How the World Came in

Achim Hochdörfer

In 1960, Piero Manzoni blew up some balloons, tied a string with a seal attached as anchor to each, and then mounted them individually on square wooden boards with nameplates. In the course of time, the balloons slowly deflated, leaving only limp blue, red, and white rubber shells: the artist's finite breath had transformed each balloon into a pictorial object, an informal figure reminiscent of a casual, spontaneously applied brushstroke or abstract splash of paint. After duly certifying them, Manzoni proceeded to sell these vestiges of his own vital presence: "When I blow up the balloon, I am breathing my soul into an object that becomes eternal," he wrote.[1] While his *Fiato d'artista* (*Artist's Breath*) may at first seem like an ironic prank, the seemingly banal setup in fact alerts us to the role of authorship, figure, and chance in art, and hence to key problems in the history of modern painting. That eventful and controversial history—rich in highs and lows and radical new departures and conservative reactions—had developed in the eyes of many of Manzoni's contemporaries into a crisis so fundamental that the medium itself was at risk of running out of breath.

Painting's greatest historic encumbrance perhaps resides in its close ties to subject theory, as first forged in the nineteenth century. In the aesthetic theories of modernism—in Romanticism, phenomenology, and critical theory—painting was the singularly privileged medium of self-reassurance. The multilayered implications of the painterly gesture had been found to provide an ideal metaphoric vehicle for analyzing the complex relationship between mind and body, eye and hand.[2] The canvas, having been touched by the brushstroke, had become the site at which the individual met society and hence a place of mediation between subjective and collective experience—even while hosting a lament over its own loss. Painting has thus remained linked to the fate of the subject, which is why any talk of the crisis of painting since the late nineteenth century has provoked a parallel discussion of a crisis of the subject. The diagnosticians of such crises have tended to appeal to the "authentic" subject who faces a fragmenting, alienating modern world. Thus in the 1950s many art critics celebrated the gestural painting of their decade as the last remaining bastion of artistic license from which the integrity of individual expression might be defended. It was this hope of securing a purely aesthetic, autonomous realm for contemplative self-reassurance that was thrown open to negotiation early in the following decade.

Against the backdrop of a booming economy and an exploding art market, however, the rhetoric of alienation and authenticity began to sound hollow and untrustworthy. It was this very commercialization of artistic expression that Manzoni targeted in the certification and marketing of his own breath, his own in(re)spiration. Under pressure from the burgeoning society of the spectacle and the perceived threat posed by the flood of media images, painting theory narrowed to a theory of media specificity. Whether and how painting could be isolated from the surfeit of information to retain its autonomy were declared the crucial questions on which the medium's fate would henceforth turn. From Manet and Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, and Cubism to Abstract Expressionism, critics and historians presented painting's development as a teleological process of purging extraneous influences, and it was vital that this trajectory was not interrupted, if at all possible. Yve-Alain Bois describes this media-specific narrowing as "a deliberate attempt to free art from its contamination by the forms of exchange produced by capitalism."[3] The advanced art criticism of the 1960s presented painting with a choice between upholding the integrity of the image and provoking its dissolution into performance art, Minimalist sculpture, and installation environments.

The consolidation of art criticism into the two opposing camps that have endured to this day nevertheless threatens to distort our view of all the rich and varied painting that has not followed one of these paths. For even an expressive mark à la Manzoni remains insolubly linked to the question of the subject's self-reassurance, irrespective of whether it is authentically communicated

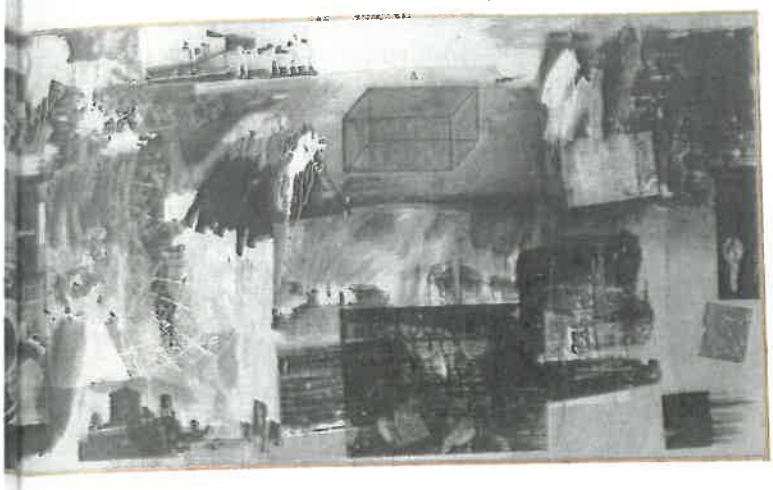
Robert Rauschenberg, *Barge*, 1962–63. Oil and silkscreen on canvas, 6 feet 8¼ inches x 32 feet 2 inches (203.9 x 980.4 cm). Guggenheim Bilbao Museos and Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, with additional funds contributed by Thomas H. Lee and Ann Tenenbaum; the International Director's Council and Executive Committee members: Eli Broad, Elaine Terner Cooper, Ronnie Heyman, J. Tomilson Hill, Dakis Joannou, Barbara Lane, Robert Mnuchin, Peter Norton, Thomas Walther, and Ginny Williams; Ulla Dreyfus-Best, Norma and Joseph Saul Philanthropic Fund, Elizabeth Rea, Eli Broad, Dakis Joannou, Peter Norton, Peter Lawson-Johnston, Michael Wettach, Peter Littman, Tiqui Atencio, Bruce and Janet Karatz, Giulia Ghirardi Paglial, 1997

and experienced as a specific historical fact or has turned out to be a hopeless illusion. Despite—or perhaps by virtue of—being contaminated by the continuous flow of the information society, the many forms of expressive mark making remained ciphers of this quest for self-reassurance, no matter how fragmented and contextualized subject and subjectivity are conceived. And these emblems are at their most conspicuous whenever there is a revolution in the technological—that is to say, media—environment, as following the advent of television and as following now the spread of social media. The relevance and vitality of painting since the 1960s therefore rests specifically on its ability to be open to the other—to what is alien to it—which is also what brought about these upheavals: painting has proved ready to enter into coalitions and alliances with other artistic media and formats that reach far beyond any merely material definition as "oil on canvas." Painting, moreover, has also sought friction with the societal contexts of technological innovation. The complexity of modern painting and the drama underlying it, in other words, result not from painting's purge of external disturbances but instead from its eager embrace of critique as stimulus.

Expression in a World of Spectacle

Robert Rauschenberg's Silkscreen Paintings, the first of which was produced in 1962, stage a programmatic confrontation between traditional, expressive painting and the surge of media imagery. Littered with images gleaned from the popular press, these "action collages" register the scintillating simultaneity of media events. *Barge,* for example, an over thirty-foot-wide painting produced in 1962–63 as part of a painting performance for the CBS television network, shows images from a wide range of categories including sports, technology, nature, art, and architecture. Owing to the massive format of the canvas, the work cannot possibly be taken in a single, summary gaze.[4] Nor is there any "totality" in terms of its composition; there is no single standpoint from which the disparate motifs might coalesce into a coherent whole. Rauschenberg instead appeals to the flexibility of the eye and to the body's physical mobility, which enables countless changes of perspective. The work itself thus undercuts any attempt to contemplate its singularity. A silkscreen print after Diego Velásquez's *Rokeby Venus* (1647–51) positioned more or less in the middle of *Barge* plays on this effect. The goddess of love admiring herself in a mirror is literally beset from all sides—by a military vehicle, a rocket, a steel frame, satellites, and not least a phallic freeway ramp. As ciphers of an increasingly technologized world, these images impinge not just on Venus pondering her own beauty but also on viewers looking in the mirror. Rauschenberg insists that it is no longer tenable to define the aesthetic view as some dreamy, timeless state; instead the work must assert itself within the riotous spectacle around it.[5]

Strewn across the canvas with calculated spontaneity, Rauschenberg's painterly gestures—the crisscrossing,

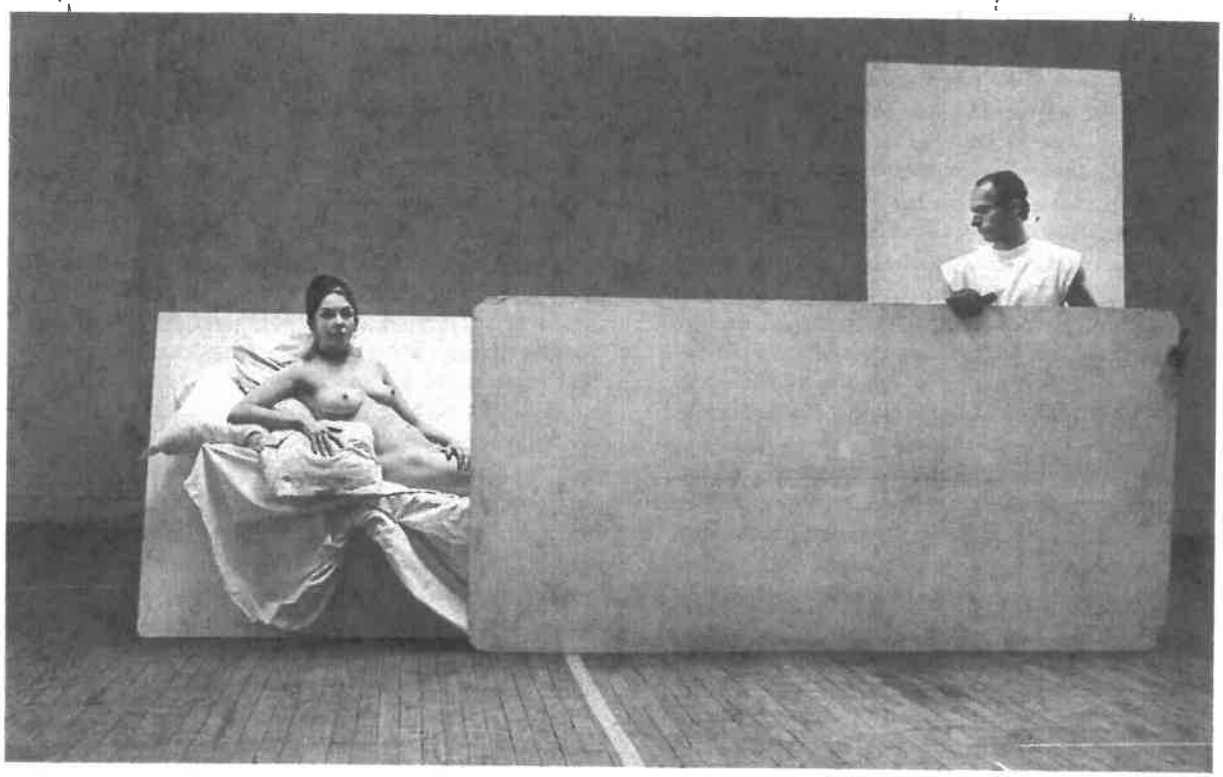


hatching, dripping veins of paint, imprints, smears, and deletions—play a crucial part in the pictorial event. Many have claimed that Rauschenberg was subjecting those same painterly elements to a photographic regime.[6] In fact, the exact opposite is true: as a method of superficially applying paint, silkscreen actually prevents the photographs from looking like technologically fabricated images floating on an interchangeable media substrate and, instead, binds them to the haptic realm of painting. Rauschenberg, moreover, either saturates the images with gloomy hues or waters them down to such an extent that they take on an immaterial, almost ethereal appearance. And that is not all: for his expressive markings are also implicated in a tricky interaction with the photographs to the extent that they illustrate, annotate, and parody their functions, or, alternatively, take on their own, independent compositional logic.[7] A sea of bold black hatch marks and a waterfall of white streaks surround duplicated images of swimmers, stacked one on top of the other in the middle of the work. Other elements are exposed as singular events, as individual assertions of materiality, which as abstract signs run parallel to the photographs. Rauschenberg thus presents completely different models of expression and demonstrates how they become interactively cross-referential in our perception. Following Leo Steinberg, *Barge* could be interpreted as an attempt to visualize an "inner monologue": as an allegory of contemporary consciousness navigating its way through the incoming tide of data and media images.[8] This is indeed the purpose underlying the metaphor of the freestyle swimmer, since directly below him, on the edge of the canvas, the artist appended his signature in the form of a print of his own hand.

Rauschenberg's project of integrating and appropriating both the techniques and the motifs of contemporary image production is paradigmatic of the many approaches to the increasing appearance of everyday life in painting from the early 1960s onward. This transition period—the timespan between Abstract Expressionism and Pop art, for which canonical art history has yet to find an apposite label—was one in which modernism's material and ideological premises were subjected to radical questioning. Painting itself was literally broken down into its constituent elements: the ground, frame, and painting process were studied; the work took on the status of concept; and the artist-subject was deconstructed and parodied (as in the case of Manzoni's *Fiato d'artista* discussed above). This was also the period when expressionist "mark making" was analyzed for its semiotic and narrative functions: Cy Twombly sexualized the practice in works that teemed with male and female genitalia reminiscent of those of restroom graffiti (p. 105), Claes Oldenburg filled his "store" with painted commercial products and comestibles that fetishized the expressionist vocabulary of forms, Yves Klein translated the painterly act into a performance spectacle entailing the use of nude female bodies as brushes (p. 38), and Niki de Saint Phalle made painting a symbol and target of paternalistic repression, when she took a rifle and shot at a work behind which she had hidden bags of paint that "bled" out of the work and onto a bread slicer positioned immediately below (p. 32). The transition period, in other words, was the starting point for several strands of painting's development for decades to come.[9]

What was seen as the inevitable dissolution of painting as a medium led art critics into what were probably their most intense disputes of the past few decades. The more performance art, Pop art, and Minimal art called generic boundaries into question, the more vehemently the representatives of modernism—most notably Clement Greenberg and Michael Fried—propagated the autonomy of the genres. Meanwhile, far removed from the New York art scene, the medium's unraveling had even become a concern of Theodor Adorno. Compared with the polemical tenor of American art criticism as typified, for example, by Fried's controversial article "Art and Objecthood" (1967), Adorno's "Art and the Arts" (also dated 1967) was almost conciliatory, yet his essay remained largely disregarded.

For Adorno, painting's collapse was by no means unprecedented; on the contrary, he argued that the phenomenon of a medium's dissolution could be found throughout art history—from the entanglement of sculpture and architecture in the Baroque period to the Romantics' attempts at synthesis, which Jugendstil later



Robert Morris, *Site*, performance with Carolee Schneemann, 1964. Photo by Hans Namuth

adopted. The historical forces driving this process invariably followed an inner drive, as if it were the very specificity of a medium that triggered the unconscious desire to transcend it. Adorno's use of the term *promiscuity* points to just such a phenomenon.[10] Adorno might be paraphrased by suggesting that at the heart of the genres is a delight in commingling with, or trespassing into, another's terrain. Crucially, the promiscuity described by Adorno is not confined to the intermediality of the arts but rather extends into their relationship to an extra-artistic reality. Sign production, says Adorno, is always infused with a *Zusatz von Außerkünstlerischem*, or a shot of the extra-artistic, and if this friction with otherness is abandoned, art lapses into empty formalism: "Art needs something heterogeneous to itself to become art," he wrote. "In the absence of that, the process that every work of art is lacks a target and so just freewheels."[11]

Protest and Expression

The calls, in the 1960s, for an exit from the picture so as to broaden the definition of painting were in many cases motivated by a drive to make art more political. Yet rarely did the translation of art into concrete action result in the abandonment of painting in favor of more aggressive forms of realpolitik. Not only did painting remain the starting point of many spatial works and performances, but it moreover became the semantic matrix on which the said works were constitutionally premised, as evidenced by Robert Morris's 1964 performance *Site*, in which the artist involved a rectangular wooden board, painted entirely in white, in a finely nuanced game with his own body. By standing in front of the upright painting, disappearing behind it, and interacting with it in ever-new image-body constellations, Morris literally concretized painting's central topoi. And as if that were not explicit enough, Carolee Schneemann then appeared onstage in a pose instantly recognizable as alluding to Edouard Manet's *Olympia* (1863), the work that, as even Clement Greenberg would admit, marks the beginning of modern painting. At issue here, in other words, is neither the transcendence nor the dissolution of painting but the potential for an alternative reading of "high modernism"—an even more radical, phenomenological understanding of painting that also points to a return to its canonized origins.[12] The target of most of the rhetorical attacks on

painting was an excessively narrow formalism; this was the "enemy" against which other aspects of the history of painting had to be brought into position. And what this testing of the possibilities and limits of painting revealed was that the pendulum swings between the integrity of an artwork and the transgression of the modernist boundaries of a work, which Adorno described, can no longer be made to fit a view of history that pits the avant-garde against the conservative and the contemplative against the actively engaged.

The evolution of Jörg Immendorff's work from the 1960s to the early 1970s illustrates this well: *Hört auf zu malen* (*Stop Painting*, p. 45)—an exhortation smeared on a canvas in 1966—has the categorical ring of a demonstrator's demand. But Immendorff makes not just words but signs and images, too: painted on the canvas is a bed and, behind it, a rack with a hat reminiscent of that worn by Joseph Beuys, the young artist's celebrated professor, perched on it. With two especially gestural diagonal lines, Immendorff literally crossed out the object and, in so doing, firmly came down on the side of *Malerei gegen Malerei* (painting against painting)—that is, in favor of politicizing painting and taking on its conflict.[13] "In this work I wanted to express my unease at a painting that has no aspirations beyond itself and does not take a stand on a single problem. . . . Anyone would think that I wanted to abolish painting altogether. Even without commentary, this painting takes a stand, the stand of uncertainty."[14] This deliberately ambivalent position is distilled in the sign of deletion: the "X" symbolizes the limitless interchangeability of extremes and painting's constant alternation between devaluation and potentiality, self-destruction and self-assertion. Invested with such a wealth of connotations, this "X" has since become a recurrent figure of painting—or, rather, of the debate over the status of painting—exploited by artists from Daniel Buren to Wade Guyton.

In the early 1970s, Immendorff turned to a kind of agitprop painting that systematically explored its relation to its social, institutional, and political context. *Wo stehst du mit deiner Kunst, Kollege?* (*Where do you stand with your art, colleague?*, 1973; pp. 46–47) depicts a reclusive painter sitting quietly at his easel as a political activist barges in. The door of the studio has been flung wide-open, affording us a view of striking workers and a factory with smoking chimney stacks. The pointed finger is an entreaty to the painter—and by extension the viewer—to leave the comfort zone of private contemplation and join the protesters. At first glance, the painting seems to posit a straightforward choice between painting, as an activity far removed from "real life," and political engagement. That the fault line of this conflict runs right through the painting, however, alerts us to Immendorff's point: what he is really calling for is a painting that derives its integrity and significance from its origins in the politics of everyday life. The painter in this work, though closely watching the most pressing political events of the day, does not join the protesters; rather, he continues to paint.[15]

The appeal of the title—*Where do you stand with your art, colleague?*—directly refers to the banner the marchers in the background display. Such an appropriation of political slogans can be found in many performances and activist works of the 1960s and 1970s. If one were to construct a genealogy of protest painting, it would start with the Situationist books and posters of the late 1950s, continue in performances such as Günter Brus's "self-painting" *Wiener Spaziergang* (*Vienna Walk*, 1965; p. 42), Adrian Piper's *Catalysis III* (1970, p. 43), and Daniel Buren's *Hommes sandwichs* (*Sandwich Men*, 1968; p. 40) demonstrations, and carry on in Glenn Ligon's referencing of an image of a protest march by African-American workers in *Untitled (I Am a Man)* (1988, p. 50), the placards and banners of AIDS activists and the Occupy movement, and Jacqueline Humphries abstract paintings as protest signs (p. 51). As different as the political impulses and aesthetic strategies that generated these works might be, they are all expressionist outcries against prevailing circumstances.[16]

The direct link between expressionism and protest was also a point of departure for feminist painting, which began to consolidate into a movement in the late 1960s. Abstract Expressionist works of Helen Frankenthaler, Saint Phalle, and Oldenburg had already thematized the male-defined sexualization of "mark making." Susan Sontag's "Notes on Camp" and Lucy Lippard's "Eccentric Abstraction" also count among the important precursors of this development.[17] The impersonal aesthetic of Minimal art, however, at first overshadowed these efforts. Underlying the emphatically literal materiality—"what you see is what you see"—was a profoundly masculine rhetoric of sharp edges and hard surfaces, of "power" and "presence."[18] This is what led Joan Snyder, Louise Fishman, and Mary Heilmann in the early 1970s to confront Minimal art's language of forms with a gendered semiotization of the expressive brushstroke. As Theresa de Lauretis explained when discussing feminist film, what the artists wanted from that revaluation was to be taken seriously as the "subject of discourse, which also means to be listened to, to be granted authorship over the story."[19]

Fishman's Angry Paintings (pp. 48–49) are paradigmatic of the feminist appropriation of mark making. Having already produced Minimalist early works, Fishman turned to political activism in the late 1960s. Her Angry Paintings of 1973, however, mark an artistic departure. The thirty-two paintings bearing women's names—including *Angry Louise*, *Angry Jill*, *Angry Marilyn*, *Angry Joan*, *Angry Gertrude*, *Angry Hillary*—together form a kind of protest march of like-minded friends, family members, and such cultural points of reference as Gertrude Stein and Marilyn Monroe. Unfurled before us in a dazzling array of colors is a full range of affective references to be derived

from writing, color, and form. And what shines through the vigorous hatching and strident grid patterns—in addition to outrage—is a sense of solidarity. In painting after painting, Fishman sought to inscribe herself in a language of expressiveness, to appropriate it, and to communicate different moods and temperaments, her ultimate aim being to follow through a narrative that is at once personal and cultural, harmonious and cacophonous. "At the height of the Pop and Minimal movements," wrote Snyder in retrospect, "we were making other art—art that was personal, autobiographical, expressionistic, narrative, and political. . . . They called it neo-expressionist. Except it wasn't neo to us."[20]

Painting as a Discursive Arena

The expressionistically inspired broadening and politicizing of painting in the 1960s and 1970s was by and large ignored by the most advanced art criticism; that is, it was interpreted as an exit from painting and as a development beyond painting's principles, and not even the feminist revaluation of the expressionist tradition was able to puncture this way of seeing. For all the hostility between Minimal art and modernism, which from 1965 onward was to transform painting discourse with lasting effect, the two camps were at least united in their condemnation of the expressionist legacy.[21] The new wave of Neo-Expressionist painting that took the art world by storm in the early 1980s was thus bound to seem like a grotesque reversal of the whole developmental logic of the most recent history of painting. Historical styles were crossed, themes and motifs that art critics had regarded as passé rediscovered, and motifs from pop culture integrated. And this provocative "revaluation of all values" (per Nietzsche) that reversed the established categories of advanced painting was celebrated as a postmodernist triumph. The question of the rules according to which certain styles might be declared good or bad, progressive or reactionary, critical or affirmative, was posed with polemical acuity and caustic irony. Jean-Francois Lyotard demanded a new "age of experimentation," an "age of satire" in which the modernist stock of forms would be rethought and implicated in a carnivalesque game.[22]

The real scandal of Neo-Expressionism thus lay less in its restoration of modernist categories such as authorship and the autonomy of the work than in its celebration of their utter, irredeemable corruption. In the late 1970s, there was talk of the end of the avant-garde: the postmodernist search for "intensities" without any utopian dimension and the loss of art's revolutionary perspective. The established models of criticality suddenly seemed formulaic and were no longer a match for the paradoxes of postmodernist experience. "Shock, scandal, estrangement," wrote Hal Foster, "these are no longer tactics against conventional thought—they *are* conventional thought."[23] The advent of rampant neoliberalism brought with it the threat of capital infiltrating even the last remaining havens of subculture and counterculture. But if opposition and transgression no longer constituted adequate responses, and if protest and spectacle, authenticity and pose, had become inextricably intermingled, then the modernist project of painting as self-reassurance had clearly degenerated into farce—or so the simulation theory that had come to haunt the aesthetic debate of the 1980s argued. Hence Craig Owens's 1983 prediction that Neo-Expressionism would transform subjective expression into a "simulation of passion" with "everything . . . bracketed in quotation marks."[24] Whereas historical Expressionism had still been able to translate its "attack on convention" into images, by the 1980s painting no longer had recourse to such a strategy. Expressive gestures were liable to dissolve into "illusions of spontaneity and immediacy" so that "everything reverses into its opposite; opposites reveal mirrored identities."[25]

With its references to simulation theory, painting's most recent crisis to be diagnosed reached its high-water mark in the 1980s, when authentic painting was deemed a thing of the past—whether that of the 1960s or of early modernism—to be played off against an utterly corrupt present. At its best—in the early works of Albert Oehlen, for example—the expressive painting of the 1980s was able to articulate this ostensible auto-corruption of the medium and the existential loss of orientation to which it had given rise in ruinous painting that consistently negated the very foundations of its own self-reassurance, becoming irredeemably ensnared in the clichés of its own history. The motifs in Oehlen's paintings—the masks and mannequins, the animals wrapped in barbed wire—are all rendered in shades of brown, as if the neoliberal optimism of the 1980s, with all its cynicism and boastful slogans, had become hopelessly mired in the triteness of latter-day West Germany.

Oehlen's *Auch Einer* (*Another One,* 1985; p. 53) shows the head of a stag, its mouth agape as if bellowing, squeezed into a blue suit as the uniform of convention and commerce. Oehlen draws on a motif of regressive animality found in the kitsch adorning the walls of countless living rooms of that era, which seemed to satisfy a petit bourgeois desire for "art." Art has repeatedly tried to tease out what the motif conceals: from Edvard Munch to Francis Bacon, the scream symbolizes the lamenting, protesting, despairing subject. Oehlen takes this emblem a step further by showing how the avant-garde's hopes for liberation and emancipation from convention have also proved to be kitschy aspirations. Significantly, the stag's antlers are broken and the pieces have been arranged to look like a hammer and sickle. Interpreted as a crypto-self-portrait, the work shows Oehlen rejecting all the aesthetic and political options available to him, yet behind the sarcasm is a hint of Oehlen's sense of solidarity with the wretched creature: the humanoid eye gazes at the viewer from the center of the picture, blue paint flowing like a tear.[26]

Oehlen's painting thus becomes an allegory and swan song for the yearning, contradictions, and polemical posturing that informed painting in the 1980s. For by the middle of the decade, the wave of Neo-Expressionist painting was already ebbing, and relentless critique had turned a carnival parade into a funeral procession. The problems raised, however, remained as virulent as ever: how could anyone continue painting once all subjects, all means of expression, were infected with cliché; once all things authentic were contaminated by their surrogates? And how could artists find their place in history once all historically binding categories and front lines were lost? How could one continue, once the death of the author was proclaimed, to think about what the process of becoming a subject might mean? It was questions like these that prepared the ground for the conceptualization of painting in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and it is on these grounds that the origins of the recent development known as network painting can be found.[27] The image concepts derived from this process can be considered part of a discursive arena in which all the labyrinthine conflicts and contradictions of painting history inform a new concept of painting. Different approaches and traditions were viewed in relation to one another, dropped threads picked up again, and imaginary encounters between historical constellations initiated. The many blockades and "No Entry" signs erected by the supposedly advanced art theories of the 1960s could now be explored with analytic acuity. Such a painting concept is not unlike a battlefield in that it, too, provides an arena in which artistic and societal conflicts might be fought in full view of the public. The metaphor of painting as arena calls to mind Harold Rosenberg's existentialist description of the act of painting as the self-assertion of the modern individual in a world of spectacle.[28] Of crucial importance, however, is that the potential for conflict must not be confined to the act of painting alone but extended to painting's broader discursive field.

Martin Kippenberger's 1989/1990 installation *Heavy Burschi* (*Heavy Guy*, pp. 28–29) provides a good example: originally conceived for a solo exhibition at the Kölner Kunstverein, it consists of imagery from Kippenberger's own catalogues and invitations, assembled and painted by the artist's assistant, Merlin Carpenter. The result, a kaleidoscope of Kippenberger's motifs, interests, hang-ups, and humor, included self-portraits, political slogans, slapstick, company logos, pop icons, and portraits of artist friends. Photographs of the finished paintings—in a nod to the monumental photographs of Thomas Struth, Andreas Gursky, and Thomas Ruff, which at the time were laying claim to painting's legacy—were printed at the size of the original paintings and framed. Finally, they were trampled on, and the torn canvases and twisted stretchers were tossed into a wooden dumpster like a heap of garbage. Because Kippenberger had left it to his assistant to design the paintings, *Heavy Burschi* was a kind of curated retrospective, a view from the outside that reconfigured Kippenberger's working methods and expressive palette.[29] In this respect, following his logic, the exhibition of the work could be read as a profound reflection "on painting," whose myths and polemics of the past few decades it reviewed:[30] the proclaimed death of painting and its resurrection in photography, the play of originality and authorship, the integration of nonpainting techniques into painting practices, and the exploration of styles and genealogies from Francis Picabia to the Situationists to appropriation—the list could continue. Yet *Heavy Burschi* is not confined to a detached analysis of painting's categories; this "retrospective" stages—on a vast scale—the autodeconstruction of the self. Thus the dumpster at the heart of the work is another cryptoportrait, a physical corpus filled with the detritus of Kippenberger's art of whose copies (or simulations) are displayed on the wall behind it.

Heavy Burschi grew out of Kippenberger's intensive engagement with a younger generation of artists and marked the beginning of a strategic integration of painting in an expressionistically inspired analysis of the social dynamics of creative processes. This task was then taken up and established by Michael Krebber, Carpenter, Stephan Dillemuth, Cosima von Bonin, Heimo Zobernig, and Stephen Prina, whose painting practices could thus be described as parergonal; that is to say, they are by-products of, commentaries on, and critiques of what Isabelle Graw once called the "institution of painting."[31] Apart from these endeavors, a host of practices sought to conceptualize the discursive arena by establishing new forms of the autonomous tableau, which effectively internalized the potential conflicts of recent painting history: alongside Oehlen's "post-abstract paintings" of 1988, the later works of Christopher Wool, Jutta Koether, Charline von Heyl, Monika Baer, Laura Owens, Amy Sillman, and Nicole Eisenman, among others, spring to mind.[32]

If postmodernism degraded all the great themes and narratives of painting history into cliché, von Heyl has since the 1990s taken these existentially laden clichés as the starting point for her paintings: "Everything about painting actually incorporates all the platitudes you can possibly think about. And you live with those platitudes. Platitudes that you kind of sacrifice your life for, that make you believe nothing else is important anymore."[33] The platitudes in question range from motifs like the sad-faced clown as a symbol of artistic self-reflection to exploding stars scattered across the canvas like confetti. But the creative process is such that these clichés appear not as extraneous, "bolted-on" applications but on the contrary as elements absorbed by painting. Thus von Heyl's sprawling tangles of lines look like tentacles and her jagged points like the mandibles of some voracious creature. The image becomes a corpus that not only

Charline von Heyl, *Alastor*, 2008. Acrylic on linen, 82 x 78 inches (208.3 x 198.1 cm)

embraces cliché but also actively incorporates it. The aggressive visuality of today's codes reverberates in von Heyl's lyrical linear constructs and geometric patterns. Painting after painting, series after series, is subjected to complex processing; each is contrasted, superimposed, undercut, and recombined. Viewers find themselves implicated in a debate, a visual dialogue in which the conditions and contexts of aesthetic verdicts are thrown open to negotiation. To exaggerate only slightly: if cliché is to be overcome, it cannot be sidelined but must be tackled head-on. The aesthetic view, as even Adorno was aware, "does not thrive in Elysian fields beyond the commodity but is, rather, strengthened by way of the experience of the commodity."[34]

Expression in the Network

Over the past fifteen years, the narrative of the end of painting has lost much of its urgency. Whereas many monographs published since the 1960s had examined the development of an oeuvre and the historical context of individual painters, male or female, the putative death of painting instantly eclipsed any discussion of the medium in general. Only with hindsight does it seem possible to reconstruct the complex and contradictory history of painting without reigniting the same old trench warfare between it and Conceptual art, between the work and its larger context.

There are several reasons for this turning point in the recent history of painting. That the dawn of a new century saw an increase in critical self-analysis on the part of the Neo-Conceptual artists who shaped the discourse of the 1990s is surely significant. After all, this same stirring of the waters brought to the surface a range of themes and issues, including forms of melancholy and romantic approaches to Conceptualism and revaluations of formalism, affect, and emotion. Themes with strong historical ties to painting were once again high on the agenda. To cite just one example among many, the exhibition "Formalismus. Moderne Kunst, heute" ("Formalism: Modern Art, Today") of 2004, curated by Yilmaz Dziewior in dialogue with Michael Krebber, explicitly distanced the media specificity that theorists from Greenberg to Bois espoused by developing a new definition of formalism that incorporated and processed the discourse of institutional critique.[35]

This new interest in painting, moreover, coincided with a historicizing—or to be more exact, a revitalizing—of the history of the 1980s. The result was the

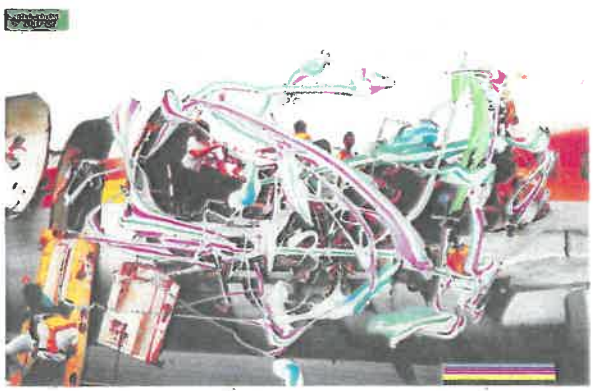
institutionalization and archival study of pop-culture discourses such as punk and New Wave, which after all were closely tied to Neo-Expressionist painting. It also became more and more apparent that there were more overlaps between the painting of the 1980s, appropriation art, and Neo-Conceptualism than was first apparent. Thus the magazine *Texte zur Kunst*, founded in 1990, viewed painting in direct relation to institutional critique. Reflecting on this later, Isabelle Graw, a founding editor of the magazine, wrote, "I would say that this editorial policy amounted to a programmatic assertion on our part with which to break down the opposing camps that had become such a permanent feature of US discourse: in one camp the good guys promoting institutional critique and post-conceptual praxis, in the other the bad guys promoting 'neo-expressionism.'"[36] Discursive networks thus emerged—among them Reena Spaulings Fine Art, a New York gallery founded in 2003—that embedded painting in a network of different discourses, including fashion, activism, queer performance, and cool capitalist critique.

This superimposition of disparate genealogies and techniques is clearly apparent in Kelley Walker's Benetton/*Artforum* light boxes. Created over a period of three years and passing through various stages, the light boxes provide a good illustration of Walker's working method: a "process of recording-by-collecting-through-marking, followed by disseminating, and then waiting for the image to be co-opted in a new way."[37] The starting point was a 1988 press photograph of an airplane in Hawaii, which the pilot had miraculously managed to land despite losing, in midflight, the top half of the fuselage just behind the cockpit. One flight attendant was sucked out of the plane, but the rest of the passengers survived the emergency landing. Benetton's art director, Oliviero Toscani, used a press photo of the stricken aircraft—as he had used images of AIDS sufferers, boat people, and accident victims—in an advertising campaign for Benetton, thus laying himself open to the charge of exploiting feelings of sympathy, shock, and political engagement. Walker, in his turn, appropriates the Benetton poster and thus incorporates the whole complex of mutual dependencies into his work. The multiply scanned, reconfigured image of a tube of Aquafresh toothpaste superimposed onto the original press photo suggests a spontaneous, expressionistic act betokening both moral protest and regressive disrespect—with all the attendant sexual connotations. It is as if the whole drama of the event were discharged in the gestural abstraction of the white, red, and turquoise streaks of toothpaste quite literally being expressed.

Schema: Aquafresh plus Crest with Whitener (2003) was exhibited in Walker's first solo show at Paula Cooper Gallery, where it was displayed in a light box, a form of presentation that well reflected the tension between contemplation and promotional message.[38] A detail of the work was then used for the cover of the April 2005 issue of *Artforum*. And in a final stage, Walker turned that same detail into a new light box, which he included in his second solo show at Paula Cooper in 2006 (pp. 76–77). There, the new untitled piece was hung in exactly the same place on exactly the same wall as the light box displayed there three years earlier. "Here was an artwork," wrote Scott Rothkopf, "simultaneously materializing the journey of an image through the art system, through the broader media universe, and through the broader media universe on which they depend."[39] By incorporating the career boost afforded him by the *Artforum* cover into the work itself as a central aspect of the media circulation of images, Walker was able to present art-historical meaning and commercial success, subjective expression and self-promotion, passion and simulation of passion, as two sides of the same coin. To put it another way, authenticity no longer was walled off in a zone of media specificity but instead could be found only in the uncompromising integrity required to reveal and reflect on the potential of one's own work and the conditions underlying it. The gaze, meanwhile, cuts through all the media and art-historical references and again and again takes us back to the press coverage of an aviation disaster. And no matter how we view the existential distress of the "unhoused" survivors, the commodifying impact of the media's circulation of images inevitably contaminates our gaze—indeed, one is tempted to take Walker's advice and smear toothpaste all over the stunt.

Walker's Benetton/*Artforum* light boxes brings together different media and formats in digital works that, even with all the photoshopping they have undergone, do not detach from the specific discursive conditions of each of those media and formats. The smears of

Kelley Walker, *Schema: Aquafresh plus Crest with Whitener*, 2003. CD-ROM, scanned image, and toothpaste, digital print on archival watercolor paper, 29 x 41 inches (73.7 x 104.1 cm)



scanned toothpaste thus retain their ties to the tradition of action painting. The light box as screen nevertheless causes the boundaries defining certain forms of production to blur. After all, the screen is actually just an empty space where anything can appear and disappear; it is a surface on which painting, photography, film, and other visual media interpenetrate to such an extent that they can no longer be pulled apart. This breaking down of the barriers defining specific media categories is very much a consequence of the simultaneous aging of analog methods of reproduction. Formerly painting's archrivals, analog photography and film could now slip into that very same position that was once reserved for painting: in other words, they became mimetic techniques that retain their direct physical contact with their points of reference. As a result of this shift, painting no longer has to justify its status as a premodernist, outdated technique. Rather, it has become a kind of external screen, a place where the analog can enter into dialogue with the digital and vice versa. Thus the painting of the first decade of this century no longer concerned playing one cultural technique off against another or defending positions that were simply no longer tenable—at least not from the point of view of media history. On the contrary, new life was breathed into painting's existence alongside other media; and rather than assuming the position of guardian of the analog world, painting was employed to actively defy the simplistic polarity on which that same identity was premised: between the mimetic, corporeal, and contemplative analog on the one hand and the immaterial, dissipated, abstract digital on the other. This situation is as evident in Wade Guyton's paintings generated on a digital printer as it is in Laura Owens's scanned newspaper clippings interwoven with the ciphers of gestural painting and in the works of Josh Smith, who avails himself of a whole gamut of reproduction techniques from silkscreen to photocopying, from monoprint to ink-jet and laser.

The painting as a medium has thus become what Leo Steinberg, talking about Rauschenberg, called the "flatbed picture plane . . . in which the painted surface is no longer the analogue of a visual experience of nature but of operational processes."[40] Thus the digitization of everyday life has resulted in a radical revamping of the factors that shaped painting from the 1960s onward, from the concepts of the "transition period" to those of the "discursive arena." And it is precisely because painting seemed so hopelessly out of date—precisely because of its own historicity—that it has been able not only to survive all attempts to modernize it but even to emerge from them stronger than ever, becoming a valuable lodestar in the chaos of images in the most diverse formats, materials, and media that now surround us. For David Joselit, therefore, the painted work lends itself to the visualization of today's networked-image-production mechanisms as does no other medium. For as he has pointed out, paintings these days are less and less likely to owe their relevance to their mimetic representation of reality, just as no one picture these days can be considered in isolation, since it will always be part of a larger referential system. Thus he has seen in recent painting a tendency "to suture spectators to extra-perceptual social networks rather than merely situating them in a phenomenological relationship of individual perception."[41]

Against this backdrop, the bodies of work that Josh Smith began developing in 2001 can be described as nothing less than a wide-ranging attempt to identify expressivity as both mode and motif of painting within the logic of just such a network. In the Name Paintings, for example, the signature of his quite-ordinary name becomes a brand that is at once interchangeable and individual; in his Announcement Paintings, he exposes art's institutional context for the interpretation machine that it is; in his collages, he examines everyday printed matter, ranging from menus to subway tickets to calendars, flyers, and even his own exhibition posters; in his Palette Paintings, he focuses on the incidental movements of the hand when mixing paints; while in the monochrome and abstract series, he tries to broaden the art-historical horizons of his own output. And that is not all, since the paintings and series are all interlinked in several ways. For example, Smith has been known to press together still-wet canvases so that two paintings leave an imprint on each other; elsewhere, he appliques posters and printed matter from the catalogues of previous exhibitions onto canvases; images are duplicated without becoming identical, parrot each other without becoming repetitive, interpenetrate without being subsumed. Thus the symbolic capital of one body of work is transferred to the next. The result is a radical exposure of accrued meaning interacting with subjective expression, a discursively defined style, and the social conditions of art. In this multiplication and serialization of images, the individual painting is no more than a single component of an open structure, which is especially evident when his paintings are displayed in blocks so that they appear not in isolation but rather as unavoidably and inextricably interlinked—as in some of the exhibitions for which Smith himself does the hanging. A presentation of Smith's works, therefore, ensures that his oeuvre is always viewed from different angles. What comes to the fore, moreover, is that painting for Smith is not so much an act of production as a discourse, which is what it has always been. It is through this discourse that the work of art is less and less a fetishized object and more a nucleus of crystallization on which meanings can accrete and mutate.

This revaluation of the work of art can be traced back at least to the transition period of the early 1960s if not beyond. Painting is especially important in this transition, since its production—not least owing to its discursive potential—is charged with subjectivity as is that of no other genre. After all, the painting's act as a cipher and

constitutive factor of subjectivity has not disappeared but in fact remains central, no matter how much production is serialized—as in Smith's case—and no matter how many nonpainting elements are injected into it. The essence of painting is no longer defined by the manual application of paint onto a canvas or some other support; rather it manifests itself in the fact that paintings are no longer understood as self-contained, hermetically sealed objects but are instead hubs of much larger referential networks. In this respect, painting has kept pace with those changes to which the subjectivity of the individual, following cultural necessity and the imperative of the times we live in, has had to submit. The goal of such subjectivization can be scarcely the act of an individual turned in on him- or herself and constantly trying to fend off the outside world but rather the act of individual who, by transcending boundaries, seeks and finds him- or herself in the other. This is something that painting knows all about, and it understands its role not as denouncing but as enabling just such an experience.

Installation view, "Josh Smith," Luhring Augustine, New York, February 10–March 18, 2011

NOTES

1. Piero Manzoni (1960), quoted in *Piero Manzoni* (London: Serpentine Gallery, 1998), 144. Regarding the metaphor of the breath in modernist painting, see Richard Shiff, "Breath of Modernism (Metonymic Drift)," in *In Visible Touch: Modernism and Masculinity*, ed. Terry Smith (Chicago: University of Chicago Press and Power Institute of Fine Arts, 1996).
2. Painting, wrote Maurice Merleau-Ponty, was predestined to embody the "extraordinary overlapping" of "interiority" and the "object-in-general": "It is by lending his body to the world that the artist changes the world into paintings. To understand these transsubstantiations we must go back to the working, actual body—not the body as a chunk of space or a bundle of functions but that body which is an intertwining of vision and movement." Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "Eye and Mind," in *The Merleau-Ponty Aesthetics Reader: Philosophy and Painting*, ed. Michael B. Smith (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1993), 123–24. Richard Shiff analyzes the semiotics of the expressive mark in numerous books and articles, including "Performing an Appearance: On the Surface of Abstract Expressionism," in *Abstract Expressionism: The Critical Developments*, ed. Michael Auping (London: Thames and Hudson, 1987), 94–123.
3. Yve-Alain Bois, "Painting: The Task of Mourning," in *Painting as Model* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990), 235. Bois contends that art "had to be distinguished from the immediate transitivity of information that amounted to a general leveling of every fact of life." Ibid.
4. See Joan Young with Susan Davidson, *Robert Rauschenberg: A Retrospective* (New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1997), 563.
5. In an interview with Gene Swenson, Rauschenberg said, "I realized that the details should not be taken in at one glance, that you should be able to look from place to place without feeling the bigger image. I had to make a surface which invited a constant change of focus and an examination of detail. Listening happens in time. Looking also had to happen in time." Robert Rauschenberg, quoted in "Rauschenberg Paints a Picture," *Artnews* 62, no. 2 (April 1963): 45.
6. Rauschenberg's interweaving of painting and photography could be taken a stage further, hence the use of brushstrokes that are at once both compositional and gestural for such single motifs as the freeway on-ramp, the steel frame, and the "X" of the satellite. Douglas Crimp, however, describes Rauschenberg's use of photography in painting as an attempt to enact painting's destruction: "Although it is only with slight discomfort that Rauschenberg was called a painter throughout the first decade of his career, when he systematically embraced photographic images in the early 1960s it became less and less possible to think of his work as painting." Douglas Crimp, "On the Museum's Ruins" (1980), in *Robert Rauschenberg*, ed. Branden Joseph (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002), 70.
7. Rauschenberg was struck by how the paintings of Öyvind Fahlström responded "to the openly established dramatics of the picture map. They are free to operate, cooperate, incorporate, collide or collapse, always responding locally without a tasteful sense of the compositional four sides of the canvas, which seems to serve only as the sheet of paper needed to record any information"—an observation that seems to apply to his own works, too. Robert Rauschenberg, in *Öyvind Fahlström* (New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1982), 37.
8. In his book *Encounters with Rauschenberg*, Leo Steinberg writes of an inner monologue in which "the outward symbol of the mind [is] a running transformer of the external world, constantly ingesting incoming unprocessed data to be mapped in an overcharged field. . . . The consistent horizontality is called upon to maintain a symbolic continuum of litter, workbench, and data-ingesting mind." Steinberg quotes from an interview with Jasper Johns in the same context: "What, I think, he invented was a pictorial surface that let the world in again." Leo Steinberg, *Encounters with Rauschenberg* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, in association with the Menil Collection, Houston, 2000), 45.
9. See my "A Hidden Reserve: Painting from 1958 to 1965," *Artforum* 47, no. 6 (February 2009): 153–58.
10. "The artistic genres appear to revel in a kind of promiscuity that violates some of the taboos of civilization." Theodor W. Adorno, "Art and the Arts," in *Can One Live after Auschwitz?: A Philosophical Reader*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann, trans. Rodney Livingstone and others (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 371. Elsewhere, Adorno writes: "This erosion of the arts wishes to escape from the ideological bias of art, which reaches down into its constitution as art, as an autarchic sphere of the spirit." Ibid., 384–85.
11. Ibid., 375. The conflict between "art" and "the arts," Adorno concluded, could not be decided by the one asserting hegemonic claims over the other. Ibid., 375–77. Elsewhere he writes: "The constellation of art

and the arts dwells within art itself. Substance finds itself stretched out between two poles: the one unifies and is rational, the other is diffuse and mimetic. Neither pole can be eliminated; art cannot be reduced to one of the two, or even to its dualism." Ibid., 383. At the same time, Adorno insists that the amalgamation of the media is a temporary phenomenon that will not lead to any major breaching of the generic boundaries; were it to do so—in the concept of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, for example—then in Adorno's eyes it would have fallen victim to a purely illusory loss of identity. To put it another way, while the traditional genres may indeed enter into new constellations, which in turn may develop traditions of their own, the complete removal of generic boundaries would negate art's very identity.

12. In an interview in November 2009, Robert Morris emphasized that the importance of painting to his artistic practice had been systematically underplayed. Richard Serra's steel plates in space can also be seen as folded-up paintings and, hence, as a further radicalization of the phenomenological theory of painting. Yve-Alain Bois's recourse to the "picturesque" in Serra's work seems to hint at such a perspective, even when he talks of a spatialized pictorialism. See Yve-Alain Bois, "A Picturesque Stroll around *Clara-Clara*," *October*, no. 29 (Summer 1984): 32–62.

13. See Isabelle Graw, "Malerei gegen Malerei? Vom Anti-Essenzialismus zum Subjekt-Bild," in *The Happy Fainting of Painting*, ed. Hans-Jürgen Hafner and Gunter Reski (Cologne: Walther König, 2014), 32–38.

14. Jörg Immendorff, quoted in *Immendorff's Handbuch der Akademie für Adler* (Frankfurt am Main: Portikus, 1990), 33.

15. Immendorff appositely describes this tension as "healthy schizophrenia" and is convinced "that art cannot be separated from politics, from everything going on around it. It is not just an aesthetic mission, but a kind of healthy schizophrenia: On the one hand you are upset and on the other you feel this urge to express yourself in whichever medium suits you best. In small, in large, in private, in public: the political as antiauthoritarian behavior." Jörg Huber, "Situation—Position. Ein Gespräch mit Jörg Immendorff über seine politische Malerei," in *Immendorff* (Zurich: Kunsthaus Zürich, 1984), 40.

16. The tradition of protest painting makes for an interesting comparison with painting's destructive strategies. See *Target Practice: Painting under Attack 1949–78*, ed. Michael Darling (Seattle: Seattle Art Museum, 2009). On the political understanding of German Expressionism, see Seth Taylor's outstanding analysis in *Left-Wing Nietzscheans: The Politics of German Expressionism 1910–1920* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1990).

17. See Susan Sontag, "Notes on Camp," in *Against Interpretation and Other Essays* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1966), and Lucy Lippard, "Eccentric Abstraction," *Art International* 10, no. 9 (November 1966): 28, 34–40. On the complex painterly implications of Post-Minimalist sculpture and performance art, see Jane Blocker, *What the Body Cost: Desire, History, and Performance* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004).

18. See Anna Chave, "Minimalism and the Rhetoric of Power," *Arts* 64, no. 5 (January 1990): 44–63. For an account of the multifaceted painting discourse of this period, see also *High Times, Hard Times: New York Painting 1967–1975*, ed. Katy Siegel and David Reed (New York: Independent Curators International, 2006).

19. Teresa de Lauretis, "Strategies of Coherence: Narrative Cinema, Feminist Poetics, and Yvonne Rainer," in *Technologies of Gender: Essays on Theory, Film and Fiction* (Bloomington, IL: Indiana University Press, 1987), 113.

20. Joan Snyder, quoted in Hayden Herrera, "Joan Snyder: Speaking with Paint," in *Joan Snyder* (New York: Abrams, in association with the Jewish Museum, New York, 2005), 38. In her essay on feminist painting in *WACK!: Art and the Feminist Revolution*, Helen Molesworth writes, "So too the struggle to interpret these works (what do they 'mean'?) is part and parcel of a simultaneous inhabiting and disavowal of the modes or languages of painting under patriarchy and then, more to the point, of patriarchal painting under the siege of feminism." Helen Molesworth, "Painting with Ambivalence," in *WACK!: Art and the Feminist Revolution* (Los Angeles: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2007), 439.

21. A good example of the damning criticism of expressionism that was published in the mid-1960s is Max Kozloff's "The Dilemma of Expressionism": "Expressionism," he wrote, right at the beginning of his article, "no longer constitutes fashion." After discussing the "critical problems in Expressionism" from van Gogh and Kandinsky to de Kooning and Pollock, he closes his article by declaring the development to have run its course: "Unfortunately, in this post-war American painting, the pressure put upon execution itself, more provocative and yet more ingrown than ever, stained the Expressionist covenant beyond repair. . . . By forcing itself to be taken too seriously, Expressionism committed a rather magnificent suicide." Max Kozloff, "The Dilemma of Expressionism," *Artforum* 3, no. 2 (November 1964): 32–35.

22. Jean-Francois Lyotard, "Philosophy and Painting in the Age of Their Experimentation: Contribution to an Idea of Postmodernity," trans. M. Minich Brewer and D. Brewer, in *The Lyotard Reader*, ed. Andrew Benjamin (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1989), 181–95.

23. Hal Foster, *Recodings: Art, Spectacle, Cultural Politics* (New York: Bay Press, 1985), 26.

24. Craig Owens, "Honor, Power and the Love of Women," in "The Expressionism Question, II," special issue, *Art in America* 71, no. 1 , (January 1983): 9–11.

25. Ibid., 11. Remarkably, critics of painting in the 1980s rated this same simulation of reality ("everything is bracketed in quotation marks") as negative in the case of painting and positive in the case of photography. In his 1986 essay "Signs Taken for Wonders," for example, Hal Foster wrote: "Today the argument that painting can be used deconstructively as a form of camouflage for subversion or other beliefs reads somewhat dubiously." In his discussion of Ross Bleckner and Jack Goldstein, he continues: "For the most part, the new abstractionists do not appropriate modern abstraction so much as they *simulate* it." Hal Foster, "Signs Taken for Wonders," *Art in America* 74, no. 6 (June 1986): 83.

26. The interpretation of this as a crypto-self-portrait is suggested by the title, which is a reference to the novel *Auch Einer. Eine Reisebekanntschaft* by Friedrich Theodor Vischer, published in 1879, whose chief protagonist is called Albert Einhart. In 1987, Oehlen selected the work as part of a stage set for a production of Richard Wagner's opera *Tannhäuser* in Bremen, where he suspended it in the air high above the stage. Having experienced free love on the pagan Venusberg, Tannhäuser finds it impossible to return to the world of bourgeois morality. It is not hard to recognize the allusion to the disappointing failures of the bourgeois revolutions.

27. See David Joselit, "Painting beside Itself," *October*, no. 130 (Fall 2009), 125–34.

28. Harold Rosenberg, "The American Action Painters," *Art News* 51, no. 8 (December 1952): 22. Reprinted in Harold Rosenberg, *The Tradition of the New* (New York: Horizon Press, 1959), 28–39.

29. In retrospect, Merlin Carpenter was critical of his role as Kippenberger's assistant: "I gave Kippenberger all my ideas from art college and just after, my entire first wave of enthusiasm. The myth is that I worked from collages. Partly true—but they were my own collages! Kippenberger was away and I coughed up my previous three years work. And this was legitimised by the idea that there was this thing called the 'Kippenberger assistant' which somehow made it all cool. But looking back on it, one wonders if it wasn't all just exploitation based on charisma." Merlin Carpenter, "Back Seat Driver," in *Gitarren, die nicht Gudrun heißen. Hommage à Martin Kippenberger*, ed. Thomas Groetz (Berlin: Galerie Max Hetzler, 2002), 26–29; online at http://www.merlin-carpenter.com/backs.htm.

30. Martin Kippenberger, quoted in Jochen Becker, "'Ich war ja auf der ersten documenta'. Martin Kippenberger mit 'Heavy Burschi' im Kölnischen Kunstverein," *taz. die tageszeitung*, November 21, 1991. See also Isabelle Graw's review, "Martin Kippenberger. Kunstverein," *Flash Art*, no. 163 (March–April 1992): 120.

31. See Isabelle Graw and André Rottmann, foreword to *Texte zur Kunst*, no. 77 (March 2010): 4. On the concept of the parergon, see Jacques Derrida, *Truth in Painting* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987).

32. The German artist Jutta Koether used the arena metaphor as a programmatic means of making contact with the New York art scene. In the spring of 1992, shortly after moving from Cologne to New York, she staged a show called "The Inside Job" at her West Village studio apartment, in the course of which fellow artists, gallerists, critics, and curators were invited to view and comment on *The One one*, the monumental canvas spread out on the floor that she was then in the process of completing. Koether described these social interactions—as well as the financial problems, personal anxieties, and moods that likewise informed

the work—in both her drawings and a notebook that became an integral part of the project. The influence of Jackson Pollock's drip paintings was not confined to the horizontal working method or to formalist notions, such as the allover composition. Koether's main target was rather the existential potential of subjective self-localization, which in her case—unlike Pollock's—implied the whole complex of social interaction.
33. Charline von Heyl, "Painting Paradox," interview by Claire Barliant and Christopher Turner, *Modern Painters* 21, no 5. (Summer 2009): 46.
34. Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 298.
35. In his foreword to the exhibition catalogue, Yilmaz Dziewior cites Juliane Rebentisch's hypothesis "that the contextual reflexivity of institutionally critical, site-specific art does not, as is often assumed, question the idea of aesthetic autonomy as such, but only an objectivist misunderstanding of the same, as expressed in the notion of art as independent of both viewer and context." Dziewior, foreword to *Formalismus. Moderne Kunst, heute* (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz, in association with the Kunstverein Hamburg, 2004), 4. In an interview published in the same catalogue, Rebentisch is critical of the topicality of the exhibition in light of the growing interest in painting (199–200).
36. Graw, "Malerei gegen Malerei?," 32.
37. Kelley Walker, "Support Failure! Kelley Walker with Bob Nickas," in *Kelley Walker* (Zurich: JRP Ringier, in association with Le Magazin—Centre National d'Art Contemporain, Grenoble, 2007), 73–74.
38. A typical advertising tool since the 1970s, the light box is used in bus stops, train stations, airports, and other public spots. Since the late 1970s, artists, notably Jeff Wall, have also frequently employed it.
39. Scott Rothkopf, in *Kelley Walker*, 120.
40. Leo Steinberg, "Other Criteria," in *Other Criteria: Confrontations with Twentieth-Century Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), 84.
41. Joselit, "Painting beside Itself," 132.