Sean Landers

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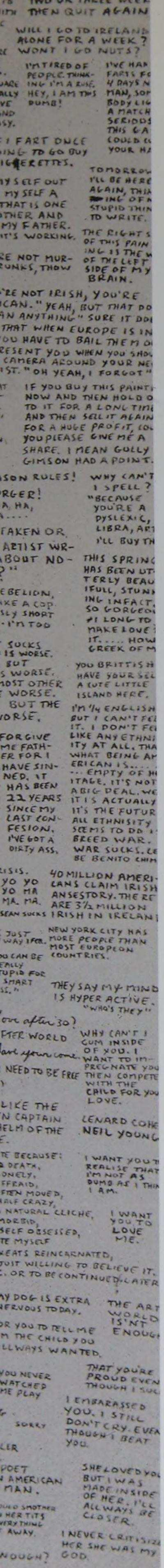

SELF-SOMETHING, 1994

Detail

Oil on linen

274.32 × 426.72 cm

Sean Landers

Kunsthalle Zürich

jrp|ringier

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Introduction

BEATRIX RUF

Since the early 90s, the work of Sean Landers has been one of the most fascinating and repeatedly irritating projects in contemporary art. The polar opposites of tormented self-doubt and endless self-aggrandizement run like a thread through the artist's work along with a number of symbols of failure used by the subject as a strategy to preserve himself from impending failure. Sean Landers undertakes this project as an artist. He can do anything (write, paint, sculpt, perform, shoot videos, write reviews) and has doubts about it all. Even doubting he does with virtuosity.

With text and video works that appear masked as conceptual art in the early 90s, he introduced into this art genre the inadequacy and taboo of the subject and the emotionality of the artist. Radical soul-baring, an emotional quarrel with his own and others' estimations, private and professional longings and torments all run through his works. He is known as the artist who – with confessional and stream-of-consciousness texts such as ART, LIFE AND GOD (1990) and [SIC] (1993), with text art and cartoons, such as FOR THE LOVE OF NOTHING (1994), with video works that filmed him or a monkey in his studio, and with 'unfinished' sculptures – presents himself as an artist who is failing with his art, his life, and his relationships. This is conceptual art about the art system with its protagonists and institutions, but is distinguished from Conceptualism's rational rules and procedures by human, emotional, and intimate disclosures.

Over the course of the past fifteen years Landers' work has repeatedly surprised his audience by the artistic production of new styles and a dabbler's input. With a formal vocabulary and a history of art motifs, he has managed to come up with a multi-faceted undertaking that revolves around the contradictions and the odyssey of human feelings, around the constructions of the subject between historical reassurance and today's incertitude, around self-aggrandizement and self-debasement, around the general human tragedy of the identity-seeking subject and naturally, and above all, around making art. Sean Landers' work is provocative in a grandiose way with contradictions and false trails. The mimicry of anti-heroic artistic existence is always also the deconstruction of the same; in his confessional writings and diverse exposures the subject is always also the object of the artist and thereby the fictionalization of his persona.

Landers' performances of the authentic bring up to date the tradition of the great 'idiots' from the history of culture and art. Jean-Yves Jouannais in his publication L'IDIOTIE – ART, VIE, POLITIQUE pointed out the difference between the 'primal idiot' who disappears in his work and the 'cunning idiot' who evades disappearance: "[...] two antithetic positions for the modern artist stand out: the one [...] with an earnest and suicidal connotation, the work as a ritual form of self-sacrifice [...] the unspoilt idiocy of Kafka, Mallarmé, Valéry, and Flaubert [...] whose works are characterized by a peculiar idiocy and self-sufficiency, are a form of suicide" and, as an opposing position, authenticity as cleverness, as cunning idiocy, such as Magritte's 'vache' period, the work of Kippenberger, Roman Signer, or Erik Satie.[1] Sean Landers' idiocy is that of cunning or idiocy as symbolic protection.

The voyeuristic access to the authentic person and to the authentic production of the artist has been shaken up several times in his works. The video ANYONE'S ORGASM (1992) turns out to be a mad trip into the private life of the artist because of the irritating codes that affect the medium: video art? Performance? Sculpture? Painting? Or what? The videos REMISSIONEM PECCATORUM (1994) and ITALIAN HIGH RENAISSANCE AND BAROQUE SCULPTURE (1993) remind us of the endurance performances of the 70s, yet Landers mimes the postures of famous classical sculptures, he fractures and counteracts iconic real time and, with iconic artistic virtuosity, the claim of video art's authenticity.

Landers has us (and himself) step into countless authenticity traps; again and again he stands before us naked in such a way that lets any kind of voyeuristic satisfaction fizzle, transforming it into a

1
Jean-Yves Jouannais: "Der Un-Untergeher," extracts from *L'idiotie – art, vie, politique*, Beaux-Arts magazine/livre, Paris, 2003; transl. by Stefan Zweifel in "Kunst & Idiotie. Eine Typologie des Vergesens. Flaubert – Kant – Warhol – Hölderlin – Dostojevsky," *ProLitteris Gazzetta*, Zurich, 2004, p 81.

shame that arises from the thought, or rather, the judgment of the shame of the 'idiots' or the exposed. Rapid categorization or assessment of Sean Landers' work often backfires when trying to analyze his work and concurrently becomes a 'déjà vu' experience.

Pablo Picasso (the resourceful craftsman-artist) and Marcel Duchamp (the resourceful conceptual artist) are the great genealogical lines along which Sean Landers develops a work that – behind the mask of the idiot and standup comic – successively penetrates the whole of art history as an arena for his own identity and his own production.

All the prototypes of the subject/artist-subject as idiots and art as idiocy have come up in his work: the 'idiot savant' of the 20th century with Landers-specific self-divestments that drive authenticity into absurdity; the 'singerie' that is introduced in the 18th century as a topic for the doubtful, aping and manipulative role of the artist and of art in I'M A CLOWN IN A WORLD OF CHIMPS (1994) or SINGERIE: LE PEINTRE (1995), SPACE-APE ON MARS (1997), and so on. Since the 19th century, the clown with his changing appearances, has played an allegory role of failure and gaucherie and a grandiose masquerade of the self (in Joyce, Miller, Mallarmé, Baudelaire, Toulouse-Lautrec, Picasso, Rouault, Beckmann, Klee, Nauman, Scholte, Borofsky, Rondinone, Cattelan, to name only a few...). And then naturally Sean Landers' personal ancestral portraits of the great artists and their works: Hogarth, Picasso, Matisse, Picabia, Michelangelo, Bernini, Ernst, Duchamp, De Chirico, Magritte (his 'période vache'), Dalí, Braque, Beckmann, which enter the artist's works as pastiches (in the late 90s) or are present as ghosts or masks of themselves: GHOST 1 (ERNST) or ELF (BRAQUE), both from 2003, among others.

With Sean Landers, a listing of his heroes and forerunners and references to art history can hardly be inflated enough, since he is always just set to pull the next masterpiece out of his hat. In the present that is full of the referentiality and collective conventions of reception, to create one's own picture with pictures available to the world is his goal and thereby make it as an artist – self-doubt and self-abasement or no, relativizing authenticity and fictionalization – with an independent, form-in-progress subject.

Sean Landers' last body of work took the 'genealogy' of his art cosmos one step further: his newest pictures are landscapes with pastiches of his own confessions. They are a kind of painterly, polished visual poetry that contaminates the genre of sublime landscape painting and, at the same time, refers to his earlier texts and text art (for example, 36 HOURS, 1995) as ghosts and, in so doing, once again parodies authenticity as a criterion for perceiving his art.

The first monographic exhibition in an institution and the first monographic catalogue on the work of Sean Landers has been realized only thanks to the magnificent support of countless people. We thank the Andrea Rosen Gallery in New York for their help in organizing the loans and in seeking out the artist's widely dispersed works; in particular we acknowledge Andrea Rosen, Jordan Bastien, Sarah Cohen, Michelle Reyes and Renee Reyes. Cornelia Grassi of greengrassi in London also supported the project in many ways. Caoimhín Mac Giolla Leíth used his long friendship with Sean Landers and knowledge of his work to contribute to the in-depth conversation with the artist and bring the hours of interview into a readable form. Alex Farquharson's enlightening analysis of Sean Landers' oeuvre provides us with new ways of reading his work, positioning it within the art history of his time. For the translations and editing of the texts we thank Gudrun Meier and Jeanne Haunschild. Gilles Gavillet as graphic designer and Lionel Bovier as publishing director overseen the production of the catalogue in all its details.

We owe Beatrice Steiner and the team at the Kunsthalle Zürich all our gratitude for their untiring commitment to the exhibition and catalogue. Through its sponsorship, the Kultur-Stiftung der Deutschen Bank has enabled us to carry out this large project that the Kunsthalle Zürich on its own would, financially, not have been capable of.

Above all, our thanks go out to Sean Landers – for his work and for the enthusiastic energy with which he has assisted every aspect of this project.

Einführung

BEATRIX RUF

Seit den frühen neunziger Jahren gehört das Werk Sean Landers' zu den faszinierenden und immer wieder von Neuem irritierenden künstlerischen Projekten der zeitgenössischen Kunst.

Wie ein roter Faden zieht sich das Gegensatzpaar quälender Selbstzweifel/heillose Selbstüberschätzung durch das Werk des Künstlers und mit ihm eine Vielzahl an Masken des Scheiterns als Strategie des Subjektes, sich vor dem unausweichlichen Versagen zu bewahren.

Sean Landers unternimmt dieses Projekt als Künstler. Er kann alles (Schreiben, Malen, Plastiken machen, Performer sein, Videos drehen, Kritiken verfassen), und er zweifelt an allem. Und auch das tut er mit Virtuosität.

Anfang der neunziger Jahre führte er mit Text- und Videoarbeiten, die in der Maske der Konzeptkunst auftreten, die Fehlstelle und das Tabu des Subjektes und der Emotionalität des Künstlers in dieses Kunstgenre ein. Radikale Selbstentblössung, das emotionale Hadern mit Selbst- und Fremdeinschätzungen, private und professionelle Sehnsüchte und Qualen durchziehen seine Arbeiten. Er gilt als der Künstler, der sich mit Selbstbekenner- und Stream-of-Consciousness-Texten präsentiert wie u.a. ART, LIFE AND GOD (1990) oder [SIC] (1993), mit Textbildern und Cartoons, z.B. FOR THE LOVE OF NOTHING (1994), mit Videoarbeiten, die mit ihm oder einem Affen in seinem Studio gedreht sind, und mit ‚unfertigen' Skulpturen, die ihn als ein an der Kunst, seinem Leben und seinen Beziehungen scheiternden Künstler zeigen. Er macht Konzeptkunst über das Kunstsystem mit seinen Protagonisten und Institutionen, die sich von den rationalen Regeln und Vorgehensweisen der Konzeptkunst mit menschlichen, emotionalen, intimen Mitteilungen unterscheidet.

Im Verlaufe seiner künstlerischen Arbeit der letzten fünfzehn Jahre hat er sein Publikum immer wieder mit neuen Stilen und Winkelschmieden seiner künstlerischen Produktion überrascht und mit dem Formenvokabular und der Motivgeschichte der Kunst ein facettenreiches Unternehmen angestellt, das um die Widersprüche und Irrfahrten der Gefühle des Menschen, um die Konstruktionen des Subjekts zwischen historischer Rückversicherung und zeitgenössischer Verunsicherung, um Selbstüberschätzung und Selbsterniedrigung und um die allgemein menschliche Tragik des sich in Formation befindlichen Subjektes – und selbstverständlich vor allem um das Kunstmachen – kreist.

Sean Landers' künstlerisches Werk irritiert auf grandiose Weise mit Widersprüchen und Fehlleitungen: Das Mimikry antiheroischer Künstlerschaft ist immer auch die Dekonstruktion desselben; in seinen Bekennerschriften und diversen ‚Nacktheiten' ist das Subjekt, das sich äussert, immer auch das Objekt des Künstlers und damit die Fiktionalisierung der gleichen Person.

Landers' ‚Performances' des Authentischen führen die Tradition der grossen ‚Iditiotien' der Kultur- und Kunstgeschichte in die Gegenwart. Jean-Yves Jouannais hat in seiner Publikation L'IDIOTIE – ART, VIE, POLITIQUE auf den Unterschied des ‚ursprünglichen Idioten', der in seinem Werk verschwindet, und dem ‚listigen Idioten', der dem Verschwinden entgeht, hingewiesen: „... [es] zeichnen sich zwei antithetische Haltungen für den modernen Künstler ab: zum einen (...), voll Ernst und suizidärem Beigeschmack, das Werk als rituelle Form der Selbstaufopferung; (...) die urtümliche Idiotie bei Kafka, Mallarmé, Valéry und Flaubert, (...) deren Werke von einer eigentümlichen Idiotie und Eigenständigkeit gezeichnet sind (...) eine Form des Selbstmords" und als gegenteilige Haltung die Authentizität als List, als listige Idiotie, wie etwa die „‚Kuhbild-Periode' von Magritte, das Werk von Kippenberger, Roman Signer" oder Erik Satie.[1] Sean Landers' ‚Idiotie' ist die Idiotie der List, ist Idiotie als symbolischer Schutz.

Der Zugang zur authentischen Person und zum authentischen Schaffen des Künstlers ist in seinen Arbeiten mehrfach gebrochen. Das Video ANYONE'S ORGASM (1992) entpuppt sich als wahnsinniger Trip in das Privatleben des Künstlers angesichts irritierender Codes, die das verwendete

1
Jean-Yves Jouannais: „Der Un-Untergeher", Auszüge aus *L'idiotie – art, vie, politique*, Beaux-Arts magazine/livres, Paris 2003; übersetzt von Stefan Zweifel in: „Kunst & Idiotie. Eine Typologie des Vergessens. Flaubert – Kant – Warhol – Hölderlin – Dostojewski", *ProLitteris Gazzetta*, Zürich 2004, S. 81

Medium betreffen: Videokunst?, Performancekunst?, Skulptur?, Malerei? oder was nun? Die Videos REMISSIONEM PECCATORUM (1994) und ITALIAN HIGH RENAISSANCE AND BAROQUE SCULPTURE (1993) erinnern an die Endurance-Performances der siebziger Jahre, doch Landers mimt Haltungen bekannter klassischer Skulpturen, bricht und konterkariert damit die ikonische Realzeit und den Anspruch des Authentischen dieser Videokunstform mit Ikonen künstlerischer Virtuosität.

Landers lässt uns und sich in zahlreiche Authentizitätsfallen treten, er steht uns immer wieder in einer Art und Weise ‚nackt' gegenüber, die jede Art von voyeuristischer Befriedigung scheitern lässt und diese in eine Scham wandelt, die sich beim Gedanken oder vielmehr der Beurteilung der Scham des ‚Idioten' oder Entblössten einstellt – Eigentore in vorschnellen Kategorien und Einschätzungen schiessen ist eine wiederkehrende Erfahrung mit dem Werk Sean Landers'.

Pablo Picasso (der genialische Handwerker-Künstler) und Marcel Duchamp (der genialische Konzeptkünstler) sind die grossen Genealogielinien, entlang derer Sean Landers sich ein Werk erarbeitet, das sukzessive in der Maske des ‚Idioten' und ‚Stand-up Comedian' die gesamte Kunstgeschichte als Feld der eigenen Identität und des eigenständigen Schaffens durchdringt.

Sämtliche Prototypen des Subjektes/Künstlersubjektes als ‚Idioten' und der Kunst als ‚Idiotie' sind inzwischen in seinem Werk zum Einsatz gekommen: Der ‚idiot savant' des 20. Jahrhunderts mit Landers-spezifischen, die Authentizität ad absurdum führenden Selbstentäusserungen; die ‚Singerie', die im 18. Jahrhundert als Topos für die zweifelhafte, nachäffende, manipulierbare Rolle des Künstlers und der Kunst eingeführt wurde – I'M A CLOWN IN A WORLD OF CHIMPS (1994) oder SINGERIE: LE PEINTRE (1995), SPACE-APE ON MARS (1997) u.a.; der Clown in den wechselnden Erscheinungen, in denen er seit dem 19. Jahrhundert in der Kunst und Kulturgeschichte als allegorisches Bild des Scheiternden und Tollpatschigen und als grandiose Maskierung des Selbst eine Rolle gespielt hat (u.a. bei Joyce, Miller, Mallarmé, Baudelaire, Toulouse-Lautrec, Picasso, Rouault, Beckmann, Klee, Nauman, Scholte, Borofsky, Rondinone, Cattelan, um nur einige zu nennen...). Und dann natürlich Sean Landers' persönliche Ahnengalerie der grossen Künstler und ihrer Werke: Hogarth, Picasso, Matisse (seine ‚idiotische' Phase, die ‚période vache'), Picabia, Michelangelo, Bernini; Ernst, Duchamp, De Chirico, Magritte, Dalí, Braque, Beckmann, die als Pasticcios in den Werken des Künstlers Eingang finden (Arbeiten der späten neunziger Jahre) oder als Geister oder Masken ihrer selbst nun in den Bildern präsent sind – GHOST 1 (ERNST) (2003) oder ELF (BRAQUE) (2003) u.v.a.

Bei Sean Landers kann eine Aufzählung der ‚Helden' und ‚Vorbilder' und seiner Referenzen in der Kunstgeschichte nicht ausufernd genug sein, da er immer wieder sein ‚Meisterstück' kreiert: in einer Gegenwart, die voller Referentialität und kollektiven Konventionen der Rezeption ist, ein eigenständiges ‚Bild' mit den vorhandenen Bildern der Welt zu schaffen und damit – Selbstzweifel und Selbsterniedrigung hin oder her, Authentizität und Fiktionalisierung relativierend – bei einem eigenständig, sich in Formation befindlichen Subjekt und also Künstler ankommt.

Sean Landers' letzte Werkgruppe führt die ‚Genealogie' seines Kunstkosmos konsequent weiter: Seine neuesten Bilder sind Landschaften mit Versatzstücken seiner eigenen Bekenntnisse. Sie sind eine Art malerisch ausgefeilte Visuelle Poesie, die das Genre erhabener Landschaftsmalerei kontaminieren und zugleich seine frühen Texte und Textbilder (36 HOURS, 1995) als ‚Geister' referieren – und damit das Authentische als Wahrnehmungskriterium seiner Kunst erneut persiflieren.

Die erste monographische Ausstellung in einer Institution und dieser erste monographische Katalog zum Werk von Sean Landers konnten nur dank der grossen Unterstützung zahlreicher Personen realisiert werden. Wir danken der Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York, für die Mithilfe in der Organisation der Leihgaben und dem Auffinden der weit verstreuten Werke des Künstlers, insbesondere Andrea Rosen, Jordan Bastien, Sarah Cohen, Michelle Reyes und Renee Reyes. Cornelia Grassi, greengrassi, London, unterstützte das Projekt in vielfältiger Weise. Caoimhín Mac Giolla Leíth hat seine langjährige Freundschaft mit Sean Landers und seine Kennerschaft des Werkes des Künstlers in das ausführliche Gespräch mit dem Künstler eingebracht und die gigantischen Transkripte der langen Interviewstunden in lesbare Form gebracht. Alex Farquharsons erhellende Analyse von Sean Landers Werk schafft neue Lesarten und positioniert es in der Kunstgeschichte seiner Zeit. Die Übersetzungen der Texte verdanken wir Gudrun Meier und Jeanne Haunschild. Gilles Gavillet als graphischer Gestalter und Lionel Bovier als Verlagsleiter haben den Katalog in gedruckter Form für das Publikum auf den Weg gebracht.

Beatrice Steiner und dem Team der Kunsthalle Zürich gebührt aller Dank für den unermüdlichen Einsatz für die Ausstellung und den Katalog. Die Kultur-Stiftung der Deutschen Bank ermöglichte mit ihrer Unterstützung ein grosses Projekt, das die Kunsthalle Zürich nicht ohne zusätzlichen finanziellen Beistand hätte durchführen können.

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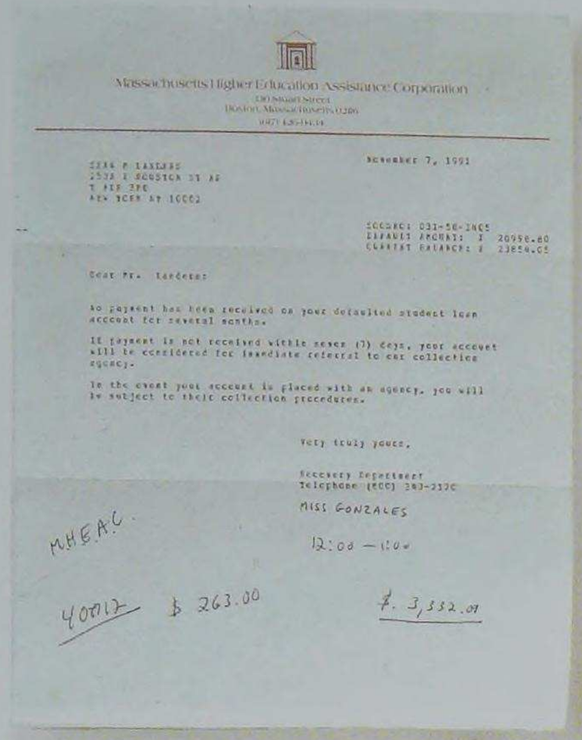

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SEAN P LANDERS
2572 E AUGUSTA ST AE
T MIP 3PC
NEW YORK NY 10002

November 7, 1991

SOCSEC: 031-58-3405
DISBURSE AMOUNT: $ 20958.60
CURRENT BALANCE: $ 23850.00

Dear Mr. Landers:

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If payment is not received within seven (7) days, your account will be considered for immediate referral to our collection agency.

In the event your account is placed with an agency, you will be subject to their collection procedures.

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Recovery Department
Telephone (800) 283-2320

MISS GONZALES

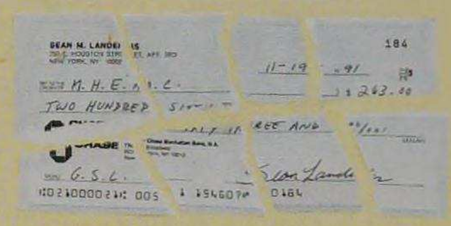
12:00 — 1:00

MHEAC

40017 $ 263.00 $. 3,332.01

ATTN. MISS GONZALES 11-21-91

PLEASE FIND THIS STRANGE LETTER AMUSING. IT IS A XEROX OF ONE OF MY ART WORKS, IT'S SALE FACILITATES THE ENCLOSED PAYMENT$. IT WAS WRITEN IN RESPONSE TO A LETTER I RECIVED ON SEPT. 16, 1991, FROM M.H.E.A.C. ALTHOUGH THE TONE OF THE LETTER WAS MEANT TO BE HUMOROUS, BECAUSE MOST ARTISTS ENDURE LIKE HARDSHIPS, I AM SERIOUS ABOUT MANY OF THE STATEMENTS EXPRESSED THERE. PARTICULARLY REGARDING MY GUILT ABOUT MY CONTRIBUTION TO THE S. AND L. CRISIS. IT MAY SEEM STRANGE TO YOU THAT I WRITE TO YOU WITH SUCH CANDOR. WELL MISS GONZALES, I'M A SINCERE, SENSATIVE, CARING MAN. I CARE GREATLY ABOUT MY HOME STATE, MY COUNTRY AND MOST OF ALL MY CREDIT RATING. PLEASE REGARD THE READING OF MY PECULIAR LETTERS AS A DUTY YOU NOT ONLY DO ME BUT ALSO THE GOOD COMMONWEALTH AND THIS GREAT NATION. BECAUSE MISS GONZALES, WE ARE AMERICANS, WE ARE PROUD AND NOBLE OCCUPIERS OF THIS STRANGE, FRAGILE, BEAUTIFUL PLANET. I LOVE LIFE MISS GONZALES, I LOVE THIS COUNTRY. I WANT TO OWN UP TO MY DEBTS. I WANT FREEDOM FROM THIS SELF IMPOSED PRISON OF POVERTY. I HAVE ONLY TO CRY OUT AND SAY: ENOUGH! I REFUSE TO BE A FAILURE AT WHAT I DO. I SHALL NOW BECOME WEALTHY AND SUCCESFULL. I SHALL LIVE UP MY DREAM TO PAY MA DEBT, INDEED I SHALL USE THE FIREY PAIN OF FAILURE TO FILL MY SAILS WITH THIS WIND OF FEAR AND TACK TO SUCCESS, AN UNCONDITIONAL WINNER. THE SILVER CUP IS FOR THE LIKES OF ME. WINNER I SAY, WINNER! INDEED A WINNER I SHALL BE. AND ON MY GRAVE MISS GONZALES IF ONE DEBT IS PAY'D SO HELP ME GOD IF IT IS NOT MY DEFAULTED G.S.L. FROM M.H.E.A.C..... OH FOR THE RAIN OF SORROW POURS DOWN UPON MY HEAD. IT DAMPENS MY VERY SOUL WITH DROPLETS INSCRIBED "YOU OWE, SINNER!" IF GOD TRANSCRIBED THE TONNET OF PRAYERS I HAILED AT HIM LIBERRY SHELVES WOULD OVERFLOW WITH VOLUMES OF ANGST. FROM SMALL TOWN TO METROPOLIS SCORES OF PALES, FORESTS WOULD BE EMPTIED TO CREATE THE PAPER FOR MISS TO BE EMPTIED UPON. ... SOBERING NOW I REALISE THE ONLY PIECE OF PAPER YOU WANT FROM ME IS SINGLE BLUE LEAF INSCRIBED 'PAY TO THE ORDER OF'..... HOW, I WONDER. HOW SHALL AN ENTITY SUCH AS I BEGIN TO POSSES THE NESSECARY FUNDS FOR A SPEEDY REPAYMENT? I SQUINT MY EYES AND GAZE OFF AS IF SUCH AN ACT WILL AID MY VISION INTO THE FUTURE. OF COURSE I SEE NOTHING BUT MY ILL FATED ART WORKS AT THE OTHER END OF MY STUDIO..... SURELY PITY FOR A WHINER OF MY MAGNITUDE MUST BE IMPOSSIBLE. SO I FIND NO OTHER RECOURSE AT THIS TIME BUT TO MAKE A PAYMENT TO YOU. I DO SO FACING A SEVEN YEAR PERIOD OF BUYING PLANE TICKETS WITH CASH AND NOT RENTING A CAR. A SMALL PRICE TO PAY FOR THE LUXERY OF NOT PAYING MY LOAN FOR THREE YEARS..... OH MISS GONZALES I WAKE UP EVERY DAY AND WATCHING SALLY JESSE RAPHAEL YOU PROBABLY AWAKE MUCH EARLYER OF COURSE BECAUSE YOU HAVE A JOB, BUT WE BOTH AWAKE BREATHING THE RED, WHITE AND BLUE AIR THAT WAFTS ACROSS AMERICA. YOU IN BOSTON OF COURSE AND ME IN NEW YORK BUT WHEN OUR FEET HIT THE FLOOR IN THE MORNING AND WE ARISE WE STAND ERECT AND FREE IN AMERICA. THIS GIANT GENEROUS ENCLOSING LAND IN WHICH CARIBU ONCE RAN OF COURSE THEY'RE NOW IN CANADA, BUT COME TO THINK OF IT ALASKA HAS A HERD OR TWO. ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO THAT P.B.S. SPECIAL ON AMERICAN WILD LIFE AS I AM? I CAN'T WAIT PERSONALLY. $... OH DEAR, I BELIEVE I AM OFF ON SOMTHING OF A TANGENT HERE, I DO APOLOGISE, YOUR WEARY EYES, HOW I PITY THEM AND YOUR BECLEARED BRAIN FOR THEIR DUTIFULL READING AND PROCESSING OF THIS HIGHLY POINTLESS INFORMATION. I'LL BET YOUR SHOES ARE OFF UNDER YOUR DESK, ARE THEY? I KNOW YOUR FEET ARE PROBABLY SOAR AND WHAT COULD BE BETTER THAN USEING AN OPERTUNITY SUCH AS READING MY LETTER TO RUB YOUR STOCKINED FEET TOGETHER UNDER YOUR DESK. AFTER ALL WHO COULD SEE, OR CARE? HA, HA, HA, HA,.. HM... WELL BACK TO MY POINT, WE ARE FREE MISS GONZALES, FROM PROUD SEATTLE TO SUNNY SAN DIEGO TO SNOWY MIAMI TO PATRIOTIC BOSTON WICH REMINDS ME DO THE RED SOX BREAK YOUR HEART EVERY YEAR AS WELL. EVEN THOUGH I HAVENT LIVED IN MASSACHUSETTS SINCE I WAS SEVENTEEN I CAN'T GIVE UP ON THE RED SOX, YOU'D THINK PERHAPS I'D BE A METS FAN BY NOW, OF COURSE I'D NEVER BE A YANKEE FAN. I HATE THE FUCKIN YANKEES, BUCKY DENT YOU..... I'M SORRY I GOT CARRIED AWAY AGAIN. PLEASE FORGIVE ME. DO YOU LIKE HOT DOGS? I KNOW WE SPOKE ONLY FOR A FEW MOMENTS ON THE PHONE BUT I FELT WE HAD A CONNECTION, I HAVE THIS IMAGE OF YOU EATING A HOT DOG WITH MUSTARD ON IT. ISN'T THAT FUNNY? YOU KNOW I WAS WALKING THROUGH THE CITY THE OTHER DAY LETING MY MIND FLOW AND JUST WALKING ANYWHERE ON A WHIM. I CAME ACROSS A BIG SHINEY BLACK POODLE, I LOOKED INTO IT AND SAW A REFLECTION OF A PART OF MYSELF I DON'T ORDINARILY SEE. IT WAS TERRAFYING MISS GONZALES. AT ONCE I SAW THE ENTIRE SCOPE OF MY BEING, FROM BIRTH TO DEATH, FROM STROLLER TO WERE, FROM COWERDICE TO COURAGES, HANDSOME TO UGLY, IT WAS ALL THERE BEFORE ME, AND I BROKE INTO TEARS, AWFULL BALLING. I CLINGED ON TO A CHAIN LINK FENCE SURROUNDING A PARKING LOT AND I JUST HUNG OFF IT CRYING. PEOPLE WERE STOPING TO COME TO MY AID BUT I COULDN'T RESPOND TO THEM, MY SADNESS WAS OVERWHELMING. I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG I HUNG THERE. I WAS AWAKENED BY A NUMBING PAIN IN MY FINGERS WICH WERE ENTIRLY BLUE AND COLD. EVEN AS I WRITE YOU NOW I FEEL A TINGLEING SENSATION IN THEM. BUT AS I WROTE EARLIER IT SOMETIMES IS ON THE RISING WIND OF BOILING INTERNAL PAIN THAT GREATNESS AMSES. MISS GONZALES CAN I BE FRANK WITH YOU?... I AM DEEPLY SAD. SOME PEOPLE ARE BORN HAPPY (IDIOTS) OTHERS SAD. BUT IN SADNESS GREAT BEAUTY IS MAD, DIVINE MUSIC FLOWS FROM THE SMOLDERING COALS OF SORROW LIKE A GULL ON AN EVENING BREEZE. OH IT IS OUT TO SEA ON THIS BREEZE THAT I WISH TO GLIDE. OUT ON WAVE OF BEAUTY, TAKEN BY NATURE INTO IT'S PERFECT RYTHM, ONLY CAUSING RIPPLES RIPPLEING OUTWARD LIKE A FROG LEAP INTO THE GLAZED SURFACE OF A PLACID POND. A DRIP OF DEW FROM AN OAK LEAF SILENTLY ENTERING A GREATER BODY OF WATER. IT IS NOT OURS TO FEAR ETERNITY MISS GONZALES BUT TO ENTER IT'S WARM LIKE THE HUGE ARCHER'S ARROW INTO THE GOOSE. OR TO MELT LIKE SNOW IN THE FIRST WARM BREEZE IN MARCH. DON'T GET ME WRONG MISS GONZALES, I LOVE LIFE. I'LL ENJOY EVERY NATURAL MOMENT OF MY LIFE WITH THE ZEAL OF THE DEPRIVED AND THE DEPTH OF THE DEPRAVED. YES YOU SAW CORRECTLY. DEPRAVED I WROTE IT. MISS GONZALES IT IS IN THE PIT WITH THE HOOVED ONE THAT ONE FULLY REALISES THE POWER AND GLORY OF ALL THINGS GOOD. FROM THE SORDID STENCH IN THE BOWLES OF HUMANITY ONE CATCHES A WIF OF THE LAVENDER SCENT OF GODNESS AND LONGS TO LIE AMUNGST THE FLOWERS IN THE SOFT WARM HILLS OF THE MEDOW. SURELY NOW IN MY LIFE I SHOULD KNOW WHERE TO TREAD AND WHERE NOT. BUT LIKE A BLIND FARMER IN THE PASTURE, I STAND ONE FOOT ON CLOVER THE OTHER IN SHIT. SO HELP ME IF I DON'T DELIVER MYSELF FROM THE LOWER SLOPE OF OUR REALM. I DO TRY IN EARNEST. AND ONE STEP IN THIS DIRECTION IS TAKEN IN THE FORM OF MY FIRST PAYMENT OF $263.00 IN THE LONG LINE OF PAYMENTS THAT WILL PROVE LONGER THAN A HUNDRED. MISS GONZALES, SEE ME DEEPLY ENTHRALLED IN MY HUMANITY STAND BEFORE YOU AND GIVE MY PLEDGE. I SHALL OVERCOME THE EVILS OF POVERTY, SLOTH, RECKLESSNESS, INDIFFERENCE, IRRESPONSIBILITY AND THE UNWANTED PURSUIT OF MY OWN CREATIVITY, MY INDIVIDUALITY, MY SOLE REASON FOR EXISTENCE TO PAY THE ORGANISATION YOU REPRESENT THE NESSECARY FUNDS TO NO LONGER BE CONSIDERD A DEBTOR, A LIABILITY, A DEPENDENT. I WANT TO STAND TALL AND PROUD IN THIS SOCIETY, AND THAT'S NOT EASY MISS GONZALES BECAUSE AMERICANS DISLIKE THEIR ARTISTS. EVEN THOUGH REMAIN AS ONE OF THE LAST VESTIGES OF AMERICAN STRENGTH GLOBALLY, WE ARE NOT SUPPORTED, CHASTISED EVEN, LAUGHED AT. THE VIRTUE OF AMERICAN ART MAY WELL BE THE LAST WORTHY EXPORT FROM THESE OVER GRAND SHORES. I AM NO FLAKY, DESPERATE MEMBER OF SOCIETY.... I AM IN FACT PROUD OF WHO I AM. IF THERE WERE AN ART OLYMPICS MISS GONZALES, THE U.S.A. WOULD HAVE THE LIONS SHARE OF GOLD. YOU SHOULD NOT PURSUE US LIKE ANIMALS INTO THE NIGHT REQUIREING LOAN REPAYMENT. YOU SHOULD HOLD US UP AND SHOW THE WORLD YOUR PRIDE..... OH DEAR, I'VE DONE IT AGAIN. BUT HEY! YOU DON'T APPRECIATE ME! I'M A RAM GOOD ARTIST AND YOU AND YOUR ORGANISATION DON'T CARE. MASSACHUSETTS DOESN'T CARE, THE FEDRAL GOVERNMENT DOESN'T CARE. FUCK IT! I'M NOT GIVING YOU THE CHECK, IN FACT I'LL RIP IT UP AND ENCLOSE IT HERE.



SEAN M. LANDERS 184
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THERE! THIS IS WHAT I THINK OF YOUR M.H.E.A.C. THIS IS WHAT I THINK OF MASSA-FUKIN-CHUSETTS! THIS IS WHAT I THINK OF THE U.S.A.!.....

IN ERNEST!

SEAN LANDERS
031-58-3405
40871216

ATTN. MISS GONZALES, 1991
Ink on paper
8 leaves, each 27.94 × 21.59 cm

Installation view
Postmasters Gallery, New York, 1990

From the ART, LIFE AND GOD series
Drawings from various dimensions
Ink on paper
Each leaf 27.94 × 21.59 cm
Sculptures of various dimensions
Wet clay, plastic, wire, metal and wood

Installation view
Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York, 1992

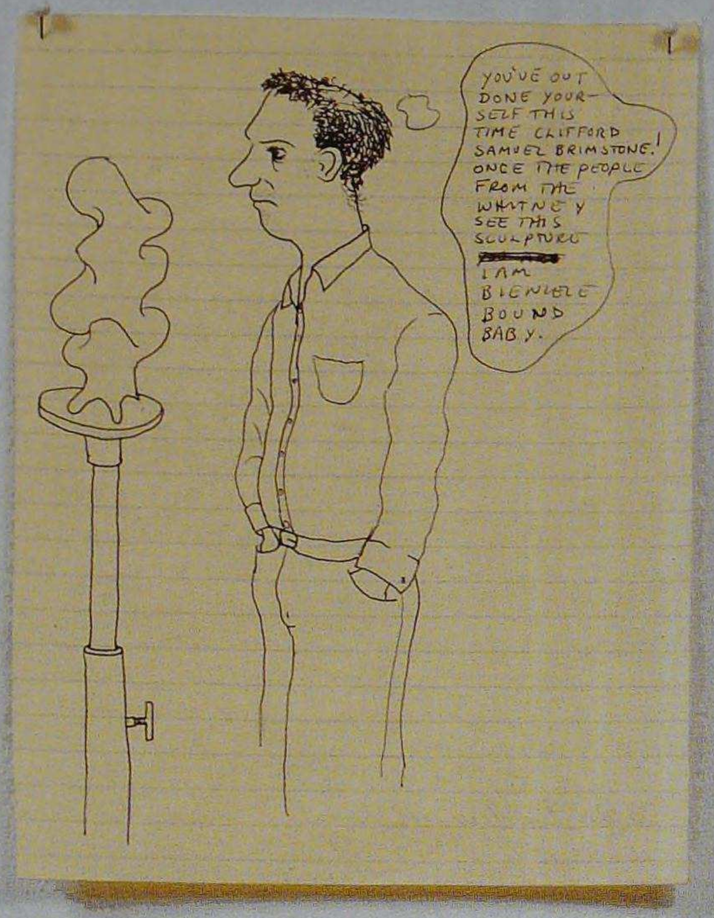
Left to right:
ANYONE'S ORGASM, 1991
Ink on paper
304.8 × 274.32 cm

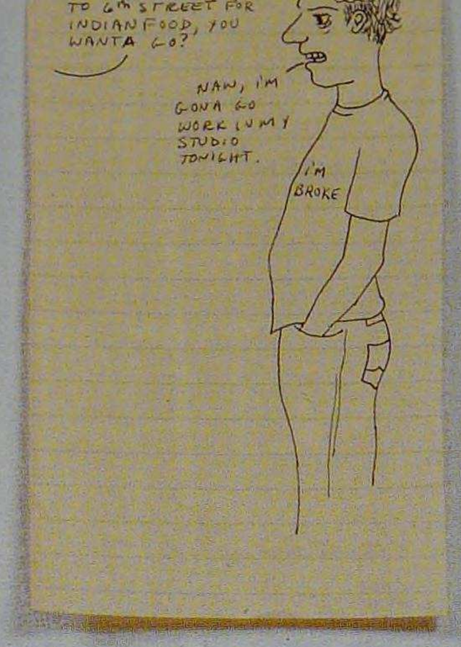
CALENDAR PAGES FROM 1991, 1991
Ink on paper
12 leaves, each 59.1 × 40.64 cm

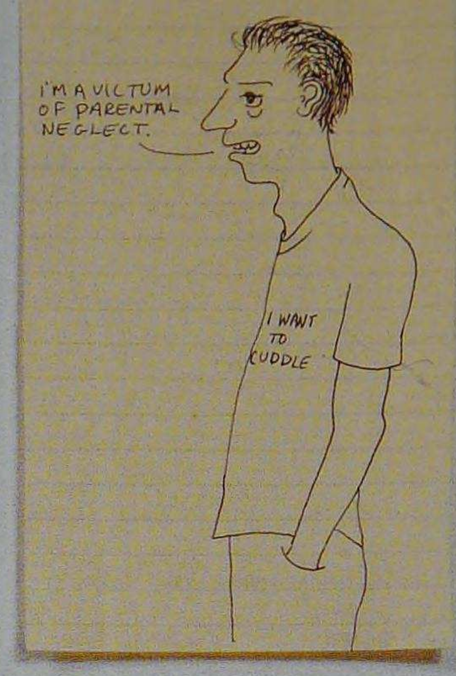
Sculptures of various dimensions
Wet clay, aluminum, steel and wood

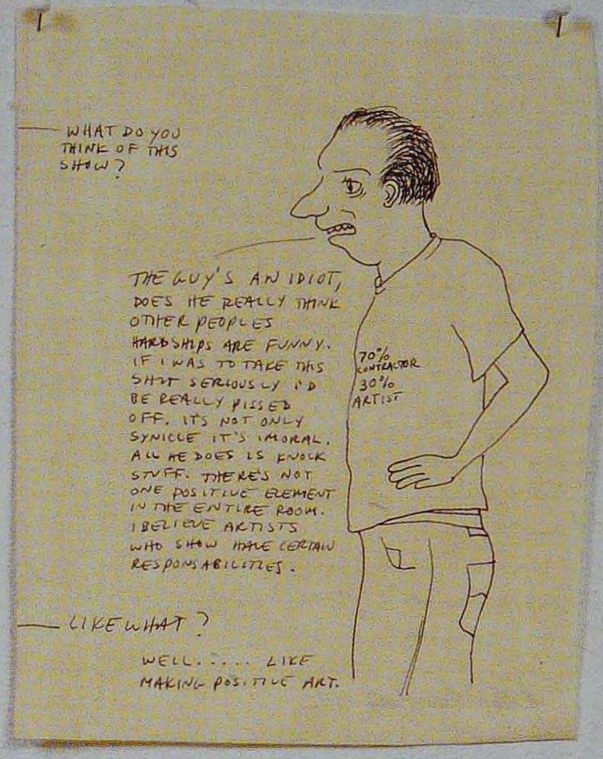
ANYONE'S ORGASM, 1992
Videotape
60 min.

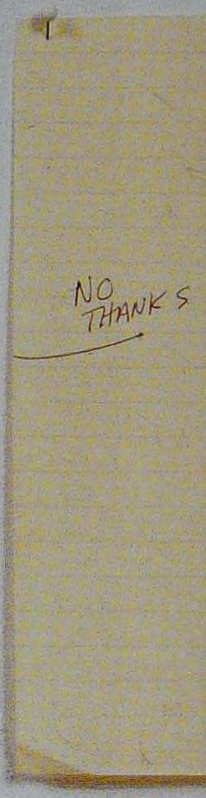
·MAX·
FISCH


YOU'VE OUT DONE YOURSELF THIS TIME CLIFFORD SAMUEL BRIMSTONE! ONCE THE PEOPLE FROM THE WHITNEY SEE THIS SCULPTURE
I AM BIENNIELE BOUND BABY.

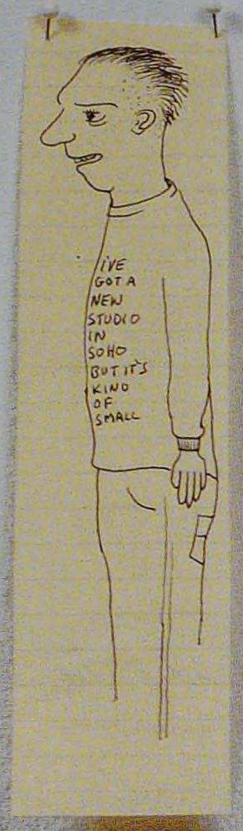

TO GO STREET FOR INDIAN FOOD, YOU WANTA GO?
NAW, I'M GONA GO WORK IN MY STUDIO TONIGHT.
I'M BROKE

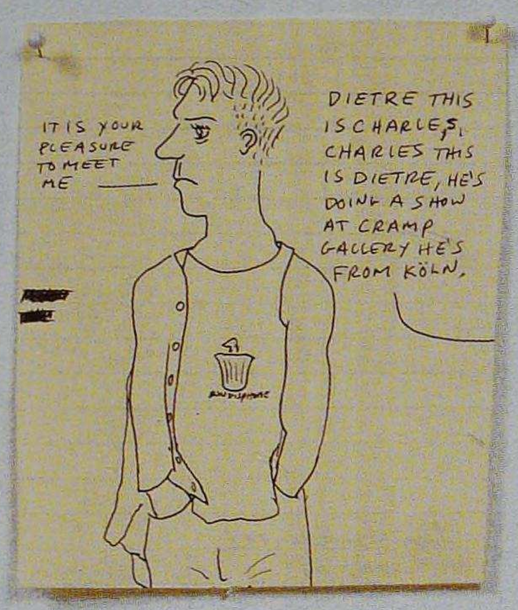

I'M A VICTUM OF PARENTAL NEGLECT.
I WANT TO CUDDLE

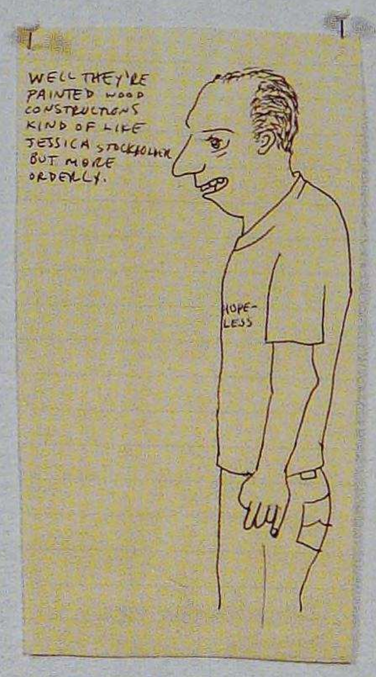

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THIS SHOW?
THE GUY'S AN IDIOT, DOES HE REALLY THINK OTHER PEOPLES HARDSHIPS ARE FUNNY. IF I WAS TO TAKE THIS SHIT SERIOUSLY I'D BE REALLY PISSED OFF. IT'S NOT ONLY SYNICLE IT'S IMORAL. ALL HE DOES IS KNOCK STUFF. THERE'S NOT ONE POSITIVE ELEMENT IN THE ENTIRE ROOM. I BELIEVE ARTISTS WHO SHOW HAVE CERTAIN RESPONSABILETIES.
70% CURATOR 30% ARTIST
LIKE WHAT?
WELL..... LIKE MAKING POSITIVE ART.

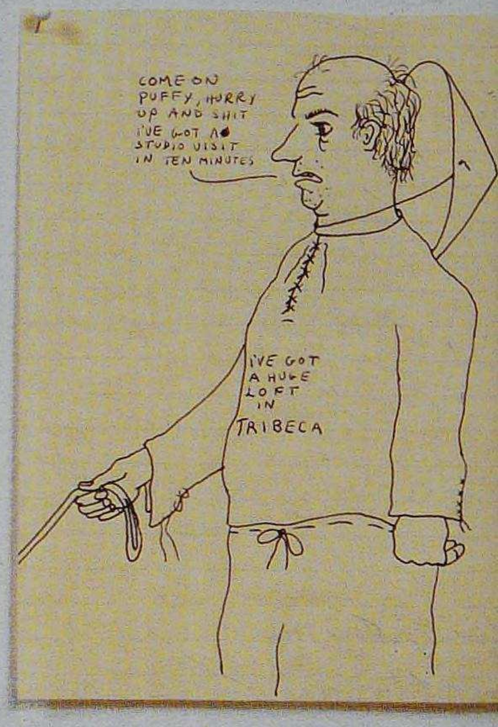

NO THANKS

HEY BRIAN, NICE TO SEE YOU
I'VE HEARD WHAT YOUVE BEEN SAYING ABOUT ME.

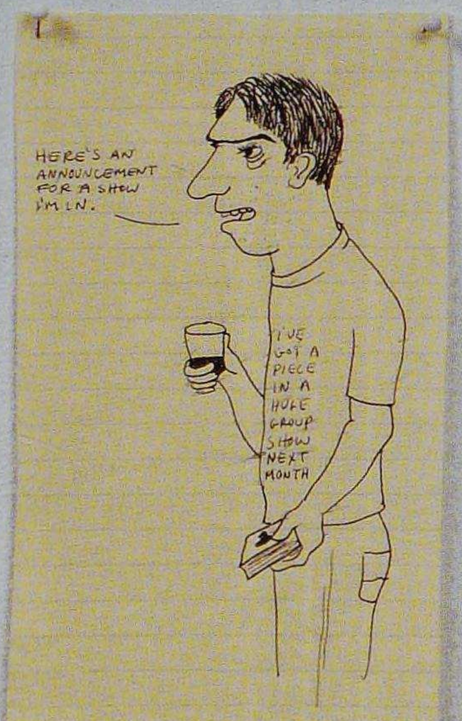

I'VE GOT A NEW STUDIO IN SOHO BUT IT'S KIND OF SMALL


IT IS YOUR PLEASURE TO MEET ME
DIETRE THIS IS CHARLES, CHARLES THIS IS DIETRE, HE'S DOING A SHOW AT CRAMP GALLERY HE'S FROM KÖLN.

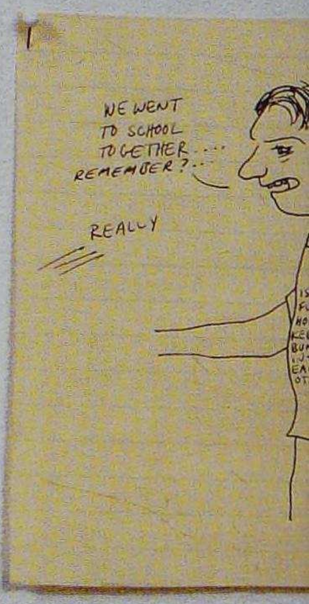

WELL THEY'RE PAINTED WOOD CONSTRUCTIONS KIND OF LIKE JESSICA STOCKHOLDER BUT MORE ORDERLY.
HOPE-LESS


COME ON PUFFY, HURRY UP AND SHIT I'VE GOT A STUDIO VISIT IN TEN MINUTES
I'VE GOT A HUGE LOFT IN TRIBECA

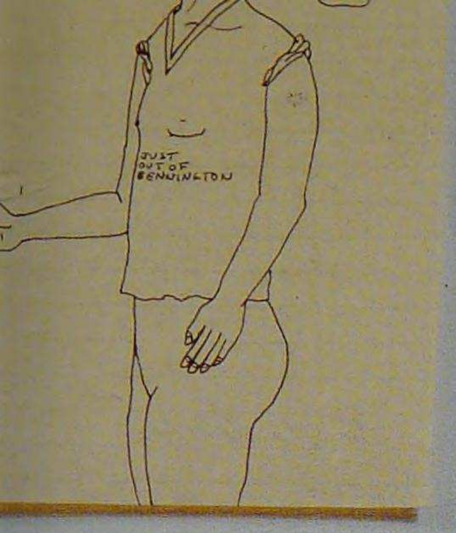
YOU CAN CALL ME TED
I ATE MY OWN CUM.

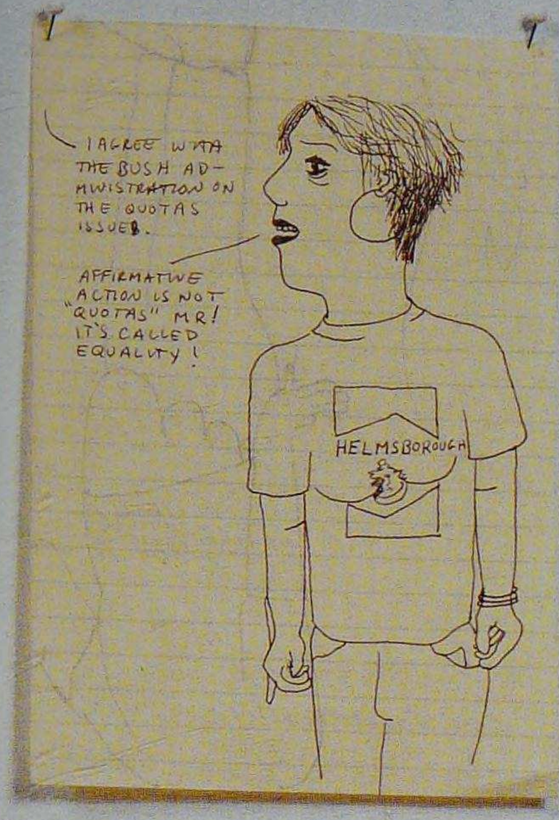

HERE'S AN ANNOUNCEMENT FOR A SHOW I'M IN.
I'VE GOT A PIECE IN A HUGE GROUP SHOW NEXT MONTH

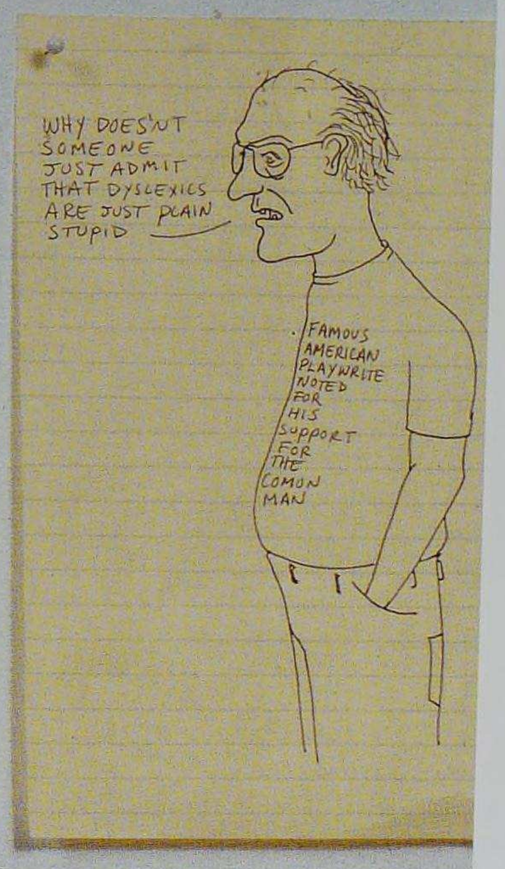
LOOK AT THAT GORGEOS GUY!
HI BOSS
THATS THE NEW INSTALATION GUY AT THIS GALLERY.
NO!... THOSE BITCHES ARE SO LUCKY.
I HEARD HE'S GAY THOUGH.
WHY ARE THE CUTEST GUYS ALLWAYS GAY?
IT'S SO TRUE.
FRESH FROM ART SCHOOL

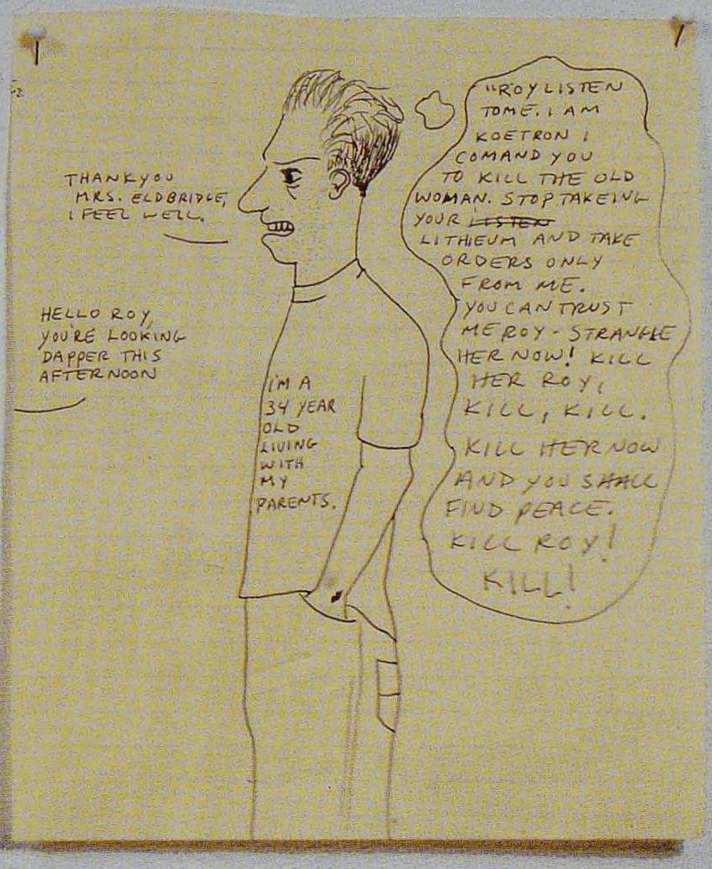

WE WENT TO SCHOOL TOGETHER... REMEMBER?
REALLY

JANE WE'RE GOING TO CHINA TOWN FOR DINNER, YOU WANTA COME?
OH, I'D LIKE TO BUT I'M SAVING UP FOR THAT TRIP TO NAPAL.





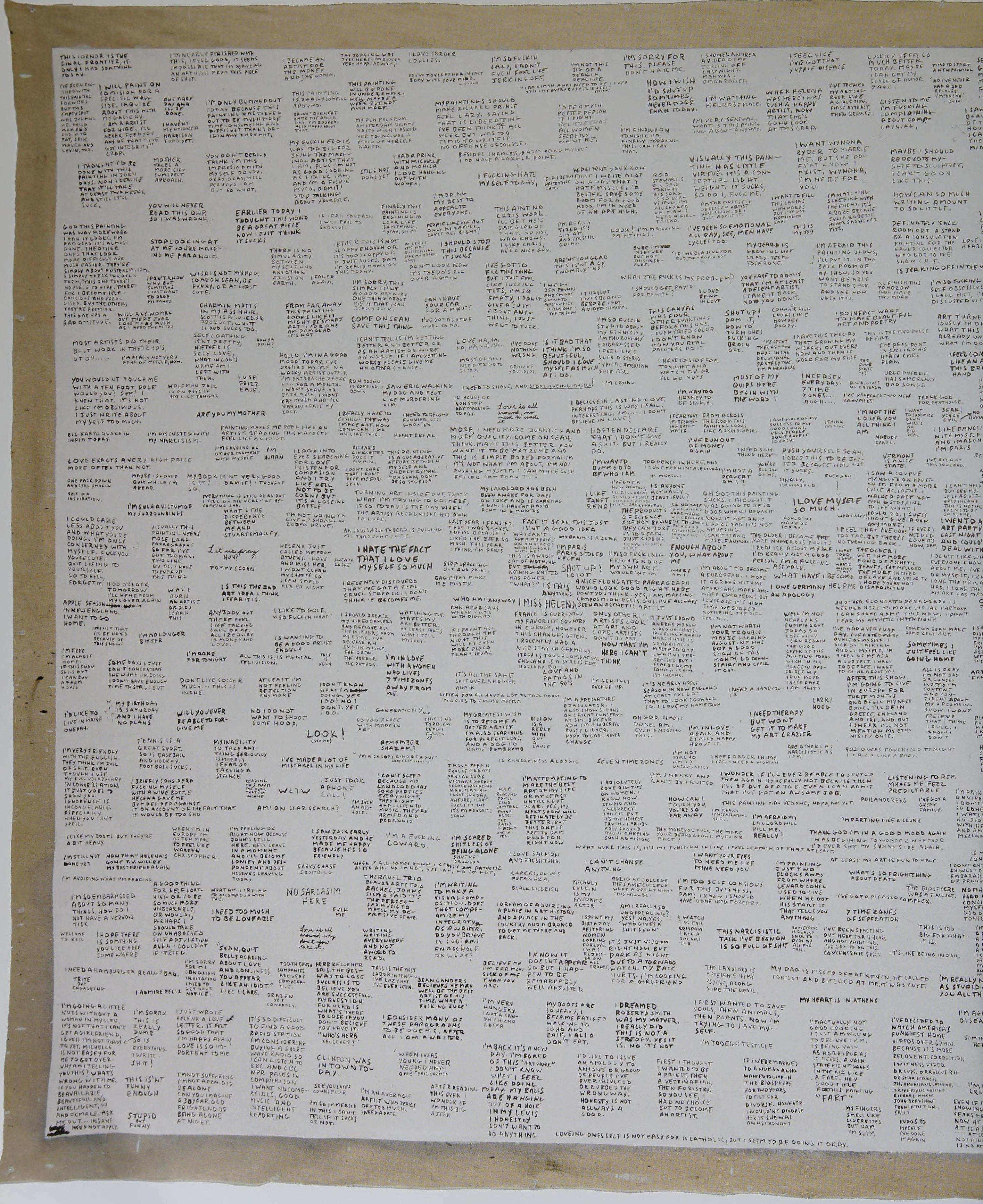




CARTOON installation, 1992
Ink on paper
Various dimensions

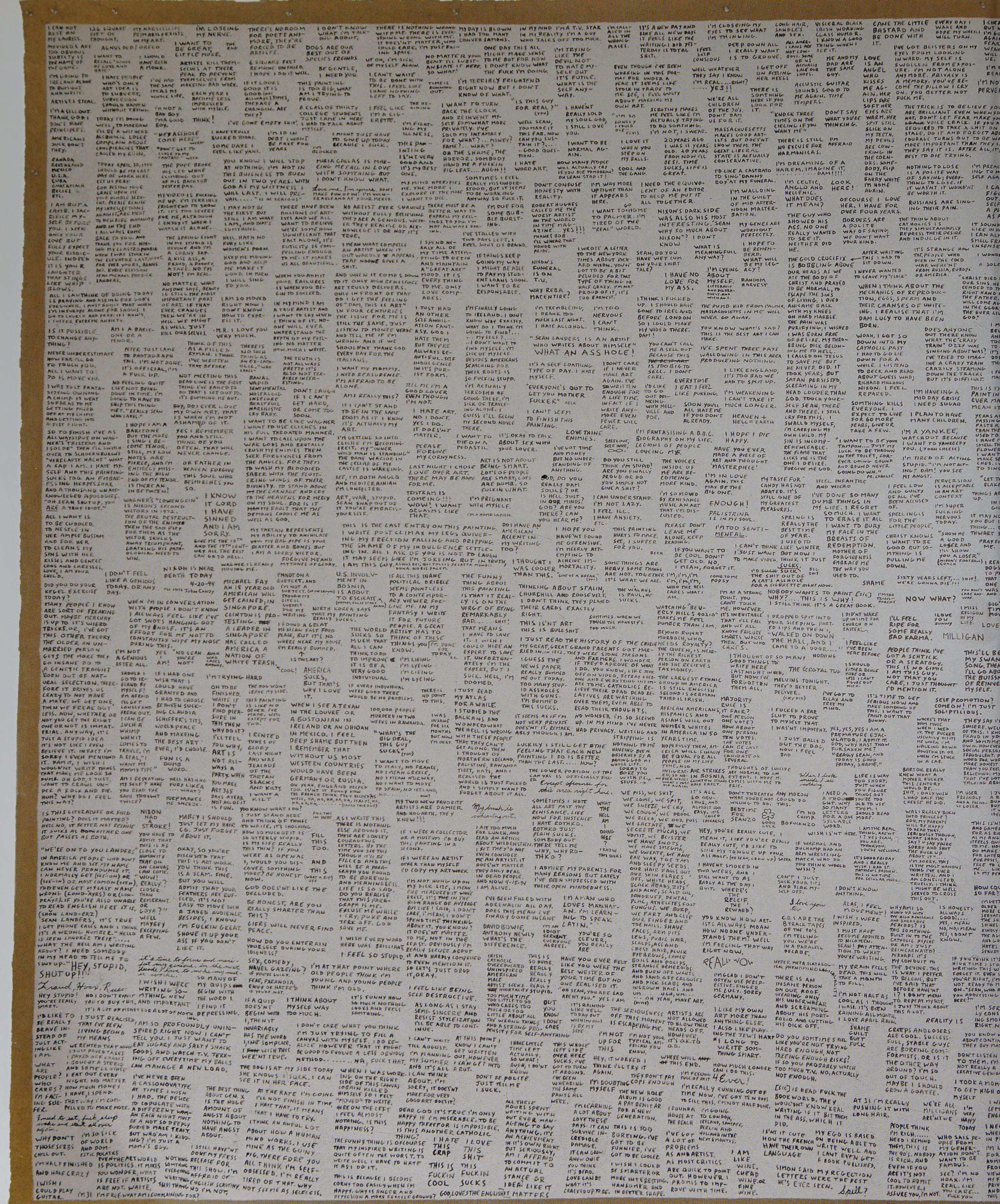
DANNY BOY OF DINGLE, 1993
Terracotta and green glaze
63.5 × 38.1 × 38.1 cm

ITALIAN HIGH RENAISSANCE AND BAROQUE SCULPTURE, 1993
Videotape
45 min.


THIS CORNOR IS THE FINAL FRONTIER, IF ONLY I HAD SOMTHING TO SAY.
I'M NEARLY FINISHED WITH THIS, I FEEL GOOD, IT SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE THAT I'M DERIVEING AN ART HIGH FROM THIS PIECE OF SHIT.
I BECAME AN ARTIST FOR THE MONEY AND THE WOMEN.
JAY JOPLING WAS JUST HERE. I'M BOOKED. VERY HAPPY ABOUT IT.
I LOVE BORDER COLLIES.
YOU'VE TOUCHED HER PERFECT BODY WITH YOUR MIND. L. COHEN
I'M SO FUCKIN LAZY, I DON'T EVEN FEEL LIKE JERKING OFF.
I'M NOT THIS BIG OF A JERK IN REAL LIFE.
"I AM HUMAN AND I NEED TO BE LOVED JUST LIKE EVERYBODY ELSE DOES." SMITHS
I'M SORRY FOR THIS. PLEASE DON'T HATE ME.
HOW I WISH I'D SHUT UP SOMTIMES, NEVER MORE THAN TODAY.
I SHOWED ANDREA A VIDEO OF ME JERKING OFF LAST NIGHT. MAN WAS I EMBARASSED.
I FEEL LIKE I'VE GOT THAT YUPPIE DISEASE
LUCKILY I FEEL SO MUCH BETTER TODAY. MAYBE I CAN GET MY SENSE OF HUMOR BACK.
TIME TO START A NEW PAINTING
"NO I'VE NEVER HAD A JOB BECAUSE I'M TOO SHY" SMITHS
I'VE BEEN FINISHED WITH THIS PAINTING FOR WEEKS BUT THIS EMPTY SPOT WAS BUGGING ME. HELLO MOM AND DAD, HI TO PAT, ERIN, MAURA AND KEVIN, TOO.
I WILL PAINT ON COMISION FOR A SPECIFIC WALL SIZE. INQUIRE ABOUT THIS WITH MY GALLERY. I AM A ARTIST FOR HIRE. I'LL NEVER FEED YOU ANY OF THAT "I'VE GOT INTEGRITY" CRAP.
ONE MORE DAY AND I'LL BE DONE.
I HAVEN'T MENTIONED HARRISON FORD YET.
I'M ONLY BUMMED OUT TODAY BECAUSE THIS PAINTING HAS TURNED OUT TO BE MUCH MORE TIME CONSUMEING AND DIFFICULT THAN I ORIGINALLY THOUGHT.
THIS PAINTING IS REALLY COMING AROUND.
THIS PAINTING WILL BE DONE IN UNDER A WEEK. WELL MAYBE A WEEK BUT NOT MUCH MORE.
BRENDT BUERKERT CAME THE OTHER DAY. I'M BOOKED. ALSO HAPPY ABOUT THAT.
MY PEN PAL FROM AMSTERDAM BECAME NASTY WHEN I ASKED HER TO INCLUDE A PHOTO OF HERSELF NAKED.
MY PAINTINGS SHOULD MAKE RICHARD PRINCE FEEL LAZY. SAYING THAT IS LIBERATEING. I'VE BEEN THINKING IT ALL WEEK BUT WAS TOO TIMID TO WRITE IT. NO OFFENSE OF COURSE.
I'D BE A MUCH BETTER PERSON IF I DIDN'T BELIEVE THAT ALL WOMEN SECRETLY WANT ME.
I'M WATCHING MELROSE PLACE.
I'M VERY SENSUAL, WHAT IS THIS PAINTING ABOUT ANYWAY.
WHEN HELENA WAS HERE I WAS SUCH A HAPPY ARTIST. NOW THAT SHE'S GONE LOOK AT THIS CRAP.
I'VE TREATED MY ART CAREER LIKE A GIRLFRIEND. FIRST ATTRACT, THEN REPULSE.
LISTEN TO ME I'M FUCKING COMPLAINING ABOUT COMPLAINING.
I'M FINALLY ON TONIGHT. I'M FINALLY IMPROVING THIS. CAN I SAY THAT.
MY FUCKIN EGO IS WAY TOO BIG FOR BEING THE MARGINAL ARTIST THAT I AM, PLUS I'M NOT AS GOOD LOOKING AS I THINK I AM, AND I'M A FUCKIN PSYCO, DAMIT! STOP TALKING ABOUT YOURSELF.
BESIDES SHAMLESSLY ADMIREING MYSELF I DO HAVE A LARGER POINT.
I HAD A DRINK WITH MICHELLE AND MONICA I LOVE HANGING OUT WITH WOMEN.
STILL NOT DONE YET
I WANT WYNONA RYDER TO MARRIE ME, BUT SHE DOESN'T KNOW I EXIST, WYNONA, I'M HERE FOR YOU.
MAYBE I SHOULD REDEVOTE MYSELF TO SCULPTURE, I CAN'T GO ON LIKE THIS.
I THOUGHT I'D BE DONE WITH THIS PAINTING IN 3 OR 4 DAYS. NOW I REALISE THAT IT'LL TAKE AT LEAST TWO WEEKS, AND STILL IT'LL SUCK.
MOTHER TAKES A MORE CIRCUMSPECT APROACH.
YOU DON'T REALLY THINK I'M THIS IMPRESSED WITH MYSELF DO YOU, OKAY, OKAY, WELL PERHAPS I AM BUT SO WHAT.
I FUCKING HATE MY SELF TODAY,
DID I REALLY WRITE THIS SHIT.
WOULDN'T YOU KNOW THAT I WRITE A LOT ON A DAY THAT I HATE MYSELF, I'D BETTER SAVE SOME ROOM FOR A GOOD MOOD, I'M IN NEED OF AN ART HIGH.
ROD STEWART'S ON DAVE TONIGHT HIS SONG IS SO BEAUTIFUL I'M ALL CHOKED UP. MAN, I NEED A GIRLFRIEND.
VISUALLY THIS PAINTING HAS LITTLE VIRTUE. IT'S A CONCEPTUAL LIGHT WEIGHT. IT SUCKS, SO DO I, FUCK ME.
I'M THE MOST SELF OBSESSED ARTIST YOU KNOW. OR I JUST ADMIT IT.
I WANT TO FILL THIS CANVAS WITH WORDS BUT I'VE GOT NOTHING TO SAY.
I'M WATCHING SLEEPING WITH THE ENEMY. IT'S A BORE BECAUSE JULIA ROBERTS NEVER SHOWS HER TITS.
THIS IS MY JOB
HOW CAN SO MUCH WRITING AMOUNT TO SO LITTLE.
I'M DOING MY BEST TO APPEAL TO EVERYONE.
PEOPLE LIKE ME BUT ONLY MY FAMILY LOVES ME. RIGHT?
YOU WILL NEVER READ THIS QUIP. SO I WAS WRONG.
EARLIER TODAY I THOUGHT THIS WOULD BE A GREAT PIECE NOW I JUST THINK IT SUCKS
IF I FAIL TO LEARN I WILL FAIL TO SURVIVE.
FINALLY THIS PAINTING IS BEGINING TO LOOK LIKE SOMTHING. "YEAH, SHIT"
THIS AINT NO CHRIS WOOL. I'LL BET HE'S DAM GLAD OF THAT. OR NOT, WHO KNOWS. I LIKE CHRIS, HE'S A NICE GUY.
I'M REALLY TIRED, IT'S 2:15 AM AND I'M STILL GOING
LOOK! I'M MAKEING PAINTINGS,
I'VE BEEN SO EMOTIONAL ALL DAY, SEE, MEN HAVE CYCLES TOO.
DEFINATELY BACK ROOM ART. A STAND BY. A CONSULATION PAINTING FOR THE EAGER COLLECTOR WHO GOT TO THE SHOW LATE.
GOD THIS PAINTING WAS WAY MORE WORK THAN IT LOOKS. I'M DAM GLAD IT'S ALMOST DONE. THE OTHER ONES THAT LOOK MORE DIFFICULT ARE MUCH EASIER. THEY'RE SIMPLY ABOUT EXISTENCIALISM. I SIMPLY TRECK THROUGH THEM, THIS ONE THERE'S NO PLACE TO HIDE. THEREFOR I BECOME SELF-CONCIOUS AND PARALISED. BUT THE OTHERS THEY'RE PRETTIER. THIS ONE HAS A BAD ATTITUDE.
STOP LOOKING AT ME YOU'RE MAKEING ME PARANOID.
THERE IS NO SIMULARITY BETWEEN MYSELF AND ANY OTHER ARTIST ON EARTH.
I FAILED AGAIN.
EITHER THIS IS NOT SLOPPY ENOUGH OR IT'S TOO SLOPPY OR IT JUST SUCKS. DAM I'M REALLY DOWN ON THIS TODAY.
AT LEAST IT'S NOT EXISTENCIAL LIKE MY OTHER ONES.
I SHOULD STOP THIS BECAUSE IT SUCKS
DON'T LOOK NOW IT'S THE 70'S ALL OVER AGAIN
SURE I'M INSECURE BUT NOT THIS INSECURE.
"IF I WERE A SCULPTOR BUT THEN AGAIN NO"
MY BEARD IS GROWING LIKE CRAZY. TESTOSERONE.
I'M AFRAID THIS PAINTING BLOWS, I'LL PUT IT IN THE BACK ROOM OF MY SHOW, SO YOU WONT BE ABLE TO STAND BACK AND SEE HOW UGLY IT IS.
ARE'NT YOU GLAD THIS ISN'T A CY TWOMBLY "NO"
I'VE GOT TO FILL THIS THING BUT I JUST FEEL LIKE SUCKING TITS, I'M SO EMPTY, I DON'T GIVE A SHIT ABOUT ANYTHING, I JUST WANT TO FUCK.
"I WEIGH 350 POUNDS AND I'M NOT GOING TO APOLOGIZE TO ANYONE" THE MOS SHOW
I THOUGHT I WAS BLOND BEFORE I GOT A VIDEO CAMERA.
WHAT THE FUCK IS MY PROBLEM?
I SHOULD GET PAY'D FOR MY LIFE?
I LOVE BEING IN LOVE
YOU HAVE TO ADMIT THAT I'M AT LEAST A DECENT ARTIST. I TAKE IT BACK NOW YOU DON'T.
I'LL FINISH THIS TOMOROW THEN MAKE TWO MORE
I DON'T KNOW WHY BUT SOMTIMES I JUST WANT TO DROP MY PANTS.
WISH IS NOT MY DOG, COME ON SEAN, BE FUNNY. OR AT LEAST CUTE.
I'M SORRY, THIS SIMPLY ISN'T A GOOD ART WORK. ONE THING ABOUT ME IS THAT I CAN REALLY SUCK.
CAN I HAVE YOUR EAR FOR A MINUTE
CHARMIN MATTS IN MY ASS HAIR. SCOTT IS A SUPERIOR PRODUCT. WHITE CLOUD SUCKS TOO,
FROM FAR AWAY THIS PAINTING LOOKS LIKE IT MIGHT BE "SMART ART" I FOR ONE AM DAM GLAD IT'S NOT
COME ON SEAN SAVE THIS THING
I'VE GOT A LOT OF WORK TO DO.
THIS CANVAS WAS FOUR OTHER PAINTINGS BEFORE THIS ONE. I EVEN TRIED COLOR, I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU REAL PAINTERS DO IT.
I'M SO FUCKIN STUPID ABOUT MY ETHNISITY I'M THUROUGHLY EMBARASSED I FEEL LIKE SUCH A STERIO TYPICAL AMERICAN JACK ASS.
SHUT UP! DAM IT, HOW TO TURN ONES FUCKING BRAIN OFF.
CONAN O'BRIEN LOOKS LIKE HOWDEY DOODY.
I DO IN FACT WANT TO MAKE BEAUTIFUL ART AND POETRY
WILL ANY WOMAN OUT THERE EVER LOVE ME AS MUCH AS I NEED THEM TOO
SELF LOATHING ISN'T PRETTY, NIETHER IS SELF LOVE, WHAT IN GOD'S NAME AM I LEFT WITH THEN.
HOW YA DOIN?
MOST ARTISTS DO THEIR BEST WORK IN THEIR 30'S, UT OH.....
I'M REALLY NOT VERY FOND OF MYSELF, NOW.
I CAN'T TELL IF I'M GETTING BETTER AND BETTER OR AS AN ARTIST OR WORSE AN WORSE. IF I AM GETTING WORSE PLEASE GIVE ME AN OTHER CHANCE.
LOVE HA, HA, HA, HA, HA, HA...
I'VE DONE NOTHING WRONG
IS IT BAD THAT I THINK I'M SO BEAUTIFUL, SHOULD I LOVE MYSELF AS MUCH AS I DO.
I'VE SPENT THE LAST TWO DAYS IN THE DELUSIONAL FANTASY THAT I'M A GENIOUS
I HAVE THIS THEORY THAT GROWING MY WISKERS OUT EVERY NOW AND THEN IS GOOD FOR MY FACE
THIS IS THE AVOIDENSE OF ART.
THE PRESIDENT IS SELLING HIS HEATH CARE PLAN.
THE FUGE STATE '93
HELLO, I'M IN A GOOD MOOD TODAY. I'VE DRESSED MYSELF IN A WACKY ARTIST OUTFIT. I'M ENTRENCHED HERE NOW FOR A MONTH. I WON'T SHAVE, OR BATH MUCH, I WONT EAT MUCH AND I'LL HARDLY LEAVE MY LOFT.
MOST OF ALL I NEED TO GO TO SLEEP.
GROW UP YOU IDIOT.
I HAVE TO STOP FOR TONIGHT AND WATCH T.V. OR I'LL GO NUTS
MOST OF MY QUIPS HERE BEGIN WITH THE WORD I
I NEED SEX EVERY DAY. 7 TIME ZONES.... AUGH....
D.N.A. GIVES US FREEDOM
URGE OVERKILL HAS SOME REALLY BAD SONGS.
YOU WOULD'NT TOUCH ME WITH A TEN FOOT POLE WOULD YOU? SEE! I KNEW THAT. IT'S NOT LIKE I'M OBLIVIOUS, I JUST WRITE ABOUT MY SELF TOO MUCH.
WOLFMAN JACK IS ON PSYCICH HOT LINE TONIGHT.
I USE FRIZZ EASE.
RON BROWN IS COMEING DOWN
I SAW ERIC WALKING MY DOG AND FELT LIKE MURDERING HIM.
I NEED TO SHAVE, AND STOP LOVEING MYSELF!
I'M CRYING
14 HOURS OF NON STOP ART MAKEING TODAY.
Love is all around, no need to waste it
I'M WAY TOO HORNEY TO BE SINGLE.
I BELIEVE IN LASTING LOVE. PERHAPS THIS IS WHY I FAIL. INTERESTING. HM..... I DON'T BELIEVE IN LOVE!
I'VE PREPARED TWO NEW CANVASES.
THANK GOD FOR PENTHOUSE.
ARE YOU MY MOTHER
I REALLY HAVE TO CHANGE THE WAY I MAKE ART. HOW LONG CAN I GO ON LIKE THIS.
I NEED TO BECOME FUNNIER, LESS WORRIED.
HEART BREAK
I FEAR THAT I'M BECOMEING BATH-WATER.
FROM ACROSS THE ROOM THIS PAINTING LOOKS LIKE A SKIN DISEASE.
I OWE MUCH OF MY SUCCESS TO MY GOOD LOOKS. UGLY PEOPLE DON'T HAVE IT SO EASY.
I THINK I'M DONE
I'M NOT THE LOSER YOU ALL THINK I AM
I WANT TO SODOMIZE DAWN WELLS NO BIG DEAL
NOBODY CARES.
SEAN! YOU'RE EVIL. NO HUMAN
I LIKE DANCEING WITH MYSELF AND IMAGENING I'M PARIS
BIG EARTHQUAKE IN INDIA TODAY.
I'M DISCUSTED WITH MY NARCISISM.
PAINTING MAKES ME FEEL LIKE AN ARTIST. READING THIS MAKES ME FEEL LIKE AN IDIOT.
MORE, I NEED MORE QUANTITY AND MORE QUALITY. COME ON SEAN, THINK, MAKE THIS BETTER, YOU WANT IT TO BE EXTREME AND THIS IS SIMPLE BORED FORMALISM IT'S NOT WHAT I'M ABOUT. I'M NOT PUSHING MYSELF. I CAN MAKE SUCH BETTER ART THAN THIS
I OFTEN DECLARE THAT I DON'T GIVE A SHIT. BUT I REALLY DO.
I'VE RUN OUT OF MONEY AGAIN
I NEED SOMTHING HERE
PUSH YOURSELF SEAN, FORCE THIS TO BE BETTER. BECAUSE NOW 4-21 IT SUCKS.
YOU'RE ALL SICK OF ME.
FINALLY, I'M FINISHED
FUCK YOU!
VERMONT IS A NICE STATE.
I'VE BEEN AT THIS TOO LONG.
I'M HAVEING AN OTHER MOMENT WITH MYSELF
I'M HUMAN
I LOOK INTO EYES SEARCHING FOR LOVE I LISTEN FOR COMPASION AND I TRY LIKE HELL NOT TO BE CORNY BUT IT'S A LOSEING BATTLE
RICHARD LINKLETTER DOES IT AGAIN.
I DON'T CARE THAT I DON'T HAVE MY FORSKIN.
THIS PAINTING IS A COLABORATIVE EFFORT BETWEEN MYSELF AND ROBERT RYMAN. "OH SEAN, DON'T BE SO STUPID"
LOVE EXACTS A VERY HIGH PRICE MORE OFTEN THAN NOT.
ONE PACK DOWN AND STILL SMOKIN
MAYBE I SHOULD QUIT WHILE I'M AHEAD.
MY BOOK ISN'T VERY GOOD IS IT?.... DAMIT! I THOUGHT SO.
SET OF INSPIRATION.
EVERYTHING IS STILL OKAY BUT I FEEL ON THE VERGE OF BECOMEING SAD.
I'M SUCH A VICTUM OF MY SURROUNDINGS
WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ME AND STUART SMALLEY.
I'M NOT GOING TO GIVE UP SHOPING ON RODEO DRIVE.
TURNING ART INSIDE OUT, THAT'S WHAT I'M TRYING TO DO. HERE, IF SO TODAY IS THE DAY WHEN THE ARTIST RECOGNISES HIS OWN FAILURE.
MY LANDLORD HAS BEEN BEEN AWAKE FOR DAYS ON COKE AND IS CARRYING A GUN. I HAVEN'T PAID RENT IN 6 MONTHS
I'M WAY TO BUMMED TO BE WHO I AM
TOO DENSE IN HERE, AND I DON'T MEAN INTALECTUALLY.
HI MICHELLE
I'M NOT A PERVERT AM I?
I'VE GOT A NEW STRATEGY, I'LL FILL AREAS DENSLY AT ONCE GIVING ME MORE SATISFACTION
IS ANYONE ACTUALLY BEAUTIFUL?
I LIKE JANET RENO!
OH GOD THIS PAINTING SUCKS. I THOUGHT IT WAS GOING TO BE SO GOOD WHEN I BEGAN IT NOW, IT NOT ONLY LOOKS BAD IT'S NOT AMUSEING.
SO NO MORE COMPLAINING HARD WORK WILL DELIVER ME. THIS WILL BE A GOOD PAINTING YET. SO HELP ME GOD.
THE PRODUCTS OF SCIENCE ARE NOT BENING THEY CAN BORE US TO DEATH. JUST KIDDING, I LOVE SCIENCE TIME...
I LOVE MYSELF SO MUCH!
WHO CARES!
I COULD'NT WAKE UP TODAY.
I SAW A COUPLE MANGLED ON HOUSTON ST. FROM A MOTOR CYCLE ACCIDENT. I WALKED PAST NOT EVEN STOPPING TO SEE WHAT I COULD DO. I GUESS I DONT GIVE A DAM ANYMORE.
I CAN'T HELP BUT SEE MYSELF AS UTTERLY INSANE. THIS IS NO TIME FOR ME TO BE SO ALONE.
I COULD CARE LESS ABOUT YOU AND WHAT YOU'RE DOING. I'M ONLY CONCERNED WITH MYSELF. FUCK YOU. YOU'RE CUTE. QUIT LIEING TO YOURSELF. GO TO HELL, FORGET IT.
VISUALLY THIS PAINTING NEEDS MORE LONG PARRAGRAPHS SO FAR I'VE GOT TOO MANY TWO LINE QUIPS. I HAVE TO EVEN UP THIS THING
Let us pray HUH?
TOMMY SCORES
HELENA JUST CALLED ME FROM ATHENS. I LOVE AND MISS HER. I WONT CLEAN MY SHEETS SO I CAN SMELL HER AT NIGHT
SWEATE LODGE
I HATE THE FACT THAT I LOVE MYSELF SO MUCH
AN INVISABLE THREAD IS PULLING ME THROUGH MY LIFE.
LAST YEAR I FANSIED THAT I WAS SAMUEL ADAMS BECAUSE I LIKED THE BEER SO MUCH. THIS YEAR I THINK I'M PARIS
FACE IT SEAN THIS JUST ISN'T A GOOD IDEA.
WHY CAN'T I KEEP MY PANTS ON ON VIDEO? WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME?
MY BRAIN IS A JERK
I'M PARIS PARIS STOLED HELEN
THIS IS A WHOLE LOT OF NOTHING BUT NOTHING UNITED HAS POWER. "WHAT?"
SHUT UP! IDIOT
IS THIS ANYTHING
I'M SO FUCKING FRIGHTENED OF MY OWN ART. WOULDN'T YOU
ENOUGH ABOUT YOU, WHAT ABOUT ME
WHERE AM I
A NICE ELONGATED PARRAGRAPH WOULD LOOK GOOD RIGHT HERE DON'T YOU THINK. YES, I AM MAKEING COMPOSITION DESISIONS. I'VE ALLWAYS BEEN AN ASTHETIC ARTIST.
I CAN'T STAND MYSELF ANYMORE.
THE OLDER I BECOME THE MORE NUMEROUS FAULTS I REALISE ABOUT MYSELF. I'M REALLY NOT A GOOD PERSON. I'M A FUCKING ASS HOLE.
I'M ABOUT TO BECOME A EUROPEAN. I HOPE IT AGREES WITH ME. AMERICANS MAKE AWKWARD EUROPEONS. BUT I SUPPOSE IT'S HIGH TIME WE STOPED NOTICEING THE DIFFERENCE.
I WANT TO GO HOME. WHAT'S HAPPEND TO ME
WHAT HAVE I BECOME
HELP ME
I OWE GERMANY AN APOLOGY
I FEEL THAT I'VE GONE TOO FAR. BUT THERE'S NO TURNING BACK.
IF EVER I NEEDED LOVE IT'S NOW, DAM.
THE OLDER I GET, THE MORE FOND OF ASTHETIC BEAUTY, THE MELLOER THE MORE IN NEED OF LOVE AND SECURITY I HOPE YOU'RE NOT DISAPOINTED
STOP SPACEING OUT AND PAINT.
BAG PIPES MAKE ME MISTY.
I RECENTLY DISCOVERD THAT I'VE GOT A REAL CRUEL STREACK. I DON'T THINK IT BECOMES ME.
IS THIS THE BAD ART IDEA I THINK I FEAR IT IS.
WAS I BORN AN ARTIST OR DID I LEARN THIS
11:00 O'CLOCK TOMORROW I'LL HEAR FROM MY LOVER AGAIN
APPLE SEASON IN NEW ENGLAND. I WANT TO GO HOME.
I PREDICT THAT I'LL BE HATED BECAUSE OF THIS SHOW.
I'M NO LONGER BITTER
ANYBODY OUT THERE FEEL LIKE TAKEING CARE OF ME. ALL I REQUIRE IS MONEY AND LOVE.
I LIKE TO GOLF. "SO FUCKIN WHAT"
IS WANTING TO BE A GOOD ARTIST ENOUGH.
I SHOULD BREACK MY VIDEO CAMERA AND REMOVE ALL THE MIRRORS FROM MY HOME. I'VE RELEASD AN EVIL IN MYSELF. THE DREAD. THE HORROR. THE PATHOS.
WATCHING T.V. MAKES MY ART BETTER. AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT I TELL MYSELF.
WHO AM I ANYWAY
CAN AMERICANS WHEAR KILTS WITH DIGNITY.
I MISS HELENA
FRANCE IS CURRENTLY MY FAVORITE COUNTRY IN EUROPE, HOWEVER THIS CHANGES OFTEN. I RECENTLY HAD A NICE STAY IN GERMANY. ITALY IS TOUGH COMPATION. ENGLAND IS A STRESS FREE HOLIDAY TOO.
ONLY OTHER ARTISTS LOOK AT ART AND CARE. ARTISTS DON'T BY ART
NOW THAT I'M HERE I CAN'T THINK
I JUST SHOWD ANDREA MY NEW VIDEO WHICH DESCRIBES BEING MANIALLY NARCISISTIC IS GRAPHICALLY MASTABATORY. I WAS'NT EMBARASSED BUT I FEARED FOR MY SANITY. I THINK I'M INSANE.
I'M NOT WORTH YOUR TROUBLE MAYBE LAHRING AUGUSTINE HAS GOT A GOOD SHOW ON THIS MONTH, GO DOWNSTAIRS AND CHECK IT OUT.
WELL I'M NOT NEARLY AS BUMMED OUT TODAY SO HOPEFULLY I CAN REGAIN THE GOOD CHEER OF THIS PAINTING TODAY WHICH IN ALL HONESTY DESCRIBES MY TRUE MOOD THESE DAYS I AM HAPPY
AN OTHER ELONGATED PARAGRAPH IS NEEDED HERE TO MAKE VISUAL HARMONY. I CAN SHAME ADMIT THIS NOW. I DON'T FEAR MY ASTHETIC INTENTIONS.
I'VE HAD A VERY BAD DAY, I'VE HATED EVERY OUNCE OF MYSELF. I SICK OF TALKING ABOUT MYSELF, I'M TIRED OF ME AS A SUBJECT. I WANT TO BE FREE. I WANT TO THINK ABOUT YOU.
COME ON SEAN MAKE SOME REAL ART.
SOMETIMES I JUST FEEL LIKE GOING HOME
ALL IS OKAY I'M NOT SAD OR LONELY INDEED I'M CONTENT AND CONFIDENT ABOUT MY UPCOMEING SHOW. I WONT PRETEND THAT I THINK I SUCK. I KNOW I DON'T
AFTER THIS SHOW I'M GOING TO LIVE IN EUROPE FOR THREE MONTHS AND BEGIN MY NEXT BOOK. I'LL BE IN GREECE, ENGLAND AND IRELAND. BUT I SWEAR I'LL NOT MENTION MY ETHNISITY ONCE.
LARRY HOEG
I NEED A HAMBURGER
IT'S NEARLY APPLE SEASON IN NEW ENGLAND AT LEAST I'VE GOT THAT TO LOOK FORWARD TO. I LOVE MY HOMETOWN
LOVE AND PATHOS IN THE 90'S
I'M GENUINLY FUCKED UP.
IT'S ALL THE SAME SHIT OVER AND OVER AGAIN
IF I PAINT ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT THIS WILL BE EVEN MORE PSYCO THAN USEUAL
I'M FREE. I'M ALMOST HOME. IF THIS SHOW SELLS OUT I CAN BUY A FARM HOUSE
SOME DAYS I JUST CAN'T CONCENTRATE ONE WHAT I'M DOING I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH TIME TO STALL OUT
I'M DONE FOR TONIGHT
ALL THIS IS, IS MENTAL TELIVISION.
THIS IS UGLY
I'M IN LOVE WITH A WOMEN WHO LIVES 7 TIMEZONES AWAY FROM ME.
DON'T LIKE SOCCER MUCH.... THIS IS INANE.
AT LEAST I'M NOT FEELING REJECTION ANYMORE
I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M DOING. YES I DO! NO I DON'T. YES I DO.
LISTEN YOU ALL HAVE A LOT TO TALK ABOUT I'M GOING TO EXCUSE MYSELF.
I'M A PREMATURE EJACULATOR. I ALSO SHOW SIGHNS OF LATENT CONSERVATISM. BUT FOR NOW I'M A LIBERAL PUSSY LICKER. I HOPE TO GOD I NEVER CHANGE.
OH GOD, ALMOST DONE. AM I EVEN ENJOYING THIS.
I'M IN LOVE AGAIN AND REALLY HAPPY ABOUT IT.
I NEED THERAPY BUT WONT GET IT TO MAKE MY ART CRAZIER
I'D LIKE TO LIVE IN MAINE ONE DAY.
MY BIRTHDAY IS SATURDAY AND I HAVE NO PLANS
WILL YOU EVER BE ABLE TO FORGIVE ME
NO I DO NOT WANT TO SHOOT SOME HOOP.
GENERATION X
DO YOU AGREE WITH MODERN ART.
THIS IS NO TYPO, I'M REALLY FUCKED UP.
MY GREATEST WISH IS TO BECOME A BETTER ARTIST I'M ALSO SEARCHING FOR PERFECT LOVE. AND A DOG I'D NAME DUMB DUMB
DILLON IS A REBLE WITH OUT A CAUSE
LOOK! (STUPID)
REMEMBER SHAZAM?
"I'M A SNOOPY KIND OF A GUY"
IS RANDOMNESS A LOGIC
SEVEN TIME ZONES
I'M NOT MACHO AM I? UNFORTUNATELY
I NEED ORDER IN MY LIFE. I NEED A WOMAN
ARE OTHERS AS NARCISISTIC AS I AM.
90210 WAS TOUCHING TONIGHT I CRIED LIKE A BABY.
TENNIS IS A GREAT SPORT. SO IS BASEBALL AND HOCKEY. FOOTBALL SUCKS.
MY INABILITY TO TAKE ANYTHING SERIOUSLY IS MEERLY I FEAR OF TAKEING A STANCE
I'VE MADE A LOT OF MISTAKES IN MY LIFE
I'M VERY FRIENDLY WITH THE ENGLISH. THEY THINK I'M FULL OF SHIT. EVEN THOUGH I USE MY FULL VOCABULARY IN CONVERSATION. IT JUST GOES TO SHOW YOU. IGNORENSE IS INCONCIEVABLE. ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU CAN'T SPELL.
I BRIEFLY CONSIDERD FUCKING MYSELF WITH A WINE BOTTLE HELENA GAVE ME BUT DECIDED AGAINST IT ON ACCOUNT OF THE FACT THAT IT WOULD BE TOO SAD
READING THIS MAKES ME FEAR THAT I'M INSANE
WLTW
I JUST TOOK A PHONE CALL!
I'M SUCH AN ASSHOLE.
AM I ON STAR SEARCH?
I CAN'T SLEEP BECAUSE MY LANDLORD HAS COKE PARTIES EVERY NIGHT, THEY FIGHT AND LISTEN TO MUSIC. THEY'RE ARMED AND PARANOID
JAQUE PEPPIN FRUGLE GORMET YAN CAN COOK VICTORY GARDEN YANKEE WOODSHOP N.P.R. PLAYING I LOVE SUNDAY. NATURE, I CAN'T FORGET THAT IT'S MY FAVORITE SHOW.
KEEP READING YOU'LL FIND SOMTHING FUNNY HERE. THE RATIO IS ABOUT ONE IN TEN.
I'M ATTEMPTING TO MAKE THE BEST ART OF MY LIFE OR AT LEAST UNTILL NEXT YEAR. YES, MY NEXT SHOW WILL DEFINATELY BE BETTER, BUT THIS ONE IS PRETTY DAM GOOD FOR RIGHT NOW
I ABSOLUTELY LOVE BIG TITS ON WOMEN. I KNOW HOW STUPID AND UNCORRECT THAT IS BUT IT'S THE HONEST TRUTH. I PROBABLY SHOULD AVOID MAKEING SUCH ADMISIONS
I'M SNEAKY AND CAN'T BE TRUSTED.
HOW CAN I TOUCH YOU, YOU'RE SO FAR AWAY
I'M REALLY CONCENTRATING HERE.
I WONDER IF I'LL EVER BE ABLE TO SHUT UP THEN AGAIN HOPEFULLY NOT BECAUSE THEN I'LL BE OUT OF A JOB. EVEN I CAN ADMIT THAT I'VE GOT AN AWSOME JOB.
THIS PAINTING MAY BE DONE, NOPE, NOT YET.
LISTENING TO REM MAKES ME FEEL PREDICTABLE
PHILANDERERS
I'VE GOT A GREAT FAMILY.
I'M AFRAID MY LANLORD WILL KILL ME. REALLY!
THE MORE YOU FUCK THE MORE YOUR BEARD GROWS. MYTH OR FACT?
I'M FARTING LIKE A SKUNK
THANK GOD I'M IN A GOOD MOOD AGAIN I WAS BEGINING TO WONDER WHETHOR I'D EVER SEE MY SUNNY SIDE AGAIN.
I LIKE MY BOOTS BUT THEY'RE A BIT HEAVY.
WHEN I'M IN EUROPE I'M OFTEN MADE TO FEEL LIKE WARREN CHRISTOPHER.
I'M FEELING OK RIGHT NOW BECAUSE JOHN'S STILL HERE. HE'LL LEAVE IN A MOMENT AND I'LL BECOME LONLEY AND DESPONDENT ABOUT HELENA'S LEAVING TODAY.
I SAW JACK EARLY YESTERDAY AND HE MADE ME HAPPY BECAUSE HE'S SO FRIENDLY
I'M A FUCKING COWARD.
I'M SCARED SHITLESS OF BEING ALONE "SHUT UP" "GROW UP"
WHAT EVER THIS IS, IT'S MY FUNCTION IN LIFE, I FEEL CERTAIN OF THAT AT LEAST.
I'M STILL NOT DONE YET
NOW THAT HELENA'S GONE T.V. WILL BE MY BEST FRIEND AGAIN
CHEVY CHASE IS BOMBING
WHEN IT ALL COMES DOWN I REALLY AM PATHETIC AFTER ALL. NO I'M NOT, YES I AM, NO I'M NOT,
I LOVE SALMON AND FRESH TUNA.
I CAN'T CHANGE ANYTHING.
I WANT YOUR EYES TO NEED ME LIKE MINE NEED YOU
I'M PAINTING JUST TWO BLOCKS AWAY FROM WHERE LENARD COHEN USED TO LIVE WHEN HE GOT HIS START IF THAT TELLS YOU ANYTHING
AT LEAST MY ART IS FUN TO MAKE.
I'M AVOIDING WHAT I'M FEARING
A GOOD THING FOR SELF LOATHING OR I'D BE SO MUCH MORE UNBEARABLE, OR WOULD I, PERHAPS I SHOULD TAKE ON UNABASHED SELF ADJULATION AUGH I COULDN'T IF I TRIED.
WHAT AM I TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH WITH THIS.
I NEED TOO MUCH TO BE LOVEABLE
NO SARCASIM HERE
FUCK ME
THE RAVEL TRIO BEAUX ARTS TRIO RACHEL, JOHN'S SISTER SAID IT'S THE PERFECT SAD MUSIC TO MATCH MY DEPRESIVE STATE.
I'M WRITING TO MAKE A VISUAL COMPOSITION. DOES THAT COMPRAMIZE MY INTEGRATY AS A WRITER. DO YOU BELIEVE IN GOD? AM I AN ASS HOLE OR WHAT?
CAPERS, OLIVES PUTANESCA,
BLACK LICORISH
McCAULY CULKIN IS MY FAVORITE ACTOR
90210 AT COLLEGE THE SAME COLLEGE WHAT A GREAT NIGHT THIS WILL BE.
I'M TOO SELF CONSIOUS FOR THIS BUISNESS, DAM! I KNEW I SHOULD HAVE GONE INTO FORESTRY.
WHAT'S SO FRIGHTENING ABOUT DEATH
THE BIOSPHERE WAS A FAILURE.
I'VE GOT A PICASSO COMPLEX.
I'M SO EMBARASSED ABOUT SO MANY THINGS, HOW DO I NOT HAVE A NERVOUS TICK
WELCOME TO HELL
I HOPE THERE IS SOMTHING YOU LIKE HERE SOMEWHERE
Love is all around why don't you take it.
WRITING WRITING EVERYWHERE AND NOT A WORD TO READ.
I DREAM OF AQUIREING A PLACE IN ART HISTORY AND A PLACE IN THE COUNTRY AND A BRONCO TO GET ME THERE AND BACK.
AM I REALLY SO UNAPPEALING? YES! NO, YES, "WHO GIVES A SHIT SEAN"
I SPENT MY BIRTHDAY PESTERING WOMEN LOOKING FOR LOVE. I WAS REJECTED ON ALL FRONTS.
I WATCH T.V. FOR COMPANY I ATE A SALAMI SUB
7 TIME ZONES OF SEPERATION
THIS NARCISISTIC TALK I'VE BEEN ON IS SO FULL OF SHIT
SOME CRITIC IS REALLY GOING TO BURY MY ASS FOR THIS.
I'VE BEEN SPACEING OUT HERE FOR 4 HOURS AND NOT PAINTING. I'VE GOT TO DO THIS. CONCENTRATE SEAN.
THIS IS TOO BIG FOR WHAT IT IS.
IT'S LIKE BEING IN JAIL.
IT'S JUST 4:30 PM RIGHT NOW BUT DARK AS NIGHT DUE TO A TORNADO WATCH. MY BACK HURTS. I'M LOOKING FOR A GIRLFRIEND
"SEAN, QUIT BELLY ACHEING ABOUT LOVE AND LONLINESS YOU APPEAR LIKE AN IDIOT" LIKE I CARE.
I'M SORRY FOR MY OBNOXIOUS INVITATION I NEED TO GET YOUR NOTICE.
I NEED A HAMBURGER REALLY BAD.
TRITE BUT ENGAGEING
I ADMIRE FELIX
TOOTH BRUSH COMPANIES ARE VERY COMPETATIVE.
BRAZEN YET COWARDLY.
HERB KELLEHER SAIS, THE BEST WAY TO LOSE SUCCESS IS TO BELIEVE YOU ARE SUCCESSFULL. MY QUESTION FOR HERB IS WHAT'S THERE TO LOSE IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE YOU HAVE IT. "WHO'S HERB KELLEHER?"
THIS IS THE MOST LABOR INTENSIVE LAZY ART I'VE EVER SEEN.
"SEAN LANDERS BELIEVES HE MAY WELL BE THE BEST ARTIST OF HIS TIME. WHAT A FUCKING JOKE"
BELIEVE ME I'M FAR MORE SICK OF ME THAN YOU ARE.
I KNOW IT DOESN'T APPEAR SO BUT I HAPPEN TO BE REMARKABLY WELL ADJUSTED.
THE LANDLORD IS A PRESENCE IN MY PSYCHE, ALONG SIDE THE DEVIL.
MY DAD IS PISSED OFF AT KEVIN. HE CALLED TONIGHT AND BITCHED AT ME. IT WAS CUTE.
MY HEART IS IN ATHENS
I'M GOING A LITTLE NUTS WITHOUT A WOMAN IN MY LIFE. IT'S NOT THAT I CAN'T GET A GIRLFRIEND, I GUESS I'M NOT READY TO YET. MICHELLE IS NOT EASEY FOR ME TO GET OVER. WHY AM I TELLING YOU THIS? WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME. IF YOU HAPPEN TO BE AVAILABLE, BEAUTIFUL AND INTELLIGENT, OH AND FEMALE. ASK ME OUT... INSANE NEED NOT APPLY.
I'M SORRY THIS IS REALLY DUMB SO IS EVERYTHING I WRITE. SHIT!
I JUST WROTE HELENA A LOVE LETTER. IT FELT SO GOOD THAT I'M HAPPY AGAIN LOVE IS SO IMPORTENT TO ME
IT'S SO DIFFICULT TO FIND A GOOD RADIO STATION I'M CONSIDERING BUYING A SHORT WAVE RADIO SO I CAN LISTEN TO BBC AND CBC NPR PALES IN COMPARISON I WANT NO COMERCIALS, GOOD MUSIC AND INTELLIGENT REPORTING
I CONSIDER MANY OF THESE PARAGRAPHS TO BE POEMS, AFTER ALL I AM A WRITER.
I'M VERY HUNGERY. I GOT A SANDWICH AND A BEER
MY BOOTS ARE SO HEAVY, I BECAME FATIGED WALKING TO SOHO AND BACK, I ALSO DON'T EAT.
I DREAMED ROBERTA SMITH WAS MY MOTHER. I REALLY DID THIS IS NOT A STRATEGY. YES IT IS. NO IT'S NOT
I FIRST WANTED TO SAVE SOULS, THEN ANIMALS, THEN PLANTS. NOW I'M TRYING TO SAVE MYSELF.
I'M TOO EGO TESTICLE
I'M ACTUALLY NOT GOOD LOOKING I JUST AM WILLING TO BELIEVE I AM. IS BEING VAIN AS HORRIBLE AS IT FEELS. A VAIN STATEMENT HANGS IN THE AIR LIKE A FART. HEY GOOD TITLE FOR THIS PAINTING "FART"
I'VE DECIDED TO WATCH AMERICA'S FUNNIEST HOME VIDEOS OVER 60 MIN. BECAUSE IT'S MORE RELAVENT. CORRECTION I WITNESS VIDEO OR COPS. OR RESCUE 911 OR STAR SEARCH. THE AMERICAN GLADIATORS, OR THE PSYCIC HOTLINE RICHARD SIMMONS JOHN BRADSHAW FRENCH ACTION SALLY
CLINTON WAS IN TOWN TODAY.
"WHEN I WAS YOUNG I NEVER NEEDED ANYONE" ERIC CARMEN
I'M BACK IT'S A NEW DAY. I'M BORED OF THIS "ART WORK" I DON'T KNOW WHAT I FEEL LIKE DOING TODAY. MY BALLS ARE HANGING OUT OF A HOLE IN MY LEVIS I HONESTLY DON'T WANT TO DO ANYTHING
I'D LIKE TO ISSUE AN APOLOGY TO ANYONE OR GROUP OF PEOPLE I'VE EVER INSULTED OR RUBBED THE WRONG WAY. HONESTY IS NOT ALLWAYS A GOOD.
FIRST I THOUGHT I WANTED TO BE A PRIEST, THEN A VETRINARIAN, THEN FORISTRY. SO YOU SEE, I HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO BECOME AN ARTIST.
IF I WERE MARRIED TO A WOMAN WHO WANTED TO LIVE IN THE BIOSPHERE FOR TWO YEARS I'D FILE FOR DIVORSE. HOWEVER I WOULD'NT DIVORSE HER IF SHE WAS AN ASTRONAUT
MY FINGERS SMELL LIKE CIGERETTES BUT DAM I'M SLIM
KUDOS TO MYSELF I'VE DONE IT AGAIN
THIS ISN'T FUNNY ENOUGH
I'M NOT SUFFERING I'M NOT AFRAID TO BE ALONE CAN YOU IMAGINE A 30 YEAR OLD FRIGHTENED OF BEING ALONE AT NIGHT.
SEE YOU LATER COUNSELOR
I'M SO IMMERSED IN THIS I CAN'T TELL IF IT SUCKS OR NOT.
I'M AN AVERAGE ARTIST WHO JERKS OFF TOO MUCH. I NEED A DATE.
AFTER READING THIS EVEN I WONDER IF I'M THIS BIG A JERK
STUPID BUT FUNNY
LOVEING ONES SELF IS NOT EASY FOR A CATHOLIC, BUT I SEEM TO BE DOING IT OKAY.

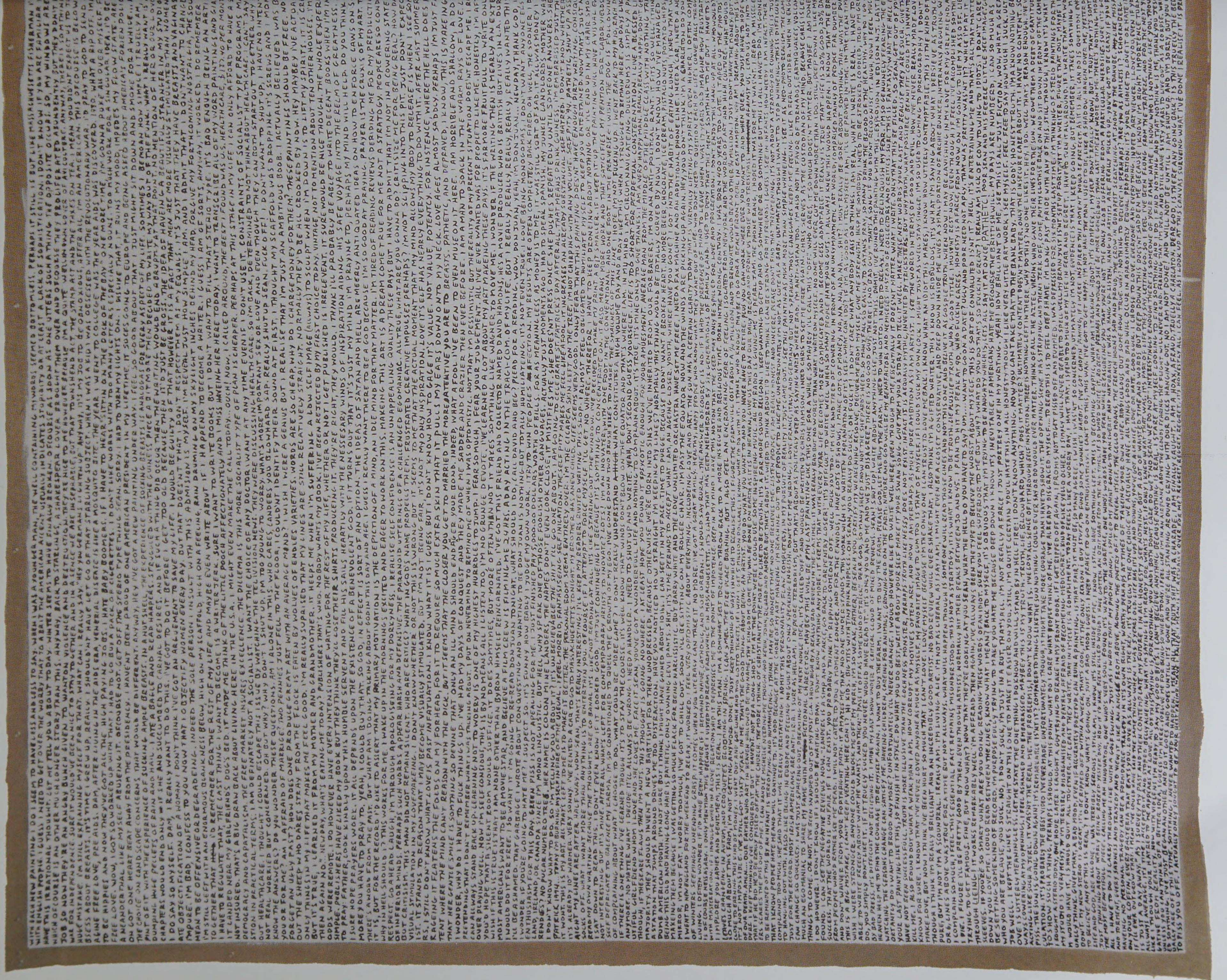
Pages 18–19
SELF-SOMETHING, 1994
Oil on linen
274.32 × 426.72 cm

FART, 1993
Oil on linen
213.36 × 285.75 cm


I CAN NOT REST ON MY LAURELS.
126 SQUARE FEET OF THOUGHT.
MY NARSISSISM PRIMARILY EXISTS IN MY ART.
I'M LOSEING MY NERVE.
THERE'S NO ROOM FOR POETS ANY MORE, THEY'RE FORCED TO BE ARTISTS.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT.
THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH ME. THERE IS EVERYTHING WRONG WITH ME. IT DOES'NT MATTER, WHO COULD CARE, I'M JUST FRICTING SPACE.
MY DAY IS BLOWN I HAD TOO MANY CONVERSATIONS.
IN MY MIND I'M A T.V. STAR IN MY REALITY I'M A GUY WHO TALKS OFF TOO MUCH.
I'M CALL-ASED IN ALL THE WRONG PLACES.
IT'S A NEW DAY AND LIKE ALL NEW DAYS IT FEELS LIKE THE WRITING I DID YESTERDAY IS TOTAL SHIT.
I'M CLOSEING MY EYES TO SEE WHAT I'M THINKING.
LONG HAIR, SANDLE'S AND SEX.
VISCERAL BLACK IRISH WORKING CLASS HUMOR. I KNOW A GOOD THING WHEN I SEE IT.
CANE THE LITTLE BASTARD AND BE DONE WITH IT.
EVERY DAY I WAKE AND HOPE MY WHEELS WILL TURN.
MY VIDEOS ARE TOO OBVIOUS SUBTLETY IS THE NAME OF THE GAME.
AGNUS DEO / ORFEO
I WANT TO BE GREAT, LITTLE MORE.
THE END
I WANT TO RECALL "SONGS OF LOVE AND HATE"
I SHOULD HAVE BEEN A MONK.
ARTISTS KILL THEMSELVES AT THEIR PEAK TO PREVENT THEMSELVES FROM MAKEING BAD WORK.
6 SQUARE FEET REMAINE UNFILLED. I HOPE I DO IT WELL.
DOGS ARE OUR BEST OUT OF SPECIES FREINDS
BE GENTLE, I NEED YOU.
UH OH, I'M SICK OF MYSELF AGAIN.
NO MATTER YOUR BENT I'LL SUBSTANTIATE IT HERE. SO WHAT!
ONE DAY THIS ALL MIGHT MAKE SENSE TO ME BUT FOR NOW I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE FUCK I'M DOING.
I'M TRYING LIKE THE DEVIL NOT TO HATE MYSELF BUT IT'S FUTILE. WHAT IS THE SELF ANY-WAY.
I'M GOING TO IRELAND ALONE TO BUM OUT AND WRITE.
I HATE PEOPLE WHO'S ONLY ART IDEA IS TO SUBVERT. SUBVERSION SHOULD HAPPEN WITHOUT TRYING.
I'VE HAD THE SAME IDEAS MY WHOLE LIFE.
EACH YEAR I BECOME LESS IMPRESSED WITH MYSELF.
IF IT LOOKS GOOD IT IS GOOD (NOT ALWAYS) TIMES, THEY ARE A CHANGIN. ARE THEY?
THIS PAINTING IS TOO BIG, WHAT AM I TRYING TO PROVE.
I CAN'T WAITE TO BE DONE WITH THIS. I FEEL LIKE I HAVE NOTHING LEFT TO SAY.
TIME IS RUNNING OUT.
I'M TERRIBLY FRIGHTEND RIGHT NOW BUT I DON'T KNOW OF WHAT.
ARTISTS STEAL.
I'M A SELLOUT. THANK GOD I DON'T HAVE PRINCIPLES.
AMERICANS SUCK DON'T THEY.
I'M NOT A BAD BOY I'M A GOOD BOY.
THINK!
I'VE GONE EMPTY SKIT.
A CLASS OF THIRTY COLLEGE STUDENTS JUST CAME IN HERE I HAD TO TALK ABOUT MYSELF.
I FEEL LIKE I'M A CIGERETTE.
THE BEGINING
I WANT TO TURN BACK THE CLOCK AND REINVENT MYSELF SOMWHAT MORE PRIVATELY. I'VE SOLD MY INTAMACY FOR WHAT?... MONEY? FAME?... WHAT? OH THE SHAME, THE HORROR. SOMBODY HAND ME A FUCKIN FIG LEAF.... AUGH!!
"IS THIS GUY FOR REAL?" (YOU)
WELL SEAN, YOU MADE IT THIS FAR. NOW CAN YOU SUSTAIN IT?... GOOD QUESTION.
I HAVEN'T REALLY SOLD MY SOUL GOD, I STILL LOVE YOU.
I WANT TO BE NORMAL AGAIN.
I HATE WORD ART.
TODAY I'M DOING WELL, TOMORROW I'LL BE A WITHERED ALCOHOLIC LOSER COMPLAIN ABOUT CONSPIRACIES THAT CAUSED MY RUIN.
"HEY ASSHOLE COME HERE" "DON'T GET TO CLOSE TO MY FANTASY"
I HAVE TRULLY SUCKED TODAY.
SOME DAYS I FEEL LIKE YANI.
I'M SO IN DEBT I WONT BE FREE FOR YEARS
I MIGHT JUST HAVE TO GIVE UP TODAY BECAUSE I SUCK.
I'M BLOCKED
I'M FIGHTING MY ILLNESS.
THIS PAINTING ISN'T VERY GOOD AND IT'S MY BEST ONE.
CANADA GREENLAND MEXICO U.S.A. CUBA GUATAMALA BELIEZ ETC.
TODAY APRIL 30, 1994 SHOULD BE MY LAST DAY OF WORK HERE. LET US PRAY: GOD BESTOW YOUR GRACE UPON ME YOUR HUMBLE SERVANT. PLEASE REALISE MY INDISCRETIONS AGAINST ARCHMENT TO DESCRIBE HUMANITY AND IN THE END I ALLWAYS COME BACK TO YOU. AND THANK YOU FOR HELPING MY CLASTROPHOBIA WHEN I WAS STUCK IN THE ELEVATOR LAST NIGHT. FOR EVER YOURS, AGNUS DEI, KYRIE ELEISON JEAN MICHAEL PATRICK LANDERS.
THE POPE BROKE HIS LEG WHILE CLIMBING OUT OF HIS BATHTUB YESTERDAY.
YOU KNOW I WILL STOP AT NOTHING. I'M NOT IN THIS BUISNESS TO BURN OUT IN TWO YEARS. WITH GOD AS MY WITTNESS I WILL LAST. I WILL PREVAIL.... "IS HE SERIOUS"
MARIA CALLAS IS MAKEING ME FALL IN LOVE WITH SOMTHING BUT I DON'T KNOW WHAT.
Love me, I'm yours. DON'T MAKE FUN OF ME. I'M VULNERABLE AND AT YOUR MERCY.
MY MIND HORRIFIES ME. THE MORE I EXPLORE IT THE MORE I WANT TO DIE.
SOMTIMES I FEEL REALLY MISUNDERSTOOD, BUT IT SEEMS TO BE WORKING ANYWAY SO FUCK IT.
DON'T CONFUSE HONESTY WITH REALITY.
I'M WAY MORE UPTIGHT THAN IT APPEARS HERE.
I NEED THE EQUIVOLENT OF AN EDITOR TO HELP ME PUT IT ALL TOGETHER.
I AM BUT A CAPIB. I SACRIFICE MYSELF BEFORE YOU. I SEEK ONLY YOUR LOVE BUT FULLY EXPECT YOUR RIDDICULE. INDEED IT IS YOUR LAUGHTER THAT STINGS LIKE WHIP BLOWS.
MY VIDEO IS FUCKING ME UP. I'M TERRIBLY FRIGHTEND TO SHOW IT. IT'S TOO SEVERE FOR ME, ALTHOUGH I ENJOY IT WHEN I WATCH IT ALONE.
I MAY NOT BE THE FIRST BUT STILL I AM WHAT I AM, AND THAT'S SOMTHING.
THERE HAVE BEEN MILLIONS OF ARTISTS AND WE ALL WANT TO BELIEVE WE'RE SOMEHOW SIGNIFICANT. THAT FACT ALONE, IT'S FUTILITY IS COMPELLING ENOUGH TO ME. IT MAKES US ALL BEAUTIFULL.
NO ARTIST EVER SURVIVES WITHOUT FULLY BELIEVING THEY ARE A GENIOUS. WETHER THEY REALISE OR ACKNOWLEGE IT OR NOT IT'S TRUE.
THERE MUST BE A BETTER WAY TO EXPRESS MY FEELINGS TO YOU. I'M NOT ALLWAYS JOKING.
I'M DUE FOR SOME BUBBLE BURSTING.
I'VE STALLED WITH TWO DAYS LEFT. I FEEL SORT OF DRAIND.
ROBERT HUGHES CALLED ME THE WORST ARTIST IN THE WORLD IN TIME MAGAZINE... YES!!! THANKS BOB I'LL WHEAR THAT HONOR WITH PRIDE.
I WANT TO GO HOME TO PALMER. I'M TIRED OF THE "REAL" WORLD.
NIXON'S DARK SIDE WAS ALSO HIS MOST INTERESTING. "SEAN WHY SO MUCH ABOUT NIXON"? I DON'T KNOW
THE SPRING LIGHT IN MY STUDIO IS DEVINE AND I'M A CORNY SAP. A KISS ASS, A FRAUD, A PHONEY, A FAKE. NO I'M NOT! I'M REAL.
HELL HATH NO FURY LIKE WOMEN'S PORN.
KEEP ME MOVING GOD AND HELP ME MAKE IT GOOD. IN TURN I WILL SING TO YOU.
I MEAN WHAT COMPELLS AN ARTIST WHEN IT OUTWARDLY APPEARS THAT NOONE GIVES A SHIT.
I SPEND NEARLY ALL OF MY TIME ATTEMPTING TO GET IN AND MAINTAIN A "GREAT ART" MOOD. IT IS EVERYTHING TO ME. ONLY LOVE COMPARES.
IF THINGS KEEP GOING MY WAY I MIGHT BE ABLE TO PAY MY STUDENT LOANS SOON. I WANT TO BE RESPONSABLE.
NIXON'S FUNERAL IS ON T.V.
WHY REBA MACENTIRE?
I WROTE A LETTER TO THE NEW YORK TIMES ABOUT RICHARD NIXON. YOU'VE GOT TO BE A BIT DELUDED FOR THAT TYPE OF THING OR HALF CRAZY. I'M NOT PROUD OF IT, IT'S TOO EARNEST.
SEAN, DO YOU HAVE WET CUM ON YOUR SHIRT TALE?
I HAVE NO LOVE FOR MY ASS.
WHAT IS MEANINGFULL ANY WAY?
I'M LYEING ABOUT MYSELF. LITTERALLY AND FIGURATIVELY.
RANDOM HARVEST
I HOPE TO BE REMEMBERED. WHAT WILL BE MY LEGACY?
ALL I CAN THINK OF DOING TODAY IS PRAYING AND ASKING FOR GOD'S FORGIVNESS. I MUST ADMIT THAT WHEN I'M IN EUROPE ALONE FOR SHOWS I GO TO CHURCH AND PRAY. IF I DON'T, I SUFFER EXTREME ANXIETY.
NO MATTER WHAT ANYONE SAYS, BEAUTY IS STILL THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF ART. IF THAT EVER CHANGES THEN WE'RE IN HELL. WE MIGHT AS WELL JUST KILL OURSELVES.
I AM SO MOVED RIGHT NOW I DON'T KNOW HOW TO EXPRESS IT.
WHEN YOU ADMIT YOUR FAILURES IS WHEN YOU BEGIN TO SUCCEED.
AND WHEN IT COMES DOWN TO IT ONLY HIGH RENISANCE ART TRULLY DELIVERS. ONLY IN FRONT OF THAT DO I GET THE FEELING OF "DAM, THIS IS ART" IN FOUR CENTURIES THE ISSUE FOR ME IS STILL THE SAME. JUST LISTEN TO MONTE VERDE AND TELL ME IF I'M WRONG AND IF WE SHOULDN'T THANK GOD EVERY DAY FOR THE ITALIANS.
IN MY MIND I AM A TRUE ARTIST AND I WANT TO CRY WHEN I THINK OF IT. NO-ONE WILL EVER UNDERSTAND THE DEPTH OF MY FEELING NO MATTER HOW MUCH I WRITE.
I JUST HAD AN OTHER SELF ANNIHILATION FANTASY. GOD I HATE THEM BUT THEY'RE ALLWAYS BEAUTIFUL. SELF INDULGENCE IN IT'S PUREST FORM.
I'M FINALLY GOING TO IRELAND. I DON'T KNOW WHY EXACTLY. WHAT DO I THINK I'M GOING TO FIND?... MYSELF?... I DON'T WANT TO FIND MYSELF. I'M SICK OF MYSELF BESIDES AMERICANS SEARCHING FOR THEIR ROOTS IS SO FUCKIN STUPID.
I'M TREMBLEING, I DRANK TOO MUCH LAST NIGHT. I HATE ALCOHOL.
I'M TOO NERVOUS I CAN'T THINK.
"SEAN LANDERS IS AN ARTIST WHO WRITES ABOUT HIMSELF" WHAT AN ASSHOLE!
IT'S A SELF LOATHING TYPE OF DAY. I HATE MYSELF.
"EVERYONE'S OUT TO GET YOU MOTHER FUCKER" BECK
I CAN'T SEEM TO FINISH THIS PAINTING.
I DON'T CARE IF I NEVER MAKE ART AGAIN. I'VE WRITTEN ENOUGH FOR A LIFE TIME. INFACT IF I WRITE ANY-MORE EVEN FEWER WILL CARE.
YOU CAN'T CALL ME A SELL OUT BECAUSE THIS IS TOO BIG TO SELL. I DON'T CARE.
EVERYTIME I EAT I FEEL LIKE PUKEING.
I'D LIKE TO GO OUT DRINKING WITH MELLVILLE AND POE.
SOON YOU'LL ALL HATE ME IF YOU DON'T ALREADY.
I LIKE ENGLAND, IT'S TOO BAD WE HAD TO SPLIT UP.
I'M WEAKENING I CAN'T TAKE IT MUCH LONGER.
HEAVEN + HELL = EARTH
I HOPE I DIE HAPPY.
LOVE THINE ENIMIES.
SELFLOVE, SELF HATE, ∞.
I'M FANTASISING A B.B.C. BIOGRAPHY ON MY LIFE. LEGIONS OF PEOPLE LOVEING ME.
HAVE YOU EVER MADE A PIECE OF ART AND THOUGHT 'MASTERPIECE'
I'M IN LOVE AGAIN. THIS MAY BE THE BIG ONE.
ENOUGH!
PALISTRINA IS IN MY SOUL.
I'M TOO SENTIMENTAL.
IT'S OKAY TO TALK ABOUT SEX WITH YOUR LOVER.
ART IS NOT ABOUT BEING SMART. LOT'S OF PEOPLE ARE SMART, LOTS ARE DUMB. SO FUCKIN WHAT.
I'M PREGNANT WITH MYSELF.
I'M A HOMO SAPIEN.
I'VE GOT TIME AND MONEY BUT NO UNDERSTANDING OF ANYTHING.
GOD, DO YOU REALLY DAM SOULS? OR IS HELL JUST IN OUR MINDS? GOD? ARE YOU THERE? CAN YOU HEAR ME?
DO YOU STILL THINK I'M STUPID? ARE YOU FINALLY PROUD OR DO YOU SIMPLY NOT GIVE A SHIT?
THE VOICES INSIDE OF ME ARE BECOMEING MORE KIND.
I CAN UNDERSTAND. I'M NOT LAZY. I FEEL ILL. I HAVE ANXIETY. ETC.
I'M SO MOVED BY RENISANCE MUSIC AN ART THAT I'M DISGUSTED.
I HOPE YOU HAVE'NT FOUND ME OFFENSIVE. I'M MEERLY ATTEMPTING TO ACHEIVE IMMORTALITY.
THIS PAINTING HURTS TO MAKE. SEE, I SUFFER FOR YOU.
PLEASE DON'T LEAVE ME ALONE, KEEP READING.
IF YOU WANT TO BE COOL DON'T GET OLD. NO, I MEAN, FORGET IT.
I CAN'T THINK I JUST WANT TO MAKE VIDEO.
I THOUGHT I WAS COOLER THAN THIS. "GIVE US A BREAK" (YOU)
SOMETHINGS ARE HEAVY SOME THINGS ARE NOT. TOGETHER IT'S WHAT WE ARE.
I'M, I'M, I'M I'M, I'M, I'M, WHO THE HELL CARES WHAT I AM.
THINKING ABOUT STALIN, CHURCHILL AND ROOSEVELT. I DON'T THINK THEY PLAYED THEIR CARDS EXACTLY RIGHT.
THE WALRUS IS PAUL, HE SUCKS.
THIS IS'NT ART THIS IS BULLSHIT
WATCHING "BEVERLY HILLS 90210" MAKES ME FEEL DUMBER THAN I AM.
I JUST READ THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH MY GREAT, GREAT GRAND PARENTS GOT MARRIED IN, IN 1842. THEY WERE STONE MASONS AND FARMERS. I WONDER IF THEY'D APROVE OF WHAT I DO. YOU KNOW, LIKE JERK OFF ON VIDEO, BETRAY EVERYONE AND EVERYTHING INTIMATE TO ME. CATHOLICS BELIEVE THEIR DEAD DEAD RELATIVES ARE WATCHING OVER THEM, EVEN ABLE TO READ THEIR THOUGHTS. NO WONDER I'M SO SCREWD UP. IN MY MIND I'VE NEVER HAD PRIVACY.
I GUESS THE NEWS PAPER REALLY BUMMED ME OUT TODAY. TOO MANY STUPID ASSHOLES WITH GUNS. I'M BUMMED THIS SUCKS.
IT SEEMS AS IF I'M NOT VERY PRIVATE DOES'NT IT. REMARKABLY THOUGH I AM.
LUCKILY I STILL GET THE FEELING THAT EACH NEW PAINTING I DO IS BETTER THAN THE LAST..... HOW?
THE LOWER PORTION OF THIS CANVAS IS OFFICIALLY FILLED. Except of course for this area right here.
SOMETIMES I HATE ALL ART PAST THE RENISANCE. LIKE NOW FOR INSTENCE I HATE ROTHKO. ROTHKO JUST PLAIN SUCKS. SOMBODY OUT THERE TELL ME WHY, WHY ROTHKO?
WHAT THE HELL AM I DOING HERE? I KNOW THIS SUCKS
I ADMIRE MY PARENTS FOR MANY REASONS BUT LATELY I'VE BEEN IMPRESSED WITH THEIR OPEN MINDEDNESS.
WE PISS, WE SHIT, WE COME, WE SPIT, WE SNEEZE, WE CRY, WE COUGH, WE DROOL WE BLEED, WE OOZ PUSS WE LACTATE, WE SECRETE MUCAS, WE VOMIT, WE BLISTER WE HAVE SNOTS, WE HAVE SMEGMA, WE SWEATE, WE HAVE EAR WAX, TOE JAM AND SLEEPY SEEDS. OUR HAIR FALLS OUT, OUR SKIN FLAKES OFF, WHITE HEADS, BLACK HEADS, ZITS AND ACNE, SCALP OIL, DANDRUFF, DENTAL PLAC, ATHELETES FOOT FUNGUS. WE BURP, WE FART AND CLIP OUR FINGER AND TOE NAILS. SHAVE FACES, ARM PITS LEGS, PUBIC HAIR, SCALPS, ASS AND CHEST HAIR, PLUCK EYEBROWS, LANCE BOILS AND POLIPS, STRANGLE HEMEROIDS AND BURN OFF WARTS AND SAND OFF CALOUSES AND PICK SCABS AND INGROWN HAIRS AND UH... UGH, UM... OH YEAH, MAKE ART.
HEY, YOU'RE REALLY CUTE, I MEAN IT, LIKE YOU'RE REALLY REALLY CUTE, I'D LIKE TO STICK MY TONGUE UP YOUR ASS HOLE. (OH SEAN, GROW UP) SORRY.
I HAVENT SMOKED IN TWO WEEKS, AND I STILL WANT TO AS BADLY AS THE DAY I QUIT. WHERE'S THE RELEIF, THE REWARD?
YOU KNOW HOW ARTISTS ALLWAYS MOAN HOW NOONE UNDERSTANDS THEM? WELL I'M FEELING THAT WAY RIGHT NOW.
REALLY NOW
I'VE BEEN FILLED WITH ADRENALIN ALL DAY. DOES THIS MEAN I'VE FINALLY GONE INSANE
I'M A MAN WHO LOVES MANHATTAN. I'M LEARNING TO SPEAK LATIN."
DAVID BOWIE, ANTHONY NEWLY WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE.
I'M AN IDIOT SERVANT EVERYONE AGREES.
YOU'RE SO CLEVER, YOU REALLY ARE
IRISH CATHOLIC OVEREDUCATED UNINSPIRED AMERICAN MALE ARTIST SEEKS IMMORTALITY
THIS IS SO DUMB. REALLY REALLY REALLY REALLY STUPID.
HAVE YOU EVER FELT LIKE YOU WERE THE BEST WRITER OF YOUR TIME BUT NO ONE REALISED IT. "OH SEAN, YOU ARE SAD AREN'T YOU." YES I AM
TOO MUCH TIME TOO LITTLE TO DO WHO CARES TOO MUCH OR TOO LITTLE ABOUT ALL THE WRONG THINGS AND A STRONG PROPENSITY FOR SELF-ANYTHING
BUT YOU KNOW I DON'T CARE
THE SERIOUSNESS OFF THIS MOMENT IS ESCAPEING ME.
ARTISTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BLOW THEIR HEADS OFF. HOWEVER IT'S O.K. TO O.D.
I LIKE MY OWN ART MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE. I ALSO LIKE PLAYING THE JEW'S HARP. I LONG TO WRITE SOMTHING SMART.
I'M NOT UP FOR THIS
I'M NOT YOUR TYPICAL AMERICAN YOU KNOW.
HEY, IT WORKED I THINK I'LL TRY IT AGAIN.
WHERE WILL THIS END.
HOW MUCH LONGER CAN I DO THIS.
I'M FEELING FULL OF SHIT 4 Ever!
I'M DOUBTING MYSELF
THEY DON'T PAY COPS ENOUGH
THE NEW HOLE ALBUM IS GOOD A PAT BENITAR FOR A NEW GENERATION.
I'M REALLY RUNNING OUT OF TIME NOW, I'VE GOT TEN DAYS TO FILL THIS. I'M NOT HALF DONE.
I FOUND A HOUSE AT THE BEACH
I'M GOING TO LONDON, IRELAND, SANTAFE, BERLIN AND HOLLAND IN THE NEXT 6 MONTHS.
ALL THESE HOURS SPENT WRITING WITH OUT EVER MANAGEING TO SAY ANYTHING. IT'S AN ACHIEVMENT IN IT'S OWN RIGHT. BUT SERIOUSLY, AM I AFFRAID TO COMMIT TO AN ACTUAL STANCE OR IDEA. LIKE IT MATTERS
I'M LEARNING A LOT ABOUT LOVE THESE DAYS. IT CAN SURVIVE INCREDIBLE DAMAGE. IT CAN GROW ANEW ONCE YOU THINK IT'S DEAD. LOVE CAN BE WHAT IT'S CRACKED UP TO BE.
THIS IS TOO BOREING. I'VE GOT TO BE FUNNIER, I'VE GOT TO BE COOLER. I WISH I COULD BE SMARTER OR MORE INTERESTING. HANSOMER AND IN BETTER SHAPE.
I'VE GOT A LOT OF PROBLEMS AS AN ARTIST. AS MOST CRITICS ARE QUICK TO POINT OUT. HOWEVER I PROMIS TO IMPROVE WITH TIME.
I AM LIKE WINE, CHEAP WINE OR FINE WINE.
IS'NT IT CUTE HOW THE FRENCH HAVE THEIR OWN LANGUAGE
MY EGO IS BASED ON BEING ABLE TO WRITE WELL AND I CANT EVEN GET A BOOK PUBLISHED.
SIMON SAID MY REGECTION LETTERS WERE THE BEST HE'S EVER SEEN. Spell?
AT 31 I'M REALLY PUSHING IT WITH LONG HAIR.
WE'RE ALL MILLIGANS AREN'T WE
I'M VERY HAPPY TODAY
PEOPLE THINK I'M RICH...... NEED I REMIND THEM, THIS IS THE 90'S. NOBODY IS RICH. AND EVEN IF YOU ARE IT'S NOT COOL TO ADMIT IT. HOWEVER, I ASSURE YOU, I'M NOT.
WHO SAIS PEOPLE FROM MY GENERATION DON'T WANT TO BE FAMOUS. SEE? I'M NO HOAX. I'M REAL. LIKE YOU CARE... FUCK YOU
CREEPS AND LOSERS ARE COOL. SUCCESSFULL, STABLE GUYS ARE BOREING CONFORMISTS. OR IS IT THE OTHER WAY AROUND? I'M SO OUT OF TOUCH. MAYBE I SHOULD GROW A GOATEE.
REALITY IS
MILLIGAN
NOW WHAT?
SHAME
SHAME GUILT BUTT FUCK
I'LL FEEL RIPE FOR SOME REALLY BAD KARMA.
PEOPLE THINK I'VE GOT A SCHTICK OR A STRATOGY. THIS IS NO GIMIC I AM THIS GUY. NOT THAT YOU CARE, I JUST THOUGHT I'D MENTION IT.
SELF PROMOTION? COME ON! I'M JUST SOLIPTICIOUS.
NOBODY WANTS TO PRINT [SIC] WHY?.... THIS IS WHY! I STILL THINK IT'S A GREAT BOOK.
[SIC] IS DEAD FUCK THE BOOK WORLD. THEY WOULD'NT KNOW REAL WRITING IF IT BIT THEM IN THE ASS. WHICH IT DID.
DO YOU SOMTIMES FEEL LIKE YOU'RE NOT TRYING HARD ENOUGH, NOT TAKEING ENOUGH RISKS? IF SO YOU PROBABLY WATCH TOO MUCH T.V. NO, ACTUALLY NOT ENOUGH.
THERE IS AN INSANE PERSON ON OUR ROOF, WEARING ONLY HIS UNDERWHEAR AND SCREAMING ABOUT HIS PORTFOLIO AND CUTTING HIS DICK OFF.
MY BRAIN FEELS DEAD. THIS WILL TAKE A MONTH TO FILL.
I'M NOT HALF AS COOL AS I THOUGHT I WAS. IT'S BEEN RAINING ALL MONTH. I LOVE APRIL RAIN.
I WISH I WERE INSPIRED.
ALAS, I FEEL MOVEMENT!
C.D.S ARE THE 8 TRACK TAPES OF THE 90'S I'M TELLING YOU. WE'RE IN A PARALELL DECADE.
I love you too
I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING.
IF WARHOL AND DUCHAMP HAD AN ARM WRESTLING MATCH WHO DO YOU THINK WOULD WIN?
CAN'T I JUST SUCK YOUR TITS AND JERK MYSELF OFF.
BEDTIME FOR SEANZO
GOOD LUCK
BOFUCKNZO
WISH IS'NT HERE.
I'M NO CHIMP.
I NEED A A THOUSAND. WHY SO MANY LETTERS FOR A ONE SYLLABLE WORD.
LIFE IS WAY TOO SHORT. JUST WHEN YOU FIGURE THINGS OUT YOU'RE TOO OLD TO USE THEM. I SHOULD READ MORE.
IT'S GOOD FRIDAY AND I REALLY WISH I HAD ST. MATHIEW'S PASSION. THIS IS NO TIME FOR SECULAR MUSIC.
I AM THE REAL THING, AREN'T I? YES SEAN, YOU ARE. THANKYOU, YOU'RE WELCOME.
WAS I REALLY BORN INTO PRIVILEGE? GOD, MY PARENTS WILL BE HAPPY TO HEAR THAT. SERIOUSLY THOUGH, WHAT SHOULD I SAY? "SAY YOU'RE SORRY AND SHUT THE FUCK UP ABOUT IT"... I'M SORRY. THIS IS THE MOST HANOUS THING I'VE EVER WRITTEN. AND I AM CONFLICTED, TRUELLY. I THINK I MIGHT BE WELL SERVED TO CROSS THIS OUT.
WHY AM I SO HUNG UP WITH THE HIGH RENISANCE AND BARROQUE PERIODS? IS THIS SOMTHING BUILT IN TO THE CATHOLIC PSYCHE OR AM I JUST REINCARNATED? PERHAPS IT'S MY CONDUIT TO THE DEVINE. THIS IS WHAT I PREFER TO BELEIVE, BUT I'VE SAID THAT BEFORE HAVEN'T I? I DON'T MEAN TO REPEAT MYSELF, I JUST THINK ABOUT THIS A LOT.
IS HONESTY ALLWAYS GOOD?... YES, I MEAN NO, NO, I MEAN YES, I DON'T KNOW.
BARTOK REALLY KNEW WHAT A MOTHER FUCKER THIS CENTURY WOULD BE... SHIT, I ONLY WISH I HAD HALF THE CHEESE HE DID.
I'M USER FREINDLY AND A FREINDLY LOSER
THEY SAY I'M SINCERE. WELL OF THIS, I KNOW FRAUD IN YOU AND SOMTIMES OWN. HOWEVER SOCIAL PERSONA FRAUDULENT. MORE HONEST THAN YOU FEEL BELIEVING. THAT I'VE GOT TALKING ABOUT
THIS'LL BE MY SWAN SONG. THEN I'LL GO ABOUT THE BUISSNESS OF REINVENTING MYSELF.
YES, YES, YES I AM A PREMATURE EJACULATOR, I ADMIT IT. GOD, WHY HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME? "REALLY SEAN, AND TODAY IS GOOD FRIDAY, SHAME."
I JUST BALLED OUT THE DOG, NOW I FEEL BAD
I FUCKED A BAR SLUT TO PROVE TO MYSELF THAT I WAS'NT IMPOTENT.
IT'S TIME TO GET SERIOUS NOW AND MAKE SOMTHING OF THIS. I WANT TO PAINT OUT THAT BUNNY.
WHERE'S THAT DAM MUSIC WHEN I NEED IT. THE FUCKER USUALLY VISITS ME WHEN I'M WALKING DOWN HOUSTON ST. OR WHEN I'M STUCK IN A CAB.
I'VE GOT TO RELAX AND FREE MY MIND.
MELVINS TONIGHT. THEY'D BETTER DELIVER. (THEY DID)
THE SCROTAL TUG
I THOUGHT OF SO MANY GOOD THINGS TO WRITE HERE LAST NIGHT IN BED, BUT NOW I'VE FORGOTTEN THEM ALL.
NOTHING
I DROPPED SPIT INTO YOUR SLEEPING PARTED LIPS AND THEN I, "WALKED ON DOWN THE HALL, AND I CAME TO A DOOR...."
I DID'NT WAKE UP IN TIME FOR CHURCH ON EASTER
I FEEL LIKE I'VE BEEN HERE BEFORE
I SHOULD EITHER REALLY MORE OR LESS I CAN'T FIGURE OUT WICH.
I'M AT A STRONG POINT. YOU CAN'T TOUCH ME. HOWEVER, IT'S INEVITABLE THAT I'LL FALL AND WE ALL KNOW FAILURE SMARTS WORSE THEN. BUT WHO CARES.
BEYOND RUPERT MURDOCH, WHO NEEDS ROYALTY? THE QUEEN, IS NEARLY THE RICHEST PERSON ON EARTH AND SHE RECIEVES TAX MONEY.
THE LARGEST ETHNIC GROUP IN AMERICA IS STILL ENGLISH SECOND IS GERMAN THIRD IS IRISH.
AFRICAN AMERICANS, HISPANICS AND ASIANS WILL OUT NUMBER WHITES IN AMERICA IN 50 YEARS TIME.
HOPEFULLY THEN, AMERICA WILL FINALLY BE EQUAL FOR ALL PEOPLE IN MY LIFE TIME, ALSO INTIGRATED.
MAJORITY RULE IS IT FAIR? ONE PERSON ONE VOTE? HOW ABOUT ONE PERSON TEN VOTES. THE VOTES CAN BE CAST FOR ONE CANIDATE OR SEVERAL.
AIR STRIKES IN BOSNIA CLINTON STANDS HALF ERECT.
THOUGHTS OF SUICIDE ARE NORMAL TO AN EXTENT. I HOPE M. COMES WITH ME TO ERIE.
DON'T THREATEN WHAT YOU'RE NOT WILLING TO DO.
ANY MORON COULD DO THIS.
IT'S ALL SO OBVIOUS, AND ALMOST TOO EASY. IT'S CALLED CATHARSIS
I'D SUCK THE SHIT OUT OF A CAT'S ASSHOLE FOR A CIGERETTE RIGHT NOW.
COME TO ME POPSY
SIXTY YEARS LEFT,... SHIT! WE'RE GONNA DIE!!!
I LOVE YOU BUNNY
I MISS RELIGON IN MY LIFE.
SPRING IS REALLY THE BEST TIME OF YEAR. I USED TO LIKE WINTER BUT NOW I THINK IT JUST SUCKS.
I'VE DONE SO MANY DUMB THINGS IN MY LIFE. I REGRET SO MUCH. I WANT TO ERASE IT ALL I WANT TO BURY MY FACE IN THE BREASTS OF REDEMPTION. MOTHER OF FORGIVENESS EMBRACE ME THE WAY YOU USED TO.
MY TASTE FOR CANDY HAS NOT ABATED. IT'S STILL ONE OF MY GREATEST PLEASURES.
I FEEL INFANTILE AND WIERD
I FEEL LOW AND GUILTY OF ALL I'VE BEEN ACCUSED OF.
SPELLING IS FOR THE LITTLE PEOPLE.
CHRIST KNOWS I WANT TO BE GOOD BUT SOMTHING IS PULLING ME DOWN.
PERVERSION IS ACCEPTABLE IN AN ART CONTEXT
I'M SUPER FUCKING NERVOUS TODAY.
"SHOW ME A GOOD LOSER AND I'LL SHOW YOU A LOSER" (NIXON'S FOOTBALL COACH)
I'M A YANKEE, WATCHOUT BECAUSE I WANT TO YANKEEFY YOU. (JOHN CHEESE)
I'M TIRED OF ACTING STUPID. "I'M NOT ACTING" DAM! YOU SEE MY ANGST.
"I WANT TO BE YOUR TAMPON.... JUST MY LUCK TO BE THROWN IN THE TOILET, FOREVER GOING ROUND AND ROUND NEVER GOING DOWN." PR. CHARLES
SOMTHING KILLS EVERYONE. I EXPECT TO LIVE FOR 60 MORE YEARS, GIVE OR TAKE A FEW.
I'M HAVEING A MID DAY CRISIS I NEED SUGAR
I PLAN TO HAVE MANY CHILDREN.
THE GOLD CRUCIFIX IS BOBBLING ABOVE OUR HEADS AS WE ATE THE BODY OF CHRIST AND PRAYED TO BE NORMAL, TO ESCAPE THE SINS OF LIVING. I DIED AND CAME BACK WITH MY KNEES ON HARD MARBLE. THE PAIN WAS PURIFYING, I WISHED I WAS BORN FREE OF DESIRE. MY THROBBING DICK BECKONING ME TO HELL. I CALLED ON JESUS TO SAVE ME BUT HE NEVER DID. IT TOOK YEARS BUT SATAN PERSISTED, SCREAMING IN MY HEAD LOUDER THAN GOD. TOUCH YOURSELF SEAN, THERE AND THERE. I STILL CRY FOR THIS. I SWALLO MYSELF, I'M CARRYING MY OWN CHILD. MY SIN IS INCOMPREHENCEABLE. THE FLAME THAT LICKS ME IS THE ONE I DESIRE. FORGIVE ME GOD.
AFTER WRITING THIS I HAD TO SIT DOWN.
I NEVER WANTED TO LEAVE MY "FLOCK"
WHEN I THINK ABOUT THE MECHANICS OF REPRODUCTION, EGGS, SPERM AND THEIR CHANSES OF UNITEING. I REALISE THAT I'M DAM LUCY TO HAVE BEEN BORN.
WOAH, I GOT SO DOWN INTO MY CATHOLIC PAST I HAD TO GO LIE DOWN FOR A WHILE. I LISTEND TO BECK AND READ ABOUT GUESS WHO; RICHARD MILLHOUS NIXON. I FEEL REPARED.
DOES ANYONE OUT THERE KNOW WHAT THE "CRAZY TRAIN" OZZY WAS SINGING ABOUT WAS? I'VE TRIED TO IMAGINE A CRAZY TRAIN CRAZILY STEAMING DOWN THE TRACKS BUT IT'S DIFFICULT.
THE DUMB KID FROM PALMER, MASSACHUSETTS IN ME WILL NEVER GO AWAY.
YOU KNOW WHAT'S SAD? THIS IS THE BEST ART I CAN MAKE.
I'VE SPENT THREE DAYS WALLOWING IN THIS AREA PRODUCEING NOTHING.
I THINK I FUCKED UP. I SHOULD HAVE GONE TO IRELAND BEFORE LONDON SO I COULD MAKE MY VIDEO THERE. DAM!
I'M CELTIC, ANGLO AND HELLENIC. WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
LOOK HERE!
OF COURSE I LOVE HER. I HAVE FOR OVER FOUR YEARS.
THE GUY WHO SHOWED HIS ASS. NO ONE REALLY WANTED TO SEE IT. NEITHER DID HE.
BORDERS ARE A POLITE WAY OF SAYING, WE DON'T WANT YOUR KIND.
THE THING ABOUT CATHOLICS IS THEY SIMULTANIOUSLY REPRESS THEIR DESIRE AND INDULGE IN IT.
IT'S STRANGE HOW THE PEOPLE WHO DIED IN THE COLD WAR WEREN'T FROM RUSSIA, EUROPE OR AMERICA.
RUSSIANS ARE SINGING THEIR PAIN.
NOTHING TO LOSE IS A POLITE WAY OF SAYING; EVERYTHING TO LOSE. IF IT WASN'T IT WOULDN'T BE WORTH IT.
I'M WALLOWING IN THE GUILT OF MID AFTERNOON MASTERBATION.
MY GENES ARE WORN OUT PERFECTLY.
I'M DREAMING OF A HAREM. IMAGINE IT, ... DAM!!!!
I'D LIKE A CASTRATO TO SING "DANNY BOY" AT MY FUNERAL.
MASSACHUESETTS MAKES GOOD ARTISTS BUT DOES'NT SHOW THEM. THE GREAT LIBERAL STATE IS ACTUALLY CONSERVATIVE.
THERE IS STILL NO EXCUSE FOR HARMONICAS.
I'M AFFRAID
"KNOCK THREE TIMES ON THE CIELING IF YOU WANT ME"
DON'T SAY WHAT YOU'RE THINKING.
LOVE IS AN ANGEL WHO KISSES ME AGAIN. HER LIPS ARE SOFT HER EYES ARE WARM. HER SPIT STILL SLICK ON MY TEETH. MY DEVILS ARE COWERING IN THE CORNORS. SOMEBODY, FLIP ON THE BARRY WHITE I'M HOME AGAIN.
I'VE GOT BLISTERS ON MY EYES FROM LOOKING INWARD. MY SELF IS SWOLLEN FROM EXPOSURE. I'M NOT ALONE ANYMORE. PRIVACY IS A MEMORY. YOU'VE BECOME THE PILLOW I CRY ON. YOU BETTER NOT FUCK ME.
THE TRICK IS TO BELIEVE YOU ARE BRILLIANT EVEN WHEN YOU'RE NOT. DON'T LET FEAR MAKE YOUR VOICE CRACK. IF YOU ARE REQUIRED TO TAKE A SHIT ON STAGE, DO IT AND FORGET ABOUT IT. COURAGE TURNS OUT TO BE WAY MORE IMPORTANT THAN THEY SAY THEY SAY IT IS. AFTER ALL, IT'S BEST TO DIE TRYING.
I FEEL SELF CONSIOUS
DEEP DOWN ALL I REALLY WANT IS TO GROOVE.
ALL AMERICANS ARE NOT COWBOYS. SOME OF US ACTUALLY LACE OUR SHOES.
ME AND MY DAD ARE THE SAME GUY.
I GET OFF ON FEELING HER HEELS
WELL WHATEVER THEY SAY I KNOW I'M REAL.... RIGHT? ..... YES!!
ACCUSTIC GUITAR SOUNDS GOOD TO ME AGAIN. TIME TEMPERS.
THERE IS SOMTHING HERE IF YOU LOOK FOR IT.
WE'RE ALL CHILDREN OF THE 70'S. DON'T DAM US FOR IT.
EVEN THOUGH I'VE BEEN WORKING IN THIS FORMAT FOR UNDER A YEAR IT SEEMS LIKE STOCK IN TRADE TO ME. SEE, I FEEL GUILTY ABOUT MAKEING MY OWN ART.
SCRUTINY MAKES ME FEEL LIKE I'M ACTUALLY TRYING TO DO SOMTHING. I'M NOT, I SWEAR.
"I'M SO LONELY I COULD DIE" ELVIS
I LOVE IT WHEN YOU STEP ON MY BALLS.
20 YEARS AGO I WAS 11 YEARS OLD. 20 YEARS FROM NOW I'LL BE 51. TIME SUCKS, LIFE IS GREAT.
COOL AND THE GANG.
HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL ACTUALLY CRY IF YOU DIE TOMORROW? OH SEAN STOP IT!
SO TO FINISH I'VE AS ALLWAYS PUT ON WAGNER'S TRISTRAM AND ISOLDE" THEN I'LL SWITCH OVER TO SCHOENBURGH'S "VERKLARTE NACHT" WHAT A SAD I AM. I HATE MYSELF AND THIS PAINTING SUCKS TOO. AN EMBARESSING HERPESSOAR AND A THOUSAND UNACCKNOWLEGED APOLOGIES. "OH SEAN SHUTUP, YOU ARE A TRUE IDIOT."
I HOPE I AM A BARITONE BUT THE MORE I SING I BECOME TENOR. STILL, MY LOW NOTES ARE FIERCE, AND I'M ENTIRELY MISSING THE HIGH END OF MY TENOR. IS THERE AN IN BETWEEN?
YES I REMEMBER YOU AND STILL THINK OF YOU OFTEN. THAT WILL NEVER CHANGE.
OH FATHER IN HEAVEN FORGIVE THIS SOUL WHO BESMIRCHES YOU SO.
I WANT TO BE LIKE WAGNER I WANT TO USE CLICHES IN HIS FULL THROATED MANNER. I WANT TO CALL UPON THE WAR GODS AND BRUTALLY CRUSH MY ENIMIES THEN SEEK FORGIVNESS FROM THE ANGLES. FOR THEM TO WASH MY BLOODIED SABER WITH THE FLUTTERING WINGS OF THEIR DIVINITY. TO STAND ABOVE THE CARNAGE AND CRY TO THE HEAVENS FOR MERCY ON MY SOUL. FOR IS IT NOT MY FAULT THAT THE DEMONS CODDLE ME AS WELL AS GOD.
I'M GETTING SO INTO CLICHE I'M BECOMING ERECT. MY "INNER WILD MAN IS STANDING" THE DANE WARIOR IN THE CELLAR OF MY CASTLE IS WAKEING.
SEE, I'M BOTH ANGLO AND MEDITERAINIAN I'M CONFLICTED.
ART, WAR, STUPID. SEAN SNAP OUT OF IT YOU'RE EMBARISYOURSELF.
I WANT TO DIE ON A PEDASTIL
PLEASE FORGIVE MY CORNYNESS.
LAST NIGHT I CHOSE LOVE OVER ART. THERE MAY BE HOPE FOR ME.
TRISTRAM IS COMEING!!! WOW! I WANT ORGASMS LIKE THAT.
ALL I WANT IS TO BE CUDDLED. TO NESTLE IN HER AMPLE BUSSOM AND FOR HER TO CLEANS MY SINS WITH HER KISSES AND GENTLE COOS AND CARESSES. LOVE, I AM YOUR CHILD.
WAGNER'S "LOWENGRIN" IS NIXON'S SECOND VICTORY IN 1972. THE BRUTAL DESTRUCTION OF THE ENIMY THEN THE SAD PITY FOR THEM AS THE VICTOR SKULKS AWAY TRIUMPHANT, LOATHING HIS PATHOLOGICAL NEED TO WIN.
I KNOW IT LORD I HAVE SINNED AND I AM SORRY.
MY TARTAN REPRESENTS MY ABILITY TO ANIHILATE YOU. MY BAG PIPE IS YOUR BLATTER AND BONES BUT I AM A SORRY VICTOR. FORGIVE ME AND MY TUNES OF GLORY.
GIVE ME THE 16TH AND THE 19TH CENTURY ALL THE REST CAN GO TO HELL.
WAGNER IS REALLY MOVING ME.
THIS IS THE LAST ENTRY ON THIS PAINTING. I WRITE POST CLIMAX MY LEGS QUIVERING MY ERECTION FALLING AND DRIPPING. THE SHAME OF MY INDULGENCE SETTLEING IN. ALL I ASK OF YOU IS NOT TO LAUGH IT MAY SEEM LIKE I'M JOKEING BUT IN TRUTH, I AM THIS GUY.
DO I HAVE AN AMERICAN ACCENT IN MY WRITING TOO?
NIXON IS NEAR DEATH TODAY 4-20-94 I'LL MISS John Candy
I DON'T FEEL LIKE A GENIOUS TODAY. OR ANY DAY.
DID YOU DO YOUR KEGEL EXERCISE TODAY?
MANY PEOPLE I KNOW ARE SORT OF FREAKING OUT. MAYBE MERCURY IS UP TO IT'S WIERD TRICKS OR, I'VE GOT THIS OTHER THEORY. THE OLDER AN UNMARRIED PERSON GETS THE MORE THEY GO INSANE DO TO A GENETIC TRAIGHT BORN OUT OF NATURAL SELECTION. THEREFORE IT DRIVES US CRAZY TO NOT HAVE A MATE. WE GET ONE, THEN WE FREAK OUT LESS. NOW, WHETHER OR NOT YOU GET THE RIGHT ONE OR NOT IS IMMATERIAL. ANYWAY, IT'S JUST A STUPID IDEA IT'S NOT LIKE I EVEN BELIEVE IT. IN FACT I'M SORRY I EVEN MENTIONED IT. DAM IT, I WISH I WOULD'NT WRITE THINGS THAT MAKE ME LOOK SO DUMB. OH GOD, I JUST WANT TO CRAWL UNDER A ROCK AND DIE. HUH? WHY DO I FEEL THIS WAY?
WHEN I'M IN CONVERSATION WITH PEOPLE I DON'T KNOW I ALLWAYS FEEL LIKE I'VE GOT SNOTS HANGING OUT OF MY NOSE. IT'S AN EFFORT FOR ME NOT TO CONSTANTLY WIPE MY NOSE DURING THIS.
MICHAEL FAY AN 18 YEAR OLD AMERICAN WILL GET CAINED, IN SINGAPORE. CLINTON IS PROTESTING. A LEADER IN SINGAPORE HAS CALLED AMERICA A NATION OF WHITE TRASH.
I'M NOT ON A SUBJECT. AND I'M NOT A SUBJECT. THOUGH MY LIFE IS SUBJECT FOR MY WRITING
U.S. INVOLVMENT IN BOSNIA IS ABOUT TO ESCILATE.
NORTH KOREA SAYS THAT MY PAINTING REALLY SUCKS.
IF ALL THIS INANE POLITICAL DRIBBLE SEEMS POINTLESS TO A CONTEMPORARY VIEWER FORGIVE ME. IN MY FANTASY I WRITE IT FOR FUTURE PEOPLE. A GREAT ARTIST HAS TO THINK OF THESE THINGS YOU KNOW.
I'M DONE FOR TODAY
THE FUNNY THING ABOUT THIS PAINTING IS THAT IT REALLY IS ON THE VERGE OF BEING REMARKABLY BAD...... SHIT! THAT MEANS I HAVE TO SAVE IT. I WISH I COULD HIRE AN EXPERT TO SAVE IT. UNFORTUNATELY I'M THE EXPERT, BUT I SUCK. HELL, I'M DOOMED.
I FOUND A GREAT MEXICAN FAST FOOD PLACE, BUT IT'S NO WHERE NEAR MY HOUSE. I'M REALLY BUMMED.
IS THIS ART?
THE WORLD SUCKS SO MUCH THAT ALL I CAN THINK TO DO TO IMPROVE IT IS BE A VERY GOOD INDIVIDUAL.
I'M LIEING I'M LYEING I'M LIEING I'M LYEING
I'M NOT A GENIOUS AFTER ALL.
YES I AM! "NO SEAN YOU'RE NOT" WHO CARES ANYWAY.
COOL!
AMERICA SUCKS, BUT THAT'S WHY I LOVE IT.
IF EVERY INDIVIDUAL WERE GOOD THERE WOULD BE NO PROBLEM.
THERE IS NO POINT TO THIS.
I JUST READ MY ATLAS FOR A WHILE. I STUDIED THE BALKANS AND WONDERED WHAT THE HELL IS WRONG WITH THESE PEOPLE THAT THEY CAN'T GET ALONG. THEN I THOUGHT OF NORTHERN IRELAND, PALISTINE, RAWANDA TIBET, HAITI, AND I REALISED THE WORLD IS JUST FUCKED AND I SIMPLY WANT TO FORGET ABOUT IT ALL.
I'M TRYING HARD
SHOULD I GO TO IRELAND BY MYSELF? I'M AFRAID I'LL GET LONELY AND FREAK OUT. I CAN BE SUCH A WHIMP WHEN IT COMES TO TRAVLE. I'M A REAL, "I WANT MY MOMMY TYPE"
IF I HAD ONE WISH THAT I COULD HAVE GRANTED AND I HAD TO CHOOSE BETWEEN SUCKING CLAUDIA SCHIFFER'S TITS, WORLD PEACE AND MAKEING THE BEST ART EVER, I'D CHOOSE.
FUN IS A DUMB WORD.
OH TO BE FINISHED. WAITE IF I DON'T FIND PLEASURE IN THIS THEN WHY DO IT? I'LL TELL YOU WHY, ART IS NOT ALLWAYS A PARTY. WHEN YOU MAKE ART 365 DAYS A YEAR NOT ALL OF IT IS FUN.
THE DOG WONT LEAVE MY SIDE.
THIS PAINTING IS LIKE NO OTHER I'VE MADE. WELL EXCEPT FOR TWO.
I RENTED TUNES OF GLORY LAST NIGHT AND WAS JEALOUS OF THE TARTAN SLACKS AND KILTS. I WANT A KILT
WHEN I SEE A TEXAN IN THE LOUVRE OR A BOSTONIAN IN IRELAND OR AN OHIOAN IN MEXICO. I FEEL DEEP SHAME BUT THEN I REMEMBER THAT WITHOUT US MOST WESTERN COUNTRIES WOULD HAVE BEEN GERMANY OR RUSSIA. OH YEAH, ENGLAND HELPED TOO. IS'NT IT FUNNY HOW THE FRENCH THINK THEY HELPED AS WELL, HA, HA, HA, HA, HA, ITALY!, HA, HA, HA, HA....... (CROSS THIS OUT)
100,000 PEOPLE MURDERED IN TWO WEEKS IN RAWANDA.
I WAS INSANE FOR SIX MONTHS BUT NOW I'M OKAY.
"WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL, THIS GUY SUCKS" (YOU)
I WANT TO MOVE TO ITALY, NO FRANCE, NO I MEAN GREECE, NO I MEAN NORWAY, NO I WANT TO MOVE TO SPAIN, NO IRELAND, NO..... WHAT?
AM I REPEATING MYSELF? HAVE YOU READ THE SAME THOUGHT TWICE?
HELL HATH NO FURY LIKE A.... WHAT?
TURP MAKES ME SNEEZE.
MY TWO NEW FAVORITE ARTISTS ARE DAMIER AND HOGARTH. THEY KNEW!!!
My brush is whimpering out.
IS THIS LITERATURE OR FIRED PAINTING? DOES IT MATTER? HELL NO, IT BETTER NOT BECAUSE IT SUCKS AS EITHER ONE BUT PASSES AS BOTH.
NIXON HAD A STROKE!
MABEY I SHOULD JUST LET MY HAIR GO. JUST FORGET ABOUT IT.
YOU KNOW WHAT I DO? I JUST STAND HERE AND THINK OF THINGS TO WRITE. IT'S SHOCKING HOW SO MUCH OF IT IS SO UTTERLY STUPID. IS MY LIFE REALLY THIS THIN? IF YOU WERE AS OPEN AS I, WOULD YOU DISCOVER SOMTHING MORE? BE HONEST NOW.
FILL THIS IN HERE
FILL THIS TOO. AND THIS (WHAT A RIP OFF)
AS I WRITE THIS THERE IS NOTHING ELSE AROUND IT. THESE ARE LONLEY COURAGEOUS LETTERS. BY THE TIME YOU SEE THIS THOUGH IT'LL BE FILLED AND THIS WILL BE A PARAGRAPH YOU FOUND TO BE BOREING AND MEANINGLESS. LIFE IS SO SAD. DO YOU REALISE THAT THIS PARAGRAPH IS ME. EXCUSE ME WHILE I CRY, PUKE AND JERK OFF. GOD SAVE ME.
IF I WERE A COLLECTOR OR A MUSEUM I'D BUY THIS PAINTING IN A SECOND.
IF I WERE AN ARTIST OTHER THAN MYSELF I'D COPY MY ART WORK.
I ATE TOO MUCH FOR LUNCH, AND READ AN ARTICLE ABOUT WILDENSTIEN. I BET THEY'D NOT EVEN CONSIDER ME AN ARTIST. IT DOES'NT MATTER THEY ONLY DEAL IN DEAD PEOPLE. AND NOW 4-15-94 I AM ALIVE.
"WE'RE ON TO YOU LANDERS" IN AMERICA PEOPLE WHO DON'T KNOW ME AND SEE MY NAME CAN NEVER PRONOUNCE IT. I NORMALLY GET (SEE-ON) OR (SEE-IN) OR MOST COMON (SEEN). THEY EVEN GET MY LAST NAME WRONG (LOND-AYRS) OR (LON-DRAYZ). IF YOU'RE ALSO UNABLE TO READ ENGLISH HERE IT IS, (SHŌN LAND-ERZ) SEAN LANDERS, IT'S TRUE I GET PHONE CALLS AND I THINK IT'S A WRONG NUMBER." HELLO IS SEEN LONDREZ THEIR"..... WHAT THE HELL AM I WRITING ABOUT? I NEED SOMBODY IN MY HEAD TO TELL ME TO SHUT UP." HEY, STUPID, SHUT UP!!
YOU HAVE TO ADMIT THAT THIS IS AS CLOSE TO HUMANITY THAT OIL ON CANVAS CAN COME. "WOW! REALLY? CLOSER THAN REMBRANT OR GOYA?" WELL MAYBEY EXCEPTING A FEW.
OKAY, SO YOU'RE DISGUSTED THAT THIS IS ART WORK. YOU THINK THIS IS A SCAM. FINE. BUT YOU WILL ADMIT THAT YOUR FEATHERS ARE RUFFLED. IT'S NOT EASY TO MOVE SUCH A JADED AUDIENCE. BESIDES, I KNOW I'M FULKIN GREAT. SHOVE IT UP YOUR ASS IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT.
GOD DOES'NT LIKE THE DELLUDED.
BE HONEST, ARE YOU REALLY SMARTER THAN THIS?
LIERS WILL NEVER FIND PEACE.
HOW DO YOU ENTERTAIN YOURSELF DURING YOUR IDLENESS? SEX, COMEDY, NAVEL GAZEING? IF YOU'RE LUCKY. FEAR, PARANOIA, ENVY OR HATRED IF YOU'RE NOT.
I'M AT THAT POINT WHERE OLD PEOPLE THINK I'M YOUNG AND YOUNG PEOPLE THINK I'M OLD.
I WISH EVERY WORD HERE WAS BRILLIANT.
I FEEL SO STUPID.
I'M NOT HUNG UP ON MY DICK SIZE, I MEAN I'VE MEASURED IT WHILE ERECT, IT'S IN THE HIGH RANGE OF AVERAGE BUT LIKE I SAID, I DON'T CARE, I MEAN, I DON'T SPEND TIME THINKING ABOUT IT. YOU KNOW? IT DOES'NT MATTER TO ME, NOT IN THE LEAST. OBVIOUSLY I'M REALLY SECURE ABOUT IT AND HARDLY COMPELLED TO EVEN MENTION IT. SO LET'S JUST DROP IT, OKAY.
I FEEL LIKE BEING SELF DESTRUCTIVE.
AS LONG AS I STAY SEMI-SINCERE AND RESIST STYLEIZATION I'LL BE ABLE TO CONTINUE.
it's time to focus and manifest my genious. in the next decade I have to make my mark in writing.
Fraud, Hoax, Ruse
HEY STUPID! YOU'RE REALLY SMART.
NO I DON'T EXPECT YOU TO BUY THIS. IT'S A LOT OF MONEY FOR A LOT OF NOTHING.
I WISH I WERE WRITING SOMTHING NEW AND IMPORTANT
SO MANY OF MY QUIPS BEGIN WITH THE WORD I. I FIND IT DEPRESSING.
IF A QUIP DOESN'T BEGIN WITH I, THEN IT INVARIABLY HAS THE WORD I, IN IT SOMPLACE. I WISH THIS WERE'NT TRUE.
I THINK ABOUT MYSELF WAY TOO MUCH.
IT'S FUNNY HOW SO MUCH NOTHING LOOKS AND FEELS SOMTHING.
I'D LIKE TO BE REALLY BRAVE INSTEAD OF JUST ACTING LIKE I AM.
I JUST REALISED THAT I'VE BEEN LIVING BEOND MY MEANS
WE RENTED THAT HOUSE I JUST PAYED TAXES I PAYED OFF LOANS I BOUGHT A STEREO AND SOME CLOTHES I EAT OUT EVERY NIGHT. NO MATTER HOW MUCH MONEY I HAVE, I SPEND. THAT WAY I'M COMPELLED TO MAKE MORE.
WHAT ARE PEOPLE? WHO CARES? I'M FARTING SUFFER.
I AM SO PROFOUNDLY UNINSPIRED RIGHT NOW I CAN'T TELL YOU. I JUST WANT TO EAT SUGARY AND SALTY SNACK FOODS AND WATCH T.V. JERKING OFF EVERYTIME MY BALLS CAN MANAGE A NEW LOAD.
I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU THINK I'M JUST TRYING TO FILL A CANVAS WITH MYSELF. I DO REALIZE HOWEVER THAT IT MIGHT BE GOOD TO EVOLVE A LESS OBVIOUS METHOD....... HA, FUCK THAT.
I CAN'T WAIT TILL AUGUST. I'M PLANNING MY SUMMER AND IT'S ALL I CAN THINK ABOUT. I'M SORRY, IT DOESN'T MAKE FOR VERY GOOD ART DOES IT?
AT THIS POINT I KNOW I CAN'T GET WRITTEN OUT, HOWEVER I CAN GET INTO A RUT.
I HAVE LITTLE TIME LEFT ACTUALLY. SO WHAT! AUGH, I DON'T KNOW
THIS WHOLE LEFT SIDE OVER HERE SUCKS. I'VE GOT TO TURN IT AROUND.
I'VE BEEN WHEARING THE SAME PANTS ALL WEEK.
DON'T BE POLITE JUST TELL ME I SUCK.
THE DOG IS AT MY SIDE TODAY SHE KNOWS I SUCK. I CAN SEE IT IN HER FACE.
WHEN I WAS WORKING ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THIS CANVAS COBAIN KILLED HIMSELF SO I FELT "MOVED" TO WRITE. HERE ON THE LEFT I FEEL ALMOST NOTHING. IS THIS HAPPINESS?
I need to eat, fuck, sleep wake and start all over again.
WHY DON'T THOSE SERBS CHILL OUT.
I'M SO SICK OF WORLD AND DOMESTIC POLATICS
I'VE NEVER BEEN A CASSONOVA TYPE. AT TIMES I WISH I HAD. THE DESIRE TO COPULATE WITH A DIFFERENT WOMAN EACH NIGHT MUST BE A NOT SO DEEPLY BURIED MALE TRAIT. BUT WHO AM I KIDDING? I'M JUST A MOMY'S BOY.
THE BEST THING ABOUT GEN. X IS THE HUGE AMOUNT OF ANGST ABOUT NOTHING TO HAVE ANGST ABOUT.
AT THE RATE I'M GOING I'LL NOT FINISH IN TIME. I HATE THAT, IT MEANS THAT I HAVE TO TRY.
I THINK AN AWFUL LOT ABOUT HOW A HUMAN MIND WORKS. I USE MINE AS THE GUINY PIG. THERE FORE YOU ALL THINK I'M SELF-OBSESSED. I'M REALLY TIRED OF THAT. WHY NOT SEE ME AS SELFLESS.
DEAR GOD IT'S TRUE I'M ONLY HAPPY IF I'M MISERABLE. TO BE HAPPY THEREFOR IS IMPOSSIBLE. IS THIS ANOTHER CATHOLIC THING?
THE FUNNY THING IS OF COURSE THAT MY INSPIRED WRITING IS QUITE OFTEN THE WORST. TO WRITE WELL I HAVE TO HATE IT AS I DO IT.
THIS IS BECAUSE I BECOME CORNY TOO EASILY WHEN I'M HAPPY. WHY IS ANGER AND DEPRESSION A MORE FERTILE GROUND?
I HATE THIS CRAP
I LOVE THIS SHIT
THIS IS FUCKIN COOL
THIS FUCKIN SUCKS
GOD, LOVES THE ENGLISH
I STILL HAVE'NT DONE MY PRESS RELEASE FOR THIS SHOW. I'M AFFRAID OF ENGLISH SCRUTINY.
NOTHING SOMTHING EVERYTHING WHATTHING THIS THING NO I'M NOT.
EVEN THE ART WORLD IS POLITICS. IT MAKES YOU WONDER WHAT IS FREE IF ARTISTS ARE NOT. WAITE, I'M FREE WHAT AM I COMPLAINING FOR?
I'M HALF FINISHED AND HALF CRAZY
I WISH I COULD PLAY GUITAR.
I'M 31

The Rocket of Brilliance

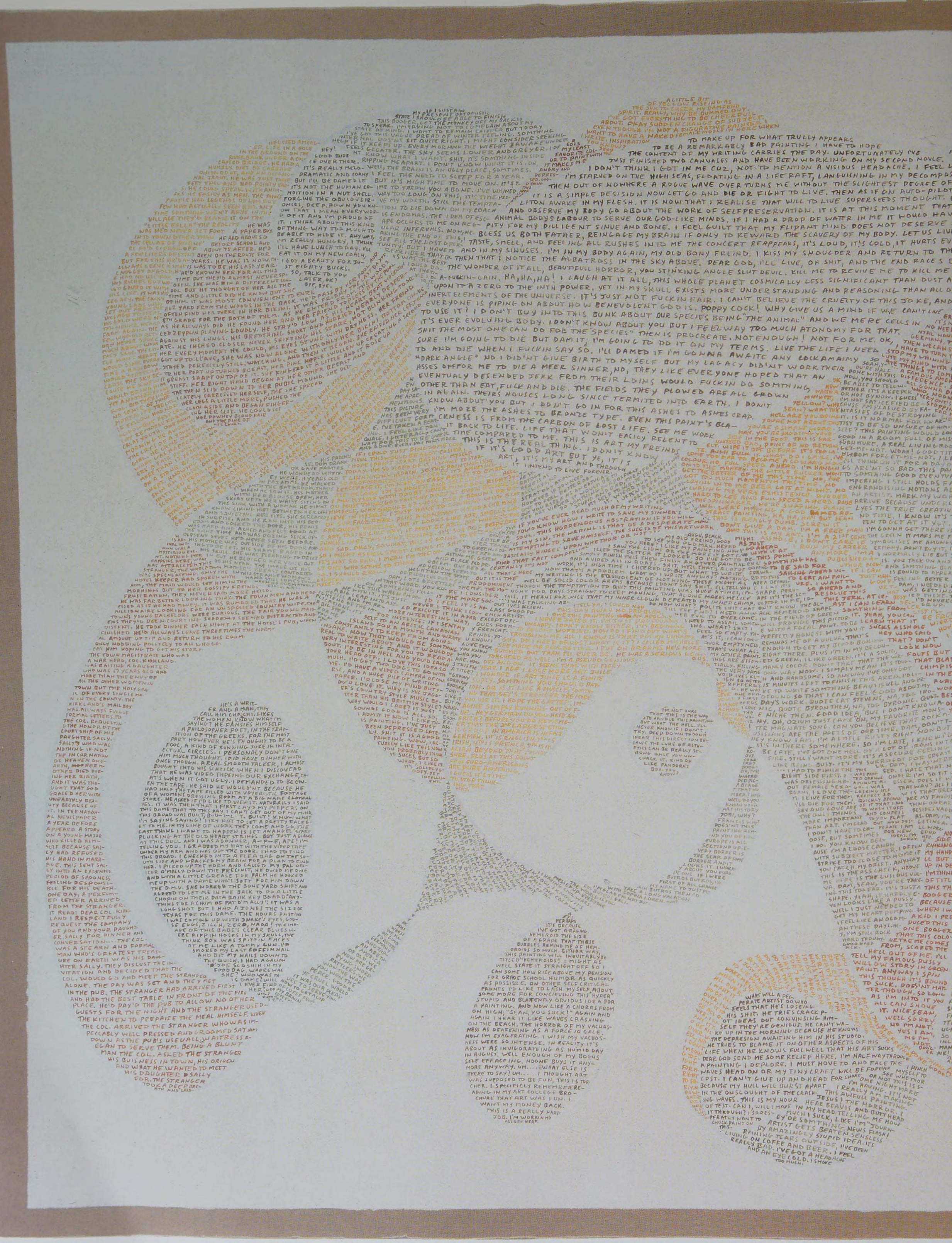
SELF-PORTRAIT © 1994 SEAN LANDERS

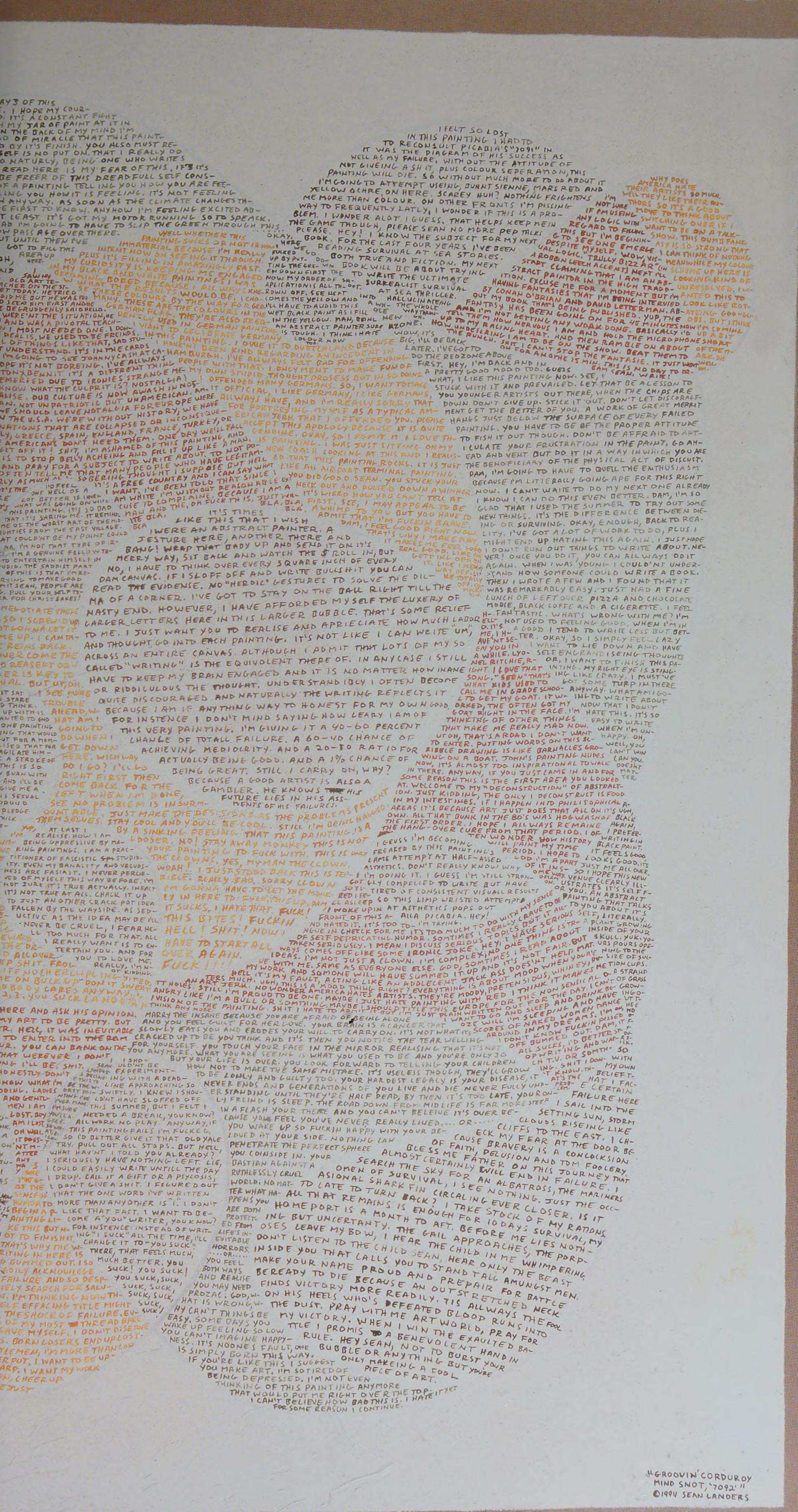


"IT MUST HAVE BEEN COLD THERE IN MY SHADOW, THE SUN NEVER SHINING ON YOUR FACE,... DID YOU EVER KNOW YOU WERE MY HERO. YOU'RE EVERYTHING I WISH I COULD BE. I CAN FLY HIGHER THAN AN EAGLE BECAUSE YOU ARE THE WIND BENEATH MY WINGS, FLY, FLY, FLY, HIGH, HIGH, HIGH!" BET MIDDLER, MIKE BOLTON, KENNY G. ALL SHOULD DIE PAINFULL TORCHEROUS DEATH'S ALONG WITH MARIA KERRY, WHITNEY HOUSTON, AND BOYS TO MEN. THEY'VE INFLACTED GREATER PAIN ON THIS NATION THAN, THAN, THAN, UGH, WELL, THEY JUST SUCK!
SO WE NOW KNOW THAT THE ODD FELLOW ARRIVED IN TOWN WITH MUCH CURIASITY AND MYSTERIE SURROUNDING HIM. WE KNOW HE WANTED TO MEET SALLY KIRKLAND. WE KNOW THAT HE'S ARRANGED A MEETING WITH SALLY'S FATHER THE WIDOWER COL. AND TOWN MAGISTRATE. WE PRESUME THAT THE ODD FELLOW WAS TO ASK THE COL. PERMISION TO COURT SALLY BUT DURING THEIR PREARRANGED FORMAL DINNER THE COL. LEFT MORE MYSTIFIED ABOUT THE ODD FELLOW THAN WHEN HE ARRIVED. IF IN FACT THE STRANGER HAD AS PREDICTED ASKED FOR SALLY'S HAND IT ALL WOULD HAVE MADE SIMPLE AND PERFECT SENCE. BUT ON THE CONTRARY THE STRANGER MADE ABSOLUTELY NO MENTION OF SALLY WHAT SO EVER. THE STRANGER APPEARD TO THE COL. TO BE A MAN OF HIGH INTELIGENCE, HE WAS UNPRETENTIOUSLY ARTICULATE AND VERY WELL READ, HAD A FIRM GRASP OF CURRENT EVENTS IN THE POLITICAL REALM, FINANCIAL WORLD, WAS AS SCHOOLED IN MILITARY TACTICS AS THE COL. IF NOT MORE SO. HE ALSO WROTE POETRY AND DABBLED WITH OIL PAINTS AND SCULPTURE, AND WAS CLASSICALLY TRAINED ON THE PIANO. HE APPEARD TO BE FROM MONEY BUT THE COL. HAD NO PROOF OF THAT. ALL THAT WAS KNOWN ABOUT HIS FINANCIAL STATE WAS THAT HE NEED NEVER LET THE MATTER CONCERN HIM. IF ONE THING DID SET THE COL. ILL AT EASE IT WAS THAT HE COULD FIND NOTHING ILL IN HIM. EVEN IN HIS PRESENTATION OF HIS LIFE THE STRANGER WAS UNPRETENSIOUS AND BUFFORD HIS INTIMIDATING LIST OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS WITH A REASURRING, SELF-DEPRICATING SENCE OF HUMOR. BY THE TIME THE COL. GOT UP TO LEAVE HE KNEW NOTHING MORE ABOUT A MAN HE HAD JUST TALKED WITH FOR THREE SOLID HOURS THAN THE MOMENT HE ARRIVED.
A MESSAGE TO YOUNG ARTISTS, DO NOT KILL YOURSELF FOR ART. IF YOU FEEL THAT YOU SUCK TOO MUCH TO SUCCEDE, THEN REALISE THAT SUCKING IS WHAT EVERY ONE FEELS THEY DO. TAKE YOUR EXPERIENCES OF FAILURE AND EMBRASE THEM, THEY ARE YOUR TOOLS. ASSES YOUR SELF HONESTLY, THEN USE YOUR MOST EMBARASING PITFALLS AS STRENGTHES. YOUR WEAPON IS THAT YOU KNOW THE BOTTOM, AND YOU KNOW EVERY ONE ELSE IS THERE TOO.
BY THE TIME THE COL. GOT HOME SALLY WAS BESIDE HER SELF WITH ANTICIPATION. SHE PESTED HER POOR FATHER WITH QUESTION AFTER QUESTION ABOUT THE STRANGER AND HIS INTENSIONS. BUT THE COL. COULD NOT SATICIFY HIS DAUGHTER WITH AN ANSWER, HE TOLD HER THAT HE NOT ONCE SHOWED THE SLIGHTEST AMOUNT OF INTEREST IN HER, AND THAT HE HAD NO CLUE AS TO WHY THE STRANGER WAS IN THEIR TOWN OR WHY HE HAD CALLED FOR THE MEETING AT ALL. WHAT THE COL. DID KNOW HOWEVER WAS THAT THE (CONT.) STRANGER WAS EXCEPTIONALLY BRIGHT AND THE HE COULDN'T STOP RECALLING THEIR CONVERSATION. IF HE HAD FELT ILL AT ESE WITH THE STRANGER, HE WASN'T CONCERND WITH IT NOW. THE COL. RETIRED TO HIS STUDY TO WRITE OF HIS EVENING IN HIS JOURNEL WICH HE HAD KEPT SINCE HIS WIFE'S DEATH.
NOW SALLY WAS LEFT TO HER OWN THOUGHTS. SHE HAD NO EXPERIENCE OF SINGLE MEN NOT HAVING PROFOUND INTEREST IN HER. IF THIS STRANGER HAD INTENDED TO GET HER ATTENTION, HE CERTAINLY HAD IT. SALLY THOUGHT OF THE POOR YOUNG MAJOR WHO HAD KILLED HIMSELF IN DESPAIR OVER NOT HAVING HER. SHE MOURNED FOR HIM BUT WAS LEFT SOMEWHAT TORCHERD BY A STRANGE FEELING OF SATICEFACTION SHE FELT UPON HEARING THE NEWS OF HIS END. SHE FEARD THAT DEEP DOWN SHE WANTED TO MAKE MEN SUFFER. SHE DIDN'T LIKE THIS ABOUT HERSELF BUT COULD NOT IGNORE THE FEELING OF SUPERIORITY SHE FELT WHEN EACH NEW YOUNG SUITOR TREMBLED IN HER GRACEFULL PRESENCE. HOW COULD THIS STRANGER SHOW INDIFFERENCE FOR HER? WHO WAS HE?
SALLY RETIRED TO HER ROOM AND SIGNALED FOR HER CHAMBER MADE TO READY HER BATH AND BED. SALLY'S CHAMBERMAID LUCINDA ENTERD AVOIDING CONTACT WITH SALLY'S EYES. SALLY GRUFFLY BARKED ORDERS AT HER. THE WERE THE SAME AGE AND LUCINDA NO LESS FETCHING THAN SALLY. SALLY DISROBED, LUCINDA BEGAN TO UNTWINE HER CORSET FOR HER, HER CLEAVAGE LOOSEND INSIDE OF IT, LUCINDA'S HEART BEGAN TO RACE AND SHE BREATHED IN QUICK PUFFS. SALLY STARED OFF DISTANTLY. LUCIND DELICATLY PULLED OFF SALLY'S CORESET, SALLY STOOD THERE IN ONLY HER HOOP SKIRT. LUCINDA AVOIDING SALLY'S EYES STILL BEGAN UNLACEING HER SKIRT FROM BEHIND AS LOOSEND SALLY'S HIPS BEGAN TO EMERGE FROM THE DENSE LAYERS OF CLOTH, IT FELL TO THE FLOOR AND SALLY STOOD SILENTLY NAKED, STARING DISTENTLY ILLUMINATED SOFTLY BY CANDLES. LUCINDA WATCHED HER AS SHE MADE HER WAY TO HER BATH. SHE SQUATED IN THE AND MOTIONED FOR LUCINDA TO COME OVER, LUCINDA PICKED UP AN URN OF HOT WATER AND POURED IT OVER SALLY SLOWLY. ONCE SALLY WAS WET, LUCINDA BEGAN CARESSING SALLY'S BODY WITH A SPONGE AND SOAP. SALLY RESTED HER HEAD AGAINST LUCINDA'S CHEST AND CLOSED HER EYES. LUCINDA, DROPPED THE SPONGE AND (CONT.)
CONTINUED TO CARESS HER WITH HER HANDS. LUCINDA'S HANDS FOUND SALLY'S BREASTS AND GENTLY MASSAGED THEM, SALLY'S LIPS PARTED A BIT AS SHE TURNED HER FACE INTO LUCY'S CLEAVAGE. LUCY QUICKLY AND EFFORTLESSLY PULLED THE TOP OF HER DRESS DOWN TO HER WAIST AND SALLY TOOK LUCY'S PERT PINK NIPPLE INTO HER MOUTH, WHILE HER HAND STROKED LUCY'S BROW AND CHEEK. LUCY'S CARRESES DESCENDED FROM SALLY'S BREASTS DOWN HER STOMACH AND SHE BEGAN TO MASSAGE THE MUSCLES IN HE HIPS AND THIGHS UNTIL SHE FOUND SALLY'S SOFT PUBIC HAIR, SHE WORKED HER FINGERS DEEPER AND DELICATLY STROKED THE SIDES OF HER VULA IN THE HOT WATER. SALLY ARCHED HER BACK THRUSTING HER BREASTS UPWARD AND LUCY TOOK HER BEAUTIFUL NIPPLE INTO HER MOUTH AND CARESSED IT WITH HER TONGUE. SHE FELT IT BECOME ERECT IN HER LIPS THE SHE FOUND THE FOLD OF SALLY'S VAGINA AND SLIPPED HER FINGER INTO IT, WARMER AND SOFTER THAN THE SOAPY WATER. SHE RAISED HER HAND SLIGHTLY TO FIND SALLY'S FIRMED CLITORIS AND GENTLY WORKED IT IN A SOFT CIRCULAR MOTION, SALLY PULLED LUCY'S FACE NEARER TO HERS AND THEY LOOKED INTO EACHOTHERS EYES. SALLY WHISPERD "LUCY" AND HER EYE LIDS SLOWLY CLOSED AS THEIR MOUTHS REACHED FOR EACHOTHER, THEIR LIPS MOISTLY MET AND SALLY FILLED LUCY'S MOUTH PASSIONATLY WITH HER TONGUE. (CONT.)
IN DEVINELY FORBIDDIN AND PERFECT PLEASURE. LUCY PULLED UP OFF OF SALLY AND PULLED A CANDLE FROM THE CANDLEABRA, AND GAVE IT TO SALLY AND TURNED PROSTRATE IN FRONT OF HER. SALLY DRAMPEND THE THICK END OF THE CANDLE WITH HER TONGUE AND GENTLY SLIPPED IT INTO LUCY'S VAGINA, FROM BEHIND. SALLY PULLED AND PUSHED IT GENTLY IN AND OUT OF HER WHILE SHE STROKED THE CIRCUMFRENCE OF HER PERFECT PINK ASS. SHE FINGERD HER CLIT AND BENT IN AND KISSED LUCY'S ASSHOLE, SHE GENTLY PULLED HER TONGUE ACROSS IT'S SURFACE, LUCY WEEPING IN PLEASURE BELOW HER, SHE FORMED HE TONGUE UP AND PRESSED INTO THE TIGHT ROSE BUD, IT RESISTED FOR A MOMENT THEN PARTED LIKE A FLOWER AND SALLY'S TONGUE PRESSED INWARD. SHE PRESSED HER TONGUE INTO HER AS DEEP AS IT COULD GO, FEELING HER SOFT TIGHTNESS ON HER DARTING TONGUE. LUCY CAME WITH THE SEVERITY OF ALL THE WORLDS WAVES CRASHING ON THE WORLDS BEACHES IN A SINGLE INSTANT. SALLY PULLED THE CANDLE OUT OF LUCY'S VAGINA AND PRESSED IT INTO HE EXCEPTING ASS THEN SWUNG AROUND AND PUSHED THE OTHER END INTO HER OWN, THEY PRESSED THEIR ASSES (CONT.)
BLAM!
SALLY ROSE OUT OF THE TUB AND THEY TOOK EACHOTHER INTO A FULL PASSIONATE EMBRACE, LUCY WRIGGLING OUT OF HER HALF REMOVED DRESS, THEY FELL INTO SALLY'S DOWNEY BED. LUCY KISSED SALLY'S BREASTS WILDLY, THEY GLISTEND SWOLLEN WITH LUCY'S SPITTLE IN THE CANDLE LIGHT. SHE TURNED ON SALLY BURYING HER FACE INTO SALLY SOFT THIGHS. SALLY SMELLED AS PURE AS A MEADOW IN A SUMMER RAIN. SHE SWUNG HER LEG OVER SALLY'S HEAD AND LOWERD HER VULVA ONTO SALLY'S LIPS. SHE FELT SALLY'S TONGUE SLIP INTO HER SLIT. PLEASURE RAN THROUGH HER LIKE SHE'D NEVER FELT. SHE TOOK SALLY'S CLITORIS IN HER LIPS AND STROKED IT WITH HER TONGUE. THEY QUAKED IN EACHOTHER'S ARMS, SHUDDERING (CONT.)
TOWARD EACH OTHER, SLOWLY AT FIRST THEN INCREASING STEADILY UNTILL THEY WERE POUNDING EACHOTHER WITH RECKLESS ABANDON. ALL THE WHILE THE STANGER STANDS IN A TREE LOOKING ON THROUGH THE WINDOW WITH OPERA GLASSES. HIS ACHEING MANHOOD POUNDING WITHIN HIM THROUGH HIS LOINS. EXHASTED FROM THEIR (CONT.)
LOVE MAKEING SALLY AND LUCY FALL ASLEEP IN EACHOTHERS ARMS, THE WARM SUMMER BREEZE BLOWING THROUGH THE OPEND WINDOW ACROSS THEM. THE STRANGER CLIMBS DOWN FROM THE TREE AND WALKS AROUND TO THE REAR OF THE HOUSE. HE ENTERS THROUGH AN OPEN WINDOW IN THE PANTRY HE REMOVES HIS SHOES AND MAKES HIS WAY TOWARD THE SERVICE STAIRWAY. HIS HEART POUNDS SO FIERCELY HE WONDERS IF IT CAN BE HEARD. HE WALKS SLOWLY THE DOOR OF THE COLNEL'S STUDY, LIGHT SPILLS FROM BENEATH THE DOOR. A FLOOR BOARD CREEKS FROM UNDER HIS STALKINGED FOOT. THE COL. CALLS OUT "WHO'S THERE" THE STRANGER FREEZES HIS HEART VISABLY RIPPLING THE RUFFLES OF HIS SHIRT. HE HEARS THE COLNEL'S CHAIR SCRAPE ON THE FLOOR THEN FOOT STEPS. THE STRANGER LEAPS TOWARD THE HINGE SIDE OF THE DOOR. THE DOOR SWINGS OPEN. LIGHT FILLS THE HALL DIMLY. THE STRANGER HOLDS HIS BREATH AND STILLS HIS EVERY MUSCLE. THE COL. STANDS IN FRONT OF THE OPEND DOOR LOOKING UP AND DOWN THE HALL, HE CALLS OUT "SALLY?, LUCINDA?" TERROR INFLAMES LIKE A FURNACE IN THE STANGERS TEMPLES. HIS HEART BEATING AUDIBLY. "IS ANYONE THERE?" THE COL. SAYS THEN RETURNS TO HIS STUDY CLOSING THE DOOR. THE STRANGER SCURIES UP THE STAIRS. HE COMES TO SALLY'S DOOR THE FAINT CANDLELIGHT BARELY DETECTABLE THROUGH THE KEY HOLE. HE LOOKS THROUGH AND FINDS THEM STILL ASLEEP IN EACH OTHERS ARMS. HE DELICATELY GRIPS THE DOOR KNOB AND SLOWLY TURNS IT. IT SPRINGS OPEN A BIT THEN THE AIR PRESSURE FROM THE OPEN WINDOW PUSHES IT BACK AGAINST THE JAM ABRUPTLY. HE FREEZES, THEN LOOKS THROUGH THE KEY HOLE TO FIND LUCY STIRING A BIT FROM THE NOISE. SHE SOON SETTLES BACK INTO DEEP SLUMBER. HE TRIES THE DOOR ONCE AGAIN, HE HOLDS IT FIRMLY AND SLOWLY OPENS IT AND SLIPS INTO THE ROOM. HE PUTS HIS SHOES DOWN AND REMOVES HIS JACKET. THEN SLOWLY APROACHES THE BED. SALLY AND LUCY LAY INTERTWINED MORE BEAUTIFULLY THAN ANYTHING PERHAPS THAT ANYONE HAS EVER SEEN BEFORE. (CONT.)
LUCY'S GOLDEN CURLY HAIR LAY SPREAD ACROSS THE PILLOW RESTING ON SALLY'S CHEST. SALLY'S BEAUTIFULL BREASTS STOOD WELL UP ON HER CHEST. HER STRAIGHT CHESTNUT HAIR CASCADING OVER THEM. THEIR FACES SO SWEETLY IN BLISSFULL SLEEP. LUCY'S VOLUPTIOUS HIP STANDING UP SHIMMERING IN CANDLE LIGHT. HER LARGE SOFT PINK NIPPLED BREAST LAYING PEACEFULLY ON SALLY'S PERT ERECT BREAST. HER PINK BUTTOCKS STILL GLISTENING FROM THERE LOVE MAKEING. HIS EYES FOLLOWED THEIR COUPLED OUT LINE DOWN TO THEIR PRETTY FEET. HE BENT TO (CONT.)
HER APPLE CHEEKS, HER CURLED PERFECT EARS. THE POETRY HE HE'D ONE DAY FILL THEM WITH. THE SONGS OF LOVE HE'D SING TO HER. HE HELD HIS BREATH AND BROUGHT HIS LIPS TO WITHIN A MIL. OF HERS. IF ONLY TO KISS HER, MY LOVE, MY LOVE. HE FOLLOWED DOWN THE CURVE OF HER NECK, (CONT.)
TAKE IN THEIR SMELL, THEIR SOFT PINK HEELS THEIR DARLING TOES SALLYS MANICURED, LUCY'S ROUGH. HE PULLED HIS SUSPENDERS OFF OF HIS SHOULDERS, HIS PANTS FELL DOWN TO HIS FEET, HE UNBUTTONED HIS SHIRT AND CAME OVER TOWARD SALLY'S SIDE OF THE BED. HE STOOD NAKED BEFORE HER, FULLY ERECT, HIS PANTS (CONT.)
DOWN AROUND HIS ANKLES HE STEPS OUT OF THEM AND ONLY REMAINS IN HIS STALKINGS HE FINDS THE CANDLE ON THE FLOOR AND PICKS IT UP TO TAKE IN IT'S LUSCIOUS AROMA. JEALOUSY OF IT RUSHES THROUGH HIM, AS HE HOLDS IT TO HIS NOSE. HIS PENIS POUNDS AT HIM BEGGING FOR RELIEF, PRESSURE ACHEING SWOLLEN IN HIS LEADEN TESTICLES. THE SLIGHTEST TOUCH ON HIS QUIVERING ORGAN WILL CAUSE IT TO EXPLODE IN FURY. HE BENDS OVER SALLY HIS EYES INCHES FROM HER FULL PINK LIPS, HER RESTING EYES, HER CURVED BROW. (CONT.)
FLOWING DOWN INTO A HEAVENLY GLEN. CLUSTERS OF HAIR STILL MATTED WITH HER WETTNESS FROM SEX. THE AROMA RISING SO PROFOUNDLY BEAUTIFUL AND STIRING, SO PURE AND CLEAR, SO GOD DAM UNBELIEVABLY STIRING, HER SLIT SILENTLY SLEEPING, THE LITTLE HOOD OF HE CLITORIS STILL PINK FROM EXCITMENT PEAKING THROUGH. HIS SKIN BURNED WITH DESIRE HIS EYES ACHED AS IF THEY SHARED THE MAGNITUDE OF FURY WELLING IN HIS LOINS. STILL HE REFUSED TO TOUCH HIMSELF TO RELIEVE THE EVER BOILING PRESSURE INSIDE OF HIM. A BREEZE WOFTING IN THE WINDOW BRUSHED BY HIS ASS AND NEARLY CAUSED HIM TO BLOW. THE CANDLES FLICKERD. HE COULDN'T HOLD MUCH (CONT.)
IN EVERY PIECE I MAKE THERE WILL BE SUFFICIANT EVIDENCE TO DAM ME AS A FRAUD AS WELL AS TESTIMENT TO WHY I AM A GREAT ARTIST. PEOPLE WILL THINK WHAT THEY WILL. I CAN'T CHANGE THAT. BESIDES NO ARTIST IS AN UNCONDITIONAL GENIOUS IN THEIR OWN TIME. ONLY HISTORY CAN PROVIDE SUCH ALCOLADES.
IN MEMORY OF THAT POOR YOUNG FELLOW FROM GLENS FALLS. YOU NEEDN'T HAVE WORRIED SO TERRIBLY, YOUR LIFE'S EFFORT WAS NOT IN VAIN. I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WELL ENOUGH TO UNDERSTAND, BUT FEEL TERRIBLY THINKING OF THE PAIN YOU LIVED WITH BECAUSE I KNOW SOMTHING OF IT MYSELF. I OFTEN WROTE AND THOUGHT THAT IF I DIDN'T MAKE GREAT ART I'D DO THE SAME. THOUGH I DOUBT I HAD NEARLY YOUR SAME CONVICTION. I WISH YOU TOLD ME SO I COULD HAVE GIVEN YOU MY PERSPECTIVE. ART MAY BE WORTH LIVING FOR, BUT DYEING FOR IT IS ENTIRELY A DIFFERENT MATTER. THERE IS NO DISGRACE IN MEDIOCRITY. THE ONLY DISGRACE IS NOT REALISING IT'S PROFUNDITY.
THE BOIL FLATULENCE BLIND CHILDREN CATS IN HEAT SOAP TOENAILS MUNCHIN ON ENTRAILS
WOW! I SPOKE TO SOON. FLAPPERS MAGAZINE #1
I WRITE IT AND FORGET IT. SO DON'T QUOTE ME. PLEASE QUOTE ME ON THAT.
THE NUGE! GOT SCRATCH, BUMMER.
HE WROTE AND WROTE AND WROTE. THEN ONE DAY HE CAME OUT WITH A BRILLIANT LINE A LINE SO BEAUTIFULL SO PROFOUND THAT NOONE ON EARTH WILL NEVER NOT UTTER IT, READ IT, OR THINK OF IT. FOR IT IS JUST THAT BEAUTIFUL. WHAT IS IT? "FUCK YOU!"
THE YOUNG FELLOW PULLED THE CORK ON HIS EXISTENCE. PERHAPS HE'D IMAGINED THAT HIS ACTION WOULD SOFTEN THE CRUEL HEARTS THAT TORMENTED HIM SO. PERHAPS HE SAW HOW IT WOULD MOVE THOSE WHO KNEW HIM SO WELL. WHY DID HE WANT TO MOVE PEOPLE DOES ANYONE'S ATTENSION DESERVE SUCH A JESTURE. WHO MISUNDERSTOOD HIM. WHAT WA HE TRYING TO SAY. WELL, HE'S DEAD NOW.
GARY WAS A FRUSTRATED ARCHITECT WHO COLLECTED INDUSTRIAL DESIGN OBJECTS FROM THE 1930'S AND 40'S. HE WAS GAY BUT WOULDN'T ADMIT IT.
I'M REALLY ANGRY LATELY, I CAN'T CALM DOWN. I WANT TO SCREAM, AND BITE HUMAN FLESH.
"IF ANY OF YOU MOTHER FUCKERS WANNA GET MELLOW THAN YOU CAN JUST TURN AROUND AND GET THE FUCK OUT OF HERE" (TED NUGENT)
BUT TED, I LIKE TO ROCK AND BE MELLOW. WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO?
MY DRAWINGS ARE SIMPLY UNDIGNIFIED. I'M IRREVERENT TOWARD NEARLY EVERYTHING. ALL I DO RESPECT IS LOVE AND NATURE.
"JIG'S UP LANDERS" "YOU ARE A CHARLATON!" REALLY, I NEED A NEW SOMTHING, I JUST CAN'T FIGURE IT OUT.
WOAH, I REALLY WENT INTO FANTASY ON THE TOP HALF OF THIS PAINTING HERE. I NEVER WROTE SO MUCH ON ONE CANVAS IN A SINGLE DAY. I FEEL ALMOST BAD ABOUT IT, LIKE I CHEATED OR SOMTHING. I ALLWAYS FEEL GUILTY IF SOMTHING GOES WELL FOR ME. WHY?
I WANT TO SING THE WORST SONG THE WORLD HAS EVER HEARD. I WANT TO BE SUBLIMELY EMBARASSED OF IT, TO SHOCK YOU WITH HOW PROFOUNDLY BAD IT IS. IT SHOULD'NT BE TOO DIFFICULT I SUPPOSE, BEING THAT I SUPER SUCK AND ALL. BUT ENOUGH ABOUT MY BULLSHIT HOW ARE YOU DOING.
OKAY I'LL ADMIT IT. I'M REALLY FRUSTRATED WITH ART MAKEING. I FEEL LIKE I'M STUCK IN THE MUD, SPINNING MY WEELS. BECOMEING EVER MORE SELF OBSESSED AND TRITE. I'M SORRY I JUST SUCK, YOU'RE ALL RIGHT ABOUT ME. I'VE GOT REALLY BIG PROBLEMS AS AN ARTIST. I CAN'T LAST MUCH LONGER "GOODBYE MY FRIENDS GOODBYE."
I NO LONGER CARE WHAT ANYONE THINKS OF ME. I'M TELLING THE ABSOLUTE TRUTH! ALL I EVER THINK OF IS TITS. THAT'S IT, NOTHING MORE. I TRY TO LOOK AT YOUR TITS. I WANT TO TOUCH THEM, I WANT YOU TO WANT ME TO SUCK THEM. I'M NOT PROUD JUST HONEST. I KNOW HOW DUMB IT SOUNDS BUT I CAN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT THEM.
"SOMONE SHOULD HAVE STOPPED THE BIRDS FROM SINGING TODAY, LIKE POUNDING NAILS WITH A HAMMER INTO CLAY" "SUCH A SMALL LOVE SUCH A SHALLOW TEAR" "THE PILLOW'S EMPTY, LITTLE GIRLS WITH FROWNS" SCOTT WALKER
ALL THIS GEN. X. GARBAGE IS FULL OF SHIT. I ONLY SAID I WAS A PART OF IT BECAUSE I WAS AFFRAID OF GROWING OLD. NOW I DON'T MIND BEING IN MY THIRTYS AND AM HAPPY TO BELONG TO NOTHING AGAIN.
OH, WHAT I'D DO FOR A THOUGHT RIGHT NOW.
THINGS ARE MUCH DIFFERENT NOW
I'M LOST AT SEA.
THE CZECK WOMAN WHO CUTS MY HAIR WAS FOLLOWING ME AROUND SOHO THIS MORNING.
WISH HATES SUMMER. WISH HATES THUNDER. WISH LIKES FOOD. WISH LIKES CUDDLES.
THIS IS NOT STRATIGIC. I'M TOO STUPID FOR STRATOGY, AND THAT'S NO STRATOGY EITHER. I'M JUST A BORED JERK ON A SUMMER DAY, WHILEING THE HOURS AWAY. I'M NOT EVEN PROUD. BANALITY'S LOUD. (MY RYMING SUCKS)
I'M TOO WICKD FOR MYSELF.
I'M DOING SOMTHING THAT BAD ARTISTS DO. I FILLING EMPTY SPACE FOR NO OTHER REASON THEN IT LOOKS EMPTY. A GOOD ARTIST WOULD CONTROL THE CANVAS, NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND.
LATELY I'VE BEEN DREAMING OF BECOMING A COMPOSER. I MUST HAVE AN ILLNESS. BUT I'VE GOT ALL THESE SONGS IN MY HEAD. IF ONLY I COULD WRITE MUSIC. I WANT TO MAKE PAINTINGS THAT ARE MUSICAL SCORES FOR SYMPHONIES. ALL NOTES, SO ONLY TRAINED MUSICIANS CAN UNDERSTAND IT. PLUS IT'LL SIMPLY LOOK BEAUTIFUL. I SAW HANDLE SCORES IN THE BRITTISH MUS. I WAS JEALOUS OF THEIR BEAUTY.
PERHAPS I'VE GONE A BIT TOO FAR WITH THIS CLOWN AND CHIMP ACTION. I'M LOSEING MY SUBTLETY. THAT MEANS THAT I EITHOR DON'T TRUST MY AUDIENCE OR MY IDEAS. THE SAD PART IS THAT I SIT HERE AS IF I WERE A SERIOUS ARTIST AND CONTIMPLATE THESE ASSNINE DRAWINGS.
I DON'T REALLY FEEL LIKE A WORLD OF HOSTILE CHIMPS IS OUT TO GET ME. IT'S A POSE SO YOU'LL THINK I'M A "CRAZY" ARTIST. BECAUSE THE ONLY THING MORE MARKETABLE THAN A DEAD ARTIST IS A CRAZY ONE.
WELL EVEN IF THIS PAINTING FAILS WHICH I THINK IT MIGHT I'LL STILL MAKE BETTER ONES LATER. SEE THAT'S MY STRATOGY, WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING. DON'T LET ME GET AWAY WITH IT. I CAN'T HIDE FROM YOU. YOU ALL KNOW THAT I'M TERRIBLY IMPRESSED WITH MYSELF. WHAT AN UGLY TRAIT, I'M ASHAMED WITH MYSELF... NO I'M NOT, I'VE GOT MORE IRRATIONAL, UNSUBSTATIATED PRIDE THAN AN ITALIAN AMERICAN.
WHAT IT ALL MEANS IS THAT HAPPINESS IS RIDDICULOUS AND THE RUT OF DEPRESSION IS INEVITABLE. IT'S A THEME TO HANG ON TO. BECAUSE EVERYONE BELIEVES THEY SUFFER MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE. AND WITHIN THEIR HEADS IT'S TRUE. AFTER ALL, EVERYONE, AND EVERTHING ELSE WE SEE IS SIMPLY PART OF THE STUPID TELIVISION SHOW WE'RE WATCHING HAPPEN AROUND US. THE ONLY REAL EXPERIENCE OF COURSE IS YOUR OWN. ALL ELSE IS TOTALY INCONSIQUENTIAL FICTION. SAD HUH? WELL IT'S TRUE JACK ASS, YOU REALLY ARE ALONE.
HERE I AM SPOUTING OFF LIKE I KNOW WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT. WELL SMART VIEWERS KNOW I'M LITTLE MORE THAN A TALKING ASSHOLE.
HOW GOD WORKS? HERE HE GIFTS ME WITH THE ABILITY AND WILL TO WRITE CONSTENTLY BUT GIVES ME NOTHING TO SAY. MEANWHILE GENIOUSES ALL OVER THE WORLD ARE SUFFERING FROM WRITER'S BLOCK.
IT'S FUNNY HOW PEOPLE SEEM TO THINK THAT I TALK ABOUT MYSELF, DON'T THEY KNOW I'M TALKING ABOUT THEM? MAYBEY I'M WRONG AND THE JOKE'S ON ME. SHIT! I HATE IT WHEN THAT HAPPENS. OH WELL. JUST MAKE IT GOOD AND EVERYTHING ELSE WILL WORK OUT.
THE DOG TOOK A SHIT OUT SIDE OF THE FRONT DOORS TO THE NEW MUSEUM TODAY. I PICKED IT UP BUT IT LEFT A STREAK ON THE SIDEWALK, JUST AS SOME P.C. STAFFER WAS WALKING OUT. THE FUCK ASKED ME TO CLEAN THE STREAK. I LOST IT! I CHARGED HIM WITH THE SHIT IN MY HAND THREATENING TO GRIND IT INTO HIS SNIVELING FACE. HE RETREATED. I WONDER IF HE KNEW THAT I'VE DONATED TWO ART WORKS TO HIS PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT WITH BOTH SOLD IN HEAVY TRADEING.
POW
THIS IS THE LAST ENTRY OF THIS PAINTING. I'M AFFRAID THAT IT LOOKS BETTER THAN IT READS. SORRY, IT'S JUST ART AFTER ALL.
I'M TIRED OF YOU AND YOUR FUCKIN ATITUDE ABOUT ART KISS MY SKINNY ASS YOU BURKIN STOCK ASS WIPES.
I'D GIVE IT ALL UP IN AN INSTANT TO BE A CROONER. WHY? I DON'T KNOW, PERHAPS BECAUSE I'M TOO SHY TO DO IT IN FRONT OF YOU, BUT GOD KNOWS I WANT TO SING. I SEE MYSELF NOW IN THE SPOT LIGHT ON STAGE WITH A WIND MACHINE BLOWING MY HAIR. AS I CRAFT THE SONG PERFECTLY, MY WOMEN HANGING ON MY EVERY NOTE. TEARS POOLING IN PREGNENT EYES. CUMULUS CLOUDS RACEING ACROSS EVER BLUER SKYS. LOVE SO SMALL AND AND PURE. MY DEFT LITTLE DARLING EVER MORE, EVER MORE. COOL IT SEAN, "PERFUME PILLOWS, GIRLS THAT FROWN SO NEAR, SUCH A SMALL LOVE, SUCH A LITTLE TEAR." S. WALKER.
I KNOW I SUCK, OK? BUT ENOUGH ABOUT ME.
LET US GO THEN, YOU AND I, WHEN THE EVENING IS SPREAD OUT AGAINST THE SKY. AND GET OUR SELVES A BIG ASS PIZZA PIE. LET US GO, THROUGH CERTAIN HALF DESERTED STREATS. AND LET ME SUCK ON YOUR DIRTY FEETS OF RESTLESS NIGHTS IN ONE-NIGHT CHEAP HOTELS AND MY BALLS A-JANGLEN LIKE CHURCH BELLS. STREETS THAT SMELL LIKE A FUCKIN ZOO OH BABY, I WANNA GET INSIDE A-YOU. TO LEAD YOU TO AN OVERWHELMING QUESTION OH, DO NOT ASK, "YOU BEEN TESTED?" LET US GO AND MAKE OUR VISIT. IN THE ROOM THE WOMEN AND BLOW TALKING OF EMPITIGO T.S. TELLYBUTT
EARTH FIRST!
I ♡ THE EARTH.
SHUT UP!
I LIKE POEMS ABOUT NATURE AND SUICIDE
EMILY DICKONSON, ANN SEXTON, SYLVIA PLATH, FROST IS SWEET, GINSBURG A BORE. MELVILLE, POE ALLWAYS GREAT. COLERIDGE, SHELLY, BYRON, KEATS, T.S. JELLYBUTT
HEY! I KNOW AND ENJOY POETRY.
THE ELVES MADE THEIR WAY TO TOWN TO GET DRUNK. THEY HAD WORKED VERY HARD FOR WEEKS ON END WITHOUT A BREAK. BOOM BOOM THE GROUP LEADER WAS BARKING ORDERS AT THEM AS THEY WALKED. THE GROUP WAS SICK OF BOOM BOOM'S ORDERS SO THEY BEAT THE LIVING SHIT OUT OF HIM. BOOM BOOM WAS UNCONSIOUS AND BLEEDING FROM THE EARS, THEN OUT OF NOWHERE A MOOSE CAME AND CRUSHED HIM TO DEATH. THE OTHER ELVES FELT BADLY SO THEY GOT AS DRUNK AS THEY HAD PLANED TO.
LARRY HOES IS STILL ON THE LOOSE
I'M SO FUCKIN STUPID I DON'T CARE I'M A FUCK'N STUPID FUCK'N FUCKED UP FOOL, U.S.A! U.S.A., U.S.A. U.S.A. U.S.A!
NO NEED TO FEAR GOD, HE'S GIVEN UP ON US AGES AGO.
I LOVE MY PENIS. MY LIFE SUCKS. I'M WHEARING SANDLES. I'VE GOT TO FIGURE OUT A WAY TO LOOK GOOD WITH SHORT HAIR.
THE CRUELEST IRONY ABOUT THIS PAINTING AND ALL OF MY PAINTINGS IS THAT I REALLY AM SERIOUS, YET EVERYONE SEEMS TO THINK IT'S SOME KIND OF GAG. NOT TO SOUND PATHETIC BUT I OFTEN CATCH MY SELF FANTASIZEING THAT THIS IS ACTUALLY "GREAT ART" THAT WILL BE IN A MUSEUM ONE DAY. THAT'S WHEN THE CHIMPS ARRIVE AND ISSUE ME THEIR BRUTAL REALITY CHECK. THAT'S WHEN I RESORT TO MY "PATTENDED" SELF EFFACEING HUMOR. DAM I GUESS I OWE THE CHIMPS A DEPT OF GRADITUDE. THEY ARE SAVEING MY ASS THE VIOLENT LITTLE BASTARDS.
THIS IS BULLSHIT CORNER, DON'T READ DOWN HERE IT'S TOO DEPRESSING. GOD I'M SICK OF MYSELF. I STOPPED BELIEVING IN GOD WHEN I WAS NINE BECAUSE HE FAILED TO PREFORM A MIRACLE I NEEDED. IT'S TIME TO GROW UP I CAN'T STAND MYSELF ANYMORE DAM, I'M REALLY BLOWING IT.
LOVE IS BEAUTIFUL BUT HATE IS AWE INSPIRING.
I'VE GOT A CONTRACT OUT ON MYSELF TO MAKE LIFE MORE INTERESTING.
I STOPPED SMOKEING NOT BY DESIGN IT JUST HAPPEND. I DIDN'T FEEL LIKE BUYING AN OTHER PACK.
HEY THIS COULD WORK!!! NA, IT'LL NEVER WORK YOU'RE A LOSER LANDERS, ALLWAYS HAVE BEEN. GIVE IT UP.
I LIKE NEAT LABIAS WITH DOWNEY HAIR.
A DUMB GUY MADE THIS.
DEAR MR. CHIMP, THANK YOU FOR EMBODYING MY SELF HATRED. WITHOUT YOU I'D BE THE ART WORLD EQUIVOLENT OF YANI. YOU GIVE MY ACT A LITTLE CLASS AND I JUST WANT TO SAY THANKS SO YOU'LL NEVER LEAVE ME. SINCERELY YOUR BUDDY THE CLOWN
MY DAD TAUGHT ME HOW TO SHIT IN THE WOODS. HE SUGGESTS THAT YOU ALLWAYS CARRY A ROLL OF TOILET PAPER IN YOUR VEHICLE.
GOD HATES THE IRISH FUCK THOSE DRUNKEN FOOLS
WHINE COMPLAIN. HEY ASSHOLE ART VIEWER WHAT WHAT THE HELL AM I SUPPOSED TO MAKE ART ABOUT? ART VIEWERS SUCK, FUCK YOU.
SOMTHING TRIANGULAR RIGHT HERE.
"BITE THE HAND THAT STROKES ME" IT'S NO, I'M JUST TELLIN EM WHAT THEY WANNA HEAR.
GROW UP IDIOT!
I DON'T WANT TO CHANGE MY IDEAS I WANT TO KEEP ON DOING THE SAME DUMB SHIT. WHAT CAN I SAY BUT IT JUST FEELS RIGHT.
DAM, I'M SICK OF WRITING ALL THE TIME. I SHOULD DRAW MORE, FOR SOME REASON IT'S FUN AGAIN. TAKE THIS PAINTING FOR INSTENCE. WHY DO I FEEL THAT I HAVE TO WRITE ON IT?
I'M PSYCHED TO WRITE. JUST TODAY I'M NOT.
DAM MY SELF DISGUST LEVEL IS WAY UP TODAY. I CAN TELL ALREADY THIS DAY IS GOING TO BE A TOTAL WASH. IT SUCKS BECAUSE YOU'LL READ IT AND THINK, THAT I'M THIS WAY ALL THE TIME. WELL I'M NOT OKAY. MOST DAYS THEY WERE RIGHT THOUGH. I AM A SUCKY ARTIST. NOONE BEMOANS THAT FACT MORE THAN I.
I'M SICK OF MY OWN STUPID SELF EFFACING TRICKS. I'M LOOKING FOR THE NEW ME. "SORRY SEAN, YOU ARE WHO YOU ARE"
THIS IS TECHNICALLY A PAINTING BUT NOT REALLY. SURE IT'S ON CANVAS AND I AM APPLYING PAINT WITH A BRUSH. BUT OTHER THAN THAT THIS IS SOMTHING ELSE.
SOMTHING RIGHT HERE, ANYTHING.
I'VE GOT TO LOOSEN UP AND BE MYSELF. I LIKE TO KID AROUND. I LIKE MAKING PEOPLE LAUGH. IT'S OF MY GREATEST PLEASURES. I LIKE TO GET SERIOUS NOW AND THEN TOO. I LIKE IT WHEN SHE FINGERS MY BUTT WHEN WE'RE FUCKING. THAT DOES'NT MEAN I'M GAY DOES IT?
EVERYTHING I WRITE OR THINK IS LAUGHABLY STUPID. THIS ALSO MAKES IT SAD AND MOVING THAT'S WHY SO MANY ARTISTS PORTRAY THEMSELVES AS CLOWNS. IT'S A SIMPLE AGE OLD TRADITION SO ANY BODY WHO EVEN THINKS NAUMEN WHEN THEY SEE THIS SHOULD OPEN A DAM ART HISTORY BOOK FOR CHRIST SAKES. AS FOR THE WRITING ON PAINTING, HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF A GUY NAMED BLAKE? AND IF YOU NEED ANOTHER REFERENCE, LOOK UP HOGARTH, ACCORDING TO SOME IGNORENTS YOU'D THINK ART HISTORY DOSE'NT PREDATE 1960. IT'S THIS WHOLE ATTITUDE OF ASSUMEING WHO DID IT FIRST WAS ALSO THE BEST. AND THAT MY FRIENDS IS SIMPLE BULLSHIT.
SEAN YOU'RE SO FUCKING INSECURE IT'S PATHETIC, YEAH BUT SO WHAT. WHO ACTUALLY CARES? NOOOOOOOOONE, THAT'S WHO. PAVEMENT IS SO MELLOW I FEEL OLD LISTENING TO IT. SHOULD I GET ELECTROLASIS ON MY ASS?
THIS HAS TURNED INTO BUMMER CORNER, SORRY.
ONLY FOOLS DON'T LEARN FROM HISTORY. IN SHORT, THAT'S WHY WE RECORD HISTORY. GOD I HATE NAIVE ART VIEWERS. THE MORE NAIVE THEY ARE, THE MORE INSECURE THEY ARE AND FOR SOME REASON THAT MAKES THE MORONS OPINIONATED.... WHY?

Pages 20–21
FOR THE LOVE
OF NOTHING, 1994
Oil on linen
274.32 × 426.72 cm

I'M A CLOWN
IN A WORLD OF CHIMPS, 1994
Oil on linen
213.36 × 304.8 cm


TO MAKE UP FOR WHAT TRULLY APPEARS
TO BE A REMARKABLY BAD PAINTING I HAVE TO HOPE
THE CONTENT OF MY WRITING CARRIES THE DAY. UNFORTUNATELY I'VE
JUST FINISHED TWO CANVASES AND HAVE BEEN WORKING ON MY SECOND NOVLE.
I DON'T THINK I GOT IN ME CUZ, NOT TO MENTION A VISIOUS HEADACHE. I FEEL L
I'M STARVED ON THE HIGH SEAS, FLOATING IN A LIFE RAFT, LANGUISHING IN MY DECOMPOS
THEN OUT OF NOWHERE A ROGUE WAVE OVER TURNS ME WITHOUT THE SLIGHTEST DEGREE OF
IT IS A SIMPLE DESISION NOW LET GO AND DIE OR FIGHT TO LIVE. THEN AS IF ON AUTO-PILOT
LITON AWAKE IN MY FLESH. IT IS NOW THAT I REALISE THAT WILL TO LIVE SUPERSEEDS THOUGHT.
AND OBSERVE MY BODY GO ABOUT THE WORK OF SELFPRESERVATION. IT IS AT THIS MOMENT THAT
ANIMAL BODYS LABOUR TO SERVE OUR GOD-LIKE MINDS, IF I HAD A DROP OF WATER IN ME IT WOULD HAV
PITY FOR MY DILLIGENT SINUE AND BONE. I FEEL GUILT THAT MY FLIPANT MIND DOES NOT DESERVE
BLESS US BOTH FATHER, REINGAGE MY BRAIN IF ONLY TO REWARD THE SCAVERY OF MY BODY. LET US LIV
TASTE, SMELL, AND FEELING ALL RUSHES INTO ME THE CONCERT REAPPEARS, IT'S LOUD, IT'S COLD, IT HURTS EV
AND IN MY SINUSES. I'M IN MY BODY AGAIN, MY OLD BONY FREIND. I KISS MY SHOULDER AND RETURN TO TH
THEN THAT I NOTICE THE ALBATROSS IN THE SKY ABOVE. DEAR GOD, I'LL LIVE, OH SHIT, AND THE END RACES
THE WONDER OF IT ALL, BEAUTIFULL HORROR, YOU STINKING ANGLE SLUT DEVIL. KILL ME TO REVIVE ME TO KILL ME
A-FUCKIN-GAIN. HA, HA, HA! I LAUGH AT IT ALL, THIS WHOLE PLANET COSMICALLY LESS SIGNIFICANT THAN DUST A
UPON IT A ZERO TO THE INTH POWER. YET IN MY SKULL EXISTS MORE UNDERSTANDING AND REASONING THAN ALL O
INERT ELEMENTS OF THE UNIVERSE. IT'S JUST NOT FUCKIN FAIR. I CAN'T BELIEVE THE CRUELTY OF THIS JOKE, AND
EVERYONE IS PIPING ON ABOUT HOW BENEVOLENT GOD IS. POPPY COCK! WHY GIVE US A MIND IF WE CAN'T LIVE
TO USE IT! I DON'T BUY INTO THIS BUNK ABOUT OUR SPECIES BEING "THE ANIMAL" AND WE MERE CELLS IN
IT'S EVER EVOLVING BODY. I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU BUT I FEEL WAY TOO MUCH ATONDMY FOR THAT.
SHIT THE MOST ONE CAN DO FOR THE SPECIES" THEN IS PROCREATE. NOTENOUGH! NOT FOR ME. OK,
SURE I'M GOING TO DIE BUT DAM IT, I'M GOING TO DO IT ON MY TERMS. LIVE THE LIFE I NEED
TO AND DIE WHEN I FUCKIN SAY SO. I'LL DAMED IF I'M GONNA AWAITE ANY LOCKAMAIMY
"DARK ANGLE" NO I DIDN'T GIVE BIRTH TO MYSELF BUT MY LAGACY DIDN'T WORK THEIR
ASSES OFFFOR ME TO DIE A MEER SINNER, NO, THEY LIKE EVERYONE HOPED THAT AN
EVENTUALY DESENDED JERK FROM THEIR LOINS WOULD FUCKIN DO SOMTHING,
OTHER THAN EAT, FUCK AND DIE. THE FIELDS THEY PLOWED ARE ALL GROWN
IN AGAIN. THEIRS HOUSES LONG SINCE TERMITED INTO EARTH. I DON'T
KNOW ABOUT YOU BUT I DON'T GO IN FOR THIS ASHES TO ASHES CRAP.
I'M MORE THE ASHES TO BRONZE TYPE. EVEN THIS PAINT'S GLA-
CRNESS IS FROM THE CARBON OF LOST LIFE. SEE ME WORK
IT BACK TO LIFE. LIFE THAT WON'T EASILY RELENT TO
TIME COMPARED TO ME. THIS IS ART MY FREINDS
THIS IS THE REAL THING. I DON'T KNOW
IF IT'S GOOD ART BUT YE, IT IS
ART, IT'S MY ART AND THROUGH
IT I INTEND TO LIVE FOREVER.
HEY! LIFE IN A HOLE IN THE GROUND ON THE RIVER BANK UNDER A COLLAPSED BRIDGE. HE HAD A HUMBLY DIET OF CARBONARA ORIGINALLY, AND AN OCCASIONAL TROUT. HE WAS JUST THREE FEET TALL AND HAD POINTY EARS. HE COULD SPEAK WITH ANIMALS AS WELL AS MEN. THE TWIGGY PEOPLE HAD LEGENDS OF HIM BUT FEW HAD ACTUALLY SEEN HIM. ANY TIME SOMTHING WASN'T RIGHT IN THE VILLAGE THEY'D SUMMON IT ON THE "LITTLE ROLLA" THE REALITY WAS HE NEVER SET FOOT A PAPERBOY INTO TOWN OTHER THAN HE HAD ABOUT SO THE CELLAR OF BUSINESS BEFORE SCHOOL AND BE HELD STRAIGHT OFF ABOUT 75 AFTER. HE'D A FEW LINERS OF STUFF BEEN ON THE ROUTE FOR BUT FOR THIS HE'D HAVE YEARS. HE WAS IN HIS ALWAYS LEAVE A SPARE WAS TO BE HIS LAST YEAR. ENUGGET OF GOLD. HE'D KNOWN HER FOR ALL THIS E HAD NO USE FOR TIME BUT THEY'D ALMOST NEVER SPO- HIS RICHES BUT WE KEN. SHE WAS IN A DIFFERENT SCH- WORLD IT WITH OOL BUT HE THOUGHT OF HER ALL THE LEGACY. THE CALMY TIME AND LITTLE DID HE KNOW BUT SHE YOUNG LADS WHO OF HIM. IT WAS MOST CONVIENIENT TO ENTER SET OUT FOR HER YARD FROM THE WOODS IN THE BACK. HE'D PASS BY HER POOL AND VILLAGE TO FIND HIS GOLD WHERE OF- OFTEN FIND HER THERE IN HER BIKINI. IT WAS FRIDAY 5TH GRADE FOR THE BOTH OF THEM. AS HE WAS ERS AGAIN. THE FEW WHO DIDN'T SCOFF AS HE ALWAYS DID HE FOUND HER AND HER FRIEND TOPLESS BY THE MUCH ABOUT WHAT LED ZEPPLIN PLAYING LOUDLY. HE STAY'D LOW AS HIS HEART BEAT VIOLENTLY THEY SAID. THE LITTLE AGAINST HIS LUNGS. HIS BREATHING SHORT AND HURRIED, NEARLY DESPER- HEART ATE. HE INCHED CLOSER NEVER SHIFTING HIS EYES STUNG WITHOUT BLINKING TO SEE WOULD SIMPLY HER EVERY MOMENT HE COULD, HIS EYES DRYNESS, HER FRIEND TIME A BOW STOOD GOT UP TO LEAVE, SHE WAS NOW ALONE WITH ONLY THE SOUND OF THE POOL CAUSE THE SKY DE- TO HER PERT UP TURNED BREAST, HER PINK NIPPLE STOOD PROUD AND IM- IF BREAST SHAPE ON TOP OF IT. SHE FINGERED HER SELF, THE WOULD BRING HIM STIFF. HER RIGHT HAND BEGAN AT HER OTHER BREAST AND YET ANOTHER THEN SLID DOWN TO HER PUBIC MOUND. SHE DEL- FOUL DID THEY HAVE I LATELY CARESSED HERSELF, THE SHE SPREAD NO SENSE OF HER LEGS A LITTLE MORE, PUSHED THE MORTALITY CLOTH ASIDE AND BEGAN FINGER- LE FELLOW HAD ING HER CLIT. HE COULD SEE HER DOWNEY BLOND HAIR AND THE PINK OF HER CUNT.
HE WONDERED WHY THAT'S LET'S FACE IT, I'M SO HORNY EY WERE. HE WAS 6 YEARS OLD TODAY. I'M SO TIRED OF THIS PAINTING IN PAJAMAS. HE WALKED AGAIN, SO THIS PAINT INTO THE BATHROOM THAT'S WHEN HE SAW IT. HIS MOTHER WITH HER BLOUSE OPEN, HER SKIRT UP TO HER WAIST SITTING ON THE SINK WITH A WOMAN HE DIDN'T KNOW LIKING HER BETWEEN HER LEGS HIMSELF, WHY SHOULD I HAVE TO AND SQUEEZING HER TITS. SHE SCREAMED IN SURPRISE AND HE RAN INTO HIS BED- ROOM AND LOCKED THE DOOR, HIS PENIS WAS HARD AND ACHED AND FELT GOOD AT THE SAME TIME AND WAS OOZING SLICK OF- A OLDEST STUFF HE'D NEVER SEEN BEFORE. HIS MOTHER WAS OUTSIDE OF HIS DOOR AND IS AR- ING TO BE LET IN. HIS SHAME RAGED IN OWN HEAD. HIS SKULL. SHE WAS PLEADING TO DELET MYSTIRIOUS EN- NT. NOTHING EVER IN BUT HE BLOCKED HER VOICE OUT HAPPENS HERE WHAT OF HIS HEAD. THE IMAGE OF HIS STRANGE, WHOLE TOWN MORNING BREAKFAST CONTORTED WAS SPECULATEING. ONLY THE IN HIS STRANGE WOMEN'S HOTEL KEEPER HAD SPOKEN WITH HAND STILL LODGED HIM, THE MAID WOULD SEE HIM IN THE WHEN HE PREMATURE MORNINGS BUT TO HER GOSSIPY FRIENDS. FRUSTRATION, THEY NEVER SAID MORE HE WAS FAR BETTER LOOKING THAN HE WAS A ESSED AS IF HE HAD MONEY. IT WAS RUMORED THAT MILLIONAIRE LOOKING FOR AN UNSPOILED COUNTRY WIFE. THE TOWN'S YOUNG BACHELORS WERE FURIOUS. THE FAIR YOUNG MAID ENS THEY'D DECIDED SUDDENLY SEEMED DISTRACTED AND DISTENT. HE TOOK DINNER EACH NIGHT AT THE HOTEL'S PUB, WHEN FINISHED HE'D ALWAYS LEAVE THREE TIMES THE NORM- AL AMOUNT OF TIP AND RETURN TO HIS ROOM. ONLY NODDING POLITELY TO ALL WHO GA- THER HIM HOPING TO GET HIS STORY.
THE TOWN MALISTRATE WHO WAS A WAR HERO, COL. KIRKLAND. WAS RAISING A DAUGHTER WHO WAS 17 YEARS OLD AND MORE THAN THE ENVY OF ALL THE OTHER WOMEN IN TOWN BUT THE HOLY GRA- IL OF EVERY SINGLE MA- N IN THE COUNTY. THE KIRKLAND'S MAIL BOY WAS ALWAYS FULL OF FORMAL LETTERS TO THE COL. REQUESTIN- G THE HONOR OF THE COURTSHIP OF HIS DAUGHTER SALLY. SALLY WHO WAS NOTHING IF NOT THE IN CARNADON OF HEAVEN ONE- ARTH, HER M- OTHER DIED DUE- ING HER BIRTH, AND IT WAS THO- UGHT THAT GOD GRACED HER WITH UNEARTHLY BEA- UTY BECAUSE OF IT. IN THE NATION- AL NEWSPAPER A YEAR BEFORE APPEARD A STORY ON A YOUNG MAJOR WHO KILLED HIM- SELF BECAUSE SAL- LY HAD REFUSED HIS HAND IN MARR- AGE. THIS SENT SAL- LY INTO AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF SADDNESS FEELING RESPONSI- BLE FOR HIS DEATH. ONE DAY, A PERFUM- ED LETTER ARRIVED FROM THE STRANGER. IT READ: DEAR COL KIRK- LAND I RESPECT FULLY REQUEST THE COMPANY OF YOU AND YOUR DAUGHT- ER SALLY FOR DINNER AND CONVERSATION... THE COL. WAS A STERN AND FORMAL MAN WHO'S GREATEST TREAS- URE ON EARTH WAS HIS DAU- HTER SALLY. THEY DISCUST THE IN- VITATION AND DECIDED THAT THE COL. WOULD GO AND MEET THE STRANGER ALONE. THE DAY WAS SET AND THEY MET IN THE PUB. THE STRANGER HAD ARRIVED FIRST AND HAD THE BEST TABLE IN FRONT OF THE FIRE PLACE. HE'D PAY'D THE PUB TO ALLOW NO OTHER GUESTS FOR THE NIGHT AND THE STRANGER USED- THE KITCHEN TO PREPAIRE THE MEAL HIMSELF. WHEN THE COL. ARRIVED THE STRANGER WHO WAS IM- PECCABLY WELL PRESSED AND GROOMED SAT HIM DOWN AS THE PUB'S USEUALL WAITRESS B- EGAN TO SERVE THEM. BEING A BLUNT MAN THE COL. ASKED THE STRANGER HIS BUISNESS IN TOWN, HIS ORIGEN AND WHAT HE WANTED TO MEET HIS DAUGHTER SALLY FOR. THE STRANGER TOOK A DEEP BRE- ATH AND SAID-
HE'S A WRIT- ER AND A MAN, THEY CALL HIM CHACHI. LIKES THE WOMEN, KNOW WHAT I'M SAYING? HE FANSIES HIMSELF A PHILOSOPHER POET, IN THE TRAP- ITION OF THE GREEKS. FOR THE MOST PART HOWEVER HE'S THOUGHT TO BE A FOOL, A KIND OF RUNNING JOKE IN INTA- LECTURAL CIRCLES. I PERSONALY DON'T GIVE HIM MUCH THOUGHT. I DID HAVE DINNER WITH HIM ONCE THOUGH. A REAL SMOOTH TALKER. I ALMOST BOUGHT INTO HIS SCHTICK WHEN I DISCOVERD THAT HE WAS VIDEO TAPEING OUR EXCHANGE, TH- AT'S WHEN IT GOT UGLY. I DEMANDED TO BE GIV- EN THE TAPE. HE SAID HE WOULDN'T BECAUSE HE HAD HALF THE TAPE FILLED WITH VOYERISTIC FOOTAGE OF A WOMENS DRESSING ROOM AT A BIG NAME CLOTHING STORE. HE ASKED IF I'D LIKE TO VIEW IT. NATURALLY I SAID YES. IT WAS THEN THAT I FIRST LAY'D MY PEEPERS ON THIS DAME THAT TO THIS DAY I CAN'T GET OUT OF MY MIND. THIS BROAD WAS BUILT, B-U-I-L-T. BUILT! KNOW WHAT I'M SAYING SAYING? I TRY NOT TO LET A PRETTY FALE- ET TO ME. IN MY LINE OF WORK THEY COME AND GO, THE LAST THING I WANT TO HAPPEN IS LET AN ANGEL STRT PLUCKING AT THE OLD HEART STRINGS. BUT JUST A GLANCE AT THIS DOLL AND I WAS A GONNER. A-P-E, APE! I'M TELLING YOU. I GRABBED MY HAT WITH THE VIDEO TAPE UNDER MY ARM AND WAS OUT THE DOOR. I HAD TO FIND THIS BROAD. I CHECKED INTO A FLEA BAG ON THE SO- UTH SIDE AND WRACKED MY BRAIN FOR A PLAN TO FIND HER. I PICKED UP THE HORN AND CALLED MY PAL OFF- ICER O'MALLY. DOWN THE PRECINCT, HE OWED ME ONE AND WITH A LITTLE GREASE FOR PALM HE HOOKED ME UP WITH A DAME WHO'S SOFT FOR HIM DOWN THE D.M.V. SHE WORKED THE BONE YARD SHIFT AND AGREED TO LET ME IN THE BACK TO DO A LITTLE CHOPIN ON THEIR DATA BANK KEY BOARD. ANY- THING FOR A CHUM OF PAT O'MALLY". IT WAS A LONG SHOT BUT I HAD A JONES THE SIZE OF TEXAS FOR THIS DAME. THE HOURS PAST ON I WAS COMING UP WITH SNAKE'S EYES, GOOS- E EGGS, ZILCH, ZERO, NADA! THE IMA- AGE OF THIS BABE'S CLEAR BLUES W- ERE RIPPIN HOLES IN MY SKULL, THE THINK BOX WAS SPITTIN FACES AT ME LIKE A TOMMY GUN. I'D SMOKED MY LAST COFFIN NAIL AND BIT MY NAILS DOWN TO THE QUICK. I HAD A GALLON O' JOE SLOSHIN IN MY FOOD BAG. WHERE WAS SHE? WHO WAS TH- IS DAME? WILL I EVER FIND HER? GOD MY HEAD HURTS.
I'M NOT SURE THAT THIS IS THE WAY TO HANDLE THIS PAINTING BUT WHAT THE HELL. I'LL NEVER KNOW IF I DON'T TRY. DEEP DOWN THOUGH I FEAR THIS DIRECTION BE- CAUSE THE LURE OF ALTH- ETICS CAN BE REALLY ST- RONG ONCE YOU UN- CORK IT. KIND OF LIKE PANDORA'S BOX. YOU KNOW?
PERHAPS IT'S BECAUSE I'VE GOT A RAGING HEMEROID THE SIZE OF A GRAPE THAT THESE BUBBLES REMIND ME OF HEM- OROIDS SO MUCH. EITHOR WAY, THIS PAINTING WILL INEVITABLY BE TITLED "HEMEROIDS". I MIGHT AS WELL STATE IT STRAIGHT OFF SO I CAN SOME HOW RISE ABOVE MY PENSION FOR GRADE SCHOOL HUMOR AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. ON OTHER SELF CRITICAL FRONTS I'D LIKE TO LASH MYSELF ABOUT SOME MORE FOR CONCIEVING THIS "HYPER" STUPID AND BLATENTLY OBVIOUS IDEA FOR A PAINTING. AND NOW LIKE A CHORAS FROM ON HIGH; "SEAN, YOU SUCK!" AGAIN AND AGAIN I HEAR IT LIKE WAVES CRASHING ON THE BEACH. THE HORROR OF MY VACUOS- NESS AS DEAFENING AS A FORCE 10 GALE. NOW I'M EXAGERATING. I WISH MY VACUOS- NESS WERE SO INTENSE. IN REALITY IT'S ABOUT AS INVIGORATEING AS HUMID DAY IN AUGUST. WELL ENOUGH OF MY BOGUS SELF EFFACEING. NOONE BUYS IT ANY- MORE ANYWAY. UM.... WHAT ELSE IS THERE TO SAY? UM.... I THOUGHT ART WAS SUPPOSED TO BE FUN, THIS IS TOR CHER. I SPECIFICLY REMEMBER RE- ADING IN MY ART COLLEGE BRO- CHURE THAT ART WAS FUN. I WANT MY MONEY BACK. THIS IS A REALLY HARD JOB. I'M WORKIN MY ASS OFF HERE.
WHAT WILL A DES- PERATE ARTIST DO WHO FEELS THAT HE'S LOSEING HIS SHIT. HE TRIES CRACK P- OT IDEAS OUT CONVINSING HIM- SELF THEY'RE GENIOUS. HE CAN'T WA- KE UP IN THE MORNING BECAUSE HE KNOWS THE DEPRESION AWAITING HIM IN HIS STUDIO. HE TRIES TO BLAME IT ON OTHER ASPECTS OF HIS LIFE WHEN HE KNOWS FULL WELL THAT HIS ART SUCKS DEAR GOD SEND ME SOME RELIEF HERE. I'M HALF WAY THROUGH A PAINTING I DEPLORE. I MUST HOVE TO AND FACE THE WAVES HEAD ON OR MY TINY CRAFT WILL BE FOREVER LOST. I CAN'T GIVE UP AND HEAD FOR SHORE BECAUSE MY HULL WILL BURST APART IN THE ONSLOUGHT OF THE CRASH- ING WAVES. THIS IS MY HOUR OF TEST. CAN I, WILL I MAKE IT THROUGH? I DOES- PERATLY WANT TO


I FELT SO LOST
IN THIS PAINTING I HAD TO
TO RECONSULT PICABIA'S "7091" IN
IT WAS THE DIAGRAM OF HIS SUCCESS AS
WELL AS MY FAILURE, WITH OUT THE ATTITUDE OF
NOT GIVEING A SH IT, PLUS COLOUR SEPERAMON, THIS
PAINTING WILL DIE. SO WITHOUT MUCH MORE TO DO ABOUT IT
I'M GOING TO ATTEMPT USEING, BURNT SIENNE, MARS RED AND
YELLOW OCHRE, ON HERE. SCAREY HUH? NOTHING FRIGHTENS
ME MORE THAN COLOUR. ON OTHER FRONTS I'M PISSING
WAY TO FREQUENTLY LATLY, I WONDER IF THIS IS A PRO-
BLEM. I WONDER ALOT. I GUESS. THAT HELPS KEEP MEIN
THE GAME THOUGH, PLEASE SEAN NO MORE PEP TALKS
PLEASE. HEY! I KNOW THE SUBJECT FOR MY NEXT
OKAY, BOOK. FOR THE LAST FOUR YEARS I'VE BEEN
HERE WE GO READING SURVIVAL AT SEA STORIES.
FUCKED BOTH TRUE AND FICTION. MY NEXT
UP BY PUT- DO- BOOK WILL BE ABOUT TRYING
TING THE GRE- WN TO WRITE THE ULTIMATE
EN DOWN FIRST THE SURREALIST SURVIVAL
NOW MY ORDER OF SH- AT SEA THRILLER.
APLICATIONS IS ALL TH- OOT. I'LL HAVE TO AUDIO THIS
ROWN OFF. SEE NEXT A WN- THE WHOLE
COMES THE YELLOW AND INTO HALLUCINATEING
WET BLACK PAINT AS I FILL OLE WAY THROU-
IN THE YELLOW. MAN, BONE NEW GH.
AN ABSTRACT PAINTER SURE ROZONE.
IS TOUGH. I THINK I HATE WOW, IT'S
COLOUR NOW
TOO
WHY DOES
AMERICA HATE
THEIR ARTISTS SO MUCH.
WELL THEY LIKE THEIR AU-
THORS SO IT'S A GOOD
MOVE TO THINK ABOUT
SWITCHING OVER IF I
WANT TO BE ON A TALK-
SHOW. THIS DUMB FANT-
ASY IS SO STRONG THAT
I CAN THINK OF NOTHING
ELSE. WOW, VIS- MEANWHILE MY COLOUR
UAL LOGIC. TRULLY BIZZ AR" (IN SCHEME UP HERE IS
A ROBBIN LEECH ACCENT) NEXT I'LL LOOKING KIND OF
START CLAIMING THAT I AM AN AB- UNRESOLVED. I-
STRACT PAINTOR IN THE HIGH TRADD- DON'T KNOW
ITION. EXCUSE ME FOR A MOMENT BUT I'M BEING INTERVIED LOOK LIKE ROT-
BY CONAN O'BRIAN AND DAVID LETTERMAN. AB- ATEING GOO-GO
OUT MY BOOK THAT'S BEING PUBLISHED. YUP, THE DBS. BUT I THINK
FANTASY HAS BEEN GOING ON FOR 45 MINUTES NOW I'M COMING
AND I'M NOT GETTING ANY WORK DONE. BASICALLY I'D UP A BIT
TELL THEM HOW NERVOUS I AM AND HOLD THE MICROPHONE SHORT
UP TO MY RALING HEART. AND THEN RAMBLE ON ABOUT OF THE-
HOW UNDESERING I AM TO BE ON THE SHOW. BEAT THEM TO ASK. OH
THE PUNCH. SHIT I CAN'T STOP THE FANTASIE. IT JUST WENT WELL
ON FOR ANOTHE IS MIN. THIS IS NO DAY TO BR- AM SEAN, WRITE!
LATER. I'VE GOT TO
DO THE RED ZONE ABOVE
FIRST. HEY, I'M BACK AND IN
A PRETTY GOOD MOOD TOO. GUESS
WHAT, I LIKE THIS PAINTING NOW. SEE, I
STUCK WITH IT AND PREVAILED. LET THAT BE A LESSON TO
YOU YOUNGER ARTISTS OUT THERE, WHEN THE CHIPS ARE
DOWN DON'T GIVE UP. STICK IT OUT, DON'T LET DISCORAGE-
MENT GET THE BETTER OF YOU. A WORK OF GREAT MERRIT
HANES JUST BELOW THE SURFACE OF EVERY FAILED
PAINTING. YOU HAVE TO BE OF THE PROPER ATTITUDE
TO FISH IT OUT THOUGH. DON'T BE AFRAID TO ART-
I CULATE YOUR FRUSTRATION IN THE PAINT, GO AH-
EAD AND VENT BUT DO IT IN A WAY IN WHICH YOU ARE
THE BENOFICIARY OF THE PHYSICAL ACT OF DISCUST.
DAM, I'M GOING TO HAVE TO QUELL THE ENTHUSIASM
BECAUSE I'M LITTERALLY GOING APE FOR THIS RIGHT
NOW. I CAN IT WAITE TO DO MY NEXT ONE ALREADY
I KNOW I CAN DO THIS EVEN BETTER. DAM, I'M SO
GLAD THAT I USED THE SUMMER TO TRY OUT SOME
NEW THINGS. IT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DIE-
ING OR SURVIVING. OKAY, ENOUGH, BACK TO REA-
LITY. I'VE GOT A LOT OF WORK TO DO, PLUS I
MIGHT END UP HATING THIS AGAIN. I JUST HOPE
I DON'T RUN OUT THINGS TO WRITE ABOUT. NE-
VER! ONCE YOU DO IT, YOU CAN ALWAYS DO IT
AGAIN. WHEN I WAS YOUNG I COULDN'T UNDER-
STAND HOW SOMEONE COULD WRITE A BOOK.
THEN I WROTE A FEW AND I FOUND THAT IT
WAS REMARKABLY EASY. JUST HAD A FINE
LUNCH OF LEFT OVER PIZZA AND CHOCOLATE
MOOSE, BLACK COFFE AND A CIGERETTE. I FEEL
H- FANTASTIC. WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME? I'M
ELL NOT USED TO FEELING GOOD. WHEN I'M IN
O. IT'S A GOOD I TEND TO WRITE LESS BUT BET-
AVE'NT SE- TER. OKAY, SO I SIMPLY FEEL LAZY
EN YOU IN I WANT TO LIE DOWN AND HAVE
A WHILE. LYO- SELF ENGRANDISEING THOUGHTS
NEL RITCHIE, R- OR, I WANT TO FINISH THIS PA-
IGHT. I LOVE THAT INTING. MY RIGHT EYE IS STING-
SONG. "SEEN" THAT'S ING LIKE CRAZY. I MUST'VE
WHAT KIDS USED TO GOT SOME TURP IN THERE.
CALL ME IN GRADE SCHOO- ANYWAY. WHAT AM I GO-
LD TO GET MY GOAT. IT W- ING TO WRITE ABOUT
ORKED, THE OFTEN GOT MY NOW THAT I DON'T
GOAT RIGHT IN THE FACE. I'M HATE THIS. IT'S SO
THINKING OF OTHER THINGS EASY TO WRITE
THAT MAKE ME REALLY MAD NOW. WHEN I'M UN-
UT OH, THAT'S A ROAD I DON'T WANT HAPPY. OH,
TO ENTER. PUTTING WORDS ON THIS SC- WELL, YOU
RIBBLE DRAWING IS LIKE BARNALLES GRO- CAN'T WIN
WING ON A BOAT. JOHN'S PAINTING NUDES CAN YOU.
NOW, IT'S ALMOST TOO INSPIRATIONAL TO WALK DOESN'T
IN THERE. ANY WAY, IF YOU JUST CAME IN AND FOR MAT-
SOME REASON THIS IS THE FIRST AREA YOU LOOKED TER.
AT. WELCOME TO MY "DECONSTRUCTION" OF ABSTRALT-
ION. JUST KIDDING, THE ONLY I DECONSTRUCT IS FOOD
IN MY INTESTINES. IF I HAPPEN INTO PHILISOPHICAL A-
AREAS IT'S BECAUSE ART JUST DOES THAT ALL ON IT'S UGH,
OWN. ALL THAT BUNK IN THE 80'S WAS HOG WASH OF BLACK
THE FIRST ORDER. I HOPE I ALWAYS REMAINE AGAIN,
THE HANG- OVER CURE FROM THAT PERIOD. I OF I PREFER-
TEN WONDER HOW HISTORY WILL PAINT MY TIME WRITING IN
I GUESS I'M BECOMING BLACK PAINT.
FREAKED BY THIS PAINTING'S PERIOD. I HOPE TO LOOKS GOOD. IT'S
LAME ATTEMPT AT HALF-ASSED GOD I'M APART JUST ME ALL OVER.
ASTHETICS. DON'T REALLY KNOW WHY OF IT INS- SO I HOPE THIS NEW
I'M DOING IT. I GUESS I'M STILL STRON- OME WAX VENUE CLEARLY ILL-
GOT FLY COMPELLED TO WRITE BUT HAVE ON. USTRATES IT'S SELF-
SO TIRED OF CONSISTENT VISUALL RESULTS OR YOU. AN ABSTRACT
SO THIS LIMP WRISTED ATTEMPT PAINTING THAT TALKS
I WOKE UP IN AT ASTHETICS POPS OUT TO YOU ABOUT IT'S
FRONT OF THIS A- ALLA PICABIA. HEY! SELF, LITERALLY.
ND HATED IT. IT'S TOO TO- I'M TRYING.
NGUE IN CHEEK FOR ME IT'S TOO MUCH TO DO WITH MY SENCE
OF SELF DEPRICATING HUMOR. SOMTIMES I REALLY CRAVE TO BE
TAKEN SERIOUSLY. I MEAN I DISCUSS SERIOUS TOPICS BUT IT ALL
WAYS COMES OFF LIKE SOME IRONIC JOKE. HEY! I HAVE
IDEAS. I'M NOT JUST A CLOWN. I'M COMPLEX! NO ONE THINK IS TR- A PLANT GROWING
WITH ME. SAME AS EVERYONE ELSE. GOD, SOMTIMES I READ ABOUT INSIDE OF YOUR
MY WORK AND SOMEONE WILL HAVE SUMMED IT UP AND IT'S NOT FAIR. BUT SKULL. YUK. YO-
HELL, IT'S MY FAULT, ACTING LIKE AN ADOLECENT JACK ASS DOESN'T HELP MAT- URS POURS OPE-
AN ART JERK. UGH, THIS IS A MOOD THING RIGHT? EVERYTHING IS ABOUT MOOD WHEN YOU'RE NING TO THE
ERS MUCH. NO WONDER AMERICA HATES ARTISTS. THEY'RE MOODY, PRETENSIOUS, WHINEY, SIZE OF SUL-
STILL I'M PROUD TO BE ONE. MAYBE I JUST HATE PAINTING WITH RED I THINK IT MAKES ME LOOK A STRAND
ANGRY LIKE I'M A BULL OR SOMTHING. MAYBE SHOULD TITLE THIS EUROPE FOR THE NON SENSICAL O- OF GRASS
I VISION OF THE PAINTING. SHIT I HATE TO ADMIT BUT I'M JUST PLAIN WRITTEN OUT FOR THE DAY. I CAN'T OF GROWN
THINK ANY MORE. I WANT TO GO AND SLEEP AND DRINK BOO-
I WILL I'M SLEEPING AND HAVE UT-

There are moments in life when a man has to face certain undeniable truths. This could mean several things, for me it means that I am terribly uncomplicated. Painfully so at times. The first mo
our teenaged neighbor Leslie Muller one day in her bikini. All of a sudden her bikini top loosened and fell off. There she stood before me, topless her pert lovley teenagld breasts exposed to t
view. Milky white and upturned, culminating in small translucent pink nipples. There I layed just sit in the patio recumbra, something deep in me began to stir, my heart rate quickend my breath faster and shorter,
I remember the sadness I felt as they once again disapeared behind the small triangles of cloth. I'd never think of breasts the same way again. They were now body parts that held a power over me, p
she better of course. To this day I still feel the same gasping excitment when I see a new pair of breasts. One could say that I almost live for that small happiness. I stand here now wond
one wish it would not be fame or fortune, it would be that every woman I met would show me her breasts and ask me to kiss them. When my father was an infant he could
breast feeding mothers. This fact makes me so jealous. I was never breast fed never mind having so ma-
ny different breasts to feed on. The next time I saw a breast in real life w
would often get pulled down. So I got a diving mask and and treaded water infront of the diving
board. Eureka! what a glorious payday that turned out to be. Though d
ing rooms for men and women were adjacent and separated only by a thin plywood wall. We realised
that if we unscrewed the coat hangers that we could see any woman we can
cried on. This all seems like a silly subject but in all honesty I think about breasts a lot, perh-
aps not out of the ordinary. But who cares about what's ordinary. The only
me. To hold a breast in my hand, to put a nipple in my mouth. to caress it with my tongue, to
feel it become erect in my mouth. To press my closed eye into one. Why o
ild in godly form. Oh I love the giver of life, giver of love and happyness. I love you, I love you
comforting, mothering power of women. The face of a mother has one eye.
how ready to be cradeled in your ever loving bosom. Bless them father, bless the breasts of world
I love you. Dear god never let there be a moment when I shall be deprived
contemplate the beauty, to center myself in the wealth of memory that so often carries me through the loniliest nights. Pink mother, my beauty, my Love. So
and tell them how they are loved. Never question
indrden your
them com
a swimi
off. He
what
ge of
and
on it
gling
spread
pleasurable
I would like to take my trunks off. I stammered "
erection and she put it in her mouth and lic
clitoriss and said touch me there, I did, she
it. I tried to but the breast in my mouth
to put it inside of her. I couldn't believe my
her legs open I climbed on top of
in I couldn't believe the fel-
her head from side to side I
a liking to me
under the
water, I
said she
bet that
yes. She
looked at
I put my
a food I'd been starving for my whole life I
this was all so new to me I didn't know if I
boy, you must really like me" I said "uh huh" she
legs spread across from me so I could see her whole vu-
breathing heavily. Then she held my penis in her hand and I told her it felt like I was going to cum again. She said hold
still erect. At fourteen that's not uncommon especially when your mind is being blown so completely. She asked me if I wanted
believe this was happening. I said yes, she put it back in her mouth and cleaned off the cum. Then she rolled over and spread
vagina. It was hot and wet, I pushed inward and the flesh there resisted involuntarily but then just opened up. As I slid
almost felt that that nature controlled my hips. I kept plunging in an out faster and faster. She was getting into it, rolling
continued with the profoundly enjoyable feeling of my penis inside of her. The feeling of inevitable orgasm began climbing inside of me again. She could sense that and
style and took and tried like hell not to cum. Her fingers dug into my ass I could feel he nails digging in. She began to shutter and said I'm cumming she pushed my
pulled. The feeling was way too much my penis was pounding the semen came shoot-
cum did you" I was silent and guilty. She said "you did, did'nt you! how could you?"
ing out faster harder and more concentrated than I'd ever felt. She
was convulshaking. Here I was a fourteen year old virgin between the legs of a 20
I told her I was sorry that I had tried to pull out of her but
I'd never see an other breast as long as I lived. I started to become sad, anxi-
year old college girl. But I was in trouble she said "I should
feel something else rising in me for the first time. Heart broken tears. I was shan-
try took hold of me. In this brief moment I think that I
Baboon! pregnent? I'd never even conceived of that idea before I all of a sud-
ed and confused I felt tears coming on. I hid my head pleading
ished that and all of a sudden
she was nice again. She said "oh
den felt as young as I was and I was utterly terrified. I be-
she'd have real trouble after
all I was a minor, she was an adult
gan "what's wrong?" I blurted out "I'm sorry, I did'nt mean it, I don't
but I was still crying. she
then sat down beside me, part
spoke what's crying "what's wrong?" and what she had done was called statutory rape. She reasured me that she
beautifull redemptive taste
I kissed them as she stroked my
her arm around me and pull-
time I pulled. It was
this experience that taught me
hair. We lyed down again
said yes, me too. I
wanted to tell her I loved her
nearly everything. We continued
hugged me into her
looks and stroked my hair
but I was too affraid to. I
But how she came to
ck in my dreams. the next time
until I did'nt have another
end. One friend of hers
was a known "flirt" and very "easy"
a breast really changed my life was about a year later, my older sister had a few of
pink nipples. She said "do
you like this?" I said nothing, she
she just came into my bedroom late one night and opened her bathrobe revealing her brea
did'nt realise was that she
would own the biggest most perfect
lowered them down to my face, she grabbed the sheet and through it off of me, revealing the
she possessed. Here were breasts that kings of old would have fought wars over
breasts I'd ever seen my hands on in my life. That Maybe one woman in a thousand
New day now, I was just sitting here thinking of ants playing football when it o-
cured to me that I lead a fairly meaningless life. I'm fact I begin each day loathing myself
mammals can cheer me when I get this way. Infact I realise that I've escaped most of
my life's troubles by taking refuge in women. I give all power to the women in my
Breasts have also driven me mad in a negative way before. In undergraduate sch-
cool I was going out with a woman who had the ugliest misshapen breasts you've ever
moaning the ugly set I had to look at each night. I felt horrible for thinking this
way, I felt like a shallow creep and I was. Out of guilt I stayed with her for 3½ yea
love all the stupid fuck jocks out their. My next girlfriend had huge beautifull goods
and the woman after her had perfect flowers. I still hate this
and I feel weird about it. I almost want to take it back and reafirm my earlier assertion that there is no breast that I wouldn't
love. But it's not true. I
about myself. I
sadly obsessed, because few breasts on earth fit my adolecent ideal. However some I've seen more than do. Oh and the pages I've t-
illed in their honor. So I
have an ideal
I thought of how my parents were once the babies of young parents and how now they're grandparents of children that I barely k-
now. I thought of milk
just went o
ein swaddling infancy of their parents infancy. Nearly unimaginable but it keeps going back if you care to think of it. Mother a-
nod child infinitum. It's
once flowing,
will be a time when I relent and become a part of the chain. a micro wing in the ladder of evolution. It'll pick-
aps be a sad moment of
mind twisti
resents a generation of my lineage it brings me back to the year A.D. 941. In 941 a Group a Normans named DeLandres were traveling west from Normandy in search
relention to
they boarded rickety boats and sailed to the new world. Their boats broke apart off the coast of Maine, the entire family died except for the young-
of a better h
I often wonder what Thomas would have thought of me. Would he be proud of what he began? Would it be me he'd be proud of or my siblings who are
est son Tho
stuck in adolescence paint tits. Have I done my part for Landers kind? What is an artist but a life questioning fool on a stage? a clown for your half-
producing
are a lin-
to the year 941 A.D. It's probably untraceable but true. I think of my names history and I can go as far back as DeLandres in
witted amu
eage that takes you back
and nipple to nourish it out of ancestery, through infancy all the way until now. Each breast of my grandmother's throng
For each
generation there was a beast
painting. There is a good number reasons so many artists painted my first one. There are 37 breasts here, I'll be 37 in the year 2000 A.D. Each breast represents a mo
Madona a Child paintings; #1, the excitement of painting devine, glorious, sublime, beautiful, breas
each an
ary and made them thank the heavens above. Just as I did when I saw
ill intentions with half baked phylosophy. #3, because the phyl-
osophy is true. Breasts did nourish our infant bodies through time to bring us here now. #
Child
profound idea, and a magnificant beauty. Oh god hear me w-
to brave a cold cruel world. I devote my self to your majestic de-
then I say I love them all. Each nipple sucked, every child born, time flows past we leaving u
Madonna
mind, I pray to your magnicance. I'll fight for your honor and
vinity. I believe that from your springs life everlasting and all things good. Bless you, mothers
are a
Nipples puffed out and swollen, luminescent, pink, purple, a foaming white
deposit my seed to enable your milk to flow onward into time. To create new temples of ha
strong
a fool of myself here or have I once again merely faced the painfull truth.
a life of their own. Dear god, how I've regressed here today. I feel like an utter fool, pun inten
art and
They think it recklessly exist. Well if they read the whole thing they wouldn't, but I realise that noone
would be, one who unnecessarily discloses the ugly truth
of time.
other intense of when breasts nearly ruined me, however this is a touchy subject, hey another good title "Touchy
reads these things. Well, that's why I write to-
I made
Perhaps a defintion of fool
Subject" a nameless woman would show
painting.
it's to never acknowledge having seen a beautifull set, t-r-o-b-l-e.
you're crying "what's wrong?" I blurted out "I'm sorry, I did'nt mean it, I don't
what's good for me I'll shut up now.
thinking of an
girlfriend telling you that other dicke
can only see inadiquacy. "Sean, your too thin" Arugh!!! now just f-
and what she had done was called statutory rape. She reasured me that she
a fine healthy girth. Shit I'm descend-
working. Now there were not the tyttes you sneeze at, huge and full the types
"Apple of discord" or "Apples of discourse" or "Macmillian Discourse"
her arm around me and pull-
Hey! I like tits okay? Why hide it? Tits
ed my head into her soft chest. M
the day the breasts in your life become cruel. Heaven's pili-
my head on her chest, she holding
your breasts and I'll be a fool for you. I am a
oh and to blow my own horn, I have'nt painted real
to have sex for the rest of the trip
ght me how to paint when I was just six years old.
unless this is my maternal legacy. "Maternal Legacy
drove my bike home and four
after all, it's in seeking mo-
thering that my tit
infant with a nipple in my mouth? Hell yes
it is to be the mind behind the penis. Ugly b
fear left in me. I never heard
For my pagan lust and
my wanton objec-
deny none of the accusations I put against myself.
woman with a mind w-
as attached. I stand
helpless infront of them, I am a weakling, a breastah
ing more. Yes I lust your
breasts, yes I will try
and on a child on a cold hearth. Set fire in the kitchen o
and spirit, I'm weaken-
in heart. My fires are not
home and find my home
rekindled. I bark at
our what I long to. Hark, the
heavens, angels sing, I've h-
dawn is over shaded by what lies in her godess brow, where honey falls like rain into rivers of lustfull wealth. Where denny nectar meets the pungent air and legions of putti swird in bliss fu
long for you already have in great wealth. It's in your mind that trouble works it's satanic deeds. Go home wayward son and find your fire ragging. and I did just that, it's a new day now my
one, indeed, nothing is moving me at all particularly." So why did you paint all of these tits on here Sean", Well, it's like this. I was frustrated and sad, I needed some relief so I painted what I believe to
just not inspired to write right now. I've learned from past experiences that when the iron is not too hot it's not worth attempting to strike. Something interesting did happen today concerning breasts thoug
these infront of their windows. They know that I can see them and still they make no effort to cover up. So I felt no need to draw my shades either and they too watch me. It's been a sort of mutual
his apartment. I'll confess to you it's been immensely thrilling at times. Well this morning I was ted the prettier of the two get out of bed, she was naked and spaced in her window to soak in
I know to act normal, no wavering or touching myself, just enjoy her nakedness at cont- ain myself. Her breast are medium large, her nipples brown and flesh pink, her pubic hair dirt
coffe maker and when I looked back she was gone. It's better this way, if I let her know that I know she watches me jerk off it'll ruin it. It'll turn it crispy and desperate. This way I k
right in front of the window. Anyway this game provides me with much entertainment. So, this morning I was leaving my apartment building when I noticed two very pretty blonde g
hip blonde girls were infact the very same two I had been watching and who had been w- atching me. They smiles broadend as I approached. They almost seemed to be waiting for me. I did'
that I reckoni- sed them would sully it so I froze my face and passed them stoicly like an ice berg. I know I did the right thing I left it so they can not fear fu
regularly inf- ront of me watching her. Young fool that I was, I asked her on a date when I saw her on the street. Dumb! Her blinds were down that same m
watch them but they also want to feel innocent. Hey, I don't know, I'm just some tit obsessed, mommies boy looser. Besides I should'nt be writing this t
dipshit. To confess is in a way to say I'm sorry. A way to admit my wandering eye. To pretend it doesn't exist is hardly better. Though I must also admit that my ob
My mother mother, Muriel Brown George, was an old Yankee farm girl. Her mother's ancestors came over on the Mayflower, fought in the revolution ect. When she was a teen she
would'nt al- low it. In consilation she got painting lessons from a second generation impressionist named J.J. LeValley. Her first dream was to be an actress, her second an artist. So
lowed my gra- ale artist to be taken seriously. So she stay'd in Western Mass. filling her attick studio with beautifull paintings. As she grew old- er she was determined to teach
I often skipped mdmother was allways eager to go paint in her studio. She'd allways greet me with a big hug into her ample bosom. Between her breasts nothing in the worl
football practice and went to her house to paint instead. My dad thought I was a sissy for this but I did'nt care. I loved how good I was at painting and she gave me genuine
approval and unconditional love and affection. These were perhaps the happiest moments of my life. Moments I'm still trying to recreate now. Looking for love and affection
through art making. With so many siblings, this was my enclave were I alone could stand out and be loved, nourished and cradled in breasts for
what I was alone, an artist. Without my grandmother I would'nt be an artist. Thankyou Muriel, thankyou Mary Barton.

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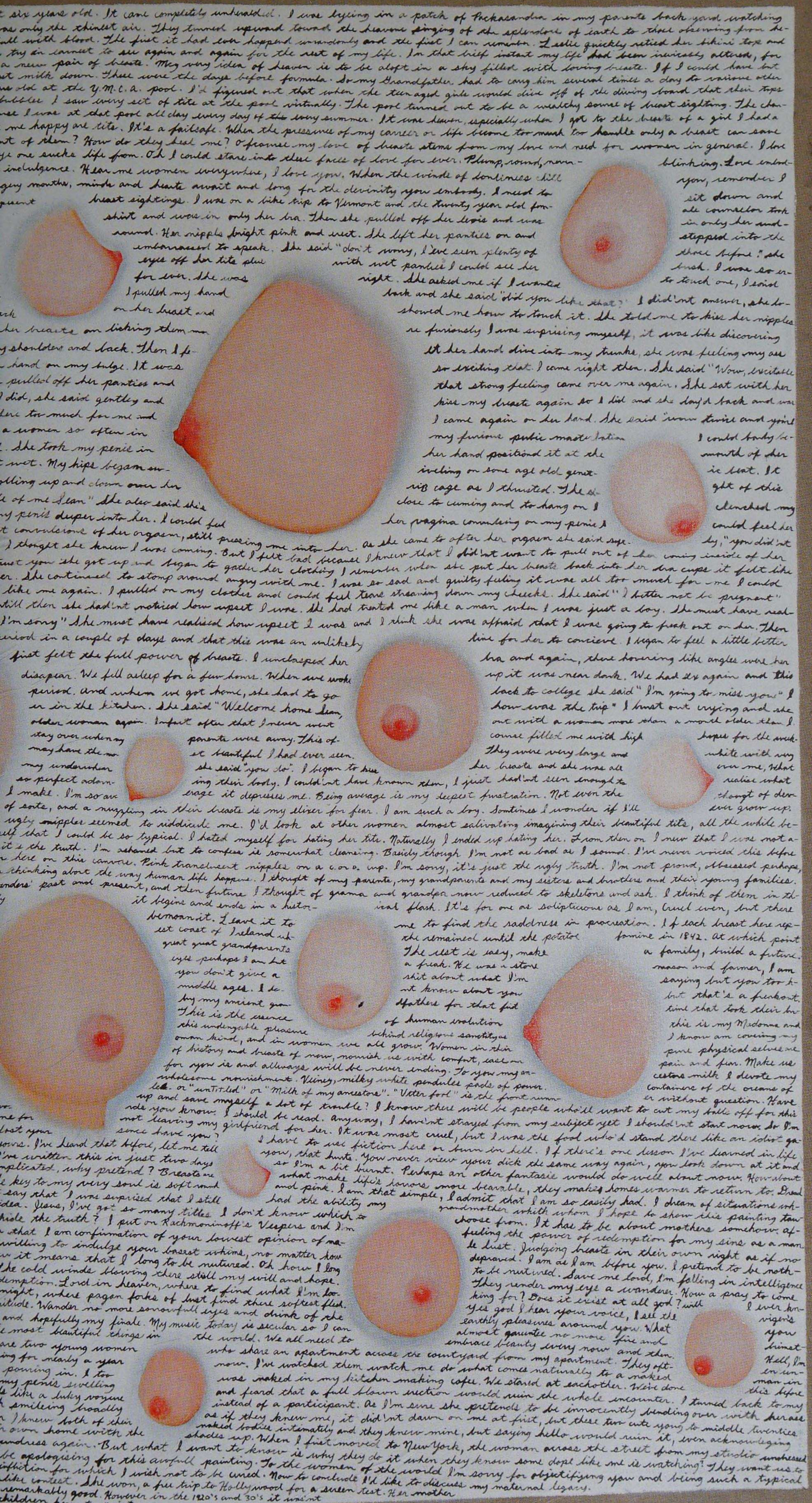
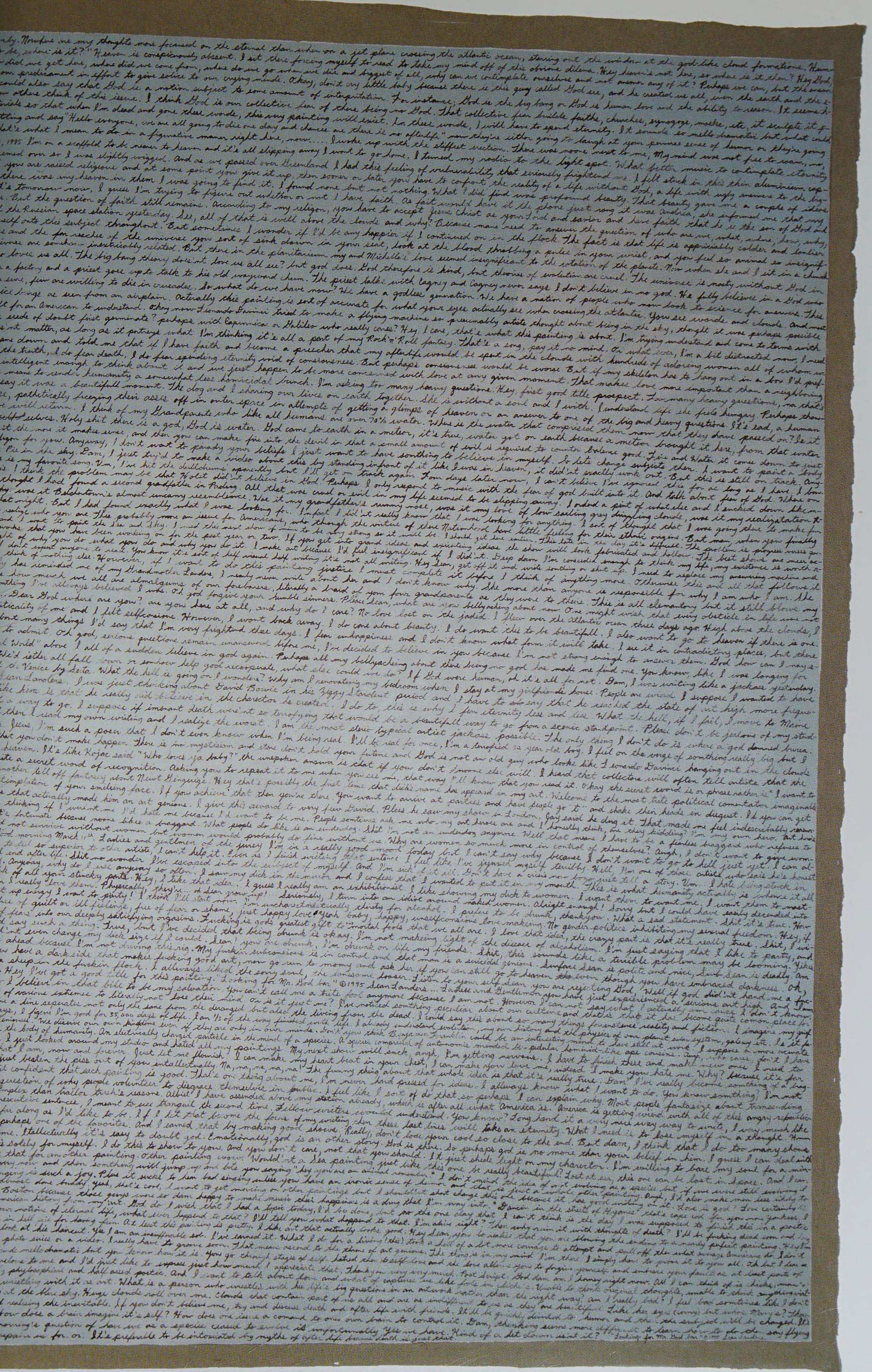


THE ETHER
OF MEMORY, 1994
Oil on linen
213.36 × 304.8 cm

There comes a time in most people's life when they contemplate the big picture, eternity. Ladies and gentlemen that time for me is now. Not that I haven't contemplated it quite frequently in the past but this time it's for real. Sky I sit there relaxing that this is the place renaissance painters thought heaven was. Most people have this image of heaven. When I'm in a jet staring out the window at mountains of cloud tops I'm usually thinking "hey, this is where we are you idiot, it? Now don't misunderstand me. I'm not so dumb that I thought I'd see God and the gang hanging out playing the harp. It's more like I was reminded of the biggest question that can be entertained by man. It is so sad that none of us can face it. To have lived and reasoned and contemplated your existence while knowing it won't last is a remarkable feat of evolution. It's also so terrifying that we make elaborate myths up in order to deal with it. Religion and God and he made all of it to test our souls to see if they were good or bad. The good souls get to go to the place called heaven which is supposed to be a righteous party. Anyway that sounds silly because I was making it up. It's even that the Church would have us think that love is good and the ability to reason is evil incarnate. This is because the more one reasons the more they find the notion of God to be absurd. There for science is evil. Reason hurts, it stings and worst of all it makes one sad. So, what do I do now? I believe god is fictional character torn out of fear. How do I sooth my screaming mind every time I contemplate mortality? I tell you; I do this, I try to find your buttery nook. So what can we do about the multitude of thoughts we have on the eternal. Well we can't do very much, infact it's one of those things like the seasons, you can't stop them, however it took me to the clouds and I dug my face into her, there was nothing but that pleasure and I had to focus intently or she'd slip away and the rhythm was speeding her hands on me she pulled me into her she plane rang and she fell to earth to soft rock. You know, I love this painting, I wont belabor it but I can tell it's going to kick ass. I remember really freaking out while looking out airplane windows. One time in particular I'd just left my girlfriend and hurtling at six hundred miles an hour above the clouds over the very spot the Titanic went down. It was then that I put it all together, death, afterlife, where do souls go? where are souls, are there any souls at all? If we are given a choice to look at into the dirt or into the heavens above what will we choose? Isn't it man who, oh sean cut this it's tacky. What I'm trying to say is that you've got a choice to join a faith or go it alone but, whatever opening falls on Good Friday, and so I want to change it out of respect for that religious and holy day on the calender. My first reaction was noone even knows what good friday is. So I guess I don't find religion all the rest. If you don't believe that then you'll not be allowed into heaven. Meaning no after life for you. No life above the clouds. It's funny that as I write this today the space shuttle astronauts are deploying is so profound that we send people into space to take a look around. "Discovery, this is Houston, do you see God up there, or any angels?" "That's a negative Houston, copy?" "Copy." Anyway, this is an awfully big canvas I'm in a world without God. Two weeks ago I went to the planetarium with my girlfriend. We were both sitting there being simultaneously blown away and humbled. It's almost embarrassing to admit, but the more I looked over at my girlfriend and thought about the love that binds me and wondered how our love fits in to the scheme of the universe. Does it? It seems almost preposterous to imagine it yet in the scheme of things it is. Personally I'd much prefer living in faith. But my faith was stolen from me somewhere along the line. Or perhaps we need a newer more believable myth. You know what's really weird? That James Cagney movie where he's a priest, why was he devoid of morals. For me that means I've become less polite. No big deal but over time that can wreak away at social fabric. From the look of empty space below it looks like this flight is going to stretch on for all of eternity. I'm so sorry you hear your mind reel. You feel fear, loneliness and national pride oddly enough, or shame. What I mean is that on international flights you are forced to confront your nationality. People actually belong to other countries, so they must have thought about the clouds and whether or not heaven was indeed there or not. And one might assume that they were doubtfull that it was there. However doubting god then would be like doubting gravity or something. Alright then, what more about heaven? I suppose I could describe my present fantasies of what heaven could be. You know like lots of beautifull women all who love me and want me. But it's so stupid it hurts to have sex with me. Well I'd preach my ass off. Stupid, don't get stupid. Alright, I shall not become stupid. I hope you'll be able to find the clouds behind my words, now I mean that figuratively and literally. Literally I'd much prefer to be above ground. I don't know why, but I can't concentrate. Okay now I can concentrate, sometimes all it takes is a radio station change. Love, love is important because as far as we know so far we are the only species because we are the sole perciever of that galaxy something so insanely larger than us but not big as love, the love my girlfriend and I shared on a lazy day in the planetarium. I'd that why love is so important is it because we stupid... While listening to baroque music I made eye contact with my dog. We held each other in our stare for a while. The ancient music coupled with the simple affection from my dog sort of made me have an inept she is the animal who understands life and I am the simpleton who thinks there is something more than food. Maybe she understands that to enjoy your life you must dwell in more tangible realms. While human is a sad animal with an overly evolved brain, we are a flake of nature. The sad part is that all the answers to life's heavy questions are right here on earth now. For instance water, water holds the answers we've evolved running in a book to a stream to a river to the ocean. Are they now raining on me, have they fallen as snow on the polar ice cap. They had water their water now is vapor and it floats in clouds above us. Eureka all life sprang. Holy shit god is water. "Mama fell from the sky and nourished us all" or "God is all around us" or "God is in everything" I'm telling you god is water. Wow, what else has can I say now that I figured out who god is. Think of firemen putting out a fire. Think of the sun scorching a sorry soul in the desert. Why is this so easy to figure out? Why has noone thought of it before? So floods and hurricane are god's wrath. This why you can't of water next. Not because I want to make my own religion but because I want to make the ultimate last at sea painting. Infact, this will be one of these sky paintings and the sea painting will be 10'x20'. If way you slice it this painting is a winner. I have to make a video and three sculptures. I can do it. Man my inspiration seems to have gone out the window. I guess when you figure out what god is there is nothing get a bunch of cd's to sort of jar my brain. I'm listening to "The Planets" by Holt. In all my discussion of God and the Universe I thought perhaps Gustav Holst could shed a little light on the subject. On a good day I'd say earth is there more fear of god than in Ireland. It's an island in an ocean without sun. All to see is grass, rock and mist. Walking into that pub that night. It was drizzling I was walking and walking my nose was running from ill straight from the blessed Virgin's breast and slammed the glass down to be filled again. An old man played an irish harp and a young man played an irish tin pipe. I retreated into a dark corner and cried my eyes out. I new I had but all I was came from right here. If an American ever found what he was looking for in Ireland or Europe that I had found it there in that dark pub on Dingle on that cold drizzling night. I also knew that I'd never be able of the fact that I often have places to find myself but that I always am. No matter where I go that I am. Little did I know that I actually would find soothing as if there are lots of things about me to discover within ourselves get it, wow! I don't know what makes me emit a romantic sap for experiences like that. What love it all have to do with after life? That is the question. What does it have to do with staring out of an airplane window a mile above the earth ability progress. I wanted every sentence on here to have value. Tomorrow, please treat me well. I want to have a banner day. Next day, I just remembered something, an old mind set about showing. Never ever plan a show. The basic idea of a show is cumulations of work absent of theories or ideas. Most important is to disregard trends and to attempt in each artwork to make it timeless. Remember, you can be popular now and forgotten in fifteen years. The moral is don't make art for recording every insipid moment of. This is my effort to lead myself in afterlife. I do want to live for ever. But never be boring. My own rule for what I read is if it's boring or requires effort I put it down. I expect the same treatment Van. it seems like an ideal romance. You see, renaissance painters would have dispensed putti in their clouds. I put my mind or my soul quietly there. This may be as close to heaven as one can get on earth. Well that's an exaggeration, anyone will snark. Okay now, God help me write. It's snowing outside, I'm listening to Handel "Messiah" it's sort of a perfect day. Sounds are carrying oddly because of the snow. Everything becomes quaint when it snows out. I started established what it was to be a Landers in my family. If ever there was a question of right or wrong she was the final word, with edicts as well. Now that she's gone I see glimpses of her in my sybling's faces got another mind to consider it. "Sean, you're staren at your navel again. Yeah so what. Days later now I feel somewhat embarrassly human. I can't stand the fact that I have no control over certain elements of my some morality test I took it when I'm a cripple I want to be a smart hero. I want children now. I'd love to obsess about something other than myself for a change. All my angst poured into a pen kid. Jesus! there is no hope, why bother thought about this painting, my whole premis for it and I realized that I did'nt really give a shit about my premis that all I wanted to do was make my paintings more beautiful. For a moment I thought that was I never want to hurt anyone but I want to do what I want. Such actions could potentially land me in hell and unfortunatly I believe in hell more than I believe in heaven. That's just part of being Irish. it is always waiting for me. The fact that in heaven or hell there I am and that's the problem. Argh, but if you don't want to hear about that do you? No you want the truth, well what is the truth other than any one moment and plead for your help de next. I am a late 20th century asshole soon to be a 21st century asshole. So you care? Who am I, no really, I don't know I mean I thought I did but well you know. Anyway, It seems sentimentality. I long for a higher authority. I want to give my fear to something big. What if god couldn't handle humanities fear anymore, you know like God has a nervous breakdown and he just couldn't listen to our sleep hasn't been easy these past weeks last night I was up worrying about an inexplicable purchase of wall to wall carpeting I made. I wondered whether or not I could cancel it. It turns out that I can't. I also bought a clean room in this castle loft. After my show I'll paint my studio and we'll renovate the kitchen. We don't even own the place. It is for sale, maybe we should buy it. I know one thing for sure though when God ex ultimately there most other artist ever have or will try to. If I can do one thing with my life it is just that for which I wish. The serenity of middle class bliss will have to be postponed. The thing that have a few kids, scrape by until I write that Pulitzer Prize winning novel I've been promising. Some South american military official confessed to pushing over thirty political prisoners off of an airplane into the is it will always occupy most of my time. Or at least during the month preceding a show. Art is so weird, I watch movies about artists constantly and I'll see an awfull stock type of an artist on screen and I think But you know I'm moody over confident or under confident never in between. I guess I hate myself enough to dislike all artists. But would I want to reside in the middle class and work for a living? No way! so what don't know what it is. Did I say I was terrified, I'm not actually. I mean that's what's weird, I feel something happening. Augh people always say that, "something's happening" as if something mystical or astrological is happening giving out wishes. The simple and truest fact of life is that no matter where you go and what you do, there you are with yourself again. If you should happen to dislike yourself then you're living in hell. However if they own if there is their favorite. If that's true than I'm a favorite in many homes. Hell what do I care! A lot that's all I live to be loved in my art. I mean that. Damn like any body reads these things I make love to you. So there it is I know the phrase so go ahead and repeat it to me when ever you see fit. Ut oh, I'm having another one of my appearing on David Letterman fantasies again, gee, I thought I'd grown like Jackass he's just in the wrong party. Don't believe in yourself, that's the surest way to hell, however it's the only way to become an art geniuses. You have to believe in yourself so much infact that you actually make get them hating you then you've won their hearts for ever, and that's as good as gold baby, you can take that to the bank. David Bowie was certifiably insane judging by his lyrics of the early seventies, but it was his ed. Hey, now is the time go nuts, you know Sean, you're young, handsome and you're getting your first movie published, you show all over the world, let's face it you're getting not only rich but also a fuckin nasty ego. Really are for students and fools, in my mind I'm it. Okay sure, sometimes I feel like that but mostly I feel like a stupid fool. It's so weird that I think I'm stupid, I'm not stupid yet I feel stupid almost constantly. I honestly don't know say I'm sorry. I'm tired of this subject, I want to reach the end of this by tomorrow so that I can paint tits. I love tits so much. I just love to be with tits all the time. Ah... That may have been the truest thing I ever wrote. on too much credit or I'll end up looking like another cow touring soft Wale. Well I'm hard baby, real hard, I'm sorry can I nestle in your tits. That's how I want to introduce myself to chicks at parties "I'm sorry, can I nestle in your ready tell that I've sort of lost my mind. It's a solipsism that eclipses all in it's view. It's like I'm on a skyscraper looking down and you all are ants. I don't mean to be a bad boy right now. In fact I feel that I am so much that he wakes up to find he's been really living to himself. You know like people think I'm somebody I'm not but really I can, who gives a fuck, why don't you shut up. How about changing subject. Yeah, I'm supposed to be the stew of self contemplation. However, it is largely what I've become strongly. It's an odd feeling to have evolved into something in one art that is slightly different than yourself. Besides, who is the audience anyway? Why bode down. We are all a bunch of weirdos who are shocked to find our ass sweats smelling slightly of vinegar "Not bad!" Lever 2000 for all your stinking parts. What an odd campaign. Can you imagine buying that soap? The relate to me. What's so bad about that. I want to engage women in conversation and pretend that she really wants me. I don't plan this of course, it just happens, I mean I am being honest right? My greatest pleasure in life is indecency there. Damn, do I ever want to get drunk and party! I want to party hard like that guy in the beginning of "Easter Peasy (at 2'11"Kill" who was watching the stripper saying go baby, go! Go go go go baby!" I want to go for can I tell you that I'd rather be working on another painting right now. As much as I love this one and appreciate how sweet it makes me feel, I simply am utterly drawn to another painting? I have going about the joy you are a lady then I am a man, lets not mince words lets get it on! Why is society so inhibitive toward free sex. Lets just all get it on and shut up about our feelings. Lets be cast-aways on the hedonistic isle ah this painting was more legible because some of the writing is too good to waist. Hey, this is no waist. Yeah but noone will ever read it until I'm dead, only then will the world know that I really was what I've I'm not ashamed of that man. I'm so fuckin happy to be alive and an artist, seriously I utterly love my job. I love being Sean Landers, what's so wrong with that? I'm so happy with every aspect of what the hell is happening to me? When the weekend approaches I feel like a sleeping hedonistic angel awakening in me and that angel loves to do what he pleases. It's odd, I'm not terribly in control of myself these I for real? Jesus Sean you sound like a fuckin dipshit. Don't shame me when I'm stepping out! I am the man you've all come here to see, I'm the dark angel in my mind. Every good art work this dope ever made God forgive me. Please forgive me. I have embraced darkness and that asshole makes better art than goodness does. For it's a godless soul who roams the forlorn and sings enchanted songs of sorrow. Dear god, I pen ultimatum, then perhaps I wouldn't reject him. Fuckin God man, it's too heavy for me to understand in the course of this painting. Besides, I don't have the courage to live in a world without god. Shit! I very very proud of that. I literally live for art sight. They are like the pubescent orgasms of some you that I miss so painfully. Listen to me when I tell you how deeply I feel, how profoundly I feel the things So I took a day off. I'm more relaxed, I was really becoming emotional on the thing, in reading my thoughts of the past few days I realize that I am quiet prepared at most any moment to lose control. It really is a tenuous balance for someone to joke about losing their sanity. I do it so often that I don't even notice the essence of the quip, yet I believe that there is something to it. People who joke about insanities turning inevitablity simply realize the stricken mother needing me to hold her after a fledged and I see myself standing there thinking "am I in a play?" Is this real? do we actually feel anything or does merely act accordingly. Why do we exist for such a small time period. in that creatures like me are forced to relinquish our lives when they are still perfectly good? Our short life spans can only mean one thing, that the individual is unimportant, that the flock is. But that sucks I am a product of the Age never of humanity or earth is a factorial one. We are bacteria, and as of on a cell in an amoebas culture. In every cell nucleus is the very strange power of thought, reasoning and most cruel, the ability to believe that one is an individual. When all anything better to discuss? Yeah, my head level is really high. I wonder if my paints are driving me mad? Fuck, I don't know, I'm just pissed off all of a sudden. It came up like a rogue storm on a clear day. Or Sean you're not calm down. Fuck, I think I need a drink. I'm becoming a fuckin. Please god take everything I have but my ability to make great art. I really am an artist. I've never felt it more in my life. I don't care how stupid the more annoying. No, because hatred is far more passionate than love. To control love you basically have to be cute. To control someone's hatred of you, you have to very smart. People who don't hate are actually smarter than those who god these days. That can only mean that I'm becoming insecure. Well if I finish this painting today I'll feel a lot better. I'd like to have eight finished by 30 days time. I now have five halfway there. It really is time to get off my worried, I know that I'm going to have a good show. It turns out that I do believe in myself. I guess I always have. Well now that I've reassured myself. I saw on MacNeil Lehrer news hour tonight an essay on talk shows. their station in life. If your station is one in which the viewing of television is fundamental to existence then naturally appearing on it is worth the small price of airing your dirty underwear. Now me, well I have many motives, those an ego. I have Messiah on, it's in that famous Alleluia part. I switched to Monteverdi, it was so soothing I sat back and did nothing more than listen to it. It set my mind free in the most soothing way. I didn't me it. I remember my first night in Mexico. I was in Merida, I'd read about it in Hemingway poems. I was prepaird for cocktail parties but found none, did find a hallucinogetic mushroom tea party however, it was informal. Thirty that I'm beneficial neurosis, why can't shows just be fun, you know I know why because if you fuck up life as you know it ends. See now that hurts. But fuck it, I'm a veteran, I'm as capable of stealing the only had two months to make this one. Hey God, are you mad at me for making this painting? To question the existence of god is a sin in my religion. This painting is a big ball aching sin. The truth is I do that. But isn't it sublime to witness a 32 year old man struggling to come terms with his childhood bullies. Why do I hold this up infront of you as if it's meaningfull. What do you care? The fact is you don't. I let's suit of your time. Tell me, are you worth that? Tell yourself Sean, is anyone's affection worth that? Unless they're fucking me, No! So if you read this painting then you owe me a blow job. Or at least show me your spot get on with it. Thing I admit I'm not in the mood to discuss god, I don't know. This morning in the newspaper I saw an article saying that human beings have ceased to evolve because survival of the fittest is no longer a fact have a few suggestions. Our asshole are in a hard to reach area and are surrounded by needles hair which tends to collect dung. Also eyesight could be better. I feel badly for my friends who have to endure contacts or glasses. Oh, I also improve evolve speculate prematurely. I realize that being able to fire away quickly were probably desirable back in the Savana days. But evolution for me is done or our assholes are going to stay where they are so be it. What does it mean for it beyond mating and what if you're not ready for children, I'm not. Impatience makes me angry. Damit I become needlessly shocked at the end of paintings. I feel a responsibility to write brilliantly at the end, I recently learned the origin of the term Yankee. In Manhattan circa the 17th century the settlers dubbed the English ones, to make fun of them they'd call them John Cheese which in Dutch is pronounced Yan Kees, there you have it Ladies and Gentlemen blemish, all I can think of is wanting to get drunk and suck mommy glands. I want to masturbate infront of women I hardly know. Why? People are really weird, I am too. I'd be focus, big blue sky Sean, remember. Falling through thin air, enough. Now I am very alive and I am going to cling that for a while. Yeah but, live for now, drink a pepsi. Bet Layd, be an asshole, because being an asshole is usually really fun. Prayers for it make but that's the whole thing isn't it, after life, you still only human, nobody thinks artists are superhuman so they. Wait, I do actually artists (just one like me) are exceptional people and we deserve to not wait in line at the Bonnie Tyler. There is a reason why should get let in before the New Jersey have a trust fund as a safety net. If any I make one bad show my party is over. I go to hell on earth. This fact never leaves my mind, thats why my writting can become so self consume and neurone. But what if I am an Emperor will no I always have that voice is listening. Am I right? Sit nothing was said. Anyway, I talk too much and do very little. There will be a day when I say that this whole time period in my life was really correct, then beyond that I predict that I'll you. It seems that the asshole state is too much around me. I'm paranoid too I fear that people want to see me fail, even those I'm a half wit star. I'm quite reasonable. But what ever happens I'd just like to say thanks for the ge two. That was a total lie. I just want to be done so fuckin bad, can I go home now teacher? please! I'm sorry for questioning god. But this punishment won't make me a believer. Let's all say it together. Sean, shut the fuck up! really. Love has ripped me pretty big role in my life in the past. Now in a calm I wonder what's next or am I there. I mean I could get really lost out of shape by a question like this if I allowed myself to it's just that it's to deserve anyone love, not even my own. Whatever god's love is, this I can readily accept because god made me he better than will love me. A godless world, that's like a world without parents. That's why it's so terrifying. sake? Are they looking at me or past me, it's so difficult to tell sometimes. Why do I care anyway? Because I want to be every thing to every body! I can, that's why I do this. I'm sucking a lover in every reader. Why because being ignorance not even intentional it just is universally rejected by peoples brains. They (brains) do not enjoy contemplating their own demise. Brains are so weird it freaks me out to think about my own brain. Like an eye staring at an eye And, we can't fly. Perhaps we can't really think either. If we were actually able to think then no problem would be without a solution. My foolish query as to the actual location of after life would be retorical (if it's a It means that we're stuck spinning in circles. I don't know if there is a god or heaven or hell. Hell sounds weird though doesn't it. Well I do know there is no Santa Claus so I guess you could view that in two ways. What's the big deal. If you're still alive reading this then you're still alive.



LOOKING FOR
MR. GODBAR, 1995
Oil on linen
276.86 × 426.72 cm

I'VE DECIDED TO RENOVATE THIS PICTURE FOR A THIRD. I CAN HEAR THE CRITICS LAUGHING. BUT WHO GIVES A SHIT. IT JUST SOUNDED LIKE A FUNNY THING TO SAY. THIS NOVEL IT TOOK ME A LONG TIME TO FIGURE OUT WHAT I ACTUALLY WANTED SO, WITHOUT FURTHER ADO "PIZZA NIGHT" TAKE THREE. II- NAL, I MEAN I DON'T FEEL THE PULSE OF LIFE AS I DID WHEN BEING UP INTO AN ART HIGH. OH YES THE ART HIGH, WHY IT'S LIKE A JACK ASS I'M LISTENING TO THE O.S. AND WHY I CONTINUE TO LIVE. NO OTHER REASON AT THIS POINT IN TIME THAT I CAN THINK OF. BOOSTER, DOG HORSE, TRIAL AS I WRITE. THAT'S HOW BORING ARE, ELF, CHEESE, LARRY PORTENTIAL CHARACTERS, RACER X, DEPUTY DOG, BOO BOO, UNDER DOG, EMPIRE STATE BUILDING, I ANTICIPATE TODAY'S OFFERING. NO, A WINDBEAR WORKED ON TOP IN LIFE PUBLICITY, CHARLIE QUIXIE, BEINTZ'S AT YORK SCHIMAL, DISCO, THE WALK A THON I DID IN I MEAN IT'S GONNA BE BEAUTIFUL. HOT FOR THE MODEL OF PIPES, THE NIGHT CHICAGO DIED, AMTEN TRANSISTER FROM MY DAD, FLIP WILSON, GERALDINE, 1987 FORD COUNTER MAN, DEAR GOD THERE'S A LOT OF IT. SQUIRELS, BUNNY AND THE JETS IN 1964, THE BROWNS, BOSTON SCIENCE MUSEUM, PUKE, LIBERTY TRAIL. HOW THE HOLIER I FEEL BECAUSE I'M HERE. YOU FOR NOT BEING A SCUM BAG BUT I'M FROM A PEACEFUL PLACE. I'M FROM A PEACEFUL PLACE. HISTORY HERE, WHAT AM I DOING THIS FOR? DO I HATE MYSELF ENOUGH TO WHETHER OR NOT WE EVER BECOME ANY- WHY WOULD ANY ED ON A FEB- ONE SUBJECT. EVERY NIGHT. THE VERY NIGHT. ARENESS. BECOMES SOMEWHAT RELEVANT THIS ENDLESS- THE FILES. ERCH FOR SEAN. LENARD NYMOY PRESENTS IN SEARCH OF SEAN. WE'LL HAT THE U.S. HOCKEY TEAM BEAT THE SOVIET THE TEAM IN THE 1980 WINTER OLYMPIC GAMES. I WAS OFF IN THE WOODS WALK- ING FOR MILES, A BLIZZA- ED WAS HAPPENING AND NO ONE CARES. SOUND WAS MUFFLED, AT IS THIS, WHAT AM I DOING? COULD HEAR MY FEET GR- UNCHING INTO THE SNOW. FROM WITHIN MY BODY AND OUT. MY MIND RACED SO FAST THAT THE NIGHTM- OULD STICK WITH ME AS A RE- EINING MOMENT. THIS IS MYST- ORY BUT IT CAN BE YOUR. WAS BEING HIT BY THE TIDE OF THEE DO I, THAT, WHAT SHIT NOT ONE DOES WHEN LOVE I'M TRYING TO FIND OUT FIRST SHOWS IT'S UNDER BELLY. OUR REALISE THAT HAPPILY EVER AFTER IS A STRANGE FANTASY YOU SAW IN SOME DISNEY MOVIES DESIGN. ED TO HELP YOU FORGET YOUR SHITTY LIFE FOR TWO HOURS FAMOUS FOR NOT TAKING THE WRONG PATH AND I LIKE HE IN HIS POEM D- DECIDED TO LIVE AND THE UE. AUGH BEARD FOR THAT WAS TO WHOA- EARLY. OKAY, BREATH DEEP AND SEE WHAT I WAS CAP- ABLE OF. YEARS I'M IN AGE OF. YEARS AND COMPLAINING. WOW I'M NUTS. THE BUSINESS. ATE R NOW OF MAKING BAD SESSIONS AND ZEL- OGNIZING WHEN THERE IS GOOD. FUCK, I WAS LOOKING FOR MY MIND AND FOUND GA- VE ME A SNAP OUT OF IT SPEECH. SAVED BY T- HE DAM BELL. I WAS LITERALLY STANDING HEEF WELL IN A BULLET OF WHITE PAINT R- EDDY TO NUKE THE FUCKER. I'M LOW ON A LITTLE THEY'S YOU DOWN AFTER A WHILE TO PAINTING TO "FU- CKER" BECAUSE- HIS PIECE OF SHIT WAS SO HARD TO MAKE. BUT NOW I ARTISTS FOR BUT RED, WHITE AND BLUE HAVE IT OF THE GOD PATRIOTISM IN FOR ME, AND I AM A BANNED BALLS I'M NOT GOING TO STOP JOYFULL, JOY- FULL WE ADORE THEE, LA, LA, LA, LA, LA AND START LOVE- LA, LA, THIS DAM PAINTING ALMOST REFUSED ME AND I NEARLY WENT LIMP. DAM IT DIDN'T HAVE TO FUCK IN TURN THE SCREWS ON THIS MONKEY- UHG! HEY GOD IF YOU HAVE ANY MORE TESTS OF WILL- POWER FOR ME TODAY PLEASE DON'T THIS MONTH I JUST MIGHT GO UNDER. SHIT, SHOWING IN NEWYORK IS TOUGH. IT'S A HO- STILE PLACE FOR A HOME TOWN HINER. YOU KNOW? NO SEAN, NO BODY KNOWS OR CARES. YEAH, NOR DO I REALLY HAT DO I CARE ABOUT ALL THESE IDIOTS? SO P- EOPLE HATE MY LOUSEY GUTS, SO WHAT, HELL I KNOW I'M A NICE GUY. HEY SEAN, BUCK UP YO- U'LL WIN IN THE END YOU ALWAYS DO. YEAH, I'VE GOT TO CHILL OUT ON MYSELF. I'M NUTS TODAY. I DRANK 60 FUCKIN CUPS OF COFFEE NOW. I'M FLYIN AND MY BRAIN IS A THOUSAND DIP SHIT, AND MY BRUSHES ARE SO WORN THAT I CAN'T MAKE MY LETTERS SMALL E- NOUGH. HOW'D YOU LIKE TO HAVE HOLE A GOOD AUDIENCE HATE YOUR FUCKIN GUTS. IT'S ACTUALLY A GOOD THING OUR REALISE HOW MANY JACK- ASSES ACTUALLY CONSTITUTE THE LIKE HE IN HIS POEM D- FAMOUS FORK IN THE ROAD THAT MADE ROBERT FROST EDGE AS THE FAMOUS FOR NOT TAKING THE WRONG PATH AND I CHEFS ALLWAYS SORT- OF LOSING MY MIND. DON'T BELIEVE THOSE WHO SAID THE YOU DON'T. IS LUCY IN HE- AVEN? NO BODY KNOWS DO THEY? SCREAMING, THE FOREST SPLITS ARE YOU QUICKEN- ING AS PLANNED. NO MORE CRYING NOW I'M NUTS. OUH HEAVEN I FINISH YOUR DAM PAINT- ING AS PLANNED. NO MORE CRYING NOW I'M NUTS. OUH KNOWS DO THEY? SCREAMING, THE FOREST SPLITS ARE YOU QUICKEN- ING AS PLANNED. NO MORE CRYING NOW I'M NUTS. OUH

MY DOG KNOWS THE SOUND OF MY PEELING A BANANA. AS SOON AS I BREAK OPEN THE PEEL SHE RUNS OVER TO ME WITH HER JEGGING EYES. THEE PAL. UTOH,... I HAD A GOOD TALK TO PAY WITH SOMEONE WHO KNEW A LOT ABOUT BUEYS. I HAD TOLD HIM OF MY PLANS I HAVE A HEART TO HEART TALK. HE MENTIONED "I LOVE AMERICA AND AMERICA LOVES ME" I WONDERD IF THERE REALLY WAS DISMISS SUCH IDEAS OUT OF HAND. AND HOWEVER DISTANT ME AND JOSEF BUEYS ARE FROM ONE ANOTHER, I DIDN'T ARTIST. I DON'T THINK I'VE EVER ADMITED THAT BEFORE. SHIT AM I NOT DAN- GEROUS ENOUGH. LOOK AT THIS ALLY LOVE DOING IT SO HAVE BEFORE AND WILL SAY AGAIN THAT ACCIDENTAL PAINTING, WHAT HAVE I DONE? OH SEAN, I MUST FIND VIRTUE IN ART GENIOUS. NAUMEN DOESN'T HOLD A CANDLE TO QUIT IT. OKAY. SO I SWITCHED FROM BOWIE TO THE HOLIER I FEEL HIM. HEY, ONE MAN'S OPINION. ANY WAY, ON FA- BOSTON. FROM ERNEST TO IRONY IN A FLASH OF THE WHO DON'T S- WARA IS GREAT IN MY MIND. I F YOU CARE EYE. AND I HAVE A THEORY ABOUT THAT. WHAT DELINEATES A GENUINENESS. I TRY TO HERE MORE ON THIS JUST ASK ME, I'LL AN IRONIC TELL YOU. I LIKE MY LOFT AGAIN, IT'S ES- STOPPED BEING UNCOMFORTABLE Y FOR THE FIRST TIME IN SIX YEARS I BUILT A CHILL DOWN RO- OM. IT'S A SHIVIAR. YO- U KNOW SOMTHI- NG. IT'S GOOD TO SIT DOWN AND- FEEL- ING. HERE IS NIL THROUGH SOMHOW. I WANT TO LIVE, I WANT TO LIVE, I WANT TO LIVE LIVE, LIVE, LIVE. WOW, NOONE AWARE- NESS SONGS LIKE THAT ANYMORE. EVE- RYONE IS TOO AFFRAID OF MAKING A FOOL OF THEMSELVES. WELL I'M NOT. I'M GOING TO GO FOR IT. I ALL- WAYS WILL, ALL WAY HAVE. I'M VERY UNCERTAIN OF MY ABILITY TO COORDINATE ALL OF THESE COLORS. THIS THING SORT OF LOOKS LIKE A MESS. I WANTED IT TO LOOK BEA- UTIFUL. TROUBLE STARTED WHEN I WENT FOR THE RED AND GREEN. THEY RIPPED IT AWAY FROM TASTE- FULLNESS AND MADE IT LOOK LIKE A CARNIVAL. ANYWAY, K WAS MEDERA. IMAGINE TALKING WITH BEN OVER MEDERA IN FRONT OF THE FIRE PLACE, AND TRYING TO CONVINSE HIM THAT CONVINSABLE COLONIAL. OPEN MINDED BUT NOT A FOOL. BUT MA- OOD POLITICIANS TODAY. SOME ONE YOU COULD TRUST. BUT THEUS ICAN VOTERS, ONLY 10% OF US VOTE WHICH IS UTTERLY PATH- ETIC. IF EVERY ONE VOTED THINGS WOULD BE VERY DIFFER- ENT. I VOTE DEMOCRATIC FOR LACK OF A BETTER CHOICE. I DO HAVE PASSION FOR MY APATHY BUT I'M NEVER MISSED AN ELECTION. I'M IN CHARGE. GO AHEAD MAKE MY DAY. I AM. WHO AM I KIDDING. I'M NOT IN CHARGE. I'M WHAT I SAY I AM. I'M WHAT I DO. I'M WHAT I PAINT. I'M WHAT I WRITE. I'M WHAT I FEEL. I'M WHAT I LOVE. I'M WHAT I HATE. I'M WHAT I FEAR. I'M WHAT I HOPE. I'M WHAT I DREAM. I'M WHAT I REMEMBER. I'M WHAT I FORGET. I'M WHAT I IGNORE. I'M WHAT I DISCARD. I'M WHAT I CONTROL. I'M WHAT I RESIST. I'M WHAT I CAN'T STAND. I'M WHAT I'M ASHAMED OF. I'M WHAT MAKES ME LAUGH. I'M WHAT I FIND BEAUTIFUL. I'M WHAT I FIND UGLY. I'M WHAT I VALUE. I'M WHAT I DESPISE. I'M WHAT I FEED. I'M WHAT I STARVE. I'M WHAT I WANT. I'M WHAT I NEED. I'M WHAT I WORRY ABOUT. I'M WHAT I TAKE FOR GRANTED. I'M WHAT I'M AFRAID OF. I'M WHAT I RUN FROM. I'M WHAT I RUN TO. I'M WHAT I'M NOT. I'M WHAT I'M NOT SURE OF. I'M WHAT I'M SURE OF. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO BE. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING NOT TO BE. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO BECOME. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO FORGET. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO REMEMBER. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO IGNORE. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO DISCARD. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO CONTROL. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO RESIST. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO STAND. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO FEED. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO STARVE. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO WANT. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO NEED. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO WORRY ABOUT. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO TAKE FOR GRANTED. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO BE AFRAID OF. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO RUN FROM. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO RUN TO. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING NOT TO BE. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING NOT TO BE SURE OF. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO BE SURE OF. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO PAINT. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO WRITE. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO SAY. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO SEE. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO HEAR. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO FEEL. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO LOVE. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO HATE. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO FEAR. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO HOPE. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO DREAM. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO REMEMBER. I'M WHAT I'M TRYING TO FORGET

PIZZA NIGHT ON THE SUBMARINE / 7073, 1995
Oil on linen
276.86 × 426.72 cm

REMISSIONEM PECCATORUM, 1994
Videotape
60 min.

Interview with Sean Landers

CAOIMHÍN MAC GIOLLA LEÍTH & BEATRIX RUF

CAOIMHÍN & BEATRIX *Let's start by discussing your earliest works and then talk about how what you do has changed over the years and what the reasons were for those changes.*

SEAN In graduate school (1984–1986) I was making huge figurative wooden sculptures of fighting animals based on things like Goya's bullfight etchings and scenes from literature. To make figurative art in art school was the 'wrong' thing to do back then at a time when Minimalism and Conceptual art were taught. It was thought preposterous, laughable, so of course how could I resist?

CAOIMHÍN *Despite the fact that Neo-Expressionist painting – Schnabel, Basquiat, Clemente, Kiefer, and the like – had swept the globe over the previous five years or so?*

SEAN Yes. They were on the radar but not taught or discussed very much, like contemporary artists today are not 'taught' in schools, but discussed privately by students on their own. I also made large minimalist sculptures à la Ronald Bladen but I subverted them by having them double as skateboard ramps. I would exhibit these things in the center of my studio. On the walls surrounding them were a torrent of words, confessional writings and cartoons in graphite and marker along with huge action oil paintings splashed directly on the wall. When students and faculty would come for critiques they would read the walls with their backs to my giant sculptures. It never dawned on me that writing and painting would become the center of my art. Because I was a sculpture major I thought I would become a sculptor.

I moved to New York in the fall of 1986 when the East Village gallery scene was thriving and Jeff Koons was the Master of the Universe. I was impressed by his art and created a body of work that in retrospect was probably influenced by it. Store-bought plaster busts of famous writers, composers, and mythological characters were set in cylinders of clear polyester resin and displayed upon wooden pedestals that I designed and turned at a lathe shop. I had two exhibits of this work, one in Tommy Solomon's Garage in Los Angeles in 1989, and one in Postmasters Gallery in New York in 1990. They were reviewed well but the work didn't feel right. I didn't trust it or the small success it had. It wasn't the real me. At the same time I lost a girlfriend who I was crazy for. Whenever my love life is imperiled, I become… well, basically the truth comes out.

It wasn't a strategy to begin writing again – I was heartsick and needed to vent. Later on while re-reading some of this stuff I realized its potential as art and I started writing with this notion. I began with a screenplay of a struggling artist in 90s New York City based on Knut Hamsun's novel HUNGER. I was greatly impressed by the type of writing in it and in Dostoyevsky's CRIME AND PUNISHMENT – the way in which the authors gave voice to the inside of the anti-hero's head. It hit me like a ton of bricks when I first read these books. This was how I thought, this was how I wrote, this was my thing. I wanted my work to be a sort of 90s version of HUNGER and I wanted to operate as the anti-hero within it.

CAOIMHÍN *But, HUNGER is, after all, a novel rather than a work of visual art.*

SEAN Right. But what I was doing was also a reaction against 'text art' in New York at that time, by artists like Hans Haacke or Mary Kelly. I thought that if text is going to be on a gallery wall, then it should damn well be… well, I just wanted to do my own version of it, one that ended up being intensely personal. I quickly learned to use the power of giving away little bits of myself to feed other people's voyeuristic tendencies.

CAOIMHÍN *Which meant turning yourself into an exhibitionist.*

SEAN Partly, but with a considerable amount of control as well. Also at this time (1990) I saw something on television that influenced me. It was called AN AMERICAN FAMILY. It originally aired in 1973 and was the first example of reality television, following a dysfunctional family for a year. They learned to live with a film crew, and began performing their lives for the camera. One son decided to announce to his family that he was gay. The father began having an affair on camera and actually used his stardom from the program to get chicks. So there was a reverb in it that I found very interesting. That's one of the reasons why I decided to use my life as a subject in my work. What I was after was reality, as honestly as I could do it and as entertaining as I could make it.

BEATRIX *So what form did this reaction against your two earliest exhibitions take and what year was this?*

SEAN It was 1991. This was my second show at Postmasters and it was a direct reaction to my first show. There were sculptures in the middle of the gallery and written works taped onto the walls. The written works were scenes from the screenplay ART, LIFE AND GOD (1990) which was handwritten on yellow legal pads of paper.

The scenes, although fairly autobiographical, were not just from my life. Some were real, others were fiction, and some were things that had happened to my brother Kevin or to my friends Richard Phillips, Carl Ostendarp, John Currin, or other people from Yale with whom I moved to New York City. They were written up in this screenplay and attributed to Chris Hamson, so it wasn't all me. That's why I didn't feel it was a true alter ego, although that's how it was taken at the time.

The sculptures were very close to what I do now, but rather than exhibit them openly, I showed them with black plastic bags over them because they were supposedly made by my fictional character and 'so bad' that he felt too ashamed to show them. They were arranged in the exact positions as my previous exhibit, the resin head show, which reinforced for some people that this show was only autobiographical.

CAOIMHÍN *Did you then get rid of this alter ego in order to focus exclusively on your own life or because the misreading was irritating you?*

SEAN Neither. I think it was just a natural progression. What got me going, in truth, were letters that were coming in from the student loan agency saying that I was in default. I had to write them a letter and I couldn't get halfway down on a piece of yellow legal pad paper before 'craziness' just started happening. I would go from 'straight' to, "oh, wouldn't it be funny if I take it this way?" I couldn't stop entertaining an audience with what I wrote. It was performance. They were very entertaining, and they were from me. So, no more Chris Hamson.

CAOIMHÍN *Did it occur to you early on to combine forms of picture making with forms of language production?*

SEAN Within a year that began happening in my drawings. In a typical exhibition of mine from this time period (the post Chris Hamson time period, 1991–1994) there would have been sculptures which were heads rendered in wet clay on top of long slender poles depicting people from my home town (witnesses of my 'shame') and arranged in the center of the room. Among them would be a video monitor on a sculpture pedestal playing one of my videos such as ANYONE'S ORGASM (1992), which I saw as a tasteless living performing sculpture in the Gilbert and George SINGING SCULPTURE sense. There would also have been text work in a variety of forms hanging on the walls, such as CALENDAR PAGES FROM 1991 (1991), cartoons of art-world stereotypes, letters to my student loan officer, or a giant sheet of photo backdrop paper covered in stream-of-consciousness writing. It's important to remember that at this time I felt that my writing was, in a sense, 'the drawing' or 'the picture.' The burst of emotion on the page, with all of its imperfect spelling, grammar and emotional penmanship was 'the thing.'

I guess what was hooking the viewers was what underlies voyeurism and that was their own self-recognition. Maybe that was why people would endure aching feet to read my art because while staring into my open soul they were actually evaluating themselves. I think this is a fundamental component of the unspoken communication between art and viewer.

CAOIMHÍN *Can you say a little more about what your intention was with language in regard to previous artists using text?*

SEAN Well, I realize that I couldn't have done what I did without the precedence of artists such as Lawrence Weiner, Joseph Kosuth, Carl Andre, and Vito Acconci. Vito was a teacher of mine, and someone whom I've never stopped admiring. He was a huge influence on me. I admire On Kawara very much, too. Even though some of his forms were dry I always found them interesting and poetic. They seemed to cut to the quick of what art actually is. I needed the precedence of these artists for what I was about to do. However, I did want to counter what they had done, and radically. My angle on text was the exact opposite to most of them; it was the sloppy internal, which is more like Acconci.

CAOIMHÍN *As opposed to Hans Haacke and Mary Kelly, whom you mentioned earlier, whose primary objectives were political. You've said elsewhere that you feel no affinity with any artist whose work is overtly political. I know you're very interested in politics and very interested in aesthetics, yet you seem to have a problem with an art that strives to combine both.*

SEAN I feel that art should be what's free of that. For me art is exactly the stuff that is free of that. Art and politics marry only when there's a necessity to communicate beyond language. Pre-Renaissance church painting and Mexican mural painting, for instance, had their purposes historically to educate, inform, and manipulate the illiterate masses. Art does not function in that role today. I think there is a place for political art, but it's rare that it works in forms other than movies or popular music. Jimi Hendrix's rendition of the National Anthem is, I think, the perfect piece of political art because it's aesthetically wonderful, and it's something that had powerful political meaning in 1969 when it was performed at Woodstock, and it has re-emerged with political meaning today. When you hear it now you can't help but think of how the United States has again gone off course. Taking a melody so unifying for Americans and handling it that way was perfect political art. But Hendrix also made it beautiful. It's a beautiful piece of music.

CAOIMHÍN *So the denial of aesthetic pleasure is something you found worrisome in some of the art you were reacting against early on.*

SEAN Exactly. But there was another sort of content missing from the work of text-artists like Haacke and Kelly. Humanity. Which I felt I was re-inserting, basically: the drippy, ugly stuff of humanity.

CAOIMHÍN *There's a crucial distinction between producing a confessional memoir to be read in private and pasting texts up on a wall. There's an immediacy about the way people engage with the visual in the gallery space, even though it's durational. You still read words in the same sequence and arguably take the same time as you would in a book, but the effect is different.*

SEAN Yeah, it makes them self-conscious. Also, these texts have their own aesthetic. The handwriting slants and my spelling goes crazy when I become emotional and write faster.

CAOIMHÍN *So there is a necessary marriage between form and content?*

SEAN Right. So many reviewers at that time referred to it as "the art of the pathetic." I guess the thoughts appeared pathetic to them, as did the form, which was wrinkly, dog-eared, yellow legal pad pages with doodles in the corners and terrible penmanship. They looked authentic, though what's interesting about them is that they were not 100 percent authentic. There were times when I was utterly controlled by my writing and my compulsive need to write something horribly personal about myself was almost a form of self-wounding. But there were other times when I would control it and spin it. It was always a mixture.

CAOIMHÍN *There is a conventional association between bad handwriting, bad spelling, and immediacy, intimacy, and confessionalism that also affects the reception of works by other artists such as Tracey Emin. Yet this is no less a convention than the assumption that messy expressionist brushwork gets you closer to a genuine emotion than, say, a meticulously planned hard-edged painting.*

SEAN Right.

CAOIMHÍN *So the critique of authenticity and the confessional mode was every bit as necessary in the 90s as the critique of expressionism was a decade earlier; but that hasn't really been elaborated in relation to your work, or that of Tracey Emin for that matter, has it?*

SEAN No, but it should have been, perhaps, or could still be.

CAOIMHÍN *I remember a phrase you once said to me. You once said that you have an utterly different relationship to shame than Tracey Emin.*

SEAN I can't even remember when I said it.

CAOIMHÍN *It could have been four or five years ago.*

SEAN I'll admit that we both have learned to use shame to our advantage. I see that similarity. But I think that if we both sold portions of our soul to the devil, she sold more of hers than I did. I think it makes her less complicated in an Oprah Winfrey kind of way. Her art doesn't appeal to the sort of voyeurism that is about self-recognition, it's more akin to a spectacle or a train wreck – how can you not stare? I think at this point she is a parody of her earlier sexually-abused self, as I am perhaps a parody of my younger angst-ridden self. When artists like her and me make work about ourselves, it doesn't take long before you use up all of your memories and you find yourself in the horrible present. Which is partly why I feel so compelled to actually render something in paint and to sculpt – to invent. You know, it's like "put up or shut up."

CAOIMHÍN *Would you have felt an affinity early on with the mixture of endearing openness and conscious artifice in work like that of Karen Kilimnik, or maybe even Raymond Pettibon.*

SEAN Yes absolutely. But there's something about their art that is slightly more genuine than mine. I am my character in my writing but I am probably more self-conscious about it, I spin my character more. Whereas I would be shocked to find that the character in Karen's work is anything but 100 percent true. The same probably goes for Raymond too. I'm not a victim of the process but that doesn't mean that I'm a trickster. There is an amazing amount of generosity and genuineness in my stuff. The small amount of deception in my work provides me with a needed fig leaf to operate behind. The chance that what you read is fiction allows me to be more explicitly honest.

In the early 90s I sometimes used writings by my sister Maura such as her thank you notes for wedding gifts. Through her writing you got a different picture than probably what she had intended, and that's what attracted me to it. As you read more and more of them the story wasn't, "oh, what a sweet girl who is thankful for these wonderful gifts" but more like "this is my reality, these gifts suck. God damn it! Is this all I get? Is this my new life?" I thought it went so much further in describing her than she could have if she had sat down and written her life's story.

I realized that ultimately I could not control everything either. The picture I was rendering was something other than what I had intended. Another thing I found was that I could humiliate an audience by humiliating myself by using their self-recognition. It fueled my subject matter for a while, but I was in conflict. I wanted approval and popularity but this was a strange way to get it because I was in a sense humiliating myself to become more popular. I would ask myself things like "do I actually want recognition so badly that I'll jerk off on camera?" The palpable question was: are they laughing with me or at me? My instinct is now, and was then, for privacy. Exhibiting my whole early body of work was extremely counterintuitive. On the eve of my 1992 show at Andrea Rosen Gallery I was so nervous about what I had exposed about myself in the art works that I broke out in shingles. Luckily the show was well received. After this I measured my commitment to an artwork by how embarrassed I was of it. Now, at this point, I simply can't write the way I wrote back then because I'm too…

CAOIMHÍN *Self-conscious?*

SEAN Yeah. But not self-conscious 'scared' but self-conscious in that I know too much about what I'm doing. I understand it too well. Everything's purposeful now. That's why my current show with Andrea Rosen (2004) is like a parody of my earlier self. The text, as it appears in the new paintings, are like echoes of an earlier event ricocheting in the far reaches of the brain or through space or something.

CAOIMHÍN *It's no longer a continuous narrative. The texts tend to be short words or phrases repeatedly superimposed on themselves in the manner of a graphic rendition of an echo. They're more heraldic, or emblematic, or epigrammatic. So, they're self-conscious self-quotation?*

SEAN Yes. There's very little direct writing where I felt something and wrote it. My earlier work was solely 'feel it and write it.' In this show most of it happened on pieces of paper and then I copied it. I've never done that with paintings before. Anyway, it's different now. I just can't sit there and complain about depression anymore, because it's not accurate.

CAOIMHÍN *But didn't that realization come along as early as the mid-90s, the realization that with success came an inability for your audience to perceive you as this unsuccessful slacker artist?*

SEAN Right.

CAOIMHÍN *I know you have always had a problem with that perception of you as a 'slacker artist,' though that was your shtick for a while.*

SEAN That's what people thought of me. That's what they wrote about. But I was never disaffected and I was never pessimistic about my future. I was quite the opposite. I had every intention of being a very hardworking and important artist. I deeply believe in myself. That's probably what is very hard for people to believe. How else could anyone confess all this crap if they weren't utterly confident? I'm not afraid of humiliation because I know that ultimately I have nothing to be ashamed of.

As it turns out, I never actually was a slacker, but when I first began to get press this was in a lot of it. Coming out of obscurity I was just so thankful I was getting any press at all that I was willing to accept anything they said, even though it wasn't true. So I was, like, "yeah, okay, I'm a slacker." It was immature of me because now I have to live it down (laughs).

CAOIMHÍN *It did chime with what was in the air at the time, the whole 'Generation X' thing.*

SEAN Yeah. But I either grew out of it or it was never really true. Maybe it was a combination of both.

CAOIMHÍN *What might have given that impression was the rhythm of self-deprecation and self-satisfaction, or indeed exultation that remains a constant in any of your longer narrative texts to this day, don't you think?*

SEAN I don't know if that's a hallmark of anything particularly 'Generation X' or 'slacker.' The Generation X condition, as defined by Douglas Coupland – was that the generation before mine, the baby boom generation, got all the good jobs and that there's no place for us to go, and we can only get service industry jobs, and there's no career for us anywhere – a claim that I think is stupid. I never believed that for a second. I always felt totally empowered and capable within my profession. In fact, I felt that I was part of a generation of artists that would put form back in art.

CAOIMHÍN *What? Could you say something about that?*

SEAN Well, that's exactly what I was talking about earlier when comparing my writing to the work of previous artists using text. I put 'form' right back into text art again. I mean 'form' in the sense of

'personality,' 'humanity.' To put form back into abstract painting or sculpture was to put an image in it. With all due respect to Neo-Expressionism, it was my generation who made that popular again. I did it in my various different ways. Others of my contemporaries did it in their ways.

> Neo-Expressionism may have been the first visceral reaction against Minimalism and Conceptualism, but I know that when I took on 'the project' or 'the mantle' or 'the responsibility' to move or evolve painting into a truly new form I wasn't merely going to react against history. I was going to use everything history offered me. That's why one of my clowns alone in a landscape is as much a descendant of Vito Acconci's SEEDBED as it is from Hudson River School painting and the notion of the anti-hero from literature.

CAOIMHÍN *Are you comparing the reintroduction of narrative into text to the reinsertion of figuration into picture making?*

SEAN Yes. I think that's partly what my texts did. There were actual stories. There were beginnings and endings. There were plots with climaxes and turning points. There was human emotional content.

CAOIMHÍN *So, to return to specific formal developments in your work, what happened after you discarded the yellow legal pad?*

SEAN Well there was a reason I discarded my yellow legal pad. It was my book [SIC] (1993), first published by Publicsfear Press Ltd. in 1993 as a limited first edition of 250 and then by Riverhead Books in 1995. This book was the culmination of all of my yellow legal pad work. It was like a bomb that went off in my life. It's the point at which everything we've been discussing thus far came to a head. It included the reverb I spoke of from AN AMERICAN FAMILY where art influences life. It included the question of whether I was in control of or a victim of my candor. It was fueled by heartache like my earliest art writing was and it painfully detailed a humiliating infatuation. Most importantly it was conceptual art with 'form' re-inserted. It literally dripped with humanity. It was figuration returned to the minimal form that text art had been in the 70s. [SIC] combined my art and life very successfully, but this created huge problems for me. So many people felt personally betrayed by it that it forced the question for me: what is more important, my art or my life? If I was to love anyone and expect them to love me could I continue to do this? I was way overexposed and genuinely humiliated by this book and I craved privacy, a fig leaf of some sort. So I continued along a new form I had invented previously where I could write what I wanted to but no one would be able to find it. I'd take a giant piece of photo backdrop paper and would just fill it up with stream-of-consciousness text. There was so much writing on these giant pieces of paper that one would lose one's place constantly while reading it and this gave me a place to hide. I completed four of these: I SUCK. RIGHT?... FUCK YOU! (1991), ANYONE'S ORGASM (1992), HARD MALE/SOFT MALE (1993), and DINGLEBERRY SEAN (1993). Each of them was an enormous amount of work so I became fearful that they'd rip, that they'd never last, and that's when I sought out giant pieces of unstretched linen to paint my words on, simply because the medium, oil on linen, has proven durable. Art for me is all about survival, immortality. Painting simply lasts longer than ballpoint pen on paper. So, just like that I was painting. Pandora's box had been opened.

> Also at this same time, as I was making the transition from my yellow legal pad phase to my text painting stage, there was another significant development. I was sculpting a series of nine naughty naked Leprechauns. Each was based on something either specific or vague from the history of sculpture. I'd do this to force a comparison between me, "20th-century cartoon raised Sean," to some of the more revered moments of art history such as Rodin's JOHN THE BAPTIST or Donatello's DAVID, etc. I was eager to demonstrate how I both did and did not rate, because that demonstration illustrated art's dilemma in our time.

BEATRIX *Art's dilemma? Could you say something more about that?*

SEAN In the wake of an art education that devalued skill in art-making what were we left with? An art that is dominated by a couple of old 70s idea people who, by the way, guard their turf like old junkyard dogs standing in the middle of the worn out dust circles that surrounds their doghouses. "NO TRESPASSING!" I admire these guys and what they've done, but I don't want to be trapped in a world dominated by or confined to their ideas alone. This was the terrain of my art education and what I wanted to react against. Which is why the sculptures in my MFA thesis exhibit were like Ronald Bladen sculptures that you could skateboard in. It was putting the 'Me' back into austere art forms. This is also why pre-World War II European painters figure so heavily for me now, because their art was the last gasp before art became supposedly conceptually checkmated and minimally reduced to nothing here in America during the 60s and 70s. Art has been reeling ever since. This will all make more sense when we talk about what I did in the later 90s and what I'm up to now.

> So, to go along with these sculptures I made a video that depicted myself in the nude and in various states of arousal, mocking famous Italian sculptures, called ITALIAN HIGH RENAISSANCE AND BAROQUE SCULPTURE (1993). Again I was thinking along the Gilbert and George line of a living, breathing, acting sculpture on video among my actual sculptures. But more importantly I was taking on the notion of narcissism. It was my view

that all art is narcissism. For anyone to believe that the thing they made is worthy of attention, exultation, money, and being cherished throughout time by generations to come is basically narcissistic! In this video I sought to illustrate this conceptually and in reality. I mean, you can't fake an erection.

CAOIMHÍN *Bringing it back to your paintings, as soon as you actually make a decision to put these words not on a throwaway, lowly material, but on canvas, you plug into a very resonant history of picture-making, of fine art, of durability of materials and so forth.*

SEAN Right.

CAOIMHÍN *You were obviously conscious of that at the time.*

SEAN Yes, I was. But there are a few different things I was trying to capture at that point and least among them was probably 'painting history.' It was really a question of the aesthetics of necessity. In other words, the way the thing looked was what the process delivered to it. I didn't conceive of a look for those things. They just happened to look that way because what I wanted to do was get every thought I had while painting the painting onto its surface.

So it was very different writing than the yellow legal pad stuff. I thought it was a total evolution away. Conceptually, it was basically "Kilroy was here" again and again and again. Why I thought that was so important is because I believe that's what art is in civilization. At its foundation it's really just making your mark.

CAOIMHÍN *Saying "I was here"?*

SEAN Yes, "I was here." Ever since the caves of Lascaux, where people blew pigment around their handprint on the cave wall, art making has sought to record the life or existence of the artist. Right through the history of Western art up to now where art making became so self-referential, "I was here" has been a huge part of it. This is what I admire so much about On Kawara and that sort of work.

CAOIMHÍN *"I am still alive. I was here?"*

SEAN "I am still alive, I am here." But my large text paintings just took this idea much further and gave you the exact thoughts I was having at the point of the painting's creation. So I'm not just telling you that "I'm still alive," I'm telling you what I was thinking when I was alive. From the beginning of the painting to the end, everything I thought and could possibly write was recorded. It's an On Kawara idea, deeply elaborated upon.

CAOIMHÍN *That's interesting in that there's a sense of immediacy in the work, but it also involves the immediate sense of a narrative produced in real time, which again is very different from reading a book,*

SEAN Right. It's because everything's a performance.

CAOIMHÍN *A performance of immediacy, which is a trick, a strategy whereby the viewer is invited to imagine they're experiencing these thoughts in the same time – in real time – as you originally did, if you're registering everything you think and leaving nothing out.*

SEAN Right.

CAOIMHÍN *But it has, of course, its echoes in the history of stream-of-consciousness in modernist literature as well.*

SEAN Yes it does. Those stream-of-consciousness paintings of that period such as DUMB DUMB (1993), or FOR THE LOVE OF NOTHING (1994), or THOUGHT BUBBLE (1994) are very large and difficult to read. You start on the left and by the time you move all the way to the right you lose your place and can't find it again. Therefore, as you read it, you just get these fragmented thoughts. Ultimately, I wanted to be more in control of the experience. That's where the 'patch paintings' come from.

CAOIMHÍN *You're talking about paintings like SELF-SOMETHING (1994).*

SEAN Right. They're very much like me standing on a stage trying to entertain you as much as possible while basically giving the picture of human thought. It's taking a much more aggressive role in actively trying to entertain anybody who stands in front of the painting. I don't want the viewer to walk away. These little 'patches' are just enough to read and to maybe hook you into reading another. One in ten hopefully can make you smile or laugh at them and as you continue to read, hopefully you begin to see a bigger picture.

CAOIMHÍN *It's the difference between a very long monologue and a lot of epigrams.*

SEAN Yes.

CAOIMHÍN *The monologic and the epigrammatic modes are quite different.*

SEAN Basically, it's the difference between a monologist and a comedian. As a comedian tells hundreds of jokes in a row, he eventually begins to paint a portrait of himself. If you hear a hundred butt jokes, you will begin to think after a while, "oh, this guy's got an anal fetish." It gets sort of creepy. So when you read everything that's written on the painting, there's a picture of me that is constructed that I can't control. Now we're getting into the fact that all art earnestly done is basically self-portraiture.

CAOIMHÍN *As the title SELF-SOMETHING indicates.*

SEAN Yes.

CAOIMHÍN *Right after this, very specific images begin to appear amongst the words.*

SEAN Well not quite, there was an endgame played out with the large unstretched word paintings. After filling many of them for a year and a half, I was tired of writing and tired of the look of them. So I phased into a willful form of writer's block by making striped paintings. I did a show with Regen Projects in Los Angeles for which I made a huge word painting titled THOUGHT BUBBLE. Exhausted from it, I painted stripes on my next canvases, as if it were a mental vacation, and titled the first one ABSENCE OF THOUGHT BUBBLE (1994). This was also the show where clown and chimp imagery first appeared in sculpture.

CAOIMHÍN *So after this, images began to appear in your text paintings?*

SEAN Yeah. The first was the painting titled I'M A CLOWN IN A WORLD OF CHIMPS (1994), in which a clown and chimpanzee are fighting, and two other paintings GROOVIN' CORDUROY MIND-SNOT/7092 (1994), and STARING AT MY ASS IN THE MIRROR (1994), that were painted under a sort of Picabia influence. These would have been the first paintings where I wanted to put in or use images. They were part of my 1994 show at Contemporary Fine Arts Gallery in Berlin. There were just three paintings and a sculpture of a chimpanzee titled ICH MACHE MICH (1994). I thought this show was of particular importance because it was my first concerted effort into the realm of a more traditional and less conceptual form of picture making.

CAOIMHÍN *These were very oblique references to Picabia.*

SEAN GROOVIN' CORDUROY MIND-SNOT/7092 was a reference to his painting titled 7091 (1938) which is a spoof on abstraction. All the paintings that I have like this – where there's a scribble, and all the conjoining areas that are made by the scribble are colored a different color – including some overlapped images taken from Picasso – are in what I think of as my 'Picabia 7091 series.' They, like his, are my spoof on abstraction, but like all ironic gestures, once repeated it becomes sincere. They're all titled '709-something.' I'm up to maybe 7099 or 7100 in this ongoing series. But they take totally different forms at this point. Some are striped paintings, some are 'Picasso paintings,' and some are text paintings. Picabia is the only artist I can think of who was totally free from the beginning of his art-making career to the end. He utilized many different media and forms and he was great in all of them. He represents freedom to me. When I refer to him in paintings I'm not copying their look so much as quoting him obliquely, as a sort of symbol for my own artistic freedom, which I think is essential for my survival.

> When I painted I'M A CLOWN IN A WORLD OF CHIMPS, I had reread a few years of my own writing and had recognized the cyclical pattern of self-aggrandizement and self-abasement. This thought pattern had become almost like a perpetual motion machine, out of which images and content were spinning. So I gave them both figures and characters. The chimp was self-aggrandizement and the clown was self-abasement. That's why in every single cartoon on this painting the chimp is getting the better of the clown.

CAOIMHÍN *You've said before that your interest in Picabia or later Picasso was because you want to be counted among the great artists, like them.*

SEAN I said that in a recording, an audio piece titled DEAR PICASSO (2001).

CAOIMHÍN *So that should be read within the context of a particular artwork rather than as an artist's statement?*

SEAN Yes. I'm fully aware that when I say that kind of thing it's kind of sad and endearing for you all to listen to. That particular piece is an excellent example of me personally meaning what I'm saying, but realizing that to others it's not credible. I didn't expect anybody to think "Sean is Picasso," or "He thinks he's going to be the next Picasso." But I do think that another artist can recognize that wish or thought pattern. That's a big part of my art: presenting an embarrassing situation like that and hoping for the viewer's empathy.

CAOIMHÍN *Presenting what may be a more universal aspiration than other artists are willing to concede openly?*

SEAN Right. I think it's a sign of strength. When you first hear that tape you think "oh, how sad and pathetic." But actually, I felt it was a bold and powerful thing to do. I'm not afraid of my dreams (laughs). Even if I know some of them are probably out of reach. I mean, I do want to be important. I'm not selling that one away here. I am just saying that I'm not crazy. I know that there are certain things about Picasso that... (pause). No, I can't even say it. Sorry. I'm not going to say it (laughs). You know what I think. You know I'm not going to say that I'm not a great artist. I won't. I don't believe it.

CAOIMHÍN *But the pictorial quotation from Picabia and the performance of the role of an artist aspiring to be Picasso are rather different.*

SEAN I think they're related in that they allude to other artists to create new meaning for myself. I admire Picasso for his unquestionable genius. I envy that. To quote him is to allude to the notion of artistic genius. I admire Picabia for the creative freedom he displayed throughout his life. I too need freedom, I have to continually change to be excited about making art. People generally do agree that I

might be as free as he was. The difference is that he could afford to be, he had family money (laughs). But you know what it was with Picabia specifically? I needed help to create a picture because I was coming out of a sea of text, from two-dimensional graphic paintings. I was looking for help from art history to be able to create a new kind of picture from text. So I used Picabia. Later I used other things… such as breasts (laughter).

CAOIMHÍN *Would you like to talk about the 'breast painting:' THE ETHER OF MEMORY (1994)?*

SEAN What can I say? If you want to paint something, paint what you love! It sounds so stupid, but it's honest.

CAOIMHÍN *This was in 1994, a time when for a white, male artist to paint a profusion of breasts was probably the most unpopular subject you could have chosen.*

SEAN Exactly. It was provocative. Sort of bad-boyish, rather than scandalous or nasty. Shall we even say political? It was just so taboo in those knee-jerk politically correct times that I couldn't resist. The objectification of women is nothing to be proud of. But I have never believed that women were anything but men's complete equals. At the same time to believe that 'enlightened' men don't fetishize women's bodies is crazy. Of course we do.

CAOIMHÍN *How about the title, THE ETHER OF MEMORY?*

SEAN Breasts in the memory, at the point of self-gratification, on one level. If you read this text it's about my maternal lineage as far back as I could imagine it. I'm a painter because my grandmother was a painter, and my mother is a painter. As a kid I used to go over to my grandmother's house to paint. She had great big boobs and every time I'd go over there she'd hug me right into the middle of them before we'd go up into her attic studio to paint. It was one of the most pleasurable things. I loved it. So it was the maternal-mammary-origins of myself as a painter thing.

FOOTBALL DUCK (2003), the bronze sculpture and FOOTBALL DUCK (1999), the painting, also relate to that. My football practice field was right next to my grandmother's house. I hated going to football practice so much that I'd just skip out and go to her house to paint. I'd be sitting there in front of an easel with my shoulder pads and cleats on, painting geraniums while my teammates were out practicing. They are portraits of my youthful self-perception in conflict between 'sporting manliness' and 'feminine artisticness.'

CAOIMHÍN *What was the next step after THE ETHER OF MEMORY?*

SEAN The next big step was my chimpanzee show, 1995, at Andrea Rosen Gallery. I made paintings, a sculpture and a video using a visit by a chimpanzee to my studio. I hoped the chimpanzee would represent me or portray me. This is where things really began to open up.

With my license to paint given to me from Picabia, now anything could go onto a canvas including marks made by a chimp. I wasn't restricted by just what I could think to write. I could make images and use illusion, which meant I could do anything and go anywhere I wanted inside the rectangle of a painting. It turns out that art's oldest form, painting, is art's truest freedom, which is what I was looking for.

With the painting LOOKING FOR MR. GODBAR (1995), text floats over an illusionistic cloudy blue sky. All of a sudden the words occupied a physical space, not an imaginary space. I meant it to be like when you're looking out an airplane window, five miles up. If you're not reading a book or engaged in the movie your thoughts are uniquely loud at that point. I was remembering those sorts of thoughts and that type of thinking. For me, God becomes an issue…

CAOIMHÍN *God becomes an issue, but more mundanely, with this image of a wide expanse of sky in LOOKING FOR MR. GODBAR, so does the history of the sublime, from nineteenth-century romantic landscape painting to the abstract sublime and beyond.*

SEAN Yes. Definitely. It was absolutely that. The Hudson River School. A small insignificant figure in sublime landscape. What I was writing on this was in fact transcendental. Which is what those people were all about…

CAOIMHÍN *Or a seascape, such as* 36 *HOURS (1995)?*

SEAN … Yes, absolutely, with this too. But this had something more specific about it. I began reading many books of survival stories, of people on life rafts after their boats had gone down in the ocean, or solo circumnavigators kind of losing their mind on the trip. So, rather than looking out the airplane window, I imagined myself on this trip. And when you listen to your thoughts this clearly for so long – I filled so many canvases like this – it doesn't take long for me, at least, to get into this "why are we here" question, which just keeps coming up and up and up.

CAOIMHÍN *Soon after this, in paintings like ALONE (1996), which relates formally to 36 HOURS, you lose the textual element in the paintings.*

SEAN Yes. And this is where I totally lose my audience (laughs). Not really, but I felt no one adequately understood it. Actually, ALONE has never been exhibited. However, many other clown paintings

from this period were exhibited at Contemporary Fine Arts in Berlin (1996), and at Rebecca Camhi Gallery in Athens (1996). In ALONE there's an impasto-painted clown, on top of an illusionistic seascape, who was directly replacing the text from a painting like NAVAL GAZE (1995) or 36 HOURS. I loved this painting. I got so high from making it that I wanted to do it again and again. So these paintings of sad lonely clowns struggling in nature became a full series, which, I guess, then acquired a new meaning in my life.

Up until this point everything I had done had been amazingly well received. I'm referring to the superficial things relating to career that just kept feeling better with every show that I made. When I removed the text from my paintings, all of a sudden there were enormous problems. No one knew what to make of them. The thing that people probably trusted about my art – writing on a painting – was gone. I felt misunderstood. Writing was just one method of re-inserting form into conceptually based art for me. It wasn't the be-all and end-all.

Therefore, when I began to make more ever-saddening clowns, their sadness referred to the fact that I was painting them and that no one seemed to understand them. It became a kind of conceptual death spiral. The more I made, the worse it seemed and the sadder the clowns became. Which I found hilarious when I was sitting around in my studio discussing it with friends, but it was also sad. I thought that someday this would be one of my favorite bodies of work and favorite stories to tell. And it is. As my wife hastens to add when I bellyache about this body of work, it has proved to be one of my most popular.

CAOIMHÍN *It's interesting that at certain points in your career there's an emphasis, sometimes literally, on the signature, as in the diptych SEAN LANDERS/7098 (2001). Yet at other times there's a denial of a signature device, which up to this particular point had been writing on paintings.*

SEAN I think all artists' natural reflex is to try to elude definition. But I felt that the clown became that signature. What frustrated me at that time, perhaps, was that I felt this 'new signature' was the same thing as my words.

CAOIMHÍN *I guess people were unwilling to accept it as the same.*

SEAN Maybe they felt that I lacked the facility or permission to 'simply' paint a picture or something. So many artists today paint in a far more lame fashion than I did back then and they get lauded for it. It was probably just timing, or maybe it was the particular emblem, the clown.

CAOIMHÍN *You mean, at the time people might have been saying that a slightly older painter like George Condo had cornered the clown market?*

SEAN No. I got no George Condo comparisons.

CAOIMHÍN *Really?*

SEAN No. Well, not that I knew of or remember. And I shouldn't have. What I was doing then was different. He is, however, one of my favorite living painters.

CAOIMHÍN *Nauman, then? Though it's less obvious, as he's not a painter.*

SEAN They gave me Nauman, probably because no one thought of me as a painter either. I got so much 'Nauman,' and the truth is that I never thought about him at all. If you even accidentally stumble across an old Nauman idea as an artist you will quickly find yourself in a shit storm from the 'Nauman lobby.' People come out of the woodwork to tell you "Nauman did that first," even if he didn't. What does it say about someone's art history education that they think Bruce Nauman invented the idea of clowns in art? He wasn't the first navel-gazer either. Artists contemplating creativity has a full history before he ever got to it. I think they saw me as a conceptual artist, plain and simple, and wearing those blinders perhaps I appeared like Nauman. The crazy thing is that no one ever thought these were paintings. That's what's remarkable. To this day people still don't think I'm a painter. I certainly have made a hell of a lot of paintings.

CAOIMHÍN *Well, what did people think they were?*

SEAN They thought this was a conceptual art act. That it was an oil painting as performance. Fair enough, but at the end of the day I did have to squirt paint out of a tube and spread it on with a brush, you know? It's a painting!

CAOIMHÍN *The distinction was probably more useful in the late 80s because the whole return of painting that had happened a decade earlier, whether perceived positively or negatively, had been seen partly as a reaction to conceptual art. So, painting per se and conceptual art were perhaps more obviously perceived as in opposition then. In any case, the initial negative critical response didn't stop you painting. What did it cause you to do within the painting?*

SEAN What it did allow me to do was paint more clowns becoming sadder in more extreme physical conditions. So that's why I find this particular series so central to the whole body of work. It's still self-conscious writing, but there's no actual text. It's me worrying about how I'm perceived, but through these cartoons.

BEATRIX *But doesn't some sort of collective consciousness come into play with the clown figure? I wonder if you can just say*

that it's about you. This is inherently a collective experience. You can speak about yourself as much as you want, but it's a shared feeling. Failure is a shared feeling, or wanting to be great, or wanting to last.

SEAN Yes, and this had been one of my early surprises. When I showed this vulnerable side of myself that it was rewarded by the empathy and understanding of others. It turns out that most people are like-minded. That's the axis on which my work functions, and always has. The way that I reach out to the viewer is by giving them something utterly personal that they recognize within themselves. Like Vito Acconci did in that 70s performance on a pier giving away whispered secrets to people who'd make the trip to see him. However, I discovered that it doesn't always take 100 percent truth in a work of art to be convincing. In a Hollywood movie, for instance, you'll notice that the whole thing is ridiculous and absurd, but there are brief moments of something that seems utterly real, that you recognize, and that makes the whole picture convincing. Zuzu's petals, for instance, from Frank Capra's IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE. It's the same in a text piece. I can write all bullshit throughout the whole thing and have just a few moments that reach through the bullshit and actually touch you with the truth, and this makes the whole thing convincing. I learned very early on that I wasn't only portraying myself, and that was fortunate. Otherwise it would have only confirmed that I was a crazy.

CAOIMHÍN *Let's return to the notion of signature and signature devices. The performance of signature in repetitive composition is something that is at the heart of 20th-century art, even the type of painting that doesn't inform your work much. The first thing a Jackson Pollock says to us today is "this is a Jackson Pollock."*

SEAN Right. And I have my trademark signature. It's the text on canvas. That's my Pollock-like signature medium. Anybody else who does that falls into 'my thing.' I feel like I own it. If there is a signature for me, it's that. And it's the unifier for all my work, right from the beginning to now.

CAOIMHÍN *So, when the cards of recent art history are shuffled, how do you think your work in this 'signature medium' will relate to that of painters as different as Ed Ruscha or Christopher Wool?*

SEAN I admire both of those artists. I welcome any comparisons with them, but I'm also secure in the knowledge that my work is completely its own thing when compared to theirs or anybody else's. It's just a brief moment for me in which I can be compared with them. There are so many artists that I can briefly be compared to, but then I move on. I don't think about them before I make the work. It just happens that it looks a certain way or shares a similarity but if it's intentional, you'll know it because I'll write about it. Like I did with Hamsun, Kawara, Acconci, Magritte, Picabia, Picasso, Hogarth, etc.

CAOIMHÍN *Yet, despite your claims to the signature medium of text on canvas, you consciously chose to jettison text around 1996 to produce what you now perversely claim to be among your favorite paintings, as you said earlier!*

SEAN Right. But you're assuming that I am the sole judge of what my signature is. In fact, others kind of assess that for you. I also said that we artists like to defy definition, and that I need to be free to do whatever I want when I want to do it, like Picabia. One can only do well what one loves to do. Anything else will be mediocre. I also didn't get to say earlier how, having had so many years of writing, the freedom of not writing was like a huge weight off my back. I had just gotten so sick of hearing my thoughts. It got really claustrophobic after a while. The freedom of just painting a picture was, like, "oh my God, everybody else who just does this has it so easy. Why do I have to push the stone up the hill? I don't have to." However, I quickly learned that I did have to. Or at least my audience expected it. I don't know why people are so uncomfortable with change within an artist or change in their 'signature.' I initially turned to Picabia for a way out. Now I look to him at times for solace, almost. That's why I keep referring to him symbolically. He's almost like a father figure or something. He sort of reassures me that it's okay to change, and to do what I need to do.

CAOIMHÍN *It's probably more common among artists of your generation of the 90s than previous generations to have what amounts to a signature style of doing lots of different things, to put it tritely.*

SEAN Well, to be trapped in a single style for life just seems like misery. How can you take yourself seriously if you do this? Even Pollock didn't. He has a full breadth of work too. What we commonly know of him is that one thing, but when you see a fuller perspective there's a lot more to that guy. He was brave enough to try many forms.

CAOIMHÍN *The reason why some people choose to have a practice that is other than varied, I suppose, is that what drives them most strongly is an act of negation or refinement that needs to take the same form. And they find it again and again and again, rather than insisting on variety.*

SEAN That's what I think is really suspect. Because, as a practitioner, I know how fast things get thin. And to think that refining just one thing can be interesting to somebody over the long term… well, I just question their curiosity. Assuming that curiosity represents intelligence, then how intelligent are they? To continue to crank out the same product is desperately cowardly. It's one of the saddest things. Yet it's what the art world seems to reward most handsomely. It's like the system has evolved to encourage mediocrity.

CAOIMHÍN *But arguably, you can have curiosity and refinement, rather than curiosity and variety. It's just not your particular way.*

SEAN As a practitioner I'm suspicious of it.

CAOIMHÍN *So you think that Agnes Martin or Robert Ryman should throw the odd clown in there?*

SEAN Yeah (laughs). Robert Ryman is an excellent example. He should have had me over to write on them (laughter). You know, there are emperor's new clothes arguments, and maybe there is none more apt than Robert Ryman. I know what a debate this could create, but ultimately it's a white painting again and again. What do you think? Are you totally sold with Robert Ryman's stuff? Some of them are beautiful, I guess. But, you know, so is some stucco work. The same goes for Ad Reinhardt. In a lot of ways those two people basically created this sort of phony checkmate to painting. It was totally false. It didn't exist. Painting was supposedly dead and they supposedly killed it. Its immediate reaction was Photo-Realism. And what came after? Neo-Expressionism? And then there was Neo-Geo, and then what…? Nothing? Obviously there were many very not-dead exceptions during this time, including Martin Kippenberger and George Condo, to name a few of my favorites. But then when painting really begins to become 'rehabilitated,' or to pick up steam again, I think, is by my generation, who actually go about the process of rebuilding this 'troubled' thing with rules that say that anything goes, and that has Conceptual art as its influence as much as, say,Velásquez, Manet, or Picasso.

CAOIMHÍN *Without any sense of imminent closure or belatedness or crisis?*

SEAN Right. That's why I'm not a slacker artist? In fact, if I were a slacker artist, then a black painting would make a lot of sense. But trying to reinvent painting is the project for everybody and anybody who paints. That's the mission for whoever takes it on.

CAOIMHÍN *But your commitment, nevertheless, is not to painting per se as a medium.*

SEAN My commitment is not solely to painting. It is to art in general.

CAOIMHÍN *But here you are talking about painting.*

SEAN I happen to be, but I don't limit myself to painting, because I don't have to. Others have to.

CAOIMHÍN *You feel they have to?*

SEAN Or they're not very good at anything else. They're not very good writers. And they're not very good sculptors. Basically, their fear prevents them from going there. I just don't have as much reticence, even with a medium that I'm not a master of. I don't mind heading straight into it. It's like the Icarus myth. I strive for greatness and if I crash and burn, and if the arc of my descent has meaning then I have created a new kind of art. There's a story in failure that's as beautiful as the story of triumph. Which is that whole anti-hero thing I learned from HUNGER.

CAOIMHÍN *If you fake failure too often, it becomes…*

SEAN No, it's not faking failure. It's trying and failing. It is failure. Failure is a story I want to tell because it's a story that everybody knows, a story that everyone lives, but no one wants to own.

BEATRIX *But you want to own it?*

SEAN Yeah. It's like beach-front property that no one wants because there's a sewage pipe on it. Well, the raw sewage is terrible but I'm on the beach.

BEATRIX *And the beach means what in this analogy?*

SEAN Art History. I hope.

CAOIMHÍN *So, it's "Try again, fail better," as Beckett put it.*

SEAN Yeah. Well, you can't say Beckett enough in regards to me.

CAOIMHÍN *Can we talk a little about your sculpture? You started with clay but you've also cast bronzes. That choice of materials is quite significant and resonant. Bronze is an enduring material. It's the material of monuments.*

SEAN Well, that's why I stopped writing on paper and started writing on lead-primed linen. I wanted it to last. That's behind my impulse to make art. I want it to last, to outlast me. In the show at Andrea Rosen Gallery (2004), that's what the painting THERE WAS A TIME… (2004), is stating. It describes my belief that, incrementally, I transfer my life into artworks, into these static objects, and when I die that's all that will be left. Perhaps that's corny, tacky, laughable, or whatever you want to call it, but it's at the basis of my impulse to do this. I've always taken great pleasure in telling the truth, especially when it's the 'wrong' thing to do. Most artists will do their damnedest to avoid this kind of statement.

CAOIMHÍN *But the ways in which you would choose to be remembered have apparently changed. You once said that you'd be as happy to be remembered for producing a sad funny little painting as for Robert Smithson's SPIRAL JETTY.*

SEAN Well, that's not changed at all.

CAOIMHÍN *There is a difference between the implied modesty of a 'sad little painting' and the monumental aspirations of a bronze sculpture.*

SEAN Monumental? I've never done anything taller than three feet.

CAOIMHÍN *Fair enough. But there are intimations of the monumental in the material itself that are unavoidable.*

SEAN I disagree. It's just a satisfying, lasting material. As far as we know oil paintings last, what, five, six hundred years? We know that bronzes last at least six thousand years. What I had in mind when I mentioned the 'sad little painting' were paintings like THE IDEA MAN (1998), or THREE NOSE

GUY (1998). Anything from the 'image and text' series, my 'vache period,' was exactly what I had in mind when I was saying that. But we are ahead of ourselves. Can I go back and connect a few dots?

BEATRIX *Sure.*

SEAN I made that series after a long evolution in my image-painting which began with the Hogarth series (1996). I took one painting by William Hogarth titled A MIDNIGHT MODERN CONVERSATION (1732) and made a dozen or so paintings from it. I used it to tell the story of my outgrowing the drinking-based camaraderie/culture on which my friends and I had subsisted for so long, where we debated and became inspired by each other's ideas. Where we kept each other company as we waited to be 'discovered.' Of finding my future wife and deciding to get married. It was an incredibly juvenile rendition of the story of growing up. This was the most overtly 'wrong' art I had ever made. They were mad paintings, but it was in line with my work. I was telling a story from my life through painting and using art history to do it. They stunned the gallerists with whom I exhibited them, Stuart Regen and Shaun Caley of Regen Projects in Los Angeles, who I cared for greatly. I'll never forget the look on Shaun's face when they came out of the crate. Needless to say, I was never asked to do another show there.

Next was the clown series, which I have already elaborated upon. That evolved into my 1997 show at Andrea Rosen Gallery in New York. These paintings were amalgams of two or three famous paintings done in a Disney-like cartoon style but in my own hand, with all of its own virtuosity or lack thereof. DANCE OF LIFE (1997), is half Matisse's DANCE (FIRST VERSION) (1909) and half Poussin's BACCHANAL BEFORE A STATUE OF PAN (1631–33). ZORKON (1997), is half Winslow Homer's BREEZING UP [A FAIR WIND] (1876) and half Géricault's RAFT OF THE MEDUSA (1819). For me the Disney influence was important because it represented the collective unconscious of imagery for people raised in the Baby Boom era and forward. We all have this sort of imagery in our heads, be it Looney Tunes, Japanimation or Tin Tin. To resist it and refer solely to imagery from the Met, Louvre and Prado I felt was just too pretentious. Again, it was the 'wrong' thing to have done but I was eager to, because it spoke of being an artist in my time. I was comparing myself favorably or not to the greats of art history to illustrate my or any artist's predicament of trying to make 'new' art in the wake of art history and, more specifically, in the wake of my generation's art education, which was dominated by theory, Conceptual art, Minimalism and Process art. These shows were my humble effort to re-insert form back into Conceptual art, to 'fail like Icarus' perhaps, but ultimately to use Conceptual art as a dagger against itself. It was a Conceptual art act that was anti-conceptual.

Unfortunately, few people seemed to understand it. Feeling rejected, I finally became despondent to the point where I had to write again for my psychological survival. Which is why I began writing in the first place.

CAOIMHÍN *What fed into the image-making at this point?*

SEAN Magritte's 'vache' period. For me, it represented a brief moment of total creative and painterly freedom and inventiveness within his otherwise very tightly rendered and deliberate body of work. When I first saw the paintings from Magritte's 'vache' period I felt so close to them, it was as if I was seeing my own art. I felt almost possessive of this body of work. I didn't want anyone else to like it because I should be the only one to like it. I felt that this was a language I already knew how to speak without studying it. I could instantly flop into it. And I did, in my way. I would paint the images referring sometimes directly to Magritte as in THREE NOSE GUY, which is inspired by what I call his 'Mr. Slipper Nose' (LE STROPIAT, 1948), though mine looks nothing like his. But most often they were completely my own inventions. All of my 'vache' figures are still part of, or an extension of, my clown language. Every one is clownish, dejected and sad. But the way these were painted in this new 'vache' language that was far more comfortable for me. I found a painting style that fit. It matched my ability, or it was just the right balance of cartoon and illusion for my particular skill level, which is something that was and should always be determined by my interest. I can paint far more 'realistically' if I want to, but the whole point of artistic freedom is not to do what you don't feel like doing. It's to follow your interest.

CAOIMHÍN *Some of these paintings are more overtly sexual than others.*

SEAN Yes, In LE DOMAINE ENCHANTÉ AKA MONSIEUR SAUCISSON (1999), it's just what it is (laughs). You know, he's happy to be where he is. The simple things in life are what's important.

CAOIMHÍN *How preconceived was the imagery in terms of the actual painting process?*

SEAN Oh, not at all. In fact, the way that I would find the images was by working on a stained canvas to begin with. Then I'd pick up my brush and I'd paint a cartoon in the middle of the canvas, not like it, wipe it off, do another, wipe it off, and repeat that process ten to twenty times. The ghost of each cartoon remained visible so there would be a mishmash or a layering of cartoon characters. Often,

with that many ghosts of old drawings a new drawing begins to emerge. Many, many of these were found that way. That goes back to the original automatic drawing techniques of the Surrealists. I was just trying to get a good cartoon, and sometimes the best way to get one was to find them by mistake. Many of my sculptures were found in a similar way. I begin a sculpture by building the clay into a skull shape. Even skulls have humanlike characters. Inevitably it reminds me of something or someone and then I sculpt it in that direction.

CAOIMHÍN *Surrealism is the art movement most associated with a fascination with the workings of the unconscious, with automatic writing, with somehow bypassing premeditation, in so far as that's possible. As late as your last show at greengrassi in 2003, where you addressed a pantheon of 20th-century artists, all male, there was a predominance of Surrealists.*

SEAN It's more generally pre-World War II European painting. Like what I was speaking of earlier, how these guys represent to me the last gasp from the long tradition of European painting when art was pretty straightforward. Like when a person sits down in front of a blank canvas and an image arrives, not necessarily from life, but from the imagination. Before post-war American art domination occurred and the whole landscape changed so radically. If you look at all nine artists depicted in that show, with the exception of Duchamp, there's something about that with all of them: Picasso, Picabia, Magritte, Dalí, De Chirico, Braque, Ernst, and Beckmann. When I sit in front of a blank canvas I feel utterly connected to them. I feel I'm in their lineage. If there's a stream of creativity that they dipped their ladle into, I try to dip my ladle into that same one. But, of course, there's some 70s lineage in me as well, like the text-artists that I built my earlier body of work upon. But all of that ultimately stems from Duchamp, which is why he was included.

My Picasso show fits in with this too. I saw 20th-century art as divided by the art of Picasso and Duchamp. Picasso typifies what I've been describing, how an artist sits in front of a blank canvas and an image arrives. And Duchamp is of course the grandfather of Conceptual art. As a representative of my time, a time where artists feel the blood of both of these lineages coursing through their veins, I again sought to create a body of work that typified both. Both men used borrowed imagery. Obviously, Picasso riffed on Velásquez to announce his belief that he belonged in Velásquez's midst historically. Duchamp introduced the idea of the 'ready-made.' Therefore, borrowing another's imagery can be seen as 'ready-made.' To use Picasso's imagery in that way, spelling my name with it in SEAN/7099 (2001), or to write 'genius' with a piece of furniture lifted from a painting of his, FEMME AU BUFFET (1936) and having a variety of his ex-wives and girlfriends he'd depicted whose lives he ruined crying at, or placed on each letter in GENIUS (2001), was using Duchamp to riff on Picasso, melding them together to describe myself and my situation as an artist.

CAOIMHÍN *Let's talk about your reasons for sometimes showing work in a variety of mediums together, a video or audio work as well as sculpture and painting or drawing.*

SEAN I think it's an over-eagerness to please, frankly. I so want to satisfy people, and to be liked. Beyond that, I think it's also a way of showing off my talent by doing the same thing in many different media. It's all the same to me. Everything I do is united through a performance-based quality. I have become a personality operating within my work. When I paint it's a painting by this sort of artist character I've established, the same for sculpture, video, and writing. When I pick up a pen to write I just sort of click into character. Or, the audio piece I played at greengrassi (2000), for instance, which is titled THE MAN WITHIN (2000) and describes my 'greatness,' I just picked up the microphone, switched into character and let it rip. What is perhaps confusing for people is that this character is partly the real me and partly not. I am in a way, still Chris Hamson.

CAOIMHÍN *Had you any particular models for what to do with sculptural form or what to do with video when you first started using these media?*

SEAN As far as the video, it was in part AN AMERICAN FAMILY, as I described earlier. Besides that it was early Wegman videos perhaps, and Spalding Gray to some extent. I saw in Wegman the opportunity to exploit simple humor, and in Gray it was the personality of the artist and storytelling. I began in 1990 with a sort of talk show format and I sat at a desk mocking the radio and telling stories. I wanted them to appear preposterous in the lineage of video art, but in the end be far more entertaining and engaging than actual video art ever was. I wanted to win by losing, in effect. I wanted them to be full of personal content, to hook people through voyeurism and, most importantly, to be 'not boring.' Those early videos sort of evolved into the living sculpture idea à la Gilbert and George. None were ever intended for a captive audience, just something you walk by, and if I hook you, well then good for me. They were closely related to my written pieces, just acted out.

As for sculpture, again it was the 'inappropriate' thing to do at the time, and that interested me. Whether it was clay heads covered in trash bags or traditional clay, it seemed somehow perverse at the time of the 'new-materials sculpture' of Matthew Barney and Michael Joaquin Grey, who were making sculpture that seemed exceedingly smart and new.

Being naturally contrarian, I was interested in returning sculpture to the 'old' and 'dumb' thing it had happily been for thousands of years before they got to it. Long after the Vaseline bench-press melts into the soil or a Richard Serra rusts into the sea my dumb little bronze heads will be humming the tune of my immortality. It's a 'Tortoise and Hare' thing.

CAOIMHÍN *Let's talk a little bit more about virtuosity and your relationship to it. Is it of no interest to you that some people are praised, rightly or wrongly, for their consummate skills in a particular medium at a time when the conscious de-skilling of the media is quite common?*

SEAN I don't try to make 'bad art.' This was the first conversation you and I ever had…

CAOIMHÍN *Right.*

SEAN … and this was the issue I took, as I didn't believe that I belonged in that category. I was just doing what I did – I never feigned naiveté. ICH MACHE MICH, was sculpted as well as I could at that time. Now I can sculpt a chimp far better. I always worked to my level at the time. If it looked really naive or had an absence of virtuosity it's because that was the truth of my situation. The idea being that all art earnestly done is essentially self-portraiture. That's why I compared myself directly to painters like Manet and Matisse and Poussin in that 1997 Andrea Rosen Gallery show, because I knew I didn't rate with them on a skill level. I thought that mine was the story of searching for my comfort level in their midst because that is the situation of a painter or an artist. You're always judged in the context of art history, contemporary art history and ancient art history.

CAOIMHÍN *Yet some of the immediate predecessors you found inspirational right at the beginning, such as Jeff Koons, never felt any need to acquire even the most rudimentary facility, as one can always commission other virtuosos in different media, from glassblowing Venetians to American sign painters, to execute one's work.*

SEAN Yeah, whereas I do it myself, and that is what's different.

CAOIMHÍN *And why? The choice to do so is obviously important to you.*

SEAN Because I drive where I want to go. I'm the master of my image. I'm responsible for what's there. I'm accountable. Jeff Koons is not in full control of his imagery. He's a director.

CAOIMHÍN *Really?*

SEAN He didn't sculpt Michael Jackson or that chimp. Someone else did. He's only so close to that image. My fingerprints are in my chimpanzee. You see, for him it's an act of irony and for me it's the point where irony has gone full circle and begins the return to sincerity.

CAOIMHÍN *So we're back to that old gambit, the expressionist convention, of which there is an available critique. As Francis Bacon put it, you want to lift images directly off the nervous system. But is there such a thing as an unmediated access to spontaneous gestural expression?*

SEAN Yeah, I believe in that.

CAOIMHÍN *You do?*

SEAN Yes, I do. I believe the hand of a great artist extends directly from their soul. I think that has a hell of a lot of meaning. I'm not saying that it excludes what Jeff does, because I actually really love what he does and can't say enough about how much I admire him. I'm just saying that I see what I want to see when I want to see it with the peculiarities of my own hand and imagination, which is inherently more sincere. His process is more like expert shopping, or commissioning, which preserves his ironic distance.

CAOIMHÍN *But it's an important part of your project that you learned your skills on the job, as it were? Wouldn't it have been nice if you'd been able to do things in the beginning as well as you can do it now?*

SEAN It would have been, yes, but we all improve in no matter what we do. Look at the early Magrittes. My God, It was like they were painted by someone in my mother's backyard painting class.

I personally am comfortable with the level of skill in paintings like PLANK BOY (2000), MS. KITTY (1999), or BUFFALO (2003), for example. I have the ability to go further toward realism if I wanted to. But I didn't feel like those paintings would satisfy me any more if I did. In others like HAPPY AND SAD (2002) I went a little further. I realized the figures' outfits far more than in, say, MARINER (2003), which is done just right for what he is. It's just that I wanted to see more there in HAPPY AND SAD. Different paintings require different things.

CAOIMHÍN *It still seems that the have-a-go mentality of doing it as well as you can do it now and not caring if that falls far short of whatever skill you may develop later on is significant. It didn't bother you. You were relatively fearless.*

SEAN Yeah. I mean what else could I do? All I can do is work to the height of ability that my interest necessitates.

CAOIMHÍN *What difference does it make being over 40 and doing what you do?*

SEAN Well, I think I have to be honest about what I am now.

CAOIMHÍN *But how obviously has that change been registered in recent years?*

SEAN Well, this most recent show at Andrea Rosen Gallery (2004) is a great example of it. It's a look back at my old text paintings. I took their graphic nature and exploded it into spatial abstract

paintings. Thoughts emerge in your brain, they become clear, and then they recede back into the blurry distance. They are still pictures of the way thoughts occur like my old paintings were, but the writing is different, it's self-parody. It's not like I no longer feel the things that I wrote on those early works, but when I write them now I feel how well-worn they are. It's like a closet full of old shoes. I've walked in them, they're worn out to the contours of my feet. I could put them on again and they'd fit comfortably but I just wouldn't feel snappy in them.

The reason the recent paintings have the 'echoing look' is when I was making them at nighttime, I'd look at the reflection of my paintings in the studio windows, which are double-glazed glass…

CAOIMHÍN *And they looked doubled, like the phrases in these new paintings?*

SEAN Yes, they looked so much better like that, and it just seemed like this sort of double vision/repetition effect was an exaggerated form of self-parody. It reminded me of a John Giorno recording where he repeated everything he said in his monologue and it evoked the palpable feeling of insanity. It just made sense to me that these paintings are echoes of those earlier 'well-worn shoes.'

CAOIMHÍN *It does seem like a graphic, cartoon rendition of an echo.*

SEAN Yeah.

CAOIMHÍN *You did say these texts were on abstract grounds. But some of them are not quite abstract, they are renditions of wide-open spaces, of skyscapes.*

SEAN Yes. The skyscapes are different. I grew up in a religious family, and really learned how to pray. It's still with me. My brain still falls into this mode of prayer, and I don't know what to do with it, being maybe not quite atheist, but a doubter of God.

CAOIMHÍN *When you say a 'mode of prayer,' you don't actually mean extempore praying, do you? You mean the repetition of pre-existing words.*

SEAN I mean, the train of thought in your mind that you think is being overheard by…

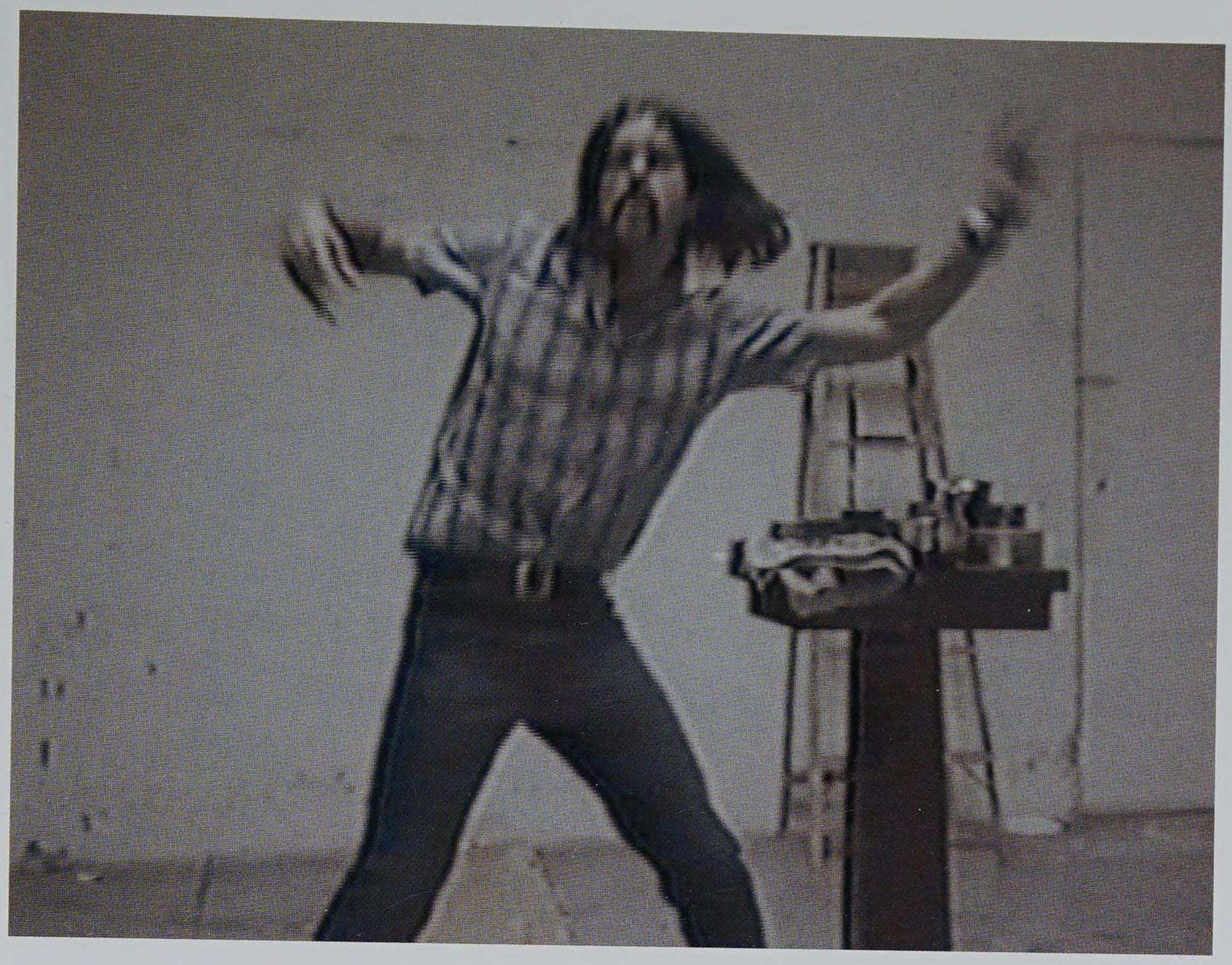
CAOIMHÍN *A deity?*

SEAN Yeah, a deity or a deceased relative.

CAOIMHÍN *Okay.*

SEAN So with these sky paintings, I'm attempting to capture this sort of prayer/thought. An example would be "Please make me a better artist," "Why can't things be easier?" By writing it I send it towards the heavens. "I want my paintings to last forever," "Please God, make me matter."

Conversely, the one with the moon, THE SLEEP OF REASON PRODUCES MONSTERS (2004) was about insomnia, paranoia and the type of desperate prayer that occurs when the devils come out. It's directly made after the Goya etching THE SLEEP OF REASON PRODUCES MONSTERS (1797–1798). The words in this painting are like the bats rising in his etching. I was just trying to give thought a picture. A clown in the Arctic landscape is giving thought a picture in a different way, as are my text paintings, videos, sculptures and my 'vache' period. It's why I have an affinity with all those pre-World War II European painters, because they too are people who sat before an easel with a blank canvas in front of them and from their thoughts procured an image. That's what I value in art. That's what I want to see in art. That's what I like to make as an artist.



DANCING WITH DEATH, 1995
Videotape
7 min.

SINGERIE: LE SCULPTEUR, 1995
Bronze
92.07 × 113.03 × 60.96 cm

SINGERIE: LE PEINTRE, 1995
Videotape
27 min.

NOT FOR GOD NOR COUNTRY, NOT FOR LOVE OR HATE, NOT FOR LIFE NOR DEATH. MAKE NO MISTAKE ABOUT IT, NOTHING NOBLE DRAWS ME HERE. I AM BUT A FOOL OF THE HIGHEST MAGN
FOR I HAVE NEVER FACED SUCH A SEA IN ALL MY LIFE. I SUMMON EVERY LAST IOTA OF STRENGTHE WITHIN MY FORLORN MIND, DO NOT FAIL ME. I IMPLORE YOU, PROVE ME WORTH
WOULD SHIVER THE VERY TIMBERS MY VESSEL OF SELFHOOD ARE SO SURELY CONSTRUCTED. AND BLESS MY TINY CRAFT, AS ABLE A BOBBING CRAFT CAN BE. JOHNATHAN LIVING STONE
JOHNATHEN NOT FOR YEARS; OH, WELL I PERISHED IN THAT STORY SIR; OH YES NOW I RECALL; IT WAS THOUGHT TO HAVE BEEN A SUICIDE SIR; YES, WELL YOU WERE THE VICTUM OF UNFORT
BEEN ROAMING THE SEAS UNABLE TO REST, IF WHAT YOU'RE TELLING ME IS TRUE JOHNATHEN, THEN I'M NOT SO SURE THAT YOU ARE THE KIND OF COMPANY I NEED TO KEEP AS I WHEA
AND CLAIM YOU'RE SOUL FOR THE PRINCE OF DARKNESS, I'M SORRY, I DON'T LIKE WHAT I'M DOING BUT IT'S REQUIRED OF ME, MY WINGS ARE TIED; LISTEN HERE JOHNATHEN L. SEAGULL,
RE TO LOSE MY STRUGGLE FOR SOULS, I WISH NOONE MY FATE; SO WHY DON'T YOU LEAVE ME THEN JOHNATHEN? I'M AFFRAID THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE SIR, MY ORDERS WERE TO REMAIN W
EXACTLY LIFE MEANS TO A HUMAN BEING AND PARDON ME BUT YOU CERTAINLY ARE ABOUT TO FIND OUT, YOU SEE MOST PEOPLE DON'T WANT TO KNOW, BUT SINCE YOU'VE MADE SUCH
YOUR CHILDISH TIRAIDS AND NOW YOU'VE PISSED OF CREATION IT'S SELF: WHAT IS CREATION? WELL SIR, CREATION IS THE OCEAN, IT'S WHERE LIFE ON EARTH BEGAN AND FROM W
ORDER YOU OFF OF MY SHIP: FINE, I'LL HOVER ALONG SIDE, BESIDES SIR, I'M ON YOUR SIDE, AND YOU'LL RELISH THE COMPANY ONCE THIS STORM HITS: EINE KLEINE NACHT MUSIK: DON'T CHAN
THAT, I DON'T WANT THIS FANTASY I'M SIX INCHES BEHIND AND THE FIRST HALF IS ALWAYS EASIEST. IF ONLY THE WORDS WOULD ENCOURAGE ME, THIS DAM SEAGULL IS AN ASSHOLE. I'LL
IED BY A WHALE OF A LIBIDO. TELL ME ABOUT IT, THE INTERNAL WORLD OF NACHT MUSIK OR VERKLART NACHT. I SIMPLY HAVN'T DROPPED INTO DRIVE YET AND THE CLOCK IS TICKING AS THE BARO
VE UP FOR A SECOND AND YOU'LL RIDE THIS OUT. AM I TALKING OF WHAT I THINK I AM? YES, I'M JUST TRYING TO GET TO THE OTHER SIDE AND I'VE NEVER HAD SO FAR TO GO IN SO LITTLE TI
END SAIL. STILL I WILL MAKE IT I HAVE TO, I WONDER IF IT'S ALL FOR NOTHING. NEW YORK TO CALLAISE, DID I SPELL THAT RIGHT. IF I'M NOT THERE BY 4:00 AM I'LL LOOSE THE RECORD.
WHAT I NEED TO KNOW. AM I WHAT I CRACK MYSELF UP TO BE? THE TRUTH IS THAT I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO'D CARE EITHER WAY. THIS QUESTION IS NON-EXISTANT TO YOU. STILL MY ASS HAN
AUSE IT'S SUCH A SMALL FRACTION. BASICALLY FOR ME FRANCE IS ON THE AYHER SIDE. STRAIGHT INFRONT OF ME. BUT I CAN'T SEE VERY FAR SINCE THE EARTH IS ROUND. YOU KNOW WHAT, I'M
AS PURE BORDUM. SO LONG AS THE TRAIL NEVER END AND I DON'T ABANDON SHIP. STAY ABOARD SAILOR DON'T EVEN BREAK TO PISS BECAUSE JOHNATHEN WILL GET YOU. JOHNATHEN IS
JUST THROUGH HOLEING ON A PIECE OF FLOTSUM AT LEAST THEN YOU KNOW YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES. JOHNATHEN IS AN UNPREDICTABLE HINDERENCE. EASILY PELT WITH WHENCE FRESH,
MORE, OR TWA MORE DEGREES PAST MY STERN I GET TO ENJOY SUSTENENCE AND A MOMENTS REST IN MY WARM CABIN. ATURN AT THE HEAD TO RELIEVE MY ACHEING BLADDER AND
OF DESPERATION. JUST WHEN YOU RAISE YOURELF TO MEET A NEARLY INSURMOUNTABLE CHALLENGE YOUR BODY GIFTS YOU WITH VIOLENT DIOREAN, OR SUDDEN NAUSSIA. LEST IT BE F
NOT A WISE DESION WHEN HYPOTHERMIA IS SUCH A REALL POSSIBILITY. THAT JOHNATHEN TRIED TO OVERTAKE ME ON THE WAY TO THE HEAD. THIS WOULD BE DIFFICULT ENOUGH UNDER F
I WILL NOT GIVE UP. A MAN DOES NOT OPEN A LUSIOUS BOTTLE OF BEER BEFORE HIS IS THROUGH WITH HIS DAYS WORK. NOT UNTIL I'M MOORED IN A SAFE FRENCH HARBOR. DAMIT! LET GO OF ME! THI
YOU ESCAPE INTO YOUR MIND, BY THE TIME YOU REACH YOUR DESTINATION YOU CAN HARDLY REMBER THE WALK. THE ONLY PROBLEM IS AFTER SO LONG AT SEA I HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE TO THE
WILL BE MUNDANE THOUGHTS. CERTAINLY UNWORTHY OF THE METHODICAL TRANSCRIPTION I REWARD THEM WITH, BUT LIFE IT'SELF IS AN EVERLASTING BLABBER OF INSIGNIFICANT RUT
IT EVEN FOR AN INSTANT AND YOU CEASE TO EXIST. IS THAT SAME PERSON YOU A YEAR AGO, TWENTY YEARS AGO, THE CONTINUENCE OF THE MONOLOG IN YOUR MIND CONECTS YOU STRA
STUPIFYING. I AM CONSTENTLY STUNNED AT HOW BARRON IT ALL IS. BUT MOSTLY I JUST ACCEPT IT THIS IS THE ANIMAL WE ARE, SO WHAT. I EVEN WANT TO BE KNOWN AS THE CHAMPION OF T
ORTABLE CHAIR. I'M AN HOUR AND FIFTEEN MINETTS BEHIND MY SCHEDUAL OF BANALITY. IT'S ABSURD AND I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT MY SELF. EVERY NOW AND THEN A GUN IS PUT TO ONES HEAD
A GIANT CANVAS EQUATING THE TRANSCRIPTION OF HIS FORCED MUNDANE THOUGHTS TO MILES PRESSED ON IN AN IMAGINED STORM IN AN IMAGINED SEA. IS THAT WHAT LIFE IS IN IT'S ENTI
EXISTS WITHIN YOUR PERCEPTION. WITHIN MY REALM ARE THESE SIMPLE THOUGHTS FORCED ONTO ROUGH CANVAS. MY PAINT HAS SO MUCH DRYER THAT IT DRIES IN FOUR HOURS MEANING I HA
ALREADY THERE. I WONDER IF ANYTHING INTELIGENT WILL EVER OCCUR TO ME AGAIN, OR WILL I CONTINUE THIS SPIRALLING TAIL SPIN INTO THE DEPTH OF INSIGNIFICANCE. I SUPPO
FORCES HIMSELF TO SAY ANYTHING. TO WRITE CONTINUESLY WITHOUT STOPPING FROM BEGINING TO END. SOUNDS BOARING DOESN'T IT. WHAT A WAY TO CAP OFF A PERFECTLY CONCIEV
WATCHING A STORM BARE DOWN ON YOU AND IT'S SO TERRIFYING THAT YOUVE FORCED YOURSELF TO BELIEVE THE ALTERNATE REALITY THAT YOURE IN A PARISIAN ART GALLERY ON AN AUTUM AFTERN
IN THE INSULAR WORLD OF MY SELFHOOD. SELFHOOD SUCKS SOMTIMES THE MORE YOU PONDER IT THE FURTHER YOU ARE LEFT BEHIND. I STARTED AT 12:00 PM I HAVE NOT STOPPED FOR FIVE HOURS AND THIS
LITERARY ENDEAVOR, IF YOU WILL. I WANTED TO BE THE GRAND FATHER OF BANAL THOUGHT IN LITERATURE, ODD AMBITION, BUT WE ALL DO TEND TO CARVE OUR NICHES. OUR LITTLE DUST WARN PAT
TCHED BIRD LEAVE HOLD OF ME. AS LONG AS I NEVER LEAVE THE HELM I'LL GET THERE. WHERE, WHO GIVES A SHIT, TO THE OTHERSIDE. THIS DISCOURAGED I CAN ONLY HOPE THE PICTURE IS BEAUTIFULL. OR
NTING IS IS STUPID AND AND BEAUTIFUL. 2 HOURS AND IS MINETS BEHIND SCHEDUAL. I'M GOING TO TRY TO MAKE IT UP BY BLABBING UTTERLY ANY NON-SENCE ICLE THOUGHT THAT POPS IN, MARY POPP
EARS OLDER THAN ME TAKE ME DOWN THEIR. HIS MOTHER JACKIE, HIS FATHER BOB, HIS BROTHER DANNY. DANNY WAS PAT'S BEST FREIND HIS FATHER WAS MY FATHER ALSO NAMED PAT WHOS FATHER WA
HAS IT THAT HE RID THE ISLAND OF SNAKES, SERPANTS, EVIL. THAT CAN'T BE TRUE THOUGH BECAUSE EVERY ONE ON THAT LITTLE ISLAND IS AFFRAID OF BURNING IN HELL FOR THEIR SINS. I THINK ST.
LE TOO I'VE NEVER BEEN THERE THOUGH, I DID GO TO VENEZUELA ONCE. IT'S QUITE A FUNNY STORY ACTUALLY. I'VE BEEN TO EUROPE OVER TWENTY TIMES THATS A LOT FOR AN AMERICAN, I REMEMBER THE
THINGS EXCEPT ART, I LIKE ART. I LIKE LOTS OF CLASSY STUFF I GUESS BUT I'M STILL PRETTY THOUROUGHLY AMERICAN. IF I WERENT BORN HERE THOUGH, I PROBABLY WOULDN'T GIVE A DAM ABOUT I
USE MY OWN MIND FREE ASSOCIATION TIME, PROCREATION RYME. DID YOU SEE THAT? IT JUST FLASHED. LIGHTENING I GUESS OR PERHAPS I JUST GOT A BOOSTER SHOT OF DIVINE INSPIRAT
WILL IT'S UNBELIEVABLE HOW LONG THIS TAKES. BUT IT'S MINE, ALL MINE AND SO HANDSOME. I LIKE STARING AT IT. LIKE A NIPPLE IN PUBLIC. HOW MORE BEAUTIFUL CAN ANY THING BECOME. AR
ON WARD INTO DESTINEY, HUH? YEAH, THERE IS NO DESTINY THERE IS ONLY CHOCOLAT SORBET, MMM, CHACOLAT SORBET, HAVE YOU BEEN LOOKING DOWN HER SHIRT TOO. I'M SORRY, I KNOW IT'S CHI
RONTED WITH ONES OWN ANIMAL, WAITE NOT ANIMAL. ANIMALS ARE COOL THAUGH, I PARTICULARY LIKE DOGS AND CHIMPANZEES. THAT'S A WHOLE OTHER SUBTOPIC. STILL NOTHING IS OUT OF PLAY THE
MISUNDERSTOOD HE SAID. THE ROWS OF WORDS LOOK SO IMPORTENT. THEY SIMPLY MEAN NOTHING ALTHOUGH ONE THOUGHT DOES LEAD TO ANOTHER AND BEFORE YOU KNOW IT YOU'RE
ONE. THERE IS NO CASTRATION FEAR, I NEVER EVER FELT THAT EITHER. THAT SIGMUND FELLOW HAD TOO MUCH TRUST THAT WHAT WAS TRUE FOR HIM WAS TRUE FOR EVERYONE. LET THAT B
PRESUME. PRESUMPTION THE GUMPTION OF THAT MAN. I'M SORRY BUT THIS IS BEAUTIEUL, HOLD ON I NEED MORE SUGAR. FREE ASOCIATION AGAIN IN SEARCH OF A TOPIC. SOMTHING ENERGY
CARED FOR. I PREDICT THAT MOST OF THE ART IN THE 20TH CENTURY WINGS OF MUSEUMS WILL BE WORTHLESS IN OUR LIFE TIMES. SO WHAT DOES THAT MEAN FOR ME. KEEP ON TRUCKING BABY. YOU GOT T
I'M SO LABOUR INTENSIVE, BECAUSE I AM THAT GRATEFULL, IT'S UNBELIEVABLE. I THANK EVERYTHING THAT GOT ME HERE. AND HERE AND HERE. ALL OVER IT. METHOD TO MADNESS, CHICKEN MADDRESS, OR
SON, GUCCY, ALEC GUINESS STOUT. TWENTY BUCKS, IF FEEL LIKE FREAKING 20 DOLLARS MAN. DON'T YOU ENJOY BEING LOVED OR DO YOU HATE YOURSELF SO MUCH THAT ANYONE DUMB ENOUGH TO LOVE Y
JUST DESERT GETS SERVED AND PEPPLE SIT AROUND LIKE ZOMBIES EATING THEIR CHEEKS FROM THE INSIDE OUT. MASTICATION OF SOMTHING SITUATION. JAMES CAGNEY HAD A VERY PECULIAR IDEA OF MA
AGE. AND TO REASSES MY TIME EXPENDITURE ALOTMENT, I ATE CHEESE DOODLES INSTEAD, I'VE BEEN SUCKING ON A TWO LITER BOTTLE OF DIET COKE ALL DAY, I ALSO HAVE CARMEL CORN AND CORN CHIPS. T
TIED TO MY RUN OF THE MILL BORED THOUGHTS THAT I ACTUALLY FORGET I'M WRITTING AND I JUST SPACE OUT AND WALK AWAY. THAT'S WHY THE LOWER HALVES OF MY PAINTINGS ARE SO TOUGH TO GET TH
HAD 20 HOURS TO FILL THIS WITH WRITING SO ESSENTIALLY BEGGARS CAN'T BE CHOOSEY. ANY DAM THOUGHT I MANAGE TO HAVE IS GOING UP HERE. I KNOW THIS WILL TURN OUT TO BE MY BEST PAINTING T
TOO. I'M 2½ HOURS BEHIND SCHEDUAL I'D LOVE TO BREAK INTO A REVERIE. I'D LOVE TO ESCAPE THE REALITY OF MY SITUATION AND FIND MYSELF IN A PERFECT FANTASY. BUT ON ANY OTHER DAY IF I FELT
I AM WELL HEELED IN THE ART OF MAINTAINING MY SANITY IN THE WAKE OF SUBSTANCIAL LONLINESS. NO I'M NOT, IT'S MY GREATEST FEAR THAT'S WHY I WRITE ABOUT IT. I WONDER HOW THAT HAPPENS.
SOME OTHER GUY. DAM, THE MORE I THINK ABOUT IT THE MORE I REALISE HOW MUCH SHIT I'VE BEEN FORCE FED. I DON'T THINK I EVEN WANT TO UNCORK THAT SUBJECT. BUT I FOUND MYSELF IN THE D
I'M NOT GOING TO BELLY ACHE ABOUT IT. BUT WHEN I WAS ON ROUTE 5 I FELT ABANDOND AND ALONE PERHAPS THE WORST I EVER FELT IT. AND IT'S A FAULT IN ME THAT WAITS TO REOCCUR OVER AND O
IN HELL OF SELF OBESSION OR SOMTHING. FUCKING HELL I'M EXHAUSTED, I HAVE NOTHING TO SAY. JOHNATHEN YOU ARE NOT AMUSEING ANY ONE. SOMTIMES IT'S ALL I CAN DO TO TURN ABOUT AND HEAD W
GREET IT. I WISH I HAD A STORY BUT I'M SO DAM BJADED. A GREAT PAINTING IS: OH HOW THE HELL DO I KNOW. LIFE ON EARTH. BLA, BLA, I'M RIDICULEING MY OWN THOUGHTS. I'M FINDING IT SO VERY
I LOWERD ALL SAILS AND BATTEND DOWN WITH TWO WARPS OFF MY STERN. I WENT BELOW AND LASHED MYSELF INTO MY BUNK AND LISTEND WITH ASTONISHMENT AT THE POWER OF THIS STORM. IN
INTO EVERY CORNOR OF MY MIND. ALL PEOPLE ARE SUBJECT TO TRIALS IN THEIR LIVES IN VARIOUS WAYS. THIS WAS MINE, JOHNATHEN APPEARD AGAIN. HE HELD OUT HIS HAND AND SAID: I DON'T NESS
ON YOU THE CHOICE NOT TO BUT IF YOU WISH TO RIDE IT OUT ON YOUR OWN THAN I CAN'T PREVENT YOU FROM SUFFERING: DONALD CROWHURST, IT'S YOU: YES, LISTEN TO JOHNATHEN SIR; FUCK JO
CROWHURST DIED BY DROWNING WHEN HE JUMPED OVERBOARD HIS TRIMARAN IN THE 1965 GOLDEN GLOBE CHALLENGE. HE WAS ATTEMPTING TO PERPETRATE A FRAUD. BY SIMPLY DALYING A
HE DOES IT VERY WELL. FIRST HE GETS YOUR TRUST BY PROMISING NOT TO FORCE HIMSELF ON YOU. AND YOU ARE LONELY SO, BETTER TO TALK THEN NOT TO. BUT ONCE YOU STOP FEARING HIM
HE GETS IN AND ONCE HE'S IN YOU HAVE TO LIVE WITH THE ADDED BURDEN OF HIM. MAKE NO MISTAKE, HE IS NOT YOUR FREIND, NOR IS HE A RELUCTENT AGENT OF SATAN. HE IS SATAN AND IF YO
YOU CAN'T STAND UP TO HIM. IT'S JUST A PROBLEM YOU HAVE IN ADDITION TO LIFE THREATENING WHEATHER. IT'S ODD BECAUSE SOME SINGLE HANDERS NEVER RUN INTO HIM. BUT THOSE WH
HAS BEEN FOLLOWING ME PERSISTANTLY ALL DAY. IT'S TIME I GIVE HIM HIS WHAT FOR. I DUG OUT MY SHOT GUN AND STRAPPED ON MY SAFTEY HARNESS AND CLIMBED ON MY HEAVING DECK. TH
ALL OF THIS JOHNATHEN NAVIGATED THE FEROUSIOUS WINDS AND MONSTEROUS SWELLS LIKE NOTHING WAS ERRANT. HE GLIDED ALONG FULLY AWARE THAT I WAS AIMING MY RIFLE AT H
WAS A DEATH ON MY HANDS. MY BARBEROUS ACT WOULD NOT RELIEVE ANY ANGUISH BUT QUITE THE OPPOSITE WOULD HIGHTEN MY MENTAL ANGUISH. JOHNATHEN WAS NOT THAT SEAGULL THAT WA
MENTAL ANGUISH WAS TO D MUCH TO BARE THAT YOU'D RELIVE YOUR SELF BY DYEING AT YOUR OWN HAND THAN YOU HAVE MET JOHNATHEN. THIS IS NOT THE TYPE OF THOUGHT ONE NEEDS SO FAR F
IS NOT AN EXTERNAL ENTITY THAT JOHNATHEN IS ACTUALLY A CORNOR OF YOUR OWN MIND. THAT HE HAS APPEARD IN SOME HALLUCINATED FORM TO CLOAK HIM SELF FROM THE VERY HORR
IN LOSEING THEN NOW IS CERTAINLY THE CHANCE. BUT JUDGEING BY THE HORROR IN WHICH I REGARD THIS NATION OF PERISHING, I THINK IT'S FARE TO SAY THAT I GOT MY DAM ANSWER; I WAN
GOOD, AND FEELS GOOD. NO QUESTION ABOUT IT JOHNATHEN, I LOVE MY LIFE AND I'M GOING TO RELISH EVERY BANAL INSTANT OF IT, BEGINING RIGHT NOW. WELL OF COURSE THERE I IN MY CRI
TO SOAK UP EVERY LAST MORSEL OF IT DON'T WE. HM. TWA HOURS FOR EVERY FOOT. PERHAPS A STORY IS IN ORDER IF ONLY I WERE MOTIVATED TO TELL ONE. EVEN IF I WAS TO GO TO BED NOW I'D
COULD COMPREHEND GIVING. GOODNESS, TWELVE HOURS TO HERE, NO WONDER I'M EMPTY I'M FOUR HOURS BEHIND SCHEDUAL, I HAVE SIX HOURS LEFT REMAINING, EIGHT IN A PINCH, TIME TO JUST GO SL
REAL IN WORDS TO YOUR UTTER ASTONISHMENT AND WRITE NOTHING OF VALUE TO ANYONE ANYWHERE. MY DAD TOLD ME THAT A GEORGE HARISON SONG WAS HIS FAVORITE SONG BECAUSE IT WAS ON THE
I AM A PRODUCT OF THE 1970'S AND I FEEL VERY AT HOME WATCHING SMOKEY AND THE BANDIT, CANNON BALL RUN, YOU KNOW, I DON'T HAVE TO TELL YOU. BUT I'M NEARLY ON TO SOMTHING. OH MAN, A TOPIC
THING. IT'S A BIT MUCH I MUST SAY, MORE THAN HALFWAY ACROSS AND STILL WITHOUT MY BARINES IF SOMBODY ASKED ME TO ENCAPSULATE THIS ONE I WOULDN'T KNOW. HOW TO ANSWER. I D
THAT. COME TO THINK OF IT THAUGH. JOHNATHEN WAS THERE TOO. WOW, JOHNATHEN IS TROUBLE. WELL THOUGHT IS THOUGHT BE IT BRILLIANT OR MUNDANE. WHAT'S STRIKING TO ME THIS EVEN
TURES TALK BACK. MUDLE BUT I'M STILL STANDING, NOT QUITE IMPASSIONED BUT REFUSING TO GIVE IN. I'VE BEEN GOING ON AND ON BUT WHAT HAVE I SAID? NOTHING. PEOPLE THINK ALL DAY
LAST WEEKEND THEN I WOULD HAVE MESSED UP MY STRETCHED ONES AND THIS ONE NEVER WOULD HAVE HAPPENED. WELL I'M SURE GLAD IT DID BECAUSE I FIND IT SO BEAUTIFULL. I'M SORRY I KE
MESSAGE FOR MY LADY GEE JUST FIVE MORE HOURS AND I GET TO GO BELOW. WILL THEY DRY IN TIME? I HAVE BETRAYED THIS IDEA OF MINE, I DONT KNOW WHY, I GOT TIRED OF THE FANTASY I
MENTIONED ABOVE IN THAT JOHNATHEN BULLSHIT. WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT ALL ABOUT ANYWAY, TRYING TO BE SOMETHING OTHER THAN MYSELF IS WHAT IT IS. I'M A GUY WHO CAN EFFORTLES
WRITING SPEED IN THIS PAST HOUR. I THINK I'VE REACHED A NEW PERFECT PLATEAU OF EMPTINESS AND I AM ABLEY TRANSCRIBING IT'S MOUNTAINOUS WALL OF NOTHINGNESS WITH ZERO TH
WASTED IN TYPE REMAINING. BUT WHY WOULD THIS APPEAL TO ME, I'M NOT SURE THAT IT DOES, I MEAN, I WOULDN'T WANT TO READ IT. IT'D DRIVE MY NUTS TO READ IT. IT WAS BAD ENOUGH W
WATCHED BRAINWAVES EVER RESEARCH IN HYPNOTHISTORY AND WHY TO CREATE AN ACURATE PICTURE OF THE WAY IN WHICH A MIND TRAVELS OR AS IN THIS PHASE GETS STUCK ON A SILLY IDEA
OF THINKING THIS IS EASY, BUT IF IT'S NOT IT APPEARS IMPOSSIBLE. THIS PARALLELS THE EFFECTS OF HOPELESSNESS TO A SHARK. OFTEN THE DOLDRUMS OFFER THE SINGLE HANDER HIS GREATEST T
JOHNATHEN, DOES A LOT OF HIS FINEST WORK IN THE EQUATORIAL WATERS OF THE DOLDRUMS. A MANY HAS BEEN LURED TO THE SOFT SIDE OF SANITY, AND SADLY NOT A FEW HAVE NE

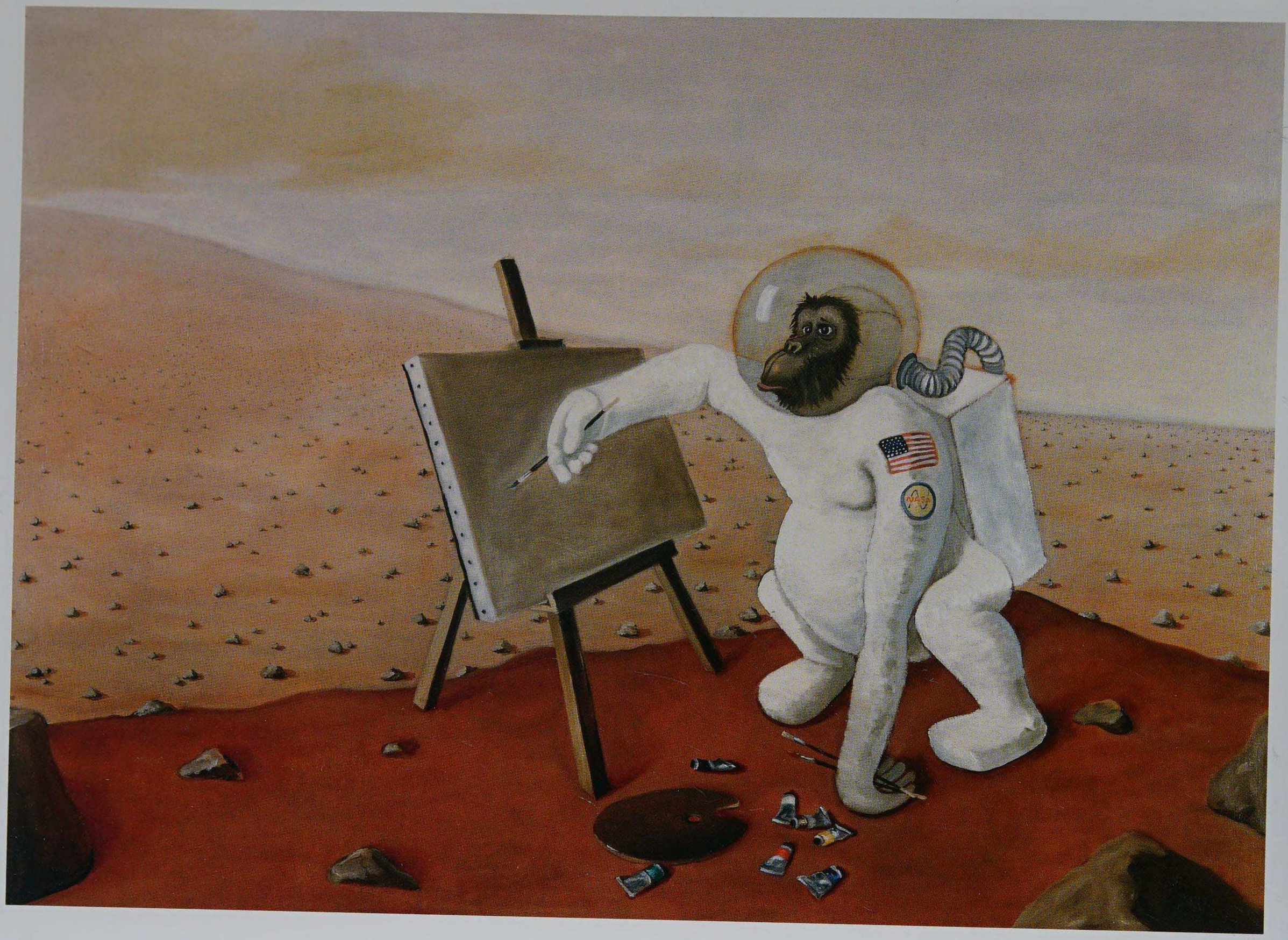
ALONE, 1996
Oil on linen
182.88 × 243.84 cm

Pages 52–53
36 HOURS, 1995
Oil on linen
213.36 × 365.76 cm

ARCTIC TREK, 1996
Oil on linen
182.88 × 243.84 cm

IN THE SHADOWS OF KILIMANJARO, 1996
Oil on linen
152.4 × 213.36 cm

REALLY SAD AND REALLY HAPPY, 1996
Bronze
31.75 × 24.76 × 17.78 cm (left)
34.92 × 24.13 × 17.78 cm (right)



SPACE-APE ON MARS, 1997
Oil on linen
153.03 × 213.36 cm

ZORKON, 1997
Oil on linen
182.88 × 243.84 cm

DANCE OF LIFE, 1997
Oil on linen
243.84 × 365.76 cm

CANDLES IN THE WIND, 1997
Bronze
115.57 × 60.96 × 96.52 cm (left)
96.52 × 83.82 × 68.58 cm (right)

THE ENCHANTED FOREST (SPRING), 1996
Oil on linen
182.88 × 243.84 cm

REUNITED... (SUMMER), 1996
Oil on linen
152.4 × 213.36 cm

ROBOT AND BUNNY, 1998
Oil on linen
274.32 × 243.84 cm

Interview mit Sean Landers

CAOIMHÍN MAC GIOLLA LEÍTH & BEATRIX RUF

CAOIMHÍN & BEATRIX *Sprechen wir zunächst über deine frühesten Arbeiten und dann darüber, wie sich das, was du machst, über die Jahre verändert hat und was die Gründe für diese Veränderungen waren.*

SEAN Im Graduiertenstudium an der Universität (1984–1986) habe ich riesige Holzskulpturen von kämpfenden Tieren gemacht, die auf solchen Dingen wie Goyas Stierkampf-Radierungen oder Szenen aus der Literatur basierten. Figürliche Kunst an einer Kunsthochschule zu machen, zu einer Zeit, als Minimalismus und Konzeptkunst gelehrt wurden, das war damals genau das ‚Verkehrte'. Es galt als absurd, lächerlich, wie hätte ich da widerstehen können?

CAOIMHÍN *Obwohl sich die neoexpressionistische Malerei – Schnabel, Basquiat, Clemente, Kiefer und so – in den fünf Jahren vorher in Windeseile ausgebreitet hatte?*

SEAN Ja. Sie waren auf dem Radar, wurden aber nicht gelehrt oder gross diskutiert, so wie gegenwärtige Künstler heute an den Schulen nicht ‚gelehrt', sondern unter den Studenten privat diskutiert werden. Ich habe auch riesige minimalistische Skulpturen in der Art von Ronald Bladen gemacht, aber ich habe sie pervertiert, indem ich sie doppelt hinsetzte, zu Skateboard-Rampen umfunktioniert. Ich hatte diese Dinger damals in der Mitte meines Ateliers ausgestellt. Eine Textflut füllte die Wände um sie herum: Bekenntnisse und Cartoons mit Graphit und Marker neben riesigen Actionpaintings in Öl, die direkt auf die Wand gespritzt waren. Wenn die Studenten und Dozenten zur Begutachtung kamen, lasen sie das Geschriebene auf den Wänden mit dem Rücken zu meinen riesenhaften Skulpturen. Es kam mir nie in den Sinn, dass Schreiben und Malen einmal den Mittelpunkt meiner Kunst ausmachen würden. Weil ich Bildhauerei im Hauptfach studierte, dachte ich, ich würde Bildhauer werden.

Im Herbst 1986 zog ich nach New York, wo im East Village die Galerieszene florierte und Jeff Koons der Herr der Welt war. Ich war von seiner Kunst beeindruckt und schuf eine Reihe von Arbeiten, die – im Rückblick betrachtet – vermutlich von ihr beeinflusst waren. Gipsbüsten, die es von berühmten Schriftstellern, Komponisten und mythologischen Figuren fertig zu kaufen gab, setzte ich in Zylinder aus klarem Polyesterharz und stellte sie auf Holzpodeste, die ich entworfen und auf der Drehbank gedrechselt hatte. Ich habe diese Arbeiten zweimal ausgestellt: 1989 in Tommy Solomon's Garage in Los Angeles und 1990 in der Postmasters Gallery in New York. Sie erhielten gute Kritiken, aber ich hatte kein gutes Gefühl dabei. Ich traute ihnen nicht oder dem kleinen Erfolg, den sie hatten. Das war nicht wirklich ich. Zur gleichen Zeit verlor ich eine Freundin, nach der ich verrückt war. Immer dann, wenn mein Liebesleben in Gefahr gerät, werde ich ... na, vor allem kommt die Wahrheit heraus.

Ich verfolgte keine bestimmte Strategie, als ich wieder mit dem Schreiben anfing – ich war verzweifelt und musste meinem Kummer Luft machen. Als ich später wieder etwas von diesem Zeug las, bemerkte ich sein Potential als Kunst und begann, unter diesem Aspekt zu schreiben. Ich begann mit einem Drehbuch, das von einem Künstler handelt, der sich in den neunziger Jahren in New York durchzuschlagen versucht, so wie in Knut Hamsuns Roman HUNGER. Ich war ungeheuer beeindruckt, wie das geschrieben war, auch von Dostojewskijs SCHULD UND SÜHNE – von der Art, wie die Autoren zum Ausdruck brachten, was sich im Kopf des Antihelden abspielt. Ich fühlte mich völlig erschlagen, als ich diese Bücher zum ersten Mal las. Das war so, wie ich dachte, das war so, wie ich schrieb, das war mein Ding. Meine Arbeiten sollten eine Art Version der neunziger Jahre von HUNGER sein, und ich wollte als Antiheld darin auftreten.

CAOIMHÍN *Aber HUNGER ist doch ein Roman und kein Werk der bildenden Kunst.*

SEAN Richtig. Aber was ich machte, war auch eine Reaktion gegen die ‚Textkunst' damals in New York, von Künstlern wie Hans Haacke oder Mary Kelly. Ich dachte, wenn Text auf einer Galeriewand auftaucht, dann sollte er verdammt noch mal ... na, ich wollte einfach nur meine eigene Fassung davon machen, eine, die letzten Endes ausgesprochen persönlich ist. Ich habe schnell die Macht zu nutzen gelernt, die ich erhalte, wenn ich kleine Häppchen von mir weggebe, um die voyeuristischen Neigungen anderer Leute zu befriedigen.

CAOIMHÍN *Und das bedeutet, dass du dich zum Exhibitionisten gemacht hast.*

SEAN Zum Teil, aber auch sehr kontrolliert. Damals (1990) sah ich auch etwas im Fernsehen, was mich beeinflusst hat. Die Sendung hiess AN AMERICAN FAMILY, stammte von 1973 und war das erste Beispiel für Reality-TV – eine dysfunktionale Familie wurde ein Jahr lang begleitet. Sie lernten, mit dem Filmteam zu leben, und begannen, ihr Leben auf die Kamera auszurichten. Ein Sohn beschloss, der Familie zu eröffnen, dass er schwul war. Der Vater fing vor der Kamera eine Affäre an und benutzte sogar seinen Starruhm aus der Sendung, um an Mädchen zu kommen. Da war also ein Echo, das ich sehr interessant fand. Das ist einer der Gründe, warum ich beschloss, mein Leben als Thema in meiner Arbeit zu verwenden. Worauf ich aus war, das war die Realität, so ehrlich, wie ich es machen konnte, und so unterhaltsam wie möglich.

BEATRIX *Wie sah denn diese Reaktion gegen deine beiden frühesten Ausstellungen aus, und in welchem Jahr war das?*

SEAN Das war 1991. Es war meine zweite Ausstellung bei Postmasters und eine direkte Reaktion auf meine erste. In der Mitte der Galerie standen Skulpturen, auf die Wände war Geschriebenes geklebt. Die geschriebenen Arbeiten waren Szenen aus dem Drehbuch ART, LIFE AND GOD (1990), mit der Hand auf gelbem Linienpapier geschrieben, wie es Anwälte benutzen.

Die Szenen waren zwar ziemlich autobiographisch, aber nicht unbedingt aus meinem Leben. Einige Szenen waren real, andere erfunden, und einige Sachen waren meinem Bruder Kevin oder meinen Freunden Richard Phillips, Carl Ostendarp, John Currin oder anderen Leuten von Yale passiert, mit denen ich nach New York gezogen war. Sie waren in diesem Drehbuch verarbeitet und auf Chris Hamson umgemünzt worden, also war das nicht alles ich. Daher hatte ich nicht das Gefühl, er sei ein wirkliches Alter Ego, obwohl das damals so aufgefasst wurde.

Die Skulpturen waren dem, was ich jetzt mache, sehr nahe, aber statt sie offen auszustellen, zeigte ich sie mit schwarzen Plastiksäcken zugedeckt, denn sie waren angeblich von meiner fiktionalen Figur gemacht worden und ‚so schlecht', dass er sich zu sehr schämte, sie zu zeigen. Sie waren in genau der gleichen Anordnung aufgestellt wie meine früheren Arbeiten, die Harzköpfe, was manche Leute in ihrer Meinung bestärkte, die Ausstellung sei rein autobiographisch.

CAOIMHÍN *Hast du dann dieses Alter Ego abgelegt, um dich auf dein eigenes Leben zu konzentrieren oder weil dich die Missdeutung ärgerte?*

SEAN Weder noch. Ich glaube, es war einfach eine natürliche Entwicklung. Was mich auf den Weg brachte, das waren in Wahrheit die Briefe, die von der Vermittlungsstelle für Studentendarlehen kamen und in denen es hiess, ich sei mit meinen Zahlungen im Rückstand. Ich musste ihnen einen Brief schreiben und war nicht einmal imstande, eine halbe Seite von diesem Anwaltspapier vollzuschreiben, ohne dass eine ‚Verrücktheit' einfach so passierte. Statt mich ‚klar und deutlich' auszudrücken, kam ich bei der Frage an „ach wäre es nicht lustig, wenn ich es so machte?". Ich konnte nicht aufhören, ein Publikum mit dem zu unterhalten, was ich schrieb. Das war Performance. Die Briefe waren sehr unterhaltsam, und sie waren von mir. Also kein Chris Hamson mehr.

CAOIMHÍN *Bist du früh auf die Idee gekommen, Formen der Bildgestaltung mit Formen der Sprachproduktion zu verbinden?*

SEAN Innerhalb eines Jahres fing das allmählich bei meinen Zeichnungen an. In einer typischen Ausstellung von mir aus dieser Zeit (nach Chris Hamson, 1991–1994) gab es Skulpturen, Köpfe aus ungebranntem Ton, die am oberen Ende von langen, dünnen Stangen befestigt waren und Leute aus meiner Heimatstadt darstellten (Zeugen meiner ‚Scham'). Sie waren mitten im Raum aufgestellt, zwischen ihnen stand auf einem Skulpturensockel ein Videomonitor und spielte eines meiner Videos, zum Beispiel ANYONE'S ORGASM (1992), das ich als geschmacklose lebende Skulptur-Performance im Sinne der SINGING SCULPTURE von Gilbert & George auffasste. Es gab auch immer Texte in verschiedenster Form, die an den Wänden hingen, zum Beispiel CALENDAR PAGES FROM 1991 (1991), Cartoons von Stereotypen der Weltkunst, Briefe an meinen Sachbearbeiter bei der Darlehensvermittlung oder eine riesige Bahn Hintergrundpapier, wie es in Fotostudios verwendet wird, bedeckt mit Geschriebenem in Stream-of-Consciousness-Manier. Ich darf nicht vergessen, dass ich damals das Gefühl hatte, das, was ich schrieb, sei in gewisser Weise die ‚Zeichnung' oder das ‚Bild'. Der Gefühlsausbruch auf der Seite mit den ganzen Unzulänglichkeiten, den Rechtschreib- und Grammatikfehlern, dieses emotionale Schreiben war genau das ‚Richtige'.

Ich vermute, was die Betrachter geködert hat, das war das Voyeuristische an der Sache und dass sie sich selbst darin wiederfanden. Vielleicht war das der Grund, warum die Leute schmerzende Füsse in Kauf nahmen, um meine Kunst zu lesen, denn während sie mir in die offene Seele starrten, beurteilten sie in Wirklichkeit sich selbst. Ich glaube, das ist eine grundlegende Komponente der stillschweigenden Kommunikation zwischen Kunst und Betrachter.

CAOIMHÍN *Kannst du ein bisschen mehr darüber sagen, welche Absicht du mit der Sprache verfolgt hast im Vergleich zu früheren Künstlern, die Text verwendet haben?*

SEAN Na ja, mir ist klar, dass ich das, was ich gemacht habe, ohne das Vorbild so hervorragender Künstler wie Lawrence Weiner, Joseph Kosuth, Carl Andre und Vito Acconci nicht hätte machen können. Vito war ein Lehrer von mir, und ich bewundere ihn immer noch. Er hatte einen gewaltigen Einfluss auf mich. Ich bewundere auch On Kawara sehr. Obwohl einige seiner Formen trocken waren, fand ich sie immer interessant und poetisch. Sie schienen auf den Punkt zu bringen, was Kunst eigentlich ist. Ich brauchte das Vorbild dieser Künstler für das, was ich vorhatte. Ich wollte ihnen jedoch Kontra geben, und zwar gründlich. Meine Art, an den Text heranzugehen, war meist das genaue Gegenteil ihrer Sichtweise; es war die schludrige Innenschau, eher wie bei Acconci.

CAOIMHÍN *Im Gegensatz zu Hans Haacke und Mary Kelly, die du vorhin erwähnt hast, die in erster Linie politische Ziele verfolgt haben. Du hast anderswo gesagt, dass du dich mit keinem Künstler verwandt fühlst, dessen Werk unverhohlen politisch ist. Ich weiss, dass du dich sehr für Politik und sehr für Ästhetik interessierst, doch scheinst du ein Problem mit einer Kunst zu haben, die sich bemüht, beides zu verbinden.*

SEAN Ich meine, dass Kunst etwas sein sollte, was davon frei ist. Für mich ist Kunst genau das, was davon frei ist. Kunst und Politik können nur eine Verbindung eingehen, wenn die Notwendigkeit besteht, jenseits der Sprache zu kommunizieren. Malereien in den Kirchen der Vorrenaissance und mexikanische Wandmalereien dienten historisch zum Beispiel dem Zweck, das ungebildete Volk zu erziehen, zu belehren und zu manipulieren. Kunst hat heute nicht mehr diese Rolle. Ich glaube, es gibt einen Ort für politische Kunst, aber es ist selten, dass sie in anderen Formen als Film oder Unterhaltungsmusik funktioniert. Die Nationalhymne in der Version, wie Jimi Hendrix sie gebracht hat, ist wohl das perfekte Beispiel für politische Kunst, denn sie ist ästhetisch wunderbar und hatte 1969, als sie in Woodstock gespielt wurde, eine gewaltige politische Bedeutung, und sie hat heute wieder eine politische Bedeutung bekommen. Wenn du sie heute hörst, dann denkst du unweigerlich daran, dass die USA erneut vom Kurs abgekommen sind. Eine Melodie zu nehmen, die für Amerikaner eine so verbindende Funktion hat, und mit ihr auf diese Weise zu verfahren, das war perfekte politische Kunst. Es ist ein schönes Musikstück.

CAOIMHÍN *Dass ästhetisches Vergnügen abgelehnt wird, fandest du also ärgerlich und beunruhigend in einem Teil der Kunst, gegen den du dich früh zur Wehr gesetzt hast?*

SEAN Genau. Aber da fehlte noch eine andere Art von Inhalt in den Werken von Textkünstlern wie Haacke und Kelly: Menschlichkeit. Die ich, wie ich meine, im Wesentlichen wieder eingebracht habe: das triefende, hässliche Zeug genannt Menschlichkeit.

CAOIMHÍN *Es macht einen entscheidenden Unterschied aus, ob die bekenntnishaften Erinnerungen, die man abfasst, zur privaten Lektüre bestimmt sind oder ob sie als Texte an die Wand geklebt werden. Die Art, wie sich die Leute innerhalb einer Galerie auf das optische Bild einlassen, hat etwas Unmittelbares, auch wenn es von langer Dauer ist. Man liest immer noch Wörter in der gleichen Reihenfolge und braucht wohl auch die gleiche Zeit, die man in einem Buch brauchen würde, aber die Wirkung ist eine andere.*

SEAN Ja, es macht sie befangen. Auch haben diese Texte ihre eigene Ästhetik. Die Schrift neigt sich, und meine Rechtschreibung spielt verrückt, wenn ich emotional werde und schneller schreibe.

CAOIMHÍN *Also gibt es eine notwendige Verbindung zwischen Form und Inhalt?*

SEAN Richtig. Viele Kritiker nannten das damals die ‚Kunst des Pathetischen'. Ich vermute, die Gedanken erschienen ihnen pathetisch, genau wie die Form, die verknickt, eselsohrig war, gelbes Linienpapier mit Gekritzel in den Ecken und schrecklichem Geschreibsel. Sie sahen authentisch aus, das Interessante an ihnen war jedoch, dass sie nicht hundert Prozent authentisch waren. Es gab Zeiten, da hat mich das Schreiben völlig beherrscht, und das zwanghafte Bedürfnis, etwas schrecklich Persönliches über mich mitzuteilen, war fast eine Form der Selbstverwundung. Aber es gab auch Zeiten, da habe ich es kontrolliert und in die passende Richtung dirigiert. Es war immer eine Mischung.

CAOIMHÍN *Schlechte Schrift, schlechte Rechtschreibung werden gemeinhin mit Unmittelbarkeit, Vertraulichkeit und Bekenntnisbereitschaft assoziiert, was sich auch auf die Rezeption von Werken anderer Künstler wie zum Beispiel Tracey Emin auswirkt. Aber das ist ebenso eine Konvention wie die Annahme, eine nachlässige expressionistische Pinselführung bringe uns näher an ein echtes Empfinden heran als, sagen wir, eine pedantisch ausgearbeitete Hardedge-Malerei.*

SEAN Richtig.

CAOIMHÍN *Daher war die Kritik an Authentizität und bekenntnishafter Äusserung in den neunziger Jahren ebenso notwendig,*

wie es die Kritik des Expressionismus ein Jahrzehnt vorher war; aber das ist doch in Bezug auf deine Arbeiten und eigentlich auch die von Tracey Emin nicht wirklich weiter vertieft worden, oder?

SEAN Nein, aber es hätte vielleicht sollen und könnte noch immer.

CAOIMHÍN *Ich erinnere mich an einen Satz von dir: Du hast einmal zu mir gesagt, du hättest eine völlig andere Beziehung zur Scham als Tracey Emin.*

SEAN Ich kann mich nicht einmal erinnern, wann ich das gesagt habe.

CAOIMHÍN *Es könnte vier oder fünf Jahre her sein.*

SEAN Ich gebe zu, dass wir beide gelernt haben, die Scham zu unserem Vorteil einzusetzen. Ich sehe diese Gemeinsamkeit. Aber ich glaube, wenn wir beide einen Teil unserer Seele dem Teufel verkauft haben, dann hat sie ein grösseres Stück verkauft als ich. Ich glaube, das macht sie weniger kompliziert, nach den Massstäben von Oprah Winfrey. Ihre Kunst zielt nicht auf jene Art von Voyeurismus, die mit Selbsterkenntnis zu tun hat, sie ist eher einem Spektakel ähnlich oder einem Zugunglück – wie soll man da nicht hinstarren? Ich glaube, an dieser Stelle ist sie eine Parodie ihres früheren, sexuell missbrauchten Ichs, so wie ich vielleicht eine Parodie meines jüngeren, von Ängsten erfüllten Ichs bin. Wenn Künstler wie sie und ich Arbeiten machen, die uns selbst zum Thema haben, dauert es nicht lange, bis alle Erinnerungen aufgebraucht sind und wir uns in der schrecklichen Gegenwart wiederfinden. Das ist zum Teil der Grund, warum ich mich so getrieben fühle, etwas gemalt wiederzugeben und Skulpturen zu machen – zu erfinden. Na ja, so etwas wie „steh zu deinem Wort, oder halte gefälligst den Mund".

CAOIMHÍN *Hast du dich schon früh zu der Mischung aus gewinnender Offenheit und bewusstem Raffinement in Werken wie dem von Karen Kilimnik oder vielleicht sogar Raymond Pettibon hingezogen gefühlt?*

SEAN Ja, ganz bestimmt. Aber da ist etwas an ihrer Kunst, was ein bisschen echter ist als meine. Ich spiele die Hauptrolle in dem, was ich schreibe, aber ich bin mir dessen wahrscheinlich mehr bewusst, ich spinne meine Rolle weiter aus. Während ich schockiert wäre, festzustellen, dass die Figur in Karens Werk alles andere als hundert Prozent echt ist. Das Gleiche gilt vermutlich auch für Raymond. Ich bin kein Opfer dessen, was da vor sich geht, aber das bedeutet nicht, dass ich trickse. Es gibt erstaunlich viel Grosszügigkeit und Echtheit in meinen Sachen. Das bisschen Täuschung in meinen Arbeiten liefert mir das Feigenblatt, das ich brauche, um dahinter agieren zu können. Die Möglichkeit, dass das, was man liest, erfunden ist, erlaubt mir, unverblümt ehrlich zu sein.

Anfang der neunziger Jahre habe ich manchmal Sachen verwendet, die meine Schwester Maura geschrieben hatte, zum Beispiel ihre Dankesbriefchen für Hochzeitsgeschenke. Durch das, was sie schrieb, ergab sich ein anderes Bild, als sie vermutlich beabsichtigt hatte, und das war es, was mich daran so reizte. Je mehr man davon las, desto mehr kam man weg von dem Eindruck „oh, was für ein nettes Mädchen ist das, sie ist so dankbar für diese wunderbaren Geschenke" hin zu „so sieht das also aus, diese Geschenke sind Scheisse. Verflucht noch mal! Ist das alles, was ich kriege? Ist das mein neues Leben?". Ich dachte, das beschrieb sie sehr viel besser, als wenn sie sich hingesetzt und ihre Lebensgeschichte aufgeschrieben hätte.

Ich merkte, dass ich letzten Endes auch nicht alles kontrollieren konnte. Das Bild, das ich wiedergab, war etwas anderes als das, was ich beabsichtigt hatte. Dazu fand ich heraus, dass ich das Publikum demütigen konnte, indem ich mich selbst demütigte, indem ich mir zunutze machte, dass sie sich wiedererkannten. Das gab meinen Themen eine Weile Nahrung, aber ich kämpfte mit mir. Ich wollte Zustimmung und Popularität, aber das war ein merkwürdiger Weg, sie zu erhalten, weil ich mich in gewisser Weise selbst demütigte, um besser anzukommen. Ich stellte mir ständig Fragen wie „brauche ich wirklich Anerkennung so nötig, dass ich vor der Kamera wichse?". Die Frage, die sich aufdrängte, war „lachen sie mit mir oder lachen sie mich aus?". Instinktiv will ich heute und wollte ich damals eine Privatsphäre haben. Meine gesamten frühen Arbeiten auszustellen, das lief meiner Intuition völlig zuwider. Kurz vor meiner Ausstellung 1992 in der Andrea Rosen Gallery irritierte mich so sehr, was ich in den Kunstwerken von mir preisgegeben hatte, dass ich plötzlich eine Gürtelrose bekam. Zum Glück wurde die Ausstellung gut aufgenommen. Danach mass ich mein Engagement für ein Kunstwerk daran, wie peinlich es mir war. Jetzt, wo ich jetzt bin, kann ich einfach nicht mehr so schreiben, wie ich damals schrieb, weil ich zu ...

CAOIMHÍN *Weil du zu befangen bist?*

SEAN Ja. Aber nicht befangen ‚aus Angst', sondern befangen, weil ich zu viel über das weiss, was ich tue. Ich verstehe es zu gut. Alles hat jetzt einen Zweck. Das ist der Grund, warum meine gegenwärtige Ausstellung bei Andrea Rosen (2004) wie eine Parodie meines früheren Ichs ist. Der Text, so wie er auf den neuen Bildern erscheint, ist wie das Echo eines früheren Geschehens, das in den fernen

Bereichen des Gehirns oder durch den Raum oder wo auch immer widerhallt.

CAOIMHÍN *Es ist kein fortlaufendes Erzählen mehr. Die Texte sind eher kurze Wörter oder Wendungen, die mehrfach übereinander gelegt werden, als würde ein Echo in graphischer Form wiedergegeben. Sie sind eher wie Wappen oder wie Embleme oder Epigramme. Sie sind also reflektierte Selbstzitate?*

SEAN Ja. Da ist sehr wenig direkt aufgeschrieben, wie ich es empfunden habe. Meine früheren Arbeiten waren nur ‚fühle und schreibe'. In dieser Ausstellung kam das meiste auf einem Stück Papier zustande, und das habe ich dann abgeschrieben. Ich habe das vorher nie bei Bildern gemacht. Auf jeden Fall ist es jetzt anders. Ich kann nicht mehr dasitzen und mich über Depression beklagen, weil es nicht stimmt.

CAOIMHÍN *Aber kam diese Erkenntnis nicht schon Mitte der Neunziger – die Erkenntnis, dass dein Publikum nicht mehr in der Lage war, dich als erfolglosen, ‚slacker' Künstler wahrzunehmen, eben weil du Erfolg hattest?*

SEAN Richtig.

CAOIMHÍN *Ich weiss, du hast immer ein Problem damit gehabt, dass man dich als ‚slacker' Künstler wahrnahm, obwohl das eine Weile deine Masche war.*

SEAN Das glaubten die Leute von mir. Das schrieben sie über mich. Aber ich war nie unzufrieden und nie pessimistisch über meine Zukunft. Ich war genau das Gegenteil. Ich hatte die feste Absicht, ein sehr fleissiger und bedeutender Künstler zu werden. Ich glaube sehr fest an mich. Das ist vermutlich für die Leute sehr schwer zu begreifen. Wie könnte jemand sonst diesen ganzen Scheiss beichten, wenn er nicht vollkommen zuversichtlich wäre? Ich habe keine Angst vor Demütigung, weil ich weiss, dass ich mich letzten Endes für nichts zu schämen brauche.

Wie sich herausstellt, war ich eigentlich nie ein ‚Slacker', aber als ich die erste Presse bekam, war das häufig so zu lesen. Da ich langsam bekannt wurde, war ich einfach so dankbar, überhaupt Presse zu bekommen, dass ich gern alles akzeptieren wollte, was sie schrieben, auch wenn es nicht stimmte. Daher war es eher so etwas wie „ja, schon gut, ich bin ein Slacker". Das war unreif von mir, denn jetzt muss ich versuchen, diesen Ruf wieder loszuwerden (lacht).

CAOIMHÍN *Es passte zu dem, was damals in der Luft lag, die ganze Geschichte mit der ‚Generation X'.*

SEAN Ja. Aber entweder bin ich dem entwachsen, oder es hat nie wirklich gestimmt. Vielleicht war es eine Mischung aus beidem.

CAOIMHÍN *Was diesen Eindruck gemacht haben könnte, war dieser Wechsel zwischen Selbstherabsetzung und Selbstgefälligkeit oder sogar Beweihräucherung, der bis heute in allen deinen längeren erzählerischen Texten vorhanden ist, meinst du nicht?*

SEAN Ich weiss nicht, ob das unbedingt typisch ist für die ‚Generation X' oder die ‚Slacker'. Die Situation der Generation X, wie Douglas Coupland sie beschrieben hat, war, dass die Generation vor mir, die geburtenstarken Jahrgänge der Nachkriegszeit, all die guten Jobs bekam, und wir wissen nicht wohin, und wir können nur Jobs in der Dienstleistungsindustrie bekommen, und nirgendwo ist für uns eine Chance voranzukommen – eine Behauptung, die ich unsinnig finde. Ich habe das nie eine Sekunde lang geglaubt. Ich fühlte mich immer befugt und fähig in meinem Beruf. Ich empfand mich als Teil einer Generation von Künstlern, die in die Kunst wieder Form bringen würden.

CAOIMHÍN *Wie? Könntest du darüber etwas sagen?*

SEAN Na, das ist genau das, was ich vorhin gesagt habe, als ich meine Texte mit den Arbeiten früherer Künstler verglich, die auch Text verwenden. Ich bringe wieder ‚Form' in die Textkunst. Ich meine ‚Form' im Sinne von ‚Persönlichkeit', ‚Menschlichkeit'. Wenn man in ein abstraktes Gemälde oder eine Skulptur wieder Form bringt, gibt man dem Werk eine bestimmte Vorstellung mit. Bei allem gebotenen Respekt vor dem Neoexpressionismus: Meine Generation war es, die das wieder populär gemacht hat. Ich habe es auf verschiedene Weise auf meine Art gemacht. Andere Künstler in meinem Alter haben es auf ihre Art gemacht.

Der Neoexpressionismus war vielleicht die erste Reaktion aus dem Bauch heraus gegen Minimalismus und Konzeptualismus, aber ich weiss, als ich das ‚Projekt' oder die ‚Aufgabe' oder die ‚Verantwortung' übernahm, die Malerei zu einer wirklich neuen Form zu führen oder zu entwickeln, da wollte ich nicht einfach nur der Geschichte etwas entgegensetzen. Ich wollte alles verwenden, was die Geschichte mir bot. Das ist der Grund, warum einer meiner Clowns, der sich allein in einer Landschaft aufhält, ebenso ein Nachfahre von Vito Acconcis SEEDBED ist, wie er der Malerei der Hudson River School entstammt und an den Antihelden aus der Literatur erinnert.

CAOIMHÍN *Vergleichst du die Wiederaufnahme von erzählenden Inhalten in den Text mit der Rückkehr zur figurativen Darstellung in der Malerei?*

SEAN Ja. Ich glaube, das war zum Teil das, was meine Texte gemacht haben. Da gab es richtige Geschichten. Da gab es Anfang und Ende. Da gab es einen Handlungsverlauf mit Höhepunkten und Wendepunkten. Da ging es um menschliche Empfindungen.

CAOIMHÍN *Um auf die Entwicklung der Form in deinen Arbeiten zurückzukommen: Wie ging es weiter, nachdem du die gelben Anwaltsblöcke aufgegeben hattest?*

SEAN Na, es gab einen Grund, warum ich das gelbe Papier aufgegeben habe. Das war mein Buch [SIC], das 1993 zunächst in einer limitierten Auflage von 250 Exemplaren bei Publicsfear Press Ltd. und 1995 dann bei Riverhead Books erschien. Dieses Buch war der Höhepunkt meiner ganzen Arbeit mit den gelben Blöcken. Es war wie eine Bombe, die in mein Leben einschlug. Es war der Punkt, wo sich alles, was wir bisher diskutiert haben, zuspitzte. Dazu gehörte das Echo, von dem ich sprach, aus dieser Sendung AN AMERICAN FAMILY, wo die Kunst auf das Leben zurückwirkt. Dazu gehörte auch die Frage, ob ich meine Offenheit unter Kontrolle hatte oder ob ich ihr Opfer war. Es erhielt Nahrung aus seelischem Kummer wie bei meinen ersten Kunsttexten und schilderte in schmerzvollen Details eine demütigende Vernarrtheit. Vor allem war es Konzeptkunst, in die wieder ‚Form' gebracht worden war. Es triefte buchstäblich vor Menschlichkeit. Es war Figuration, reduziert auf die minimale Form der Textkunst in den siebziger Jahren. [SIC] war eine sehr gelungene Verbindung zwischen meiner Kunst und meinem Leben, aber das brachte mir riesige Probleme. Sehr viele Leute fühlten sich persönlich verraten, so dass sich mir die Frage aufdrängte: Was ist wichtiger, meine Kunst oder mein Leben? Wenn ich alle lieben sollte und erwartete, dass sie mich liebten, konnte ich dann so weitermachen? Ich wurde in gewisser Weise ausgeliefert und richtig gedemütigt durch dieses Buch und sehnte mich nach dem Rückzug in eine Privatsphäre. Daher machte ich mit einer neuen Form weiter, die ich mir vorher ausgedacht hatte, wo ich schreiben konnte, was ich wollte, aber keiner es finden würde. Ich nahm eine riesige Bahn Fotokulisse und füllte sie mit Stream-of-Consciousness-Text. Da war so viel geschrieben auf diesen riesenhaften Papierbahnen, dass man beim Lesen ständig die Orientierung verlor, und das gab mir einen Ort, wo ich mich verstecken konnte. Ich habe vier von dieser Art gemacht: I SUCK. RIGHT?... FUCK YOU! (1991), ANYONE'S ORGASM (1992), HARD MALE/SOFT MALE (1993) und DINGLEBERRY SEAN (1993). Es war jedes Mal irrsinnig viel Arbeit, daher bekam ich Angst, die Bahnen könnten reissen, sie würden nicht lange halten, und damals habe ich dann riesige Stücke ungespanntes Leinen ausfindig gemacht, auf die ich meinen Text schreiben konnte, einfach weil Leinen für Ölfarbe ein bewährter, dauerhafter Bildträger ist. In der Kunst geht es mir in erster Linie um Überleben, Unsterblichkeit. Malerei hält einfach länger als Kugelschreiber auf Papier. Daher habe ich eben gemalt. Die Büchse der Pandora hatte sich geöffnet.

Zu dieser Zeit, als ich von meinem gelben Anwaltsblock auf die Textmalerei umstieg, gab es eine weitere entscheidende Entwicklung. Ich habe neun Skulpturen mit nackten, frechen Kobolden gemacht. Jede bezog sich entweder auf etwas ganz Bestimmtes in der Geschichte der Bildhauerei oder enthielt vage Anspielungen. Ich wollte damit einen Vergleich zwischen mir, dem „mit Cartoons grossgezogenen Sean des 20. Jahrhunderts", und einigen der höher geschätzten Momente der Kunstgeschichte wie Rodins JOHANNES DER TÄUFER oder Donatellos DAVID provozieren. Ich wollte unbedingt demonstrieren, dass ich beides machte und eigentlich nirgendwohin gehörte, denn so, wie ich es brachte, verdeutlichte es ja das Dilemma der Kunst in unserer Zeit.

BEATRIX *Das Dilemma der Kunst? Könntest du darüber etwas mehr sagen?*

SEAN Im Kielwasser einer Kunsterziehung, die handwerkliches Geschick im Kunstschaffen abwertete, was blieb da für uns übrig? Eine Kunst, die von ein paar alten Leuten mit Ideen aus den siebziger Jahren beherrscht wird, die übrigens wie alte Hunde auf der Schutthalde ihre Scholle bewachen, in der Mitte der Staubkreise stehend, die sie um ihre Hundehütten herum in den Boden gefurcht haben: „ZUTRITT VERBOTEN!" Ich bewundere diese Typen und was sie gemacht haben, aber ich will nicht in einer Welt festsitzen, die nur von ihren Ideen beherrscht wird oder allein auf diese beschränkt ist. Das war das Terrain meiner Kunsterziehung und wogegen ich mich wehren wollte. Weshalb die Skulpturen meiner Abschlussarbeit für den Master of Fine Arts wie Skulpturen von Ronald Bladen waren, in denen man Skateboard fahren konnte. Ich brachte in karge Kunstformen das ‚Ich' zurück. Das ist auch der Grund, warum europäische Maler aus der Zeit vor dem Zweiten Weltkrieg für mich heute eine so grosse Bedeutung haben, denn ihre Kunst war das letzte Luftschnappen, bevor die Kunst hier in Amerika in den sechziger und siebziger Jahren angeblich konzeptuell schachmatt gesetzt und minimal auf ein Nichts reduziert wurde. Die Kunst taumelt seitdem. Dies wird alles klarer werden, wenn wir über das reden, was ich gegen Ende der Neunziger gemacht habe und was ich jetzt vorhabe.

Zur Begleitung dieser Skulpturen habe ich ein Video mit dem Titel ITALIAN HIGH RENAISSANCE AND BAROQUE SCULPTURE (1993) gemacht, das mich nackt und in verschiedenen Stadien der Erregung zeigt, während ich die Pose berühmter italienischer Skulpturen imitiere. Wieder dachte ich dabei an Gilbert & George, ich wollte eine lebende, atmende, agierende Skulptur auf Video zwischen meinen eigentlichen Skulpturen haben. Aber was noch wichtiger ist, ich begann mich mit dem Begriff Narzissmus auseinanderzusetzen. Ich war der Ansicht, alle Kunst sei ‚Narzissmus'. Denn wenn jemand glaubt, das Ding, das er gemacht hat, sei Aufmerksamkeit, Jubel, Geld wert und werde über alle Zeiten hinweg

von kommenden Generationen in Ehren gehalten, so ist das im Grunde narzisstisch! In diesem Video habe ich versucht, das als Idee und in Wirklichkeit zu zeigen. Ich meine damit, man kann keine Erektion vortäuschen.

CAOIMHÍN *Um auf deine Gemälde zurückzukommen, sobald du also beschliesst, diesen Text nicht auf billiges Wegwerfmaterial zu schreiben, sondern auf Leinwand, klinkst du dich in eine sehr weit ausschwingende Geschichte der Bildgestaltung ein, der bildenden Kunst, der Beständigkeit der Materialien und so fort.*

SEAN Richtig.

CAOIMHÍN *Das war dir offensichtlich damals klar.*

SEAN Ja, bestimmt. Aber es sind verschiedene Dinge, die ich damals anzusprechen versucht habe, und am wenigsten wichtig war mir vermutlich die ‚Geschichte der Malerei'. Es war wirklich eine Frage der Ästhetik der Notwendigkeit. Anders ausgedrückt, so wie das Ding aussah, das war das, was der Vorgang daraus gemacht hatte. Ich habe das Aussehen dieser Sachen nicht vorausgeplant. Sie sind einfach zufällig so geworden, denn ich wollte jeden Gedanken festhalten, der mir durch den Kopf ging, während ich das Bild auf seine Oberfläche malte.

Daher war das eine ganz andere Art des Schreibens als bei dem Zeug auf den gelben Anwaltsblöcken. Ich dachte, es sei eine ganze Evolution weit weg. Von der Idee her war es im Wesentlichen immer und immer wieder „Kilroy was here". Ich hielt das deshalb für so wichtig, weil ich glaube, das ist es, was Kunst in der Zivilisation ist. Im Grunde ist es wirklich nur so, dass man seine Marke setzt.

CAOIMHÍN *Und sagt „ich war hier"?*

SEAN Ja, „ich war hier". Seit den Grotten von Lascaux, als die Menschen Pigment um ihren Handabdruck herum auf die Wand der Höhle bliesen, versucht das Kunstschaffen, das Leben oder die Existenz des Künstlers aufzuzeichnen. Die ganze Geschichte der westlichen Kunst hindurch bis heute, wo das Kunstschaffen so selbstreferentiell geworden ist, macht ‚ich war hier' einen grossen Teil davon aus. Das ist, was ich so sehr an On Kawara und Arbeiten dieser Art bewundere.

CAOIMHÍN *„Ich lebe noch." „Ich war hier"?*

SEAN „Ich lebe noch, ich bin hier." Aber meine grossen Textgemälde haben diese Idee noch ein ganzes Stück weitergeführt und dir genau die gleichen Gedanken gegeben, die ich zu dem Zeitpunkt hatte, als ich das Bild malte. Daher sage ich dir nicht nur „ich lebe noch", ich sage dir, was ich gedacht habe, als ich lebte. Vom Anfang des Bildes bis zum Ende ist alles, was ich gedacht habe und hätte aufschreiben können, aufgezeichnet worden. Das ist ein Konzept von On Kawara, das ich ein ganzes Stück vertieft habe.

CAOIMHÍN *Das ist insofern interessant, als die Arbeiten etwas Unmittelbares haben, aber sie vermitteln auch den Eindruck, dass in Echtzeit erzählt wird, was wiederum etwas ganz anderes ist, als wenn man ein Buch liest.*

SEAN Richtig. Weil eben alles eine Performance ist.

CAOIMHÍN *Eine Performance von Unmittelbarkeit, was ein Trick ist, eine Strategie, mit der das Publikum aufgefordert wird, diese Gedanken in der gleichen Zeit – in Echtzeit – zu haben, wie du sie ursprünglich hattest, wenn du alles festhältst, was du denkst, und nichts auslässt.*

SEAN Richtig.

CAOIMHÍN *Aber das enthält natürlich auch Anklänge an die Geschichte des Stream of Consciousness in der modernistischen Literatur.*

SEAN Ja, sicher. Diese Stream-of-Consciousness-Bilder wie DUMB DUMB (1993) oder FOR THE LOVE OF NOTHING (1994) oder THOUGHT BUBBLE (1994) sind sehr gross und schwierig zu lesen. Du fängst auf der linken Seite an, und während du den ganzen Weg nach rechts zurücklegst, verlierst du die Orientierung und findest dich nicht mehr zurecht. Während du liest, kannst du also nur diese bruchstückhaften Gedanken erfassen. Schliesslich wollte ich dann mehr Kontrolle darüber haben, was ich erlebe und empfinde. So sind diese ‚Zettelbilder' entstanden.

CAOIMHÍN *Du meinst damit Bilder wie SELF-SOMETHING (1994).*

SEAN Richtig. Sie sehen ganz danach aus, als stünde ich auf einer Bühne und wollte dir so viel Unterhaltung wie möglich bieten, während ich im Grunde genommen ein Bild menschlicher Gedanken gebe. Ich nehme also eine sehr viel herausfordernde Rolle an, indem ich aktiv versuche, alle zu unterhalten, die vor dem Bild stehen. Ich will nicht, dass der Betrachter weggeht. Diese kleinen ‚Zette' sind gerade genug zum Lesen, und vielleicht animieren sie dich, noch einen zu lesen. Einer von zehn bringt dich hoffentlich zum Schmunzeln oder Lachen, und wenn du weiterliest, gewinnst du hoffentlich allmählich ein grösseres Bild.

CAOIMHÍN *Das ist der Unterschied zwischen einem sehr langen Monolog und vielen Epigrammen.*

SEAN Ja.

CAOIMHÍN *Monolog und Epigramm sind völlig verschiedene Ausdrucksmittel.*

SEAN Hauptsächlich ist das der Unterschied zwischen einem Monologredner und einem Komödianten. Während der Komödiant Hunderte von Witzen am Stück erzählt, zeichnet er letzten

Endes allmählich ein Portrait von sich. Wenn du hundert Arschwitze hörst, sagst du dir nach einer Weile, „aha, der Typ hat einen Analfimmel". Es wird irgendwie unheimlich. Wenn du also alles liest, was auf dem Gemälde geschrieben ist, wird von mir ein Bild aufgebaut, das ich nicht unter Kontrolle habe. Jetzt kommen wir zu der Tatsache, dass alle ernsthaft geschaffene Kunst im Grunde eine Produktion von Selbstportraits ist.

CAOIMHÍN *Wie der Titel SELF-SOMETHING andeutet.*

SEAN Ja.

CAOIMHÍN *Gleich danach tauchen zwischen den Wörtern ganz bestimmte Figuren auf.*

SEAN Na ja, nicht ganz, da stand noch ein Endspiel mit den unaufgezogenen Textbildern aus. Nachdem ich anderthalb Jahre lang viele Leinwände vollgeschrieben hatte, war ich die Schreiberei leid und wollte sie auch nicht mehr sehen. Daher löste ich eine absichtliche Schreibblockade aus, indem ich eine Weile Streifenbilder malte. Ich hatte eine Ausstellung bei Regen Projects in Los Angeles, für die ich ein riesiges Textbild mit dem Titel THOUGHT BUBBLE gemacht hatte. Davon erschöpft, malte ich Streifen auf meine nächsten Leinwände, als wäre es Urlaub für den Geist, und nannte das erste Bild ABSENCE OF THOUGHT BUBBLE (1994). Das war auch die Ausstellung, wo zum ersten Mal Clown und Schimpanse als Skulptur auftauchten.

CAOIMHÍN *Also danach tauchten Figuren in deinen Textbildern auf?*

SEAN Ja. Das erste war das Bild mit dem Titel I'M A CLOWN IN A WORLD OF CHIMPS (1994), wo ein Clown und ein Schimpanse miteinander kämpfen, und zwei andere Bilder, GROOVIN' CORDUROY MIND-SNOT/7092 (1994) und STARING AT MY ASS IN THE MIRROR (1994), die ich in gewisser Weise unter dem Einfluss von Picabia gemalt habe. Das dürften die ersten Bilder gewesen sein, bei denen ich Figuren einsetzen oder verwenden wollte. Sie gehörten zu meiner Ausstellung 1994 in der Galerie Contemporary Fine Arts in Berlin. Es gab nur drei Gemälde und eine Skulptur von einem Schimpansen unter dem Titel ICH MACHE MICH (1994). Ich hielt diese Ausstellung für besonders wichtig, weil ich mit allen Kräften versucht hatte, in den Bereich einer traditionelleren und weniger konzeptuellen Form des Bildschaffens zu gelangen.

CAOIMHÍN *Das waren sehr versteckte Bezüge auf Picabia.*

SEAN GROOVIN' CORDUROY MIND-SNOT/7092 bezog sich auf sein Bild mit dem Titel 7091 (1938), das eine Parodie auf die Abstraktion ist. Die ganzen Bilder, die ich in dieser Art habe – wo ein Gekritzel ist und alle angrenzenden Bereiche, die durch das Gekritzel geschaffen werden, verschiedenfarbig sind – darunter auch Figuren, die sich überschneiden und die ich von Picasso entlehnt habe –, gehören zu meiner ‚Picabia 7091-Serie', wie ich sie nenne. Sie sind, wie bei ihm, eine Parodie auf die Abstraktion, aber wie bei allen ironischen Gesten wird Ernst daraus, sobald sie sich wiederholt. Sie haben alle einen Titel, der von ‚709-' an weiterzählt. Ich bin jetzt vielleicht bei 7099 oder 7100 in dieser fortlaufenden Serie. Aber sie sind bisher alle unterschiedlich. Manche sind Streifenbilder, manche sind ‚Picasso-Gemälde' und manche sind Textbilder. Picabia ist, wenn ich es recht bedenke, der einzige Künstler, der von Anfang bis Ende in seinem künstlerischen Schaffen völlig frei war. Er verwendete viele verschiedene Medien und Formen und war in allen grossartig. Er verkörpert Freiheit für mich. Wenn ich mich bei meinen Bildern auf ihn beziehe, dann kopiere ich nicht so sehr ihr Aussehen, sondern zitiere ihn eher indirekt, als eine Art Symbol für meine eigene künstlerische Freiheit, die, wie ich meine, für mein Überleben unbedingt notwendig ist.

Als ich I'M A CLOWN IN A WORLD OF CHIMPS malte, hatte ich gerade noch einmal gelesen, was ich im Laufe einiger Jahre geschrieben hatte, und aufgefallen war mir dabei das wiederkehrende Muster aus Selbsterhöhung und Selbsterniedrigung. Dieses gedankliche Muster war fast so etwas wie ein Perpetuum mobile geworden, aus dem Inhalte und Metaphern herausgewirbelt wurden. Also gab ich beiden Form und Charakter. Der Schimpanse war Selbsterhöhung, und der Clown war Selbsterniedrigung. Das ist der Grund, warum der Schimpanse bei jedem einzelnen Cartoon auf diesem Bild besser abschneidet als der Clown.

CAOIMHÍN *Du hast einmal gesagt, du interessiertest dich deshalb für Picabia oder später Picasso, weil du zu den grossen Künstlern wie sie gezählt werden möchtest.*

SEAN Ich habe das bei einer Aufzeichnung gesagt, einer Audioarbeit mit dem Titel DEAR PICASSO (2001).

CAOIMHIN *Also sollte das im Kontext eines bestimmten Kunstwerkes verstanden werden und nicht als öffentliche Erklärung eines Künstlers?*

SEAN Ja. Mir ist vollkommen klar, wenn ich so etwas sage, dann finden das alle, die es hören, irgendwie traurig und allerliebst. Diese bestimmte Arbeit ist für mich ein ausgezeichnetes Beispiel dafür, dass ich selbst meine, was ich sage, aber merke, dass es für andere nicht glaubhaft ist. Ich habe von niemandem erwartet, dass er glaubt, „Sean ist Picasso" oder „er denkt, er wird der nächste Picasso". Aber ich bin überzeugt, ein anderer Künstler kann den Wunsch oder das Gedankenmuster verstehen.

Das macht einen grossen Teil meiner Kunst aus: Ich führe eine peinliche Situation wie diese vor und hoffe, dass der Betrachter sich hineinversetzen kann.

CAOIMHÍN *Du zeigst einen vielleicht umfassenderen Ehrgeiz, als andere Künstler willens sind, öffentlich einzugestehen.*

SEAN Richtig. Ich meine, das ist ein Zeichen von Stärke. Wenn du dieses Band zum ersten Mal hörst, dann denkst du „oh, wie traurig und pathetisch". Aber tatsächlich empfand ich das als kühne und gewaltige Angelegenheit. Ich fürchte mich nicht vor meinen Träumen (lacht). Selbst wenn ich weiss, dass einige von ihnen ausser Reichweite sind. Ich meine, dass ich wirklich wichtig sein will. Ich will diese Vorstellung nicht aufgeben. Ich sage nur, dass ich nicht verrückt bin. Ich weiss, es gibt da gewisse Sachen an Picasso, die … (Pause). Nein, ich kann es nicht sagen. Tut mir leid. Ich werde es nicht sagen (lacht). Du weisst, was ich meine. Du weisst, dass ich nicht sagen werde, ich bin kein grosser Künstler. Werde ich nicht. Ich glaube es nicht.

CAOIMHÍN *Aber das Bildzitat von Picabia und die Performance der Rolle eines Künstlers, der unbedingt Picasso werden will, sind recht verschieden.*

SEAN Ich glaube, sie haben insofern etwas miteinander zu tun, als sie sich auf andere Künstler beziehen und mir eine neue Bedeutung schaffen sollen. Ich bewundere Picasso, weil er ohne Frage ein Genie war. Ich beneide ihn darum. Wenn ich ihn zitiere, dann spiele ich auf den Begriff des künstlerischen Genies an. Ich bewundere Picabia, weil er sein ganzes Leben lang schöpferische Freiheit bewiesen hat. Auch ich brauche Freiheit, ich muss mich ständig verändern, damit ich Lust habe, Kunst zu schaffen. Die Leute sind im Allgemeinen einhellig der Meinung, ich könnte genau so frei sein, wie er war. Der Unterschied ist, dass er sich das leisten konnte, er hatte Geld von der Familie (lacht). Aber weisst du, was es speziell bei Picabia war? Ich brauchte Hilfe, um ein Gemälde zu machen, weil ich aus einem Meer von Texten kam, zweidimensionalen graphischen Bildern. Ich suchte Hilfe in der Kunstgeschichte, um vom Text aus eine neue Art Bild zu schaffen. Daher benutzte ich Picabia. Später benutzte ich andere Dinge … zum Beispiel Brüste (Lachen).

CAOIMHÍN *Möchtest du etwas über das ‚Brustbild' sagen: THE ETHER OF MEMORY (1994)?*

SEAN Was soll ich dazu sagen? Wenn du etwas malen willst, dann male, was du liebst! Das klingt so dumm, aber es ist ehrlich.

CAOIMHÍN *Das war 1994, in einer Zeit, als überwältigend füllige Brüste für einen weissen, männlichen Künstler vermutlich das unpopulärste Thema waren, das du dir hättest aussuchen können.*

SEAN Genau. Das war eine Provokation. Eher in der Art Lausebengel, gar nicht mal skandalös oder anstössig. Sollen wir vielleicht sagen politisch? Es war einfach so tabu in diesen reflexhaft reagierenden politisch korrekten Zeiten, dass ich nicht widerstehen konnte. Die Abwertung der Frau zum Objekt ist nichts, worauf sich stolz sein liesse. Aber ich habe nie geglaubt, Frauen könnten den Männern nicht vollkommen ebenbürtig sein. Gleichzeitig zu glauben, dass ‚aufgeklärte' Männer den Frauenkörper nicht zum Fetisch erheben, ist verrückt. Natürlich tun wir das.

CAOIMHÍN *Was bedeutet der Titel THE ETHER OF MEMORY?*

SEAN Brüste in der Erinnerung, bis zur Befriedigung sinnlicher Lust, auf einer Ebene. Wenn du diesen Text liest, es geht darin um meine Abstammung mütterlicherseits, so weit zurück, wie ich mir das vorstellen konnte. Ich bin Maler, weil meine Grossmutter Malerin war und meine Mutter Malerin ist. Als Kind ging ich immer zu meiner Grossmutter hinüber zum Malen. Sie hatte riesengrosse Dinger, und jedes Mal, wenn ich hinüberging, umarmte sie mich und drückte mich genau dazwischen, bevor wir hinauf unters Dach in ihr Atelier gingen. Das gehörte zu den lustvollsten Erlebnissen. Ich liebte es. Also ging es um meinen Ursprung als Künstler aus den mütterlichen Brüsten.

FOOTBALL DUCK (2003), die Bronzeskulptur, und FOOTBALL DUCK (1999), das Gemälde, haben auch damit zu tun. Der Fussballplatz, wo wir trainierten, war direkt neben dem Haus meiner Grossmutter. Ich hasste es so sehr, zum Fussballtraining gehen zu müssen, dass ich einfach schwänzte und zu ihr zum Malen ging. Da sass ich dann vor der Staffelei mit meinen Schulterpolstern und Nockenschuhen und malte Geranien, während meine Mannschaftskameraden draussen trainierten. Diese Arbeiten sind Portraits des Konflikts zwischen ‚männlicher Sportlichkeit' und ‚weiblichem Künstlertum' in meiner Selbstwahrnehmung als Jugendlicher.

CAOIMHÍN *Was war der nächste Schritt nach THE ETHER OF MEMORY?*

SEAN Der nächste grosse Schritt war meine Schimpansenausstellung, 1995 in der Andrea Rosen Gallery. Ich hatte, als mich ein Schimpanse in meinem Atelier besuchte, Gemälde, eine Skulptur und ein Video gemacht. Ich hoffte, der Schimpanse würde mich vertreten oder als mein Ebenbild herhalten. Das war die Zeit, als die Dinge wirklich in Gang kamen.

Mit der Malerlaubnis, die ich von Picabia erhalten hatte, konnte nun wirklich alles auf die Leinwand kommen, einschliesslich der Spuren, die ein Schimpanse hinterliess. Ich war nicht einfach nur auf das beschränkt, was mir zu schreiben einfiel. Ich konnte Figuren machen und Illusion verwenden, und das bedeutete, ich konnte überhaupt alles machen,

überallhin gehen innerhalb des Rechtecks eines Gemäldes. Es stellt sich heraus, dass die älteste Form der Kunst, die Malerei, die echteste Freiheit der Kunst ist, und danach suchte ich.

Bei dem Gemälde LOOKING FOR MR. GODBAR (1995) fliesst der Text über einen illusionistischen blauen Wolkenhimmel. Das Geschriebene nahm plötzlich einen tatsächlich vorhandenen, keinen imaginären Raum ein. Es sollte so aussehen, als schautest du im Flugzeug aus dem Fenster, in 8000 Meter Höhe. Wenn du nicht gerade ein Buch liest oder mit dem Film beschäftigt bist, dann sind dort deine Gedanken ungewöhnlich laut. Ich erinnerte mich an diese Art Gedanken und an diese Art des Denkens. Für mich wird Gott ein Thema...

CAOIMHÍN *Gott wird ein Thema, aber auf eine eher irdische Art, mit dieser Vorstellung von einem sich weithin erstreckenden Himmel bei LOOKING FOR MR. GODBAR, das gilt auch für die Geschichte des Erhabenen, von der romantischen Landschaftsmalerei des 19. Jahrhunderts bis zur abstrakten Erhabenheit und darüber hinaus.*

SEAN Ja. Ganz bestimmt. Es war genau das. Die Hudson River School. Eine kleine, unbedeutende Figur in erhabener Landschaft. Was ich da geschrieben habe, war in der Tat transzendent. Und das ist es, worauf alle diese Leute aus waren...

CAOIMHÍN *Oder ein Seestück wie 36 HOURS (1995)?*

SEAN Ja, ganz bestimmt, das auch. Aber das hatte noch etwas Besonderes. Ich begann damals, viele Bücher mit Überlebensgeschichten zu lesen, über Leute auf Rettungsflössen, nachdem ihre Schiffe im Meer versunken waren, oder einsame Weltumsegler, die unterwegs irgendwie den Verstand verloren. Statt also im Flugzeug aus dem Fenster zu sehen, stellte ich mich auf dieser Reise vor. Und wenn man so lange dermassen deutlich seinen Gedanken lauscht – ich habe auf diese Weise so viele Leinwände gefüllt –, dann dauert es nicht lange, wenigstens bei mir nicht, bis man zu dieser „warum sind wir hier"-Frage kommt, die einfach immer wieder auftaucht.

CAOIMHÍN *Bald danach auf Bildern wie ALONE (1996), das sich formal auf 36 HOURS bezieht, verlierst du das Textelement bei den Bildern.*

SEAN Ja. Und genau da verliere ich mein Publikum (lacht). Eigentlich nicht, aber ich hatte das Gefühl, keiner hat es so richtig verstanden. ALONE ist übrigens nie ausgestellt worden. Viele andere Clownbilder aus dieser Zeit waren allerdings in der Galerie Contemporary Fine Arts in Berlin (1996) und in der Galerie Rebecca Camhi in Athen (1996) zu sehen. ALONE zeigt einen pastos gemalten Clown zu einem illusionistischen Seestück, der den Text aus einem Bild wie NAVAL GAZE (1995) oder 36 HOURS unmittelbar ersetzte. Ich liebte dieses Bild. Ich wurde so high vom Malen, dass ich es immer wieder neu malen wollte. Daher wurde aus diesen Bildern mit den traurigen, einsamen Clowns, die sich in der Natur abmühen, eine ganze Serie, die dann vermutlich in meinem Leben eine neue Bedeutung annahm.

Bis dahin war alles, was ich gemacht hatte, erstaunlich gut aufgenommen worden. Ich rede von den äusseren Dingen, die mit Karriere zu tun haben, die sich einfach mit jeder Ausstellung, die ich machte, besser anfühlten. Als ich den Text aus meinen Bildern entfernte, gab es plötzlich riesige Probleme. Kein Mensch wusste etwas mit ihnen anzufangen. Das, worauf sich die Leute offensichtlich bei meiner Kunst verlassen hatten – das Geschriebene auf einem Bild –, war nicht mehr da. Ich fühlte mich missverstanden. Schreiben war für mich nur einer von vielen Wegen, in eine konzeptuell begründete Kunst wieder Form zu bringen. Es war nicht das A und O.

Als ich dann begann, mehr ewig traurig stimmende Clowns zu machen, dann waren sie deswegen traurig, weil ich sie malte und kein Mensch sie zu verstehen schien. Es wurde eine Art konzeptuelle Todesspirale. Je mehr ich machte, desto schlimmer schien es und desto trauriger wurden die Clowns. Was ich rasend komisch fand, wenn ich in meinem Atelier sass und mit Freunden darüber diskutierte, aber es war auch traurig. Ich dachte, eines Tages würde das eine meiner beliebtesten Werkfolgen und eine meiner Lieblingsgeschichten sein. Und es ist tatsächlich so. Wie meine Frau immer gleich hinzufügt, wenn ich über diese Serie jammere, sie hat sich als eine meiner populärsten erwiesen.

CAOIMHÍN *Es ist interessant, dass in deinem Schaffen zu gewissen Zeiten das Schwergewicht – manchmal buchstäblich – auf der Signatur liegt, zum Beispiel bei dem Diptychon SEAN LANDERS/7098 (2001). Zu anderen Zeiten fehlt hingegen die Kennzeichnung durch eine Signatur, was bis zu diesem bestimmten Zeitpunkt das Geschriebene auf den Bildern war.*

SEAN Ich glaube, es ist bei allen Künstlern ein natürlicher Reflex, dass sie sich einer Definition zu entziehen versuchen. Aber ich hatte das Gefühl, dass der Clown diese Signatur wurde. Frustriert hat mich damals vielleicht, dass ich meinte, diese ‚neue Signatur' sei das Gleiche wie meine Texte.

CAOIMHÍN *Ich vermute, die Leute wollten es nicht als das Gleiche akzeptieren.*

SEAN Vielleicht glaubten sie, mir fehle das Geschick oder die Erlaubnis, ‚einfach' ein Bild oder was

zu malen. So viele Künstler malen heutzutage auf eine sehr viel lahmere Art als ich damals und werden dafür gelobt. Es war vermutlich einfach die falsche Zeit, oder es war das ganz bestimmte Emblem, der Clown.

CAOIMHÍN *Du meinst, die Leute haben sich vielleicht damals gesagt, dass ein kaum älterer Künstler wie George Condo den Markt mit Beschlag belegt hatte?*

SEAN Nein, ich bin nicht mit George Condo verglichen worden.

CAOIMHÍN *Wirklich nicht?*

SEAN Nein. Na ja, nicht dass ich wüsste oder mich erinnerte. Und es wäre auch nicht berechtigt gewesen. Was ich damals machte, war anders. Er gehört allerdings zu meinen heute lebenden Lieblingsmalern.

CAOIMHÍN *Dann vielleicht Nauman? Obwohl das weniger offensichtlich ist, weil er kein Maler ist.*

SEAN Sie stellten mich zu Nauman, weil mich vermutlich auch niemand als Maler sah. Ich bekam so viel ‚Nauman', und die Wahrheit ist, dass ich mich überhaupt nie um ihn gekümmert habe. Selbst wenn du als Künstler nur rein zufällig über eine alte Nauman-Idee stolperst, schon fällt die ‚Nauman-Lobby' unflätig über dich her. Leute tauchen aus dem Nichts auf und erzählen dir ‚Nauman hat das zuerst gemacht', auch wenn das gar nicht stimmt. Was sagt das über ihre Kenntnisse in Kunstgeschichte, wenn sie glauben, Bruce Nauman habe die Idee mit den Clowns in der Kunst erfunden? Er war auch nicht der Erste, der Nabelschau gehalten hat. Dass Künstler sich über Kreativität Gedanken machen, hatte schon eine umfassende Geschichte, bevor er auftauchte. Ich glaube, sie sahen mich schlicht und einfach als Konzeptkünstler, und weil ich diese Scheuklappen trug, wirkte ich wohl so wie Nauman. Das Verrückte ist, dass nie jemand gedacht hat, das könnten Gemälde sein. Das ist das Erstaunliche. Bis heute glauben die Leute immer noch nicht, dass ich Maler bin. Ich habe doch nun wirklich wahnsinnig viele Bilder gemalt.

CAOIMHÍN *Und was dachten die Leute, was das wäre?*

SEAN Sie hielten das für einen Akt der Konzeptkunst. Ein Ölgemälde als Performance. Na schön, aber wenn der Tag um war, musste ich doch tatsächlich Farbe aus einer Tube spritzen und mit dem Pinsel auftragen. Es ist ein Gemälde!

CAOIMHÍN *Die Unterscheidung war vermutlich Ende der achtziger Jahre eher angebracht, weil die ganze Wiederkehr der Malerei, die ein Jahrzehnt vorher stattgefunden hatte, ob sie nun positiv oder negativ aufgenommen wurde, zum Teil als Reaktion auf die Konzeptkunst aufgefasst worden war. Daher wurden die Malerei per se und die Konzeptkunst damals wohl eher als Gegensätze verstanden. Auf jeden Fall hat dich die anfängliche negative Reaktion der Kritik nicht davon abgehalten, weiter zu malen. Was hat sie innerhalb deiner Malerei bewirkt?*

SEAN Sie hat mich noch mehr Clowns malen lassen, die in extremeren physischen Situationen noch trauriger werden. Das ist der Grund, warum ich finde, dass diese bewusste Serie für mein gesamtes Schaffen eine so zentrale Bedeutung hat. Es ist immer noch reflektiertes Schreiben, aber da gibt es keinen Text im eigentlichen Sinn. Ich bin es, der sich darüber Gedanken macht, wie ich aufgenommen werde, aber durch diese Cartoons.

BEATRIX *Aber kommt nicht mit der Clownfigur eine Art kollektives Bewusstsein ins Spiel? Ich frage mich, ob du einfach so sagen kannst, es geht um dich. Das ist von Natur aus ein kollektives Erlebnis. Du kannst so viel über dich reden, wie du willst, aber das Gefühl wird geteilt. Misserfolg ist ein Gefühl, das geteilt wird, oder der Wunsch, berühmt zu sein oder zu überdauern.*

SEAN Ja, und das gehörte zu meinen frühen Überraschungen. Als ich diese verletzbare Seite von mir zeigte, da wurde das durch die Einfühlung und das Verständnis der anderen belohnt. Es stellt sich heraus, dass die meisten Menschen gleich gesinnt sind. Das ist die Achse, auf der meine Arbeit stattfindet und immer stattgefunden hat. Ich versuche, den Betrachter zu erreichen, indem ich ihm etwas ausgesprochen Persönliches gebe, das er in sich selbst wiederfindet. Wie das Vito Acconci in jener Performance in den siebziger Jahren gemacht hat, als er auf einer Pier Menschen, die sich zu ihm auf den Weg machten, Geheimnisse zuflüsterte. Ich habe jedoch herausgefunden, dass ein Kunstwerk nicht immer hundertprozentig wahr sein muss, um überzeugend zu wirken. Bei einem Hollywood-Film zum Beispiel merkt man, dass die ganze Sache lächerlich und absurd ist, aber da gibt es kurze Augenblicke von etwas, was vollkommen real erscheint, was du wieder erkennst und was den ganzen Film überzeugend macht. Zuzus Rosenblätter zum Beispiel aus Frank Capras IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE. Das ist genauso bei einer Arbeit mit Text. Ich kann das ganze Ding hindurch allen möglichen Scheiss schreiben und habe trotzdem ein paar Momente, die über den Scheiss hinausgehen und dich tatsächlich mit ihrer Wahrheit berühren, und das macht das ganze Ding überzeugend. Ich habe sehr früh gelernt, dass ich dabei nicht nur mich portraitierte, und das war ein Glück. Sonst hätte es wohl nur bestätigt, dass ich verrückt bin.

CAOIMHÍN *Kehren wir zum Begriff der Signatur und den Emblemen der Signatur zurück. Die Ausführung der Signatur in einer sich wiederholenden Komposition ist etwas, was zum Herzstück der Kunst des 20. Jahrhunderts gehört, sogar zu der Art von Malerei, die deine Arbeit nicht besonders beeinflusst hat. Das Erste, was ein Jackson Pollock uns heute sagt, ist „das ist ein Jackson Pollock".*

SEAN Richtig. Und ich habe meine Warenzeichen-Signatur. Das ist der Text auf der Leinwand. Sie ist ähnlich wie bei Pollock mein Signaturträger. Wenn jemand anderes so etwas macht, dann dringt er in mein ‚Revier' ein. Mir ist, als gehörte mir das. Wenn ich eine Signatur habe, dann ist es diese. Und sie schafft die Einheit aller meiner Arbeiten, von Anfang an bis jetzt.

CAOIMHÍN *Wenn also die Karten der jüngsten Kunstgeschichte gemischt werden, was glaubst du, in welche Beziehung wird deine Arbeit auf diesem ‚Signaturträger' zu dem Werk von Künstlern gesetzt werden, die so verschieden sind wie Ed Ruscha oder Christopher Wool?*

SEAN Ich bewundere diese beiden Künstler. Ich begrüsse alle Vergleiche mit ihnen, aber ich weiss auch mit Sicherheit, dass mein Werk im Vergleich zu ihrem oder dem Schaffen anderer Künstler etwas ganz Eigenes ist. Es ist immer nur ein kurzer Moment, dass ich mit ihnen verglichen werden kann. Es gibt so viele Künstler, mit denen ich kurz verglichen werden kann, aber dann gehe ich weiter. Ich kümmere mich nicht um sie, bevor ich anfange. Es passiert einfach, dass es so oder in gewisser Weise ähnlich aussieht, aber wenn es Absicht ist, wirst du das erfahren, weil ich darüber schreibe. So wie ich das bei Hamsun, Kawara, Acconci, Magritte, Picabia, Picasso, Hogarth usw. getan habe.

CAOIMHÍN *Obwohl du den Text auf der Leinwand als deine Signatur beanspruchst, hast du doch um 1996 herum den Text absichtlich aufgegeben, um das zu schaffen, was du jetzt bockig zu deinen Lieblingsbildern zählst, wie du vorhin gesagt hast!*

SEAN Richtig. Aber du nimmst an, ich wäre der einzige Richter, der über meine Signatur zu befinden hätte. In Wahrheit legen das andere Leute für uns fest. Ich habe auch gesagt, dass wir Künstler uns gern der Definition entziehen und dass ich frei sein muss, das zu tun, was ich will und wann immer ich es will, wie Picabia. Man kann nur das gut machen, was man gern macht. Alles andere wird mittelmässig. Ich wollte vorhin noch sagen, dass die Freiheit, nicht zu schreiben, nachdem ich so viele Jahre geschrieben hatte, mir vorkam, als hätte ich mir ein riesiges Gewicht vom Hals geschafft. Ich war es einfach so leid geworden, meine Gedanken zu hören. Es wurde nach einer Weile richtig beängstigend eng. Die Freiheit, einfach ein Bild zu malen, das war wie „o mein Gott, alle anderen, die das machen, haben es so einfach. Warum muss ich den Stein den Berg hinaufschieben? Muss ich nicht". Allerdings habe ich schnell gelernt, dass ich doch musste. Zumindest mein Publikum hat es erwartet. Ich weiss nicht, warum es den Leuten so unangenehm ist, wenn ein Künstler sich oder seine ‚Signatur' verändert. Anfangs wandte ich mich an Picabia, um einen Ausweg zu finden. Jetzt suche ich manchmal bei ihm Trost, ein bisschen. Das ist der Grund, warum ich symbolisch auf ihn verweise. Er ist fast wie eine Vaterfigur oder so etwas für mich. Er versichert mir irgendwie, dass es in Ordnung ist, sich zu verändern, und dass ich tue, was ich tun muss.

CAOIMHÍN *Es ist vermutlich unter Künstlern deiner Generation der Neunziger verbreiteter als bei früheren Generationen, einen Signaturstil zu haben, der letztendlich darin besteht, dass man eine Menge verschiedener Sachen macht, um es banal auszudrücken.*

SEAN Na ja, einem einzigen Stil lebenslänglich in die Falle zu gehen, scheint einfach ein Elend zu sein. Wie kannst du dich selber ernst nehmen, wenn du das machst? Nicht einmal Pollock hat das gemacht. Er hatte ebenfalls ein weites Arbeitsfeld. Was wir gemeinhin von ihm wissen, ist das eine, aber wenn du ihn unter einem breiteren Blickwinkel siehst, dann ist an diesem Typen sehr viel mehr dran. Er war mutig genug, viele Formen auszuprobieren.

CAOIMHÍN *Der Grund, warum sich manche Leute für ein Vorgehen entscheiden, das alles andere als abwechslungsreich ist, ich vermute, was sie am stärksten treibt, das ist ein Akt der Negierung oder Verfeinerung, der die gleiche Form hervorbringen muss. Und sie finden sie immer und immer wieder, statt auf Abwechslung zu bestehen.*

SEAN Das halte ich wirklich für fragwürdig. Denn als Praktiker weiss ich, wie schnell sich das abwetzt. Und zu glauben, nur etwas zu verbessern, könnte auf lange Sicht für jemanden interessant sein ... na, ich stelle da einfach ihre Neugier in Frage. Wenn wir annehmen, dass Neugier für Intelligenz steht, wie intelligent sind sie dann? Immer weiter das gleiche Ergebnis herauszuleiern, ist hoffnungslos feige. Das ist absolut traurig. Und doch scheint es das zu sein, was die Kunstwelt besonders grosszügig belohnt. Es ist, als sei das System auf einem Stand angekommen, wo Mittelmässigkeit gefördert wird.

CAOIMHÍN *Aber vielleicht kann man neugierig sein und trotzdem ausfeilen, statt neugierig zu sein und verschiedene Sachen zu machen. Es ist eben nur nicht dein Weg.*

SEAN Als Praktiker habe ich da meine Zweifel.

CAOIMHÍN *Du meinst also, Agnes Martin oder Robert Ryman sollten es einmal mit dem Clown versuchen?*

SEAN Ja (lacht). Robert Ryman ist ein ausgezeichnetes Beispiel. Er hätte mich holen sollen, damit ich darüber schreibe (Lachen). Na ja, es gibt Diskussionen über des Kaisers neue Kleider, und vielleicht ist keiner besser geeignet als Robert Ryman. Ich weiss, was für eine Debatte das in Gang setzen könnte, aber letzten Endes malt er immer wieder weisse Bilder. Was meinst du? Bist du vollkommen begeistert von dem Zeug von Robert Ryman? Manche Sachen sind schön, vermute ich. Aber das ist Stuck wohl auch. Das Gleiche gilt für Ad Reinhardt. In vielerlei Hinsicht haben diese beiden Leute

die Malerei scheinbar schachmatt gesetzt. Sie war völlig unberechtigt. Sie hat nicht existiert. Die Malerei war angeblich tot, und sie hatten sie angeblich umgebracht. Die unmittelbare Reaktion darauf war der Photorealismus. Und was kam danach? Der Neoexpressionismus? Und dann kam Neo-Geo, und was dann …? Nichts? Offensichtlich gab es viele untote Ausnahmen in dieser Zeit, darunter Martin Kippenberger und George Condo, um zwei meiner Lieblinge zu nennen. Aber wenn die Malerei tatsächlich allmählich ‚rehabilitiert' wird oder wieder in Fahrt kommt, ich glaube, das geschieht durch meine Generation, die sich die Mühe macht, diesem ‚Problemkind' neue Regeln zu geben, die besagen, dass alles möglich ist, und von der Konzeptkunst ebenso beeinflusst wird wie, sagen wir mal, von Velázquez, Manet oder Picasso.

CAOIMHÍN *Ohne dass der Eindruck entstünde, hier drohe ein Stillstand, es sei gestrig, es könnte kritisch werden?*

SEAN Richtig. Ist das der Grund, warum ich als Künstler kein ‚Slacker' bin? Wenn ich tatsächlich ein ‚Slacker' wäre, dann ergäbe ein schwarzes Bild sehr viel Sinn. Aber der Versuch, die Malerei neu zu erfinden, das ist das Unternehmen für überhaupt jeden, der malt. Das ist eine Mission für jeden, der gewillt ist, sie auf sich zu nehmen.

CAOIMHÍN *Aber du engagierst dich trotzdem nicht für die Malerei per se als Medium.*

SEAN Ich engagiere mich nicht nur für die Malerei. Sondern für die Kunst überhaupt.

CAOIMHÍN *Aber hier redest du über Malerei.*

SEAN Das ist Zufall, aber ich beschränke mich nicht auf die Malerei, weil ich das nicht muss. Andere müssen.

CAOIMHÍN *Du meinst, sie müssten.*

SEAN Oder sie können alles andere nicht besonders gut. Sie sind keine guten Autoren. Und sie sind keine guten Bildhauer. Im Grunde hält ihre Angst sie davon ab, sich zu verändern. Ich habe nicht so viel Zurückhaltung, auch nicht bei einem Medium, das ich nicht beherrsche. Mir macht es nichts aus, mich kopfüber hineinzustürzen. Es ist wie der Mythos von Ikarus. Ich strebe nach Grösse, verbrenne und stürze ab, und wenn der Bogen meines Niedergangs Bedeutung hat, dann habe ich eine neue Art von Kunst geschaffen. Da gibt es eine Geschichte des Scheiterns, die so schön ist wie die Geschichte des Triumphs. Was diese Sache mit dem Antihelden ist, die ich aus HUNGER gelernt habe.

CAOIMHÍN *Wenn du das Scheitern zu oft vortäuschst, dann wird es…*

SEAN Nein, das ist kein vorgetäuschtes Scheitern. Das ist versuchen und scheitern. Es ist scheitern. Scheitern ist eine Geschichte, die ich erzählen will, weil das eine Geschichte ist, die jeder kennt, eine Geschichte, die jeder erlebt, aber keiner haben will.

BEATRIX *Aber du willst sie haben?*

SEAN Ja. Das ist wie Eigentum direkt am Strand, das keiner haben will, weil dort ein Abwasserrohr entlangläuft. Na ja, das ungeklärte Abwasser ist schrecklich, aber ich bin am Strand.

BEATRIX *Und der Strand bedeutet was in dieser Analogie?*

SEAN Die Kunstgeschichte. Hoffe ich.

CAOIMHIN *Also „versuch's noch einmal, scheitere besser", wie Beckett gesagt hat.*

SEAN Ja. Na ja, du kannst in Bezug auf mich gar nicht genug Beckett bringen.

CAOIMHÍN *Können wir ein bisschen über deine Skulpturen reden? Du hast mit Ton angefangen, aber du hast auch Bronzeguss gemacht. Diese Wahl der Materialien ist recht bezeichnend und bringt Nachhall. Bronze ist ein dauerhaftes Material. Es ist das Material von Denkmälern.*

SEAN Na, deswegen habe ich aufgehört, auf Papier zu schreiben, und angefangen, auf Leinen zu schreiben, das mit Bleiweiss grundiert ist. Ich wollte, dass es erhalten bleibt. Das steht hinter meinem Drang, Kunst zu machen. Was ich schaffe, soll dauerhaft sein, mich überdauern. Das ist genau das, was das Bild THERE WAS A TIME … (2004) in der Ausstellung in der Andrea Rosen Gallery (2004) ausdrückt. Es beschreibt meine Überzeugung, dass ich mein Leben schrittweise in Kunstwerke verlagere, in diese statischen Objekte, und wenn ich sterbe, ist das alles, was übrig bleiben wird. Vielleicht ist das rührselig, geschmacklos, lächerlich oder wie du es nennen willst, aber es ist das, was mich treibt. Ich hatte immer grosse Freude daran, die Wahrheit zu sagen, besonders dann, wenn sie nicht ‚angebracht' ist. Die meisten Künstler setzen alles daran, dergleichen Äusserungen zu vermeiden.

CAOIMHÍN *Aber die Art und Weise, wie man sich deiner Meinung nach an dich erinnern sollte, hat sich offensichtlich geändert. Du hast einmal gesagt, du wärest genauso glücklich, wenn man dich als Maler eines traurig-lustigen Bildchens in Erinnerung behielte, wie du dich freutest, wenn du Robert Smithsons SPIRAL JETTY hinterlassen könntest.*

SEAN Nun, daran hat sich überhaupt nichts geändert.

CAOIMHÍN *Da gibt es einen Unterschied zwischen der implizierten Bescheidenheit eines ‚traurigen Bildchens' und den monumentalen Ambitionen einer Bronzeskulptur.*

SEAN Monumental? Ich habe nie etwas gemacht, was höher war als ein Meter.

CAOIMHÍN *Na gut. Aber allein das Material lässt doch schon auf Monumentalität schliessen.*

SEAN Ich bin anderer Meinung. Bronze ist einfach ein befriedigender, dauerhafter Werkstoff. Soweit

wir wissen, halten Ölgemälde na vielleicht vierhundert, fünfhundert Jahre? Wir wissen, dass Bronze mindestens sechstausend Jahre überdauert. Woran ich dachte, als ich das ‚traurige Bildchen' erwähnte, waren Bilder wie THE IDEA MAN (1998) oder THREE NOSE GUY (1998). Eben alles aus der ‚Figur und Text'-Serie, meiner ‚période vache', das war genau das, woran ich dachte, als ich das sagte. Aber wir sind zu schnell vorgegangen. Kann ich zurückgehen und ein paar Kleinigkeiten einschieben?

BEATRIX *Natürlich.*

SEAN Ich habe diese Serie gemacht, nachdem ich mit meiner figürlichen Malerei ein ganzes Stück weitergekommen war. Diese begann mit der Hogarth-Serie (1996). Ich nahm ein Werk von William Hogarth mit dem Titel A MIDNIGHT MODERN CONVERSATION (1732) und malte auf dieser Basis ungefähr ein Dutzend Bilder. Ich erzählte die Geschichte, wie ich einer Lebensphase entwuchs, der Trinkgelagekameraderie/-kultur, von der meine Freunde und ich so lange gezehrt hatten, wo wir diskutierten und uns mit unseren Ideen gegenseitig inspirierten. Wo wir einander Gesellschaft leisteten, während wir darauf warteten, ‚entdeckt' zu werden. Wie ich meine Frau fand und zu heiraten beschloss. Es war eine unglaublich jugendhafte Wiedergabe der Geschichte des Erwachsenwerdens. Es war die unverhohlen ‚falscheste' Kunst, die ich je gemacht habe. Das waren verrückte Bilder, aber sie lagen auf einer Linie mit meiner Arbeit. Ich erzählte durch die Malerei eine Geschichte aus meinem Leben und benutzte dazu die Kunstgeschichte. Die Galeristen, bei denen ich sie ausstellte und die ich sehr mochte, Stuart Regen und Shaun Caley von Regen Projects in Los Angeles, reagierten fassungslos. Ich werde nie Shauns Gesichtsausdruck vergessen, als ausgepackt wurde. Ich brauche nicht zu sagen, dass sie mich nie wieder fragten, ob ich dort ausstellen will.

Dann kam die Clownserie, über die ich schon ausführlich gesprochen habe. Daraus wurde 1997 meine Ausstellung in der Andrea Rosen Gallery in New York. Diese Bilder waren ein comicartiger Verschnitt in Disney-Manier aus zwei oder drei berühmten Gemälden, aber von mir gemacht, mit ihrer ganz eigenen oder fehlenden Virtuosität. DANCE OF LIFE (1997) ist zur einen Hälfte DER TANZ (erste Fassung, 1909) von Matisse und zur anderen Hälfte Poussins BACCHANAL VOR EINER PAN-BÜSTE (1631–1633). ZORKON (1997) ist halb Winslow Homers BREEZING UP [A FAIR WIND] (1876) und halb Géricaults FLOSS DER MEDUSA (1819). Für mich war Disneys Einfluss wichtig, weil er für Leute der Babyboom-Jahre und danach das Figureninventar repräsentierte, das im kollektiven Unbewussten vorhanden ist. Wir alle haben einen solchen Figurenvorrat in unseren Köpfen, sei es Looney Tunes, Japanimation oder Tin Tin. Sich diesem zu widersetzen und einfach nur auf die bildlichen Darstellungen des Metropolitan Museum, des Louvre und Prado zurückzugreifen, war meiner Meinung nach einfach zu grossspurig. Wieder war es das ‚Falscheste', was man tun konnte, aber ich wollte es unbedingt, weil es etwas darüber aussagte, was es bedeutet, in meiner Zeit Künstler zu sein. Ich verglich mich mehr oder weniger wohlwollend mit den Grossen der Kunstgeschichte, um mein eigenes und das Dilemma aller anderen Künstler zu schildern, die wir versuchen, im Kielwasser der Kunstgeschichte ‚neue' Kunst zu machen, und vor allem im Kielwasser der Kunsterziehung meiner Generation, die von Theorie, Konzeptkunst, Minimalismus und Prozesskunst beherrscht war. Diese Ausstellungen waren mein bescheidener Versuch, in die Konzeptkunst wieder Form zu bringen, vielleicht ‚wie Ikarus zu scheitern', aber letztendlich die Konzeptkunst als Dolch gegen sich selbst zu benutzen. Es war ein Akt der Konzeptkunst, der antikonzeptuell war.

Leider schienen das wenige Leute zu begreifen. Da ich mich abgewiesen fühlte, wurde ich schliesslich so mutlos, dass ich wieder zu schreiben beginnen musste, um psychisch zu überleben. Das ist der Grund, warum ich nun das Schreiben an die erste Stelle setzte.

CAOIMHÍN *Was hat zu diesem Zeitpunkt deine Bildgestaltung beeinflusst?*

SEAN Magrittes ‚période vache'. Für mich repräsentierte sie einen kurzen Augenblick vollkommener schöpferischer Freiheit und Kreativität als Maler in einem ansonsten eng umrissenen und wohlüberlegten Schaffen. Als ich zum ersten Mal die Bilder aus Magrittes ‚période vache' sah, fühlte ich mich ihnen so nah; mir war, als sähe ich meine eigene Kunst. Ich erhob fast einen Besitzanspruch auf diese Werke. Ich wollte nicht, dass jemand anders sie mochte, weil nur mir dieses Recht zustehen sollte. Ich hatte das Gefühl, dies sei eine Sprache, die ich sprechen konnte, ohne sie gelernt zu haben. Ich konnte mich sofort hineinfallen lassen. Und das tat ich, auf meine Weise. Ich malte Figuren, die sich manchmal direkt auf Magritte bezogen, wie in THREE NOSE GUY, der von seinem STROPIAT (1948) inspiriert ist, ‚Herrn Pantoffelnase', wie ich ihn nenne, obwohl meiner mit seinem überhaupt keine Ähnlichkeit hat. Aber am häufigsten waren sie vollständig meine eigenen Erfindungen. Alle meine ‚vache'-Figuren sind immer noch Teil oder eine Erweiterung meiner Clownsprache. Jede einzelne ist clownhaft, deprimiert und traurig. Aber sie so zu malen, in dieser neuen ‚vache'-Sprache,

war für mich sehr viel angenehmer. Ich fand einen Malstil, der zu mir passte. Er entsprach meinem Können oder bot für meinen aktuellen Stand genau das richtige Gleichgewicht zwischen Cartoon und Illusion, etwas, was immer durch mein Interesse bestimmt wurde und immer bestimmt werden sollte. Ich kann sehr viel ‚realistischer' malen, wenn ich will, aber der springende Punkt bei der künstlerischen Freiheit ist, dass man das, wonach einem nicht zumute ist, eben nicht macht. Wichtig ist, dass man seinem Interesse folgt.

CAOIMHÍN *Einige dieser Malereien sind deutlicher sexuell als andere.*

SEAN Ja. Bei LE DOMAINE ENCHANTÉ AKA MONSIEUR SAUCISSON (1999) ist es einfach das, was es ist (lacht). Er freut sich eben, dort zu sein, wo er ist. Im Leben sind es die einfachen Dinge, die zählen.

CAOIMHÍN *Hattest du schon eine Vorstellung von den einzelnen Bildelementen, bevor du mit dem eigentlichen Malen begannst?*

SEAN Nein, überhaupt nicht. Ich fand die einzelnen Elemente, indem ich die ungrundierte Leinwand zunächst dünnflüssig einfärbte. Dann nahm ich meinen Pinsel und malte ein Cartoon in die Mitte der Leinwand, mochte es nicht, wischte es weg, malte ein neues, wischte es weg und wiederholte die Prozedur ungefähr zehn- bis zwanzigmal. Von jedem Cartoon blieb eine Spur sichtbar, so dass es einen Mischmasch oder ein Übereinanderlagern von Cartoon-Figuren gab. Oft taucht dann aus den vielen Spuren alter Zeichnungen allmählich eine neue Zeichnung auf. Viele, viele davon sind auf diese Weise zustande gekommen. Das geht zurück auf die Techniken des automatischen Zeichnens bei den Surrealisten. Ich habe einfach versucht, ein gutes Cartoon zu erhalten, und die beste Möglichkeit, eines zu bekommen, war manchmal, dass ich es durch Zufall fand. Viele meiner Plastiken sind auf eine ähnliche Weise entstanden. Ich begann eine Plastik, indem ich den Ton in eine Schädelform arbeitete. Sogar Schädel sehen Menschen ähnlich. Zwangsläufig erinnert er mich an etwas oder an jemanden, und dann arbeite ich in dieser Richtung weiter.

CAOIMHÍN *Surrealismus ist die Bewegung in der Kunst, die vorwiegend mit den faszinierenden Wirkungen des Unbewussten assoziiert wird, mit dem automatischen Schreiben, dem Versuch, eine vorherige Planung irgendwie zu umgehen, soweit das möglich ist. In deiner letzten Ausstellung 2003 bei greengrassi, wo du ein Pantheon von Künstlern des 20. Jahrhunderts gezeigt hast, alle männlich, waren die Surrealisten in der Überzahl.*

SEAN Es war eher allgemein europäische Malerei aus der Zeit vor dem Zweiten Weltkrieg. So ähnlich, wie ich vorhin schon gesagt habe, dass nämlich diese Leute für mich den letzten Atemzug in der langen Tradition europäischer Malerei repräsentieren, als die Kunst recht geradlinig verlief. So wie sich jemand vor eine leere Leinwand setzt, und ein Bild taucht auf, nicht unbedingt aus dem Leben, aber aus der Phantasie. Bevor in der Nachkriegszeit die amerikanische Kunst zu dominieren begann und sich die ganze Landschaft von Grund auf derart änderte. Wenn du dir alle neun Künstler ansiehst, die in dieser Ausstellung dargestellt sind, so gilt das, mit Ausnahme von Duchamp, für alle von ihnen in gewisser Weise: Picasso, Picabia, Magritte, Dalí, De Chirico, Braque, Ernst und Beckmann. Wenn ich vor einer leeren Leinwand sitze, dann fühle ich mich ihnen ausgesprochen verbunden. Ich spüre, dass ich zu ihrem Stammbaum gehöre. Wenn es einen Strom an Kreativität gibt, in den sie ihre Schöpfkelle getaucht haben, dann will ich meine Schöpfkelle in denselben Strom tauchen. Aber natürlich stamme ich auch ein bisschen aus den siebziger Jahren, mit den Textkünstlern, auf die ich meine frühere Werkgruppe aufgebaut habe. Aber das alles stammt letzten Endes von Duchamp, und das ist der Grund, warum er mit dabei war.

Meine Picasso-Ausstellung gehört auch dazu. Ich sah die Kunst des 20. Jahrhunderts aufgeteilt zwischen der Kunst von Picasso und Duchamp. Picasso ist ein typisches Beispiel für das, was ich eben beschrieben habe, wie ein Künstler vor einer leeren Leinwand sitzt und das Bild auftaucht. Und Duchamp ist natürlich der Grossvater der konzeptuellen Kunst. Als Vertreter meiner Zeit, einer Zeit, in der die Künstler das Blut dieser beiden Ursprünge durch ihre Adern fliessen fühlen, war es mir darum zu tun, eine Werkgruppe zu schaffen, die beides symbolisiert. Beide Männer benutzten entlehnte Bildelemente. Picasso schlachtete Velázquez wohl deshalb aus, um zu verkünden, dass er sich Velázquez' Kreisen historisch zugehörig fühle. Duchamp führte den Begriff ‚Readymade' ein. Daher kann man die Entlehnung aus dem Bildvorrat anderer Künstler als ‚Readymade' auffassen. Wenn ich Picassos Inventar auf diese Weise benutzte, dazu meinen Namen buchstabierte und das Bild SEAN/7099 nannte, wenn ich ‚genius' hinschrieb bei einem Möbelstück, das von einem seiner Gemälde, FEMME AU BUFFET (1936), abgekupfert ist, wenn ich eine Auswahl seiner Exfrauen und Freundinnen vorführte, die er gemalt und mit seiner Schreierei zugrunde gerichtet hatte, oder bei dem Bild GENIUS (2001) eine von ihnen auf die einzelnen Buchstaben setzte, dann benutzte ich Duchamp, um Picasso auszuschlachten, verschmolz sie miteinander, um damit mich und meine Situation als Künstler zu beschreiben.

CAOIMHÍN *Sprechen wir über deine Gründe, warum du deine Arbeiten manchmal in verschiedenen Medien gleichzeitig zeigst: Video oder Audio und ebenso Skulptur und Gemälde oder Zeichnung.*

SEAN Ich glaube, das ist offen gesagt ein übermächtiges Verlangen, den Leuten zu gefallen. Ich will auf diese Weise ihre Erwartungen erfüllen, sie sollen mich mögen. Darüber hinaus ist es wohl auch eine Möglichkeit, mein Talent vorzuführen, indem ich die gleiche Sache in vielen verschiedenen Medien mache. Mir ist das einerlei. Alles, was ich mache, ist zu einer Art Performance verbunden. Ich bin eine Persönlichkeit geworden, die in meinen Arbeiten auftritt. Wenn ich male, dann wird das Bild von diesem Künstlertyp gemalt, den ich geschaffen habe; das Gleiche gilt für Skulptur, Video und Schreiben. Wenn ich einen Stift in die Hand nehme, um zu schreiben, dann klinke ich mich einfach irgendwie in diese Rolle ein. Oder zum Beispiel die Audioarbeit, die ich bei greengrassi (2000) abgespielt habe, die den Titel THE MAN WITHIN (2000) trägt und meine ‚Grösse' beschreibt, ich habe einfach das Mikrofon genommen, bin in die Rolle geschlüpft und habe losgelegt. Verwirrend ist für die Leute vielleicht, dass diese Rolle zum Teil mein wirkliches Ich ist und zum Teil nicht. In gewisser Weise bin ich immer noch Chris Hamson.

CAOIMHÍN *Hattest du für das, was du mit der Skulptur als Form und mit dem Video machen könntest, bestimmte Vorbilder, als du anfingst, mit diesen Medien zu arbeiten?*

SEAN Was das Video betrifft, so war das zum Teil AN AMERICAN FAMILY, wie ich vorhin schon gesagt habe. Daneben waren es vielleicht die frühen Videoarbeiten von Wegman und bis zu einem gewissen Grad Spalding Gray. Ich sah bei Wegman, wann sich einfacher Humor verwenden lässt, und bei Gray war es die Persönlichkeit des Künstlers und das Geschichtenerzählen. Ich begann 1990 mit einer Art Talkshow, ich sass an einem Tisch, machte mich über das Radio lustig und erzählte Geschichten. Sie sollten – auf dem Stand, auf dem sich die Videokunst damals befand – grotesk wirken, aber letzten Endes sehr viel unterhaltsamer und einnehmender sein, als es die Videokunst tatsächlich jemals war. Ich wollte praktisch gewinnen, indem ich verliere. Sie sollten sehr viel Persönliches enthalten, die Leute durch Voyeurismus ködern und vor allem ‚nicht langweilig' sein. Aus diesen frühen Videos entwickelte sich irgendwie die Idee der lebenden Skulptur à la Gilbert & George. Keins war jemals für ein eingesperrtes Publikum gedacht, es sollte etwas sein, woran man vorbeigeht, und wenn ich euch damit packe, na dann schön für mich. Sie hatten sehr viel mit meinen geschriebenen Arbeiten zu tun, waren nur ausagiert.

Was die Skulptur betrifft, so war das damals wieder das ‚Unpassendste', was man machen konnte, und das interessierte mich. Ob es mit Müllsäcken zugehängte Tonköpfe waren oder der herkömmliche Ton, es erschien irgendwie verrückt zu einer Zeit, als die ‚Skulptur aus neuen Materialien' von Matthew Barney und Michael Joaquin Grey modern war, deren Arbeiten ausgesprochen raffiniert, elegant und neu wirkten. Da ich von Natur aus gern Kontra gebe, reizte es mich, die Skulptur wieder zu dem ‚alten' und ‚dummen' Ding zu machen, das sie erfreulicherweise über Jahrtausende gewesen war, bevor diese Leute damit anfingen. Lange nachdem die aus Vaseline geformte Trainingsbank in den Boden zerflossen oder ein Richard Serra ins Meer gerostet ist, werden meine dummen Bronzeköpfchen das Lied meiner Unsterblichkeit singen. Das ist wie die Geschichte vom Hasen und vom Igel.

CAOIMHÍN *Sprechen wir noch ein bisschen über Perfektion in einer künstlerischen Technik und wie du dazu stehst. Interessiert es dich nicht, dass in einer Zeit, in der sehr häufig auf Fertigkeiten in den einzelnen Bereichen absichtlich verzichtet wird, manche Leute für ihre Virtuosität in einem bestimmten Medium – zu Recht oder zu Unrecht – gelobt werden?*

SEAN Ich versuche nicht, ‚schlechte Kunst' zu machen. Das war das Thema unseres allerersten Gesprächs...

CAOIMHÍN *Richtig.*

SEAN ...und zur Antwort gab ich, dass ich mich dieser Kategorie nicht zugehörig fühlte. Ich habe einfach das gemacht, was ich gemacht habe, ich habe Naivität nie vorgetäuscht. Die Skulptur ICH MACHE MICH habe ich damals so gut gemacht, wie ich konnte. Jetzt kann ich eine viel bessere Skulptur von einem Schimpansen machen. Ich habe damals immer mein Niveau gehalten. Wenn es wirklich naiv aussah oder technisches Können vermissen liess, dann deshalb, weil das damals meine wirkliche Situation war. Die Idee dahinter war, dass jede Kunst, wenn sie ernsthaft gemacht wird, im Grunde ein Selbstportrait ist. Darum habe ich mich in dieser Ausstellung 1997 in der Andrea Rosen Gallery direkt mit Malern wie Manet, Matisse und Poussin verglichen, weil ich wusste, dass ich nicht mit ihnen auf eine Stufe gehörte. Ich dachte, meine Aufgabe sei es, in ihrer Mitte eine Ebene zu finden, auf der ich mich wohl fühle, denn das ist die Situation eines Malers oder Künstlers. Wir werden immer im Kontext der Kunstgeschichte beurteilt, der Geschichte der zeitgenössischen Kunst und der alten Kunst.

CAOIMHÍN *Aber einige der unmittelbaren Vorgänger, die du gleich zu Anfang inspirativ fandest, zum Beispiel Jeff Koons, hatten nie das geringste Bedürfnis, sich auch nur die elementarsten Fertigkeiten anzueignen, da man für die verschiedenen Techniken immer ausgezeichnete Fachleute anheuern kann, von venezianischen Glasbläsern bis hin zu amerikanischen Schildermalern, die einem die Arbeit abnehmen.*

SEAN Ja, während ich das selber mache, und das ist der Unterschied.

CAOIMHÍN *Und warum? Die Entscheidung, es so zu machen, ist dir offensichtlich wichtig.*

SEAN Weil ich dorthin fahre, wohin ich will. Ich bin der Herr meines Bildes. Ich bin verantwortlich für das, was da ist. Ich bin Rechenschaft schuldig. Jeff Koons hat seine Bildgestaltung nicht voll unter Kontrolle. Er ist der Regisseur.

CAOIMHÍN *Wirklich?*

SEAN Er hat die Skulptur von Michael Jackson oder diesen Schimpansen nicht selbst gemacht. Jemand anders hat das gemacht. Nur so nah ist er diesem Bild. Mein Schimpanse trägt meine Fingerabdrücke. Für Jeff ist das ein Akt der Ironie, und für mich ist es der Punkt, wo sich der Kreis schliesst und die Ironie wieder ernsthaft zu werden beginnt.

CAOIMHÍN *Da sind wir wieder bei der alten Masche, der expressionistischen Konvention, für die es eine brauchbare Kritik gibt. Wie Francis Bacon gesagt hat, willst du Bilder direkt dem Nervensystem entnehmen. Aber gibt es so etwas wie einen unvermittelten Zugang zum Ausdruck spontaner Gesten?*

SEAN Ja, daran glaube ich.

CAOIMHÍN *Wirklich?*

SEAN Ja, wirklich. Ich glaube, dass die Hand eines grossen Künstlers direkt aus seiner Seele herausreicht. Ich meine, das hat eine ungeheuer grosse Bedeutung. Ich sage damit nicht, dass es das ausschliesst, was Jeff macht, weil ich eigentlich wirklich mag, was er macht, und nicht oft genug wiederholen kann, wie sehr ich ihn bewundere. Ich sage damit nur, dass ich sehe, was ich sehen will, wenn ich es angesichts der Besonderheiten meiner eigenen Hand und Phantasie sehen will, was natürgemäss aufrichtiger ist. Seine Verfahrensweise ist eher die eines Sachverständigen, der Einkäufe tätigt oder Aufträge vergibt, was ihm seine ironische Distanz erhält.

CAOIMHÍN *Aber ein wichtiger Teil deiner Vorhaben ist, dass du dir deine Fertigkeiten sozusagen bei der Arbeit erworben hast. Wäre es nicht schön gewesen, wenn du gleich am Anfang die Dinge so gut hättest machen können, wie du sie jetzt machen kannst?*

SEAN Das wäre schön gewesen, ja, aber wir werden alle besser, egal, was wir machen. Sieh dir die frühen Magrittes an. Mein Gott, sie sehen aus, als hätte sie jemand aus dem Malkurs meiner Mutter auf der Wiese hinterm Haus gemalt.

Ich persönlich bin zufrieden mit dem Niveau meines Könnens bei Bildern wie zum Beispiel PLANK BOY (2000), MS. KITTY (1999) oder BUFFALO (2003). Ich kann weiter in Richtung Realismus gehen, wenn ich das wollte. Aber ich hatte das Gefühl, diese Bilder würden mich dann nicht mehr zufrieden stellen, wenn ich es getan hätte. Bei anderen wie HAPPY AND SAD (2002) bin ich ein Stück weiter gegangen. Ich habe das Outfit der Figuren sehr viel weiter ausgeführt als, sagen wir, bei MARINER (2003), wo es genau seine Art trifft. Ich wollte bei HAPPY AND SAD einfach mehr sehen. Bei unterschiedlichen Bildern muss man auf verschiedene Weise verfahren.

CAOIMHÍN *Diese Wacker-voran-Mentalität, es jetzt so gut zu machen, wie du kannst, und dich nicht darum zu kümmern, ob das bei weitem nicht an die Fertigkeit heranreicht, die du vielleicht später entwickeln wirst, spielt offensichtlich immer noch eine wichtige Rolle. Es hat dich nicht beirrt. Du warst relativ furchtlos.*

SEAN Ja. Ich meine, was sollte ich sonst machen? Ich kann doch nur bis zu der Höhe des Könnens arbeiten, die mein Interesse mir abnötigt.

CAOIMHÍN *Was ändert sich, wenn man über vierzig ist und das macht, was du machst?*

SEAN Na ja, ich denke, ich muss mir ehrlich eingestehen, was ich jetzt bin.

CAOIMHÍN *Aber wie deutlich ist diese Veränderung in den vergangenen Jahren wahrgenommen worden?*

SEAN Na, die gerade vergangene Ausstellung in der Andrea Rosen Gallery (2004) ist dafür ein wunderbares Beispiel. Sie war ein Rückblick auf meine alten Textbilder, deren graphischen Charakter ich in raumgreifende abstrakte Gemälde explodieren liess. Gedanken tauchen im Kopf auf, sie werden klar und verschwimmen dann wieder in der Ferne. Es sind immer noch Bilder, die zeigen, wie Gedanken zum Vorschein kommen, wie das meine alten Bilder getan haben, aber die Art des Schreibens ist eine andere, es ist Selbstparodie. Das bedeutet nicht, dass ich die Dinge, die ich bei den früheren Arbeiten geschrieben habe, nicht mehr so empfinde, aber wenn ich sie jetzt schreibe, merke ich, wie abgewetzt sie sind. Es ist wie ein Schrank voll alter Schuhe. Ich bin in ihnen gelaufen, sie sind so verschlissen, dass sie die Form meiner Füsse angenommen haben. Ich könnte sie wieder anziehen, und sie würden bequem passen, aber ich würde mich einfach nicht flott in ihnen fühlen.

Die jüngsten Gemälde wirken deshalb so ‚echohaft', weil ich, wenn ich nachts malte, die Reflexion der Bilder auf den Fenstern meines Ateliers betrachtet habe, die doppelt verglast sind...

CAOIMHÍN *Und sie sahen doppelt aus – wie die Satzfetzen auf diesen neuen Bildern?*

SEAN Ja, sie sahen so viel besser aus, und es schien irgendwie, als sei diese Art des Doppeltsehens/des Wiederholungseffekts eine übersteigerte Form der Selbstparodie. Es erinnerte mich an eine Aufnahme von John Giorno, wo er alles wiederholte, was er in seinem Monolog sagte, und das rief ein deutliches Gefühl geistiger Verwirrung hervor. Mir wurde einfach klar, dass diese Bilder

Spiegelbilder jener früheren ‚abgetragenen Schuhe' sind.

CAOIMHÍN *Es sieht tatsächlich aus wie eine graphische, cartoonartige Wiedergabe eines Echos.*

SEAN Ja.

CAOIMHÍN *Du hast gesagt, diese Texte seien abstrakt begründet. Aber einige sind gar nicht so abstrakt, sie sind die Darstellung weit geöffneter Räume, von Himmelslandschaften.*

SEAN Ja. Die Himmelslandschaften sind anders. Ich bin in einer religiösen Familie aufgewachsen und habe wirklich beten gelernt. Das ist noch in mir drin. Mein Gehirn fällt immer noch in diesen Gebetston, und ich weiss nicht, wie ich damit umgehen soll, da ich vielleicht nicht ganz atheistisch bin, aber Gott anzweifle.

CAOIMHÍN *Wenn du sagst ‚Gebetston', dann meinst du doch nicht beten, was dir einfällt? Du meinst die Wiederholung vorhandener Worte.*

SEAN Ich meine die Gedanken im Kopf, von denen man glaubt, dass sie mitgehört werden…

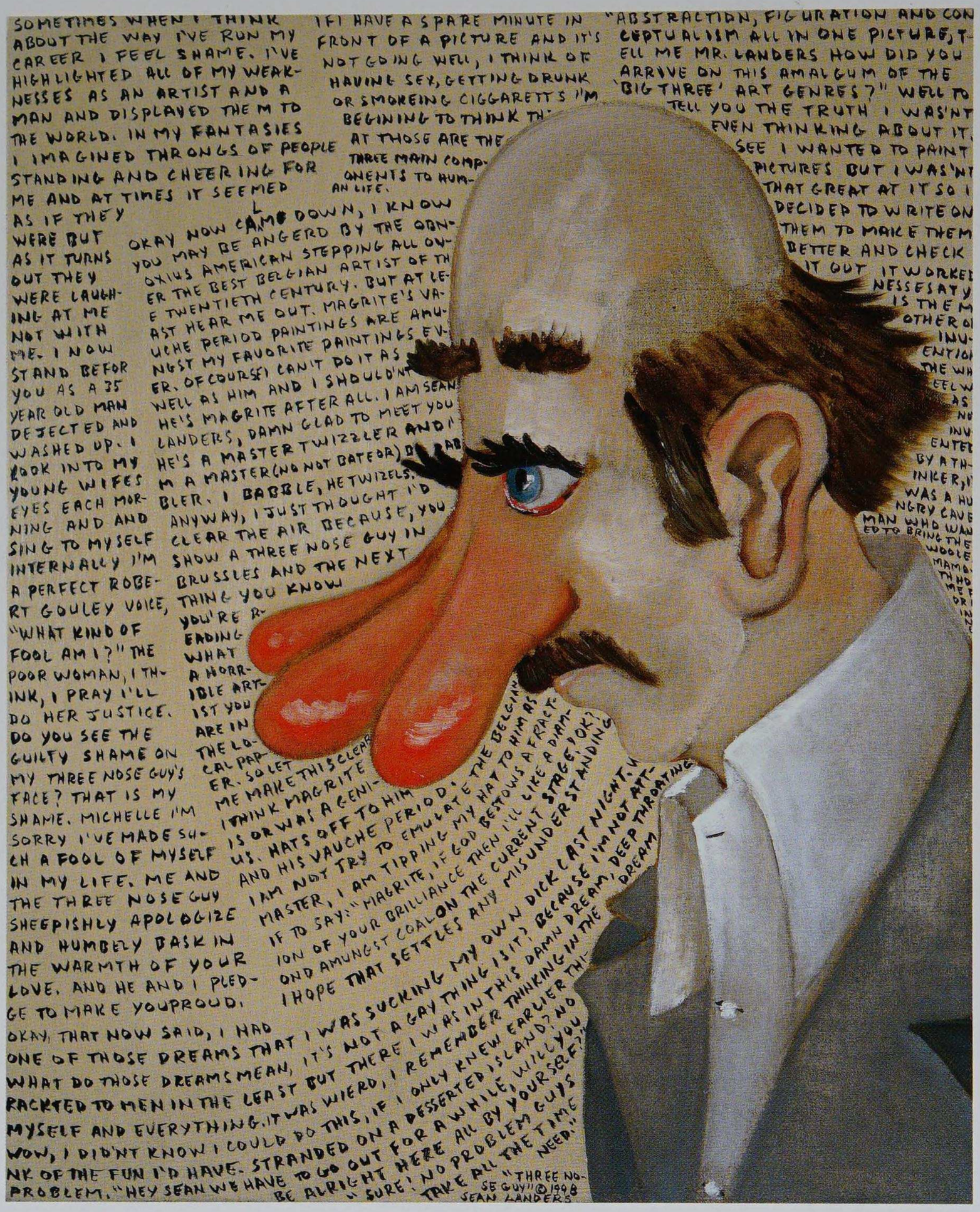
CAOIMHÍN *Von einer Gottheit?*

SEAN Ja, von einer Gottheit oder einem verstorbenen Verwandten.

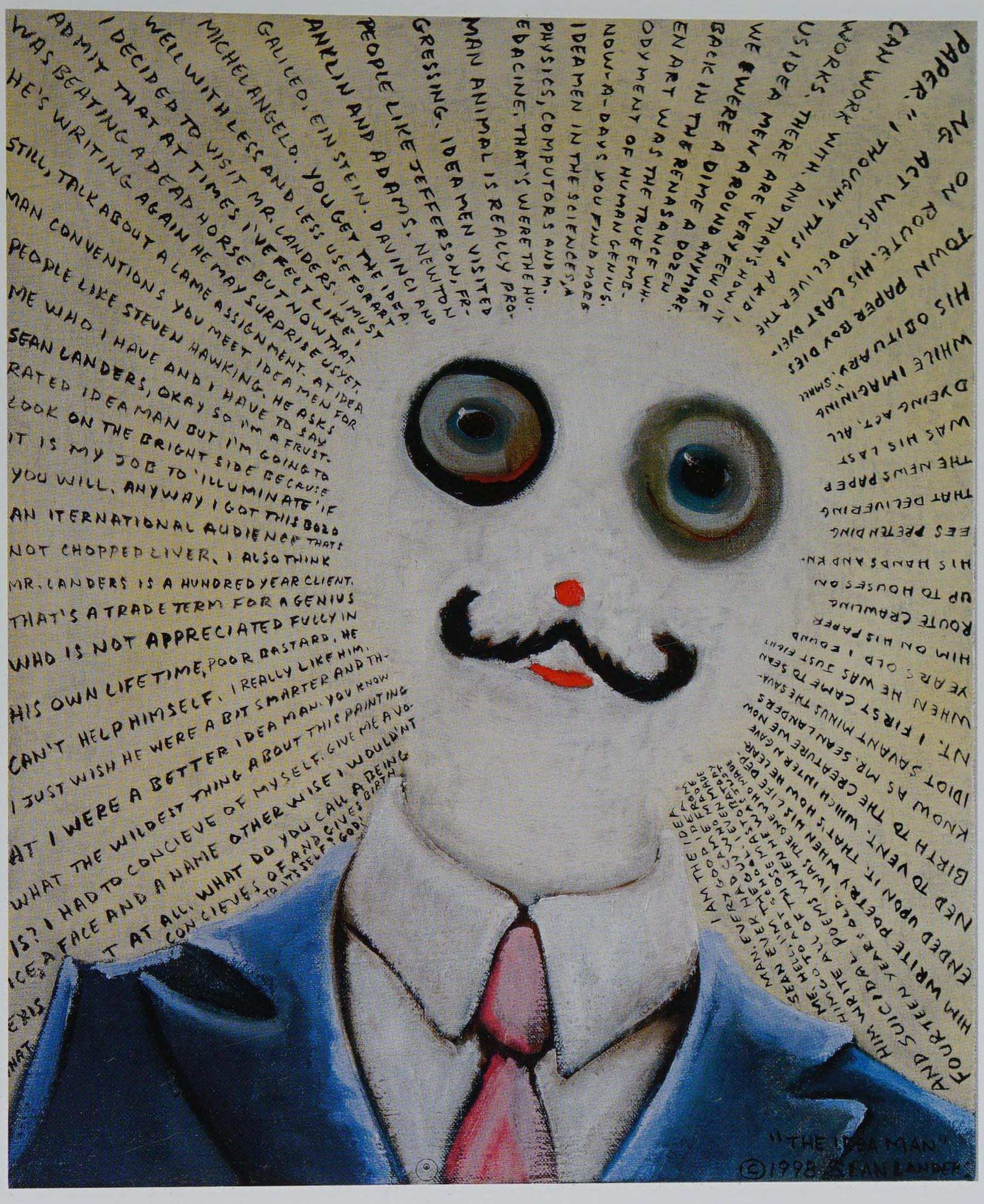
CAOIMHÍN *Verstehe.*

SEAN Mit diesen Himmelsbildern versuche ich also, diese Art des Gebets/des Denkens wiederzugeben. Ein Beispiel wäre „Mach mich bitte zu einem besseren Künstler" oder „Warum kann das nicht alles leichter sein?". Indem ich das schreibe, schicke ich es zum Himmel. „Ich will, dass meine Bilder ewig halten", „Bitte, lieber Gott, lass mich wichtig sein". Umgekehrt ging es bei dem Bild mit dem Mond, THE SLEEP OF REASON PRODUCES MONSTERS (2004), um Schlaflosigkeit, Paranoia und jene Art verzweifelten Betens, wenn die Teufel hervorkommen. Es ist direkt nach Goyas Radierung DER SCHLAF BRINGT UNGEHEUER HERVOR (1797/98) gemacht. Die Worte auf diesem Bild sind wie die Fledermäuse, die auf seiner Radierung aufsteigen. Ich habe nur versucht, dem Denken ein Bild zu geben. Ein Clown in der arktischen Landschaft gibt dem Denken auf andere Weise ein Bild, so wie meine Textbilder, Videos, Skulpturen und meine ‚période vache' das tun. Das ist der Grund, warum ich mich zu all diesen europäischen Malern aus der Zeit vor dem Zweiten Weltkrieg hingezogen fühle, denn auch sie haben vor einer Staffelei mit einer leeren Leinwand gesessen, und aus ihren Gedanken stieg ein Bild auf. Das ist es, was ich an der Kunst schätze. Das ist es, was ich als Künstler gern mache.

THE ROBOT POET, 1999
Oil on linen
76.2 × 66.04 cm



THREE NOSE GUY, 1998
Oil on linen
81.5 × 66 cm



THE IDEA MAN, 1998
Oil on linen
61.96 × 50.8 cm

FOOTBALL DUCK, 1998
Oil on linen
137.16 × 116.84 cm

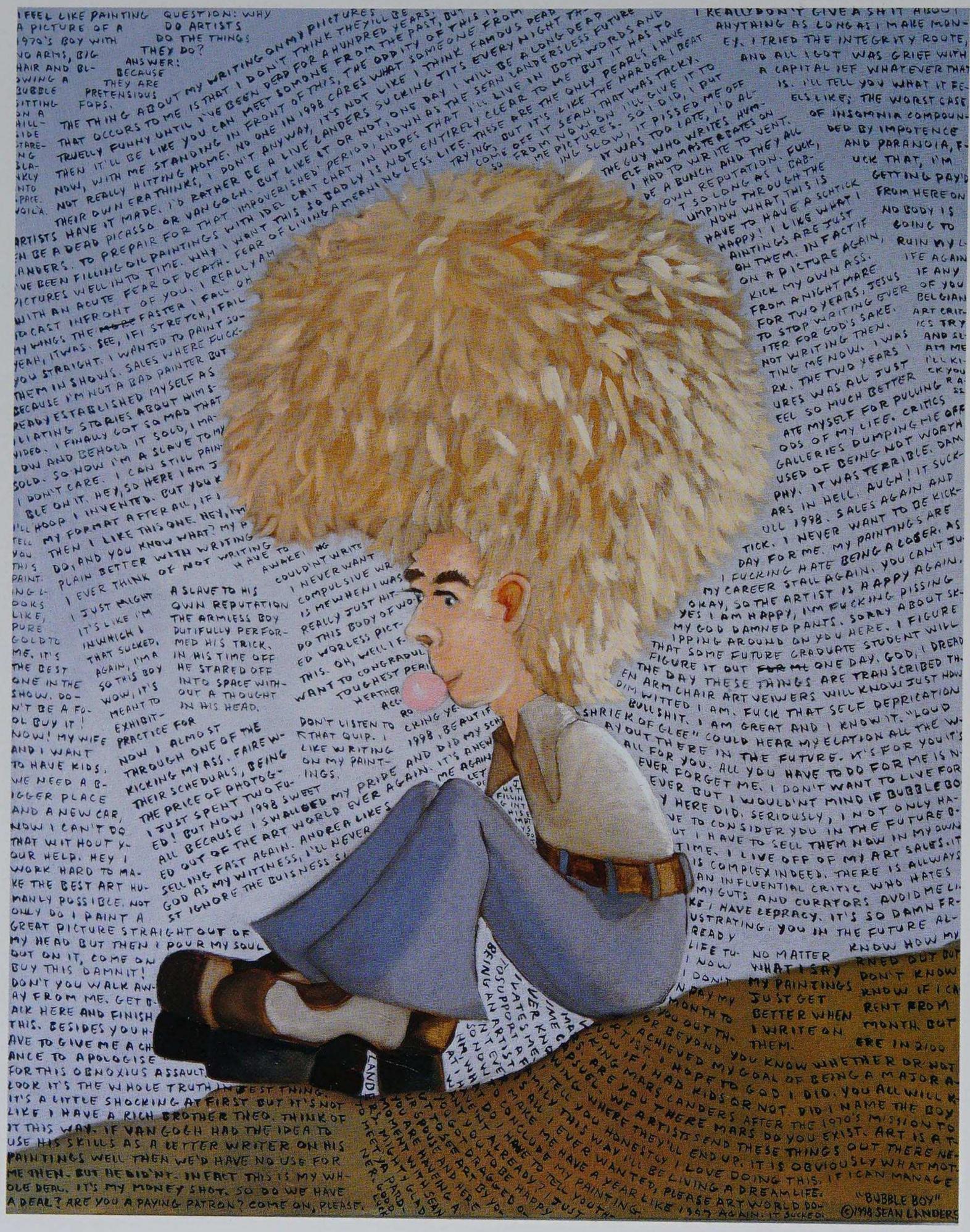
CAREER EGO, 1999
Oil on linen
142.24 × 119.38 cm

LE DOMAINE ENCHANTÉ AKA MONSIEUR SAUCISSON, 1999
Oil on linen
259 × 193 cm

THE BOOBY, 1998
Oil on linen
96.52 × 81.28 cm

FAWN AND DEER, 2000
Oil on linen
86.36 × 73.66 cm

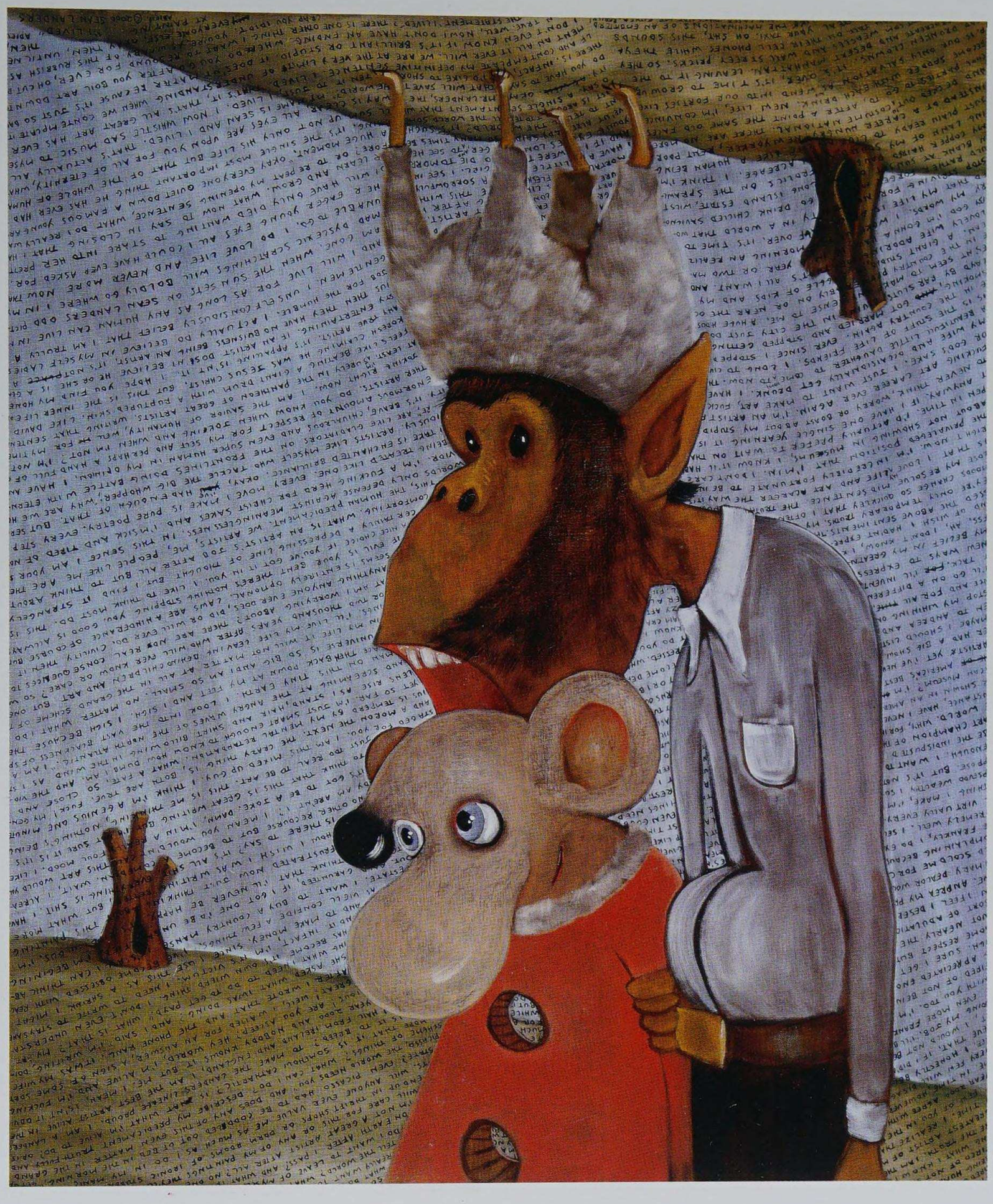
ROMEO AND JULIET, 1999
Oil on linen
101.6 × 86.36 cm



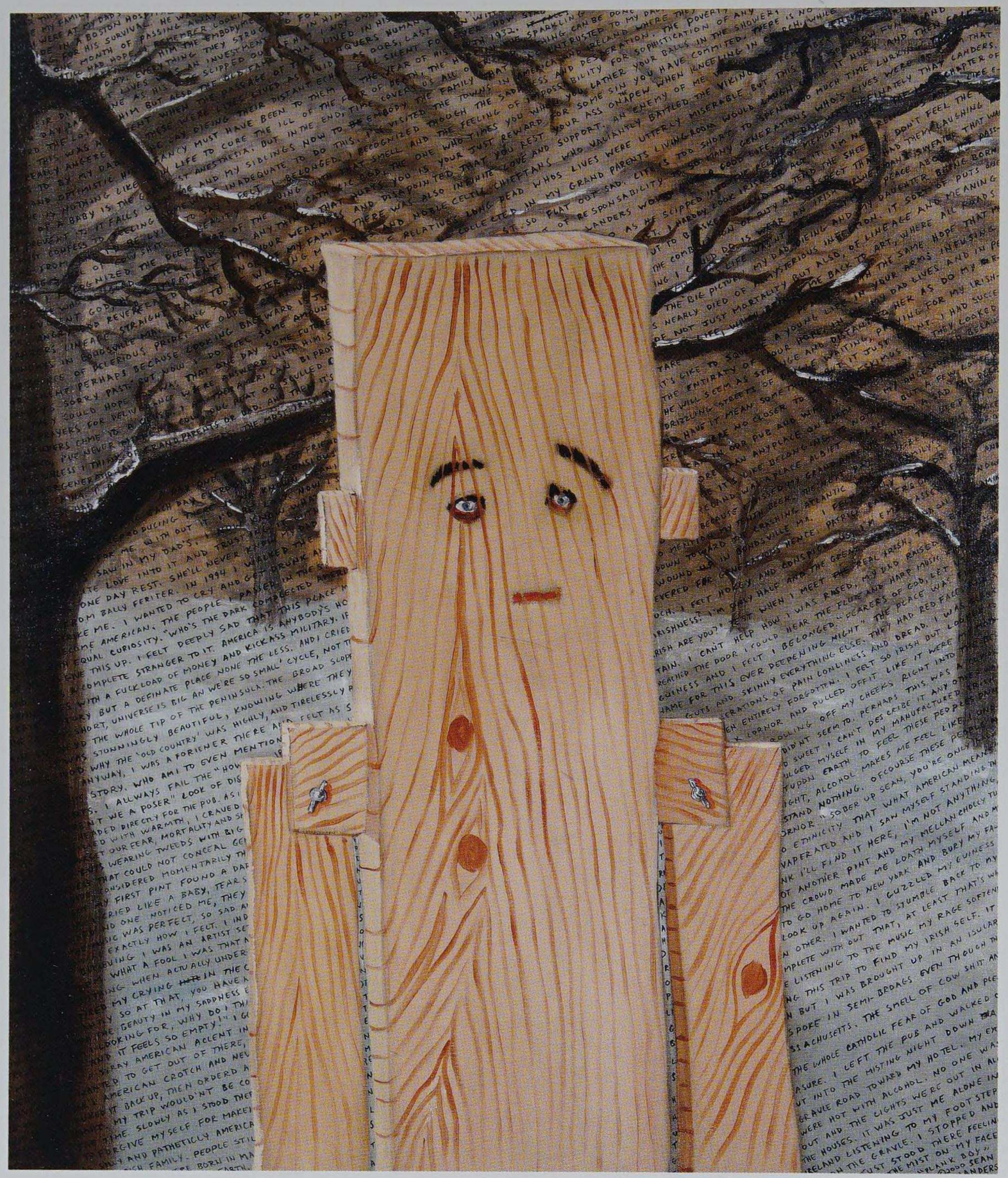
BUBBLE BOY, 1998
Oil on linen
121.92 × 96.52 cm

LIZ, 2000
Oil on linen
83.82 × 73.66 cm

MS. KITTY, 1999
Oil on linen
109.22 × 93.98 cm



I LIVED/MONKEY AND GNOME, 2000
Oil on linen
144.78 × 121.92 cm



PLANK BOY, 2000
Oil on linen
139.7 × 119.38 cm

Sean Landers: Art and Language

ALEX FARQUHARSON

"My original idea was to make conceptual art entertaining, sloppy, emotional, human and funny. Over the years I got so far out on this conceptual limb that I went around full circle until I was a traditional artist again. I tried to be ironic about it but eventually became sincere. Now I'm a happy victim of my own charade. I figure that it's better to be a sucker who makes something than a wise guy who is too cautious to make anything at all."[1]

1
Sean Landers, *The Booby* (1998)

In the early 90s Sean Landers was the guy with logorrhoea and the masochistically high embarrassment threshold making text works and videos about his naked self. Text and lo-fi video is seen as the preserve of Conceptual art. That association seemed accentuated in the aftermath of a decade of muscular figurative painting and high-finish objects. Despite the wonderfully inappropriate anomaly of clowns, clouds, oceans, and breasts appearing within and behind his fields of text, and clay chimps and humanoids circling his television monitors, Landers was still down as a conceptualist, albeit one prefixed by 'Neo.'

Beyond the media he used, there was some mileage in the association. Much of the time this was art about art, which made it Conceptual art of sorts. The writing – on canvas, on sheets of yellow legal paper, in his novel [SIC] (1993) – alluded at length to its own characteristics, to the contexts in which it was made, to the contexts in which it might be seen. Reflexivity of this kind was a hallmark of Conceptual art: an artist might begin exploring what art was, or could be, by revealing how the structures around it acted on it, and how it acted on its surroundings. By appearing in his videos Landers seemed to be keeping another common conceptual conundrum in the air: What is art? Something made by an artist… What's an artist then? Someone who makes art.

Like Conceptual art before it, Landers' work has the tendency to occupy spaces beyond the framework of the traditional artwork – spaces that frame both its production and reception. The studio, for example, is very evident in all his videos. Landers also interferes directly with the reception of his work by writing his own press releases. (Recently he even reviewed his own work!) One thinks of all those Minimalists and Conceptual artists who wrote criticism that appropriated or pre-empted the work of the critic (Donald Judd, Robert Morris, Joseph Kosuth, Robert Smithson, Mel Bochner, etc.) and, less directly, those that used art magazine pages as sites for works (Dan Graham, Douglas Huebler, Smithson, Bochner, Kosuth). [SIC], and the writing that appears on his paintings, continually makes reference to the infrastructure of the art world: its participants (critics, dealers, curators, collectors, artists, viewers) and its institutions (galleries, magazines, art schools, biennials, museums). Prior to the 60s, we were supposed to ignore such things – except, that is, when confronted by the proto-conceptual enigmas of Marcel Duchamp.

Besides the cloudy skies and choppy seas, the fulsome but disembodied breasts, the sadistic chimps and battered clowns, it takes less than a minute's reading of his early text paintings to realize that Sean Landers' reflexivity deviates radically from these conceptual precedents. While subjectivity is rarely acknowledged in Conceptual art, the majority of his sentences feature the word 'I.' Furthermore, critics and viewers are directly addressed as 'you,' as if he is literally in the room with us breathing down our necks – almost like an imaginary Vito Acconci performance. When he refers to the art world, the reflexivity isn't the analytical sort we've come to expect of Conceptual art and 'institutional critique.' Instead it takes the form of emotional outpourings of triumph, rage, despair, envy, and humiliation. As such, these responses to art's contexts are inseparable from the apparently unfiltered continuum of his life.

In this he has taken the confessional mode to new extremes. By comparison, notorious confessionalists as various as Sylvia Plath, Robert Lowell, Woody Allen, Kurt Cobain, and Morrissey seem coyly self-censorious. As if on a truth drug, there's nothing, seemingly, Sean Landers won't divulge, however embarrassing and self-indicting: we read of his masturbatory fantasies, his religious hang-ups,

his professional jealousies, his personal relationships, his faltering belief in his genius, the agony he suffers on receipt of negative reviews, and much more besides.

This is high stakes stuff, but Landers, in his portrayal of himself, comes over – like the unreliable narrators of modernist novels – as a little too naive to have realized its full implications. We find ourselves not knowing whether what we are reading or hearing is the whole truth, half the truth, or complete fiction. This ambiguity is especially effective in an intellectual context – post-Barthes, Derrida, and Foucault – that is skeptical of authorial presence. By seemingly adopting a strategy of full disclosure, Landers not only transgresses art-world etiquette through many of the things he divulges, he also rattles its philosophical co-ordinates.

The verisimilitude of his representations of his emotional life is such that we find ourselves wondering, for a moment, if we might be in the presence of the real thing – i.e. the outsider or 'idiot savant' whose conspicuous talents have been embraced by the art world (his I'M A CLOWN IN A WORLD OF CHIMPS seems to toy with that idea). Reading between the lines, though, we can begin to detect the games being played by a sophisticate well versed in the rules of the art world. It's not transgression itself that makes Landers unique – 90s art is particularly notable for transgression. What makes his practice unique is the impression he manages to maintain that these transgressions are done involuntarily – that he just can't help these aspects of his life flooding into his art.

It's this performative aspect that lends continuity to the many apparently contradictory forms his work has taken – paintings and bronze sculptures on the one hand, text works and videos on the other. It's also what has made his works amongst the most engaging and entertaining of the last fifteen years. In Landers' case, those qualities contribute to the works' complexity. The laughter and empathy which they give rise to, defer and frustrate our will and ability to interpret the practice as a whole. Its performativity runs rings round us: the work is always two or three steps ahead of our ability to process it. We find ourselves letting go of our critical guard. It's his audience, rather than Sean Landers himself, who, momentarily at least, find themselves 'happy victims' of his 'charade.'

Bruce Nauman's early videos show what art can look like if you remove the object: we are left with the artist alone in his studio, an image both profound and absurd. Stripped of all received notions of art-making, we view Nauman at the zero degree of the creative act, reduced to bouncing balls, pacing the room in an exact square formation, and other apparently worthless tasks. Bereft of art objects, Nauman's studio loses definition, and in the process becomes infinite – a kind of universe. At the same time his studio is a prison cell – after all, what's the use of a studio if you're not going to make objects? Stuck here, seemingly without purpose, killing time as we imagine a prisoner would, Nauman, like Samuel Beckett and Franz Kafka before him, implies that the calling of the avant-garde is a life sentence.

While Nauman's studio is virtually empty, Landers' studio in ANYONE'S ORGASM (1992) is full of art materials and one or two works-in-progress: some kind of head, perhaps, made of clay, on a plinth, under wraps, and a large text piece on a sheet of paper that covers an entire wall. Their presence is enough to problematise the status of his actions in the film. While the pointlessness of Nauman's actions can be considered conceptually and existentially profound, however casual they appear, Landers makes it that much harder for us to decide whether the pointlessness of his actions adds up to anything. This problem is emphasized the one time we see him at work on his text painting. In light of this short sequence, what are we to make of the actions that fill the rest of the sixty-minute video – the monologues, the singing, the dancing, the face pulling? Any one of these actions alone, sustained for the full duration, might just evoke 70s performance-based video (Vito Acconci, John Baldessari, Paul McCarthy, Andy Warhol, or William Wegman, for example), but together in one film, seemingly performed at whim, they begin looking like the behavior of an artist with severe motivation problems. Instead of dematerializing the art object, Landers creates the impression that he can't seem to get round to doing the materializing. His activities ask to be taken for the diversion strategies of an indolent procrastinator. Nauman, Beckett, and Kafka come to mind, but so do the attention-seeking dimwits of reality shows that now crowd television schedules. We're left in an interpretative dilemma.

The constant din of the radio doesn't help. While we know that most art gets made to some kind of soundtrack, I can't recall another artwork other than ANYONE'S ORGASM that gives the radio such prominence. Its prominence in the piece suggests Landers doesn't know what's involved in making video art, since the first thing any other artist would do, once the camera is rolling, is turn it off. It also contributes to the sense that we aren't so much viewing the documentation of a performance as witnessing the artist's down time – the bits we shouldn't see, the bits all other artists would edit out of the work. By showing us the 'life' around the 'art' Landers introduces a new level of uncertainty between those terms just when we thought the issue was a dead one in the aftermath of the 'dematerialized' practices of the 60s and 70s. Ironically, Landers achieves this by re-introducing traditional media in the middle of it all (the clay head and the canvas on the wall).

Perhaps it could be argued the radio in ANYONE'S ORGASM does what the palettes, easels, and models do in Picasso, Matisse, and Braque's reflexive compositions. Perhaps it also follows on from the

coffee tins and brushes Jasper Johns rendered in bronze. It's harder to make such a claim, though, when we've heard what Landers is listening to. While we might like to imagine Pollock listening to Charlie Parker, Rauschenberg to John Cage, the British Pop artists to The Beatles, and so on, soft rock rules chez Landers, an association he uses to offend our sense of art's respectability. "I want to know what love is/I want you to show me," "I want to know/have you ever seen the rain?," "Never get caught between the moon and New York City," "The albatross and whale are my brothers" and other ridiculous pomp wafts through his studio, stimulating and accompanying his activities in ANYONE'S ORGASM. The singing, dancing, and mugging to camera is done as if showing off to friends – very good friends – rather than for the approval of gallery visitors, an impression that seems to lampoon the sacrosanct white rooms used to show it in. When he sings, he adopts a grotesque croon, like a dreadful lounge act, or a mock pious chant, as if singing the Eucharist. On several occasions he repeats a phrase over and over as if identifying with sentiments resembling some of the more self-parodic passages in his prose, or, alternatively, as if imitating a teenager imitating an avant-garde composer dismembering a popular song. When he plays with the interference between radio stations, his grimaces imply that he knows that we know that he knows he is indulging in a received notion of experiment rather than the actual thing.

As such Landers is playing with the notion that he might be someone simply doing what's expected of him, instead of striving to develop an artistic path of his own. The studio in his videos doesn't symbolize art's new frontier. Instead, Landers seems to imply that he's there because he's supposed to be, as if to say "what else do you expect me to do now that I've got my MFA?" Watching his videos we always have the sense that the creative spell, such as it is, is about to be broken by a loft-mate wanting to borrow some sugar, or a call from a creditor chasing a late instalment on a student loan. By hiring a chimpanzee (dressed like a human, as in television adverts and family movies) and letting him loose in the studio for half an hour, Landers deliberately implies that he is inadvertently suggesting that the monkey might make better use of these four walls than he does. SINGERIE: LE PEINTRE (1995) looks like a Bruce Nauman video speeded up: the loveable primate body surfs on a skateboard, darts up and down step ladders, and sprints back and forth from one end of the space to the other, accompanied by a soundtrack, sentimental and spirited by turns, that includes MOON RIVER and the theme to MISSION IMPOSSIBLE.

If we were to go on the specific references Landers makes to other artists, he wouldn't seem that interested in the recent avant-garde anyhow. Whereas artists like Warhol and Nauman were role models for Landers' generation, his many homages to artists date back to an era before art took the forms many of his works take. This enhances the performative evocation that he is writing, performing, and shooting videos simply because that's what an artist of the 90s does, in the same way that renting a white-washed loft in Manhattan and going to gallery openings in Chelsea is what's expected of him. Even when his videos get closest to performance precedents, they have pretences to be among more elevated company. REMISSIONEM PECCATORUM (1994) and ITALIAN HIGH RENAISSANCE AND BAROQUE SCULPTURE (1993) are reminiscent of the endurance feats on camera of Marina Abramovic and Vito Acconci, yet the poses are designed to evoke Michelangelo and Bernini. The effect of the conflation is an image of the artist as narcissist, appearing as his own muse – more Morrissey, were he ever to appear on stage naked, than Dying Slave or avant-garde masochist. Rather than simply quoting art history, as many first generation postmodernists in the 80s did, Landers literally makes the references his own.

With the exception of a group of paintings featuring clowns, naked hippies, aliens, robots, and pink rabbits in various landscapes, nearly all Landers' paintings that don't feature writing are pastiches of great art-historical works or portraits of great artists. The former include series by William Hogarth and Pablo Picasso. The latter come in two forms: famous artists as ghosts of themselves and famous artists in various disguises. Both are portraits of what popular publishers now call 'modern masters' of an era contemporary artists rarely refer to.

GHOST 1 (ERNST), GHOST 2 (DUCHAMP), and GHOST 3 (PICABIA) (all 2003) resemble grisailles, old photographs, and spectres. Together, the series is a séance which we as viewers witness or, by implication, participate in: Landers attempts to channel the spirits of his forebears through oil on canvas, a medium which itself has since reputedly died. In this, Landers' use of the medium, with the exhibition context in mind, is as performative as his videos – an agency painting rarely has.

It's harder to determine what Landers intends by the other portraits, which feature clowns' face paint and garish costume. Why is Dalí a king, Braque an elf, De Chirico a Viking, Ernst a devil and Picasso a soldier from the American Civil War? And why, with the exception of Dalí, would they appear in costume at all? The point of all these artists, and presumably their appeal to Landers, is that they embody uniqueness. Why the uniforms then? Why the obvious but inappropriate personifications? Although we recognize everything we are looking at, Landers manages to make paintings that resist categorization and remain enigmas.

Virtually all Landers' gallery of modern masters were related to Surrealism. His version of the Surreal, however, looks deliberately off target. Instead of being bizarre, his 'masters' simply look odd, like pantomime dames in the wrong costumes. Landers' other attempts at Surrealism seem similarly contrived. The chimps, clowns, aliens, robots, bunnies, and naked hippies that populate his first series of paintings devoid of writing were generic before Landers got to them: despite backdrops that hark back to Romanticism, the slightly anachronistic figures that populate them look as if they've strayed from the comforting world of post-war American entertainment: Disney animations, family sitcoms, theme parks, and children's picture books. His aliens are green and egg-headed, of course, while his robots are so tinpot they seem like they never saw the back of the 50s or the Yellow Brick Road. Their appearance in his art suggests a mind crowded with cultural hand-me-downs, so much so that it's unable to summon up individually persuasive characters of his own.

> That accusation is harder to level at others. A recent series of bronze busts of anthropomorphic animals could have sprung from the eccentric and unhinged Victorian imaginations of Lewis Carroll or Edward Lear were they to resettle in 21st-century America: FOOTBALL DUCK (2003) is, as implied, a duck whose head is shaped like a U.S. football, while PEANUT HEAD'S (2003) head is indeed modelled on the shell of monkey nuts. A series of figurative paintings that feature writing, made between 1998 and 2000, feature all manner of mutants: among them a sad balding man with three droopy red noses (THREE NOSE GUY), a man with an erect penis for a nose and giant scrotum for a chin (LE DOMAINE ENCHANTÉ AKA MONSIEUR SAUCISSON), and a woman with teddy bear faces on her breast and trees where her head, left arm and waist should be (APOLLO AND DAPHNE). Still, we don't shudder in the face of these anatomical aberrations as we might before a strange creature in a Surrealist painting. Instead of actually looking dreamlike, they look as if they have been contrived to seem dredged from the unconscious: the hybridization is forced, the sexual allusions absurdly clichéd, and the characters' symbolic roles all too apparent. Those characteristics set up a fictitious sense of authorship. We feel they are the works of a Sunday painter aiming at some received idea of Surrrealism filtered through more immediate influences of B movies and soft porn. The technical sophistication of several of these works – the inappropriately beautiful Tiepoloesque light that bathes Monsieur Saucisson and the breast he stands on, for instance – reveals the gap between this fictitious creator and the actual artist who assumes his identity. The effect, again, is analogous to modernist novelists' use of 'unreliable' narrators.

The combination of writing and image on these paintings comes across as especially wrong: in terms of the avant-garde, figurative painting was regarded obsolete by artists employing text; in terms of the Western tradition, writing on the painting would disrupt the illusionistic coherence of what it represented. The appearance of illustrations by famous artists in works of literature are these paintings' closest forebears. In Landers' works, though, writing and image are fused on the same canvas, which compounds their fundamental incompatibility. Often, though, the imagery bears no more relation to the subject of the writing around them than traditional English pub signs do with the conversations occurring indoors. In some, Landers makes a quick reference to the image and title on the top left hand corner and then ignores it in the rest of the text, like the proverbial elephant in the room. BUBBLE BOY (1998), for example, begins, "I feel like painting a picture of a 1970s boy with no arms, big hair and blowing a bubble sitting on a hillside stareing [sic] blankly into space. Voilà." (Thanks Sean.) Bar a couple of brief re-appearances, BUBBLE BOY doesn't get a look into the comically lugubrious monologues that follow and we are left none the wiser. Instead Landers opines on posterity; how being alive is better than being dead; how he got a critical hiding when he dropped his 'shtick' of writing on his paintings in previous shows; how he's returned to it because it means his paintings would sell; how as a consequence his dealer likes him again; how great this particular painting is; how we really should buy it if we can afford it so that he and his family can have a better lifestyle. It's hard to know what this has to do with BUBBLE BOY any more than any of his other creations from the series – PLANK BOY (2000), CAREER EGO (1999), THE BOOBY (1998), et al – which is, of course, precisely the point.

> The images in these paintings operate the way themes do in many stand-up comedy routines. Landers on Landers as entertainer: "People think I'm a fucking comedian. Hey, I'm a serious artist for God's sake, look at this painting... Okay this painting isn't a good example, but I've made lots of serious art before, right?" (FOOTBALL DUCK, 1998). A routine may purport to be about a comedian's experiences of hitch-hiking, a bus journey home one day, or the relative merits of the various emergency services[2], but these prosaic themes merely act as pretexts for a sequence of wild digressions. Occasionally the theme comes back in view, as if the comedian has just remembered what it was he or she should be addressing. The effect of these 'mistakes' is of someone following the non-linear train of their thoughts. Usually, of course, most of what seems like free association is scripted. When the writing is good, the effect is astonishing, like witnessing a movie of the workings of the mind, which is the impression we have reading [SIC]. Because stand-up comedy is happening before us in real time, often we're not sure whether we are witnessing actual free-association or its representation.

Many of literature's modernists shared this aim of representing the flux of consciousness realistically. None, however, have surpassed Lawrence Sterne's THE LIFE AND OPINIONS OF TRISTRAM SHANDY,

2
The subjects of three acts I've seen lately.

published between 1759 and 1767 in nine volumes shortly after the heyday of Hogarth and English literary satire (John Dryden, Alexander Pope, Jonathan Swift, et al), amusing and bemusing its contemporary readership in equal measure. As TRISTRAM SHANDY reveals, consciousness behaves in an endlessly digressive manner, obstructing the progressive path the novelist is expected to take. As a consequence, the book's apparent hero, Tristram, remains in utero for the first two volumes while he expounds on a whole range of subjects other than the events of his life. By the end we still know next to nothing about him, yet we've become familiar with the obstetrician who delivers him, the local parson's sermons, the progress of the Williamite wars in Flanders, Uncle Toby's meticulous real-time enactments of these wars on his bowling green with his sidekick Corporal Trim, contemporary French Catholic opinion on baptising children before birth, Pythagorean mathematics, and much more.

> Sean Landers' writing, especially in [SIC], is as digressive and absurd as TRISTRAM SHANDY, except that his 'life and opinions' remain the constant subject of these digressions. Written out by hand, it resembles speech, as it cannot be edited, except by crossing words out. In this respect [SIC] is a performance with a set length – 1000 pages – which he fails in the end to achieve, despite threatening himself with the death of his mother if he doesn't. As with TRISTRAM SHANDY, much stand-up and a lot of his other work, the writing is full of references to the task at hand, what he's written so far, and the anticipated response of the reader:
>
> *Naturally by the time you read this in Grenoble the thousand pages won't be done, I guess I should set a time limit of some kind. Let's say by the date of my opening at Andrea Rosen Gallery in Sept. or October of 1993 if my 1000 pages are not done by then the thug will execute my mother and I shall be to blaim. God save me and for my mother's sake don't let me get writters block. Shit. 992 pages to go. Maybey I got in over my head here. 1000 pages it's a lot you know it'll be a piece about as long as Crime and Punishment, probably about as important to litterature too [sic].*[3]

Its performativity and reflexivity is echoed in one of many passages by Sterne:

> *I will not finish that sentence till I have made an observation upon the strange state of affairs between the reader and myself […] I am this month one whole year older than I was this time twelve-month; and having got, as you perceive, almost in the middle of my fourth volume – and no farther than to my first day's life – 'tis demonstrative that I have three hundred and sixty-four days more life to write just now, than when I first set out… at this rate I should just live 364 times faster than I should write – It must follow, an' please your worships, that the more I write, the more I shall have to write – and consequently, the more your worships read, the more your worships will have to read.*[4]

While [SIC] and the writing on Landers' early paintings tends to read as unmediated stream-of-consciousness, the writing in the recent paintings seems increasingly self-parodic: "Hey, I'm that guy that writes on his paintings. Accept no imitations. Especially English ones" (FOOTBALL DUCK). Landers does Landers as consciously as he's done Hogarth and Picasso. His most recent paintings feature melodramatic short phrases or single words drawn from what we've come to know as his lexicon: "masterpiece," "cynical," "finish me," "struggle," "give in," "my work will function better when I'm dead," "I know I worked hard I really tried" in THERE WAS A TIME… (2004) and "I know I'm great," "sometimes I can suck," "I have greater range and talent than anyone" in IT'S UP TO YOU (2003). Each word and phrase is repeated as if it's an echo returning from his earlier work, as if its author now suffers from compulsive repetition, and as if Landers is offering us the prospect that he has become the monster he created.

> The bronze 'confederacy of dunces' that accompany the paintings evokes no less than Rembrandt, Narcissus, Sisyphus, Icarus, and the Minotaur, according to his own triumphant review of the exhibition in FRIEZE[5]. They're "his progeny for his progeny," "irreverent fantasy creatures" intended to "entertain his kids." Finally, despite the rabbit ears, the reptilian skin, the elephant trunk, and walrus tusks, they are no less SEAN LANDERS, he claims, than the Landers we know from his apparently unmasked monologues. Referring to himself in the third person, as if "I is another" (Arthur Rimbaud), Landers ends the review-cum-obituary, "And last, they are a record of his performance on this stage, one at times warped by delusion and fantasy and fig leafed by occasional fiction but ultimately, it is him. He is this person."
>
> Free for once of the anxieties all artists are prey to, but none have dared or thought to include in their work – "Why, for instance, have I never shown in an American museum? I'm America's best artist yet I've never had a big show" (I LIVED/MONKEY AND GNOME, 2000) – he projects a mock-heroic image of himself in the afterlife, in the manner of Shelley's Keats in ADONAIS (1821), in the company of the great dead masters, far from the petty malice of the everyday art world.

3
Sean Landers, *[sic]*, Publicsfear Press, New York, 1993; Riverhead Books (New York), 1995, p. 8.

4
Lawrence Sterne, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*, Oxford University Press, 1993, p. 228.

5
Sean Landers, "Sean Landers, Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York," in: *frieze*, issue 83, May 2004, p. 108.

Failure, as a strategy – what one could call 'secondary failure' – connects Sean Landers with many of the other most significant artists of the last fifteen years. The contemporaneity of John Currin's portraits, for example, is attributable to their 'flaws' when held up against art historical precedents. The apparent slightness of many of Martin Creed's neo-Conceptual works derive from his anxieties around his ability to add anything new to art or the world. Maurizio Cattelan has gone to a doctor to get a certificate excusing himself on medical grounds for not having come up with a work in time for an exhibition, and the police for a certificate to state the work he didn't make was stolen from his car. Carsten Höller turned a car into a mobile LABORATORY OF DOUBT (1999), equipping it with a logo and a public address system. The work, however, remained silent when he failed to find ways of articulating doubt.

Mike Kelley and Martin Kippenberger, two of these artists' immediate predecessors, have since come to be seen as two of the most influential figures of the 80s. At a time when art works acted iconically and the artists that made them were stars, Kelley cast himself as a museum janitor and Kippenberger showed photographs of himself having been badly beaten up. Kelley has since become best known for deploying lowly craft techniques against Modernism and masculinity, while some of Kippenberger's most powerful late works were actual size subway entrances, in various architectural styles, that led nowhere.

It is significant that all these artists are white and male, and that all come from either the United States or Western Europe. Since the early 90s there has been much discussion around identity, especially from post-colonial, post-feminist, and queer perspectives. At the same time, the art world has undergone a process of globalization, with curators eager to identify emerging art centres in Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Eastern Europe.

While in works related to these contexts difference tends to be celebrated and injustices denounced, Landers, like Cattelan, Currin, Kelley, and Kippenberger, for example, takes a completely different approach to identity. Since Landers and these artists aren't acting from a distinct position of 'otherness,' their means of exploring identity have more to do with ambivalent and nuanced relations between the self and society, than issues of visibility and representation. Identity, in the representational sense, does enter Landers' work via his conflicted feelings about his Catholic and lower-middle class upbringing, his Greek and Irish roots, and his dyslexia, but he makes no attempt to offer himself as a representative of these demographics.

In many ways, however, his can be considered a parallel and progressive project, the bad behavior notwithstanding. In the past, few straight white male artists felt the need to question their own relationship to the kind of art they made or the contexts in which it was received – not in public at least, and not in their works. That unselfconsciousness arose from a sense that their role as artists was naturally theirs. By contrast, Landers makes his conflicts, doubts, humiliations and anxieties the subject matter of his work. Even when the tone of the works turn to expressions of his genius, we know that the artist behind the persona knows that this is an embarrassing faux pas, and that these proclamations come at a time when the term is discredited.

We know this because we understand that Landers' portrayal of his emotional life is as performative as it is comic. In this it is related to overt aspects of self-portraiture in the works of Cattelan, Kelley, and Kippenberger and implicit aspects of self-portraiture in Creed, Currin, and Höller. As with Landers, they construct a sense of persona in their work that is often mocking or self-deprecating: the cruel prankster (Cattelan), the angry adolescent (Kelley), the maudlin drunk (Kippenberger), the agonizer (Creed), the womanizer (Currin), the slightly malign scientist (Höller). In Landers' work, this staging of the self is developed in many more directions and to much greater extremes. While the personas these other artists adopt are quickly recognizable, it's more difficult to determine what MONSIEUR SAUCISSON and FOOTBALL DUCK stand for with any degree of certainty and to what extent they and Sean Landers are interchangeable. Obviously they don't resemble the artist physically, but are their words a direct transcription of the artist's thoughts at the moment they were written, or, alternatively, do the words themselves form different caricatures of Sean Landers? If the latter, what is there more of, fact or fiction? Rarely do we find ourselves with such disorientating doubts before art works.

Humor is often closely related to performativity and 'secondary failure.' In Landers' practice it runs far deeper than most. With the exceptions of Dada and Fluxus, some Surrealism and some Pop, comedy is not something we associate with Fine Art. Generally, we associate it with art forms involving the written or spoken word (film, theatre, novels), comedy being far harder to achieve through images, especially non-moving ones. Landers' works – especially, but not exclusively, when writing is involved – often attain true comic brilliance. As in Woody Allen's films, we find ourselves laughing out loud with the artist at the picture of SEAN LANDERS that emerges in the confessions in his writing, the actions in his videos and choice of imagery in his paintings and sculpture while we are in the act of absorbing them.

As with Woody Allen, Landers' staging of the self is part of a metafictional game. We are aware, throughout, that he operates both inside and outside the work as both its protagonist and author. This means that we always have the sense that Sean Landers is stepping in and out of the frame of the work –

be it painting, video, or memoir – much as Allen literally enters and exits the cinematic frame he is simultaneously directing.

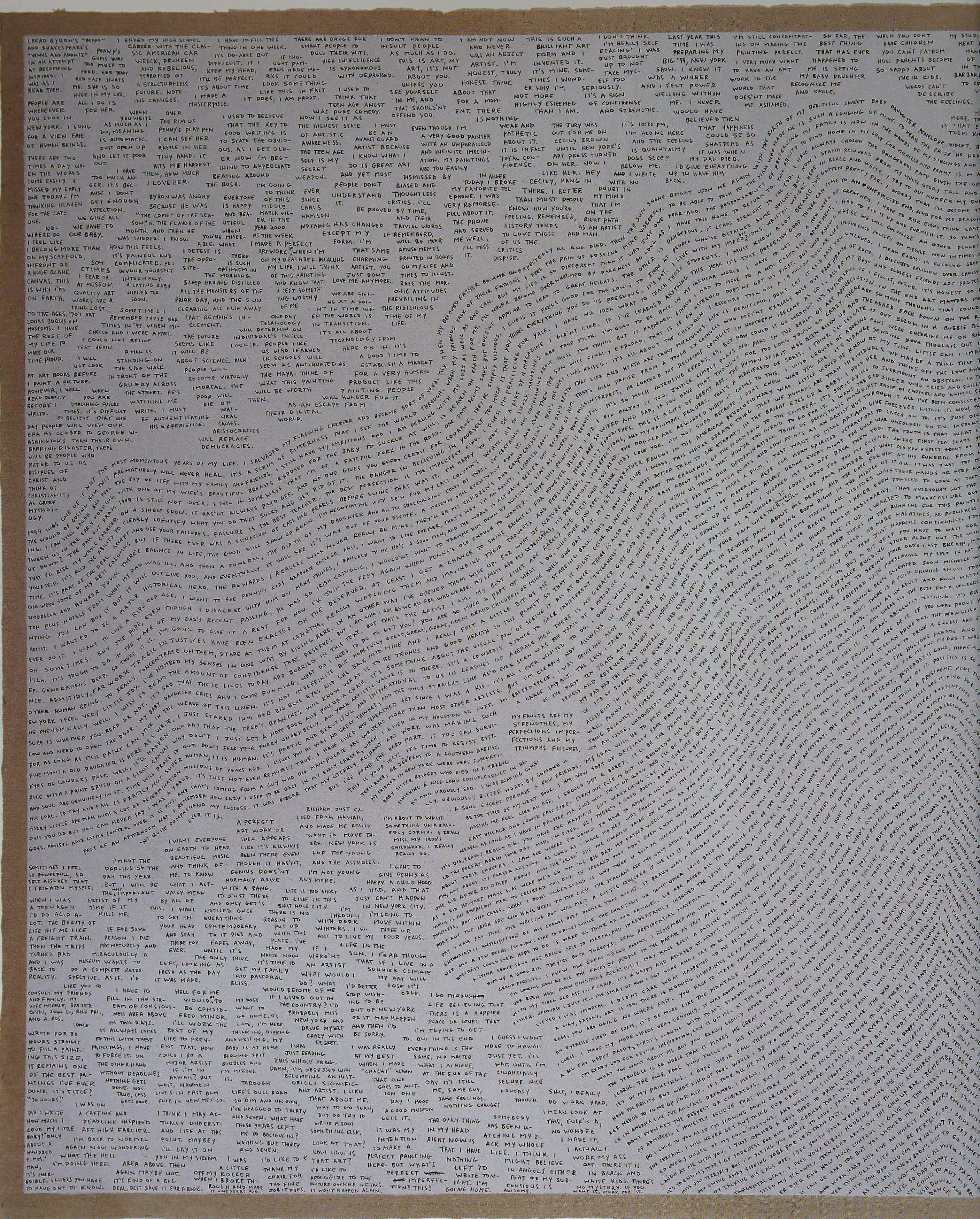
This is what distinguishes Landers' works from historical precedents they appear to resemble or pay homage to. The Picasso paintings are a case in point. In one, the Picassoid forms spell "Sean Landers," while in another they spell "Genius." In the monologue that accompanies them, Landers meditates, mock-heroically, on the relation between this noun and proper noun. As parodies, the paintings are innately resistant to the claims his performative self makes on his behalf. On the other hand, the soundtrack undermines the autonomy of Landers' paintings and the famous paintings they are based on. With Landers' speech and Holst's epic music resounding in the gallery, his Picasso paintings verge on becoming props in the performance of his elaborate metafiction, despite the authority of their compositional virtuosity.

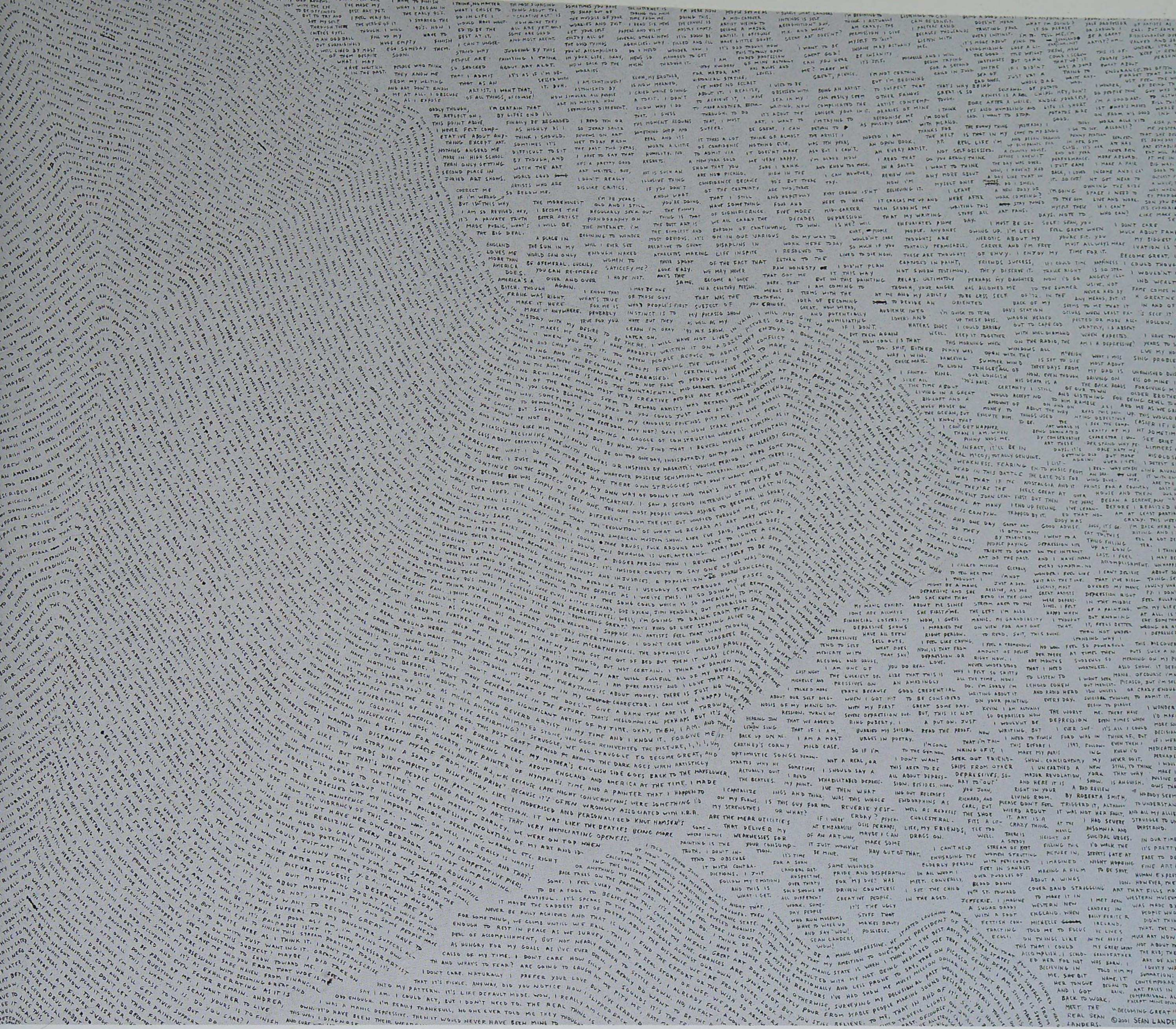
Metafiction has a particularly contradictory relationship to Surrealism. Instead of plumbing the depths of the self, it suggests that the self, when apparent in art works, is a construction. Portraiture, since it belongs to the world of appearances, would be the last strategy a surrrealist would employ to convey the unconscious self. André Breton wouldn't have tolerated Landers' representations of his circle, which of course is part of their irony. Nor would he have appreciated the deliberate absurdity of the various pop cultural borrowings in his neo-Surrealist paintings: the aliens in a rowing boat on a wild sea at night, the chimp in the astronaut suit at an easel on what looks like Mars, and so on.

Landers' text works and performance-based videos also deliberately fail in respect to the criteria of Conceptual art. In general, anything that could be taken as a subjective statement was excised from these precedents in the 60s and 70s: the language employed a quasi-scientific objectivity, while the artist's body was treated as abstract material. In this way Conceptual art made what came before and after the art object, and the structures around it, the content of the work itself: the artist's body, the space of the studio, the politics of the exhibition space, the world beyond these spaces, the publications used to represent it, etc. Landers incorporates many of these contexts into his works. At the same time, he has incorporated a whole range of contextual material into his work that Conceptual artists neglected, which is what creates the impression that he is getting Conceptual art wrong. That material belongs to the subjective, emotional sphere and is shared by all artists. By making his artistic and professional highs and lows the main subject of his work, Sean Landers hasn't just provided an ongoing commentary on his own practice, he has also, indirectly, provided a commentary on every other artist's.

7095, 2001
Oil on linen
172.72 × 233.68 cm

Pages 106–107
PERFECT, 2000
Oil on linen
213.36 × 365.76 cm


I READ BYRON'S "BEPPO" AND SHAKESPEARE'S "VENUS AND ADONIS" IN AN ATTEMPT AT BECOMEING INSPIRED. I WAS AS I READ THEM.
PENNY'S GUMS HURT TOO MUCH TO FEED. HER TEARY RED FACE HURTS ME. SHE IS SO HUGE IN MY LIFE. ALL I DO IS FOR HER.
I ENDED MY HIGH SCHOOL CAREER WITH THE CLASSIC AMERICAN CAR WRECK, DRUNKEN AND REBELIOUS, TERROFIED OF A STRUCTURELESS FUTURE. NOTHING CHANGES.
I HAVE TO FILL THIS THING IN ONE WEEK. IT'S DO-ABLE BUT DIFFICULT. IF I KEEP MY HEAD, IT'LL BE PERFECT. IT'S ABOUT TIME I MADE A MASTERPIECE.
IF THOUGHT PATTERNS MADE MARKS IT COULD LOOK SOMETHING LIKE THIS. IN FACT IT DOES, I AM PROOF.
THERE ARE DRUGS FOR SMART PEOPLE TO DULL THEIR WITS. HIGH INTELLIGENCE IS SYNONOMOUS WITH DEPRESSED.
I DON'T MEAN TO INSULT PEOPLE AS MUCH AS I DO. THIS IS ART, MY ART, IT'S NOT ABOUT YOU. UNLESS YOU SEE YOURSELF IN ME, AND THAT SHOULD'NT OFFEND YOU.
I AM NOT NOW AND NEVER WAS AN ABJECT ARTIST. I'M HONEST, TRULY HONEST. THINK ABOUT THAT FOR A MOMENT. THERE IS NOTHING WEAK AND PATHETIC ABOUT IT. IT IS IN FACT TOTAL CONFIDENSE.
THIS IS SUCH A BRILLIANT ART FORM AND I INVENTED IT. IT'S MINE. SOMETIMES I WONDER WHY I'M NOT MORE HIGHLY ESTEEMED THAN I AM.
I DON'T THINK I'M REALLY 'SELF EFACING' I WAS JUST BROUGHT UP TO NOT TAKE MYSELF TOO SERIOUSLY. IT'S A SIGN OF CONFIDENSE AND STRENGTHE.
LAST YEAR THIS TIME I WAS PREPARING MY BIG '99, NEW YORK SHOW. I KNEW IT WAS A WINNER AND I FELT POWER WELLING WITHIN ME. I NEVER WOULD HAVE BELIEVED THEN THAT HAPPINESS COULD BE SO SHATTERD AS IT WAS WHEN MY DAD DIED. I'D GIVE EVERYTHING UP TO HAVE HIM BACK.
I'M STILL CONCENTRATING ON MAKING THIS PAINTING PERFECT. I VERY MUCH WANT TO HAVE AN ART WORK IN THE WORLD THAT DOES'NT MAKE ME ASHAMED.
SO FAR, THE BEST THING THAT HAS EVER HAPPENED TO ME IS SEEING MY BABY DAUGHTER RECOGNIZE ME AND SMILE.
WHEN YOU DONT HAVE CHILDREN YOU CAN'T FATHUM HOW PARENTS BECOME SO SAPPY ABOUT THEIR KIDS. WORDS CAN'T DESCRIBE THE FEELINGS.
PEOPLE ARE WHEREEVER YOU LOOK IN NEW YORK. I LONG FOR A VIEW FREE OF HUMAN BEINGS.
WHEN YOU WRITE AS MUCH AS I DO, MEANING IS AUTOMATIC. JUST OPEN UP AND LET IT POUR OUT.
OVER THE RIM OF PENNY'S PLAY PEN I CAN SEE HER RATTLE IN HER TINY HAND. IT HITS ME HARDEST THEN, HOW MUCH I LOVE HER.
I USED TO BELIEVE THAT THE KEY TO GOOD WRITING IS TO STATE THE OBVIDOUS. AS I GET OLDER NOW I'M BEGINING TO APPRECIATE BEATING AROUND THE BUSH.
I USED TO THINK THAT TEEN AGE ANGST WAS PURE COMEDY. NOW I SEE IT AS THE HIGHEST STATE OF ARTISTIC AWARENESS. THE TEEN AGE SELF IS MY SECRET WEAPON.
I MUST BE AN AVANT GUARD ARTIST BECAUSE I KNOW WHAT I DO IS GREAT ART AND YET MOST PEOPLE DONT UNDERSTAND IT.
EVEN THOUGH I'M A VERY GOOD PAINTER WITH AN UNPARALLELD AND INFINITE IMAGINATION. MY PAINTINGS ARE TOO EASILY DISMISSED BY BIASED AND THOUGHTLESS CRITICS. I'LL BE PROVED BY TIME, AND THEIR TRIVIAL WORDS IF REMEMBERD, WILL BE MEER AMUSEMENTS PRINTED IN BOOKS ON MY LIFE AND TIMES TO ILLUSTRATE THE MORONIC ATTITUDES PREVAILING IN THE RIDICULOUS TIME OF MY LIFE.
IN ANGER TODAY I BROKE MY FAVORITE TELEPHONE. I WAS VERY REMORSEFULL ABOUT IT. THE PHONE HAD SERVED ME WELL, I'LL MISS IT.
THE JURY WAS OUT FOR ME ON CECILY BROWN UNTIL NEW YORK'S ART PRESS TURNED ON HER. NOW I LIKE HER. HEY CECILY, HANG IN THERE. I BETTER THAN MOST PEOPLE KNOW HOW YOU'RE FEELING. REMEMBER, HISTORY TENDS TO LOVE THOSE OF US THE CRITICS DISPISE.
IT'S 10:30 PM, I'M ALONE HERE AND THE FEELING IS QUAINTASMY DOGS SLEEP BELOW ME. I WRITE WITH NO DOUBT IN MY MIND THAT I'M ON THE RIGHT PATH AS AN ARTIST AND MAN.
THERE ARE TWO TIMES A DAY WHEN THE WORDS COME EASILY. I MISSED MY EARLY ONE TODAY. I'M THINKING HEAVEN FOR THE LATE ONE.
I HAVE TOO MUCH ANGER. IT'S BECAUSE I DONT GET ENOUGH AFFECTION. WE GIVE ALL WE HAVE TO OUR BABY.
BYRON WAS ANGRY BECAUSE HE WAS "THE COMET OF THE SEASON" IE. THE FLAVOR OF THE MONTH. AND THEN HE WAS IGNORED. I KNOW HOW THIS FEELS.
EVERYONE IS HAPPY AND BEAUTIFUL WHEN YOU'RE MISERABLE. WHAT I DETEST IS THE OPPOSITE.
I'M GOING TO THINK OF THIS MIDDLE MARCH WEEK IN THE YEAR 2000 AS THE WEEK I MADE A PERFECT ARTWORK. SO WHEN I'M ON MY DEATHBED RECALLING MY LIFE, I WILL THINK OF THIS PAINTING AND KNOW THAT I LEFT SOMETHING WORTHY OF ME.
EVER SINCE CHRIS HAMSON NOTHING HAS CHANGED EXCEPT MY FORM. I'M THAT SAME CHARMING ARTIST. YOU JUST DONT LOVE ME ANYMORE.
NOWHERE DO I FEEL LIKE I BELONG MORE THAN ON MY SCAFFOLD INFRONT OF A HUGE BLANK CANVAS. THIS IS WHY I'M ON EARTH.
IT'S PAINFUL AND COMPLICATED. YOU DEVOUR YOURSELF INTERNALLY. A CRYING BABY WEENED TOO SOON.
THERE IS SUCH OPTIMISM IN THE MORNING. SLEEP HAVING DISTILLED ALL THE MONSTERS OF THE PRIOR DAY, AND THE SUN CLEARING ALL ELSE AWAY THAT REMAINS INCLEMENT.
SOMETIMES I FEAR THAT MUSEUM QUALITY ART WORKS ARE A THING LOST TO THE AGES. '70'S ART LOOKS BOGUS IN MUSEUMS. I HAVE THE REST OF MY LIFE TO MAKE OUR TIME PROUD.
WE ARE LIVING AT A POINT IN TIME WHEN THE WORLD IS IN TRANSITION. IT'S ALL ABOUT TECHNOLOGY FROM HERE ON IN. IT'S A GOOD TIME TO ESTABLISH A MARKET FOR A VERY HUMAN PRODUCT LIKE THIS PAINTING. PEOPLE WILL HUNGER FOR IT AS AN ESCAPE FROM THEIR DIGITAL WORLD.
SOMETIMES I REMEMBER THOSE SAD TIMES IN '93 WHEN MICHELLE AND I WERE APART. I COULD NOT RELIVE THAT AGAIN.
ONE DAY TECHNOLOGY WILL DETERMIN AN INDIVIDUAL'S INTELLIGENCE. PEOPLE LIKE US WHO LEARNED IN SCHOOLS WILL SEEM AS ANTIQUATED AS THE MAYA. THINK OF WHAT THIS PAINTING WILL BE WORTH THEN.
THE FUTURE SEEMS LIKE IT WILL BE ABOUT SCIENCE. RICH PEOPLE WILL BECOME VIRTUALLY IMORTAL. THE POOR WILL DIE OF NATURAL CAUSES. ARISTOCRACIES WILL REPLACE DEMOCRACIES.
I WILL NOT LOOK AT ART BOOKS BEFORE I PAINT A PICTURE. HOWEVER, I WILL READ POETRY BEFORE I WRITE.
A MAN IS STANDING ON THE SIDE WALK IN FRONT OF THE GALLERY ACROSS THE STREET. HE'S WATCHING ME WRITE. I MUST BE AUTHENTICATING HIS EXPERIENCE.
WHEN YOU ARE IMAGINING FUTURE TIMES. IT'S DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE THAT ONE DAY PEOPLE WILL VIEW OUR ERA AS CLOSER TO GEORGE WASHINGTON'S THAN THEIR OWN. BARRING DISASTER, THERE WILL BE PEOPLE WHO REFER TO US AS DISIPLES OF CHRIST AND THINK OF CHRISTIANITY AS GREEK MYTHOLOGY.
MY FAULTS ARE MY STRENGTHES, MY PERFECTIONS IMPERFECTIONS AND MY TRIUMPHS FAILURES.
SOMETIMES I FEEL SO POWERFULL, SO SELF ASSURED THAT I FRIGHTEN MYSELF.
I'M NOT THE DARLING OF THE DAY THIS YEAR. BUT I WILL BE THE MOST IMPORTANT ARTIST OF MY TIME IF IT KILLS ME.
I WANT EVERYONE ON EARTH TO HEAR BEAUTIFUL MUSIC AND THINK OF ME. TO KNOW WHAT I ACTUALLY MEAN BY ALL OF THIS. I WANT TO GET IN YOUR HEAD AND STAY THERE FOR EVER.
A PERFECT ART WORK OR IDEA APPEARS LIKE IT'S ALLWAYS BEEN THERE EVEN THOUGH IT HAS'NT. GENIUS DOES'NT NORMALLY ARIVE WITH A BANG. IT'S JUST THERE AND ONLY GET'S NOTICED ONCE EVERYTHING CONTEMPORARY TO IT DIES AND FADES AWAY, UNTIL IT'S THE ONLY THING LEFT, LOOKING AS FRESH AS THE DAY IT WAS MADE.
RICHARD JUST CALLED FROM HAWAII, AND MADE ME REALLY WANT TO MOVE THERE. NEW YORK IS FOR THE YOUNG AND THE ASSHOLES. I'M NOT YOUNG ANYMORE.
LIFE IS TOO SHORT TO LIVE IN THIS SHIT HOLE CITY. THERE IS NO REASON TO PUT UP WITH THIS PLACE. I'VE MADE MY NAME NOW IT'S TIME TO GET MY FAMILY INTO PASTORAL BLISS.
I'M THROUGH WITH DARK WINTERS. I WANT TO LIVE MY LIFE IN THE SUN. I FEAR THOUGH THAT IF I LIVE IN A SUNNIER CLIMATE MY ART WILL LOSE IT'S EDGE.
I'M ABOUT TO WRITE SOMETHING UNABASHEDLY CORNY. I REALLY MISS MY 1970'S CHILDHOOD, I REALLY REALLY DO.
I WANT TO GIVE PENNY AS HAPPY A CHILD HOOD AS I HAD. AND THAT JUST CAN'T HAPPEN IN NEW YORK CITY. I'M GOING TO MOVE WITHIN THREE OR FOUR YEARS.
IF I WERE'NT AN ARTIST WHAT WOULD I DO? WHAT WOULD BECOME OF ME IF I LIVED OUT IN THE COUNTRY? I'D PROBABLY MISS NEW YORK AND DRIVE MYSELF CRAZY WITH REGRET.
I'D BETTER STOP WISHING TO BE OUT OF NEW YORK OR IT MAY HAPPEN AND THEN I'D BE SORRY.
WHEN I WAS A TEENAGER I'D DO ACID A-LOT. THE BEAUTY OF LIFE HIT ME LIKE A FREIGHT TRAIN. THEN THE TRIPS TURNED BAD AND I WAS BACK TO REALITY.
IF FOR SOME REASON I DIE PREMATURELY AND MIRACULOUSLY A MUSEUM WANTS TO DO A COMPLETE RETROSPECTIVE. AS IF. I'D LIKE YOU TO CONSULT MY FRIENDS AND FAMILY. MY WIFE MICHELLE, BROTHER KEVIN, JOHN C., RICH PHI., AND A. ROS.
I ONCE WROTE FOR 36 HOURS STRAIGHT TO FILL A PAINTING THIS SIZE, IT REMAINS ONE OF THE BEST PAINTINGS I'VE EVER DONE. IT'S TITLE? "36 HOURS."
I HAVE TO FILL IN THE STREAM OF CONSIOUSNESS AREA ABOVE IN TWO DAYS. IT ALLWAYS COMES TO THIS WITH THESE PAINTINGS, I HAVE TO FORCE IT. ON THE OTHERHAND WITHOUT DEADLINES NOTHING GETS DONE. NOT TRUE, LESS GETS DONE.
HELL FOR ME WOULD BE TO BE CONSIDERED MINOR. I'LL WORK THE REST OF MY LIFE TO PREVENT THAT. HOW COULD I BE A MAJOR ARTIST IF I'M IN HAWAII? BUT WAIT, NAWMEN LIVES IN EAST BUM FUCK IN NEW MEXICO.
MY DOGS WANT TO GO HOME. IT'S LATE, I'M HERE THINKING, DIPPING AND WRITING. MY BABY IS AT HOME BLOWING SPIT BUBBLES AND I'M MISSING IT.
I WAS JUST READING THIS WHOLE THING. DAMN, I'M OBSESSED WITH BECOMEING AN HISTORICLY SIGNIFICANT ARTIST. I LIKE THAT ABOUT ME. WAY TO GO SEAN, BUT DO TRY TO WRITE ABOUT SOMETHING ELSE.
I WAS REALLY AT MY BEST WHEN I MADE "CHACHI" WHEN THAT ONE GOES TO AUCTION ONE DAY I HOPE A GOOD MUSEUM GETS IT.
I GO THROUGH LIFE BELIEVING THAT THERE IS A HAPPIER PLACE OR LEVEL THAT I'M TRYING TO GET TO. BUT IN THE END EVERYTHING IS THE SAME, NO MATTER WHAT I ACHIEVE, AT THE END OF THE DAY IT'S STILL ME, SAME GUY, SAME FEELINGS. NOTHING CHANGES.
I GUESS I WONT MOVE TO HAWAII JUST YET. I'LL WAIT UNTIL I'M FINANCIALLY SECURE. NICE FANTASY THOUGH.
I WAS ON A CAFFINE AND DEADLINE INSPIRED ART HIGH EARLIER. I'M BACK TO NORMAL AGAIN NOW WONDERING WHAT THE HELL I'M DOING HERE.
DID I WRITE HOW MUCH I LOVE MY LITTLE BABY? "ONLY ABOUT A HUNDRED TIMES." MAN, IT'S INCREDIBLE. I GUESS YOU HAVE TO HAVE ONE TO KNOW.
I THINK I MAY ACTUALLY UNDERSTAND LIFE AT THIS POINT. MAYBEY I'LL LAY IT ON YOU IN MY STREAM AREA ABOVE. THEN AGAIN MAYBE NOT. IT'S KIND OF A BIG DEAL. BEST SAVE IT FOR A BOOK.
THROUGH LIFE'S DULL ROAD SO DIM AND UNEVEN, I'VE DRAGGED TO THIRTY AND SEVEN. WHAT HAVE THESE YEARS LEFT ME TO BELIEVE IN? NOTHING BUT THIRTY AND SEVEN.
I WAS A LITTLE OFF MY ROCKER WHEN I BROKE THROUGH AND MADE IT NINE YEARS AGO.
I'D LIKE TO THANK MY CHAIR FOR THE FINE JOB IT DOES.
LOOK AT THAT! NOW HOW IS THAT ART? I'D LIKE TO APOLOGIZE TO THE FUTURE OWNER OF THIS. IT WONT HAPPEN AGAIN.
IT WAS MY INTENTION TO MAKE A PERFECT PAINTING HERE. BUT WHAT'S PERFECT OF IMPERFECTION? THIS!
THE ONLY THING IN MY HEAD RIGHT NOW IS THAT I HAVE NOTHING LEFT TO WRITE TONIGHT. I'M GOING HOME.
SOMEBODY HAS BEEN WATCHING MY BACK MY WHOLE LIFE. I THINK I MIGHT BELIEVE IN ANGELS EITHER THAT OR MY SUBCONSIOUS IS AWSOME.
SHIT, I REALLY DO WORK HARD. I MEAN LOOK AT THIS, FUCK'N A, NO WONDER I MADE IT. I ACTUALLY WORK MY ASS OFF. THERE IT IS IN BLACK AND WHITE KIDS. THERE'S NO MYSTERY. IF YOU WANT IT, WORK FOR IT.



BECOMING GREAT, 2001
Oil on linen
218.44 × 543.56 cm

SEVEN DEADLY SINS,
2002
Set of seven paintings
Oil on linen

Clockwise, from top left:

GREED
83.82 × 99.06 cm

ENVY
96.52 × 116.84 cm

ANGER
86.36 × 106.68 cm

SLOTH
78.74 × 93.98 cm

GLUTTONY
101.60 × 121.92 cm

PRIDE
81.28 × 96.52 cm

LUST
91.4 × 111.8 cm

SEAN LANDERS / 7098, 2001
Oil on linen
187.96 × 254 cm (left)
187.96 × 330.2 cm (right)

SEAN, SEAN, SEAN/7097,
2000
Oil on linen
203.2 × 294.64 cm

WAR AND PEACE / 7100, 2001
Oil on linen
259.08 × 670.56 cm

GENIUS, 2001
Oil on linen
218.44 × 543.56 cm

ON THE WALL ABOVE, 2001
Oil on linen
233.68 × 172.72 cm

Sean Landers: Kunst und Sprache

ALEX FARQUHARSON

„Ursprünglich hatte ich die Idee, die konzeptuelle Kunst unterhaltsam, schludrig, emotional, menschlich und witzig zu machen. Über die Jahre habe ich mich mit diesem Konzept so sehr exponiert, dass sich der Kreis zu schliessen begann und ich wieder zu einem traditionellen Künstler wurde. Ich versuchte, ironisch damit umzugehen, aber es wurde letzten Endes ernst. Jetzt bin ich ein glückliches Opfer meiner eigenen Scharade. Ich denke mir, es ist besser, ein Trottel zu sein, der etwas macht, statt ein Klugscheisser, der zu vorsichtig ist, überhaupt etwas zu machen."[1]

1
Sean Landers, *The Booby* (1998)

Anfang der neunziger Jahre war Sean Landers der Typ mit der Logorrhoe und der masochistisch hohen Schamschwelle, der Textarbeiten und Videos über sein nacktes Ich machte. Text und Low-Fidelity-Video gelten als Domäne der konzeptuellen Kunst. Diese Verbindung schien in den Nachwirkungen eines Jahrzehnts, das eine deftige figurative Malerei und Hochglanzobjekte hervorgebracht hatte, betont hervorzutreten. Der wunderbar unpassenden Absonderlichkeit der Clowns, Wolken, Meere und Brüste, die in und hinter seinen Textfeldern auftauchten, sowie den Tonschimpansen und menschenähnlichen Wesen zum Trotz, die seine Fernsehschirme umkreisen, wurde Landers immer noch als Konzeptkünstler geführt, wenngleich mit der Vorsilbe ‚Neo-' versehen.

Über die verwendeten Medien hinaus lag in der Verbindung ein gewisser Nutzen. Die meiste Zeit ging es um Kunst über Kunst, was sie zu einer Art Konzeptkunst machte. Das Geschriebene – auf Leinwand, auf gelbem Linienpapier, in seinem Roman [SIC] (1993) – nahm ausführlich auf seine eigenen Merkmale Bezug, auf die Kontexte, in der es geschaffen wurde, auf die Kontexte, in denen es möglicherweise gesehen würde. Reflexivität dieser Art war ein Markenzeichen der Konzeptkunst: Ein Künstler mochte zunächst erkunden, was Kunst ist oder sein könnte, indem er aufdeckt, wie die Strukturen in ihrer Umgebung auf sie einwirken und wie sie auf ihre Umgebung einwirkt. Indem Landers in seinen Videos auftrat, schien er ein weiteres gängiges konzeptuelles Rätsel in der Schwebe zu halten: Was ist Kunst? Etwas, was ein Künstler gemacht hat... Was ist denn ein Künstler? Jemand, der Kunst macht.

Wie die Konzeptkunst aus der Zeit vor ihnen greifen Landers' Arbeiten allmählich in Bereiche über, die sich ausserhalb des Rahmens des traditionellen Kunstwerkes befinden – Bereiche, die sowohl ihre Produktion als auch ihre Rezeption betreffen. Das Atelier ist zum Beispiel in allen seinen Videoarbeiten deutlich präsent. Landers mischt sich auch direkt in die Rezeption seiner Arbeit ein, indem er seine eigenen Pressemeldungen schreibt. (Vor kurzem hat er sogar seine eigene Arbeit rezensiert!) Man denkt an all jene Minimalisten und Konzeptkünstler, die Besprechungen schrieben, in denen sie die Arbeit des Kritikers selbst übernahmen oder ihr zuvorkamen (Donald Judd, Robert Morris, Joseph Kosuth, Robert Smithson, Mel Bochner usw.), und, weniger offensichtlich, an jene, die Seiten von Kunstmagazinen als Orte für ihre Arbeiten verwendeten (Dan Graham, Douglas Huebler, Smithson, Bochner, Kosuth). [SIC] sowie das Geschriebene, das auf seinen Gemälden erscheint, bezieht sich immer auf die Infrastruktur der Kunstwelt: ihre Mitglieder (Kritiker, Händler, Kuratoren, Sammler, Künstler, Betrachter) und ihre Institutionen (Galerien, Zeitschriften, Kunstschulen, Biennalen, Museen). Vor den sechziger Jahren sollten wir solche Dinge nicht beachten – das heisst mit Ausnahme der Situationen, in denen wir mit den protokonzeptuellen Rätseln Marcel Duchamps konfrontiert waren.

Von den bewölkten Himmeln und bewegten Meeren, den übertrieben üppigen, doch körperlosen Brüsten, den sadistischen Schimpansen und übel zugerichteten Clowns abgesehen, hat man beim Lesen seiner frühen Textbilder in weniger als einer Minute erfasst, dass sich die Reflexivität von Sean Landers grundsätzlich von der seiner konzeptuellen Vorgänger unterscheidet. Während in der Konzeptkunst Subjektivität selten eingestanden wird, enthält die Mehrzahl seiner Sätze das Wort ‚ich'.

Daneben werden Kritiker und Betrachter direkt mit ‚du' angeredet, als sei er im Raum und sitze uns buchstäblich im Nacken – fast wie eine fiktive Performance von Vito Acconci. Wenn er sich auf die Kunstwelt bezieht, ist die Reflexivität nicht analytisch in der Weise, wie wir es von der konzeptuellen Kunst und ‚institutionellen Kritik' inzwischen erwarten. Stattdessen nimmt sie die Form emotionaler Ergüsse von Triumph, Wut, Verzweiflung, Neid und Demütigung an. Als solche sind diese Reaktionen auf die Kontexte der Kunst von dem offenbar ungefilterten Kontinuum seines Lebens nicht zu trennen.

Damit hat er die bekenntnishafte Äusserung zu neuen Extremen geführt. Im Vergleich dazu erscheinen bekannte und so grundverschiedene Autoren von Bekenntnisliteratur wie Sylvia Plath, Robert Lowell, Woody Allen, Kurt Cobain und Morrissey verschämt selbstkritisch. Da gibt es offensichtlich nichts, wie peinlich oder selbstanklägerisch es auch sein mag, was Landers nicht verbreiten würde, als stünde er unter einer Wahrheitsdroge: Wir lesen von seinen Phantasien beim Masturbieren, seinen religiösen Komplexen, seinen beruflichen Eifersüchteleien, seinen persönlichen Beziehungen, von seinem schwankenden Glauben an sein Talent, den Qualen, die er leidet, wenn er negative Kritiken bekommt, und vieles mehr.

Das sind Dinge, bei denen es um einen hohen Einsatz geht, aber Landers wirkt mit seiner Selbstdarstellung – wie die unzuverlässigen Erzähler modernistischer Romane – ein bisschen zu naiv, um die Auswirkungen vollständig erfasst zu haben. Wir ertappen uns dabei, dass wir uns fragen, ob das Gelesene oder Gehörte die ganze Wahrheit, die halbe Wahrheit oder reine Erfindung ist. Dieser Doppeldeutigkeit kommt in einem intellektuellen Kontext – Barthes-Nachfolge, Derrida und Foucault –, welcher der Gegenwart eines Autors skeptisch begegnet, eine besondere Wirkung zu. Indem Landers offensichtlich die Strategie einer vollständigen Enthüllung verfolgt, setzt er sich durch die vielen Dinge, die er verbreitet, nicht nur über die Etikette der Kunstwelt hinweg, er bringt auch ihre philosophischen Koordinaten in Unordnung.

Die Darbietungen aus seinem Gefühlsleben wirken so realistisch, dass wir uns plötzlich fragen, ob wir der wirklichen Sache begegnen – d. h. dem Aussenseiter oder ‚idiot savant', dessen unübersehbare Talente von der Kunstwelt vereinnahmt wurden (I'M A CLOWN IN A WORLD OF CHIMPS scheint mit diesem Gedanken zu spielen). Wenn wir jedoch zwischen den Zeilen lesen, können wir allmählich entdecken, dass diese Spiele von einem kulturerfahrenen Menschen gespielt werden, der sich mit den Regeln der Kunstwelt gut auskennt. Es ist nicht die Transgression als solche, die Landers einzigartig macht – die Kunst der neunziger Jahre ist besonders für Transgression bekannt. Was seine Praxis einzigartig macht, ist die Tatsache, dass er den Eindruck aufrechtzuerhalten vermag, diese Grenzüberschreitungen geschähen unwillkürlich – dass er nicht umhinkönne, diese Aspekte seines Lebens in seine Kunst einfliessen zu lassen.

Es ist dieser performative Aspekt, der den zahlreichen, scheinbar widersprüchlichen Formen, die sein Schaffen angenommen hat, Kontinuität verleiht – Gemälde und Bronzeskulpturen auf der einen Seite, Textarbeiten und Videos auf der anderen. Es ist auch das, was seine Arbeiten zu den reizvollsten und unterhaltsamsten Kunstwerken der letzten fünfzehn Jahre gehören lässt. In Landers' Fall tragen diese Eigenschaften zur Komplexität der Arbeiten bei. Das Gelächter und die Anteilnahme, die sie hervorrufen, behindern und vereiteln unseren Willen und unsere Fähigkeit, die Praxis als Ganzes zu deuten. Ihrer Performativität sind wir nicht gewachsen: Das Werk ist immer zwei oder drei Schritte unserer Fähigkeit voraus, sie zu verarbeiten. Wir ertappen uns dabei, wie wir unsere kritische Wachsamkeit einstellen. Es ist sein Publikum, nicht so sehr Sean Landers selbst, welches zu ‚glücklichen Opfern' seiner ‚Scharade' wird, zumindest vorübergehend.

Bruce Naumans frühe Videos zeigen, wie Kunst aussehen kann, wenn das Objekt entfernt wird: Wir werden mit dem Künstler in seinem Atelier allein gelassen, ein Bild, das ebenso tiefsinnig wie absurd ist. Aller landläufigen Begriffe des Kunstschaffens entledigt, sehen wir Nauman am Nullpunkt des schöpferischen Akts, darauf reduziert, Bälle zu dribbeln, den Raum in einem exakten Quadrat zu durchschreiten und andere offensichtlich nutzlose Aufgaben zu verrichten. Der Kunstgegenstände beraubt, verliert Naumans Atelier seine Definition und wird während des Vorgangs unendlich – eine Art Universum. Gleichzeitig ist sein Atelier eine Gefängniszelle – wozu ist denn schon ein Atelier gut, wenn man dort keine Objekte schaffen wird? Hier festgesetzt, offensichtlich ohne Zweck und Ziel, schlägt Nauman die Zeit tot, wie wir uns das von einem Gefangenen vorstellen, und unterstellt, wie Samuel Beckett und Franz Kafka vor ihm, dass die Berufung der Avantgarde eine lebenslängliche Verurteilung impliziert.

Während Naumans Atelier praktisch leer ist, befindet sich in ANYONE'S ORGASM (1992) in Landers' Atelier eine Fülle von Kunstmaterial, dazu ein oder zwei angefangene Arbeiten: eine Art Kopf vielleicht, auf einem Sockel, aus Ton gefertigt, verhüllt, und eine riesige Textarbeit, auf einem Bogen Papier, welche die ganze Wand einnimmt. Ihr Vorhandensein genügt, um den Status seiner Handlungen im Film zu problematisieren. Während der Sinnlosigkeit von Naumans Aktionen konzeptuell und existenziell eine tiefere Bedeutung unterstellt werden kann, wie zufällig sie auch erscheinen mögen, macht uns Landers die Entscheidung sehr viel schwerer, ob die Sinnlosigkeit seiner Handlungen irgendeinen Sinn ergeben könnte. Dieses Problem wird das eine Mal besonders deutlich, wenn wir ihn bei der Arbeit

an seinem Textgemälde sehen. Was sollen wir angesichts dieser kurzen Sequenz von den Handlungen halten, die den Rest des sechzigminütigen Videos einnehmen – den Monologen, dem Singen, dem Tanzen, den Grimassen? Jede einzelne dieser Handlungen, über die volle Dauer aufrechterhalten würde vielleicht nur an Videoaufzeichnungen von Performances der siebziger Jahre (Vito Acconci, John Baldessari, Paul McCarthy, Andy Warhol oder William Wegman zum Beispiel) erinnern, aber zusammen in einem Film und offenbar nach Lust und Laune durchgeführt, scheinen sie das Verhalten eines Künstler zu zeigen, der ernsthafte Motivationsprobleme hat. Statt den Kunstgegenstand zu entmaterialisieren, erweckt Landers den Eindruck, dass er offenbar nicht dazu kommt, die Materialisierung in Gang zu bringen. Seine Tätigkeiten fordern dazu heraus, als Ablenkungsmanöver eines trägen Zauderers ausgelegt zu werden. Nauman, Beckett und Kafka kommen in den Sinn, aber auch die Aufmerksamkeit heischenden Dummköpfe von Realityshows, die heute unsere Fernsehprogramme füllen. Wir sind in ein interpretatorisches Dilemma geraten.

Der ständige Radiolärm hilft nicht. Während wir wissen, dass die meiste Kunst zu Hintergrundgeräuschen irgendwelcher Art gemacht wird, kann ich mich, abgesehen von ANYONE'S ORGASM, an kein Kunstwerk erinnern, das dem Radio ein solches Gewicht gäbe. Die Bedeutung, die es in dieser Arbeit gewinnt, lässt vermuten, Landers wisse nicht, was es bedeutet, Videokunst zu machen, denn jeder andere Künstler würde zuallererst das Radio ausschalten, sobald die Kamera läuft. Es trägt auch dazu bei, dass wir den Eindruck gewinnen, wir sähen nicht die Dokumentation einer Performance, sondern würden Zeugen einer Phase des Leerlaufs des Künstlers – der Teile, die wir nicht sehen sollten, der Teile, die alle anderen Künstler aus ihrer Arbeit eliminieren würden. Indem uns Landers das ‚Leben' um die ‚Kunst' herum zeigt, bringt er genau dann, als wir dachten, das Problem hätte sich im Zuge der ‚entmaterialisierten' Praktiken der sechziger und siebziger Jahre erledigt, eine neue Ebene der Ungewissheit ein. Ironischerweise erreicht das Landers, indem er die traditionellen Medien (den Tonkopf und das Gemälde an der Wand) wieder in den Mittelpunkt stellt.

Vielleicht könnte man argumentieren, das Radio mache in ANYONE'S ORGASM das, was die Paletten, Staffeleien und Modelle in den reflexiven Kompositionen von Picasso, Matisse und Braque machen. Vielleicht sind sie die Weiterführung der Kaffeedosen und Pinsel, die Jasper Johns in Bronze gegossen hat. Das zu behaupten, wird schwieriger, wenn wir hören, was sich Landers anhört. Während wir uns vielleicht gern vorstellen würden, Pollock höre Charlie Parker, Rauschenberg John Cage, die britischen Pop-Künstler hörten die Beatles und so fort, ist bei Landers Softrock angesagt, eine Assoziation, die er verwendet, um unser Gefühl für die Achtbarkeit der Kunst zu verletzen. „Ich will wissen, was Liebe ist / du sollst es mir zeigen", „Ich will wissen / hast du schon einmal den Regen gesehen?", „Bleib nie zwischen dem Mond und New York City hängen", „Der Albatros und der Wal sind meine Brüder" und anderer lächerlicher Pomp wabern durch sein Atelier, stimulieren und begleiten seine Tätigkeiten in ANYONE'S ORGASM. Das Singen, Tanzen und Grimassieren vor der Kamera geschieht, als wolle er vor Freunden – sehr guten Freunden – prahlen und nicht etwa um die Gunst der Galeriebesucher buhlen, ein Eindruck, der die sakrosankten weissen Räume, in denen es gezeigt wird, zu verhöhnen scheint. Wenn er singt, nimmt er einen grotesken Schnulzenton an, wie in einer grässlichen Klubdarbietung, oder er präsentiert einen heiligen Singsang, als feiere er die Eucharistie. Verschiedentlich wiederholt er eine Phrase immer wieder, als identifiziere er sich mit Empfindungen, die Passagen in seiner Prosa ähneln, in denen er sich selbst parodiert, oder als imitiere er einen Teenager, der einen Komponisten der Avantgarde imitiert, der einen Popsong verstümmelt. Wenn er mit der Interferenz zwischen den Rundfunksendern spielt, ist seinen Grimassen zu entnehmen, dass er weiss, dass wir wissen, dass er weiss, dass er sich einem Experiment gemäss landläufiger Meinung hingibt, statt sich der eigentlichen Sache zu widmen.

Damit spielt Landers mit der Vorstellung, er könnte jemand sein, der einfach nur macht, was von ihm erwartet wird, statt sich zu bemühen, einen eigenen künstlerischen Weg zu entwickeln. Das Atelier in seinen Videos symbolisiert nicht die neue Grenze der Kunst. Stattdessen unterstellt Landers offensichtlich, dass er dort ist, weil man es von ihm vermutet, als wollte er sagen: „Was soll ich eurer Meinung nach sonst machen, nachdem ich jetzt den Master of Fine Arts habe?" Wenn wir seine Videos sehen, haben wir immer das Gefühl, der Zauberbann seiner Kreativität werde, so fragil, wie er ist, gleich durch einen Künstlerkollegen von nebenan gebrochen, der ein bisschen Zucker bei ihm borgen will, oder durch den Anruf eines Gläubigers, der einer verspäteten Rate für die Rückzahlung des Studiendarlehens nachjagt. Indem er einen Schimpansen (wie in Fernsehreklamen oder Familienfilmen als Mensch gekleidet) mietet und ihn im Atelier eine halbe Stunde frei herumlaufen lässt, unterstellt Landers mit Absicht, er wolle unabsichtlich damit sagen, dass der Affe diese vier Wände vielleicht besser zu nutzen wisse als er selbst. SINGERIE: LE PEINTRE (1995) ähnelt einem Video von Bruce Nauman im Schnellvorlauf: Der liebenswerte Körper des Primaten surft auf einem Skateboard, saust Stehleitern hinauf und hinunter und sprintet von einem Ende des Raums zum anderen, von einem Soundtrack begleitet, der im Wechsel zwischen gefühlvollen und beschwingten Klängen MOON RIVER und das Thema von MISSION IMPOSSIBLE enthält.

Würden wir uns auf die Hinweise verlassen, die Landers auf andere Künstler gibt, er wäre an den Vertretern der jüngsten Avantgarde wohl nicht besonders interessiert. Während Künstler wie Warhol und Nauman Rollenvorbilder für Landers' Generation waren, reichen seine zahlreichen Huldigungen an andere Künstler in eine Zeit zurück, als die Kunst noch nicht die Formen angenommen hatte, die viele seiner Werke heute annehmen. Eine besondere Bedeutung erhält dabei der performative Aspekt seiner Arbeit, die Tatsache, dass er einfach deshalb schreibt, Performances und Videos macht, weil es das ist, was ein Künstler der neunziger Jahre tut, ebenso wie von ihm erwartet wird, dass er in Manhattan einen weiss getünchten Loft mietet und in Chelsea zu Galerieeröffnungen geht. Selbst dann, wenn seine Videos früheren Performances äusserst nahe kommen, erheben sie den Anspruch, sich in erlesener Gesellschaft zu befinden. REMISSIONEM PECCATORUM (1994) und ITALIAN HIGH RENAISSANCE AND BAROQUE SCULPTURE (1993) erinnern an die bravourösen Dauerbelastungstests, denen sich Marina Abramovic und Vito Acconci vor der Kamera gestellt haben, doch die Posen sind so angelegt, dass sie an Michelangelo und Bernini denken lassen. Das Ergebnis der Verschmelzung ist ein Bild des Künstlers als Narzisst, der als seine eigene Muse erscheint – mehr Morrissey, würde er jemals nackt auf der Bühne auftreten, als ‚Sterbender Sklave' oder Masochist der Avantgarde. Statt die Kunstgeschichte einfach zu zitieren, wie es viele Postmodernisten der ersten Generation in den achtziger Jahren taten, eignet sich Landers die Verweise buchstäblich an.

Mit Ausnahme einer Gruppe von Gemälden, die Clowns, nackte Hippies, Ausserirdische, Roboter und rosa Kaninchen in verschiedenen Landschaften zeigen, sind fast alle Bilder von Landers, auf denen keine Schrift erscheint, Pasticcios berühmter historischer Kunstwerke oder Portraits grosser Künstler. Erstere umfassen Bildfolgen von William Hogarth und Pablo Picasso. Letztere kommen in zweierlei Gestalt daher: berühmte Künstler als Geister ihrer selbst und berühmte Künstler in verschiedenen Verkleidungen. Beide sind Portraits von ‚modernen Meistern', wie sie von populärwissenschaftlichen Verlagen genannt werden, aus einer Epoche, auf die sich zeitgenössische Künstler selten beziehen.

GHOST 1 (ERNST), GHOST 2 (DUCHAMP) und GHOST 3 (PICABIA) (alle 2003) ähneln Grisaillen, alten Fotografien und Gespenstern. Insgesamt ist diese Serie eine Séance, deren Zeugen wir als Betrachter werden oder der wir implizit beiwohnen: Landers versucht, die Geister seiner Ahnen durch Öl auf Leinwand zu kanalisieren, ein Medium, das seitdem angeblich selbst gestorben ist. Damit ist die Verwendung dieses Mediums, bei der Landers den Kontext der Ausstellung gedanklich einbezieht, ebenso performativ wie seine Videos – eine vermittelnde Funktion, die ein Gemälde selten hat.

Schwieriger lässt sich bestimmen, was Landers mit den übrigen Portraits beabsichtigt, die mit Clownfarben bemalte Gesichter und eine protzige Kostümierung zeigen. Warum ist Dalí ein König, Braque ein Elf, De Chirico ein Wikinger, Ernst ein Teufel und Picasso ein Soldat aus dem amerikanischen Bürgerkrieg? Und warum treten sie, mit Ausnahme von Dalí, überhaupt in Kostümen auf? Das Entscheidende bei diesen Künstlern und was sie für Landers vermutlich so reizvoll macht, ist ihre Einzigartigkeit, die sie verkörpern. Warum dann die Uniformen? Warum die augenfälligen, doch wohl unpassenden Personifizierungen? Obwohl wir alles wieder erkennen, was wir sehen, gelingt es Landers, Bilder zu malen, die sich einer Kategorisierung entziehen und rätselhaft bleiben.

So gut wie alle modernen Meister in Landers' Galerie hatten mit dem Surrealismus zu tun. Seine Version des Surrealen hingegen wirkt, als hätte sie absichtlich das Ziel verfehlt. Statt bizarr zu sein, sehen seine ‚Meister' einfach nur sonderbar aus, wie Damen aus der Pantomime in den falschen Kostümen. Landers' übrige Unternehmungen in Sachen Surrealismus erscheinen ähnlich gekünstelt. Die Schimpansen, Clowns, Ausserirdischen, Roboter, Häschen und nackten Hippies, die seine erste, schriftlose Bilderfolge bevölkern, waren als Gattung bereits vorhanden, bevor Landers zu ihnen kam. Trotz einiger Hintergründe, die auf die Romantik zurückgreifen, erwecken die leicht anachronistischen Figuren, die auf diesen Bildern auftauchen, den Eindruck, als seien sie aus der wohligen Welt der Unterhaltung im Nachkriegsamerika entlaufen: aus Disney-Animationen, Familienserien, Freizeitparks und Bilderbüchern. Seine Ausserirdischen sind natürlich grüne Eierköpfe, während seine Roboter so schäbig aussehen, als hätten sie die Kehrseite der fünfziger Jahre oder die Yellow Brick Road nie zu Gesicht bekommen. Ihr Auftauchen in seiner Kunst lässt an einen Kopf denken, der mit abgegriffenen Kulturhäppchen so sehr vollgestopft ist, dass er es nicht fertigbringt, eigene und in ihrer Eigenart überzeugende Figuren auf die Beine zu stellen.

Dieser Vorwurf lässt sich bei anderen Werken nicht so leicht erheben. Eine kürzlich gefertigte Folge von Bronzebüsten anthropomorpher Tiere könnte der exzentrischen und aus den Angeln geratenen viktorianischen Phantasie von Lewis Carroll oder Edward Lear entsprungen sein, wären diese Autoren im Amerika des 21. Jahrhunderts neu anzusiedeln: FOOTBALL DUCK (2003) ist, wie der Titel vermuten lässt, eine Ente, deren Kopf wie ein amerikanischer Fussball geformt ist, während der Kopf von PEANUT HEAD (2003) tatsächlich auf der Schale von Erdnüssen modelliert wurde. Eine Folge figurativer Gemälde mit Schrift, zwischen 1998 und 2000 entstanden, zeigt Mutanten aller Art – darunter einen traurigen Mann mit beginnender Glatze und drei herabhängenden roten Nasen (THREE NOSE GUY, 1998), einen Mann mit erigiertem Penis als Nase und riesigen Hoden als Kinn (LE DOMAINE

ENCHANTÉ AKA MONSIEUR SAUCISSON, 1999) und eine Frau mit Gesichtern von Teddybären auf der Brust und Bäumen dort, wo ihr Kopf, linker Arm und ihre Taille zu sein hätten (APOLLO AND DAPHNE, 1999). Doch schaudert uns nicht beim Anblick dieser anatomischen Verirrungen, wie wir vielleicht erschrecken würden angesichts einer seltsamen Kreatur in einem surrealistischen Bild. Statt einen traumartigen Eindruck zu erwecken, sehen sie aus, als seien sie zu dem Zweck ersonnen, wie Ausbaggerungen aus dem Unbewussten zu wirken: Die Hybridisierung wurde forciert, die sexuellen Anspielungen sind zu absurden Klischees übersteigert und die symbolischen Rollen der Figuren allzu offenkundig. Diese Merkmale lassen ihren Autor zu einer in gewissem Sinne fiktiven Gestalt werden. Wir empfinden diese Bilder als Werke eines Sonntagsmalers, der auf eine landläufige Vorstellung abzielt, wie Surrealismus auszusehen habe, gefiltert durch direktere Einflüsse wie B-Movies und Softporno. Die technische Raffinesse verschiedener dieser Werke – das unpassend schöne Tiepolosche Licht zum Beispiel, das Monsieur Saucisson und die Brust, auf der er steht, umhüllt – macht den Abgrund deutlich, der sich zwischen diesem fiktiven Schöpfer und dem Künstler auftut, der seine Identität annimmt. Die Wirkung ist wieder ähnlich wie in modernistischen Romanen, deren Autoren ‚unzuverlässige' Erzähler verwenden.

Die Kombination von Schrift und Bild auf diesen Gemälden wirkt ganz besonders verfehlt: Aus avantgardistischer Sicht galt figurative Malerei unter Künstlern, die Text verwendeten, als obsolet; unter dem Blickwinkel der westlichen Tradition würde Geschriebenes auf dem Gemälde die illusionistische Kohärenz des Dargestellten durcheinander geraten lassen. Die in literarischen Werken berühmter Künstler auftauchenden Illustrationen sind die engsten Vorfahren dieser Gemälde. Bei Landers' Arbeiten sind allerdings Schrift und Bild auf derselben Leinwand miteinander verschmolzen, was ihre grundsätzliche Unvereinbarkeit verstärkt. Oft aber hat das bildlich Dargestellte mit dem Thema des Geschriebenen in seiner Umgebung nicht viel mehr zu tun als die traditionellen Schilder an englischen Pubs mit den Unterhaltungen, die sich drinnen ergeben. Bei einigen gibt Landers in der linken oberen Ecke einen knappen Hinweis auf Bild und Titel und ignoriert dann beides im restlichen Text, als sei der sprichwörtliche Elefant im Porzellanladen, über den keiner redet. BUBBLE BOY (1998) zum Beispiel beginnt: „Mir ist, als malte ich ein Bild von einem Jungen der siebziger Jahre, der keine Arme und fülliges Haar hat und eine Blase bläst, während er auf einem Hügel sitzt und mit leerem Blick ins Weite starrt [sic]. Voilà." (Danke Sean.) Abgesehen von ein paar erneuten kurzen Auftritten, erhält BUBBLE BOY keinen Einblick in die komisch-trübseligen Monologe, die sich anschliessen, und wir werden auch nicht schlauer. Stattdessen lässt sich Landers über die Nachwelt aus: wieviel besser es sei, lebendig statt tot zu sein; wie er von den Kritikern Haue bekam, als er in Ausstellungen davor mit der ‚Masche' aufhörte, auf seinen Bildern zu schreiben; wie er wieder damit angefangen habe, weil das bedeutet, dass seine Bilder sich verkaufen; wie ihn als Folge davon sein Händler wieder mag; wie grossartig genau dieses Bild sei; warum wir es wirklich kaufen sollten, wenn wir es uns leisten könnten, damit er und seine Familie sich ein besseres Leben machen können. Es lässt sich schwer vorstellen, was das mit BUBBLE BOY zu tun haben soll oder mit anderen Kreationen aus dieser Folge – PLANK BOY (2000), CAREER EGO (1999), THE BOOBY (1998) u. a. – was natürlich genau der Punkt ist.

Die Bilder auf diesen Gemälden funktionieren in gleicher Weise wie Themen in den Nummern vieler Stegreifkomödien. Landers über Landers als Entertainer: „Die Leute meinen, ich wäre ein verdammter Komödiant. Hei, ich bin um Gottes willen ein ernst zu nehmender Künstler, seht euch dieses Bild an ... Okay dieses Bild ist kein gutes Beispiel, aber ich habe vorher jede Menge ernsthafte Kunst gemacht, stimmt's?" (FOOTBALL DUCK, 1998). Eine solche Nummer mag den Anschein erwecken, es ginge um die Erfahrungen eines Komikers beim Trampen, irgendeine Heimfahrt im Bus oder die einzelnen Vorzüge der verschiedenen Hilfsdienste,[2] aber diese prosaischen Themen bieten nur den Vorwand für eine Fülle wilder Abschweifungen. Gelegentlich kommt das Thema wieder in den Blick, als sei dem Komiker oder der Komikerin gerade wieder eingefallen, worum es eigentlich gehen sollte. Der Effekt dieser ‚Fehler' ist, dass wir dem nichtlinearen Verlauf dieser Gedanken folgen. Gewöhnlich ist natürlich das meiste dessen, was freie Assoziation zu sein scheint, vorher schriftlich ausgearbeitet worden. Wenn das Skript gut ist, dann ist die Wirkung erstaunlich, so als sähen wir einen Film über die Funktionsweise des Gehirns, was unser Eindruck ist, wenn wir [SIC] lesen. Weil eine Stegreifkomödie in Echtzeit vor uns abläuft, sind wir nicht sicher, ob wir eine wirkliche freie Assoziation erleben oder ihre Darstellung.

Viele modernistische Autoren verfolgten in ihrer Literatur ebenfalls das Ziel, den Fluss der Bewusstseinsvorgänge realistisch darzustellen. Keiner hat jedoch Lawrence Sterne übertroffen, dessen neun Bände seines Romans THE LIFE AND OPINIONS OF TRISTRAM SHANDY, GENTLEMAN [dt. Titel: Leben und Meinungen des Herrn T. S.] zwischen 1759 und 1767 erschienen, kurz nach der grossen Zeit von William Hogarth und der englischen Satireliteratur (John Dryden, Alexander Pope, Jonathan Swift u. a.), und mit denen er seine zeitgenössischen Leser ebenso amüsierte wie verwirrte. Wie TRISTRAM SHANDY zeigt, vollzieht sich Bewusstsein in unendlichen Abschweifungen und behindert den Weg, den der Romanautor vermutlich einschlagen wird. Folglich bleibt der offenkundige Held des Buchs, Tristram, die ersten beiden Bände über im Uterus, während er sich über eine ganze Reihe von Themen auslässt, die mit Ereignissen in seinem Leben nichts zu tun

2
Die Themen dreier Nummern, die ich kürzlich gesehen habe.

haben. Am Ende wissen wir immer noch so gut wie nichts über ihn, dafür aber sehr viel über seine Geburtshelfer, die Predigten des Dorfpfarrers, den Fortgang der Feldzüge Williams in Flandern, die Onkel Toby mit seinem Handlanger Corporal Trim auf dem Bowlinggreen in Echtzeit pedantisch nachstellt, wir kennen die Einstellung französischer Katholiken zur vorgeburtlichen Kindtaufe, erfahren Einzelheiten über die Mathematik des Pythagoras und vieles mehr.

> Was Sean Landers schreibt, vor allem in [SIC], ist ebenso ausschweifend und absurd wie TRISTRAM SHANDY, mit der Ausnahme, dass ‚Leben und Meinungen' bei ihm das konstante Thema dieser Abschweifungen bleiben. Mit der Hand geschrieben, ähneln sie gesprochener Sprache, da sie nicht redigiert werden können, es sei denn, Wörter würden im Text durchgestrichen. Unter diesem Aspekt ist [SIC] eine Performance von vorgegebener Länge – 1000 Seiten –, die er letzten Endes nicht erreicht, obwohl er sich droht, seine Mutter würde sterben, wenn es ihm nicht gelänge. Wie in TRISTRAM SHANDY, vielen Kabarettnummern und einer Menge seiner übrigen Werke enthält das Geschriebene unzählige Hinweise auf die zu erledigende Aufgabe, was er bisher geschrieben hat und wie die Reaktion des Lesers ausfallen mag:
>
> *Bis du dies in Grenoble lesen wirst, werde ich natürlich mit den tausend Seiten nicht fertig, ich sollte mir wohl irgendein Zeitlimit setzen. Sagen wir bis zum Datum meiner Eröffnung in der Andrea Rosen Gallery im Sept. oder Oktober 1993, wenn meine 1000 Seiten bis dahin nicht fertig sind, wird der Gangster meine Mutter umbringen und ich bin schuld. Der Herr steh mir bei und wegen meiner Mutter lass mich keine Schreibblockade kriegen. Scheisse. Noch 992 Seiten. Vielleicht hab ich mir da zuviel vorgenommen. 1000 ist nämlich eine Menge Zeug das wird ungefähr so lang wie Schuld und Sühne, vermutlich auch ungefähr genauso wichtig für die Literatur [sic].*[3]

Die performative und reflexive Art der Darstellung findet bei Sterne in zahlreichen Passagen ein Echo:

> *Ich will diesen Satz nicht beenden, ohne vorher eine Bemerkung über das seltsame Verhältnis zwischen dem Leser und mir zu machen [...]. Ich bin diesen Monat ein ganzes Jahr älter, als ich heute vor zwölf Monaten war; und da ich in dieser Zeit, wie Sie sehen, fast bis in die Mitte meines vierten Bandes – und doch nicht weiter als bis zu meinem ersten Lebenstag – gekommen bin, zeigt das deutlich, dass ich jetzt dreihundertvierundsechzig Tage mehr von meinem Leben schreiben muss als damals, als ich anfing [...] bei diesem Tempo würde ich eben 364mal schneller leben als schreiben – Daraus folgt doch, bitte sehr, verehrter Leser, dass ich, je mehr ich schreibe, desto mehr werde schreiben müssen – und dass folglich der verehrte Leser, je mehr der verehrte Leser liest, desto mehr wird lesen müssen.*[4]

Während das, was Landers in [SIC] und auf seinen frühen Bildern schreibt, eher unvermittelt dem Bewusstseinsstrom folgt, scheint er sich mit dem Geschriebenen auf den Gemälden aus jüngerer Zeit in zunehmendem Masse selbst zu parodieren: „He, ich bin der Typ, der auf seinen Bildern schreibt. Billige keine Imitationen. Vor allem keine englischen." (FOOTBALL DUCK). Landers mimt Landers so bewusst, wie er Hogarth und Picasso gemimt hat. Auf seinen jüngsten Gemälden erscheinen kurze, melodramatische Wortfügungen oder einzelne Wörter, die dem entnommen sind, was wir als sein Lexikon kennengelernt haben: „Meisterwerk", „zynisch", „macht mich kaputt", „Quälerei", „nachgeben", „mein Werk wird besser wegkommen, wenn ich tot bin", „ich weiss, dass ich sehr viel gearbeitet habe, ich hab es wirklich versucht" auf dem Bild THERE WAS A TIME... (2004) und „ich weiss, dass ich toll bin", „manchmal bin ich Scheisse", „ich habe ein grösseres Spektrum und mehr Talent als sonst wer" auf IT'S UP TO YOU (2003). Jedes Wort und jedes Satzfragment wird wiederholt, als wäre es das Echo seines früheren Werks, als litte ihr Autor unter Wiederholungszwang, als biete uns Landers die Aussicht, das Ungeheuer geworden zu sein, das er geschaffen hat.

> Die bronzene ‚Verschwörung der Idioten', welche die Gemälde begleitet, erinnert an keine Geringeren als Rembrandt, Narziss, Sisyphos, Ikarus und Minotaurus, wie in seiner eigenen triumphalen Besprechung der Ausstellung in FRIEZE[5] zu lesen ist. Sie sind „seine Nachkommen für seine Nachkommen", „respektlose Kreaturen der Phantasie", zu dem Zweck geschaffen, „seine Kinder zu unterhalten". Schliesslich seien sie trotz ihrer Kaninchenohren, der Reptilienhaut, des Elefantenrüssels und der Walrosszähne, behauptet er, nicht weniger ‚Sean Landers' als der Landers, den wir aus seinen scheinbar unverhüllten Monologen kennen. Von sich selbst in der dritten Person sprechend, als „Ich ist ein anderer" (Arthur Rimbaud), beendet Landers die Kritik nebst Nachruf mit den Worten: „Und schliesslich sind sie ein Zeugnis seiner Performance auf dieser Bühne, eines, das zuweilen durch Täuschung und Phantasie entstellt und gelegentlich durch Fiktion mit einem Feigenblatt verhangen wird, aber letzten Endes ist das er. Er ist diese Person."
>
> Endlich einmal frei von den Ängsten, denen alle Künstler ausgeliefert sind, die aber keiner von ihnen, nicht einmal in Gedanken, in sein Werk aufzunehmen gewagt hat – „Warum habe ich zum Beispiel nie in einem amerikanischen Museum ausgestellt? Ich bin Amerikas bester Künstler und habe trotzdem nie eine grosse

3
Sean Landers, *[sic]*, Puclisfear Press, New York 1993; Riverhead Books, New York 1995, S. 8 f.

4
Lawrence Sterne, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*, Oxford University Press, 1993, S. 228 f.

5
Sean Landers, „Sean Landers, Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York", *frieze*, Nr. 83, Mai 2004, S. 108 f.

Ausstellung gehabt" (I LIVED / MONKEY AND GNOME, 2000) –, entwirft er ein komisch-heroisches Bild von sich im Leben nach dem Tod, nach der Manier von Keats in Shelleys ADONAIS'-ELEGIE (1821), in der Gesellschaft der grossen toten Meister, fern der kleinlichen Bosheit der alltäglichen Kunstwelt.

Scheitern als Strategie – was man ‚sekundäres Scheitern' nennen könnte – verbindet Sean Landers mit vielen der übrigen sehr bedeutenden Künstler der letzten fünfzehn Jahre. Das Zeitgenössische an John Currins Porträts zum Beispiel ist den ‚Mängeln' zuzuschreiben die sichtbar werden, wenn man sie mit ihren kunsthistorischen Vergängern vergleicht. Das offenkundig Seichte vieler neokonzeptuellen Arbeiten von Martin Creed geht auf seine bange Frage zurück, ob er der Kunst oder der Welt irgendetwas Neues bieten könne. Maurizio Cattelan hat sich vom Arzt auf einem Attest bescheinigen lassen, dass er aus medizinischen Gründen mit einer Arbeit für eine Ausstellung nicht rechtzeitig fertig geworden ist, und bei der Polizei die Arbeit, die er nicht gemacht hat, als Diebstahl aus seinem Auto gemeldet. Carsten Höller hat ein Auto zu einem fahrbaren LABORATORY OF DOUBT (1999) umgebaut und mit einem Logo und einer Lautsprecheranlage ausgestattet. Das Werk allerdings blieb stumm, als er keine Möglichkeiten fand, Zweifel zu artikulieren.

Mike Kelley und Martin Kippenberger, zwei unmittelbare Vorläufer dieser Künstler, gelten seitdem als zwei der einflussreichsten Repräsentanten der achtziger Jahre. Zu einer Zeit, als Kunstwerke als Ikonen fungierten und die Künstler, die sie gemacht hatten, Stars waren, gab Kelley sich die Rolle eines Hausmeisters im Museum, und Kippenberger zeigte Fotografien von sich, nachdem er tüchtig zusammengeschlagen worden war. Kelley ist seitdem vor allem dafür bekannt geworden, dass er bescheidene Handwerkstechniken gegen Modernismus und Männlichkeit setzt, während einige der kraftvollsten Spätwerke Kippenbergers U-Bahn-Eingänge in normaler Grösse und unterschiedlichen Baustilen waren, die nirgendwohin führten.

Es ist bedeutsam, dass alle diese Künstler weiss und männlich sind und dass sie alle entweder aus den Vereinigten Staaten oder Westeuropa kommen. Seit Anfang der neunziger Jahre ist über Identität viel diskutiert worden, vor allem aus postkolonialer, postfeministischer und homosexueller Sicht. Gleichzeitig hat die Kunstwelt einen Prozess der Globalisierung durchlaufen, und Kuratoren haben sich eifrig bemüht, Kunstzentren in Lateinamerika, Afrika, Asien und Osteuropa ausfindig zu machen.

Während in Arbeiten, die sich auf diese Kontexte beziehen, Unterschiede gern gefeiert und Ungerechtigkeiten angeprangert werden, nähert sich Landers wie zum Beispiel auch Cattelan, Currin, Kelley und Kippenberger dem Problem der Identität auf eine völlig andere Weise. Da Landers und diese Künstler nicht von einer klaren Position des ‚Andersseins' aus agieren, haben ihre Mittel, Identität zu erforschen, mehr mit den ambivalenten und nuancierten Beziehungen zwischen dem Ich und der Gesellschaft zu tun als mit Fragen der Sichtbarkeit und Repräsentation. Identität im repräsentativen Sinne allerdings findet in Landers' Schaffen Eingang auf dem Weg über seine widersprüchlichen Gefühle im Hinblick auf seine kleinbürgerliche, katholische Erziehung, seine griechischen und irischen Wurzeln und seine Legasthenie, aber er unternimmt keinen Versuch, sich als Vertreter dieser Bevölkerungsgruppen anzubieten.

In vielerlei Hinsicht kann sein Projekt jedoch als parallel und fortschrittlich gelten, ungeachtet des schlechten Benehmens. In der Vergangenheit fühlten wenige weisse, heterosexuelle männliche Künstler das Bedürfnis, ihre eigene Beziehung zu der Art von Kunst, die sie machten, oder die Kontexte, in denen sie aufgenommen wurde, in Frage zu stellen – zumindest nicht in der Öffentlichkeit und nicht in ihren Arbeiten. Diese Unreflektiertheit erwuchs aus dem Gefühl, dass die Rolle als Künstler in ihrer Natur liege. Im Gegensatz dazu macht Landers seine Konflikte, Zweifel, Demütigungen und Ängste zum Thema seiner Arbeit. Selbst wenn der Ton der Werke eine Ausdrucksweise annimmt, die auf sein Genie abhebt, wissen wir, dass der Künstler hinter seiner Rolle weiss, dass es ein peinlicher Fauxpas ist und dass diese Proklamationen zu einer Zeit stattfinden, in welcher der Begriff in Misskredit geraten ist.

Wir wissen das, weil wir verstehen, dass Landers' Schilderung seines Gefühlslebens ebenso eine Performance ist, wie sie komisch ist. Damit steht sie in Beziehung zu offenkundigen Aspekten der Selbstdarstellung in den Werken von Cattelan, Kelley und Kippenberger und impliziten Aspekten der Selbstdarstellung bei Creed, Currin und Höller. Wie Landers schaffen diese Künstler ein Rollenverständnis in ihrem Werk, das oftmals spöttisch und selbstironisch ist: der grausame Witzbold (Cattelan), der wütende Halbwüchsige (Kelley), der gefühlsselige Zecher (Kippenberger), der Qualen Leidende (Creed), der Frauenjäger (Currin), der ein bisschen boshafte Wissenschaftler (Höller). In Landers' Arbeiten wird diese Inszenierung des Ichs in sehr viel mehr Richtungen und in sehr viel grösserem Mass weitergeführt. Während die Rollen dieser anderen Künstler leicht zu durchschauen sind, lässt sich viel schwieriger mit gewisser Sicherheit entscheiden, wofür MONSIEUR SAUCISSON und FOOTBALL DUCK stehen und in welchem Masse sie und Sean Landers austauschbar sind. Offenkundig haben sie rein äusserlich keine Ähnlichkeit mit dem Künstler, aber sind ihre Worte eine direkte Transkription seiner Gedanken im Augenblick des Schreibens, oder sind sie andererseits eigenständige Karikaturen von Sean Landers? Falls Letzteres, was ist dann mehr vorhanden: Fakt oder Fiktion? Selten sind wir bei der Betrachtung von Kunstwerken dergleichen verwirrenden Zweifeln ausgeliefert.

Humor hat oft sehr viel mit Performativität und ‚sekundärem Scheitern' zu tun. In Landers' Praxis reicht er weit tiefer als meist. Von Dada und Fluxus, einigen Surrealisten und Pop-Künstlern abgesehen, assoziieren wir Komik gewöhnlich nicht mit bildender Kunst. Normalerweise assoziieren wir sie mit Kunstformen, die das geschriebene oder gesprochene Wort beinhalten (Film, Theater, Romane), weil sich Komik sehr viel schwieriger durch Bilder, vor allem solche, die sich nicht bewegen, erreichen lässt, Landers' Arbeiten jedoch – besonders dann, aber nicht nur, wenn dabei geschrieben wird – geraten oft umwerfend komisch. Wie bei Woody Allens Filmen lachen wir plötzlich mit dem Künstler bei dem Bild SEAN LANDERS laut auf, das sich aus den schriftlichen Bekenntnissen, den Aktionen in seinen Videos und der Wahl der Figuren bei seinen Gemälden und Skulpturen aufbaut, während wir sie in uns aufnehmen.

> Wie bei Woody Allen gehört auch bei Landers die Inszenierung des Ichs zu einem metafiktionalen Spiel. Wir sind uns die ganze Zeit über bewusst, dass er sowohl innerhalb als auch ausserhalb des Werkes als dessen Protagonist und gleichzeitig Autor agiert. Das bedeutet, dass uns immer klar ist, dass er sich in das Werk hinein – und aus ihm herausbegibt – sei es Malerei, Video oder Erinnertes –, so wie Allen den filmischen Rahmen buchstäblich betritt und verlässt, während er gleichzeitig Regie führt.

Das ist es, was Landers' Arbeiten von historischen Vorgängern unterscheidet, denen sie zu ähneln oder zu huldigen scheinen. Die Picasso-Gemälde sind dafür ein typisches Beispiel. Auf einem Bild fügen sich die picassoiden Formen zum Namenszug ‚Sean Landers', während sie auf einem anderen ‚Genius' buchstabieren. In dem Monolog, der sie begleitet, meditiert Landers auf komisch-heroische Art über die Beziehung zwischen diesem Nomen und dem Eigennamen. Als Parodien sind die Bilder von Natur aus gegen die Ansprüche resistent, die sein inszenierendes Ich zu seinen Gunsten geltend macht. Andererseits unterminiert der Soundtrack die Autonomie seiner Bilder und der berühmten Gemälde, auf denen sie basieren. Während Landers' Stimme zu hören ist und Holsts epische Musik in der Galerie erklingt, drohen seine Picasso-Gemälde der Autorität ihrer kompositorischen Virtuosität zum Trotz zu Requisiten innerhalb der Performance seiner ausgeklügelten Metafiktion zu werden.

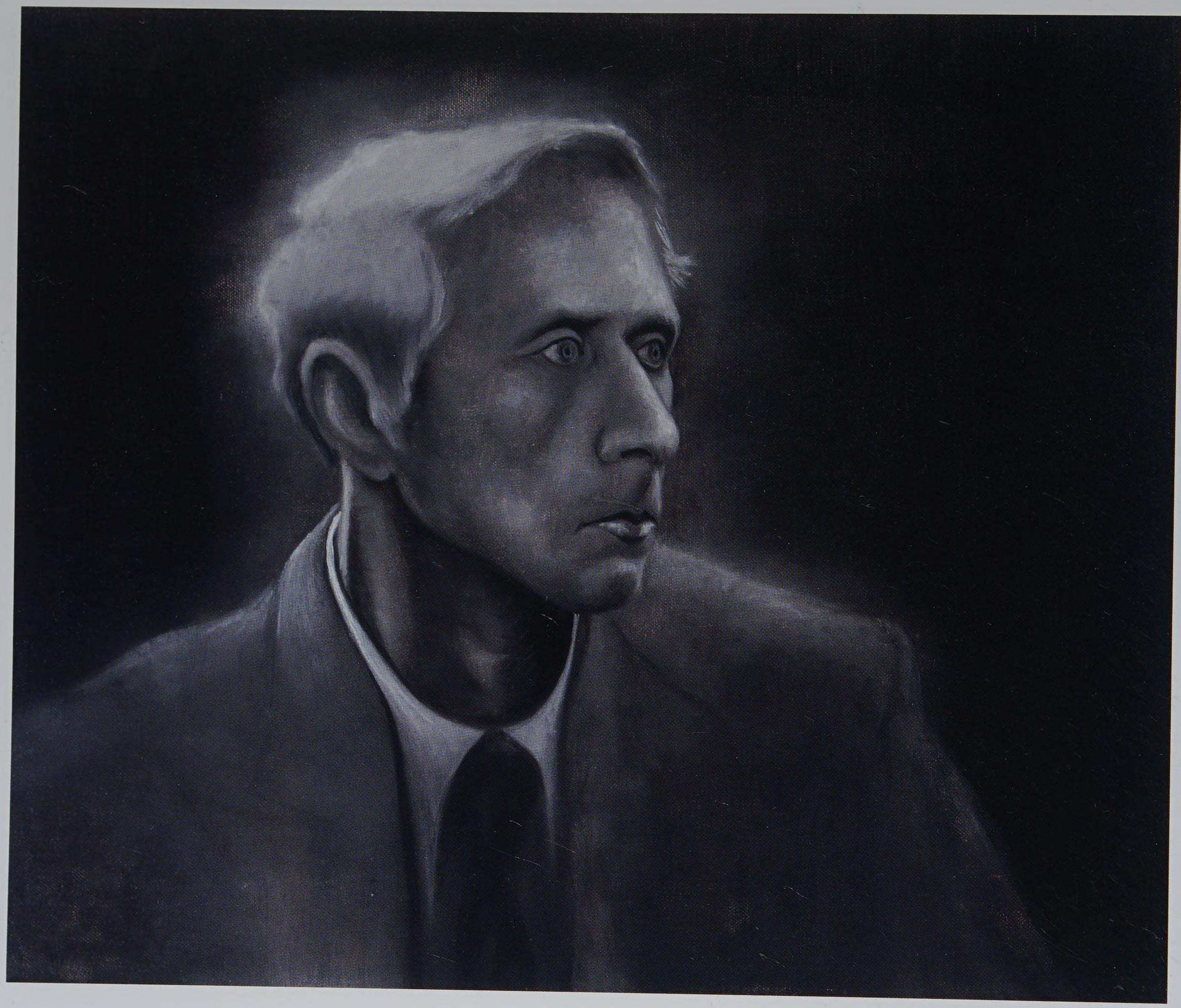
> Metafiktion steht in einer besonders widersprüchlichen Beziehung zum Surrealismus. Statt die Tiefen des Ichs auszuloten, behauptet sie, das Ich sei ein Konstrukt, wenn es in Kunstwerken zum Vorschein kommt. Portraitmalerei wäre, da sie zur Welt des Scheins gehört, die letzte Strategie, die ein Surrealist einsetzen würde, um das unbewusste Ich zum Ausdruck zu bringen. André Breton hätte Landers' Darstellungen seines Kreises nicht toleriert, was natürlich zu ihrer Ironie gehört. Auch hätte er auf seinen neosurrealistischen Bildern die absichtliche Absurdität der verschiedenen Entlehnungen aus der Pop-Kultur nicht geschätzt: die Ausserirdischen nachts in einem Ruderboot auf stürmischer See, der Schimpanse im Astronautenanzug an einer Staffelei auf einem Etwas, das wie der Mars aussieht, und so weiter.

Landers' Textarbeiten und auf Performances basierende Videos scheitern absichtlich auch in Bezug auf die Kriterien der konzeptuellen Kunst. Generell hatten diese Vorgänger in den sechziger und siebziger Jahren alles entfernt, was als subjektive Äusserung hätte aufgefasst werden können. Die Sprache bediente sich einer scheinwissenschaftlichen Objektivität, während der Körper des Künstlers als abstraktes Material behandelt wurde. Auf diese Weise machte die konzeptuelle Kunst das, was vor und nach dem Kunstobjekt kam, sowie die umgebenden Strukturen zum Inhalt des Werkes: den Körper des Künstlers, den Raum des Ateliers, die Politik des Ausstellungsraumes, die Welt ausserhalb dieser Räume, die zu ihrer Darstellung verwendeten Publikationen usw. Landers integriert viele dieser Kontexte in seine Arbeiten. Gleichzeitig hat er eine Vielfalt kontextuellen Materials, das von konzeptuellen Künstlern vernachlässigt wurde, in sein Werk aufgenommen, was den Eindruck erweckt, er habe die konzeptuelle Kunst falsch verstanden. Dieses Material gehört zu der subjektiven, emotionalen Sphäre und wird von allen Künstlern geteilt. Indem Sean Landers seine künstlerischen und beruflichen Höhen und Tiefen zum Thema seiner Arbeit macht, hat er nicht einfach nur einen aktuellen Kommentar zu seiner eigenen Praxis, sondern indirekt auch der jedes anderen Künstlers geliefert.

DEVIL (MAGRITTE), 2003
Oil on linen
78.74 × 68.58 cm

GHOST 3 (PICABIA), 2003
Oil on linen
71.12 × 60.96 cm

VIKING (DE CHIRICO), 2003
Oil on linen
68.58 × 58.42 cm



GHOST 1 (ERNST), 2003
Oil on linen
55.88 × 66.04 cm

KING (DALÍ), 2003
Oil on linen
93.98 × 78.74 cm

HAPPY AND SAD, 2002
Oil on linen
63.82 × 73.98 cm

WEARY CLOWN, 2003
Bronze
48.9 × 27.9 × 27.9 cm

ASIDE FROM ALL THE LIES, THIS IS WHO I AM

DO YOU WANT TO KNOW MY SECRET? I BELIEVE MY OWN BULLSHIT.

I DON'T BELIEVE ANY OF YOUR BULLSHIT

I WISH I WERE MORE ABSURD

I DON'T L... VERY MU... CATCH IS THAT I'M PEOPLE WHO NEEDS PEOPLE. NOW DOESN'T THAT MAKE ME THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE IN THE WORLD?

IT DOESNT TAKE A GENIUS TO FAKE I.Q. TEST RESULTS OR DOES IT

LUCK

MY IMPERFECTION MAKE ME PERFECT

SISYPHOUS

HOW ARE YOU FEELING TODAY?

I DON'T MEAN ANYTHING I JUST PORTRAY

WHEN I BROKE THROUGH I WAS DARING, BRILLIANT AND REALLY IMMATURE. WELL NOW I ... I CAN'T GET RESPECT.

I'M KILLING MYSELF TO AT LEAST ONCE A DAY.

TRUE CONFIDENCE IS ADMITING YOUR DESP... OVERCOMING YOUR PRIDE AND FEELINGS OF ... THE TRUTH. OKAY HERE IT GOES. MY I.Q. IS 151 I CAN WRITE, PAINT, SCULPT, ACT AND PLAY I'M A GREAT DRUMMER, BAND, FATHER AND TEACHER. THE TRUTH IS, I'M FUCKING AMAZING!

TRUST ME

SCIENTISTS BELIEVED THAT GETTING LAID WAS THE DRIVING FORCE BEHIND GENIUS. DUH!

I'VE HEARD THIS ALL BEFORE

I'M CORNY

WHAT'S MY FAILURE THAT I DEPLORE? IS IT

POVERTY OR THE LACK OF RESPECT?

REGRET

I'M A FUTURE NATIONAL TREASURE I'D LIKE TO FEEL A LITTLE OF THAT "L... NOW WHILE I'M ... TO GRAB IT IN MAN...

HEY, THIS IS AB-EX.

I SEEK AUT... AND BUE...

IS THE ARTWORLD A MERRITOCRACY

I'M

YOUR DESISIONS DEFINE YOU.

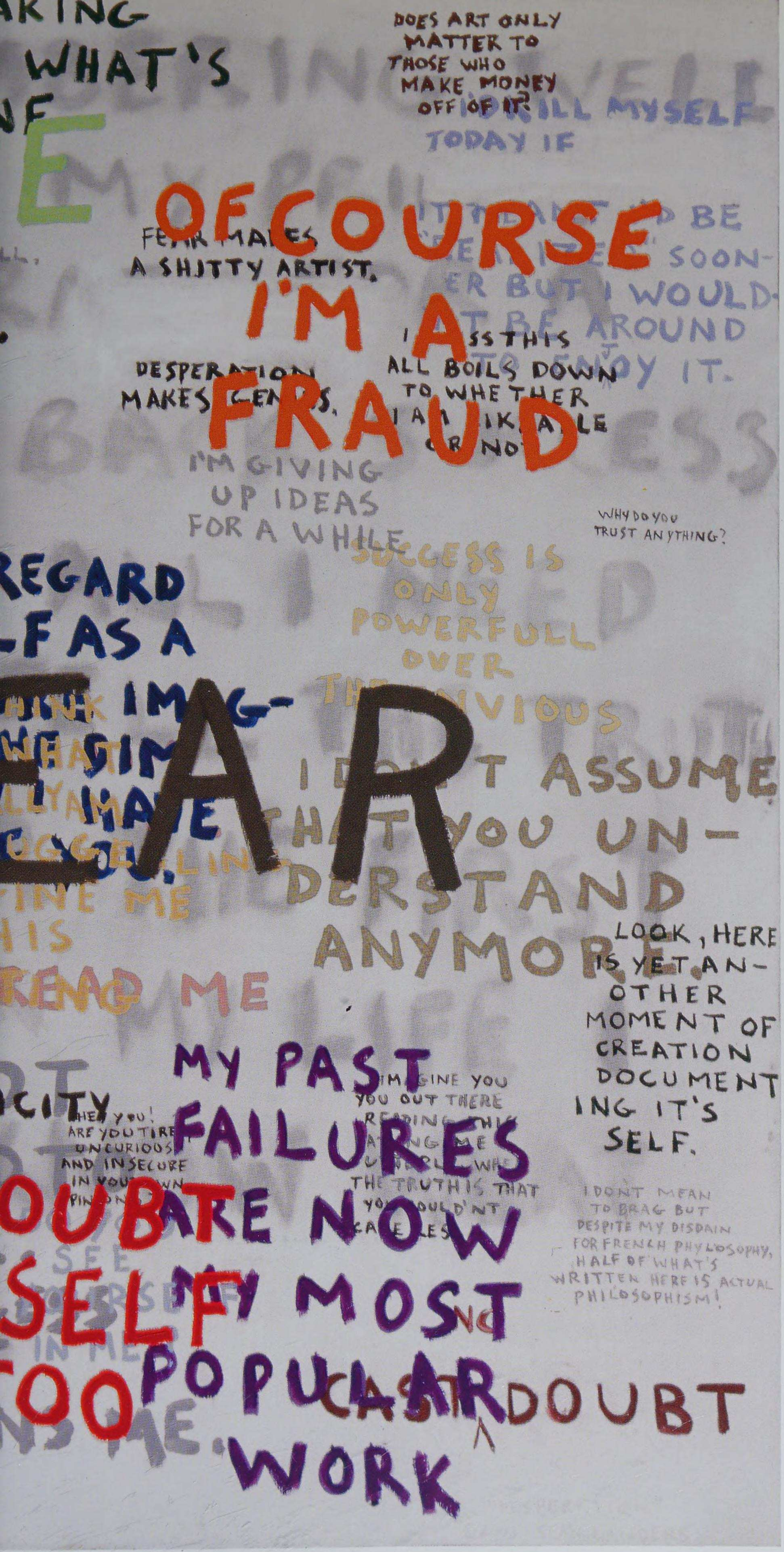
HAVE YOU EVER VERBALLY IMPLORE YOU TO LOVE THEM. I AM THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN DO THIS AND GET AWAY WITH IT. PLEASE LOVE ME.

THIS PAINTING IS SO EFFORTLESS AND EFFORTLESSLY ...

GENUINE

MABEY THIS WORK FUNCTIONED BETTER WHEN I WAS YOUNG

I ALMOST FEEL GUILTY

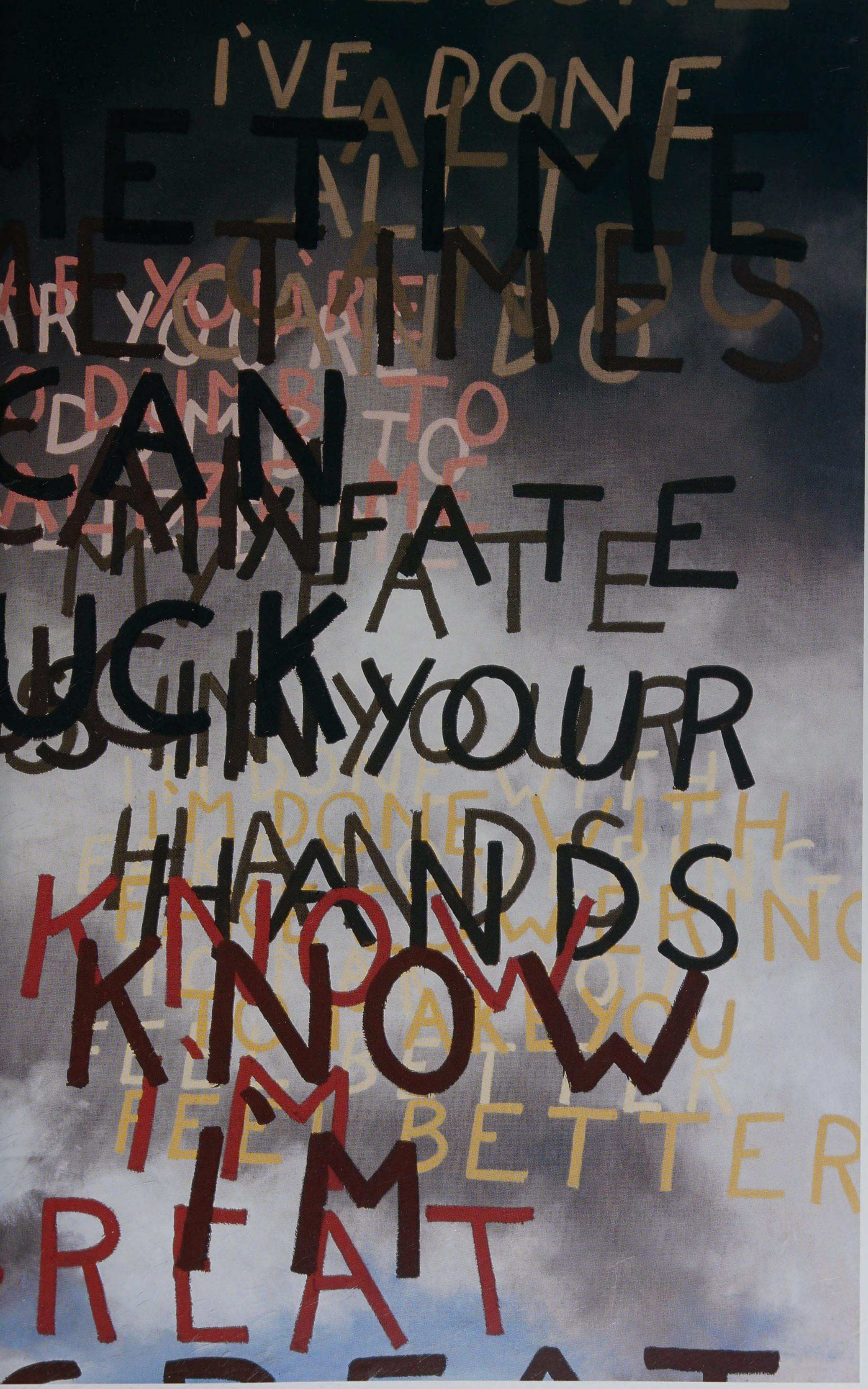


LUCK, FEAR, REGRET,
2003
Oil on linen
142.24 × 198.12 cm

PEANUT HEAD, 2003
Bronze
60.96 × 27.94 × 27.94 cm

BUFFALO, 2003
Oil on linen
99.06 × 83.82 cm

I HAVE GREATER RANGE AND TALENT THAN ANYONE I TRUST THIS PAINT TO MEET MY EXPECTATIONS I AM THE ARTIST BORN TO MAKE



IT'S UP TO YOU, 2003
Oil on linen
182.88 × 274.32 cm

MARINER, 2003
Oil on linen
73.66 × 63.5 cm

ELEPHANT KING, 2003
Bronze
53.97 × 27.94 × 27.94 cm

I'M BEST WHEN I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M DOING

THIS IS NOT IMMORTALIT

TOO EASY

FOOL

PEOPLE WHO CLAIM THEY'RE CONFIDENT ARE'NT

SUCKER

NOT ANOT

YOU HAVE CHOSEN

IS THIS

JACK OF

I'M THE GA

DONE

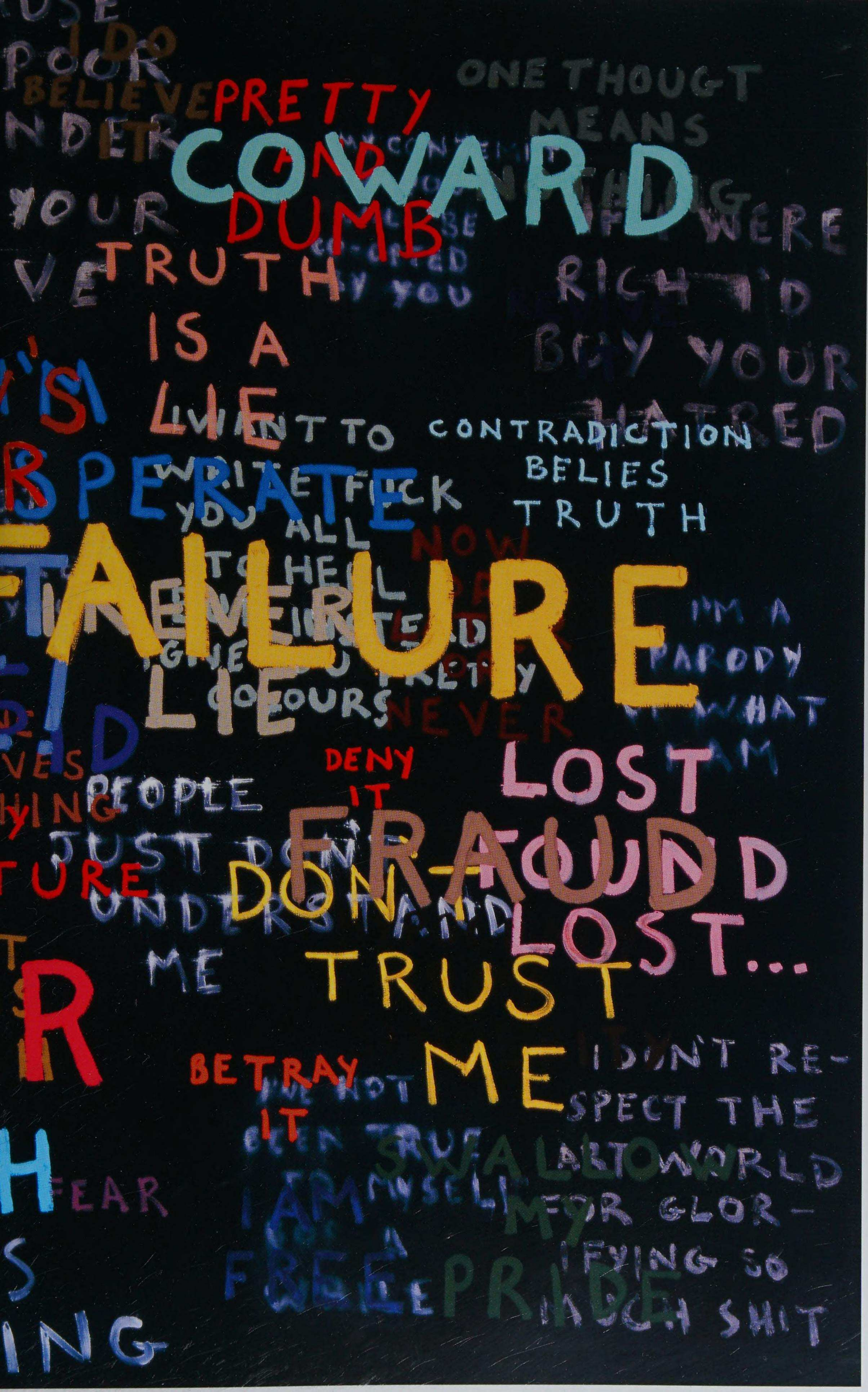
JOKES

THANE THIS

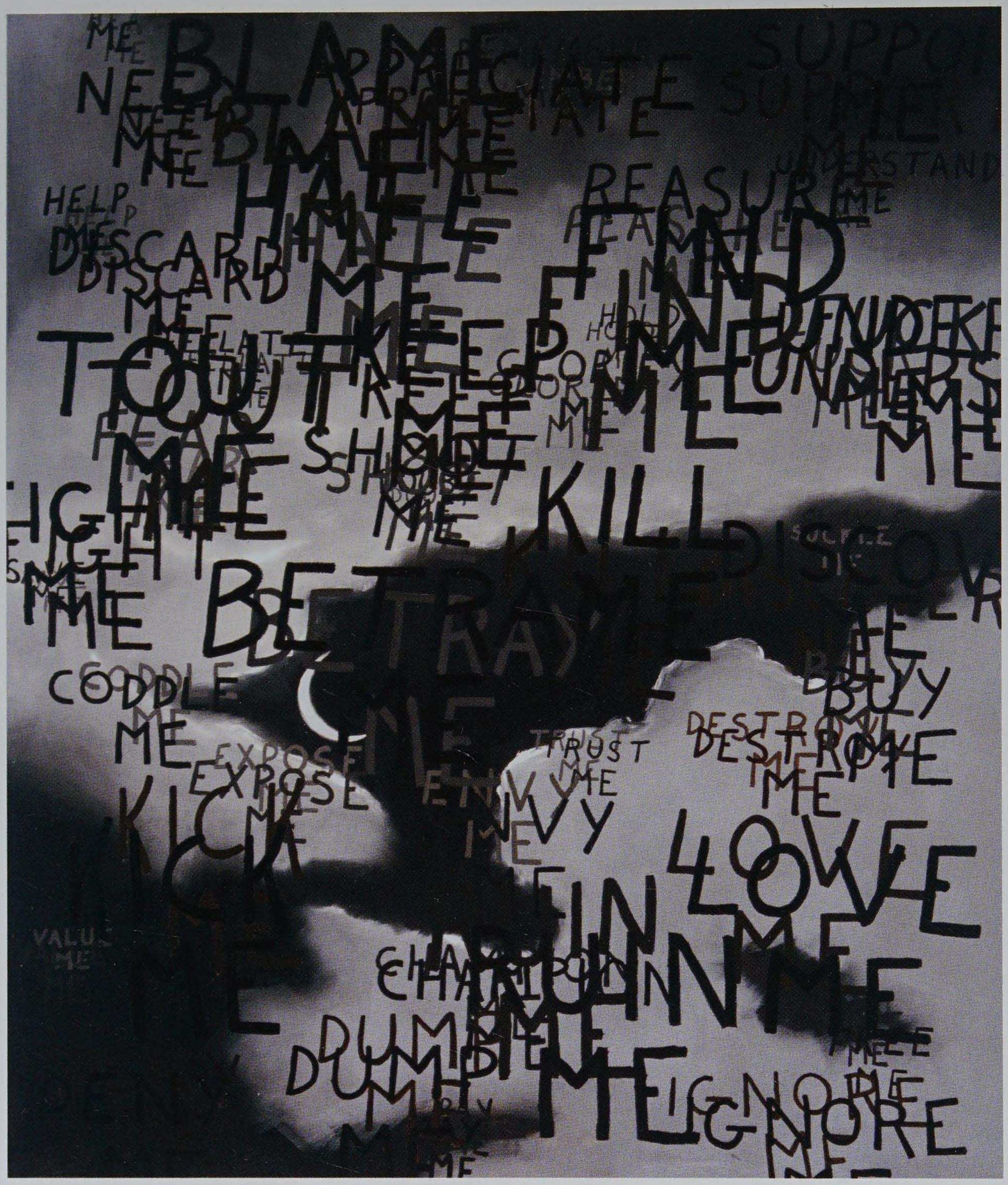
I'M GREAT AND TERRIBLE

MASTER OF

ANYONE

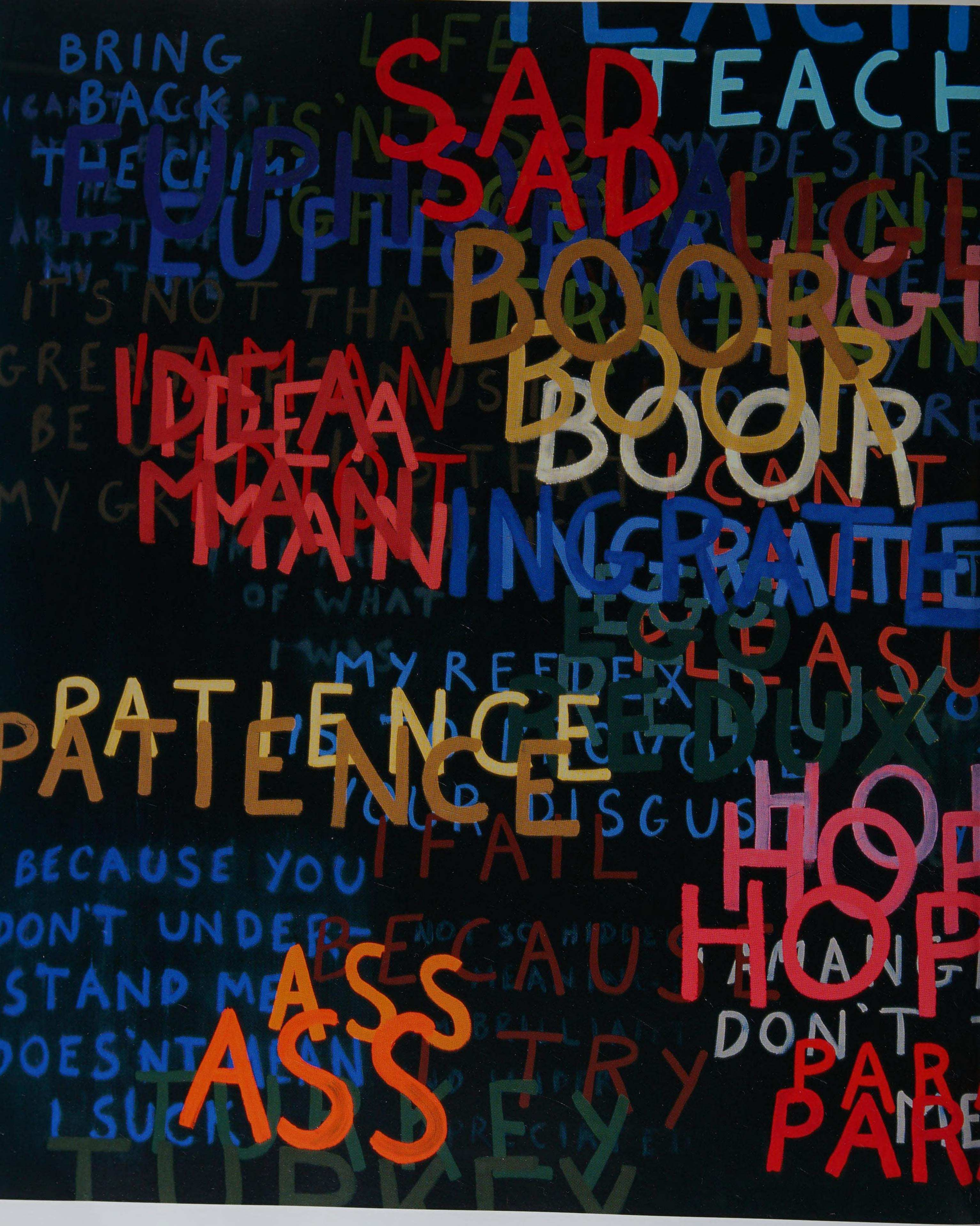


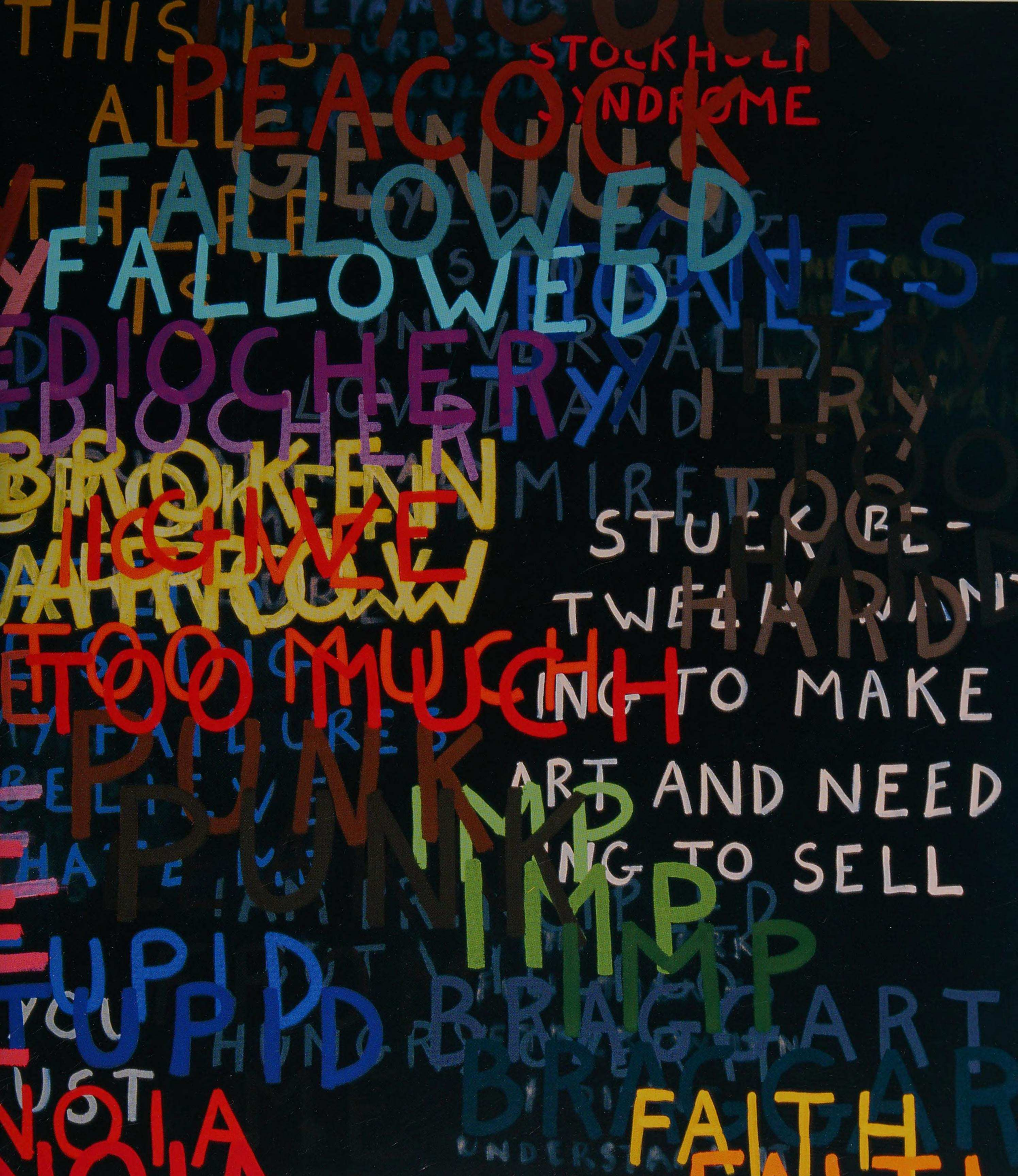
FOOL FAILURE, 2003
Oil on linen
182.88 × 274.32 cm



THE SLEEP OF REASON PRODUCES MONSTERS, 2004
Oil on linen
279.4 × 233.68 cm

FOOTBALL DUCK, 2003
Bronze
53.34 × 27.94 × 27.94 cm

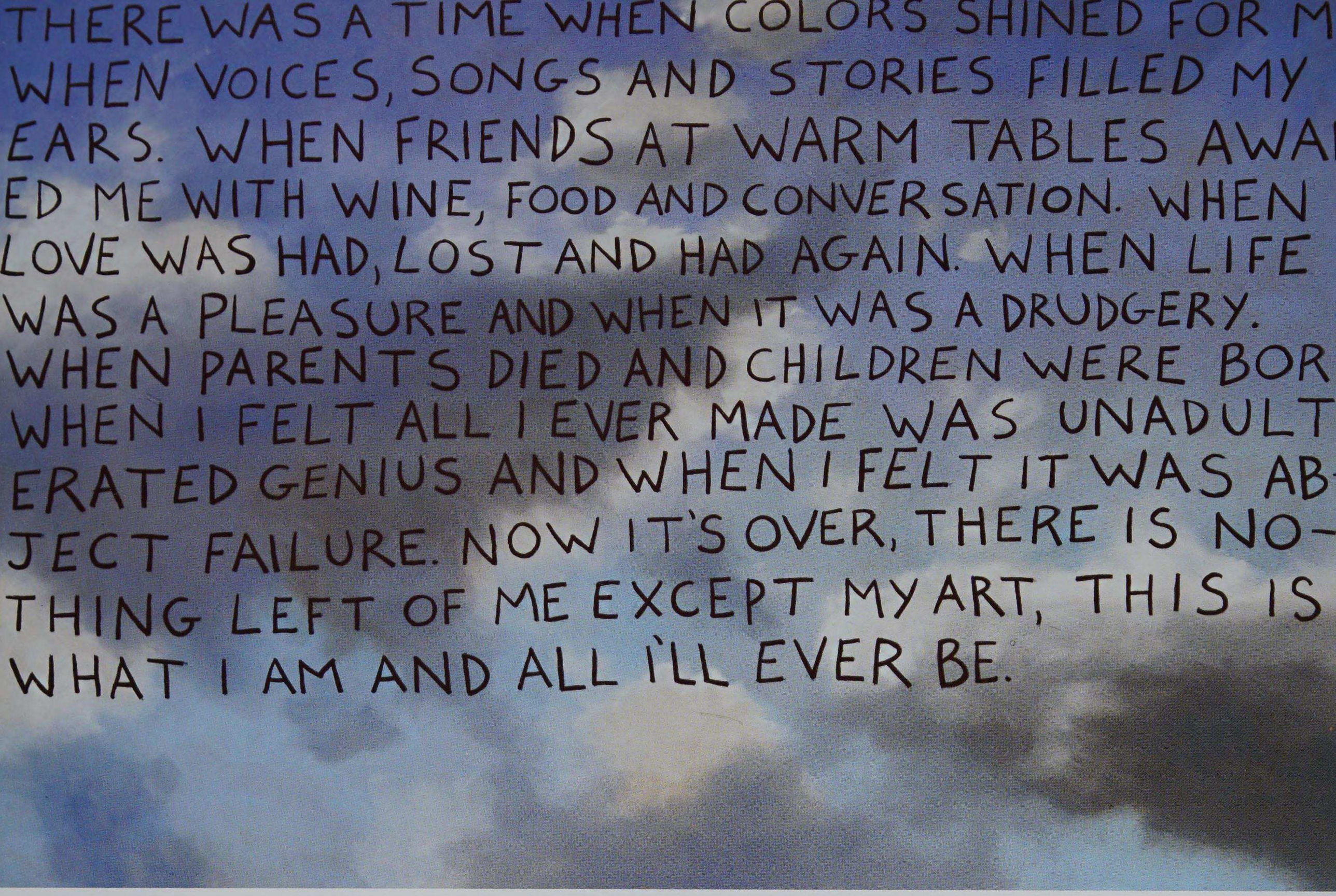

BRING
BACK
THE CHIP
SAD
EUPHORIA
BOOBS
I DREAM
OF WHAT
I WAS
MY REFLEX
PATIENCE
BECAUSE YOU
DON'T UNDER-
STAND ME
DOES'NT MEAN
I SUCK
ASS
TURKEY
I HATE
HOPE
DON'T
PARTY


THIS IS
PEACOCK
STOCKHOLM
SYNDROME
ALL
FALLOWED
FALLOWED
ED
BROKEN
HEART
ACTIVE
TOO MUCH
STUCK RE-
TWEAKING
TO MAKE
ART AND NEED
NG TO SELL
PUNK
IMP
STUPID
PHONE
BRAGGART
NOIA
CRINGE
FAITH
FAITH

GHOST 5 (KIPPENBERGER), 2003
Oil on linen
76.2 × 66.04 cm

Pages 148–149
SAD BOOR, 2003
Oil on linen
213.36 × 365.76 cm

MR. RABBIT, 2003
Bronze
46.99 × 27.94 × 27.94 cm



THERE WAS A TIME..., 2004
Oil on linen
182.88 × 274.32 cm

Biography

BORN 1962, PALMER, MASSACHUSETTS
LIVES AND WORKS IN NEW YORK CITY.

EDUCATION

1986 MFA, Yale University School of Art, New Haven, CT
1984 BFA, Philadelphia College of Art, PA

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2004 Kunsthalle Zürich, Zurich
China Art Object, Los Angeles
sister, Los Angeles
Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York
2003 greengrassi, London
2002 Taka Ishii Gallery, Tokyo
Rebecca Camhi Gallery, Athens
2001 Galerie Jennifer Flay, Paris
Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York
2000 greengrassi, London
Taka Ishii Gallery, Tokyo
1999 Contemporary Fine Arts, Berlin
Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York
Galeria Presença, Porto
1998 Taka Ishii Gallery, Tokyo
Crown Gallery, Brussels
1997 Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York
Studio Guenzani, Milan
1996 Contemporary Fine Arts, Berlin
Rebecca Camhi Gallery, Athens
Regen Projects, Los Angeles
1995 Galerie Jennifer Flay, Paris
Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York
Galerie Birgit Küng, Zurich
1994 Bruno Brunnet, Berlin
Jay Jopling/White Cube, London
Regen Projects, Los Angeles
1993 Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York
Galerie Esther Schipper, Cologne
Galerie Jennifer Flay, Paris
1992 Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York
1991 Robbin Lockett Gallery, Chicago
Marc Jancou Galerie, Zurich
1990 Postmasters Gallery, New York
1989 Tom Solomon's Garage, Los Angeles

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2004 *Guardare, Pensare, Raccontare, Conservare*,
Casa del Mantegna, Mantova
Land of the Free, Jack Hanley Gallery, San Francisco
Jason Meadows, sister, Los Angeles
I Am the Walrus, Cheim & Read, New York
Tenth Anniversary Exhibition, Taka Ishii Gallery, Tokyo
Nature Study, Todd Madigan Gallery, California State University, Bakersfield

2003 *Today's Man*, John Connelly Presents, New York
Rendered, Sara Meltzer Gallery, New York
Drop Out, China Art Objects, Los Angeles
Influence, Identity, and Gratitude, MIT List Visual Arts Center, Boston, curated by Bill Arning
Thatcher, Blue Gallery, London, curated by Tara Howard
Gallery Artists, Taka Ishii Gallery, Tokyo
Comic Release: Negotiating Identity for a New Generation, Regina Gouger Miller Gallery, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh; traveled to Contemporary Arts Center, New Orleans; University Art Gallery, University of North Texas, Denton; University of Arizona Museum of Art, Tucson; Western Gallery, Western Washington University, Bellingham; Armory Center for the Arts, Pasadena; Art House, Austin

2002 *Face/Off: A Portrait of the Artist*, Kettle's Yard, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, curated by Simon Groom; traveled to Towner Art Gallery and Local Museum, Eastbourne
Center for Curatorial Studies Tenth Anniversary, Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson
To Whom It May Concern, Logan Galleries, The California College of Arts, Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, San Francisco
Copy, Roth Horowitz, New York, curated by Neville Wakefield
Heaven Knows I'm Miserable Now, LOW, Los Angeles

2001 *Desire Admiration Acquire*, Arcadia University Art Gallery, Glenside
Tele(visions), Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna, curated by Joshua Decter
Extra Art: A Survey of Artists' Ephemera, 1960–1999, Logan Galleries, The California College of Arts, Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, San Francisco, curated by Steven Leiber
Alumni Choice: An Exhibition of Works on Paper, Yale University Art Gallery, Yale University, New Haven

Soyez réaliste, demandez l'impossible!, Galerie Jennifer Flay, Paris
The way I see it: Chantal Joffe, Karen Kilimnik, Sean Landers and Lisa Milroy, Galerie Jennifer Flay, Paris
La Colección Jumex, Jumex Centro de Distribución, Mexico City

2000 *Salon*, Delfina Project Space, London
2000 Anos Luz, Galeria Leyendecker, Canary Islands, curated by Angel Luis de la Cruz
Kin, Kerlin Gallery, Dublin, curated by Caoimhín Mac Giolla Leíth
oo, Barbara Gladstone Gallery, New York
Body Beautiful, Galerie Jennifer Flay, Paris
Selections from the Permanent Collection of Modern and Contemporary Art, Denver Art Museum, Denver
Arte Americana, Ultimo Decennio, Loggetta Lombardesca, Ravenna, curated by Claudio Spadoni
Group Exhibition of Gallery Artists, Rebecca Camhi Gallery, Athens

1999 *A Place Called Lovely*, GreeneNaftali, New York, curated by Sima Familant
Gallery Swap, Contemporary Fine Arts at Sadie Coles HQ, London
Self Evident, Vaknin Schwartz, Atlanta
Etcetera, Spacex, Exeter, curated by Alex Farquharson
Examining Pictures: Exhibiting Paintings, Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, curated by Francesco Bonami and Judith Nesbitt; traveled to Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; University of California Los Angeles, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles
Colección Jumex, Museo de Arte Carillo Gil, San Angel
Positioning, Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson
Hello Mr. Soul, Gallery 400, University of Illinois at Chicago

1998 *encyclopedia 1999*, Turner & Runyon Gallery, Dallas
Word Perfect, Gallery 400, University of Illinois at Chicago
Hanging, Galeria Camargo Vilaça, Sao Paulo, curated by Márcia Fortes; traveled to Paco Imperial, Rio de Janiero; Museum of Modern Art, Recife

1997 *Heart, Body, Mind, Soul: American Art in the 1990s, Selections from the Permanent Collection*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York
Tanti Video, Arcate Art Fabrica, Torino
From a Whisper to a Scream, Ten in One Gallery, Chicago
Kunst.Arbeit, Südwestdeutsche Landesbank Forum, Stuttgart

1996 *a/drift: Scenes from the Penetrable Culture*, Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, curated by Joshua Decter
Galerie Declercq, Knokke
Against: Thirty Years of Film and Video, Anthony d'Offay Gallery, London
So you want to be a rock and roll star: Artists 'sing' on screen, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, curated by Dominic Molon
Let Me Bring You Down, art initiatives, 148 Gallery, New York, curated by Two Dollar Guitar (Tim Foljahn and Steve Shelley)
nach weimar, Kunstsammlung zu Weimar, Weimar
wunderbar, Kunstverein in Hamburg, Hamburg
push-ups, Athens Fine Art School, the factory, Athens, curated by Emily Tsingou
Toons, Galleri Campbells Occasionally, Copenhagen, curated by Jacob Fabricius

Sammlung Volkmann zeigt: Faustrecht der Freiheit, Kunstsammlung Gera; traveled to Neues Museum Weserburg, Bremen
Incestuous, Thread Waxing Space, New York, curated by Tiong Ang and Carter Kustera
Sugar Mountain, White Columns, New York, curated by Paul Ha and Andrea Scott
Rotterdam on Line, MK Expositieruimte, Rotterdam
Young Americans: New American Art in the Saatchi Collection: Part I, Saatchi Gallery, London

1995 *I'm Writing in Lacanian Ink*, Deutsches Haus, Columbia University, New York, curated by Richard Foreman and Josephina Ayerza
Raw, Postmasters, New York
Next of Kin: Looking at the Great Apes, MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge
Word for Word, Beaver College Art Gallery, Glenside
Scribbles, Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago, curated by Deborah Wilk
New Acquisitions: An Exhibition of Artists' Books and Multiples, Art Metropole, Toronto
Histoire de l'Infamie, Fonds Régional d'Art Contemporain, Auvergne, curated by Jean-Yves Jouannais
I Confess, Nikolaj Copenhagen Contemporary Art Center, Copenhagen
International Festival of Films on Art, Knokke
KOMIX, Brooke Alexander Editions, New York
Narcissistic Disturbance, Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles, curated by Michael Cohen

1994 *A series of rotating installations* (Week 5: November 22–26: Sean Landers and Muriel Brown George), Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York
Recent Acquisitions from the Rivendell Collection, Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson
Noritoshi Hirakawa, Sean Landers, Jan Voss, Jeanne Dunning, Galerie Drantmann, Brussels
David's Friends, Bernard Toale Gallery, Boston, curated by Timothy Fichtner and David Zin
esprit d'amusement, Grazer Kunstverein, Graz
Das Jahrhundert des Multiple. Von Duchamp bis zur Gegenwart, Deichtorhallen, Hamburg
Exposition, Galerie Jennifer Flay, Paris
Arte in Video: 22 Inches, Inter Nos and Galerie Pasquale Leccese, Milan, curated by Tommaso Corvi Mora
Sea Change: Franklin Furnace Benefit, Josh Baer Gallery, New York
Die Orte der Kunst, Sprengel Museum, Hannover
Auto-Eeroticism, Ecole des Arts Décoratifs, Paris, video screening organized by Nicolas Trembley for A Bao A Qou
Can you believe your eyes?, The Museum of Contemporary Art, The Beyerd in Breda
Don't Postpone Joy or Collecting Can Be Fun!, Neue Galerie, Graz, curated by Rudi Molacek and Barbara Steffen; traveled to Austrian Cultural Institute, New York
Kunstverein in Hamburg, Hamburg
Intercourse, Mustard, Brooklyn, curated by Pablo Gomez and Daniel Carello
Volkmann Collection, Cologne, curated by Kasper König
Don't Look Now, Thread Waxing Space, New York, curated by Joshua Decter
Passing Through, Galerie Walcheturm, Zurich, curated by Ugo Rondinone

1993 Tavelli Gallery, Aspen
Audience 0.01, Vera Vita Gioia, Naples, curated by Helena Kontova; traveled to Trevi Flash Art Museum of Contemporary Art, Trevi
Auction Benefit, New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York
Into the Lapse, Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, Copenhagen, curated by Brian Butler
Phenylovethylamour, Galerie Daniel Buchholz, *Unfair* booth 26, Cologne, curated by Lothar Hempel and Carsten Höller
November, Galerie Esther Schipper, Cologne
influx, Gallery 400 at The University of Illinois at Chicago
Backstage, Kunstverein in Hamburg, Hamburg; traveled to Kunstmuseum Luzern, Lucerne
Die Sprache der Kunst, Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna; traveled to Frankfurter Kunstverein, Frankfurt
Summer Group Show, Galerie Esther Schipper, Cologne
Word of Mouth, Friesenwall 120, Cologne, curated by Ana de Portella; traveled to Dogenhaus Galerie, Leipzig; Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels, curated by Ana de Portella, Brian Butler and Stefan Dillemuth
TranceseX: A State of Mystical Absorption, Mondrian Hotel, West Hollywood, curated by Les Ayre, Erika Knerr and Amanda M. Obering
Tom Cugliani Gallery, New York
Standards. Aperto 1993, Biennale di Venezia, Venice, section curated by Nicolas Bourriaud
Yale Collects Yale, Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven
Sean Landers, Raymond Pettibon, Richard Prince, Jürgen Becker, Hamburg
SOHO at Duke IV, Duke University Museum of Art, Durham
Confessional, Liz Koury Gallery, New York, curated by Andrea Scott

1992 *The Anti-Masculine (Overlapping, but not corresponding to the feminine)*, Kim Light Gallery, Los Angeles, curated by Bill Arning
Transgressions In The White Cube: Territorial Mappings, Usdan Gallery at Bennington College, Vermont, curated by Joshua Decter
Under Thirty, Galerie Metropol, Vienna, Austria, curated by Erik Oppenheim
New Deal, Bruno Brunnet, Berlin
I, Myself and Others, Le Magasin – Centre National d'Art Contemporain de Grenoble, Grenoble
Third Annual Exhibition of Collector's Choice of American Artists, Vered Gallery, East Hampton, New York
Paradise Europe, Copenhagen, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, organized by Bizart and curated by Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York; Daniel Buchholz, Cologne; Galerie Maquina Espanola, Madrid; Stalke Out of Space, Copenhagen; and Galleria Paolo Vitolo, Rome
Into the Lapse (Program 1), 1301, Santa Monica, curated by Jean Rasenberger and Brian D. Butler
Regen Projects, Los Angeles
Galerie Esther Schipper, Cologne
Free Lunch, Centre d'Art Contemporain, Martigny, curated by Erik Oppenheim

1991 *Ornament: Ho Hum All Ye Faithful*, John Post Lee, New York
L'Esprit Bibliothèque, La Galerie du Mois, Paris
Pleasure, Hallwalls, Buffalo, curated by Steven Saltzman
Letters, Christine Burgin Gallery, New York
Videos and a Film About Some Schmoes Who Are Trying to Conform (yet miss), Robbin Lockett Gallery, Chicago
Gulliver's Travels, Sophia Ungers Gallery, Cologne
Words & # 's, Wright State University, University Art Galleries, Dayton
5 Days, Thomas Solomon's Garage, Los Angeles
Name Gallery, Chicago
LYRIC– Uses of Beauty in the 90s, White Columns, New York

1990 New Jersey State Museum, Newark
Work in Progress? Work?, Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York
Total Metal, Simon Watson Gallery, New York, curated by Richard Phillips
Drawings, Paula Allen Gallery, New York
Postmasters Gallery, New York
Benefit Exhibition, White Columns, New York
Benefit Exhibition, The New Museum, New York

1989 *Outer Limits*, Holly Solomon Gallery, New York
Islip Art Museum, East Islip, Long Island
American Fine Arts Co., New York

1988 *Small works show*, Sculpture Center, New York
Sculpture, White Columns, New York
Art on the Beach, Creative Times, Queens, New York

1986 *South Beach III*, Organization of Independent Artists, Staten Island
Mutual Respect, Vanguard Gallery, Philadelphia

Selected Bibliography

2004 Collings, Matthew: "Getting ahead in New York," in *Modern Painters*, Summer, p. 18-19
Giovannini, Jospeh: "Escape from New York," in: *Architectural Digest*, p. 190-197, 236
Smith, Roberta: "I am the Walrus at Cheim & Read," in: *The New York Times*, June 25, p. E33
Houser, Craig: "Sean Landers", in: *Flash Art*, May/June, p. 82
Landers, Sean: "Sean Landers: Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York," in: *Frieze*, May, p. 108
Smith, Roberta: "Sean Landers," in: *The New York Times*, April 2, p. E35
Levin, Kim: "Voices Choices. Sean Landers at Andrea Rosen Gallery," in: *The Village Voice*, March 17-23, p. 81
"Sean Landers," in: *The New Yorker*, March 15, p. 37-38
"Sean Landers," in: *Time Out*, March 11–18, p. 84

2003 Plender, Olivia: "Sean Landers, greengrassi, London," in: *Frieze*, October, p. 126
Coomer, Martin: "Sean Landers at greengrassi," in: *Time Out London*, June 25–July 2, p. 57
Lyall, Sarah: "Margaret Thatcher as Muse," in: *The New York Times*, May 12, pp. E1, E5
"Not-so-iron lady," in: *Art Review*, vol. 1 no. 7, May, p. 20
"Thatcher Years Art Show Opens," in: *BBC News Online*, April 16

2002 Saltz, Jerry: "Repeat Performance," in: *The Village Voice*, October 7
"Sean Landers," in: *Symbol*, March 23, p. 34–37

2001 Cash, Stephanie: "Sean Landers at Andrea Rosen Gallery," in: *Art in America*, November, p. 145–146
Edelson, Sharon: "Art Course: Restaurants are turning into ad hoc galleries, displaying the work of topflight artists," in: *W*, September, p. 442, 444, 452, 454, 456
"Sean Landers at Galerie Jennifer Flay," in: *FigaroScope*, September 5–11, no. 17751, p. 45
Gilbert, Andrea: "Splash," in: *View Magazine*, Summer, p. 88–93
Perree, Rob: "Sean 'Picasso' Landers," in: *Kunstbeeld*, July/August, p. 64–65
Siegel, Katy: "Public Offerings," in: *Young Americans*, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, p. 207–192
Wilson, Michael: "Sean Landers at Andrea Rosen Gallery," in: *Untitled*, Summer, p. 34–35
"Goings on About Town: Sean Landers at Andrea Rosen Gallery," in: *The New Yorker*, May 14, p. 26
"A Guide to the Great Neighborhoods in New York: Chelsea," in: *SPUR*, June, p. 181
Fineman, Mia: "I, Picasso," in: *The Village Voice*, May 15, vol. XLVI, no. 19, p. 70
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L. ANYWAY, IT'S
A STUPID IDEA
NOT LIKE I EVEN
VE IT. IN FACT I'M
EY I EVEN MENTIOND
AM IT, I WISH I
D'NT WRITE THINGS
MAKE ME LOOK SO
L OH GOD, I JUST
T TO CRAWL UN-
A ROCK AND DIE.
WHY DO I FEEL
WAY?

HIS LITERATURE OR FIELD
TING? DOES IT MATTER?
NO, IT BETTER NOT BECAUS
KES AS ~~BOTH~~ FATHER ONE
PASSES AS BOTH.

RE ON TO YOU LANDER
ERICA PEOPLE WHO DON
ME AND SEE MY NAME
NEVER PRONOUNCE IT.
MALLY GET (SEE-ON) OR
N) OR MOST COMON (SEEN
VEN GET MY LAST NAME
G (LOND-AYRS) OR (LON-
). IF YOU'RE ALSO UNABL
AD ENGLISH HERE IT I
LAND-ERZ)
LANDERS, IT'S TRUE
PHONE CALLS AND I THI
WRONG NUMBER." HELL
N LONDREZ THEIR".....
THE HELL AM I WRITIN
? I NEED SOMEBODY
HEAD TO TELL ME TO
P. "HEY, STUPID,
TUP!!"

nd, Hoar, Rue
TUPID! NO! DON'T EXPE
REALLY YOU TO BUY TH
IT'S A LOT OF MO
E TO I JUST REALISE
ELLY THAT I'VE BEEN
IN- LIVING BEOND
OF MY MEANS

TODAY APR
SHOULD BE
DAY OF WOR
LET US PRAY
GOD BESTOW
GRACE UPON
YOUR HUMBLE
ENT. PLEASE
MY INDEFENSE
AGAINST, ARO
TO DESCRIBE
AND IN THE
I ALWAYS
BACK TO YO
THANK YOU F
ING MY CLAS
WHEN I WAS
THE ELEVATO
FOR EVER YO
DEI. KYRIE E
SEAN MICHAE
LANDERS.

ALL I CAN THINK OF DOING
IS PRAYING AND ASKING FO
FORGIVNESS. I MUST ADMIT TH
'M IN EUROPE ALONE FOR SHO
O TO CHURCH AND PRAY. IF I D
SUFFER EXTREME ANXIETY.

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Kunsthalle Zürich

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