

**Big Dirty Secrets: The Works of Paul McCarthy and Mike Kelley**

Tatiana Mellema

A Thesis

In the Department

of

Art History

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of Master of Art History at

Concordia University

Montreal, Quebec, Canada

August 2008

© Tatiana Mellema, 2008

**CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY**



Library and  
Archives Canada

Bibliothèque et  
Archives Canada

Published Heritage  
Branch

Direction du  
Patrimoine de l'édition

395 Wellington Street  
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4  
Canada

395, rue Wellington  
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4  
Canada

*Your file* *Votre référence*  
*ISBN: 978-0-494-45341-4*  
*Our file* *Notre référence*  
*ISBN: 978-0-494-45341-4*

**NOTICE:**

The author has granted a non-exclusive license allowing Library and Archives Canada to reproduce, publish, archive, preserve, conserve, communicate to the public by telecommunication or on the Internet, loan, distribute and sell theses worldwide, for commercial or non-commercial purposes, in microform, paper, electronic and/or any other formats.

The author retains copyright ownership and moral rights in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

**AVIS:**

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque et Archives Canada de reproduire, publier, archiver, sauvegarder, conserver, transmettre au public par télécommunication ou par l'Internet, prêter, distribuer et vendre des thèses partout dans le monde, à des fins commerciales ou autres, sur support microforme, papier, électronique et/ou autres formats.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur et des droits moraux qui protègent cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

---

In compliance with the Canadian Privacy Act some supporting forms may have been removed from this thesis.

Conformément à la loi canadienne sur la protection de la vie privée, quelques formulaires secondaires ont été enlevés de cette thèse.

While these forms may be included in the document page count, their removal does not represent any loss of content from the thesis.

Bien que ces formulaires aient inclus dans la pagination, il n'y aura aucun contenu manquant.

■ ■ ■  
**Canada**

## Abstract

### **Big Dirty Secrets: The Works of Paul McCarthy and Mike Kelley**

Tatiana Mellema

The artworks by Los Angeles based contemporary artists Paul McCarthy and Mike Kelley can be considered a post-pop that turns pop art's appropriation of high and low cultural materials into a fixation on the psychosocial effects of culture on the individual. Creating a frenzied web of associations that develop pop, performance, and postminimal art strategies, the artists elicit audiences in a critical inquiry into our structures of meaning. Appropriating film, television and urban life with performance and installation art practices McCarthy and Kelly reveal the social construction behind cultural values, our notions of gender, and architectural spaces. This thesis sets out to address McCarthy and Kelley's work through three categories: post-pop, performance and architectural space, arguing that McCarthy and Kelley implode high and low cultural materials in order to reveal the repressive social conditioning of American culture at large. Works that will be considered in particular include: McCarthy and Kelley's collaborative project *Sod and Sodie Sock Comp O.S.O.* (1998), McCarthy's work *Caribbean Pirates* (2001- 2005), and Kelley's *Half a Man* (1987- 1991) series and piece *Educational Complex* (1995).

## Table of Contents

List of Figures.....	v
Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1            McCarthy and Kelley's Post- Pop.....	13
Chapter 2            Performing the Man.....	34
Chapter 3            L.A., Disneyland, Television, Repressed Memories and All the Spaces in Between.....	65
Conclusion.....	90
References.....	98
Figures.....	106

## List of Figures

### Introduction

1. Paul McCarthy and Damon McCarthy

*Caribbean Pirates*

2001- 2005

Installation

Baldwin Park Studio, Los Angeles

2. Paul McCarthy

*Blockhead (Black)*

2003

Steel, vinyl, coated nylon, fans, rigging, wood, vending machines, hard candy bars, paint, glass rope

2591 X 1128 X 1707 cm

Tate Modern, London

3. Mike Kelley

*Craft Morphology Flow Chart*

1991

32 Tables, 114 found, handmade dolls, 60 photographs, 1 drawing

Dimensions variable

Carnegie-Mellon University, Pittsburg

4. Paul McCarthy and Mike Kelley

*Family Tyranny*

1987

Video still

Los Angeles, California

5. Paul McCarthy and Mike Kelley

*Sod and Sodie Sock Comp O.S.O.*

1998

Performance

Wiener Secession, Vienna

6. Jeff Koons

*Michael Jackson and Bubbles*

1988

Ceramic

42 X 70 ½ X 32 ½ inch

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco

7. Paul McCarthy

*Michael Jackson and Bubbles (Gold)*

1999  
Fiberglass, metal, wood, paint  
72 X 78 X 39 inch  
Flick Collection, Zurich

## Chapter One

8. Roy Lichtenstein  
*Yellow and Green Brushstrokes*  
1966  
Oil and magna on canvas  
214 X 458  
Collection, Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt am Main

9. Claes Oldenburg  
*The Store*  
1961  
Installation  
Ray Gun Mfg. Co., 107 East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, New York

10. Photograph of Claes Oldenburg at his one-man show "The Store"  
24 September – 20 October 1962  
Green Gallery, New York

11. Andy Warhol  
*Orange Car Crash [5 Deaths 11 Times in Orange]*  
1963  
Acrylic and silkscreen ink on linen  
220 X 209 cm  
Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna, Turin

12. Andy Warhol  
*Marilyn Monroe*  
1967  
Screen print on paper  
910 X 910 mm  
Tate Modern, London

13. Paul McCarthy and Mike Kelley  
*Sod and Sodie Sock Comp O.S.O.*  
1998  
Video still  
Wiener Secession, Vienna

14. Paul McCarthy and Mike Kelley  
*Sod and Sodie Sock Comp O.S.O.*

1998  
Video still  
Wiener Secession, Vienna

15. Andy Warhol  
*32 Campbell's Soup Cans*  
1962  
Casein, metallic paint and pencil on linen  
51 X 40.5 cm  
Museum of Modern Art, New York

16. Paul McCarthy  
*Daddies Ketchup Bottle*  
1987  
Performance props from *The Trunks*  
Cibachrome print  
171.5 X 117.6 cm

17. Paul McCarthy and Damon McCarthy  
*Caribbean Pirates*  
2001-2005  
Video still from *Houseboat Party*  
Los Angeles, California

18. Mike Kelley  
*Plush Kundalini and Chakra Set*  
1987  
Stuffed plush animals  
670.5 X 61 X 61 cm

19. Mike Kelley  
*More Love Hours Than Can Ever Be Repaid*  
1987  
Handmade craft items, afghans, sewn onto canvas  
244 X 322.5 X 15 cm  
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

20. Paul McCarthy and Mike Kelley  
*Sod and Sodie Sock Comp O.S.O.*  
1998  
Video still  
Wiener Secession, Vienna

## **Chapter Two**

21. Allan Kaprow

*18 Happenings in 6 Parts*  
1959  
Installation for Happening  
Reuben Gallery, New York

22. Otto Muehl  
*Materialaktion*  
1965  
Video Stills

23. Paul McCarthy  
*Plaster Your Head and One Arm Into a Wall*  
1973  
Performance  
Pasadena, California

24. Mike Kelley  
*Perspectaphone*  
1978  
Performance  
Contemporary Exhibitions, Los Angeles

25. Vito Acconci  
*Trappings*  
1971  
Video stills: Super 8 Film on video  
8 min, colour, silent

26. Paul McCarthy  
*Painter*  
1995  
Video still  
Los Angeles, California

27. Mike Kelley  
*Three- Point Program/ Four Eyes*  
1987  
Glued felt banner  
94.5 X 59.1 in

28. Paul McCarthy  
*Rocky*  
1976  
Video still (21:30 min)  
Los Angeles, California



29. Mike Kelley  
*Plato's Cave, Rothko's Chapel, Lincoln's Profile*  
1986  
Performance  
Performance Artists Space, New York

30. Paul McCarthy and Mike Kelley  
*Sod and Sodie Sock Comp O.S.O.*  
1998  
Video stills  
Wiener Seccession, Vienna

31. Paul McCarthy and Mike Kelley  
*Sod and Sodie Sock Comp O.S.O.*  
1998  
Video still  
Wiener Seccession, Vienna

32. Paul McCarthy and Damon McCarthy  
*Caribbean Pirates*  
2001-2005  
Video still from *Pirate Party*  
Los Angeles, California

33. Paul McCarthy and Damon McCarthy  
*Caribbean Pirates*  
2001-2005  
Video still from *Pirate Party*  
Los Angeles, California

34. Paul McCarthy and Damon McCarthy  
*Caribbean Pirates*  
2001-2005  
Video still from *Pirate Party*  
Los Angeles, California

35. Mike Kelley  
*Untitled*  
1990  
Installation  
Metro Pictures, New York

36. Mike Kelley  
*Arena 5*  
1990  
Stuffed toy figures, blanket

246.5 X 221 cm

Mike Kelley

*Mooner*

1990

Cat blanket, pillow, double cat food dish, cat toys

11.5 X 91.5 X 100.5 cm

Collection, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles

### Chapter Three

37. Robert Morris

*Mirrored Cubes*

1965

914 X 914 X 914 mm

Green Gallery, New York

38. Robert Smithson

*A Nonsite (Franklin, New Jersey)*

1968

Painted wooden bins, limestone, gelatin- silver prints and typescript on paper with graphite and transfer letters mounted on mat board

16 ½ X 82 ¼ X 103 inch

Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago

39. Bruce Nauman

*Performance Corridor*

1969

Wallboard wood

96 X 240 X 20 inch

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York

40. Bruce Nauman

*Clown Torture*

1987

Two 20 inch color monitors, two 25 inch color monitors, 4 speakers, 2 video projectors, 4 video tapes (colour and sound)

Cannan Foundation, Los Angeles

41. Vito Acconci

*Seedbed*

1972

Performance

Sonnabend Gallery, New York

42. Vito Acconci

*Instant House*

1980

Flags, wood, springs, ropes, and pulleys

96 X 60 X 60 inch open, 96 X 252 X 252 inch closed

Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego

43. Paul McCarthy

*Dead H*

1968/ 75

Galvanized metal

15 X 46 X 168 cm

44. Mike Kelley

*Birdhouse for a Bird That is Near and a Bird That is Far*

1978

Wood, paint, metal

70 X 94 X 28 cm

45. Mike Kelley

*Three Valleys*

1980

Performance

Foundation for Art Resources, Los Angeles

46. Paul McCarthy and Mike Kelley

*Sod and Sodie Sock Comp O.S.O.*

1998

Installation

Wiener Secession, Vienna

47. Paul McCarthy and Mike Kelley

*Sod and Sodie Sock Comp O.S.O.*

1998

Video stills

Wiener Secession, Vienna

48. Paul McCarthy and Mike Kelley

*Sod and Sodie Sock Comp O.S.O.*

1998

Video still

Wiener Secession, Vienna

49. Paul McCarthy and Damon McCarthy

*Caribbean Pirates*

2001- 2005

Installation photograph of *Frigate, Cakebox and Village*

Baldwin Park Studio, Los Angeles

50. Paul McCarthy and Damon McCarthy  
*Caribbean Pirates*

2001- 2005

Installation photographs of *Houseboat*  
Baldwin Park Studio, Los Angeles

51. Paul McCarthy and Damon McCarthy  
*Caribbean Pirates*

2001- 2005

Installation photograph of *Underwater World*  
Baldwin Park Studio, Los Angeles

52. Mike Kelley

*Educational Complex*

1995

Acrylic, latex, foamcore, fiberglass, wood  
122 X 975.5 X 91.5 cm

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

53. Mike Kelley

*Educational Complex*

1995

Acrylic, latex, foamcore, fiberglass, wood  
122 X 975.5 X 91.5 cm

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

54. Mike Kelley

*Sublevel*

1998

Plywood, resin, car jacks, steel

Area 215 X 824 X 592 cm

Jablonka Galerie, Cologne

## Introduction

Paul McCarthy and Mike Kelley have been called everything from provocateurs, buffoons, clowns, masochists, blue-collared anarchists, to contemporary art legends. Whatever one chooses to call them, it is without a doubt that both have had an enormous impact on generations of artists, playing an important role in the California art scene for over thirty years. Works by both McCarthy and Kelley have been influential for artists as varied as Jim Shaw, Jason Rhoades, and Cindy Sherman. Both have had a loyal underground following in the West coast and significant success in Europe, and were only critically acknowledged in America at large in 1992. Attention was brought to their practices in the USA through the Los Angeles MOCA's controversial exhibition *Helter Skelter*, which was a significant survey of nineties California art practices. The ignorance of American critics to McCarthy and Kelley's practices may in part be due to the fact that their works are often considered disturbing and unseemly, as the artists rip open the dark and dirty underbelly of the United States of America's cherished beliefs and values.

Engaging associations as varied as Slasher films, minimalism, Disney, William Burroughs, underground music, abstract expressionism, occult religions, and low-grade comics, McCarthy and Kelley aggressively examine highbrow and lowbrow culture and the norms that they perpetuate.<sup>1</sup> Numerous critics have considered McCarthy and Kelley's practices as exemplary of Julia Kristeva's writings on the abject, however such analyses have ignored a crucial relationship of their practices to pop art. The enormously enriching characteristic of McCarthy and Kelley's artistic strategy is their appropriation

---

<sup>1</sup> Magnus af Petersens, "Paul McCarthy's 40 Years of Hard Work- An Attempt at a Summary," *Paul McCarthy: Head Shop, Shop Head: Works 1966-2006*, Edited by Magnus af Petersens and Paul McCarthy (Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 2006), 20-21

of cultural artifacts in a frenzied, obsessive, masochistic, and adolescent manner that reveals high culture, gender and space as social constructions. This thesis sets out to address their works through three categories: post-pop, performance, and architectural space, arguing that McCarthy and Kelley implode high and low culture in order to reveal the repressive social conditioning of American culture at large.

McCarthy (b. 1945) studied painting at the San Francisco Art Institute and took on the interdisciplinary art and film program at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles where he continues to reside today. The artist began working as a painter in the late sixties making action-oriented works with violent undertones that were elaborated into a series of performances including elements of physical jeopardy. In the mid seventies McCarthy began performing fictional characters in an aggressive and sexually provocative manner that relied on the use of body fluid substitutes including motor oil, mayonnaise, hand cream, and chocolate syrup, as well as props such as toys, kitchen utensils and bottles.<sup>2</sup> These performances in front of small hand picked audiences garnered him widespread attention in the performance art scene in California for being raw and visceral. In the mid-eighties McCarthy shifted his practice to object based works, producing motorized sculptures that alluded to Disneyland's robotic characters and special effects dummies as seen in horror films.<sup>3</sup> By the early nineties the artist began producing installations that included elaborate video performances exhibited

---

<sup>2</sup> A number of these works are preserved in the form of drawings, films and videotapes. Thomas McEvelley, "Paul McCarthy: Performance and Video Works: The Layering," *Paul McCarthy: Head Shop, Shop Head: Works 1966-2006*, Edited by Magnus af Petersens and Paul McCarthy (Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 2006), 37.

<sup>3</sup> Ralph Rugoff, "Survey: Mr. McCarthy's Neighbourhood," *Paul McCarthy*, Edited by Ralph Rugoff, Kristine Stiles, and Giacinto Di Pietrantonio, (London: Phaidon, 1996), 54, 61.

inside television sets littered with performance traces. McCarthy's newer works continue with the same vision, energy, and depraved humor as before, however on a larger scale.<sup>4</sup>

*Caribbean Pirates* (2001- 2005) is among one of McCarthy's most recent installation projects and is his first work that is in collaboration with his son Damon. Although the work is collaborative, *Caribbean Pirates* provides rich example of Paul McCarthy's artistic explorations and concerns to date, including variations on subject matter and artistic strategies that the artist has presented throughout his lifetime. First exhibited in 2005 at the Haus der Kunst in Munich, the enormous installation consists of multi-channel video projections, large-scale sculptures, props, and film sets. (Fig. 1) The work is an example of McCarthy's turn of the millennium projects, whose scale and level of detail have been turned up to a frantic level.<sup>5</sup> His other well known large scale projects include two inflatable sculptures that were mounted on the rooftop of the Tate Modern in 2003, and were in the form of a minimalist cube headed doll and an enormous Daddies ketchup bottle. (Fig. 2) McCarthy's project *Piccadilly Circus* 2004 is also an example of his expansive enterprises, the artist using the entire building that was formerly a bank on Piccadilly Circus in London (and is now the Hauser & Wirth gallery), to stage a sprawling multi-level labyrinth installation. The scale of *Caribbean Pirates* conjures the hypersimulation at work in American culture, the piece actually based on the popular Disneyland ride Pirates of the Caribbean. The installation includes a pirate ship, houseboat, a movable construction made up of four rooms, an enormous mechanical

---

<sup>4</sup> Rachel Harrison, "California Über Alles: Rachel Harrison on Paul McCarthy," *Artforum* 44(1), September 2005, p. 69.

<sup>5</sup> Martin Herbert, "Paul McCarthy," *Artforum* 46(9), May 2008, p. 372.

head, and video projections of absurd and sexually charged performances.<sup>6</sup> Parodying the pop culture of Disneyland and Hollywood, McCarthy engages the mythos of the pirate in a manner that resonates with foreign policy and corporate heists that have come to define contemporary America.<sup>7</sup>

Originally from Detroit, Kelley (b. 1954) attended the Fine Arts program at the University of Michigan, and moved to Los Angeles in 1976 to complete a Master's of Fine Arts at the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts). At the beginning of his artistic career Kelley poured his artistic energies into his Detroit noise band *Destroy All Monsters* whose sounds morphed into metaphoric meanings, and into his paintings that mixed street culture and art school aesthetics.<sup>8</sup> While attending CalArts Kelley began making craft based sculptures that resembled birdhouses, and developed a performance practice that comically inverted systems of logic through a play on words, physical gags, and a general ambush on accepted ideas.<sup>9</sup> Kelley at the same time presented the materials of his performance projects in galleries as installations, and by 1986 focused with greater precision on the exhibition of these objects, installations, paintings, drawings, and videos. Transforming large systems of belief such as philosophy, art, and history into objects, Kelley organized ensembles of everyday things including the discarded, kitsch, and mass media materials.<sup>10</sup> Kelley's works subvert ideological orders or systems through a

---

<sup>6</sup> Stephanie Rosenthal, "How to use Failure," *Lala Land Parody Paradise: Paul McCarthy*, Edited by Stephanie Rosenthal (Munich: Haus der Kunst, 2005), 131.

<sup>7</sup> Herbert 372.

<sup>8</sup> Elizabeth Sussman, "Introduction," *Mike Kelley: Catholic Tastes*, Edited by Elizabeth Sussman (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1993), 17, 19.

<sup>9</sup> Timothy Martin, "Rocking the Lifeboat," *Sunshine & Noir: Art in LA, 1960-1997*, Edited by Lars Nittve and Helle Crenzien (Humblebaek: Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, 1997), 182.

<sup>10</sup> Elizabeth Sussman, "Open the Door and Let it in," *Mike Kelley 1985-1996*, Edited by José Lebrero Stals (Barcelona: Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, 1997), 25-6.



dysfunctionalism that is in marked opposition with the seriousness of his core subject, creating what Kelley describes as an adolescent art that "...is [in] the attitude of a humorist, like somebody who knows the rules but doesn't see any reason to be involved in them."<sup>11</sup>

Kelley developed two major series of works over the course of his career titled *Half a Man* and *Missing Time*. *Half a Man* began as the title of an exhibition held at the Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago in 1987, which showcased Kelley's felt banners, afghan tapestries, arrangements of used stuffed animals, and soiled yarn dolls.<sup>12</sup> The theme of the exhibition developed into a five year project for the artist that included: *More Love Hours Than Can Ever Be Repaid* (1987) that were dolls and afghans sewn together into a quilt like assemblage; the theatrical staging of dolls in *Arenas* (1990); the testing of the empathetic powers of stuffed animals in *Empathy Displacement: Humanoid Morphology* (1991); and *Craft Morphology Flow Chart* (1991) where one hundred and thirteen dolls were sorted in a pseudo-scientific analysis according to their style and content. (Fig. 3) *Half a Man* addressed the formation of gender and identity at childhood and was a reaction against the masculinist tradition of art, museumification, and nineteen eighties commodity artworks. The project *Educational Complex* developed out of the public's response to the *Half a Man* series, in particular audiences' assumption that Kelley's doll works were about disturbed childhood experiences.<sup>13</sup> Responding to this

---

<sup>11</sup> José Lebrero Stals, "Dragging oneself over the threshold of the exhibition," *Mike Kelley 1985- 1996*, Edited by José Lebrero Stals Kelley (Barcelona: Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, 1997), 20.

<sup>12</sup> Ralph Rugoff, "Mike Kelly/2 and the Power of the Pathetic," *Mike Kelley: Catholic Tastes*, Edited by Elizabeth Sussman (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1993), 161.

<sup>13</sup> Mike Kelley, "Mike Kelley," *Press Play: Contemporary Artists in Conversation*, Interview with Isabelle Graw (London: Phaidon, 2005), 386.

public interest in childhood trauma and America's obsession with Repressed Memory Syndrome Kelley created *Educational Complex* (1995). An architectural model of all the schools Kelley ever attended, with the spaces that he could not remember left blank, the work is a play on the artist's experiences of abuse in the education system.

During the 1970s, McCarthy and Kelley both worked in Los Angeles and knew vaguely about one another's practices, crossing paths a number of times through the city's performance and noise music scenes.<sup>14</sup> It was only by the mid-eighties that they first began visiting one another's studios, and in 1987 when the artists worked on their first project together. This first piece has led to numerous collaborative installations, videos, and photography projects between the two since. Their first collaboration, *Family Tyranny: Modeling and Molding* (1987), was initiated by McCarthy who invited Kelley to perform with him at the city's public access television studio. (Fig. 4) The work was based on a typical fifties television fix-it hobby show set in a wood paneled basement workshop.<sup>15</sup> McCarthy acted as father preparing a white concoction made out of processed foodstuff, while showing Kelley who played child, how to force the liquid down the throat of a mock boy's head made out of a Styrofoam ball on a stick.<sup>16</sup> The only performance instruction that McCarthy offered Kelley was: "I am the father you are the son."<sup>17</sup> Substantial collaborations by Kelley and McCarthy since *Family Tyranny* have included: *Heidi: Midlife Crisis Trauma Center and Negative Media-Engram Abstraction*

---

<sup>14</sup> Paul McCarthy and Mike Kelley, *Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery International Lecture Series* (Toronto), March 9, 2000.

<sup>15</sup> Peter Monk, "Mike Kelley and Paul McCarthy: Collaborative Works," *Power Plant Exhibition Brochure: Mike Kelley and Paul McCarthy, 18 March – 28 May 2000* (Toronto: Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery, 2000).

<sup>16</sup> Monk, "Mike Kelley and Paul McCarthy."

<sup>17</sup> Monk, *Power Plant Exhibition Brochure*.

*Release Zone* (1992); *An Architecture Composed of the Paintings of Richard M. Powers and Francis Picabia* (1997); *Fresh Acconci* (1995); and *Sod and Sodie Sock Comp O.S.O.* (1998-1999). While McCarthy and Kelley negotiate the varying formal components of their individual practices in these collaborations, the strength of their partnership lies in their shared critique of society's conditioning of the individual through institutions and cultural representations.<sup>18</sup>

The project *Sod and Sodie Sock Comp O.S.O.* (1998) by McCarthy and Kelley was organized for the Secession in Vienna, and included an installation and performances of loosely arranged military scenes. (Fig. 5) The idea for the work grew out of the performance *Sod and Sodie Sock and Studio C* (1996) that McCarthy and Kelley took on in Tokyo with the Japanese noise musician Violent Onsen Geisha at the alternative art space P-House. This performance was based on the cartoon Sad Sack by George Baker drawn for American GIs that depicted a bewildered civilian trying to be a soldier, and in the nineteen sixties became a comic strip for children.<sup>19</sup> The piece was also a response to the 1995 Okinawan rape incident, where three U.S. servicemen kidnapped and raped a twelve-year-old Japanese girl on an American military base, stirring an enormous public outcry against American military residence in Japan.<sup>20</sup> In the performance at P-House McCarthy dressed and acted as the cartoon's character Sarge, Kelley as the characters Sad Sack and Sadie Sack, and Violent Onsen Geisha as himself.<sup>21</sup> McCarthy, Kelley and

---

<sup>18</sup> Monk, *Power Plant Exhibition Brochure*.

<sup>19</sup> McCarthy and Kelley, *Lecture Series*.

<sup>20</sup> McCarthy and Kelley, *Lecture Series*.

<sup>21</sup> McCarthy and Kelley, *Lecture Series*.

Mike Kelley, *Sod & Sodie Sock & Studio C (Tokyo 1996)*, CD linear notes (Los Angeles: Compound Annex Records, 1998).

Violent Onsen Geisha each took on their own actions playing music, going to the toilet, crawling, whistling, getting their hair cut, mopping, and using a telephone, their sounds and images being tracked back and forth by videos and speakers from the various spaces.<sup>22</sup> When asked to collaborate on a larger show for the Vienna Secession the artists returned to the Sad Sack subject matter, developing an enormous installation of army tents where videotaped performances based on hard labour, strict discipline, comedy and shame were taken on by the artists dressed as commanders and thirteen volunteers dressed as GIs.<sup>23</sup> *Sod and Sodie Sock Comp O.S.O.* elaborated on themes of American imperialism, modernism, indoctrination, authority, and bodily regimentation.

Both McCarthy and Kelley have throughout their practices appropriated an array of cultural artifacts from the everyday to high art in order to manipulate and penetrate American culture. The terms post-pop and neo-pop have been applied to this general tendency in contemporary art to revive and transform the sixties pop art tradition, and have been popularly been applied to the works of Jeff Koons, Richard Prince and Takashi Murakami. According to Robert Storr, the legacy of pop art has been the subversive recycling of popular culture in a manner that reveals that art and everyday culture operate according to the same rules of elitism.<sup>24</sup> Contemporary artists consistently mirror these pop appropriations by working within the realm of mass media imagery in order to complicate dominant narratives and contexts whose meanings shape subjectivity.<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup> Kelley, *Sod & Sodie Sock & Studio C.*

<sup>23</sup> Giovanni Intra, "Repressionism is Dead," *artext (USA)* 68, Feb-April 2000, p. 56-58.

<sup>24</sup> Robert Storr, "What's not to like?," *Artforum* 43(2), October 2004, p. 263-264.

<sup>25</sup> Jack Bankowsky, Jeff Wall, Alison Gingeras, Thomas Crow, Diedrich Diederichsen, Tim Griffin, Stephen Prina, and Rhonda Lieberman, "Pop after Pop: A Round Table," *Artforum* 43(2), October 2004, p. 167.

McCarthy and Kelley's post-pop is unique in that their works are particularly obsessive, anxious, raw, political, and twisted parodies that aggressively implode the norms and values of everyday life. Both McCarthy and Kelley's works are about the underside of contemporary America, in an attempt to expose our cultural mindset that is constructed through the avant-garde and popular.

McCarthy and Kelley's post-pop is in sharp contrast with a number of artists associated with the label neo-pop and post-pop who appropriate the commercial everyday in a dandified celebration of the superficial, revealing the hollowness of contemporary life.<sup>26</sup> The most well known artist of this tendency is Jeff Koons whose gambit has been to dignify objects of bad taste in a manner that highlighted eighties commodity fetishism.<sup>27</sup> Rather than eliciting a playful engagement with the popular, McCarthy and Kelley's works use appropriation to emphasize the disturbing social constructions that are the source of commodity production. Consider for example Koon's work *Michael Jackson and Bubbles* (1998), which is a tastelessly gilded porcelain life-size sculpture of the eighties pop star and his pet.<sup>28</sup> (Fig.6) Koon's work satirizes popular taste by dignifying celebrity fanfare and industrial fabrication in a neo-baroque monument. McCarthy has made a number of works based on Koon's sculpture, such as his 1999 *Michael Jackson and Bubbles* fiberglass sculpture series painted in gold, black, and white where Jackson's head, hands, and feet have been enlarged. (Fig.7) Resembling an overgrown toy whose psychological state is physically personified, McCarthy's sculpture

---

<sup>26</sup> Marco Livingstone, *Pop Art: A Continuing History* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1990), 244.

<sup>27</sup> Although neo-pop must be considered as distinct from our discussion of post-pop, Koon's coarse appropriation of the popular remains influential to artists such as McCarthy and Kelley.

<sup>28</sup> Livingstone 248.

implies a distressed father-son relationship fraught by bestiality. Rather than emphasize the consumption of Jackson's celebrity image, McCarthy's work explores the cultural tyranny of family values behind the construction of popular father and son figures. McCarthy and Kelley relentlessly expose the source of our cultural production, rather than parading its products in a celebratory manner that masks a deeper cynicism of contemporary life.

In chapter one I will outline the critical characteristics of American pop art as it first appeared in the sixties including its blurring of high and low cultural distinctions; its transposing of pop symbols; its opening to representations of trauma in the mass media; and finally its challenge to normative sexuality through camp. I will suggest that McCarthy and Kelley turn these critical strategies into a post-pop style that takes the damaging effects of high and low culture on the psychology of the individual as the primary subject; appropriating pop culture symbols in a frenzied and obsessive manner that is a high-keyed slippage of signification; by examining the public sphere's pathological obsession with spectacles of trauma; and finally by exploding Warholian camp into an absurd disruption of gender norms. McCarthy and Kelley reject pop's play with consumer surfaces and language for an adolescent and masochistic fixation on the psychosocial effects of culture on the individual. In the hands of McCarthy and Kelly the pop operation becomes an unrelenting deconstruction where normative structures of meaning that underpin high and low cultural materials are imploded.

In the second chapter I will examine McCarthy and Kelley's practices as a body art that de-centers the performance of masculinity in high and low culture. I will consider both artists' connection to performance practices that use the body as a means to interrogate the construction of subjectivity, including Happenings, Fluxus, dance, feminist performance, Viennese Actionism, and 1970s body art. McCarthy and Kelley's works will be considered in particular connection to seventies masochist body art that stages the incoherence of masculinity, exposing gender as contingent on performative reiteration. It will be argued that both artists develop performance art's investigation into gender construction by blending mediatized performances from popular culture into their works, including characters from film and television. By eliciting performances of male stars such as Rocky and Iggy Pop in disturbed masculine parodies, McCarthy and Kelley remind viewers that gender is constructed through corporeal signs and discursive means expressed in both the avant garde and the popular.

Staging the subjective experiences of contemporary architecture and their construction through media and discourse, McCarthy and Kelley reveal space as socially produced. Chapter three will consider the artists' works as spatial investigations that frantically stage everyday space, exposing the role of architecture in the social ordering of thoughts and action. By developing formal strategies found in minimalist, site-specific, and installation works, both artists elicit the audience in spatial models, revealing the public's role in the construction of the contemporary city. Integrating spatial characteristics of Los Angeles, McCarthy and Kelley emphasize the contradictions found in our everyday spaces, including fragmentation, and an excessive reliance on simulation

and suppression. By mapping the dominant relationships between the citizen and architecture in America, McCarthy and Kelley undermine the utopian promises behind our totalizing spatial orders.

McCarthy and Kelley are highly influential contemporary artists who turn high art and popular culture, gender norms, and shared spaces upside down, revealing the troubling social values that they are based upon. The artists create a frenzied web of references that employ post-pop, performance and architecture, where meanings, categories and definitions are exposed as constructions. Audiences are forced to engage with the dark, disturbing, and oftentimes ridiculous side of these categories. It is through an over-the-top, disturbing, and obsessive aesthetic that the artists reveal the repressive social conditioning of the individual in America. Instead of buffoons, or art legends, I would like to discuss McCarthy and Kelley as purveyors of contemporary America.



## Chapter One: McCarthy and Kelley's Post-Pop

In order to explore McCarthy and Kelley's engagement with the legacy of pop art, it is necessary to introduce the development of pop from 1956 to 1968, and theories of pop culture and pop art practice. The term pop art was first coined in the early 1950s by Lawrence Alloway a member of the Independent Group (I.G.) in London who were artists, architects, and critics that explored the implications of popular culture as a dissident movement.<sup>29</sup> The term initially referred to culture at large, as I.G. was seeking to absorb predominantly American mass media material into art through an informal laboratory of private seminars and exhibitions.<sup>30</sup> By the late 1950s and early 1960s through the I.G. and American artists such as Roy Lichtenstein, Claes Oldenburg, and Andy Warhol, the term "pop" began to be used as a description of art that drew on popular imagery such as comics, advertisements and Hollywood films.<sup>31</sup> In the mid-sixties pop art attained a distinct place in the USA, driven by a nexus of new collectors like Robert Scull and dealers such as Leo Castelli, as well as by the extensive critical attention it garnered in the popular press.<sup>32</sup> According to the curator Henry Geldzahler, half of the well-known American pop artists in New York were working independently unaware of each other using common source imagery, and in the short interval of a year and a half these artists were given shows and dubbed a movement by the media.<sup>33</sup>

---

<sup>29</sup> Hal Foster, "Survey," *Pop*, Edited by Mark Francis (London: Phaidon, 2005), 16.

<sup>30</sup> Lawrence Alloway, "Pop Art: The Words," *Pop Art: The Critical Dialogue*, Edited by Carol Anne Mahsun (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1989), 176.  
Description of I.G.: Foster, "Survey," 19.

<sup>31</sup> Foster, "Survey," 17.

<sup>32</sup> Steven Henry Madoff, "Wham! Blam! How Pop Art Stormed the High-Art Citadel and What the Critics Said," *Pop Art: A Critical History*, Edited by Steven Henry Madoff (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1997), xiv.

<sup>33</sup> Sara Doris, *Pop Art and the Contest over American Culture*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 107.

Partially due to its rapid ascent into American culture, pop art was opposed by a number of critics as a superficial indulgence that was nothing more than a fad.<sup>34</sup>

Though these critical writings smacked of cultural protectionism, the controversy around the rise of pop introduces an important and enduring question for art history: can we consider pop art critical? It is still very often suggested that pop was indulgent and decadent since it refused to adopt a moral position on commercial culture that it supposedly helped to perpetuate.<sup>35</sup> However, pop art was critical, and it is pop's critical strategies that have been adopted by McCarthy and Kelley. Pop challenged cultural elitism, opened cultural structures of meaning to inquiry, pointed to the traumatic effects of the mass media, and challenged gender norms through the style of camp. By looking out to the world for source material, pop art challenged the inwardness of the Abstract Expressionist atmosphere of the early nineteen sixties.

McCarthy and Kelley have turned pop's critical strategies into a post-pop style that appropriates everyday products and language in order to examine the damaging psychological and social effects that drive culture. According to Sigmund Freud, civilization has built itself upon repression and sublimation of the individual, which includes the subduing of anxieties about a lack of individual coherence and autonomy, and the means by which instinctual aims are shifted to more appropriate or socially viable

---

<sup>34</sup> Madoff xiv.

<sup>35</sup> Dick Hebdige, "In Poor Taste: Notes on Pop," *Modern Dreams: The Rise and Fall of Pop* (New York: ICA and London: MIT Press, 1988), 84.

expressions.<sup>36</sup> Using Freud's notion of sublimation we can consider McCarthy and Kelley's artistic strategy as an aggressive de-sublimation, which deconstructs the process of subject formation. McCarthy and Kelley appropriate high and low-cultural materials, such as pornography and modern art, in order to reveal the cultural hierarchies embedded in the everyday. Fusing performance and architecture with the pop art strategies of appropriation, McCarthy and Kelley's post-pop is a sharpening of pop's critical edge into an elaborate and varied interaction of meanings that challenges the authoritative structures that American life is built upon.

Pop art's critical contribution has been its blurring of distinctions between avant garde and popular culture, puncturing the seriousness of high art. The initial critical hostility towards pop art was driven by the mass culture debate in the fifties and sixties fueled in part by Clement Greenberg's influential essay "Avant-Garde and Popular culture" originally published in 1939, and republished in 1961, right before the height of pop art's success in 1965.<sup>37</sup> According to Greenberg there are two cultures, that of the avant-garde that maintains a high level of art belonging to the ruling class, which is in contrast to the second cultural phenomenon known as kitsch.<sup>38</sup> Kitsch for Greenberg is "popular, commercial art and literature with their chromeotypes, magazine covers, illustrations, ads, slick and pulp fiction, comics, Tin Pan Alley music, tap dancing, Hollywood movies, etc., etc."<sup>39</sup> The product of the industrial revolution, and the culture

---

<sup>36</sup> Amelia Jones, "Paul McCarthy's Inside Out Body and the Desublimation of Masculinity," *Paul McCarthy*, Intro. Lisa Philips (Ostfildern; New York: Hatje Cantz Pub, New Museum of Contemporary Art, 2000), 126.

<sup>37</sup> Doris 1-2.

<sup>38</sup> Clement Greenberg, "Avant-Garde and Popular culture," *Art and Culture: Critical Essays* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1939), 5-6.

<sup>39</sup> Greenberg 9.

of the masses, kitsch is a debased of genuine culture, taking advantage of matured traditions for its own ends: profit.<sup>40</sup> Since pop art asserted the products of popular culture as worthy of consideration in its own right by using it as a source for the arts, pop challenged the legitimacy of authoritative taste formations exemplified by Greenberg.<sup>41</sup> Distinctions such as avant-garde and mass culture were blurred, problematizing elitist taste rooted in an opposition of the privileged to the masses.<sup>42</sup> However, pop art was not a triumph of low culture over high culture, or a breakdown of social oppositions. According to Umberto Eco no alternative avant-garde or lower culture exists that is not profoundly influenced by hegemonic culture.<sup>43</sup> Pop instead provided critical and creative processes that smudged the lines between cultural distinctions, revealing that these distinctions are in fact constructed.

By transposing symbols of pop culture, pop art opened these cultural structures of meaning to critical inquiry. Claude Levi-Strauss states that in communication there is a relationship between the signifier and the signified that are perceived as a single reality, for example in writing the signifier are the letters themselves, while the signified is the intended meaning that the letters when put together into words represent.<sup>44</sup> Eco argues that every object acts as sign itself, referring to its own function, to the people who use it, to the circumstances it is used in, and so on.<sup>45</sup> The pop operation consists of taking object signs and images from popular culture and transposing them, preventing their

---

<sup>40</sup> Greenberg 10.

<sup>41</sup> Hebdige 77.

<sup>42</sup> Hebdige 85.

<sup>43</sup> Umberto Eco, "Lowbrow Highbrow, Highbrow Lowbrow," *Pop Art: The Critical Dialogue*, Edited by Carol Anne Mahsun (Ann Arbor and London: ICA and London: MIT Press, 1988), 222.

<sup>44</sup> Eco 222.

<sup>45</sup> Eco 225.

typical signification and opening these objects to reconsideration.<sup>46</sup> Roland Barthes describes this process of cutting the pop object from its ordinary context in order to reveal them as significations of what everyone sees and consumes as an avant-gardist disruption.<sup>47</sup> By decontextualizing object signs, pop art leads viewers to discover certain properties of everyday objects, showing their social meanings more clearly.<sup>48</sup> For Eco what differentiates the pop operation from the readymades of the Surrealists is the use of a metalinguistic operation, which is a language that uses its own terms to explain the terms of its object language.<sup>49</sup> Therefore pop artists use the language of pop culture in order to open its structures of meaning that are signified through consumer objects.

In order to consider pop's blurring of high and low culture and the pop operation, it is valuable to discuss works by two prominent pop artists from the nineteen sixties, Roy Lichtenstein and Claes Oldenburg. Roy Lichtenstein's series of *Brushstroke* paintings that he began the autumn of 1965 can be considered a mockery of gestural painting celebrated by modernist critics such as Greenberg.<sup>50</sup> Lichtenstein was known for using comic strips as his source material, as he often selected a single panel from a strip, and enlarged and traced its image onto a large canvas.<sup>51</sup> According to Hal Foster, Lichtenstein worked to show that comics were worthy to be considered high art, by placing these supposed low cultural forms into the realm of exalted painting.<sup>52</sup> In his piece *Yellow and Green Brushstrokes* (1966) the artist transformed the gestural

---

<sup>46</sup> Eco 225.

<sup>47</sup> Roland Barthes, "That Old Thing, Art..." *Pop Art: the Critical Dialogue*, Edited by Carol Anne Mahsun (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1989), 236.

<sup>48</sup> Eco 226.

<sup>49</sup> Eco 226.

<sup>50</sup> Mark Francis, "Colonization of the Mind," *Pop* (London: Phaidon, 2005), 150.

<sup>51</sup> Foster, "Survey," 25-6.

<sup>52</sup> Foster, "Survey," 26-7.

brushstroke of the Abstract Expressionists into a cartoon by depicting the painterly stroke with Ben Day dots that simulated the mechanical reproduction of the dailies. (Fig. 8) Converging two supposedly separate cultural realms onto the same picture plane, the artist implied a connection between avant-garde devices and commercial design, both of whom have benefited from an exchange of forms with one another.<sup>53</sup> Recognizing the intersection of pop culture and the avant-garde, Lichtenstein raised the level of pop culture and challenged the notion of an avant-garde detached from society. Taking on the arduous task of reproducing a large brushstroke through Ben Day dots in *Yellow and Green Brushstrokes*, the artist also pokes fun at the seriousness of Abstract Expressionism and the elitism that cultural tastemakers grant themselves in opposition to the public.

The New York based pop artist Claes Oldenburg similarly challenged cultural contexts by eliciting the pop operation in his work *The Store*. Beginning in 1961 for almost a year Oldenburg installed and opened *The Store* in his Lower East Side studio.<sup>54</sup> (Fig. 9) The storefront space was densely composed of plaster and canvas sculptures of items taken from the merchandise and advertisements typically found in shop windows.<sup>55</sup> Oldenburg's environment used the language of a typical store by including a layout of displays, an overload of items that could be purchased "on the cheap," and even a cash register. However, as Oldenburg explains *The Store* was not quite a store, as we know it:

---

<sup>53</sup> Foster, "Survey," 28.

<sup>54</sup> The space included four small narrow rooms, which were also used as a theatre of Happenings of Oldenburg's Ray Gun Theatre.

<sup>55</sup> Germano Celant, "The Sculptor versus the Architect," *Claes Oldenburg: An Anthology* (New York: Guggenheim Museum Publications, 1995), 23.

The beauty of the store was that it was almost a real store...but it wasn't a real store, so that this confusion existed, so that when people went away they saw real things with half the confusion of seeing my things.<sup>56</sup>

Oldenburg's store was an inventory of ordinary consumer items made grotesque, as everyday objects were emphasized for their synthetic and refuse qualities. For example the sculpture *Floor Cake* (1962), a large soft sculpture of a chocolate cake slice was constructed out of canvas painted in synthetic polymer paint and latex, and filled with foam rubber and cardboard boxes.<sup>57</sup> This dessert's monumental size and industrial materials made it completely vulgar and unappetizing. (Fig. 10) Oldenburg therefore appropriated the language of the store and made its objects strange through exaggerated constructions and a parodied context that revealed the gluttonous and wasteful realities of consumer life.

Pop art, and more specifically work by the artist Andy Warhol, can also be considered critical in its opening to the traumatic effects of the mass media. According to Hal Foster Warhol through a compulsive repetition of popular culture, persona and images, drained images of significance and undermined their affect that were equivalent to public encounters with trauma in the mass media.<sup>58</sup> Foster develops the notion of traumatic realism using Sigmund Freud's article "Mourning and Melancholia" (1917), and Jacques Lacan's seminar "The Unconscious and Repetition" (1964). Borrowing from these writings he argues that Warhol's obsessive repetitions serve as a draining of significance and defending against affect, which rather than allowing audiences to master

---

<sup>56</sup> Claes Oldenburg et al., "Jasper Johns, Andy Warhol, Claes Oldenburg," *On Record: 11 Artists 1963*, Interviews with Billy Kluver (New York: Experiments in Art and Technology, 1981). Document taken from Hal Foster and Mark Francis, *Pop* (London: Phaidon, 2005), 229.

<sup>57</sup> Mark Francis, "Documents," *Pop* (London: Phaidon, 2005), 191.

<sup>58</sup> Hal Foster, "Death in America," *October Files 2: Andy Warhol* (London: MIT Press, 2001), 72-73.

trauma, act as an obsessive fixation of the object in melancholy.<sup>59</sup> This melancholic fixation is a pathological and self-tormenting mourning over an object lost.<sup>60</sup> Therefore Warhol's trauma is a constant missed encounter with what Lacan defines as the real, which since it cannot be represented is alluded to repeatedly.<sup>61</sup> However, these repetitions do not only reproduce traumatic effects but they produce traumatic effects as well,<sup>62</sup> since repetition rather than providing viewers with a chance to come to terms with the depicted trauma, points instead to the very need of the real, rupturing the media's screen of obsessive fixation.<sup>63</sup>

In discussing Warhol's works as a warding against traumatic significance while simultaneously opening out to trauma,<sup>64</sup> we can consider *Orange Car Crash [5 Deaths 11 Times]* (1963) that is part of his *Death in America* series. (Fig. 11) This series of silk screened paintings depicts car crashes, the electric chair, images of suicide victims, and dogs in the Birmingham race riots, in the high keyed colours of red, orange, white and silver.<sup>65</sup> *Orange Car Crash* includes a photograph of a car wreck and its five victims silk-screened eleven times in orange and black, using the same tonality of a newspaper reproduction. The repetition of the traumatic image numbs the viewer to the shocking nature of the event, screening one from understanding what has occurred. However Warhol's use of the silk screening process that includes drips, streaks, and accidental

---

<sup>59</sup> Foster, "Death in America," 72.

<sup>60</sup> Sigmund Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia," *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XIV (1914-1916)* (London: Vintage, 2001), 244, 247.

<sup>61</sup> Hal Foster, *Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century* (Cambridge; London: MIT Press, 1996), 123.

<sup>62</sup> Foster, "Death in America," 72.

<sup>63</sup> Foster, "Death in America," 73.

<sup>64</sup> Foster, "Survey," 30.

<sup>65</sup> Francis, "Colonization of the Mind," 132.



overlaps, as well as his choice of the colour orange that saturates the photograph in an all too manufactured citrus tone, provide fissures in the image that point to the trauma of a missed encounter. Warhol's work is an elaboration of our own optical unconscious in the postwar society of spectacle, which is numbed by the proliferation of images from the news media fixated on death, preventing us from grasping the real.<sup>66</sup>

Warhol's self-presentation and artwork also provided a challenge to normative notions of gender through the sensibility of camp. First defined by Susan Sontag in her seminal essay "Notes on Camp" (1964) camp is said to be a style that is a homosexual conceit ranging from the outrageously effeminate to the minor put-on.<sup>67</sup> According to Sontag, "Camp is the answer to the problem; how to be a dandy in an age of mass culture."<sup>68</sup> Through parodic critique the camp intellectual expresses their importance as a non-threatening presence, while distancing themselves from the morality and taste of the governing class.<sup>69</sup> Numerous critics have argued that camp transforms, destabilizes, and subverts mainstream sexual identity and sexual roles, having been directly responsible for re-definitions of gender in past decades.<sup>70</sup> Many of Warhol's pop works were of a camp sensibility while his own self-presentation embraced camp performance.<sup>71</sup> However,

---

<sup>66</sup> Foster, "Death in America," 75.

<sup>67</sup> Susan Sontag, "Notes on 'Camp'," *Against Interpretation and Other Essays* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1961), 290.

<sup>68</sup> Sontag 288.

<sup>69</sup> Andrew Ross, "Uses of Camp," *Camp: Queer Aesthetics and the Performing Subject*, Edited by Fabio Cleto (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 317.

<sup>70</sup> Ross, 324-5.

<sup>71</sup> Caroline A. Jones, "Andy Warhol's Factory, 'Commonism' and the Buisness Art Buisness." *Machine in the Studio: Constructing the Postwar American Artist* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 225, 229.

Warhol understood the risks of articulating homosexuality in his work<sup>72</sup> and as a result employed camp's multiple codings to suggest homosexual difference without making such content manifest.<sup>73</sup> Taking on camp's directive that one cannot live life, one must perform it, Warhol was also a self-stylized cipher<sup>74</sup> performing roles throughout his career that included the working-class outcast, the homosexual commercial artist, the solitary studio artisan, the publicity Factory boss, and finally the blank centre of popular culture.<sup>75</sup> While Warhol's camp provided a cover for queer identifications, homoerotic subjects, gay audiences, and queer contexts were crucial to the production and reception of his pop work.<sup>76</sup>

Warhol's female celebrity paintings such as *Marilyn Monroe* (1967) can be considered an example of his camp sensibility that challenged gender norms. (Fig. 12) Marilyn Monroe was a camp icon of the 1960s, among other celebrities that Warhol painted including Liz Taylor and Jackie Kennedy.<sup>77</sup> These women embodied camp's theatrical projections, since they themselves proved invested in performing glamorous public facades even in the face of personal tragedies.<sup>78</sup> Marilyn's traumatic suicide that allegedly resulted from affairs with the Kennedy men could also provide a sympathetic

---

<sup>72</sup> According to Richard Meyer, Warhol's early work took up a flamboyant tone, however due to censorship of his work, including rejection from the Tanager Gallery and the removal of his mural of *Thirteen Most Wanted Men* from the World's Fair, restrictive forces became the shaping forces of his creative decisions. Richard Meyer, "Most Wanted Men: Homoeroticism and the Secret of Censorship in Early Warhol," *Outlaw Representation, Censorship and Homosexuality in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Art* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 99.

<sup>73</sup> Meyer 99.

<sup>74</sup> Borrowing phrase from Jones 190.

<sup>75</sup> Jones 225, 229.

<sup>76</sup> Jennifer Doyle, Jonathan Flatley and José Esteban Muñoz, "Introduction," *Pop Out: Queer Warhol*, Edited by Jennifer Doyle, Jonathan Flatley and José Esteban Muñoz (Durham; London: Duke University Press, 1996), 6.

<sup>77</sup> Jones 224-5.

<sup>78</sup> Jones 228.

link to the homosexual whose everyday plight was dwarfed in the face of Marilyn's turbulent life.<sup>79</sup> To celebrate these female icons was also for many gay men a way to deny conventional masculine spectatorship, taking on a displaced relationship to cultural spectacle.<sup>80</sup> However it is not only Warhol's selection of Marilyn as a subject that is camp, but also the work's emphasis on Marilyn's performance of womanhood. In *Marilyn Monroe* the silk screening process flattens her image to a cosmeticized object or icon, Marilyn's blonde hair, blue eye shadow and rouge lips becoming her defining features. The parody of Marilyn as a painted woman amplifies gender as a production and imitative structure, the celebrity looking much more like a drag queen than the star herself.<sup>81</sup> The performance of Marilyn as a drag queen served for Warhol as a document of Hollywood's construction of womanhood, the artist once stating that drag queens were "ambulatory archives of ideal movie star womanhood."<sup>82</sup> *Marilyn* is also a parody of mass production, since the repetition of her image in a gritty and streaked style brings to mind the construction of celebrity through the proliferation of cheap media images. We can consider this as part of Warhol's camp double coding, which allowed the work's challenge to gender norms to be protected from mainstream scrutiny.

McCarthy and Kelley's works move beyond pop's desire to arrest the visual language of pop culture, taking psychological attitudes towards authority as their primary subject. Like their pop precursors McCarthy and Kelley's works take a serious look at American culture through the high and low by adopting its artifacts such as comics,

---

<sup>79</sup> Jones 228.

<sup>80</sup> Ross 323.

<sup>81</sup> Doyle 203.

<sup>82</sup> Jones 231.

processed foods, artworks, and ads. However, their post-pop appropriations also include a parading of what is left out of the squeaky clean Hollywood and advertising images, in order to expose culture's warts, poop and all. For McCarthy and Kelley it is more important that pop culture appropriations are used to represent the disturbing psychological and social realities that drive cultural logic. As aggressive acts of de-sublimation, their post-pop works do not seek appropriation as a means to merely blur the line between high and low cultural forms. Instead both artists implode claims to authority held by all cultural structures, including the gatekeepers of "high" culture. Intentionally peering into the dirty cracks of everyday life, their post-pop works contain a biting humor that attacks all institutions of social order.

In order to examine McCarthy and Kelley's engagement with pop culture as an investigation into socio-psychological attitudes, it is worth considering their collaborative work *Sod and Sodie Sock Comp. O.S.O* (1998). The installation was a simulation of a military camp built into a labyrinth of narrowly arranged tents and tunnels, a shower cabin, a fashion show stage, and a watchtower erected next to a mountain of margarine and buckets full of sawdust.<sup>83</sup> Inside the tents was a kitchen with piles of utensils and oatmeal cakes in the form of excrement strewn about, as well as a laboratory with instruments suggesting sexual experiments.<sup>84</sup> The installation had the feeling of an abandoned site since it served as a stage for performances held at the site weeks before

---

<sup>83</sup> Martin Prinzhorn, "Fighting on Two Different Fronts: Sod and Sodie Sock Comp O.S.O.," *Mike Kelley, Paul McCarthy: Collaborative Works*, Edited by Philip Monk (Toronto: Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery, 2000), 51-2.

<sup>84</sup> Prinzhorn 52.

the exhibition's opening.<sup>85</sup> Performances included individuals dressed as soldiers, extraterrestrials, transsexuals and so on, taking on military hazing rituals, an alien abduction, and a communal shower.<sup>86</sup> (Fig. 13)

*Sod and Sodie Sock Comp. O.S.O* is based on pop culture sources the American comic strip *Sad Sack* (1941-1957) that portrayed a bewildered civilian trying to be a soldier,<sup>87</sup> and the military comedy television shows such as *Hogan's Hero* and *M\*A\*S\*H*.<sup>88</sup> The theme of ineptness in the *Sad Sack* and television's anti-heroes were used by McCarthy and Kelley as a way to act out a humiliating psycho sexual drama revealing the military's sadistic regime of discipline and indoctrination.<sup>89</sup> McCarthy and Kelley therefore mixed popular culture sources with parodies of the army's disturbing psychological abuses and social regimentation that pop culture representations ignore. The installation and performances are also a series of mocking references to notions of high culture that endure in the American arts. For example, one of the performances included an enlisted group of art students who made monuments out of oatmeal that emphasized verticality serving as a symbol for phallic monumentality that is at the core of post- WWII American arts.<sup>90</sup> (Fig. 14) According to Martin Prinzhorn the piece's reference to military popular culture after WWII and the triumphant character of modernist art imply that culture, politics and art are not independent systems, but rather

---

<sup>85</sup> Prinzhorn 52.

<sup>86</sup> Prinzhorn 52.

Mike Kelley, "Mike Kelley," *Press Play: Contemporary Artists in Conversation*, Interview with Isabelle Graw (London: Phaidon, 2005), 392.

<sup>87</sup> Mike Kelley, *Minor Histories: Statements, Conservations, Proposals*, Edited by John C. Welchman (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2004), 19.

<sup>88</sup> Philip Monk, "A Twisted Pedagogy," *Mike Kelley, Paul McCarthy: Collaborative Works*, Edited by Philip Monk (Toronto: Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery, 2000),16.

<sup>89</sup> Monk "A Twisted Pedagogy," 16.

<sup>90</sup> Monk "A Twisted Pedagogy," 16-17.

part of them same repressive social structure.<sup>91</sup> Therefore the dramas acted out through popular culture military representations were used to stage the ridiculous and disturbing effects of social hierarchies within the military and in culture at large.

McCarthy and Kelley turn the pop operation into a frenzied and obsessive strategy. Both artists isolate symbols of mass culture and its language in a manner that makes it strange, opening objects to investigation. However, unlike earlier pop artists McCarthy and Kelley sandwich numerous cultural signifiers together that contradict one another, further complicating their original meaning. For example, Warhol isolated the Campbell's soap can in a series of silk screened portraits, making the everyday cans strange by placing them in a high art context. (Fig. 15) McCarthy similarly appropriates a processed food product: Daddy's Ketchup. (Fig. 16) However in McCarthy's performances and installations, his appropriated food sauce moves through a number of metaphorical meanings from processed food, blood, and semen, through to the authority of the father. In McCarthy and Kelley's works the world as we know it appears almost unrecognizable, as a slippage of signs prevents viewers from understanding and organizing these cultural cues into any definitive focus.<sup>92</sup> More than a disruption of signification, McCarthy and Kelley elicit so many signifiers that it is only through their unification in performance and architectural space that these isolated components become part of a complex and interactive exchange of meanings.

---

<sup>91</sup> Prinzhorn 53.

<sup>92</sup> Ralph Rugoff, *Piccadilly Circus: Paul McCarthy* (Zurich: Scalo Verlag, 2004), 174.

McCarthy's installation and video work *Caribbean Pirates* (2001-2005) that he produced in collaboration with his son Damon McCarthy, provides an interesting model to explore post-pop's build-up of pop culture references and high-keyed slippage of signification. The enormous installation included an original-size pirate ship made out of rusted fiberglass, where a life sized cake box had been inserted that one could walk into, and an enormous mechanical head of the infamous pirate of the *Captain Morgan* brand of rum had been placed at its side.<sup>93</sup> Parked next to the pirate ship was a 1970s houseboat, as well as a separate construction of four rooms that were motor driven to sway back and forth.<sup>94</sup> Projected on screens throughout the installation were video performances including *Pirate Party* (2005) that staged an invasion of a small village by a group of pirates, and *Houseboat* (2005), which was a reenactment of the play *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* where rich socialites engaged in verbal and physical abuse.<sup>95</sup> Both videos included a handful of actors who wore exaggerated costumes and performed sexually charged and violent taboo actions with props such as chocolate syrup, fake blood, and butter. (Fig. 17) Traces of the performances, which were filmed in both of the installation's ships, were smeared on the walls and floors of the installation, while props such as fake severed limbs, bowls, and empty cans of Hershey's Chocolate Syrup were strewn about.

McCarthy's *Caribbean Pirates* includes an array of objects from pop culture, whose frenzied symbolic slippage puncture normative meaning. His installation tangles

---

<sup>93</sup> Stephanie Rosenthal, "How to use Failure," *Lala Land Parody Paradise: Paul McCarthy*, Edited by Stephanie Rosenthal (Munich: Haus der Kunst, 2005), 131.

<sup>94</sup> Rosenthal 131.

<sup>95</sup> Rosenthal 133-4.

quickly recognizable cultural signifiers such as the Disneyland theme park ride *Pirates of the Caribbean*, America's beloved junk food, iconic cartoon facial features, and the visuals of schlock horror films. However, these transposed signs are sandwiched between references to repressed histories of invasion, plunder, destruction, and mutilation historically taken on by pirates as well as by the modern state of America under the guise of nation building.<sup>96</sup> McCarthy's work also acted out exaggerated signs of gender from brutal forms of piratic masculinity to the effeminacy of marginal groups.<sup>97</sup> Rather than allowing the viewer to fix on one or two cultural signs for investigation, *Caribbean Pirates* left viewers spinning in an attempt to gather references and meanings. McCarthy's semantic slippages are one of his key critical strategies, since it is the extreme instability of meanings that shift accepted metaphors and clichés, disturbing systems of order that we take for granted.<sup>98</sup> It is through McCarthy's psychotically upside down version of a theme park ride that our perception of Disneyland as the happiest place on earth is shifted to understand Disney as one of our more disturbing social constructions.

Developing Warhol's exploration of the media, McCarthy and Kelley's works reveal media trauma as a devouring of representations, rather than an obsessive repetition of images. According to Mark Seltzer, shared and reproducible spectacles of pathological violence have become crucial sites where our contemporary public

---

<sup>96</sup> John Welchman, "First Mate's Bloody Flux," *Lala Land Parody Paradise: Paul McCarthy*, Edited by Stephanie Rosenthal (Munich: Haus der Kunst, 2005), 192.

<sup>97</sup> Welchman 198.

<sup>98</sup> Ralph Rugoff, "Mr. McCarthy's Neighbourhood," *Paul McCarthy*, Edited by Ralph Rugoff, Kristine Stiles, and Giacinto Di Pietrantonio, (London: Phaidon, 1996), 35.



convenes, culture today having become a “wound culture.”<sup>99</sup> Collapsing private and public registers through pathological public violence, trauma has become a way of locating the subject.<sup>100</sup> These traumatic spectacles have become indistinguishable from mass, machine-produced representations, creating an endless switching between the psychological and social, the trauma or the real becoming impossible to track.<sup>101</sup> The individual in “wound culture” is therefore subject to media’s repetition of trauma and the repetition of the repetition itself.<sup>102</sup> Like Warhol’s pathological fixation with trauma whose representations produce traumatic effect, contemporary accounts are obsessive and affective. However, for McCarthy and Kelley these traumatic spectacles do not simultaneously screen against and create a traumatic affect, but are instead a salient collapse between observer and scene, representation and perception.<sup>103</sup> The artists develop Warhol’s elaboration on the media’s obsession with death into a relentless re-staging of the media’s fixation on the psychodynamics of traumatization.<sup>104</sup> Audiences are subjected to shocks that are apart of a common mass-cultural communication used to understand subjectivity.<sup>105</sup> Therefore, McCarthy and Kelley both reveal that our social sphere has become inseparable from the media’s commonplace spectacles of the wound.

As part of Kelley’s 1987 *Half a Man* exhibition at the Chicago’s Renaissance Society, the artist included two sewn constructions made of stuffed-toy animals. The first was *Plush Kundalini and Chakra Set*, which were synthetic toy animals tied together into

---

<sup>99</sup> Mark Seltzer, “Wound Culture: Trauma in the Pathological Public Sphere,” *October* 80, Spring 1997, p. 3.

<sup>100</sup> Seltzer 4-5.

<sup>101</sup> Seltzer 15.

<sup>102</sup> Seltzer 16.

<sup>103</sup> Borrowing from Seltzer 21.

<sup>104</sup> “psychodynamics of traumatization” borrowed from Tom Holert, “Schooled For Scandal,” *Artforum*

39(3), Nov 2000, p. 140.

<sup>105</sup> Holert 139- 140.

a large snake-like form, and hung from the ceiling in the shape of an “erectile sausage” devoid of a scrotum.<sup>106</sup> (Fig. 18) The second construction was titled *More Love Hours Than Can Ever Be Repaid*, and was a collection of handcrafted and fiber crafted dolls sewn onto a large canvas. (Fig. 19) *More Love Hours* separated itself from *Plush Kundalini* by only including handmade and fiber craft items that are generally created for the sole purpose of being given away.<sup>107</sup> Kelley’s work was an engagement with the eighties reassessment of appropriation based art, substituting the popular Conceptual anti-aesthetic blank object with craft and kitsch assemblages.<sup>108</sup> By mobilizing craft that has long been disparaged in painterly and sculptural terms, Kelley sought to play out the repressed formal languages in art.<sup>109</sup> However, the works elicited readings by viewers of disturbed childhood scenarios, an issue which has become fundamental to understanding the impact of Kelley’s doll works, as well as his later works including *Educational Complex*.<sup>110</sup> Kelley explained:

In past works, especially the ones utilizing stuffed toys, many viewers had projected scenarios of a disturbed childhood upon them. That had not been my intention, yet I found that the works could not escape this reading. I had to quit making works using those materials, but I thought I should deal with the issues these works raised. That’s when I started making work about my ‘abuse.’<sup>111</sup>

The assumption that the cause of dysfunctionality of adults resides ultimately in childhood trauma has become canonical in contemporary culture, especially in the

---

<sup>106</sup> Ralph Rugoff, “Mike Kelley/2 and the Power of the Pathetic,” *Mike Kelley: Catholic Tastes*, Edited by Elizabeth Sussman (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1993), 165.

<sup>107</sup> John C. Welchman, “Survey: The Mike Kelleys,” *Mike Kelley* (London; New York: Phaidon, 1999), 64.

<sup>108</sup> Welchman 64.

<sup>109</sup> Glenn Adamson, “Amateur,” *Thinking Through Craft* (Oxford; New York: Berg, 2007), 16.

<sup>110</sup> Mike Kelley, “Interview,” *Mike Kelley*, Interview with Isabelle Graw (London; New York: Phaidon, 1999), 19.

<sup>111</sup> Kelley, “Interview,” 19.

nineties through debates around Repressed Memory Syndrome.<sup>112</sup> According to Seltzer, the recourse of childhood trauma as cause of adult dysfunctionality creates an understanding of trauma that is inseparable from the breakdown between psychic and social registers, resulting in a pathological public sphere.<sup>113</sup> Kelley's doll works unintentionally register our *wound culture*, by providing viewers with pathetically low-grade and stained commercial objects in *Plush Kundalini*, which are expected to stand in for real experiences of trauma. *More Love Hours than Can Ever Be Repaid* is thought to similarly elicit abuse, through an emphasis on gift exchange where the adult makes a toy in the expectation of an unspecified repayment from the child. This absence of a subject and the audience's projection reveals our pathological fixation on mediated spectacles of trauma that replaces real experiences and consumes the public sphere.

McCarthy and Kelley's post-pop explode Warholian camp into a frenzied disruption of gender norms that is central to the conception of their works. Whereas Warhol's challenge to normative sexual values was articulated in the double coded subtlety of camp,<sup>114</sup> McCarthy and Kelley bombard audiences with over-the-top performances of gender that undermine categories. Performing a parody of normative characteristics of man and woman, post-pop mixes characteristics of gender among a larger symbolic economy of appropriated cultural symbols and language. Gender performances become mutable and exchangeable with a variety of items and actions

---

<sup>112</sup> The advocates of Repressed Memory Syndrome believe that severe traumatic experiences (especially in children and in cases of sexual abuse) are repressed and can no longer be recalled, resulting in pathological conditions from neurotic symptoms to complete psychic fracture of Multiple Personality Syndrome. RMS was hotly debated in the nineties.

<sup>113</sup> Seltzer 11.

<sup>114</sup> This is with the exception of his underground film work that has been ignored by many critics.

including violence, toys, and hamburger meat. The exposure of gender constructions are for McCarthy and Kelley an important part of unearthing social control in general. The desublimation of culture for both artists includes an unearthing of gender performances that order public and private life. Whereas the camp of Warhol's work could be considered as a secondary meaning, deconstructing gender plays a definitive role in the reception of McCarthy and Kelley's post-pop.

Overt challenges to gender norms can be found in all of the three works by McCarthy and Kelley that have previously been discussed. In *Sod and Sodie Sock Comp. O.S.O's* performances included a transsexual shower scene, while among the general cast of performers were naked men and women who shamefully hid their genitals.<sup>115</sup> (Fig. 20) *Caribbean Pirates* projected video performances of men and women in psychosexual dramas where gendered characteristics were acted out ranging from aggression to effeminacy, among liquids meant to simulate bodily fluids. Kelley's *Half a Man* project acted out a failed manhood, as stuffed animals and craft works became pathetic mementos of the artist as a man whose fixations on the feminine would not allow him status as a full man according to our cultural standards.<sup>116</sup> By acting out parodies of gender McCarthy and Kelley strip culture of its slick representations of men and women revealing their ultimately constructed nature.<sup>117</sup> Shame and aggression become a defining characteristic of gender performance for both artists, exhibiting its contingent nature. Gender is contextualized in this manner as a symptom of socially perpetuated cultural norms.

---

<sup>115</sup> Prinzhorn 53.

<sup>116</sup> Rugoff, "Mike Kelley," 161.

<sup>117</sup> Gender performance will be further explored in chapter two.

The critical strategies of nineteen sixties pop are elaborated by McCarthy and Kelley into a charged attack on society's underlying social structures of control. Sixties pop took on a critical engagement with contemporary society by appropriating its commercial products in a manner that challenged high art distinctions, exposed social constructions, revealed the traumatic effects of the media, and parodied the performative nature of gender. Post-pop has moved from pop's play with consumer surfaces and language to a relentless fixation on the repressed psychosocial effects of a culture based on structures of authority. In the hands of McCarthy and Kelly popular culture and the pop operation become part of a frenzied deconstruction where structures of meaning are imploded, and a parody of society as traumatic and ridiculous is acted out. Further expanding the scope of pop through strategies of performance and architectural space, McCarthy and Kelley's works provide a behind the scenes tour through the social subconscious of America.

## Chapter Two: Performing the Man

Though there were many precedents for the use of the body in art prior to World War II, the regular, systematic and intentional use of the body can be defined as a specific genre known as performance art.<sup>118</sup> In order to consider the relationship of Paul McCarthy and Mike Kelley's works to these practices, it is important to define the terms performance art and body art. The term performance art is generally applied retrospectively to "happenings, Fluxus, actions, rituals, demonstrations, direct art, destructions art, event art, and body art" that emerged in the nineteen sixties and seventies,<sup>119</sup> referring to artists who used their bodies as a material of visual art, emphasized the role of process over product, and representational to presentational modes of action that extend formal boundaries into real time and movement in space.<sup>120</sup> The term body art is defined as a performative art practice that highlights the position of the body as the marker of the subject's place in the social world.<sup>121</sup> Body art is applied to performance practices, as well as works without a strict performer/audience relationship that emphasize the social construction of meaning through the body.

McCarthy and Kelley's practices are an individualized body art that challenge the masculine subject as performed in both high and low culture. Both artists engage performance art as well as popular culture performances in order to de-center the social

---

<sup>118</sup> Kristine Stiles, "Uncorrupted Joy: International Art Actions," *Out of Actions: Between Performance and the Object 1949- 1979*, Edited by Paul Schimmel (Los Angeles: The Museum of Contemporary Art New York; Thames & Hudson, 1998), 228.

<sup>119</sup> Meiling Cheng, *In Other Los Angeleses: Multicentric Performance Art* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 2002), 17.

<sup>120</sup> Kristine Stiles, "Performance Art," *Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art: A Sourcebook of Artists' Writings*, Edited by Kristine Stiles and Peter Selz (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1996), 679.

<sup>121</sup> Amelia Jones, *Body Art/ Performing the Subject* (Minneapolis; London: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 13.

conditioning of masculinity. In order to explore McCarthy and Kelley's individualized body art it is necessary to examine their relationship to the history of performance, and their use of masochist performance practices to elicit an intersubjective engagement that interrogates the construction of masculinity. In addition to performance art, it is necessary to consider their incorporation of performances from popular media that reveals both the "high" and "low" as active in the social construction of gender. Their performative deconstruction of masculinity will be explored through an analysis of the works *Sod and Sodie Sock Comp O.S.O.* (1998), *Caribbean Pirates* (2001-2005), and *Half a Man* (1987-1991).

Driven by an emphatic questioning of human experience after WW II, the Holocaust, the atomic bomb, the war in Vietnam, as well as the rise of youth culture, activism, and rock and roll, numerous artists in the sixties began to examine the profound shifts in notions of experience and subjectivity.<sup>122</sup> Central to the explosion of performance art practices in the sixties and seventies was an interest in interrelationships and the recognition that events do not possess discrete facts and perceivers, but rather the two are joined in observation.<sup>123</sup> Artists placed their body in the political realm in order to provide for the possibility for radical engagement, demonstrating that meaning is exchange.<sup>124</sup> The composer and artist John Cage reflected this shift in recognition of subjectivity, his works and teachings that were presented at the Black Mountain College in the forties and fifties serving as an essential factor in the development of performative

---

<sup>122</sup> Paul Schimmel, "Leap into the Void: Performance and the Object," *Out of Actions: Between Performance and the Object 1949- 1979*, Edited by Paul Schimmel (Los Angeles: The Museum of Contemporary Art New York; Thames & Hudson, 1998), 17.

<sup>123</sup> Marvin Carlson, *Performance: A Critical Introduction* (London; New York: Routledge, 1996), 94.

<sup>124</sup> Jones, *Body Art*, 13-14.

practices. Cage rethought the conventions of traditional Western music by incorporating chance and indeterminacy into the process of composition and performance, placing a new emphasis on the primacy of the event.<sup>125</sup> Also crucial to the preliminary development of performance practices were works that emphasized the actions of art making, often articulating Jackson Pollock as important in his performative, open-ended and process oriented approach. This included the Japanese art association named Gutai founded in 1954 and led by Jiro Yoshihara. Gutai artists transformed painting into a process-oriented and theatrically improvisational medium, by putting themselves into their works through anarchic acts, such as hurling their bodies through canvases.<sup>126</sup> French Nouveau Realism artist Yves Klein is also notable for emphasizing the act of art making, as he often negotiated the Pollockian trope of artistic genius into performative works that were overtly theatrical, aristocratic and ironic.<sup>127</sup>

Some of the earliest performances known as Happenings were pioneered by New York artists such as Allan Kaprow, Jim Dine, Red Grooms, Claes Oldenburg, and Robert Whitman, and embraced by artists internationally.<sup>128</sup> Allan Kaprow was the primary advocate of the Happenings, writing widely about the movement, and performing *18 Happenings in 6 Parts* at the Reuben Gallery, New York in 1959, which is where the name “Happenings” was derived from.<sup>129</sup> (Fig. 21) The work was an interactive environment that included a six-part performance where audience members responded

---

<sup>125</sup> Schimmel 21.

<sup>126</sup> Schimmel 25-7.

<sup>127</sup> Jones, *Body Art*, 86.

<sup>128</sup> Schimmel 58.

<sup>129</sup> Schimmel 58.



according to instructions given to them prior to the event.<sup>130</sup> In Happenings, artists juxtaposed simultaneous, polymorphic, multimedia events and actions providing an intersection of art and life.<sup>131</sup> Kaprow wrote in 1956 that the performative quality of Pollock's work would be most significant for the generation of the 1960s<sup>132</sup> because:

Pollock as I see him left us at a point we must become preoccupied with and even dazzled by the space and objects of our everyday life...we shall utilize the specific substances of sight, sound, movements, people, odors, touch. Objects of every sort are materials for the new art.<sup>133</sup>

According to critic Jill Johnston, Kaprow's works degraded the human form, by bringing subjects down to earth, re-embodying what official culture has disembodied or etherealized.<sup>134</sup> Happenings blurred the distinction between art and life and extended the postmodern performative of the artistic subject, which articulated subjectivity as contingent and particular.<sup>135</sup> This imploded modernism's claim of universality, singularity and legibility of reading in art through a participatory dimension that removed mediating factors and relayed intentional meanings directly to the audience.<sup>136</sup> By 1970 the theme of opening art to everyday life in an attempt to affirm life and change the world had splintered into numerous sub themes and genres.<sup>137</sup>

Throughout the 1970s until 1982 there was an international emergence of performances that were dubbed Fluxus. Fluxus was a loose association of artists

---

<sup>130</sup> Rose Lee Goldberg, *Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present* (London; New York: Thames & Hudson, reprinted 2001), 128.

<sup>131</sup> Stiles, "Performance Art," 682.

<sup>132</sup> Schimmel 19.

<sup>133</sup> Allan Kaprow, *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life, Expanded Ed.*, Edited by Jeff Kelley (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 2003), 7-9.

<sup>134</sup> Banes 193.

<sup>135</sup> Jones, *Body Art*, 66.

<sup>136</sup> Jones, *Body Art*, 85.

<sup>137</sup> Timothy Martin, "Rocking the Lifeboat," *Sunshine & Noir: Art in LA, 1960-1997*, Edited by Lars Nittve and Helle Crenzien (Humblebaek: Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, 1997), 176.

organized by George Macinuas who coined the term in 1961 as a continuous moving on, or passing by, and succession of changes.<sup>138</sup> More than a specific focus, Fluxus was a generic rubric used to present a diverse variety of work through performance events that began in New York, laying the foundations for international festivals in Europe throughout the mid to late sixties.<sup>139</sup> Rather than an art movement, Fluxus was seen as an active philosophy of experience that transcended boundaries of the art world, and was characterized by “globalism, the unity of art and life, intermedia, experimentalism, chance, playfulness, simplicity, implicativeness, exemplativism, specificity, presence in time and musicality.”<sup>140</sup> Fluxus encouraged socio-poetic interaction and epistemological experimentation that provided an interactive transference of ideas played through by the audience.<sup>141</sup> The diverse performances of Fluxus meant that the movement came to be identified with disparate artists such as Ben Vautier, Alison Knowles, Nam-June Paik, Yoko Ono, Wolf Vostell, and Joseph Beuys.

Dance was also an important element in the evolution of styles and exchange of ideas and sensibilities that characterized the performance work of this period.<sup>142</sup> Many dancers in America in the sixties were trained in the traditional manner, and worked with John Cage and Merce Cunningham, incorporating Happenings and Fluxus experiments into their works by using everyday actions and objects.<sup>143</sup> In 1955 the Dancers

---

<sup>138</sup> Stiles, “Performance Art,” 685.

<sup>139</sup> Owen Smith, “Developing a Fluxable Forum: Early Performance and Publishing,” *The Fluxus Reader*, Edited by Ken Friedman (Chinchester; West Sussex: Academy Editions, 1998), 7.

<sup>140</sup> Ken Freidman, “Introduction: A Transformative Vision of Fluxus,” *The Fluxus Reader*, Edited by Ken Friedman (Chinchester; West Sussex: Academy Editions, 1998), ix.

<sup>141</sup> Craig Saper, “Fluxus as Laboratory,” *The Fluxus Reader*, Edited by Ken Friedman (Chinchester; West Sussex: Academy Editions, 1998), 137.

<sup>142</sup> Goldberg, *Performance Art*, 138.

<sup>143</sup> Goldberg, *Performance Art*, 138.

Workshop Company was formed in San Francisco, where Ann Halprin collaborated with Simone Forti, Yvonne Rainer, Steve Paxton and Trisha Brown, as well as with musicians such as La Monte Yong, and architects, painters, and sculptures.<sup>144</sup> Collaborators were encouraged to explore unusual techniques in an outdoor platform.<sup>145</sup> Yvonne Rainer described her investigations:

It is my overall concern to reveal people as they are engaged in various kinds of activities – alone, with each other, with objects – and to weight the quality of the human body toward that of objects and away from the superstylization of the dancer. Interaction and cooperation on the one hand; substantiality and inertia on the other.<sup>146</sup>

Free association became an important part of the dances, movement becoming unrestricted and developed according to its own principles.<sup>147</sup> These dancers would go on to start the Judson Dance Group in New York in 1962, holding public performances as part of Happenings and events in the Reuben Gallery and Judson Church, later forming a regular venue of their own.<sup>148</sup>

Out of Happenings, Fluxus, dance and other performing arts grew a diverse array of feminist performance practices that deliberately transgressed the art and life boundaries.<sup>149</sup> Feminist performance artists explored the gendering of artistic subjectivity by enacting their bodies in relation to the rhetoric of the pose, unhinging conventional

---

<sup>144</sup> Goldberg, *Performance Art*, 139.

<sup>145</sup> Goldberg, *Performance Art*, 139.

<sup>146</sup> Banes quoting Rainer 190.

<sup>147</sup> Goldberg, *Performance Art*, 140.

<sup>148</sup> Goldberg, *Performance Art*, 140-141.

<sup>149</sup> Josephine Withers, "Feminist Performance Art: Performing, Discovering, Transforming Ourselves," *The Power of Feminist Art: The American Movement of the 1970s, History and Impact*, Edited by Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1994),

models of art production and interpretation.<sup>150</sup> Carolee Scheeman's works embody the central themes of feminist performance, the artist using her body to complicate the gaze and threaten interpretive systems.<sup>151</sup> In *Interior Scroll* (1975) Scheeman stroked her body with paint, and pulled a scroll from her vagina that she read aloud, which was a condemnation of a macho filmmaker obsessed with Minimalist systems. By using her body as an extension of her paintings, *Interior Scroll* served as an interrogation into the process by which art objects are assigned value according to patriarchal biases.<sup>152</sup> By the early seventies a loose community of feminist performance artists had formed in New York City including among others, Yvonne Rainer, Adrian Piper and Laurie Anderson. Some of the most challenging feminist performances also came from California, artists engaging issues of representation head on in the San Francisco and Bay Area, Los Angeles, and San Diego.<sup>153</sup> Los Angeles became known for its feminist collaboratives initiated by Judy Chicago's feminist art classes at Fresno State, where groups of students expressed their frustrations and fears through cathartic physical exercises.<sup>154</sup> Opening in 1973, the Los Angeles' Woman's Building also proved crucial to the development of feminist performance by providing a space where artists such as Suzanne Lacy, Barbra Smith, and the Feminist Art Workers presented and developed their practices.<sup>155</sup>

The term body art is regularly used to describe performances of the Austrian Wiener Aktionismus or known in English as the Viennese Actionists. The Viennese

---

<sup>150</sup> Jones 151, 152.

<sup>151</sup> Jones 160.

<sup>152</sup> Jones 161-162.

<sup>153</sup> Withers 165.

<sup>154</sup> Withers 168.

<sup>155</sup> Withers 168.

Actionists included the Austrian artists Günter Brus, Otto Mühl, Hermann Nitsch and Rudolph Schwarzkogler. The Viennese school had ideological roots in Neolithic rituals that involved themes of the incorporation of the female, human sacrifice, shamanic endurance, dishonor and so on.<sup>156</sup> Performing quasi-religious rituals of self-castration, rape, and slaughter using excrement, food, blood, and dead animals, they sought to provoke in order to expose the largely state controlled, highly oppressive society of post-war Austria.<sup>157</sup> (Fig. 22) Their work was a critical anti-modernist impulse against “affirmative culture,” their careers corresponding with the revival in German art of the notion “kultur,” which advocated a utopian social community through cultural internalization and the reinforced status of the artist.<sup>158</sup> Interested in moving art into the realm of the performative, the body served for the Actionists as a symbol for what they dubbed “the politics of experience.”<sup>159</sup> Their last collective performance *Art and Revolution*, held in Vienna in 1968 included provocative anti-authoritarian, anti-American speeches, a naked pissing contest, and the flagellation of a masochist named Laudris.<sup>160</sup>

The Viennese Actionists anticipated 1970s masochistic performance that was centered on individual acts of bodily violence, found in the works of Vito Acconci, Chris

---

<sup>156</sup> Thomas McEvilley, “Paul McCarthy: Performance and Video Works: The Layering,” *Paul McCarthy: Head Shop, Shop Head: Works 1966-2006*, Edited by Magnus af Petersens and Paul McCarthy (Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 2006), 36.

<sup>157</sup> Philip Ursprung, “‘Catholic Tastes’ Hurting and healing the body in Viennese Actionism in the 1960s,” *Performing the Body/ Performing the Text*, Edited by Amelia Jones (London; New York: Routledge, 1999), 138, 146.

<sup>158</sup> Ursprung 144-5.

<sup>159</sup> Herbert Klocker, “Gesture and the Object: Liberation as Aktion: A European Component of Performative Art,” *Out of Actions: Between Performance and the Object 1949- 1979*, Edited by Paul Schimmel (Los Angeles: The Museum of Contemporary Art New York; Thames & Hudson, 1998), 175.

<sup>160</sup> Ursprung 139.

Burden, Gina Pane, and Marina Abramovic in collaboration with her partner Ulay. Masochism in psychological terms is defined as recurrent, intense sexually arousing fantasies, sexual urges, or behaviour involving real acts of being humiliated, beaten, bound or otherwise made to suffer.<sup>161</sup> Masochism in 1970s performance art involved the staging of artists' masochist submission of themselves to audiences, which served as metaphors for strictly regulated daily life.<sup>162</sup> According to Kaja Silverman by turning away from biology and the social, masochist acts magnify the losses and divisions upon which identity is based, undermining societal order.<sup>163</sup> In response to the disaffection with the ongoing war in Vietnam, and the eroding faith in the state, 1970s masochist artists drew upon alienation as a way to address the volatile social and political issues of everyday life.<sup>164</sup> These artists pointed to the dematerialization of accountability of society at large through a materialization of the vulnerability of the body-as-object, attempting to free themselves from the modern contract.<sup>165</sup>

In the nineteen sixties and seventies California was host to numerous well known performance artists such as Bruce Nauman, Chris Burden, Dennis Oppenheim, Paul Cotton, Terry Fox, and Paul Fried.<sup>166</sup> Through the employment at universities in California of some of the most important performance artists of the time, such as Allan

---

<sup>161</sup> Kathy O'Dell, *Contract with the Skin: Performance Art and the 1970s* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 3.

<sup>162</sup> O'Dell 9.

<sup>163</sup> Kaja Silverman, "Masochism and Male Subjectivity," *The Masculinity Studies Reader*, Edited by Rachel Adams and David Savran (Malden: Blackwell, 2002), 22-23, 36.

<sup>164</sup> O'Dell 12.

<sup>165</sup> Jones paraphrasing O'Dell, *Body Art*, 129.

<sup>166</sup> Martin, "Rocking," 175.

Kaprow,<sup>167</sup> Alison Knowles, Nam June Paik, Dick Higgins, performance art was validated and spread as a contemporary medium in the West coast. Meanwhile, schools such as the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts), the University of California in Irvine, and the Woman's Building emerged as nodes for transgressive body art activities.<sup>168</sup> Performance was also invigorated by the opening of alternative spaces dedicated to supporting these practices, including The Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) founded in 1970 by Tom Marioni as a museum for actions, with a permanent collection based on performance residue, relics, and environments.<sup>169</sup> Although well acquainted with California's performance practices, McCarthy and Kelley's performances were not defined by an immediate association with a regional movement or local scene. Instead both artists had tangential relationships to these practices, transforming references to numerous performance practices in their own highly individualized body art.<sup>170</sup>

McCarthy has taken on performance work since the outset of his career in the 1970s, serving as an influential and controversial figure in the Los Angeles performance scene. In 1970 the artist shifted his performative painting practice to strictly action-oriented works that included elements of physical jeopardy, such as the work *Plaster Your Head and One Arm into a Wall* (1973), where McCarthy did just what the title of

---

<sup>167</sup> Kaprow would actually go on to become one of the most important and established academicians in Southern California, with full tenure at the University of California in San Diego.  
Linda Frye Burnham, "Performance Art: In Southern California: An Overview," *Performance Anthology: Source Book of California Performance Art*, Edited by Carl E. Loeffler and Darlene Tong (San Francisco: Last Gasp Press & Cont. Art Press, 1989), 393-4.

<sup>168</sup> Burnham 391, 394.

<sup>169</sup> Carl E. Loeffler, "From the Body into Space: Post-Notes on Performance Art in Northern California," *Performance Anthology: Source Book of California Performance Art*, Edited by Carl E. Loeffler and Darlene Tong (San Francisco: Last Gasp Press & Cont. Art Press, 1989), 376.

<sup>170</sup> Martin, "Rocking," 185.

his work suggested, trapped his head and left arm in a wall with plaster. (Fig. 23) McCarthy dubs this first period of performance work from 1970 to 1974 as structural, which is the obsessive repetition of small simple actions towards an infantile regression.<sup>171</sup> The artist's works from 1974 onwards became more aggressive and sexually provocative, including "both a persona and liquids," where an elementary fictional character was performed that obsessively played with body fluid substitutes including motor oil, mayonnaise, hand cream, chocolate syrup and so on.<sup>172</sup> His performances became more process oriented, messier, and more intense, his body being increasingly defiled.<sup>173</sup> Barbara Smith describes McCarthy's performances in 1979:

Since 1972 all of his performances have involved the ingestion of either raw meat, mayonnaise or cold cream and the binding or adding to his penis of dolls and other material and smearing his body, particularly his face, hair and genital area with ketchup, mayonnaise and/or actual makeup.<sup>174</sup>

Initially performing in seclusion or for small audiences of three to five people who were mostly his friends, he began making colour videos of his performances in 1974, and gradually enlarged his audiences, until 1980 when he stopped regularly performing live.<sup>175</sup> In 1983 McCarthy took all the objects that he had used in his performances including toys, kitchen utensils, and bottles, and packed them away into trunks, only to photograph them in 1994 as abused and dirty residue of his works.<sup>176</sup> By 1984 McCarthy began making large-scale film and video productions that expanded his performances to

---

<sup>171</sup> McEvelley 36.

<sup>172</sup> McEvelley 37.

<sup>173</sup> Martin, "Rocking," 78.

<sup>174</sup> Burnham 418.

<sup>175</sup> Ulrike Groos, "Introduction," *Paul McCarthy: Videos 1970-1997*, Edited by Yilmaz Dziewior (Hamburg; Köln: Kunstverein in Hamburg, König, 2003), 18-19.

<sup>176</sup> Groos 23.



involve other performers acting with him inside elaborate sets.<sup>177</sup> These video taped performance works were exhibited in the mid-nineties as part of existing or custom-built stage sets.<sup>178</sup>

McCarthy's oeuvre has engaged a variety of performance art strategies. Explorations of destruction and personal danger were important introductory stages of McCarthy's performance work, and masochistic and feminist performance continue to play a vital role in the artist's practice. In the sixties some reports about the "Destruction in Art Symposium" that was held in London in 1966 had surfaced in the American press about the Vienna Actionists.<sup>179</sup> A strong connection between McCarthy's performances and those by Viennese Actionist Otto Muhl who took on "material actions" by using heterogeneous mixtures of foodstuffs can also be drawn.<sup>180</sup> However McCarthy's work is quite distinct from Viennese Actionists because his work is less about shamanic rites, and more about specific targets of parody found in high art and popular culture.<sup>181</sup> McCarthy also engages Happenings, Fluxus, Gutai, and Klein, through an incorporation of everyday life and an emphasis on the interrelationship between the audience and the artist. His performances explore the action of painting over product, incorporate everyday materials, blur the line between audience and performer, and pieces such as *Whipping a Wall and a Window with Paint* (1974), *Face Painting- Floor, White Line* (1972), and *Penis Brush Painting* (1974), are in fact direct parodies of pieces by Yves Klein, as well as Gutai, and

---

<sup>177</sup> Magnus af Petersens, "Paul McCarthy's 40 Years of Hard Work- An Attempt at a Summary," *Paul McCarthy: Head Shop, Shop Head: Works 1966-2006*, Edited by Magnus af Petersens and Paul McCarthy (Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 2006), 10.

<sup>178</sup> Groos 23.

<sup>179</sup> Martin, "Rocking," 175.

<sup>180</sup> Martin, "Rocking," 179.

<sup>181</sup> Ralph Rugoff, "Mr. McCarthy's Neighbourhood," *Paul McCarthy* (London: Phaidon, 1996), 45-6.

Fluxus artists.<sup>182</sup> McCarthy has however strongly differed from these performance artists by focusing primarily on the social construction of identity, and proving less interested in breaking down the distinctions between art and life.<sup>183</sup>

Beginning in 1978 Kelley produced a series of performance works that would become his defining mode throughout the eighties, garnering him widespread attention in the art world.<sup>184</sup> As a CalArts student Kelley began making craft based sculptures such as birdhouses from how-to manuals, and sculptures with multiple and ambiguous meanings that required performances of explanatory language in order to be understood.<sup>185</sup> Meanings were contingent and changeable according to how Kelley's objects were acted upon or talked about, language allowing the objects to become vehicles of unrestrained association and reference.<sup>186</sup> In the performance *Perspectaphone* (1978), two square megaphones were used, one handheld and one eight feet long, to confuse the idea of voice projection with perspective reduction. Kelley in *Perspectaphone* explained by drawing a diagram on a chalkboard and saying "it's loudest near the mouth, you're not hearing it louder; I'm fooling you."<sup>187</sup> (Fig. 24) Dance, noise music, as well as burlesque and adolescent humor were all important recurring elements of Kelley's performances. However over the years they became increasingly complex in their stagings and references, with language becoming the glue to an endless strings of associations.<sup>188</sup> Kelley's performances became increasingly defined by lists of associations that included

---

<sup>182</sup> Petersens 11.

<sup>183</sup> Rugoff 50.

<sup>184</sup> Martin, "Janitor in a Drum: Excerpts from a Performance History," *Mike Kelley: Catholic Tastes*, Edited by Elizabeth Sussman (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1993), 56.

<sup>185</sup> Martin, "Janitor," 56.

<sup>186</sup> Martin, "Janitor," 56, 60.

<sup>187</sup> Martin, "Janitor," 59.

<sup>188</sup> Martin, "Janitor," 65.

ideas, allusions, objects, images and jokes, and ridiculed the audience's investment in the work.<sup>189</sup> By 1987 the artist stopped performing live on a regular basis, however each of his major bodies of work continues to engage his performance research, writing, drawings and sculptures, as well as his interest in the body.<sup>190</sup>

Kelley's practice is deliberately diverse and pointed, his interest in performance art aimed at undercutting dominant cultural discourses. Kelley attended CalArts in 1978 when artists such as Allan Kaprow, John Baldessari, Michael Asher, Douglas Huebler were teaching in a manner steeped in conceptualism.<sup>191</sup> His works were a deliberate response to the reductionist tendencies of conceptualism, and the challenges to masculinist cultural practices presented by California's feminist performance practices. Kelley strove to diversify sixties and seventies performative practices in a manner antagonistic to the pedantic nature of conceptualism.<sup>192</sup> His emphasis on language was particularly unusual in Los Angeles' performance scene, Kelley emphasizing sculptures as props for verbalization of unrestrained cultural associations and references that deflated high art pretenses.<sup>193</sup> The artist also used dance in some of his works in order to explicate the imperfectable nature of the idea as thing in contrast to the analytic pretenses of the Judson Dance Group, since Kelley's dance would deteriorate the idea in the process of being revealed.<sup>194</sup> In works such as *Oracle at Delphi* (1978) and *Jug of Spirits* (1978), Kelley interrogated the cult of the performer in order to demonstrate the

---

<sup>189</sup> Martin, "Rocking," 182.

<sup>190</sup> Martin, "Rocking," 186.

<sup>191</sup> Martin, "Rocking," 181.

<sup>192</sup> Elizabeth Sussman, "Introduction," *Mike Kelley: Catholic Tastes*, Edited by Elizabeth Sussman (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1993), 16.

<sup>193</sup> Martin, "Janitor," 60.

<sup>194</sup> Martin, "Rocking," 181.

consciousness-raising pretensions or spiritualism of many seventies performance works.<sup>195</sup> Though the artist had a stake in seventies feminist performance in Los Angeles, his work has also had an explicit inclination towards gender bending and the politics of domesticity.<sup>196</sup> Kelley has also exhibited an interest in Fluxus musical experimentation, as well as free jazz, noise music and so on, forming the band *Destroy All Monsters* that blended these experimental music techniques with pop music, erasing the piety of subject matter.<sup>197</sup> The writings and performances that he developed in these early works would become a wellspring for ideas and associations that enriched his subsequent object-based works.<sup>198</sup>

The pivotal connection of McCarthy and Kelley's practices to performance art is their use of the body in order to establish an engagement with the audience that interrogates the structures through which the subject takes place. Body art in particular serves as a site of intersubjectivity, where reception and production come together, revealing meanings and values on the social and political contexts of reception as well as the desires of the interpreter.<sup>199</sup> By engaging the body in an open-ended and embodied relationship with the audience, artists interrogate politics of visibility and the structures through which the subject takes place.<sup>200</sup> This insistent artist-audience engagement

---

<sup>195</sup> Martin, "Rocking," 182.

<sup>196</sup> Martin, "Rocking," 185.

<sup>197</sup> He would later during his years at CalArts become a member of the band The Poetics which included fellow students Don Keieger, Mitchell Syrop and John Miller, and were an art-rock performance group. Sussman, "Introduction," 17.

<sup>198</sup> Schimmel 119.

<sup>199</sup> Jones, *Body Art*, 14, 25.

<sup>200</sup> Jones, *Body Art*, 23.

marks a contingency of meanings and values on an interpretative relation that open vicissitudes of subject/object relations in art.<sup>201</sup>

By using the body in art to elicit intersubjective experiences, performance reveals the performative dimension of subjectivity. Linguist philosopher J.L. Austin first defined the performative as the issuing of an utterance that is the performing of an action, such as saying “I do” at a wedding.<sup>202</sup> To post-structuralists every act, utterance and idea is performative, and that inscribed in these cultural expressions and practices are systems of power.<sup>203</sup> For example, Jacques Derrida argues that every mental or phenomenal event is a product of “différance” (“difference” + “deferral”), which is defined by otherness plus a lack of fixed or decided meaning.<sup>204</sup> Since the relation between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary (socially constructed), then the production of meaning derives from an interaction of linguistic units, meaning being produced by something that is not there, or différance. Therefore it is the act of signification that produces its own significance, with no order of meaning to ground it. For Derrida the self is inscribed in language, writing comprised of all systems of inscribed power including laws, courts, scientists, teachers, etc. Therefore the body too is constituted by différance, since it is not an organic undifferentiated presence, but is in fact the mind communicating the body according to rules of language based on a system of differences.<sup>205</sup> According to Peggy Phelan performance reveals our body’s reliance on the performative to secure

---

<sup>201</sup> Jones, *Body Art*, 36.

<sup>202</sup> Richard Schechner, *Performance Studies: An Introduction, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* (New York; London: Routledge, 2006), 124.

<sup>203</sup> Schechner 142.

<sup>204</sup> Schechner 146.

<sup>205</sup> The Description of Jacques Derrida’s theory of différance in this paragraph taken from: Philip Auslander, “Just be your self: logocentrism and différance in performance theory,” *From Acting to Performance: Essays in Modernism and Postmodernism* (London; New York: Routledge, 1997), 28-38.

subjectivity, exposing its reliance on supplement to ensure being.<sup>206</sup> Body art frames the performative dimension of the self through a reliance on the viewer whose interpretations establish meanings and values.<sup>207</sup>

The performative construction of gender has been an important subject of interrogation for performance art. Historically, the body within discourses and organizations of power has been invested with the idea that sex and sexuality is natural or essential.<sup>208</sup> Judith Butler argues that the category of sex and naturalized institutions of heterosexuality are constructs that are socially instituted and socially regulated and are not natural, but in fact political categories.<sup>209</sup> Gender is therefore performative, whereby acts, gestures, and desire produce the effect of a gender identity that is in fact fabricated and sustained through these corporeal signs and other means.<sup>210</sup> Drag performance according to Butler mocks the expressive model of gender and the notion of a true gender identity by revealing the distinctness of gendered experience.<sup>211</sup> Much like drag performance, body art according to Jones situates the sexual self through a reiteration of norms or set of norms that open up the possibility for disidentification.<sup>212</sup> Performance uses a particularly narcissistic relationship with the audience, where the artist turns their subjectivity inside out, and marks the fact that their identity is never fully coherent with their intentions.<sup>213</sup>

---

<sup>206</sup> Peggy Phelan, *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance* (London; New York: Routledge, 1993), 150-1.

<sup>207</sup> Jones, *Body Art*, 35-36.

<sup>208</sup> Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble* (New York; London: Routledge, 1990), 125.

<sup>209</sup> Butler 172.

<sup>210</sup> Butler 185.

<sup>211</sup> Butler 186-7.

<sup>212</sup> Jones *Body Art*, 49.

<sup>213</sup> Jones, *Body Art*, 50.

Male masochist body art performances interrogate the performative construction of masculinity. According to Jones the male body artist is masochistic in his submission of himself to another by offering his male body to the audience in a manner that instantiates the contingency of the male subject.<sup>214</sup> The prominent New York artist Vito Acconci is one of the most famous masochist body artists, "...enacting his body/self in terms of profound alienation, specifically performing the failure and insufficiency of his anatomical masculinity... to ensure his coherence and authority as a subject."<sup>215</sup> In 1971 Acconci performed *Trappings* in a warehouse in Germany, where he sat naked surrounded by toys, cloth, string, wood, and foam, and dressed his penis in doll's clothing and talked to it.<sup>216</sup> (Fig. 25) By objectifying his penis Acconci enacted the pathetic incoherence of masculinity, staging an ambivalent narcissism that offered his body/self to the audience, instigating the performative nature of masculinity.<sup>217</sup> Masochism in Acconci's work is used to materialize his own vulnerability, as he performed the failure of his anatomical masculinity to ensure his coherence and authority as a subject.<sup>218</sup> By objectifying his penis, Acconci enacted a parodist masculine masquerade as cited by Butler, unhinging gender and sexuality as a naturalized institutions. Acconci's work serves as a formidable challenge to modernism's closed system of disinterested interpretation, which veils the privileged body of the male artist genius, by ironicizing the heroic elements of this phenomenon.<sup>219</sup>

---

<sup>214</sup> Jones, *Body Art*, 116.

<sup>215</sup> Jones, *Body Art*, 118.

<sup>216</sup> Jones, *Body Art*, 118.

<sup>217</sup> Jones, *Body Art*, 116.

<sup>218</sup> Jones, *Body Art*, 118.

<sup>219</sup> Jones, *Body Art*, 103-4.

McCarthy and Kelley's works use masochist performance in order to challenge the social construction of the masculine subject. McCarthy's performance works have been about exposing the seams in the otherwise seamless relationship between artistic greatness, artistic creation, and phallic potency.<sup>220</sup> Like Acconci, McCarthy stages a narcissistic ambivalence to his body, unveiling masculinity as pathetic and insufficient in its coherence. In McCarthy's works the phallus is often enacted as a removable object, masculinity performed as contingent and hysterical rather than transcendent and ordinary.<sup>221</sup> In the video performance *Painter* (1995) the artist appears as a painter-clown who acts like an inarticulate buffoon using exaggerated gestures to paint with an enormous brush between his legs, indulging his libidinous inclinations, and hacking his rubber index finger with a meat cleaver, all the while grunting things like "De Kooning" and "I'm a fucking painter."<sup>222</sup> (Fig. 26) McCarthy ironicizes the heroic narratives of Abstract Expressionism by staging a supposedly male artist genius in a performance of hysteria and infantile eccentricity that reveals the phallus as interchangeable with a giant paintbrush. Kelley similarly submits himself to masochist humiliation by engaging aesthetics of failure, which for Kelley means "The failure of the object to meet the expectations of the viewer."<sup>223</sup> For example included in Kelley's *Half a Man* series are a group of handcrafted felt banners with statements that are twists on pop culture genius posters, such as the banner *Three-Point Program/Four Eyes* (1987) proclaiming "Pants Shitter & Proud, P.S. Jerk-Off Too (And I Wear Glasses)."<sup>224</sup> (Fig. 27) The banner

---

<sup>220</sup> Jennie Klein, "Paul McCarthy: Rites of Masculinity," *PAJ (USA)* 23(2), May 2001, p. 15.

<sup>221</sup> Amelia Jones, "Paul McCarthy's Inside Out Body and the Desublimation of Masculinity," *Paul McCarthy*, Intro. Lisa Philips (Ostfildern; New York: Hatje Cantz Pub, New Museum of Contemporary Art, 2000), 129.

<sup>222</sup> Groos 145-6.

<sup>223</sup> Mike Kelley, "Talking Failure," Interview with Julie Sylvester, *Parkett* 31, March 1992, p. 103.

<sup>224</sup> Sussman, "Introduction," 27.



objectifies the artist as a four-eyed pooping masturbator, which is in stark contrast to the masculine artist genius. Kelley in his *Half a Man* is also reacting against the masculine tradition of painting by working in crafts, in effect working as a cross-dresser by crossing genres.<sup>225</sup> By titling the series *Half a Man* Kelley announces his ambivalence to gender identity and the narrative male genius, which he plays out through a narcissistic engagement with failure.

Essential to the performative interrogations by McCarthy and Kelley has been the disruption to heterosexuality as a fixed expression of sex. According to Butler, gender is naturalized through a heterosexual matrix: the understanding that our sex is fixed and expressed through a stable gender identity that practices heterosexuality.<sup>226</sup> Sex as an anatomy, sensation, acts, and practice is arbitrarily unified according to Butler,<sup>227</sup> sexual desires having in fact no relation to sex or gender.<sup>228</sup> McCarthy and Kelley both stage works that challenge the presumption of heterosexuality, by presenting a variety of heterosexual, homosexual, bestial, and incestual gestures throughout their works, revealing sexuality as arbitrarily connected to one's anatomy. By presenting a matrix of sexual performatives in a charged libidinal space, the artists reveal heterosexuality as neither more natural nor more original than homosexuality.<sup>229</sup> In their collaborative work *Fresh Acconci* (1995) the artists asked young and beautiful actors to reconstruct Acconci's famous performance works in the feel of soft-core porn. The resulting videos

---

<sup>225</sup> Sussman, "Introduction," 27.

<sup>226</sup> Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 151.

<sup>227</sup> This argument has been the foundation of Queer Theory

<sup>228</sup> Judith Butler, "Against Proper Objects," *Feminism Meets Queer Theory*, Edited by Elizabeth Weed and Naomi Schor (Bloomington; Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1997), 4.

<sup>229</sup> Judith Butler, "Gender is Burning: Questions of Appropriation and Subversion," *Theory in Contemporary Art Since 1985*, Edited by Zoya Kocur and Simon Leung (Malen; Oxford; Victoria: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 169.

established a sexual tension and seduction, whose moody and peculiar titillations possess an edge of perversity.<sup>230</sup> Appropriating sexual distortions found in mainstream pornography and performance art,<sup>231</sup> the artists mock heterosexual performatives that pervade culture, revealing normative notions of sexuality as socially constructed.

In order to consider McCarthy and Kelley's use of performance it is necessary to discuss the use of mediatized performance in contemporary art. Television, commercial film, and photography have become intrinsic and determining elements in our cultural formations today, and contemporary performance art reflects this phenomenon by often referring to and recreating these mediatized formats.<sup>232</sup> Andy Warhol was already using performances mediated by film in the nineteen sixties in order to explore stardom and celebrity status manufactured by commercial cinema.<sup>233</sup> At the same time artist Yayoi Kusama engaged popular culture media in her performative works, exploring its encroachment into the realm of high art.<sup>234</sup> By the early eighties numerous performance artists had shifted to working as choreographers, pieces serving as interdisciplinary collaborations and spectacles hugely influenced by popular entertainment modes.<sup>235</sup> Consider for example performative works by contemporary artists Yasumasa Morimura

---

<sup>230</sup> Timothy Martin, "Fresh Acconci, Beautiful Acconci," *Mike Kelley, Paul McCarthy: Collaborative Works*, Edited by Philip Monk (Toronto: Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery, 2000), 34.

<sup>231</sup> In addition to Acconci's works, this appropriation includes contemporary performance, in particular the works of Cheryl Donegan and Matthew Barney, whose good looks have made video performance a form of pornography for the art world.

<sup>232</sup> Mediatized performances, are those circulated on television as audio or visual recordings and as other forms based in technologies of reproduction.

Auslander, *Liveness*, 29-30.

<sup>233</sup> Juan A. Suarez, "The Artist as Advertiser: Stardom, Style, and Commodification in Andy Warhol's Underground Films," *Bike Boys, Drag Queens and Super Stars: Avant-Garde, Mass Culture, and Gay Identity in the 1960s Underground Cinema*, (Bloomington; Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1996), 215, 220.

<sup>234</sup> Laura Hoptman, "Yayoi Kusama: A Reckoning," *Yayoi Kusama* (London: Phaidon, 2000), 59.

<sup>235</sup> Carlson 108.

and Matthew Barney that are elaborate dialogues around film, television and the mediatized representations of everyday reality.<sup>236</sup> In contemporary performances the mediated performance has been recognized as participating in the same cultural economy as live performance, and therefore serving as a space for potentially critical practices.<sup>237</sup> By entering the commodified world of mass entertainment performance artists have taken on some of its salient characteristics in a dizzying intertextuality where distinctions in culture are blurred and meanings lie in the juxtaposition between cultural discourses.<sup>238</sup> Therefore, these works can be identified as having interrelatedness with the world where subjects and objects are multiplicitous and dispersed.<sup>239</sup>

Both McCarthy and Kelley have similarly engaged a flux of mediatized performances in their works. One of the most outstanding features of McCarthy and Kelley's oeuvre has been their blending of characters from films and televisions into their performative constructions. In addition to completing a film degree at the San Francisco Institute, McCarthy in fact earned a living temporarily in the Hollywood movie industry. He has stressed that living in the midst of Hollywood has probably meant more to him than to other Los Angeles based artists.<sup>240</sup> By the beginning of the 1970s McCarthy had already decided to integrate elements outside of the arts proper into his performances.<sup>241</sup> Familiar figures from the media landscape appear throughout his works including American Presidents, Disney characters and the old man from Tobe Hooper's *The Texas*

---

<sup>236</sup> Rose Lee Goldberg, "One Hundred Years," *Live: Art and Performance*, Edited by Adrian Heathfield (London: Tate Pub., 2004), 180.

<sup>237</sup> Philip Auslander, "Going with the Flow: Performance Art and Mass Culture," *TDR* 33(2), Summer 1989, p. 129-30.

<sup>238</sup> Auslander, "Going with the Flow," 119, 125.

<sup>239</sup> Jones, "Body Art," 18.

<sup>240</sup> McEvelley 19.

<sup>241</sup> Tom Holert, "Schooled For Scandal," *Artforum* 39(3), Nov 2000, p. 139.

*Chainsaw Massacre* (1974). McCarthy has also choreographed elaborate performances hiring other actors as collaborators, using cheap store-bought props and stage sets familiar to Hollywood productions, and sometimes even hiring professional film crews to document his performances. Using distancing devices even in his early performances (such as performing in a shrewdly divided room), McCarthy's works have always mediated, even more so now that his videotaped performances are embedded in installations.<sup>242</sup> Although Kelley's performance works are not mediatized in the sense of being photographed extensively or videotaped, his works regularly integrate popular culture performances found in media culture, especially forms of pop spiritualism from science fiction films, stage performances of Punk and Glam Rock idols such as Iggy Pop, as well as filmic language.<sup>243</sup> Kelley like McCarthy has also utilized popular children's entertainment by appropriating characters from Popeye and Yogi Bear who are Disney's television rivals as well as their cheaper animated forms.<sup>244</sup>

McCarthy and Kelley appropriate popular culture characters from television and film in order to interrogate the performativity of masculinity within mainstream culture. The construction of characters in the media is often based on the use of stereotypes that maintain and insist on boundary definitions that do not exist, mapping out acceptable and legitimate behaviour.<sup>245</sup> The most pervasive stereotype in the media is the representation of male sexuality, which both McCarthy and Kelley obsessively undermine. In

---

<sup>242</sup> Martin, "Rocking," 180.

<sup>243</sup> Martin, "Rocking," 180, 182.

<sup>244</sup> Daniel Kothenschulte, "Kelleyland. The Cartoon as 3-Dimensional Art and the Tragedy of Loss. Mike Kelley and Disney's Ghost," *Mike Kelley, Peter Fischli, David Weiss: Sammlung Goetz, [13 Juni- 4 November 2000]* (Munich: Sammlung Goetz, 2000), 25.

<sup>245</sup> Richard Dyer, *The Matter of Images: Essays on Representations, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.* (London; New York: Routledge, 2002), 13.

McCarthy's videotaped performance *Rocky* (1976) the naked artist wears boxing gloves and a mask of a bandit sporting a grey hat and stubble. He delivers punches to his body, boxes an invisible opponent, while occasionally smearing his penis and buttocks with ketchup.<sup>246</sup> (Fig. 28) The artist parodies 1970s muscle stars such as Arnold Schwarzenegger and Sylvester Stallone, performing idealizations of white masculinity that are supposedly determined by a hard, tough, and dangerous sexuality determined by the penis.<sup>247</sup> By boxing against himself all the while smearing his flaccid penis in sauce, McCarthy presents these performed characteristics of masculinity as absurd, unhinging their formidable impact. In 1986 Kelley took on a series of performances that examined the messianic cult of the performer in music, which included his work *Plato's Cave*, *Rothko's Chapel*, *Lincoln's Profile*.<sup>248</sup> (Fig. 29) In this piece Kelley performed with Molly Cleator in front of a curtain, behind which the band Sonic Youth and Adam Rudolf played music. Throughout their performance Kelley took on a snarling idol persona who strutted, seduced and insulted the audience, while his counterpart acted as a scolding mother, combative partner and stooge.<sup>249</sup> Kelley's performance can be likened to the performances of musicians Jim Morrison and Iggy Pop who took on confrontational stage acts that is a masculinist strain of counterculture rock music.<sup>250</sup> Through trumped up ritual and a play with power relations, Kelley reveals the rock star as a publicly

---

<sup>246</sup> K.S., "Rocky," *Paul McCarthy: Videos 1970-1997*, Edited by Yilmaz Dziewior (Hamburg; Köln: Kunstverein in Hamburg, König, 2003), 104.

<sup>247</sup> Richard Dyer, "The White Man's Muscles," *The Masculinity Studies Reader*, Edited by Rachel Adams and David Savran (Malden: Blackwell, 2002)

Dyer, *Matter of Images*, 90-91.

<sup>248</sup> Martin, "Janitor," 79-80.

<sup>249</sup> Martin, "Janitor," 81-2.

<sup>250</sup> Mike Kelley, "Cross Gender/ Cross Genre," *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art* 22(1), Jan 2000, p. 6. Leerom Medovio, "Mapping the Rebel Image: Postmodernism and Masculinist Politics of Rock in the U.S.A.," *Cultural Critique* 20, Winter 1991-1992, p. 23.

fictionalized rebelling subject who performs cultural tropes of masculinity with which the fan identifies.<sup>251</sup>

In order to bring together our discussions so far about McCarthy and Kelley's use of body art and popular culture performances as a means to dismantle the social construction of masculinity, I would like to reconsider three works already introduced, beginning with their collaborative project *Sodie Sock Comp O.S.O.* based on the American comic book *Sad Sack*, Paul and Damon McCarthy's *Caribbean Pirates* based on the Disneyland ride *Pirates of the Caribbean*, and finally Kelley's series of *Half a Man* works.

When exhibited at the Secession *O.S.O.* was presented as a five-tent installation where a series of performances including McCarthy, Kelley, and eight student volunteers took place over the course of two weeks.<sup>252</sup> Performance props and their residues, were left behind and exhibited as part of the installation, while video and photo documentation of the performances were also displayed. This collaborative project grew out of a performance *Sad and Sadie Sack U.S.O.* (1996) that McCarthy and Kelley presented at the P-House in Tokyo with the noise musician Violent Onsen Geisha.<sup>253</sup> As part of the Tokyo performance McCarthy performed as Sarge and Kelley as Sad and Sadie Sack (Sad Sack's girlfriend), and set up a chain of speakers and video monitors that recorded their performances that moved from the P-House space into the street and a neighborhood

---

<sup>251</sup> Medovio 156.

<sup>252</sup> Paul McCarthy and Mike Kelley, *Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery International Lecture Series* (Toronto), March 9, 2000.

<sup>253</sup> McCarthy and Kelley.

salon where Kelley asked the hairdresser to style his wig to match the hair of Sadie Sack.<sup>254</sup> Numerous references to body art practices can be found in *U.S.O.* and *O.S.O.*, these include: the engagement of the audience with the performance and the incorporation of everyday life that were both emphasized by Happenings; the piling of bricks of margarine that elicits Fluxus performance; the messy fluid stuff similarly used by the Viennese Actionists; and the repeated subjugation of nude men to humiliation found in masochist body art.<sup>255</sup> The artists also parodied performances of the inept soldier from television military shows as well as the shower scene from the movie *Porky's* (1982).

The *O.S.O.* performances provide an intersubjective engagement that challenges the construction of the male subject. The gender bending of the Tokyo performance that was based on the two characters Sad Sack and Sadie Sack who are boyfriend and girlfriend but look exactly alike (their only distinguishable features being their haircuts), is found throughout the *O.S.O.* work.<sup>256</sup> Over the weeks as the group performed hazing rituals, an alien abduction, a transsexual shower scene, and an art class, plots were linked through moments of gender confusion, role reversals and characters becoming soiled.<sup>257</sup> (Fig. 30) During the filming performers displayed or hid their genitals, while transsexuals showered, and actors dressed as aliens performing anal probes. Through masculine parodies that disturbed coherence and authority by failing to exclude otherness

---

<sup>254</sup> Mike Kelley, *Sod & Sodie Sock & Studio C (Tokyo 1996)*, CD linear notes (Los Angeles: Compound Annex Records, 1998).

<sup>255</sup> O.S.O was actually dedicated to the radical filmmaker and Viennese actionist Kurt Kern. Martin Prinzhorn, "Fighting on Two Different Fronts: Sod and Sodie Sock Comp O.S.O.," *Mike Kelley, Paul McCarthy: Collaborative Works*, Edited by Philip Monk (Toronto: Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery, 2000), 57.

<sup>256</sup> Kelley, *Sod & Sodie Sock & Studio C*.

<sup>257</sup> Kelley, *Sod & Sodie Sock & Studio C*.

including femininity, homosexuality, and penetrability, the phallus was displayed as a flaccid and objectified penis.<sup>258</sup> In these actions performers mocked the model of gender as a physical expression of a true, internal and coherent sexual identity, revealing it as performative fabrication.<sup>259</sup> For example in the re-enactment of the infamous *Porky's* shower scene, the movie's girls were replaced by three transsexuals who parodied stereotypical gender attributes. (Fig. 31) Similarly the masculinism of heroic modern monuments were replaced by bug infested oatmeal masses that stood for the phallus veiled in modernist discourse. (Fig. 14) Heterosexual masculinity is therefore exposed as a subjectively determined construct that is contingent on socially regulated and controlled gender performance found in both the avant garde and popular.<sup>260</sup>

The McCarthy's *Caribbean Pirates* reveals the social construction of masculinity through the performance of Disney, Slasher films and body art practices. Prior to the installation's exhibition in Munich, performances by a handful of actors and Paul McCarthy were carried out in Los Angeles over a month and recorded with eight cameras.<sup>261</sup> These performances videos were then edited into *Pirate Party* (2005) and *Houseboat Party* (2005) and projected as part of the *Caribbean Pirates* installation. The video performances were based on the loose plots of an invasion of a village (*Pirate Party*) and a party on the boat of the wealthy instigator of the invasion (*Houseboat Party*).<sup>262</sup> Actors were given free reign to develop their movements into senseless and

---

<sup>258</sup> Jones, *Body Art*, 118.

<sup>259</sup> Butler 185-6.

<sup>260</sup> Jones, *Body Art*, 111.

<sup>261</sup> Stephanie Rosenthal, "How to use Failure," *Lala Land Parody Paradise: Paul McCarthy*, Edited by Stephanie Rosenthal (Munich: Haus der Kunst, 2005), 132.

<sup>262</sup> Rosenthal 132.



absurd activities.<sup>263</sup> The performances are reminiscent of masochistic body art and Viennese Actionism as actors are tied up, fake limbs are severed, liquid stuffs such as chocolate syrup, butter and fake blood soil performers and their set, all the while genitals are revealed as the actors moan and revel in a burlesque buffoonery that oftentimes looks like a brutal, gluttonous, and ruthless orgy.<sup>264</sup> (Fig. 32) The McCarthys also used the work as an opportunity to take a swipe at contemporary performance as specialized erotica. An actor meant to look like Matthew Barney in his work *Cremaster Cycle 3* (2002) takes part in the sexual buffoonery filling his mouth with licorice while covering his body in chocolate syrup.<sup>265</sup> (Fig. 33) Pop culture and performance references mingle to present a masculinity that is contingent and hysterical, as the work also parodies performances from Slasher horror films, and the adventurous portrayals of pirates in Disney films. The crudeness and formulaic repetitiveness, as well as the reliance on extreme violence and its dumb exploitative nature identifies McCarthy's work with the format of the Slasher genre.<sup>266</sup> While donning the exaggerated appendages of Disney characters, McCarthy's actors perform the history of piracy as handed down by the contemporary media, pirates sporting the stereotypical attributes of nautical masculinity including the beard, floppy hat, skull and crossbones, and peg leg.<sup>267</sup> (Fig. 34) However, these Disney imageries are apart of a flux of masochist performatives and Slasher techniques that fragment the body and subvert male identification.<sup>268</sup> Disney's sanitization of gender and sexuality that removes historical, social and political

---

<sup>263</sup> Rosenthal 134.

<sup>264</sup> Petersens 21.

<sup>265</sup> McCarthy and Kelley.

<sup>266</sup> Peter Hutchings, "Slashers and post-Slashers," *The Horror Film* (Harlow: Pearson, 2004), 193-4.

<sup>267</sup> John Welchman, "First Mate's Bloody Flux," *Lala Land Parody Paradise: Paul McCarthy*, Edited by Stephanie Rosenthal (Munich: Haus der Kunst, 2005), 194-5.

<sup>268</sup> Carol J. Clover, "Her body, himself: Gender in the Slasher film," *Horror: The Film Reader*, Edited by Mark Jancovich (London; New York: Routledge), 84.

contexts,<sup>269</sup> and the artistic reiteration of the masculine genius is undercut through performative stagings of masculinity that reveal its attributes as unfixed.

Although Kelley stopped taking on solo performances in front of an audience in 1987, his works retain a performative enunciation of the body, found in his series *Half a Man*. This series is based on addressing gender and identity formations at childhood that are invested in feminized craft forms such as dolls and stuffed animals.<sup>270</sup> The performative element of this project includes Kelley performing as a cross-dresser by working in a typically female genre, as well as his installation projects *Arenas* (1990). *Arenas* placed cloth dolls and stuffed toys in arrangements (or arenas) on top of crocheted Afghans making it appear as if the toys were participating in a dialogue with one another.<sup>271</sup> (Fig. 35, 36) Meanwhile boom boxes were placed next to each arena that played recordings of Kelley reading dialogues in a cute and squeaky adult falsetto voice that was that spoke about subjects as vast as colours, garbage, and critical theory.<sup>272</sup> The texts were meant to be barely understandable as arenas were often exhibited together, boom boxes drowning one another out.<sup>273</sup> Kelley according to Ralph Ruggoff “delights in tracing the failure of images to express big ideas grafted onto them.”<sup>274</sup> *Arenas* activate

---

<sup>269</sup> Henry A. Giroux, “Memory and Pedagogy in “The Wonderful World of Disney”,” *From Mouse to Mermaid: The Politics of Film, Gender and Culture*, Edited by Elizabeth Bell and Lynda Haas (Bloomington; Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995), 47.

<sup>270</sup> Elizabeth Sussman, “Open the Door and Let it in,” *Mike Kelley 1985-1996*, Edited by José Lebrero Stals (Barcelona: Museu d’Art Contemporani de Barcelona, 1997), 32.

<sup>271</sup> Sussman, “Open the Door,” 32.

<sup>272</sup> Sussman, “Open the Door,” 32.

<sup>273</sup> Sussman, “Open the Door,” 33.

<sup>274</sup> Ruggoff 170.

the charged emotions that adults project onto children's toys.<sup>275</sup> The banality and meaninglessness of these communications becomes clear, revealing that these surrogate actors are a ridiculous embodiment of our cultural psychology of gender and sexuality.<sup>276</sup> These include Saturday morning cartoons meant to foster the "proper" socialization of children by presenting characters absurdly scrubbed clean characters devoid of any genitals. An excerpt from one of the taped dialogues, *Dialogue #1 "Theory, Garbage, Stuffed Animals, Christ"* (1991) reads as follows:

The best way to fuck something up is to give it a body.  
A voice is killed when it is given a body. Whenever there's a body around, you see its faults.  
Theory proves that.  
The body of a famous critic came to our class the other day.  
Now we don't believe its writings anymore.  
Its writings became theatre.  
And the presence of all that flesh made us think of all the things the writings didn't speak of... of what was left out.  
Authoritative voices must be disembodied to work.<sup>277</sup>

This dialogue also provides the hint that *Arenas'* are also about disturbing the transcendence of modernism and critical theory that privileges heterosexual masculinity, as Kelley undermines artistic expectations of his gender by playing with dolls.<sup>278</sup> Kelley's performatives purposefully fail to claim gender authority or coherence, unhinging the body as a vessel that serves only to befoul the idealized innocence of childhood and undermine the artistic male genius. In addition to masochist performance, Kelley evokes Yayoi Kusama's small phallic objects made of stuffed fabrics, Warhol's postmodern

---

<sup>275</sup> Rainald Schumacher, "The Janitor Who Keeps House in Our Soul. Notes on Mike Kelley," *Mike Kelley, Peter Fischli, David Weiss: Sammlung Goetz, [13 Juni- 4 November 2000]* (Munich: Sammlung Goetz, 2000), 56.

<sup>276</sup> Schumacher 60.

Sussman, "Open the Door," 30.

<sup>277</sup> Martin, "Janitor," 85-6.

<sup>278</sup> Jones, *Body Art*, 76.

Rugoff 171.

performativity, Happenings interest in the everyday, the Fluxus play with language, and feminist interest in the gendered legitimization of art forms. However, Kelley remains skeptical of performance practices as he presents stuffed animals as surrogate actors who question the whole basis of performance as communication.<sup>279</sup>

McCarthy and Kelley engage performance art practices and pop culture in order to undercut normative definitions of masculinity. Both well acquainted with performance practices, they engage and respond to these methods of art making. Their primary connection to body art is their use of masochist performance in order to perform the insufficiency of anatomical masculinity in determining gendered behaviour, which unveils the body and serves to undermine the masculine subject as veiled as universal and privileged in modernist discourse. What makes McCarthy and Kelley's works markedly different from seventies body artists is that their unhinging of the male body through masochist submission is mixed with performances of masculine stereotypes found in mediatized culture. Characters from television series, pornography, Saturday morning cartoons, Disney, and film, are twisted in the violence of Slasher films, fluids of Viennese Actionists, Fluxus play, Acconci's insufficiency, Happenings engagement with the audience, and so on. Figures and forms are united in an intersubjective play that reveals that heterosexual masculinity is in fact constructed through performances found in the vanguard through to the mainstream. McCarthy and Kelley ham up our array of cultural texts to reveal that there is really nothing natural about them.

---

<sup>279</sup> Sussman, "Open the Door," 30.  
Kelley, "Talking Failure," 101.

### Chapter Three: L.A., Disneyland, Television, Repressed Memories and all the Spaces in Between

Space has become a privileged domain of study for numerous cultural practitioners who situate art relations between built form and the performative dynamics of everyday life.<sup>280</sup> This has included artists who employ strategies such as performance, installation, land art and site-specificity that double as spatial interventions, transforming the manner in which architecture defines its relationship with subjects.<sup>281</sup> According to Anthony Vidler, the history of architecture has been the history of the sense of space in culture.<sup>282</sup> In order to consider spatial practices in contemporary art it is necessary to consider the principles of modernist architecture, which serve as the cultural logic behind spatial organization today. In Sigfried Giedion's *Space, Time and Architecture (1941)*, that is a manifesto of modern architecture, the author places emphasis on the programmatic aspects of space stating that the "new tradition" of architecture was to provide an authentic expression of an underlying unity within the chaos of time, combating tendencies towards superficiality.<sup>283</sup> For modernists spatial theory was the way of creating a new world and escaping history by anchoring space in architectural planning, form, and modern life.<sup>284</sup> Henri Lefebvre in *The Production of Space (1974)* shifted architectural discourse from the notion of space as a product to space as a productive activity, by arguing that space is not a natural entity but a historical and social

---

<sup>280</sup> Alan Read, "Introduction: Addressing architecture, art and the everyday," *Architecturally Speaking: Practices of Art, Architecture and the Everyday*, Edited by Alan Read (London; New York: Routledge, 2000), 1.

<sup>281</sup> Anthony Vilder, "Deep Space/ Repressed Memory: Mike Kelley's Educational Complex," *Mike Kelley 1985- 1996*, Edited by José Lebrero Stals Kelley (Barcelona: Museu d' Art Contemporani de Barcelona, 1997), 117.

<sup>282</sup> Anthony Vilder, "Introduction," *Warped Space: Art, Architecture, and Anxiety in Modern Culture*, Edited by Anthony Vilder (Cambridge; London: MIT Press, 2000), 4.

<sup>283</sup> Hilde Heynen, *Architecture and Modernity: A Critique* (Cambridge; London: MIT Press, 1999), 42.

<sup>284</sup> Vilder, "Introduction", 7.

product made up of various social practices.<sup>285</sup> Space has been increasingly defined as a product of subjective projection and introjection as opposed to a stable container of objects and bodies that modernism strives for.<sup>286</sup> An understanding of space as a social construction revealed that as opposed to an organic unity, different and sometimes incompatible practices realize the possibilities of a single location.<sup>287</sup> Interrogating the texture of contemporary space, theorists such as Frederic Jameson and Jean Baudrillard have argued that in post-industrial society space has mutated into a postmodern hyperspace that heavily relies on simulations, is dramatically de-centered, and is organized according to neo-capitalist values, exemplified in a city such as Los Angeles.

The spatial relationship of individuals to their cultural environment has become an important consideration for artists since the nineteen sixties and onwards. Minimalism introduced an artistic investigation into the production of space, by displacing the artist as subject to the spectator as subject, and introducing the consideration of the work's particular environment.<sup>288</sup> The proliferation of site-specific and installation works that arose in the wake of minimalism continued to engage spatial planes of perception and interpretation, developing into a mapping of a broader cultural space.<sup>289</sup> McCarthy and Kelley both engage the real and virtual spaces of Los Angeles' schizoid landscape in order to expose the ordering logic behind spatial production today in America. The artists explore strategies of site-specificity and installation, developing minimalism's

---

<sup>285</sup> Miles Malcolm, "Representations of the City," *The City Cultures Reader*, Edited by Miles Malcolm (London; New York: Routledge, 2000), 193.

<sup>286</sup> Vidler, "Introduction," 1.

<sup>287</sup> Nick Kaye, *Site-Specific Art: Performance, Place and Documentation* (London; New York: Routledge, 2000), 5.

<sup>288</sup> Kaye 2.

<sup>289</sup> James Meyer, *Minimalism: Art and Polemics in the Sixties* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2001), 2.

engagement of space in a manner that emphasizes the viewing subject and their psychological experience as the ultimate site of spatial production. These perceptual investigations take place in what might be called “laboratories of space” that consider Los Angeles’ militarization of space in *O.S.O Sod and Sodie Sock Camp* (1998), its reliance on simulations in *Caribbean Pirates* (2001-2005), and its mundane architectures of socialization in *Educational Complex* (1995). Allowing audiences to navigate numerous sites of spatial production, McCarthy and Kelley reveal the contradictions latent in the contemporary city that is in opposition to its attempts at creating a totalizing spatial order. This chapter therefore addresses issues of space and architecture as explored in works by McCarthy and Kelley.

Minimalism served as a crux between modernist sculpture and the consideration of site, extending art into cultural space. Minimalism (1963-1968) led by the artists Donald Judd, Robert Morris, Carl Andre, Dan Flavin, and Anne Truitt, developed key debates about three dimensional abstraction.<sup>290</sup> These artists were heavily influenced by Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s *The Phenomenology of Perception* (1945) that described perception, or how and what one perceives, as determined by one’s physical presence within a matrix of circumstances.<sup>291</sup> Minimalist sculptures included a radical formal simplification, stripping objects to basic industrial materials and three-dimensional geometric formats. These sculptures served as objects of perception that heightened one’s awareness of the process of perception, and engaged viewers with the object’s

---

<sup>290</sup> Meyer, *Minimalism*, 6.

<sup>291</sup> Claire Bishop, *Installation Art: A Critical History* (London: Tate Publishing, 2005), 50.

relationship to the space of the gallery.<sup>292</sup> For example Robert Morris' *untitled (Mirrored Cubes)* (1965) which were a series of large-scale mirrored cubes, engaged the viewer in a play of space through multiple reflections that dissolved the solidity of the forms.<sup>293</sup> (Fig. 37) Integral to Morris was altering the gallery surroundings to become a "function of space, light and the viewer's field of vision."<sup>294</sup> Michael Fried described minimal works as creating a theatrical relation between the viewer and the work through a perceptual immediacy that responded to the temporal environment.<sup>295</sup> Although extremely influential to contemporary practices, minimalism's materialist commitment confined its analysis to the gallery frame, making its criticality limited to the confines of the museum.<sup>296</sup>

According to Rosalind Krauss by the end of the nineteen sixties artists had expanded the dimension of artistic structure to the public, conventional nature of cultural space.<sup>297</sup> In the wake of minimalism various forms of art such as land art/earth art, conceptual art, performance/body art, postminimalism, and site specificity, challenged the innocence of space and the presumption of the universal viewing subject.<sup>298</sup> Early site specific works engaged minimalism's emphasis on perceptual experience by requiring the viewer for the piece's completion, although their primary goal became establishing an

---

<sup>292</sup> Bishop 53.

<sup>293</sup> Kaye 27-28.

<sup>294</sup> Robert Morris, "Notes on Sculpture," *Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology*, Edited by Gregory Battcock (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 232-233.

<sup>295</sup> Fried's article intended to denounce minimalism, however his description would in fact become an important definition for minimalist proponents.

Meyer, *Minimalism* 233.

<sup>296</sup> James Meyer, "The Functional Site; or, Transformation of Site Specificity," *Space, Site, Intervention: Situating Installation Art*, Edited by Erika Suderburg (Minneapolis; London: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 27.

<sup>297</sup> Rosalind Krauss, "Sculpture in the Expanded Field," *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture*, Edited by Hal Foster (New York: The New Press, 1998), 41-2.

<sup>298</sup> Miwon Kwon, "One Place After Another: Notes on Site Specificity," *October* 80, Spring 1997, p. 87.



indivisible relationship between the art and its site.<sup>299</sup> Artworks served as institutional critiques that conceived of site not only in physical terms, but also as a cultural framework of interrelated spaces and economies.<sup>300</sup> While early site-specific practices relied on the literal site as the precondition of the work, the dominant drive of site-oriented practices today is an intense engagement with everyday life through contingent locations.<sup>301</sup> James Meyer dubs these works “functional sites” that are processes or operations mapping “institutional and textual filiations and the bodies that move between them.”<sup>302</sup> Robert Smithson’s series of 1968 *Non-sites* are important precursors to these projects, the artist exhibiting materials such as dirt from outdoor sites beside information that traces the geological or geographical characteristics of the area the materials were taken from.<sup>303</sup> (Fig. 38) Site in Smithson’s work is depicted as a dizzying chain of signifiers that refer to an elsewhere, revealing place as a vectored relation that is only temporarily experienced.<sup>304</sup> According to Miwon Kwon when describing contemporary site specificity “...the actuality of location (as site) and the social conditions of the institutional frame (as site) are *subordinate* to a *discursively* determined site that is delineated as a field of knowledge, intellectual exchange, or cultural debate.”<sup>305</sup>

The impossibility that sites could be central, contributed to the expansion of installation art as well, artists developing all-surrounding models of space that activated a

---

<sup>299</sup> Erika Suderburg, “Introduction,” *Space, Site, Intervention: Situating Installation Art*, Edited by Erika Suderburg (Minneapolis; London: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 2. Kwon 86.

<sup>300</sup> Kwon 87, 88.

<sup>301</sup> Meyer, “The Functional Site,” 26.  
Kwon 91.

<sup>302</sup> Meyer, “The Functional Site,” 25.

<sup>303</sup> Kaye 92.

<sup>304</sup> Meyer, “The Functional Site,” 30.

<sup>305</sup> Kwon 92.

radical de-centering of the viewing subject.<sup>306</sup> The term “installation” was coined in the sixties to delineate an art form that takes note of the perimeters of a space and reconfigures it, reorienting perceptual experience of the viewer to become the primary subject of the work.<sup>307</sup> Throughout the seventies phenomenology had come under attack by feminist and post-structural theorists who opposed the depiction of the body as an abstract entity that ignored the social and cultural determinations of perception.<sup>308</sup> As artists sought to incorporate the dismantling of the subject in spatial investigations, the individual was revealed as a psychological entity whose perception is fractured and split.<sup>309</sup> Some artists developed what was coined postminimal works,<sup>310</sup> which were installations where physical limits were established and affirmed by the viewer’s relationship to the co -ordinates of a given space.<sup>311</sup> Chrissie Iles describes this conceptual and process based practice as “discontinuous, heterogeneous, and multi-dimensional,” whose emergence was also connected to the development of instant, real-time quality of video technology in the mid-sixties.<sup>312</sup> Video technologies were used in installations by artists such as Dennis Oppenheim, Dan Graham, Vito Acconci and Bruce Nauman, which transformed the parameters of space by engaging a psychological investigation of the viewer.<sup>313</sup> According to Iles contemporary video installations have shifted into a phase of the cinematic, where the viewer is inseparable from a total space

---

<sup>306</sup> Suderburg 4.

<sup>307</sup> Suderburg 4-5.

<sup>308</sup> Bishop 69.

<sup>309</sup> Bishop 76.

<sup>310</sup> Coined by Robert Pincus-Witten in 1968 to suggest the formal possibilities opened by minimalism.

<sup>311</sup> Bishop 82, 69.

<sup>312</sup> Chrissie Iles, “Between the Still and Moving Image,” *Into the Light: The Projected Image in American Art 1964-1977*, Edited by Chrissie Iles (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 2001), 253.

<sup>313</sup> Iles 254-255.

that collapses the boundaries between film and video, and is a move away from the confrontational nature of earlier installations into a more inclusive engagement.<sup>314</sup>

We can consider Bruce Nauman as employing a postminimal approach to spatial organization in his installations that explored problems of physical self-awareness, and emphasized the psychological experience of space.<sup>315</sup> In *Performance Corridor* (1968) the artist constructed two freestanding walls eight feet high and twenty feet long, and placed them twenty inches apart to form an extremely narrow claustrophobic corridor, while he later incorporated live video monitors into the work that displayed images of empty corridors and visitors filmed from behind.<sup>316</sup> (Fig. 39) The ambiguous and uncomfortable realm of the corridors transformed an ambivalent viewing activity into a highly charged emotional experience, revealing physical, emotional, and intellectual reactions.<sup>317</sup> Nauman explored new ways to integrate video and sculpture, developing works that further emphasized subliminal tensions and had broader cultural implications.<sup>318</sup> In the video installation *Clown Torture* (1987) Nauman presented four monitors<sup>319</sup> that replayed five sequences: *Clown taking a Shit* which is a clown on a public toilet; *Pete and Repeat* where a clown repeats a story; *No, No, No, No* where a clown repeatedly screams “no”; *Clown with a fishbowl* which includes a clowns trying to balance a fishbowl; and *Clown with Water Bucket* which depicts a clown trying to

---

<sup>314</sup> Iles 260- 261.

<sup>315</sup> Neal Benezra, “Surveying Nauman,” *Bruce Nauman*, Edited by Robert C. Morgan (Baltimore; London: PAJ Books; John Hopkins University Press, 2002), 120, 124.

Marcia Tucker, “PheNAUMANology,” *Bruce Nauman*, Edited by Robert C. Morgan (Baltimore; London: PAJ Books; John Hopkins University Press, 2002), 24.

<sup>316</sup> Benezra 126.

<sup>317</sup> Tucker 27.

<sup>318</sup> Benezra 132, 139.

<sup>319</sup> Two monitors were correctly mounted, while one was upside down and the other on its side.

balance a bucket.<sup>320</sup> (Fig. 40) The range of content from the violent and innocent to the absurd and humorous, as well as the tempo of the videos overloaded the viewer with a state of extreme perceptual disturbance.<sup>321</sup> Evoking the unconnectedness and surveillance of the contemporary urban environment while employing aggressive games and a play on words, Nauman posed questions of individuality and the totalitarianism of the public realm.<sup>322</sup>

The artist Vito Acconci also charged the gallery space with the psychological, which led to his examination of public space and its antagonistic relationship with the individual. Vito Acconci has said of his relationship to minimalism that:

It was my father. It was my father art. A lot of the stuff was so much about, if Minimalism means so much to me, what can I possibly do? For me- what I could possibly do- I had to find a flaw in Minimalism. And the flaw possibly was that the source wasn't clear. It appeared as if it was there, forever- where did it come from? – so okay, could I go to the source?<sup>323</sup>

Acconci sought to challenge minimalism's legacy by shifting its exploration with perception to an engagement with psychological subjectivity that is integral to spatial experience.<sup>324</sup> In *Seedbed* (1972) the artist produced a sloping ramp similar to a minimalist sculpture, and charged the gallery space with a psychological dimension by masturbating under the ramp three times a week for the duration of three weeks.<sup>325</sup>

(Fig. 41) By the mid seventies Acconci used the gallery as a model of public space,

---

<sup>320</sup> Benezra 138-9.

<sup>321</sup> Benezra 139.

<sup>322</sup> Jorg Zütter, "Alienation of the Self, Command of the Other," *Bruce Nauman*, Edited by Robert C. Morgan (Baltimore; London: PAJ Books; John Hopkins University Press, 2002), 86- 87.

<sup>323</sup> Frazer Ward, "Survey: In Private and Public," *Vito Acconci*, Contributions by Frazer Ward, Mark C. Taylor and Jennifer Bloomer (London; New York: Phaidon, 2002), 35.

<sup>324</sup> Ward 35.

<sup>325</sup> Bishop 66-7.

pointing to the mechanisms of exclusion that structure community.<sup>326</sup> In 1980 his practice became a direct challenge to the commonplaces of architecture, as he produced models of buildings that questioned everyday life.<sup>327</sup> For example in *Instant House* (1980) four American flags that lay on a floor were activated when the gallery visitor sat on a swing. Once the swing was used the boards would erect themselves, surrounding the viewer in the form of a house decorated with the American flag. (Fig. 42) *Instant House* sought to acknowledge the programmatic and symbolic order of modernist architecture that is at odds with one's individualism.<sup>328</sup>

Developing models of spatial experience has been central to McCarthy's practice, from postminimal and performance investigations to installations of everyday architectures. According to McCarthy "Minimalism was a thing that as a young artist you were thinking about and it was going on."<sup>329</sup> In *Dead H* (1968; 1975) McCarthy developed his critique of minimalism, converting Donald Judd's columns of cubes into a ventilation system. Made out of metal furnace ducts *Dead H* was spread out onto the floor and open at the ends to reveal their empty interior.<sup>330</sup> (Fig. 43) The work played on the physically hollow and inaccessible nature of minimalist work, exploring minimalism's closure to the psychological and philosophical connotations of spatial experience.<sup>331</sup> Turning minimalism towards an acknowledgement of the humane, *Dead H*

---

<sup>326</sup> Ward 48.

<sup>327</sup> Anthony Vidler, "Home Alone: Vito Acconci's Public Realm," *Warped Space: Art, Architecture, and Anxiety in Modern Culture*, Edited by Anthony Vidler (Cambridge; London: MIT Press, 2000), 137- 141.

<sup>328</sup> Ward 49-50.

<sup>329</sup> David Thorp, "Large- Scale Substitutes," *Blockhead & Daddies Bighead: Paul McCarthy at the Tate Modern* (London: Tate, 2003), 172-173.

<sup>330</sup> Lane Relyea, "A Few Words for Dead H," *Parkett 73*, July 2005, p. 103.

<sup>331</sup> Frances Morris and Sarah Glennie, "Hollow Dreams," *Blockhead & Daddies Bighead: Paul McCarthy at the Tate Modern* (London: Tate, 2003), 177.

was also a metaphor for the architecture of the body, the hollow vents suggesting an entry way or limb that fuses architecture with anthropomorphic associations, while the title in fact stands for “Dead Human.”<sup>332</sup> McCarthy would develop perceptual engagements with audiences through his performances in houses and studios that established particular spatial frameworks of viewing.<sup>333</sup> For example, McCarthy describes his performances *Sailor’s Meat* (1975) and *Tubbing* (1975) that were presented on the same evening:

In the hotel where we lived, there was a hallway with six sleeping rooms and a bathroom. I put a monitor in the hallway pointing towards where the audience might stand or sit. The monitor was between the doorway of the bathroom where *Tubbing* took place and the doorway of the bedroom where *Sailor’s Meat* was done. The viewer was forced to be in the hallway and watch the monitor. The monitor blocked the audience from going down the hallway and looking directly into the bathroom or bedroom.<sup>334</sup>

By framing works in a manner where bodies struggled against physical boundaries, McCarthy like postminimalist artists elicited the body as a spatializing force, and architectural boundaries as a metaphor for civilizing influences.<sup>335</sup> In the artist’s later installations, including *Caribbean Pirates*, the gallery was constructed as a staged equivalent of everyday architectural space.<sup>336</sup> Structures suggested warped versions of modernist architectures through spatial displacements, references to multiple viewpoints, and cultural projections of space.<sup>337</sup> McCarthy’s works have engaged the hysterical spaces of Nauman’s projects with the totalizing architectural models of Acconci.

---

<sup>332</sup> Morris and Glennie 177.

<sup>333</sup> Ulrike Groos, “Introduction,” *Paul McCarthy: Videos 1970- 1997*, Edited by Yilmaz Dziewior (Hamburg; Koln: Kunstverein in Hamburg, Konig, 2003),18.

<sup>334</sup> Groos 19-20.

<sup>335</sup> Amelia Jones, “Paul McCarthy’s Inside Out Body and the Desublimation of Masculinity,” *Paul McCarthy* (Ostfildern; New York: Hatje Cantz Pub; New Museum of Contemporary Art, 2000), 126.

<sup>336</sup> Anthony Vidler, “Panoptic Drives/ Mental Spaces: Notes on Paul McCarthy’s “Dimension of the Mind”,” *Paul McCarthy* (Ostfildern; New York: Hatje Cantz Pub; New Museum of Contemporary Art, 2000), 213.

<sup>337</sup> Ralph Rugoff, “Raw Footage,” *Piccadilly Circus: Paul McCarthy* (Zurich: Scalo Verlag, 2004), 169-170.

Kelley's investigations into everyday architecture have similarly grown out of his interest in subjective experiences of space. Rejecting minimalism, and dubbing it "I-beam sculpture," Kelley's earliest works were sculptures that stripped minimalism of its anonymity and imbued it with subjectivity.<sup>338</sup> Made of simple plywood and painted in white, Kelley's *Birdhouse for a Bird That is Near and a Bird That is Far* (1978) bears resemblance to minimal sculpture. However, by building the house according to a basic how to manual, and customizing the two houses for particular bird types, Kelley draws ridiculous personifications that mirror how we act in space.<sup>339</sup> (Fig. 44) Throughout his performance works the artist would illustrate universal ideologies, using objects and drawings whose meanings shifted according to rambling associations that evoke real places and non-places (utopia) at once.<sup>340</sup> In *Three Valleys* (1980) the artist presented a "travelogue" or "tale of two cities"<sup>341</sup> conjuring the space of California through objects, and dominant signifiers such as maps and photography,<sup>342</sup> whose meanings shifted in a dizzying chain of signification much like Smithson's *Non-sites*. (Fig. 45) Kelley's post performance works were often explicit explorations of architectural space, and included elaborate installations of sculptural objects, drawings, and paintings that were all related to particular themes.<sup>343</sup> Sometimes fully embracing and entering architectural discourse, particular installations interrogated architectural projects as authoritarian programs of

---

<sup>338</sup> Elizabeth Sussman, "Introduction," *Mike Kelley: Catholic Tastes*, Edited by Elizabeth Sussman (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1993), 17, 19.

<sup>339</sup> Timothy Martin, "Janitor in a Drum: Excerpts from a Performance History," *Mike Kelley: Catholic Tastes*, Edited by Elizabeth Sussman (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1993), 56.

<sup>340</sup> Martin 73.

<sup>341</sup> Martin 65.

<sup>342</sup> John C. Welchman, "The Mike Kelleys," *Mike Kelley* (London; New York: Phaidon, 1999), 51.

<sup>343</sup> Elizabeth Sussman, "Open the Door and Let it in," *Mike Kelley 1985- 1996*, Edited by José Lebrero Stals Kelley (Barcelona: Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, 1997), 26.

social thought and order.<sup>344</sup> These works include *From My Institution to Yours or Mike Kelley's Proposal for the Decoration of an Island of Conference Rooms (with Copy Room) for an Advertising Agency Designed by Frank Ghery* (1992) and the sculpture *Educational Complex* (1995).

McCarthy and Kelley's architectural explorations can be considered in relationship to Henri Lefebvre and Michel de Certeau's writings that consider space an unfixed social practice.<sup>345</sup> Lefebvre argued that space is enacted by the interplay between spatial practices (the everyday use of urban space); representations of space (conceptualized spaces used for construction); and representational spaces (associated images and symbols of space).<sup>346</sup> Although individuals move within this triad, these three practices are shaped by the powerful societal forces that use space to serve and maintain their domination and control.<sup>347</sup> Michel de Certeau also understood space as a practiced place, citing examples such as the street's geometrical plan that is transformed by walkers' paths, and acts of reading that produce particular places.<sup>348</sup> DeCerteau distinguished between place and space: delineating place as the order of physical elements organized according to "proper" societal rules, and space as the actions of subjects within place including their varying directions, velocities, and time variables.<sup>349</sup> Therefore space as a practiced place as argued by Lefebvre and de Certeau admits

---

<sup>344</sup> José Lebrero Stals, "Dragging oneself over the threshold of the exhibition," *Mike Kelley 1985- 1996*, Edited by José Lebrero Stals Kelley (Barcelona: Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, 1997), 17.

<sup>345</sup> David Harvey, "Afterword" *The Production of Space*, Henri Lefebvre, Translation by Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1991), 425.

<sup>346</sup> Lefebvre 38.

<sup>347</sup> Lefebvre 10-11.

<sup>348</sup> Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Translation by Steven Rendell (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1984), 117.

<sup>349</sup> De Certeau 17.



unpredictability, denying order and stability.<sup>350</sup> For de Certeau individuals are constantly in the process of performing the contingencies of a particular spatial practice, which can never be resolved into an underlying order.<sup>351</sup> Lefebvre similarly stated that space is already in place before the appearance of its actors, which conditions one's competence and performance, however it is the "texture of space" that affords opportunities to negate this space through presence, action and discourse.<sup>352</sup>

In Fredric Jameson's *Postmodernism or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (1991), the cultural critic describes the texture of contemporary space, stating that the logic of our postindustrial society has meant the mutation of space into a new "hyperspace."<sup>353</sup> This space transcends the capacity of the individual to organize their immediate surroundings perceptually and cognitively in order to map their position.<sup>354</sup> This creates an alarming juxtaposition between the body and built environment that stands for our global multinational and decentered communication networks.<sup>355</sup> In decoding the postmodern hyperspace Jameson argues that architecture has cannibalized architectural styles of the past and combined them into over-stimulating ensembles.<sup>356</sup> This is a symptom of architectures that value replication over innovation and totality over constituent signifiers, in order to allow for capitalism to penetrate everyday practices.<sup>357</sup>

---

<sup>350</sup> Kaye 5.

<sup>351</sup> Kaye 5.

<sup>352</sup> Lefebvre 57.

<sup>353</sup> Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991), 44.

<sup>354</sup> Jameson, *Postmodernism*, 44.

<sup>355</sup> Jameson, *Postmodernism*, 44.

<sup>356</sup> Michael J. Dear, *The Postmodern Urban Condition* (Oxford; Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), 56.

<sup>357</sup> Fredric Jameson, "Envelopes and Enclaves: The Space of Post-Civil Society," Interview with Michael Speaks, *Assemblage* 17, April 1992, p. 36.

The architect Rem Koolhaas describes this contemporary spatiality as “Junkspace” which is “...what coagulates while modernization is in progress, its fallout...Junkspace is the Bermuda Triangle of concepts, an abandoned petri dish: it cancels distinctions, undermines resolve, confuses intention with realization. It replaces hierarchy with accumulation...”<sup>358</sup> According to Michael Sorkin the salient characteristics of the new city is a loosening of ties to specific spaces, rising levels of surveillance and segregation, and reliance on simulations.<sup>359</sup>

Jameson asserts that Los Angeles remains the privileged city for describing postmodern urbanism, and the city has in fact served as a model for discussions around contemporary urbanism.<sup>360</sup> Los Angeles’ transition to a postmodern urban space began with the city’s freeway building (1956-1991): roads carved the signature landscape of the city that is a flat totalization, uniting a fragmented mosaic of polarized and segregated neighborhoods.<sup>361</sup> The city has been defined as an elastic urban context organized according to a neocapitalist order, enclosing fragmented communities, cultures and economies, and including outlandish representations of urban locality.<sup>362</sup> Los Angeles’ urbanity “dwells between the real and ideal, the planned and the accidental, the cultivated

---

Paulette Singley “Los Angeles: Between Cognitive Mapping and Dirty Realism,” *Shaping the City: Studies in History, Theory & Urban Design*, Edited by Edward Robbins and Rodolphe El-Khoury (New York; London: Routledge, 2004),127.

<sup>358</sup> Rem Koolhaas, “Junkspace,” *October* 100, Spring 2002, p. 175-6.

<sup>359</sup> Michael Sorkin, “Introduction: Variations on a Theme Park,” *Variations on a Theme Park: The New American City and the End of Public Space*, Edited by Michael Sorkin (New York: Noonday Press, 1992), xiii-xiv.

<sup>360</sup> Singley 100-101.

<sup>361</sup> Dear 97.

<sup>362</sup> Edward W. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London; New York: Verso, 1989), 244-6.

and the fallow,” captured by Jameson’s term “dirty realism.”<sup>363</sup> Citing LA’s Westin Bonaventure Hotel as an example of the city at large, Jameson describes the performative conditions of depthlessness, fragmentation, nostalgia, and programmic decentering of the subject.<sup>364</sup> The hotel achieves a placeless disassociation from the surrounding city, and seeks to be in a world within itself, immersing the viewer in a milling confusion of trajectories and pathways, which makes it impossible for anyone to get their bearings.<sup>365</sup>

Popular culture representations of the city have proven fundamental in its spatial construction by conditioning the perception and reception of LA. Television and film serve as an archive of architectural representation that is one of the defining urban experiences of contemporary life, by enacting a process of identification with distinct places and idealized city living.<sup>366</sup> Los Angeles is one of the media’s distinct places, its landscapes pervading television and film worldwide since, “...just about every square inch of the city has been used for theatrical and television films...” and more than five hundred feature films have been set in the city alone between the mid-1960s to the mid-1990s.<sup>367</sup> However these ideal and cultivated images transcend their physical sites by facilitating a public fantasy of urban inhabitation, Los Angeles dwelling somewhere between the ideal and real.<sup>368</sup> The extreme smudging of boundaries between the world of the media and material world has also been fundamental to the city’s proliferation of

---

<sup>363</sup> Singley 127.

<sup>364</sup> Singley quoting Soja, 100.

<sup>365</sup> Jameson, *Postmodernism*, 40-43.

<sup>366</sup> Pascucci, Ernest, “Intimate (Tele)visions,” *Architecture of the Everyday*, Edited by Stephen Harris and Deborah Berke, (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997), 52.

<sup>367</sup> Robert Carringer, “Hollywood’s Los Angeles: Two Paradigms,” *Looking for Los Angeles: Architecture, Film, Photography, and Urban Landscape*, Edited by Charles G. Salas and Michael R. Roth (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2001), 247-248.

<sup>368</sup> Ernest 45- 47.

theme parks, including Disneyland, whose media representations of place in films have lead people to its physical realization in the theme park.<sup>369</sup> Television and Disneyland both extract, reduce, and recombine, in order to create an entirely new, anti-geographical space that celebrates the existing order of things under the guise of escape from it.<sup>370</sup> The theme park is in fact an inverse model of Los Angeles, the city described according to cultural tropes such as Fantasyland, Frontierland, Tomorrowland, and whose consumption of the city as spectacle also occurs through motorized vehicles (the car).<sup>371</sup> Disneyland's utopian model of Los Angeles offers a consumption of the city based on idealized principles of urbanism found in media representations.<sup>372</sup> Edward Soja recounts LA's geography stating, "With exquisite irony, contemporary Los Angeles has come to represent more than ever before a gigantic agglomeration of theme parks, a life space comprised of Disneyworlds."<sup>373</sup> This is similar to what Jean Baudrillard has argued, that Disneyland is presented as an imaginary in order to make us believe the rest is real, however ironically Los Angeles and the rest of America are in fact no longer real but of the order of the hyperreal and simulation that is in endless circulation.<sup>374</sup>

McCarthy and Kelley both elicit the hyperspace of Los Angeles in installations that serve as architectural models of experience, exploring spatial production in America. Lefebvre argued that due to the strong political hegemony, a surge in forces of

---

<sup>369</sup> Out of the top twenty-five amusement/theme parks in the world three are located in Los Angeles. Miodrag Mitrasinovic, *Total Landscape, Theme Parks, Public Space* (Aldershot; Burlington: Ashgate, 2006), 21.

<sup>370</sup> Sorkin, "Disneyland," 208.

<sup>371</sup> Sorkin, "Disneyland," 217-218.

<sup>372</sup> Michael Sorkin, "See You in Disneyland," *Variations on a Theme Park: The New American City and the End of Public Space*, Edited by Michael Sorkin (New York: Noonday Press, 1992), 227.

<sup>373</sup> Soja 246.

<sup>374</sup> Singley 126, 133.

production, and inadequate control of markets, spatial chaos has allowed spatial contradictions to arise that may turn out to precipitate capitalism's downfall.<sup>375</sup> Since spatial production is an everyday social practice, spatial systems put into place by the powerful rely on the reciprocity of use by its citizens who can negate its order through collective and individual use.<sup>376</sup> De Certeau similarly argues that the rationalization of the city is undercut through urban life that allows for the re-emergence of what has been removed from urbanist projects, leaving the city prey to contradictory movements.<sup>377</sup> McCarthy and Kelley expose the contradictions of contemporary space through a performance of Los Angeles' spaces as fragmented, depthless, and a de-centered perceptual experience. Space becomes in the hands of McCarthy and Kelley "composed of intersections of mobile elements...as the effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it, temporalize it, and make it function in the polyvalent unity of conflictual programs or contractual proximities."<sup>378</sup> Like DeCerteau's walkers who perform a spatial acting out of place, audiences in McCarthy and Kelley's works undercut the ordering of space by analyzing the plurality of urban practices that cities try to administer or suppress.<sup>379</sup>

McCarthy and Kelley's installation *Sod and Sodie Sock Comp O.S.O.* imbues spatial experience with the psychological. Made up of a sprawling labyrinth of tents, tunnels, a stairway leading nowhere, a fashion show stage, a mountain of margarine, and a watchtower, *O.S.O.*'s architectonic structure serves to radically frame and restrict the

---

<sup>375</sup> Lefebvre 63.

<sup>376</sup> Lefebvre 56.

<sup>377</sup> De Certeau 95.

<sup>378</sup> De Certeau 117.

<sup>379</sup> De Certeau 96.

audience's perception and experience, creating a warped mindscape. The work charges space with subjective and cultural references using for example stacked mattresses and margarine arranged in an order derivative of minimalism, the everyday use of the materials sully the neutrality of the exhibition space.<sup>380</sup> (Fig. 46) The work emphasizes the psychological experience of space in a manner similar to Nauman's performance corridors *O.S.O.* by also including crawl spaces, tunnels and peep holes that elicit claustrophobia and fear, visitors not knowing what they are going to see or where they will end up.<sup>381</sup> The invitation to crawl through a long tunnel running to a peephole that looks into the installation's shower room also emphasizes the sexualized act of viewing.<sup>382</sup> (Fig. 47) Therefore the gallery is charged with psychological encounters emphasizing space as a social practice, as visitors navigate their own pathways, engaging the unstable and alienating character of the work's materials and objects.

McCarthy and Kelley undercut the everyday ordering of space by providing a model of postmodern hyperspace whose contradictions seep from the edges. These physical encounters are housed within a clear geometrical organization of space that elicits urban planning that is the modus operandi of modern architecture and Los Angeles's circuit of highways.<sup>383</sup> (Fig. 48) Surveillance and discipline is also emphasized through a watchtower that is erected over the entire installation, peepholes and crawl spaces offering opportunities for spying, and objects doubling as instruments

---

<sup>380</sup> Mike Kelley, "Interview," *Mike Kelley*, Interview with Isabelle Graw (London; New York: Phaidon, 1999), 10.

<sup>381</sup> Kelley, "Interview," 21.

<sup>382</sup> Kelley, "Interview," 21.

<sup>383</sup> Martin Prinzhorn, "Fighting on Two Different Fronts: Sod and Sodie Sock Comp O.S.O.," *Mike Kelley, Paul McCarthy: Collaborative Works*, Edited by Philip Monk (Toronto: Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery, 2000), 52.

of interrogation. (Fig. 46) This regimentation is fused with references to the body, the guard tower also serving as a latrine, while alien probing and cross-dressing are performed throughout the installation, making ridiculous modernism's idealization of the body as a microcosm for architecture.<sup>384</sup> Representations of military camps from popular culture are made occupiable throughout *O.S.O.* since the work resembles a theatrical film set from military television shows, and the camp Disney created for the animated propaganda film "Der Fuehrer's Face" (1943).<sup>385</sup> The pervasiveness of surveillance, simulation, strict spatial organization, and play of the body and architecture in the contemporary city are intensified in a blurring of practices whose plurality unfixes the viewer in a fragmented, depthless, and overly-simulated space. According to Martin Prinzhorn the work "...not only implies that art has to be put into a vaster context, at the same time it is implying that the context has to contain all the specificities, all the imaginary separations and boundaries that are there to create a closed and even identity."<sup>386</sup> Los Angeles' obsession with the policing of social boundaries through architecture, media representations of space, planning, and conglomeration of theme parks is re-performed by the artists as a mapping of dominant spatial relations in America and the world. The American military camp installed in Vienna also serves as a reference to the aims of cultural imperialism and military occupation, whose organization of space internationally are central to the affirmation of neo-capitalism world wide.

---

<sup>384</sup> Anthony Vidler "The b-b-b-Body: Block, Blob, Blur," *The Body in Architecture*, Edited by Arie Graafland (Rotterdam: Delft School of Design Series on Architecture and Urbanism, 2006),131.

<sup>385</sup> Daniel Kothenschulte "Kelleyland. The Cartoon as 3-Dimensional Art and the Tragedy of Loss. Mike Kelley and Disney's Ghost," *Mike Kelley, Peter Fischli, David Weiss: Sammlung Goetz, [13 Juni- 4 November 2000]* (Munich: Sammlung Goetz, 2000), 28.

<sup>386</sup> Prinzhorn 56.

*Caribbean Pirates* by Paul McCarthy and Damon McCarthy provides a warped staging of Southern California's Disneyland ride *Pirates of the Caribbean*. The installation is composed of three architectural zones, the centerpiece a life-sized pirate ship dubbed *Frigate*, with an enormous plywood *Cakebox* inserted in its center, and a stage entitled *Village* attached to the side of the vessel that is made up of found materials. (Fig. 1, 49) The ship looks like a cross between a Spanish galleon and cargo vessel, and is made up of a patchwork of rust coloured bolted fiberglass panels whose joints and interstices are visible.<sup>387</sup> Visitors can enter or peer into *Cakebox* through its peepholes and crawl spaces that look into the bowels of the ship, and is the backside of a simulated film set of a house façade. Across from *Frigate* is *Houseboat* that is the exterior shell of a seventies houseboat purchased by Paul McCarthy and converted into a stage set. (Fig. 50) The third zone of the installation is *Underwater World* that is an enormous rollicking kinetic sculpture made up of twenty thousand pounds of steel tubing and four elevator motors, in the shape of an H supported by two armature catwalks that contain four enclosed cabin-like rooms that move simultaneously.<sup>388</sup> (Fig. 51) The work fuses references from Paul McCarthy's *Dead H*, the substructure of rooms and corridors found below the pirate ship's deck, and the skeleton of a theme park ride missing all of its accoutrements.<sup>389</sup> *Caribbean Pirates* establishes a radical de-centering of the viewing subject through spatial displacements of tipping rooms, narrow corridors, porous walls, whose violence is made manifest by video projections of masochistic performances that echo throughout the space, as well as left over objects that trigger the imagination of the

---

<sup>387</sup> John Welchman "First Mate's Bloody Flux," *Lala Land Parody Paradise: Paul McCarthy*, Edited by Stephanie Rosenthal (Munich: Haus der Kunst, 2005), 200.

<sup>388</sup> Welchman 201-202.

<sup>389</sup> Welchman 201-202.



viewer. The social construction of space is further emphasized by the relationship that the work establishes between the body and architecture. Corridors, crawl spaces, and rooms throughout all three zones simulate human bowels and passageways, as objects and materials have a double appearance of the bodily and architectural, revealing the fact that humans project their body throughout space. The underlying H-shaped structure of *Underwater World* according to Paul McCarthy in fact stands in as a symbol of the human body's two arms and two legs.<sup>390</sup>

Rupturing the boundaries of architecture Damon and Paul McCarthy mix conventional structures with simulations, revealing the dizzying relationship between representations of space and their physical realization. *Caribbean Pirates* is deployed as a Hollywood film set, the on and off camera worlds merging as sets shift from backdrops and props to installations and sculptural objects.<sup>391</sup> Based on the *Pirates of the Caribbean* ride at Disneyland, the work makes-over the scrubbed clean, de-sexualized, decontextualized, and aestheticized version of pirates in Disney, by accentuating these subtracted features in filthy and gluttonous pirate performances, all the while including an animatronic Captain Morgan head.<sup>392</sup> Like the Disney ride, McCarthy builds a theatre of popular culture figures into an organized space of simulation, although his perverse version is not Disney's rejoicing in city life as a global marketplace. Whereas Disneyland celebrates the space of neocapitalism (in particular Los Angeles) as a state of utopia by eliminating the everyday problems of urbanity, McCarthy includes an uncoordinated

---

<sup>390</sup> Stephanie Rosenthal, "How to use Failure," *Lala Land Parody Paradise: Paul McCarthy*, Edited by Stephanie Rosenthal (Munich: Haus der Kunst, 2005), 130.

<sup>391</sup> Welchman 196.

<sup>392</sup> Welchman 199.

barrage of fragments and details that are part of our experience of space that is suppressed. The blurring of simulations and place is emphasized, as well as structural fallout, confusion, fragmentation, and the seeping of popular culture into the recesses of everyday life. The models of space found in the popular media and theme parks are dissected as visitors navigate *Carribean Pirates*, recognizing the systematic totality that our everyday spaces are produced according to.

Kelley's work *Educational Complex* examines the mundane architecture of the educational system in order to expose the psychological experience of space. This piece is a large architectural model made up of the individual schools that Kelley attended as well as the house in which he grew up.<sup>393</sup> (Fig. 52, 53) The model includes Kelley's kindergarten, Catholic elementary school, junior high school, undergraduate university, and graduate university.<sup>394</sup> Kelley describes his work as a reconstruction of his memories of these spaces:

The exterior elevations of the models are fairly accurate, based on photographs, and in some instances, floor plans. The interiors, on the other hand, are radically incomplete, reflecting my inability to remember what was there. These unremembered sections of architecture are left blank, represented as inaccessible, filled-in blocks. I would estimate that a good 80 percent of the buildings are filled in in this manner.<sup>395</sup>

The result of his memory reconstruction is a three-dimensional model that visitors are able to walk around, considering the work as a subjective spatial model of the

---

<sup>393</sup> Mike Kelley, "Architectural Non-Memory Replaced with Psychic Reality," *Mike Kelley: Minor Histories: Statements, Conversations, Proposals*, Edited by John C. Welchman (Cambridge; London: MIT Press, 2004), 318.

<sup>394</sup> Kelley, "Architectural Non-Memory," 318.

<sup>395</sup> The initial intention of Kelley was to construct the model completely from memory, however his memory of these structures was so poor that he was forced to rely on photographs and floor plans for the exterior of the buildings.

Kelley, "Architectural Non-Memory," 318.

architecture of educational systems. By eliciting what Meyer describes as functional site-specificity that maps the individual's use of space, Kelley's work can be likened to Smithson's *Non-sites*. Like Smithson Kelley creates a network of signifiers revealing site as a destination that is temporarily experienced.<sup>396</sup> Rather than recreating the buildings according to their physical realities, Kelley has re-built only particular specificities of buildings that he remembers in order to emphasize his psychological experiences of these architectures.<sup>397</sup> We can consider Kelley's *Educational Complex* as an outgrowth of his earlier project *Sublevel* (1998) where the viewer in a menacing Naumanesque fashion was asked to crawl through a dark tunnel, all the while being unable to see where they would end up, the subterranean tunnels psychologizing space according to subconscious and unconscious experiences of architecture.<sup>398</sup> (Fig. 54) Kelley's project therefore emphasizes the social construction of everyday space by mapping the artist's unconscious experience of architecture that is part of spatial production.

Kelley's *Educational Complex* is a confrontation with architecture as an expression of utopian fantasy that aims at social order. By focusing on the mundane everyday experience of architectures that are partial and often forgotten, Kelley reveals the significance of authoritarian geometrical planning and structures that inform our unconscious experiences of space.<sup>399</sup> *Educational Complex* merges separate buildings into one superstructure, simulating contemporary utopian hyperspaces whose totalizing

---

<sup>396</sup> Meyer, "Functional Site," 30.

<sup>397</sup> Mike Kelley, "Missing Space/ Time: A Conversation Between Mike Kelley, Kim Colin, and Mark Skiles," *Mike Kelley: Minor Histories: Statements, Conversations, Proposals*, Interview with Kim Colin and Mark Skiles, Edited by John C. Welchman (Cambridge; London: MIT Press, 2004), 333.

<sup>398</sup> Kelley, "Interview," 20-21.

<sup>399</sup> Stals 17.

landscapes elicit social order. Although the work is not a direct reference to Los Angeles, it does include the city's school Cal Arts that Kelley attended, and whose building was in fact creatively initiated and commissioned by Walt Disney.<sup>400</sup> This is emblematic of Kelley's interest in utopian architectures as models of everyday space. Exploring the notion of Repressed Memory Syndrome that fetishizes what is forgotten as a by-product of abuse, Kelley states that his project is about overcoming his victimization at the hands of the educational complexes and their architectures of social control.<sup>401</sup> The ill remembered blank spaces are blocked off from access eliciting imagined darkness of intimate experiences of danger and abuse that Kelley has forgotten.<sup>402</sup> However these forgotten memories are not repressed experiences of sexual abuse, but experiences of childhood socialization according to cultural rules whose enforcement begin at the home and school. By reconstructing institutional spaces through a mapping of subjective experience, Kelley presents characteristic experiences of buildings in order to undercut their programmatic aspects. Subjectivity introduces pluralities of urban practice that undermine authoritative discourses, and reveal the discarded and forgotten residues of the individual that architectural programs conceal.<sup>403</sup> *Educational Complex* like de Certeau's city walkers reconstructs the architectural through a subjective play that admits unpredictability, and denies stability and order.<sup>404</sup>

---

<sup>400</sup> 23 Kothenschulte 23.

<sup>401</sup> Vidler, "Deep Space," 124.

<sup>402</sup> Kelley, "Missing Space/ Time," 328-29.

<sup>403</sup> Vidler, "Deep Space," 126.

<sup>404</sup> Vidler, "Deep Space," 126.

McCarthy and Kelley stage the characteristics of contemporary space in a manner that emphasizes the contradictions in our totalizing orders. Exploding minimalism's perceptual neutrality, the artists emphasize the psychological experiences of space in an assault of perceptual experience akin to the works of Bruce Nauman and Vito Acconci. Presenting perceptually charged atmospheres that integrate Los Angeles' fragmented, militarized, and theme parked landscapes, their works provide models of contemporary spatial experiences that reveal the contradictions behind utopian promises of modernist programs. Spatial practices in both their virtual and real manifestations are blurred in installations that seethe with psychological disorders driven by suppression. The individual is asked to navigate pathways through the dysfunctionality of contemporary hyperspace whose reliance on policing, simulation, and suppression reveal how unfixed contemporary space really is. Engaging the pluralities of space from the overly ordered and simulated to the decentered and dirty real, McCarthy and Kelley remind viewers that space is a continuing social practice whose operations rely on our complicity.

## Conclusion

Integrating elements outside of the arts proper, McCarthy and Kelley's works are witty, gross, bad-taste, low-grade parodies of America. With a depraved humor, a keen interest in art practices, and eye for the everyday bad and ugly, both artists undermine the dreams and values behind American consumerism and political maneuvering. Developing the strategies of pop art, performance, and spatial practices, McCarthy and Kelley create a frenzied environment of references and perceptual inversions that elude art historical classification as well as broader social definitions and categories. Through highly individualized art practices that appropriate the mundane to the spectacular, McCarthy and Kelley examine the intersection between culture and the individual. Both artists deconstruct mass produced imagery and high art in order to reveal our cultural artifacts as social constructions that reiterate taste formations, as well as gender and spatial norms. McCarthy and Kelley's transformation of the familiar turn cultural logics upside down, undermining the ordering systems that govern our daily actions.

Moving pop art appropriation into the frenzied and obsessive, McCarthy and Kelley implode cultural elitism and open our structures of meaning to critical inquiry. Pop art was significant in smudging the line between cultural distinctions by transposing the popular into high art in a manner that disrupted consumer languages, and opened culture to critical inquiry. The work of Andy Warhol in particular was essential in revealing post-industrial America as invested in the ideals of gender and sexuality, as well as fixated on public spectacles of trauma. McCarthy and Kelley's works are rarely cited for their elaboration of pop strategies, however the artists consistently integrate low

and high cultural materials in unlikely contexts and juxtapositions, such as acting out of Disney and Sad Sack narratives in psycho-sexual dramas. Their pop operation includes an elaboration of the psychological and social impact of objects and images constructed according to neo-capitalist cultural logic. Slipping between various significations, objects, and images, each become part of a circuit of meanings that is charged and likely to topple at any moment. Meanwhile, Warhol's trauma and camp are turned into a pathological public violence that has come to pervade the contemporary media, and an insistent disruption of gender norms. Through relentless fixations on the psychosocial the artists navigate post-pop towards the dark and dirty that is a far cry from the parodied consumer surfaces à la Jeff Koons and Takashi Murakami.

McCarthy and Kelley's works can be considered an outgrowth of performance practices including Happenings, Fluxus, dance, feminist performance, Viennese Actionism, and seventies body art. Beginning their artistic careers as performance artists, McCarthy and Kelley have continued to integrate the body into their works eliciting primarily nineteen seventies masochist body art, and the work of Vito Acconci. McCarthy and Kelley like Acconci submit their bodies to masochist engagement with the audience, by staging their anatomical masculinity as incoherent, vulnerable, and failing to sustain authority. Through a parodist masculine masquerade the artists unhinge gender as a naturalized institution, revealing heterosexual masculinity as a social construction dependent on performative reiteration. McCarthy and Kelley's masculine performances are unique from Acconci in that they parody art criticism's veiling of the phallus in modernist discourse, as well as the macho and effeminate characters from popular

culture. By performing twisted versions of male figures in high art and the media, the artists expose the social construction of masculinity in culture at large. Figures such as Willem de Kooning, Rocky, and Iggy Pop moan like children and indulge their libidinous urges, mocking the gender trope of a hard and tough sexuality that is supposedly endowed in the penis. In works that are live performances, videotaped performances, and performative installations, McCarthy and Kelley integrate well-known gender constructs that are taken for granted as natural and make them available to an audience through an open-ended engagement.

McCarthy and Kelley's works also interrogate the socially constructed spatial regimes of American cities, using Los Angeles as a paradigm of contemporary urbanity. Like postminimalism, installation and site specificity that extended minimalism's investigation into the production of space, McCarthy and Kelley consider the psycho-social role of spatial production in culture at large. Providing models of an individual's subjective spatial experience in the contemporary city, the artists reveal space as an unfixed social practice whose underlying order is constructed by the powerful and reiterated by the citizen. Contemporary urbanism has been characterized as a postmodern hyperspace or Junkspace that is governed by the logic of neo-capitalism, which seeks a totality of its parts, replacing distinctions with hierarchy. By eliciting the everyday spatial experience of Los Angeles that is fragmented, depthless, de-centered, and reliant on simulations to elicit spatial compliance, the artists expose contradictions that are apart of social spatiality. McCarthy and Kelley create installations that imbue ordered urban models with subjectivity, while integrating Los Angeles' emphasis on surveillance,



discipline and over the top simulation. By layering various spatial practices and the individual's everyday experiences McCarthy and Kelley undermine the totality of the neo-capitalist spatial model, as exemplified in LA. Space is revealed to rely on the individual's use for its performative reiteration, the plurality of urban practices undermining spatial orders put into place by the elite.

The artists turn American sites that we take for granted as ordinary or ideal into spectacles of the systematic totalities that organize our daily lives. In *O.S.O.* the army base becomes a conglomeration of everyday references whose perceptual inversions and over the top parodies draw frightening parallels between the humiliating regimentation of the military and American culture. Through a web of juxtapositions in *Caribbean Pirates*, Disney's sanitized versions of historical, social and political contexts is turned into a wellspring of references to repressed histories of invasion, plunder, destruction and mutilation that American nation is built upon. Finally in Kelley's *Half a Man* series and *Educational Complex*, the artist appropriates mundane ideas, objects and buildings in order to take aim at our social education, which is developed into a scathing review of our larger belief systems. The architectonic structures of these works unites disparate images and objects in a network of meanings, revealing that everything from the Saturday morning cartoon to the romanticized histories of pirating is part of a larger schema of a particular kind of social order.

Works by McCarthy and Kelley can be considered adaptations of Americanized themes and their international impact. The USA has a history of fervent transcontinental

cultural exchange promoting American culture and values through high art, discourses, film, the military, television, consumer products, and so on. Using American sites such as Disneyland and the army as backdrops to a flurry of political metaphors that consider homeland times and its bossy cultural imperialism, the artists reveal America's formidable international influence. For example, the dialogue between Europe and the USA serves as important subject matter in *O.S.O.* where the aims of American art are linked with military occupation.<sup>405</sup> Like American pop art that used its house language to critique its own culture, McCarthy and Kelley's works are about using canonical American objects and images to peer into the nation's psyche. International maneuvering and national strength and prosperity are revealed as an obsessive acting out that masks fundamental inadequacies of intolerance, ignorance and violence. Mirroring the extreme absurdity of the politics and culture of America, works gain invaluable ground by activating the country's political and cultural unconscious on an international stage.

Reconsidering the works *Sod and Sodie Sock Comp O.S.O.* and *Caribbean Pirates* is especially productive for us today in light of a contemporary America that is entangled in military and political spectacles of trauma. This spectacle has never intervened so palpably before into American's daily lives, images becoming a mutation of the military-industrial-entertainment complex that seeks to ensure citizenship and the strength of the state.<sup>406</sup> In post 9/11 America and throughout the duration of the Iraq war there has been a state struggle for mastery in the realm of image-control in order to recuperate the

---

<sup>405</sup> Philip Monk, "A Twisted Pedagogy," *Mike Kelley, Paul McCarthy: Collaborative Works*, Edited by Philip Monk (Toronto: Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery, 2000),16.

<sup>406</sup> Retort, Ian A. Boal, T.J. Clark, Joseph Matthews, Michael Watts, *Afflicted Powers: Capital and Spectacle in a New Age of War*, San Francisco: Verso, 2005, 37.

strength of the nation. Commonplace traumatic spectacles are also circulated today through a more intensified electronic communication that further collapses private and public registers, which what Seltzer argues normalizes compulsive violence.<sup>407</sup> McCarthy and Kelley's traumatic staging of military life in *O.S.O.* and *Pirates* play out the violence, hierarchy, and indoctrination within army ranks as well as their role in enacting invasion and plunder. With these works McCarthy and Kelley explode accepted images of trauma into a burlesque buffoonery where the instability of everyday signifiers unearth the social constructions behind these scenarios. Images of the war in Iraq, or abuse of prisoners in Guantanamo Bay are revealed as disturbing experiences that exist in real time, and whose depiction and real life outcome are controlled by the USA's international politicking.

Eliciting a scathing critique of American culture through disturbing visual play it is no wonder that McCarthy and Kelley have exhibited almost exclusively outside of the USA. McCarthy has also been commercially ignored by American buyers for years, only to sell his first work in 1991, and his first work to a museum in 2001. While Kelley has had more immediate commercial success, his practice has been more extensively exhibited in Europe as well. Despite recent recognition from American curators and critics that has resulted in exhibition of their works in some US art museums, significant survey of their practices or exhibitions of their newer works continues to overwhelmingly take place abroad. McCarthy and Kelley's practices demonstrate an urgent need for cultural critique, however this lack of attention at home reveals an American art network

---

<sup>407</sup> Mark Seltzer, "Wound Culture: Trauma in the Pathological Public Sphere," *October* 80, Spring 1997, p. 17.

that is buttressed by donor dollars and who are as a result are unprepared to present controversial albeit significant works. It is particularly telling that the brazenly political pieces *O.S.O.* and *Caribbean Pirates* have been shown exclusively in galleries outside the USA, including the Vienna Secession in Vienna and the Haus der Kunst in Munich.

McCarthy and Kelley continue to work with the same humor and energy they took on when they began their practices. They regularly receive accolades internationally, being featured in numerous solo and group exhibitions, publications, and receiving invitations to international art fairs and biennials. An enormous retrospective of McCarthy's work titled "Head Shop/Shop Head: Works 1966-2000," presented by the Belgium gallery S.M.A.K. continues to tour across Europe today, while an exhibition of rarely seen works by the artist opened at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York this past summer in 2008.<sup>408</sup> The Wiels Museum in Belgium opened a ten-year retrospective of the Kelley's work (1995- 2008) at the end of July 2008 featuring his piece *Educational Complex*, while the artist continues to publish his writings through MIT Press. Both McCarthy and Kelley produce new works all the time using all resources available to them, and remain hugely influential. It has therefore become all the more urgent to consider the history of their practices, and their continued output in the context of national and international art histories.

The common denominator in McCarthy and Kelley's works is an interwoven chain of references and associations that moves between lowbrow and highbrow culture

---

<sup>408</sup> It is interesting to note that the Whitney exhibition is of McCarthy's early architectural installations that explore perceptual experience, and do not include works of any controversial or disturbing content.

and the norms and values that shape the individual.<sup>409</sup> The artists use artifacts of the everyday and the heralded, elaborating on the psychological impact of culture and its logics of order. Gender and space are revealed as social constructions that are performed daily, maintaining divisions and hierarchies that reinforce cultural logics. Mapping the fissures and contradictions of these practices, McCarthy and Kelley demonstrate the absurdity behind cultural truths that we value and sometimes admonish. What we are meant to see and think is revealed to be in sharp opposition to what actually determines how we experience the world. Pop, performance, and postminimal legacies are useful in understanding their works, however it is one's familiarity with consumer objects and images that provide McCarthy and Kelley's works their formidable impact. Through obsessive, disturbing, and oftentimes ridiculous appropriations the artists deconstruct everyday life showing us why we do what we do and how we do it. Pop surfaces are replaced for an exploration of the psychosocial and the repressive social conditioning that highbrow and lowbrow images are infused with. In order to understand McCarthy and Kelley one must look to culture at large and re-consider all of America's deep, dark and dirty secrets, because this is in fact exactly what they would like us to do.

---

<sup>409</sup> Magnus af Petersens, "Paul McCarthy's 40 Years of Hard Work- An Attempt at a Summary," *Paul McCarthy: Head Shop, Shop Head: Works 1966-2006*, Edited by Magnus af Petersens and Paul McCarthy (Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 2006), 21.

## Bibliography

- Auslander, Philip. *From Acting to Performance: Essays in Modernism and Postmodernism*. London; New York: Routledge, 1997.
- . "Going with the Flow: Performance Art and Mass Culture." *TDR* 33 (Summer 1989): 119- 136.
- Bell, Elizabeth and Lynda Haas, eds. *From Mouse to Mermaid: The Politics of Film, Gender and Culture*. Bloomington; Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995.
- Berke, Deborah and Stephen Harris, eds. *Architecture of the Everyday*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997.
- Bloomer, Jennifer, Mark C. Taylor and Frazer Ward. *Vito Acconci*. London; New York: Phaidon, 2002.
- Bishop, Claire. *Installation Art: A Critical History*. London: Tate Publishing, 2005.
- Butler, Judith. "Gender is Burning: Questions of Appropriation and Subversion." In *Theory in Contemporary Art Since 1985*. Edited by Zoya Kocur and Simon Leung. Malen; Oxford; Victoria: Blackwell Publishing, 2005. 166-181.
- ."Against Proper Objects." In *Feminism Meets Queer Theory*. Edited by Elizabeth Weed and Naomi Schor. Bloomington; Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1997. 2-30.
- . *Gender Trouble*. London; New York: Routledge, 1990.
- Cameron, Dan, Amelia Jones, Lisa Philips, and Anthony Vidler. *Paul McCarthy*. Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz Pub; New York: New Museum of Contemporary Art, 2000.
- Carlson, Marvin. *Performance: A Critical Introduction*. London; New York: Routledge, 1996.
- Carringer, Robert. "Hollywood's Los Angeles: Two Paradigms." In *Looking for Los Angeles: Architecture, Film, Photography, and Urban Landscape*. Edited by Charles G. Salas and Michael R. Roth. Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2001. 247-266.
- de Certeau, Michel. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Translation by Steven Rendell. Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1984.
- Cheng, Meiling. *In Other Los Angeleses: Multicentric Performance Art*. Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 2002.

Cleto, Fabio. "Introduction: Queering the Camp." In *Camp: Queer Aesthetics and the Performing Subject*. Edited by Fabio Cleto. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999. 1-42.

Clover, Carol J. "Her body, himself: Gender in the Slasher film." In *Horror: The Film Reader*. Edited by Mark Jancovich. London; New York: Routledge. 77- 89.

Dear, Michael J. *The Postmodern Urban Condition*. Oxford; Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 2000.

Doris, Sara. *Pop Art and the Contest over American Culture*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Doyle, Jennifer, Jonathan Flatley and José Esteban Muñoz, eds. *Pop Out: Queer Warhol*. Durham; London: Duke University Press, 1996.

Dyer, Richard. *The Matter of Images: Essays on Representations, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.* London; New York: Routledge, 2002.

--. "The White Man's Muscles." In *The Masculinity Studies Reader*. Edited by Rachel Adams and David Savran. Malden: Blackwell, 2002. 262- 273.

Dziewior, Yilmaz, Edited by Paul McCarthy: *Videos 1970-1997*. Hamburg; Koln: Kunstverein in Hamburg, Konig, 2003.

Eco, Umberto. "Lowbrow Highbrow, Highbrow Lowbrow." In *Pop Art: The Critical Dialogue*. Edited by Carol Anne Mahsun. Ann Arbor and London: ICA; London: MIT Press, 1988. 77-85.

Foster, Hal. "Death in America." In *October Files 2: Andy Warhol*. London: MIT Press, 2001. 68-88.

--. *Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century*. Cambridge; London: MIT Press, 1996.

--, and Mark Francis. *Pop*. London: Phaidon, 2005.

Freud, Sigmund. "Mourning and Melancholia." In *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XIV (1914-1916)*. London: Vintage, 2001. 237-257.

Friedman, Ken, ed. *The Fluxus Reader*. Chincester; West Sussex: Academy Editions, 1998.

Celant, Germano. *Claes Oldenburg: An Anthology*. New York: Guggenheim Museum Publications, 1995.

Glennie, Sarah, Timothy Llewellyn, Paul McCarthy, Francis Morris, James Rondeau, Nicholas Serota, and David Thorp. *Blockhead & Daddies Bighead: Paul McCarthy at the Tate Modern*. London: Tate, 2003.

Goetz, Ingvild, Sammlung Goetz, and Rainald Schumacher. *Mike Kelley, Peter Fischli, David Weiss: Sammlung Goetz, [13 Juni- 4 November 2000]*. Munich: Sammlung Goetz, 2000.

Goldberg, Rose Lee. "One Hundred Years." In *Live: Art and Performance*. Edited by Adrian Heathfield. London: Tate Pub, 2004. 176- 180.

--. *Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present*. London; New York: Thames & Hudson, 2001.

Graw, Isabelle, Anthony Vidler, and John C. Welchman. *Mike Kelley*. London; New York: Phaidon, 1999.

Greenberg, Clement. "Avant-Garde and Kitsch." In *Art and Culture: Critical Essays*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1939. 3-21.

Hebdige, Dick. "In Poor Taste: Notes on Pop." In *Modern Dreams: The Rise and Fall of Pop*. New York: ICA; London: MIT Press, 1988. 77-85.

Heynen, Hilde. *Architecture and Modernity: A Critique*. Cambridge; London: MIT Press, 1999.

Holert, Tom. "Schooled For Scandal." *Artforum* 39 (Nov 2000): 134- 141.

Hoptman, Laura J. *Yayoi Kusama*. London: Phaidon, 2000.

Hutchings, Peter. *The Horror Film*. Harlow: Pearson, 2004.

Iles, Chrissie, ed. *Into the Light: The Projected Image in American Art 1964-1977*. New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 2001.

Jameson, Frederic. "Envelopes and Enclaves: The Space of Post-Civil Society." Interview with Michael Speaks. *Assemblage* 17 (April 1992): 30-37.

--. *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1991.

Jones, Amelia. *Body Art/ Performing the Subject*. Minneapolis; London: University of Minnesota Press, 1998.



Jones, Caroline A. "Andy Warhol's Factory, "Commonism" and the Business Art Business." In *Machine in the Studio: Constructing the Postwar American Artist*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996. 189-267.

Kaprow, Allan. *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life, Expanded Ed.* Edited by Jeff Kelley. Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 2003.

Kaye, Nick. *Site-Specific Art: Performance, Place and Documentation*. London; New York: Routledge, 2000.

Kelley, José Lebrero Stals, ed. *Mike Kelley 1985- 1996*. Barcelona: Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, 1997.

Kelley, Mike. "Mike Kelley." In *Press Play: Contemporary Artists in Conversation*. Interview with Isabelle Graw. London: Phaidon, 2005. 381-395.

--. *Minor Histories: Statements, Conservations, Proposals*. Edited by John C. Welchman. Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2004.

--, and Paul McCarthy. *Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery International Lecture Series*. Lecture script. Toronto, March 9, 2000.

--. "Cross Gender/ Cross Genre." *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art* 22 (Jan 2000): 1-9.

--. CD linear notes. *Sod & Sodie Sock & Studio C (Tokyo 1996)*. Los Angeles: Compound Annex Records, 1998. CD recordings of performance.

--. "Talking Failure." Interview with Julie Sylvester. *Parkett* 31, (March 1992): 100-103.

Klein, Jennie. "Paul McCarthy: Rites of Masculinity." *PAJ (USA)* 23 (May 2001): 10-17.

Koolhaas, Rem. "Junkspace." *October* 100 (Spring 2002): 175- 189.

Krauss, Rosalind. "Sculpture in the Expanded Field." In *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture*. Edited by Hal Foster. New York: The New Press, 1998. 35- 47.

Kwon, Miwon. "One Place After Another: Notes on Site Specificity." *October* 80 (Spring 1997): 85-110.

Leerom, Medovio. "Mapping the Rebel Image: Postmodernism and Masculinist Politics of Rock in the U.S.A." *Cultural Critique* 20 (Winter 1991-1992): 153-188.

- Lefebvre, Henri. *The Production of Space*. Translation by Donald Nicholson-Smith. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1991.
- Livingstone, Martha. *Pop Art: A Continuing History*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1990.
- Loeffler, Carl E. and Darlene Tong, eds. *Performance Anthology: Source Book of California Performance Art*. San Francisco: Last Gasp Press & Cont. Art Press, 1989.
- Madoff, Steven Henry. *Pop Art: A Critical History*. Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1997.
- Mahsun, Carol Anne, ed. *Pop Art: The Critical Dialogue*. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1989.
- Malcolm, Miles. "Representations of the City." In *The City Cultures Reader*. Edited by Miles Malcolm. London; New York: Routledge, 2000. 193- 194.
- Martin, Timothy. "Rocking the Lifeboat." In *Sunshine & Noir: Art in LA, 1960-1997*. Edited by Lars Nittve and Helle Crenzien. Humlebaek: Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, 1997. 171- 187.
- McCarthy, Paul. "Paul McCarthy." In *Press Play: Contemporary Artists in Conversation*. Interview with Kristine Stiles. London: Phaidon, 2005. 450-461.
- Meyer, Richard. "Most Wanted Men: Homoeroticism and the Secret of Censorship in Early Warhol." In *Outlaw Representation, Censorship and Homosexuality in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Art*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002. 94-157.
- . *Minimalism: Art and Polemics in the Sixties*. New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2001.
- Mitrasinovic, Miodrag. *Total Landscape, Theme Parks, Public Space*. Aldershot; Burlington: Ashgate, 2006.
- Monk, Peter, ed. *Mike Kelley, Paul McCarthy: Collaborative Works*. Toronto: Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery, 2000. 51-57.
- Morgan, Robert C., ed. *Bruce Nauman*. Baltimore: PAJ Books; London: John Hopkins University Press, 2002.
- Morris, Robert. "Notes on Sculpture." In *Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology*. Edited by Gregory Battcock. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995. 222-236.

Oldenburg, Claes et al. "Jasper Johns, Andy Warhol, Claes Oldenburg." In *On Record: 11 Artists 1963*. Interviews by Billy Kluver. New York: Experiments in Art and Technology, 1981.

O'Dell, Kathy. *Contract with the Skin: Performance Art and the 1970s*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998.

Petersens, Magnus af and Paul McCarthy. *Paul McCarthy: Head Shop, Shop Head: Works 1966-2006*. Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 2006.

Phelan, Peggy. *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance*. London; New York: Routledge, 1993.

Read, Alan, ed. *Architecturally Speaking: Practices of Art, Architecture and the Everyday*. London; New York: Routledge, 2000.

Relyea, Lane. "A Few Words for Dead H." *Parkett* 73 (2005): 102-106.

Rosenthal, Stephanie, ed. *Lala Land Parody Paradise: Paul McCarthy*. Munich: Haus der Kunst, 2005.

Ross, Andrew. "Uses of Camp." In *Camp: Queer Aesthetics and the Performing Subject*. Edited by Fabio Cleto. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999. 308-329.

Rugoff, Ralph. *Piccadilly Circus: Paul McCarthy*. Zurich: Scalo Verlag, 2004.

--, Kristine Stiles, and Giacinto Di Pietrantonio. *Paul McCarthy*. New York; London: Phaidon, 1996. 32-87.

Schechner, Richard. *Performance Studies: An Introduction, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*. London; New York: Routledge, 2006.

Schimmel, Paul, ed. *Out of Actions: Between Performance and the Object 1949-1979*. Los Angeles; New York: The Museum of Contemporary Art, and Thames & Hudson, 1998.

Silverman, Kaja. "Masochism and Male Subjectivity." In *The Masculinity Studies Reader*. Edited by Rachel Adams and David Savran. Malden: Blackwell, 2002. 21-40.

Singley, Paulette. "Los Angeles: Between Cognitive Mapping and Dirty Realism." In *Shaping the City: Studies in History, Theory & Urban Design*. Edited by Edward Robbins and Rodolphe El-Khoury. London; New York: Routledge, 2004. 98-134.

Soja, Edward W. *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*. London; New York: Verso, 1989.

Sorkin, Michael, ed. *Variations on a Theme Park: The New American City and the End of Public Space*. New York: Noonday Press, 1992.

Stiles, Kristine. "Performance Art." In *Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art: A Sourcebook of Artists' Writings*. Edited by Kristine Stiles and Peter Selz. Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1996. 679- 803.

Suarez, Juan A. "The Artist as Advertiser: Stardom, Style, and Commodification in Andy Warhol's Underground Films." In *Bike Boys, Drag Queens and Super Stars: Avant-Garde, Mass Culture, and Gay Identity in the 1960s Underground Cinema*. Bloomington; Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1996. 214- 259.

Suderburg, Erika, ed. *Space, Site, Intervention: Situating Installation Art*. Minneapolis; London: University of Minnesota Press, 2000.

Sussman, Elizabeth, ed. *Mike Kelley: Catholic Tastes*. New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1993.

Sontag, Susan. "Notes on "Camp"." In *Against Interpretation and Other Essays*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1961. 275-304.

Tinkcom, Matthew. "Warhol's Camp." In *Camp: Queer Aesthetics and the Performing Subject*. Edited by Fabio Cleto. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999. 344-360.

Ursprung, Philip. "'Catholic Tastes' Hurting and healing the body in Viennese Actionism in the 1960s." In *Performing the Body/ Performing the Text*. Edited by Amelia Jones. London; New York: Routledge, 1999. 138- 152.

Vidler, Anthony. "The b-b-b-Body: Block, Blob, Blur." *The Body in Architecture*. Edited by Arie Graafland. Rotterdam: Delft School of Design Series on Architecture and Urbanism, 2006. 130- 137.

--. *Warped Space: Art, Architecture, and Anxiety in Modern Culture*. Cambridge; London: MIT Press, 2000.

Withers, Josephine. "Feminist Performance Art: Performing, Discovering, Transforming Ourselves." In *The Power of Feminist Art: The American Movement of the*

*1970s, History and Impact.* Edited by Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard. New York:  
Harry N. Abrams, 1994. 158- 189.

Fig. 1



Fig. 2

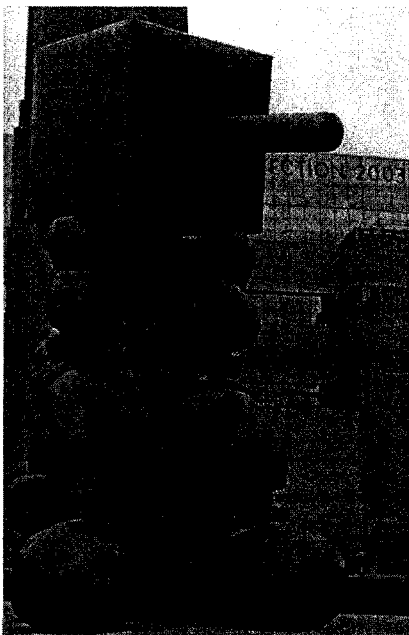


Fig. 3



Fig. 4

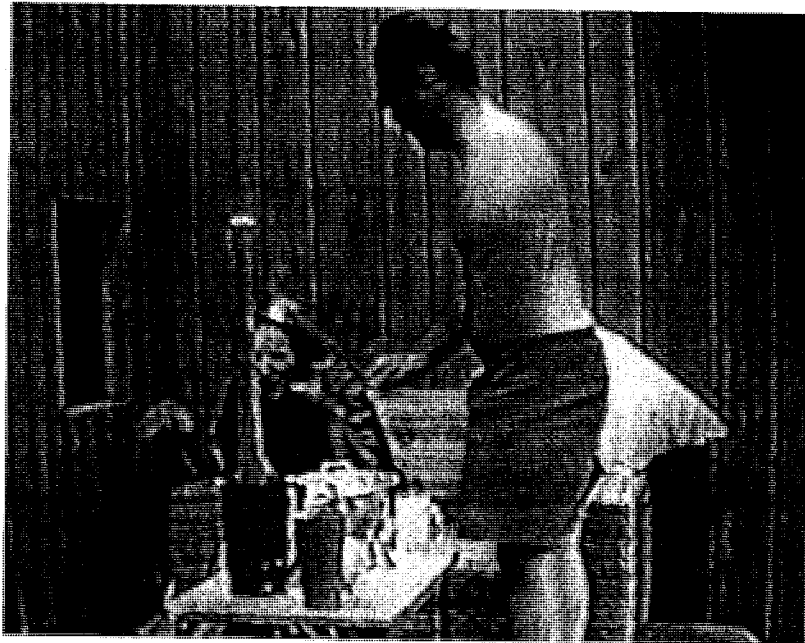


Fig. 5



Fig. 6





Fig. 7



Fig. 8

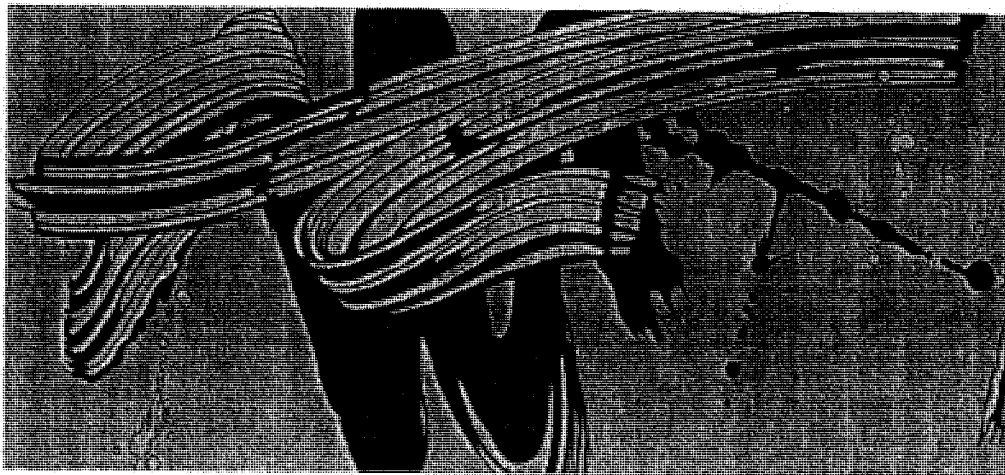


Fig. 9



Fig. 10

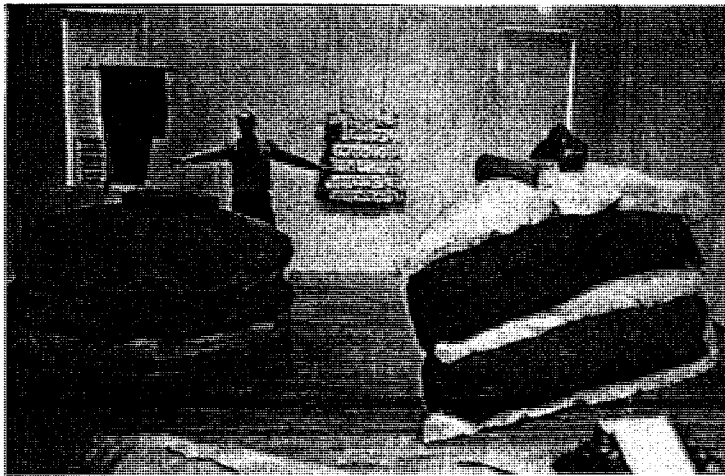


Fig. 11

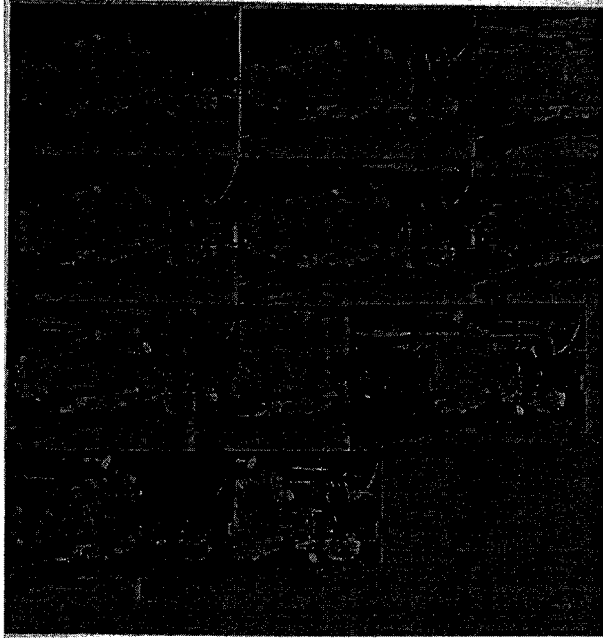


Fig. 12



Fig. 13



Fig. 14

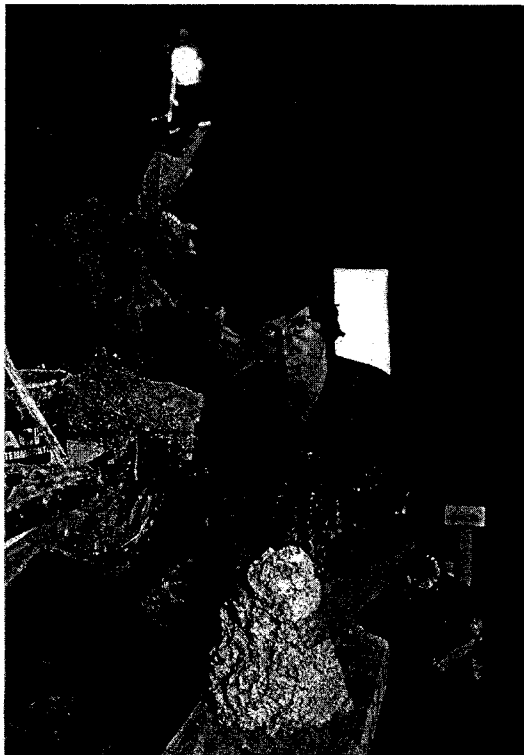




Fig. 17



Fig. 18

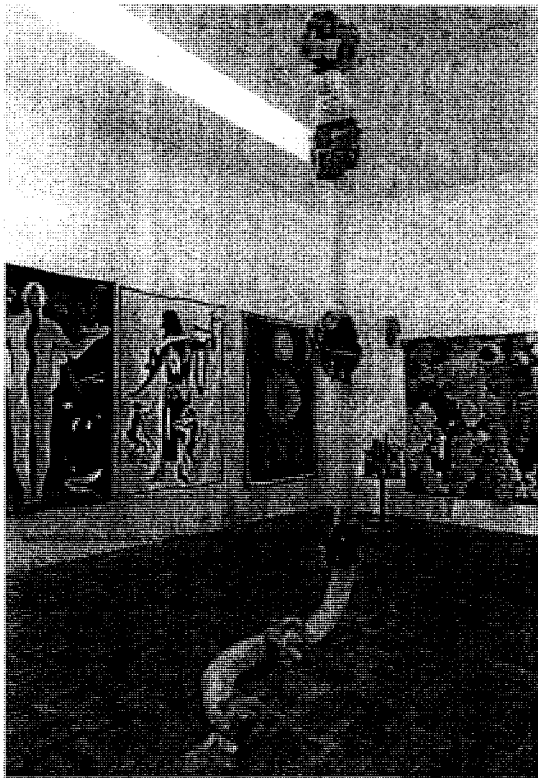


Fig. 19

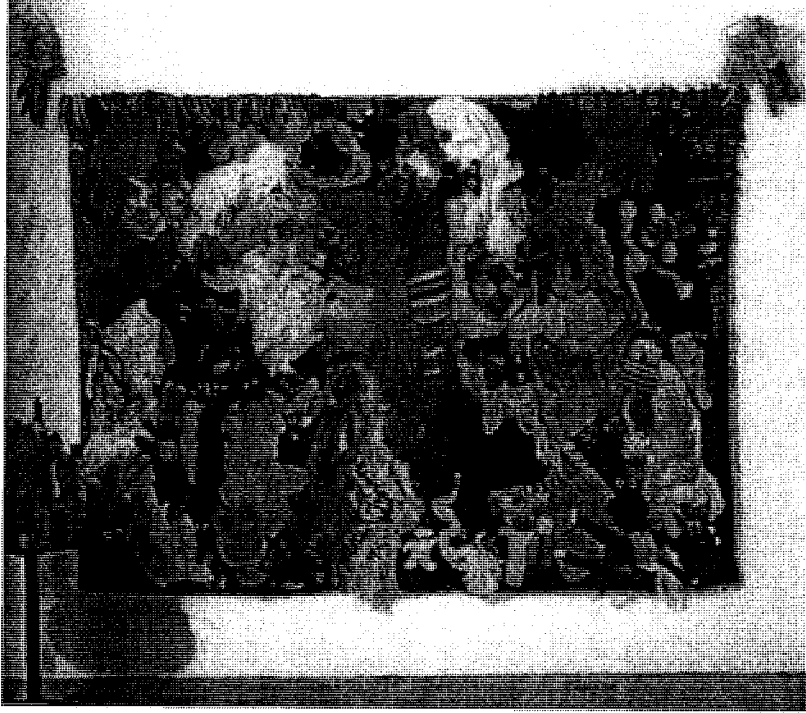


Fig. 20

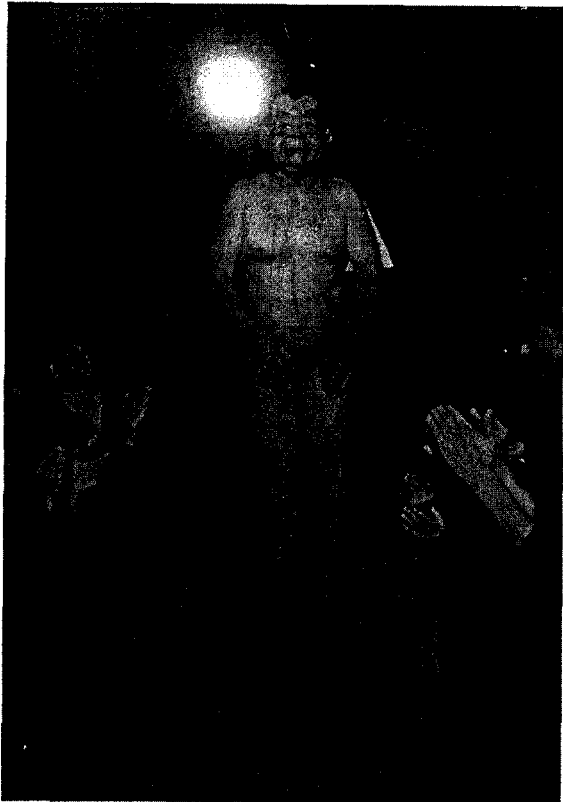


Fig. 21



Fig 22





Fig. 23



Fig. 24

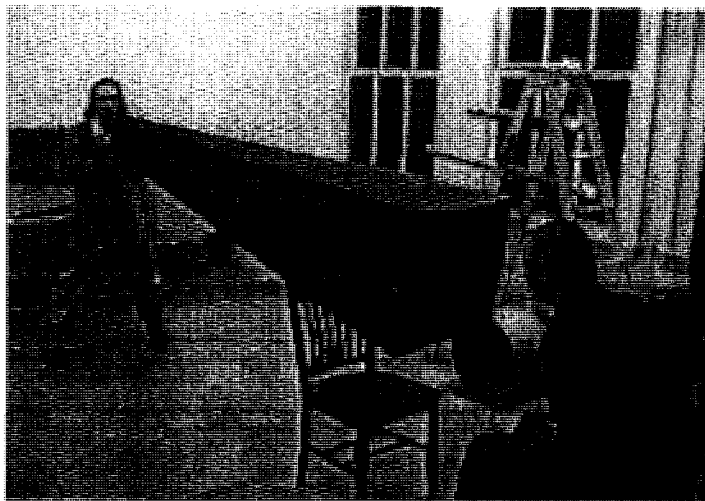


Fig. 25

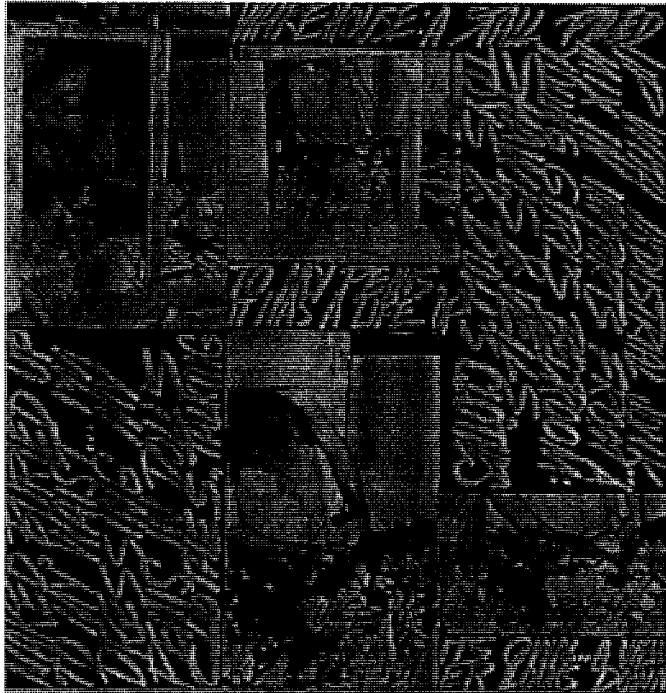


Fig. 26

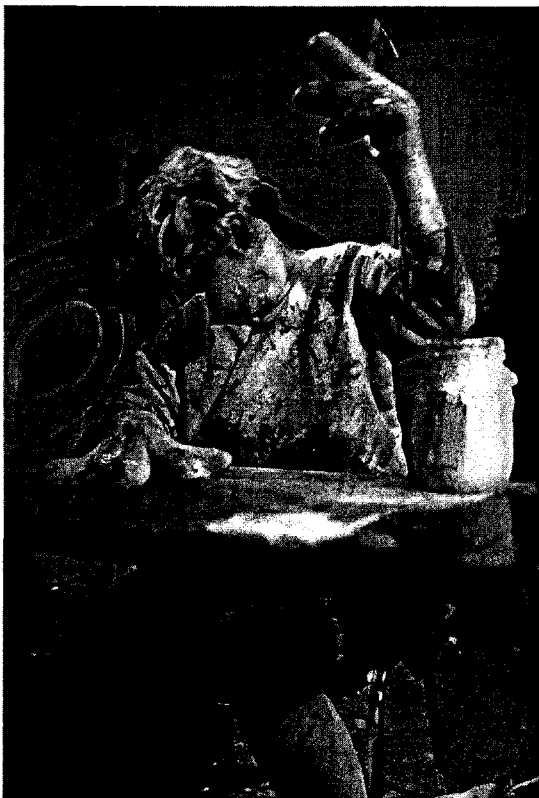


Fig. 27

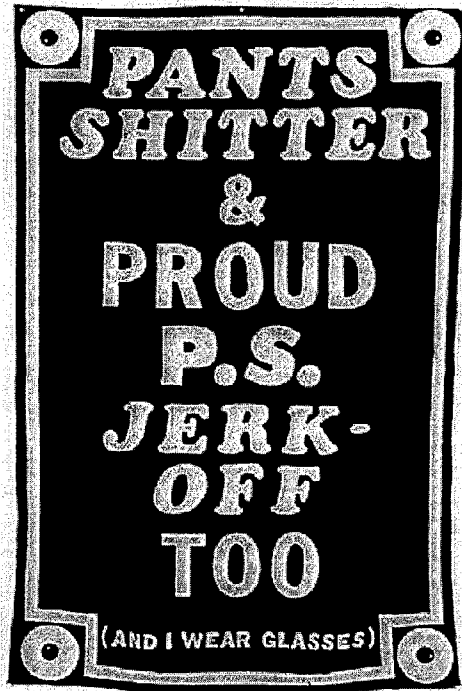


Fig. 28

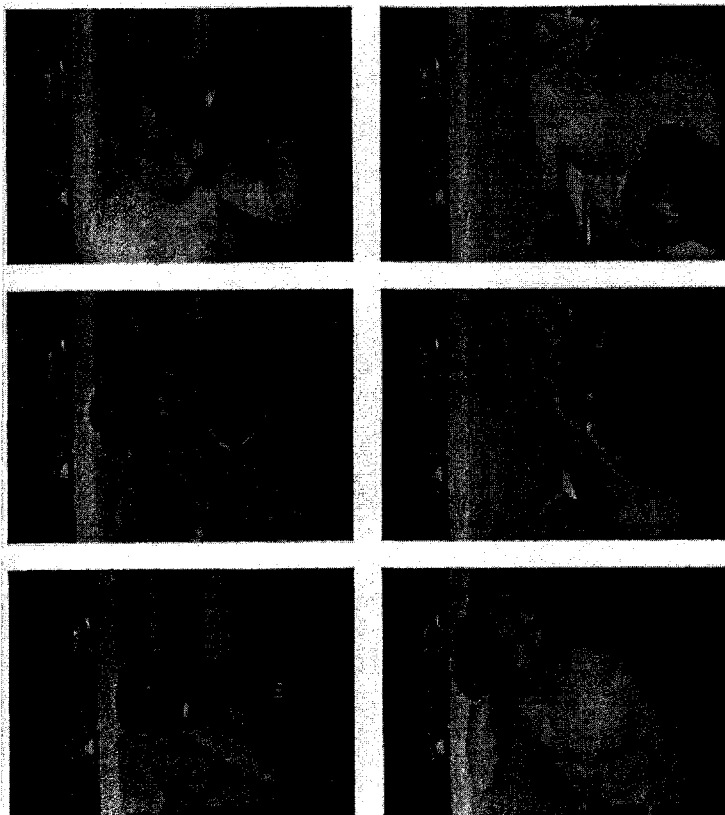


Fig. 29



Fig. 30

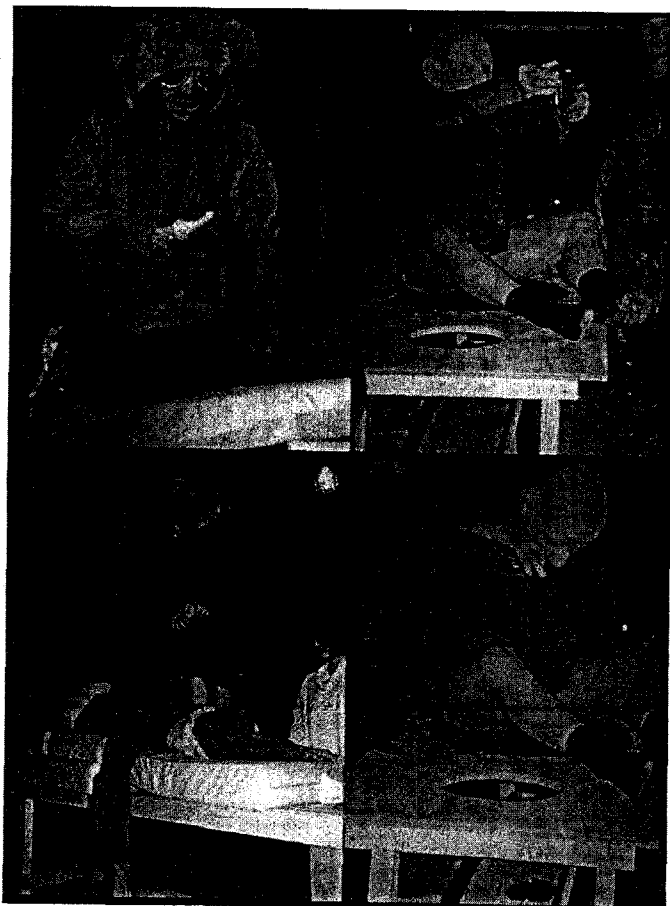


Fig. 31



Fig. 32



Fig. 33

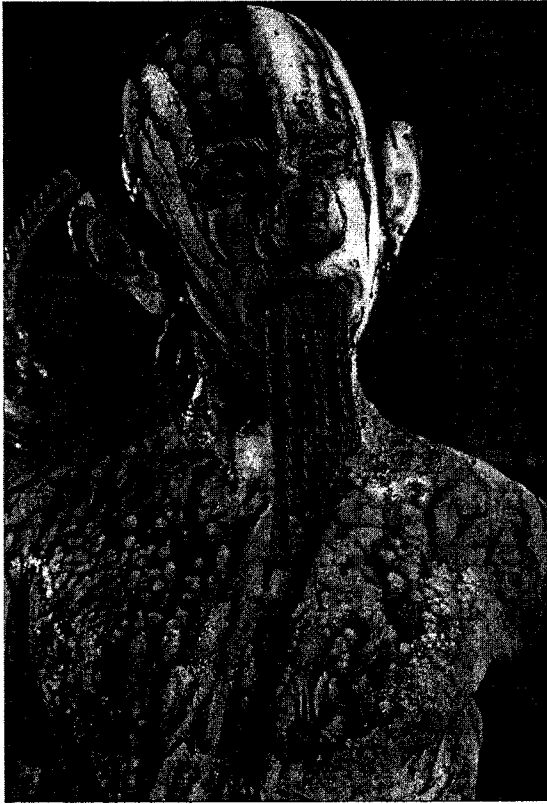


Fig. 34



Fig. 35

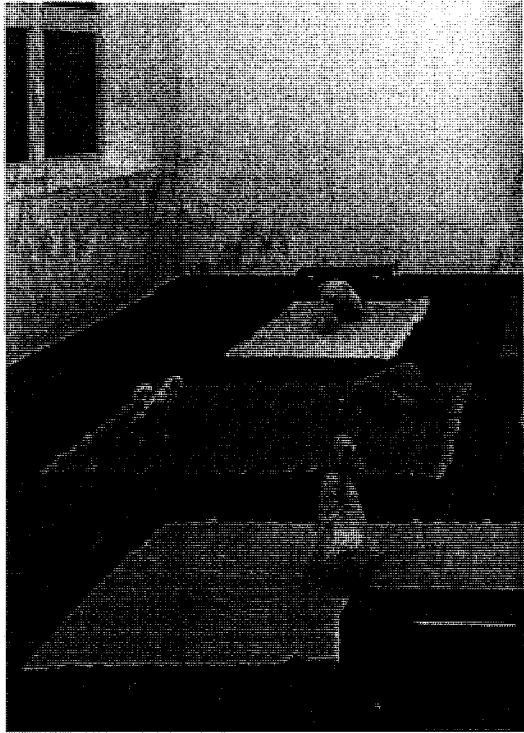


Fig. 36

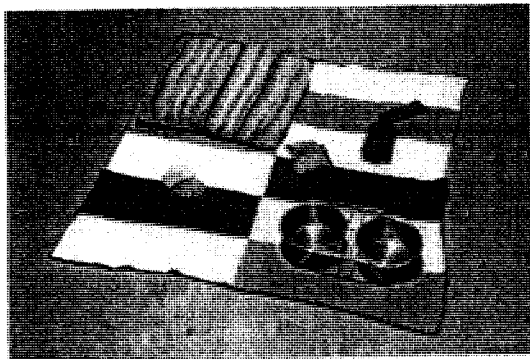
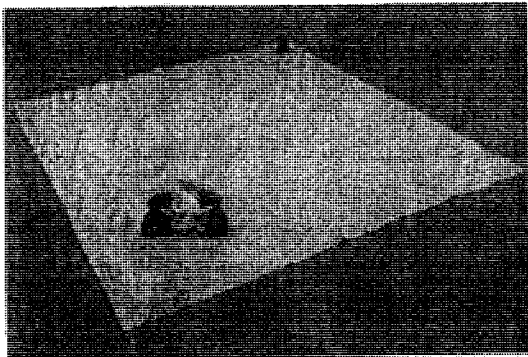


Fig. 37

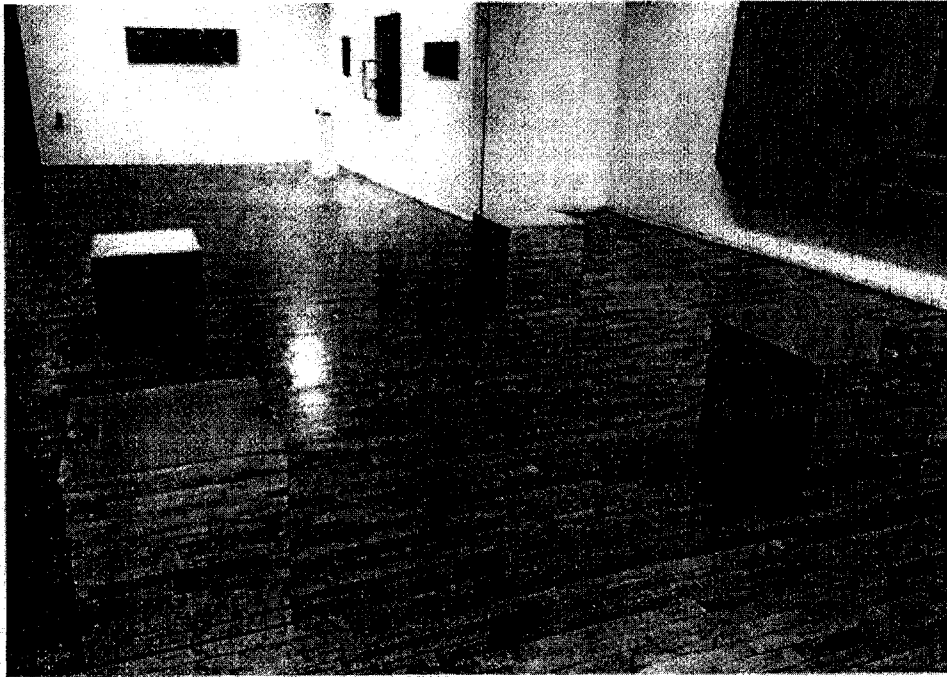


Fig. 38

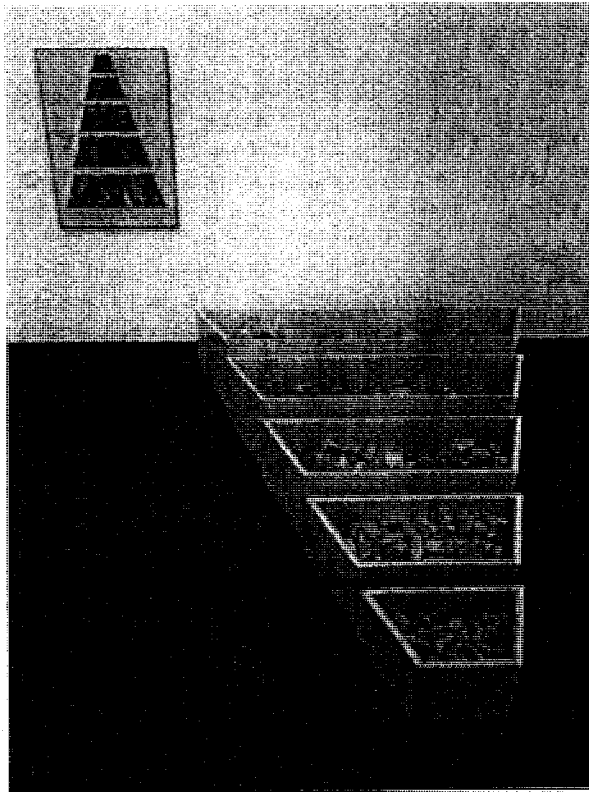




Fig. 39

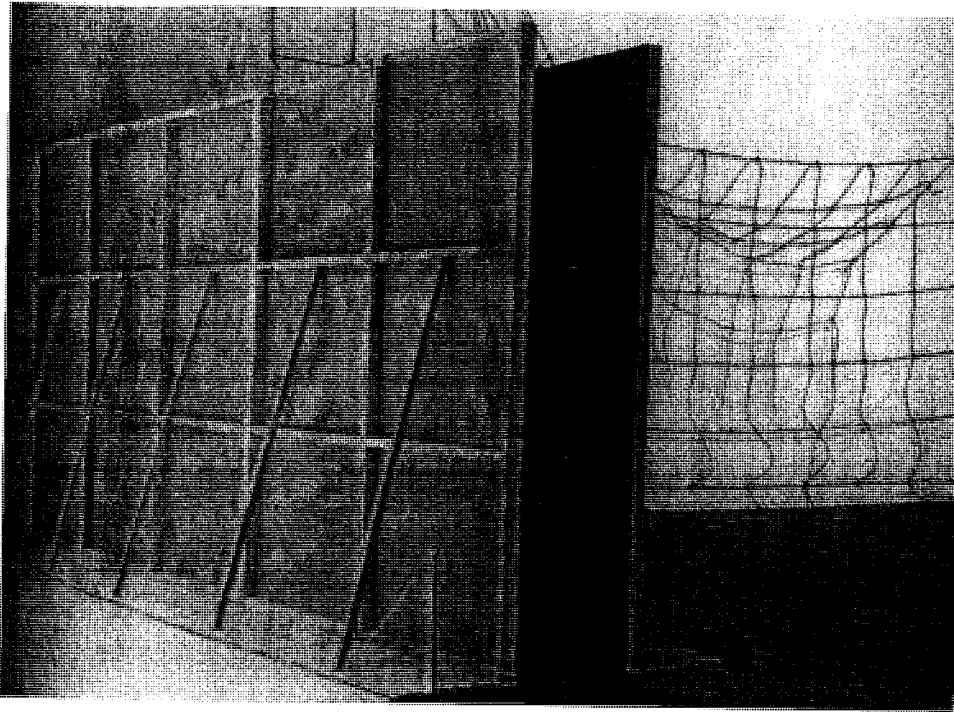


Fig. 40

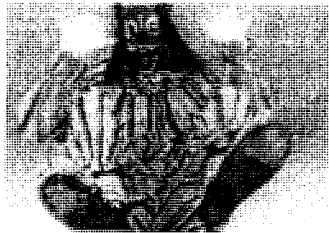
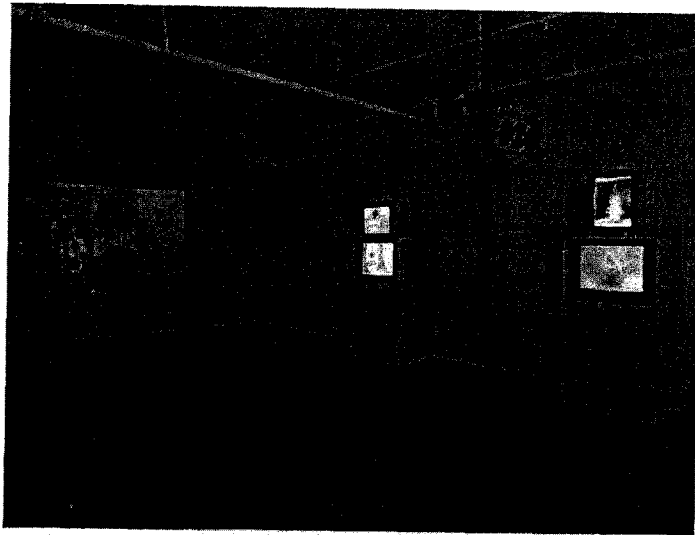


Fig. 41

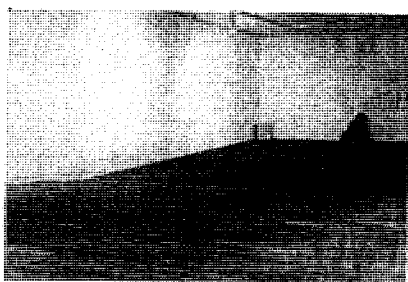


Fig. 42

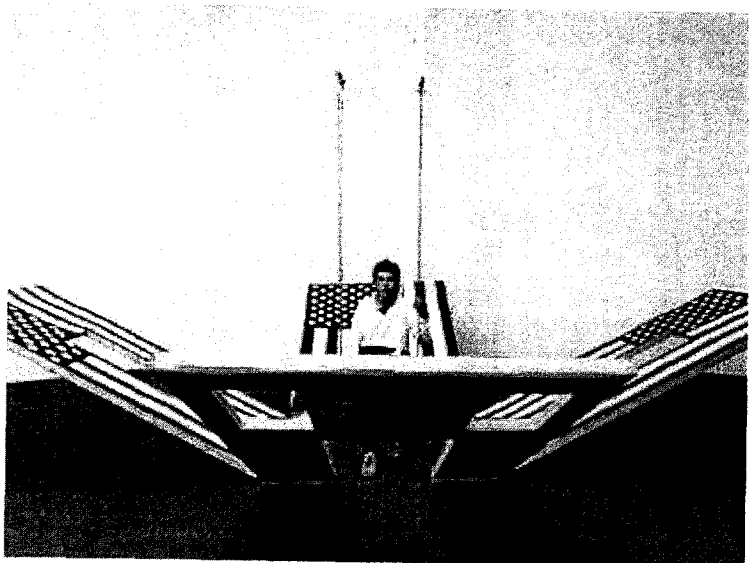


Fig. 43

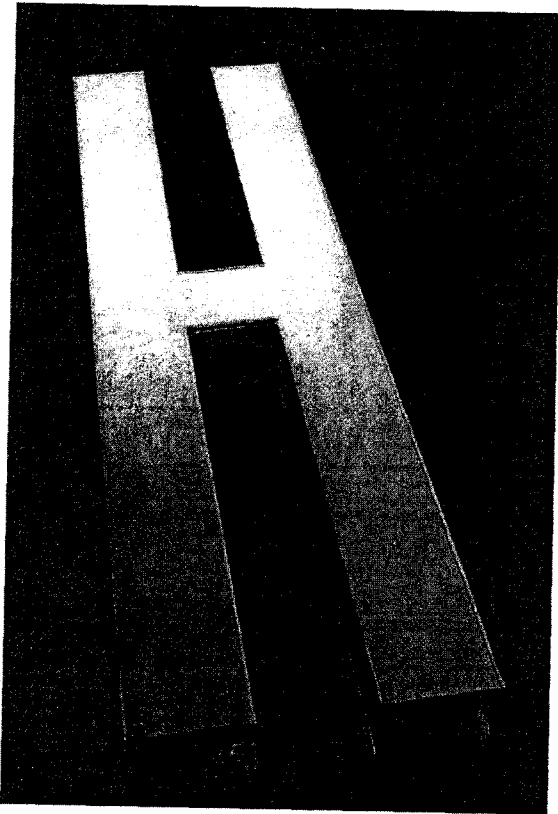


Fig. 44

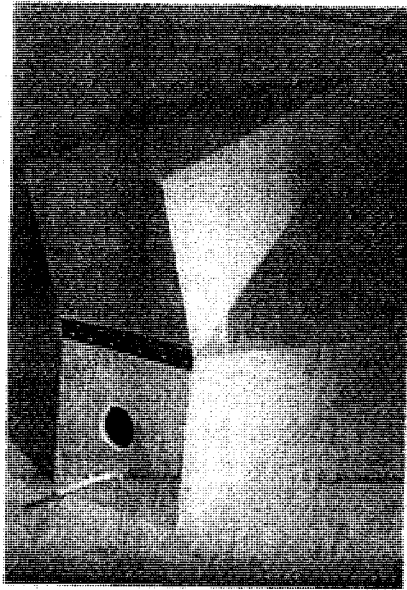
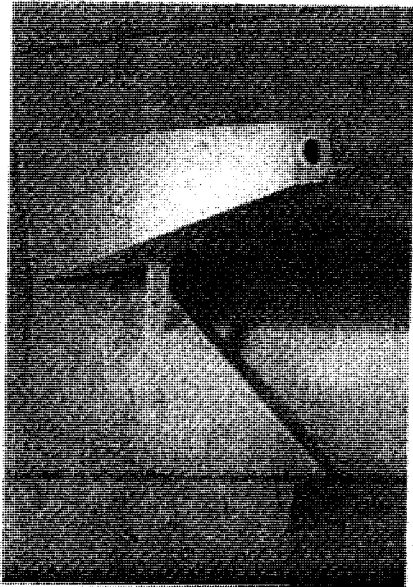


Fig. 45



Fig. 46

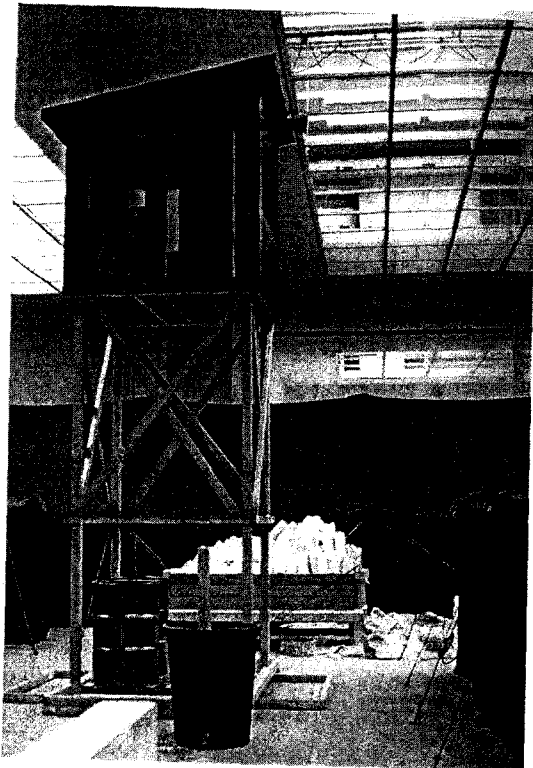


Fig. 47

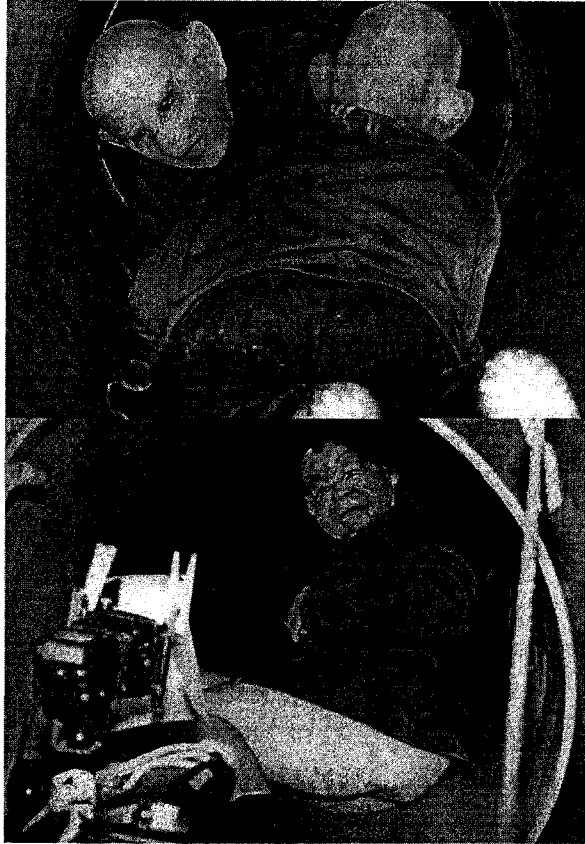


Fig. 48

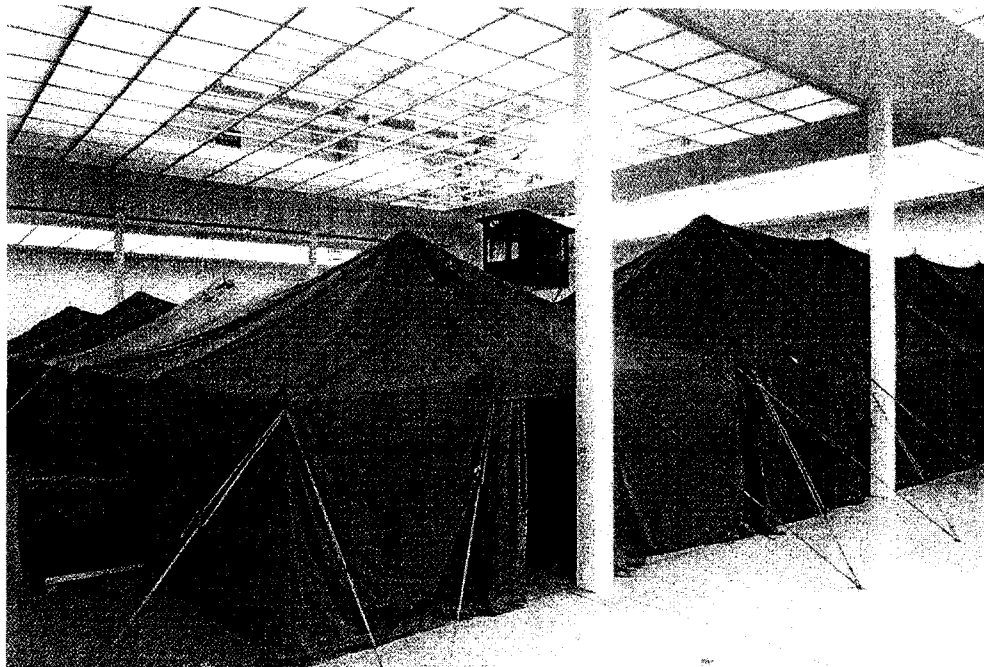


Fig. 49

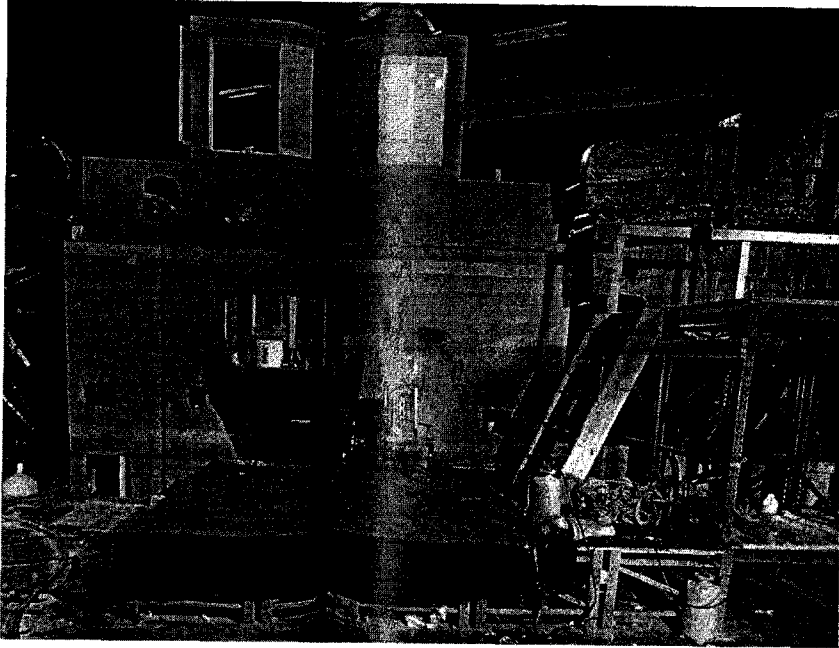


Fig. 50

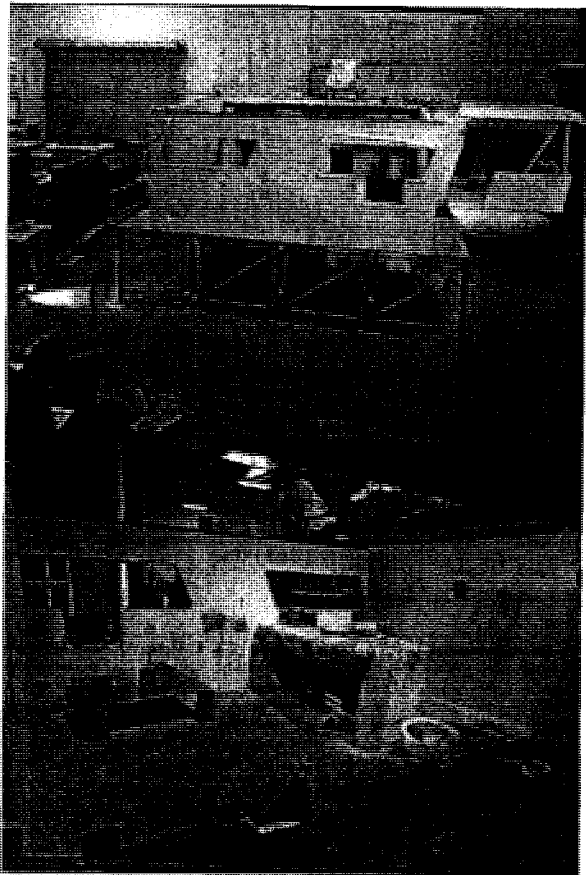


Fig. 51

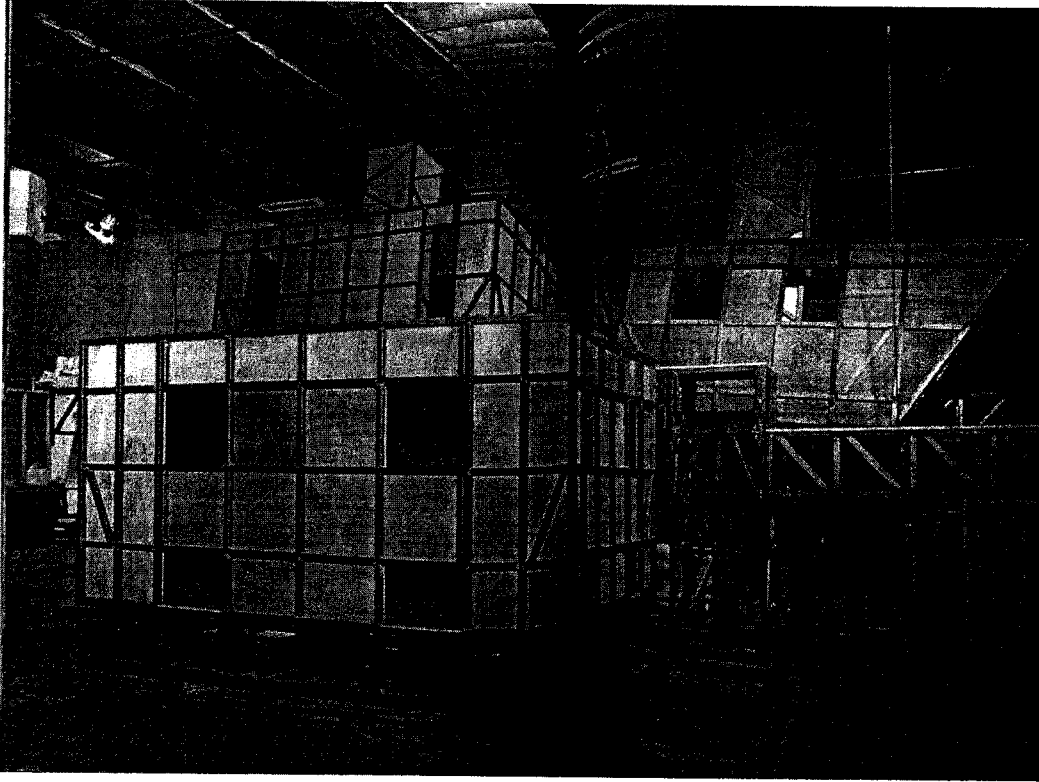


Fig. 52

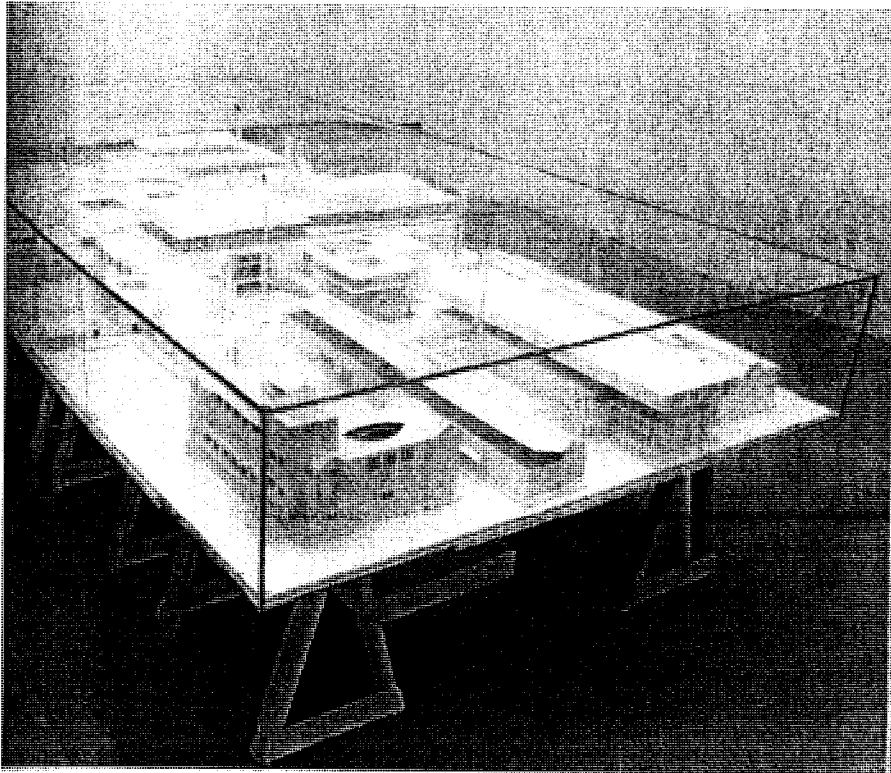


Fig. 53

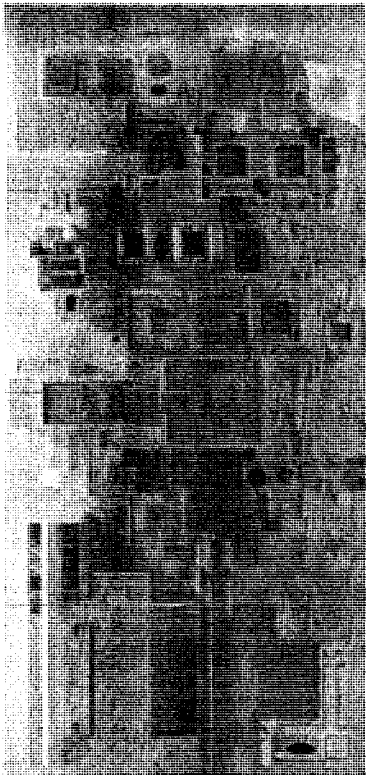


Fig. 54

