

WHITE FLAG PROJECTS

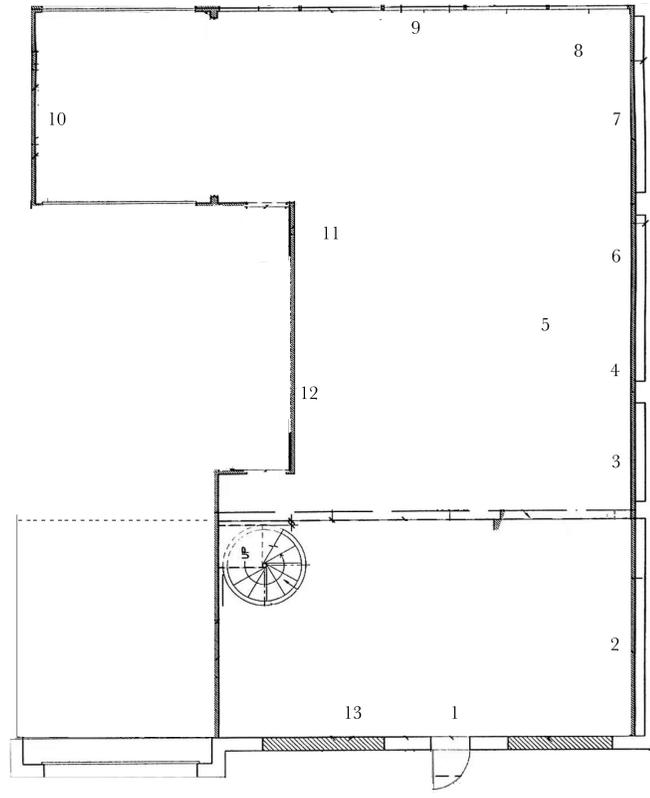
Another Kind of Vapor

June 18 – July 23, 2011

IAIN BAXTER&
Robert Heinecken
David Lieske
Paul McCarthy
Otto Piene
William Pope.L
Dieter Roth
Ed Ruscha
Jennifer West

Curated by Jenny Gheith and John McKinnon

It's a conservator's nightmare... unfixed photographs fade; fire and smoke burn a board's surface; abstract projections reveal film leader dowsed in chocolate sauce, ketchup, mayonnaise, and apple juice; dyed canvas bleaches in the sun; Pepto-Bismol and caviar act as printing materials; laundry detergent bottles leak as they balance a surface of peanut butter, paint, and coffee; an artist covers his body with food; objects are molded in plastic; 40-year-old flies lay dead in a jar. Taking inspiration from Dieter Roth's now legendary exhibition *Staple Cheese (A Race)*, *Another Kind of Vapor* presents artists who have experimented with non-traditional materials. Some sculpt, mold, and print with these substances, others conserve marks and stains. Allowed to decay, decompose, or remain in stasis, these objects endure as symbols of impermanence, waste, memory, and time.



1- David Lieske, *Case Arse II (Nash/Megson Collection; 1 Month, 11 Days)*, 2009
Black cotton and wooden stretcher, 92 ³/₄ x 97 ¹/₂; 92 ³/₈ x 79 ¹/₂; 92 ⁷/₈ x 89 ⁵/₈
Collection Forrest Nash and Will Megson

2-William Pope.L, *Commercial Work*, 2011
Sheetrock, wood, peanut butter, liquid detergent and bottles, oil stick, pencil, paint, & coffee
Courtesy the artist and Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York

3- Ed Ruscha, *Pepto-Caviar Hollywood*, 1970
Two-color screenprint on Copper Deluxe paper, printed with Pepto-Bismol and caviar, 14 ⁷/₈ x 41 ⁵/₈ inches
Courtesy Cirrus Gallery, Los Angeles

4- William Pope.L, *#188F 3.17.06 Another Kind of Vapor*, 2006
Mixed media, 5 x 5 inches
Collection Lisa Dorin and Larry Smallwood, Chicago

5 (vitrine)- Dieter Roth, *Untitled (Invitation for Staple Cheese (A Race))*, 1969/1980
Ink on paper, 5 x 5 inches
Collection Ira Wool, Chicago

Official Notice No. 57723, Los Angeles County Health Department, Bureau of Environmental Sanitation

Copy of Ordinance No. 127,507, Copy of Ordinance No. 7583

Carbon copies of letters to Kynaston McShine, Museum of Modern Art; Sam Wagstaff, St. Louis Art Museum;
Ad Petersen, Stedelijk Museum; accompanied by installation photograph and proposal for steel housing

Roth Time: A Dieter Roth Retrospective, Edited by Theodora Vischer and Bernadette Walter.
Lars Miller Publishers (Schaulager Basel, Museum Ludwig, The Museum of Modern Art): pp. 130-1.

6- IAIN BAXTER&, *Still Life, 4 Crushed Jugs*, 1965
Vacuum formed plastic, 14 x 16 inches
Courtesy Corkin Gallery, Toronto

7- Otto Piene, *Veil*, 1975
Smoke and fire on board, 40 x 30 inches
Collection of Otto and Elizabeth Piene

8- David Lieske, *Case Arse II-Appendix-(Sao Paulo)*, 2011
Photocopied booklet, 24 pages

9- IAIN BAXTER&, *Still Life, Mesh and 3 Crushed Bottles*, 1965
Vacuum formed plastic, 27 ¹/₂ x 34 inches
Courtesy Corkin Gallery, Toronto

10- Jennifer West, *Regressive Squirty Sauce Film*, 2007
16 mm film leader squirted and dripped with chocolate sauce, ketchup,
mayonnaise & apple juice, transferred to DVD, 3:36 minutes
Courtesy the artist and Marc Foxx, Los Angeles

11- Flies collected by Dieter Roth during the exhibition *Staple Cheese (A Race)*, 1970

12- Paul McCarthy, *Grand Pop*, 1977/1995
Cibachrome print mounted on aluminum, 25 ⁷/₈ x 37 ¹/₂ inches
Collection Rena Conti, Chicago

13- Robert Heinecken, *Vanishing Photographs—(Krimms/Uelsmann/Doubleday/Heinecken)*, 1973
11 unfixed silver gelatin prints (4 on view), 11 x 14 inches each
Courtesy Robert Heinecken Trust

I had a show of 40 suitcases, large, small, old and new, and all of them were full of cheese. There were two tons of cheese in that show. Sanitary inspectors were brought in and they found that the cheese had formed vapours akin to laughing gas, which could be dangerous. Then the gallery lady, who'd sat in the place for six hours every day, said: I was wondering why I felt so merry the whole time.

Although he did not achieve a breakthrough in the United States with this exhibition, he no doubt left his mark, or rather an unusual scent, on the trail of twentieth-century art history in America.

"We Want to Organicize Disintegration"

Towards Organic Painting. We seek to make disintegration organic.

In a disintegrated world, we seek to discover and reveal to ourselves the inner structures, the fertilizing germs of our organic existence.

We seek to establish these presences unequivocally.

Beyond any hedonism of surfaces, any impression or memory, we disintegrate phenomena and gestures to discover their innermost impulses, to cut away the essential from the gratuitous and reduce it to a monad with absolute precision in order to distinguish each in its most authentic germ.

The picture frame is our space of liberty in which we continually reinvent painting in an ongoing quest for our primal images.

WEST HOLLYWOOD HEALTH CENTER
Bureau of Environmental Sanitation
621 N. San Vicente Blvd.
Los Angeles, Calif., 90069
668-7750



OFFICIAL NOTICE No. 57723
LOS ANGELES COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION

(OFFICE ADDRESS)
SUBJECT FLY BREEDING ADDRESS 615 DATE May 20, 1970
TO EUSENIA BOTLER ADDRESS 617 North La Cienega Blvd.
ADDRESS 617 North La Cienega Blvd.

You are hereby directed to:

Sec. 630 Health and Safety Code: Maintain premises in such a manner
so as not to permit the breeding or harboring therein or thereon of
flies.

This notice shall be complied with as required by: State Health and Safety Code California Administrative Code Los Angeles
County Ordinance No. 7583 L.A. City Ordinance No. 127507 Other Code
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this was
a way of registering the messy lining of the utopian vision that could not be. As
Samuel Beckett wrote: "To find a form that accommodates the mess, that is the
task of the artist now."¹¹

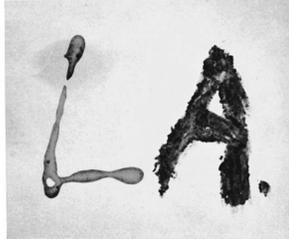
A pair of socks is no less suitable to make a painting with than wood, nails, turpentine,
oil, and fabric.



it's
great how the drugstore puts everyone on the same level, in the same place, because at some point everyone
ends up needing Band-Aids, aspirin, or a neti pot. And that's how my materials operate: they personalize but
also unite people on a base level.

Technically this was a sort of a printers's worst nightmare. First of all we were working with
materials that we had no idea what they would be like, caviar and Pepto-Bismal, and how do
you print with these things.

mayonnaise and peanut butter, those
"cheap" foods we ate as kids... I like these materials. This brown goo, and its evil
twin, this... white goo. Once used, they don't stay in their original form: they
change, they oxidize... Which leads to an an interesting query: What is
brownness as opposed to whiteness?

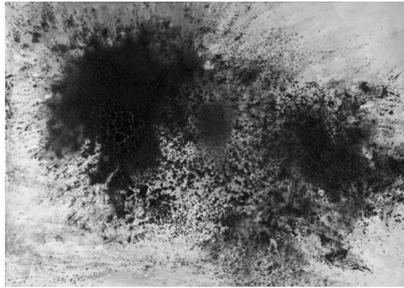


A painting is "a canvas." Canvas is cloth. Buttons can be sewn on cloth. Go ahead, sew them on. Is the result also "a painting"?

Or, if you prefer, consider the sociological angle. A painting is a high class thing? Why not spread some caviar on them?

It was Manzoni who most directly brought together the circuits of the body and the circuits of capital. He packaged breath as well as shit. He once criticized contemporary painters for their gymnastics: "They paint a line in, step back, look at their work with head on one side and half closed eye, then jump forward again and add another line of colour."¹¹ He took some delight in caricaturing the painter as an extravagant, posturing gymnast, filling up a painting as if it were a receptacle with "artificial meanings." Why, he asked, "shouldn't this receptacle be emptied?" He set himself the task with his "achromes," which hung on the wall as paintings but behaved as objects would. In this way his gymnastics would be different – he would turn somersaults with the object of art itself.

Paint, which he sometimes mixes with mayonnaise and ketchup, wells from enormous paint tubes on the floor or propped against the walls. Together with other utensils and materials, these paint tubes occasionally take on a life of their own as they dance and move about the room. The painter cuts the tubes open in order to fill them with other paints. Or he uses them, like brushes, to spread paint on canvases. Occasionally, he even crawls into one of them. He pours paint out onto a tabletop and spreads it with an oversized roller. In other scenes, he flings paint at canvases, damages or even perforates canvases by poking a paintbrush handle right through them.



A great Pollock is dizzyingly lovely. At the same time, it is an expanse of flung, spilled, and spattered gunk.

In one performance, *Ma Bell*, in the early 1970s I poured motor oil over a telephone book and started laughing really loud. That was when I first took on a persona. I did another performance around 1970 where I made a list of things I was going to do, like eat all I can, spread Vaseline on the walls and spray paint it red, or put food in my pockets and lay in the sun. So I began to use foods and other materials, and around 1972 it became more cultural, not so much about painting or a single physical act.

Baxter's notion of place flows in and out of his product still lifes. They could be read as material curiosity, consumer critique or purgatory, in a long line of artist inquiries – from the pictorial typography of Pablo Picasso, Kurt Schwitters, and Stuart Davis to the object assemblages of Andy Warhol, Muntadas and Haim Steinbach.³¹ Baxter's still life products are distinct in their matter-of-factness, imbued with a sense of cultural place (the super market, the office supply mega-store), and a place in late 20th century culture. The Dutch still life of the 17th and 18th century – the cornucopia of fruit – is replaced, in one instance, by an offering of household poisons,





The result the pure result is juice and size and baking and exhibition and nonchalance and sacrifice and volume and a section in division and the surrounding recognition and horticulture and no murmur. This is a result. There is no superposition and circumstance, there is hardness and a reason and the rest and remainder. There is no delight and no mathematics.

There is a hint of complicity hovering in the air: the refinement of the taste buds and especially of the olfactory organs has its moments of weakness, of loss of class, when the cheeses on their platters seem to proffer themselves as if on the divans of a brothel. A perverse grin flickers in the satisfaction of debasing the object of one's own gluttony with lowering nicknames: *crottin*, *boule de moine*, *bouton de culotte*.

in place of the cheeses
he sees names of cheeses, concepts of cheeses, meanings of cheeses, histories of cheeses, contexts of cheeses, psychologies of cheeses, when he does not so much know as sense that behind each of these cheeses there is all that, then his relationship becomes very complicated.

This shop is a museum: Mr. Palomar, visiting it, feels as he does in the Louvre,

To apply the term *photographs* to the objects Heinecken makes requires a radical reevaluation of the conventionally-accepted meaning of the word. If a definition of photographer can be expanded to mean simply one who uses light-sensitive materials, then Heinecken fulfills the definition. This is not so radical as it seems considering that in the early 19th century Thomas Wedgewood and W. H. F. Talbot, two of photography's earliest practitioners, made images without using a camera by placing objects on light-sensitive materials and exposing them to light. Also, the word *photography* means simply *light drawing*. The word *object* is the key to the difference between Heinecken's work and other photographers who use the camera as a mirror or witness to experience. His use of the camera is infrequent and without intentions of experiential recording. Instead, his images are *about* experience rather than *of* experience. He fabricates objects from a diversity of light-sensitive materials in addition to materials not usually associated with the process of photography. Ironically, Heinecken has also used the word *equivalent* in describing the function of the objects he makes. He refers to his work as "symbolic equivalents for experience, fantasy, or imagination".



I discovered the potential of sour milk by accident. It was at a special period in my life, when I was married in Iceland,—that I sneaked out at night to draw what you might call “dirty pictures.” I was very ashamed of this bent and to destroy these pictures I once poured sour milk over them. Then I noticed that they became very beautiful. Subsequently I always pour sour milk over pictures that weren’t beautiful or didn’t work out. Sour milk is like landscape, ever changing. Works of art should be like that—they should change like man himself, grow old and die.

Peanut butter, an invention of George Washington Carver, is the artist’s chosen medium to present these appropriated loaded images. For Pope.L, the medium is intertwined with the subject matter. Peanut butter is an unforgiving medium. It cannot be erased or painted over. It tends to slip from its surface over time and compromises the material on which it is painted. In this case, the medium created by an American icon, peanut butter, cannot be erased, cannot be obliterated; yet, the obliteration of blackness was one objective of lynching. The artist has also articulated that it was “not simply the obliteration of blackness, but also the obliteration of memory; getting drunk on spectacle to forget (expunge) what one is actually doing; lynching was [in this sense] also a celebratory event.”³⁰ These paintings, Pope.L suggests, raise the notion of “who brings the pain and who possesses it,” as they reveal in all of their gloppy, aromatic painterliness the harsh realities of racism.³¹



THE ONLY PATH TO THE UNIQUE AND PERSONAL ART PRODUCT IS THROUGH THE DOOR OF EXPERIMENTATION. WHY SO MANY PEOPLE IN THE ART INDUSTRY FIGHT EXPERIMENTAL WORK AND CALL IT ANTI-ART ALWAYS PUZZLES ME. EXPERIMENTAL WORK IS THE HIGHEST FORM. IT IS THE MANNERISTS WHO ARE ANTI-ARTISTS! DESTRUCTION IS A PERFECTLY LOGICAL ARENA TO PERFORM IN. TO BEGIN ONE MUST DECIDE WHAT AND HOW, THEN WHERE, THEN UP TO THE ATTIC OR DOWN TO THE CELLAR OR OUT INTO LIFE TO GET SOMETHING TO RUIN.



IAIN BAXTER& (Canadian, b.1936) questions the role of art as both consumer commodity and as a medium for cultural commentary. BAXTER& was the first artist to adopt a corporate persona, forming “N.E. Thing Company” in 1966. NETCO’s output ranged from conceptual, satirical, vacuum-formed still lifes to post-modern appropriations of famous artworks. He has had solo exhibitions at Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto; Canadian Cultural Centre, Paris; and Corkin Gallery, Toronto. The Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago is currently organizing a retrospective of his work. His work has been included in numerous international exhibitions including at Museum of Modern Art, New York; Seattle Art Museum; and Aspen Art Museum.

Robert Heinecken (American, 1931–2006) was an artist and teacher who seldom used a camera, yet was identified as a photographer. He used an array of unconventional processes and an irreverent attitude toward the photographic original to influence the course of the art form. He founded the graduate program for photography at UCLA in 1964, and retired from the institution in 1991. Since 1964, Heinecken has had over sixty international solo shows. In 1999, a retrospective of his work traveled to the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago and Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

David Lieske (German, b. 1979,) lives and works in Berlin, Germany. For source material, Lieske mines history, art history, pop culture, his autobiography, and his own work. With sly critique and conceptual rigor, he strips down original codes to fashion his own to create a web of new referential meanings. Lieske has had solo exhibitions at Galerie Daniel Buchholz, Cologne; Corvi Mora, London; Standard, Oslo; Rowley Kennerk, Chicago; and Midway Contemporary, Minneapolis. He has participated in group exhibitions at Gagosian Gallery, New York; Metro Pictures, New York; Kunstverein Hamburg; Frederic Petzel, New York; Marc Foxx, Los Angeles; and Galerie Meerrettich, Berlin

Paul McCarthy (American, b. 1945) lives and works in Los Angeles, California. In many of his erotically charged works, American food staples—mayonnaise, ketchup, and chocolate syrup—are used as stand-ins for bodily fluids. Filled with excess, his performances, sculptures, installations, and films break cultural taboos as a means to ridicule polite society. Recent solo exhibitions of his work were held at the Fondazione Nicola Trussardi, Milan; De Uithof, Utrecht; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. From 2000–01, a retrospective of his work traveled to the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York; Villa Arson, Nice; and Tate Liverpool.

Otto Piene (German, b. 1928) lives and works in Groton, MA, and Düsseldorf, Germany. From 1974 to 1993, Piene was Professor and Director of the Center for Advanced Visual Studies at MIT. Throughout his career he has been a leading force in demonstrating the interdependency of art, nature and science. In 1950s Germany, he co-founded the influential avant-garde Group Zero, an international assembly of artists interested in kinetic, environmental and elementary art. His work is represented in more than 100 museums around the world. He has participated in numerous international group exhibitions, including *Documenta 2, 3, and 6*; the *Venice Biennale*; *EXPO ’67*; the *Carnegie International*; and the *São Paulo Biennial*.

William Pope.L (American, b. 1955) is a prominent multidisciplinary artist known for his conceptual, often performance-based art practice, which actively confronts issues of race, sex, power, consumerism, and social class. A retrospective of his work entitled *eRacism* toured nationally at Institute of Contemporary Art at Maine College of Art; Diverse Works Art space, Houston; Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, Oregon; and Artists Space, New York. Pope.L has had solo exhibitions at Art Institute of Chicago; Santa Monica Museum; Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna; His work has been included in group exhibitions at New Museum, New York; Studio Museum, Harlem; Renaissance Society, Chicago; Mass MoCA, North Adams; and the *Whitney Biennial*.

Dieter Roth, also known as Dieter Rot and Diter Rot, (Swiss-German, 1930–1998) was a sculptor, performer, book designer, poet, graphic artist, publisher and musician. His work was not universally accepted when first exhibited, but is now situated within a post-war European scene that includes Joseph Beuys, Yves Klein, Lucio Fontana and others who experimented with unorthodox techniques and blurred boundaries between performance and sculpture, theater and visual art, high culture and low. From 2003–04, the full range of Roth’s creative accomplishments—including paintings, drawings, graphic works, books, sculptures, installations, and film and video works—was shown in a retrospective organized by Schaulager Basel, Switzerland, in collaboration with The Museum of Modern Art, New York and Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany.

Ed Ruscha (American, b. 1937) combines the cityscape of Los Angeles with vernacular language to expose the banality of urban life in a variety of forms encompassing photography, drawing, printmaking, painting, and artist books. Ruscha has been the subject of numerous retrospectives at museums including the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; the Centre Georges Pompidou; the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden; Hayward Gallery, London; Whitney Museum of Art; and Jeu de Paume, Paris. In 2001, Ruscha was elected to The American Academy of Arts and Letters as a member of the Department of Art. Ruscha was the United States representative at the 51st Venice Biennale in 2005.

Jennifer West (American) lives and works in Los Angeles, CA. Employing various unique processes, West subjects 16, 35 and 70 mm film negative and leader to an eclectic range of idiosyncratic substances. She has had solo exhibitions at Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston; Marc Foxx, Los Angeles; and Vilma Gold, London. Her work has been included in group shows at Tate Modern, London; Musée d’Art Contemporain, Bordeaux; Drawing Center, New York; MoCAD, Detroit; Vilma Gold, London; Studio Voltaire, London; Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago; ZKM, Karlsruhe, Germany; Seattle Art Museum; Project Space, Sandrioni Rey, Los Angeles.

Guest curators

Jenny Gheith was curatorial assistant in the Department of Contemporary Art and program director for the Society for Contemporary Art at the Art Institute of Chicago from 2006–2010. During this time she coordinated exhibitions of James Bishop, Mel Bochner, Monica Bonvicini, Vincent Fecteau, Jana Gunstheimer, Richard Hawkins, Mario Ybarra Jr, and William Pope.L. She has published essays on Fischli & Weiss, Ellsworth Kelly, William Kentridge, Jim Nutt, Michael Rakowitz, Charles Ray, and Richard Serra and film reviews for Electronicintifada.net and the *Lebanon Daily Star*. She holds an MA in Art History, Criticism, and Theory from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

John McKinnon is program coordinator for the Society for Contemporary Art at The Art Institute of Chicago. As the Assistant Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Milwaukee Art Museum, his exhibitions included BRUCE CONNER; *Fifty Works for Fifty States: The Dorothy and Herbert Vogel Collection*; *Andy Warhol: The Last Decade*; *Andy Warhol: Pop Star*; *Act/React: Interactive Installation Art*; and *On Site: Santiago Cucullu*. He has written for *Artforum.com*, *Art Papers*, *X-TRA*, and *Flash Art*. He holds dual Masters Degrees in Art History and Arts Administration from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

White Flag Projects

Matthew Strauss
Founder/Director

Jessica Baran
Assistant Director

David Burns Smith
Exhibition Manager

Senior Interns: Taylor Crossland, H. Lindsay Donahue
Interns: Katie Hasler, Kathleen Perniciaro, Liz Prentice, Netta Sadovsky, Mel Trad

Another Kind of Vapor has been made possible with support from The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, the White Flag Projects Board of Directors, and our members. Opening reception sponsored in part by Schlafly Beer.

Façade: Reproduction of Otto Piene, *UNTITLED*, 1978
Digital print on vinyl, 154 x 154 inches
Courtesy Otto Piene
Original painting: Collection Renate Böhmer-Haberland, Munich, Germany

Thanks to Bruce Burton & Lydia Grey

The curators would also like to thank Matthew Strauss and the staff at White Flag Projects, particularly Jessica Baran, David Burns Smith, and Mel Trad. A huge thank you to all of our lenders, artists, and supporters including Luke Batten, IAIN BAXTER&, Cristopher Canizares, Rena Conti, Jane Corkin, Corazon Del Sol, Lisa Dorin and Larry Smallwood, Lydia Grey, Rodney Hill, Eileen Jeng, Rowley Kennerk, Joseph D. Ketner, David Lieske, Otto Piene, William Pope.L., Jean Milant, Todd Simeone, Lia Trinkabrowner, Andy Weymouth, Jennifer West, and Ira Wool and Barbara Mirecki. A special thank you to Nicki McKinnon, Yoni Levy, and Franklin GheithLevy.

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