But detractors of CAE's project see more sinister uses for such small molecules. And CAE isn't denying that, if successful, their work could be used by activists opposed to agbiotech to destroy genetically modified crops—conceivably without the legal repercussions that accompany more heavy-handed methods like arson.

"We don't encourage any particular form of activism," Kurtz says. "We just supply the tools and knowledge and discuss the possibilities for it. The people in a given situation can decide how to use it," he adds.

But discussing applications—good or bad—of CAE's work is putting the cart before the horse. The group has an extremely long and difficult road ahead of it: Developing the small molecule of their dreams would take trained scientists years, even with lots of funding and appropriate lab facilities.

This provocative experiment generated public discussion about the political, regulatory, and economic issues swirling around genetically modified products. CAE has found a way to engage and educate the public about a complex scientific system. Scientists should take note.



SOY SAUCED Art student Dymphna DeWild sprays Monsanto's Roundup herbicide on Roundup Ready soybeans as part of CAE's "Molecular Invasion" exhibit at the Corcoran Gallery.

to Roundup. When photoactivated, this common enzyme cofactor irreversibly inhibits EPSP synthase from *Escherichia coli* by attaching to a histidine near the enzyme's active site [*Biochem. J.*, 290, 525 (1993)]. But because the targeted histidine is conserved across plant species, PLP is likely to have the same inhibitory effect on engineered and native EPSP synthases.

Monsanto had funded the original work on PLP. CAE tried to extend Monsanto's

PHOTO BY AMANDA YARNELL



Mutant bacteria, genetically altered mice, cactuses with curly hair: step this way to enter the danger zone of bioart.

The Artists in the Hazmat Suits

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IN a certain part of the art world, the story is recounted like a slowly unfolding nightmare: On the afternoon of May 11 last year, Steven Kurtz, a respected artist and professor at the State University of New York at Buffalo, called 911 to report that his wife, Hope, 48, was not breathing.

The police arrived to find Hope Kurtz dead, and in a hallway they found something else—a biological lab, with an incubator, centrifuge and bacterial cultures growing in petri dishes. Windows nearby were covered with foil, and on the shelves sat books like "The Biology of Doom" and "Spores, Plagues and History: The Story of Anthrax." The F.B.I. was called in. Agents in white biohazard suits scoured the house. Subpoenas—citing sections of the Biological Weapons Anti-Terrorism Act—were issued to Mr. Kurtz and other members of an art group he and his wife helped found, the Critical Art Ensemble. And in the summer of 2004 Mr. Kurtz was indicted by



The magazine in its heyday. Its writers are still cited by influential comedians today.

a federal grand jury on charges of mail and wire fraud, accused of illegally obtaining two of the bacteria samples in his lab, crimes that could send him to prison for up to 20 years.

While the bare facts of the case lent it the contours of a doomsday episode of "CSI," information that emerged later changed the picture considerably. Medical examiners found that Mrs. Kurtz's death was not suspicious; she died of heart failure. As artists, she and her husband had long worked openly with biological and chemical agents, which they used at exhibitions around the world, including a 2002 show involving genetically altered plants at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington. Most significant, the bacteria cultures in Mr. Kurtz's lab were determined to be essentially harmless. One is used in high-school science experiments and is available on the Internet for educators to buy.

But federal prosecutors have continued to pursue the case, which could come to trial later this year. In the process, they have transformed Mr. Kurtz into an unlikely art world martyr-hero and shone a spotlight on an emerging art movement that blurs the lines between art and science—especially the science of genetics and bio-

Go Ahead, Shoot the Dog
 To the horror of its originators, a new National Lampoon is growing up by dumbing down.

By JAKE TAPPER

IF you didn't happen to catch National Lampoon's Greek Games, held during spring break on South Padre Island, Tex., the comedy high jinks you missed went a little something like this: teams of college students with names like I Felts Thi and Tappa Kegga Day competed in events like the Salisbury Steak Toss, in which they tried to catch meat in plastic helmets, and the Lube Luge, sliding down plastic sheeting coated with something resembling K-Y Jelly. There was also something billed as Greco Roman Strip Wrestling.

Along with pay-per-view strip poker and television shows featuring battles between bikini-clad women, the Greek Games are part of what the new owners of National Lampoon Inc. are calling a resurrection of an American comedic treasure. But veterans of the original National Lampoon and others who were greatly influenced by it are horrified by the wet T-shirt contests and worse. The new efforts may, in some sense, revive Na-

The Million Dollar Hoax

4.9 | 2005 | Workshop and Intervention



In 2005, CAE was invited by I/O/Lab in Stavanger, Norway to facilitate a tactical media workshop. We generally accept such invitations without questions, because workshops are a good way to meet other activist groups and learn about on-the-ground local politics in a given area. We were quite curious about what might be happening outside of Oslo. This workshop turned out to be very unusual, because nothing was happening. Not because there wasn't artistic talent: the workshop was full of artists who had an endless stream of good ideas about public works, but nothing in the way of interventions. Why? Because the participants did not seem to know of any contested issues. No matter what we asked about—wages, housing, immigration, etc.—everyone was content with the status quo. Finally, we got to the issue of energy, and then to the dominance of Statoil (the nationalized oil industry giant responsible for a huge portion of Norway's wealth). Again, they had no major problems. CAE asked if anyone understood the incredible power of Statoil? They said it wasn't much of a consideration in daily life. We suggested that we do an illustration of the immense centralized power of this company.

CAE had been taken to the beach areas, and told how much people loved this public resource. We asked whether Statoil could appropriate this land if they wanted it. The answer was yes. From this point, the project took off. CAE basically just watched it happen.

A press release was prepared announcing that Stavanger's main beach would be appropriated in order for Statoil to build fairgrounds dedicated to the celebration of fossil fuels. The release was topped off with a CADD drawing of the grounds with 3D renderings of all the pavilions. Untraceable cell phones were purchased, so numbers for Statoil's "public relations department" could be placed in the release. Shortly after sending out the release, media outlets began phoning. The hoax went well for a while, particularly at the national level. Unfortunately, a small local paper was suspicious about the repurposing of the beach. CAE learned a lesson here. In small countries, the right hand can easily find out what the left hand is doing. The local paper rang Statoil, and spoke to a major executive who confirmed there were no plans for a fairground in Stavanger. Our public relations people tried to no avail to convince the local journalist that the executive was simply not aware of the initiative because it was not part of his division. The fraud alert went out, and the hoax collapsed. The police were called, but, of course, did nothing, much to the relief of the locals, who looked quite worried.

The upside was that the newspapers still printed the story of the hoax. It was good copy. They even printed the illustration we sent out. Our representation of the power of Statoil was published, just not framed as we originally hoped. The article is the only artifact left from the workshop.



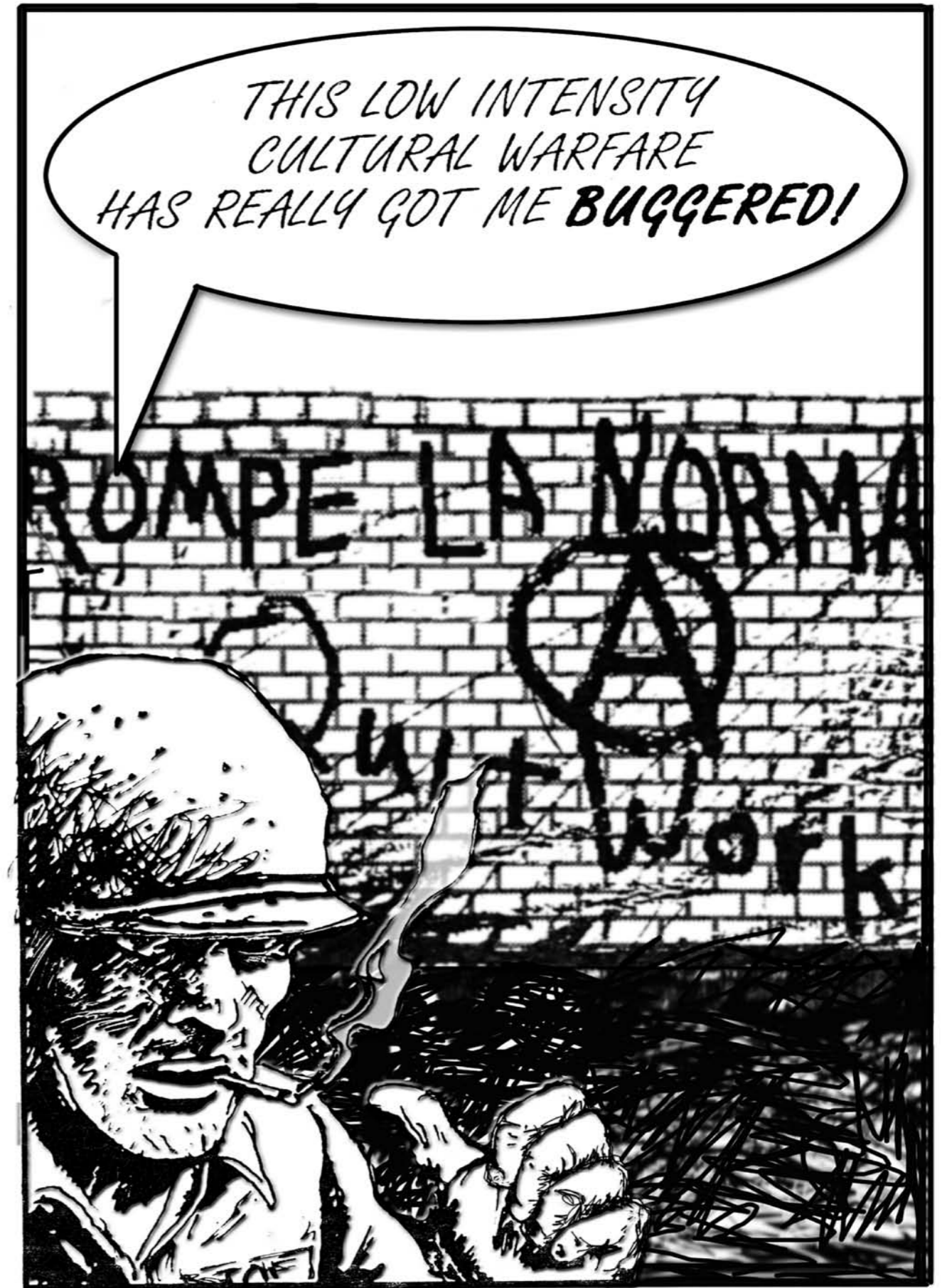
05. Public

CAE has always been disappointed that we have never been able to disassociate ourselves from the term “public.” The primary reason is that we have never had a firm grasp of what it means. The word “public” is like the word “life”—great intellects have tried to explain their meaning, but no one has done so in a satisfactory manner. It appears to us as a kind of catch-all term for the numerous approaches to describing social space and those who inhabit it.

For Westerners, CAE believes the most common association with “public” is its mythic condition as it pertains to democracy. “Public space” is the territory where grassroots politics occurs, and “the public” refers to whoever inhabits the space. In this forum, people are free to assemble to speak about the political issues of the day using whatever variety of speech act they deem best. This zone is thought of as autonomous and necessary for the business of democracy to be conducted. It exists so the public can be well informed about key political issues, in addition to giving all political positions an opportunity to compete in the “marketplace of ideas.”

Unfortunately, this ideal type has never existed anywhere at any time. Autonomous space is a hope or a wish, that if approximated at all, occurs only in domestic space, which is perhaps the only alternative to public space. All space outside of the pseudo-self-determined domestic space is thoroughly managed by either owners or controllers. In all social spaces, rules and regulations abound, including severe limitations on assembly and speech. To complicate the situation further, the rules are typically arbitrarily applied and enforced. CAE does not mean to say that the complete absence of autonomous social space is necessarily bad. We are happy that public squares are no longer used for lynching, or, to be less dramatic, for unregulated food service. Management can function in the public interest, but when it stands in the way of the messiness of democracy—as it must to maintain order—the foundational contradiction of the concept of public clearly reveals itself.

If, then, CAE is a group that enacts public projects and concerns itself with the public, what does that mean? We will not pretend we can answer this question in any way other than in a contingent, operational form. For CAE, to work in the public sphere means to work outside of domestic space or smooth cultural commercial spaces. For example, a commercial gallery space is a smooth space. Internal consensus exists regarding expression, because the optimum forms of expression can be deduced by all stakeholders, who share the common goal of completing financial transactions. External consensus exists because authority approves of this form of profit generation. In contrast, the public sphere is full of friction. Private interests hold too big a stake in what may be visible and verbalized and what must remain invisible and unsaid to allow spaces of open discourse. In our public work, CAE has always tried to invent ways to speak the unspeakable and reveal the invisible, whether it is the invisibility of the margins, the hidden levers of control, or the latent threats and forces that underlie normative compliance.



Exit Culture

5.1 | 1992 | Intervention

Exit Culture was an early CAE project that taught us a great deal about what public space is, and how to function within it as interventionists.



At this time, CAE had just finished our associational documentary *Apocalypse and Utopia* (page 242). One of the sections featured Arthur and Marilouise Kroker chronicling their take on some of CAE's favorite sites—highway exits and what awaits at the end of the ramp. This brief investigation inspired us to engage these sites in greater depth. We decided to rent a Winnebago for three days and travel the highways of Florida, stopping along the way to create scenes and experiences that would disturb the routinization and hypermanagement of exit spaces. Armed with slide shows, videos, performative gestures, postcards, and poetry for CB radio (made by recombining plagiarized lines from trucker songs, Department of Motor Vehicle manuals, car ads, etc.), we began our journey. For the most part, the journey was peaceful as we stopped at rest stops, restaurants, malls and tourist attractions, but two gestures did not go over well with authorities.



The first was giving away free postcards. Whether we handed them out or stuck containers of them to walls, the local security was never happy about it. These agents did not like, or for that matter, understand, the concept of “free”; nor did they like anyone speaking to people with the idea of giving them something—that was “bothering the customers” and “slowing their movement.” What authorities liked even less was the second gesture: an adult playing with toys (although he did have the additional strikes of being Hispanic and wearing a Burger King crown). This action was truly the end of the world for the managerial class. Wherever this was done, security mounted an immediate response. Even though the performer did not bother anyone (the great sin of the postcards), nor block the free movement of people, this slight deviation from normal expectations could not be tolerated. Indeed, we were naïve enough to believe that if we did something within legal limits, authority would simply have to accept it. What we learned is that the law allows agents of power to arrest whomever they want, whenever they want. In the US, laws ranging from minor violations such as “disturbing the peace,” “public nuisance,” and “vagrancy,” to serious felonies such as “causing a false public emergency” or “inciting a riot” can be arbitrarily enacted against anyone. Whether one is doing something legal or illegal is never objectively interpreted in the public sphere. During this project, we came to experience how “public” space is forcibly managed solely in the interest of the pursuit of profit, and any hope left us that democracy might be more than a myth told to children. Public space as a zone in which civil discourse could occur was patently absent in exit culture. Within exit culture, the only acceptable form of communication and civil discourse is “consumer choice.” Any form of speech that disturbs this singular form of self-expression is interpreted by authority as illegal.



CAE believes that this project had a much more profound impact on us than it did on our viewers. How we would conduct ourselves in public actions after this project was forever changed.





TOP: Power, you need to believe in it to see it. | LEFT: The expressway of expenditure economy requires daily sacrifices. | CENTRE: Certain signs insure self discipline. | RIGHT: Desire is the ultimate impulse of power. At speeds in excess of 80-90 MPH one is no longer steering a vehicle but aiming a missile. | BOTTOM: American Express, electronic bodies traveling everywhere, everyday.

Bataille Goes Commercial

5.2 | 1994 | Radio Commercials



These radio commercials were an attempt by CAE to enact anti-commercialism in an intense commercial sphere. It was a modern solution for a very postmodern problem (fight commercialism with anti-commercialism). Happily, we had money. The project was funded by a Florida New Forms grant, so it was easy to approach an Orlando radio station and convince them to accept the commercials even if we didn't actually have a product to sell (which they thought incredibly strange). We were paying customers, so ultimately selling us airtime was fine with them. CAE delivered the scripts, and they made the commercials.

For one weekend our thoughts on economic waste and excess were broadcast into thousands of households, punctuating the gaps between "classic" rock songs. At best, the dominant perversion of collecting wealth to solidify power got to announce itself at regular intervals. At worst, CAE hopes we disturbed the routinized listening patterns so common to the center of the radio dial.

Accursed Share Card

Background noise of a restaurant. Over the din a father and daughter are talking.

FATHER: Let your father pick up the check.

DAUGHTER: I think you've sacrificed enough dad, let me get this one with my Accursed Share card.

FATHER: You have an Accursed Share card?

DAUGHTER: That's right. I have the means to acquire the excess that I deserve.

FATHER: Yes, I know I have always depended on my Accursed Share card. I've purchased useless items available due to the convenience of waste for over 30 years . . . and now you have your share. I'm so proud.

ANNOUNCER: That's right its the Accursed Share card. Get your slice of American excess. The Accursed Share card is accepted at all points of consumption great and small. Comply today.

The Western Civilization Recliner

A husband has just returned from work, and is greeted by his sympathetic wife.

WIFE: Oh dear, you look so tired. Another hard day at work? The wolves biting at your heels again?

HUSBAND: Yes. I'm ready to just relax, and enjoy all that I have acquired

WIFE: Come into the living room and rest. Watch some TV, and relax in your new recliner.

HUSBAND: Oh, this is so comfortable

WIFE: Yes indeed, just like Western Civilization, it's time to recline.

ANNOUNCER: That's right, the Cold War is over, the Berlin Wall is down, and the world is computer convenient. Get in on the comfort with the Western Civilization Recliner. Available in all first world capitalist economies. Comply today!

The International Campaign for Free Alcohol and Tobacco for the Unemployed

5.3 | 1997 | Intervention

UNEMPLOYED?
Get your
Free Cigarettes
& Beer Here!

International Campaign for Free Alcohol and Tobacco for the Unemployed

When CAE arrived in Sheffield, UK, it was every bit as bleak as we had been warned. The city was sad, the weather awful, and unemployment was at 20%. We were there for a yet another cyberfestival, Love Bytes. Once again the moment had arrived where we could not ignore the stark realities of the material world and distract ourselves with arguments over the future of virtual reality, only to collect a paycheck at the end. It seemed like such a waste to come so far for that. As is CAE's policy, whenever a cash-providing triviality presents itself, we do it in order to use the money to address an actual concern of the locality we are in. In so doing, we return the cash to the local economy, as well as do something that interests us and hopefully others.

Shortly before leaving for Sheffield, CAE had been discussing Sheffield's economy and unemployment with then subRosa member (and future CAE member) Lucia Sommer. The conversation drifted to poverty and homelessness and why people refuse to give people money when approached on the street. The clichéd excuse is they will buy drugs and alcohol. Lucia was outraged by the moral hypocrisy that deemed the poor less entitled to drugs and alcohol than the wealthy. *The International Campaign for Free Alcohol and Tobacco for the Unemployed* (ICFATU) was born, and Sheffield seemed like a good place to launch it.

CAE wasn't interested in the free campaign as much as we were interested in remaking public space with this simple gesture. The campaign was a means to invite participation and hopefully annoy those who are disgusted by under-economies. In Sheffield, the only happy place seemed to be the pub, which also seemed to be one of the least stratified spaces in the city. Everywhere else seemed to have a stricter class designation. CAE did, however, find another potential public bright spot—the main market transportation artery. All kinds of difference were on display there, but one could hardly call it a happy place. The space was marked by the usual public protocol of ignoring everyone else and acting as oblivious as possible to the social moment. However, once we added the social lubricant of free alcohol and tobacco, which comes complete with new codes for public interaction, the area transformed into a far more extroverted space, and people were suddenly far less indifferent to their common surroundings.

Had CAE created a mini-utopia, a temporary autonomous zone? For some, yes, but for others, no. We had failed to consider that a woman drinking on the street has a different connotation from a man drinking on the street. Hence we had created a social space with men in the center having a great time, and women on the margins proceeding with understandable caution. In the center, class difference seemed to implode, but less so on the margins. Like so many tactical media projects, making them perfect is difficult—yet CAE would be redeemed when using this tactic many years later in Japan (see page 150).



For immediate release:

On April 23-26 the The International Campaign for Free Alcohol and Tobacco for the Unemployed (ICFATU) will be in Sheffield, UK to distribute free alcohol and tobacco to all unemployed citizens. The ICFATU hopes to begin the breakdown of the data construction of individuals within various unemployed populations as working machines who can subsist solely on the goods and services necessary to maintain work functions.

The ICFATU is a part of a global activist network dedicated to establishing the right to zero-work, and to defending the pleasures of laziness. As long as the hegemony of the pancapitalist work-machine imposes slavery upon all those who reside in its colonial territories both real and virtual, the ICFATU makes the following demand:

Alcohol and tobacco should be provided for all unemployed people in addition to any and all benefits owed by the state.

This policy should be immediately enacted for the following reasons:

1. Each individual is expected to produce goods and services for the benefit of the pancapitalist hegemony. Within this system each individual is treated as a micro-machine contributing to the structure and dynamics of the macro-machine (the system as a whole). Within this system, an attempt is made to fully rationalize each micro-system so it may be optimized to best fit the needs of the system. Each individual is treated as if s/he has no other qualities except those that allow he/r to produce and consume marketable goods. When an individual fails to meet socio-economic standards of labor and consumption, the intensity of the state construction of the individual as a machine is increased. In spite of the fact that rebellious individuals are useful to the system as workforce replicators and as members of the reserve labor army, they are denied all rights and goods other than those absolutely necessary to maintain them as a neutralized machine. From the pancapitalist perspective, those who refuse the work machine are dysfunctional, and deserve nothing more than machinic support (food and sometimes housing). The nurturing and development of nonrational expressions of desire are constructed by the system as undeserved rewards and immoral activities. The ICFATU demands that even those who refuse the work machine have the right to food, shelter, and medical care, but also require (and thereby have the right to) goods and services that fulfill individuals' nonrational needs.

2. In many nations, an intersection between alcohol use and public life has emerged. In the US, this can be seen in tavern culture, or in the UK, in pub culture. In order to contribute to this public sphere, one must be able to enter this public space. Unfortunately, this sphere/space intersects with commerce, and hence an individual must have money to be a part of the public discourse generated within it. The ICFATU insists that if public space is to remain public an ability to engage in commerce cannot be required of the members of this public sphere. Hence the ICFATU demands that this public space be replicated at state expense for all who are in need, and that alcohol and tobacco be given away free of charge in this space.

3. The ICFATU finds the hypocrisy of the willing slaves of capital intolerable. The ICFATU attempts to set an example for all by insisting by word and by deed that the unemployed (for whatever reason) have the same right to alcohol and tobacco as the employed. There is no moral dilemma about whether money should be given to the unemployed if they are going to buy alcohol or tobacco with it. The acquisition of alcohol and tobacco by the unemployed is morally the same as when an employed person acquires it. Any person who enables the unemployed to buy alcohol and tobacco is empowering this population to the same extent as if they had helped them to buy food. The ICFATU demands that the state follow this imperative.



The Renaming Project

5.4 | 2002 | Intervention

This project came about by happy accident while visiting Adelaide, South Australia. While smoking in a parking lot, CAE met a young aboriginal activist and cultural worker. He was in the process of recovering a local language once believed lost. The recovery had been under way for a while, and those involved knew enough of the ancestral language that the local First People became convinced that certain sacred spaces could and should be dual-named. This particularly applied to the sacred ground in the center of the city now called Victoria Square. The activist said that the city council had been approached about this matter, but no progress had been made. CAE suggested that if the council wouldn't do it, we should change the name of Victoria Square to its original name, *Tarndanyungga* ("the dream space of the red kangaroo"). We could contract the company that makes the city signs to make replicas.

Another central player in this action was curator and cultural activist Amanda McDonald-Crowley. We may have known what to do, but Amanda knew how to get it done. First, we needed money for the street signs. Amanda was working at the Adelaide Festival of the Arts, and hired CAE to give a lecture at the festival for an honorarium that was much larger than the task at hand deserved, but one that would cover the cost of the signs. Amanda then went on to assemble the teams to change the signs, and most importantly convinced the tribal elders that this was a good idea that deserved their blessing.

This action was executed in plain sight. We waited for a night when the square would be full of people and the police would have their hands full. On the evening of a public concert program, the teams dressed as city workers and rapidly switched the signs. CAE may have misperceived this, but it appeared that the aboriginal participants were taking greater delight removing the Victoria Square signs than installing the *Tarndanyungga* signs. Ten of the twenty Victoria Square signs were replaced, as was the common procedure for dual naming a particular location. The Victoria Square signs that were removed were returned to the City Council.

As we were taking down one of the last signs, a reporter wandered up and asked what we were doing. We told him we worked for the city, and we were doing some routine maintenance. He did not believe this explanation, and continued to interrogate us. We asked for his contact information and said we would email him a statement the next day. This promise seemed to satisfy him, and he went away, leaving his card with us.

As we promised, the next day we sent him a statement about what we were doing and why. We also included a section stating that we would continue to repeat this action until the dual naming was made permanent. The newspaper printed our letter.

A few days after the article was published, our signs came down, but weren't replaced for a number of days. When they were, it was the Victoria Square signs that went back up (apparently our letter did not intimidate the Council). But, a couple of months after the action, the City Council officially dual named the park. Whether the action had anything to do with this development will probably never be known but, like the origin of the project, it was at least a happy accident.



Subj: tarndanyungga
Date: Friday, March 15, 2002 12:25:49 AM
From: publicartaction@yahoo.com.au
To: CriticalArt@cs.com

Dear CAE,

For your information, to follow is the copy from the article from the Advertiser on Monday as well as the statement provided to the Adelaide Festival publicity dept. by the PAAC. The article appeared with two photos - before and after removal of signs (the photos were of a shabby looking Victoria Square sign, with Hilton Hotel in the background, the Tarndanyungga sign looked clear and crisp with Aboriginal flag in the background). There have been a couple of follow up letters to the editor, one suggesting that the action was illegal, and the other suggesting that perhaps the renaming of Tarndanyungga to Victoria Square mid last century was illegal. We don't know either of the authors of these letters. Let us know if you would also like copies of these. We will also keep you informed of any other follow up to the project, as well as documentation from the night for your information. (We are still agitating ;) If you want hard copy of articles/ letters, please let us know what address to send these to.

regards
Public Art Action Coalition (PAAC)

The Advertiser
11 March 2002

Victoria Square secretly renamed.

Art activists replaced 10 street signs in Victoria Square with signs showing a Kaurna name on Saturday

night.

The activists unbolted signs reading Victoria Square and installed professionally-made signs reading Tarndanyungga, meaning place of the red kangaroo dreaming.

A group named the Public Art Action Coalition yesterday claimed responsibility.

The group is not connected with the Adelaide Festival, which held its last day of events in Victoria Square on Saturday.

"None of the signs replaced have been damaged in any way and they're being returned to the Adelaide City Council," the coalition said.

The council took down the Kaurna signs yesterday morning but the Victoria Square signage had not been re-installed by last night.

Statement from PAAC:

On Saturday night, 9 March 2002, the Public Art Action Coalition removed 10 of the Victoria Square signs in the heart of Adelaide and replaced them with signs reading Tarndanyungga.

The Public Art Action Coalition, a group of Adelaide and South Australian artists from diverse cultural backgrounds supported by national and international artists, is dedicated to new visions and possibilities for representation within the public sphere. This art action was inspired by the use of the name Tarndanyungga to describe this place during the Adelaide Festival 2002.

50% of the signs reading Victoria Square were replaced. Appropriate consultation was undertaken in regard to the use of the name Tarndanyungga. None of the signs replaced has been damaged in any way and they are being returned to the Adelaide City Council.

Concerned Citizens of Kyoto

5.5 | 2010 | Intervention

CAE originally went to Kyoto for the exhibition *Trouble in Paradise* at the National Museum of Modern Art, where we were showing documents and ephemera from our biotech projects. While installing, a curator and another exhibiting artist approached us and asked if we would like to do a performance while in Kyoto. We were reluctant as time was short and we really hadn't come prepared for such activity. Then the Sheffield performance was specifically requested. We tried to convince them it wasn't a good idea by telling them about the shortcomings of the Sheffield manifestation. They responded by assuring us that Japan was different because there were precedents for public drinking and every adult could take part. This reassurance piqued our attention. The only question was how to frame the event.



By this time we had been at the museum long enough to notice some irregularities. Most notably, that the public was not there. The museum was unquestionably an underutilized public resource. As we came to learn, it was somewhat of a secret. Each day when we would climb into a taxi to go to the museum, the taxi driver *never* knew where it was. We ended up taking a picture of a local monument near the museum so the drivers would know where to take us. What made this situation exceptionally strange was the fact that the biggest taxi stand in Kyoto was directly across the street from the museum. We decided to make the museum a utilized public resource for all, if only for a day.

Armed with the cooperative labor of many students from Kyoto's finest art school, we made a flyer advertising the giveaway, and collected the necessary cases of beer and cartons of cigarettes. We passed out flyers to workers all over the city. We went to all the homeless encampments. We were determined to get a diverse crowd no matter what.

Back at the museum, CAE's minions were making counterfeit copies of the invitation for the exclusive gala preview of the exhibition. These would be given away to anyone arriving for free drinks just before the preview.



When the time arrived for the giveaway, things began slowly, but over time quite a crowd developed. We gave out hundreds of bottles of beer and dozens of invitations. And it didn't go the way of Sheffield; this was an all-inclusive public party. About three quarters of the way through the performance as a diverse crowd began to fill the museum, a few museum staffers came out and stamped "copy" all over the remaining invitations. We had been discovered, but it was too late—diversity happened.





Underground Tarot

5.6 | 2011 | Subway Video Programme



While at a party some CAE members were introduced to Sharon Switzer of Onestop Media Group. One of her initiatives was video programming for the Toronto subway system. She was acquainted with our work, and wondered if we would be interested in presenting something there. This offer was quite substantial, given she could show our work on over 100 screens viewed by over a million people a day. We could not refuse such massive public access. However, as with all mass media for the general public, content restrictions were abundant. Some artists might find these restrictions to be too censorious, and would walk away, but for CAE expression in public space is always managed. Hence, the question for us is always: can we take advantage of the situation in spite of the managerial system? If the answer is yes, then we proceed. In this case, we were well aware that nothing overtly subversive could go over the wires, but we thought we could hide messages within image/text documents that were open-ended in terms of possible meaning. We would make images that simultaneously had both radical and conservative interpretations, making it possible to plausibly deny the former should there be a complaint.

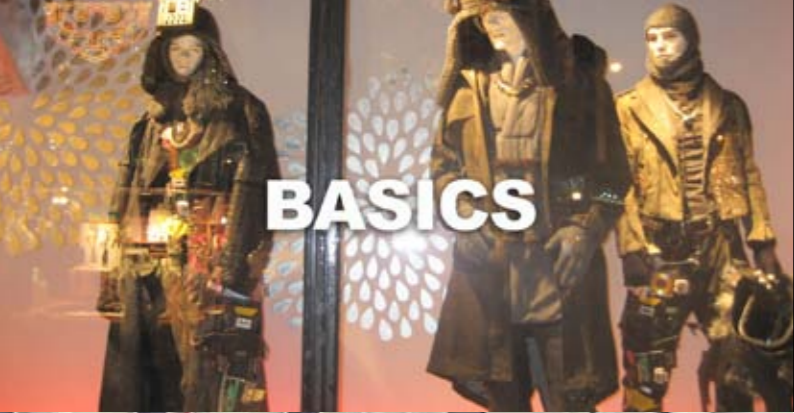
In order to construct this system of representation, we started by looking at the art world itself. The work of artists like Andy Warhol or Barbara Kruger speak to the opinion the viewer already has. If one is critically minded, the Warhol *Brillo Box* is a critique of the commodification of everyday life; if one is committed to accumulating commodities, it's a celebration of economic abundance and the psychological joy of brand familiarity.

We also looked at science fiction, which has often been a haven for subversive thought in times and in places that were under ideological lockdown. Science fiction has always provided the necessary deniability as to its message, because its denotative meaning can always act as an alibi for the connotative associations. If a censor sees something unacceptable in it, it can be argued that the problem is rooted in the mind of the censor, thus censoring the censor. In the US, cinema and television writers and producers have endlessly used this strategy in the representation of sex and sexuality.

Of all the systems we looked at, nothing compared with those developed by mystics. Over the centuries mystics have excelled at creating intricate systems that forcefully invite interpretation, but disallow any resolution or closure as to the intention or meaning of a text or image. The Tarot is an excellent example of a system of meaning so vast it is empty. The meaning of the cards, even when specifically configured, is as varied as there are readers.

The Tarot form was perfect since it encourages open interpretation but no interpretation can disprove the validity of any other. All are correct, or all are wrong. We had one other element on our side: the presentation had no context. It was simply an image/text that appeared on screen for no particular reason. We were able to disassociate our images from the usual categories that define this space (advertising and local information), so that the images instead fell into the categories of the weird and out of place. In that liminal space, viewers could not digest these images using habitual patterns of recognition and interpretation. They had to either immediately dismiss them or think about what they might mean. CAE's hope was that in that moment of confusion when everyday routine has failed them, they could potentially stumble across a meaning they would not normally be inclined to see. Imagine, thinking about what you are seeing while standing on a subway platform.

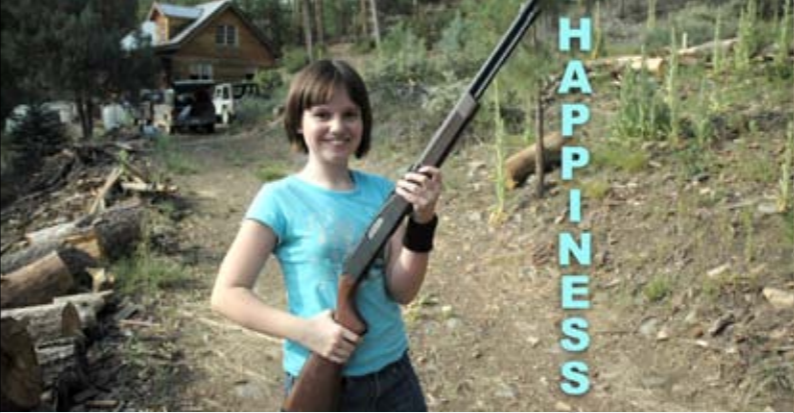




BASICS



CHOICE



HAPPINESS



NATURE



COMMUNITY



CREDIT



PEACE



PLEASURE



DIVERSITY



EFFICIENCY



PROGRESS



PROSPERITY



EMBODIED



EMPOWERED



PROVOKE



RUIN



FORTIFIED



FUTILITY



SACRIFICE



STARVATION

5.7 Winning Hearts

Text & image to come

5.7 Winning Hearts

Text & image to come

5.7 Winning Hearts

Text & image to come

5.7 Winning Hearts

Text & image to come

06. Geography

The issue of geography has always been a challenge for interventionists. Physical, social, ecological, biological, or virtual geographies are constantly shifting and, in so doing, remaking themselves. The dynamism of these environments creates a field of opportunity that allows for the invention of new relationships—for individuals and groups—within emergent geographic spaces. The infinite expansion of potential environments makes it difficult for authority to police, or even know how to police them. Hence, these unstructured places—whether in cloaked cyberspace, in rural emptiness, in urban margins, or in the molecular cosmos—offer locations for temporary operations that can be executed with modest risk, but with powerful impact. The problem is that geographies are interlocking, and a vibration in one can create a disturbance in another that could be heavily controlled and policed.

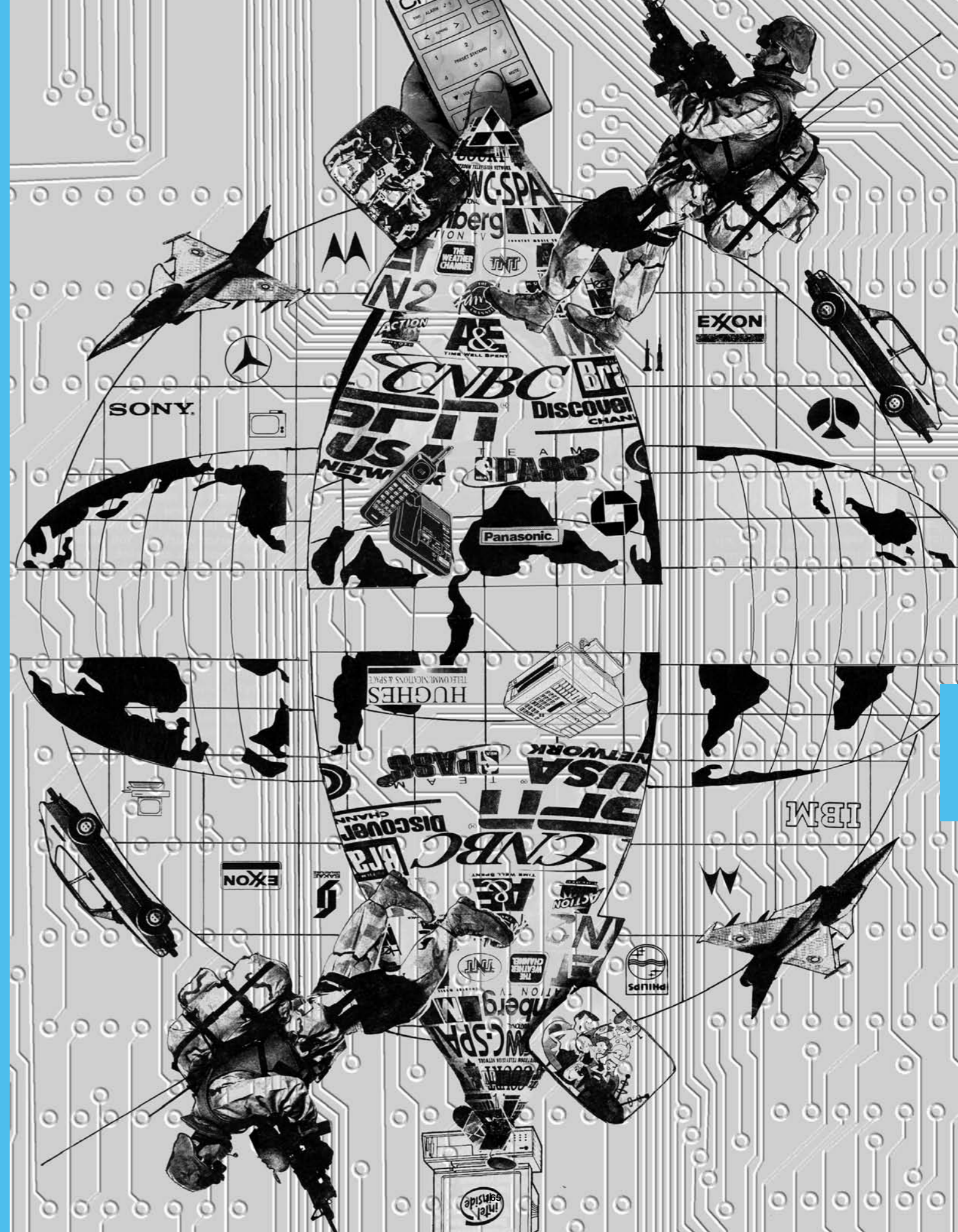
CAE has had a fair amount of experience with this problem, yet we continue to look for these fields of opportunity (and volatility) in an effort to stay one step ahead of disciplinary agencies while maximizing alternative relational possibilities. As a geographical constellation becomes increasingly familiar, authority will attempt to introduce as much inertia as possible into the field. Once the geographic constellation is slowed, stabilized, and ordered, it becomes easier to direct. Fortunately, many geographies are so vast that only portions can be brought under control, while others (biological, cosmic, and even some digital) are still so poorly understood that specific economic interests cannot be identified.



In this manner, the monument produces a disciplined space, where disturbance and difference are rendered silent and invisible. Monuments are not the signs of freedom they claim to be. They are the very opposite—quelling freedom of speech, freedom of thought, and freedom of remembrance. They are the overseers in the panoptic prison of ideology, to which too many masochistically submit. To the complicit, monuments offer a peaceful space through the familiarity of cynical tradition. At the monument, the complicit are not burdened with alienation arising from diversity of opinion, nor with the anxiety of moral contradiction. They are safe from the disturbance of reflection. Monuments are the ultimate ideological bunkers—the concrete manifestation of a fortress mentality. Nothing foreign enters, and nothing familiar leaves. Is it any wonder that monuments are the perfect photo opportunity? After all, the photo is visual proof that all is well in the fortress of repression. Of course, we are speaking not only about monuments honoring wars and heroes, but of all projects of massive scale, built to colonize territories and praise the capital it took to create them. Warships, skyscrapers, blockbuster films, Facebook, prisons, bureaucracies, and shopping malls all register forms of monumentality.

In contrast, CAE has focused on processes of deterritorialization—methods of appropriating a space and making a hasty retreat, so the space may be appropriated by other subjects who can recombine it into different forms with different meanings. CAE often seeks geographic regions that are the least encumbered by monumentality, but is unafraid to put on our camouflage and work in the shadow of the monument. The construction and reconstruction of spatial meaning is a key concern for CAE.

In cultural geographies, the disciplinary weapon of choice has been the monument. Through the use of scale, monuments inhibit individual agency by insisting that anything so large could only appear through consensual efforts.



Halifax Begg Your Pardon

6.1 | 2011 | Intervention

CAE had been called “terrorists” for our theories of electronic civil disobedience in the mid-90s, but the *Halifax* action was the first time we were associated with terrorism because of something we *did*. We certainly weren’t trying to associate ourselves with this unfortunate label, and from our perspective the project wasn’t even a provocation—but the police saw the situation differently.



We had been in Halifax the previous year to give two lectures at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. The events went well, and we were invited back the following year to conduct a workshop with the students and whoever else might be interested at the Khyber Center for the Arts. The initial meeting was quite lighthearted, and those in attendance decided that this intervention should be fun and attractive. The primary issue that emerged was tourism, which is hardly surprising given that Halifax is a popular tourist destination. Happily, no “locals rule” attitude asserted itself in the discussion, but rather an interest in what a tourist cannot see or know. How could we make the invisible and secret, visible and public? A tour seemed to provide this very opportunity, for while tours tend to take us on expected journeys to experience the referents of the images we know so well, some tours can take us into the unknown and unexpected. CAE found ourselves interested in remaking the relationship to the culture and cityscape, and our collaborators felt the same.




Participants began compiling a list of cultural embarrassments and public secrets that would make a rather curious tour. To highlight these sights, we made a variety of “sorry” markers (including bricks, flags, and digital tags). According to the participants, all of whom were Canadian, Canada is an apologetic culture, and such an action was in keeping with the time and place. That night we placed a number of the markers around the city. The next day we began handing out brochures for the tour, and even built a small pirate radio station to advertise the tour in the harbor-side parking lots frequented by tourists. Finally, we placed brochures in the maps and guides shelves of the Halifax tourist center.




The intervention felt like a success, and we retired to the beach for beer and some self-congratulation. The next day we checked the newspaper to see if the cultural journalists of Halifax had taken notice. They hadn’t, but the news reporters had. One of our digital tags had been found on a ferry and another in the bathroom of a ferry station. The police interpreted them as bombs. They proceeded to shut down the harbor—stopping the ferries, halting incoming and outgoing shipping, and closing the ferry stations—all during Friday rush hour. Thus, the action made the headlines, was the talk of the town, and the police were looking for us with a charge of “criminal mischief” (a very serious charge in Canada). In spite of the copious amount of conversations regarding Halifax’s local character and culture, the administration of NSCAD remained unimpressed. CAE was never invited back, nor have we set foot in the city again.





how to make a digital tag

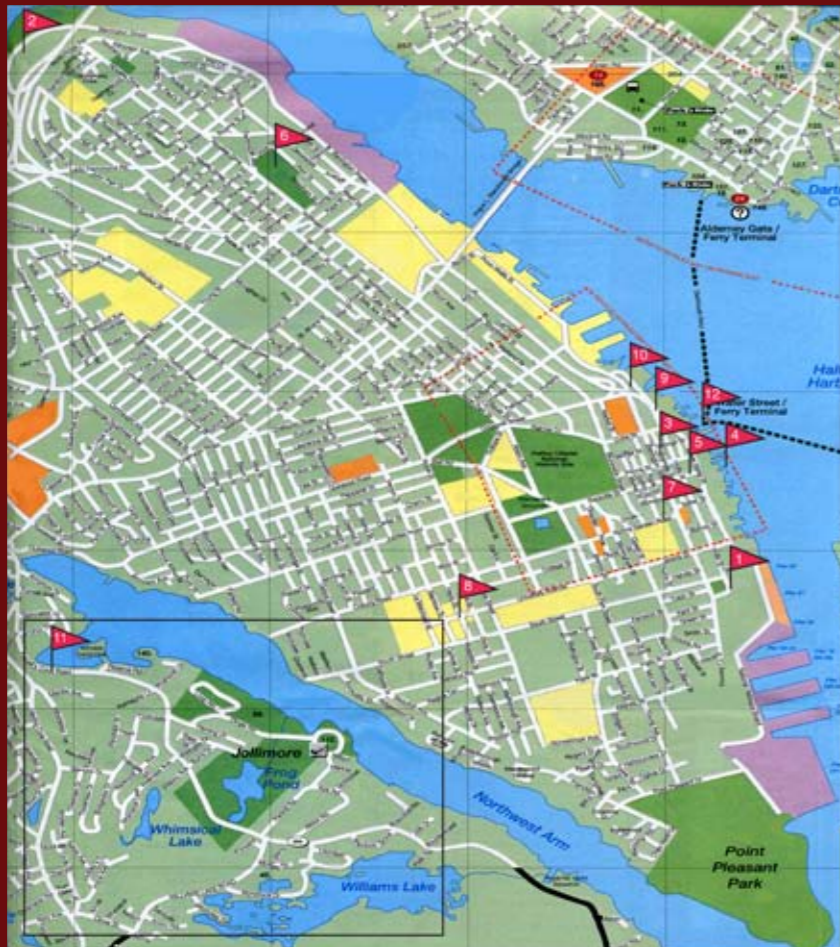


Facilitators:
Beatriz da Costa and CRITICAL ART Ensemble

No looney toons
Low spirits
THE DAILY NEWS
Saturday July 13, 2002
Prank shuts down harbour
Black box on ferry causes scare
Metro Transit



Landry, McGillivray
Canon ZR40
Carsand-Mosher



Halifax Begs Your Pardon!



A Walking Tour of Halifax's Most Embarrassing Cultural and Historic Sites

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CANADA Toronto trash on the move PAGE A16

SPORTS Surin to enjoy last hurrah PAGE C4

Gourmet Dining Overnight



The Halifax ferry Woodside I sits in the middle of Halifax Harbour while Halifax Regional Police check out two suspicious packages, one found on the vessel and one in the Halifax ferry terminal. Both packages turned out to be harmless.

Suspicious packages halt ferry service

Bomb-like devices part of graffiti campaign against 'embarrassing' aspects of city's culture, history

By John Gillis

A perceived "bomb scare" that shut down ferry service in Halifax Harbour for 2½ hours Friday and restricted other boat traffic turned out to be "part of a campaign of removable graffiti," police say.

Halifax Regional Police evacuated a harbour ferry and the Halifax, downtown Dartmouth and Woodside terminals after suspicious packages were found taped to the wall of a ferry and in a women's washroom at the Halifax terminal.

The device on the ferry was accompanied by a note that Staff Sgt. Scott Burbridge initially said "certainly implied that it was a bomb."

He later said: "We now do not think it was intended to be perceived as an explosive device."

But that was after the bomb squad was called in to examine the two packages. The ferry had been driven out to the middle of the harbour.

Ferry service was interrupted from about 4:40 p.m. to 7:15 p.m. Rush hour commuters were bused across the bridge and a container ship was prevented from entering the harbour.

A "well-put-together, glossy, tourist-style" pamphlet found on board the ferry tipped police off to the graffiti campaign, Staff Sgt. Burbridge said.

Whoever is behind the effort seems to be attacking "embarrassing" aspects of the city's culture and history, he said.



Halifax police arrive at the Halifax ferry terminal to check out reports of a suspicious package in the women's washroom.

The "device" on the ferry included a scrolling pager with the message: "We apologize for dumping raw sewage into the harbour."

Police later found that a brick in the walkway at Cornwallis Park had been replaced with one

Ontario court OKs same-sex marriages

Not recognizing gay unions violates Charter, judges rule

By Nancy Carr
The Canadian Press

A gay couple shared a celebratory kiss and wept tears of joy Friday after an Ontario court decision brought them giant steps closer to having their church marriage legally recognized.

The precedent-setting decision is expected to have ramifications across Canada and around the world.

"We're no longer second-class citizens in this country and the time has come for change," said Joe Varnell, a member of a Toronto church that sued the federal government for the right to marry same-sex couples.

"My relationship is validated and nobody can say we're not a real family anymore."

Prohibiting gay couples from marrying is unconstitutional and violates the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the three-judge panel ruled in a unanimous decision.

Justice Robert Blair wrote in the decision that marriage "must be open to same-sex couples who live in long-term, committed, relationships — marriage-like in everything but name — just as it is to heterosexual couples."

A lawyer for the federal attorney general — who opposed same-sex marriages — agreed the decision was momentous.

"Certainly it is an historic decision and it is unprecedented," Roslyn Levine, counsel to the federal attorney general, said outside the courthouse.

"It means marriage is no longer limited to one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others."

But the decision doesn't mean that Varnell and his partner Kevin Bourassa, who were wed in a Toronto church ceremony in January 2001 along with a lesbian couple, are legally married yet.

Ontario Superior Court Justice Heather Smith suspended Friday's ruling in favour of gay marriages for two years, giving Parliament time to redefine the term "marriage."

• See Ontario / A2



Kevin Bourassa kisses his partner Joe Varnell during a news conference Friday.

\$50m in offshore work available to N.S. firms

By Michael Tutton
The Canadian Press

Nova Scotia companies will have a fighting chance to win about \$50 million in work on a

METRO

BUSINESS	B6
CANADA	A11, A16, D29
CLASSIFIED	D1
COMICS	E6
EDITORIAL	B3
ENTERTAINMENT	A12
JOURNAL	B1
NOVA SCOTIA	A3
OBITUARIES	D28, D29
OPINION	B4
RELIGION	E3
SPORTS	C4

Seizing art 'absolutely absurd'

Artist's work not pornography, police overzealous — AGNS director

By Barry Dorey
Staff Reporter

said Cronin. "She is doing work about herself and her daughter. ... and I don't construe that as

The Molecular Invasion

6.2 | 2002 | Theory

The Molecular Invasion is an indispensable user's guide for anyone interested in the critical thinking and practice of biotech as a social, scientific, and political phenomenon. Whether in the genetic transgressions of the "fourth domain," the "promissory rhetoric" of utopian science industries, or the networks of "transgenic production," CAE offer us a bio-praxis: Tools for an open, critical engagement with biotech.

—Eugene Thacker

Another significant contribution from CAE in their ongoing mission to confront global capital wherever it makes mischief. In this volume, CAE outlines the ways and means to resist (endo)colonization on the molecular front with ideological disruptions, in combination with a practical "contestational biology."

—RTMark

In this just-in-time homeopathic cocktail of a book, CAE—the accident that's already happened!—calls on radical subjects to contest the greatest colonial enterprise yet: The corporate molecular invasion of the DNA of humans, plants, and other living organisms. With incisive clarity, CAE calls on informed amateurs and activists to do their homework and fight corporate science with science! See you at the public lab.

—subRosa

Brilliant! Replaces general fears of genetic engineering with specific strategies for resistance, and public impotence with tools for direct action... but the recipes made us nauseous.

—Institute for Applied Autonomy

Synonyms: 3-Hydroxy-2-methyl-5-([phosphonoxy]methyl)-4-pyridinecarboxaldehyde

Pyridoxal-5-phosphoric acid

Codecarboxylase

Molecular Formula: C₈H₁₀NO₆P

Molecular Weight: 247.1

CAS Number: 41468-25-1

MDL Number: MFCD00006333

Purity Grade: Minimum 98%

Pyridoxal 5-phosphate

CC1=CN=C(C=C1C=O)COP(=O)(O)O.O

Quality Application: Enzyme cofactor.

Normal coenzyme form of Vitamin B6

Form Aspect: Off-white to tan crystals.

Assay Display: Minimum 98%

Storage Temp: Store below 0°C.

Molecular Invasion

Critical Art Ensemble

Critical Art Ensemble

Molecular Invasion

AUTONOMEDIA

New Autonomy Series

AUTONOMEDIA

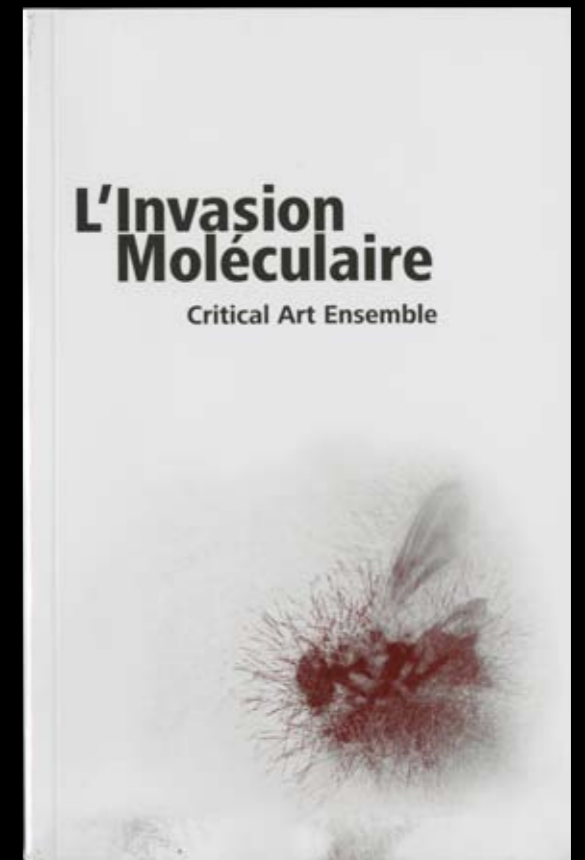
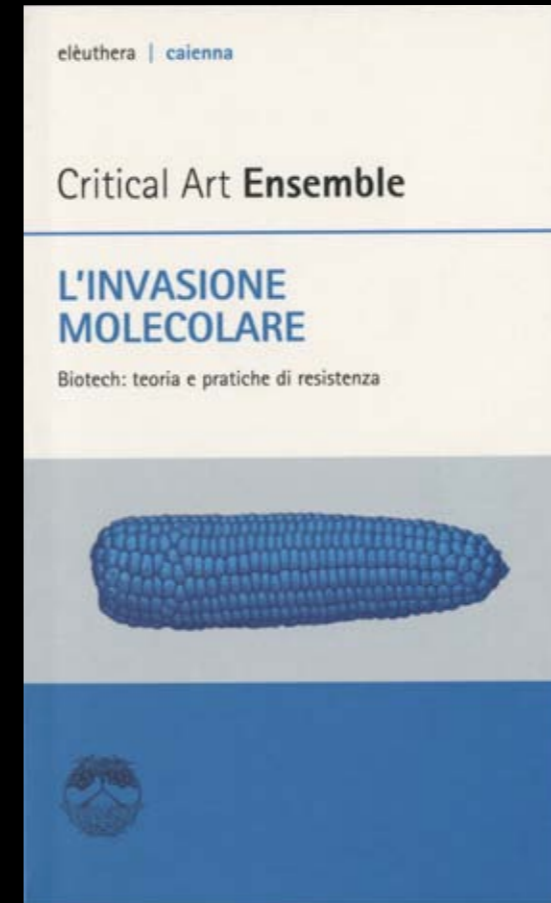
Cover: Critical Art Ensemble

This book project was the summary of our positions and ideas concerning advances in molecular biology and transgenic production. In it, CAE tried to pinpoint ideological abuses emerging from these new knowledge systems and practices. Perhaps more importantly, we attempted to demonstrate that the technology of molecular biology could be used for resistant purposes—that there could be a “contestational biology.” The knowledge and technology in these systems is pliable and can be used in ways for which it was never designed. It can do more than serve the military and the multinationals, as it can be repurposed to work against them. This knowledge and technology is too important to be left to the financial and technocratic few who will use it solely to advance their own interests. CAE still believes that the geography of transgenics is yet to be fully formed, so there is still time to reshape it.

CAE offered a seven-point plan to appropriate the means of transgenic production that we still stand behind:

1. Demystify transgenic production and products.
2. Neutralize public fear.
3. Promote critical thinking.
4. Undermine and attack Edenic utopian rhetoric.
5. Open the halls of science.
6. Dissolve cultural boundaries of specialization.
7. Build respect for amateurism.

Needless to say, this book (and especially the chapter on “fuzzy biological sabotage”) was widely quoted in the indictment against Steve Kurtz. CAE suspects the mail fraud case was only a means to get Kurtz under oath on the witness stand in order to question him about *The Molecular Invasion*, with the hopes of gathering evidence to reinstate a terrorism charge.



Free Range Grain

6.3 | 2003 | Exhibition and Public Lab

Regretfully, this project never came to full fruition. We originally planned to launch it in Europe and then present a different iteration in the US, but CAE's lab was seized as evidence after the arrest of CAE member Steve Kurtz for "bioterrorism." The project had to be put on hold much to the sorrow of the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, which was the US launch site. When the Department of Justice returned the lab four years later, our excitement had waned.

This saga began in 2000 when CAE was working with the Henry Art Gallery in Seattle. While touring the Genome Center at the University of Washington, we noticed a piece of equipment that we did not recognize. We approached a person we thought to be a bench scientist and asked if he knew what it was. He did not, because he was a work-study political science major. This information was a revelation. The grunt work of the flagship molecular biology project could be done by *anyone*. And why not? Science works like any other institution in its desire to simplify and optimize its procedures. CAE realized we could cut out the scientists, have our own lab, and DIY everything. In past public lab pieces, like *Flesh Machine* (page 216) and *Cult of the New Eve* (page 266), we had asked scientists to do key procedures for us when we really didn't need to. For *Free Range Grain*, if we wanted to test food, we could—we just needed the protocols, wetware, and hardware that were all readily available.

CAE had a number of interests associated with *Free Range Grain*. The first was continuing our public lab initiative, only this time having it fully staffed with amateurs. We hoped to lower public alienation regarding science, and part of that was showing how slow and mundane the everyday processes of biological science are. The second concern was engaging people in a discussion about the political economy of food. Not an exciting topic for most people, but if we could bring them to the table by testing food to see if it was truly organic as the label stated, we could create interest. We could generate a new relationship to grocery stores, farms, food factories, etc. (Little did we know what a tedious process food testing is—so much so that we felt a small twinge of relief when the FBI confiscated the lab.)

The project began in Europe, where we focused on testing processed corn products that were not labeled as genetically modified (which by law they must if any GM ingredients are used). We chose corn because of the massive amounts of GM corn that the US ships worldwide. We did not think the corn products would be pure because manufacturing food products at an industrial level requires unmanageable amounts of raw product. Impressionistic as they may be, our findings were interesting. In Holland, the food we tested had zero contaminants. In Germany, it was a 50-50 split. In Austria, the most anti-GMO country, everything we tested was contaminated. More importantly, in conversation with participants it was easy to move from discussing corporate contamination of the food supply to questioning what will happen when a few multinationals control the entire food chain.

Our plan for the US was to test "organic" grain-based food to see if it really was. We'll just have to wonder about that.

CAE

pipette tips
Micro tubes
Macro tubes (50 ml)
Pipette tubes
pack of gel film
scale paper
gloves
argose powder
DNA stain
PCR stain
TAE
FRG CD

Space

lab bench
2 lab stools
2 computers
tables for the computers
2 chairs
microwave
fridge
freezer
enzymes (extraction and test kits)
TAQ
DDH₂O
Ethanol 70%
power (transformers w/ 4 plugs)
secure space

Hardware (lab delivery)

1 Thermocycler
1 Centrifuge
2 Electrophoresis apparatus
1 Vortex mixer
1 grinder
2 glass cylinder
2 beakers
1 thermometer
1 macro tubes stands
1 magnetic tube rack
5 microtube racks
1 pipette rack
1 gel casting box
4 pipettes
1 scale
3 plastic boxes
1 metal bowl



Free Range Grain

A project by Critical Art Ensemble, Beatriz da Costa, and Shyh-shiun Shyu



GM^{food}

It's what's for dinner.



Free Range Grain

A project by Critical Art Ensemble
Beatriz da Costa and Shyh-shiun Shyu

GM^{food}

The mark of excellence.



Free Range Grain

A project by Critical Art Ensemble
Beatriz da Costa and Shyh-shiun Shyu

GM^{food}

We bring good things to life.



Free Range Grain

A project by Critical Art Ensemble
Beatriz da Costa and Shyh-shiun Shyu

Peep Under the Elbe

6.4 | 2008 | Intervention

CAE had been to Hamburg many times, and each time wondered where the poor lived. We were about to find out.

The trip was prompted by an invitation from the Kultur/Natur festival (K/N). The staff of KNF were headquartered in a marginal neighborhood called Wilhelmsburg, which is where they wanted us to make our project. To help the artists adjust to the neighborhood, K/N immersed them in it. CAE was placed in public housing (not an unusual experience for CAE), which Wilhelmsburg had in great abundance. Wilhelmsburg shared the island in the middle of the river Elbe with the Port Authority. The port covered most of the waterfront, while the residential area was primarily in the center of the island. The neighborhood was wanting for infrastructure, and was packed with immigrants (approximately 30 ethnicities), working poor, and the elderly. Though an official part of Hamburg, Wilhelmsburg was actually an area unto itself designed to keep some people in and others out. The socio-economic conditions were certainly less than ideal, and were punctuated by the ubiquitous stench of a fat rendering plant (it took about a week to get used to the smell). To be sure, it wasn't what we were expecting when asked to come to Hamburg for six weeks and produce a project. With all expectations now erased by the everyday life conditions, we began thinking about what we could do.

The first subject to strike us was the ecology of rats on the island. Taking the trash out was always an adventure. Then when we saw about twenty rats frolicking in broad daylight in the back of one of the local grocery stores, we became even more interested. The problem was that this ecosystem was too complex for a project needing to be completed in six weeks.

Around the same time, we also began to notice the strange coloration of the canals and creeks that crisscrossed the island. Some of them were a bizarre shade of blue that was indicative of an excess of copper in the water (it turned out there had been a copper plant on the island). Other creeks were simply unspeakable in their appearance, which would be just another typical industrial experience if people weren't swimming in the water or fishing it with the intention of eating the fish for supper. The canals and creeks were a public resource, and the locals were exploiting them for the economic and entertainment value they had. Clearly, in an underresourced area, CAE could not tell people not to use the water for gathering food or swimming. Instead, we had to create a new geographic relationship, on a both a physical and psychological level so people could use this sketchy resource to its best advantage.

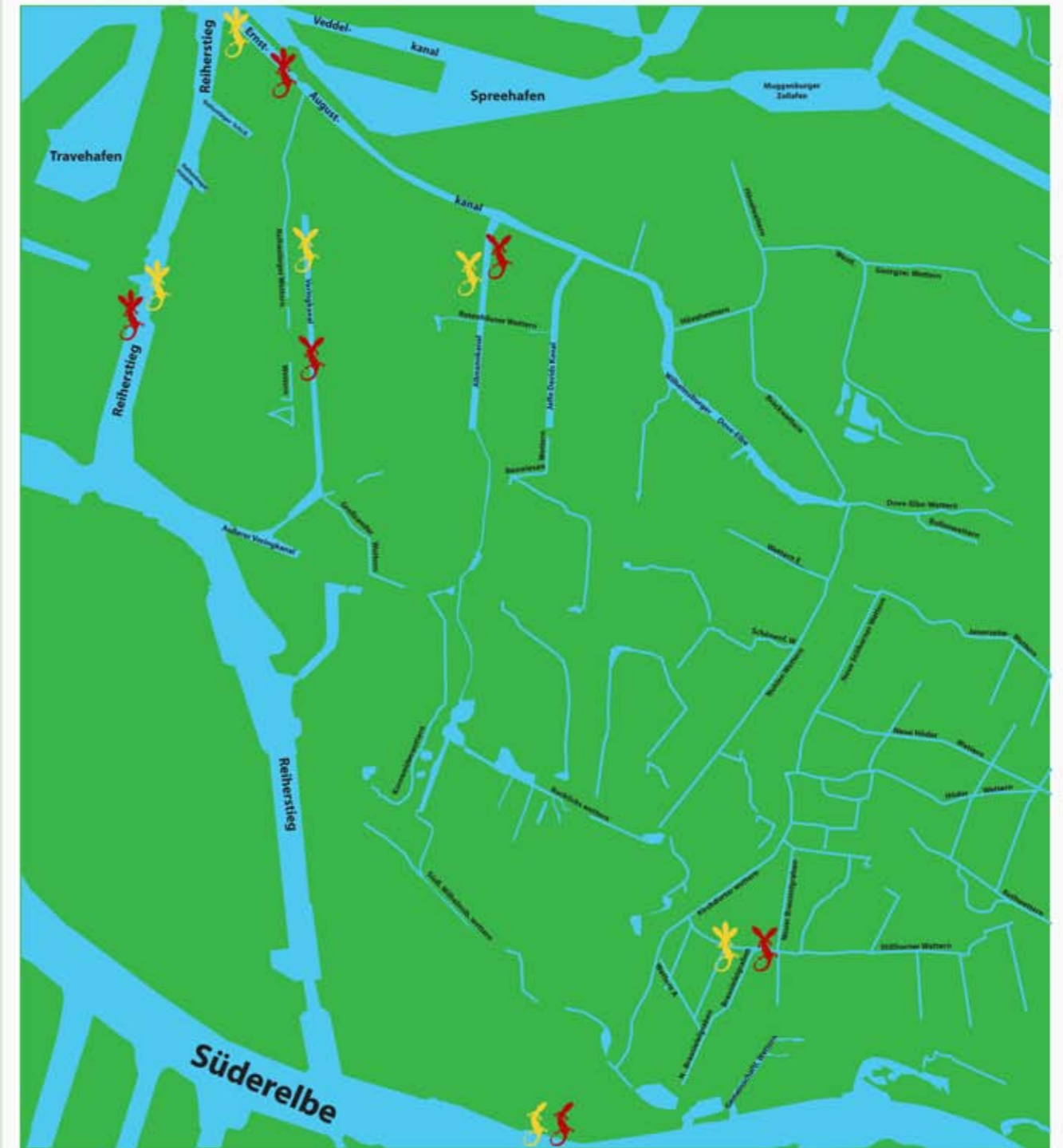
Helping us to accomplish this goal was the local water board. Visiting with the scientists who worked there was both depressing and enlightening. They freely admitted the water quality was not the best, although it could be much worse. They also showed us their data on the silt at the bottom of the canals. It was close to pure poison, garnering the highest rating of plus eight—code red on the toxicity chart. We asked if there would be a clean-up. Unfortunately, such an undertaking would be very expensive, and what little money was allocated for remediation and clean-up went to Hamburg proper.






CAE's next move was to begin testing the water around the island. We took samples from both interior and exterior waterways and contracted a lab to do a full spectrum toxicity analysis. We also bought hundreds of home test kits that could detect variable amounts of metals, some toxins, and bacteria intensity. When our data came back, we made maps of the least toxic locations for swimming, and where one would have the best chance of catching the least toxic fish. The maps included additional recommendations, such as to eat the small fish rather than the large ones, and not to eat fatty fish like eels, which have concentrated levels of toxins. We began biking up and down the canals stopping to talk to fisherman and give them test kits. By the end of our stay, the fisherman knew who we were and what we were doing, and they were saving deformed specimens (mostly with gaping tumors) for us.

Our most helpful find was that the most popular swimming beach had elevated levels of arsenic. Hopefully, that has changed, and people are now swimming in the Elbe proper at the southern tip of the island. If the silt isn't stirred up too much the swimming isn't bad. The river current keeps the water fairly clean and the bacteria count low.

The title of this project may appear odd when seen out of context. It was a play on an urban development campaign that was underway at the time called *Leap Over the Elbe*. This project purported to function as an initiative that would reunite Hamburg and Wilhelmsburg. From CAE's perspective this idea was ridiculous. The conditions on the ground alone would stop any movement to culturally bridge the city and, as if that were not enough, the Port Authority—which has total control of what can happen on the island—did not support it. CAE believed the neighborhood's relationship to water to be more fundamental than a new cultural relation that will never happen. Hence, we wanted to suggest that looking into the Elbe might be of greater urgency than leaping over it.

PAGE 178 TOP LEFT, TOP RIGHT, AND CENTER LEFT: CAE samples canal water for testing. | PAGE 178 CENTER RIGHT, BOTTOM LEFT AND RIGHT: CAE meets with the Bureau of Water Resources. | PAGE 179 TOP LEFT: CAE members stop to speak with fishermen about water quality and food safety. | PAGE 179 TOP RIGHT: Test kit results. | PAGE 179 CENTER LEFT: CAE member works on display boxes for water safety maps. | PAGE 179 CENTER RIGHT: Installed map on a popular swimming beach.



- | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
|  | Empfohlen für Wassersportaktivitäten
(außer Angeln) |  | Empfohlen zum Angeln
(bei begrenztem Verzehr des Fangs) |
|  | Vorsicht ist geboten |  | Vorsicht ist geboten |
|  | Hier bitte nicht schwimmen |  | Fisch nicht zum Essen geeignet |



New Alliances

6.5 | 2011 | Workshop and Intervention

In October of 2011, CAE traveled to Turin, Italy for a workshop on “new alliances” in collaboration with Parco Arte Vivente (PAV), directed by Piero Gilardi, an institution committed to cultural action that engages daily ecological commitment as an act of resilience. From its programming, to its architecture, to the remediated site on which it is located, PAV signals a change in the relation of humans to the environment and stands in stark contrast to the modern sites and structures that surround it. Needless to say, CAE could not have asked for a better partner in getting this project off the ground.

The general concept of the workshop was to transform the precarious position of endangered plant species into a quality that could be used to aid environmental activism. Given the dual nature of species that are both endangered and protected, it appears we have a possible site where the power of precarity in conjunction with law can work in favor of a healthy environment. Perhaps we can integrate the shared precarity of endangered plant species and endangered social and green spaces in a manner that strengthens and protects both. In many countries, endangered plant species enjoy special legal protection. At the very least, they elicit public sympathy and can function as an ethical hammer for conservationists. Though these plants may be weak as species, they are quite powerful as individual specimens. If that power can be connected with human and nonhuman spaces that are endangered by various capitalist agencies reappropriating territory from people unable to defend it, perhaps a sociopolitical symbiosis between plants and people could develop. The plants would expand in number as people plant them for protection, thus addressing the problem of species collapse, and the spaces would gain the legal protection accorded to the plants to better resist aggressive or hostile takeover attempts. Unjust development threatens a number of spaces: community gardens, common areas, endangered rural spaces, any kind of squatted territory, and those threatened by extraction industries, including farmland, wilderness, or even suburban aquifers.

The workshop in Turin consisted of four key parts that would lay the groundwork for the action. CAE would describe the plan and variations on the potential new alliances. An agronomist with expertise in environmental law (Daniele Fazio) would then speak about laws regarding endangered species at the national, provincial, and municipal levels. Then a botanist and gardener (Filippo Alossa) would talk about local endangered plants and demonstrate how to grow them. The workshop would end with a series of scouting missions to determine the best sites for planting.

When CAE arrived in Turin, Orietta Brombin, the Director of Education and Training Activities at PAV, who was also functioning as producer for this workshop, had assembled an amazing team of participants, including our much-needed lawyer and agronomist. Prior to our arriving, the team had already scouted the locations, so we only needed to proceed with the first three parts. The legal session was somewhat disappointing in that we learned that Italy distinguished between cultivated and wild when it came to endangered species—cultivated plants were not protected, no matter how rare. However, this wouldn't slow a media campaign, and there did appear to be some gray area as to how cultivation could be proven when coming across a plant in a fallow field.

Growing the plants, and acquiring the means necessary to grow a lot of plants, was all quite possible. We were able to choose a flower easily enough (Cupid's Dart, *Catananche caerulea*), although this process was determined largely by the market for commercially available seeds. Obviously, not just anyone can harvest the seeds of wild endangered plants. Fortunately, a wide variety of endangered plant seeds are commercially available. Finally, we came to realize that the project would have to be extended, as Alossa strongly recommended that we use a natural cycle for growing in natural elements and avoid the artificiality of the greenhouse, as greenhouse grown plants would be too weak for natural conditions. He suggested beginning to sow the plants in late spring, and transplanting them in late summer.

This project is ongoing, and is expanding into sites in North America.

PAGE 181 CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Workshop participants. | Assessing the aesthetic power of different endangered flowers. | Botanist and gardener Filippo Alossa explains the choice options of endangered plant species. | Workshop participants receive instruction on transplanting endangered species. | Preparing seeds for germination. | Workshop participants receive instruction on soil preparation. | Workshop participants discuss choice options of endangered plant species. | **PAGE 182 TOP:** Look at Yourself in the Mirror and You'll See the World, PAV Living Art Park, field trip in Via Passo Buole (ex-industrial area), Turin, June 7, 2011 | **PAGE 182 BOTTOM:** Look at Yourself in the Mirror and You'll See the World, PAV Living Art Park, field trip in Piazza Nizza (spontaneous urban garden next to the subway), Turin, July 19, 2011. | **PAGE 183 TOP:** Look at Yourself in the Mirror and You'll See the World, PAV Living Art Park, field trip in via Zino Zini (a small motorway in the city), Turin, Sept 27, 2011 | **PAGE 183 BOTTOM:** Look at Yourself in the Mirror and You'll See the World, PAV Living Art Park, field trip in Lungo Dora Savona/Corso XI Febbraio (crescent-shaped garden), Turin, Oct 11, 2011





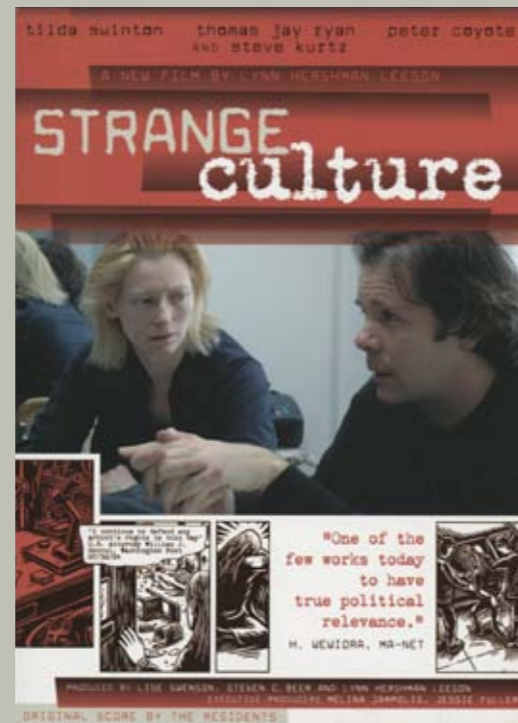
07. Crime

We are all criminals. CAE isn't speaking of capitalism's vast under-economy, nor the desperate minions that constitute its masses. We are speaking of those who are enveloped in the legitimized world of corruption. In this realm of unending accumulation by any means available, criminality is the only possible identity. Property law tells us that acting for a reasonable redistribution of wealth (one where everyone has the right to have fundamental needs fulfilled), is picking someone's pocket, as if the fortune in the pocket being picked did not originate in crime.

Laws tell us about proximity. What we can be near, and from what we must keep our distance. When we can be still, and when we must move. The law tells us what can go into our bodies and under which circumstances, and what can come out of our bodies and under which circumstances. These demands are so refined and specific that a person can hardly go through a day without breaking a law. Our crimes are just part of life, part of our identity, and they are, for the most part, committed unnoticed. Not having the label of "criminal" imposed upon one is really a matter of good fortune or a commitment to silence. For those who are neither lucky nor fearful, they may be sure that authority will want to speak to them about criminal activities.



Discipline comes in many guises, and over the years CAE has met almost all of them—police, federal agents, corporate lawyers, government prosecutors, politicians, church groups, and militaries (often the most reasonable of this grouping). The only ones we have failed to encounter are social workers, and we suspect that is because no CAE member has children. In one sense, CAE is a band of criminals partly because the criminality of everyday life compels us to be, and partly because criminality is imposed upon us by the authority we reject. During the Bush era we were even investigated by the FBI to see if we were a "sleeping cell," and were openly called criminals in government press conferences. We have been threatened with arrest on numerous occasions. We have been indicted, subpoenaed, and compelled to appear before grand juries. Consequently, we have had an interest in crime as a subject over the years, and especially in that ever-shifting line between criminal misbehavior and socially just acts.



TOP RIGHT : When Kurtz was under indictment for felony mail and wire fraud he had to carry letters such as this one to prove the legitimacy of his visit when crossing international borders. | OPPOSITE TOP: Neighbor Mike Mulley captured the raid on Kurtz's home on film. | OPPOSITE BOTTOM: Pages from the documentary comic about Kurtz's arrest by Timothy Stock and Warren Heise, in *Alphabet City Magazine 10: Suspect*.



Electronic Civil Disobedience

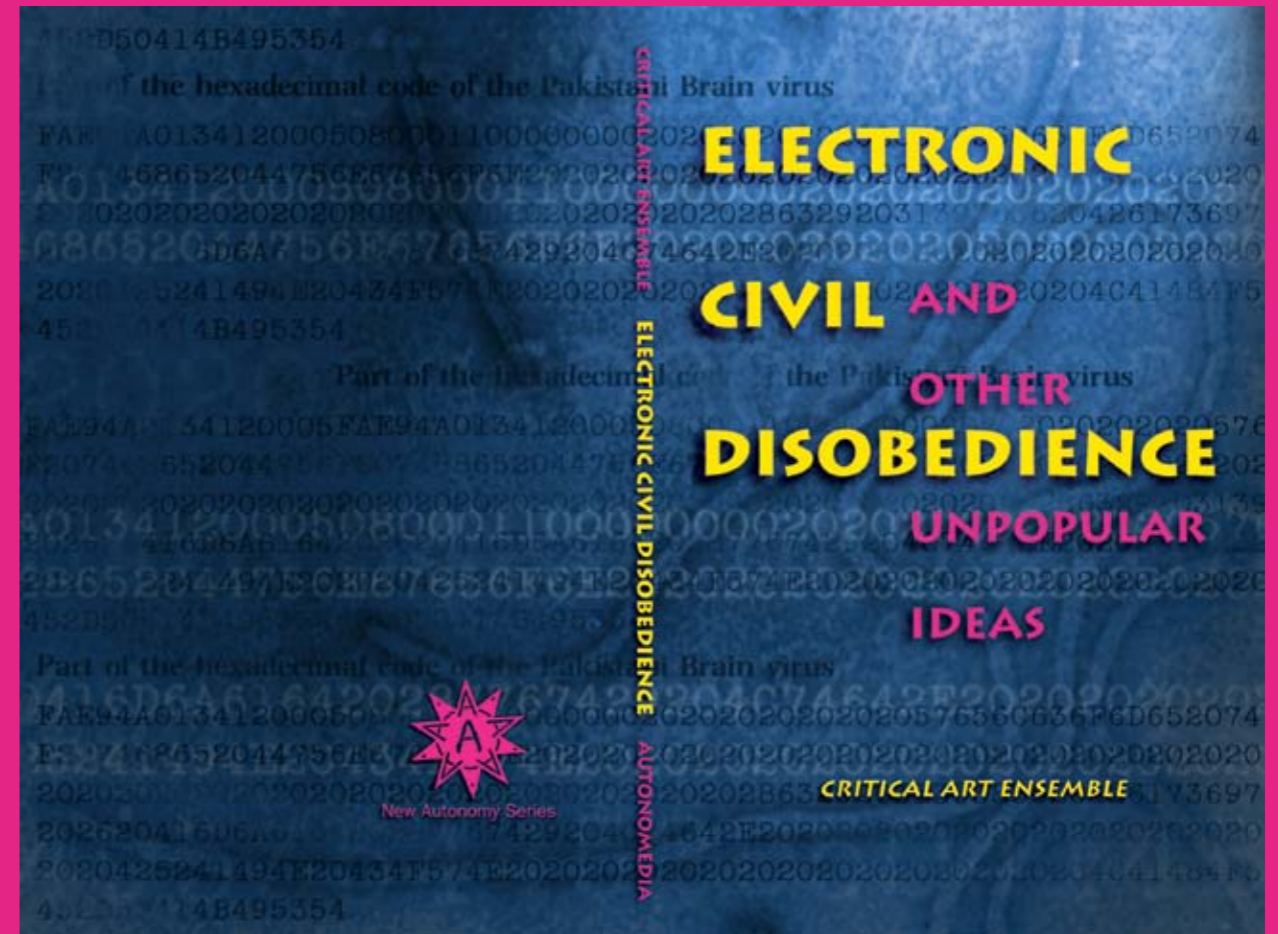
7.1 | 1996 | Theory

This book continued the exploration begun in *The Electronic Disturbance (TED)* (page 110). While *TED* was very well received, critics continually mentioned two primary shortcomings. The first was that while *TED* explains the nature of nomadic power in the age of the virtual, it said very little about nomadic resistance on the Internet or in the “bunker” (what CAE was calling fortified, overly managed public spaces). In the first part of *Electronic Civil Disobedience and Other Unpopular Ideas*, CAE offered a preliminary outline of a rational strategy and tactical possibilities for nomadic resistance. In other words, the matters described in the book were the rational and oppositional counterparts of nomadic power (i.e., the contemporary form of domination).

In the second part, CAE replied to the second most common criticism of *TED*. Critics mentioned that while CAE often recommends nonrational actions, none are actually outlined in *TED*. CAE attempted to get beyond the traditional activist position enveloped in reactive, rational resistance by searching for the (non)location of the inherently contestational energy of Dionysian tendencies. As in *TED*, CAE continued to maintain that the social dynamic of the nonrational—which typically appears as explosive and unstoppable moments of excess, waste, sacrifice, abjectivity, spontaneity, mania, delirium, and uselessness—had to function as a parallel engine of resistance alongside alternative cultural politics. These elements of existence are truly at the heart of individual autonomy, and yet they are seldom acknowledged by activist culture. Like rational society itself, activist culture tries to *organize* them out of existence, or at least to the point where they no longer appear. In this text, CAE examined how these nonrational elements have entwined themselves with rational visible culture.

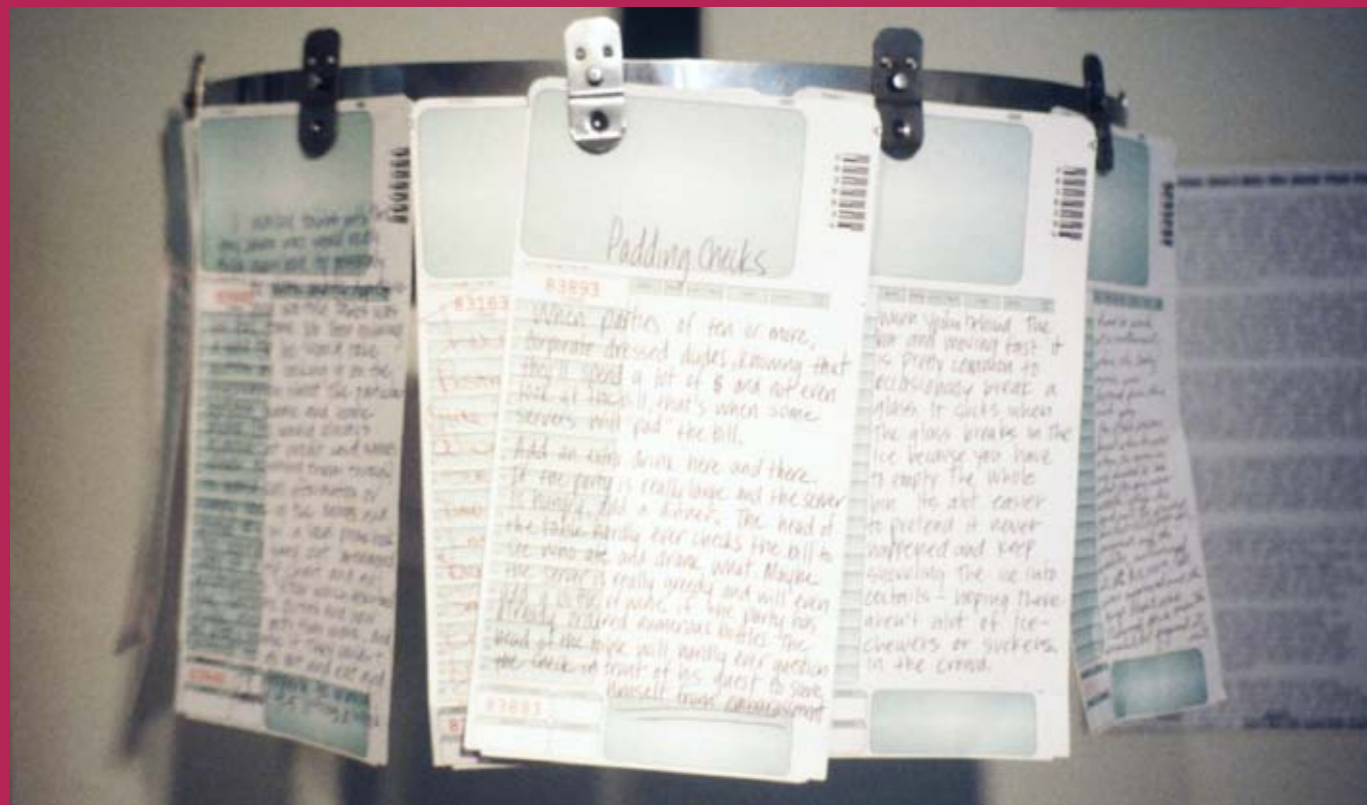


ABOVE: Serbian translation of *Electronic Civil Disobedience*. | OPPOSITE BOTTOM: Slovenian translation.



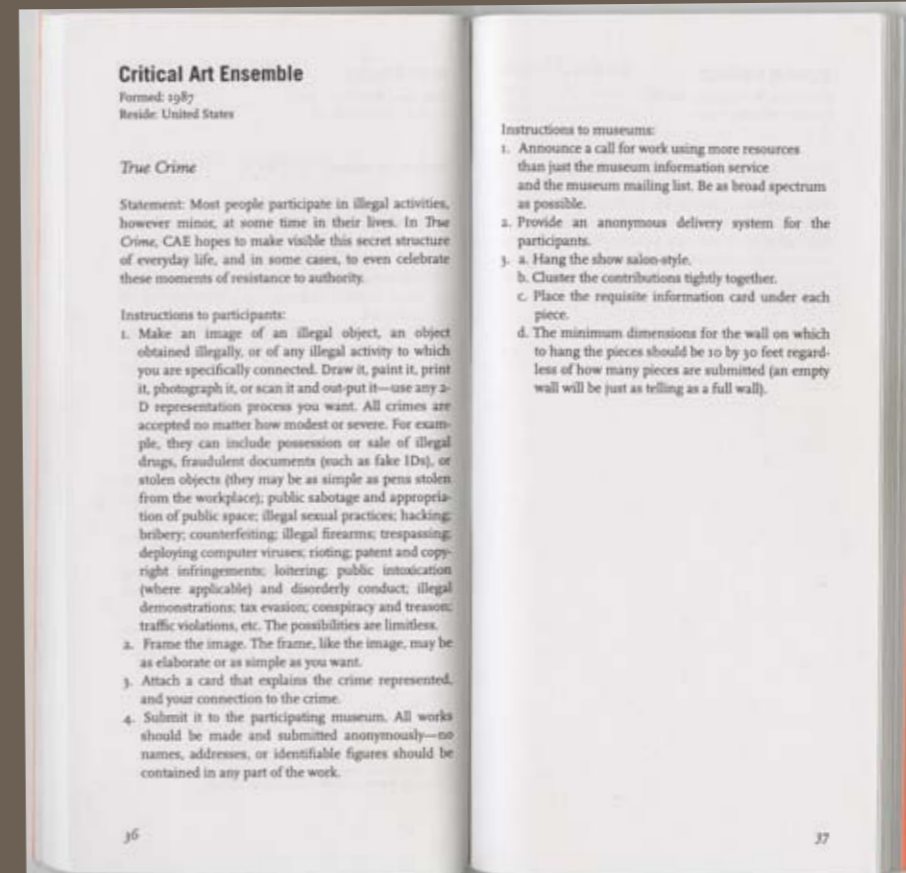
True Crime / Live Crime

7.2 | 1997 / 2006 | Exhibition



True Crime was produced for the *Do It (Museum)* series curated by Hans-Ulrich Obrist for Independent Curators International in NYC. The idea was for artists to provide simple instructions for projects or exhibitions. A museum would then agree to actualize at least half of the projects in the collected instructions book, and a set of participants to actualize the projects would be chosen using criteria set by the museum. While the instructions for *True Crime* were complex, they boiled down to asking participants to document a crime they had committed in the course of everyday life. In 2006, this idea was reconfigured by the curatorial collaboration DisplayCult for the Toronto Performance Festival. The idea was to transform *Do It* into a performance based book of instructions titled *Do Me!*, and CAE's project was transformed into *Live Crime*. The instructions were much simpler: "Commit a crime that has humanitarian value." This single statement left a lot of room for free interpretation.

TOP: This was CAE's favorite piece of the *True Crime* series. First, the artist gave us a 3D piece when the rules clearly stated all work must be 2D. This project consisted of an order wheel filled with tickets. On each ticket was a text about a crime committed in the restaurant where the artist worked. Each ticket was written up by one of the employees. The artist had polled all the workers at the restaurant and compiled a fairly thorough list of crimes they had committed, from padding bills, watering down drinks, and stealing food and alcohol, to giving incorrect change, and committing health violations, etc. This artist went beyond individual crime, and revealed an entire ecology of crime within a business. | BOTTOM: Lamont Gallery, Phillips Exeter Academy. A very common crime in the *True Crime*. We received a lot of work regarding identity and immigration crimes | PAGE 192 TOP: *True Crime*. Cranbrook Art Museum, Bloomfield Hills, MI. | PAGE 192 CENTRE: *True Crime*. Visual Arts Center. Boise State University, Boise, Ohio. | PAGE 192 BOTTOM: *True Crime*. Atlanta College of Art Gallery, Atlanta, GA. | PAGE 193 TOP: *True Crime*. Cranbrook Art Museum, Bloomfield Hills MI. | PAGE 193 CENTER: *True Crime*. Pittsburgh Center for the Arts. | PAGE 193 BOTTOM: *True Crime*. Memphis Brooks Museum of Art. Memphis, TN.



Critical Art Ensemble

Formed: 1987
Reside: United States

True Crime

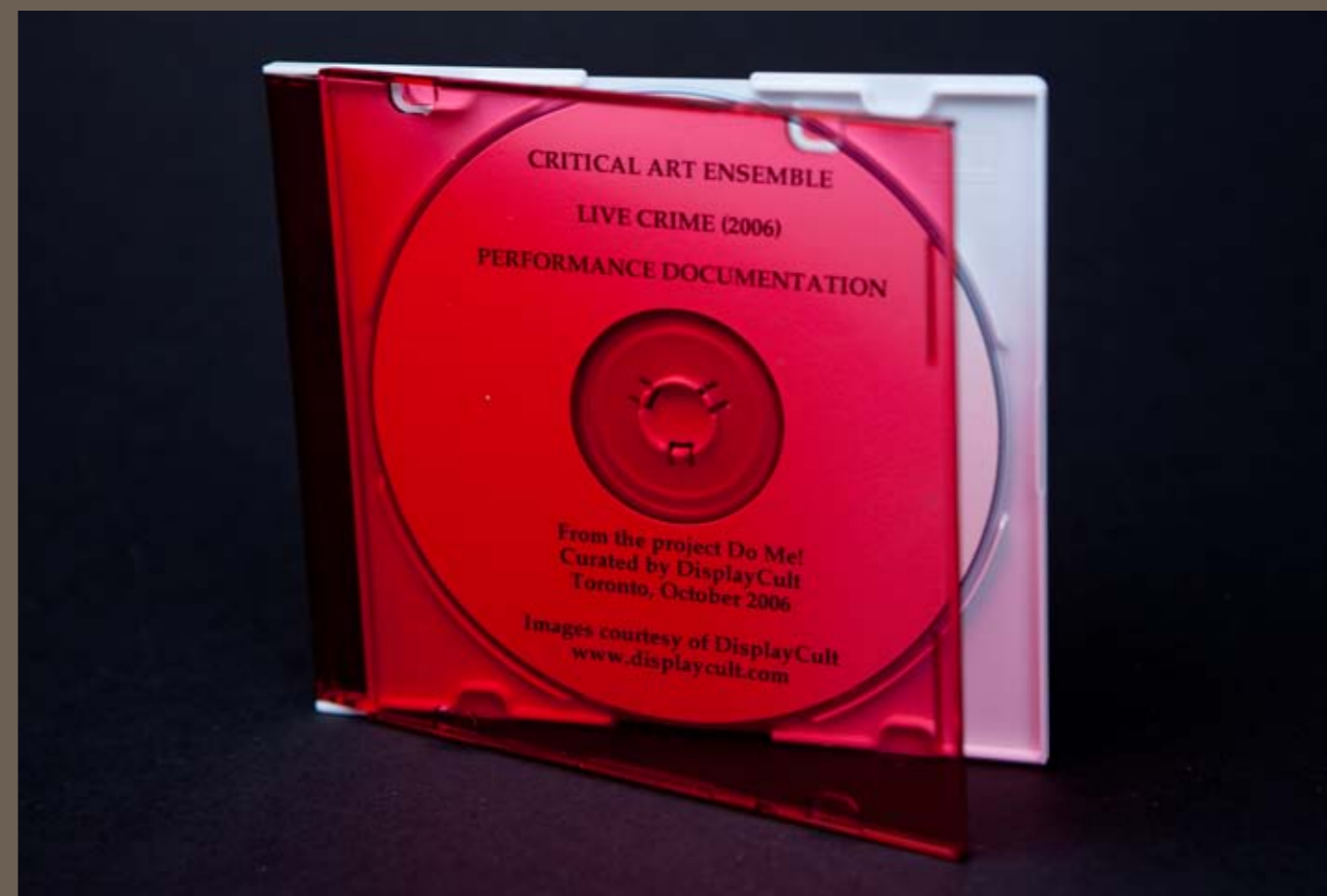
Statement: Most people participate in illegal activities, however minor, at some time in their lives. In *True Crime*, CAE hopes to make visible this secret structure of everyday life, and in some cases, to even celebrate these moments of resistance to authority.

Instructions to participants:

1. Make an image of an illegal object, an object obtained illegally, or of any illegal activity to which you are specifically connected. Draw it, paint it, print it, photograph it, or scan it and out-put it—use any 2-D representation process you want. All crimes are accepted no matter how modest or severe. For example, they can include possession or sale of illegal drugs, fraudulent documents (such as fake IDs), or stolen objects (they may be as simple as pens stolen from the workplace); public sabotage and appropriation of public space; illegal sexual practices; hacking; bribery; counterfeiting; illegal firearms; trespassing; deploying computer viruses; rioting; patent and copyright infringements; loitering; public intoxication (where applicable) and disorderly conduct; illegal demonstrations; tax evasion; conspiracy and treason; traffic violations, etc. The possibilities are limitless.
2. Frame the image. The frame, like the image, may be as elaborate or as simple as you want.
3. Attach a card that explains the crime represented, and your connection to the crime.
4. Submit it to the participating museum. All works should be made and submitted anonymously—no names, addresses, or identifiable figures should be contained in any part of the work.

Instructions to museums:

1. Announce a call for work using more resources than just the museum information service and the museum mailing list. Be as broad spectrum as possible.
2. Provide an anonymous delivery system for the participants.
 - a. Hang the show salon-style.
 - b. Cluster the contributions tightly together.
 - c. Place the requisite information card under each piece.
3. The minimum dimensions for the wall on which to hang the pieces should be 10 by 30 feet regardless of how many pieces are submitted (an empty wall will be just as telling as a full wall).





Catch Me if You Can (New and Improved Edition)

7.3 | 2003 | Intervention



Catch Me if You Can (New and Improved Edition) was a collaboration between CAE and kuda.org in Novi Sad. The war in Serbia was over, and the West was beginning to extract wealth for services rendered. Among the new business conditions was a demand that Western copyrights be recognized and enforced. CAE arrived in Serbia the week before the copyright enforcement policy went into effect. Prior to this policy, Serbian cities and towns were dotted with shops and kiosks that sold pirated DVDs and CDs. Entire catalogues of a band's music sold for one dollar, as did DVDs not yet available in the US. With only a week to go before all these businesses would close for good, business was brisk.

CAE decided to send a "welcome to capitalism" message to all the people who would no longer be able to afford music and cinema. We bought a copy of *Catch Me if You Can* (a popular Leonardo DiCaprio film that was nominated for an Oscar), which had been acquired from one of the promotional DVDs that are distributed to academy voters. These DVDs had "for your consideration" messages sprinkled throughout them to discourage commercial exploitation of the film. We replaced the "consideration" texts with messages explaining what people could expect when the rule of capitalism began, focusing the message on cultural resources they would no longer be able to afford. We made as many copies as we could, and gave them away in the streets.



TOP: CAE member at kuda.org, Novi Sad, Serbia. | BOTTOM: CAE in a Serbian bootleg shop. | OPPOSITE TOP: A copy of the reworked *Catch Me if You Can* DVD. | OPPOSITE BOTTOM: The complete Ramones catalog purchased for one US dollar.



All Apologies

7.4 | 2004 | An Exhibition in Ruins

Since we did not have a project for *The Interventionists* show at the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (Mass MoCA) due to the FBI's confiscation of *Free Range Grain* (page 172), CAE went to the museum to see if we could still contribute in some way to the exhibition. We still had the support pieces for the action (banners, website, some of the food we were going to test), so we installed those in the space along with an FBI drawing found in the aftermath of the raid on Steve Kurtz's home. We also made a sign that explained why the project was incomplete. The exhibition curator and the museum director added an explanation of their own. Finally, press coverage of the story was put up on the walls.

At that point in time, all we really knew about our legal situation was that Steve was under investigation by the FBI and the Department of Justice. Since the exhibition was an excellent survey of contemporary resistant cultural practices, and most of the artists were in attendance, the moral support for CAE's precarious situation was tremendous, but it didn't stop there. Concerns over the ongoing investigation led to the formation of the CAE Defense Committee and the CAE Defense Fund (an initial fund started by the Yes Men was folded into this one). These groups of dedicated friends and activists would go on to handle fundraising, public and media relations, expert witness acquisition, and even acted as guardians for Steve. Between his first arrest and his subsequent indictment, we did not know who the FBI would come for, when they might come, or how they would execute the arrest. Our lawyers suggested we be ready for anything, including an armed raid. During this organizational moment at the museum, all of CAE was subpoenaed to appear before a Grand Jury. Steven Barnes and key collaborator Beatriz da Costa were subpoenaed leaving their hotel in North Adams, MA. The pool of people under subpoena only grew, and came to include Steve Kurtz's friends, university colleagues, students, and former CAE members and collaborators. On June 29, 2004, Steve and geneticist and key collaborator Robert Ferrell were indicted on two counts of mail fraud and two counts of wire fraud.

The Mass MoCA show was notable for one other reason. The invitation for the exhibition was a primary piece of evidence against Steve and helped to secure the warrant to search his home. Appearing on the invitation was a small Atlas Group graphic of a bombed-out car captioned with Arabic writing. Citing the invitation, the Department of Justice claimed Steve possessed terrorist writings, and therefore constituted a credible threat to public safety. This type of absurd claim would continue for another four years until the case was finally dismissed.



ABOVE: CAE's incomplete installation. | OPPOSITE TOP: MassMoca invitation for *The Interventionists*. | OPPOSITE BOTTOM: Viewers look over the remnants of the installation. | PAGE 198: A piece of FBI art illustrating how the molecular biology equipment was laid out on the lab bench. | PAGE 199: CAE/da Costa's statement on the confiscation.

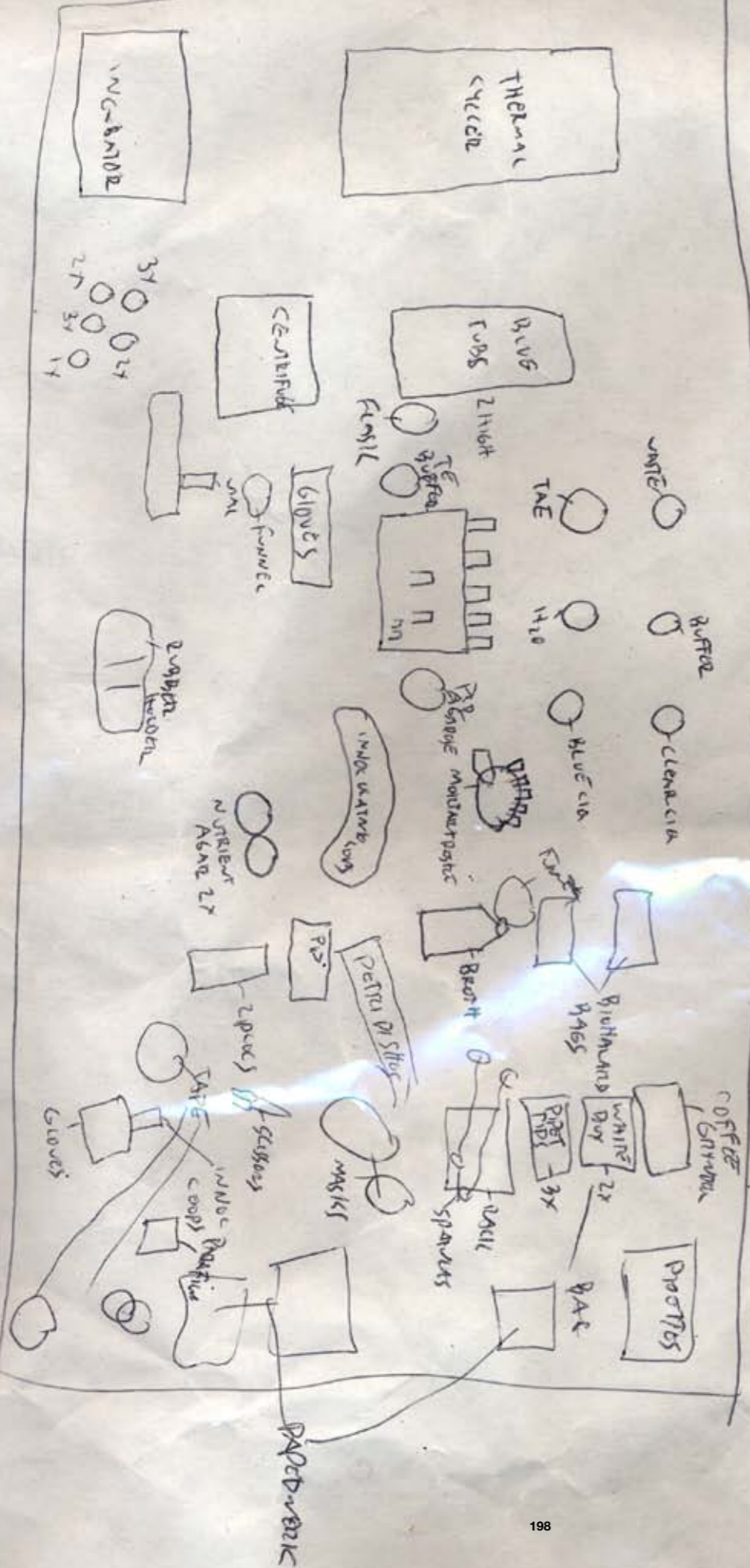
While preparing Free Range Grains for The Interventionists exhibition, CAE/da Costa's lab equipment was seized by the FBI. Lawyers believe that the confiscation of the hardware and wetware could have been made possible through the use of the Patriot Act. Constitutional rights lawyers are currently considering the validity of this linkage. The lab equipment used for Free Range Grains could not be successfully used for the production and weaponization of any germs dangerous to humans or animals. The FBI field and laboratory tests have demonstrated that the equipment seized was not used for any illegal purpose. Furthermore, any person in the US may obtain and possess this equipment without violating US laws. In spite of these facts, the FBI has persisted in its investigation of bioterrorism with respect to the research conducted in this project, and, as of this writing, the FBI has not released any of the seized items, leaving us unable to present the project in its entirety.

DIAGRAM/SKETCH

PAGE _____ OF _____

TIFIER _____
ASSISTANTS _____

REFERENCE:
 SCALE or DISCLAIMER
 COMPASS ORIENTATION
 EVIDENCE
 FIXED OBJECTS
 MEASUREMENTS
 KEY/LEGEND



Seized

7.5 | 2008 | Exhibition



Seized was a project CAE never wanted to do. During the four years CAE was defending Steve Kurtz and Bob Ferrell from mail and wire fraud charges, we went to great lengths to keep the defense and our practice separate enterprises. We were often asked if the legal case was our practice now. Our belief was if we equated the two we would be acquiescing to the desires of the FBI and the Department of Justice (DoJ). We had to continue our previous and planned initiatives as if the case had never happened.



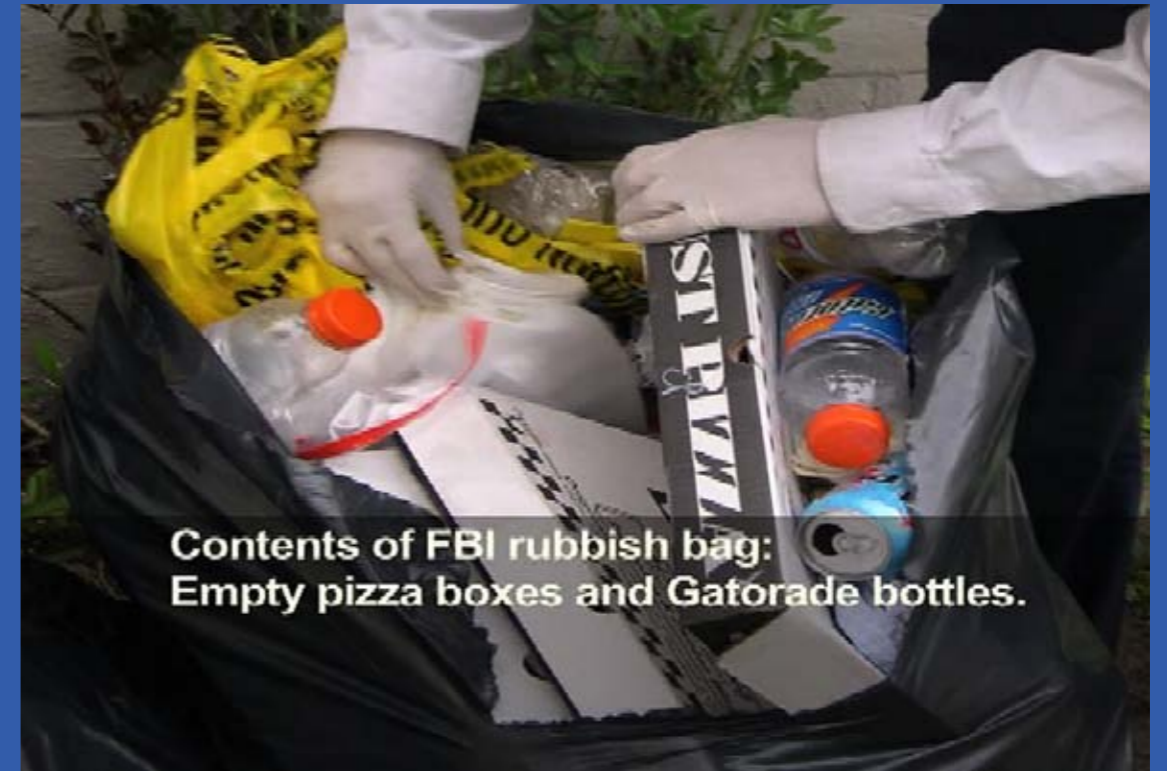
In the spring of 2008 we had to relent. We thought Steve would be going to trial that summer, and it would best to display the evidence seized by the FBI to the public so they could make up their own minds about the case, rather than forming an opinion based on the spin of lawyers filtered through journalists. Hallwalls Contemporary Art Center in Buffalo, NY agreed to mount the exhibition. (Hallwalls director Ed Cardoni was already the chief fiscal officer for Steve and Bob's defense fund, so the support was not surprising.) A month before the opening, the indictment was dismissed as "insufficient on its face," but it was too late too to cancel without leaving Hallwalls with empty galleries, so we continued the exhibition as planned.



The project consisted of two parts. The first was to display documentation of the projects that the FBI and DoJ found criminally suspicious. From CAE's perspective (and our lawyer's), the projects were all done within the limits of the law and thus were constitutionally protected. The second part consisted of evidence of the raid on Steve's home, which had been confiscated by the government for two weeks. When it was finally returned, the Yes Men stopped by to film the aftermath. The house was a mess from the search, but in addition to the disorder, a considerable amount of trash was left by the various law enforcement agencies that had ransacked the house. Dozens of pizza boxes, Gatorade bottles, various forms and a "to do" list, test kits, hazmat suits, gas mask filters, and unidentifiable trash, littered the scene. The Yes Men helped clean up the mess, collected all the trash, loaded it into their car and took it home. It seemed crazy at the time, but it was actually a smart move. The trash was passed on to the Institute for Applied Autonomy (IAA) with whom CAE collaborated on *Seized*. IAA excavated the trash and found artifacts that would delight any forensic investigator. IAA and CAE also collaborated on a video about the raid that was shown in the exhibition and at fundraisers. Between the detritus and the documentation, we had a very strange snapshot of the meeting of two opposing subcultures.

We did relent further, and showed the project four more times—once in NYC for Creative Time's *Democracy Project*, and once in Berlin for the Art and Law series at Art Lab, in Ljubljana at Aksioma for its *Art and Crime* series, and in San Francisco at SOMArts for *I Am Crime*.

BOTTOM LEFT: *Seized. Democracy. Creative Time, NYC* | **TOP RIGHT:** Detail. *Seized. Democracy.* | **OPPOSITE TOP:** *Seized* detail. Still from the video *Evidence* which chronicles the aftermath of the raid on Kurtz's home. | **OPPOSITE BOTTOM:** *Seized. Hallwalls Contemporary Art Center, Buffalo, NY.* | **PAGE 202:** The smoking gun. This document was the key piece of "evidence" against Kurtz, which the judge ruled was irrelevant when he dismissed the case. | **PAGE 203:** FBI "to do" list pulled from the trash they left in their raid on Kurtz's house.



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Last updated September 8, 2003

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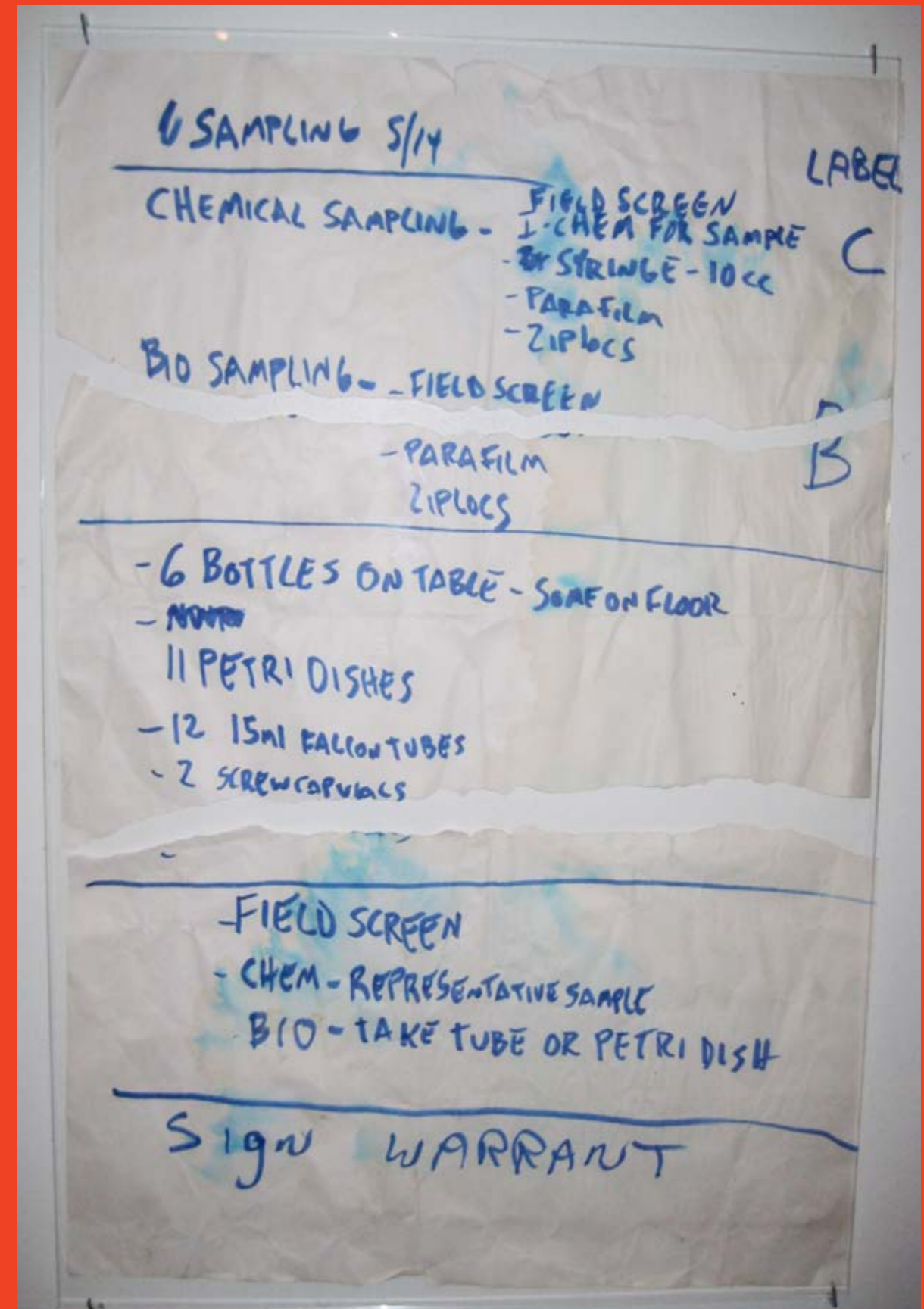
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International

Sherpa
run high
climbed



The FBI's hazardous materials response team entering Steve Kurtz's home in Buffalo Photograph: Don Heupel/AP

Kerry surges ahead of Bush in national poll

But results in key marginal states picture for Democrats' prospects

Gary Young

The Democratic presidential hopeful, John Kerry, has pulled far ahead of the president, George Bush, according to a poll in the Los Angeles Times.

But while Mr Kerry has extended his lead nationally, a regional poll conducted simultaneously shows that the electoral battleground remains evenly divided in the key swing states, which he must win if he is to become president in November.

In a two-way contest, Mr Kerry leads Mr Bush by 51% to 44%. In a three-way race that includes the independent, Ralph Nader, Mr Kerry leads 48% to 42%, with Mr Nader on 4%. Mr Kerry's prospects have been boosted by the fact that a growing proportion of Americans — about 60% — believe the country is on the wrong track. It is the highest figure recorded by an LA Times poll during the Bush presidency.

The improving economy and United Nations endorsement of the June 30 handover in Iraq appear to have done little to bolster Mr Bush, with 56% of Americans saying the US "needs to move in a new direction" because his policies have not improved the country.

But while the general message is encouraging for Mr Kerry, the news from some marginal states is more bleak. Detailed polling in Missouri, Wisconsin and Ohio shows Mr Bush either ahead or neck and neck with the Massachusetts senator.

During the 2000 election, the Republicans won Missouri and Ohio and lost Wisconsin.

In tight races that election Democrats won nationwide, yet lost because they did not win enough states.

It also suggests areas where Bush has flooded the attack ads, better than he has. Data compiled by the Times shows that candidates have spent \$15m (£8.17m) in marginal states supporting Mr Kerry, while Mr Bush spent \$25.6m.

When those opinions about the most common parrot the ke Bush ads — the issues for page.

While Mr Kerry with Democratic primaries, the has failed to gain traction in many states, it has allowed Mr Kerry to build momentum with character.

More than 60% of Americans nationally, of independent they did not about the Massachusetts senator "to decide would be a better than Mr Bush."

While some of the Democrat Mr Kerry's camp.

Links
johnkerry.com
georgewbush.com
guardian.co.uk

Art becomes the next suspect in America's 9/11 paranoia

Gary Young in Buffalo

On May 10 Steven Kurtz went to bed a married art professor. On May 11 he woke up a widower. By the afternoon he was under federal investigation for bioterrorism.

What began as a personal tragedy for Mr Kurtz has turned into what many believe is, at best, an overreaction prompted by 9/11 paranoia and, at worst, a politically motivated attempt to silence a radical artist.

Several of Mr Kurtz's colleagues and artistic collaborators have been subpoenaed and a date for a federal grand jury hearing set for Tuesday. Both artist and his art are set to go on trial for their alleged links with terrorism.

The ordeal started when Mr Kurtz, who teaches at the University at Buffalo, New York state, called the emergency services when he woke up to find Hope, his wife of 25 years, had stopped breathing.

A paramedic who came to his house saw laboratory equipment used in Mr Kurtz's art work. Within hours agents from the Joint Terrorism Task Force were combing his house



A poster made by Kurtz and the Critical Art Ensemble

and had seized his books, personal papers, computer as well as his work which have still not been returned.

Hope, it transpired, had died of a heart failure which no one suggests had anything to do with Mr Kurtz or his work. But as her body lay in the house Mr Kurtz, 46, was whisked off to be questioned for two days while his home was cordoned off and searched. "It's a com-

plete fishing expedition," says Mr Kurtz's lawyer, Paul Cambria. "There's no question that it's a paranoid overreaction that would never have happened before 9/11. I only hope that it is not simply aimed at trying to silence his message or the methods he's using to convey his message." The FBI refuses to comment.

Mr Kurtz, who is not speaking to the press, is part of the Critical Art Ensemble, "dedicated to exploring the intersections between art, technology, radical politics and critical theory."

His art often involves blending biology with agricultural issues. In 2002 his exhibit Molecular Invasion, a statement against genetically modified crops, created a display of small soy, corn and canola plants growing under large incubating lamps. Other exhibits allowed visitors to watch bacteria grow in petri dishes. "He's trying to change the world through his work and his discourse," says Adele Henderson, the head of the art department at the University at Buffalo.

The New York-based writer and artist Greg Sholette says: "His art itself is going to be on-

chusetts to serve her a subpoena. "I can only think they are trying to intimidate us and maybe make us an example."

Ms da Costa, a professor at the University of California, says everything found in the house has been exhibited in public before.

Those close to Mr Kurtz or the case believe the case has spun out of control and has potentially huge ramifications. "I feel harassed and hassled," Ms Da Costa says. "But mostly I feel sorry for Steve Kurtz because he lost his wife, and his life has been a nightmare ever since. And he didn't even have time to grieve."

The subpoenas say the FBI is seeking charges under section 175 of the US Biological Weapons Anti-Terrorism Act of 1989, which has been expanded by the Patriot Act.

It prohibits the possession of "any biological agent, toxin, or delivery system" without the justification of "prophylactic, protective, bona fide research, or other peaceful purpose".

Mr Cambria argues that Mr Kurtz's work "obviously" comes under the last two categories. "I know everything we did was legal," said Beatriz da Costa, a member of the CAE who says FBI agents followed her to an art show in Massa-

chusetts to serve her a subpoena. "I can only think they are trying to intimidate us and maybe make us an example."

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PHOTOS: ROSE MATTHEW

THE STEVE KURTZ CASE

Is a Buffalo artist the victim of overzealous prosecutors armed with the Patriot Act?

BY JENNIFER STRAHLE

Departments, the Buffalo Fire Department and Hazmat units, and the FBI.

What followed has led many activists to accuse the government of a profound overreaction, if not an infringement of rights. Over the next two days, the FBI seized control of Kurtz's home, which he was forbidden to enter. Kurtz was put up at a local motel for two days at the FBI's expense—though not, law enforcement officials insist, in their custody. A medical examiner arrived to inspect Hope's body, which was then taken to the county examiner's office for an autopsy. The Buffalo Fire Department and Hazmat crews came to execute a criminal search warrant obtained by the FBI, and began collecting bacteria samples that were shipped off to the state health commissioner. After the FBI had removed any suspicious items from Kurtz's home, the Erie County Health Department ordered the residence sealed over the weekend. Kurtz didn't regain access to his home until May 17, when preliminary results from the New York State Health Department apparently showed the house no longer posed a danger to public health.

However, last week, a federal grand jury began hearing evidence to consider whether to charge the 46-year-old artist and academic with possession of biological toxins. Initially, Kurtz's supporters were certain that any confusion about his work would be cleared up in a matter of days. Now they expect the grand jury hearings to continue until at least the end of this month. On the advice of his attorney, Kurtz isn't talking to the press.

The FBI, careful never to label Kurtz as a suspect during the investigation, says keys to the home were handed over willingly, and indicated there were no objections throughout the entire process—a process that included, according to artists associated with Kurtz who were later subpoenaed for the grand jury hearings, the confiscation of his birth certificate, passport, books, and components of his art projects, including all of the Free Range Grain lab equipment. None of these belongings has been returned.

Neither the FBI or U.S. attorney's office in Buffalo will say what was taken from Kurtz's house. (Under Department of Justice policy, the agencies can't acknowledge that any suspect is under investigation.) But the FBI

objects to the suggestion that its actions were somehow empowered by the Patriot Act. The act, passed by Congress six weeks after the Sept. 11 attacks, expanded the government's ability to investigate suspected terrorists in ways that have drawn strong criticism from both Democrats and Republicans. According to the FBI, the warrant to search the house was issued under authority it has held since it was founded almost a century ago.

Yet the FBI agrees that such a sophisticated, pulling-out-all-stops investigation is likely the product of the post-Sept. 11 environ-



Immolation

7.6 | 2008 | Two-Channel Video Installation

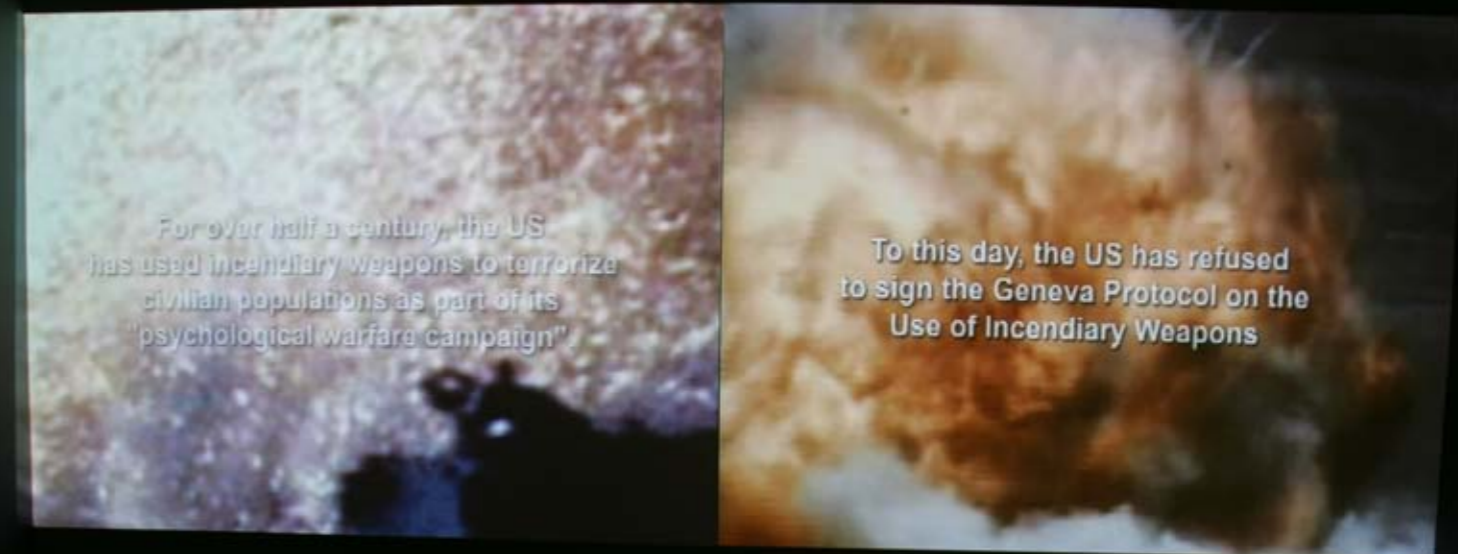


The members of CAE always hoped that we could complete our collaboration without ever having to produce a work specifically about war. We hoped never to hit viewers in the head with this blunt object of a topic, and were sure that more fascinating and undeveloped subjects were out there waiting for us. Unfortunately, the situation in the Middle East made CAE's humble desire to escape the issue of war impossible. We had already taken a step toward a focused examination of an element of war in *Marching Plague* (page 64). With *Immolation*, it was all in.

Immolation was a two-channel video installation concerned with the use of incendiary weapons on civilians after The Geneva Convention and the Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Incendiary Weapons of October 1980. The installation chronicles the major war crimes of the United States involving

these weapons on a (macro) landscape level, and contrasts it with the damage done to the body on the (micro) cellular level. To accomplish this task, CAE grew human tissue at the SymbioticA Art and Science Collaborative Research Laboratory at the University of Western Australia in Perth and, using high-end microscopy, shot the micro footage of exploding and imploding cells. In addition to these images, CAE used film footage of present and past wars that have used immolation against civilian targets as a strategic choice for the sole purpose of terrorizing civilian populations. We hoped to provide a different way of imaging, viewing, and interpreting the human costs of these war crimes, in contrast to the barrage of media imagery to which we have become so desensitized, and that in too many instances actually justifies the violence.

PAGES 208-209: CAE working at SymbioticA.





GROWING HUMAN TISSUE CELLS



TITANIUM TETRACHLORIDE



WHITE PHOSPHOROUS



08. Sickness

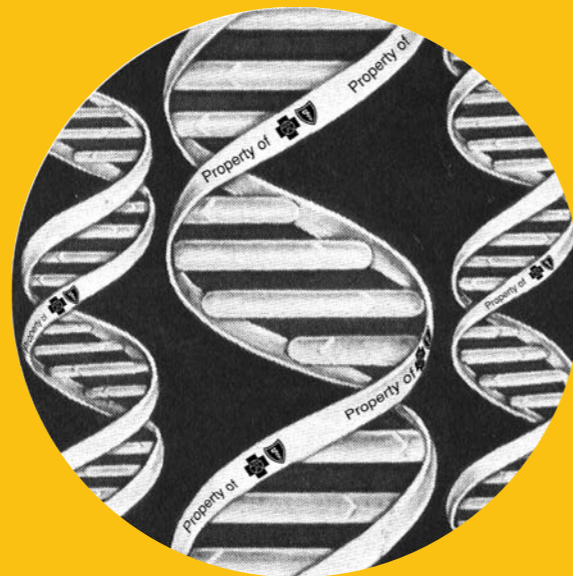
Despite the significant intellectual history of the idea of sickness, we are still surprised to find ourselves devoting an entire section to this topic. This retrograde concept was a fixture of modernity. Poe, Nietzsche, Huysmans, Galton, Proust, Kafka, Dostoyevsky, Kierkegaard, Mann, Breton, Sartre, and so many others were consumed with exploring the literal and metaphorical meaning and value of sickness. The idea was believed to represent the social sphere so precisely that thinkers from all parts of the political spectrum used it as a descriptive if not explanatory device. Sometimes it was used to describe a person's relationship to existence and nonexistence. At other times, it was used to explain the decay of societal institutions, nations, and empires, or the deviance of a given demographic. The problem is that when biological categories are imported into psychological and especially sociological analysis, dangerous prejudices can be created or reinforced.

Labeling humans or human-related phenomena as pathological is usually based upon a very intolerant value system. To say an artwork, an energy source, an ideology, or a mind is “sick” assumes a universal definition of normality, and prescribes this standard of normality as the one to be reflected by all that is good and healthy: anyone failing to maintain normality is bad for the social world and must be cured or purged. This position has traditionally been the domain of the Right, in that it tends to maintain a single order and the status quo. To invert this position by saying the status quo is “sick” and hence in need of purging, or to negate or resist an imposed label of sickness, has traditionally been the domain of the Left. Unfortunately for both sides, the use of sickness functions as a naturalizing screen for latent, politicized value judgments favoring particular interests. These judgments and interests did not emerge out of biological conditions; rather, they developed through historical processes.

Despite this, CAE seems unable to avoid using this metaphor entirely. Many of our concerns with sickness are material and measurable, where physiological illness and the economy of biological abnormality are the subjects of analysis. This less treacherous endeavor includes issues such as the human right to choice of medical intervention at different points in the life cycle, the lack of medical resources for most of the world, and the lack of resolve and resources dedicated to making a just and equitable global health policy. CAE has also, with some trepidation, explored the intersection of the biological and cultural—that place where normative baselines shatter and mythic narratives of nature (such as male/female) become problematic, if not oppressive.

The most difficult and even sinister situation, however, is when the rhetoric of sickness imposes itself on political discourse. Take the use of torture, a practice deemed worthy of material and political support from the Right in the US: while reason is fully capable of refuting the value of such actions, it cannot stop them. Reasoned discourse is too impoverished to confront the most extreme cases of authoritarianism when the public perceives itself as under threat. (The rhetoric of sickness almost always accompanies security issues no matter what the political platform.) Thus, pathologizing torture and those who enact it is a less rational, but often more convincing means of expression, because it undermines the promise of security. Likewise with pathologizing bigotry and discrimination, or adventurism in warfare. Reason is not enough to discourage these practices. They have to be framed in a stronger language—so we find ourselves immersed in the rhetoric of sickness, all the while knowing that we are using an arbitrary, ugly lie traditionally used as the ideological hammer behind history’s worst atrocities. We have tried to refuse this rhetoric whenever possible, but have not always succeeded.

A second problem emerges out of personal experience. How do we process the rollercoaster ride of nausea, panic, detachment, repulsion, ennui, obsession, hyperstimulation, weariness, neurasthenia, anhedonia, and dread? The experience of sickness that is not biological, but societal, in origin can infect anyone. (These types of illnesses are not merely an aberration of nineteenth century intellectuals, although they are often rebranded to better suit the ideological imperatives of the moment.) Nor can contemporary medical practices save us from them, as the medical establishment is so corrupted and impoverished by capitalism that it all too often contributes their the causes. Moreover, the categories of pathology serve an industry that addresses only their symptoms, which in turn allows the social and environmental conditions that create the m to continue. The rhetoric of sickness, for better or worse, is the only one capable of speaking to the experience of the more detestable mental states produced by the current political economy. In this situation, CAE has again used this rhetoric, although we hope to simultaneously deconstruct it in a manner that reveals its many pitfalls and low explanatory value.

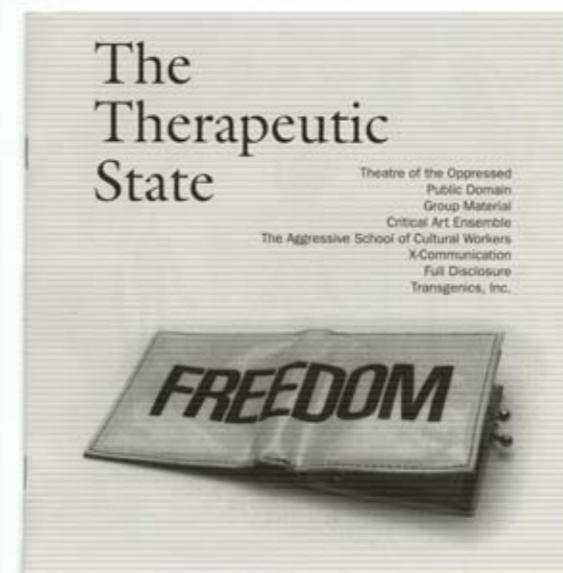


Health Care



Critical Art Ensemble

Not Warfare



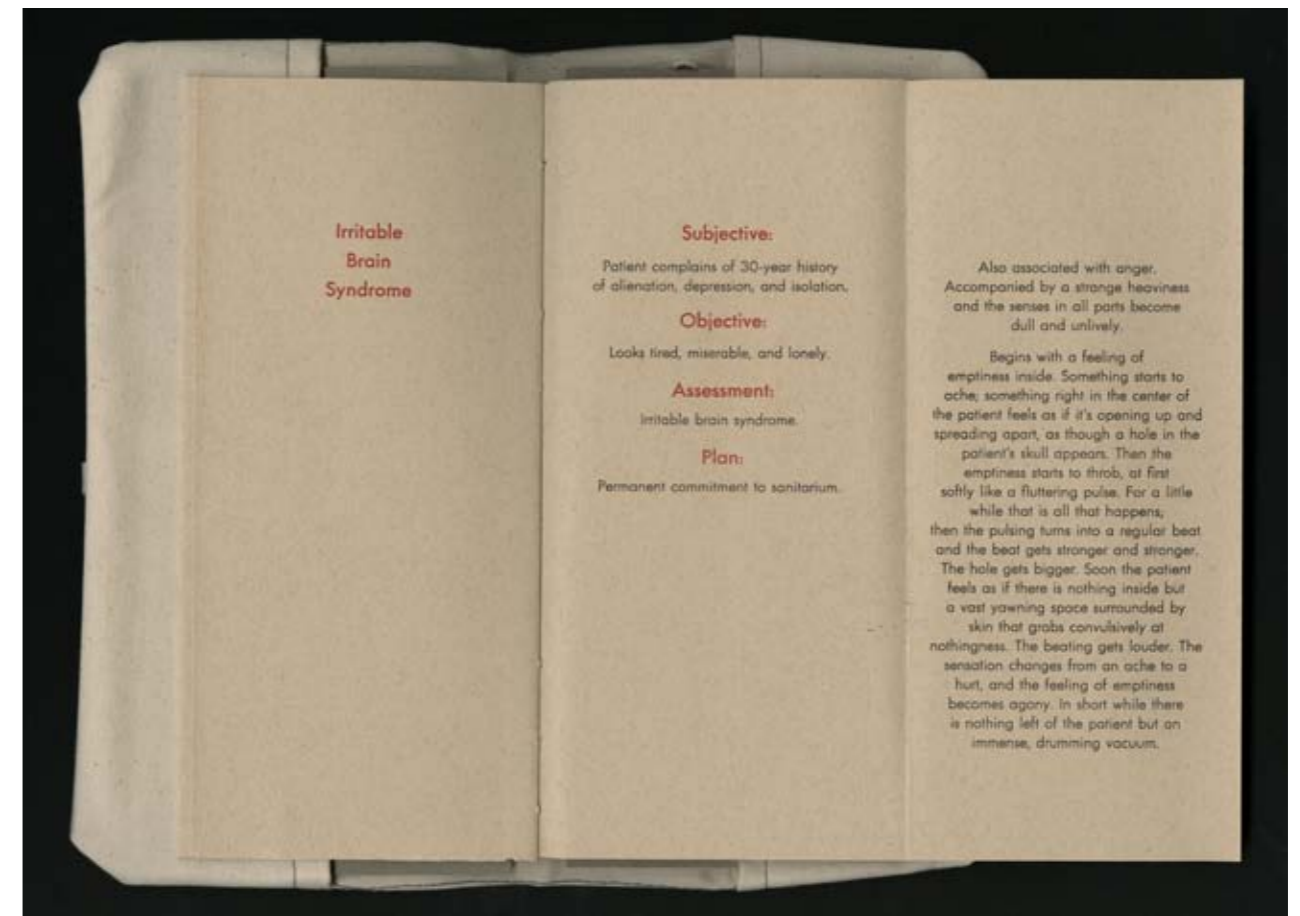
Diseases of Consciousness

8.1 | 1996 | Artists' Book



Diseases of Consciousness was a simultaneously serious and humorous catalog of the many afflictions acquired by humans simply by being alive in this moment in history. These diseases have no biological basis, nor can the symptoms be arrested by psychiatric drugs, or cured through psychotherapy. Not even invasive surgery can successfully cut them out. Wealth cannot ward them off, nor can poverty avoid them. They are the burden of being human in a global neoliberal economy. Once infected, the sufferer can only hope to endure these life-long sentences.

Diseases of Consciousness was presented in both artists' book and web formats.



Irritable Brain Syndrome

Subjective:

Patient complains of 30-year history of alienation, depression, and isolation.

Objective:

Looks tired, miserable, and lonely.

Assessment:

Irritable brain syndrome.

Plan:

Permanent commitment to sanitarium.

Also associated with anger. Accompanied by a strange heaviness and the senses in all parts become dull and unlively.

Begins with a feeling of emptiness inside. Something starts to ache; something right in the center of the patient feels as if it's opening up and spreading apart, as though a hole in the patient's skull appears. Then the emptiness starts to throb, at first softly like a fluttering pulse. For a little while that is all that happens, then the pulsing turns into a regular beat and the beat gets stronger and stronger. The hole gets bigger. Soon the patient feels as if there is nothing inside but a vast yawning space surrounded by skin that grabs convulsively at nothingness. The beating gets louder. The sensation changes from an ache to a hurt, and the feeling of emptiness becomes agony. In short while there is nothing left of the patient but an immense, drumming vacuum.

Hardening of the Categories

Subjective:

Patient's spouse reports that he has grown strange and difficult of access. Although he has not lost any of his feelings, and has not become hostile or cold, he seems to get more remote all the time. Since his 35th year he has been totally immured in a deep, far-off state.

Objective:

Concretions found in skull x-ray.

Assessment:

Hardening of the categories.

Plan:

Surgery to clean out blocked categories -- a last resort, since the disease is generally chronic and incurable... the concretions nearly always return after a few months.

Self-awareness is temporarily altered or lost. This alteration in consciousness is perceived as a barrier between the sufferer and the outside world. The condition may be restricted to a single body part or it may encompass the whole self.

Flesh Machine

8.2 1997 Biotech Project and Public Lab

Flesh Machine (FM) was CAE's first major biotech project. For the previous two years, CAE had been focused on the relationship between the body and information and communication technology (ICT) and had done a number of performance-lectures on this topic (some of which we were able to import into *FM* as theoretical introduction). Jumping from body/ICT to reproductive technology was a fairly easy task. We also hoped to explore our ideas about amateurism in science as well as the potential of a public access laboratory for purposes of resistance. If nothing else, we were anxious to demystify laboratory procedures and erode the perception that a fundamental understanding of the biological is possible only for an elite class of knowledge professionals.



The performance consisted of a process that staged the prevailing hierarchy of reproductive materials—sperm and eggs—in the flesh market in terms of “quality.” In other words, CAE believed we could create a microcosm of class division based on a person’s genetic qualities and biological predispositions. To do this, we created a company website for “BioCom,” a fictional assisted reproductive service provider. On the site, we had plenty of information about current developments in genetics in general and reprotch in particular. Most participants went straight to the heart of the matter: an actual donor application form lifted from a real clinic specializing in assisted reproductive services. For those engaged in the process, CAE, acting as representatives of BioCom, insisted that participants complete the survey in full. We designed a script that would grade the form on a pass/fail basis. (Clinics, as far as we know, do not use computer assessment, so we were simplifying the process, but we think a computer would do quite well at eliminating and selecting potential candidates, since many of the characteristics or predispositions that eliminate a donor are extremely black-and-white.) If a candidate passed, s/he received a certificate of genetic merit, and was allowed to move forward in the process. If s/he failed, s/he received a rejection notice, and could not move on in the process. Those who could move on, did, unless they were afraid of giving a blood sample (no ‘fraidy cats were being reproduced in our lab). DNA was extracted from the blood in an on-site molecular laboratory, and cells were taken and flash-frozen in the on-site cryogenics lab. Finally, a portrait photo was taken of the participant, so we had a very good profile of the person by the end.

What we found was that even artificial separations grounded in biology really bother people, or excite them when they are in the superior class. Those who were rejected were often quite upset, and demanded to know why they were rejected. (Incidentally, all CAE members failed the test.) Usually the reason was quite glaring, with drug use and family medical history being the primary culprits. People felt they had a real stake in the process, which encouraged them to stay, and allowed for an expansion of the discourse beyond science fiction narratives about a society stratified by flesh. CAE was able to get to the underlying discourse that motivated us—the reemergence and repackaging of eugenics.

The ideological sickness that afflicted the early twentieth century was never totally eliminated—it morphed and adapted. CAE smells a rat anytime “quality” is applied to biology. We must ask, quality in what sense, and who decides? The concept of quality is problematic even with a principle that would appear to be acceptable (such as “longer life span”) so when we get to quality meaning “adaptive to capitalist political economy” we are entering truly worrisome territory. Just by taking the test, a person can see very quickly that the content of many of the questions has nothing to do with health, and everything to do with aesthetics and adaptability to the technocracy (what kind of worker will you be?). These characteristics are the selling points for the service, although the implied genetic determinism is quite exaggerated (e.g. receiving reproductive material from an intelligent donor does not guarantee an intelligent baby). When the sales discourse is about giving your child every advantage, this really means how to make the child a better suited to capitalist values and needs. On the test CAE used for *Flesh Machine*, the characteristics that are absent are just as telling as those that are present. For example, there are questions about anger and aggression, but no questions about empathy (which is strongly grounded in genetics, protecting the person from a psychopathic predisposition) or love. What was rewarding for CAE was that this latent discourse did not seem lost on anyone. In fact, once involved in the process, it was brutally apparent.

ABOVE LEFT: Rejection screen from BioCom website. | **ABOVE LEFT:** On-site DNA extraction. | **OPPOSITE TOP LEFT:** Participants take the donor test and look over the BioCom web site. | **OPPOSITE TOP RIGHT:** After passing the test, this participant gives blood for a DNA extraction. | **OPPOSITE CENTER LEFT:** CAE member flash freezing a cell sample. | **OPPOSITE CENTER RIGHT:** Cryoroom set-up in Kapellica Gallery, Ljubljana, Slovenia. | **OPPOSITE BOTTOM:** Cryopreservation room used for freezing cell samples from those who pass the test, Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki.





LET'S KILL BABY?

Performance. Wie weit die moderne Genforschung das Schicksal künftiger Generationen beeinflussen könnte, demonstrieren amerikanische Künstler in Wien mit drastisch-realistischen Mitteln.

Das Publikum darf Fragzeichen auslösen und Ängste über Alter, Geschlecht, Krankheiten und akrobatische Leistungen befragen. Freiwildige Probanden werden unter kritischer Aufsicht Blut und weitere biologische Proben für den nächsten Tag erhalten um Zerkleinerung, ob ihre Gene „fit“ genug sind für die industriemässige Produktion der Lebensformen. Sind sie es nicht, wird sie mit dem herkömmlichen Fortkommen. Sind sie es hingegen, können sie diese Bestandteile in

er Erkenntnis einer weltweit operierenden Datenbank als DNA-Nervenzustand. Das ist nur eines der Aspekte, die kommenden Freitag und Samstag im Wiener Museumsgelände von US-amerikanischen Critical Art Ensemble eröffnet werden. „Flesh Machine“ nennt das Kollektiv aus Chicago seine Performance, mit der es auf die – offiziell viel zweniger bekannten – Eigenschaften der Gentechnologie aufmerksam machen will. In Wien wird diese Weltspionage stattfinden, weil das CAE glaubt, dass die Europäer mindestens die Geschlech-

ter-art, Internet, Film und Video. Währenddessen wird ein Schachspiel zwischen Kunst, kritischer Beobachtung, Technologie und politischem Aktivismus allgemeinverständlich herausgearbeitet. Das Ensemble agiert an jedem Ort, das es für angemessen hält – in Museen und Kulturinstitutionen ebenso wie in Bars, Clubs, Galerien oder auf der Straße. Dabei kommt es zu einer auch in Wien ungewöhnlichen Mischung aus Performance und Kunst. Zwei Ensemble-Mitglieder setzen sich einmal an den Strand von Moon Beach und hantieren bildlich mit Kindererziehung. Einem britischen Vergleichen erweist das andere Badeschwamm zu schachteln, das schließlich die Polizei wegen Erregung öffentlicher Argernisse eingreift – was exakt der Zweck der Übung war. Wie reagiert die Gesellschaft auf Außenstehende? Bei einem anderen Experiment, „True Crime“, würde das Ensemble herausfinden, welche Verbrechen Menschen begehen würden, wenn sie mit Sicherheit unterstützt durch die neuesten genetischen Methoden. Das Projekt „Flesh Machine“ ist ein Projekt des Critical Art Ensemble (CAE) in Chicago, Illinois. Es wird am 13. November 2003 um 20 Uhr im Museum für Moderne Kunst in Wien stattfinden. Tickets sind im Vorverkauf erhältlich. Kontakt: www.cae.com



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Research and Development
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For the Family
More about BioCom

Philosophers may speculate on what it means to be a human being but today's geneticists will bring us a lot closer to the answer. Their studies yield important clues almost daily - about our intelligence and behavior, but especially about human diseases, from rare cancers to mental illness. It may take time, but science will develop reliable medical tests for detecting these genes early enough to intervene.

The researchers here at BioCom have two primary goals - to completely invade the flesh with vision and mapping technologies (initiating a program of total body control from its wholistic, exterior configuration to its microscopic constellations), and to develop the political and economic frontiers of flesh products and services.

Become part of the BioCom family. Try our donor screening test.



TIEDE-YMPÄRISTÖ



Geeniteatteri testaa etiikkaamme

Taidemuseo Kiasman "kenttälabora" rikkoisi eettisiä ohjeita geeniseulonasta

TIMO PAUKKU
Helsingin Sanomat

Nykyaikainen tiede yhä lähenee ihmistä. Jopa silmälinssit ja kontaktit ovat ihmisen osia. Nyt voi ja saa tarjota edes myös erinäköisiä - ja sinä epäilemättä jos uskallat mennä sinne - taidemuseo Kiasman näyttelyssä. Taidemuseo Kiasman näyttelyssä on esillä taideteoksia, jotka käsittelevät ihmisen ja teknologian suhdetta. Näyttely on osa Kiasman "kenttälabora"-projektia, joka on osa Kiasman "kenttälabora"-projektia, joka on osa Kiasman "kenttälabora"-projektia.

Geenien arkinen kieli puuttuu

Kukaan ei ole koskaan nähnyt geenien arkinen kieli puuttuu. Kukaan ei ole koskaan nähnyt geenien arkinen kieli puuttuu. Kukaan ei ole koskaan nähnyt geenien arkinen kieli puuttuu.


Mahtava tähtikartta tekeillä

Yhdysvaltoissa ryhdytään kartoittamaan tähtikartta, joka sisältää 40 kertaa enemmän kuin aiemmin tiedettyjä tähtiä. Tämä on mahtava tähtikartta tekeillä.

Genetismi - 2000-luvun iskusana?


Genetiikka on tullut 2000-luvun iskusana. Genetiikka on tullut 2000-luvun iskusana. Genetiikka on tullut 2000-luvun iskusana.

Creating superior labor, one worker at a time.



BioCom

Building a better organic platform.



CRITICAL ART ENSEMBLE
 η μηχανή της σάρκας
 εκδόσεις των Έξυπν



Critical Art Ensemble
Cyborgs & Designerbabies
 Flesh Machine:
 Die biotechnologische
 Revolution
 XMedia



Passagen Verlag

FLESH MACHINE


a project by Critical Art Ensemble



21.11.
 19:00 – 24:00
 Lecture/Performance/Event
 interactive BioTech-Installation

22.11. 14:00 – 19:00
 interactive BioTech-Installation

Public Netbase t0 Media~Space!
Museumquartier, Museumplatz 1



Radio Bikes

8.3 | 2000 | Workshop and Intervention

The year 2000 was a dark time in Austria. A right wing coalition led by the fascistic Freedom Party under Jörg Haider had been elected to power. For most of the seventy plus percent who had not voted for Haider, the situation was particularly unbearable, and they did their best to express their dissatisfaction. The once robust left-infused culture scenes were waning, and this trajectory was further complicated by an international cultural boycott. CAE broke ranks from this idea, arguing that any boycott should be tactical in nature. It made sense for an opera company, a ballet, or even a ski team to boycott Austria, but for allies of the anti-fascists to boycott the country would be to do what the fascists wanted. The fascists did not want anti-authoritarian artists, activists, and intellectuals to be there. CAE believed we could do more in solidarity with those fighting the government than we could by remaining passively on the outside.

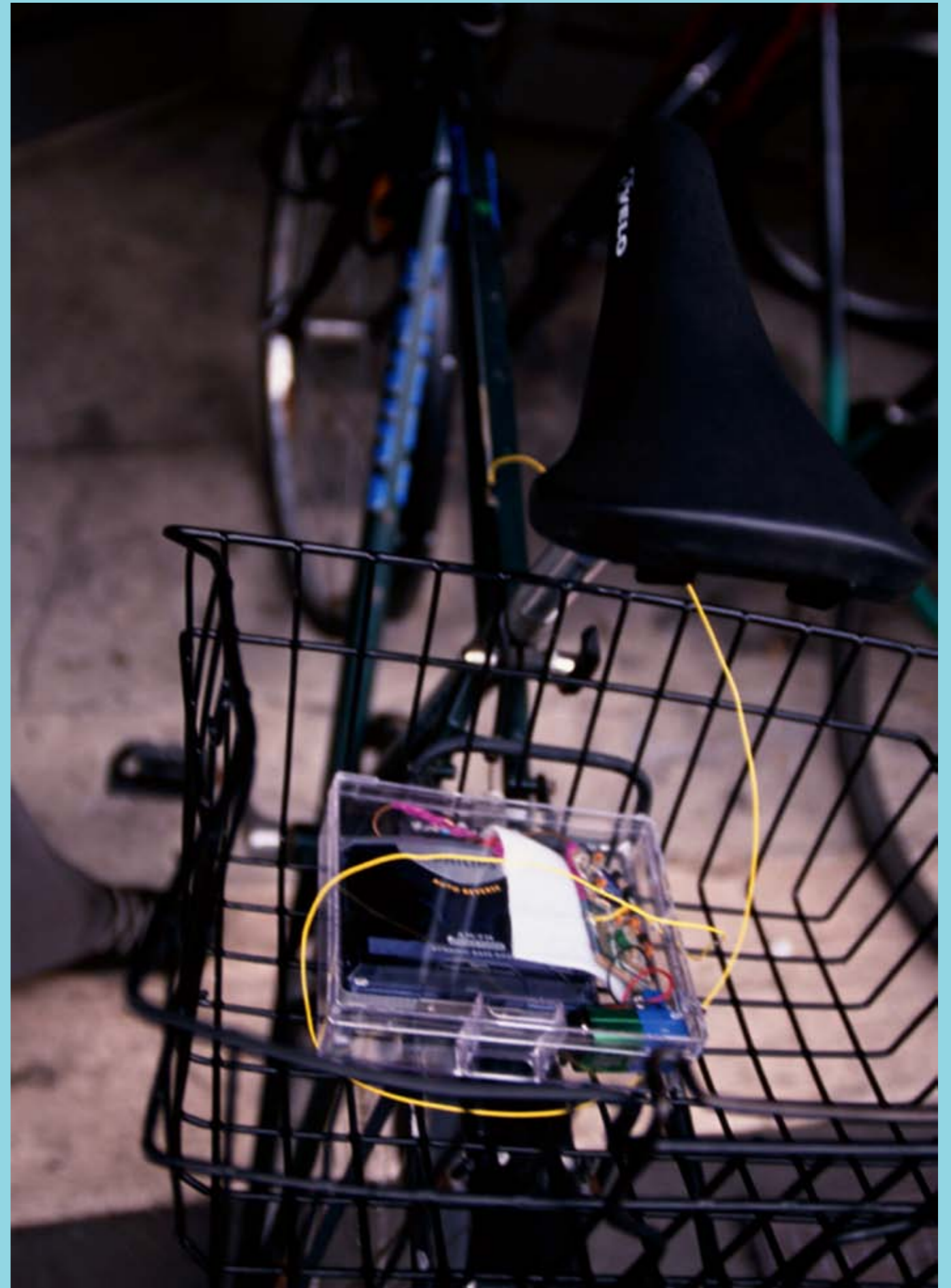
Radio Bikes was a workshop at ESC Gallery in Graz, where fascist affronts to democracy seemed to be occurring on a regular basis—most notably, police forcibly stopping popular demonstrations. Pirate radio appeared to be a good system for creating some useful counterspectacle; however, it was too dangerous. Even some legal contestational cultural activities were being violently treated as illegal. One of CAE's collaborators at that time, Paul Vanouse, came up with the idea of creating low wattage nomadic radio that could not be triangulated because it could move quickly. Moreover, the transmitter could fit in a bicycle basket and use the bike itself as an aerial, thus maintaining the bike's appearance as being nothing out of the ordinary, and certainly nothing criminal.

For broadcast material, the workshop participants sampled all the Österreichischer Rundfunk's (ORF) station IDs and jingles in order to make our sound recordings appear as official broadcasts. Then everyone went to work creating short burst news reports about what the fascists had done or would do (these stories tended to be more mockery than truth, but locals were very upset with the political conditions, so it was understandable). The reports satirized the reinstatement of the 3K (*Kinder, Küche, Kirche*; or children, kitchen, church) program for women, and the new taxi ordinances. Taxi companies emboldened by state protection began to guarantee that they only employed Austrian-born drivers. This was an ideological sickness that was hard to parody because it was so extreme to begin with, but we pushed forward. We created a news item explaining that foreign-born drivers would now be required to use the traditional transportation of their home country for their taxis—rickshaws, elephants, camels, etc. While in hindsight perhaps this was not the most effective topic to address, it seemed very satisfying to participants at the time.

For distributing the messages, the bikes could be ridden into traffic to take over car radios tuned to the most popular ORF station, or could be placed near office buildings for the same effect. The bikes proved to be a safe method for distributing anti-fascist material in a politically dangerous landscape.



ABOVE: *Radio Bikes* workshop. | OPPOSITE TOP: *Radio Bikes* workshop. | OPPOSITE BOTTOM: Participants writing scripts for the broadcasts. | PAGE 224 TOP: Fitting the bike with a transmitter. | PAGE 224 BOTTOM: The bike in action. | PAGE 225: Completed radio bike.



The Body Proud

8.4 | 2003 | Installation



The Body Proud can only be described as a gift to us from some benighted convention planners. In 1998, CAE was asked to give a lecture at the conference of the Special Interest Group on Graphics and Interactive Techniques (SIGGRAPH), which was being held at the Orlando Convention Center. Accepting this invitation and actually attending could have been a complete waste of time, had it not been for the unintentional, visionary *tableau vivant* that awaited guests as they walked into the lobby of the convention center. The lobby was massive. In the center, an approximately thirty-meter section had been carved out for a special guest service—table after table of massage therapy offered free to attendees. Along one wall above the gathering crowd was a timeline revealing the amount of money spent to produce SIGGRAPH from the time of its inception all the way to the present. Needless to say, the funds increased exponentially from year to year. Every new technology has its own set of accidents and disasters, and there, for all to see, underneath a timeline of money allegedly well spent, were the countless broken bodies of the technocracy. The experience was stunning. What could we do but recreate it whenever we got the chance?

Unfortunately, CAE could never recreate it on that same scale (masseuses are expensive), but despite this deficit the performance always made its point. The project premiered at the Volksbühne in Berlin. One of the first things we had to do was modify the timeline. Instead of money spent on SIGGRAPH, CAE made a video combining statistics on the number of personal computers sold in Western countries and the massive increases in the Western use of mood management drugs and psychiatric services, with advertising images of the latest psychopharmaceuticals and ICT devices; the video was screened on a row of monitors alongside the massage tables. While we're not suggesting a one-to-one correlation between these phenomena, we do think it suggests a compelling narrative about sickness in the technosphere. Perhaps humans did not evolve to stare into screens all day. Indeed, the broken bodies that lined up for free massages every time we staged this performance served as convincing witnesses to one of the origins of a plethora of contemporary pathologies.

OPPOSITE: *The Body Proud*. The Volksbühne (People's Theatre), Berlin. |
PAGE 228: *The Body Proud*. The Matadero Contemporary Art Center, Madrid. |
PAGE 229: *The Body Proud*. Kultur/Natur festival, Hamburg.





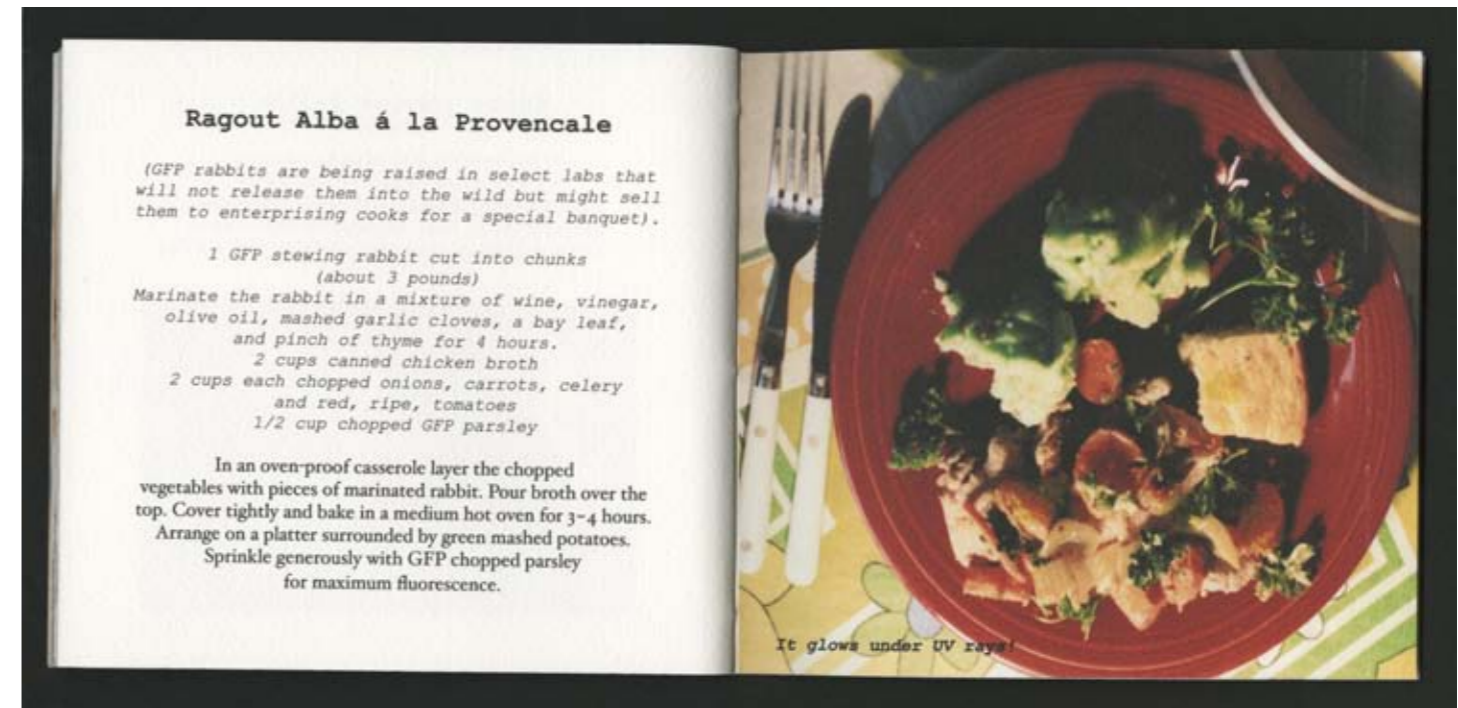
Food for a Hungry World

8.5 | 2009 | Cookbook



Food for a Hungry World was a small book project produced in collaboration with the cyberfeminist collective subRosa. The book is a commentary on the high cost of eating a healthy diet. The expense of high quality and organic food drives people with limited resources toward foods made with plentiful, cheap ingredients. For the first time in history, even obese people can be starving because their calorie-packed food lacks enough nutritional elements to nourish their bodies. So many food economies in the world are little more than crimes against humanity, constructed by the global food industry solely for profit and without consideration for public health. We also thought it necessary to comment on how out of touch so many food movements are in regard to working people's economic situations.

Food for a Hungry World was created when by slamming the presentation style of retro *haute cuisine* into the low-end ingredients found in a local supermarket. Compelling, yet nauseating. And yes, we did have a taste-tester that actually sampled the recipes. He said some of it tasted good, which shows that although the food industry may not know how to make affordable nutritional food products, it does manage to make unhealthy products taste good.



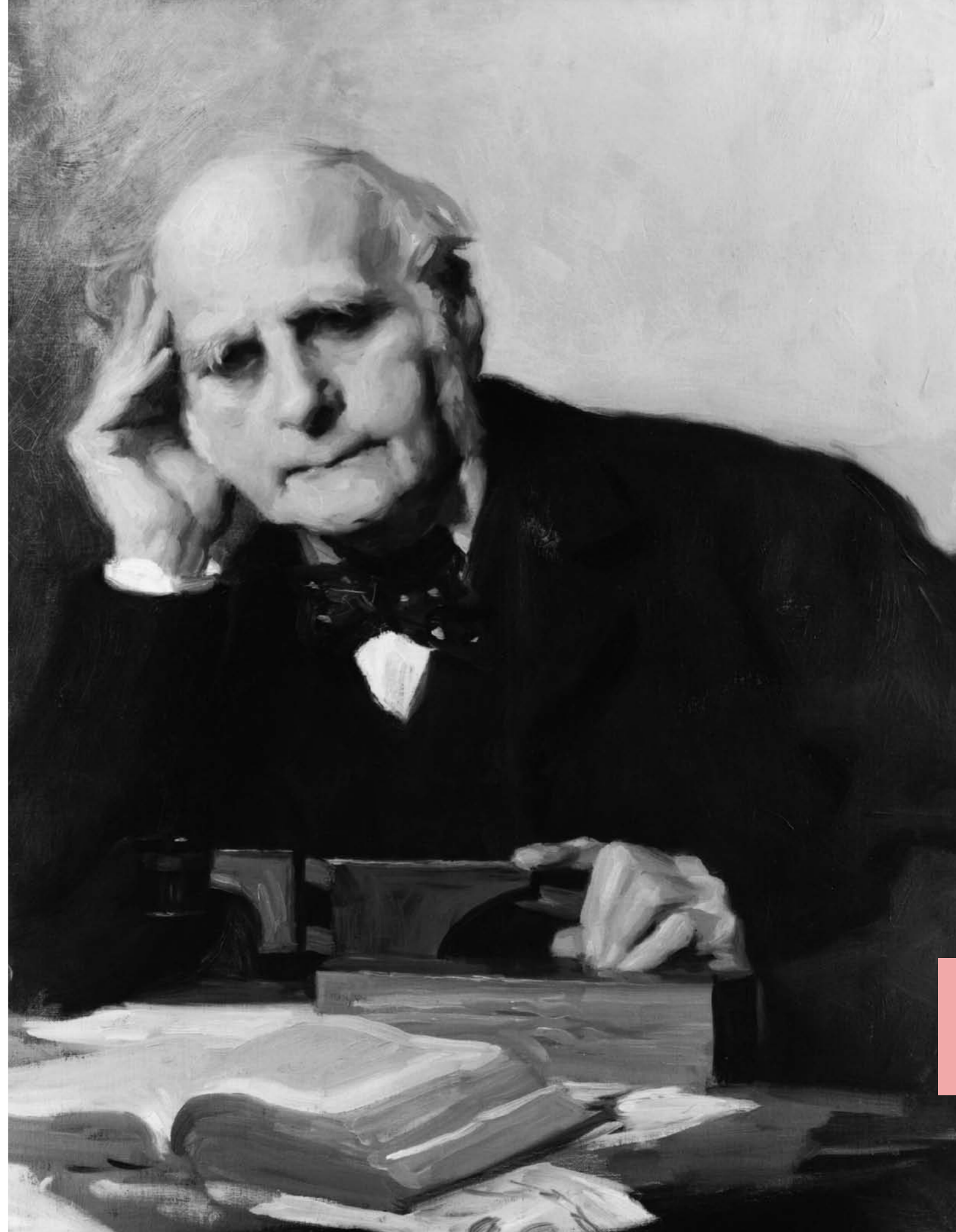
The Concerns of a Repentant Galtonian

8.6 | 2011 | Pamphlet

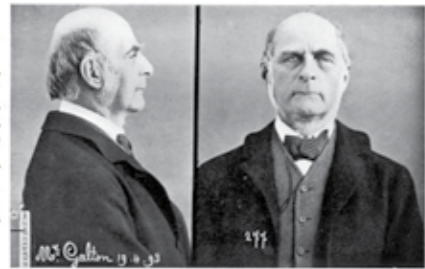
This pamphlet was made for the *100 Notes—100 Thoughts* series for DOCUMENTA (13). DOCUMENTA had no requirements for this work other than making sure the material would fit the pages allotted. CAE chose the subject matter, design elements, and image/text combination.

The subject was directly related to this very book. While mining CAE's archive for materials for *Disturbances* we noticed that much of our work revolved around the topic of sickness, in both literal and metaphoric ways. It was so prevalent that we decided it needed to be one of the book's themes. The need to follow this theme surprised us because we had always been very wary of rhetorics of pathogens and abnormalities. Historically, they have been attached to so many atrocities, and typically function as a tool of expression for the worst authoritarian regimes. As we looked over the materials related to this topic, much of which is in this volume, we noticed that CAE too, often used the language of sickness for politically expedient reasons. We believed our aims to be just, but don't all who employ this rhetoric feel the same? We felt compelled to go back and re-examine our own internal contradictions, our tactical usage of this language, and our attraction to notions of sickness. The repentant Galtonian was the mouthpiece for this moment of reflection.

Francis Galton was a modern thinker who, among his many activities, first put forth a theory of eugenics and was a primary explorer of the issue of the connection between sickness and genius. (Like Nietzsche, Galton was considered a polymath by many, and also had considerable trouble with illness throughout his life.) Perhaps his longest lasting legacy is his phrase "nature versus nurture." By having our character accept and then reject Galton's conservatism, we could try to describe CAE's own internal contradictions, and how pragmatism can get the better of principle. For example, although in principle we know we should not use a language of sickness, how can we not see the revival of torture in the West as anything else? Sickness always seems so plausible, so full of explanation, and yet it leads us down such dangerous paths once it becomes the common lens through which we view the world.



Sex	Male	Prof. A.	1844	1844	1844
Year	1844	1844	1844	1844	1844
Height	5' 10"	5' 10"	5' 10"	5' 10"	5' 10"
Build	Slender	Slender	Slender	Slender	Slender

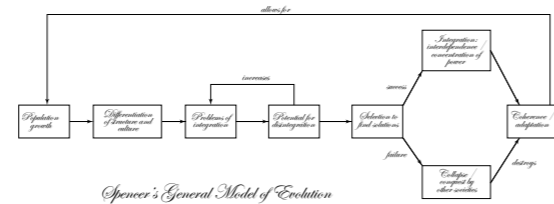


Sex	Male	Prof. A.	1844	1844	1844
Year	1844	1844	1844	1844	1844
Height	5' 10"	5' 10"	5' 10"	5' 10"	5' 10"
Build	Slender	Slender	Slender	Slender	Slender

Even in my dotage, I have never failed to mark the day that I felt compelled to distance myself from my first mentor, Francis Galton. In his day, he was a hero to his public, an intellectual giant amongst his peers, and the person I then credited with whatever learnedness I had achieved. During my youth, I was completely enamored of the conviction that Europe was unrelentingly progressing toward ever-greater prosperity and perpetual peace. This irresistible amelioration was fueled by science, engineering, and enterprise. The entirety of the earth, from the soil, to the animals, to humanity itself, could be managed and optimized solely by the application of scientific principles. The polymaths and visionaries of this new rational world would become collaborators with evolution itself in order to shape a perfect human for a perfect society.

Such are the utopian excesses of youth. One can only imagine my horror when in a moment of clarity I realized the folly of my beliefs. As I increasingly distanced myself from the advice of the men who dominated my thinking with regard to sociology and biology—men like Francis Galton, Herbert Spencer, and Thomas Malthus—I found myself acquiring an ever-deeper understanding of evolutionary theory. (I know this list of influences must appear quite amusing to a contemporary reader, as it has been many decades since these names were uttered in a university lecture hall, but in their

time their influence cannot be overstated.) Slowly, I found my utopian desires giving way to a form of reasoning grounded in skepticism rather than in certitude. My skepticism was so profoundly disruptive that every principle I thought irrefutable became susceptible to interrogation. During these turbulent times, I concluded that humans functioning as an intentional influence upon evolution was not science,



Spencer's General Model of Evolution

but hubris parading itself as rationality. No one had the means to know for what evolution was selecting until after the fact, and even at this point of discovery, any narrative as to the reason one form of animal succeeded while another failed was only wild, reductive conjecture. Although the mechanism of selection can be proven within reasonable doubt, the object of selection is transcendent, always remaining beyond human knowledge. Therefore any attempt to engineer humans would have no connection to evolution whatsoever, and would instead be significant only in regard to the perverse (unnatural) economic and political interests of those creating policies for artificial selection and elimination.

From that day forward, I could no longer stomach the modeling of nature and culture as being one and the same. I became repulsed by the confusion of evolution and history. I refused to tolerate cultural prejudices presenting themselves as foundational truths. I swore I would discontinue employing the models, metaphors, and rhetorics used to describe and explain the natural world interchangeably with those that describe and explain the human social sphere. My devotion to the union of biology and sociology had ended, and were I ever again to explore the continuum between the two, I would do so only with the greatest care, caution, and trepidation.



Herbert Spencer born April 27, 1820

I am alarmed. With increasing frequency, I hear the rhetoric of sickness and contagion expressed in relation to the social body. No actual bacterial or viral pathogen roams unobstructed. The "infection" is, rather, a behavior that spreads and acts in a manner similar to infectious disease threatening to destroy the normality of the status quo. In some of the areas in which it has taken root my anxiety is lessened. In the Middle East and North Africa where despots are being threatened by uprisings, the rhetoric of contagion (particularly from the "outside") is to be expected. The besieged leader must explain away the rebellion by postulating an external enemy who permeates borders for the purpose of contaminating the minds and bodies of the citizenry. In turn, the brutal retaliations that follow an uprising are justified as the defense of borders and the social body. My anxiety is lessened in these cases not because the crimes cloaked by this rhetoric are any less reprehensible than those found elsewhere in the world, but because the rebels have the power and the external support to wage a successful campaign.

In Europe, I am less optimistic. The rebellious masses in Greece, Spain, France, Italy, and the United Kingdom have no external support. To the contrary, the formidable forces of the global economy demand to see these uprisings crushed, and are willing to offer any support needed by the sovereign powers to suppress the expression of interests counter to those of the global oligarchy. In these cases, the rhetoric of sickness and contagion is extremely dangerous. It generates a social order accepting of whatever oppression or even atrocity is deemed necessary. Once a class of people can be associated with sickness, and hence beyond the norm, their politics can rapidly be transformed into criminality. When the transformation is complete, the act of arresting and beating people for justified political dissent and self-defense becomes a matter of necessary, everyday police work. The pairing of contagion with "thuggery" is common to such situations.

The rhetoric of the cure is no less pleasant. The model established by the medical industry in global economy parallels the one used to cure the ills of the social order: Arrest the symptoms and ignore the cause. If the rioting, burning, and looting are absent, then all is well—even if the underlying problem still remains. Remission is a perfectly acceptable, if not a desirable, outcome. To investigate why a person lacks investment in the social order, or to research why the means to fulfill basic human need are absent in a time of massive wealth, is anathema to the powerful.



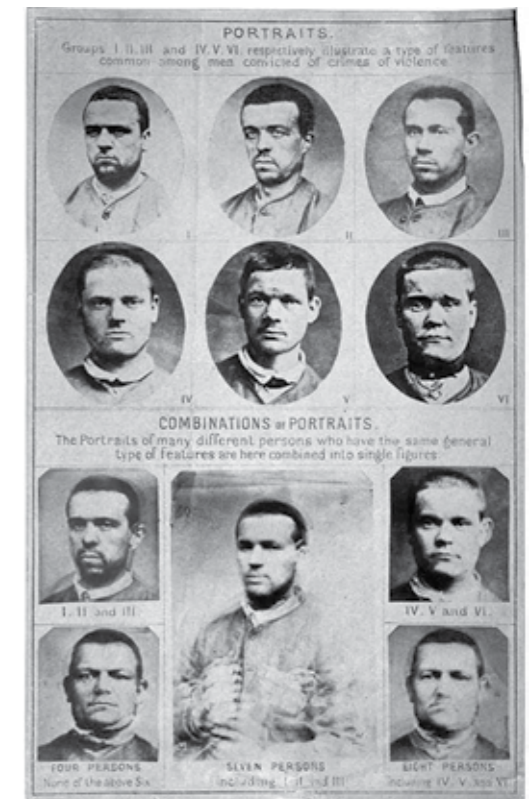
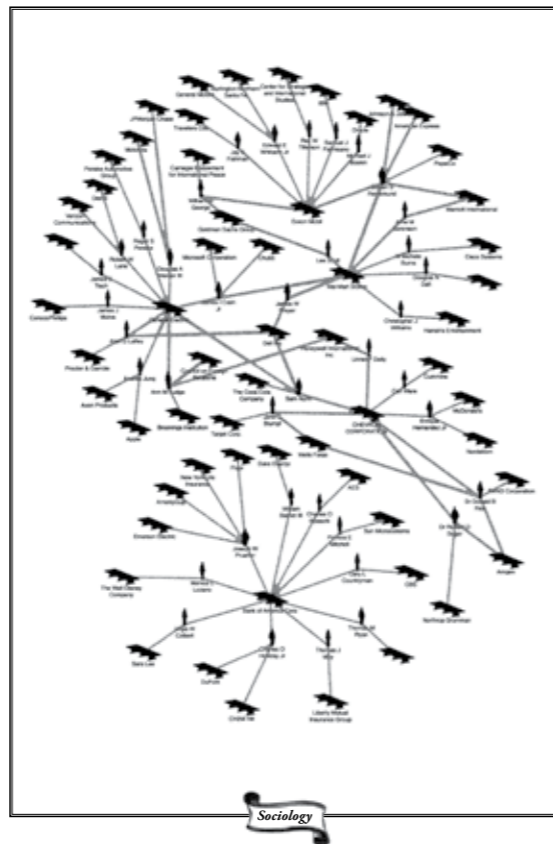
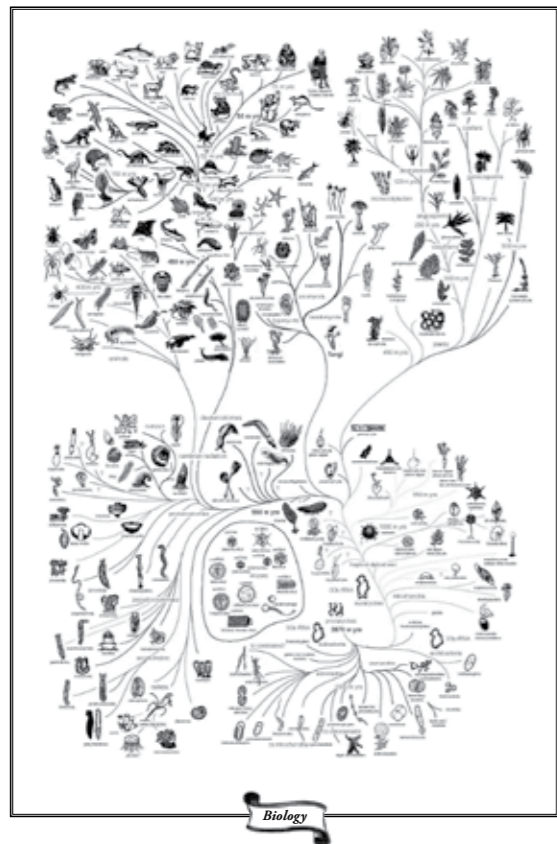
Health is not the absence of sickness

Galton is probably best remembered for coining the phrase "nature versus nurture." For most of history, nature has trumped nurture in terms of popularity. Oddly enough, however, during the arc of my lifetime, nurture has made its best showing yet at asserting its explanatory power. Nature briefly became the concept under suspicion, and was accused of housing every type of cruel cultural prejudice and fantasy. Yet as history drifts into a more conservative era, nature has again moved to the forefront. Its separation from the limelight appears to be over, and we find the status quo justified by arguments about natural conditions and relations, and entire groups of humans condemned for their natural capacity for all varieties of deviance and sickness. In my state of repentance I find these accusations troubling, as they so often work against equal justice and democratic principle.

Unfortunately, the traces of Galton's thinking still trouble my mind, insisting I examine the consistency of my position. I fear that I tend toward nurture only if it suits my political ambitions, and not as a means to discover the truth. Fortunately, I am not alone. When I consider the debate over gay rights that rages in the United States at the moment, I am given pause. The conservatives, who almost always align themselves with nature when explaining social behavior, have taken the surprising position that the direction of desire toward sexual objects is freely chosen, despite their belief God has predetermined monogamous heterosexuality to be the natural inclination. The liberal side, which on one hand believes that sexuality is constantly renegotiated along an expansive gender continuum, can also be quite pleased to insist that sexuality is determined, or at very least fixed at an early age, indicating some type of genetic predisposition. The expediency of politics is poison to reason.

Economy does so much better at remaining consistent in its adulation for the power of nature in regard to sickness and deviance. The short-lived power of the Freudians is gone, swept away by a psychiatric industry that places all its faith in biochemical interventions. Modern medicine has made its way far from battling bacterial or viral pathogens; it has managed to find the means to arrest unwanted feelings and behaviors. The medical industry would have us believe that our natural tendency as humans is toward neutrality and acceptance. Perhaps it is correct in the notion that chronic sadness, estrangement, or nervous disorder is not natural, but the medical industry has no incentive to go to the cause. Much like the London riots, it is better to torment the body with the (chemical) means at hand. And if a natural cause must be found, the answer is always in the individual character (defective genes, chemical imbalance, etc.), never in the environment enveloping the person.

I remain a concerned man completely unable to contend with my own contradictions. I presume that this too is natural.



Evil has gone out of the world and sickness has come into it.



Overactive Rational Gland (ORG)

Subjective:

pt is unaware he has problem, wants to know why he is here.

Objective:

Overbearing, argumentative, refuses to consider emotional reactions and motivations as valid.

Assessment:

Plan: Lengthy confinement in psychiatric hospital

Comments:

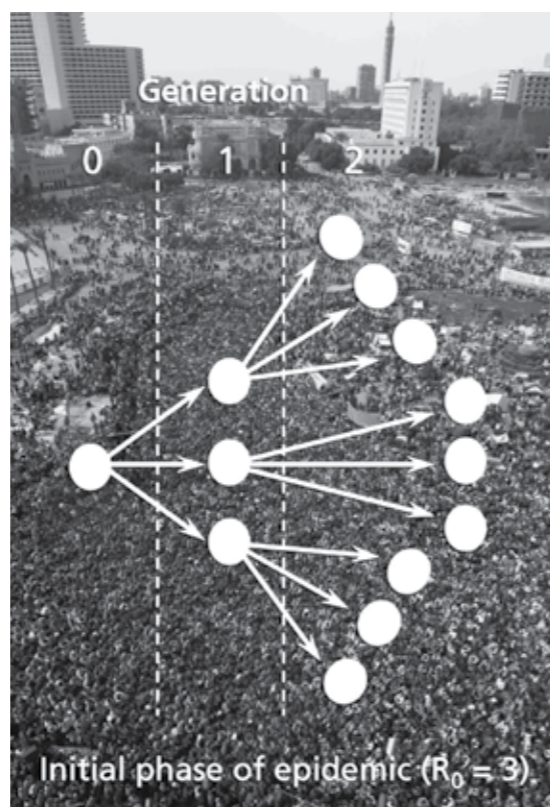
Causes hair to stand on end, showing the obdurate inflexibility of the pt's mind. The eyes stare, the feet stamp the guiltless earth, as though there were not room enough for this much rationality in the atmosphere, and so it sought to enter the earth as well. ORG deforms the body from the hair of the head to the sole of the foot.



I have found myself on the verge of disturbed amusement to see that in recent decades contagions have acquired positive associations. I suppose I should not be surprised that a global market valorizing speed and excess should admire the traits and abilities of viruses. They are capable of rapid global movement; no border can contain or repel them; and they fill space until it bursts. They will expand until every resource is depleted, even if it means the decimation of their own kind. I cannot help but wonder, "Is this not also an accurate description of humanity?" To which the utopian inside me insists, "No, humans are not an automated species determined by biology." My real fear is that the thought of a suicidal species bent on environmental decimation could acquire a positive connotation.

I cannot believe it a random occurrence that the rhetoric of "pathogen positive" began in the ether of the technosphere—a space where speed and efficiency are so deeply cherished. Computer viruses at first were considered an annoying infection to be neutralized as in the world of their material counterparts, but soon their magnificent traits were understood as desirable. A virus is the highest power of reproducibility, which in turn is the heart and soul of the digital world. The desire for fast, efficient reproducibility is the engine that moves culture, commerce, and politics. We want our images to be viral, our products to be infectious, and our politics to be a contagion. In the wake of Arab Spring, I have often heard of "the contagion of democracy," spoken with sincere positivity by those who support the uprisings.

This trend has not limited itself to the virtual world and cultural exchanges, but has made its way back into the discourses concerning the finer characteristics of humanity. When I was very young, there was considerable discussion about the relationship of sickness and genius. Many of the literary and philosophical giants of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, including Francis Galton, were consumed with the issue. After World War II, that line of investigation seemed to disappear. Yet now that "pathogen positive" has reasserted itself with great vigor, the connection between sickness and genius has returned. The thesis that the finest leaders, thinkers, and artists may all be touched by some form of abnormality that propels them to go beyond common wisdom once again finds an audience. Mental disorders and physical disabilities are again fashionable among polymaths and visionaries—or perhaps it is merely a repackaging of the Great Man theory. What a conundrum for would-be parents: to have a sickly child who changes the world, or a healthy one that is normatively functional. I feel a grand reimagining of the categories of health and sickness is in the air. What new atrocity comes our way?



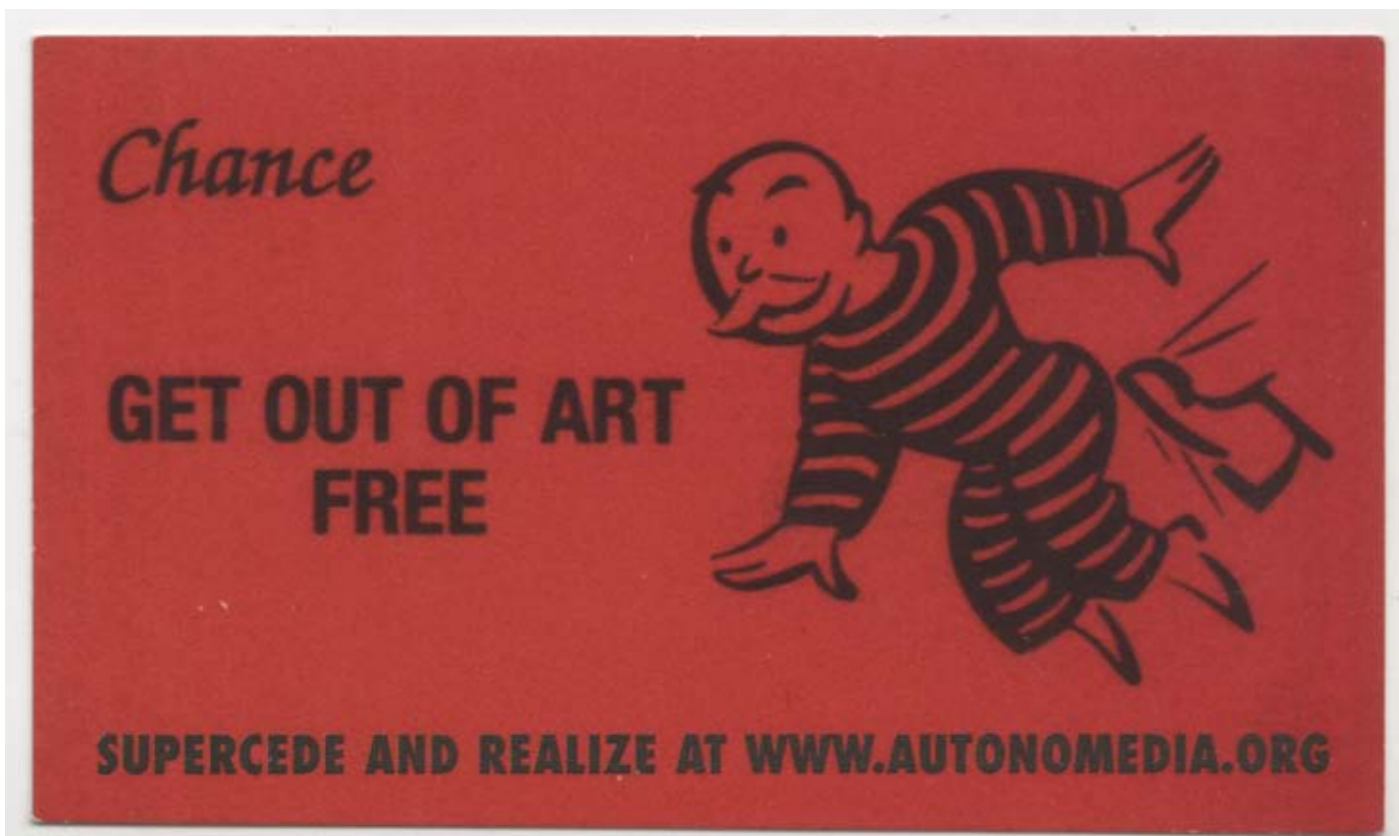
Pathogen Positive



09. Utopia

Pessimism of the intellect; optimism of the will.
—Antonio Gramsci

Utopia is a concept for which CAE has a great affection, in spite of its many shortcomings and its tendency toward universalism. Growing up as part of Gene Roddenberry's *Star Trek* generation, we had hopes that knowledge would one day render the acquisition of wealth obsolete for everyone, thereby making the development of mind and body, and non-imperial adventurism the only goals worth pursuing. We may have just described utopia in a sentence, but the devil is in the details. What does Roddenberry's utopia actually look like? It seems to consist of perpetual military struggles between empires necessitating living in a constant state of red alert, paralleled with artificial adventure on the holodeck. That sounds to CAE more like life under the Bush administration.



Forget utopian social systems for a moment—is a utopian statement even possible? “Stop rape!” Surely everyone can agree on this, but how do we stop it? Increased prison time? Expansion of the prison system? Compulsory self defense courses? Burqas? Redistribution of wealth? Increased surveillance? Armed escorts? Selected castration? Accessible mental health care? To our dismay, utopia assumes a universal sameness in which all people want the same things from life and society. In the current global order, the division of labor is far too complex for a universal paradise. If Thomas More’s *Utopia* is really a derivative of no-place-land, he saw the problem many years ago.

Happily, Hakim Bey freed us from the idea that utopia had to be either heaven on earth or an ecstatic end of history. With his notion of the temporary autonomous zone (TAZ), we were able to value utopian tendencies as a prescription for micro-revolutions and new arrangements of autonomous activity that could exist even in the most totalitarian environments. If the TAZ was discovered and destroyed or assimilated, that was simply part of an ongoing historical process in which capitalism abhors all alternatives to itself. No matter how long a TAZ may last (one minute or one century), the end of a TAZ is no time for mourning; rather, it is time to begin a new one. Utopians were freed from the burden of providing a permanent systemic solution for utopia, or creating new grist for the capitalist mill, and were invited to experiment in any way possible to create production and pleasure within consensus-based social nodes.

CAE is interested in attempting such experiments, but not as a public practice. TAZ can never be public for the reasons explained above, and if we were ever to create a long-term TAZ, why would we bother with interventions? Why not just stay in the pleasure palace as a final statement of resistance? Clearly, the long-term TAZ has eluded us. Given that we must continue with the best model of resistance we know—intervention—we can’t resist packaging utopian hopes in ways that allow us to further other autonomous arrangements. A utopian grouping of people (so long as they don’t appear hostile) acts as a magnetic curiosity to onlookers. Between the conjunction of the freakish difference utopians represent, and the wonderment of onlookers as they consider how the utopians find meaning in their activities, we produce a seduction machine capable of generating new arrangements of flow and conjunction. Whether as parody or as genuine desire, utopia is ultimately connected to delusion, but at times it is a magnificent delusion.



Apocalypse and Utopia

9.1 | 1992 | Videos



Apocalypse and Utopia was CAE's reaction to the "finger pointing" documentary that seemed to dominate the politicized video scene in the early 90s. There was no shortage of dictators, zealots, agent provocateurs, and authoritarians of all varieties that needed to be exposed for what they were, but it was the recurring belief in the truth of photography that bothered us. We considered those who were making such films to be allies, but we couldn't support the method of production. It appeared to CAE as artificial, and at its worst, disingenuous and formulaic. If we were going to make a documentary, or at least a work that could be classified as nonfiction, we wanted to shift the method in two fundamental ways. First, we didn't want to focus on crisis points, but instead concentrate on the latent authoritarian substructures in ordinary phenomenon. Second, we wanted to consistently call attention to the subjective nature of the film. We wanted to show we were only recording one interpretation of the real.

To do this, we recruited some individuals whose job is to tell others what is real. These included Arthur and Marilouise Kroker, Tom Kalin (from *Gran Fury*), the Autonomedia Collective, and Greg Ulmer. And, of course, CAE would contribute a segment. Subjects included exit culture, gender reassignment, temporary autonomous zones, pet sacrifice, and the body without organs. We hoped that when these hermeneutic segments were shown in aggregate, a general picture would emerge of latent authoritarian currents and residues that reside deep in US culture.

In 1993, the World Wide Web, as we now know it, came online. Graphic user interface (GUI) had a tremendous impact on CAE in terms of how we thought about production and distribution. Interactivity and online distribution became key points of investigation for us. In spite of our tremendous investment in film and video, we dropped it. CAE wouldn't make another video as an end in itself until 2006.



DRIFT DISTRIBUTION

INDEPENDENT FILM

9 March, 1994

Steve Kurtz
Critical Art Ensemble
1556 Marcia Avenue
Tallahassee, FL 32310

Dear CAE:

Finally I have received copies of the catalog from L'HIVER DE L'AMOUR. Here is your very own copy. Thanks so much for contributing GENDER CRASH to this show. The show has received a lot of attention in Paris, where it is considered to be quite radical. The film/video component of the show is especially well attended and appreciated I am assured by both the curators and museum personnel. I will forward any reviews that the show receives as soon as they are provided to me.

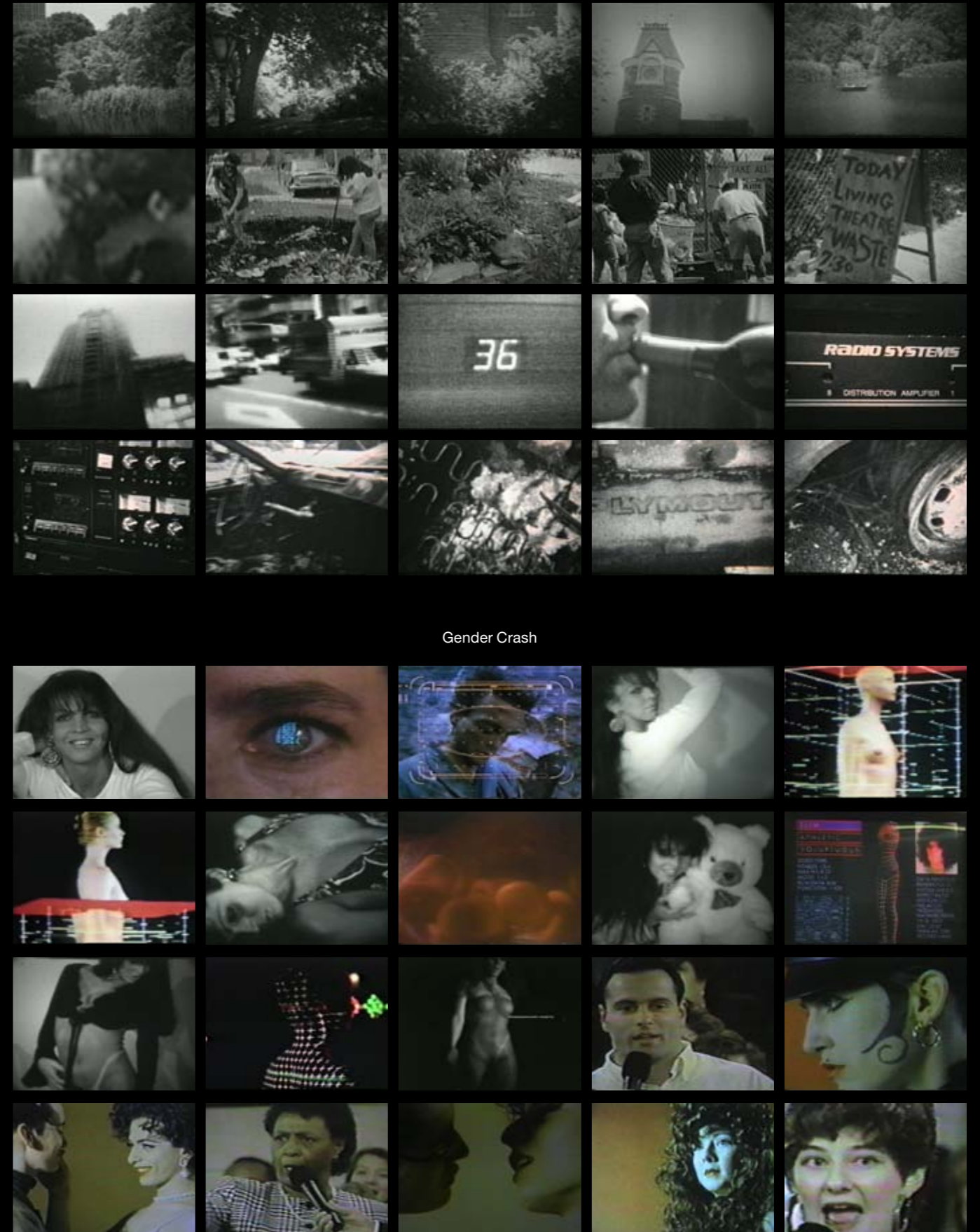
Take care and I hope to speak to you again soon.

Best,

Chris Hoover

611 BROADWAY, #742
NEW YORK, NY 10012
TEL (212) 254-4118
FAX (212) 254-3154
EMAIL: DRIFTEFV@AOL.COM

TAZ – Temporary Autonomous Zone



Gender Crash

Mr. Mentality



Exit Culture



Body Without Organs



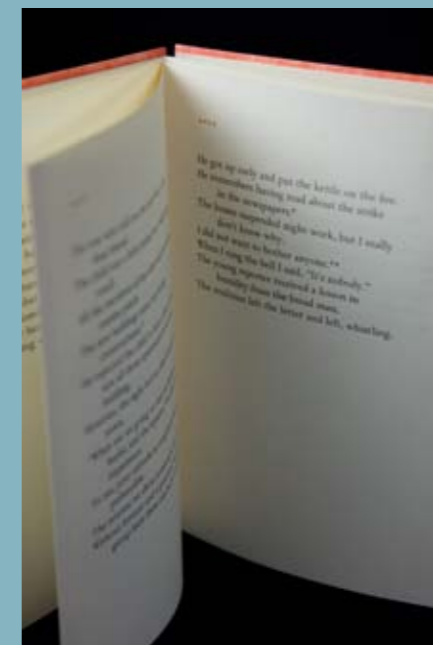
Artists' Books

9.2 | 1988 to 1992 | Artists' Books



During this time, many artists could no longer bear to hear the words “originality” or “creativity” due to their association with a cadaverous modernism that had no place in the recombinant digital culture of the postmodern world. CAE shared this opinion, but we noticed that many of the institutions responsible for producing culture did not. What for us were the only sensible methods of operation in virtual society—appropriation, recombination, plagiarism, detournement, remix, and so on—were for the old guard the methods of the creatively disabled, knowledge thieves, and juvenile minds. For a young CAE, the greatest offender was the education system in general and universities in particular. For the most part, they are still this way, locked into a retrograde book culture that too often rewards unnecessary labor. Not that CAE was unilaterally against books. We understood that in the right context they are a useful medium; we just couldn’t accept them as a peerless medium deserving of a special cultural status.

However, we thought, if books are what they want, then books they shall have. Books filled to the brim with plagiarized texts in the form of poetry (another problematic retrograde form as practiced in the realm of higher learning). Unfortunately, we knew no publishing house would touch such works, so we needed to publish them ourselves. Then again, what self-respecting library would touch a book from a homespun vanity press? None. But if we made them artists’ books of exceptional quality, using the finest papers, with letterpress printing, handmade bindings, and in limited editions, what institution could resist such lovely fetish items? Once we got the books inside, any enterprising young radical could use them as precedent for the fair and reasonable use of the techniques used in the works. The book as precious object is so seductive in its appearance that it is irresistible to institutions of the word, regardless of the content therein. Surrounding provocation with seduction was the perfect camouflage to infiltrate halls of education.



What Derrida does to Lacan
Lacan can do to Derrida:
Take a random walk.
Around by Fort Dada.

I have been hornsawgled
by the experts

The utter senselessness of this interesting
subject of conversation:

What's the use of in the center?

To have a notion to take place

Which is only passing through.

The puppet called "historical materialism"

is to win all the time.

"The 'modern
situation' is a
catastrophe
that offends
our most
basic desires
for peace and
happiness —
[Even] the most
beautiful argu-
ment sounds
like
sophistry —

The critical function no longer overtly inhabits the text.

What is a Utopia for? To make meaning.

Discourse about reality becomes possible.

Moral obsession is followed by a minor scientific delirium.

It is a conduit by way of which goods gush into the kitchen,
awaiting the moment when they will all be casually
scooped into the Marxist basket.

In his patient tinkering with the faulty text

The humanist becomes a Zionist of the imagination.

This is a perfectly rational conclusion.

It's the devil with a human face —

His little cough of photo criticism

Is an instant producer of insomnia.

Dread of the simulacral,

Natty dread of the simulacrum,

So infinitely degraded.

~~Great God I'd rather be~~

Viewed with a shutter by Baudelaire:

Art debauched by commerce.

Inter texte.

The lights all turn green at once.

Now someone interrupts the sign:

He gives the hand-signal for "crop rotation" or "awesome tubes."

Always Already Hypertextual poetry is a metaphor for a textual constellation that has always already gone nova.

"Use any system which suggests itself to you. Take your own words or the words said to be the 'very own words' of anyone else living or dead. You'll soon see that words don't belong to anyone . . . Writers don't own their words. Since when do words belong to anybody? 'Your

¹This statement was originally made by Georges Sorel (*Illusions of Progress*) during the height of the Quarrel between "the modern situation" is a catastrophe ¹ the that offends our most basic desires—

Ideas improve. The meaning of Ancients and the Moderns. words participates in the improvement. Plagiarism is necessary. Progress implies it. It embraces an author's phrase, makes use of his expressions, erases a false idea, and replaces it with the right idea. "When

poetry **beneath the** is insti- **modernist bric-a-brac** tutionalized, its power as a medium of communication becomes attenuated, because it is cut off from audiences outside the university . . . Competition and conformity in graduate writing programs have produced poets who write what is known as 'the workshop poem.' Technically elegant, usually lyric, and most often solipsistic, it is churned out at such a rate that Donald Hall calls it

and stray allegorical fragments "McPoem" and blames it for the general lack of interest in contemporary "To reveal in all its purity the space in which poetry outside the ranks of literary critics and the poets themselves." discursive **with which these textual** events are de- **superstructures swarm,** played is not to

undertake to re-establish it in an isolation that nothing could ever overcome; it is not to close it upon itself; it is to leave oneself free to describe the interplay of relations be- **The age of more mystified contradiction.**²

³Theory must rest on paper **Here is a model: Cutting shapes from a piece of paper,**³ Empiricism, necessary interrelationships which constitute meaning; only on paper which claimed

can theory be lifted into the heart of the transhistorical bureaucracy. that in compari- **whose pieces derive their meaning from their relationship to each other**— son to post- LAUTRÉAMONT, GUY DEBORD, KARL KRAUS, BRION GYSIN, THE NE- structuralist theory, Hegel

OISTS, KAREN ELIOT, CRITICAL ART ENSEMBLE, THE LETTERISTS, RO- used a clear and succinct LAND BARTHES, STEWART HOME, SMILE, BAUDELAIRE, WILLIAM S. style of exposition. "Plagiarism is Every Notion Fixed This Way Has No Other Basis / The exis- BURROUGHS the negative point of a culture that finds its ideological justifi-

tence of theory is nothing in **Ideology resides less in the cuts made in the paper** cation in the 'unique'. Indeed, itself. / The commodity itself made the laws. "Sex, the invisible treasure that sighs from a it is only through the creation of Images detached from every aspect of life / baby's fingers, / governs her gestures as 'unique identities' that commodi-

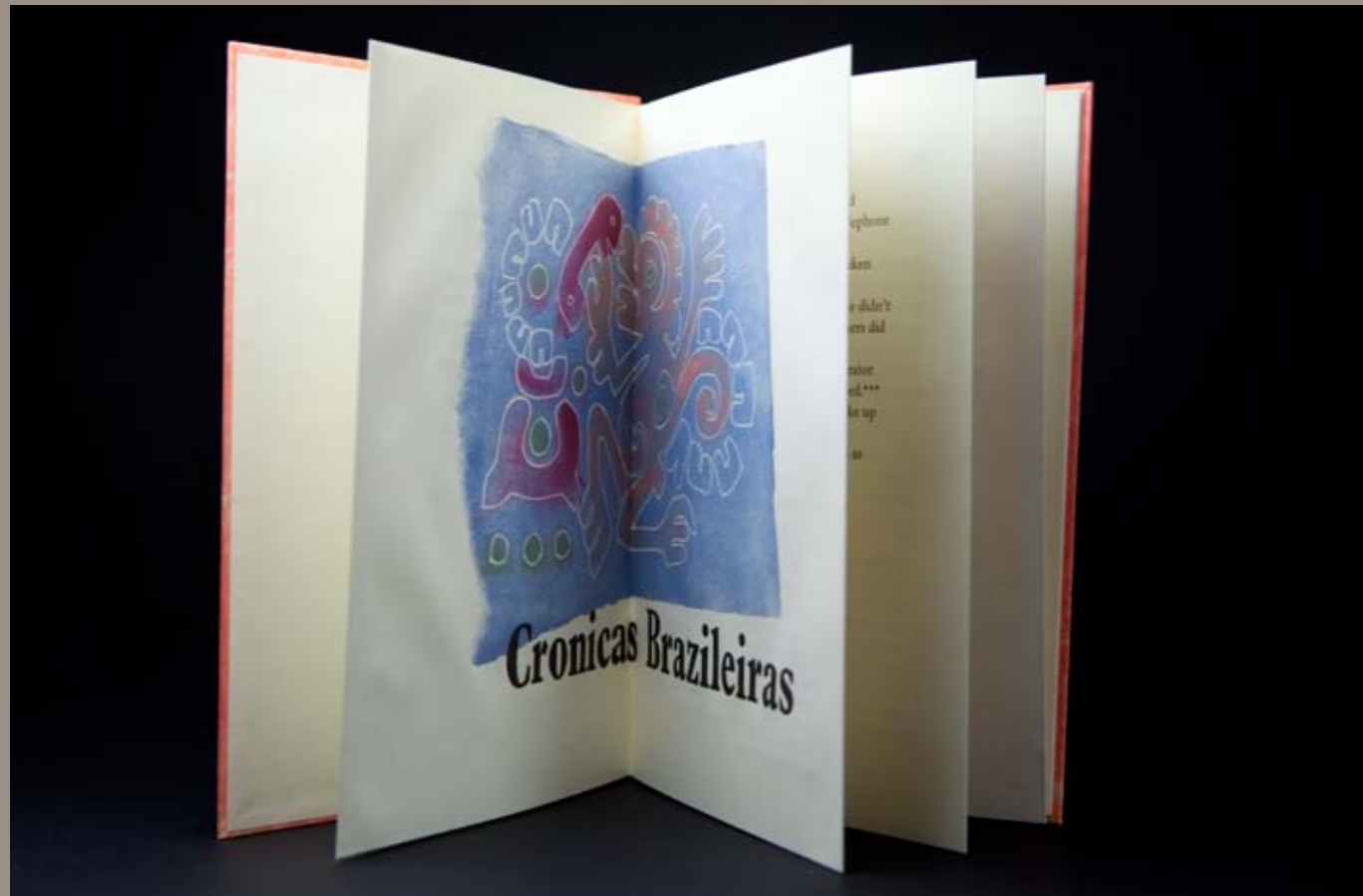
Fuse into a common stream. / It covers the entire surface of the world and bathes endlessly in its wholly as form commands the swoop / in constituting dominant images, by subjectivising them, we aim to **than in** own glory. / Within **the reduction of** the neck of a swan, / though she **reality to the** create a

itself its absolute denial, / It is separation carry her gender as coolly as the diamond blue 'normality' better suited to our perfected. The spectacle is the guardian of eyes / and shivering senses that extend her self nightmare dictated by power." requirements than the media sleep, / A map which exactly covers its beyond her body. / In what chromosomal interchange / her contours territory. / The spectacle is the money which one *only looks at*— / were specified few can fathom; yet, endowed /

In the **thickness of a single sheet of paper.** by thousands of forebears, / only she, the universal endless pursuit of its attainment everyone must submit or die: The commodity contemplates itself in a world it receiver, / has no gene to consign to the mix. . . ." — excerpt has created. POETRY CAN NO LONGER **But eschatology is not history. . . .**⁴ from a McPoem

BE REMADE. — Isidore Isou ⁴ A confusion typical of contemporary poetry. **The question of the sign somehow mysteriously passes beyond materialism.**⁵ ⁵ "The only possible rejoinder is neither confrontation nor destruction, but only theft: fragment the old

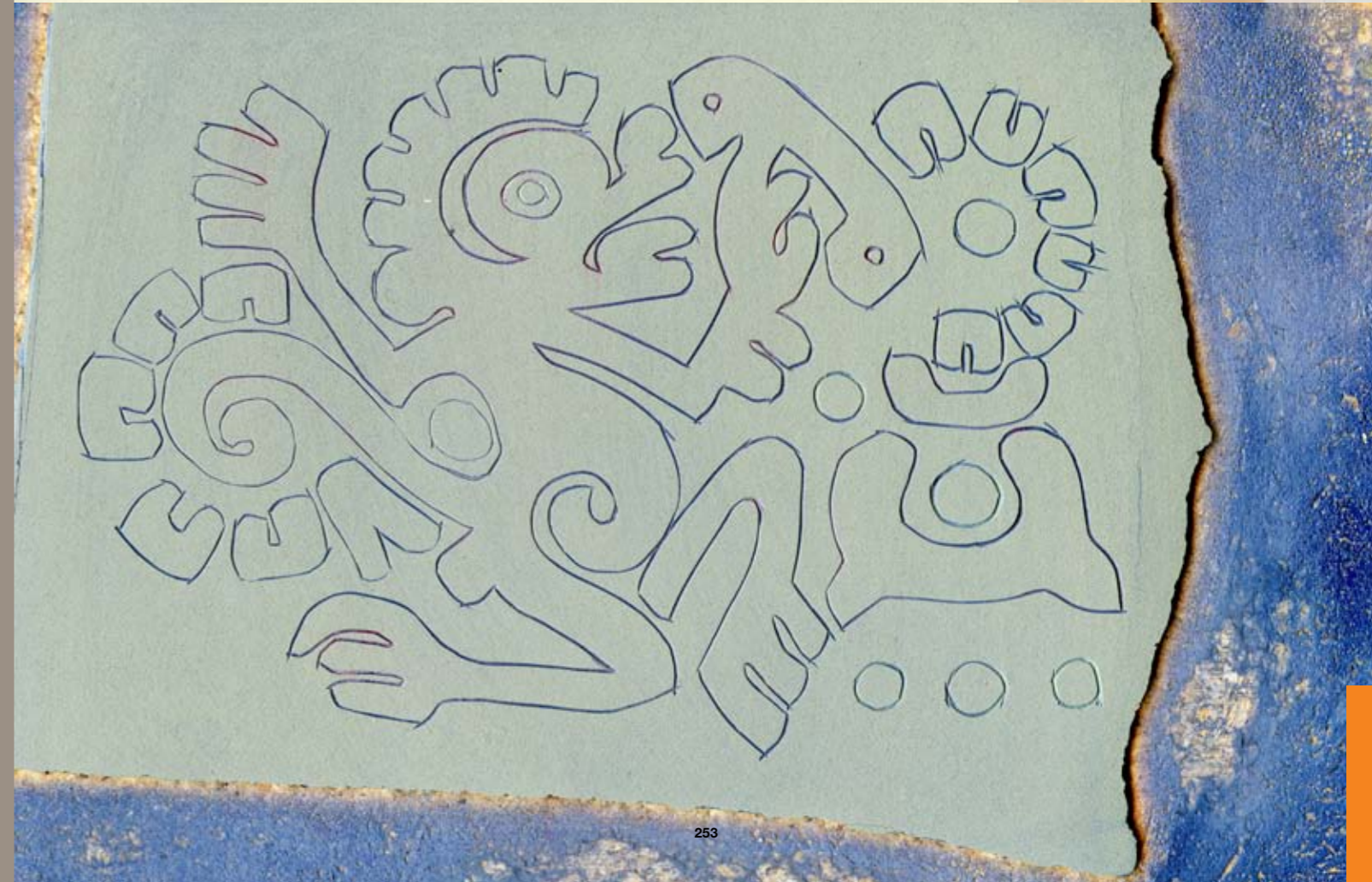
text of culture, science, literature, and change its features. . . as one disguises stolen goods."



Plan for book design

- Bind pgs. in "layers" (see inside - ignore colored paper, it would all be one color). Could use more than one page per layer, of course -
- Use illustration somewhere (doesn't have to be the cover) to convey idea of layers.
- Bind across top, book opens at bottom?

↑ the diagram reads this way.



THE FUNEST EXPERIMENT *
(El Diablo Cojuelo, Miami, Enero 1988)

our second homeland
the american union
we get acquainted with the mood:
a sorrowful preconception.
There is a funest experiment going on.
That is why we feel worry, and also
Those who are not brilliant after all,
who feel the brain in the right place,
doing the right work
for the sake of our rational privileges.
The funest experiment, in general terms,
consists of not brightening
"the Cuban question"
by going deeper into it,
a rational consideration of the problem.
We are preparing an ample scenery for
liberalism to rule
And all of us certainly know
what is going to happen afterwards. **
Our common destiny, that of the Cubans,
and even the one of the United States,
is gaining darkness. ***
Sad prespective of both horizons.

Annotations for The Funest Experiment

* "When politics falls to the level of being merely another occupation, it usually leads to villainy. Such sad spectacle is now being offered by the United States."

** "I do not want the people of my country to be like these Americans . . ."

*** "This is a powerful country, full of products it cannot sell, and determined to extend its sway over Latin America. . . . They are now announcing officially their desire to treat all our countries as natural dependencies of the U. S., and to buy Cuba."

—José Martí, 1853-1895

CONVERGENCE...

1
is dealing with Cuba have
o partisans such as Phillip
i, and the notorious Wayne
o headed the U.S. interests

the State Department is
upted by the advent of the
g the last half of the 1970s;
meeting with their Cuban
es by the Castro regime to
public opinion.

the nature of Fidel Castro
terly anti-American, hard-
ge, turn down the rhetoric,
was told, "new Cuba" could
a people.

anything, his rule grew

ed a second requirement:
igolá and 16 other African
gin. Again, Castro refused.
e didn't have to make any
was undoubtedly correct.
redible lengths to appease
mples:

ig ago exposed the Cuban
nd into the United States.
e it.

aware that Cuba is a major
logy. They also know of the
ditties, such as automative
Both continue to operate

Cuba from Miami and to
f the planes involved in the
nsport shot down by the
1986.

international terrorism and
et for decades. Personnel of
ngton and the Cuban U.N.
repeatedly and flagrantly
es imposed by the U.S. but
s of known Castro agents
has been arrested.

United States law fully as
affair. Nor are they any
unless witnesses, some
ngressional committees,
has ever been thoroughly

ing U.S. policy - and Fidel
ason for confidence they
"with Cuba - on commu-

THE FUNEST EXPERIMENT

—Especial para
EL DIABLO COJUELO-
Dr. Orlando Alvarez-Fundora

We love this great country,
our second homeland. We feel
proud of sharing the sound his-
torical traditions of the Ameri-
can Union, and we get ac-
quainted with the mood of the
American people as well.

But our feelings and hearts
are getting deeply imprinted
by a sorrowful preconception.
There is a funest experiment
going on, an that is why we feel
worry, and so do most of the
common people in this nation.
Those who are not brilliant after
all, but they are surely men and
women who feel the brain in
the right place, and doing the
right work for the sake of our
rational privileges as human
beings.

Incidentally, there is a man-
ner of procedure within most of
the ruling spheres of the coun-
try. It is, more than a policy, a
second-natured-way of be-
havior, so deeply rooted that
seems to be like the portrait of
the personality in function of
the conduct.

those with power often feel
no need of explaining the rarity
of such a public comportment.
Like the allowing of repeated
and incresing concessions to
the enemy. To the indubitable
enemy. To the communists.

Notwithstanding, those at
the top usually pretend they
are just the ones who know.

The funest experiment, as far
as it has to do with us, the Cu-
ban American people, and the
Cuban people, in general
terms, consists of not brighten-
ing 'the Cuban question' by
going deeper into it, so as to
obtain clear and honest solu-
tions at the end of a rational
consideration of the problem.

In other words, we are pre-
paring an ample scenery for
liberalism to strenghten and
rule. And all of us certainly know

**ASISTIRA EL DIABLO
COJUELO A LA CPAC**

Viene de la 1ra. Pág.

Esta Convención, a la que con-
curren las luminarias del Par-
tido Republicano, habrá de efec-
tuarse entre los días 11 y 13 del
próximo mes, en el hotel OMNI
Shoreham.

Invitado nuestro director, allá
estará presente 'El Diablo Co-
juelo' para captar las impre-
siones de las más conspicuas
figuras de poder, en cuanto a su
modo de pensar con relación a la
permanencia del sandinismo
sovietizante en Nicaragua, y de
lo real, hasta donde sea posible
saber, de la nueva política de
Washington, de negociaciones
con la Cuba que el castro-
comunismo ha convertido en
poderosa base militar y naval de
la Unión Soviética, con amenaza
manifiesta para la seguridad de
Estados Unidos..



LA SEMANA M
En 1963, cuando
Convocatoria a la S
tiana, nuestro ino
desaparecido Aur
Dulzaides, patrio
decía que todos jun
defender la salvaci
patria, añadiendo:
de pura acción', han
más de 20 años.
Pero parece qu
Seguimos con los cu
Tata.

EL CONVIDADO... viene de

No hay que engañarse. La inversión hecha por los Estados Unidos en el caso de Cuba durante estos treinta años supera, con los millones que se han gastado en Nicaragua. En ambas inversiones tiene un objetivo muy claro: recuperar el territorio. La otra salida posible (admitiendo que haya en realidad una salida) es que el Sr. Castro sea el que reajuste sus relaciones con los Estados Unidos y venga un proceso de liberalización y apertura en la manera como se está insinuando en la Unión Soviética. Pero las autoridades, por supuesto, en su mayoría, rechazaron esta idea. Pérez, ni el famoso General del Pino, ni el tal Azpillaga, jamás esta fórmula. Tampoco el resto de los cubanos. "¡Nada!", se dice. Que se vaya. Que lo vayan. Que lo partan. El único que se lanzó por el camino de la reconciliación fue el Sr. Castro. Lo suyo tuvo algo de metafísica o metapolítica. Los demás se quedaron con algo de compasión.

Después de oír estas voces cubanas tan bien intencionadas, yo hago es refugiarme en mi tesis de que somos un pueblo con tendencias delirantes. Llevamos clavada en el alma aquella frase repetida de "la Cuba que soñó Martí". Hemos sido un pueblo que alguien que no despierta. El mismo Castro es un personaje del sueño que se convirtió en pesadilla.

Hay un cuento corto de James Thurber que se titula "The Lemmings and the Sea". El autor habla de unos roedores que se dan a conocer en los países nórdicos y que se llaman lemmings. Periódicamente estos animalitos, que andan en manadas enormes, se suicidan colectivamente. La caída del sol, cuando el horizonte enrojece, millares de ellos corren desesperadamente hacia el mar y se pierden en él. Se suicidan en forma entusiasta y apasionada. Probablemente los animalitos da el grito de alerta: "¡El mundo se hunde!". Corren hacia la muerte. La moraleja que saca Thurber es que todos los hombres deben esforzarse por saber, por

The Piran Manifesto

9.3 | 1997 | Manifesto



CAE is re-releasing this document only to show that while we tend toward a general pessimism when analyzing our fate under global capitalism, we do still have a narrow streak of utopianism that can be coaxed to the surface given the right conditions. A weekend on the Slovenian coast to discuss future tactics for the cultural reconnection of former eastern and western European resistant cultures goes a long way toward this end. Especially when the Soros Foundation picks up the tab.

Date: Mon, 26 May 1997 23:40:47 +0100
To: nettime-l@Desk.nl
From: Marie Ringler <marie@t0.or.at>
Subject: <nettime> The Piran Nettime Manifesto

keywords: internet - cyberspace - nettime - pan-capitalism - NGO - content
29.5.1997, The Piran Nettime Manifesto
A PRESS RELEASE by Nettime (Vienna ad-hoc committee)

PRESS CONFERENCE 29.5.1997 19:00
Public Netbase Media~Space!, Museumsquartier, Museumsplatz 1,
Vienna/Austria Thursday, 29.5.1997 19:00

Participants: Pit Schultz (Berlin), Geert Lovink (Amsterdam),
Critical Art Ensemble (Chicago), Diana McCarty (Budapest),
Marko Peljhan (Ljubljana), Oliver Marchart (Wien), Peter Lamborn Wilson (New York)

"Why do you rob banks?"
"Because that's where the money is." (Willie Sutton, famous bank robber)

Last week Nettimers frolicked in the real space/time continuum on the Slovenian coast in the town of Piran where the following bullets were established:

Nettime declares Information War.

We denounce pan-capitalism and demand reparations. Cyberspace is where your bankruptcy takes place.

Nettime launches a crusade against data barbarism in the virtual holyland.

We celebrate the re-mapping of the Ex-East/Ex-West and the return to geography.

We respect the return to "alt.cultures" and pagan software structures ("It's normal!").

Deprivatize corporate content, liberate the virtual enclosures and storm the content castles!

Refuse the institutionalization of net processes.

We reject pornography on the net unless well made.

We are still, until this day, rejecting make-work schemes and libertarian declarations of independence.

NGOs are the future oppressive post-governments of the world.

We support experimental data transfer technology.

Participate in the Nettime retirement plan, zero work by age 40.

The critique of the image is the defense of the imagination.

Nettime could be Dreamtime.

Questions can be addressed to the participants at the Nettime press conference, Public Netbase,
Museumsquartier, Vienna, 29.5.1997, 19:00 hours

The Society for Reproductive Anachronisms

9.4 | 1999 | Performance

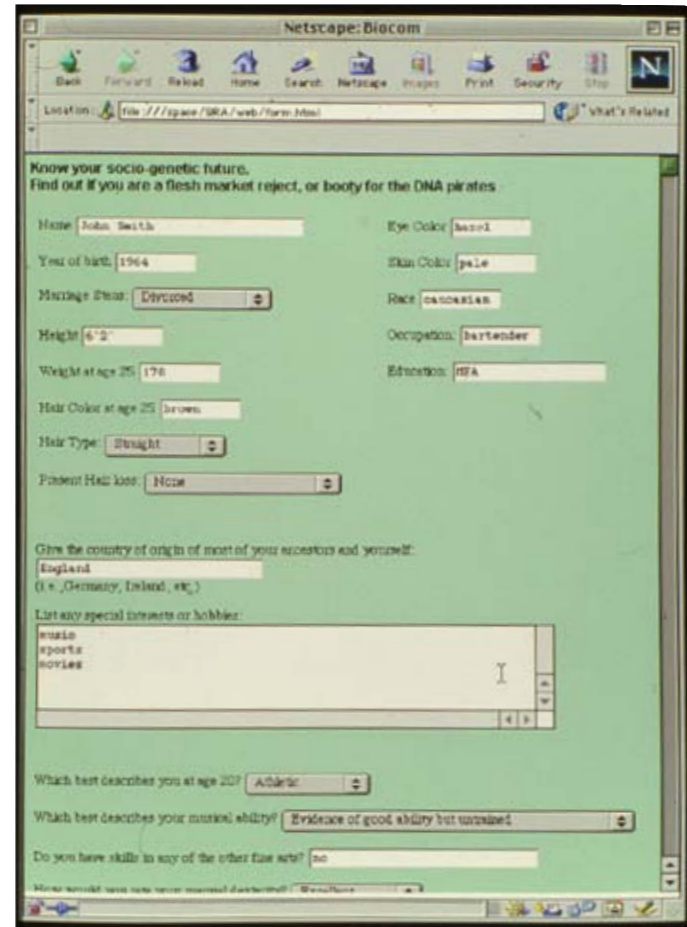


try to have sex with as many genetic variations of men as possible. (The SRA even constructed a travel agency to help them do this). Likewise, men interested in reproduction should have as much sex as possible with as diverse a group of women as possible. Hybridization improves one's line, and the "sperm war" in the womb between the sperm of the many donors would insure that only the healthiest and heartiest sperm would fertilize the egg. This form of reproduction would not only lead the world back into harmony with natural selection, it would create a sexual utopia rivaling that described by Fourier.

The Society for Reproductive Anachronisms (SRA) came about because CAE wanted to continue to talk about new forms of eugenics, but knew most venues could not produce the original *Flesh Machine* (page 214) which required labs, technicians, and wetware that were all quite expensive. We needed a smaller portable project that could be staged at minimal cost if we were going to take the discourse outside of well-funded institutions.

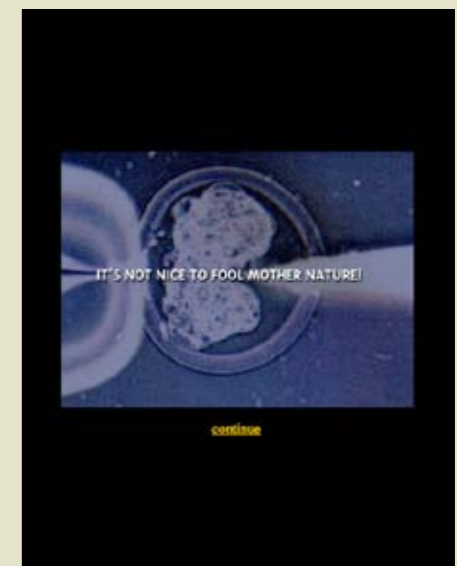
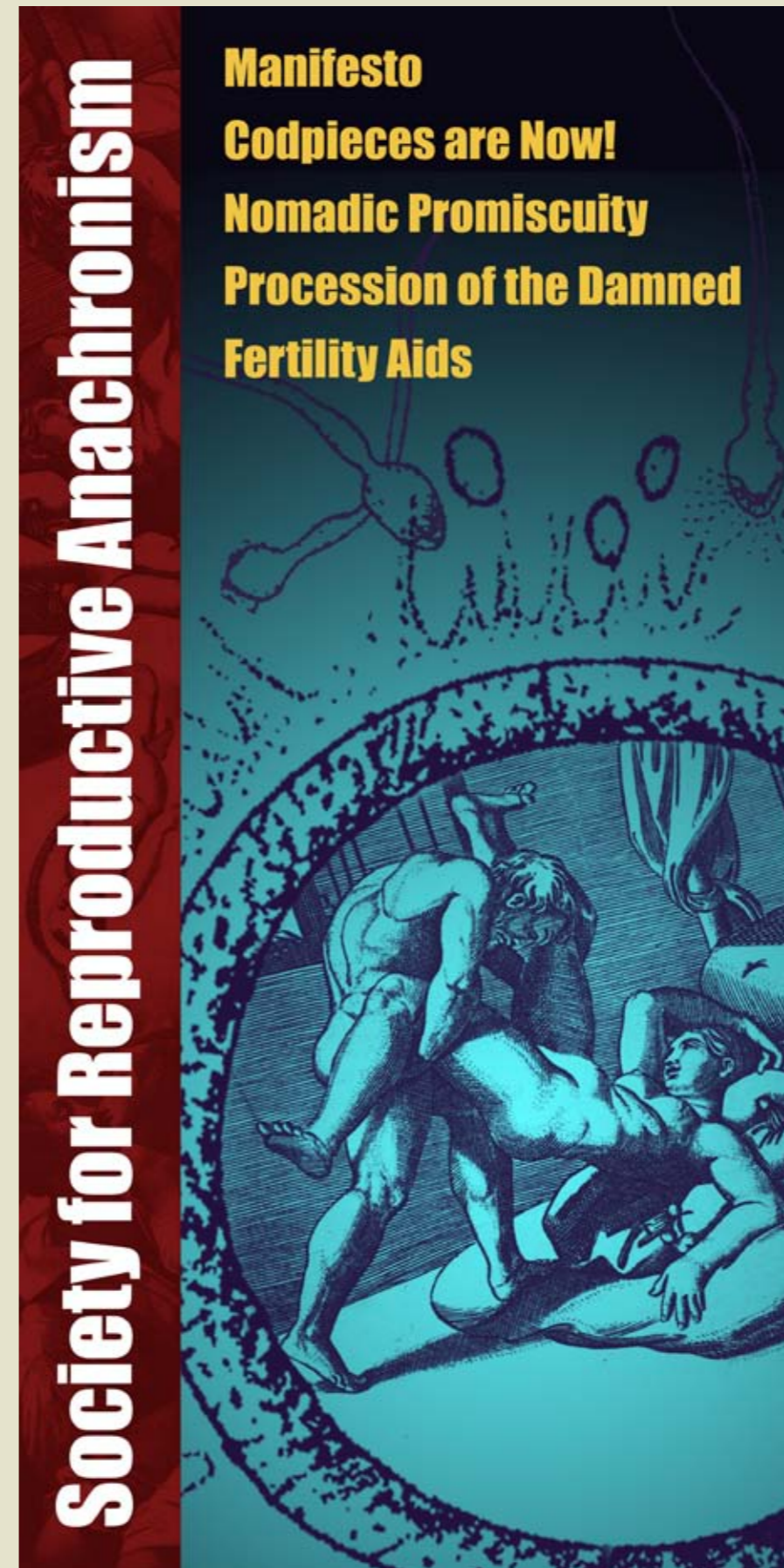


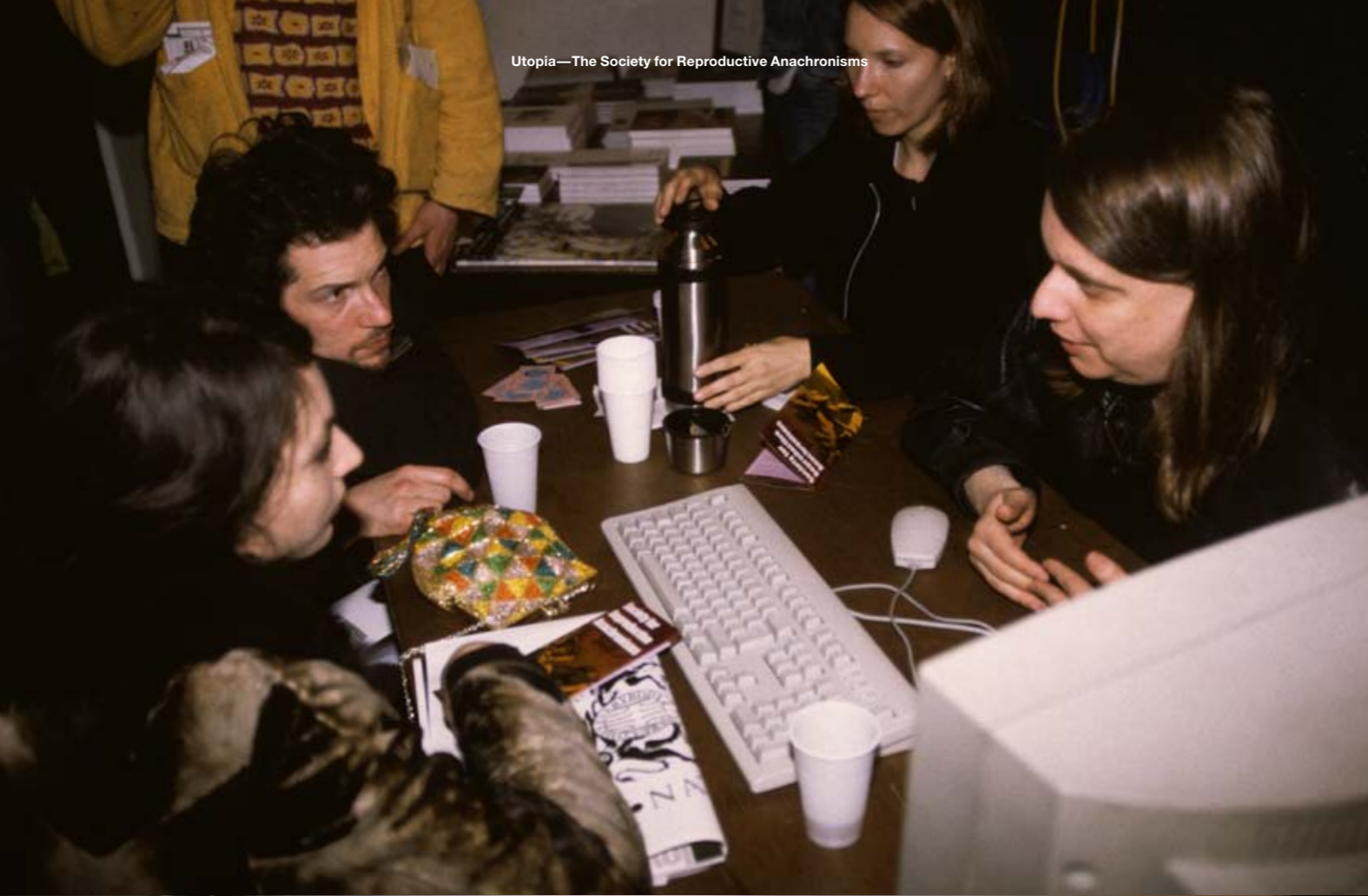
The form that came to mind was the activist information table. Our problem was what to promote. The corporate persona we had used in *Flesh Machine* wouldn't work in this instance, since corporations don't use information tables. We knew we had to go to the other end of the political spectrum. We needed to create a position extreme enough to reject corporate eugenics (as all Left positions would), but would still accept radical means of reproduction. This enabled us to critique corporate eugenics, but to do so from a weird enough position to hold the curiosity of a participant. To this end, we constructed a group that demanded an end to all medical or modern technological intervention in the reproductive process. Their goal was to protect the process of natural selection. Medical interventions were weakening the species, leading humans down the road to extinction. People incapable of breeding naturally should not be given any aid through commodification of the flesh. Those able to breed naturally could improve the quality of their familial gene pool and the species gene pool by following specific rules. The SRA's key concept was "nomadic promiscuity." During ovulation periods, women should



Armed with this counterfeit ideology, CAE took its information table to venues such as universities and conventions. Reactions were diverse, but CAE believes that regardless of the reaction, a perverse curiosity focused visitor attention on the synthesis of reason and madness rolling out before their eyes. Or perhaps they just wanted free samples of the many alleged aphrodisiacs we were giving away.

PAGES 260-261: The Society for Reproductive Anachronisms at Expo Destructo, London, UK.





Intelligent Sperm

9.5 | 1999 | Provocation



Intelligent Sperm Online was a response to the practice by some fertility clinics of sending scouts into universities to trawl for donors—primarily egg donors. Customized products from young coeds at top universities fetch a great deal of money when paired with the right client. Clinics pitch these as healthy eggs, and claim they carry a predisposition for entrance into the Ivy League.

In this provocation, a CAE member acts as a representative of a fertility clinic (BioCom). Live on screen via the internet is a “client” who is interested in finding a sperm donor. The representative gives his pitch as to why the young university students should donate to the clinic and how much money they could make. The pitch is quite incendiary, because it uses the language of contemporary eugenics: “We just want to give the children of soon-to-be parents the genetic advantages that will help them to better adapt to our current economic environment. And where else could we get better genes than at this establishment for higher learning? Who can deny we are engineering a perfect tomorrow here and now, while simultaneously making money?” In the audience is a confederate who excitedly volunteers to make a donation in exchange for cash. The online real time customer looks him over and gives an “OK,” generally to the horror of the audience. The performance ends as the pitchman and donor go off to sign a contract.

Needless to say, the audience retaliated with a great deal of pushback. The first time CAE performed this action was at Rutgers University at a conference on Globalization, Culture, and Identity. Our university contact, Eugene Thacker, had asked CAE to do an intervention. He would slip us into the program at the end of the day’s activities. At first people were just stunned, but by the end of the provocation, people were screaming at the BioCom “representative.” A tour guide from the university had brought in some perspective students to sample some of the extracurricular activities. The young freshmen were mortified. CAE had to break character, and say it was a just a performance—check the program (it was listed as a “multimedia demo”). We weren’t really from BioCom. So save the hate, and find out if this activity or something like it is happening on campus, and if so, use the outrage to fuel a campaign to ban it.

CAE has played many unsavory roles over the years, but this one was probably the most hated of all.

PAGE 263 TOP: CAE member gives his pitch to attract would-be donors. | **PAGE 263 CENTER:** CAE member in a back room pretending to be a BioCom client looking to purchase sperm. | **PAGE 263 BOTTOM LEFT:** Asking for volunteers. | **PAGE 263 BOTTOM RIGHT:** A confederate volunteers to make the donation. The client approves.





NEW WORLD (DIS)ORDERS?

FEBRUARY 18TH & 19TH 1999
CONFERENCE ON GLOBALIZATION, CULTURE, & IDENTITY

globalization.PICT body/map body/map2



The Fourth Session of the Conference Series 'Doing Comparative Literature'

panel i :: Reading the Globe
Anthony Alessandrini, Yaakov Perry, John Scanlon, Violeta Davoliute

panel ii :: Values, Ethics, and Human Rights
Elizabeth Brereton Allen, Bridget Conley, Susan Koshy, Neloufer de Mel

panel iii :: Roundtable Discussion :: "What's a Nice Colored Girl....?"
Karla Jackson-Brewer, Regina "Gunga" Lewis, Davine Del Valle

panel iv :: Cultural Commodification - Globalization, Nationalism, and the Marketing of Identity
Chris Vaughan, Lisa Coxson, Raul Coronado Jr., Martine Gantrel

panel v :: Mapping the Metropolis
Emily T. Bauman, Tsung-Yi Huang, Abdou Maliq Simone, Tolonda Tolbert DiFranco

panel vi :: Nation, Identity, and Intellectuals
Meyda Yegenoglu, Turjo Haapamaki, Melanie A. Perez Ortiz

panel vii :: Guest Speaker :: Steven Ungar

panel viii :: Multimedia Demonstration :: [techne]
Critical Art Ensemble, Eugene Thacker+Nikola Stojcin

organizers: Sara Warner, Bethuel Hunter, Romana Uhlirova, Thomas Ponniah
email: doingcd@rci.rutgers.edu
url: http://complit.rutgers.edu/conferences/new_world_disorders
sponsored by the Program in Comparative Literature, the Graduate School New Brunswick, the GSA, and the Deans' Offices of Douglass and Rutgers Colleges



W3LAB
0 items, 99.4 MB av

net.art ::
Mark Amerika
Diane Bertolo
Sawad Brooks
Heath Bunting
Vuk Cosic
Critical Art Ensemble
DhalgrenMOO
Disinformation
Fakeshop
Floating Point Unit
i/o 360
I/O/D
Oz Lubling
/m/e/t/a/
Robbin Murphy
John Neilson
Nikolas
Thomas Noller
Marianne Petit
Plumb Design
Post-Tool
Erwin Redl
James Roven
Alexi Shulgin
Yoshi Sodeoka
Beth Stryker
Eugene Thacker
Helen Thorington
Annette Weintraub
Arianne Wortzel
Jody Zellen
zz+sawad+rdom

<http://gsa.rutgers.edu/maldoror/techne/techne.html>

an online exhibit of projects for the web, presented in conjunction with the "new world (dis)orders" conference

hyper.theory ::
Mark Amerika, Sawad Brooks, Steve Dietz, Ricardo Dominquez, Arthur + Marilouise Kroker, Douglas Kellner, Geert Lovink, Lev Manovich, David Porush, Mark Poster, Rhizome, Steven Shaviro, VNS Matrix

keynote speaker ::
Homi K. Bhabha
moderator :: Bruce Robbins

keynote panel ::
bell hooks + Drucilla Cornell

Cult of the New Eve

9.6 | 2000 | Performance

By 2000, the Human Genome Project (HGP) was concluding at a much faster rate than anyone expected, and laboratories everywhere were wondering how to keep the government funds and corporate investments flowing when the flagship was retired. The easiest strategy was to pump up the utopian rhetoric to maximum strength. Venture capitalists needed reassurance that new enterprises had the equivalent power of NASA's long-promised moon station or Mars landing. One might expect that those on the frontier of molecular biology would simply go to the same promises that so many had used before. Whether it is energy, communications, transportation, or vision engines, the public is always told that new knowledge and technology is good for democracy, is more convenient and efficient, will create new and improved communities, and will create better bodies (the old McLuhan thesis that technology is the extension of the body). Oddly, when applied to biological products, this same set of promises has the opposite effect. At worst, they are tainted by an association with twentieth-century eugenics, and at best, people seem unhappy about the idea of having their flesh engineered. A different rhetoric had to be found. Since the Enlightenment promises were not acceptable, only one rhetorical system remained that was familiar to the Western public: Christian promissory rhetoric. Science was the new religion anyway, so why couldn't the language of the Church be appropriated? Science had the legitimacy; scientists were the experts. Who could say otherwise? Knowledge of "God's blueprint" would deliver new miracle cures, Edenesque abundance, and most importantly, immortality.

Most scientists kept their dispassion intact, but others spiraled out of control. The promises seemed plausible to the public, especially when a man with a PhD in Molecular Biology sporting a lab coat earnestly spoke them. CAE knew we did not have the kind of credibility needed to contradict these rhetorical extravaganzas, but we could change the context. What if the most delegitimized social constellation were to parrot the same promissary phrases and slogans? How would they sound then? For this task, CAE chose those who are lost to reason, the brainwashed—cult people. *Cult of the New Eve* was born to call all the believers to the soon-to-arrive bio-utopia. Dressed in their cult regalia (a combination of the clothes worn by the Heaven's Gate cult and the unabomber) they would walk the land speaking the gospel of the HGP.

The Cult's figure of worship was the "New Eve" (the first person to donate her genome to the HGP). With the help of geneticist Bob Ferrell, CAE had brewer's yeast made that contained Eve's random genome library. With this yeast, the Cult brewed beer and baked wafers. All the followers could now take communion. The Cult did not ask participants to have faith, but to believe in the material order. They did not offer metaphoric blood and body. No, when the Cult promised the body of Eve, the devotee got every gene! All the new "miracles" could be seen and touched by anyone. And in the end, everyone will find the way to immortality itself. Why wait for heaven?



This performance received responses that spanned the entire spectrum. Some were amused. Some were excited. Others were openly hostile or disturbed. We discovered that many Europeans (especially the French) don't like cults, and that the Germans are not fond of genetically modified beer. Whatever the emotional response, CAE is pretty certain that every bit of information we distributed was received with great deal of skepticism, and hopefully the residuals of that skepticism will assert themselves when this rhetoric is heard in other contexts.

ABOVE, PAGE 267 TOP: *Cult of the New Eve* at The Museum of Contemporary Art, Toulouse. | PAGE 267 CENTER: Cult street actions in Brussels for the Brussels 2000 festival. | PAGE 267 BOTTOM LEFT: Cult at Santa Clara Hospital, Rotterdam. | PAGE 267 BOTTOM RIGHT: Cult sermon at the Center for Art and Media in Karlsruhe, Germany. | PAGE 268: Brewing transgenic beer. | PAGE 268 BOTTOM LEFT: Participant taking communion at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Toulouse. | PAGE 268 BOTTOM RIGHT: Beer and water containing the random genome library of Eve. | PAGE 271: Cult prayer cards.





EUNIGEN PURE

Custom Brewed

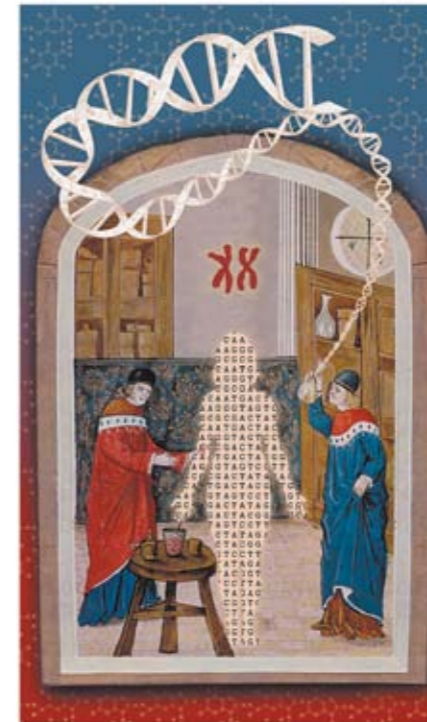
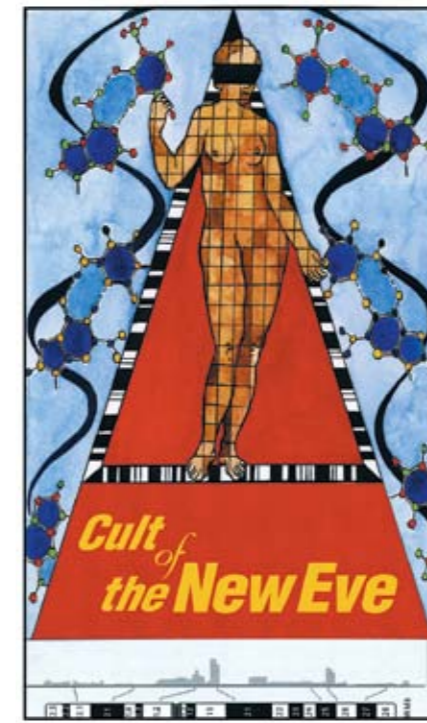
ELIXIR OF EDEN

Genetically modified
with the finest human gene sequences.

<http://critical-art.net/cone>



Cult of the New Eve



Critical Art Ensemble Members

1986

Steve Kurtz, Steven Barnes (video production); Steve Kurtz, Steven Barnes, George Barker, Claudia Bucher, Greg Carter, Joel Whitaker

1988

Steve Kurtz, Steven Barnes, George Barker, Claudia Bucher, Hope Kurtz, Dorian Burr, Jennifer Canterberry

1988–1989

Steve Kurtz, Steven Barnes, Hope Kurtz, Dorian Burr, Beverly Schlee, Ricardo Dominguez

1990

Steve Kurtz, Steven Barnes, Hope Kurtz, Dorian Burr, Beverly Schlee, Ricardo Dominguez, Phil Gelb

1990–1993

Steve Kurtz, Steven Barnes, Hope Kurtz, Dorian Burr, Beverly Schlee, Ricardo Dominguez

1993–2001

Steve Kurtz, Steven Barnes, Hope Kurtz, Dorian Burr, Beverly Schlee

2004

Steve Kurtz, Steven Barnes, Beverly Schlee

2005–present

Steve Kurtz, Steven Barnes, Beverly Schlee, Lucia Sommer

Key Collaborators

Beatriz da Costa, *GenTerra*, *Free Range Grain*, *Halifax Begs Your Pardon*

Robert Ferrell, *Cult of the New Eve*, *GenTerra*, *Marching Plague*

Melissa Meschler, *Siezed*, *GenTerra*, *Free Range Grain*, *Molecular Invasion*, *Mythic Weapons*, *Catch Me if you Can*, *Peep Under the Elbe*, *Marching Plague*, *A Public Misery Message*, *Winning Hearts and Minds*

Claire Pentecost, *Molecular Invasion*

Shyh-shiun Shyu, *Free Range Grain*

Mustafa Unlu, *Molecular Invasion*

Paul Vanouse, *Cult of the New Eve*, *Radio Bikes*

Faith Wilding, *Flesh Machine* (cast), *Society for Reproductive Anachronisms*, *Cult of the New Eve*, *Food for a Hungry World* (subRosa

Books

The Electronic Disturbance

Text: Steve Kurtz

Edit: Hope Kurtz

Design: Steven Barnes

Images: Steven Barnes, Dorian Burr

Scripts: Dorian Burr, Ricardo Dominguez

Poetry: Hope Kurtz

Autonomea editor: Steven Englander

Electronic Civil Disobedience and Other Unpopular Ideas

Text: Steve Kurtz

Edit: Hope Kurtz

Design: Steven Barnes

Images: Steven Barnes, Dorian Burr

Script (p120): Ricardo Dominguez

Poetry: Hope Kurtz

Autonomea editor: Steven Englander

Flesh Machine: Cyborgs, Designer Babies, and New Eugenic Consciousness

Text: Steve Kurtz (Chapter 5 with Faith Wilding)

Edit: Hope Kurtz

Design: Steven Barnes

Images: Steven Barnes, Dorian Burr, Faith Wilding

Digital Resistance Explorations in Tactical Media

Text: Steven Kurtz (Chapter 6 with Institute for Applied Autonomy; Chapter 7 with Carbon Defense League)

Edit: Hope Kurtz

Design: Steven Barnes

Images: Steven Barnes, Dorian Burr

Molecular Invasion

Text: Steve Kurtz

Edit: Hope Kurtz

Design: Steven Barnes

Images: Steven Barnes

Marching Plague Germ Warfare and Global Public Health

Text: Steve Kurtz

Edit: Lucia Sommer

Design: Steven Barnes

Images: Steven Barnes

Disturbances

Text: Steve Kurtz

Text edit: Lucia Sommer

Digital Archive Research: Steven Barnes

Paper Archive Research: Steve Kurtz

Additional Research: Dorian Burr

Image selection: Steve Kurtz, Steven Barnes

Additional photography and technical assistance: Shasti O'Leary Soudant, Alicia Paolucci

Text edits for Four Corners Books: Richard Embray