

Heaven | 1999 | 90 x 135 cm

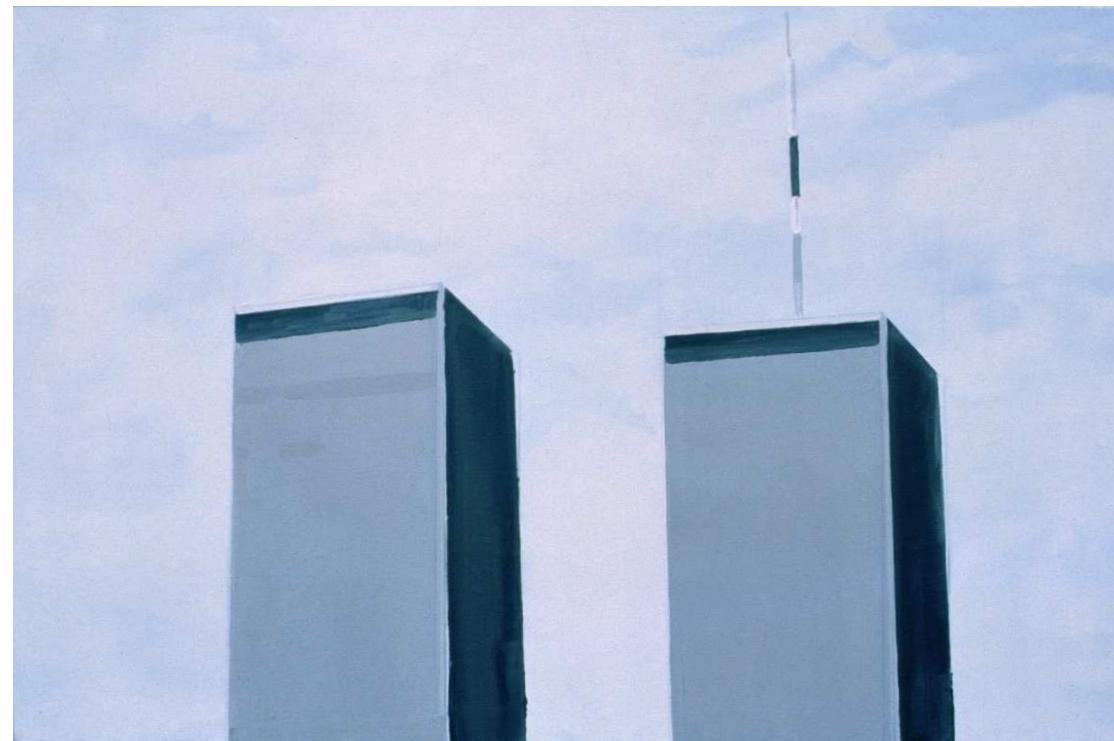


Eighth Avenue | 1999 | 80 x 120 cm

2 3



Ghost Truck | 1999 | 100 x 150 cm



Twin Towers | 1999 | 90 x 135 cm

4 5



Yellow Border | 1999 | 165 x 110 cm



Bad Water | 1999 | 200 x 300 cm

6 7



Gate | 1999 | 90 x 135 cm



Wing | 1999 | 200 x 300 cm

8

9



Blue Sky, Red Church | 2000 | 150 x 100 cm



Red and Blue Border | 2000 | 135 x 90 cm

10

11



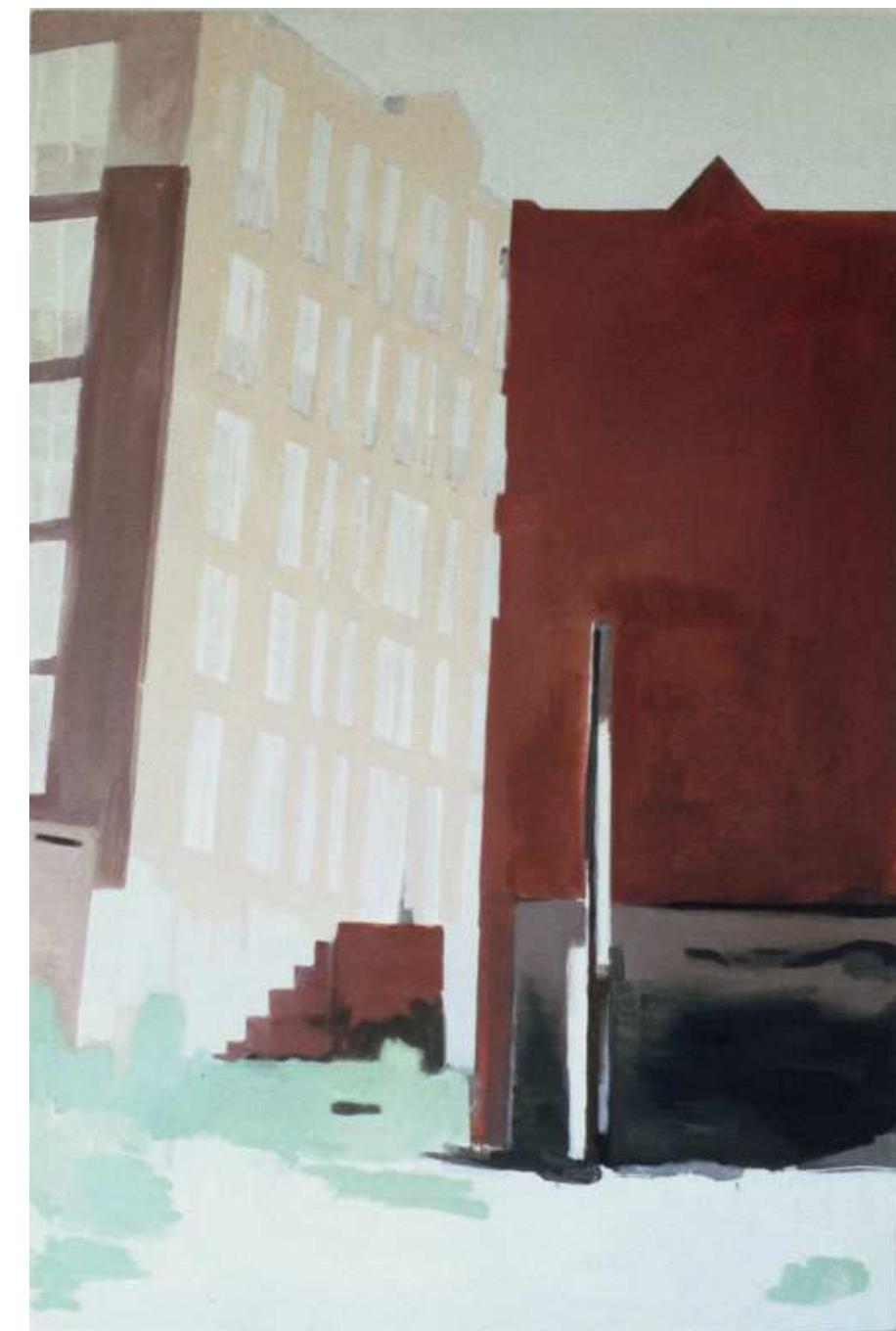
Sidewalk | 2000 | 120 x 90 cm



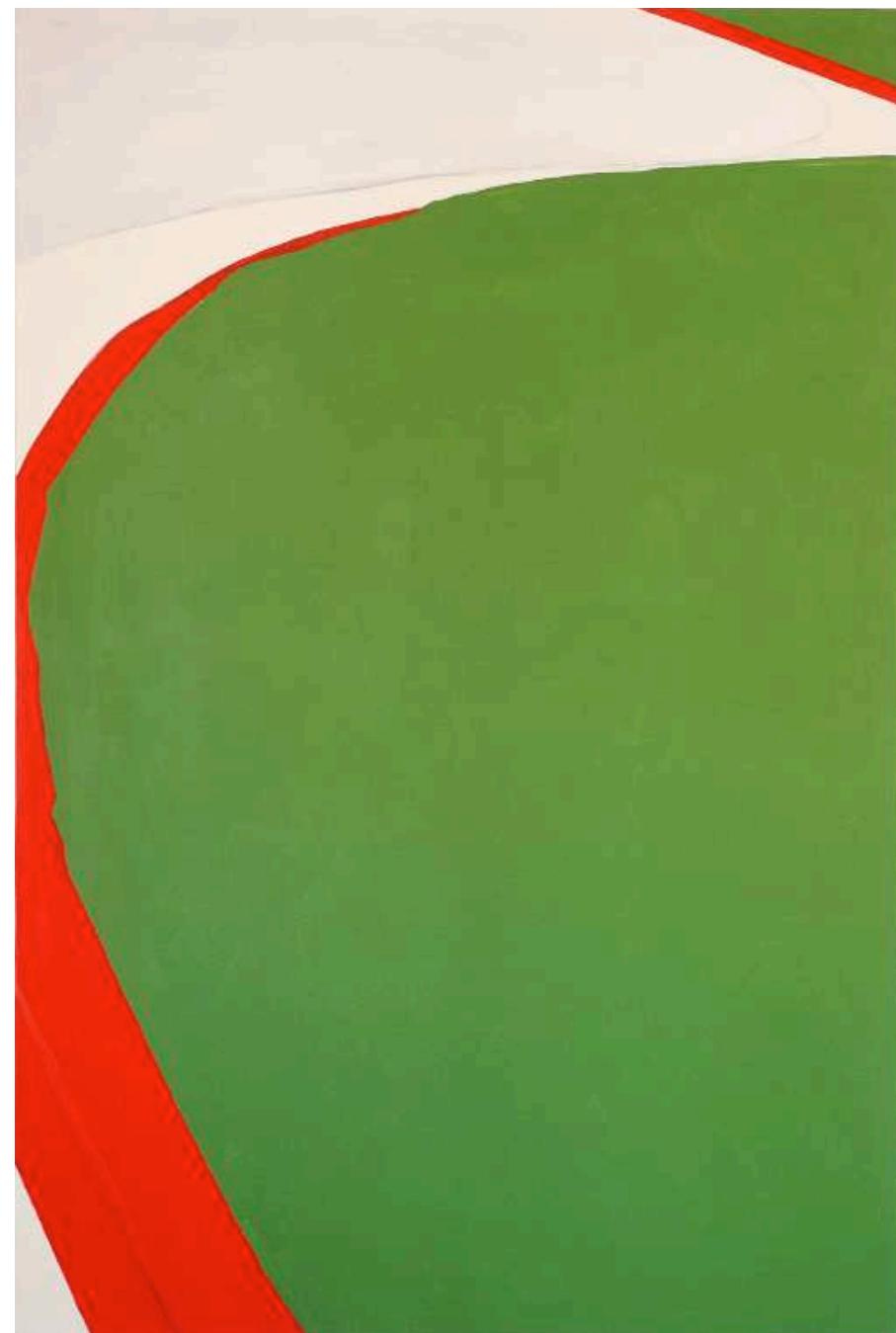
Twin Peaks | 2000 | 66 x 85 cm

12

13



Cohesion | 2000 | 150 x 100 cm



Red Border #2 | 2000 | 180 x 120 cm

14

15



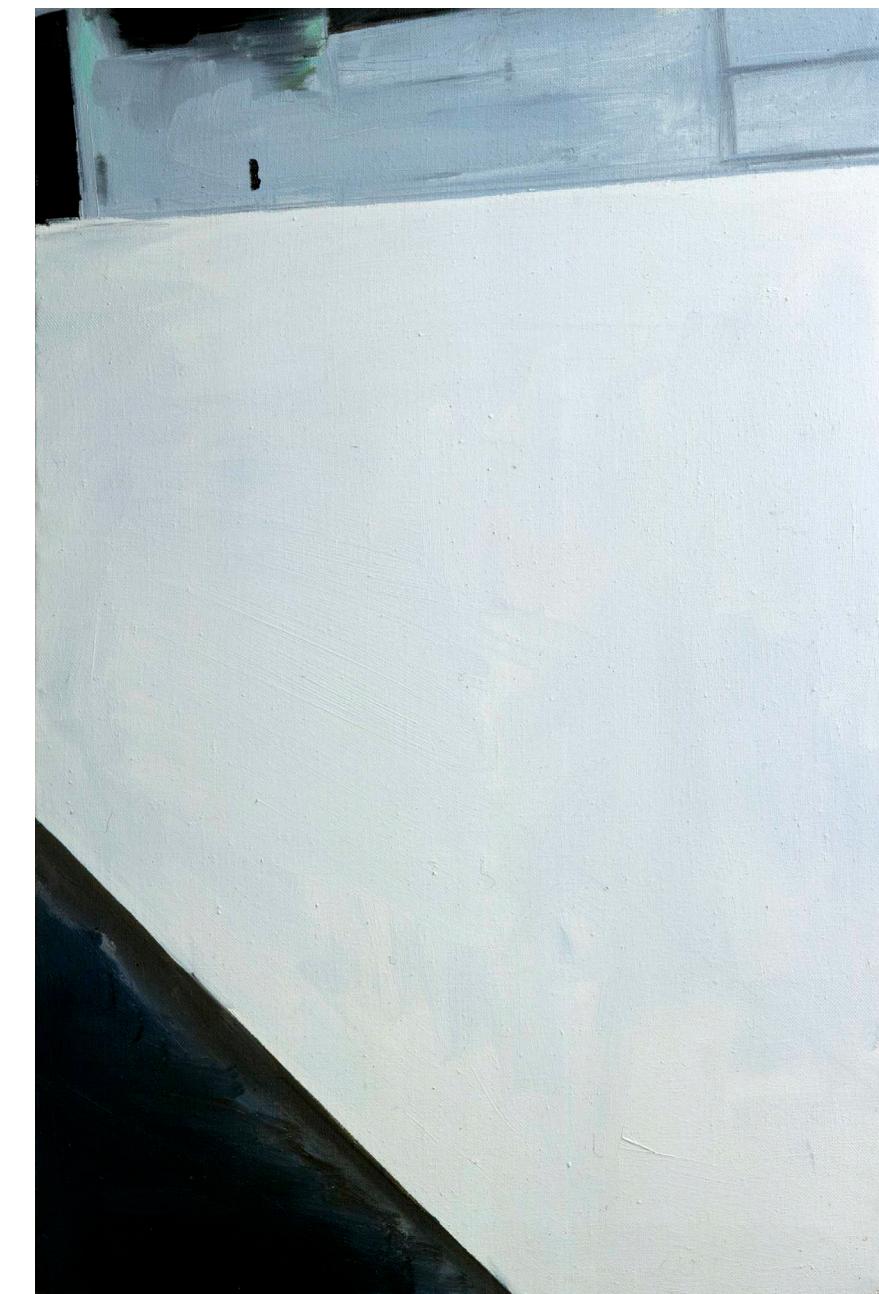
White Tube | 2000 | 180 x 120 cm



Bronx | 2000 | 90 x 135 cm

16

17



Sidewalk | 2001 | 76 x 51 cm



Blue Border | 2001 | 180 x 120 cm



Rue de Rivoli | 2001 | 90 x 135,5 cm

18

19



Flash | 2001 | 70 x 47 cm

20

21



Flashlight | 2001 | 114.3 x 76.2 cm



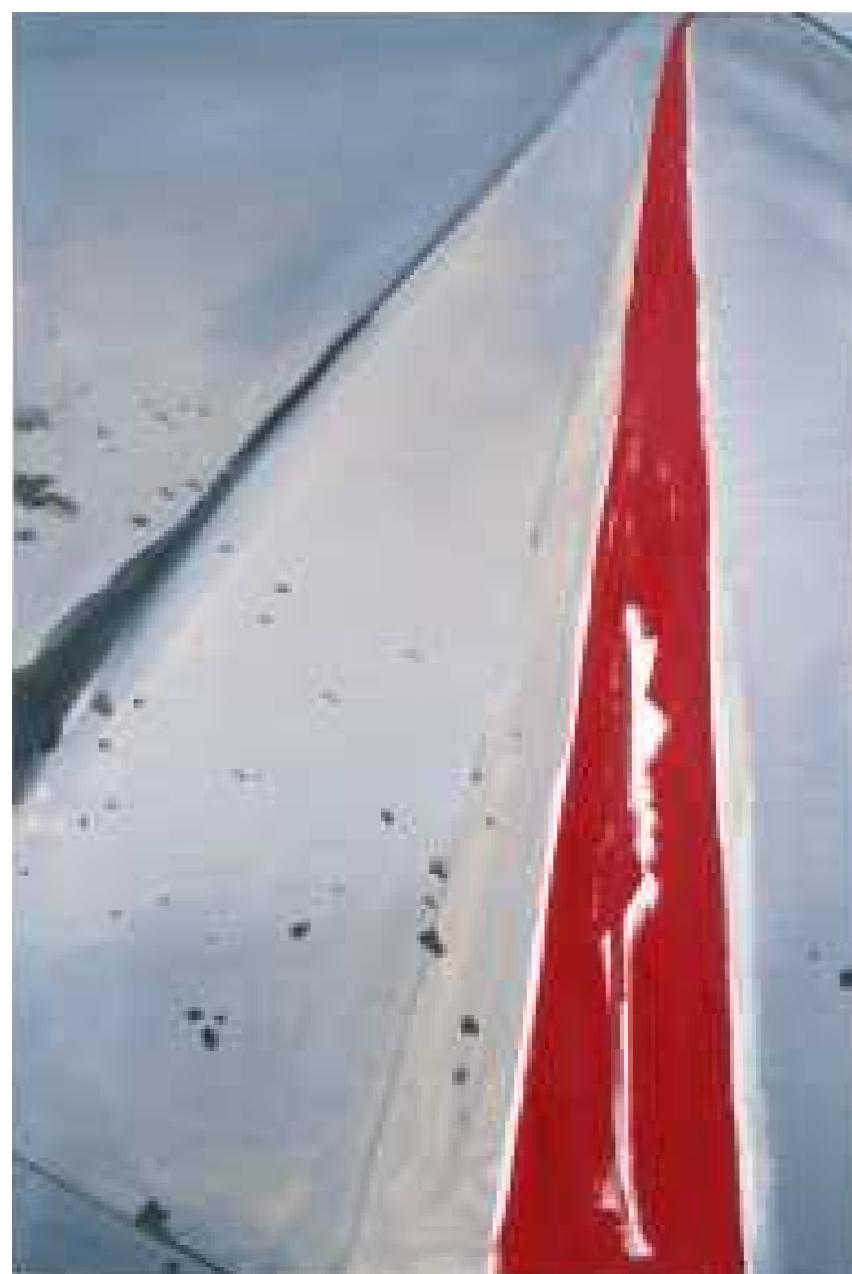
Green and Pink Border | 2001 | 70 x 46 cm

22

23



Orange and Black Border | 2001 | 70 x 46 cm



Red Border #4 | 2001 | 150 x 100 cm

24

25



Sidewalk-Reflection | 2001 | 90 x 60 cm



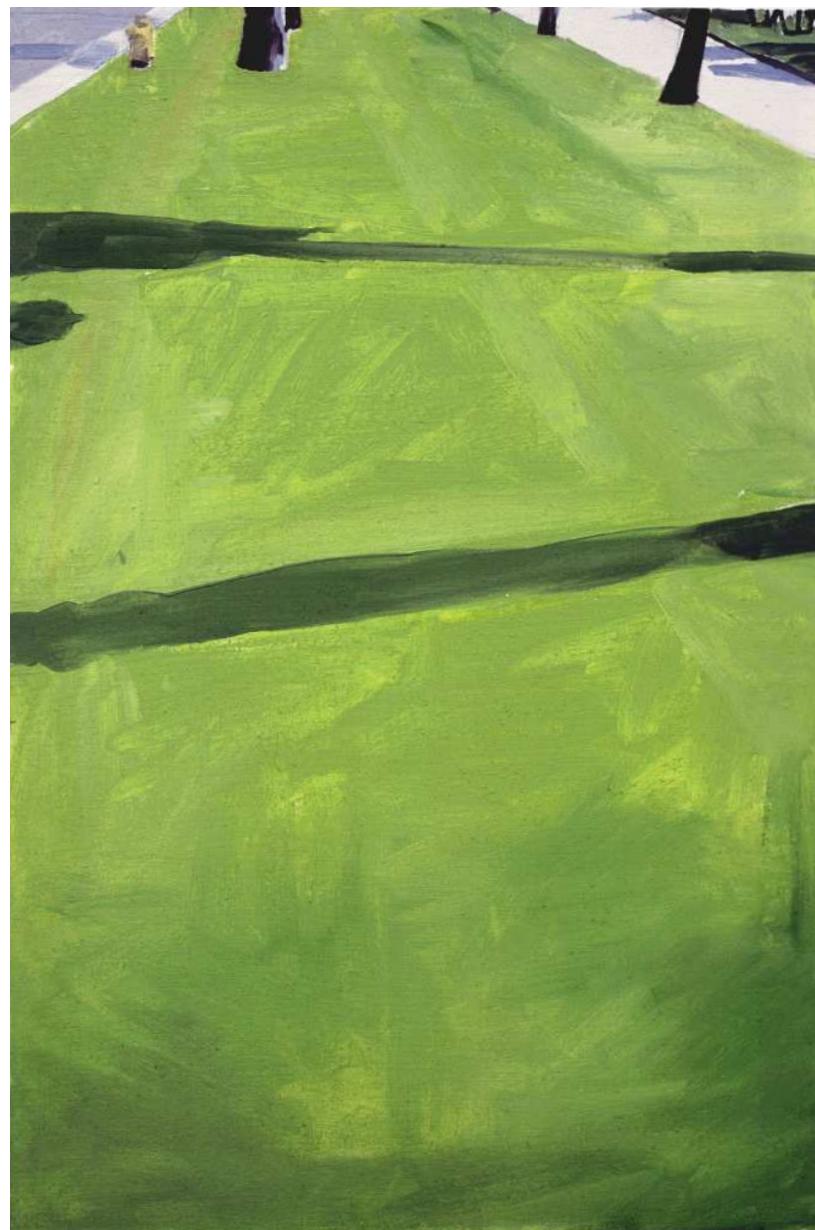
Tent #2 | 2001 | 165 x 110 cm

26

27



Tigers | 2001 | 100 x 150 cm



Two Shadows | 2001 | 75 x 50 cm

28

29



Dead End (Flash) | 2001 | 180 x 120 cm



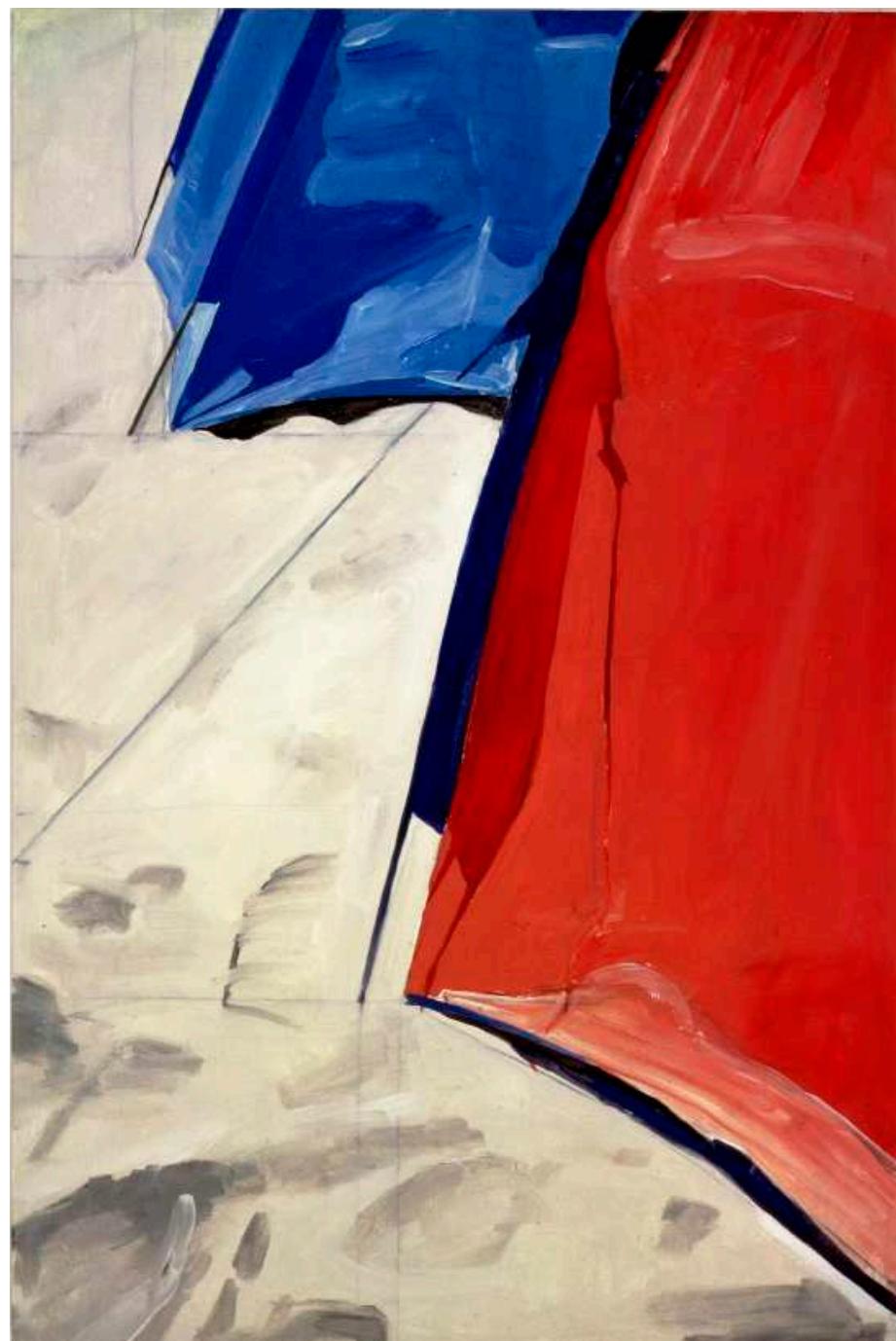
The Farm | 2001 | 90 x 135 cm

30

31



Yellow and Red Border | 2001 | 135 x 90 cm



Le Barcarès | 2001 | 180 x 120 cm

32

33



Andorra | 2002 | 90 x 135 cm



Garage | 2002 | 174 x 170 cm

34

35



Golden Tree | 2002 | 90 x 135 cm



Hollywood | 2002 | 90 x 135 cm

36

37



Joshua Tree | 2002 | 100 x 150 cm



Low Wall | 2002 | 255 x 170 cm

38

39



Railroad | 2002 | 90 x 135 cm



Tractor | 2002 | 90 x 135 cm

40

41



Viaduct | 2002 | 280 x 420 cm



Yellow Non-Stop | 2002 | 180 x 120 cm

42

43



Zion | 2002 | 100 x 150 cm



Gasoline Station | 2002 | 252 x 162 cm

44

45



Red Border and Black | 2002 | 70 x 46 cm



Shadows (Death Valley) | 2002 | 240 x 160 cm

46

47



Blue Border and Grid | 2003 | 190 x 135 cm



Boat | 2003 | 90 x 60 cm

48

True Romance

Screenplay by Quentin Tarantino
Produced by Samuel Hadida, Steve Perry, Bill Unger
Directed by Tony Scott

Typed with two bare fingers by Niki Wurster
from: www.pg.ru/scripts/true_romance.html, accessed January 5, 2010

Cast List

Christian Slater	Clarence Worley
Patricia Arquette	Alabama Whitman
Dennis Hopper	Clifford Worley
Michael Rapaport	Dick Ritchie
Bronson Pinchott	Elliot Blitzer
Christopher Walken	Vincenzo Coccotti



50

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wall

wall

Saul Rubinek
Samuel L. Jackson
Brad Pitt
Val Kilmer
Lee Donowitz
Big Don
Floyd
Elvis

When you are tired of relationships, try a romance.

INT. BAR—NIGHT

A smoky cocktail bar downtown Detroit. CLARENCE WORLEY, a young hipster hepcat, is trying to pick up an older lady named LUCY. She isn't bothered by him, in fact, she's a little charmed. But, you can tell that she isn't going to leave her barstool.

CLARENCE
In "Jailhouse Rock" he's everything rockabilly's about. I mean he is rockabilly: mean, surly, nasty, rude. In that movie he couldn't give a fuck about anything except rockin' and rollin', livin' fast, dyin' young, and leaving a good-looking corpse. I love that scene where after he's made it big he's throwing a big cocktail party, and all these highbrows are there, and he's singing, "Baby You're So Square... Baby, I Don't Care". Now, they got him dressed like a dick. He's wearing these stupid-lookin' pants, this horrible sweater. Elvis ain't no sweater boy. I even think they got him wearin' penny loafers. Despite all that shit, all the highbrows at the party, big house, the stupid clothes, he's still a rude-lookin' motherfucker. I'd watch that hillbilly and I'd want to be him so bad. Elvis looked good. I'm no fag, but Elvis was good-lookin'. He was fuckin' prettier than most women. I always said if I ever had to fuck a guy... I mean had too 'cause my life depended on it... I'd fuck Elvis.



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Lucy takes a drag from her cigarette.

LUCY
I'd fuck Elvis.

CLARENCE
Really?

LUCY
When he was alive, I wouldn't fuck him now.

CLARENCE
I don't blame you.
(they laugh)
So we'd both fuck Elvis. It's nice to meet people with common interests, isn't it?

Lucy laughs.

The unsightliness of the motifs, their bottomless anonymity, the sense of loss in nonetheless attentively observed details, all tell us that this world is recognizable, but not familiar, for it is completely random and insignificant, incomprehensible because it is tired to death of meaning. What a contrast to the images themselves, which burst with ambition and fearlessness, which strike out around them mercilessly and recklessly, self-assuredly demanding their place among other images. This is possible because in every image, the painter marks out his place with razor-sharp precision.

The images are descriptive—a landscape, a building, a construction or a detail thereof. We can easily recognize the subject. Still, no one can escape the irresistible impression that there is also a narrator at work here, someone who generated a conflict and awaits a resolution, pent-up, panting. There is always an implied viewer, an implicit eye stretched across the entire visible motif, like cellophane over food. What is it that the observer is after? What does that gaze want?

The conflict is also there thanks to a remarkable tension between the vehemence and the neutrality in the surface. Here the paint is used to colour in; there it is evocatively applied. Now the brush suddenly describes; then it abstracts again. The painter employs a wide vocabulary of means: now the linear stripe, now the wild sweep; now the great depth, followed by the flat plane; now the positive, then the flip-flop of the negative facing it. Suddenly it is the motif that follows, then it is



the paint and the brush. There is so much variation and pleasure in the use of these means that you cannot avoid the impression that this work—despite the semblance of the contrary—is saturated with happiness. Painting is indeed not an artistic endeavour that by nature inclines to be melancholy: on the contrary. Here abides yet another paradox. Koen van den Broek uses photographs, and photography is—rightly or wrongly—repeatedly described as a melancholy medium that from its very soul is always speaking of distance and leave-taking. The work itself seems to be saying something quite different than the canvas: the work is strict, distant, absent, abandoned (which it has in common with photography). The canvas welcomes us with a cheer. Conceptually, photography—the core problem of photography—is at the foundation of this work, the way perspective was at the root of the work of Piero della Francesca, or the problem of the subjectivized standpoint in that of Caravaggio. Here, we see how the photographic act challenges the creation of an image. While perspective installs a noble epistemology, the camera introduces the epistemology of a consumer democracy. Away with the dream of control and overview; enter arbitrariness and disintegration. —

The journey of the artist—once firmly in the direction of the Mediterranean Sea—is today to the new places of our visual culture. The trip is not motivated by a Prix de Rome and inexhaustible numbers of the memories of by-gone generations

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and their theories about things classical. Today, the artist is flawlessly driven by what is a primarily diffuse knowledge of film, likely to be registered in film stills rather than in well-developed scenes. The rhetoric of these images is as compelling a model as Marcantonio Raimondi's engravings were for Raphael. It is a source of inspiration, yet at the same time a provocation to transformation and variation. Nowhere better than in painting can we see the work of this fundamental shift.

The history of painting is a history of the way it has observed. In the Middle Ages, landscapes and figures led to decorative patterns. Exalting discoveries of ever-new figurations followed the Renaissance. From the late 18th century, portfolios were filled with direct observations of nature in pencil or watercolour, assisted or not by the camera obscura or the camera lucida. Finally, there are photographs, since the middle of the 19th century. Within the context of these techniques for looking, source material was produced, the sketches that needed to be further worked out, in tableaux with an individual signature, a colour palette, a specific imagination, a sensuality, a style. The fact that without these techniques to assist, what we call inspiration would not stand a chance is a troublesome conclusion for all who continue to think that the image is a child of spontaneity (and we all want so badly to believe it). Today, more explicitly than ever before, photographs provide the source material for many painters. Under the surface, together with the photograph, is the sketching:

people take on the photographic system itself. The camera is today's device for looking—the way a system of perspective used to be. And, just as for a few centuries the art of painting presented itself by way of the perspectival dispositif, for a century and a half, painting has been occupied with both employing and resisting the photographic dispositif. It happens just here, in this use and rejection. It is not in the motifs, but in the systems of looking. How does the painter turn photographic observation into an image? The photograph is in fact less than a sketch. It is something that is wholly and completely inadequate: it is not an image, at best only a registration. It is not a material that can be worked—such as a drawing that is homologous to a painting. The photograph must disappear as a photograph in order for an image to exist. Nothing is borrowed from the photograph. The photographic must be neutralized, played over. In this process, the distance is determined between the (photographic) model and the ambition of the image. This transposition makes the difference between what one has seen and what one wants to let others see.

Koen van den Broek travels, far and elaborately. It is no coincidence that borders touch him. He travels to the United States and Japan. In every image, there is a border, even though the title speaks of a car, a tent, a bridge, a train, and a garage. It is always a car, a tent, a bridge on the other side of a border, where you can only take note of things as a traveler, not as an inhabitant. The 'photographic sketches' are made

with the same sense of wonder on the part of the traveler as the sketches that Henri Matisse worked with in Morocco, JMW Turner along the Rhine, Claude Lorrain the Roman campagna. There, where wonderment put other painters into the landscape, van den Broek is behind the camera, looking through a lens, setting himself outside and across from his motif, like an enemy, sharp and without feeling. His wonder is noticeably cool, for in these images, he does not look around him, but looks down. He is not looking for encounters, but avoids them. He does not look for motifs that make the country he is visiting specific and recognizable, but holds on firmly to forms of subject matter that one can indeed find everywhere. These images look more like a refusal to travel. Asocial photography: the opposite of the report in search of the face, the demeanour of the other. Van den Broek thus makes it clear that he is not an illustrator of tourist curiosity. How far removed this is from the declaration of love for the voyage to Rome! —

The painter firmly underscores the photographic origin of his images. He slides the photographic model under the paint and over the work of the brush. In their selection and their framing, many motifs are immediately recognizable as photographic. You only get to see them by way of the device. It is consequently very misleading to refer to van den Broek's work as realistic (and a qualification between parentheses or brackets changes nothing of that misconception). Van den

CLARENCE
Well, enough about the King, how 'bout you?

LUCY
How 'bout me what?

CLARENCE
How 'bout you go to the movies with me tonight?

LUCY
What are we gonna see?

CLARENCE
A Donny Chiba triple feature. "The Streetfighter", "Return of the Streetfighter", and "Sister Streetfighter".

LUCY
Who's Sonny Chiba?



Broek makes use of motifs that are only seen as they are photographed (Garry Winogrand). The way that he shows pavements, shadows, the details of objects, comes from the camera, from an intentional misuse of the camera. With remarkable frequency, he does not frame the subject itself, but frames against the subject. He de-frames the subject. This is a visual operation that is only possible by way of this optical device. It permits a perverse use of the system of perspective that was once intended to make things visible in a clear and orderly way. Here, the camera cuts across that order by winching together the primary motif that stands neatly against a background. The result is an anti-image. We recognize a motif, but see at the same time that the registration itself did not recognize it. This distorted décadrage is continually carried forward in van den Broek's work. Because the painter takes a very literal transcription of the photographic registration as his starting point, in every image, we also see the isomorphic structure (Henri Vanlier) of the exposure working through. We see, namely, how the exposure, with a single, specific lens, was taken from a very specific standpoint. No human eye looks this way. It is how a machine registers. The photographic surface is an even and uncompromising projection plane, obedient to a static geometry. The moving retina, in contrast, puts us in the centre of the world. Van den Broek is never in that world. He stands exclusively across from it, facing a flat surface.

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Take Luc Tuymans, for example, who never lets the photographic origins of his images be seen in this extreme, technical way. He more readily concentrates on the banality of visual language, on the low rhetoric of the photographer, who determines things almost bureaucratically. Van den Broek reflects on the making of his exposures, indeed, without sociologizing on an anonymous visual culture. Just as Matisse shifted the drawing to the foreground of his painting, so van den Broek places 'the photographed' in the foreground of his own canvases. The photograph was neither made nor selected for its subject matter, but because it allowed him to take the logic of the photographic disposition as the starting point for his thinking about images. It is no coincidence that in addition to the emphatically photographic standpoint and framing, there is another crucial looking device in van den Broek's work, and this is the automobile. The different subjects were not sought out from a clear and thought-out pictorial standpoint (as in the case of Edward Hopper), but are recorded as one drives past, cursorily and devoid of engagement. The work breathes the atmosphere of a road movie, where there is fewer discoveries being done and more catastrophes being anticipated.

The painter's underdrawing is left poignantly sensed in the image. Lines and line effects are crucial. Van den Broek thus translates the projected slides into a linear structure. A photograph that is inherently not a linear technique, but a zone technique, is

thus literally transposed through a tracing process. Photography, the ultimate process that knows no 'graph' process, is here forced into a graphic straightjacket. This is a procedure that I do not see in others who use photography, such as Tuymans or Gerhard Richter. On the contrary, they accentuate the 'zone', certainly not the drawing. With van den Broek, it is that drawn character that gives the image something alive, that makes the image resilient and humorous. The underdrawing is a caricature of the exposure, the photograph. The more precisely it takes place, the less mood remains of the photograph. The photograph is pushed aside, drawn away, indeed by following it to the letter, but now with a graphic technique. Each canvas therefore owes a tribute to photography: its instant emasculation. As for the underdrawing, it is worked on. It is worked over (the underdrawing was there first). Strangely enough, the working over is also under the underdrawing. Van den Broek builds up the image in such a way that he achieves both depth and height in the surface of the image (not the volume of the thing portrayed, but volume in the painting itself). He simultaneously fills in sketched-out planes, pigment by pigment, and leaves others blank. The use of white is consequently crucial. Around the white, his image rocks from flat to deep, from abstract to figurative, from positive to negative, from full to hollow. Whereas only one optic rule can be followed and only one idea realized in a single photograph, very even in a single thin surface, van den Broek

makes an image in which every zone, brushstroke, graphic underline or pigment is supported by a precise decision, a strategic choice, a thought of its own, a specific, referential quotation. The photograph consequently seems to be a fundamental accord with which the painter builds further variations. There is a highly tensed yet very relaxed play in the painted surface. One segment is Matisse, another Andy Warhol. A rock looks like Gustave Courbet, the red of a car like Hopper. His images are spun-out dialogues with the earlier presentations he has enunciated. The past does not lie behind him, but on his canvas, in the enormous diversity of colour and painting effects. He does not paint with red, but with Hopper, not in browns, but with Courbet, as though he and the past are battling it out in a card game on the gaming table with a photographic registration. "What would you do here now? Then, what do you do there?"

What makes van den Broek's work so rich and most of all, so full of promise is that it is not marked by a passive subjugation of visual culture, but by a masterful counter-coup, with the condition that he—as a painter—digs deeply into the photographic. Take, for example, the series with cracks or fissures—at once both road and boundary. In a series not unrelated to Claude Monet, he produces variations on that theme. The theme is a statement of what boundary and trajectory are, about waiting at the border and racing forward along a route, about restriction and extreme lack of restrictions, about the definite and

CLARENCE
He is, bar none, the greatest actor working in martial arts movies ever.

LUCY
(not believing this)
You wanna take me to a kung fu movie?

CLARENCE
(holding up three fingers)
Three kung fu movies.

Lucy takes a drag from her cigarette.

LUCY
(laughing)
I don't think so, not my cup of tea.



the wildly indefinite. But the theme is also one of form. The straight line is overgrown with a weed-like web of whimsical fissures in the crust. The geometric section of road, with its road markings, lays under an unstructured, rampant overgrowth, a broken structure of lines without purpose or meaning. This little network lies like an abstraction on top of the figurative network. They are two plastic options presented concurrently in a weird and wondrous way.

The painter who once began with minimalist work, in which pure form prevailed, has slowly absorbed the figurative reference, without wiping out the ideological disposition of that minimalism. It is not the reference that is primordial, but the reference to the relationship to the reference. This relationship is not determined by the exoticism of a faraway world, but by very trusted photographic effects and procedures. As a painter, he gives retort and response to the photographic looking device, just as mannerism is a long commentary on perspective—that other device for looking.

The work still holds more surprises. In addition to the toppling over and the reverberations between the photographic and the painterly, there is a second turnover, from description and determination to the narrative, from still photography to cinematography, from a motif from the world to a personage in the world, from a world of only just things to a world suddenly filled with a virtual presence. This effect is produced by the literal character with which van den Broek takes over

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the photographic parameters, such as framing, and consequently the vantage point of his photographs. Again a comparison with Richter and Tuymans is instructive. They use photographs as registrations of something, while van den Broek uses them as registrations made by someone. The subject is therefore coupled to a view(er), an outlook, and a space 'behind' a face, in which an activity—looking—can be situated. In film, this is known as the subjective, or the point-of-view shot.

Again, van den Broek makes no use of this subjective viewpoint to underscore the value of the subject matter, but to indicate its convertibility. Moreover, the position that the camera gives us is not one of respect, but of its opposite, of examination without respect. The painter has chosen no scenes, but objects, no people, but material arrangements, traces of people and their having passed by, their aleatory, transparent character. Modern ruins—without historic relevance, without enthusiasm, never inviting one to stand still and silent in order to hear the voice of the one or the thing remembered. No, it is not a ruin, but detritus: of a road surface, of the edge of a pavement; a random, coincidental state of the world, accidentally met. The result is a ruin of the making of the image itself.

This 'look' brings with it a number of qualifications. It is a hurried and inattentive glance, sniffing for a subject, for the motif on which one cannot focus. The snooping around is taking place under a cloud of threat: gazing down onto the pavement

and the road gives no overview, hence no control. The unknown—as the unknown, already implicitly a danger—hovers at the edge of the image, lurks in a shadow, skulks at the wall's edge. Attentive study is at once hopelessly blind and impotent. Whatever information might be collected, it is too punctilious and consequently unenlightening. A car window, with a landscape hung against it like wallpaper, the enlargement of a detail of a stoop or footpath, as if that blow-up would unlock a secret, a shadow throwing itself threatening over the shoulder into its field of vision. Everything has an atmosphere of suspense. Alfred Hitchcock and David Lynch are never far away. What is so fascinating is that both have so often shown that the threatening element is not only in the abandoned streets of a metropolis, but can certainly also be generated—and more furiously—in a landscape. Not melancholy and introspective nature—so long the idea of the landscape tradition—but the terror of an overfilled emptiness in which one looks forward in vain for identifiable form.

With this, van den Broek again relates to the great tradition of narrative images in which the relationship of figures to their environment repeatedly includes a moment of truth. Nothing here is clearer than the work of Nicolas Poussin. Van den Broek, however, is a painter of our times. The personages have disappeared from the image and have grouped themselves in front of the canvas, looking at their decor, at the location selected for the drama where they will soon have

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to play out their miserable roles, like an equally lost Cary Grant in an Eric Fischl painting. Perhaps the great art can indeed be read in the dryness with which the perilous and the uninhabitable are reported.

The sounds of the city flow in through an open window: car horns, gun shots and violence. Paint is peeling off the walls and the once green carpet is stained black. On the bed nearby is a huge open suitcase filled with clear plastic bags of cocaine. Shotguns and pistols have been dropped carelessly around the suitcase. On the far end of the room, against the wall, is a TV. "Bewitched" is playing. At the opposite end of the room, by the front, is a table. DREXL SPIVEY and FLOYD DIXON sit around. Cocaine is on the table as well as little plastic bags and a weigher. Floyd is black, Drex is a white boy, though you wouldn't know it listen to him.

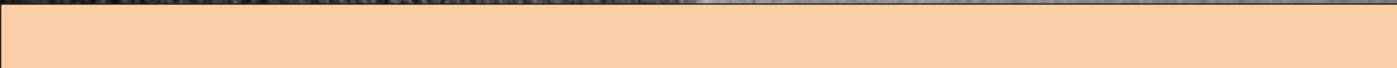
DREXL
Nigger, get outta my face with that bullshit.

FLOYD
Naw man, I don't be eatin' that shit.

DREXL
That's bullshit.

BIG DON WATTS, a stout, mean-looking black man who's older than Drex and Floyd. Walks through the door carrying hamburgers and french fries in two greasy brown-paper bags.

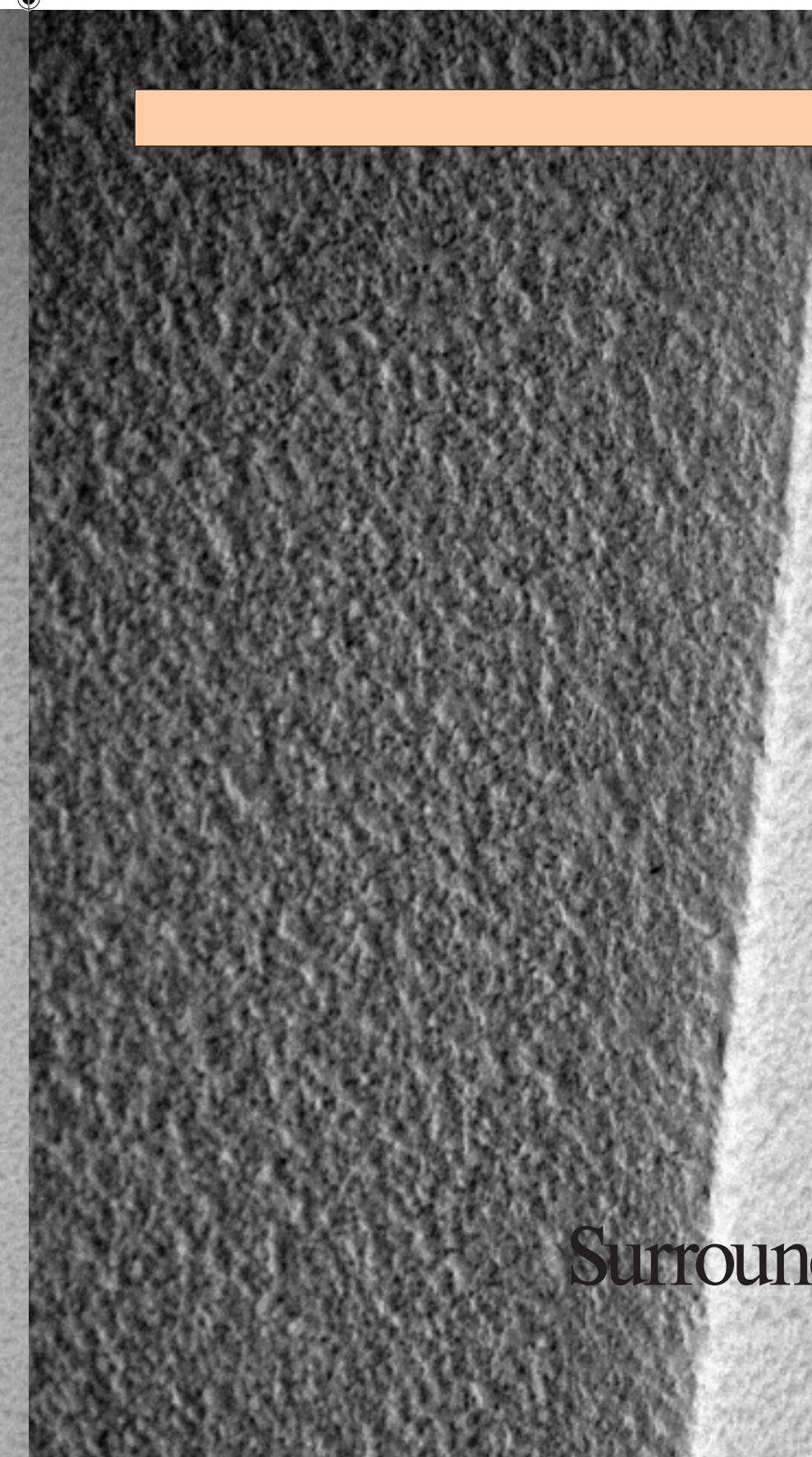
FLOYD
Naw man, that's some serious shit.



60

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wall



Surround

DRXL

Nigga you be like a big dog.

BIG D

What the fuck are you talkin' about?

DRXL

Flooyss, what do you eatin' pussy

BIG D

Shit, any nigger say he don't eat pussy is lyin' his ass off.

DRXL

I hear that.

BIG D

Hold on, I'm comin' Big D. You sayin' you eat pussy?



Bergotte's Vermeer and Other Histories

Andrew Renton

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1 History Painting

Painting never comes to you without a history. At least one. There is the history into which it slips quietly. It's part of history before you know it. (For Koen van den Broek it was always part of history.)

As much as painting is made of history, so history is made of painting. Both constructed to a degree, but organic in a type of evolution. History as the sum of influence, sublimation, repression and deflection.

Another history occurs within the artwork itself. An internalised, condensed version of all that history being compressed into the history of making. In the painting you can observe the time of its making, over time. This might be the only way to read it. History in form and process rather than in content and subject.

A history of histories, then, where the painting stands in relation to and in defiance of the genre it inhabits. It's forever, interminably, indebted. The more the painting protests against the genre, overly specific as it is, the more it becomes embedded within its trail of references and obligations.

Never without history, never from nowhere, a difficulty emerges as painting demands reading in terms of its points of reference. As much as it aspires to refer forwards, this future trajectory is to suggest the dissolution of the subject within it.

The subject has been folding in upon itself for as long as you can remember.

You might even argue that painting is not about abstraction, as such,

or any tendency towards it, since Crack the latter has become a subject in itself; a motion or slippage that is carefully monitored or marked from one body of work to another.

Abstraction might be understood as the consolidation of the genre; an insistence on a particular space of play. This much is given; the frame, whether the painting is contained by it, or whether it continues beyond.

And painting is never completely formless, even as the subject recedes, since the form is always conditional upon the history of histories. In the absence of even the barest flicker of resemblance, another type of subject evolves through the processes of making and remaking.

BIG D
Nigger, I eat everything. I eat pussy. I eat the butt. I eat every motherfuckin' thang.

DREXL
Preach on, Big D.

FLOYD
Look here. If I ever did eat some pussy—I would never eat any pussy—but, if I did eat some pussy, I sure as hell wouldn't tell no goddamn body. I'd be ashamed as a motherfucker.

BIG D
Shit! Nigger you smoke enough sherm your dumb ass'll do a lot a crazy ass things. So you won't eat pussy? Motherfucker, you be up there suckin' niggers' dicks.

DREXL
Heard that.

Drex and Big D bump fists.



2
Without Subject

Painting, Koen van den Broek's painting, is without subject. The extent to which this may be verified is limited by the constraints of the eye that perceives a field without limit. The 'image' (although you know it is not this) overflows beyond the borders of the painting, both conceptually and physically.¹

(For that matter, the notion of the painting's border or frame is a useful marker according to convention, but an unreliable measure or term of reference upon closer inspection. But this argument is for elsewhere.)

It might help, temporarily, to use image as a working term, in order to help establish a field of play that is never wholly abstracted from its source, on the one hand, nor a motivating force on the other.

Again, this would produce a fatal over-reading of the working out, the working through, the processes of making.

(Something to do with continuity

it was once about. An image of its ...)

So an image, then, made and remade, according to a series of disparate strategies. Remade to such an extent that it empties itself of content. Or at least, it is no longer what

it was once about. An image of its former self.

But the making tells you a great deal about this emptied-out image, so-called. If there is always a source from which the activity of image making is derived, it is not always the same source. An image of an image, not in the manner of appropriationist survival tactics, but an authentic re-entering of the image, from scratch, every time. No less 'authentic' with the recurrence, but more virtual in its distance from the source of the imagery.

The point being that the source

is no longer significant. It never was. However much the process of painting might appear to resemble or to reference outside of itself, the site represented within this site of representation is beside the point. Or at least you might not set store by it. It is not to be over-interpreted.

So what purpose, then, does this image, so-called, have if it no longer wishes to connote or invoke? Perhaps the image or represented site recurs as if to get that part of the business out of the way, in order to get on with the business of painting?

Were you to relinquish the idea of an image of whatever degree of virtuality, you would then face another pressing legacy of the history of painting that has something to do with the history of paint and gesture, and the continuity between expression and that gesture.

Again, this would produce a fatal over-reading of the working out, the working through, the processes of making.

(Something to do with continuity

it was once about. An image of its ...)

According to the post-war American model, the possibilities are immersive and boundless. Painting stands without debt, or connection; perhaps to be understood as a site for immediate experience. There is no deferral in either transmission or reception. There is nothing but the painting.

The subsequent arc of American painting in the half century since this over-achieved zero degree might be seen as a persistent renegotiation of the figurative—even when there is

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3
Another History of Painting

The history of abstraction might have taken a wrong turn here and there. Somehow time burdened painting with a series of obligations that had something to do with the possibilities of expression and gesture and with the continual relation between the two.

American abstraction becomes the degree zero that sought not so much a displacement of European models, but a conscious discontinuity. As if that autonomy not only could provide a new Modern, but also might rewrite the rules of what such modernity might be.

While Clement Greenberg was advocating a space for an independent American art that celebrated its potentiality in the very act of making, Samuel Beckett could only make a case for *empêchement*—or for an art impeded in its own making.² In the *Three Dialogues*, Beckett's famous dictum of "the expression that there is nothing to express" culminates with the "obligation to express."³ But this hardly fills the void that Beckett has created for both the subject and the activity of painting.

Your desire to invoke some obligation to continuity, even without motive or formal closure, the work at stake is only part of the story, always subject to be completed elsewhere. A compulsion to repeat in some darkly anxious encounter with the unexpressible, combined with a canvas emptied of subject, if not of content.

Van den Broek's painting would seem to generate interstices between

FLOYD
Yeah, that's right. Laugh. It's so funny, oh it's so funny.
(he takes a hit off of a joint)
There used to be a time when sisters didn't know shit about gettin' their pussy licked. Then the sixties came an' they started fuckin' around with white boys. And white boys are freaks for that shit.

DREXL
Because it's good!

FLOYD
Then, after a while sisters use to gettin' their little pussy eat. And because you white boys had to make pigs out of yourselves, you fucked it up for every nigger in the world everywhere.

BIG D
Drex. On behalf of me and all the brothers who aren't here, I'd like to express our gratitude.

Drex and Big D bust up.

FLOYD
Go on pussy-eaters... laugh. You look like you be eatin' pussy. You got pussy-eatin' mugs. Now if a nigger wants to get his dick sucked he's got to do a bunch of fucked-up shit.



itself and other paintings.

These might be considered sites of contemplation; where one painting repeats or contradicts another. Any painting, however achieved, is always in relation to another. It's what keeps the act of painting going, rather than the historical assumption that this might be sustainable only through the excess of gesture.

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4 Seen from Above

Or another type of figuration always operating at one remove: the landscape.

Your first instinct is not to call van den Broek a landscape painter at all, although he often paints landscapes. The distinction has something to do with positioning. With where the artist stands. He is never in the landscape, or if he is, you might imagine him utterly disabled by it. He is somehow obliged to step outside of his own landscape and to adopt one universally recognized if only known at one remove.

So van den Broek as the master of the great American landscape? There is no irony to this. The landscape he comes to, is an already mediated, mythologized one, primarily urban. He renders the foreignness of the point of view. Utopia could be anywhere.

The American landscape, another cultural anxiety of repetition—even van den Broek's belated version of it—manifests a movement westwards, in the manner marked by Wayne Thiebaud or Ed Ruscha. The landscape we encounter is a constructed one, framed with the movie camera's lens or with some hoist or device to gather the images from an improbable perspective.

As if viewed from above, or from a position that you cannot extrapolate from the image in front you. Impossible landscapes, then, sustaining your idea of a place. These paintings revisit a scene that could not be found in the first place.

Crack

BIG D
So you do eat pussy!

FLOYD
Naw naw!

BIG D
You don't like it, but you eat that shit.
(to Drex)
He eats it.

DREXL
Damn skippy. He like it, too.

BIG D
(mock English accent)
Me thinketh he doth protest too much.



5
Bergotte's Vermeer
(First Patch of Wall)

"At last he came to the Vermeer which he remembered as more striking, more different from anything else he knew, but in which, thanks to the critic's article, he noticed for the first time some small figures in blue, that the sand was pink, and, finally, the precious substance of the tiny patch of yellow wall. His dizziness increased; he fixed his gaze, like a child upon a yellow butterfly that it wants to catch, on the precious patch of wall."⁴

It is never how you remember it. It is never how you remembered it, as you recall the first/last time this encounter was lodged in your memory. With every encounter the painting must be subject to change. Experience becomes embedded within the word, but is often out of sync with the perception or anticipation of the painting before you.

You come late to the painting. You are nostalgic for it, even before you notice its absence. If you are to see van den Broek's paintings as a persistent negotiation with continuity, the points of return are not manifestations of circularity or repetition, but the consolidation of projection forwards, where the work renews itself and estranges itself from its origins.

The disconcerting thing to you is that you could have sworn you knew it. On every formal level the image and the marks are unambiguously clear. But the painting does not travel alone. It always embeds your expe-

rience of its reading. The more you encounter it, the more you come to know it, the more it will, by definition surprise you.

You mourn its absence. It eludes you, especially here, now, when you come to bear witness to it. The painting at an ineluctable moment of coming to be seen. It's never quite the right angle, never the right light of day. There is a loss. The painting misremembers and you misremember it in equal measure.

The same goes for every painting. But van den Broek's work inscribes this through a more thorough procedure. It is as if his body of work articulates exactly that moment of perception—where the viewer is placed in an uncanny scene of self-perpetuated nostalgia. The marks or images are to be continually revisited, and van den Broek's achievement has been to render the stages of these recurrent encounters as uncoupled frames of a continuous montage.

(How to achieve an internal critique, that keeps a close eye on the obligations to the formal, while at the same time recognising imperceptible differences that no instrument or agent might measure?)

Thus the attempt at repetition; often an emptying out or a displacement of the figured within the painting in order to signal what it once was.

With every iteration it grows once removed and closer to you. The contradiction is not so hard to square because of the very nature of the medium itself. Paint retraces itself.

You mourn for the painting, you miss it, even as you face up to it.

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6
Painting as Erasure

The trick of it is that there is no erasure. Painting is fluid, changeable. But a mark is a mark. It does not go away, however much the wish to wipe the canvas clean. Nothing is undone.

Van den Broek's painting marks an impression in the site of painting, long before work begins on the painting. It follows a template of sorts, renegotiating what is a long-established space to such an extent that it is always an act of repainting.

There was never a first one. Painting over as more an act of blocking out rather than imaging or imagining. But the effacing act of paint over paint produces another image, the same or similar; an anxious repetition that reworks the previous painting as an attempt to unmake or escape. But in the process merely empties it out of source or subject.

This should not be read negatively, nor interpreted as a sign of painting reaching any logical end. There is no end to painting. To recognize the discontinuity is strategy enough to sustain it as practice. Each new painting is an intense commentary of every painting van den Broek has made or seen before it, and a supplement to the history he cannot help but be part of.

So painting becomes an affirmative act, in the way that its marks come to occupy the space of play. Little left to prove, with few grand gestures. Painting as continuous engagement. An inverse archaeology, where the painting builds up a con-

text for itself with each sustained Crack act of separation or removal. Remaking, then, as the strongest form of erasure.

FLOYD
Well fuck you guys then! You guys are fucked up!

DREXL
Why you trippin'? We jus' fuckin' with ya. But I wanna ask you a question. You with some fine bitch, I mean a brick shithouse bitch—you're with Jayne Kennedy. You're with Jayne Kennedy and you say "Bitch, suck my dick!" and then Jayne Kennedy says, "First things first, nigger, I ain't suckin' shit till you bring your ass over here and lick my bush!" Now, what do you say?

FLOYD
I tell Jayne Kennedy, "Suck my dick or I'll beat your ass!"

BIG D
Nigger, get real. You touch Jayne Kennedy she'll have you ass in Wayne County so fast.

DREXL
Nigger, back off, you ain't beatin' shit. Now what would you do.

FLOYD
I'd say fuck it!



7

A View upon Perspective,
and the Meaning of Diagonals

If van den Broek's work testifies to any faith in an idea of perspective, it might be configured over several planes simultaneously. You cannot rely upon the idea of a single point of view, and you have grown accustomed to a constant readjustment of sightlines, both within the work and within the broader context of its placement or installation.

Another type of perspective occurs when, as the viewer of the painting, you become aware of the discrepancy between the illusion the painting contains and its own materiality. You cannot help but read for surfaces and marks, but your eye picks up false trails that end improbably within the composition.

It should all work, in theory. But the marks towards perspective detach themselves from their theoretical origins and operate as independent marks, sometimes within two planes simultaneously. It makes no difference whether it is a painting from a photograph, or a painting over a photograph, or a painting of a painting. Van den Broek enters into the image with independent shapes and blocks of colour, even as his refusal of painterly or graphic flatness forces the eye to reject the illusion he simulates.

The strategy is as deliberate as it is complex. Lines are left hanging, unanchored, detached, fragmented. You have some sense at least of where they might have gone. But suggestion is a tricky thing in painting, particularly when so much

formal play on the surface is concerned with the painting's undoing. This is not impressionistic, or even gestural, but an anti-illusionist relationship to surface and subject. Until there is no surface. Until there is

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8

Angelico's White
(Second Patch of Wall)

"Sometimes it even suggests to seekers-after-representation that there's 'nothing there'—despite its representing a wall, although a wall so close to a real wall, which is painted the same white, that it seems merely to present its whiteness. Then again, it is by no means abstract..."⁵

To start with a clarification—there is no absolute white for van den Broek. If it comes close, it's a subjective form of white. Perhaps in the manner of Robert Ryman, who, you might argue, has never painted a white painting.

White, then, as an accent, or visual charge. More often it denotes spaces within the painting than connect subjective elements within the frame. Moreover, it connects one painting to another. White serves as the degree zero of self-effacement and the remarking shade within the painting. White does not describe, but marks those *puncta* where the painting is at work, but 'off-subject.' Again, no absolute white. Nothing is, when the painting can no longer articulate what it set out to such, but an idea of it. A residual image reproduce, and when the image fades to white.

(You are often left with the impression that you might have seen an expanse of white, even where of van den Broek's paintings as there was none.)

Drex and Big D get up from the table disgusted and walk away, leaving Floyd sitting all alone. Big D sits on the bed, his back turned to Floyd, watching "Bewitched".

FLOYD
(yelling after them)
Ain't no man have to eat pussy!

BIG D
(not even looking)
Take that shit somewhere else.

DRXL
(marching back)
You tell Jayne Kennedy to fuck it?

FLOYD
If it came down to who eats who, damn skippy.

Notes

¹ See Jacques Derrida, *The Truth in Painting*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington and Ian McLeod (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), *passim*.

² Samuel Beckett, "Peintres de l'empechement" (1948), in Samuel Beckett, *Disjecta*, ed. Ruby Cohn (London: John Calder, 1984).

³ Samuel Beckett, "Three Dialogues with Georges Duthuit" (1948), in Samuel Beckett: *The Grove Centenary Edition*, Volume 4, ed. Paul Auster (New York: Grove Press, 2006), p. 556.

⁴ Marcel Proust, *In Search of Lost Time*, Vol. V (The Captive), trans. C.K. Scott Moncrieff and Terence Kilmarin; rev. D.J. Enright (London, Chatto & Windus, 1992), p. 207.

⁵ George Didi-Huberman, *Confronting Images: Questioning the Ends of a Certain History of Art*, trans. John Goodman (University Park: Pennsylvania University Press, 2005), p. 17.



wall

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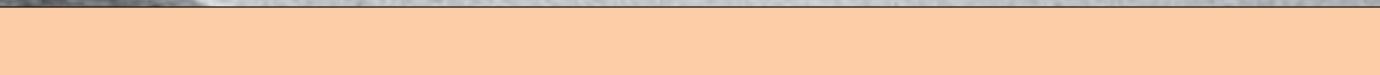
Surround

DREXL
With that terrible mug of yours if Jayne Kennedy told you to eat her pussy, kiss her ass, lick her feet, chow on her shit, and suck her dog's dick, nigger, you'd aim to please.

BIG D
(glued on TV)
I'm hip.

DREXL
In fact, I'm gonna show you what I mean with a little demonstration. Big D, toss me that shotgun.
Without turning away from "Bewitched" he picks up the shotgun and tosses it to Drex.

DREXL
(to Floyd)
All right, check this out.
(referring to shotgun)
Now, pretend this is Jayne Kennedy. And you're you.



wall

74

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wall

Then, in a blink, he points the shotgun at Floyd and blows him away. Big D leaps off the bed and spins toward Drex. Drex, waiting for him, fires from across the room. The blast hits the big man in the right arm and shoulder, spinning him around. Drex makes a beeline for his victim and fires again. Big D is hit with a blast, full in the back. He slams into the wall and drops. Drex collects the suitcase full of cocaine and leaves. As he gets to the front door he surveys the carnage, spits and walks out.

EXT. CLIFF'S MOVING CAR—MORNING

A big white Chevy Nova is driving down the road with a sunrise sky as a backdrop. The song "Little Bitty Tear" is heard a cappella.

INT. CLIFF'S MOVING CAR—MORNING

CLIFF WORLEY is driving his car home from work, singing this song gently to the sunrise. He's a forty-five-years-old ex-cop, at present a security guard. In between singing he takes sips from a cup of takeout coffee. He's dressed in a security guard uniform.

EXT. TRAILER PARK—MORNING

Cliff's Nova pulls in as he continues crooning. He pulls up to his trailer to see something that stops him short.

CLIFF'S POV THROUGH WINDSHIELD



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One of the origin myths of painting defines it in terms of light and shade. According to Pliny the Elder, the arts of drawing and painting were discovered by the daughter of a Corinthian potter, whose lover was temporarily going to leave her side. In the wish to hold onto his likeness, she projected her lover's shadow on a wall, and traced the contour of his profile; thus, according to Pliny, painting was born. The myth of the Corinthian Maid can however also be brought into relation with those quintessentially modern media: photography and film. While the photograph allows itself to be described as the chemical fixing of the contour of a shape on a flat plane, film is the mechanical projection of images of light on a vertical screen. Photography and film moreover knocked painting off its plinth, despite their shared origin myth. Painting has for a long time ceased to be at the top of the pyramid of the visual arts. Moreover, the idea of hierarchy is no longer the issue. Painting is one medium among many.

Koen van den Broek started out as an artist at a time at which the end of painting had already been repeatedly pronounced, and today even the question regarding the end of painting no longer seems relevant anymore. And still he chooses to paint. With this decision he not only relates as an artist to the tradition of painting—whether or not it be declared dead—but at the same time—as a generator of images—to contemporary visual culture. His work is typified by an immediate handling of two technical media

Clarence and a nice-looking YOUNG WOMAN are watching for him in front of his trailer.

CLOSEUP-CLIFF

Upon seeing Clarence, a little bitty tear rolls down Cliff's cheek.

BACK TO:
CLIFF'S POV

Clarence and the Young Woman walk over to the car. Clarence sticks his face through the driver's side window.

CLARENCE
Good Morning, Daddy. Long time no see.

INT. TRAILER HOME-MORNING

All three enter the trailer home.

CLIFF



that lie at the basis of the present-day mass image production: photography and film.

Movement and the Modern Media

Even more than photography, film was received as the medium that could best 'capture' the experience of modernity. Since its inception around 1895, the filmic image, certainly in comparison with the painted image, was thought to correspond more closely to what Baudelaire called "the ephemeral, the fugitive and contingent" character of modern life.¹ This explains in part the multiple presence of trains in early films. Images of the quintessentially modern vehicle emphasized both the modern character of film and the relationship to accelerated movement and technological development. Film easily won the paragone with painting as the movement-related medium. The trains depicted in the work of Turner or Monet simply weren't life-like enough. By contrast, it is said the train arriving at a platform in one of the first films by the Lumière brothers was experienced to be so realistic that some visitors fled the cinema.

Film nonetheless relates in a two-fold way to movement. While a film literally passes through a projector at a speed of twenty-four frames a second, the projected 'moving' images merely convey an illusion of movement. Within the isolated filmic image itself, no movement takes place, but within the time frame of the film, 'movement' is possible.²

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This no doubt explains why we see so many images of travel or displacement, of movements from point A to point B. By means of images of (other) moving machines, such as trains or cars, film can refer to itself as a medium. Incidentally, the train figured as a metaphor for the registering eye, the mobilized gaze, already before the invention of film. The passive, seated viewer looks through the frame of the train window at the landscape shooting by.³ The same is thought later about the car; seated, immobile while moving, the passenger or driver looks through the frame of the car window at the landscape gliding past. In the train or car, the 'film of images' is not produced by a machine that projects images through space, but by a machine that frames images as it is projected through space. The train however no longer counts as the privileged means of travel and transportation of the contemporary subject. Today the car determines the parameters of the contemporary—moving—filmic gaze. In David Lynch's *Lost Highway* (1997) the loop in the film's plot is reflected in the apparently endless journey on a nocturnal highway, of which only the middle, yellow line is lit up, by the headlights of a driving car. The eye of the camera here coincides with the eyes of the driver.

The Traveling Eye, and an Iconography of Road Movies

Van den Broek is a traveling painter. He travels the world by car. The experience of looking at landscapes from this vehicle lies at the basis of

his work. He is eager to bring that specific visual experience into relation with cinematic experience. This comparison is even greater for him during nocturnal journeys, whereby the driver or the passenger of the car—not unlike Lynch's *Lost Highway*—can view the 'moving' images of the landscape, alone and unobserved.⁴ Van den Broek uses the car like the traveling camera in film. Yet he documents the driving gaze by 'capturing' cutouts from the 'moving' field of his gaze with an analog photocamera. He photographs the travel landscape from the driving car, or details from that landscape beside or in the vicinity of the car, during a short interruption of the journey. Van den Broek does not take one photograph, but many. The resulting packages of photographs make up a kind of slow, spread out film of the journey (with far fewer than 24 images per second), from which the artist makes a selection. These specific images, taken *en route*, of fragmented roadside scenery, gas stations and sidewalk edges, then serve as a source for his paintings. Through their implicit iconography of the road the works maintain a reference to the process that originated them, related to movement. But also thanks to the ubiquitous presence of the moving image—or with other words thanks to our subconscious memory of film—when we are confronted with a painting by van den Broek, we easily link back to the movement that lay at the basis of the 'starting image' of that painting.

Moreover, a continent such as North America, which van den Broek

has explored extensively, is known to many of us primarily through film. Especially an inhabitant of the densely populated European continent, associates the expansiveness of the various landscapes in van den Broek's paintings with distant travels. The vast and empty mountain reef of *Mesquite Flat* (2009) instantly calls the landscape of the western to mind. The many streets in van den Broek's work in turn evoke associations with the road movie genre. The objects along those roads may well be unfamiliar for the European's daily life; he still knows them from American film and television series. Usually the roads in van den Broek's paintings are empty. It is only now and then that a car comes into view. In this way a truck and a handful of cars, clearly recognizable as American, 'pursue' the painter in *Escape from LA* (2005). The red truck in *Ghost Truck* (1999) is a typical pick-up truck of the fifties, and resembles, for example, the truck in which Cary Grant makes his getaway after being chased by a plane in Hitchcock's *North by Northwest* (1959)—a scene that visually fascinates van den Broek.

In his work, van den Broek explores—keeping Baudelaire in mind as it were—the extent to which painting can still 'capture' the experience of present-day modernity. Engaging the mobile gaze of the contemporary subject, so the artist shows in his work, is after all not exclusively reserved to photography and film. While both 'modern media' serve as a starting point and reference in van den Broek's painterly practice, they only do so through the mediation of

Excuse the place, I haven't been entertaining company as of late. Sorry if I'm acting a little dense, but you're the last person in the world I expected to see this morning. Clarence and the Young Girl walk into the living room.

CLARENCE
Yeah, well, that's OK, Daddy, I tend to have that effect on people. I'm dyin' on thirst, you got anything to drink?

He moves past Cliff and heads straight for his refrigerator.

CLIFF
I think there's a Seven-Up in there.

CLARENCE
(rumaging around the fridge)
Anything stronger?
(pause)
Oh, probably not. Beer? You can drink beer, can't you?

CLIFF
I can, but I don't.



the car. The car's interference allows for the three terrains covered by photography, film and painting to converge. With van den Broek the car is not only a *machine of movement*, a typifying object in the experience of contemporary modernity, but also a *machine of vision*, an apparatus that determines the contemporary mode of perception.

It can be noted here that a literal reference to the car window is missing in van den Broek's works. We can think for example of *The Windshield (Route de Villacoublay)* (1917) by Henri Matisse. In this work, Matisse uses the window of the car as a redoubling of the idea of a painterly window, which in turn is further emphasized by the presence of a painting within the painting, located on the driver's seat. Moreover it appears to be the same painting as the one that we are looking at.⁵ Van den Broek conversely is less interested in a traditional Albertian comparison of the painting with a window on reality, than in a broader exploration of contemporary perceptions of space.

'Moving Images', or Movement in Images

Even without explicit reference to the frame of the car window, or to that of the photographic registration, van den Broek manifestly makes *frames* or cutouts from existing landscapes. Yet his work relates to the realistic tradition of painting only indirectly. The framing of a landscape or field of vision on the world merely plays a role in the first stage of van den Broek's work. The photograph is the link to

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perceivable reality; fantasy 'does not exist' for van den Broek. The painting does take the photographic source material into account, but does not reproduce the photograph. It merely returns in the composition and in the justification of the rectangular shape of the image plane—a shape that in no way corresponds to nature or the imagination.⁶ The format of a canvas by van den Broek is literally an enlargement of the photograph it is based on.

In the 'translation' of the photograph to the painting, van den Broek first draws the composition on the canvas as an under-layer. Following the photograph's framing, he then builds up the painterly image, step by step, by connecting points with each other via lines, and through the addition of color. The artist describes the first phase of this process as 'selection': he reduces colors and pictorial elements of the photograph, in terms of the composition and viewing direction of the image. Later steps consist of interventions that no longer have anything to do with the photograph. In van den Broek's words, an addition occurs in the painting process; a spontaneous presence emerges that is absent in the photograph.

In many of van den Broek's works the composition evokes a suggestion of movement. This movement in turn elicits a movement of the viewer's eye. In painting this movement of the viewer's eye over the painting is a classical *topos*. Even in the heyday of modernist flatness and medium specificity, Clement Greenberg still left open the possibility for a 'traveling' eye in the 'landscape' of

the abstract painting. This 'traveling,' Crack so Greenberg stated, was however not of a spatial nature, but merely optical: "The Old Masters created an illusion of space in depth that one could imagine oneself walking into, but the analogous illusion created by the Modernist painter can only be seen into; can be traveled through, *literally or figuratively*, only with the eye" (my emphasis).⁷ With van den Broek, eye movement is however not typified by random traveling within the space of the painting, but by a linearly instigated acceleration. Let's take for example the painting *Dallas* (2009). It emphasizes the significance that van den Broek gives to the viewing direction in his compositions. The standing format of a painting calls for a different suggestion of movement than the horizontal format. In the latter format, movement is mainly suggested by succession or accumulation, as in Donald Judd's *Untitled (Progression)* (1969), one of the works that van den Broek selected for the exhibition "Fantasy" that he curated in 2008 for MuHKA, the Antwerp Municipal Museum of Contemporary Art. In *Dallas* an acceleration of the gaze can be attributed to the application of strongly receding perspectival lines, which in turn are emphasized by the vertical format. As soon as our eye enters the painting, it is immediately directed out of the painting again, unless we decide to pause on the Dallas skyline, at the top edge of the painting. If we however follow the viewing direction of the road, then the eye probably skims past the city: the vanishing point lies beside the centre, that is, of both the painting and the city.

Already in 1925 Béla Balàzs described the danger of 'vision machines': the speed of the moving train or car reduces experience to the present. Whatever we have just seen quickly disappears along the way, so that "one landscape after another dissolves into a vision."⁸ The traveler on foot, by comparison, can, according to Balàzs, feel the reality of his environment in his body, and feel the space as 'real' instead of dreamlike. It is striking that with van den Broek, as soon as he stops his car and explores the side of the road on foot, the movement shifts to the image itself. The pieces of reality that figure in the photographic cutouts made during these walks have a greatly accelerated perspective. His frames in no way correspond to the actual perception of the pedestrian. Here a comparison imposes itself with the work of impressionist painter Gustave Caillebotte, who based his paintings on comparable photographs, described as 'amateurish' at the time. The photographs of both van den Broek and Caillebotte, through an 'incorrect' use of the perspectival system, incur a deformation of habitual visual perception. The perspectival system imitates the perception of the human eye, and presupposes a certain distance of the viewing point of the (fictive) viewer to the rectangle of the painterly or photographic 'window.' The 'correct' distance depends on the size of the rectangle.⁹ When the viewing point comes to lie too close to the image plane, all elements in the image undergo "monstrous disfigurations" of ordinary vision.¹⁰ Photography easily achieves such

CLARENCE
(closing the fridge)
That's about all I ever eat.

CLIFF
(to Girl)
I'm sorry... I'm his father.

YOUNG GIRL
(sticking her hand out)
That's OK, I'm his wife.
(shaking his hand vigorously)
Alabama Worley, pleased to meetcha.

She is really pumping his arm, just like a used-car salesman. However, that's where the similarities end: Alabama is totally sincere. Clarence steps back into the living room, holding a bunch of little ceramic fruit magnets in his hand. He throws his other arm around Alabama.



deformations, for example through a change of lens. In Caillebotte's painting *Le Pont de l'Europe* (1876), the viewing point of the fictive viewer lies five times closer than the perspectival system presupposes. The result is that the visual field within the frame is five times larger than the academic norm. A comparison with the painting *Dallas* by van den Broek reveals comparable visual deformations: because the foreground is enlarged, the background reduced and the convergence of vanishing lines accentuated, the overall perception of the space is altered.¹¹ Other than Caillebotte, van den Broek however does not chose a field of vision that is too wide, but one that is too narrow. His photographs are—almost filmic—*blow-ups* of reality. Also at odds with Caillebotte, van den Broek places the vanishing point of his road not within but outside of the painting. In other paintings, for example *Yellow and Red Border* (2001) and *Fort Worth* (2008), the diagonals that criss-cross the image are so steep that they nearly become vertical. As they appear to tip up, they almost emphasize the flat, rectangular plane of the painting and incite a 'liberation' of form. If we assume that the eye goes along with the painter's image manipulations and follows a clearly present trajectory in a painting, a sequence-movement of the eye also occurs in *From Here to the West and Back* (2008), from below to the top or the other way round. If this movement is repeated several times, the gaze accelerates by itself, and the rapid eye movement approaches the aforementioned movement of film through a projector.

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'Time-Images,' or Realism without Naturalism

Van den Broek is a cinephile painter. He watches films as if they were image sequences: he rewinds, repeats scenes and fragments of films for a visual analysis of their specific images. He is interested by singular camera shots, the build-up of tension and the power of a single, isolated filmic image. This does not however mean that van den Broek's paintings should be brought into relation with the film still. The still very rarely originates directly from the film, but is specifically staged afterwards in order to evoke an entire scene.¹² The still is an exemplary kind of image that can be narratively 'completed' by the viewer. That which is represented can be placed in a fictive continuum of space and time. Van den Broek on the other hand is interested in the 'in-between' images, those that are absorbed into the flood of images that is the film, and that constitute the 'sideline' to the central action in the film. The artist is not aiming to create a narrative tension in his work. The empty continuum in many of his paintings (van den Broek does not paint from the centre of the painterly field, but around it and towards it) is not an 'open space' that invites the viewer to 'complete' or 'fill in' the artwork.¹³ But what does it do? Van den Broek tries, as with the filmic 'in-between image,' to generate images that are narratively uncharged; images of what in our mostly centering gaze constitutes the periphery or margin. In the various paintings based on photographs taken at the famous

vista *Dante's Peak* in California, van den Broek paints the 'sideline' of the panorama, an insignificant image that is in the vicinity of the visual 'attraction.' He frames precisely that part of reality that would stay off screen, *hors-champ*, in a dramatically charged image.

Another inspiration for van den Broek are the many film scenes of traveling, of the displacement by road and through landscapes, and the infinite arsenal of metaphoric 'in-between images' that they generate. These filmic trajectories mostly take place in the indeterminate zones of displacement, transition and departure such as airports, bus stations, tank stations, waiting rooms, or at what Marc Augé once termed 'non-places'.¹⁴ Van den Broek is not so much interested in the specific formal appearance of the non-identity of these kinds of places, as in the spatial constitution of their indeterminacy. Were it not for the titles, the 'places' in van den Broek's paintings would remain undetermined. Through the isolation of a limited selection of shapes the artist denies these places their 'identity' and brings about a suggestion of spatial indeterminacy.

A comparison with the analysis given by Deleuze of the distribution of space and time characteristic of the post-war filmic image can illuminate the suggestion of spatiality in Koen van den Broek's images. Deleuze designates a new distribution of space and time in post-war film with the term 'espace quelconque,' or 'any-space-whatever'.¹⁵ According to Deleuze, in these images the traditional cate-

Notes

¹ Charles Baudelaire: "By 'modernity' I mean the ephemeral, the fugitive, the contingent, the half of art whose other half is the eternal and the immutable." Charles Baudelaire, "The Painter of Modern Life" (1863), in: Charles Baudelaire, *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays* (London: Phaidon, 2001), p. 12.

² This is Zeno's paradox of the shooting arrow.

³ See Clément Chéroux, "Vues du train: Vision et mobilité au XIXe siècle," *Etudes photographiques* no. 1, November 1996, p. 73; and Jacques Autmont, "The Variable eye, or the Mobilization of the Gaze," in *The Image in Dispute: Art and Cinema in the Age of Photography*, ed. Dudley Andrew (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997), pp. 235-236.

⁴ The viewing of a fleeting landscape shooting past from the car however offers the driver of that car more freedom than the viewer in the train or the cinema: the driver of a car can himself 'steer' the frames. This is how the 'cockpit' of the car distinguishes itself from what Jean-Louis Baudry calls 'the apparatus (*dispositif*) of projection' of film. In analogy with Plato's cave in psychoanalytic 'apparatus theory' the viewing situation of the cinema is based on subconscious desires, and the institutionalized film form exploits an optimization of this voyeuristic, steerless viewing position of the spectator. See Jean-Louis Baudry, "Ideological Effects of the Basic Cinematographic Apparatus," *Film Quarterly* Vol. 28, no. 2, 1974-75, pp. 39-47; and Jean-Louis Baudry, "The Apparatus: Metapsychological Approaches to the Impression of Reality in Cinema," in *Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology: A Film Theory Reader*, ed. Philip Rosen (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), pp. 299-318.

⁵ I thank Wouter Davids for this reference. The painting is discussed more at length in: Yve-Alain Bois, "On Matisse: The Blinding: For Leo Steinberg," *October* Vol. 68, Spring 1994, pp. 73-79.

⁶ Cf Meyer Schapiro, "On Some Problems in the Semiotics of Visual Art: Field and Vehicle in Image-Signs," *Simiolus: Netherlandish Quarterly for the History of Art* Vol. 6, no. 1, 1972-73, p. 9.

⁷ Clement Greenberg, "Modernist Painting" (1960), in Clement Greenberg, *The Collected Essays and Criticism: Volume 4: Modernism with a Vengeance, 1957-1969*, ed. John O'Brian (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1995), p. 90.

⁸ Béla Balázs, "On Foot," *October* no. 115, Winter 2006, pp. 59-60.

⁹ For a more extensive discussion of this process with Caillebotte see: Kirk Varnedoe and Peter Galassi, "L'espace de Caillebotte," in *Gustave Caillebotte*, ed. Kirk Varnedoe (Paris: Biro, 1988), pp. 20-26.

ries of space and time are detached from sensation. Perception is cut off from the schemes whereby we understand the material world in terms of causality. Space and time, basically, become detached from the perceiving subject. 'Any-spaces-whatever' precede awareness and do not have to be perceived in order to exist.¹⁶

Through its size van den Broek's *Mesquite Flat* evokes a cinematic feeling. In the words of the painter, it depicts "only sand and clouds." More important is that van den Broek characterizes the landscape as independent from all human intervention. Dirk Lauwaert states elsewhere in this volume that van den Broek's landscapes are "depopulated": "The personages have disappeared from the image and have grouped themselves in front of the canvas, looking at their decor, at the location selected for the drama where they will soon have to play out their miserable roles."¹⁷ In Deleuze's terms van den Broek's landscapes would not be so much depopulated, as completely detached from any relationship to mankind. An art that describes this un-designated landscape could be called realistic—but it is a type of realism that stands far removed from naturalism.¹⁸

Van den Broek's 'in-between images' in their pictorial reworking become charged as visually potent images. Were we to speak of realism, it would be only in relation to the subject represented on the canvas. Van den Broek avoids a material realism that would make the painting into a paint-object. The canvases are covered with thinly applied oil paint, not

CLARENCE
Oh yeah, we got married.
(referring to the magnets)
You still have these.
(to Alabama)
This isn't a complete set; when I was five I swallowed the pomegranate one. I never shit it out, so I guess it's still there. Loverdoll, why don't you be a sport and go get us some beer. I want some beer.
Do you want some beer? Well, if you want some it's here.

He hands her some money and his car keys.
CLARENCE
Go to the liquor store.
(to Cliff)
Where is there a liquor store around here?

CLIFF
Uh, yeah... there's a party store down 54th.



entirely without, but with a reduced surface texture. Thus the emphasis comes to lie on the image, that is, an image 'projected' onto the canvas by means of paint.¹⁹ In the end neither the photograph nor the film are of painterly nature. "That," according to van den Broek, "is why the painting is made."²⁰

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Notes (continued)

¹⁰ The formulation is by Charles Blanc, *Grammaire des arts du dessin* (1867) (Paris: ENSBA, 2000), p. 542.

¹¹ Varnedoe and Galassi, op. cit. (note 9), pp. 20-21.

¹² Cf Gombrich on the film still: "They are specially made and very often specially posed on the set, after the scene is taken. That thrilling scene where the hero embraces his girl while he keeps the villain covered with a revolver may consist of many yards of film containing twenty-four frames per second of running time, but none of them may be really suitable for enlargement and display." Ernst Hans Gombrich, "Moment and Movement in Art," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* no. 27, 1964, p. 296.

¹³ Wolfgang Kemp 'translated' the literary theoretical notions *Unbestimmtheitsstelle* (Roman Ingarden) and *Leerstelle* (Wolfgang Iser) to art history, in: Wolfgang Kemp, "Death at Work: On Constitutive Blanks in 19th Century Painting," *Representations* no. 10, 1985, pp. 102-123.

¹⁴ Marc Augé, *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity* (London and New York: Verso, 1995).

¹⁵ Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image* (London: Continuum, 2009), pp. 111-113.

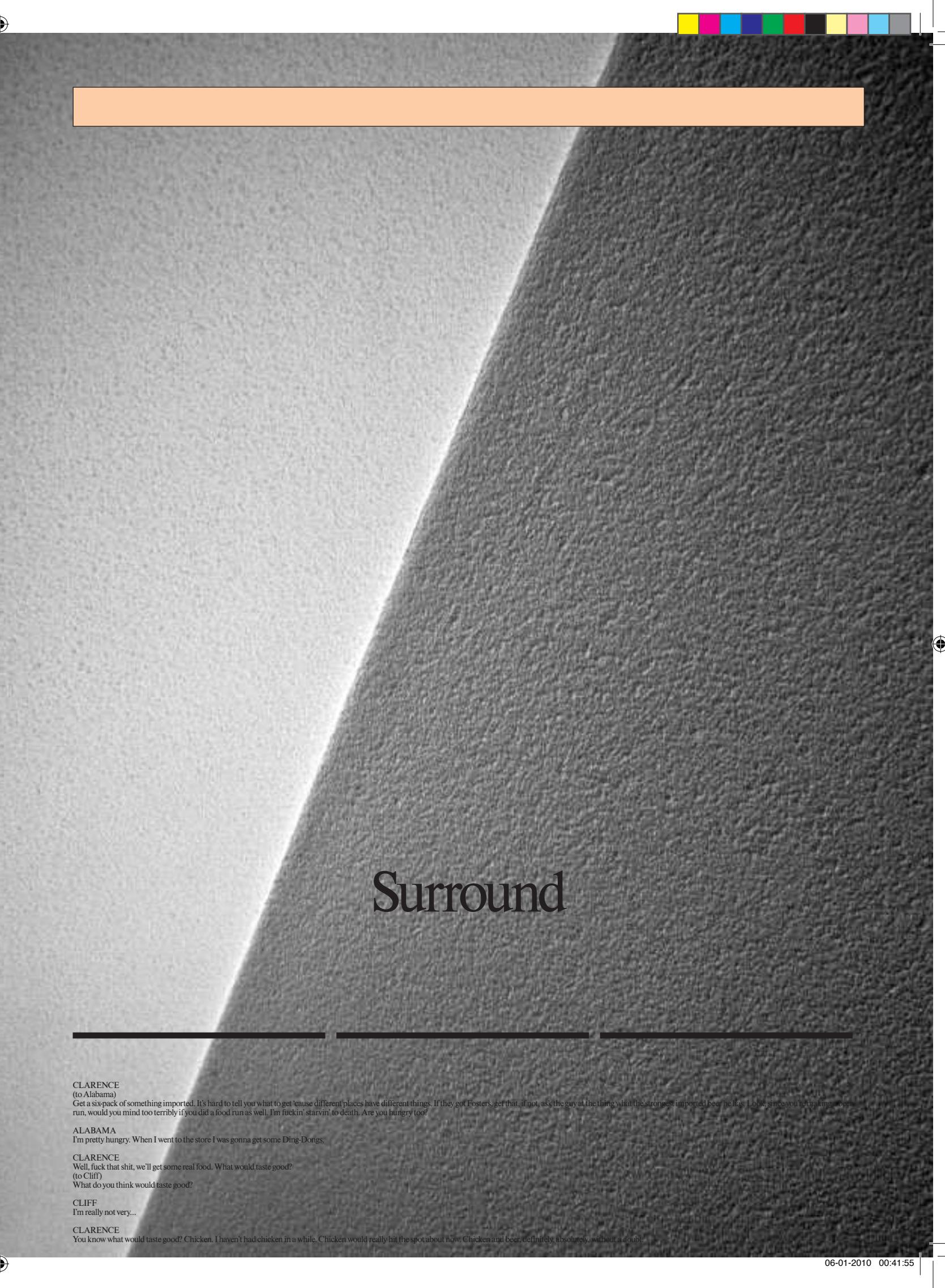
¹⁶ For a more comprehensive discussion of this notion with Deleuze, see: John Rajchman, "Deleuze's Time, or How the Cinematic Changes Our Idea of Art," in *Art and the Moving Image: A Critical Reader*, ed. Tanya Leighton (London: Tate Publishing, 2008), pp. 307-327.

¹⁷ Dirk Lauwaert, "The Blinding of Photography" ('Het blinden van de fotografie') was first published in the journal of the Museum Dhondt Dhaenens, Ghent (MDD no. 1, 2005) and is reprinted in this volume.

¹⁸ Cf Rajchman, op. cit. (note 16), p. 315.

¹⁹ For an extensive discussion of painting in relation to the technical media and of the notion 'paint screen,' see: Frank Reijnders, *Della Pittura: De schilderkunst en andere media* (Amsterdam: Duizend & Een, 2000).

²⁰ All quotes from Koen van den Broek were taken during a conversation with the author in the artist's studio, September 2009.



CLARENCE
(to Alabama)
Get a six-pack of something imported. It's hard to tell you what to get 'cause different places have different things. If they got Fosters, get that, if not, ask the guy at the thing what the strongest imported beer he has. Look, since you're thinking about a food run, would you mind too terribly if you did a food run as well. I'm fuckin' starvin' to death. Are you hungry too?

ALABAMA
I'm pretty hungry. When I went to the store I was gonna get some Ding-Dongs.

CLARENCE
Well, fuck that shit, we'll get some real food. What would taste good?
(to Cliff)
What do you think would taste good?

CLIFF
I'm really not very...

CLARENCE
You know what would taste good? Chicken. I haven't had chicken in a while. Chicken would really hit the spot about now. Chicken and beer, definitely, absolutely, without a doubt.



(Not a Colour Photograph): On the Dawning of Aspects in *This an Example of That*

John C. Welchman

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Part of John Baldessari's giant archive of found images scoured by the artist during the last three decades from photo and memorabilia stores and Hollywood-adjacent dumpsters, the fundamental premise of the originating photographs for *This an Example of That* is to represent, generally from the point of view of the film-camera, the particularity and consequential detail of a film set. Augmented by textual additions of several kinds—black chalk boards inscribed with the film title, set descriptor, date, director and shot numbers, as well as other categorizing numerals, usually in white—these images are managerial icons (sometimes doubled as press images) that pay homage to the elaborate simulation of place negotiated by Hollywood set design. Their organizing principle, then, is a form of overarching 'truth-to-location' that establishes these mostly interior spaces as epitomes, sometimes replicas, of the spaces most proper and appropriate to the characters who will move through them and the period-specific narratives they unfold. Their greatest debt is, therefore, to continuity and locative rectitude; and their role is generally that of material and atmospheric establishment.

In line with the variety of film products engendered by these scrupulously observed spaces, there is, of course, great variety in their address and make-up. At one end of the scale are the gorgeously grandiose Art deco-inflected sets for *The Jazz Age* (dir. Lynn Shores, 1929), including the Ziegfeld penthouse and Helen Morgan Club, and the exotic

(to Cliff)
Where's a good chicken place around here?

CLIFF
I really don't know.

CLARENCE
You don't know the chicken places around where you live?
(to Alabama)
Ask the guy at the place where a chicken place is.

He gives her some more money.

CLARENCE
This should cover it, Augie-Doggie.

ALABAMA
Okee-dokee, Doggie-Daddy.



(Not a Colour Photograph):
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historicism of *Camelot* (dir. Joshua Logan, 1967). In the middle register we encounter bourgeois interiors such as *Hunt's Home* (#38), Zeb's House (#166), and the Moroccan-accented drawing-room of #20. Then there are a number of more everyday locations, either workplaces such as the laboratory in #27, or general contexts such as the street scene from a Western set in #33, subtitled *With garlic and horses*.¹

But this simple typology does not account for all of the photographs, and, in fact, excludes some of the most interesting examples selected by Baldessari. Many of these are para-filmic, in the sense that they represent not places and contexts that will appear on film, but spaces that inform the making of a film, such as *Miss Southern's Dressing Table (With Mirror, Etc.)*—probably referring to Ann Sothern, aka Southern (1909–2001), who appeared in over a hundred movies and TV shows from the late 1920s through the 1980s. If this photograph shows the location at which an actress confronts herself in the process of being made up and delivered into her role, *Back of Same Set* takes us over to the other side of the type parodied by John Waters in *Cry-Baby* (1990), which was set in 1954 Baltimore and featured a version of *The Naughty Lady of Shady Lane* (by Baldwin and the Whiffles). *Photo Shoot (Desert with Car)* presents a related case, for it is uncertain whether the shoot in question is for a film or some other purpose, commercial or otherwise; or whether it might be a still taken during the making of a film in which process represented in these a photo shoot occurs.

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We have so far established some bearings among the materials that constitute simply the *grounds* of the collaboration between Baldessari and Koen van den Broek. This image repertoire was dispatched from Los Angeles to Antwerp, and just as van den Broek had no say in the selection and naming of the photographs, so Baldessari also abandoned his authorship, this time at the point of exchange. The initial dispatch was a selection of 22 black and white images, sent as low-resolution jpegs, so that key details were not visible, including the board-based texts that identify many of the photographs—and which van den Broek only discovered later after the photos were enlarged. As van den Broek wryly notes, "it was like John selected the images based on everything that I don't do and wouldn't use in my paintings: they were black and white, supplied with people, and mainly interiors, or intimate scenes... and, of course, he said nothing at all about any of this!"²

Van den Broek performed several operations on the photographs consigned to him. First, he worked on the complete range of images in the form of A3-formatted prints, by making painted additions, mostly in primary colours, which he refers to as 'designs.' It was important to the process that van den Broek was able to address them consecutively and have them available as a group within his compositional purview.

Once the designs were established, secondly, van den Broek had the works enlarged and mounted on board, so that they now appeared in a festive, bar-like expanse; or the a range of sizes, some at something blue masking applied over the furni-

She opens the door and starts out. Clarence turns to his dad as the door shuts.

CLARENCE
Isn't she the sweetest goddamned girl you ever saw in your whole life? Is she a four alarm fire, or what?

CLIFF
She seems very nice.

CLARENCE
Daddy. Nice isn't the word. Nice is an insult. She's a peach. That's the only word for it, she's a peach. She even tastes like a peach. You can tell I'm in love with her. You can tell by my face, can't ya? It's a dead giveaway. It's written all over it. Ya know what? She loves me back. Take a seat, Pop, we gotta talk v'

CLIFF
Clarence, just shut up, you're giving me a headache! I can't believe how much like your mother you are. You're your fuckin' mother through and through. I haven't heard from ya in three years. Then ya show up all of a sudden at eight o'clock in the morning. You walk in like a goddamn bulldozer... don't get me wrong. I'm happy to see you... just slow it down. Now, when did you get married?

CLARENCE
Daddy, I'm in big fuckin' trouble and I really need your help.



(Not a Colour Photograph):
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ture in a preliminary version of #52/ *The Learning Tree (Winger Dining Room)*, which, in association with the central red square, subverts the metallic and woody formality of the dining-room into a sectioned environment of coloured, footed shapes, with intimations of modern design in the tradition of Piet Mondrian.

The other mode is more aggressive and invasive. Here the marks seem almost recklessly to sweep across parts of the image, sometimes obliterating what's underneath, sometimes allowing glimpses of the former iconography to seep through the rapid strokes of their new pictorial coating (as with the red 'square' of #52). The most encompassing application is reserved for #3/*(Interior With Fireplace)* in which three panels of loosely brushed white paint obscure all but two slivers of the original image, permitting the viewer to see only a few chair legs at the bottom and some lighting encasements at the top. Even in this more interventionist mode, however, the additions usually respond to aspects of the formal or material constitution of the original scene. In #99/*The Jazz Age (Interior Helen Morgan Club)*, for example, a de luxe, highly theatrical, curtained space centred on a dining table is subject to two zonal additions. One conjures a curvilinear, palette-shaped, orange patch with an overlapping circumference of blue, tipped out of the frame to the right, which responds to the beribboned cinching of the flanking drapes. The other animates the table top with a sweeping brushstroke, seasoned with yellow, to form a billowing, tapered, abstract mass, the formal appearance of which offers dramatic resolution to the pleated fabrics behind and around it.

While several works combine these modes, in #48/*Too Much, Too Soon (Interior Sound Stage)* we encounter an unusually sustained distribution of pictorial supplements,

most of which operate in the hinterland between contouring and invasion. Van den Broek has largely followed the pre-existing lines of the bowls, platters, a cake stand and various food items set out on the buffet table that bifurcates the image. But while some of these marks are like frosted additions to various pies and puddings, others obscure either the comestibles or their contexts. The area at the base of the photograph, on the other hand, where the fold of the tablecloth hangs down, extending out of the frame, is made over into a blue-edged grid with highlights of red, laid down over touches of white and grey that develop its naturalistic appearance. What was surely the blankest area of the original photograph is thus transformed into an active zone of pictorial focus. The most remarkable additions, however, are made to the three jacketed figures, who we identify as actors (the figure to the right is Errol Flynn, who died shortly after the completion of this film) standing behind the buffet table, whose heads are crudely edged with red squares.

#48/*Too Much, Too Soon (Interior Sound Stage)* develops one of the subtlest of van den Broek's a sweeping brushstroke, seasoned dialogues with the formal interventions onto the photographic surface

Crack

made by his American collaborator. The convention of applying circles or coloured dots over the faces of the protagonists represented in them, which rapidly became Baldessari's paradigm device for the blocking-out or erasure of physiognomic identities, is probably the most recognizable and iterated of the artist's own additions to the found photographs with which he worked from the mid-1980s on.³ Manifestly aware of this key turn in Baldessari's work, van den Broek has wittily inverted the technique of dotted overlay and effacement by actively framing the three key faces, thus drawing them into the composition as highlights rather than blotting them out as absences. Alongside this ironic twist, #48/*Too Much, Too Soon (Interior Sound Stage)* is virtually the only work in the wider series in which van den Broek has used circular and semi-circular motifs. Exploiting the natural circularities of the plates and dishes on the table, he has painted-in two solid, quasi-circular forms in blue and green; edged the rim and sides of a bowl, cropped to the right, in light blue; and over-painted in red half of the central platter. By transposing the counter-physiognomic proclivities of his collaborator onto comestible objects and their receptacles, and accentuating the expressive heads of this masculine trio, van den Broek has unsettled the 'relational equilibrium' sought for by Baldessari through the cultivation of civic, social and celluloid anonymity.⁴

The curb motif recurs, in blue, in #101/*Camelot (Guenvere's Terrace)*, where it outcrops on the flagstones of the foreground terrace in the form of a thick horizontal line met by a much thinner stroke of blue that leads from the curtained door to form an acute angle. These marks are accompanied by a columnar stub painted-in where the adjacent wall meets a block of solid masonry on the right side of the photograph. As with #131, the additions make a radical impact on the compositional

BLACK TITLE CARD: "HOLLYWOOD"

INT. OUTSIDE OF CASTING DIRECTOR'S OFFICER—DAY

FOUR YOUNG ACTORS are sitting on a couch with sheets of paper in their hands silently mouthing lines. One of the actors is DICK RITCHIE. The casting director, MARY LOUISE RAVENCROFT, steps into the waiting room, clipboard in hand.

RAVENCROFT
Dick Ritchie?

Dick pops up from the pack.

DICK

I'm me... I mean, that's me.

RAVENCROFT
Step inside.



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organization of the image, in addition to flavouring its locative significance with a hint of holiday hotel or the theatre. Here, however, the curb is strategically placed in a terraced environment that is partly interior and partly exterior—a spatial *mélange* common enough, of course, in Baldessari's *Los Angeles*. Curbs make their presence felt again in a form that doubles as orange skirting board (paired with a yellow vertical) in #134/*The Jazz Age (Interior Ziegfeld's Penthouse)*; in the yellow, sectionated diagonal that edges the table in #27/*Superman In Exile (Laboratory)*; and, most dramatically, in the four angled shapes that float across the surface of one of the #166s, #166/*Ice Palace (Interior Lower Floor Zeb's House)*.

In his own paintings, the curb is a focal form for van den Broek's exploration of spatial borders, perspectival recession, and the stepped, zonal division between the speedy

vectors of the automobile and the slower trajectory of the pedestrian (though cars and people are almost never present). Abstracted from their normative contexts, which include the surface streets of the Los Angeles grid where van den Broek has worked during several sojourns in California, these curbs are transformed into a sequence of demarcational notations, standing-in for separating out. Looked at another way, their angular format turns them into hooks that catch hold of the photographic surface and threaten to pull it apart, or to detour it in two directions, as when the curb of a street meets an intersection and turns the corner with it. In this notion of

the corner we arrive at perhaps the closest analogy in avant-garde art to the effects of van den Broek's curbs. I am referring to the 'corner' or 'counter reliefs' of Vladimir Tatlin in which he took on, but then dismantled, the paradigm of Cubist fragmentation, only to reconvene its implications for three-dimensional practice at the interstitial meeting point of two space-defining walls. In his theory-informed practice, Tatlin was committed to the development of ideas through what he termed 'refraction points' which included not only the apparatus of his reliefs, but also relations between the individual and collective creativity: "The initiative individual," he wrote, is "the refraction point of the collective's creativity and brings realization to the idea."⁵ Here, hooks, intersections or corners themselves converge on the routes and passages forged in the artwork between individuals and collaborative collectivities.

One of the paradoxes of van den Broek's designs is that they overlay the formal language of neo-Constructivism with the pictorial texturalism of post-Neo-Expressionist painting; so that many of the supplemental marks appear in a geometricizing range of blurred verticals, horizontals, squares, lozenges and, of course, signature, curb-like ticks. On my reading the imprecisions of form, magnified in this series by the act of magnification itself, make a pair with the 'errors' or lapses in numbering and notation (which I will discuss in a moment): both betoken the preoccupation of this work with interstitial conditions or the confounding betweenness

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that separates (and sometimes reconvenes) painting and photography, figure and ground, the individual and the collective. This overlay, and the pairs and antitheses it releases, is managed quite literally in #36/*Burton (Interior Dr. Bentley's Office)*, a work that bears the telling inscription (out of the first photographic frame at the bottom): "Life as a movie." To achieve this work, van den Broek projected his own early painting *Eighth Avenue* (1999) onto the set photograph, and traced out some of its angles and intersections in black paint with smudges of white, which form a diagonal 'curtain' folded across the right side of the photo. In addition to figuring in a literal crossroads, this work raises the stakes of the superimpositional logic we have established, colliding Broadway in New York with Hollywood and LA, layering theatre over film (as well as paint onto photograph), and merging the forms of a painter with the ideas of the conceptual artist. More than even this, its final message offers an allegory for the series as a whole, as well as summarizing a central preoccupation of both artists: how life itself might relate to, or be considered as, a movie. "I thought about an audition when I saw the photo," van den Broek noted when discussing this image.⁶ Herein lies the answer to the last question: for the preface to both life and film is an audition, that special place of trial, seeing, hearing and acting out that secures (or otherwise) one's passage into the real simulation.

This aspect of the work is carefully managed by van den Broek. The coloured paint marks, he suggests, act to "withdraw my work from the photo." That is, they allow that it is there, and work with this allowance; but they also take it away. Van den Broek's supplements or superimpositions also depend, how-

INT. CASTING DIRECTOR'S OFFICE—DAY

She sits behind a large desk. Her name-plate rests on the desktop. Several posters advertising "The Return of T.J. Hooker" hang on the wall. Dick sits in a chair, holding his sheets in his hands.

RAVENCROFT

Well, the part you're reading for is one of the bad guys. There's Brian and Marty. Peter Breck's already been cast as Brian. And you're reading for the part of Marty. Now in this scene you're both in a car and Bill Shatner's hanging on the hood. And what you're trying to do is get him off. (she picks up a copy of the script)

Whenever you're ready.

DICK

(reading and miming driving)
Where'd you come from?

RAVENCROFT

(reading from the script lifelessly)
I don't know. He just appeared as magic.



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Example of That, and this is as much painted black, and in part of smooth the case for the perceptual scaling axles, gears, etc., and next to it a of the coloured touches as it is for grating made of light galvanized dimensions of the differently wire. I see the finished iron surfaces enlarged individual works. Van den as iron-coloured, the boy's hair as Broek's decision to work at A3 size blond, the grating as zinc-coloured, and then to blow-up the images has despite the fact that everything is clear consequences for the regimen depicted in lighter and darker tones of colours—which appear coarser, of the photographic paper.”⁸

Wittgenstein argues here for the phenomenological contouring of as pictorial marks, and more intrinsically ‘coloured’ than they would if colour were applied to the images colour were applied to the images after their enlargement. Recalling the process by which he arrived at his decisions, the artist notes that they were less a product of logical deduction than of relentless elimination. His technique arrived de facto, as van den Broek carefully ruled-out other approaches, especially those what he refers to as the ‘danger’ and ‘obviousness’ of ‘thinking about small gestures.’⁹

These questions can be opened up more effectively, perhaps, if we look across to some theoretical conjectures about colour’s relation to objects, spaces and photography itself. It turns out that one of the few philosophers to address all three of these dimensions in the signification of colour, Ludwig Wittgenstein—who will assist us here—offers a meditation on the colouristic impulses that govern the perception of a black and white photograph. In *Remarks* were first published his last work, *Remarks on Colour*, he unravels the following scenario:

“I see in a photograph (not a colour photograph) a man with dark hair and a boy with slicked-back blond hair standing in front of lathe, which is made in part of castings

which many of the photographs appropriated by Baldessari were taken), is, of course, even more characteristically the case in the age of the internet and the LED screen. Wittgenstein’s parable suggests

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that we are psychologically predisposed to rethink a black and white image in the terms of the colourized perception through which we look out onto the world—and that, in effect, some effort along the lines of van den Broek’s colouristic additions is not just inevitable, but has probably already happened. We might think of these supplements, then, as projected accelerations of visionary forms, the colour of which depends on a kind of afterimage already harvested from the perception of the image. This might explain more persuasively the oscillation of van den Broek’s marks between the conditions we have already set out: contour, infill, or object-consistency, which conform to the logic of the image, on the one hand; and interruption or intervention, assertions of form which appear to contest the logic of the observable, on the other.

Once again, Wittgenstein helps us to navigate across these thresholds. He writes in *Philosophical Investigations* that “the colour of the visual impression corresponds to the colour of the object ... the shape of the visual impression corresponds to the shape of the object ... but what I perceive in the dawning of an aspect is not a property of an object, but an internal relation between it and other objects.”¹⁰ We catch the philosopher moving, here, from a logic of correspondence in which colour (and shape) are properties of an object—which a viewer apprehends or intuits together, on this basis—to a more conjectural mode organized by contingent relationalities. Van den Broek’s marks, I want to suggest, are engaged in the production of what Wittgenstein nicely terms these “aspects dawning.” Posed between depth and surface, colour and non-colour, the intrinsic and the projected, they reanimate the scene of the photograph by working through, between and beyond its conditions. Sometimes the marks are stubbornly autonomous; sometimes they supply the photograph with its own pre-conditions, and sometimes imagine it into a future existence

Of course, van den Broek’s added marks are also signatures, and thus affirm another kind of identity, quite different from the self-possession by an object of its properties, or the desire of a black and white photograph for its colours. Like the period production stills used by Baldessari for the past quarter-century, the repertoire of oranges, greens, yellows, blues, reds and creamy whites, often arranged in couplets and trios, and the smearable daubing that puts them their places, have become declarative elements in a personal style. Van den Broek insists on the readability of these colours as signatures—drawing them alongside Baldessari’s signature choices, manifest in the photographic groundwork. He further argues for the provision of “balance” they jointly engender: “like a good marriage ... it creates a complicated tension.”¹¹

Several consequences arise from the ‘marital’ interactivity of *This an Example of That*, and the shared custody of its productive scene negotiated by the two artists. One of these is a scene of disjunction and

DICK
(reading from script)
Well, don't just sit there, shoot him.

She puts her script down, and smiles at him.

RAVENCROFT
That was very good.

DICK
Thank you.

RAVENCROFT
If we decided on making him a New York type, could you do that?

DICK
Sure. No problem.



(Not a Colour Photograph):
On the Dawning of Aspects in
This an Example of That
John C. Welchman

mistranslation, that generates, in Troyes' poem *Lancelot, the Knight of the Cart*—should be the more general, semantic, formal) arising from the collision of double points of origin and multiple points of view. The two eyes that look onto the work, in short, move in and out of synchronization. Their slight lack of alignment, or failure to engender parallax vision, results in a number of parapraxes visible in the documentary protocols of the series. The most obvious are typographic slips arising from both the primary points of origin in the set photographs themselves, and from later formalizations and exchanges. #38/Hunt's Home (*Interior with Fireplace, Clock, etc.*), for example, should actually read 'Aunt's Home,' as it refers to the Malibu house of Aunt Margaret, played by Kathryn Givney, as seen in the opening sequences of *Once You Kiss a Stranger ...* (dir. Robert Spaar, 1969). The 'A' in the identification card inserted into the found photo could easily be misread as an 'H,' which is how Baldessari transcribed it. Other slips appear to be a product of the shift between languages and contexts as the works-in-progress moved from Los Angeles to Antwerp, Maastricht and Brussels. In the book version of the *This an Example of That* project, for example, 'Ziegfeld' is spelled both 'Ziegfells' (in #131/*The Jazz Age (Int. Ziegfells Penthouse)*) and 'Ziegfield' (in #134/*The Jazz Age (Interior Ziegfield's Penthouse)*). While the legendary queen consort of King Arthur, in #101/*Camelot (Guenevere's Terrace)*, famous for her love affair with Arthur's chief knight Sir Lancelot—which first appears in Chrétien de

turn, several after-effects (perceptual, semantic, formal) arising from the book itself is an example of the on-going revisionism of the project, for it reproduces images that van den Broek describes as unfinished versions of the series exhibited at the Bonnefantenmuseum, Maastricht and the Gallery Greta Meert, Brussels in October 2008.

While these are incidental details, to be sure, they are, at the same time, symptomatic of the wider disjunctive and choristic paradigms that underwrite the series, to which both artists contribute, consciously and unconsciously. In the book referred to above, the doubling, rhyming and slippages we have identified in the accompanying typography are given some measure of formalized sanction by the disparate numerical system added to the titles, and the lay-out within which they are arranged. The image flow of the book starts with #99, then proceeds in the following sequence: 38, 38, 166, 166, 10, 10, 20, 20, 14, 14, 51, 51 [unnumbered], [unnumbered], 33, 33, 62, 62, 101, 101, 131, 131, 36, 36, [unnumbered], [unnumbered], 134, 48, 3, [unnumbered], [unnumbered], 166, 166, [unnumbered], [unnumbered], 27, 27, 52, 52, 99. In this arrangement, the works are pieced out in fugal couplets, with one pair split between the beginning and the end and another borrowing the number (166) of a different work, so that every image faces onto two others; but their numerical sequence is the production of an unfathomable logic. One effect of this randomized sequencing is that

Notes

¹ All works in *This an Example of That* bear the title of the series followed by a number and descriptive subtitle. Henceforth works will be referred to only with their number and the second part of the title.

² Koen van den Broek, discussion with the author, September 2009.

³ On the question of Baldessari's counter-facialized protagonists, see my "Art Subjects: Physiognomy Without a Face", in *John Baldessari: Pure Beauty*, eds. Leslie Jones and Jessica Morgan (London: Tate Modern, 2009); exhibition in Tate Modern, from October 13, 2009 to January 10, 2010, travelling to Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, February 11 to April 25, 2010; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, June 27 to September 12, 2010; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, October 17, 2010 to January 9, 2011; and "Re: Facing", in *John Baldessari: BRICK BLDG, LG WINDOWS W/XLENT VIEWS, PARTIALLY FURNISHED, RENOWNED ARCHITECT*, ed. Martin Hentschel (Krefeld: Museum Haus Lange), p. 110-123; exhibition from March 1 to July 19, 2009.

⁴ See "Relational Equilibrium," a discussion between John Baldessari and John C. Welchman, in *John Baldessari: From Life*, ed. Marie de Bruxelles (Nîmes: Carré d'Art Musée d'art contemporain de Nîmes; ENSBA, Paris, 2005); exhibition from 19 October, 2005 to 8 January, 2006.

⁵ Vladimir Tatlin, "The Initiative Individual in the Creativity of the Collective" (1919), in *Art in Theory, 1900-2000: An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, ed. Charles Harrison and Paul Wood (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), p. 334.

⁶ Koen van den Broek, discussion with the author, September 2009.

⁷ Koen van den Broek, discussion with the author, September 2009.

⁸ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Remarks on Colour* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), p. 63.

⁹ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1973), p. 212.

¹⁰ Koen van den Broek, discussion with the author, September 2009.

¹¹ See *This an Example of That* (Mechelen: bkSM, 2008).

This an Example of That clearly has its own scenographic investments and is produced into public visibility with a combination of refrains, leaps and shifts—all predicated on the duets of double-appearance. This mode of display offers to incorporate what might be lost or forgotten, mistranscribed or mistranslated, deferred or projected, into the operating system of the work. The set, here, is a kind of set-up, something pre-established yet somehow waiting to pounce on, or even trick the viewer. Just as van den Broek's marks work in the relational spaces between objects, representations and colours (and their respective properties), so the bilateral aspect of the series as a whole is driven by a constant shuttle between two authorial and stylistic poles, and the aesthetically consequential bleed of one into the other, as numbers, letters, forms and colours are sent spinning in a centrifuge of 'theses' and 'thats.'

RAVENCROFT
Could we try it now?

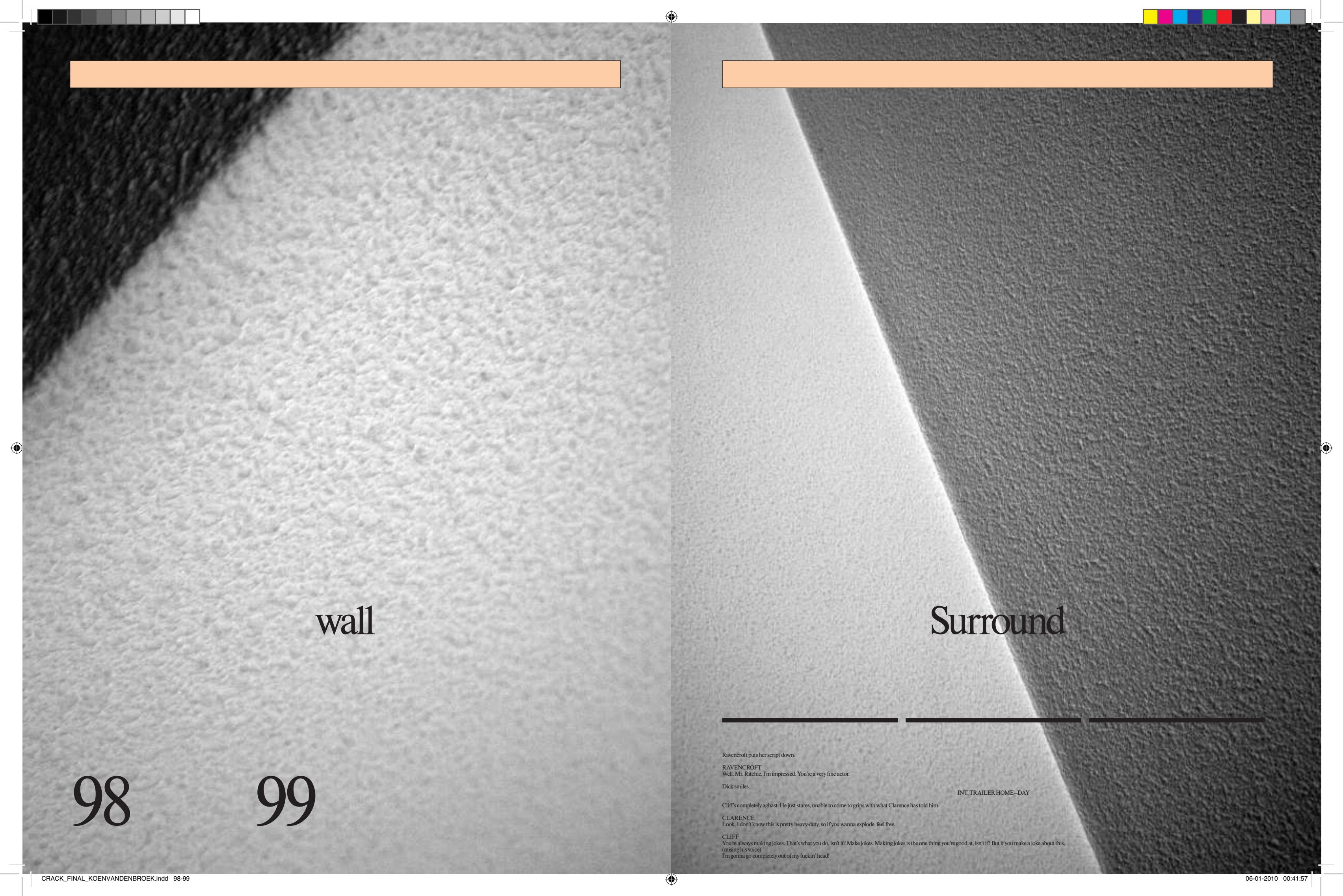
DICK
Absolutely.

Dick picks up the script and begins, but this time with a Brooklyn accent.

DICK
Where'd he come from?

RAVENCROFT
(monotone, as before)
I don't know. He just appeared as magic.

DICK
Well, don't just sit there, shoot him.



98

99

wall

Surround

Ravencroft puts her script down.

RAVENCROFT
Well, Mr. Ritchie, I'm impressed. You're a very fine actor.

Dick smiles.

INT. TRAILER HOME—DAY

Cliff's completely aghast. He just stares, unable to come to grips with what Clarence has told him.

CLARENCE
Look, I don't know this is pretty heavy-duty, so if you wanna explode, feel free.

CLIFF
You're always making jokes. That's what you do, isn't it? Make jokes. Making jokes is the one thing you're good at, isn't it? But if you make a joke about this, (raising his voice) I'm gonna go completely out of my fuckin' head!



Blank or Empty: Koen van den Broek's Painterly Speculations about Space

Wouter Davidts

100

101

"To cover the world, to cross it in every direction, will only ever be to know a few square metres of it, a few acres, tiny incursions into disembodied vestiges, small, incidental excitements, improbable quests congealed in a mawkish haze a few details of which will remain in our memory ... the world, no longer as a journey having constantly to be remade, not as a race without end, a challenge constantly to be met, not as the one pretext for a despairing acquisitiveness, nor as the illusion of a conquest, but as the rediscovery of a meaning, the perceiving that the earth is a form of writing, a *geography* of which we had forgotten that we ourselves are the authors."

Georges Perec¹

"Yet the dot evades our capacity to find its center. Where is the central point, axis, pole, dominant interest, fixed position, absolute structure, or decided goal? The mind is always being hurled towards the outer edge into intractable trajectories that lead to vertigo."

Robert Smithson²

Cliff pauses and collects himself.

CLIFF
What do you want from me?

CLARENCE
What?

CLIFF
Stop acting like an infant. You're here because you want me to help you in some way. What do you need from me? You need money?

CLARENCE
Do you still have friends on the force?

CLIFF
Yes, I still have friends on the force.

CLARENCE



Koen van den Broek's exhibition "Angle" at White Cube in Hoxton Square, London, in the spring of 2007 consisted of eleven new works, presented as a coherent series.³ According to van den Broek, "Angle" signaled a movement "back to the beginning," even a "nostalgic" return. After seven years of work and a subsequent sabbatical year, the artist forced himself to return to the "language of the early years." He wanted to look at an earlier painting "not just as a picture but more as an object."⁴ Van den Broek also changed his by then familiar working procedure. The works in "Angle" were not painted after photographs but after existing works by the artist. *Cut Out* (2006) for example was painted after *Green and Pink Border* (2001), *Yellow Milk* (2006) after *Red Border* (1999), and both the diptychs *Movement* (2006) and *Anything Goes* (2006) after *Eight Avenue* (1999). If one looks closely at van den Broek's young body of work prior to 2007, however, one cannot fail to note that "Angle" represents just a partial return. "Angle" consists only of revisions of van den Broek's so-called 'border paintings,' a signature series of works made after photographs of the surface of streets and its many features, both functional and formal, such as curbs, borders, gutters, pavement, and cracks. Alongside these the artist has steadily painted both country and urban scenes, either vast or densely populated by assorted manmade objects and structures, buildings or large-scale infrastructure; such as a luminous red truck abandoned in a desert-

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like plain with a mountain reef in the back (*Ghost Truck*, 1999), a greyish cottage against the background of snowy mountains (*Andorra*, 2002), a horse with carriage in the snow (*Frydlant #2*, 2003), a tent structure (*Circus*, 2003); a ghostly park (*American Psycho*, 2004); a water reservoir (*Reservoir*, 2005); and a mountain village (*Landscape (Keeler US)*, 2007); a sloping mountain of sand (*Mesquite Flat*, 2009). The perspectival disposition of either type of work is significantly different. Whereas a 'border painting' is based upon a distorted and downward photographic perspective of a street surface, a 'scenic painting' stems from a plain and frontal picture of a particular outdoor landscape or setting.⁵ Van den Broek did not, surprisingly, subject the 'scenic paintings' to his willful revision of his painterly practice. Why would the artist limit the reconsideration of his formal language to the 'border paintings,' especially as he never fails to stress that he 'needs' the 'scenic paintings.'⁶ If they deliver the necessary balance within the overall production of his work, why then did he not subject them to an equally meticulous revision of their formal language?

The reworking the earlier works implied, the artist noted, "disconnecting the titles from their origin" and thus coming up with new ones.⁷ While most of the works in "Angle" bear equally abstract titles to the works they stem from, the first work made in the series has a both mystifying and expressive title, if not a programmatic one: *Solution* (2006), painted after *Red and Blue*

Border (2000).⁸ If "Angle" represents a moment of retrospection cum-self-reflection in the painterly practice of van den Broek, does *Solution* then signal a moment of revelation, or even elucidation? Does *Solution*, not unlike *Onement* for Barnett Newman, mark a moment that van den Broek could "finish questing?"⁹ Questing for what? one might ask. And if so, what was the answer he found? Or, even more importantly in the first place, which problem was at stake in the earlier work?

Solution is of the same size as *Red and Blue Border* and in essence contains the same image: a vertical perspective on a fragment of road, framed by two curbs, the first located in the left upper part of the canvas and painted red, and the second, painted blue, in the right lower part of the canvas. Yet both paintings are fundamentally different. For *Red and Blue Border*, as for all of his 'border paintings,' van den Broek used a formal strategy that exploits a peculiar quality of the built environment. Despite the utter intricacy and diversity of buildings, roads and city infrastructure, the urban landscape of concrete objects and forms contains the germ of pictorial abstraction. Depending on viewing angle, proximity, or clarity, images of the many 'edifices' and 'constructions' in our daily surroundings can advance the dormant abstract qualities of the latter's inherent surfaces, structures, grids, and patterns (thus the ubiquity of architecture and the urban landscape as both an artistic subject and a visual source for both painting and photography). In *Red*

Notes

¹ Georges Perec, *Species of Spaces* (1974), in *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces*, ed. and transl. John Sturrock (London: Penguin Books, 1997), pp. 1-96 (78-79). Whereas I used the English translation for the quotations in this essay, I developed my argument on the original French text, as republished in 2000 with an undated addendum (*Prière d'insérer*) on a separate page by Perec: Georges Perec, *Espèces d'espaces* (1974) (Paris: Galliée, 2000). This addendum has not been added to the 1997 English translation yet contains vital comments by the author on his book.

² Robert Smithson, *A Museum of Language in the Vicinity of Art* (1968), in *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, ed. Jack D. Flam (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), pp. 78-94 (94).

³ "Angle" was the first exhibition for which the artist made a coherent series of works. For an overview of the series, see: *Angle: 11 works by Koen van den Broek exhibited in the White Cube, London (February 2nd–March 10th, 2007)* (London: White Cube, 2007). In 2008, van den Broek developed a new coherent series of works entitled *Out of Space*. First shown at the Figge von Rosen Gallery in Cologne (April 17–June 14, 2008), the *Out of Space* series were painted after the works of *This an Example of That*, the collaborative project with John Baldessari that was to be presented later that year in the Bonnefantenmuseum in Maastricht (October 17, 2008–January 25, 2009) and the Galerie Greta Meert in Brussels (October 12–November 22, 2008). For a complete overview of the works of *Out of Space*, see: *Koen van den Broek: Out of Space* (Cologne: Figge von Rosen, 2008). For a review of the show in Cologne, see: Wouter Davidts, "Koen van den Broek: Out of Space," *Artforum* Vol. 47, no. 3, October 2008. The preparatory studies of the series *This and Example of That* can be found in: John Baldessari, *Koen van den Broek: This an Example of That* (Ghent: MER. Paper Kunsthalle; Strombeek: BKSM, 2008).

⁴ Koen van den Broek, "Angle," in: *Angle: 11 works by Koen van den Broek exhibited in the White Cube, London (February 2nd–March 10th, 2007)* (London: White Cube, 2007), p. 1.

⁵ For a discussion of the photographic and subsequent painterly strategies in the work of Koen van den Broek, I refer to Dirk Lauwaert, ("Het blinden van de fotografie/The Blinding of Photography") published in the journal of the Museum Dhondt Dhaenens, Ghent (MDD, no. 1, 2005) and republished in this volume.

⁶ The artist during a roundtable discussion in preparation of this publication at the White Cube gallery storage, London, on June 26th 2009. Participants were Vinca Kruk, Andrew Renton, Merel van Tilburg, Philippa von Rosen, Astrid Vorstermans, John Welchman, and Wouter Davidts.

⁷ Not unlike the all-encompassing colour red in Henri Matisse's *The*

and Blue Border van den Broek plays out this latent abstract pictorial qualities of our built environment, in this case focusing on such an urban trait as a street. Due to its distorted close-up perspective on the surface of the street—with no horizon nor human presence—*Red and Blue Border* continuously moves back and forth between an abstract composition of lines and surfaces and a figurative picture of an empty roadside scene. *Solution* reduces this ambulant image formation almost, if not altogether, to a zero degree. Daily elements like a street lamp, two sections of green lawn and a pair of cracks and different shades of grey of the concrete street surface, which grant *Red and Blue Border* its figurative disposition, have all disappeared. *Solution* is an abstract composition consisting of a blank pink surface upon which the red border freely hovers in the left upper part of the painting and the blue border clings to the right edge of the canvas, granting it some sort of stability. *Solution* only vaguely reminds of the foregoing image. Contrary to *Red and Blue Border*, *Solution* somewhat fails, albeit most intriguingly, to generate a figurative image. The painting fosters a further abstraction of an already quasi-abstract representation of space; to such a degree that the latent figuration is put on hold. The pink colour of the painting's surface is, as the artist noted, "so flat" that the blue and the red element, while giving a certain depth to the image, fall short of generating a perspectival space.¹⁰ Not unlike the all-encompassing colour red in Henri Matisse's *The*

Could you find out if they know anythin'? I don't know they know shit about us. But I don't wanna think, I wanna know. You could find out for sure what's goin' on.
(pause)
Daddy?

CLIFF
What makes you think I could do that?

CLARENCE
You were a cop.

CLIFF
What makes you think I would do that?

CLARENCE
I'm your son.

CLIFF
You got it all worked out, don't you?



Red Studio (L'atelier rouge, 1911), the pictorial and spatial effect of the pervasive pink in *Solution* is such that it reduces space to the level of the picture surface, all the while magically suggesting depth.¹¹ *Solution* is marked by a similarly incessant optical play between the frontal nature of the picture plane and the virtual space of the image.

Space has always been a critical subject of painting, from the invention of perspective in the Renaissance to the emergence of abstraction in the 20th century. Whether painters chose for realism or abstraction, the challenge always remained the same: to paint a space that critically relates and corresponds to the space(s) that we inhabit. From Alberti to Matisse and Barnett Newman, painters questioned the status of the painting as a window on the world. From the start, van den Broek consciously engaged in a dialogue with this historical tradition of exploring the contemporary nature and meaning of space within the medium of painting, in particular in the era after abstract painting. Both the scenic and border paintings are driven by the artist's unremitting speculations whether, in order to question the contemporary status of space, one can represent it or whether one is obliged—to use Newman's expression—to 'declare' it.¹² Van den Broek simultaneously takes up and repositions the challenges set by abstract painting. While abstract painters explored space by wiping out any anchor of a representational or even vaguely identifiable image, van den Broek proceeds by seeking out the

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extent to which it can be reintroduced again—not to replace the abstract representation of space with a figurative version, but rather to balance it out.

"Anything that exists," Lawrence Weiner once stated, "has a certain space around it; even an idea exists within a certain space."¹³ There is space above our head, space under our chair, space next to our bed, space around our house, space in our country, and space on and beyond the earth. Space is elusive but very present. Space is everywhere yet there are many species of spaces.¹⁴ To explore its nature and meaning is, contrary to what many abstract painters believed, far from representing a 'non-thing'.¹⁵ Well aware of the legacy of post-Minimalism and Conceptual Art, van den Broek investigates the extent to which the factual registration and deconstructive testing of spaces within the former and the analytical understanding and ideological decoding of spaces within the latter can be employed to unhinge the transcendental approach and the ensuing idealist understanding of space within painting.¹⁶ Van den Broek however consciously and stubbornly sticks to the medium of painting, even in an era where it has been declared obsolete ad nauseam.¹⁷ Painting, so he never fails to note, is only one means amongst many others available to contemporary artists today, albeit one with a lengthy historical and theoretical legacy that one willy-nilly has to negotiate with. It is not merely a medium with which one is able to visualize space—whether realistic-

ally or abstractly—but also one with which one can question space whilst visualizing it—both formally and conceptually.¹⁸ *Solution* can be seen as an absolute pinnacle of this endeavor. Whereas the work may at first seem only remotely reminiscent of the spaces that we occupy and traverse in our everyday existence, it all the more explores the very constitution of those spaces, that is, through a radical representation of the very material structures that establish them.

Human beings, French novelist Georges Perec writes in *Species of Spaces* (*Espèces d'espaces*, 1974) have a rather bad comprehension of the space they occupy and use. "The space of our lives," he states, "is neither continuous, nor infinite, neither homogeneous, nor isotropic." That however doesn't mean, so he continues, that "we know precisely where it breaks itself down, where it curbs itself, where it disconnects itself, and where it gathers itself back again." We traverse from one space to another but seldom try to measure, control or acknowledge it: "Bewildered we experience fissures, gaps, points of friction, while we now and then have the vague impression that it corners itself down someplace, or that it bursts out, or that it crashes into itself." To get a better sense of space, Perec argues, the challenge is not so much "to reinvent space, ... but to question it, or, yet even simpler, to read it." To this end an analyzing stance is the most appropriate. "[T]oo many good-intentioned people," he ironically adds between brackets, "already occupy

Notes (continued)

⁷ Van den Broek, op. cit. (note) 4, p. 1.

⁸ When the artist invited me in 2006 to visit his studio to look at the works that he was planning to show at the "Angle" exhibition in the White Cube gallery in London, *Solution* immediately stood out to me as the centre piece of the series. Only later I learned in conversation with the artist in October 2009 that it was the first work made by the artist in the series and that he himself considered it as a crucial work as soon as he had painted it.

⁹ Barnett Newman, as quoted in Thomas B. Hess, *Barnett Newman* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1971), p. 51. For critique on Hess's existential reading of Newman's statement and a far more intriguing analysis of its implications, see: Yve-Alain Bois, "Perceiving Newman," in: *Painting as Model* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1993), pp. 187-213.

¹⁰ The artist in conversation with the author, October 2009.

¹¹ Jean Leymarie, "The Painting of Matisse," in *Henri Matisse*, ed. Jean Leymarie, Herbert Read and William S. Lieberman (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1966), pp. 9-18 (14).

¹² Barnett Newman, "Frontiers of Space: Interview with Dorothy Gees Seckler," *Art in America* Vol. 50, no. 2 (Summer) 1962, pp. 83-87, as reprinted in: *Barnett Newman: Selected Writings and Interviews*, ed. John P. O'Neill (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990), pp. 247-251 (249).

¹³ Lawrence Weiner, as cited in: Roselee Goldberg, "Space as Praxis," *Studio International* Vol. 190, no. 977, 1975, pp. 130-136.

¹⁴ Here I paraphrase the title of a show on art and architecture in 1999 in Esslingen. For a catalogue of the exhibition, see: Renate Wiehager, ed., *The Space Here Is Everywhere: Kunst mit Architektur = Art with Architecture* (Esslingen: Galerien der Stadt, 1999).

¹⁵ Jimmy Ernst, a painter initially associated with Abstract Expressionism and the son of the Surrealist Max Ernst, as quoted in: Michael Auping, "Four Horizons," in *Declaring Space: Mark Rothko, Barnett Newman, Lucio Fontana, Yves Klein* (Fort Worth: Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth; Munich: Prestel Verlag, 2007), pp. 135-164 (137): "For our generation, the issue was as clear as it was indefinable. It was about the nature of space in our time ... We all talked about it—Americans, Europeans—how do you visualize a non-thing."

¹⁶ Deviant of all "conventional signs, ... islands and capes," it is "[a] perfect absolute blank."²⁰ *The Bellman's Map* indeed does not present any point of reference. It is nothing but a rectangular and blank frame, alongside the rims of which are nonetheless indicated the North on top, the West on the left and

themselves with thinking about our environment." The many structures and constructions populating our daily environment that are meant to organize life and manage human traffic never turn our world transparent. Quite the contrary, Perec ends, "what we call everydayness isn't marked by evidence, but by opacity: a form of blindness, a manner of anesthesia."¹⁹

Species of Spaces consists of Perec's lengthy description, and at times rather idiosyncratic account of the many spaces that we occupy and navigate in our daily lives: the page, the bed, the bedroom, the apartment, the apartment building, the street, the neighborhood, the town, the countryside, the country, Europe, the world. Surprisingly, the first illustration (Fig. 1) in the book

does not show a daily space. Perec starts his book with the intriguing *Ocean-Chart* or *The Bellman's Map* of Lewis Carroll's story *The Hunting of the Snark*. Central to this agonizing story about the voyage of an improbable crew to find an inconceivable creature is the peculiar map that the leader—the Bellman—uses to sail the sea. The crew is relieved that this document is "[w]ithout the least vestige of land," as this provides them with "[a] map they could all understand."

Deviant of all "conventional signs, ... islands and capes," it is "[a] perfect absolute blank."²⁰ *The Bellman's Map* indeed does not present any point of reference. It is nothing but a rectangular and blank frame, alongside the rims of which are nonetheless indicated the North on top, the West on the left and

CLARENCE
Look, goddammit, I never asked you for a goddamn thing! I've tried to make your parental obligation as easy as possible. After Mom divorced you, did I ask you for anything? When I wouldn't see ya for six months to a year at a time, did you ever get your shit about it? No, it was always "OK," "No problem," "You're a busy guy, I understand". The whole time you were a drunk, did I ever point my finger at you and talk shit? No! Everybody else did. I never did. You see, I know that you're just a bad parent. You're not really very good at it. But I know you love me. I'm basically a pretty resourceful guy. If I didn't really need it I wouldn't ask. And if you say no, don't worry about it. I'm gone. No problems. Alabama walks in through the door carrying a shopping bag.

ALABAMA
The forager's back.

CLARENCE
Thank God. I could eat a horse if you slap enough ketchup on it.

ALABAMA
I didn't get any chicken.

CLARENCE
How come?



the South on the right-hand-side, as well as the North Pole on the left and South Pole on the right. Other terms that are printed clockwise yet without clear logic alongside the perimeters of the frame are "Nadir, Meridian, Latitude, Equator, Equinox, Zenith, Longitude." These remain just meaningless and formal notations, since there are no elements, dots or lines within the map itself to which they might relate or refer. The size of the chart is undefined either. The "Scale of Miles" at the lower left corner consists of a mere cryptic line of dots: "...". Perec's version of the *Ocean-Chart* however differs quite a bit from Carroll's: all notations alongside the frame have been erased, the double line of the frame is reduced to a single line, the scale has been removed and the rectangular format is now square. Perec thus presents us with a further reduced version of an already abstract chart. While Carroll's map still vaguely bears the resemblance of a map, Perec's has become an abstract image, a 'picture' that is somewhat reminiscent of a Suprematist composition by Kazimir Malevich, in particular the square painting *White on White* (1918). The kinship between *The Bellman's Map* and abstract painting did not escape the artist Robert Smithson either. In the essay "A Museum of Language in the Vicinity of Art" (1968) he notes that the chart reminds him of a work by Jo Baer. Baer's paintings, he writes, are marked by a similar kind of "abstract cartography." But more important is Smithson's observation that the blankness of Baer's "surfaces" corresponds

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to that of the map, which, as he most insightfully notes, "contains 'nothing,' yet is 'not a 'void'.'" Baer's paintings, the artist suggests, depict a lack of spatial reference rather than a spatial abyss.

Smithson's distinction between blankness and emptiness, between the vacant and the void, is equally significant for Perec. Referring to the first image in his book he starts the Foreword by declaring that "[t]he subject of this book is not the void exactly, but rather what there is round about or inside it (cf Fig. 1)." The *Bellman's Map*, or rather Perec's schematized version of it, is certainly not empty. In the most abstract sense, it makes space 'emerge' by 'framing' it. The space within that frame may contain nothing, yet the very fact that it is positively asserted on the page within a frame, makes it more than a mere void. As such the illustration perfectly underscores Perec's aim of the book. Space might be what he wants to tackle, yet not in an abstract sense. Perec realizes that space as such is too abstract a notion. It offers little more than "nothingness, the impalpable, the virtually material; extension, the external, what is external to us, what we move about in the midst of, our ambient milieu, the space around us."²³ Space, Perec suggests, is everywhere yet does not become visible in itself. It comes about through those very material manifestations that we encounter on a daily basis yet do not manage properly to get our heads around. "To live," he notes at the end of the Foreword, "is to pass from one space to another, while doing your

very best not to bump yourself."²⁴ With *Species of Spaces* Perec attempts to map and describe those manifold material obstacles that delimit, define, contain, circumscribe, and cover the spaces and sites we use and traverse. The very requirement for his descriptive enterprise, he discloses, is one of visual scrutiny. We simply need visual obstacles to "construct space" in our field of vision, or, to "see" it: "When nothing arrests our gaze, it carries a very long way. But if it meets with nothing, it sees nothing, it sees only what it meets. Space is what arrests our gaze, what our sight stumbles over: the obstacle, the bricks, an angle, a vanishing point. Space is when it makes an angle, when it stops, when we have to turn for it to start off again."²⁵

Perec's words almost read as the conceptual programme of van den Broek's painterly practice. Analogous to Perec, van den Broek has engaged in a mapping of the various spaces that are 'produced' by the numerous structures and constructions that we encounter during our daily navigation of the world. Yet whereas the writer's preferred medium is discursive, the artist's medium is visual. Van den Broek's body of work 'reads' as a figurative equivalent of Perec's listing: a bed (*Mattress*, 2003), a bedroom (*Love Hotel*, 2004), an apartment (*Hippi Corsica #3*, 2003), an apartment building (*Cohesion*, 2000), a street (*Eighth Avenue*, 1999), a neighborhood (*Bronx*, 2001), a town (*Lichterfelde*, 2004), the countryside (*Zion*, 2002). But the titles of the works clearly indicate that van den Broek

Notes (continued)

¹⁶ Van den Broek made this position manifestly clear in the exhibition "Fantasy" which he curated at MuHKA, the Antwerp Municipal Museum of Contemporary Art (March 21–September 21, 2008). Asked to present his work together with works of his own choice out of the collection of the museum, the artist added works by such seminal minimalist and conceptual artists as Marcel Broodthaers, Dan Flavin, Donald Judd, Blinky Palermo, Ed Ruscha and John Baldessari, as well as works by iconic painters such as Robert Mangold and Brice Marden or contemporary innovative figures such as Mary Heilmann and Mitja Tušek. Equally important are the artist's inclusion of artists that are emblematic of the conceptualist revision of painting and sculpture since the late 1980s, such as Thomas Schütte, Jeff Wall, Jan Verkruyse or Liam Gillick. Significant too was that van den Broek included *Solution* in the show as well, granting it a place in a room along works by Judd, Schütte, Gillick, Tušek and René Heyvaert.

¹⁷ In this respect it is very important to note that the critical comments of Catherine David, curator of Documenta X in Kassel in 1997 and notorious for her disavowal of painting, very much shaped the early work of van den Broek. David was a regular guest critic at the Higher Institute for Fine Arts (HISK) in Antwerp right after the Documenta X, during the period that van den Broek was one of the residing artists (1997–2000). For a comment of the artist on the role of David, see: Wouter Davidts and Guy Châtel, "The Lightness and Seriousness of the Project," *Janus*, no. 14, 2003, pp. 32–37.

¹⁸ In this, van den Broek is very much influenced by his peer and friend John Baldessari. During a lecture at the opening of the exhibition of their joint project *This is an Example of That* at the Bonnefantenmuseum in Maastricht on October 16, 2008, the artist stressed the contemporary relevance of a conceptualist questioning of the medium of painting: "Questions that John [Baldessari] posed in the early seventies, remain highly valid today. Can you paint when you are calling yourself a conceptualist? Or, in reverse, can you be a conceptual artist when you paint?"

¹⁹ My translation. Georges Perec, undated addendum (*Prière d'insérer*) on a separate page in *Spécies d'espaces* (1974) (Paris: Galilée, 2000): "L'espace de notre vie n'est ni continu, ni infini, ni homogène, ni isotrope. Mais sait-on précisément où il se brise, où il se courbe, où il se déconnecte et où il se rassemble? On sent confusément des fissures, des hiatus, des points de friction, on a parfois la vague impression que ça se coince quelque part, ou que ça éclate, ou que ça se cogne. Nous cherchons rarement à en savoir davantage et le plus souvent nous passons d'un endroit à l'autre, d'un espace à l'autre sans songer à mesurer, à prendre en charge, à prendre en compte ces laps d'espace. Le problème n'est pas d'inventer l'espace, encore moins de le ré-inventer (trop de gens bien intentionnés sont là aujourd'hui pour penser notre environnement ...), mais de l'interroger, ou, plus simplement encore, de le lire; car ce que nous appelons quotidennet n'est pas évidence, mais opacité: une forme de cécité, une manière d'anesthésie." Van den Broek plays upon our ambivalent relationship to sites and locations. While some of the depicted locations, metropoles like Paris, Los Angeles, Berlin or New York invoke a degree of familiarity—not in the

ALABAMA
It's nine o'clock in the morning. Nothing's open.

INT. TRAILER HOME—BEDROOM—DAY

Cliff's on the telephone in his bedroom, pacing as he talks. The living room of the trailer can be seen from his doorway, where Clarence and Alabama are horsing around. They giggle and cut up throughout the scene. As Cliff talks, all the noise and hubbub of a police station comes through over the line. He's talking to DETECTIVE WILSON, an old friend of his from the force. We see both inside the conversation.

CLIFF
It's about that pimp that was shot a couple of days ago, Drex Spivey.

WILSON
What about him?

CLIFF
Well, Ted, to tell you the truth, I found out through the grapevine that it might be, and I only said might be, the Drex Spivey that was responsible for that restaurant break-in on Riverdale.

WILSON



least since they have served time and again as a backdrop in film and television—other localities are utterly inconspicuous and generic, such as Lichervelde or Keeler, or of no retraceable geographic position at all. Yet not a single work of van den Broek allows for recognition or familiarization. All spaces and sites are equally lackluster and distant. Yet something remarkable happens the more van den Broek zooms in on those spatial features that demarcate, stop, turn, and enforce an angle upon our trajectories. While the introduction of a close up view and an eccentric perspective may wipe out spatial and locational specificity, it above all allows for space as such to visually emerge. Whereas in a scenic painting we come across an all over presence of space, we encounter its establishment in a border painting. We suddenly perceive a space that contains little to nothing yet is not a void. The depicted spatial vacuity however is not of absolute nature but the result of delineation—a stratagem that it shares with *The Bellman's Map*. To paraphrase Perec, van den Broek is not preoccupied with the void, but rather with "what there is round about or inside it." The depicted part of the street in *Red and Blue Border* may "contain nothing, yet it is not a void." The street is deserted: it is being left empty.

Emptiness but not the void then? Whereas the void stands for abstraction, emptiness implies tangibility: a space that is left vacant. The paramount medium to confront us with space in such a fashion undeniably is architecture. "Architecture,"

Blank or Empty: Koen van den Broek's Painterly Speculations about Space Wouter Davidts

as Geert Bekaert has written, "is not made to determine, but to establish a fundamental indeterminacy by its very determination."²⁶ Artificial as it is, it institutes an empty space within the fullness of the world. It clears up a zone and retains it open within the saturated presence of nature. Emptiness, Bekaert argues, is thus what is being built. This emptiness is not formless but demanding: it speaks of "belief in possibility, expectation and desire."²⁷ The significance of emptiness also pertains to kindred disciplines like large-scale infrastructure, urban furniture and road construction. Buildings, bridges, roads, curbs, pavements and sidewalks free up space within the world in order to let people pass through it, an act which often implies an emptying out process of the surrounding environment, either urban or natural. They define, in other words, the material frame and support through and upon which we can move and travel. This very status of supporting frame also constitutes their spatial power. All these different structures serve, as Perec writes, as the necessary obstructions to make us see space. By the very spatial separation and delineation they introduce, they are the preeminent structures to allow space to appear, that is, when being left empty. Space simply shows up best in an empty room; or, as van den Broek's paintings convey, on an empty street.

With *Solution* van den Broek managed to represent this reality principle by the highest degree of abstraction, while not succumbing to the production of an abstract image. It's as if the two hovering

relics of the former borders make such a vague notion as emptiness almost actual. They do not represent a void, but frame a blank space in the middle of the canvas—not unlike *The Bellman's map*. Only the most basic of elements that make up the frame—its 'borders'—stayed behind on the canvas. Again a painting by Matisse comes to mind. Throughout his whole career, Matisse painted many windows—of which many were of his studio—to play upon difficult dialogue between art and reality.²⁸ The most radical of these is undeniably *French Window at Collioure* (1914), painted during a period that Matisse started to experiment with abstraction. In contrast to paintings of that same period, such as *The Blue Window* (La fenêtre bleue [La glace sans tain], 1913), *Interior with Goldfish Bowl* (Intérieur, bocal de poissons rouges, 1914) or *The Window* (La fenêtre, 1916), *French Window at Collioure* does not show any detail of the interior of the room from which the painter looked through the window. Neither can one discern anything behind the window. In *French Window at Collioure* Matisse only painted the perimeter of the window, or that which frames the view. In respectively the left and right part of the painting he put the two windowpanes, of which the left is aligned with the wall and the right is only half open, thereby granting the painting spatial perspective and depth. The middle of the painting however is a murky black rectangle, which causes one to doubt whether Matisse looked from the inside towards the outside, but rather the

Notes (continued)

²⁰ Lewis Carroll, *The Hunting of the Snark: An Agony in Eight Fits* (1874), p. 21.

²¹ Smithson, op. cit. (note 2) pp. 92-93.

²² Perec, op. cit. (note 1), p. 5.

²³ Perec, op. cit. (note 1), p. 5.

²⁴ Perec, op. cit. (note 1), p. 5.

²⁵ Perec, op. cit. (note 1), p. 81.

²⁶ Geert Bekaert, "Een gebouw waar kunst haar intrek kan nemen," in *Museumarchitectuur*, ed. Cornelis van de Ven and Bob Martens (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 1989), pp. 56-68 (76). My translation.

²⁷ Ibidem.

²⁸ Leymarie, op. cit. (note 11), p. 14.

²⁹ John Elderfield and Judith Cousins, "Part IV—1913-1917: Abstraction and Experimentation," in John Elderfield, *Henri Matisse: A Retrospective* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1993), pp. 237-241 (40).

other way around, into the room. In that case, the framed view is not so much a void but an empty space—albeit one that is so dark that it looks like an abyss.

When Matisse painted *French Window at Collioure* the work did not meet with great acclaim—it took until 1966 for it to be exhibited, until abstract painting was in full reign.²⁹ In an era when modern painting was being born and abstraction only starting off, Matisse's representation of a space—through the framework of the window—was too abstract. Van den Broek's interest and admiration for the painting however is based upon precisely the inverse reasons: it is not totally abstract yet. With the least vestige of architectural detail, it remains an image we understand. In his work, van den Broek investigates the amount of referential elements a painting needs to represent a space. *Solution* in this regard installed an outer frontier that his work was still lacking in 2006, that is, a standard on the verge of abstraction. In this sense it was *Solution* that the artist 'needed.' The work created the overall balance within the body of work, as it defined the outer end of spatial representation in relation to the scenic paintings. In relation to *Golden Tree* (2002), as it were, *Solution* defines the other end of the spectrum of van den Broek's image repertoire. In between lies a vast array of painterly possibilities to depict our world's countless species of spaces, from the abstract to the figurative, from the intangible to the real, or from the empty to the full. ●

Are you still working security for Foster & Langley?

CLIFF Yeah, and the restaurant's on my route. And you know, I stuck my nose in for the company to try to put a stop to some of these break-ins. Now, while I have no proof, the name Drexel Spivey kept comin' up Who's case is it?

WILSON McTeague.

CLIFF I don't know him. Is he a nice guy? You think he'll help me out?

WILSON I don't see why not. When you gonna come round and see my new place?

CLIFF You and Robin moved?

WILSON



wall

110

111



wall

Since are you? chm. Me and Robin got a divorce six months ago. Got myself a new place—mirrors all over the bedroom, ceiling fans above the bed. Guy'd have to look as ugly as King Kong not to get laid in this place. I'm serious, a guy'd have to look like a gorilla.

GUY:

Chm, me and Chm, I had by Clarence's 1966 red Mustang. Alabama. Summing herself by doing cartwheels and handstands in the background.

CLIFF:

They day, writing, in fact, they think it's drug related.

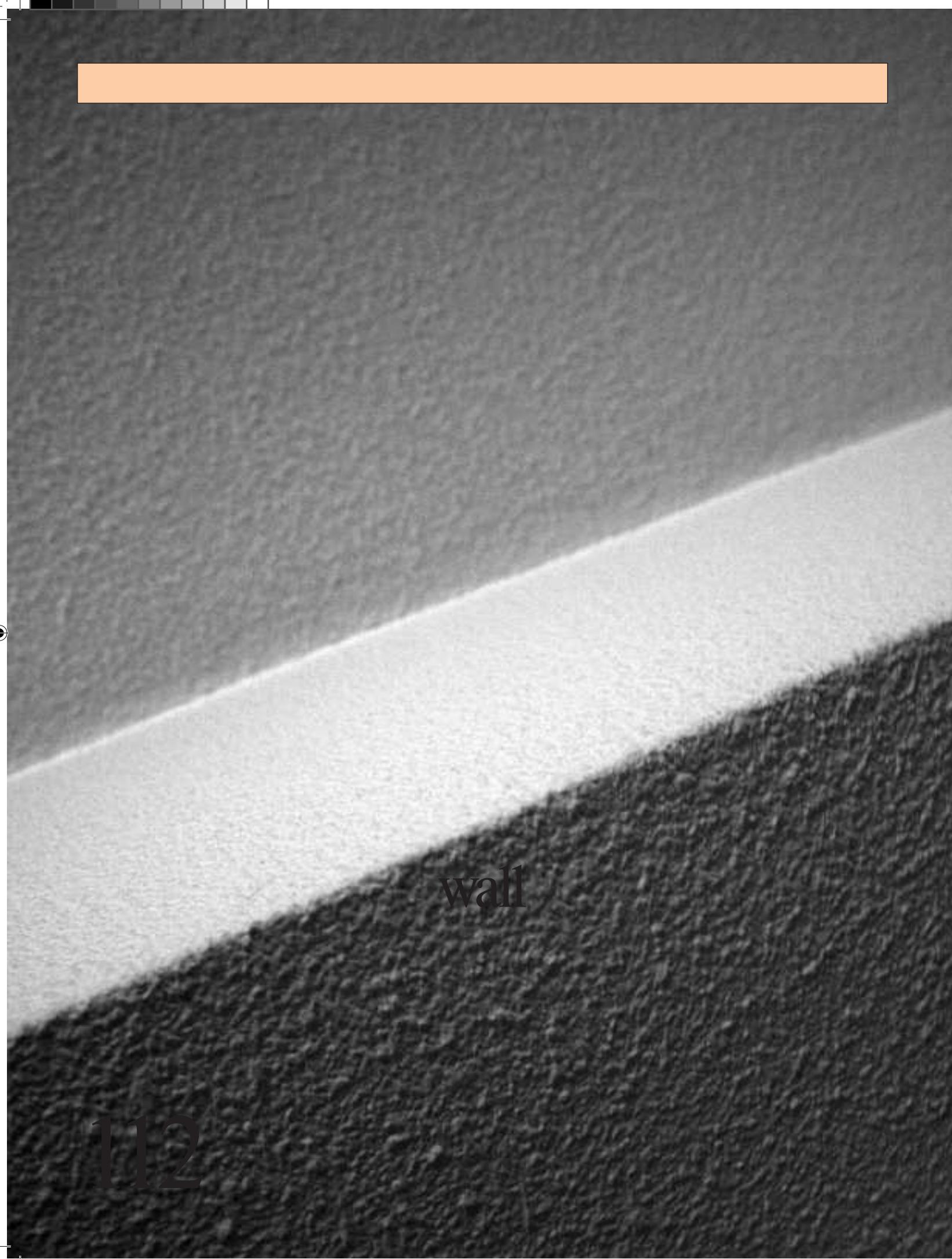
CLARENCE:

Edgar. W. I don't related.

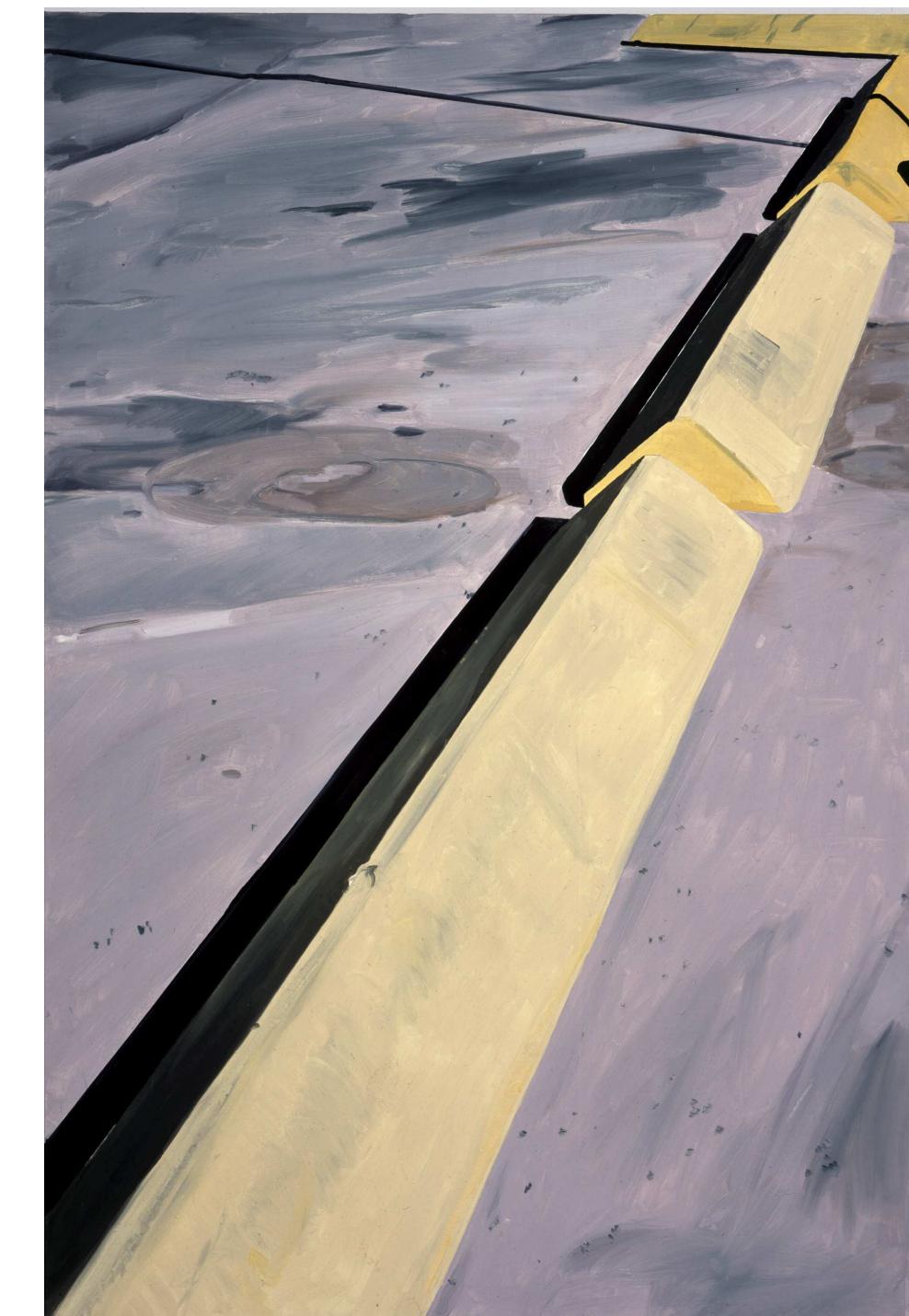
CLIFF:

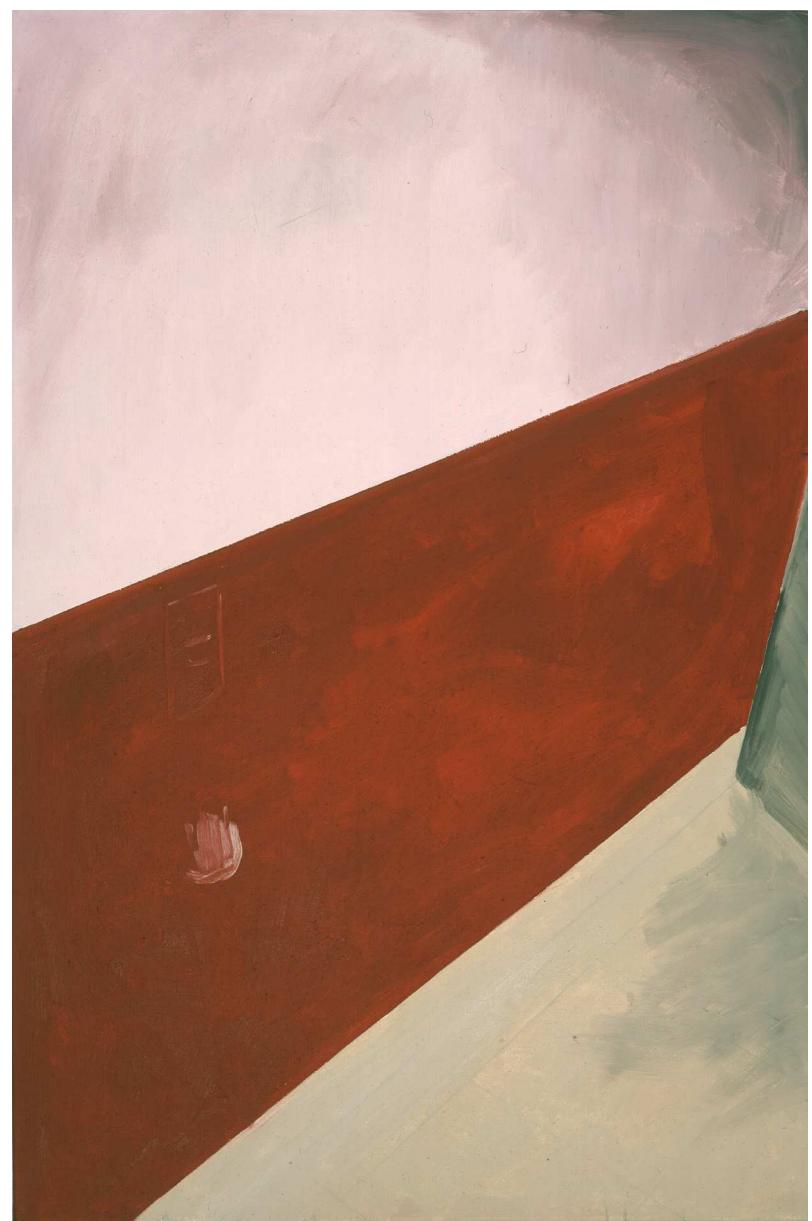
They day, writing, in fact, they think it's drug related.

EXT. TRAILER HOME—DAY



112





Cafeteria | 2003 | 135 x 90 cm

114

115



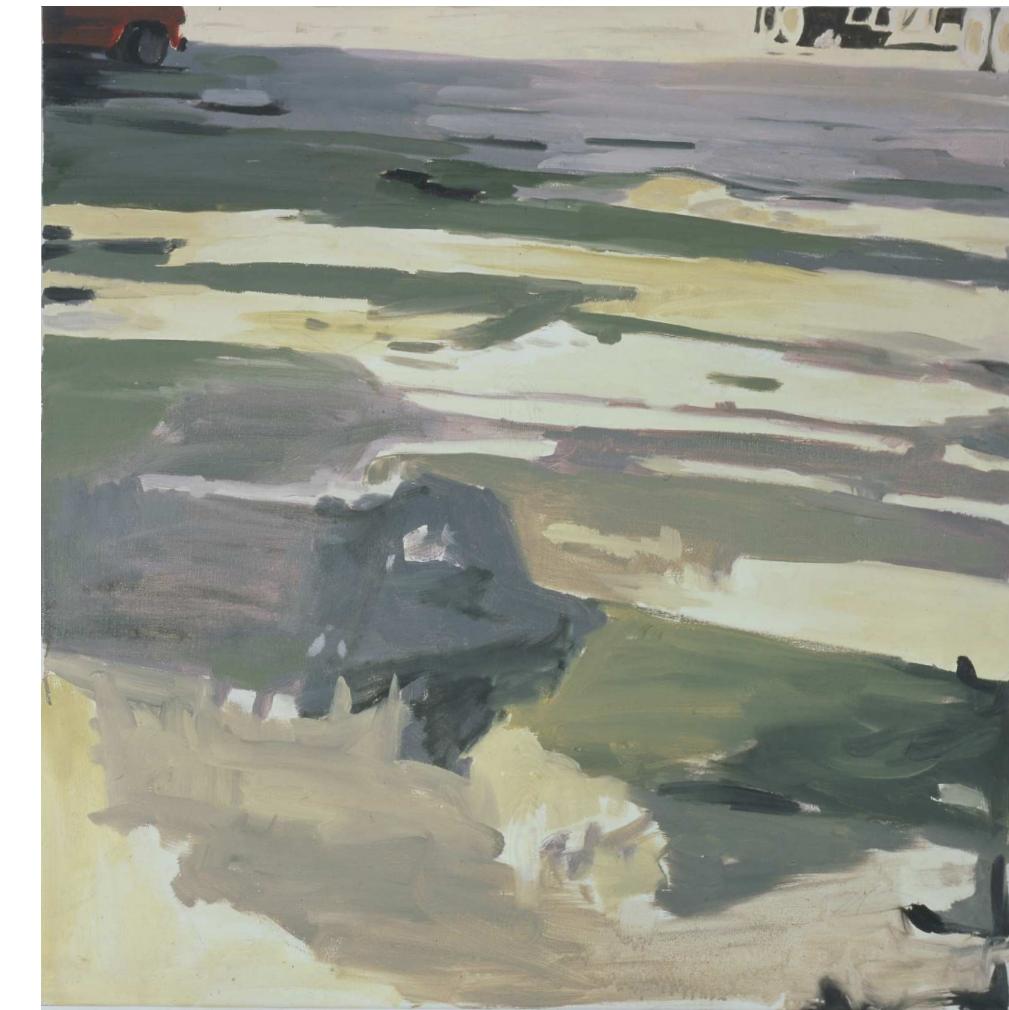
Canal | 2003 | 90 x 135 cm



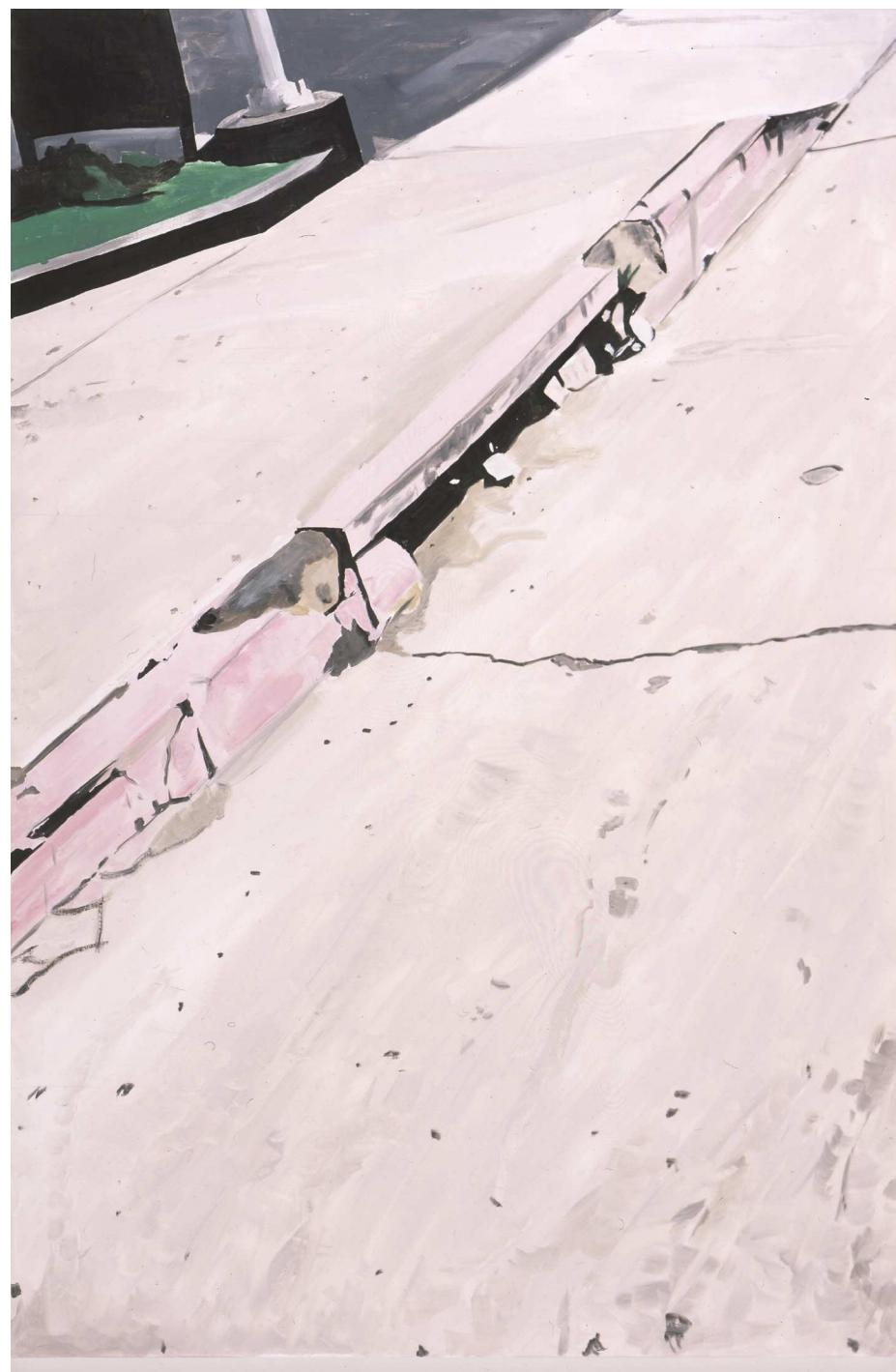
Circus | 2003 | 110 x 165 cm

116

117



Composition | 2003 | 90 x 87,5 cm



Crack | 2003 | 180 x 120 cm

118

119



Early Evening | 2003 | 79 x 77 cm



Frydlant #1 | 2003 | 90 x 135 cm

120

121



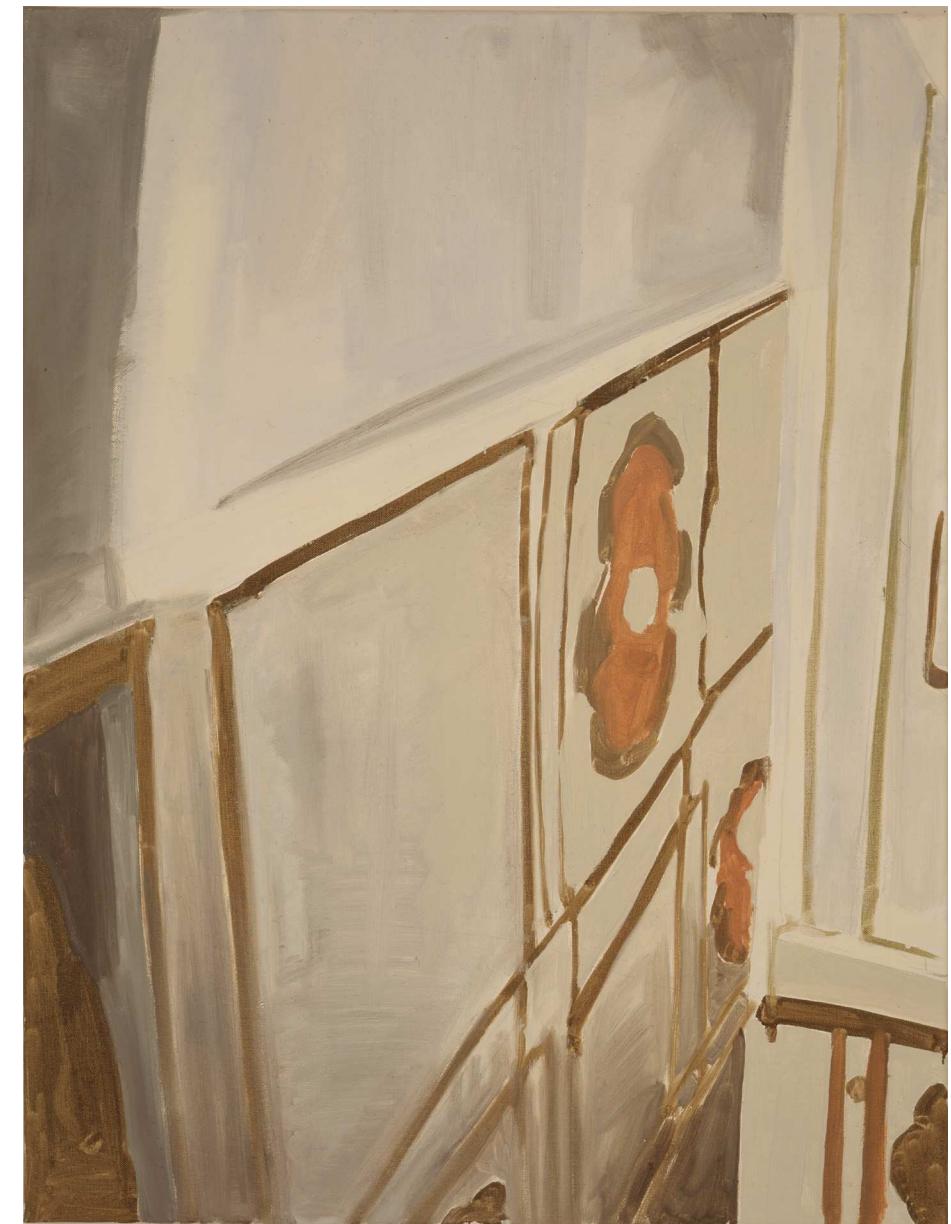
Frydlant #2 | 2003 | 100 x 150 cm



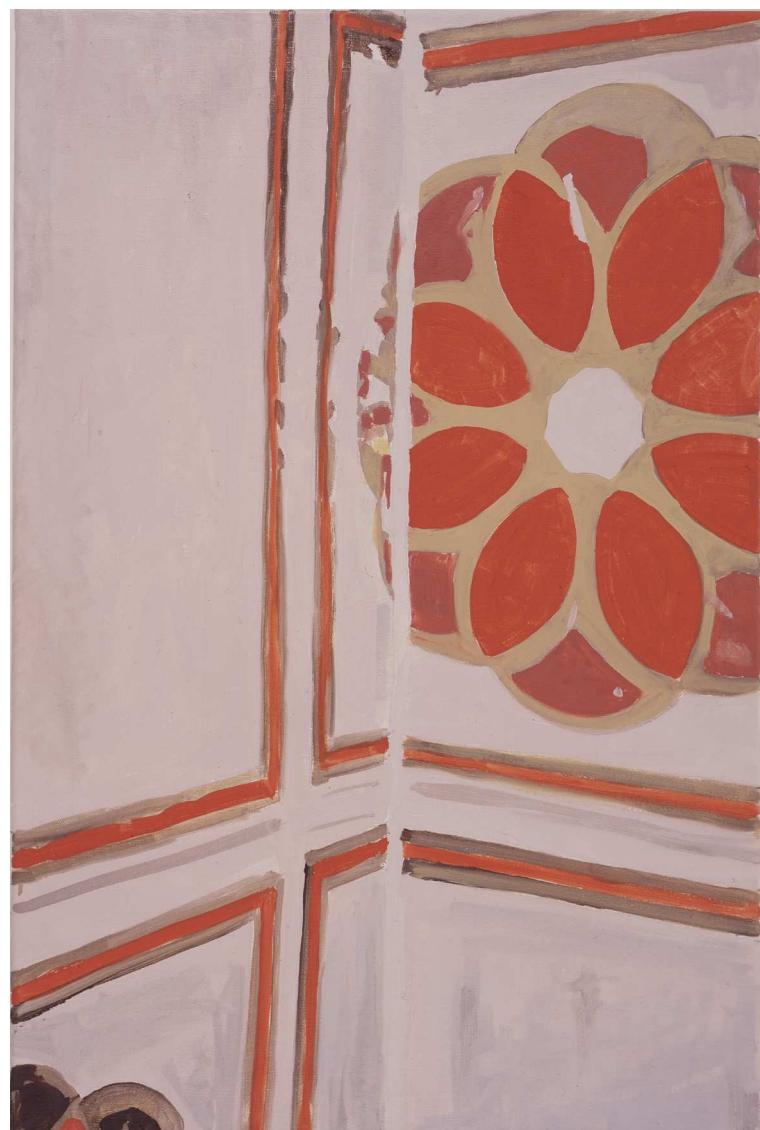
Gasoline Station (detail) | 2003 | 60 x 90 cm

122

123



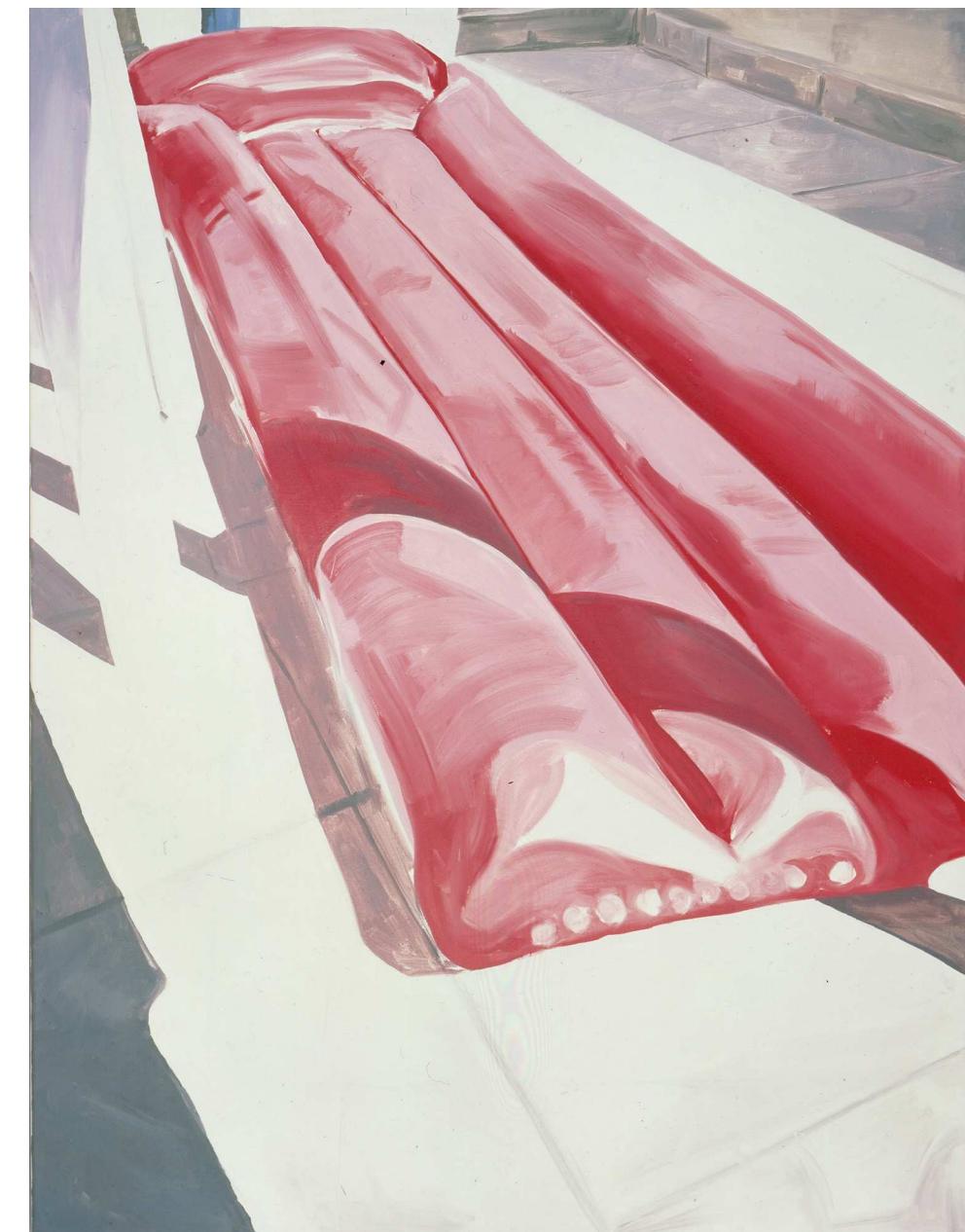
Hippi Corsica #3 | 2003 | 95 x 73 cm



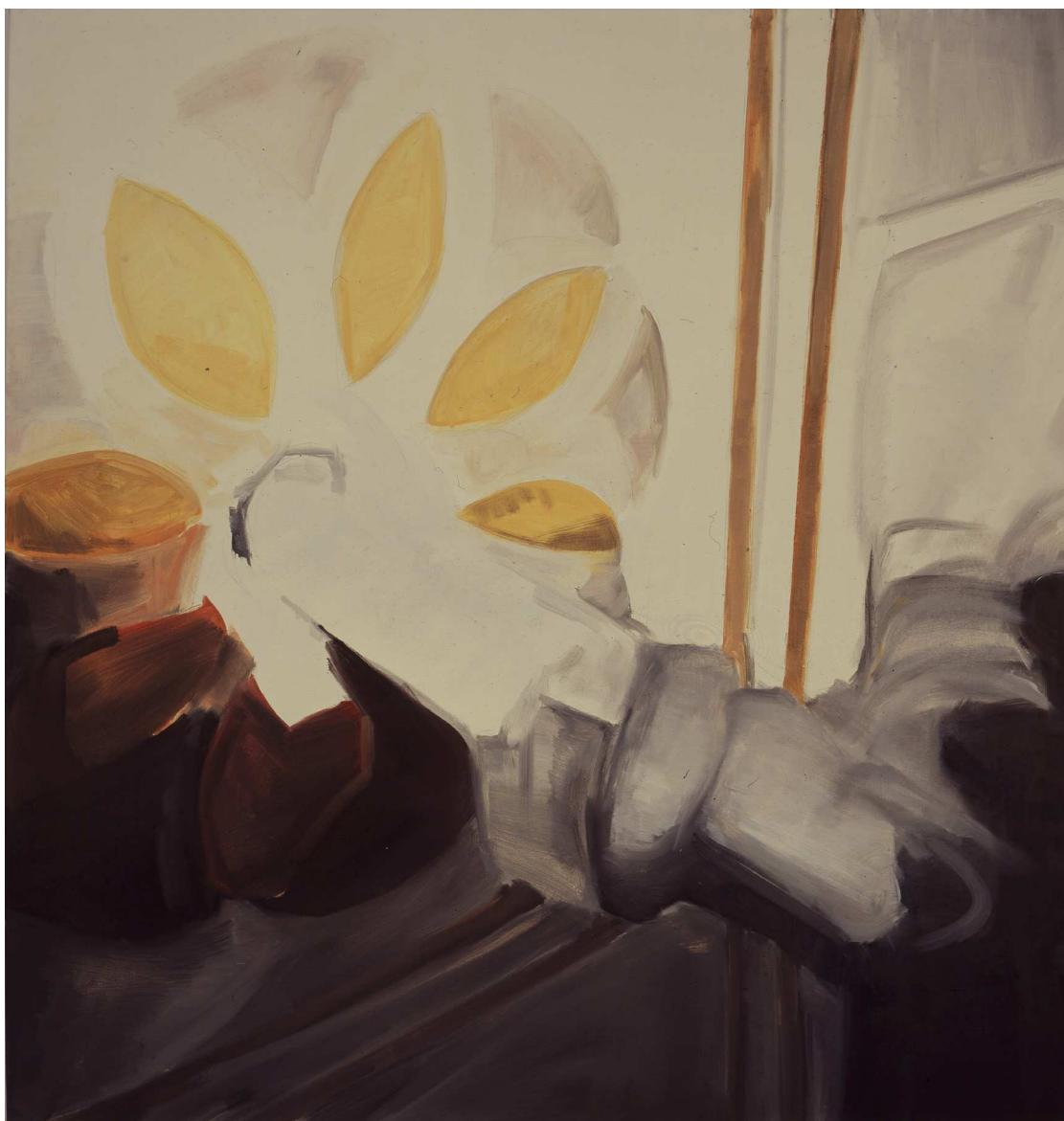
Hippi Corsica #4 | 2003 | 90 x 60 cm

124

125



Mattress | 2003 | 190 x 145.5 cm



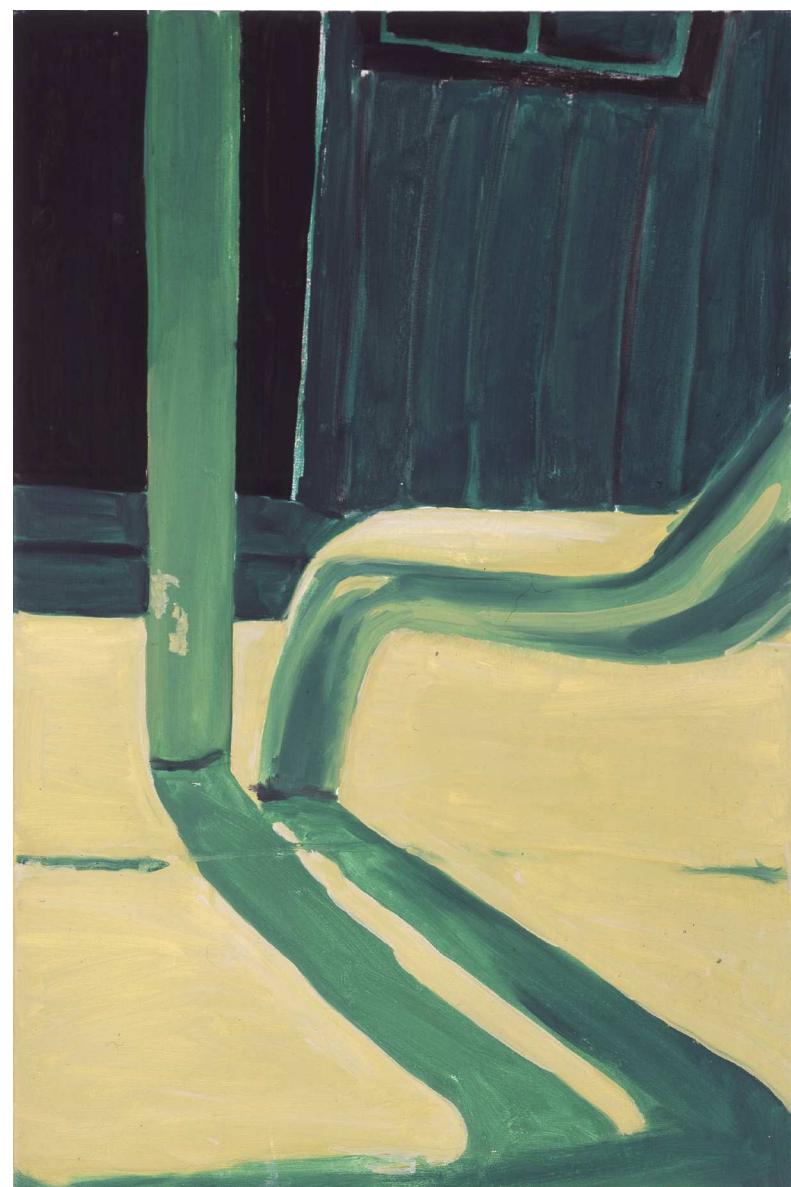
Penetration | 2003 | 120 x 115 cm

126

127



Pick-up | 2003 | 110 x 142,5 cm



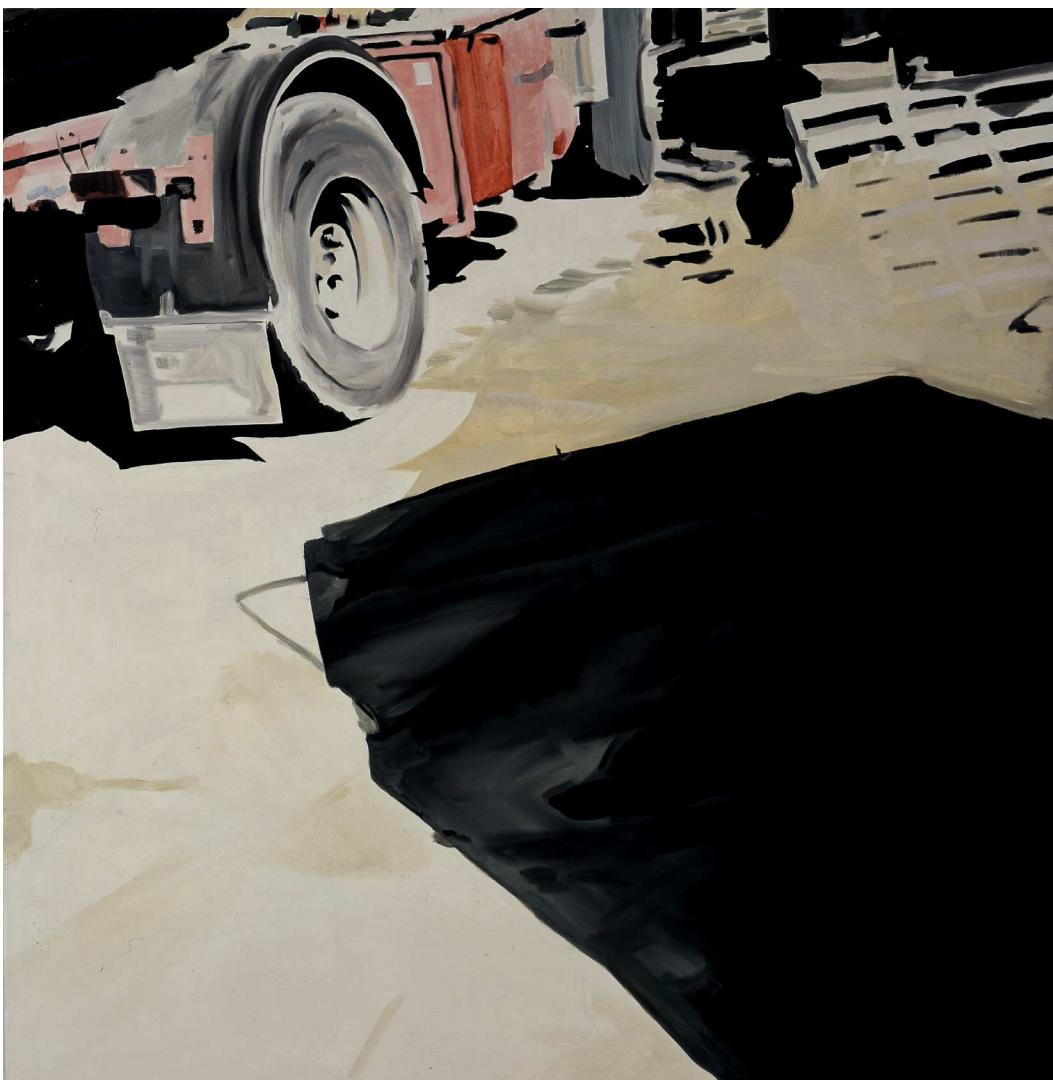
Railing | 2003 | 90 x 60 cm

128

129



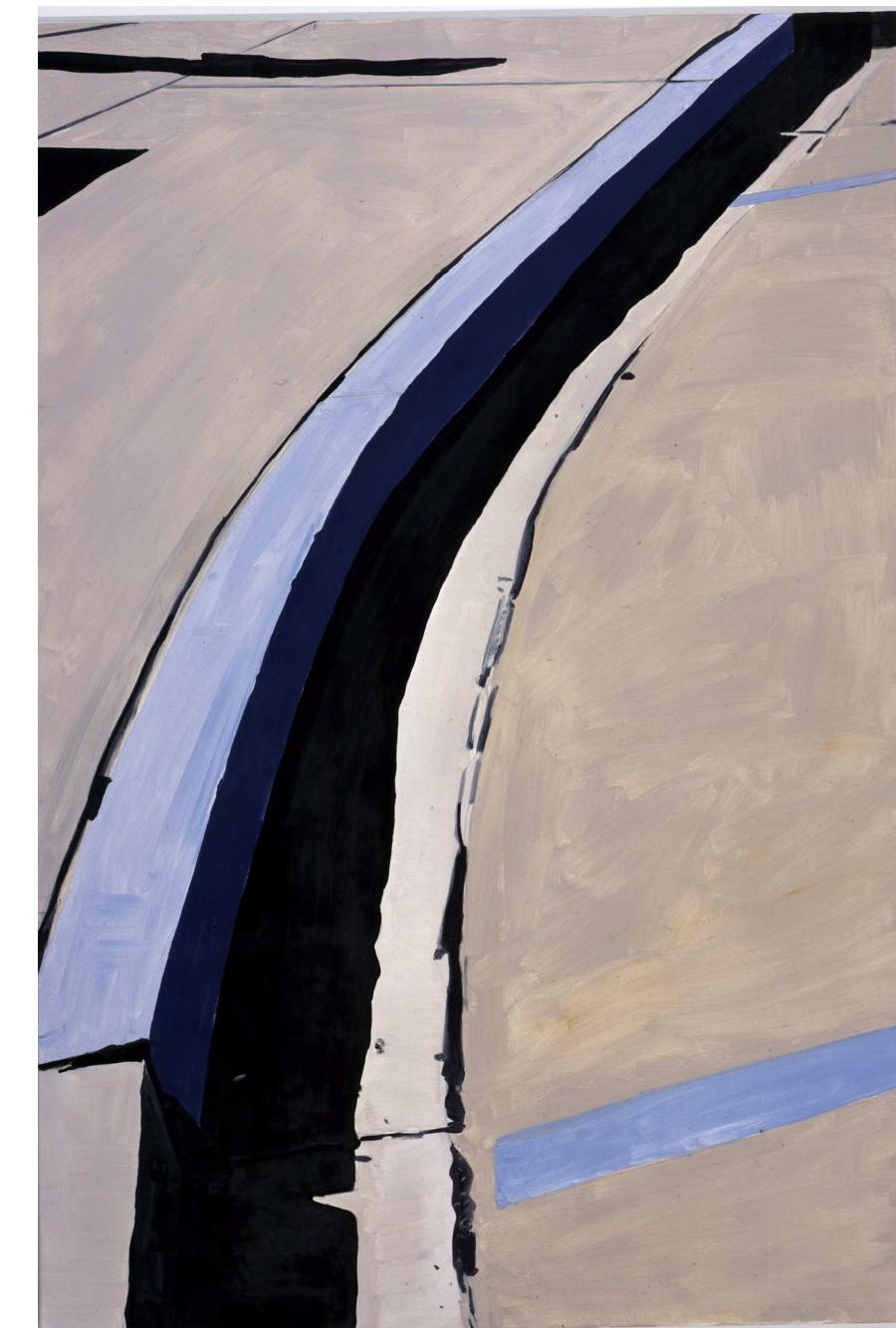
San Luis Potosi | 2003 | 120 x 115 cm



Shadows - Heraklion #2 | 2003 | 142,5 x 110 cm

130

131



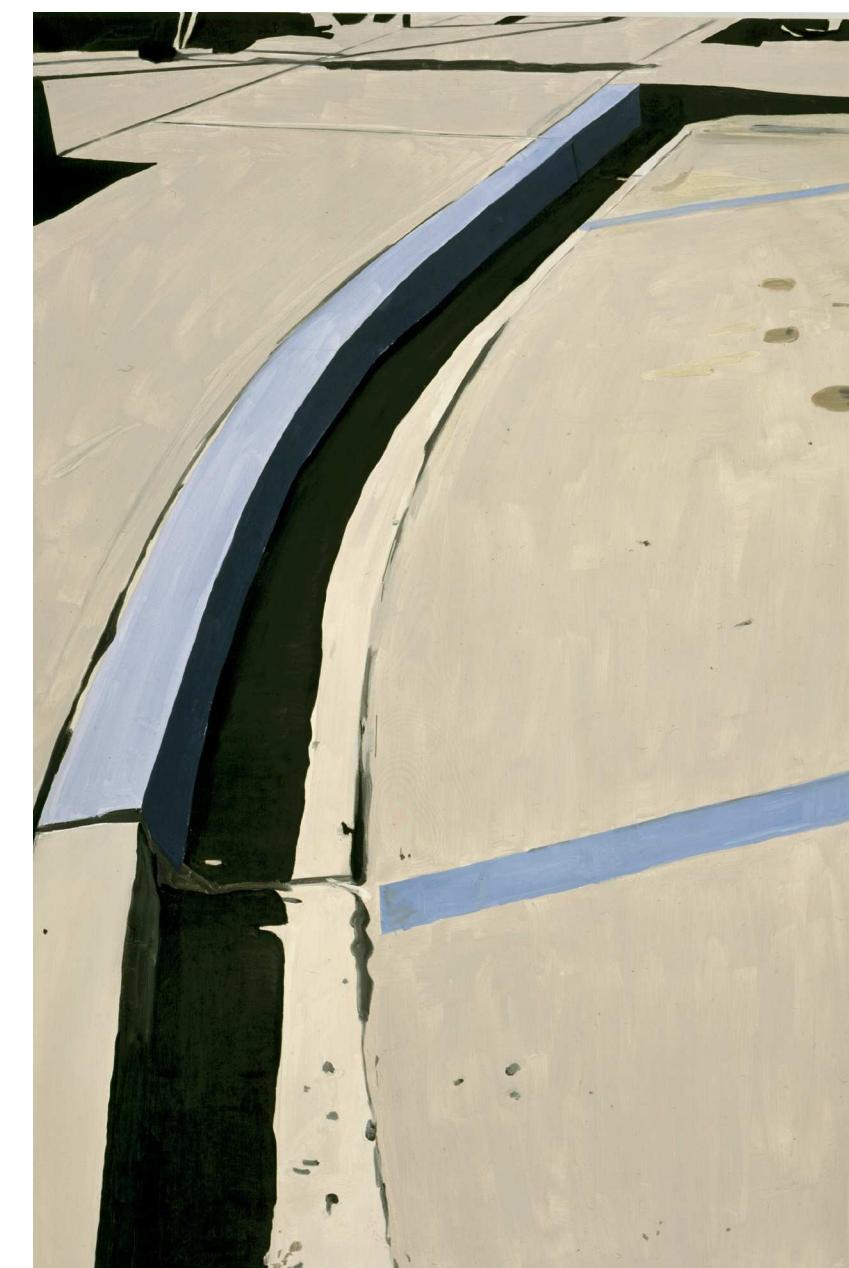
Shadows and Blue Border #1 | 2003 | 210 x 140 cm



Shadows and Blue Border #2 | 2003 | 210 x 140 cm

132

133



Shadows and Blue Border #3 | 2003 | 210 x 140 cm



Shadows and Blue Border #4 | 2003 | 210 x 140 cm

134

135



The Swimming Pool | 2003 | 90 x 135 cm



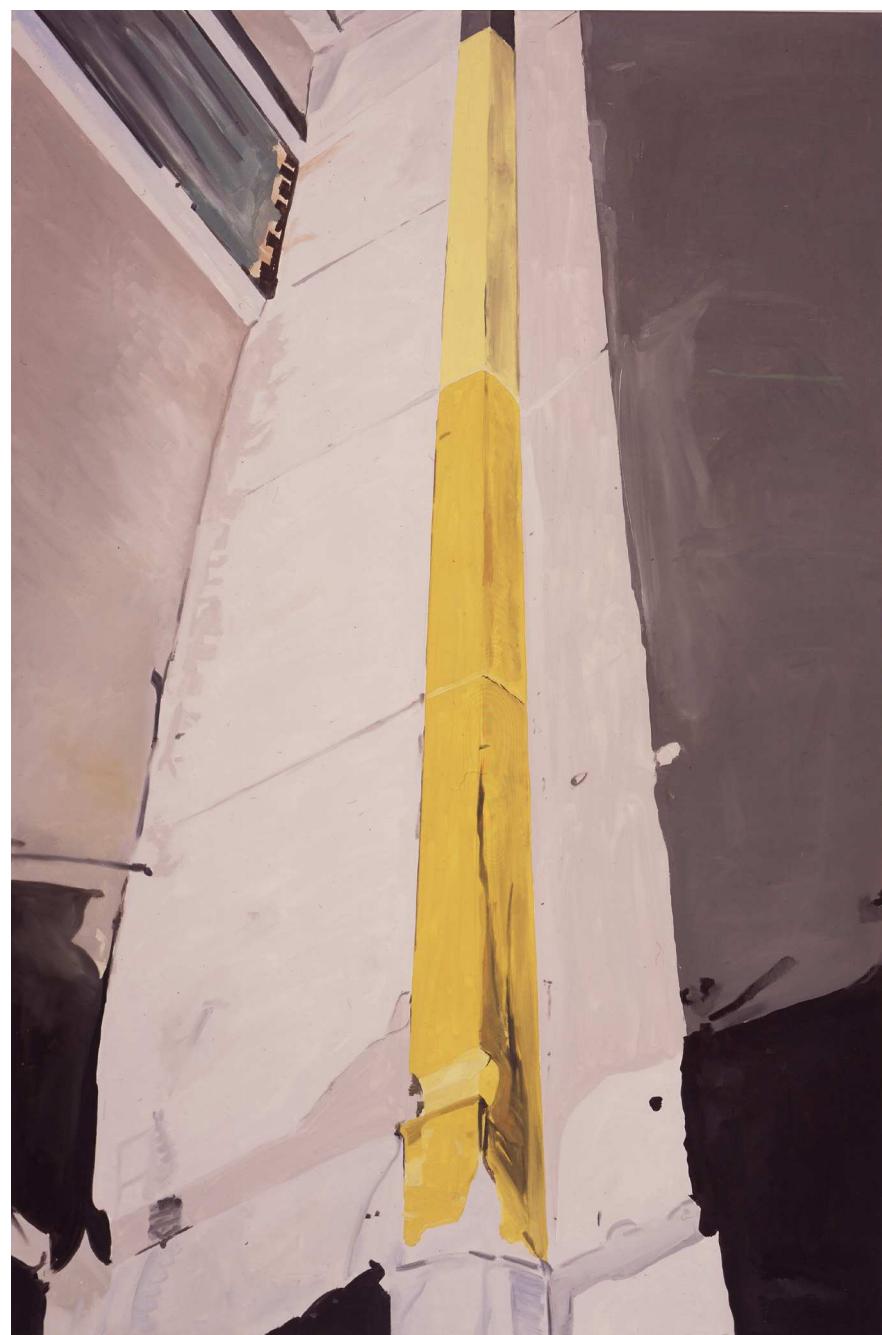
Viaduct-Estado de Veracruz | 2003 | 90 x 135 cm

136

137



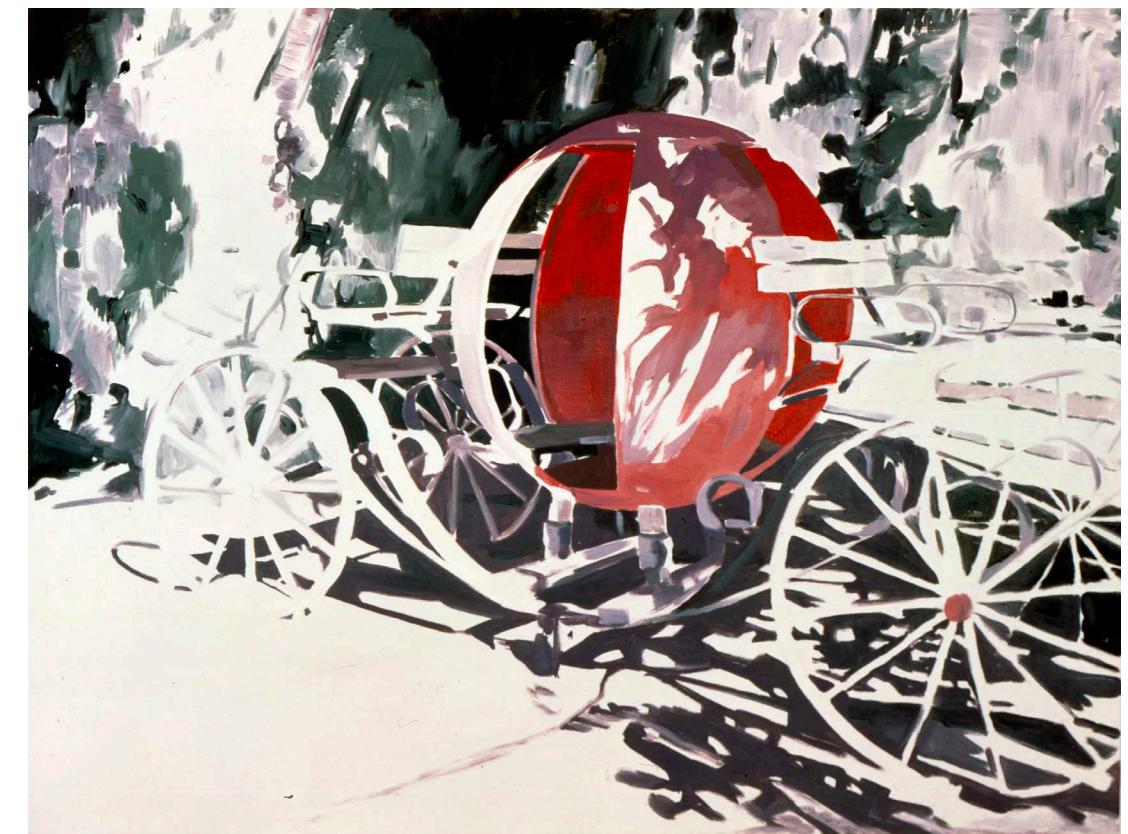
White and Red Border | 2003 | 69 x 46 cm



Yellow Border #2 second version | 2003 | 240 x 160 cm

138

139



Cinderella | 2003 | 120 x 157 cm



Sculpture #1 (Grey) | 2004 | 423 x 13 x 26,3 cm
Sculpture #2 (Yellow) | 2004 | 423 x 13 x 26,3 cm

140

141



1000 Cracks | 2004 | 110 x 165 cm



178#3 (dark) | 2004 | 90 x 87,5 cm

142

143



178#4 | 2004 | 79 x 77 cm



I90#1 | 2004 | 100 x 150 cm

144

145



I90#3 | 2004 | 110 x 165 cm



190 #4 | 2004 | 110 x 165 cm



American Psycho | 2004 | 46 x 69 cm

146

147



Blue Border and Grid #2 | 2004 | 210 x 140 cm

148

149



Devils Golf Course #2 | 2004 | 142,5 x 109,5 cm



Diablo | 2004 | 180 x 120 cm

150

151



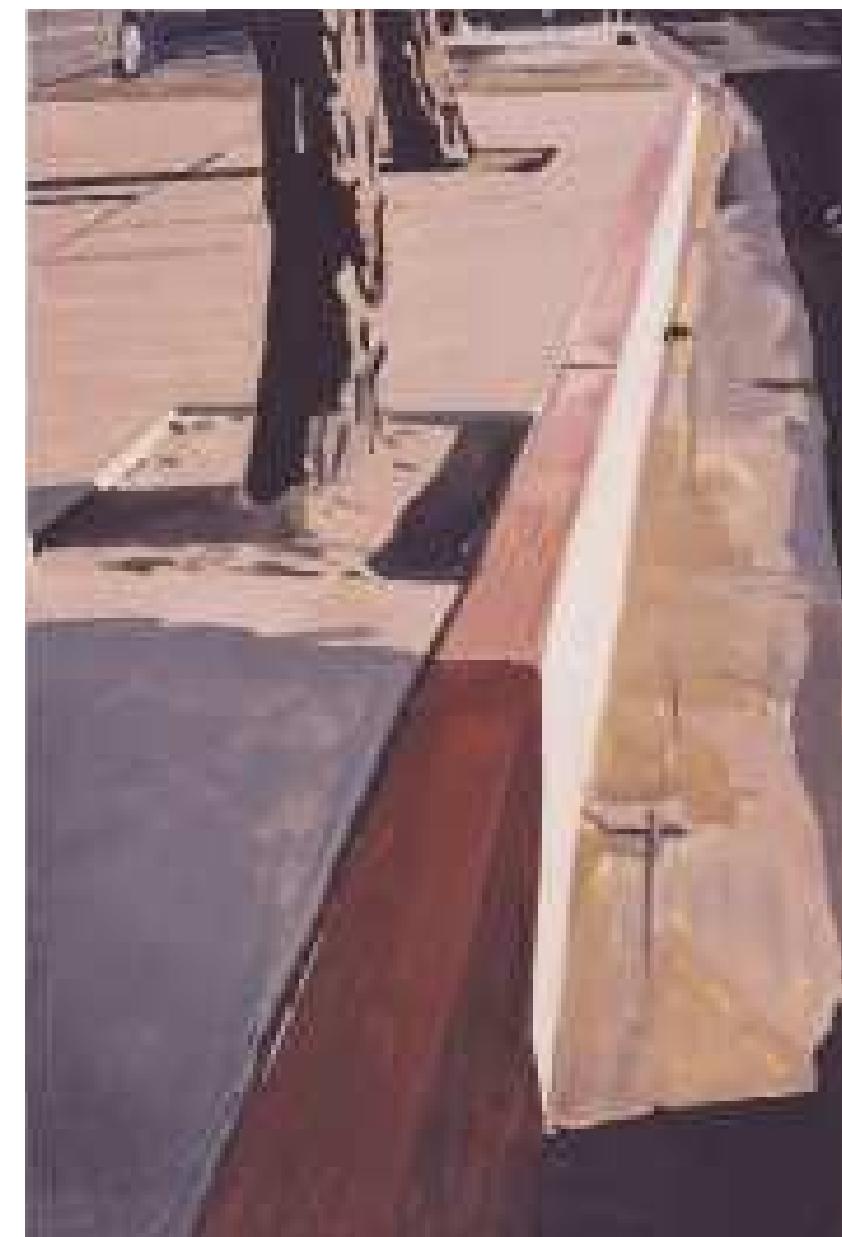
DVBorder and Two Shadows, Blank | 2004 | 180 x 130 cm



DV Border and Shadows Salamanca | 2004 | 85 x 120 cm

152

153



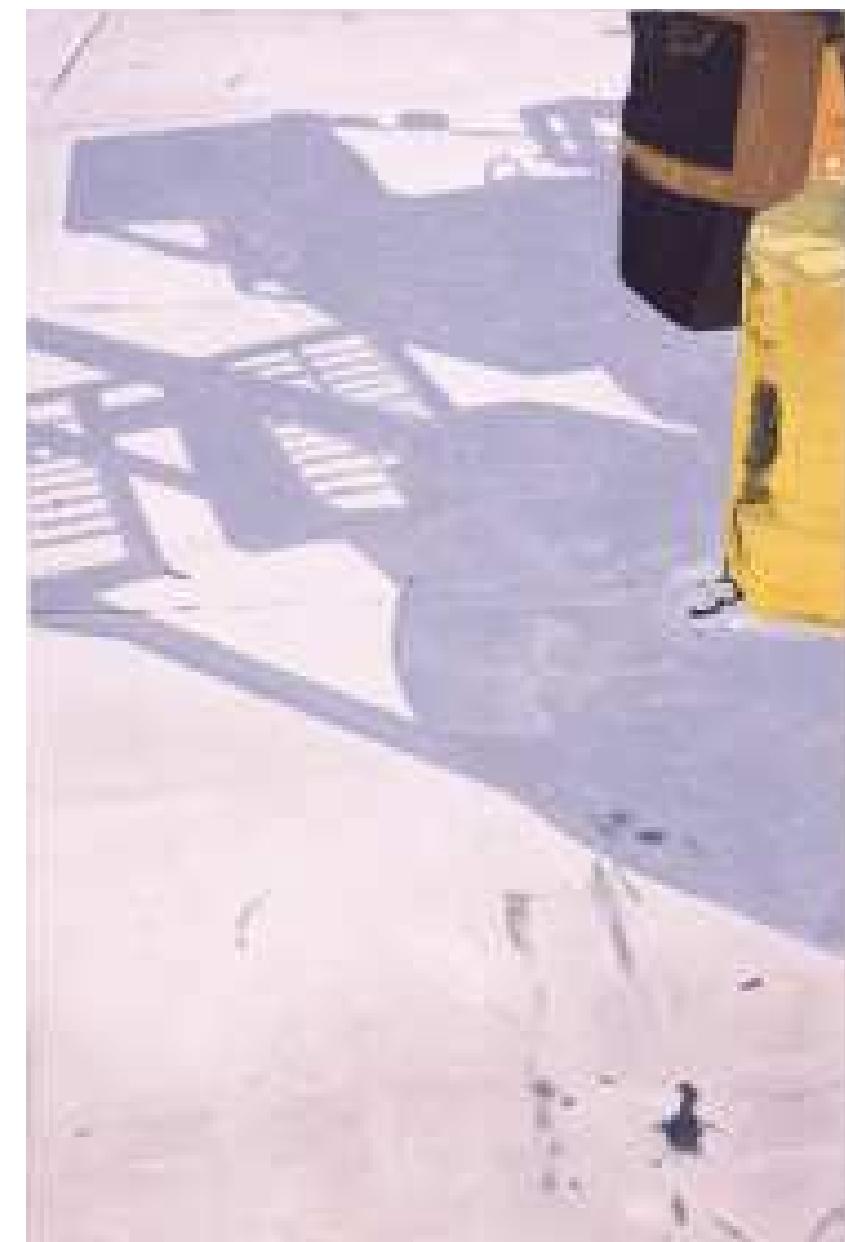
El Paeso Drive | 2004 | 195 x 130 cm



Fork-lift Truck #2 | 2004 | 120 x 117 cm

154

155



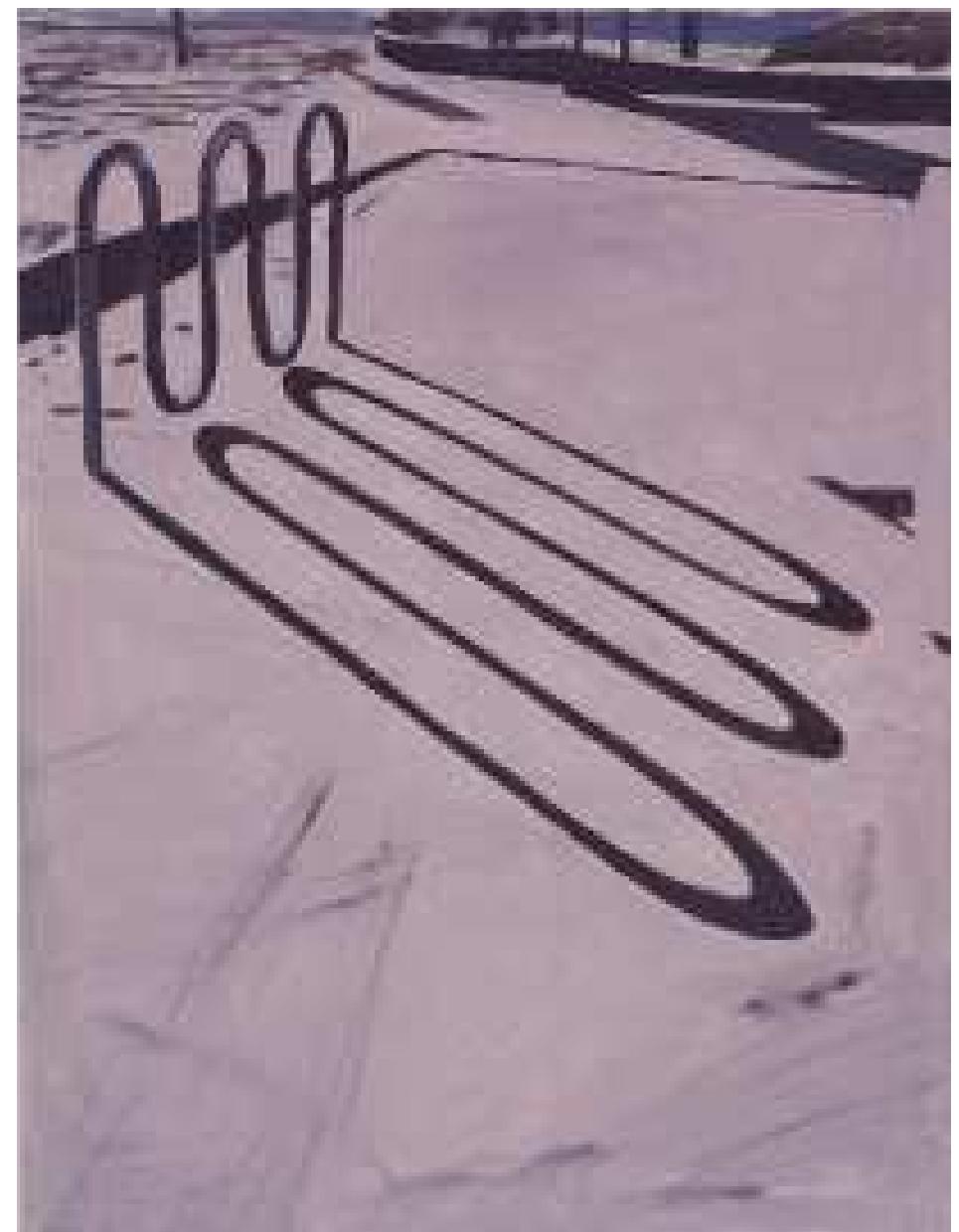
Fork-lift Truck | 2004 | 240 x 160 cm



General Shermanroad #2 | 2004 | 120 x 180 cm

156

157



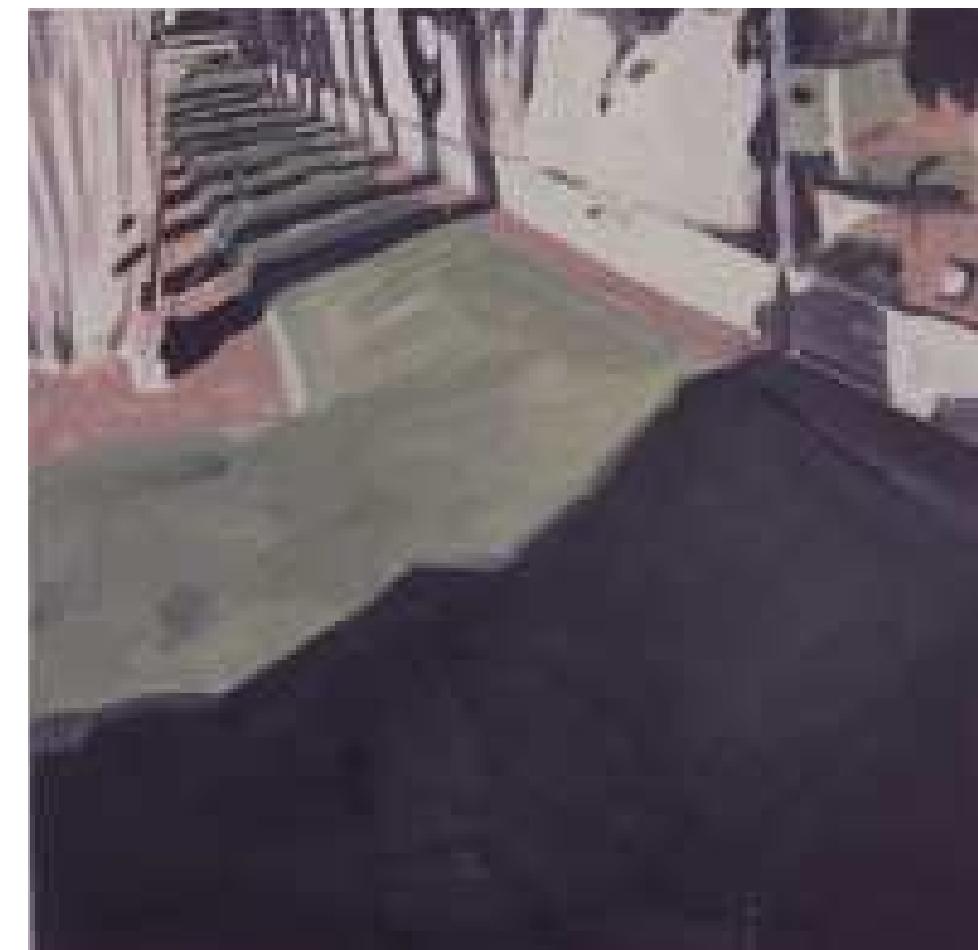
Half Moon Bay | 2004 | 115 x 88 cm



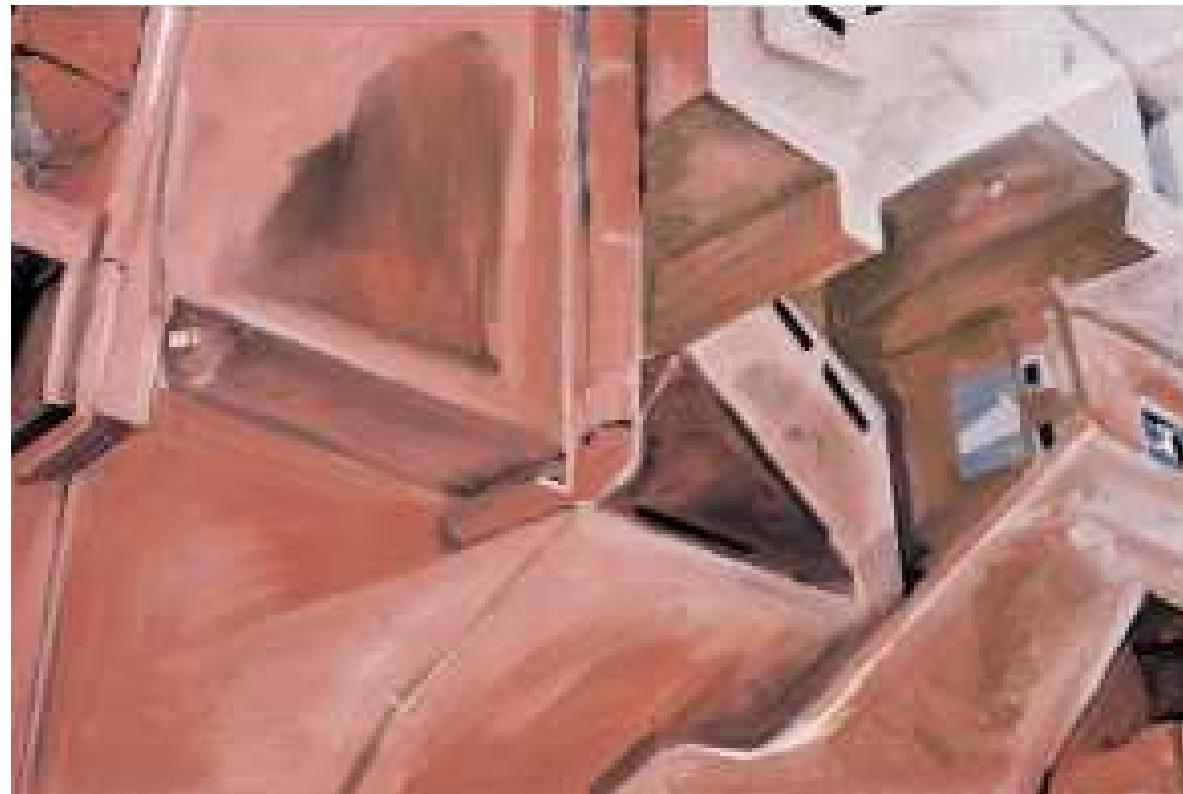
Interruption | 2004 | 210 x 140 cm

158

159



Lichtervelde | 2004 | 100 x 97,5 cm



Love Hotel | 2004 | 80 x 120 cm

160

161



Mexico Town in the Morning | 2004 | 200 x 195 cm



Project | 2004 | 100 x 100 cm

162

163



Reflection | 2004 | 118,5 x 115,5 cm



Stovepipe Wells | 2004 | 110 x 165 cm

164

165



Tepechitlan | 2004 | 120 x 117 cm



Turtels | 2004 | 100 x 130.5 cm



Water Lillies #1 | 2004 | 100 x 150 cm

166

167



Waterfall | 2004 | 100 x 150 cm



Devils Golf Course | 2004 | 110 x 165 cm

168

169



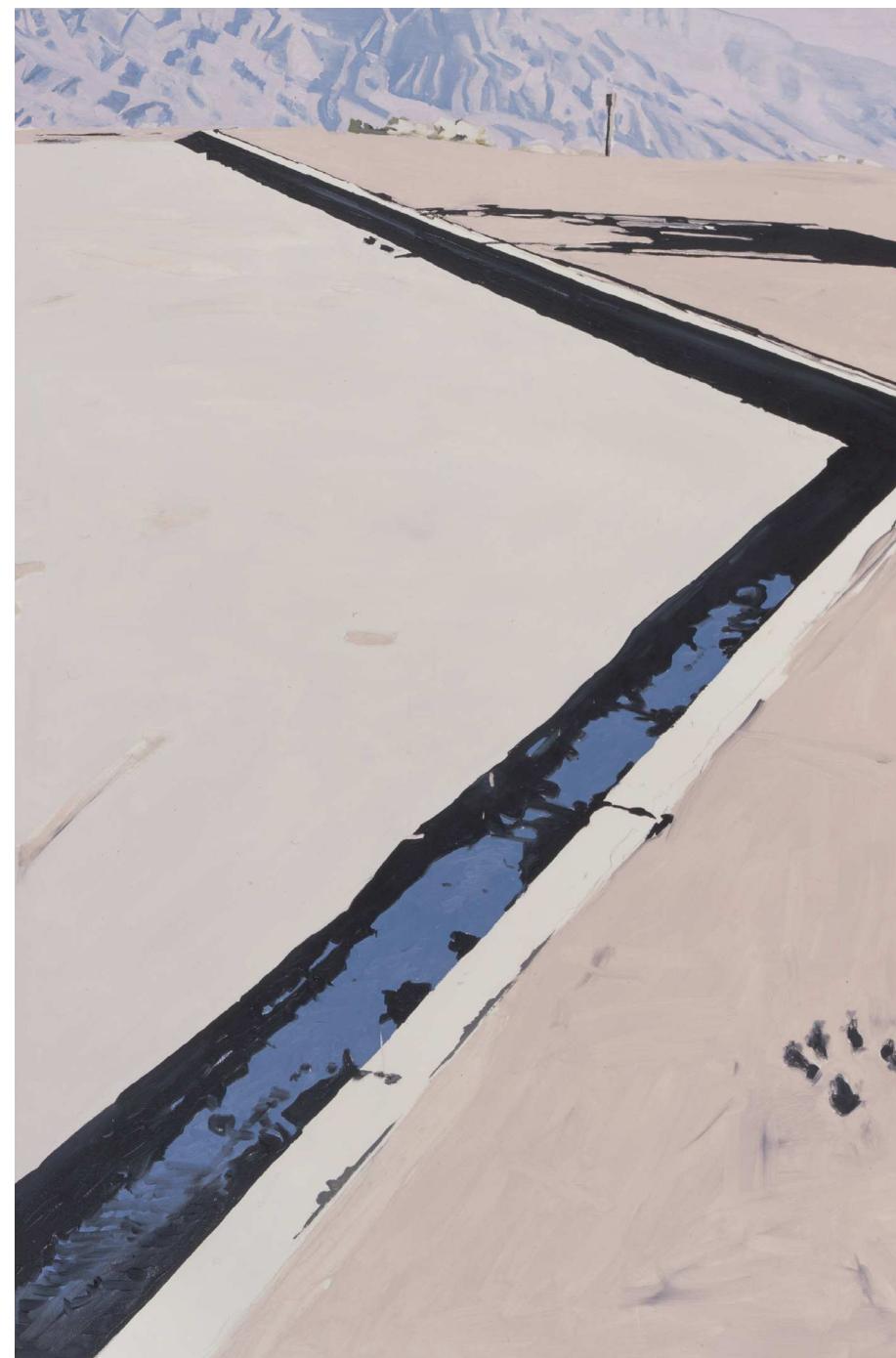
62 *lipstick* | 2005 | 90 x 87.5 cm

170

171



Burning | 2005 | 280 x 420 cm



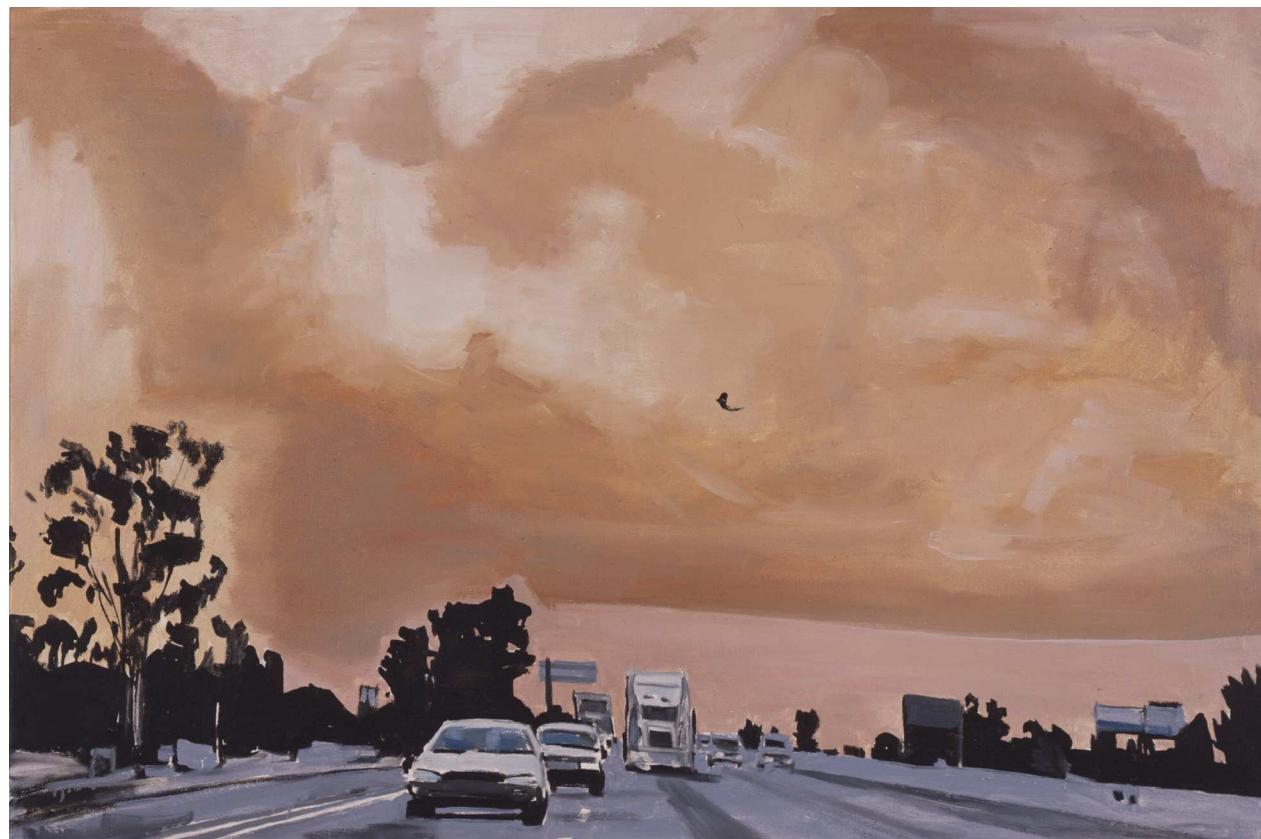
Dante's View #1 | 2005 | 240 x 160 cm

172

173



Dante's View #3 | 2005 | 240 x 160 cm



Escape from LA | 2005 | 80 x 120 cm

174

175



Fork-lift Truck #4 | 2005 | 210 x 140 cm



Gaffey Street | 2005 | 130 x 169 cm

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Fantasy et al.

Koen van den Broek

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In spring 2008, I was invited by the Marie Louise Hessel Museum Crack MUHKA, the Antwerp Museum of Contemporary Art, to 'intervene' in the presentation of the museum's collection, the fifth artist in a series of exhibitions initiated by the museum to promote research-based interaction with the collection. In contrast to preceding artists such as Gert Robijns, Pieter Vermeersch, and Carla Arocha, I chose not to put my own work at the centre, but to reveal the historical legacies to which it consciously relates. As many of the artists that I admire and am influenced by are not represented in the museum's collection, I decided to bring in their works from other institutions and in particular from the many private collections that happen to be in Belgium. Modeled after the exhibition "Magritte and Contemporary Art: The Treachery of Images" in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 2007, curated by my friend John Baldessari, I assembled works by protagonists of Minimalism, Conceptual Art, and Post-Expressionist painting, and works by friends and fellow artists. In the ensuing exhibition, "Fantasy," I did not so much intervene in the museum's collection as provide it with a carefully constructed daydream. ●

At Wouter Davidts' suggestion, I invited the Rotterdam-based artist duo Bik Van der Pol to come to Antwerp and visit "Fantasy." Several times in the past, Bik Van der Pol have acted as intervening artists in museum collections, for instance at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam ("Fly Me to the Moon," 2006), Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven ("PLUG-IN 28, Pay Attention," 2008), and at

CLARENCE
That's what I've been tellin' ya. The guy was like a mad dog. So the cops aren't looking for me?

CLIFF
Naw, until they hear something better they'll assume Drexel and Blue Lou had a falling out. So, once you leave twon, I wouldn't worry about it.

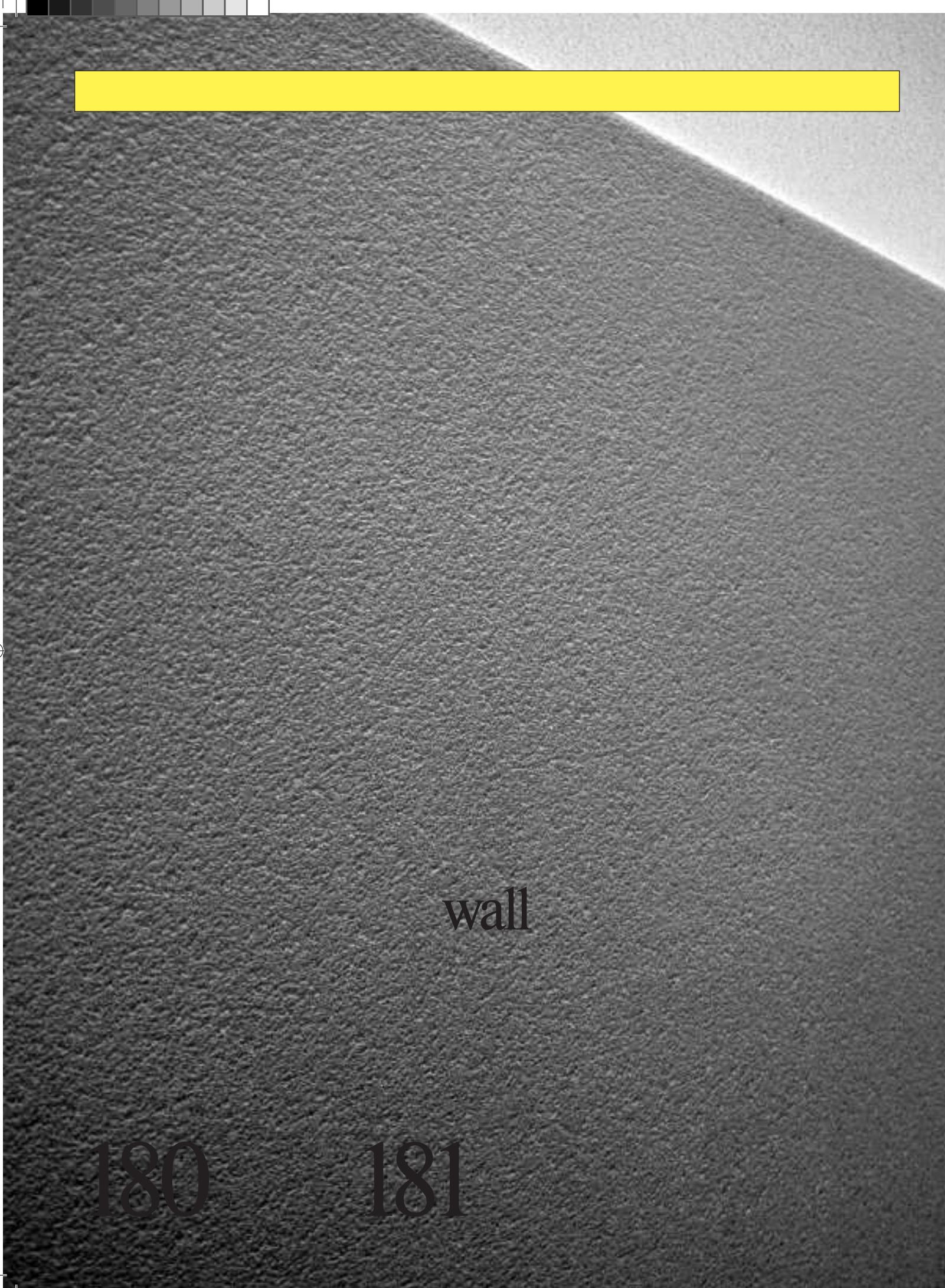
Clarence sticks his hand out to shake. Cliff takes it.

CLARENCE
Thanks a lot, Daddy. You really came through for me.

CLIFF
I got some money I can give you.

CLARENCE
Keep it.

CLIFF



wall

180

18

Fantasy

Well, son, I want you to know I hope everything works out with you and Alabama. I like her. I think you make a cute couple.

CLARENCE
We do make a cute couple, don't we?

CLIFF
Yeah, well, just stay outta trouble. Remeber, you got a wife to think about. Quit fuckin' around. I love you son.

Touching each other. Clarence takes a piece of paper out and puts it into Cliff's hand.

This is Disney's summer in Hollywood. We don't just want to be part of it. We want to lead it.

Clarence turns toward Alabama and yells.

CLARENCE
"Bama, we're outta here. Kiss 'ems good!



A Guided Tour

Bik Van der Pol

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183

A GUIDED TOUR

We meet for the first time in the Antwerp Museum of Contemporary Art (MUHKA), for which he curated the exhibition "Fantasy." The museum had invited him to explore its collection, and to share his personal artistic vision on its public constitution. "What is relevant?" had been his first question. What does it mean when a museum opens up its spaces and gatherings to a particular, individual artistic position? What is the urgency of such a gesture? Thinking about the public nature of a museum collection immediately involves the private as well: collections are always built based upon specific, individual perspectives. What makes them public may actually be not so much its general relevance, but first and foremost its way of being financed, and its degree of (public) responsibility.

One could argue that it is irrelevant to distinguish between public and private, since what makes a collection particular, personal, specific or thrilling, are the choices, mostly and ultimately, made by individuals: choices of acquisition (what and

Alabama runs across from where she was and throws her arms around Cliff and gives him a big smackeroo on the lips. Cliff's a little startled. Alabama's bubbling like a Fresca.

ALABAMA
Bye, Daddy! Hope to see you again real soon.

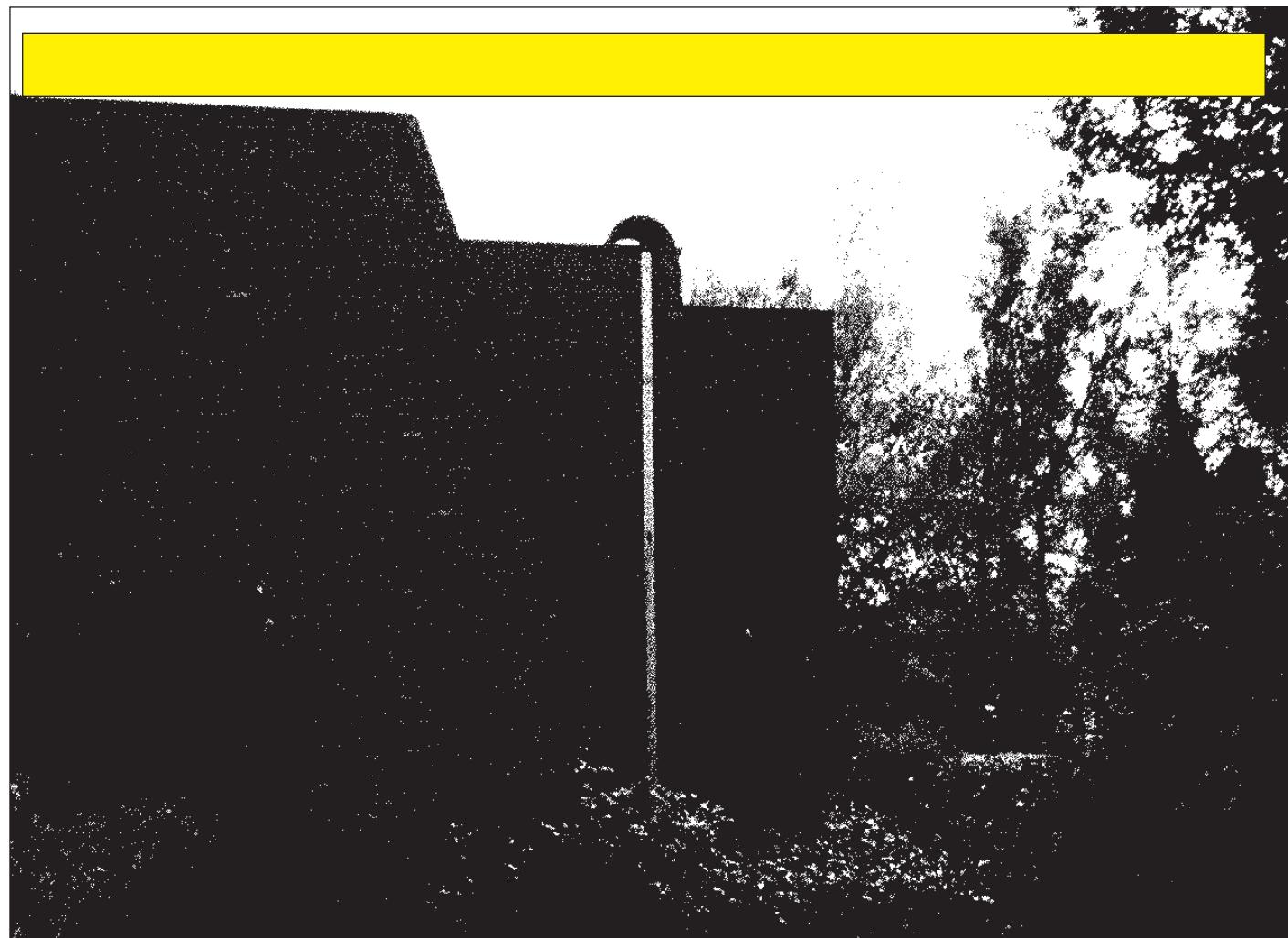
CLARENCE
What kind of daughterly smackeroo was that?

ALABAMA
Oh, hush up.

The two get into the Mustang.

CLARENCE
(to Cliff)
We'll send you a postcard as soon as we get to Hollywood.

Clarence starts the engine. The convertible roof opens as they talk.



when), choices of presentation (what and where), and choices of orchestration (what and how). These choices can be driven by passion, by persuasion, or by perception ... Yet in the end it's the array of past choices that generates the imagination that on its turn constitutes the potential of a collection.

Two wooden containers with traces of paint; a long aluminium line; an obelisk in red, blue, yellow and white; yellow, magical lights in rainbow colors; three rectangular windows in pitch black with purple, yellow and red light shining through; a cross of small round breads; a swimming pool,

one man kneeling, the other swimming, a red dot, a blue square; another white square and a brown trapezium (which could also be a square in perspective); a lost red lorry in the desert.

He had just returned from Los Angeles. The American landscape with its interstates still resonated in his mind and the Californian light still prickled in his eyes. As he then explored the specific collection of MuHKA, he realized that he had to acknowledge what he was missing. Being aware of what is going on elsewhere, he felt it was necessary to consider the museum's actual

collection as a mere starting point. He wanted to expand the field and go beyond all borders. This would not only enable him to tell his story but above all to bridge the gap between (his) reality and (his) fantasy.

He was, so to speak, 'in limbo': an invited guest with particular experiences and points of view, being trusted and allowed to play around with the 'public good,' in the hope and expectation that this endeavor would bring something new to the museum. Wouldn't it be great if yet undisclosed aspects could be revealed? After all, bringing in guests from outside is believed to generate



CLIFF
Bama, you take care of that one for me. Keep him out of trouble.

ALABAMA
Don't worry, Daddy, I'm keepin' this fella on a short leash.

Clarence, slowly, starts driving away.

CLARENCE
(to Cliff)
As the sun sets slowly in the west we bid a fond farewell to all the friends we've made... and, with a touch of melancholy, we look forward to the time when we will all be together again.

Clarence peels out, shooting a shower of gravel up in the air. As the Mustang disappears Cliff runs his tongue over his lips.

CLIFF
The-son-of-a-bitch was right... she does taste like a peach.

INT. DICK'S APARTMENT—DAY

fresh views, alternative perspectives and unforeseen connections: the unimaginable might suddenly become reality instead of mere fantasy, and sometimes, one indeed needs an outsider to make that happen. Such an imaginative situation, not unsimilar to what Wikipedia describes on the literary genre of Fantasy, can be attained by "... the inclusion of fantastic elements in a self-coherent, internally consistent setting Within such a structure, any location of the fantastical element is possible: it may be hidden in, or leak into the apparently real world setting, it may draw the characters into a world with such elements, or it may occur entirely in a fantasy world setting, where such elements are part of the world."¹

This description could easily have been the guiding principle for the "Fantasy" exhibition. Even though the collection of MuHKA served as a starting point, it did not completely fulfill his desires. It did not, in other words, allow him to outline his fantasy. Hence he had to embark on a road trip, to define his own parameters, to sketch his landscape, and to define the playing field. In order to complete the picture, to shift the perception, and ultimately to transform the museum—albeit only for a very short period—he added a unique and specific selection from private collections. The world may not be perfect, he thought, but why not try to mold it into a wonderful shape according to one's own dreams?

A baroque hole throughout an office building; a yellow garbage bin on small wheels; the light blue edge of a pavement; a lonely dark grey rock



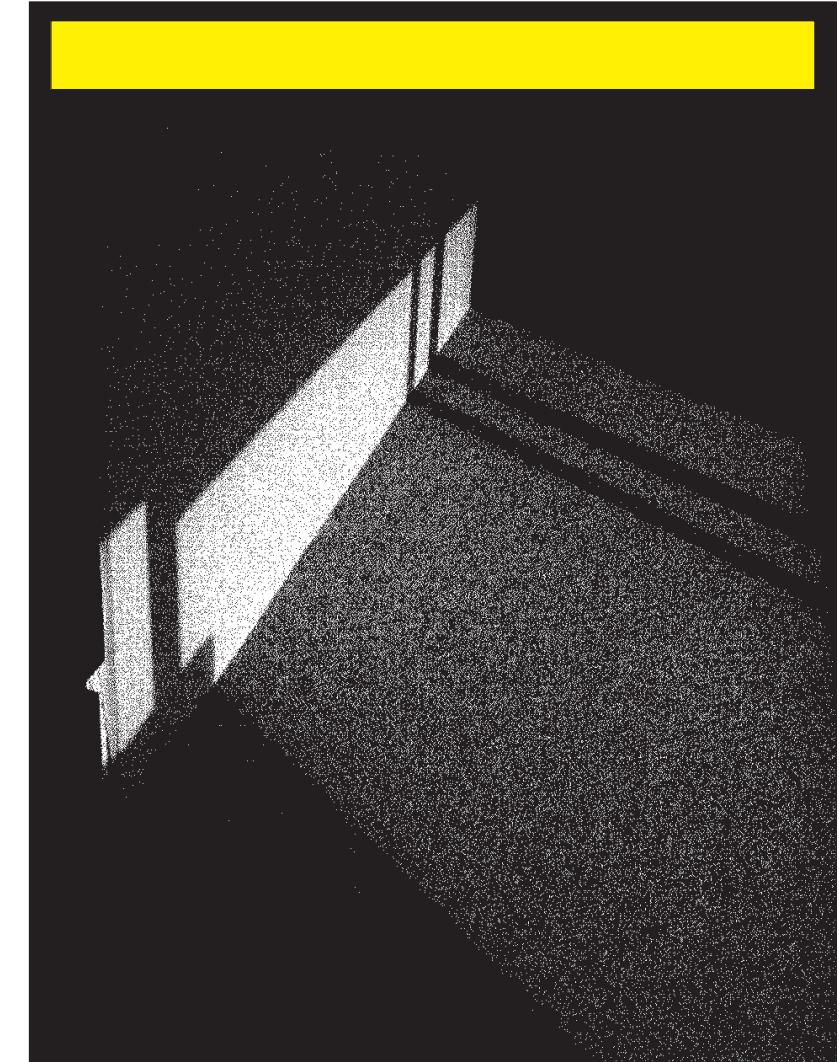
in the sea; sunlight casting a sharp shadow on a bleak empty street; water running through a river bed; a small house amidst green hills; the orange corner of a street; a blue restaurant in purple pink evening light with a bridge in the background; three green tractors on a row.

The American landscape, assisted by Hollywood film industry, has intervened in the museum. "Fantasy" has become a script, a scenario for an unknown film with references to what we think we remember: the imaginary construction of a cinematic space through relationships formed between film and architecture, landscape and city, paintings and photographs, sculptures laying



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flat on the floor and reaching towards the ceiling, interior views and spectacular vistas, moving in and out of the space of the museum.

Mexico motel; palm trees; a view over a grey dim ocean; a brown rusty slab of metal; a naked woman or not a woman; the green and the bronze; a shiny red room; a yellow orange sunset over the purple ocean; bright white light in a corner; a colorful striped transparent display construction; corners and edges; a penthouse on a mountain.

We leave the building, exchange the museum for the spaces that are

Dick's apartment is standard issue for a young actor. Things are pretty neat and clean. A nice stereo unit sits on the shelf. A framed picture of a ballet dancer's feet hangs on the wall. The phone rings. Dick answers.

DICK
Hi, Dick here.

INT. HOTEL SUITE—LAS VEGAS—SUNSET

Top floor, Las Vegas, Nevada hotel room with a huge picture window overlooking the neon-filled strip and the flaming red and orange sunset sky. Clarence paces up and down with the telephone in his hand.

CLARENCE
(big boopper voice)
Heeeelllloooo baaaabbbbyyyy!!!

Note: We intercut both sides of the conversation.

DICK

so present in the works in "Fantasy:" the city, the river, the harbor, urban squares, streets, pavements, rural fields, built and un-built landscapes. We look at the dashboard: wooden steering wheel, chrome-plated clocks, and lots of lights blinking in the dark. Turn up the music. Destroy All Monsters. Louder, louder, louder. We drive on; guided by voices, faster, move on the beat. The city passes our windows, following the same rhythm. Antwerp looks cool, by night. While listening to the music, we try to talk. Of no avail, we just go with the flow.

The pavement changes. We surpass the edge of the city. We cross a few bridges and some abandoned railroads. We accelerate, join in on





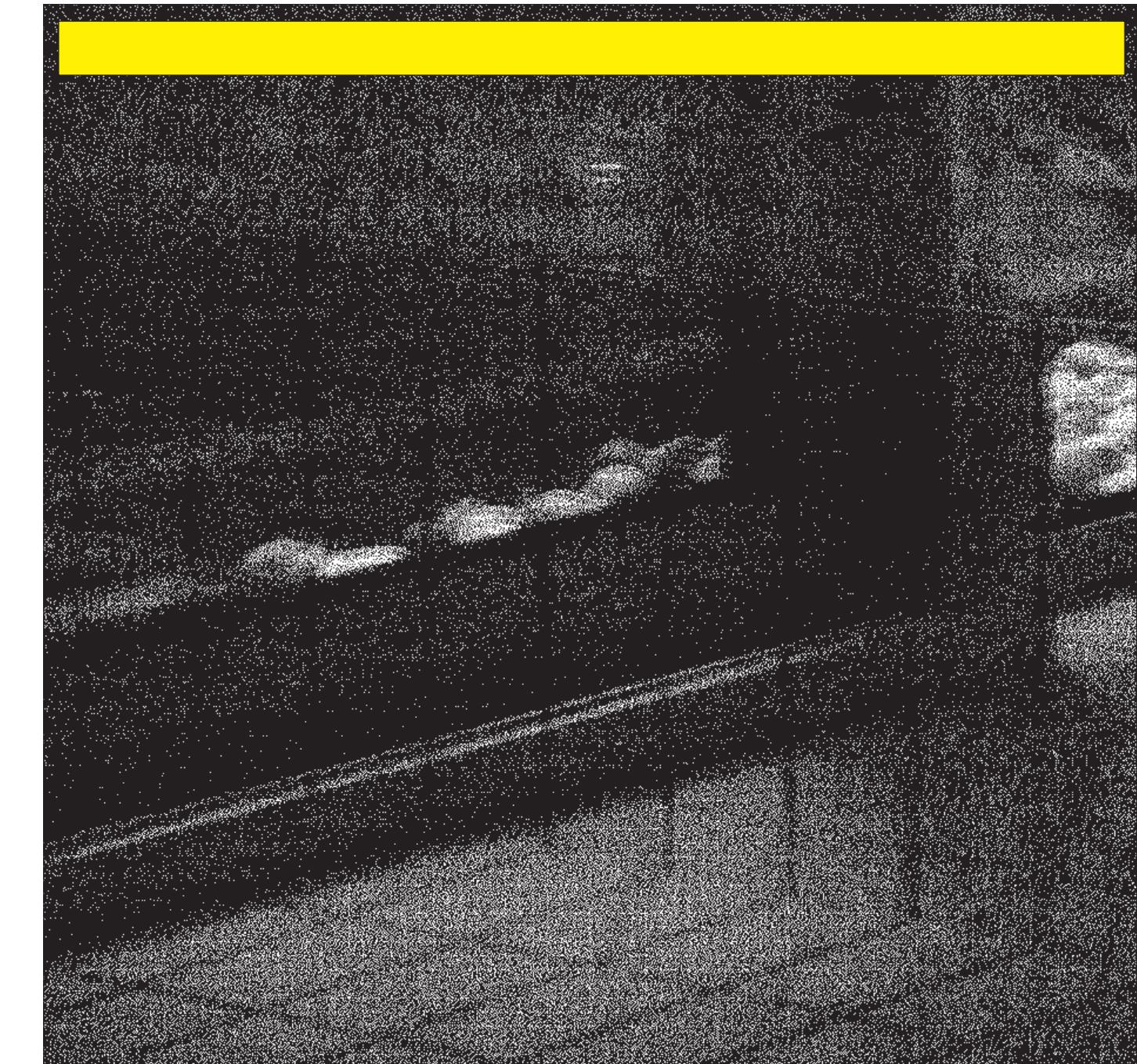
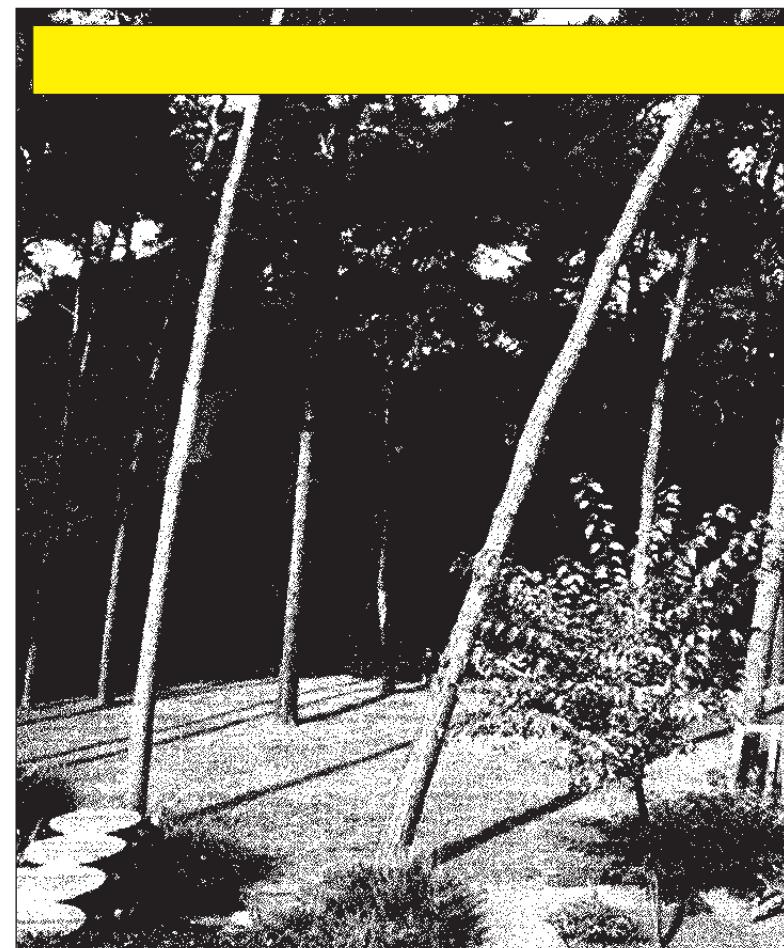
the ring, and follow the highway aligned by wet green bushes on the road side, while the windshield wipers move from left to right to left to right to left, until we exit again on a junction and pass through fields. A bit off Antwerp, not quite Brussels yet. The house is situated in the countryside, behind a long line of thick green hedges, a brick dwelling from the seventies hidden in the grey misty farmland, behind a few sleepy villages, cows in the distance. *Objet trouvé. Fantasy Island.*

Blue tiled swimming pool; dark bronze brown orange bar with bottles lined up on brown smoked glass shelves; cold glass house; carefully designed garden; marble terrace.

Is it possible to create a fantasy for real, to pull it around you, and to jump back into the world when you decide to?

Long pine trees on a row, all leaning into one direction; large glass window panes; bright white light coming in from triangle shaped roof lights, casting a sharp shadow on a dark brown intensely patterned wooden wall; large white feather shaped grass moving in the wind; long row of books almost diagonally intersecting a space; Quentin Tarantino; children's toys; brick outside wall continuing through the glass in the interior space; white pebbles; brown leather chair; sharp copperplate yucca plant with light bulbs; black mirrored walls; an old bare shed with traces of dark green paint; round transparent garden lights.

The architecture, the setting, and the environment of the house, they all connect to the artistic universe that we just encountered, not so long



ago, in the museum. Details are important in life.

Reflecting surfaces; golden plated bookshelves; portrait of a woman (Billie Holiday?); grey concrete ceilings with wood imprint; champagne bottle in the corner; brown leather bar stools with traces of a lifelong

use; black window frames; golden bathroom; gleaming vermillion red Ford Mustang.

L.A. meets Belgium backcountry. What is affected by what?

¹ en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fantasy, accessed October 15, 2009.

Clarence?

CLARENCE
You got it.

DICK
It's great to hear from you.

CLARENCE
Well, you're gonna be seein' me shortly.

DICK
You comin' to L.A.? When?

CLARENCE
Tomorrow.

DICK



FANTASY

John Baldessari
Throwing Three Balls in the Air to Get a Straight Line, 1973

John Baldessari
Two Distorted Figures (on Blue) with (Yellow) Springboard, 1991
Private collection, Brussels

Charif Benhelima
Garbage, 2007
de Buren, Antwerp

Marcel Broodthaers
Deux Tonneaux, 1966
Private collection, Brussels

Wim Catrysse
Backdrop, 2007
Courtesy of the artist

Jan Cox
Fruit and Flower, 1962
Courtesy De Zwarte Panter,
Antwerp

Jan Cox
Orpheus and Maenads, 1965
Courtesy De Zwarte Panter,
Antwerp

Jan Cox
Ontwerp Tlias van Homerus',
undated
Courtesy De Zwarte Panter,
Antwerp

Luc Deleu
Obelisk, 1983

Luc Deleu
Legoconstructie, 1978

Luc Deleu
Legoconstructie, 1978

Luc Deleu
Legoconstructie, 1979

Luc Deleu
Legoconstructie, 1981

Luc Deleu
Madrid-Madrid, 1997

William Eggleston
Untitled (Open Suitcase), 1999–
2000
edition 4/7
Courtesy Xavier Hufkens
Gallery, Brussels

William Eggleston
*Untitled (Bar, American Flags,
Memphis-Tennessee)*, 2001
edition 2/7
Courtesy Xavier Hufkens
Gallery, Brussels

William Eggleston
Untitled (Food Market), 1994
edition 3/10
Courtesy Xavier Hufkens
Gallery, Brussels

Tracy Emin
There's Nothing Funny about This,
2000
Collection Jan Van Imschoot

Dan Flavin
Corner Piece, 1978

Liam Gillick
Last Day of Production, 2007
Courtesy Galerie Micheline
Szwajcer, Antwerp

Mary Heilmann
Garden of Allah, 1986
Private collection, Belgium/
Courtesy Zeno X Gallery, Antwerp

Mary Heilmann
Red Square, Yellow Bar, 1986
Private collection, Belgium/
Courtesy Zeno X Gallery,
Antwerp

Mary Heilmann
Lavender, 1986
Private collection, Belgium/
Courtesy Zeno X Gallery,
Antwerp

René Heyvaert
Kruis, 1978

Peter Joseph
Red over Bronze, 2006
Private collection, Brussels

Donald Judd
Untitled, 1984
MuHKA, Antwerp

Donald Judd
Untitled (Progression), 1969
Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven

What's up? Why're leavin' Detroit?

Clarence sits down on the hotel room bed. Alabama, wearing only a long T-shirt with a big picture of Bullwinkle on it, crawls behind him.

CLARENCE
Well, there's a story behind all that. I'll tell you when I see you. By the way, I won't be alone. I'm bringing my wife with me.

DICK
Get the fuck outta here!

CLARENCE
I'm married man.

DICK
Get the fuck outta here!

CLARENCE
Believe it or not, I actually tricked a girl into falling in love with me. I'm not quite sure how I did it. I'd hate to have to do it again. But I did it. Wanna say hi to my better half?

wall
190 191



Jan Kempenaers <i>Brussels</i> , 1997	Edward Ruscha <i>Twentysix Gasoline Stations</i> , 1962	Edward Ruscha <i>Colored People</i> , 1972
Robert Mangold <i>Attic Series III</i> , 1990 Private collection, Brussels	Edward Ruscha <i>Various Small Fires and Milk</i> , 1964	Edward Ruscha <i>Hard Light, Los Angeles</i> , 1978
Brice Marden <i>Poster for Philip Glass Concert, Idea Warehouse, New York, February 2, 9, 16 & 23, 1975</i> edition of 100 Private collection, Antwerp	Edward Ruscha <i>Some Los Angeles Apartments</i> , 1965	Thomas Schütte <i>Kollektion (8 Muster-8 Farben)</i> , 1980 Collection Herbert
Gordon Matta-Clark <i>Office Baroque # 669</i> , 1977	Edward Ruscha <i>The Sunset Strip, Los Angeles</i> , 1966	Koen van den Broek <i>Rhythm</i> , 2006 Courtesy of the artist and Jay Jopling/White Cube, London
Paul McCarthy & Mike Kelley <i>Fresh Acconci</i> , 1995 De Vleeshal, Middelburg	Edward Ruscha <i>Thirtyfour Parking Lots in Los Angeles</i> , 1967	Koen van den Broek <i>Waterfall</i> , 2004 Courtesy of the artist and Jay Jopling/White Cube, London
Paul McCarthy & Mike Kelley <i>Heidi</i> , 1994	Edward Ruscha <i>Royal Road Test, Los Angeles</i> , 1967	Koen van den Broek <i>Eight Avenue</i> , 1999 Private collection/ Courtesy White Cube, London
Blinky Palermo <i>Auto</i> , 1972 Collection Galerie Marie-Puck Broodthaers	Edward Ruscha <i>Nine Swimming Pools and a Broken Glass</i> , 1968	Koen van den Broek <i>Ghost Truck</i> , 1999 Private collection/ Courtesy White Cube, London
Blinky Palermo <i>2 Rote Siegel</i> , 1970 Collection Galerie Marie-Puck Broodthaers	Edward Ruscha <i>Crackers, Hollywood</i> , 1969	Koen van den Broek <i>Display</i> , 2006 Courtesy of the artist and Jay Jopling/White Cube, London
Blinky Palermo <i>Ohne Titel (mit Komma)</i> , 1971 Collection Galerie Marie-Puck Broodthaers	Edward Ruscha <i>Real Estate Opportunities</i> , 1970	Koen van den Broek <i>Fantasy Cracks</i> , 2007 Courtesy of the artist and Jay Jopling/White Cube, London
Blinky Palermo <i>Blaues Dreieck</i> , 1969 Private collection, Brussels	Edward Ruscha <i>A Few Palm Trees, Hollywood</i> , 1971	Koen van den Broek <i>Solution</i> , 2006 Courtesy of the artist and Jay Jopling/White Cube, London
	Edward Ruscha <i>Records, Hollywood</i> , 1971	



Before Dick can respond Clarence puts Alabama on the phone.

ALABAMA
Hi, Dick. I'm Alabama Worley.

DICK
Hello, Alabama.

ALABAMA
I can't wait to meet you. Clarence told me all about you. He said you were his best friend. So, I guess that makes you my best friend, too.

Clarence start dictating to her what to say.

CLARENCE
Tell him we gotta go.

ALABAMA
Clarence says we gotta be hittin' it.



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Koen van den Broek
Cut Out, 2006
Courtesy of the artist and Jay Jopling/White Cube, London

William van den Broek
Untitled, 1983

Wilfried Vandenbroucke
Sunset with Pirates, 2007
Courtesy of the artist
Wilfried Vandenbroucke
Welcome to Tijuana, 2007
Courtesy of the artist

Wilfried Vandenbroucke
No Surrender, 2007
Courtesy of the artist

Wilfried Vandenbroucke
Blue Restaurant, 2007
Courtesy of the artist

Wilfried Vandenbroucke
John My Deere, 2007
Courtesy of the artist

Wilfried Vandenbroucke
México Hotel, 2007
Courtesy of the artist

Jan Van Imschoot
The Mistake, 2008
Collection of the artist

Jan Van Imschoot
The Widow, 2008
Collection of the artist

Jan Van Imschoot
The Colonel, 2008
Collection of the artist

Jan Van Imschoot
Ladyboy-curlieiman I, 2007
Collection of the artist

Jan Van Imschoot
Doorway in the Sun no. 3 (a dilettant version), 2007
Collection of the artist

Dan Van Severen
Untitled, 1992

Jan Vercruyse
Places (II.8), 2006
Places (III.5), 2006

Jeff Wall
The Guitarist, 1987
Private collection, Brussels

Franz West
Uncle-chair, 2005

DICK
What?
CLARENCE
Tell him we'll be hittin' his area some time tomorrow.
ALABAMA
He said don't go nowhere. We'll be there some time tomorrow.
DICK
Wait a minute—
CLARENCE
Tell him not to eat anything. We're gonna scarf when we get there.
ALABAMA
Don't eat anything.



DICK
Alabama, could you tell Clar...

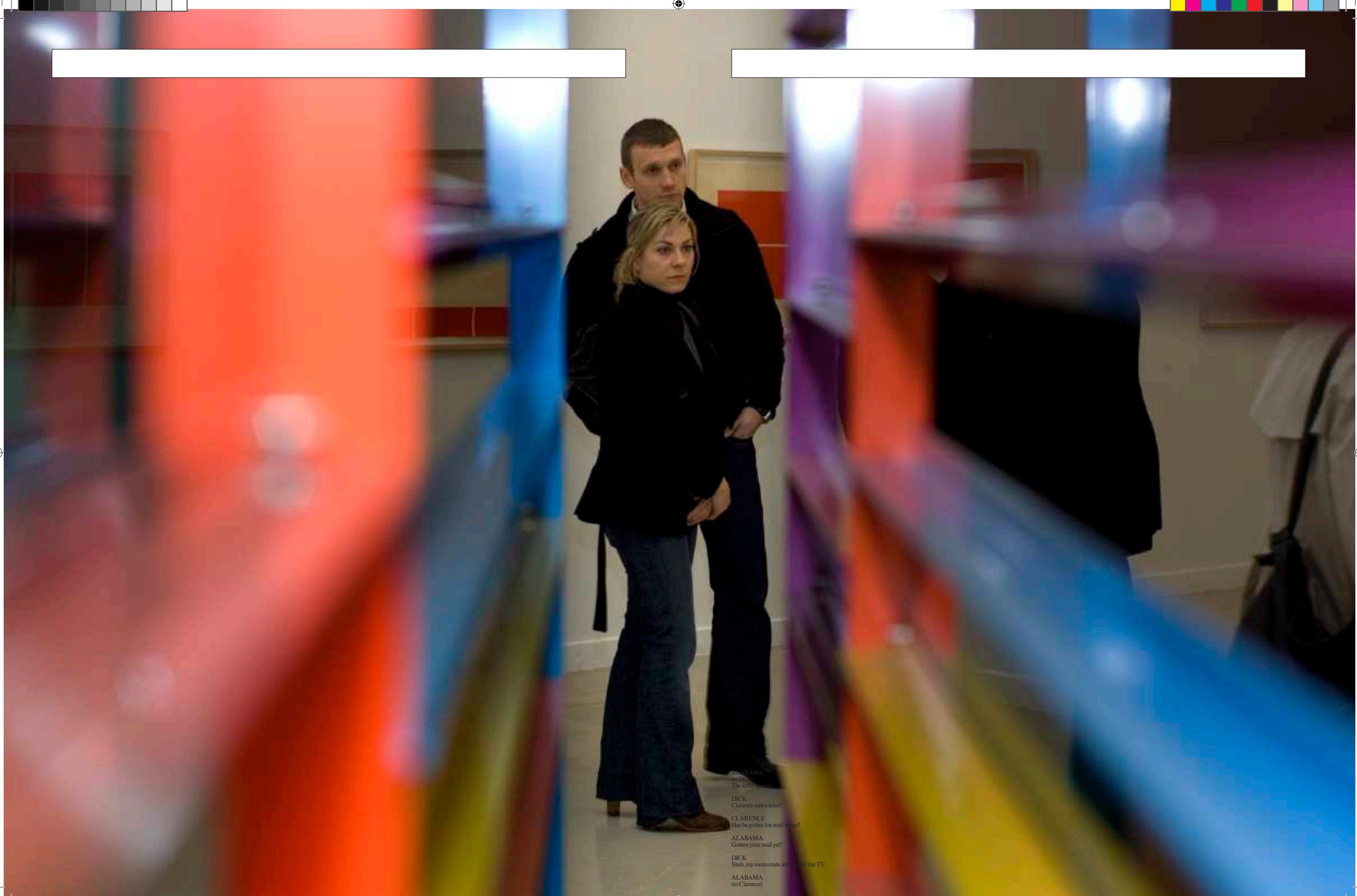
CLARENCE
Ask him if he got the letter.

ALABAMA
Did you get the letter?

DICK
What letter?

ALABAMA
(to Clarence)
What letter?

CLARENCE
The letter I sent.



ALABAMA
(to Dick)
The letter I sent.

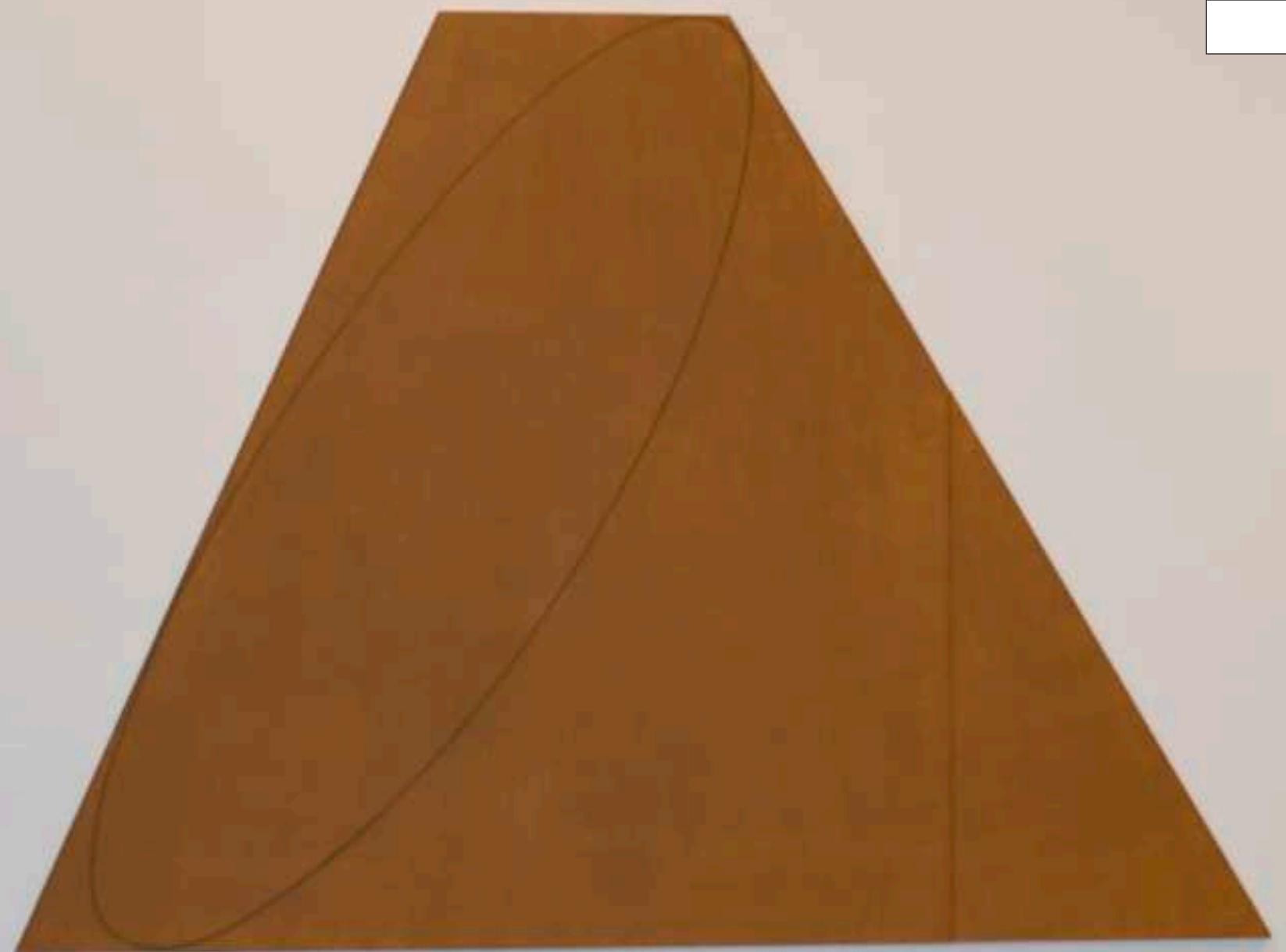
DICK
Clarence sent a letter?

CLARENCE
Has he gotten his mail today?

ALABAMA
Gotten your mail yet?

DICK
Yeah, my room-mate leave on the TV.

ALABAMA
(to Clarence)



Yes.

CLARENCE
Has he looked through it yet?

ALABAMA
(to Dick)
Ya looked through it?

DICK
Not yet.

ALABAMA
(to Clarence)
Nope.
CLARENCE
Tell him to look through it.





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ALABAMA
(to Dick)
Get it.

DICK
Let me speak to Clarence.

ALABAMA
(to Clarence)
He wants to speak with you.

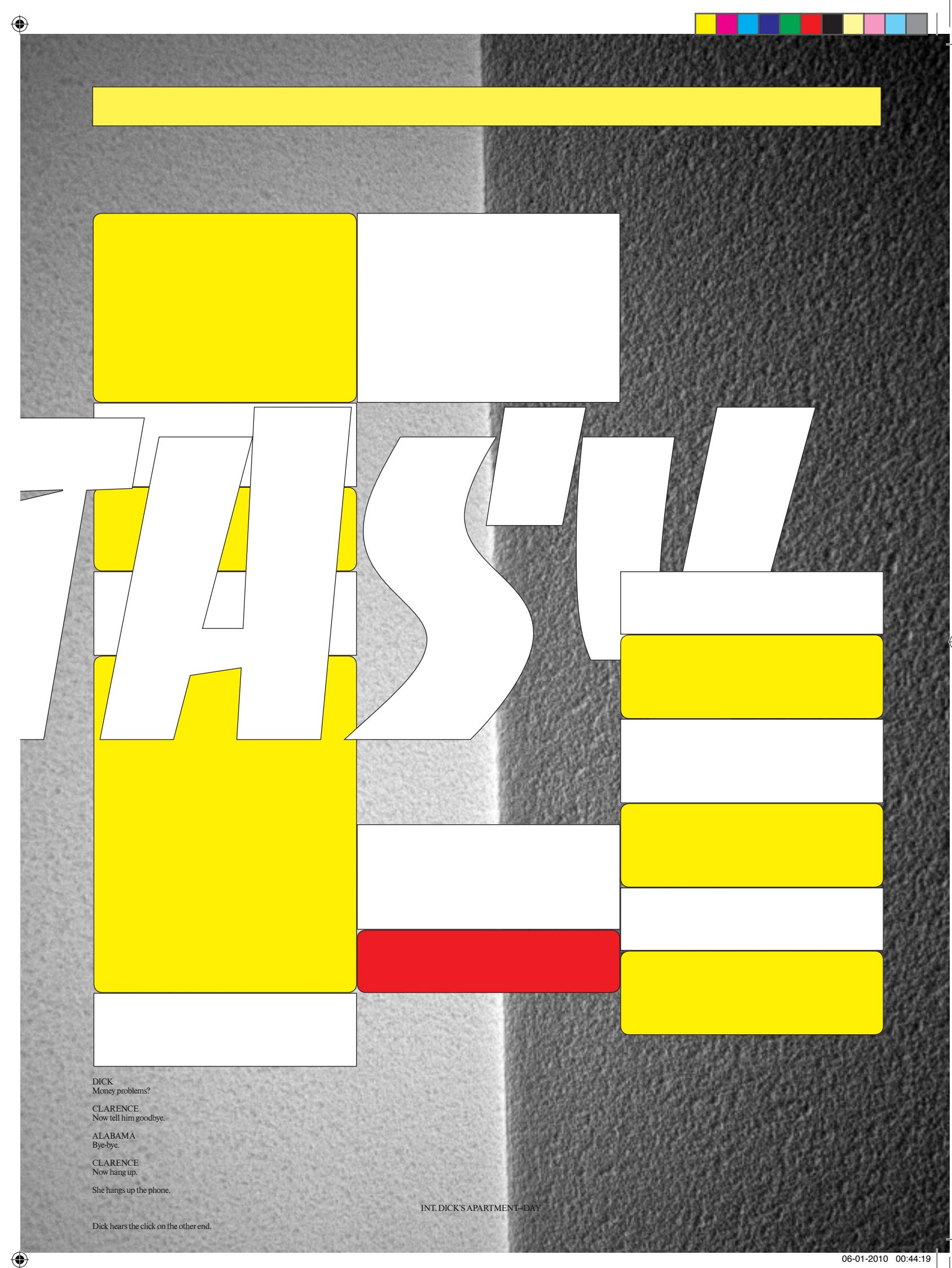
CLARENCE
No time. Gotta go. Just tell him to read the letter, the letter explains all. Tell him I love him. And tell him, as of tomorrow, all his money problems are over.

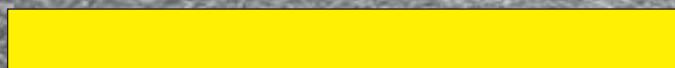
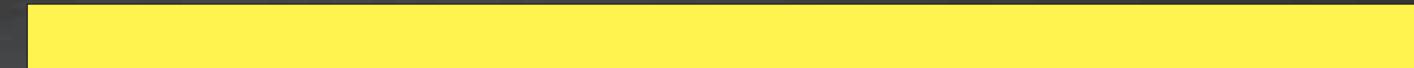
ALABAMA
(to Dick)
He can't. We gotta go, but he wants you to read the letter. The letter explains it all. He wants you to know he loves you. And he wants you to know that as of tomorrow, all of your money problems are over.



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wall

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Fantasy

DICK

Hello, hello, Clarence? Clarence's wife?... I mean Alabama... hello?

Extremely confused, Dick jangles up the phone. He goes over to the TV and picks up the day's mail. He goes through it.

BILL: Southern California Gas Company.

BILL: Group W.

BILL: Fossenkamp Photography.

BILL: Columbia Record and Tape Club.

LETTER: It's obviously from Clarence. Addressed to Dick. Dick opens it.

EXT. TRAILER-DAY

A lower-middle-class trailer park named Astro World, which has a neon sign in front of it in the shape of a planet. A big, white Chevy Nova pulls into the park. It parks by a trailer that's slightly less kept up than the others. Cliff gets out of the Chevy. He's drinking out of a fast-food soda cup as he opens the door to his trailer.

INT. TRAILER-DAY



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Kyoto | 2005 | 80 x 136 cm



Reservoir | 2005 | 180 x 270 cm

210

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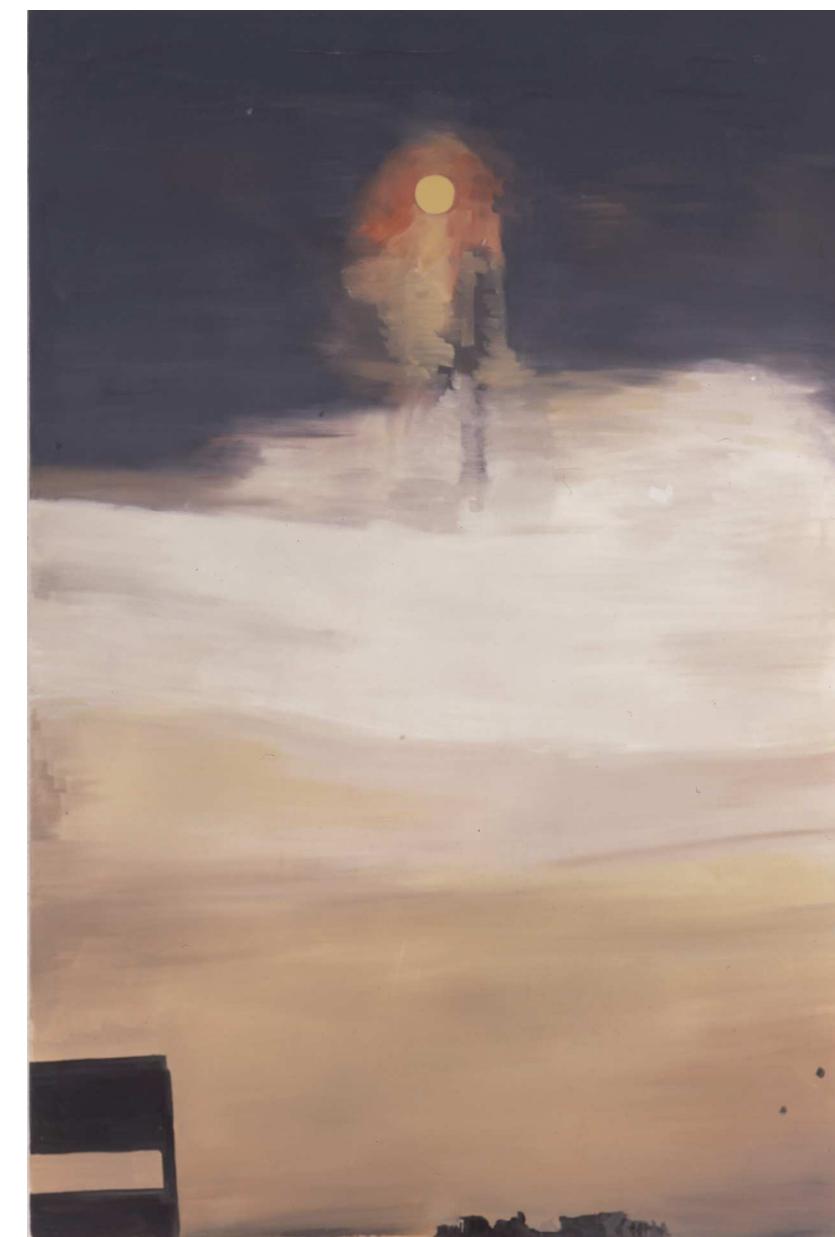
Sanjusangendo | 2005 | 115 x 88 cm



Science Fiction | 2005 | 200 x 300 cm

212

213



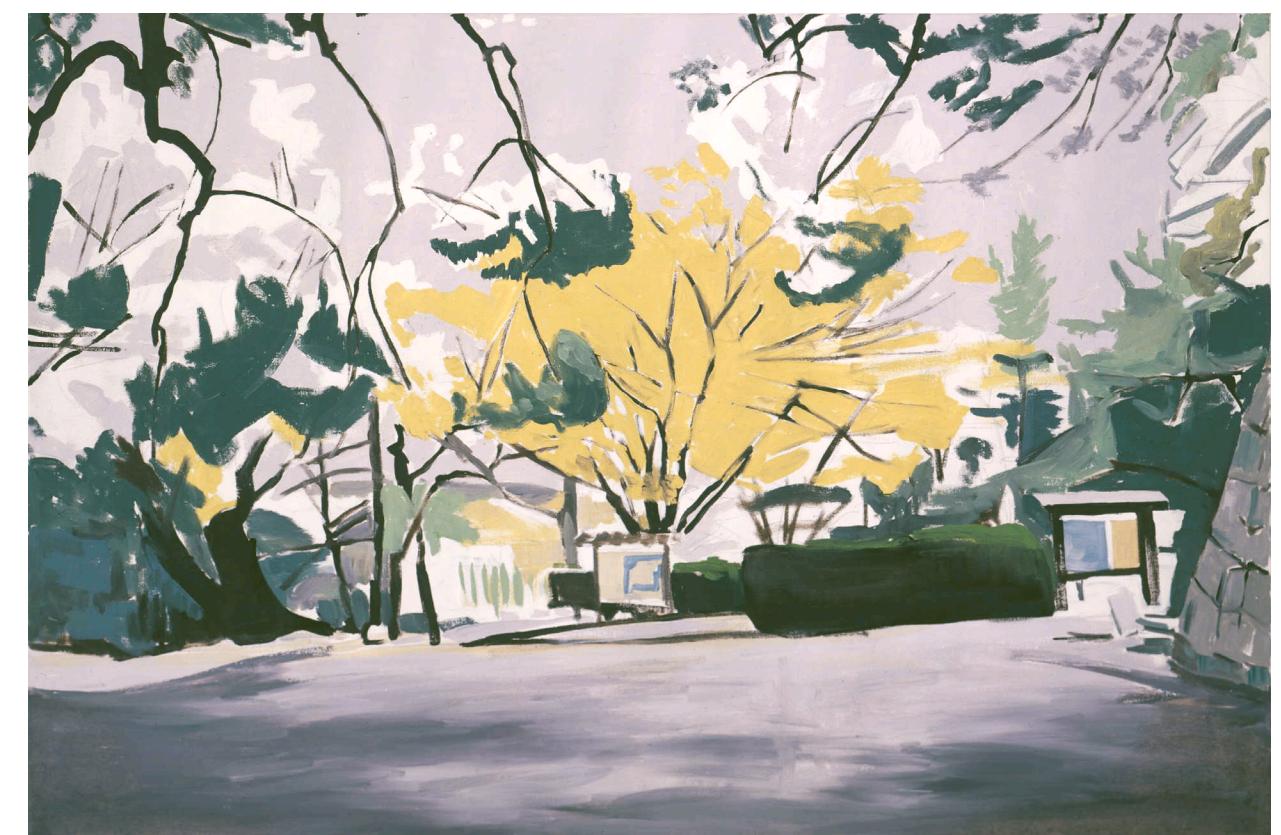
Smoke Screen | 2005 | 210 x 140 cm



Storage | 2005 | 102,5 x 100 cm

214

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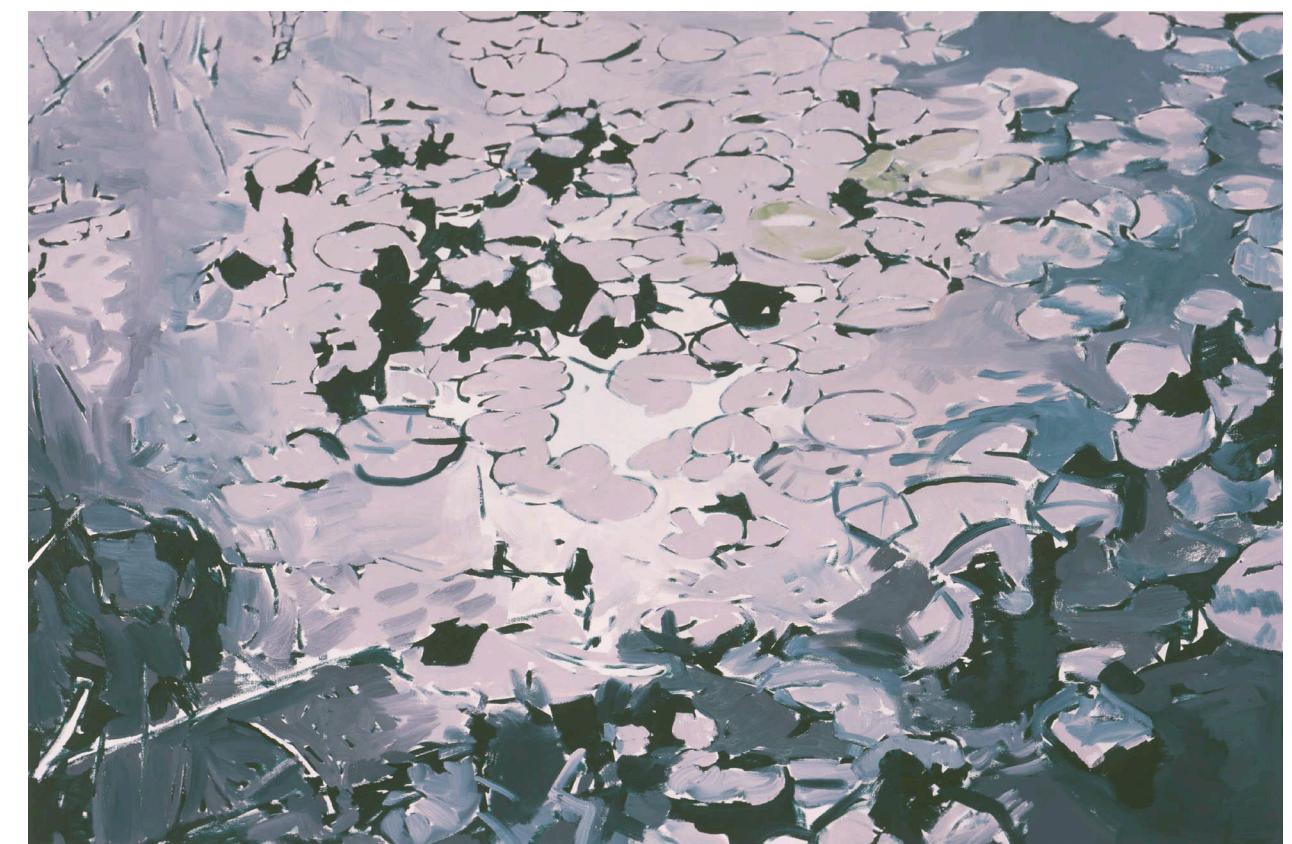
The Emperor's Garden | 2005 | 100 x 150 cm



The Wind | 2005 | 80 x 120 cm

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Water Lilies #3 | 2005 | 100 x 150 cm



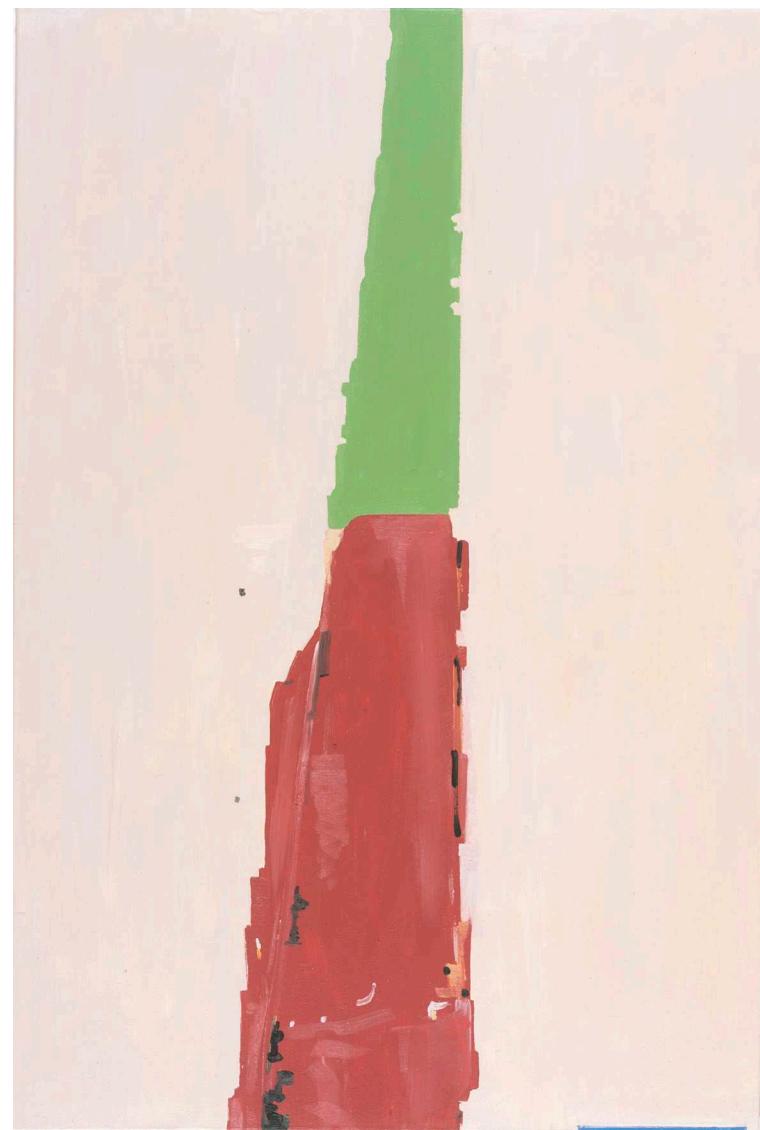
Anything Goes | 2006 | 60 x 180 cm

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Cocoon | 2006 | 135 x 90 cm



Cut Out | 2006 | 135 x 90 cm

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Display | 2006 | 60 x 180 cm



Display Disconnected | 2006 | 60 x 180 cm

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Les Taches Rouges | 2006 | 135 x 90 cm





Movement | 2006 | 60 x 180 cm

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Rhythm | 2006 | 60 x 180 cm





Solution | 2006 | 135 x 90 cm

226

227



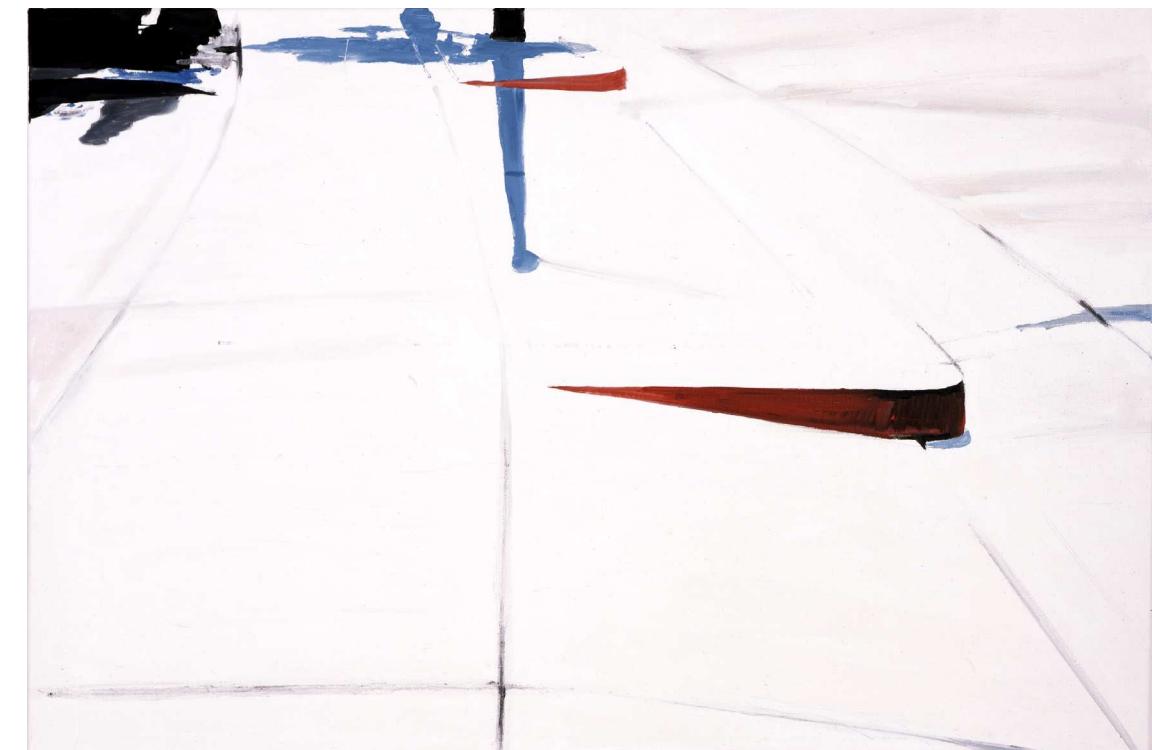
Violetta | 2006 | 120 x 80 cm



Yellow Milk | 2006 | 135 x 90 cm

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Breaking Points | 2006 | 80 x 120 cm



Happiness | 2006 | 300 x 200 cm

230

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Spain (Truck) | 2006 | 110 x 165 cm



Trona | 2006 | 158 x 154 cm

232

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190 (Furance Creek) | 2007 | 90 x 135 cm



3D | 2007 | 88 x 115 cm

234

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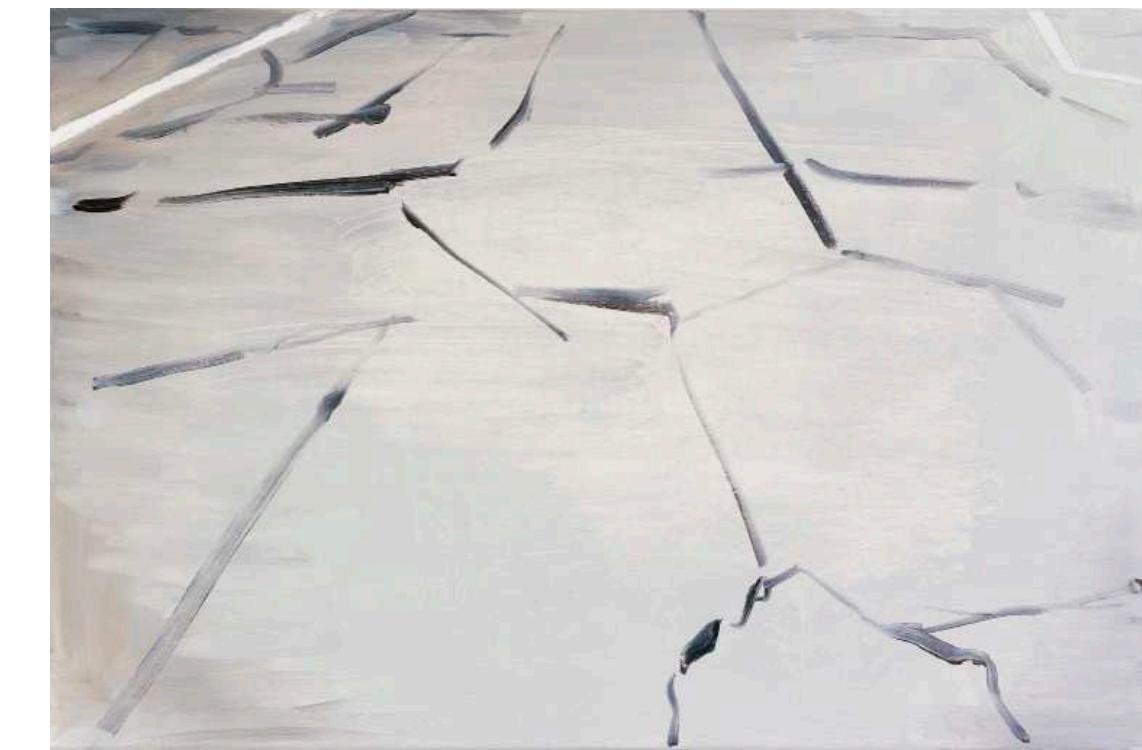
Blue Border-Street Lamp | 2007 | 210 x 140 cm



Fl horizontal | 2007 | 110 x 165 cm

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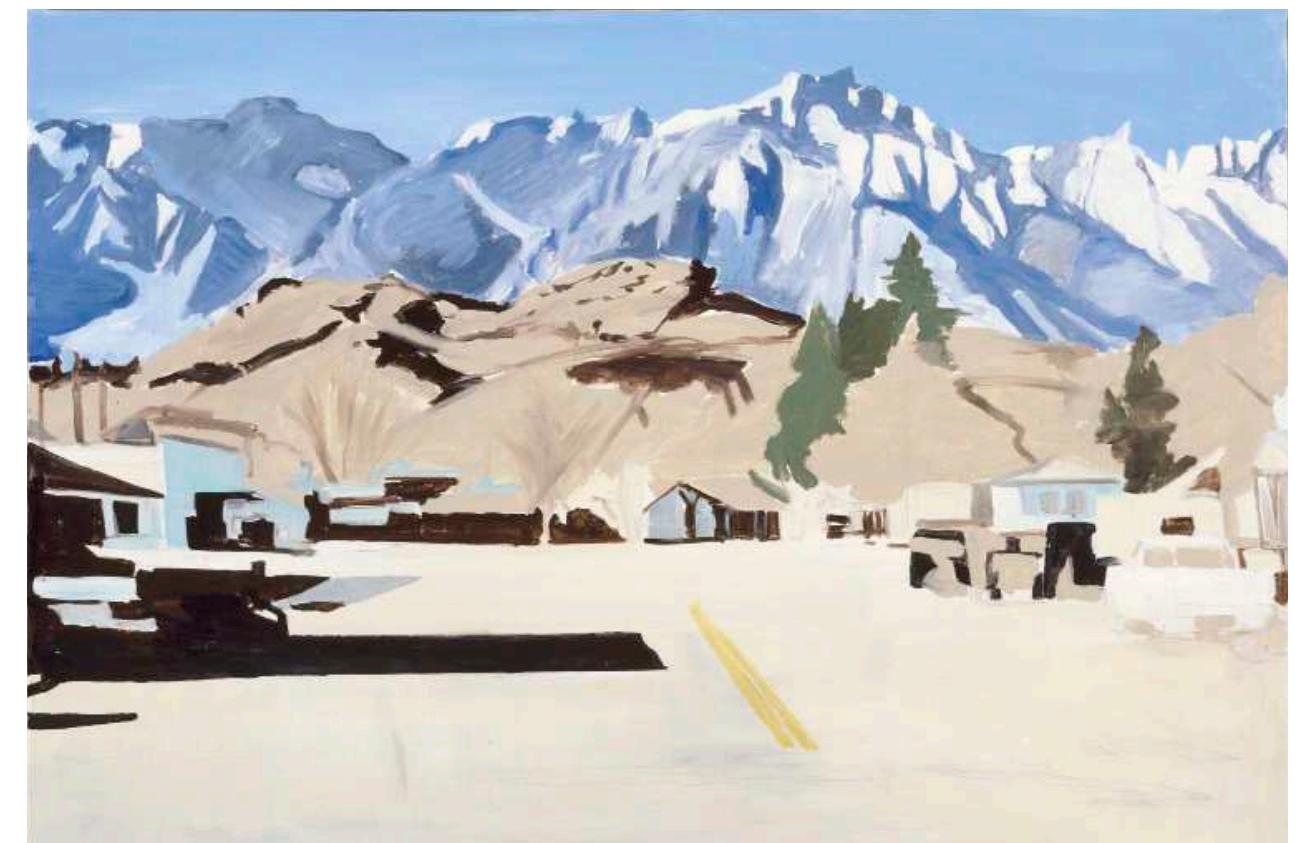
Fantasy Cracks | 2007 | 80 x 120 cm



Just Stripes | 2007 | 110 x 143 cm

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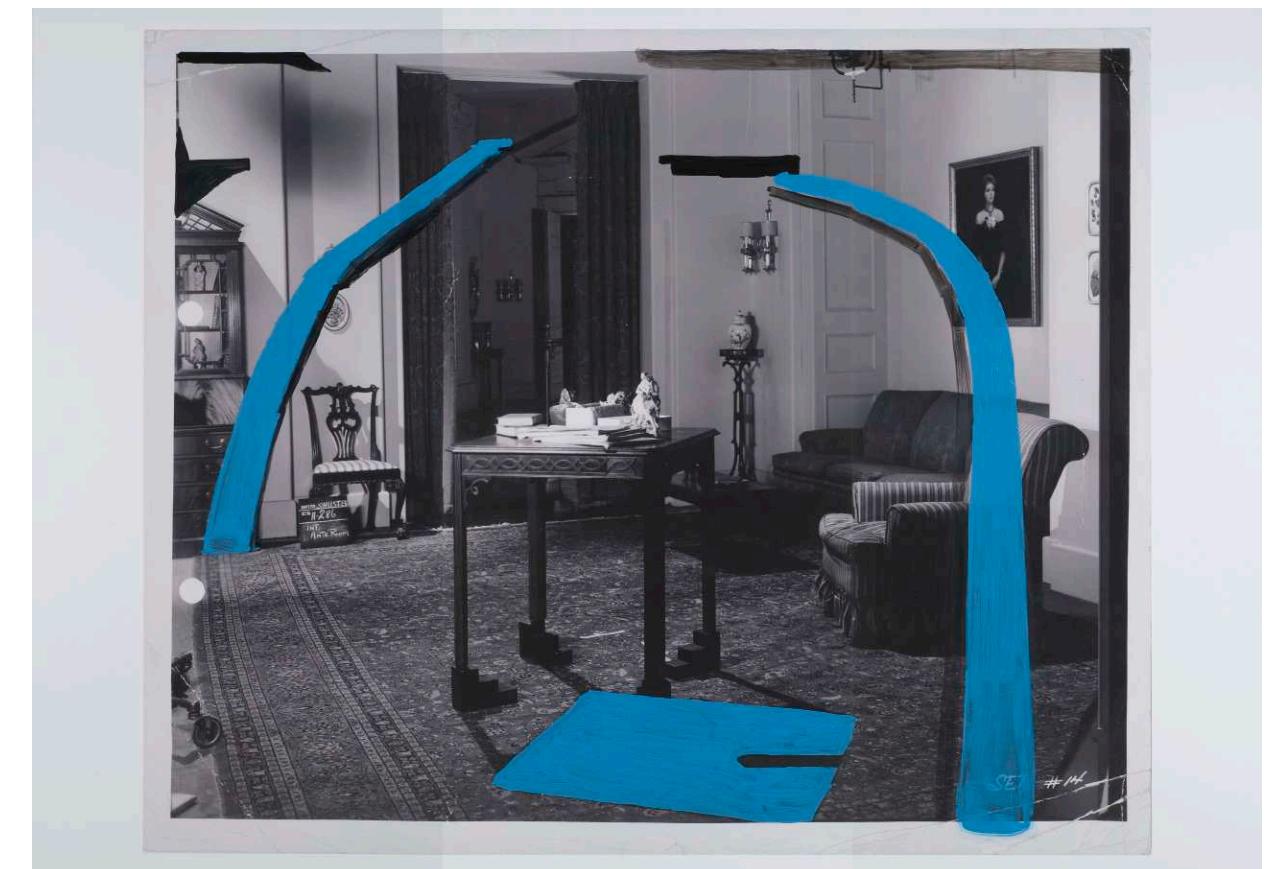
Landscape (Keeler US) | 2007 | 110 x 165 cm



Yellow Border | 2007 | 195 x 130 cm

240

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This an Example of That: #14 / Shuster (Interior Ante Room) | 2008 | 297 x 421 cm



This an Example of That: #3 / (Interior With Fireplace) |
2008 | 332 x 420 cm

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This an Example of That: #99 / The Jazz Age (Interior Helen Morgan Club) | 2008 | 297 x 421 cm



*This an Example of That: #51 / The Learning Tree (Rodney's Study) |
2008 | 297 x 421 cm*

244 245



This an Example of That: #131 / The Jazz Age (Int. Ziegfells Penthouse) | 2008 | 186 x 264 cm



This an Example of That: #27 / Superman In Exile (Laboratory) | 2008 | 264 x 186 cm

246

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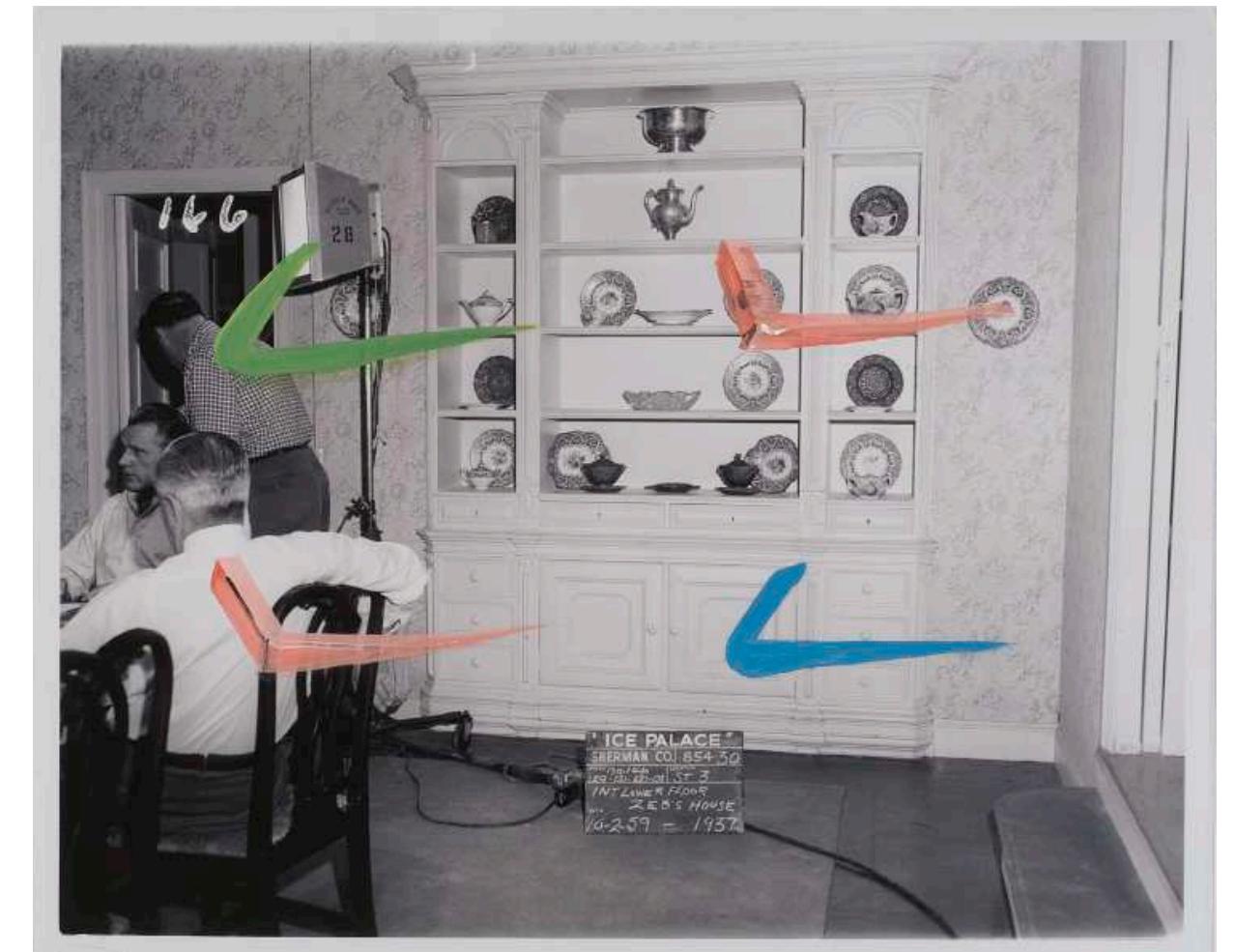
This an Example of That: #134 / The Jazz Age (Interior Ziegfeld's Penthouse) | 2008 | 186 x 264 cm



This an Example of That: #52 / The Learning Tree (Winger Dining Room) | 2008 | 174 x 220 cm

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This an Example of That: #166 / Ice Palace (Interior Lower Floor Zeb's House) | 2008 | 155 x 220 cm



This an Example of That: #38 / Hunt's Home (Interior With Fireplace | Clock | etc.) | 2008 | 120 x 170 cm

250

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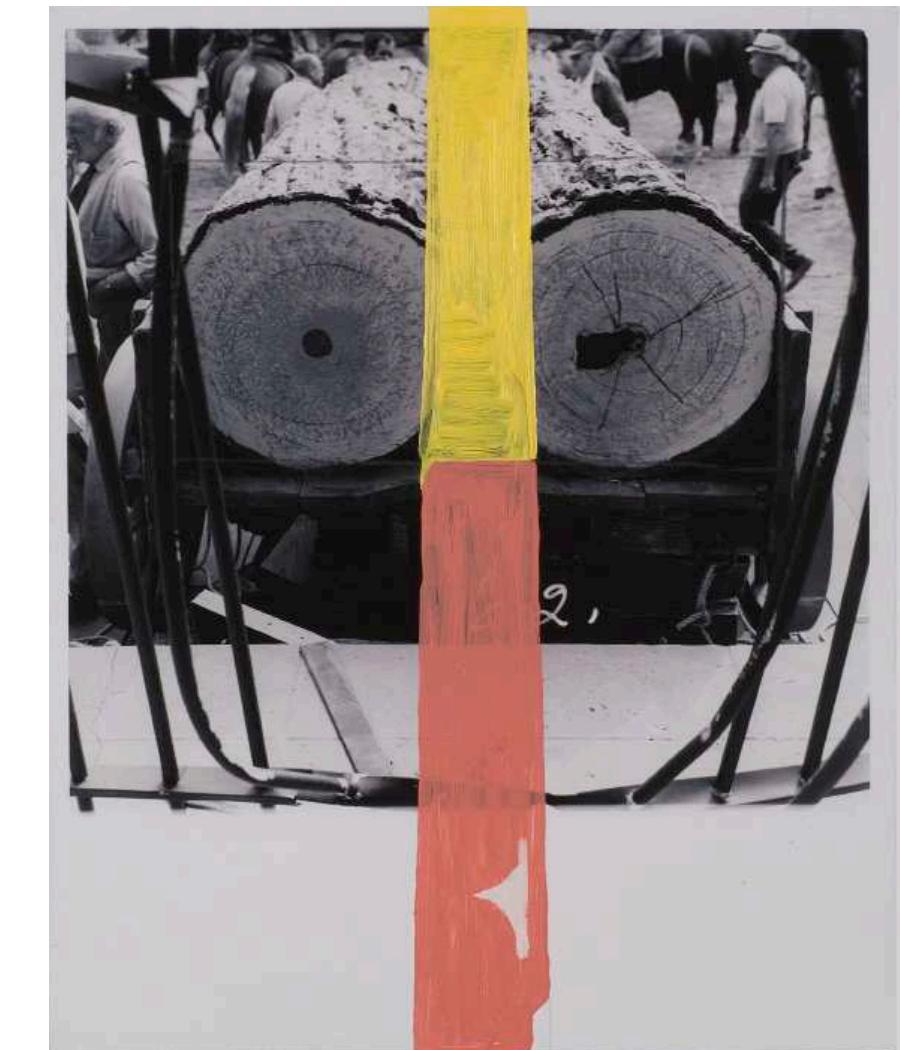
This an Example of That: #48 / Too Much | Too Soon (Interior Sound Stage) | 2008 | 106 x 150 cm



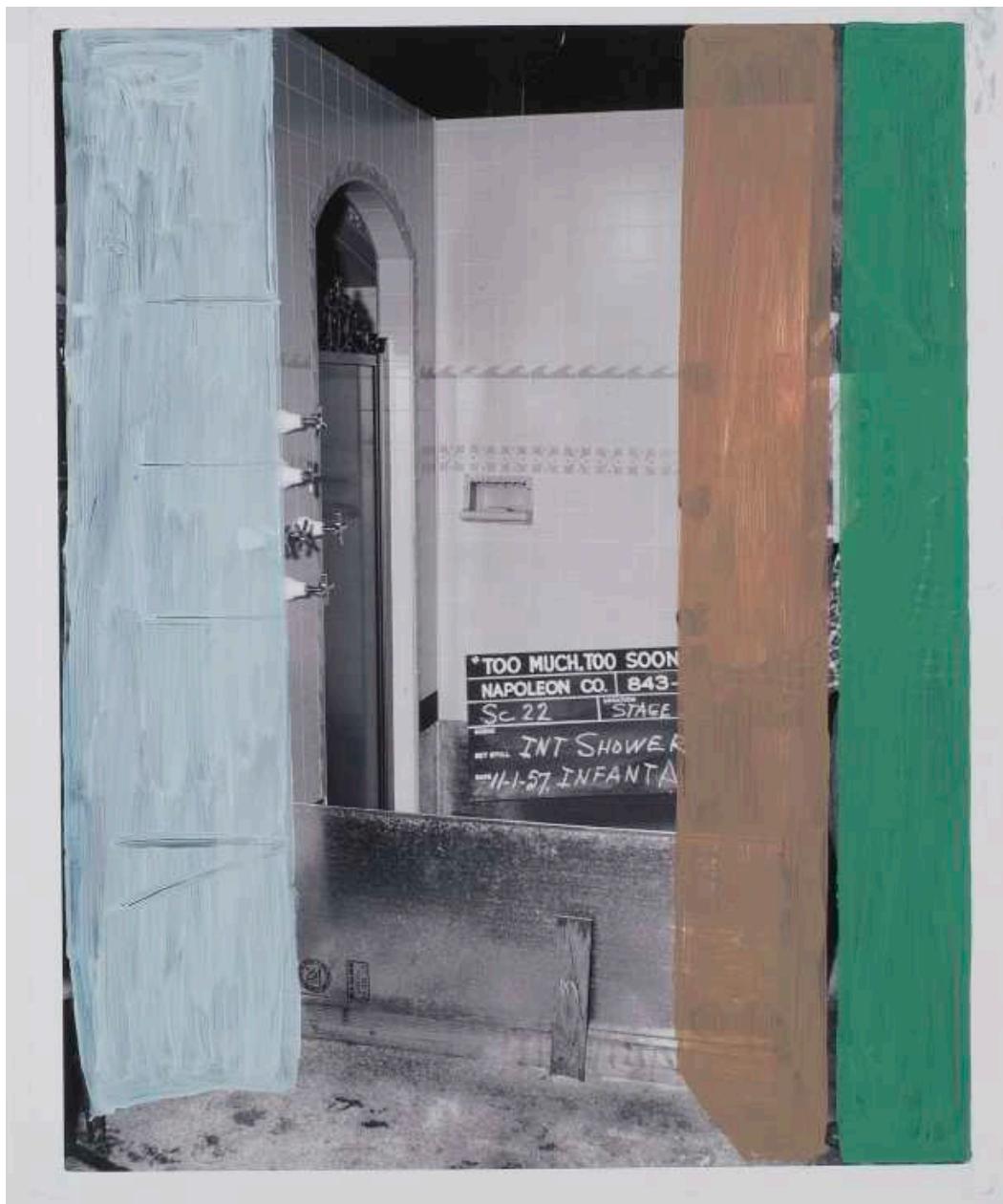
This is an Example of That: #36 / Burton (Interior Dr. Bentley Office) | 2008 | 77,5 x 110 cm

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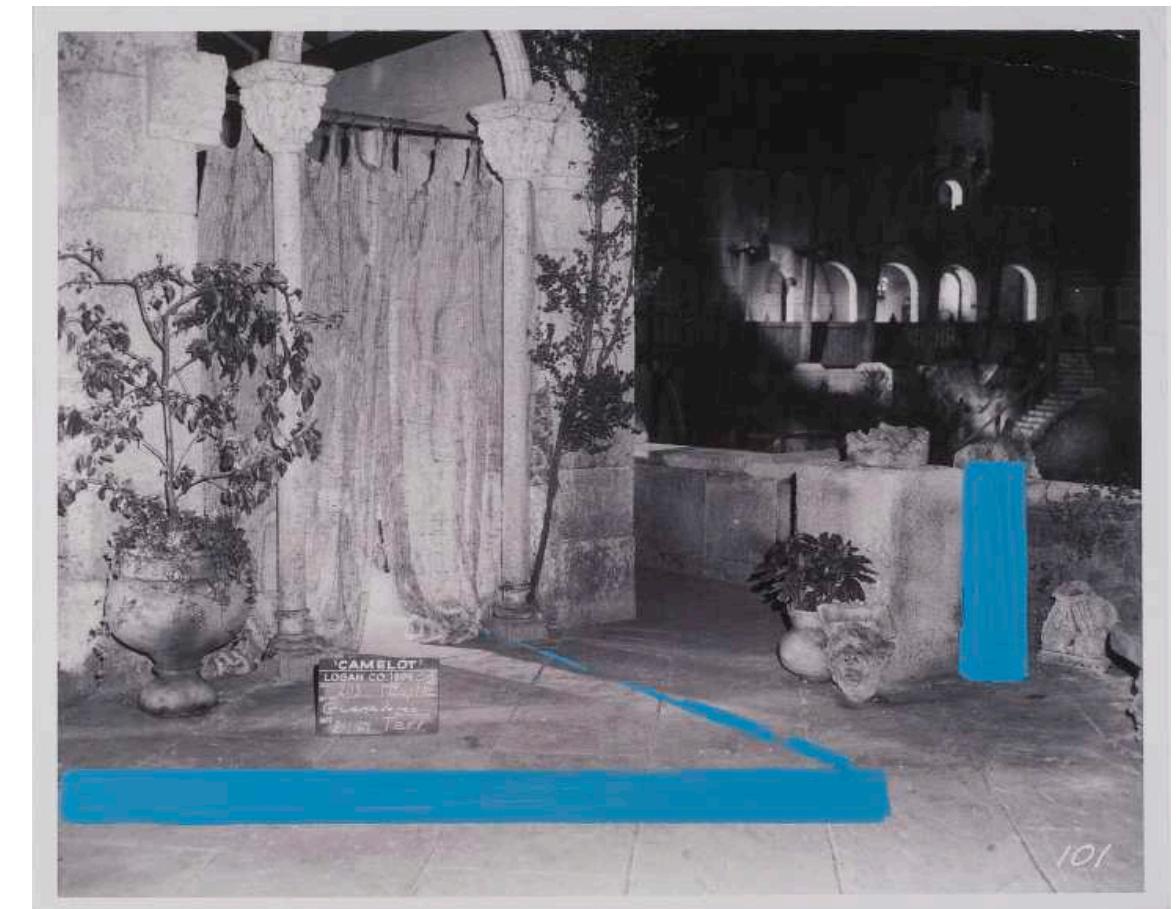
This is an Example of That: #62 / Two Logs | 2008 | 160 x 113 cm



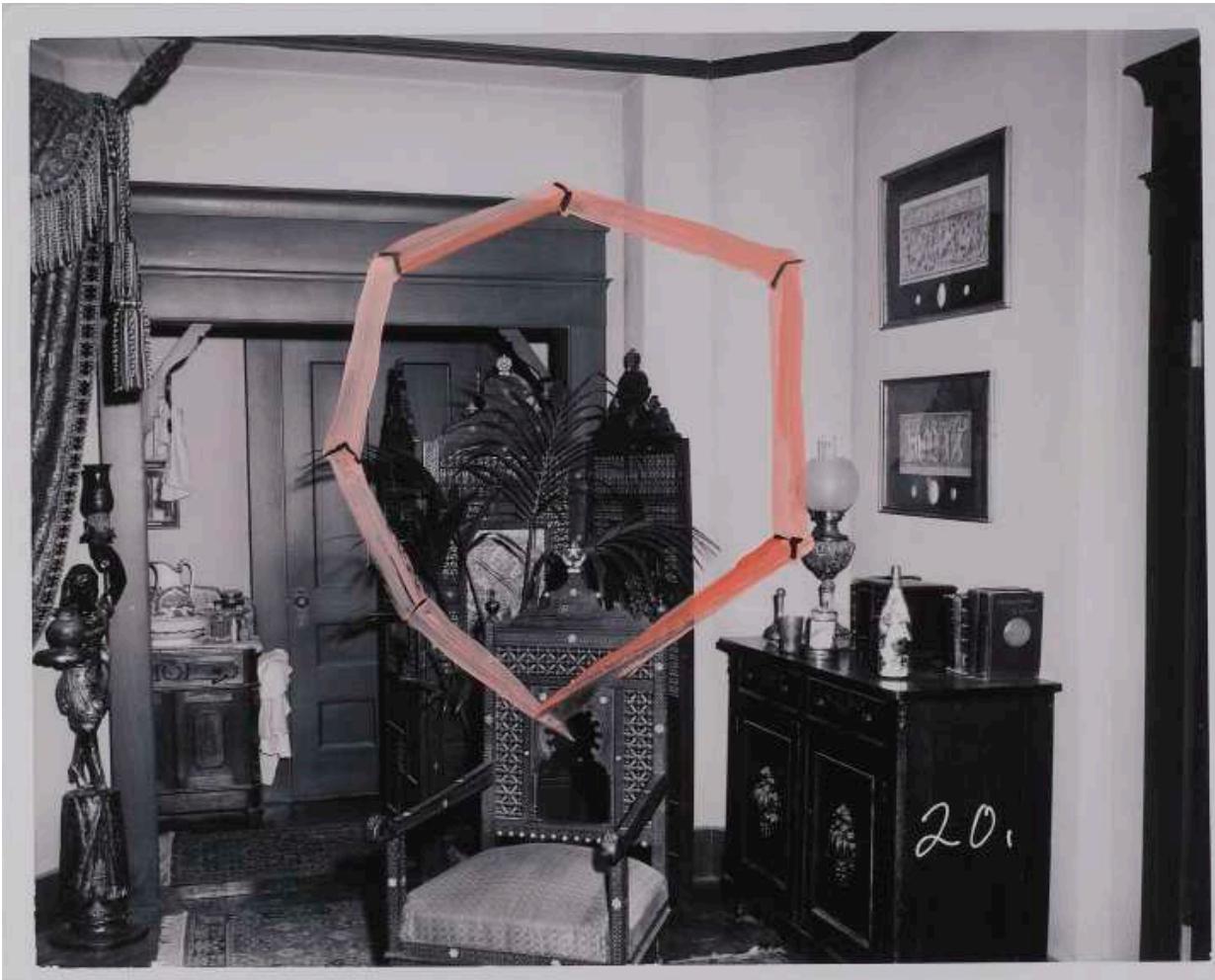
This an Example of That: #10 / Too Much | Too Soon (Interior Shower Infanta) | 2008 | 160 x 113 cm

254

255

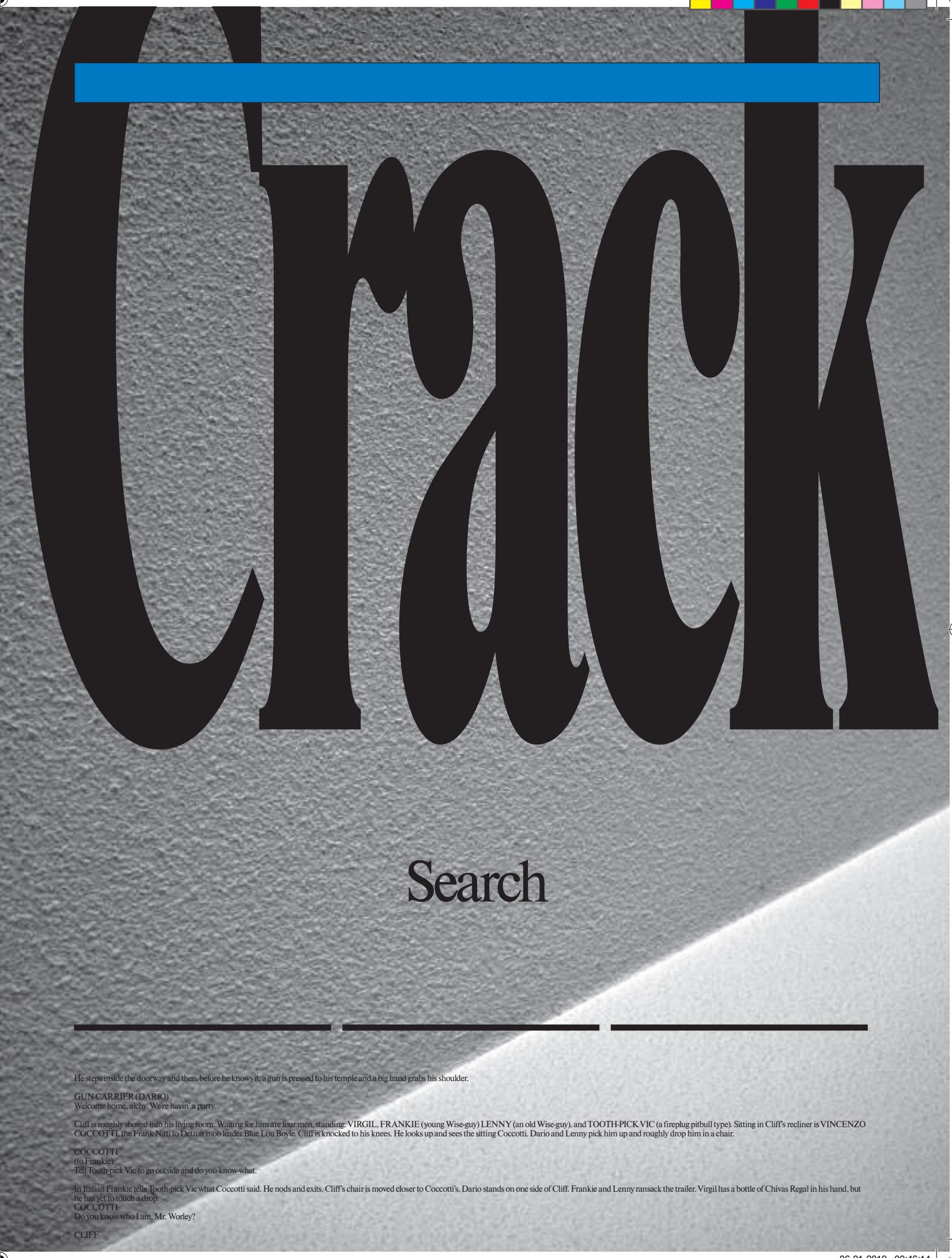


This an Example of That: #101 / Camelot (Guenevere's Terrace) | 2008 | 127 x 180 cm



This an Example of That: #20 / Interior (With Palm) | 2008 | 92 x 130 cm

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He steps inside the doorway and then, before he knows it, a gun is pressed to his temple and a big hand grabs his shoulder.

GUNCARRIER (DARIO)
Welcome home, alchy. We're havin' a party.

Cliff is roughly shoved into his living room. Waiting for him are four men, standing: VIRGIL, FRANKIE (young Wise-guy) LENNY (an old Wise-guy), and TOOTH-PICK VIC (a fireplug pitbull type). Sitting in Cliff's recliner is VINCENZO COCCOTTI, the Frank Nitti to Detroit mob leader Blue Lou Boyle. Cliff is knocked to his knees. He looks up and sees the sitting Coccotti. Dario and Lenny pick him up and roughly drop him in a chair.

COCCOTTI
(to Frankie)
Tell Tooth-pick Vic to go outside and do you-know-what.

In Italian Frankie tells Tooth-pick Vic what Coccotti said. He nods and exits. Cliff's chair is moved closer to Coccotti's. Dario stands on one side of Cliff. Frankie and Lenny ransack the trailer. Virgil has a bottle of Chivas Regal in his hand, but he has yet to touch a drop.

COCCOTTI
Do you know who I am, Mr. Worley?

CLIFF



wall



Works



Heaven
1999, 90 x 135 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy the artist



Eighth Avenue
1999, 80 x 120 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection, courtesy
White Cube, London (UK)



Ghost Truck
1999, 100 x 150 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Twin Towers,
1999, 90 x 135 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection, courtesy
White Cube, London (UK)



Yellow Border
1999, 165 x 110 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Bad Water
1999, 200 x 300 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection James and Jacqui
Erskine, Sydney (AU)



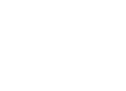
Gate
1999, 90 x 135 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy the artist



Wing
1999, 200 x 300 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Figge von Rosen
Galerie, Cologne (D)



Sidewalk
2001, 76 x 51 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Blue Border
2001, 180 x 120 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection, courtesy
White Cube, London (UK)



Rue de Rivoli
2001, 90 x 135,5 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy the artist



Flash
2001, 70 x 47 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



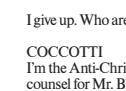
Red and Blue Border
2000, 135 x 90 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection, courtesy
White Cube, London (UK)



Flashlight
2001, 114,3 x 76,2 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



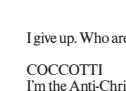
Green and Pink Border
2001, 70 x 46 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection, courtesy
White Cube, London (UK)



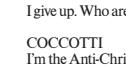
Andorra
2002, 90 x 135 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Figge von Rosen
Galerie, Cologne (D)



Garage
2002, 174 x 170 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



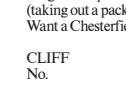
I give up. Who are you?



COCCOTTI
I'm the Anti-Christ. You get me in a vendetta kind of mood, you will tell the angels in heaven that you had never seen pure evil so singularly personified as you did in the face of the man who killed you. My name is Vincenzo Coccotti. I work as a counsel for Mr. Blue Lou Boyle, the man your son stole from. I hear you were once a cop so I assume you've heard of us before. Am I correct?



CLIFF
I've heard of Blue Lou Boyle.



COCCOTTI
I'm glad. Hopefully that will clear up the how-full-of-shit-I-am question you've been asking yourself. Now, we're gonna have a little Q and A, and, at the risk of sounding redundant, please make your answers genuine.



Want a Chesterfield?



CLIFF
No.



COCCOTTI



Twin Peaks
2000, 66 x 85 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection, courtesy
White Cube, London (UK)



Cohesion
2000, 150 x 100 m
Oil on canvas
Private collection, courtesy
White Cube, London (UK)



Red Border #2
2000, 180 x 120 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection, courtesy
White Cube, London (UK)



White Tube
2000, 180 x 120 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection, courtesy
White Cube, London (UK)



Bronx
2000, 90 x 135 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection, courtesy
White Cube, London (UK)



Bronx



2000, 90 x 135 cm



Oil on canvas



Private collection, courtesy
White Cube, London (UK)



Sidewalk-Reflection
2001, 90 x 60 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



2001, 90 x 60 cm



Oil on canvas



Private collection



The Farm
2001, 90 x 135 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy the artist



2001, 90 x 135 cm



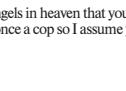
Oil on canvas



Collection Cooper Family
Foundation (US)



2001, 90 x 135 cm



Oil on canvas



Private collection



Andorra
2002, 90 x 135 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Figge von Rosen
Galerie, Cologne (D)



2002, 90 x 135 cm

Oil on canvas

Private collection



Golden Tree
2002, 90 x 135 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Hollywood
2002, 90 x 135 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Joshua Tree
2002, 100 x 150 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Low Wall
2002, 255 x 170 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Railroad
2002, 90 x 135 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Tractor
2002, 90 x 135 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



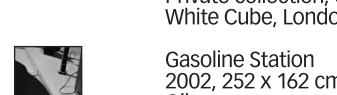
Viaduct
2002, 280 x 420 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection Hall Art Foundation, Connecticut (US)



Yellow Non-Stop
2002, 180 x 120 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Zion
2002, 100 x 150 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection, courtesy White Cube, London (UK)



Gasoline Station
2002, 252 x 162 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection Veronique en Hans Skeppner, Brussel (B)



Red Border and Black
2002, 70 x 46 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection Mimi Dusselier, Meulebeke (B)



Shadows (Death Valley)
2002, 240 x 160 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Blue Border and Grid
2003, 190 x 135 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Boat
2003, 90 x 60 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Broken Yellow Border
2003, 195 x 130 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection, courtesy Jeremy Lewison limited, London (UK)



Cafeteria
2003, 135 x 90 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy the artist



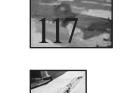
Canal
2003, 90 x 135 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Circus
2003, 110 x 165 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection, courtesy White Cube, London (UK)



Composition
2003, 90 x 87,5 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Crack
2003, 180 x 120 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection Tristar



Early Evening
2003, 79 x 77 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Early Evening
2003, 79 x 77 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Early Evening
2003, 79 x 77 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



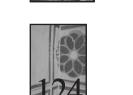
Early Evening
2003, 79 x 77 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Early Evening
2003, 79 x 77 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Early Evening
2003, 79 x 77 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Early Evening
2003, 79 x 77 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Early Evening
2003, 79 x 77 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Early Evening
2003, 79 x 77 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Early Evening
2003, 79 x 77 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Mattress
2003, 190 x 145,5 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Figge von Rosen Galerie, Cologne (D)



Penetration
2003, 120 x 115 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy the artist



Pick-up
2003, 110 x 142,5 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection Sarah and Louis Elson (UK)



Railing
2003, 90 x 60 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



San Luis Potosi
2003, 120 x 115 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Shadows-Heraklion
2003, 174 x 170 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Figge von Rosen Galerie, Cologne (D)



Shadows and Blue Border #1
2003, 210 x 140 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection of Nikos and Alison Hecht, Aspen, CO (US), Courtesy of Pettit Art Partners



Shadows and Blue Border #2,
2003, 210 x 140 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Shadows and Blue Border #3
2003, 210 x 140 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection SF Moma, San Fransisco (US)



Shadows and Blue Border #4
2003, 210 x 140 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection of Thomas Flohr



The Swimming Pool
2003, 90 x 135 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Viaduct-Estado de Veracruz
2003, 90 x 135 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Hippi Corsica #3
2003, 95 x 73 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy the artist



Hippi Corsica #4
2003, 90 x 60 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy the artist



White and Red Border
2003, 69 x 46 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Yellow Border #2, second
version
2003, 240 x 160 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection Hall Art Foundation, Connecticut (US)



Cinderella
2003, 120 x 157 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy the artist



Devil's Golf Course #2
2004, 142,5 x 109,5 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection Leeum, Samsung Museum, Seoul (KOR)



1000 Cracks
2004, 110 x 165 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



178 #3 (dark)
2004, 90 x 87,5 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection

178 #4
2004, 79 x 77 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy the artist

190 #1
2004, 100 x 150 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection Vlaamse Gemeenschap (B)

190 #3
2004, 110 x 165 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection

190 #4
2004, 110 x 165 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy the artist

Mexico Town in the Morning
2004, 200 x 195 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Locksley Shea Gallery, Minneapolis, Minnesota (US)

Project
2004, 100 x 100 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Figge von Rosen Galerie, Cologne (D)

163 Reflection
2004, 118,5 x 115,5 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Figge von Rosen Galerie, Cologne (D)

Escape from LA
2005, 80 x 120 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection, Antwerp (B), courtesy Figge von Rosen Galerie, Cologne (D)



Diablo
2004, 180 x 120 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection Beatrix and Mike Seidenberg (B)



Tepechitlan
2004, 120 x 117 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Turtels
2004, 100 x 130,5 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy the artist



Water Lillies #1
2004, 100 x 150 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection Groeninge Foundation, Brugge (B)



Waterfall
2004, 100 x 150 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy the artist



Devils Golf Course
2004, 110 x 165 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



62 lipstick
2005, 90 x 87,5 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy the artist



Burning
2005, 280 x 420 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection, Cologne (D), courtesy Figge von Rosen Galerie, Cologne (D)



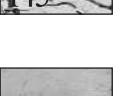
Dante's View #1
2005, 240 x 160 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection (B), courtesy Figge von Rosen Galerie, Cologne (D)



Dante's View #3
2005, 240 x 160 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection, Hamburg (D), courtesy Figge von Rosen Galerie, Cologne (D)



Escape from LA
2005, 80 x 120 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection, Antwerp (B), courtesy Figge von Rosen Galerie, Cologne (D)



I have a son of my own. About your boy's age. I can imagine how painful this must be for you. But Clarence and that bitch-whore girlfriend of his brought this all on themselves. And I implore you not to go down the road with 'em. You can always take comfort in the fact that you never had a choice.

CLIFF
Look, I'd help ya if I could, but I haven't seen Clarence.

Before Cliff can finish his sentence, Coccotti slams him hard in the nose with his fist.

COCOTTI
Smarts, don't it? Gettin' slammed in the nose fucks you all up. You got that



Fork-lift Truck #4
2005, 210 x 140 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection, Valladolid (ES)



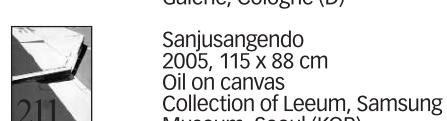
Gaffey Street
2005, 130 x 169 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Kyoto
2005, 80 x 136 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy the artist



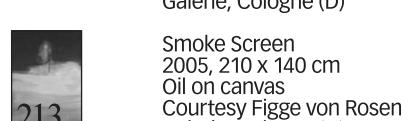
Reservoir
2005, 180 x 270 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection (B), courtesy Figge von Rosen Galerie, Cologne (D)



Sanjusangendo
2005, 115 x 88 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection of Leeum, Samsung Museum, Seoul (KOR)



Science Fiction
2005, 200 x 300 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection (UK), courtesy Figge von Rosen Galerie, Cologne (D)



Smoke Screen
2005, 210 x 140 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Figge von Rosen Galerie, Cologne (D)



Storage
2005, 102,5 x 100 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection Mr. & Mrs. Luc Haenen (B)



The Emperor's Garden
2005, 100 x 150 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Figge von Rosen Galerie, Cologne (D)



The Wind
2005, 80 x 120 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Water Lilies #3
2005, 100 x 150 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection

218

Anything Goes
2006, 60 x 180 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection (UK)



Spain (Truck)
2006, 110 x 165 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection (B)

219

Cocoon
2006, 135 x 90 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Trona
2006, 158 x 154 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection Dirk Boone (B)

220

Cut Out
2006, 135 x 90 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Greta Meert Gallery, Brussels (B)

221

Display
2006, 60 x 180 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Figge von Rosen Galerie, Cologne (D)

222

Display Disconnected, 2006, 60 x 180 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Greta Meert Gallery, Brussels (B)

223

Les Taches Rouges
2006, 135 x 90 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection, courtesy Thomas Liakounakos

224

Movement
2006, 60 x 180 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection Van Tuyckom (B), courtesy Groeninge Foundation, Brugge (B)

225

Rhythm
2006, 60 x 180 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Greta Meert Gallery, Brussels (B)

226

Solution
2006, 135 x 90 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection S.G., Brussels (B), courtesy Figge von Rosen Galerie, Cologne (D)

227

Violetta
2006, 120 x 80 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection (B), extended loan S.M.A.K., Ghent (B)

228

Yellow Milk
2006, 135 x 90 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection

229

Breaking Points
2006, 80 x 120 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection, courtesy Thomas Liakounakos

230

Happiness
2006, 300 x 200 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Figge von Rosen Galerie, Cologne (D)



Spain (Truck)
2006, 110 x 165 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection (B)



Trona
2006, 158 x 154 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection Dirk Boone (B)



190 (Furnace Creek)
2007, 90 x 135 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



3D
2007, 88 x 115 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Greta Meert Gallery, Brussels (B)



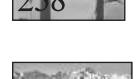
Blue Border-Street Lamp
2007, 210 x 140 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy the artist



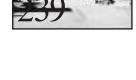
F1 horizontal
2007, 110 x 165 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Fantasy Cracks
2007, 80 x 120 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Greta Meert Gallery, Brussels (B)



Just Stripes
2007, 110x 143 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Figge von Rosen Galerie, Cologne (D)



Landscape (Keeler US)
2007, 110 x 165 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection, Cologne (D), courtesy Figge von Rosen Galerie, Cologne (D)



Yellow Border
2007, 195 x 130 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection



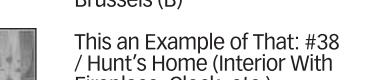
This an Example of That: #52 / The Learning Tree (Winger Dining Room)
2008, 174 x 220 cm
Digital photographic print mounted on panel
Courtesy Greta Meert Gallery, Brussels (B)



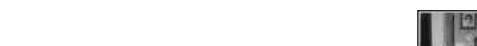
Transmission
2008, 109,5 x 142,5 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Greta Meert Gallery, Brussels (B)



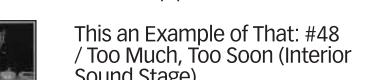
This an Example of That: #166 / Ice Palace (Interior Lower Floor Zeb's House)
2008, 155 x 220 cm
Digital photographic print mounted on panel
Courtesy Greta Meert Gallery, Brussels (B)



American Images
2008, 88 x 115 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Figge von Rosen Galerie, Cologne (D)



This an Example of That: #38 / Hunt's Home (Interior With Fireplace, Clock, etc.)
2008, 120 x 170 cm
Digital photographic print mounted on panel
Courtesy Greta Meert Gallery, Brussels (B)



Base
2008, 88 x 115 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection S.M.A.K., Museum of Contemporary Art, Ghent (B)



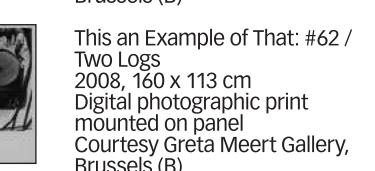
This an Example of That: #48 / Too Much, Too Soon (Interior Sound Stage)
2008, 332 x 420 cm
Digital photographic print mounted on panel
Courtesy Greta Meert Gallery, Brussels (B)



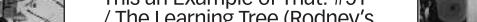
Blue
2008, 115 x 88 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Figge von Rosen Galerie, Cologne (D)



Counterpart
2008, 210 x 140 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection, Brussels (B), courtesy Figge von Rosen Galerie, Cologne (D)



Fort Worth-Yellow
2008, 210 x 140 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection VERDEC (B), courtesy Figge von Rosen Galerie, Cologne (D)



This an Example of That: #36 / Burton (Interior Dr. Bentley Office)
2008, 77,5 x 110 cm
Digital photographic print mounted on panel
Courtesy Greta Meert Gallery, Brussels (B)



Frame
2008, 115 x 88 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection, Cologne (D), courtesy Figge von Rosen Galerie, Cologne (D)



This an Example of That: #62 / Two Logs
2008, 160 x 113 cm
Digital photographic print mounted on panel
Courtesy Greta Meert Gallery, Brussels (B)



From Here To The West And Back
2008, 115 x 88 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection S.M.A.K., Museum of Contemporary Art, Ghent (B)



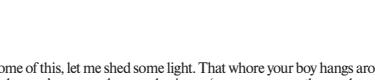
This an Example of That: #10 / Too Much, Too Soon (Interior Shower Infanta)
2008, 160 x 113 cm
Digital photographic print mounted on panel
Private collection, Malibu (US), courtesy Greta Meert Gallery, Brussels (B)



Melrose Ave # 3
2008, 69 x 46 cm
Oil on canvas
Private collection, Genk (B), courtesy Figge von Rosen Galerie, Cologne (D)



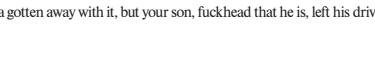
This an Example of That: #101 / Camelot (Guenevere's Terrace)
2008, 127 x 180 cm
Digital photographic print mounted on panel
Courtesy Greta Meert Gallery, Brussels (B)



Museum
2008, 88 x 115 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection S.M.A.K., Museum of Contemporary Art, Ghent (B)



This an Example of That: #20 / Interior (With Palm)
2008, 92 x 130 cm
Digital photographic print mounted on panel
Courtesy Greta Meert Gallery, Brussels (B)



Office
2008, 165x 110 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection Nivelle-Van Hecke, Zuijenkerke (B), courtesy Figge von Rosen Galerie, Cologne (D)



Out of Space
2008, 73 x 95 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Figge von Rosen Galerie, Cologne (D)



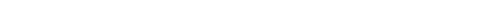
CLIFF
What are you talkin' about?



COCCOTTI
I'm talkin' about a massacre. They snatched my narcotics and hightailed it outta there. Woulda gotten away with it, but your son, fuckhead that he is, left his driver's license in a dead guy's hand. A whore hiding in the commode filled in all the



CLIFF
I don't believe you.



COCCOTTI
That's minor importance. But what's of major fuckin' importance is that I believe you. Where did they go?

CLIFF

262

263



Who will lead us?
2008, 200 x 300 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection Axel Vervoordt (B)



Alameda St
2009, 88 x 115 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Figge von Rosen
Galerie, Cologne (D)



Brice Canyon National Park
Rd #1
2009, 120 x 80 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Figge von Rosen
Galerie, Cologne (D)



Black Curbed Intervention
2009, 90 x 60 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Greta Meert Gallery,
Brussels (B)



Brice Canyon National Park
Rd #3
2009, 88 x 115 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Figge von Rosen
Galerie, Cologne (D)



Mesquite Flat
2009, 266 x 400 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Figge von Rosen
Galerie, Cologne (D)



V oid
2009, 300 x 200 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Greta Meert Gallery,
Brussels (B)



White Crack
2009, 110 x 160 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Greta Meert Gallery,
Brussels (B)



Crane (Springdale)
2009, 90 x 135 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Figge von Rosen
Galerie, Cologne (D)



Speed
2009, 100 x 150 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Figge von Rosen
Galerie, Cologne (D)



Solution Master
2009, 90,2 x 87,5 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Figge von Rosen
Galerie, Cologne (D)



Dallas
2009, 210 x 140 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Greta Meert Gallery,
Brussels (B)



The Beginning
2009, 210 x 140 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Figge von Rosen
Galerie, Cologne (D)



294 Road Runner
2009, 100 x 150 cm
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Figge von Rosen
Galerie, Cologne (D)

Koen van den Broek

1973 (Belgium)
Lives and works in Schilde, Belgium

Biography

1991–1993
— Department of Architecture, Urbanism and Planning (ASRO), K.U. Leuven (B)

1993–1995
— Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Antwerp (B)

1995–1997
— Academy of Visual Arts St. Joost, Breda (NL)

1997–2000
— Higher Institute for Fine Arts Flanders (HISK), Antwerp (B)

Solo Exhibitions

2010
— "Curbs and Cracks," S.M.A.K., Ghent (B)
— "Preview (Works on Paper)," K.M.S.K., Antwerp (B)
— EACC, Castelló (ES)

2009
— "Shadows of Time," MDD, Deurle (B)

2008
— Artforum, Berlin; Figge von Rosen Galerie (D)
— "This an Example of That" (collaboration with John Baldessari), Greta Meert Gallery, Brussels (B); Bonnefantenmuseum, Maastricht (NL)
— "Out of Space," Figge von Rosen Galerie, Cologne (D)
— artbrussels, Brussels; Figge von Rosen Galerie (D)

2007
— "Angle," White Cube, London (UK)

2006
— "Dante's View," Figge von Rosen Galerie, Cologne (D)
— Project St Lucas Ghent, Vlaams Bouwmeester, Ghent (B)

2005
— "Koen van den Broek," Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens, Deurle (B)

2004
— "Koen van den Broek: Paintings 1999–2004," DA2, Salamanca (E)

2003
— "Threshold," White Cube, London (UK)

2002
— Chapelle des Pénitents Blancs, Gordes (F)

2001
— "Borders," White Cube, London (UK)
— "Koen van den Broek: Paintings," Z33, Hasselt (B)

2000
— Cultureel Centrum, Hasselt (B)

1999
— Galerij Art 61, Hever (B)

1998

— Bernarduscentrum, Antwerp (B)

1997
— Galerie Hellinga, Beetsterzwaag (NL)

Group Exhibitions

2009
— "Fading," Museum van Elsene, Brussels (B)

— "A Story of the Image," The Singapore Institute of Contemporary Arts, Singapore; Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai (collaboration with MUHKA, Antwerp) (CHN)

2008

— "Fantasy," MUHKA, Antwerp (B)

— "Academie," Chapelle d'École des beaux-arts, Paris (F)

— "Biennale van de schilderkunst," Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens, Deurle (B); Roger Raveelmuseum, Machelen (B)

— "Take the Doll," Freeman Gallery, Aardenburg (NL)

— "The Hands of Art," S.M.A.K., Ghent (B)

2007

— "The Floor," De Zwarte Panter, Antwerp (B)

— "Vanaf nu!..," LLS387, Antwerp (B)

— "Metamorphosis III," L.A.C. Narbonne (F); Museu Municipal Joan Abelló, Berenguer, Barcelona (E)

— "Welcome Home," MUHKA, Antwerp (B)

— "Jubilee," MUHKA, Antwerp (B)

2006

— "Open Space," Art Fair, Cologne (D)

— "Beaufort 2006," Ostend (B)

— "Freestate," Oud Militair Hospitaal, Ostend (B)

— "Leere X Vision," MARTa, Herford (D)

— "Between a Rock and a Hard Place," Kenny Schachter Rove, London (UK)

— "Leefijdgoden," Roger Raveelmuseum, Machelen (B)

2005

— "Royal Academy Illustrated 2005 (Summer Exhibition)," London (UK)

— "Prague Biennale 2: Expanded Painting," Karlin Hall, Prague (CZE)

— "Scape-Code: Their Subjective Topographies," P K M Gallery, Seoul (KOR)

2004

— "Direkte Malerei/Direct Painting," Kunsthalle Mannheim (D)

— "Karel Appel: Onderweg, Reis van Rudi Fuchs langs de kunst der Lage Landen," Bozar (Palais des Beaux-Art), Brussels (B)

— "This not a home, this is a house," Galerie l'Observatoire, Brussels (B)

— "Framed: Koen van den Broek – Wim Catrysse," CC Strombeek, Strombeek-Bever (B)

2003

— "Once Upon a Time: Een blik op de kunst in België in de jaren '90," MUHKA, Antwerp (B)

— "Matisse and Beyond: A Century of Modernism," SFMOMA, San Francisco (US)

— "Oorsprong," de Brakke Grond, Amsterdam (NL)

— "The Ambiguity of the Image: Belgium Art Now: Art Athina," Helexpo, Athens (GRE)

2002

— "Wim Catrysse, Koen van den Broek, Leen Voet," James Van Damme Gallery, Brussels (B)

Side Projects

Exhibition curator

2009
— "Selectie van Koen van den Broek," Indian Caps, Antwerp (B)

2008
— "Fantasy," MUHKA, Antwerp (B)
— "Take the Doll," Freeman Gallery, Aardenburg (NL)

Lectures (Selection)

2008
— Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Antwerp (B)
— Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Ghent (B)
— De Vooruit, Ghent (B)
— Bozar, Brussels (B)

2007
— De Bijloke, Ghent (B)

2006
— De Warande, Brussels (B)

2004
— Domus Artium, Salamanca (E)
— Otis Art Institute, Los Angeles (US)
— California Art Institute, West Lake Village (US)
— Pasadena Art Institute Pasadena (US)

2003
— Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Antwerp (B)

2004
— Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Ghent (B)

Theatre Design

2008
— design for René, Pol Heyvaert/Campo (Ghent)

Editions (Selection)

— "Shadows of time, black polyurethane on inox, 2008, 20 different editions, BeLa Editions, Brussels

— "Shadow of light, steel, paint, made-to measure projector, 15 different editions, 2008, D&A LAB, Brussels

On their honeymoon.

COCCOTTI

I'm gettin' angry askin' the same question a second time. Where did they go?

CLIFF

They didn't tell me.

Coccotti looks at him.

CLIFF

Now, wait a minute and listen. I haven't seen Clarence in three years. Yesterday he shows up here with a girl, sayin' he got married. He told me he needed some quick cash for a honeymoon, so he asked if he could borrow five hundred dollars. I wanted to help him out so I wrote out a check. We went to breakfast and that's the last I saw of him. So help me God. They never thought to tell me where they were goin'. And I never thought to ask.

Coccotti looks at him for a long moment. He then gives Virgil a look. Virgil, quick as greased lightning, grabs Cliff's hand and turns it palm up. He then whips out a butterfly knife and slices Cliff's palm open and pours Chivas Regal on the wound. Cliff screams. Coccotti puffs on a Chesterfield. Tooth-pick Vic returns to the trailer, and reports in Italian that there's nothing in the car. Virgil walks into the kitchen and gets a dishtowel. Cliff holds his bleeding palm in agony. Virgil holds the dishtowel. Cliff uses it to wrap up his hand.



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- Jennifer Higgle, *Koen van den Broek*, London: Jay Jopling/White Cube, 2003
- *Koen van den Broek: Schilderijen/Paintings*, Hasselt: Provincial Centrum voor Beeldende Kunsten Limburg, 2001

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- Patrick Auwelaert, "In en om de kunst: Schipperen tussen figuratie en abstractie: Over Koen van den Broek," *Kunsttijdschrift Vlaanderen*, November 2008, pp. 325-331
- Elena Balachov, "Uitgerukt voor uitgedrukt," *De Morgen*, October 29, 2008
- Marc Ruyters, "John Baldessari en Koen van den Broek in Maastricht en in Brussel, (Tegen) spreken met beelden," *<H>ART*, October 23, 2008, p. 11
- Lars Kwakkenbos, "Een venijnige uitdaging voor Koen van den Broek," *De Standaard*, October 23, 2008
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He has curated many shows internationally, including the first "Manifesta" in Rotterdam 1996, "Walter Benjamin's Briefcase," Porto 1994, "Browse" in Vancouver 1997 and London 1998, "Total Object Complete with Missing Parts," Glasgow, 2001, "Stay Forever and Ever and Ever" at South London Gallery, 2007, "Come, Come, Come into my World" at the Ellipse Foundation, Lisbon, 2007, "Front of House" at Parasol Unit, London, 2008, and the first ArtTLV biennial in Tel Aviv, 2008. He co-curated Koen van den Broek's retrospective "Curbs and Cracks" at SMAK (with Thibaut Verhoeven), Ghent in 2010.

He has been a columnist for the *Evening Standard* and is the author of hundreds of articles, books, and catalogues. He was a member of the jury for the 2006 Turner Prize. He is Curator of the Cranford Collection, London, and advises many museums and institutions, including the British Government Art Collection.

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COCCOTTI

Sicilians are great liars. The best in the world. I'm a Sicilian. And my old man was the world heavyweight champion of Sicilian liars. And from growin' up with him I learned the pantomime. Now there are seventeen different things a guy can do when he lies to give him away. A guy has seventeen pantomimes. A woman's got twenty, but a guy's got seventeen. And if you know 'em like ya know your own face, they beat lie detectors to hell. What we got here is a little game of show and tell. You don't wanna show me nothin'. But you're tellin' me everything. Now I know you know where they are. So tell me, before I do some damage you won't walk away from.

The awful pain in Cliff's hand is being replaced by the awful pain in his heart. He looks deep into Coccotti's eyes.

CLIFF Could I have one of those Chesterfields now?

COCCOTTI

Sure.

Coccotti leans over and hands him a smoke.

CLIFF

Got a match?

Cliff reaches into his pocket and pulls out a lighter.



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CLIFF

Oh, don't bother. I got one.

(he lights the cigarette)

So you're a Sicilian, huh?

COCCOTTI

(intensely)

Uh-huh.

CLIFF

You know I read a lot. Especially things that have to do with history. I find that shit fascinating. In fact, I don't know if you know this or not, Sicilians were spawned by niggers.

All the men stop what they were doing and look at Cliff, except for Tooth-pic Vic who doesn't speak English and so isn't insulted.

Coccotti can't believe what he's hearing.

COCCOTTI

Come again?

CLIFF

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(he lights the cigarette)

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(he lights the cigarette)

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Crack an Epilogue

Wouter Davidts

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extent—or will it engage with the formal and conceptual realm of his practice? To what degree can it intervene in this—in other words be a mode of production in itself? If a book accompanies an exhibition, does it then need to serve as a 'catalogue' of the works on display and provide them with a discursive context in the guise of one or two essays? Or can it operate in a more autonomous way and draw on the exhibition as an opportunity and challenge to fabricate an object of equal weight and importance flanking the exhibition?

Koen van den Broek: CRACK presents 10 years of work by the Belgian artist Koen van den Broek and is published on the occasion of the solo exhibition "Curbs & Cracks" at the S.M.A.K., Municipal Museum of Contemporary Art in Ghent. Although developed in a direct association with the exhibition at the museum, the book is conceived as a visual and discursive project in itself. It serves as the first substantial study of van den Broek's work and practice, opening up different theoretical and conceptual perspectives. It has been developed in close dialogue with the artist, the graphic designers, the publisher, the museum staff, and the curators of the exhibition, all having a say about the content and form.³ Our aim was to give the book a structure and appearance, both material and discursive, in keeping with the conceptual rigor and formal richness of the artist's practice.

To this end we invited a broad range of contributors to discuss particular topics within van den Broek's work, based on their backgrounds

When the samba takes you
Out of nowhere
And the background's fading
Out of focus
Yes the picture's changing
Every moment
And your destination
You don't know it
Bryan Ferry, *Avalon*

Crack

At the opening of Documenta V in Kassel in 1972, conceptual artist Joseph Kosuth commented on the ubiquitous presence of artist's books in the exhibition. They were, he sneeringly noted, "becoming a style."¹ In the preceding decade leading artists, curators, and dealers—figures like Lawrence Weiner, Lucy Lippard, and Seth Siegelaub, to name just three—had indeed begun making books that engaged in an intimate dialogue with the work they documented. The resulting books either became artworks in their own right or replaced the conventional catalogue by serving as the artist's 'show.' As the art object dematerialized, books became handy, transferable repositories for ideas and started to serve as alternative spaces alongside those of traditional art institutions.²

To this day, the conceptualist legacy of the artist's book remains an incontestable reference. The intimate interchange and direct fine-tuning between the artist's practice and work—whether visual or conceptual—and the space and form of the book—both discursive and material—set a standard that we are obliged to negotiate when making books. It confronts us with a series of vital questions. Will the book support the work of the artist—and, if so, to what

CLIFF
It's a fact. Sicilians have nigger blood pumpin' through their hearts. If you don't believe me, look it up. You see, hundreds and hundreds of years ago the Moors conquered Sicily. And Moors are niggers. Way back then, Sicilians were like the wops in northern Italy. Blond hair, blue eyes. But, once the Moors moved in there, they changed the whole country. They did so much fuckin' with the Sicilian women, they changed the blood-line for ever, from blond hair and blue eyes to black hair and dark skin. I find it absolutely amazing to think that to this day, hundreds of years later, Sicilians still carry that nigger gene. I'm just quotin' history. It's a fact. It's written. Your ancestors were niggers. Your great, great, great, great-grandmother was fucked by a nigger, and had a half-nigger kid. That is a fact. Now tell me, am I lyin'?

COCCOTTI
Coccotti looks at him for a moment then jumps up, whips out an automatic, grabs hold of Cliff's hair, puts the barrel to his temple, and pumps three bullets through Cliff's head. He pushes the body violently aside. Coccotti pauses. Unable to express his feelings and frustrated by the blood in his hands, he simply drops his weapon, and turns to his men.

LENNY
I haven't killed anybody since 1974. Goddamn his soul to burn for eternity in fuckin' hell for makin' me spill blood on my hands! Go to this comedian's son's apartment and come back with somethin' that tells me where that asshole went so I can wipe this egg off of my face and fix this fucked-up family for good.

TOOTH-PICK
Vic taps Frankie's shoulder and, in Italian, asks him what that was all about. Lenny, who has been going through Cliff's refrigerator, has found a beer. When he closes the refrigerator door he finds a note held on by a ceramic banana magnet that says: "Clarence in L.A.: Dick Ritchie (number and address)".

LENNY
Boss, get ready to get happy.



and expertise as writers, academics, and artists. Andrew Renton, co-curator of the exhibition at the S.M.A.K., discusses van den Broek's work against the background of the weighty legacy of abstract painting. John C. Welchman sheds light on "This an Example of That," the collaborative project between van den Broek and John Baldessari. Dirk Lauwaert kindly allowed us to republish his essay on the photographic strategies that lie at the basis of van den Broek's painterly practice. Merel van Tilburg discloses the cinematic nature of this travelling painter's work. The artist duo Bik Van der Pol delve into van den Broek's artistic and personal universe, disclosing intimate bonds between his curatorial choices and domestic setting. Finally, Wouter Davidts goes in search of the crux of van den Broek's predilection for pictures of architecture and the built environment.

In a final stage the design studio Metahaven was engaged to provide the book with a proper material form and to distribute both the visual and discursive contents within a challenging structure, that is, to contribute to the book with their proper design strategies and visual language.

The production of this book was an intensive and rewarding journey. I wish to thank the artist and everyone else who joined us along the way. ●

Notes

1 Joseph Kosuth, in Jef Cornelis, *Documenta V*, 1972, BRT (16mm; 00:53:19; color and b&w; sound); www.argosarts.org.

2 Martha Wilson, "Artist's Books as Alternative Spaces," in *The New Artspace* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, 1978), pp. 35-37; Kate Linker, "The Artist's Book as an Alternative Space," *Studio International* Vol. 195, no. 990, 1/1980, pp. 75-79.

3 On June 26, a meeting was held at the repository of the White Cube Gallery in London to view Koen van den Broek's work in depth and to set up an exchange between the different people who were involved in the book. At the meeting were Vinca Kruk, Andrew Renton, Merel van Tilburg, Philipp von Rosen, Astrid Vorstermans, John Welchman, and Wouter Davidts.



Transmission | 2008 | 109,5 x 142,5 cm



American Images | 2008 | 88 x 115 cm

274

275



Base | 2008 | 88 x 115 cm



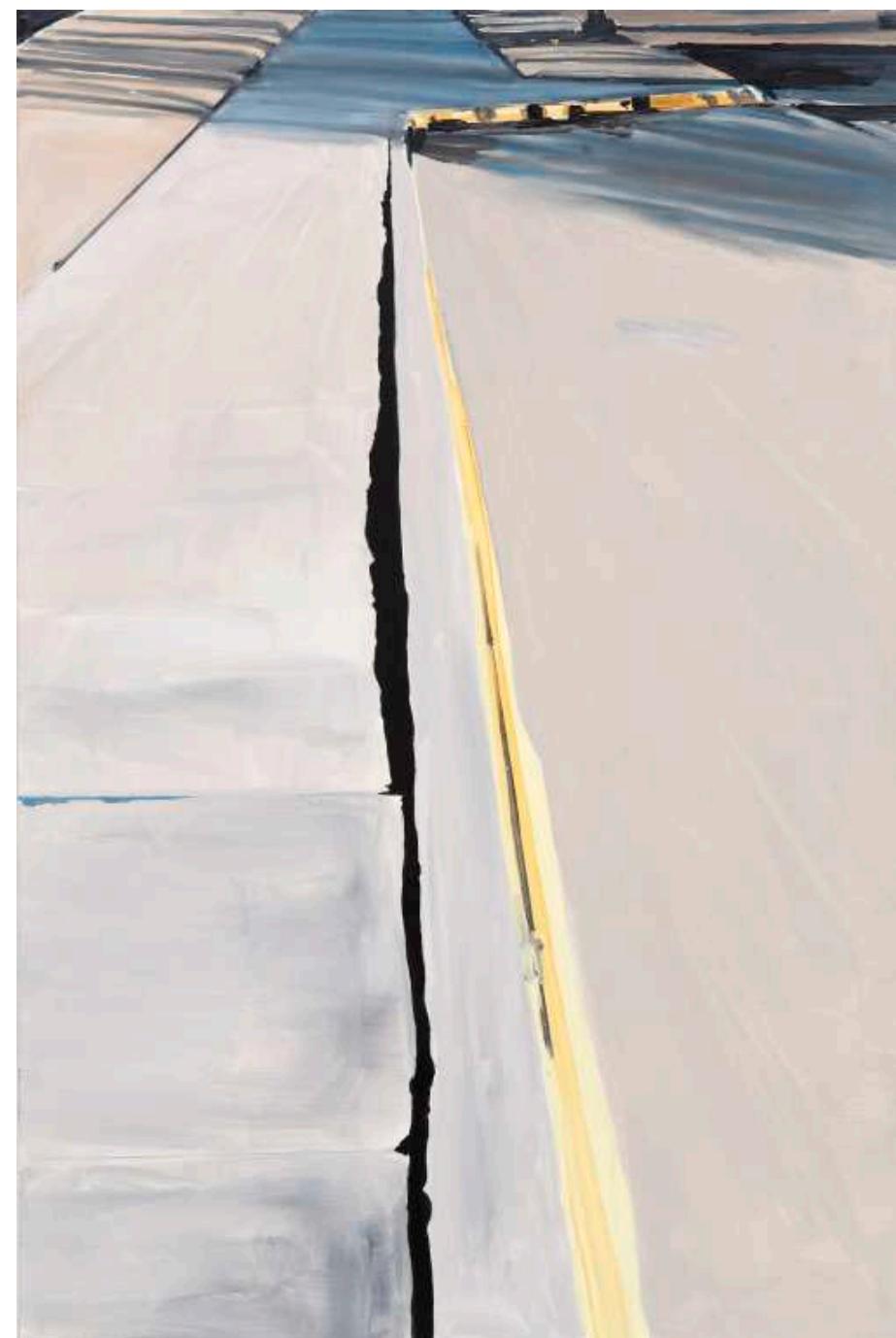
Blue | 2008 | 115 x 88 cm

276

277



Counterpart | 2008 | 210 x 140 cm



Fort Worth-Yellow | 2008 | 210 x 140 cm

278

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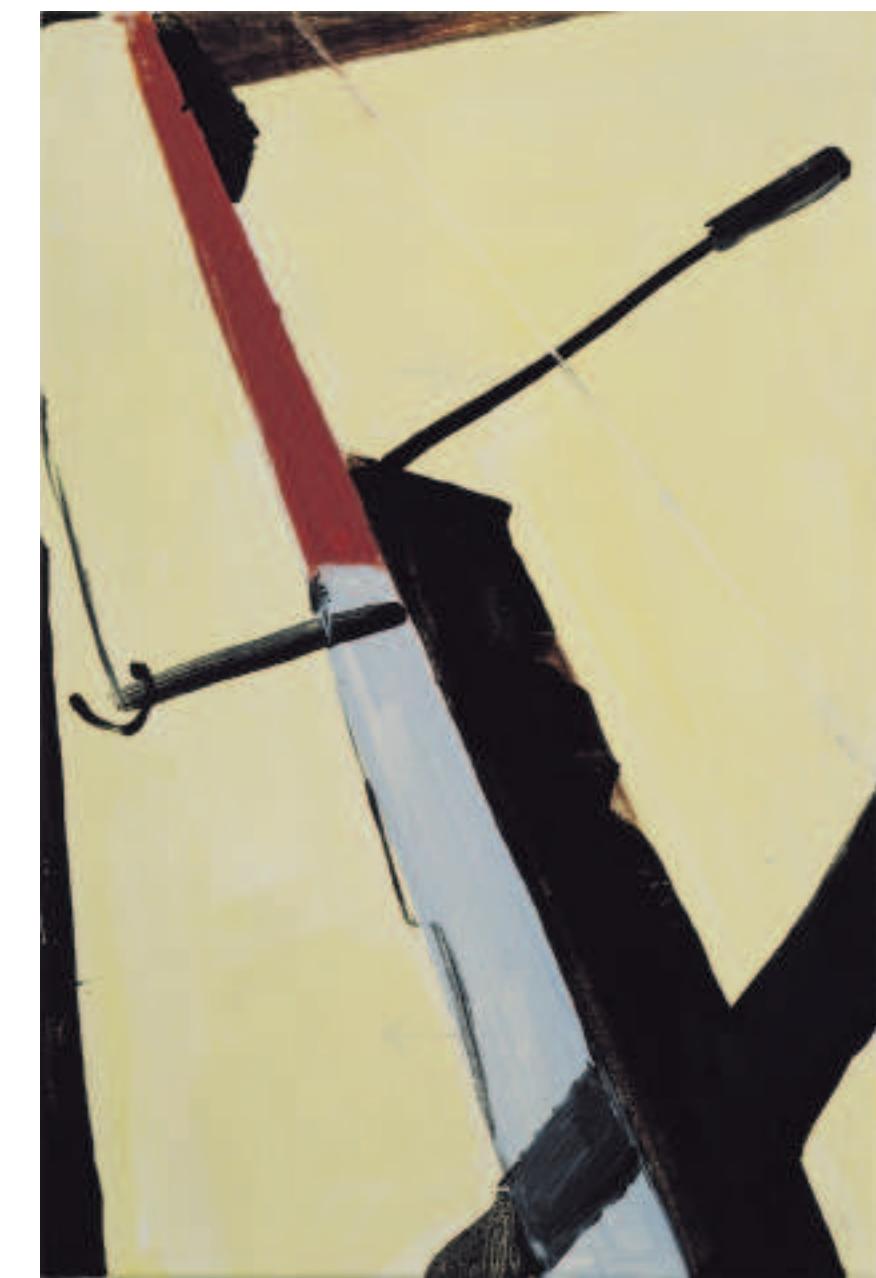
Frame | 2008 | 115 x 88 cm



From Here To The West And Back | 2008 | 115 x 88 cm

280

281



Melrose Ave #3 | 2008 | 69 x 46 cm



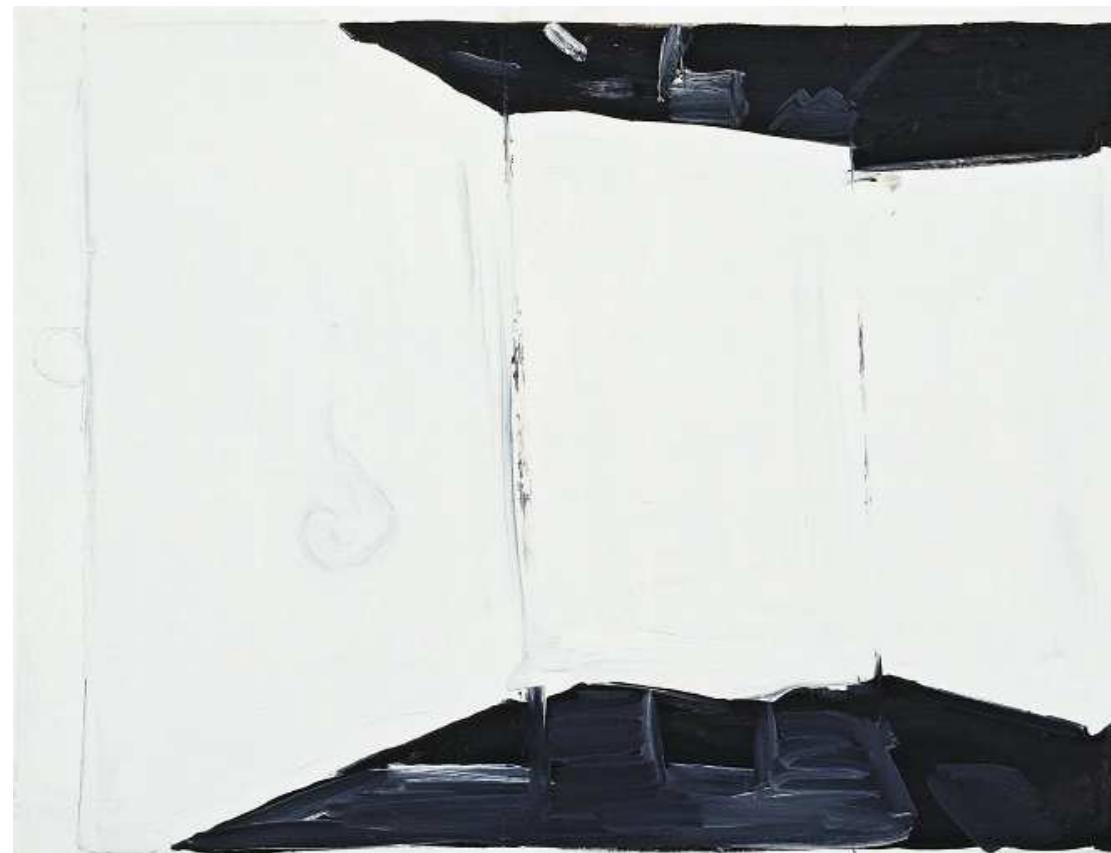
Museum | 2008 | 88 x 115 cm

282

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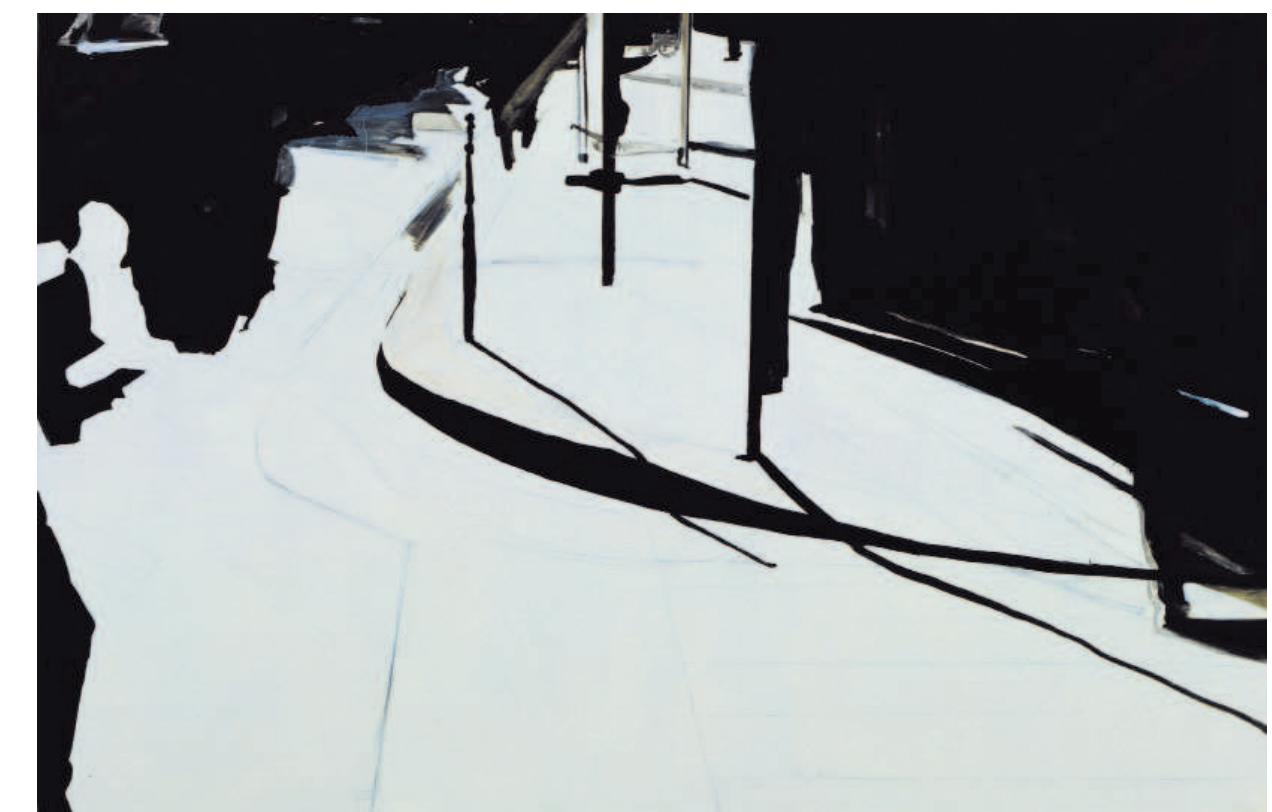
Office | 2008 | 165x 110 cm



Out of Space | 2008 | 73 x 95 cm

284

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Who will lead us? | 2008 | 200 x 300 cm



Mesquite Flat | 2009 | 266 x 400 cm

286

287



Void | 2009 | 300 x 200 cm



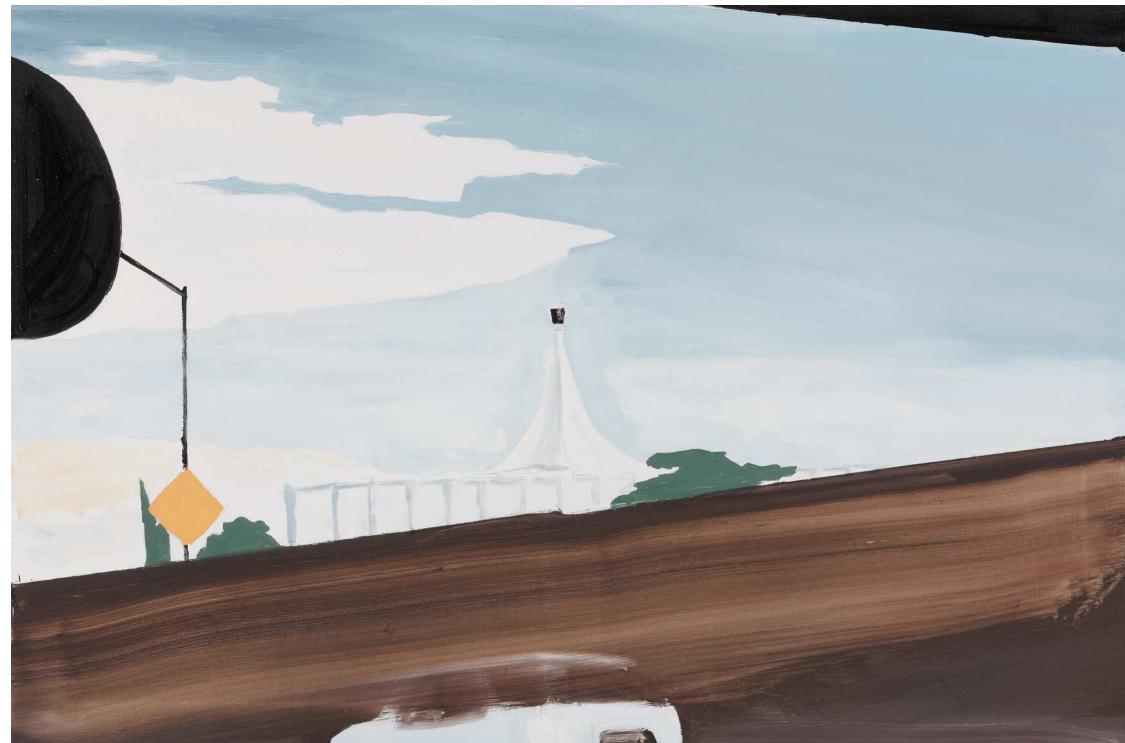
White Crack | 2009 | 110 x 160 cm

288

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Crane (Springdale) | 2009 | 90 x 135 cm



Speed | 2009 | 100 x 150 cm

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Solution Master | 2009 | 90,2 x 87,5 cm



Dallas | 2009 | 210 x 140 cm

292

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The Beginning | 2009 | 210 x 140 cm



Road Runner | 2009 | 100 x 150 cm

294

295



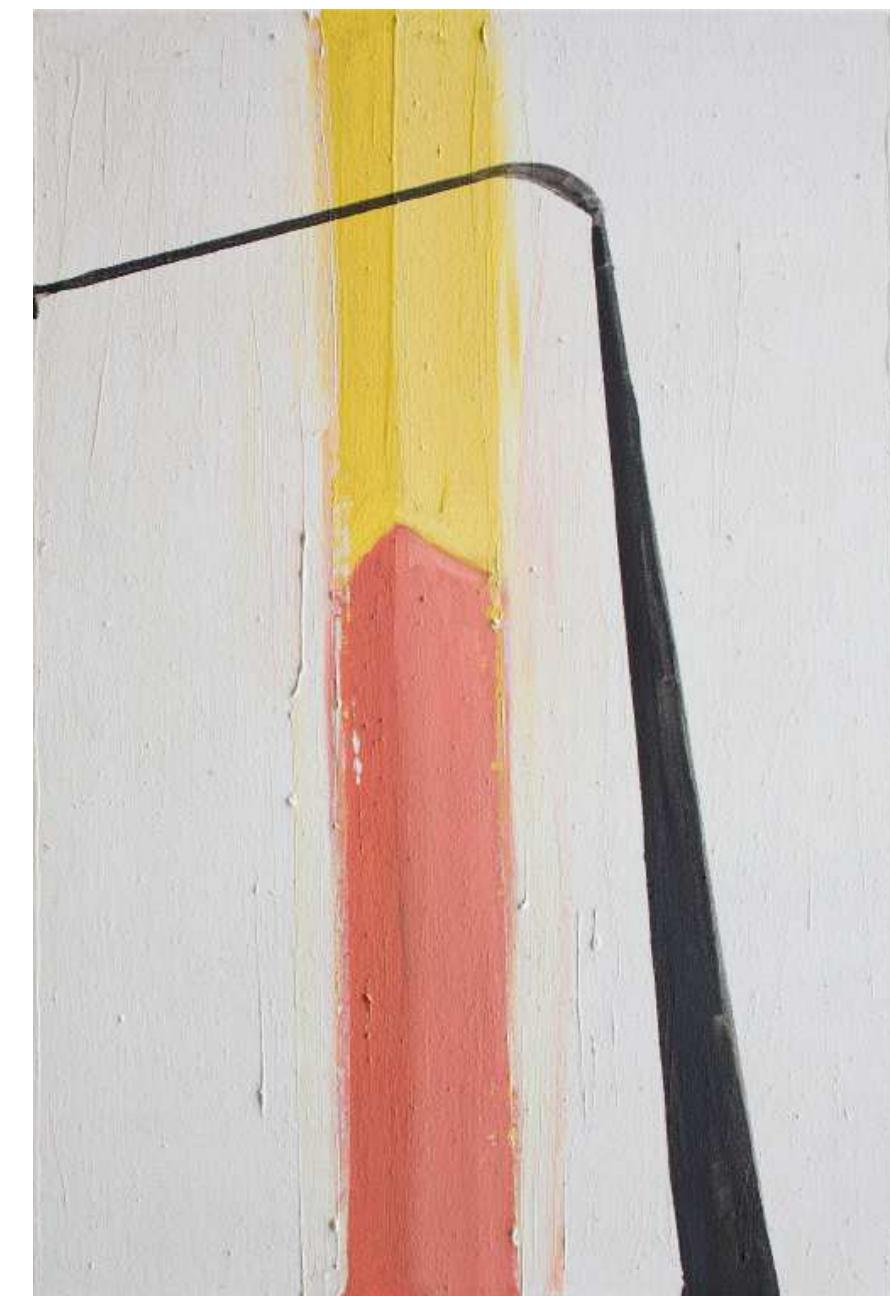
Alameda St | 2009 | 88 x 115 cm



Brice Canyon National Park Rd #1 | 2009 | 120 x 80 cm

296

297



Black Curbed Intervention | 2009 | 90 x 60 cm



Brice Canyon National Park Rd #3 | 2009 | 88 x 115 cm

298

299



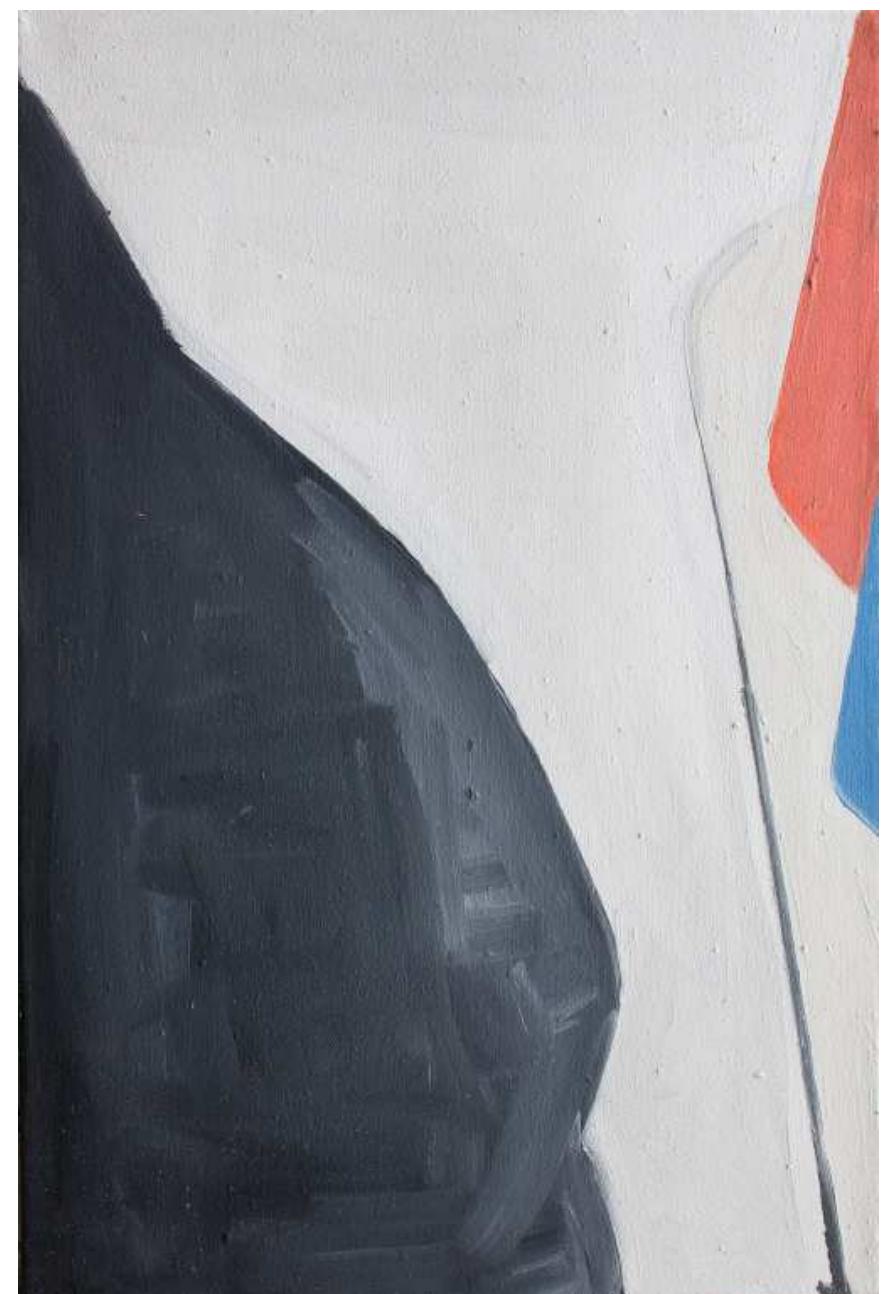
Brice Canyon National Park Rd #2 | 2009 | 180 x 120 cm



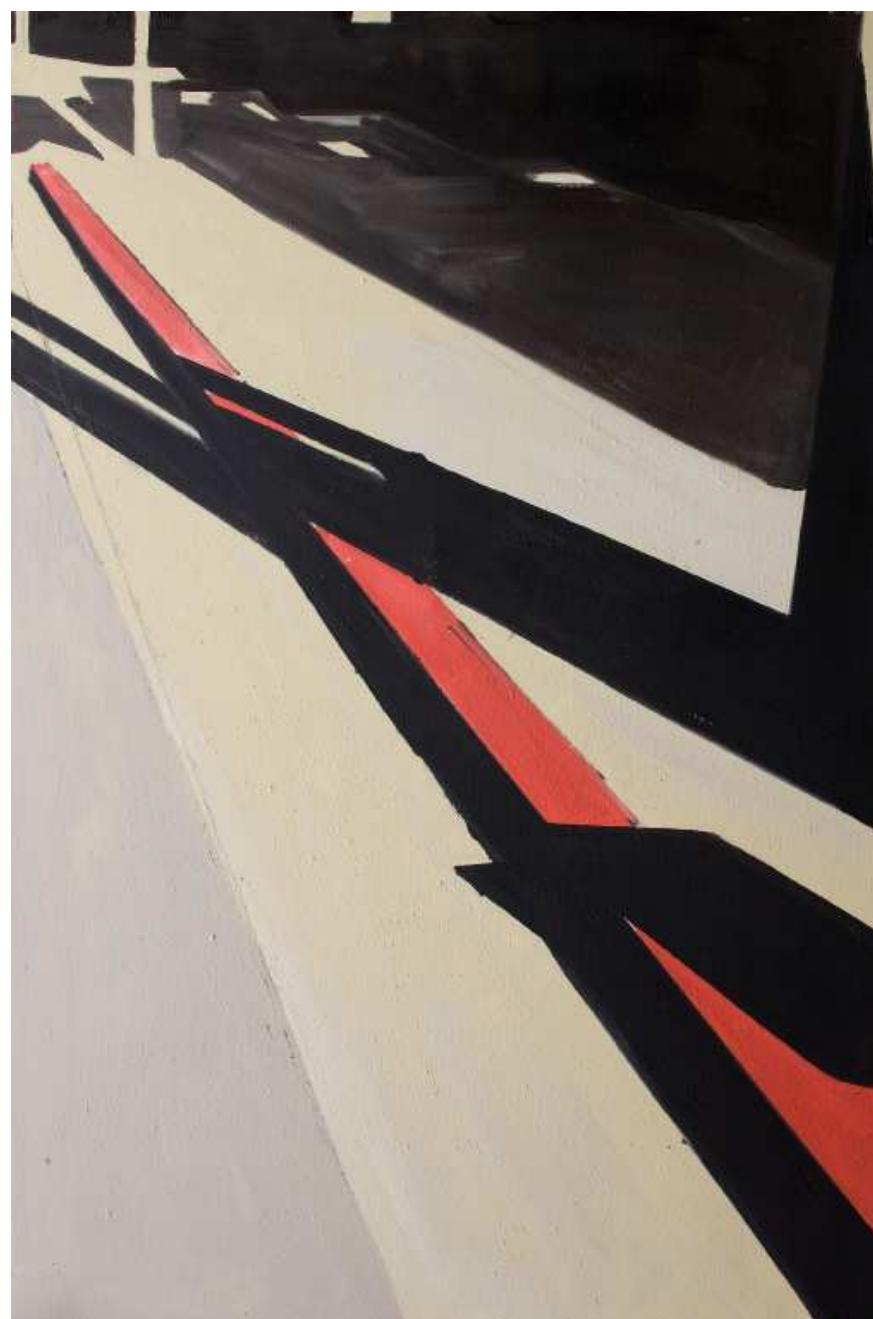
Stripes Intervention Blue and Light Brown | 2009 | 50 x 75 cm

300

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Pitstop | 2009 | 75 x 50 cm



Wilshire BLVD #1 | 2009 | 180 x 120 cm

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The Clash | 2009 | 142,5 x 109,5 cm



The Edge #3 | 2009 | 180 x 120 cm

304

