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September 12, 2002

Amy Smith
Curatorial Department
P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center
22-25 Jackson Ave. at 46th Ave.
Long Island City, NY 11101

Dear Amy --

Per your request, please find enclosed a package of information on Joe Scanlan. I have included a bio, a selection of articles, and a group of images from his recent exhibitions. I would love to discuss his work with you, and I hope that you will be able to come by the gallery some time soon to review his slides.

If you have need of any further material, please do not hesitate to call.

With regards,

Jordan Gutcher

525 WEST 22ND STREET NEW YORK, N.Y. 10011 T. 212 352 9460 F. 212 352 9464 gallery@damelioterras.com www.damelioterras.com

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D'AMELIO TERRAS

JOE SCANLAN

1961 Born in Stoutsville, Ohio. Lives in Brooklyn, New York.

EDUCATION

1983 BFA, The Columbus College of Art and Design, Columbus, OH

ONE PERSON EXHIBITIONS

- 2001 D'Amelio Terras, New York *Store A*
- 2000 RAUM Aktueller Kunst Martin Janda, Vienna, Austria
- 1999 D'Amelio Terras, New York *Invention*
Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, Los Angeles, *Product no. 2*
- 1998 FRAC Languedoc-Roussillon, Montpellier, France, *Les Moules*
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL, *Pay For Your Pleasure*
(reprise)
- 1997 D'Amelio Terras, New York
Galerie Micheline Szwajcer, Antwerp
- 1996 Museum Haus Lange, Krefeld, Germany
- 1995 Galerie Ghislaine Hussenot, Paris
- 1994 Galerie Micheline Szwajcer, Antwerp, Belgium
- 1993 Galerie Tanja Grunert, Cologne, Germany
- 1991 Robbin Lockett Gallery, Chicago, IL, *Fairly Recent Work*

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2001 Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver, Canada, *Promises*, curated by Christina Ritchie
Kunstverein Herford, Herford, Germany, *Frank, Joe and Co*, Two person show with Frank Gehry
- 2000 New Langton Arts, San Francisco, CA, *C2C*
Moderna Galerija Ljubljana, *Worthless*, curated by Carlos Basualdo
D'Amelio Terras, New York
Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia, PA, *Against Design*
Miami Art 2000, Miami, FL, *Deja Vu*, curated by Amada Cruz
RAUM Aktueller Kunst Martin Janda, Vienna, Austria, *Wider Bild*
Gegen Wart
Witte Zal, Ghent, Belgium, *Dust and Dirt*, curated by Dirk Manesse
- 1999 Musee des Arts decoratifs, Paris, *ITEBOS*

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- 1998 Art Gallery of Ontario, Canada, *Waste Management*
Paine Webber Art Gallery, New York, *Comfort Zone*
TBA exhibition space, Contemporary Arts Council, Chicago, IL, *Stuff*
12th Biennale of Sydney, Sydney, Australia, *Every Day*
Fonds Regional d'Art Contemporain de Bourgogne, Dijon, *Poussiere (dust memories)*
D'Amelio Terras, New York, *Humble County*
The Cultural Center, Chicago, IL, *Reality Bites: Approaches to Representation in American Sculpture*
RAUM Aktueller Kunst Martin Janda, Vienna, Austria, *Liam Gillick, John Miller, Joe Scanlan*
- 1997 Galerie Micheline Szwajcer, Antwerp, Belgium
Ateliers d'Artistes, Marseilles, *Perceptions Nomades/Espaces Urbain*
Museum Haus Esters and Lange, Krefeld, Germany, *Niemansland*
D'Amelio Terras, New York, *Spaces Between*
- 1996 Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL, *Art in Chicago: 1945-1995*
Galerie Micheline Szwajcer, Antwerp, Belgium
- 1995 Le Nouveau Musee, Institute d'Art Contemporain, Villeurbanne, France, *Aperto*
Musee des Beaux Arts Andre Malraux, Le Havre, France, *Head to Toe*
Centre National d'Art Contemporain de Grenoble, Grenoble, France, *Cosmos*
- 1994 Nicole Klagsbrun Gallery, New York, *Gaylen Gerber & Joe Scanlan*
Christopher Grimes Gallery, Santa Monica, CA, *Keith Cottingham & Joe Scanlan*
Kölnener Kunstverein, Cologne, Germany, *The State of Things*
Galerie Tanja Grunert, Cologne, Germany
Gallery 400, The University of Illinois at Chicago, *The Ecstasy of Limitations*
University Art Museum, Santa Barbara, CA, *Guys Who Sew*
Frederick Layton Gallery, Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design, Milwaukee, WI, *Amenities*
Kunsthalle Fridericianum, Kassel, Germany, *Oppositions and Sister Squares*
- 1993 Wiener Secession, Vienna, Austria, *Oppositions and Sister Squares*
Galerie Jennifer Flay, Paris, *Just what is it that makes today's homes so different, so appealing?*
Domaine de Kerguehennec, Locminé, France, *From the Hand to the Head, the Theoretical Object*
Domaine de Kerguehennec, Locminé, France, *Twelve Artworks in Space*
Liz Koury Gallery, New York, *Confessional*
Randolph Street Gallery, Chicago, IL, *Under Contract*
Feigen Gallery, Chicago, IL
- 1992 Documenta IX, Kassel, Germany
Centre National d'Art Contemporain de Grenoble, France, *I, Myself and Others*
Robbin Lockett Gallery, Chicago, IL, *Dead Cat Bounce*
Galerie Tanja Grunert, Cologne, Germany

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- 1991 White Columns, New York, *Casual Ceremony*
 Christopher Grimes Gallery, Santa Monica, CA, *Comfort*
 Grazer Kunstverein, Graz, Austria, *Körper und Körper*
 Betty Rymer Gallery, Art Institute of Chicago, *Grounded*
 Randolph Street Gallery, Chicago, IL, *Improvements? on the Ordinary?*
 The Anonymous Museum, Chicago
- 1990 Stux Gallery, New York, *Stuttering*
 Robbin Lockett Gallery, Chicago, *Get well soon*
 Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago, *Beneath the Skin*
 Nicole Klagsbrun Gallery, New York, *Mark Depman, Robert Feintuch, and Joe Scanlan*
 Robbin Lockett Gallery, Chicago, IL, *Plus*
- 1988 Ricky Renier Gallery, Chicago, IL, *The Size of Chicago*
 Randolph Street Gallery, Chicago, IL, *Detail in the Cottage*
 Randolph Street Gallery, Chicago, IL, *Sex, Death and Jello*
- 1987 Chicago Public Library and Cultural Center, Chicago, IL, *Urgent Messages*
- 1986 Superior Street Gallery, Chicago, IL, *An Exhibition of Devices (with Ian Schneller)*

ARTIST'S PROJECTS:

- 2000 Commerce 2: Poststructuralism in Country and Western Music, CD
 Compilation
- 1999 "Motivational Speaking," critical issues seminar, Graduate Sculpture
 Department, Yale University
- 1998 "The Window Stunt," public reading, The Museum of Contemporary Art,
 Sydney, Australia
- 1997 "The Undertaker's Art," telescript for Pierre Huyghe's *Mobile Television*, Le
 Consortium, Dijon, France
- "The Window Stunt," public reading, D'Amelio Terras, New York
- 1996 "Used Gun, Never Used," lecture, Slade School of Art, University
 College, London
- "The Window Stunt," design workshop, Merzakademie,
 Stuttgart, Germany
- 1995 "Yard Sale," 1838 North Wolcott, Chicago, IL
Youth Culture Killed My Dog (but I don't really mind), group exhibition,
 catalogue and soundtrack, Contemporary Arts Council, TBA
 Exhibition Space, Chicago, IL
- "Double-Elimination Scrabble Tournament," TBA Exhibition Space,
 Chicago, IL
- 1994 *Optimism*, Hirsch Farm Foundation, Hillsboro, Wisconsin
 [edited] *A History of The Renaissance Society, The First Seventy-
 Five Years: 1915-1991*. Essays by Jean Fulton, Richard Kostelanetz,
 Anne Rorimer, Joseph Scanlan and John Vinci. Chicago: The
 Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago
- 1993 [edited] *Miroslaw Balka, 36.6*. Essays by Julian Heynen and Peter

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- Schjeldahl. Chicago: The Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago.
- 1992 [edited] *Why Paint?*, Essay by David Pagel, Chicago: The Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago
- "Painting, 'The Artist', and Albert Camus", lecture, The Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago
- "The Return of the Hand", *The Question Concerning Art and Technology*, symposium, The University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Indiana
- 1991 *Reading List*, with Hirsh Perlman, *Documenta IX*, catalogue, Kassel
- Underfood*, with Dan Peterman, The Resource Center, Chicago
- [edited] *Michael Asher*, Essays by Birgitte Pelzer and Anne Rorimer, Chicago: The Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago
- [edited] *The Body*, Fiction by Anne Calcagno, Dennis Cooper, Richard Hawkins, Patricia Highsmith, Mark Leyner, Clarice Lispector, David Sedaris, David Wojnarowicz, et al. Chicago: The Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago
- Transition Head No. 1*, with Jeanne Dunning, Robbin Lockett Gallery, Chicago
- 1990 "Tarzan and the Stolen Idol," *Critics Embarrass Themselves*, Club Lower Links, Chicago
- 1989 "A Phone Call From Rome," *A Benefit for Whitewalls*, Club Lower Links, Chicago
- 1988 *Primer*, a free, collaboratively published magazine, four issues, Chicago
- 1986 *The Hawaiian Journal*, personal newspaper, three issues, Honolulu

SOLO CATALOGUES

- 1999 *Commerce 1*, Brooklyn: Store A, New York
- 1998 *Pay for Your Pleasure (reprise)*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL
- 1996 *Joe Scanlan*, Krefeld, Germany: Museum Haus Lange, Kaiser Wilhelm Museum

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 2000 *Against Design*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Institute of Contemporary Art (ex.cat)
- Objecthood '00*, Athens, Greece: Hellenic American Union (ex. cat): 70-73.
- Michael Newman, "After Conceptual Art: Joe Scanlan's Nesting Bookcases, Duchamp, Design and the Impossibility of Disappearing," *Rewriting Conceptual Art*: 206-221.
- 1999 Myers, Holly. "Joe Scanlan" *Art Issues* No. 60 (November/December): 52
- Knight, Christopher. "Art Reviews." *The Los Angeles Times* October 15: F28.

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- mind)." New Art Examiner (September): 41-2
- Wilk, Deborah. "Youth Culture Killed My Dog (but I don't really mind)." Flash Art (Summer).
- Perrin, Frank. "Magazine as Laboratory." BLOCNOTES No. 8 (Winter): 40-1.
- Troncy, Eric. "Joe Scanlan at Ghislaine Hussenot." Flash Art Vol. 28, No. 182 (May 1995): 119-20.
- 1994 Brown, Elizabeth A. and Fran Seegull. Guys Who Sew. Santa Barbara: University of California (ex. cat).
- "The Ecstasy of Limit." University of Illinois at Chicago: Gallery 400.
- Lambrecht, Luk. "Kunst in huis." De Morgen (Antwerpen) May 1994.
- "Tentoonstelling: Joe Scanlan." Artefactum (Antwerpen) Vol. XI No. 53 (August): 27.
- "Joe Scanlan." BLOCNOTES No. 7 (Autumn): 76.
- Levin, Kim. "Choices." The Village Voice December 27: 8.
- Lieberman, Rhonda. "Glamour Wounds: Positively Camp." Artforum October 1994: 10-11.
- Pagel, David. "Scanlan's Humble House-and-Garden Works." The Los Angeles Times April 1.
- Patner, Andrew. "A History of the Renaissance Society: The First Seventy-five Years." New Art Examiner November: 18.
- Schneider, Christiane. Sunshine: Jahresring 41. (Munich, Jahrbuch für moderne Kunst Verlag Silke Schreiber): 226.
- Smith, Roberta. "Also of Note: Gaylen Gerber and Joe Scanlan." New York Times December 16: C36.
- Tumlrir, Jan. "Like Gazing Into a Deep Pool at Night." Artweek October: 20.
- 1993 Wilson, William. "Plane /Structures at Otis: Enriching Work." Los Angeles Times September 19: F2.
- Domaine 1993. Locmine, France: Domaine de Kerguehenneec.
- Zacharopoulos, Denys. "From the Hand to the Head, the Theoretical Street." Locmine, France: Domaine de Kerguehenneec.
- (ex. brochure).
- "The Unknown Magnitude." Art Today (Athens, Greece) November/December: 66-95.
- Stal, Jose Lehrero. "Joe Scanlan: Galerie Tanja Grunert." Flash Art Summer 1993: 120.
- Vogel, Sabine, Robert Mahoney and Barbara Uppenkamp. Oppositions and Sister Squares. Vienna: Wiener Secession.
- Borchardt-Birnbaumer, Brigitte. "Soziale Felder und Wohnungsmisere (Social Terrains and the Misery of Living)". Kultur (Vienna) July 30.
- Strouhal, Ernst. "Pfeifsignal im Universum (Whistling in the Universe)." Falter (Vienna) July 20.
- Wagner, Thomas. "Kunst ist kein Affen-Geschäft (Art is not Monkey Business)." Frankfurter Allgemeine July 30.

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- 1992 Artner, Alan. "Chicago artists strut their stuff." Chicago Tribune May 17: 10-11.
 Hoet, Jan, Denys Zacharopoulos, Bart de Baere, and Pier Luigi Tazzi. "Documenta IX." Stuttgart: Edition Cantz, and New York: Harry N. Abrams.
 Bost, Bernadette. "A vous et a moi." Le Monde (Rhône-Alp edition) (October 2).
 Kimmelman, Michael. "At Documenta, It's Survival of the Loudest." New York Times July 5: 27.
 Levin, Kim. "Jan Who? Docu What?" The Village Voice (July 14): 95-96.
 Nesbitt, Lois E. "Books: The Body." Arts Magazine (February): 95.
 Sherlock, Maureen. "Home Economics." Arts Magazine (February): 50-57.
 Smith, Roberta. "Art in Review: Casual Ceremony." New York Times January 3.
 Vogel, Sabine B. "Chicago: Eine Besichtigung non-kommerzieller Projekte." Kunstbulletin (March): 62-66.
 "Openings: Joe Scanlan" Artforum (May): 112
 Arning, Bill, Ben Kinmont and Kevin O'Halloran. Casual Ceremony. White Columns, New York (ex. cat).
 1991 Adcock, Craig. "Pop into Agit-Pop." Tema Celeste (March/ April): 74-79.
 Hixson, Kathryn. "Chicago in Review." Arts Magazine (April): 106-107.
 Lieberman, Rhonda. "Stuttering." Flash Art (March/April).
 Palmer, Laurie. "Joe Scanlan: Robbin Lockett Gallery." Artforum (Summer): 137.
 1990 Barckert, Lynda. "New Humanism." Reader (May): 30-31.
 Bulka, Michael. "Art in the Waste-strea." New Art Examiner (December): 28-30.
 Rimanelli, David, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Beth Wilson. "The Morning Stutterer." "New York: Stux Gallery (ex. cat).
 1989 Pickelman, Jason. "Dissent Flares in Chicago." New Art Examiner (March)
 1988 Kane, Mitchell. "Detail in the Cottage." Chicago, IL: Randolph Street Gallery (ex. brochure).
 Tasset, Tony. "Sex, Death and Jello." Chicago, IL: Randolph (ex. brochure).
 1987 Bowman, Russell. Urgent Messages. Chicago Public Library and Cultural Center (ex. cat).
 1985 Baker, David. "Charged Particles." Columbus, OH: Community of Poets Awards III.

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WRITINGS BY THE ARTIST

- 2001 "Ed Ruscha: Singing Praises." Eyestorm.com
July 30 <http://www.eyestorm.com/feature/ED2n_article.asp?article_id=308>.
- 2000 "The Undertaker's Art." Gagarin 2, Waasmunster, Belgium
"What's The Use?" eyestorm.com July 21 <http://www.eyestorm.com/feature/ED2n_article.asp?article_id=122>.
"The Ballad of Ed Ruscha." Songpoems (Los Angeles: Art Issues Press.).
"Fun's not Dumb." Art Issues 64 (September - October).
- 1999 "The Ballad of Ed Ruscha." Parkett No. 55 (June): 60-5.
"DIY: A Scrapbook on Waste Management and Death." Waste Management (Toronto: The Art Gallery of Ontario).
- 1998 "The Window Stunt." Every Day The Biennale of Sydney (ex. cat).
"The Art of Disappearing." frieze No. 42 (September/October): 54-5.
"Bill Viola." frieze No. 42 (September/October): 90.
"Personal Preference: Dave Hickey's Air Guitar and Paul Lukas' Inconspicuous Consumption." Guggenheim Magazine (Spring): 4-5.
"Picture: AK 47 Assault Rifle." frieze No. 38 (January/February): 34-5.
"Josiah McElheny." frieze No. 38 (January/February) : 92.
"A Fan's Diary." Art Issues (January/February): 48.
- 1997 "Pae White." frieze No. 37 (October/November) : 89-90.
"Every Man For Himself: Henry Darger." frieze No. 35 (Summer): 55, 57.
"A Fine Disregard: Kawasaki's New Breed of Subway Trains." frieze No. 32 (January/February): 27-28.
"Brian Tolle." frieze No. 33 (March/April): 85-6.
- 1996 "Let's Play Prisoners: Video Art and Human Relations." frieze No. 30 (September/October): 60-7.
"Flush: Some Thoughts Around the Work of Phillip Reilly." Phillip Reilly Göppingen, Germany: Stadtische Galerie: 9-16.
"Vija Clemins." frieze (Summer): 68-9.
"Ethics of Ambiguity: Ice hockey's new televised surveillance system." frieze (May-June): 30-31.
"The Shock of the Used: The relevance of Charles and Ray Eames." frieze No. 25 (January/ February): 30-31.
"No Place Like Home: The Architecture of Bruce Goff." frieze No. 25 (January/February): 46-51.
- 1995 "Barry Le Va." frieze No. 24 (November/ December): 68.
"First Action Heroes: The 100th Anniversary of Cinema." frieze No. 23

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- (September/October): 37-8.
- "Last Action Hero: A Finkl & Sons, Chicago." frieze No. 22 (Summer): 7.
- "Sarah Whipple." frieze No. 22 (Summer): 71.
- "The Snake, The Worm and Dan Peterman, catalogue essay in Nutopl,
Rooseum Museum of Contemporary Art, Malmo, Sweden, p. 26-39
- "Alfredo Jaar." frieze No. 21 (May): 66.
- "San Quentin Tarantino." Youth Culture Killed My Dog (but I don't really
mind), Chicago: Contemporary Arts Council: 35-63.
- 1995 "Making and Wasting Time, or: A Calendar for Self-employed Agnostics
Living in Seasonal Climates (who follow Astrology)." Optimism,
Northbrook, IL: Hirsh Farm Foundation.
- "Niketown, USA: Ten Years of Air Jordans." frieze No. 19
(January/February): 11.
- 1994 "Barnett Newman's Coffee Table." New York: Nicole Klagsbrun
Gallery.
- "Back to Basics and Back Again: Dan Peterman." frieze No. 17
(September/October): 36-39.
- "Motivation and Time in the Work of Certain Los Angeles Artists."
Plane/Structures, Los Angeles: Fellows of Contemporary Art.
- "David Hammons: Hometown." frieze No. 15 (May): 54-5.
- "Extending the Boundaries: The Renaissance Society 1963- 1991." A
History of The Renaissance Society, The First Seventy-Five Years,
Chicago, IL: The Renaissance Society at The University of
Chicago.
- "Sculpture Chicago, Culture in Action." frieze No. 12 (November/
December): 22-7.
- 1993 "Statement." Oppositions and Sister Squares, Vienna: Wiener
Secession.
- 1991 "Tomoharu Murikami." Artscribe (September): 89.
- "Berlin Fax." Art issues (Summer): 9.
- "20th Century Dots: Sigmar Polke." Artscribe (March/April): 20-1.
- "Prominent Neckties: Ed Paschke." Artscribe (January/ February): 14-5.
- 1990 "Peter Huttering." Artscribe (November/December): 87-8.
- "Franz Graf." Artscribe (September/ October): 91.
- "Robert Colescott." Artscribe (Summer): 83-4.
- "Nic Nicosia." Artscribe (Summer): 84.
- "Haha: 'Murmur'." Artscribe (May): 81.
- "Mitchell Kane." Artscribe (March/April): 80-1.
- "Peter Saul." Artscribe (January/ February): 82-3.
- "Being Near An Ocean Always Makes You Better Off." Primer No. 4
(Chicago: self-published).
- 1989 "Risa Sekiguchi." Artscribe (November/ December): 84-85.
- "Dorothy." New Art Examiner (November): 40-41.
- "Problems with Reading Rereading." Artscribe
(September/October): 84-85.

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- 1988 "How To." Primer No. 3 (Chicago: self published.)
 "Barbara Bloom." Artscribe (March/April): 84.
 "Gerhard Richter." Dialogue (January/February): 19-20.
 "An Autobiography." Primer No. 2 (Chicago: self published): 1-35.
 "Robert Gober." Dialogue (September/ October): 32-3.
 "Songs for Urban Life." Primer No. 1 (Chicago: self published): 18-25.
 "Kay Rosen." Dialogue (July/ August): 33-34.
 "Staging Recollection." Dialogue (May/ June): 40-41.
 "Tim Rollins & K.O.S." Dialogue (March/April): 32-3.
 "Primary Structures." Dialogue (January/February): 26.
 "Vincent Balestri: Kerouac, The Essence of Jack." New Art Examiner (January): 66.
 1987 "Sculpture: Structures on the Wall." Dialogue (September/October): 30.
 "Art About Ourselves: Vito Acconci." Dialogue (May/June): 25-6.
 "Money-Market: Tony Tasset." Dialogue (March/April): 26.
 1986 "The Pigfield Revisited." Riverwind Vol. 10: 49.
 1985 "A Dead Romance." Charged Particles (Columbus, Ohio: The Community of Poets Awards III.)
 "Wednesday Night Winter." Shared Systems (Columbus, Ohio: The Community of Poets Awards II.)

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D'AMELIO TERRAS



Joe Scanlan
Custom
1998
tasmanian blackwood
23 x 88 x 34 inches
58.4 x 223.5 x 86.4 cm
JS-17-SC

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D'AMELIO TERRAS



Joe Scanlan
Catalyst
1999
acrylic tears in offset-printed cardstock
2 3/4 x 1 1/4 x 1/4 inches
concept: Joe Scanlan
design: Friendlier
production: Burton Packaging
JS-18-SC

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D'AMELIO TERRAS



Joe Scanlan
JS/G-7-EX.1

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D'AMELIO TERRAS



Joe Scanlan
JS/G-7-EX.2

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D'AMELIO TERRAS



Joe Scanlan
Store A: Bruges, 2002
2001/2002
macroform plastic, metal, wood, rubber, nylon, lycra
Installation View: "Octopus," curated by Kurt Vanbelleghem, various
locations throughout Brussels, May 18 - September 16, 2002.
JS-9-EX

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D'AMELIO TERRAS



Joe Scanlan

Do It Yourself Dead on Arrival Pay for Your Pleasure (reprise)

1998/2002

DIY book, D.O.A compact disc, IKEA parts, blue polyester wig, wood,

carpet, 49 banners made with dye transfer ink on poly/poplin, velcro

Installation View: Institute d'Arte Contemporarin, Villeurbanne, France.

June 12 - September 8, 2002.

JS-8-EX

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Time Out New York

Sept 27-Oct 4, 2001
Issue 313

Joe Scanlan
D'Amelio Terras,
through Oct 6
(see Chelsea).

Joe Scanlan blurs the distinctions between art, design and commerce (if any remain) almost too well. Like his contemporaries Jorge Pardo and Andrea Zittel, he reaches beyond formalist concerns to make art and design interchangeable modes of inquiry into social and economic issues. To that end, he has published a faux *October* journal called *Commerce*, a forum for his ironic brand of enlightened capitalism.

As a subscriber to Wittgenstein's dictum "Meaning is use," Scanlan creates sculptures utilitarian enough to hold their own in the commercial marketplace without calling too much attention to themselves as art. Here, he's turned the gallery into a retail outlet for his storefront studio, in Brooklyn, where he builds simple pieces of furniture, which include an enormous beech-wood coffin, meant to function as a daybed, Cubist-inspired assemblages of wood scraps, for hanging on the living-room wall, and a pressboard-and-aluminum coffee table with a cast-resin plastic water bottle that doubles as a vase for branches of fake forsythia, whose flowers are actually little twists of Post-it notes. Scanlan's most popular item is a stackable shelving system that can remake itself as a bench, a book-



Joe Scanlan,
Store (detail), 2001.

case or a collapsible sculpture with a flick of the wrist. Scattered among a number of atomized snowflake drawings on the walls are snapshots of the environments in which the bookshelves' current owners have placed them. Several seem to prefer leaving them in storage.

Well, this is no Moss. In fact, Scanlan's exhibition may be most remarkable for the complete lack of flash or ego, especially since the display is nothing if not self-advertisement. By implication, so is every other exhibition of art, for which galleries function as showcases of commodities whose market values may have no relation to their subjective worth. If this point has somewhat less than revelatory impact, it is in keeping with the deliberately understated tone of Scanlan's general argument about the place of art in a consumer culture, about which he is unusually articulate. The trouble is, there is nothing here that hasn't been said or done before, most particularly by Scanlan himself.

—Linda Yablonsky

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Store A 97 North Lake Drive Hamden, CT 06517 203-645-7154 storea@earthlink.net

CONTEMPORARY ART INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY

United States Patent Pending
Docket No. 47136-20001.00
Serial No. 09/852,468

THE ARTWORK

Serial Number 09/852,468 is a chemical compound which converts coffee grounds into a fully functional luxury grade potting soil. Originating as an artwork by internationally renowned artist Joe Scanlan, Serial Number 09/852,468 transforms end-of-the-line consumer waste into an innovative and profitable product. As such, Serial Number 09/852,468 offers unique publicity, brand and marketing potential to the right investor.

THE MARKET

Potting soil is a 450 million dollar-a-year market that has experienced an annualized growth of 12% over the previous decade, with a spectacular increase of 18% in 1999. Two brands currently dominate the market but consumers poll greater preference for convenience of place of purchase than for brand or even price, a consumer habit that encourages product placement in national retail chains or select cultural institutions.

THE OPPORTUNITY

Serial Number 09/852,468 is seeking an administrative and distribution partnership and operating capital of \$150,000. The formula for Serial Number 09/852,468 is simple and is predominantly coffee grounds (85%). The remaining materials are available for free or at minimal costs, and manufacturing costs for Serial Number 09/852,468 are minimal and low skilled. Two distribution strategies for Serial Number 09/852,468 both yield impressive returns: 1] selling Serial Number 09/852,468 through national coffee chains as a one-pound kit with each retail outlet providing the coffee grounds for free; 2] manufacturing Serial Number 09/852,468 and selling the complete packaged product onsite and/or online.

Conservative projections, anticipating securing a 1% market share, net the venture 1.2 million dollars during the first year of operation. As an innovative brand unlike any other in the potting soil market, Serial Number 09/852,468 will likely grow the market rather than secure an existing share. Revenues will increase dramatically as Serial Number 09/852,468 drives its own emerging market niche in the strong growth sector of luxury household and gardening products.

THE ARTIST

Joe Scanlan is currently an assistant professor in the School of Art at Yale University. He has had one-person exhibitions in New York, Paris, Cologne, Vienna, Antwerp, Chicago and Los Angeles. He participated in Documenta IX, the Venice Aperto 1995, and the 12th Sydney Biennial, and is currently working on exhibitions for the Institute of Contemporary Art, Lyon; Kunsthalle, Zurich; and IKON Gallery, Birmingham. He is represented by D'Amelio Terras, New York.

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D'AMELIO TERRAS

NEW ART



THE NEW YORKER

SEPTEMBER 24, 2001

GALLERIES-CHelsea

JOE SCANLAN

The artist is a practitioner of a peculiar brand of deadpan conceptualism, equal parts opacity and shtick. Here Scanlan transforms the front of the gallery into a facsimile of his Brooklyn studio-cum-store, which carries an eponymous line of shelves, as well as coffins, fake forsythia, and snowflakes (all of which figure in the labyrinthine installation tucked behind the storefront). These well-crafted "products," especially the shelving, poke fun at the modularity of minimalism and the current fad for design-inflected art (cf. Jorge Pardo). Through Oct. 6. (D'Amelio Terras, 525 W. 22nd St. 352-9460.)

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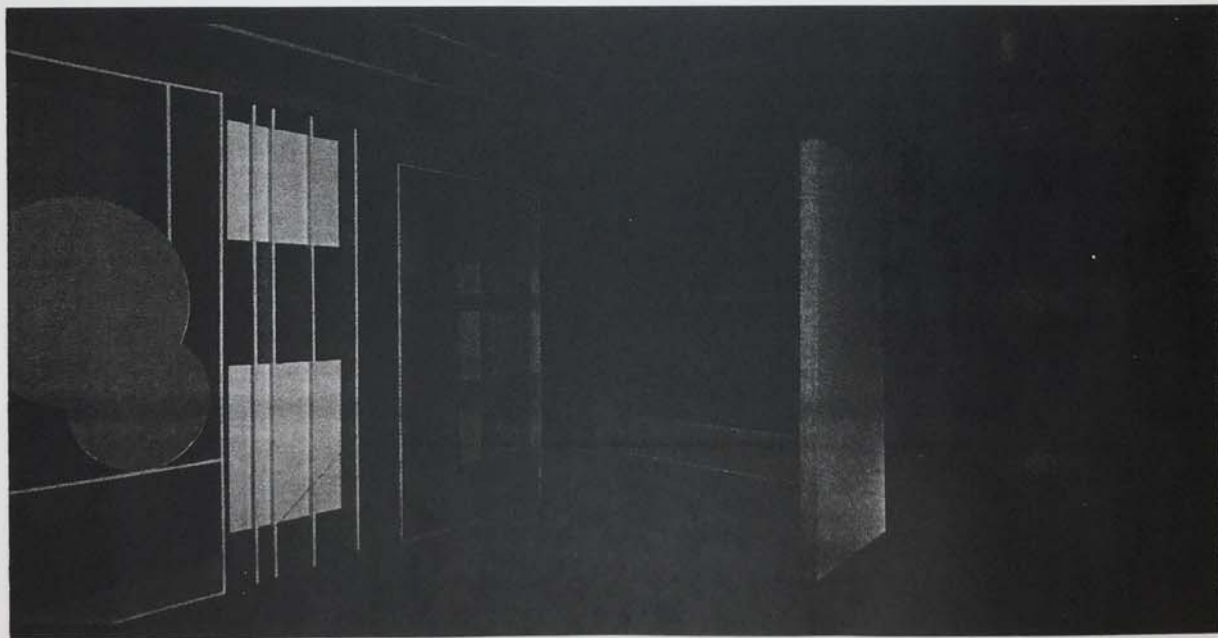
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NEW | ART

EXAMINER

oct 2000



In 1963, the redoubtable and prescient Claes Oldenburg produced *Bedroom Ensemble*, an oversized bedroom suite with its everyday geometry worked into a series of uncanny shapes, teasing to the surface one of the first forceful signs of the bout that was to take place between art and design. In 1998, Jorge Pardo also produced a

bedroom suite, *Untitled*, but it seems the very antithesis of Oldenburg's. Nowhere did Pardo question what a bedroom suite may be, what it means to place it in an art context, what one should make out of the tumultuous exchange between art and design after

the likes of Oldenburg and Richard Artschwager drove it to a fertile irresolution. Where Oldenburg misshaped objects looking to squeeze a little extra meaning from their references, Pardo complacently copied his from "life"; where Oldenburg saw art and design as contenders thirsting for the belt, Pardo saw a pair of retired has-beens, basking in

lassitude; where Oldenburg took a confrontational position vis-à-vis the world, Pardo indulged in an anxiety-free self-effacement. The comparison is fruitful only in that it provides muscle to the opinion that Pardo's project, although often bracketed in terms of the art-design exchange, may be about

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cars + furniture

adrift in the world

something else altogether or about coming to this exchange from a different angle.

Pardo churns out visually elegant objects that unabashedly imitate classic Modernist design. But, his sculptural objects are always *almost* the objects they look like. His *Untitled* bedroom suite is no different visually from any '70s-ish

bedroom set of the sort that's been revived lately. It has a wardrobe, a vanity with mirror and stool, a pair of night tables, and a Brady Bunch color scheme of browns, oranges, yellows, and creams. That it was conceived as a sculpture, however, complicates things. Its art-object status continually interferes with

any interpretative effort. A swirl of connotations buzzes around the piece and invites us to ponder Pardo's relationship to the Minimalists and the Light and Space artists of California; or to consider the affinities he shares with other young West Coast artists like Kevin Appel and Sam Durant who are interested in exploring

mid-century design and architecture; or to elucidate the differences that separate him from Oldenburg and Artschwager.

This layer of connotations is the last conceptual link that binds Pardo's objects to the condition of art, which keeps them from getting

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lost in the world, indiscernible from the things they mimic. This brazen drive to turn art into what it is not—real, functional objects—is everywhere blatantly at work in Pardo's output. His lamps, tables and chairs, and vases, when used in an everyday context, hardly seem to assert their art-object status, sharing instead an obdurate congeniality with the objects that usually populate architectural settings. "We can sit on the chairs made by Jorge Pardo in the gallery and consider them as sculptures," writes Jan Avgikos, "but it is really not necessary that they exude art presence when installed, as chairs or in ensembles with tables and lamps, in a public café. In such environments, their art value is negligible—a curiosity at best."¹ The pier he installed in Münster, Germany in 1997 suffered the same gleeful predicament. It became a site of social exchange like any other pier. The house-cum-sculpture Pardo built for himself in Los Angeles in 1998, in which he now resides, also occupies an ambiguous ground and seems eager for its own blithe disappearance into the neighborhood around it.

Like Pardo, a number of younger artists are employing the vocabularies of graphic, interior, and architectural design, but few are doing so to follow the beaten path of inquiry that Artschwager and Oldenburg cleared and engage any serious questions regarding the nature of art. These younger artists are more interested in mischievously confusing categories and blurring boundaries, in working the dazzling magic of approximation and imitation, in probing incessantly the seemingly infinite malleability of sculpture, and in setting their objects adrift in the world. Theirs is an art that "proposes its own disappearance into mainstream culture as 'designer' décor elements (art as chairs, tables, lighting fixtures)."² It's assimilating into the broader culture by imitating familiar design, by attempting to "de-differentiate

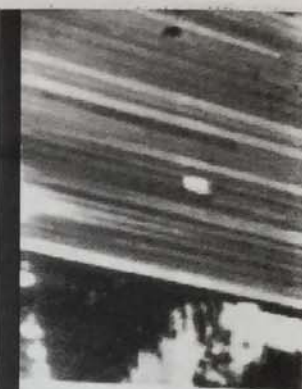
itself in relation to the cultural sphere heretofore viewed as antithetical to the condition of art."³ It conspires with vernacular design, as it aspires to become it.

Joe Scanlan began in the late '80s with what seemed a makeshift approach, producing objects that responded to immediate demands in his life. He made *Nesting Bookshelf* in 1989, *Extended-Wear Underwear* in 1991, and *Bathroom Floor (Improved)* in 1993. The bookshelf comprises a set of simple, rectangular nesting forms made of raw planks. The forms could be stacked into modular shelving units or stored one inside the other. He met his mundane needs by fabricating particular objects that aren't commonly mass-produced. He negotiates an exchange between objects intended for private use and their public display in an art space, complicating his intention, and relating the question of meaning not to context but to desire and function.

In recent years, a conceptual twist has taken place at the core of Scanlan's project. Where he once produced objects in accordance to his everyday needs, he now builds them for others to use. He reissued his *Nesting Bookcase* in a slightly modified format as *Product No. 2*, 1999. Even the new name—which refers more directly to a consumer-exchange unit—indicates Scanlan's move toward an investigation of the way his objects get lost in the world. In a recent show, he presented *Product No. 2* with a series of photographs titled *An Investigation of the Role of the Consumer in the Interpretation of the Work of Art* in which the shelves are shown being put to various uses (e.g., in a teenage boy's room, in a storage room). Scanlan has perfected an ironic bind: as the consumer completes the work of art, she or he obliterates it. In use, Scanlan's shelves become objects no different from any other functional shelves. Or, at the very least, come as close as an art object can to becoming something altogether different from what it really is. If Scanlan once employed the trope of the tinkerer, he now aligns himself with another thoroughly American character—the small business owner with his unique and practical objects. In the process, he probes

the scandalous marriage of art and commerce, of production and consumption, of making and desiring, and investigates the market dimensions of a product and the economic realities it must maneuver through in the world. Scanlan, then, not only sets his objects adrift in the world but also confuses the task of producing art objects with that of producing any other kind of object.

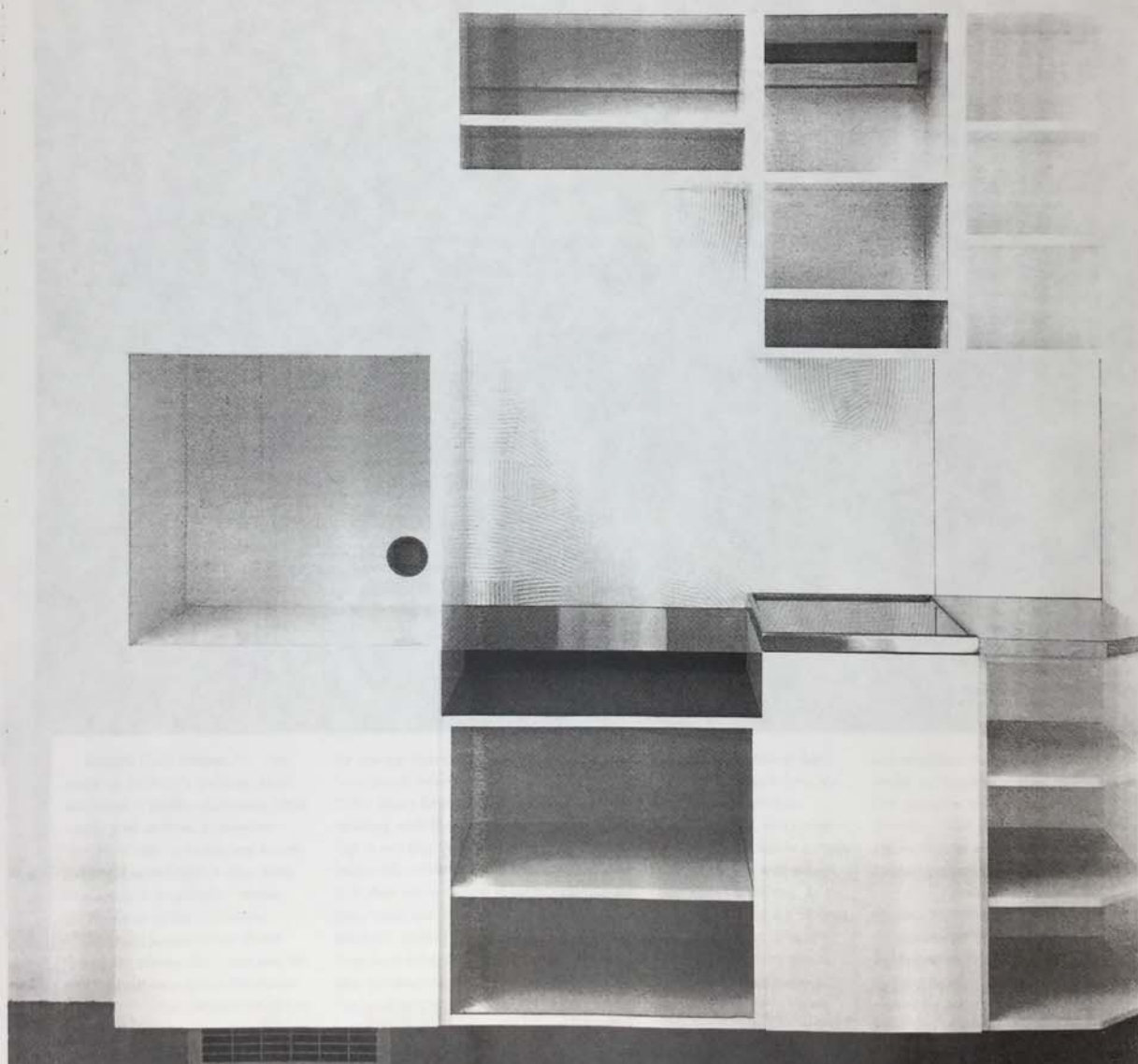
Clay Ketter trades in the designer-in-the-studio trope for that of the resourceful New England contractor tuned into Yankee ingenuity and self-reliance who gets the job done with whatever is at hand. His thornily American, dressed-down, hands-on approach to things includes an appropriation of the aesthetics of the construction trade and the remodeling site. To produce *Billy Bob*, 1999, Ketter took a set of IKEA "Billy" shelves that apparently didn't satisfy his spatial needs and joined them, creating more shelving space, with slabs of particleboard painted with household enamel that was a slightly different hue than that of the store-bought parts. The idea, ostensibly, was to highlight the difference between the way Europeans and Americans approach domestic space, and what this may say about the peculiarities of their national characters. According to Ketter, Swedes who find that the IKEA shelves don't provide the space they need would simply return to the store and purchase more units. Americans, and New Englanders in particular, on the other hand, would race to the lumberyard and purchase enough cheap wood to customize the shelves to their needs. Clunky and witty, the piece says something for the possibility of a poetic individuation of the mass-produced, while maintaining a sly verisimilitude with the garage, garden shed, and student-pad shelves to which it alludes.



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Clay Ketter

For Clay Ketter, the 1997 installation was a meditation on the relationship between art and design.

A series of aluminum kitchenettes, each with a sink, stove, and countertop, were arranged in a row.

The kitchenettes were made of aluminum and had a clear sheet of glass for a countertop.

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What keeps Ketter's objects from melding with the objects they look like is that they are rendered useless.

Ketter's *Cold Kitchenette*, also made in 1999, is a taciturn, blunt sculpture: a useless aluminum kitchenette with shelves, a countertop devoid of sink or stove, and a compartment sealed with a clear sheet of glass. It is practically indistinguishable from the aluminum kitchenettes found in any Home Depot showroom. It is inert and literal and effects a severe blankness like any orthodox Minimalist object but alludes to the shiny new kitchen aesthetic that is pervading newly remodeled homes everywhere. Ketter's 1997 *Surface Habitat for Appliance* plays the unfinished, construction site aesthetic even further

by leaving exposed the unpainted wallboards behind the cabinets. What keeps Ketter's objects from melding with the objects they look like is not that there is anything inherently different about them, or that they are presented in an incomplete state, but that they are rendered useless. They're saved from becoming the things they imitate by adhering to the old Richard Serra adage that art must, by nature, lack function.

Tobias Rehberger also sets his work up to be assimilated into the general mass culture. *Performance (Frame One)* from 1997, comprising 16 MDF panels hung on the wall covering cool fluorescent tubes

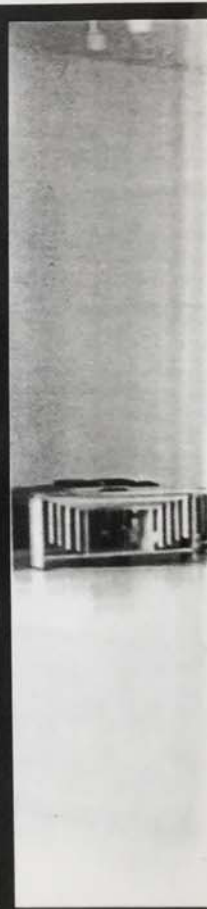
that softly ooze light behind them. Painted in mute autumn colors, the panels sit at the cusp between sculpture and painting, like early wall-bound Donald Judds or certain Artschwager paintings with their exaggerated Formica frames. At the foot of the panels, there is a Helmut Lang camel wool jacket from the winter 1997-98 collection, accompanied by matching pants and a beige polyester shirt. The clothes, the same laconic beiges and creams as the panels, become integrated into the painting/sculptural arrangement, while unfurling a new reading. With the clothes folded

and displayed, the panels begin to double as boutique design, and we find ourselves oscillating between the domains of fashion, design, and art. Important is also the fact that Rehberger's use of Helmut Lang is very different than, say, Haim Steinbach's use of Nikes. There is no commodity critique here. Rehberger earnestly presents Helmut Lang's clothes as sites of pleasures, just as they would be presented in a boutique, and invites the viewer to remember and ponder the ways in which the body registers delight.

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Scanlan negotiates an exchange between objects intended for private use and their public display, relating the question of meaning not to context but to desire and function.



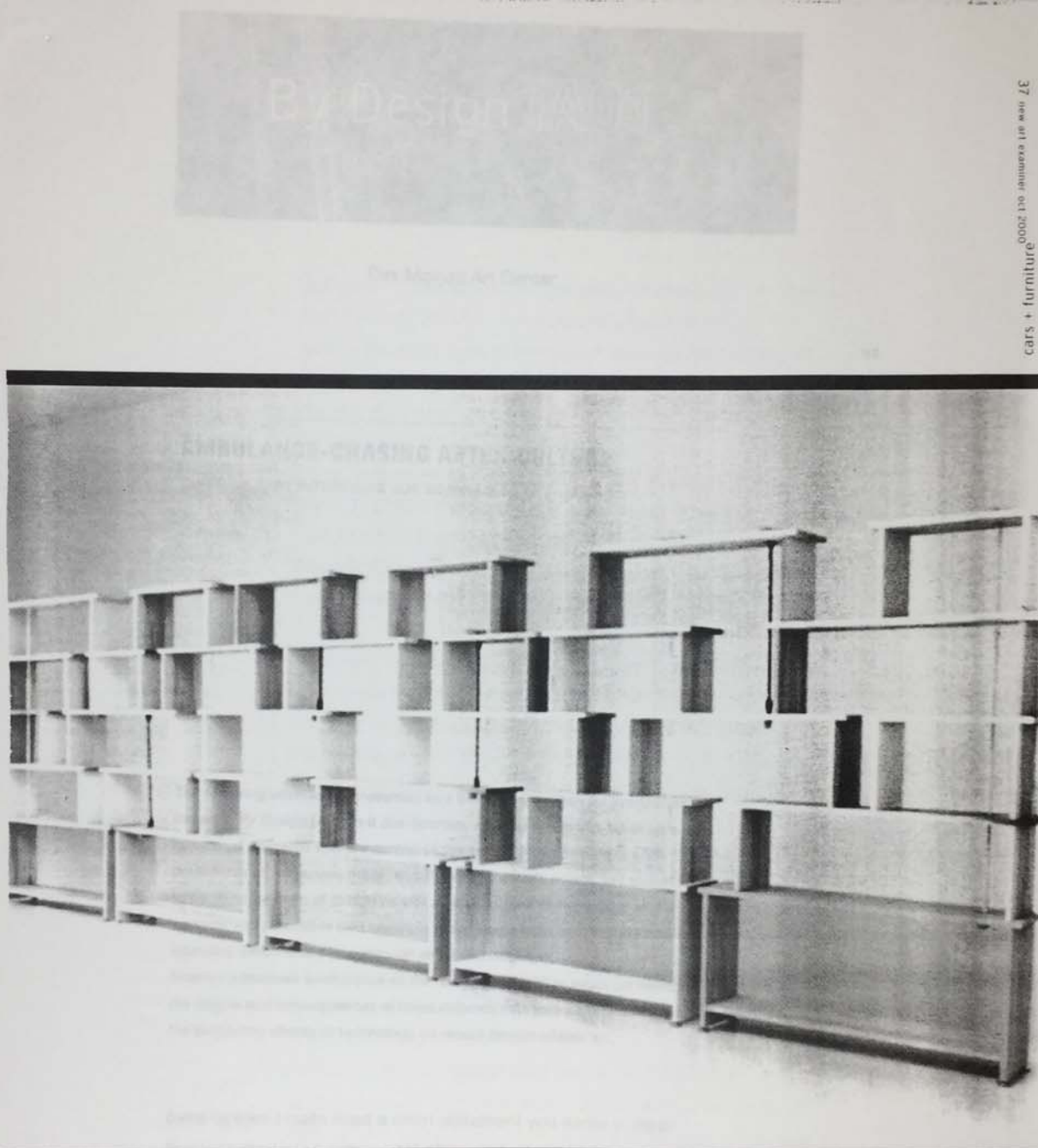
For his most recent New York show, "Jack Lemmon's Legs and Other Libraries," Rehberger installed all around the edge of the gallery (creating a new perimeter for it) a series of tightly packed sleek, sensuous shelving units, with their back to the viewer. He left enough space between the shelves and the

wall for the frosty light of the 33 televisions they held to spread smoothly through the gaps. Deprived of any view of what was playing on the TV sets, what choice was there for the viewer but to really look at the usually hidden side of these shelves and begin to consider backsides and role-reversals? Slowly, as the viewer pondered

the back of the shelves, finished in retro-mad, shiny enamel colors in geometrical shapes, he or she began to ironically reference geometrical abstraction and other Modernist jabs at painting. The fusion of the language of painting with that of the SoHo boutique and its insouciant

atmosphere of elated high-cost consumerism caught one almost unawares. Rehberger allows boundaries to become porous and categories to hybridize, leaving one with a sense that much of what he is after is experiential, body-bound, intended to induce pleasure and curiosity, like the boutiques he constantly references and all the sexy clothes they hold.

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Pardo, Scanlan, Ketter, and Rehberger are looking to negotiate a way for their work to grow lost in the world. Since we've accepted that art is pretty much the expansive field of objects produced and activities undertaken in its name, artists have indefatigably taxed art's elasticity. What these artists who borrow the vocabularies of design

are ultimately after is, I think, testing that one last line of resistance that has kept art objects from becoming fully assimilated into mass culture. They want to know if art can be pushed far enough to encompass objects that are visually and conceptually indiscernible from the brute things that populate our

everyday landscape. Which is the same as saying that they want to know what lies beyond the paradigms of art that we've bank so heavily on, and bring something that has thus far seemed infinitely malleable and adjusting to the one place it may not be able to go. **NEWART**

Gean Moreno is an artist and writer living in Miami.

¹Avgikos, Jan, "The Shape of Art at the End of the Century," *Sculpture*, April 1998, 52.
²Ibid., 51.
³Ibid., 53.

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Des Moines Art Center

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AMBULANCE-CHASING AFTER CULTURE

CHRIS GILBERT INTERVIEWS JOE SCANLAN

The following interview is presented as a theoretical toolbox for interpreting the art in *By Design IA01*. In it Joe Scanlan, an artist and writer, takes up a number of concerns that are central to the exhibition. Appearing in such periodicals as *Art issues*, *frieze*, and *Parkett*, Scanlan's writing has shown him to be an acute critic of design as well as an informed commentator on the systems and processes that underpin today's art production. In the present interview, which took place through email exchanges in June and July 2001, Scanlan addresses such topics as the relation of "look" to historical memory, the origins and consequences of mass culture's influence on recent art, and the facilitating effects of technology on recent design-related art.

CHRIS GILBERT: I quite liked a short statement you wrote in *frieze* that was illustrated with an AK-47 assault rifle. It began, "Many artists today are keen on blurring the distinction between art and design, and rightfully so, since once you admit that anything is grist for the art mill, the next logical step is to design your own products as works of art." What do you see as the historical background for this condition—everything becoming "grist for the art mill"?

1. Joe Scanlan, "Picture: AK-47," *frieze*, no. 38 (January–February 1996), 35.

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JOE SCANLAN: It begins with two gestures: Picasso's *Still Life with Chair Caning* (1911–12) and Duchamp's *Fountain* (1917).² The gesture of collage and the strategy of the ready-made declared that the "art mill" was open for business. Everything that has followed (Kurt Schwitters, Robert Rauschenberg, Joseph Beuys, Jeff Koons (fig. 4)) has expanded the encyclopedia of things the art mill can digest, to the point that artists are just as fascinated with the ability of the art mill itself—the series of refining chambers that begins with the artist's studio and runs through the gallery, the collector, the art magazine, and the museum—as they are with whatever materials they're putting in it.

Personally, I prefer to focus on the fact that there's another mill responsible for making things like inflatable rabbits and urinals available as raw material in the first place. That mill begins on the drafting table of some usually anonymous product designer and runs through the whole process of prototyping, fabrication, distribution and display before even having a chance of entering the public imagination. In the past decade, artists and consumers alike have become more and more interested in this other, shall we say, "ur-mill," which begins with designers. And the more aware we become of this "ur-mill" the more appreciative we become of its own artistic greatness—from the Bauhaus and Herman Miller to Kartell and IKEA. Once you realize that there is more innovation, hubris, fantasy, and risk involved in product design than there is in contemporary art, once you realize that this is where the real cultural action is, it's easy to start thinking that designing a great product is the best way to arrive at a work of art. Instead of making Brillo boxes you

² Generally understood to be the pioneering work of collage, Pablo Picasso's *Still Life with Chair Caning* (1911–12) consists of a painted canvas onto which a piece of oilcloth printed with the image of chair caning is affixed.

Fountain (1917) is the title given by Marcel Duchamp to one of his early ready-mades, a urinal turned on its side, placed on a pedestal, and inscribed with the name "R. Mutt."

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invent the Brillo pad, and things unfold from there.

cg: Let's talk about the conceptual makeup of a product. Is something lost from the art object in order to make it more like a product, or is something added that makes it so? Perhaps the added element is the potential of a mass audience or new production methods?

js: What is lost is the emotional guarantee that what you are making has value. A failed work of art is still a work of art. But a failed product is much more derelict, since all products contain the potential—I would say fantasy—of mass appeal. Because of this fantasy, the product not only needs an audience in order to be fulfilled, but it also has a much more precipitous fall from grace if it fails to be persuasive. Failed art is rarely part of the public imagination, but the Edsel or New Coke were great topics of derision. Compared to the public risks involved in designing products, making art is a rather safe enterprise. There's very little at stake if you fail, and there's not much to be gained or impressed with if you succeed.

cg: Is art, especially pop art or art that emulates modern design, just "ambulance-chasing" after consumer culture?

js: Art has been chasing ambulances ever since the Vatican hired Bernini to woo back the Protestants.

cg: Let me put it another way. In an interview you did with Amada Cruz in 1998, you drew a distinction between "talking"

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and "walking," saying that ten to fifteen years ago, art tended to talk about mass culture but couldn't actually keep pace with it.³ Do you think the presence of technology in the home and studio (for example, video editing software and CAD programs) might have contributed to this change, to art's increased ability to walk with mass culture?

JS: Definitely. The U.S. government reports that one out of every five working adults today is self-employed, and some economists put the number as high as one in three. Either way, this entrepreneurial boom is partly due to the constant merging and downsizing that goes on in corporations, but it is also partly due to the fact that the technology accessible today makes it much more feasible for a person's livelihood to be self-generated. In New York at the moment there's an ad for a laserjet printer whose tag line is: "Don't let them know how small you are." The gist is that if you buy this printer your professional image will be indistinguishable from Boeing's or General Motors'. It's not true, of course, but the mere acknowledgment of a desire to be indistinguishable from major corporations says a lot about the status of the individual.

For people whose primary product is digital output—graphic design, video, film, photography, drafting, publishing, or music—it's a great day. You really can make products that are technically indistinguishable from Fortune 500 products. The harder pull, the area where I think most artists are still not capable of "walking the walk," is furniture design. Computers have greatly enhanced our ability to draw a chair, but the cost of fabricating it digitally

3 "Joe Scanlan Talks with Amada Cruz." Joe Scanlan: *Pay for Your Pleasure* (Reprise) (Chicago: Museum of Contemporary Art, 1998), 6.

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on a scale that makes it feasible and competitive is still beyond the means of most individuals.

cg: You've written about democratic objects having a certain invisibility—how an object can serve its function so perfectly that you no longer see it—like the Bell 500 Series Telephones (fig. 5) by Henry Dreyfuss.⁴ But can visibility also be part of a democratic object? If good and enfranchising design is invisible, can good and enfranchising art be about visibility or accessible beauty? I recall Michael Baxandall writing that early Italian Renaissance painting appealed to the same abilities that people at that time used in their everyday life, like judging a horse for its beauty and strength.⁵ It seems that for us a comparable ability might be looking at automobiles and looking at ranges and dishwashers and Walkmans and TVs. Might this training result in an art that relies more on "look," or visual immediacy, rather than on theory or history?

js: I don't think it's possible for an object to have immediacy without relying on theory and history. In order for something to have a "look" it must reference something we're already familiar with, be it a 1950s Formica pattern or a 1970s lapel width. Without a history of forms and our memory of them, nothing could have a look, because we wouldn't be able to recall what the thing with the look "looked like." As soon as we concede that the familiarity of a certain style is rooted in representation and memory, we are speaking from the standpoint of theory. For example, I can accurately say that Stanley Kubrick's *Barry Lyndon* had a "look" and was visually immediate, connoting the

4 Joe Scanlan, "The Art of Disappearing," *frieze*, no. 42 (September–October 1998), 54–5. The Bell 500 Series Desk Telephone, designed by Henry Dreyfuss in 1949, is a design landmark. Created for Bell Telephone Laboratories at a time when telephones were leased and not sold, Dreyfuss's design succeeded in becoming a classic because of its simplicity, durability, and unobtrusive appearance.

5 Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy: A Primer in the Social History of Pictorial Style* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 36–40.

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eighteenth century, even though I was neither alive at that time nor did I see the film in its initial release.⁶ How can that be? Where did I get the information that makes *Barry Lyndon* seem familiar to me, and how do I trust that information? Those are theoretical questions based on historical experiences that inform my recognition of a style, no matter how immediate it may be.

ca: So it seems that it is one thing for an object to be *visual*—to have references drawn from culture and history that determine its look—and a different matter for it to be *visible* and enfranchising, which is to say, seen by a large number of people.

js: Yes, the two are distinct. I do think art can be enfranchising and thereby achieve a kind of democratic visibility. But in our time this has usually had to do with sensationalism or infamy, as with Andres Serrano's *Piss Christ* (1987) or Carl Andre's *Equivalent VIII* (1966) at the Tate Modern.⁷ If we said those examples followed Michael Baxandall's model, then we would have to say those artists are appealing to the people's everyday appetite for scandal and contempt. A more humanist example would be Maya Lin's Vietnam Veterans Memorial (figure 1). Despite the turbulence of her proposal's government approval, no one can argue with how profoundly that sculpture reflected the capacity of its citizenry not only to appreciate a highly unconventional form but also to deem it highly appropriate. Ironically, the sculpture's most distinct trait is its invisibility.

I think there is a strange shift that happens with the democratization of culture that is related both to economics and

6 Stanley Kubrick's *Barry Lyndon* (1975) is based on a novel by William Makepeace Thackeray. The film is remarkable for its photography: Kubrick filmed the action using only natural light, candlelight, and the light from oil lamps. The result is a rich palette, which, along with the film's period costuming, strongly evokes the eighteenth century.

7 Andres Serrano's *Piss Christ* (1987) is a photograph of a crucifix immersed in the artist's urine. Carl Andre's *Equivalent VIII* (1966) consists of 120 firebricks arranged in a grid and reflecting on the floor. Both were controversial and became subjects of public debate, although for different reasons. *Piss Christ* attracted attention because of its explicit, shocking imagery, whereas *Equivalent VIII* was the subject of protests in Britain over the alleged waste of public money when it was purchased by the Tate Gallery.

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to human nature, because an artwork's broad visibility is first accomplished through word of mouth. Word of mouth is a kind of testimonial that, depending on how much we trust our source, tells us that a certain artwork or image or product actually lives up to its media billing. Having a relatively narrow distribution network, an artwork can achieve a broad visibility only after it's achieved a broad audibility. We hear about it or read about it first, and then want to see it.

cc: That sounds like a testimonial for literary criticism as a means to appreciate visual art. What about theory? Does it factor into the interest in merging art and design?

js: It does, but in a backward sort of way. In the early 1990s there was a common refrain that the public "didn't get" contemporary art, the presumption being that they lacked the sensitivity to discern it, the knowledge to understand it, or the attention span to be challenged by it. I think the truth is to the contrary: I think the general public has "gotten it" all too well. Having been presented with such concepts as the end of originality, the pernicious relationships between art and language and commerce and desire, the occasional need for art to be less precious and more diverse—many fans of culture left the galleries and museums to conduct their own cultural anthropology. For five decades art has been borrowing the literary conceit that the viewer completes the work, and whaddaya know? They went off and did.

I think that relates to what we were saying before, about our

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ARTFORUM

AMBULANCE-CHASING AFTER CULTURE

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increasing aesthetic appreciation of the "ur-mill" of popular culture and what technology has made possible. We don't need art to transform the world into art for us, we can discern our own worlds and appreciate them as art. In a way, that's what design artists are doing: they're processing history, thinking about the Bauhaus and Dada and Robert Ryman and Sherrie Levine, thinking about function and material and surface and content. But instead of those thoughts being manifested in conventional art forms, they're being manifested as applied design.

E.H.C.

Joe Scanlan, *Design*, 1998
Photograph by Michael O'Connell

JOE SCANLAN DESIGN

Joe Scanlan's artwork "Design" is a large-scale, multi-media work that explores the relationship between design and culture. The piece is a complex, multi-layered work that combines elements of design, art, and culture. It is a work that is both visually striking and intellectually challenging. The piece is a large-scale, multi-media work that explores the relationship between design and culture. The piece is a complex, multi-layered work that combines elements of design, art, and culture. It is a work that is both visually striking and intellectually challenging. The piece is a large-scale, multi-media work that explores the relationship between design and culture. The piece is a complex, multi-layered work that combines elements of design, art, and culture. It is a work that is both visually striking and intellectually challenging.

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REVIEW

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ARTFORUM

SEPTEMBER 1999 \$7.00 INTERNATIONAL



Joe Scanlan, *Custom*, 1998.
Tasmanian blackwood, 23 x 88 x 34".

JOE SCANLAN D'AMELIO TERRAS

Joe Scanlan's exhibit "Invention" dealt with the act of consumption—not only getting and spending but their secret partners, compulsion and decay. The artist has long been interested in design and fabrication, but here he went beyond such production-end concerns to the crux of the issue: what "making" does to "wanting." Scanlan has an admirable command of how material substance shapes immaterial sense, how matter molds essence. His "Invention" put things like flowers, snowflakes, tears—even our own faces in the mirror—up for sale in a beautifully crafted boutique of the faux ephemeral.

Custom, 1998, is a coffin, made from Tasmanian blackwood in collaboration with a master cabinetmaker. An unembellished polygon, it sat isolated on the floor with its lid leaning against a wall, propped on shims of blue polystyrene, a balance of showroom bravado and workshop nonchalance. Urging attention to shape and material, the piece toyed with obvious Minimal references. But the title was un-Minimally important: Referencing both the traditions that accompany death and the cultural capital accrued around the made-to-order, *Custom* was the ultimate showcase. By evoking an erotics of consumption that had somehow been embalmed, the piece served as a pointed introduction to the rest of the exhibit.

In the inner gallery stood three tables of varying heights, made from dovetailed rectangles of poplar on aluminum legs. Some of the table ends had a piece missing, a random detail that drew attention both to Scanlan's interest in modular form and his need to poke holes in seemingly seamless constructions. The first table—*Counter*, 1999—was arranged like a makeup display in a SoHo emporium, with sexy little chrome mirrors, packets of a product named "Catalyst," and what looked like drops of water laid out on black felt. Reading the packaging, one learns that "Catalyst" contains "Acrylic Tears," "waterproof, media proof, and non-hypoallergenic," and that they should be used "any time you want to give the appearance of having feelings, or need to alter the chemistry of your surroundings." (Boxes of six "Catalyst" tears were sold as an unlimited edition for twenty dollars each.)

A second table, called simply *Table*, was bare, emptiness being perhaps the ultimate product. On the third stood a lissome bunch of forsythia branches in an elegant vase, a facsimile of the inevitable bouquet decorating every gallery desk in the neighborhood. Although the object read as a cipher for luxury and taste, the "branches" turned out to be straightened wire coat hangers, the "blooms" meticulously handmade from yellow Post-It notes. Restating the basic message of all *vanitas* while paying homage to Bruce Nauman, the piece was called *Pay Attention Motherfuckers*, 1999.

Snowflakes, 1999, softened the irony of the rest of the show. A group of unframed pencil and gouache drawings of geometric shapes in white and icy blues, the piece was hung salon-style and could have been as chilly as wallpaper. But it came off more like sketchbook pages scribbled with quotes and notations, intimate and untidy. "The creative mind," wrote Virginia Woolf, "must free itself by consuming all impediments." Copied into a corner of one of the drawings, the line punned on price and purchase as well as promoting artistic ingenuity—a fitting caption for Scanlan's entire project.

—Frances Richard

REVIEWS

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D'AMELIO TERRAS

THE ART NEWSPAPER, No. 31, APRIL 1999

Our choice of New York contemporary and **For Immediate Release**

Joe Scanlan
April 3 - May 8, 1999
INVENTION

In a new installation which is at once grim and glamorous, Scanlan pantomimes a culture that tries to solve situations by inventing products. *Invention* sets up a conceptual see-saw by installing a hand-made coffin in one room, and a boutique of synthetic emotions in the other. "Catalyst" is the name of Scanlan's own invention, a prepackaged suite of plastic cosmetic tears. A device "to wear when you want to give the appearance of having feelings or want to alter the chemistry of your surroundings", Catalyst marks the culmination of 6 months of research and development with specialists in the design, fashion and packaging industries. The coffin, which Scanlan fabricated in collaboration with a master cabinet maker out of Tasmanian Blackwood, has been built to the artist's exacting specifications. As such, it has much in common with many of today's high-end custom-made home furnishings.

Joe Scanlan was recently shown in the 1998 Sydney Biennale as well as "Waste Management" at the Art Gallery of Ontario. In fall of 1999, he will have a solo show at Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibition Space. Scanlan writes frequently for *Frieze* and other publications. This is his second one-person exhibition at D'Amelio Terras.

For more information, please contact (353-9460).

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Art issues.

THE ART NEWSPAPER, No. 91, APRIL 1999

Our choice of New York contemporary and modern galleries



Not furniture: Joe Scanlon, "Stall", 1998. At D'Amelio Terras

□ Showing at D'Amelio Terras this month, Joe Scanlon constructs works that resemble common objects such as bookshelves, doors, and tables. According to the artist, he wants his sculptures to contain "the uncomfortable posture of only 'passing through' the context of art—where they are momentarily frozen, held still for scrutiny—before returning to their mundane uses." Scanlan has been compared to the antiquated model of the "tinker/inventor," picking up skills—sewing, carpentry, fiction writing—as he needs them.

D'AMELIO TERRAS 525 WEST 22ND STREET NEW YORK, N.Y. 10011 T. 212 352 9460 F. 212 352 9464

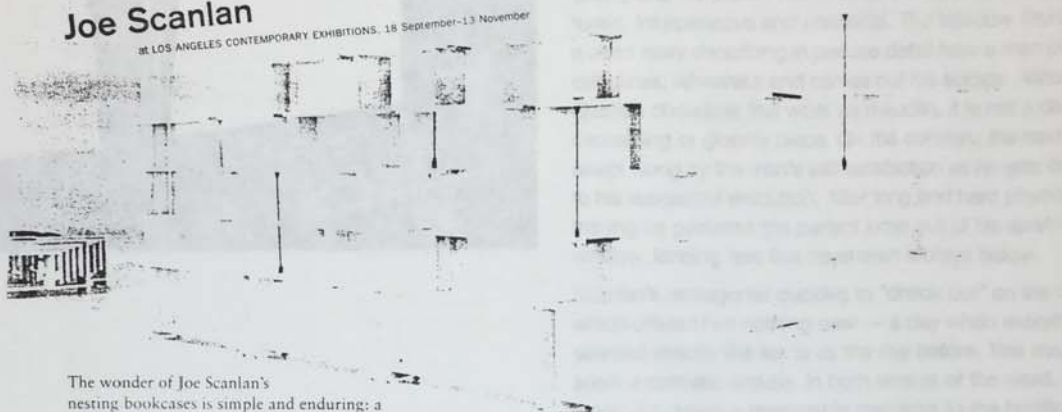
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Art issues.

November/December 1999 number 60

Joe Scanlan

at LOS ANGELES CONTEMPORARY EXHIBITIONS, 18 September-13 November



The wonder of Joe Scanlan's nesting bookcases is simple and enduring: a fascination with the unexpected expansion of a small thing to seemingly infinite proportions, and vice versa. The correlations between the New York artist's bookcases and Russian nesting dolls, or his bookcases and the wide array of collapsible space-saving gadgets sold on late-night infomercials, are both material and conceptual. Like those trinkets and devices, Scanlan's bookcases confront issues of physical space with a concern for functionality, economy, efficiency, and novelty—each able to be broken down into a compact, self-contained box about the size of a suitcase. The greater wonder of the exhibition, however, lies in the artist's application of these interests and processes beyond the realm of physical space and into photographic space, textual space, economic space, historical space, and domestic space. Indeed, each manifestation of the exhibition—material, photographic, and textual—itself collapses to fit neatly into the belly of the next.

A continuation of his 1989 work, *Nesting Bookcases*, Scanlan's current exhibition is titled "Product no. 2"—a name change that indicates the artist's interest in planting his work securely in material conditions and economic realities. The gallery installation consists of one even row of fully expanded shelves that runs the length of the space and another short stack that cuts diagonally across one corner. Both include finely made shelves of smooth pale wood, alternating white and lime-green accents, and twisted nylon cords that connect the top tier to the bottom by running through holes in the middle to give the shelves stability. Several collapsed bookcases linger around the entry. Viewed in this context, the structures are slightly bewildering in their incompleteness.

Also located in the gallery is a box of loose black-and-white photographs. Titled *An Investigation on the Role of the Consumer in the Interpretation of a Work of Art* (1989-99) they depict similar bookcases in a variety of settings, from living rooms to children's rooms, storage rooms to other art galleries. Some bookcases are expanded and some contracted, some actively functional, some still covered in bubble wrap, some heavily laden, some stylishly spare. The relationship between the photographs (which were taken by the people who own the bookcases) and the installation is a little unnerving, each simultaneously embracing and excluding the other. Just as the photographs are "nested" within the installation, the installation apparently is nested in a future photograph. The arrangement belittles the pictures in its size, color, and materiality, while the pictures challenge the dominance of the installation by framing it as an object to be documented. The degree to which these images are subsumed in the personal realm expands the scope of the exhibition and lends clarification to the context of the gallery and the meaning of the objects it contains.

The mirroring effect of Scanlan's sculptural installation and photographs is extended still further by *Commerce*, a self-published journal produced to "nest" the bookcases in specific textual and critical contexts. Mimicking the design of the academic journal *October*, Scanlan's do-it-yourself publication includes a variety of essays by established, obscure, and even fictional critics; photographs of the bookcases; and a long list of contributors, including Billy Corgan and Michael Jordan. Delightfully funny while critically interesting, the inaugural issue illuminates the conceptual framework of the artist's bookcases without being didactic, or, for that matter, entirely reliable.

On the whole, "Product no. 2" is remarkably well-conceived—a hall of mirrors in which a single image extends endlessly in every direction. It combines such an impressive number of artistic virtues—elegant design, conceptual power, emotional appeal, and humor—and mends its way into so many different contexts that the bookcases themselves seem to fade away. In the words of essayist Michael Newman, "The *Nesting Bookcases* exist in a tension between display and disappearance. They are at once the object on display and the means of display that recedes into the background: both figure and ground." Handling ambiguity with great agility, Scanlan's bookcases serve multiple purposes, expanding and contracting in various applications.

Holly Myers is a writer who lives in Los Angeles.

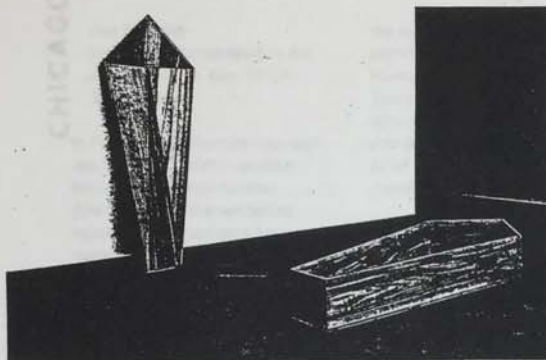
Joe Scanlan
"Product no. 2," 1999
Installation view

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Joe Scanlan

"Everyday," Sydney Biennale, 1998



Joe Scanlan's art takes two forms — fiction writing and gallery installations. He is also a writer about art and contemporary culture. This is significant because both his writing and his plastic work reveal a mind that is highly tuned, interpretative and analytical. *The Window Stunt* is a short story describing in precise detail how a man plans, calculates, rehearses and carries out his suicide. Although Scanlan describes this work as maudlin, it is not a dark, depressing or gloomy piece. On the contrary, the reader is swept along by the man's self-satisfaction as he gets closer to his successful execution. After long and hard physical training he performs the perfect jump out of his apartment window, landing feet first seventeen storeys below.

Scanlan's protagonist decides to "check out" on the day which offered him nothing new — a day when everything seemed exactly the same as the day before. This may seem a pathetic excuse, in both senses of the word, but it can also seem a reasonable response to the horrific thought that daily life is becoming endlessly the same. Perhaps our only means of survival is an acquired ability to find newness in the everyday.

As a maker of objects and installations, Scanlan is interested in the possibility of taking control of situations which may outwardly appear of little or no "real" significance, but which occupy a crucial position at the periphery (that which contains the centre) of the everyday. Since 1991 he has made a series of works entitled *Potting Soil*, comprised of collected leftovers of his domestic routine. Coffee grounds, saw dust, egg shells, dry wall dust, Epsom salts, bone meal, onion skins and cigar butts decompose and are presented in piles, pots or bags in a gallery. This interest in life's residue is seen in the work, *The Space Under My Remote*, 1997, which is a cast of resin and cigar ash of the space beneath the artist's TV remote control. This tiny object describes a non-space, a "kind of black hole trivia", but placed on a standard plinth and isolated in its own room it assumes a monumental presence. The artist speaks about it being "not unlike a small boat or a surfboard (or a coffin)" whose "absurdity fills the entire room".

Ingrid Swenson

▲ *Debut de Siècle*, 1997
Installation: Museum Haus Esters, Krefeld
Wood, glue, fabric, plastic
Dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist
Photography Volker Döhne

► *Numerous Incidents*, 1996
Installation: Museum Haus Lange, Krefeld
Stylite, resin, flower petals
Courtesy of the artist

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REVIEWS

NEW ART EXAMINER

CHICAGO

Joe Scanlan
Museum of Contemporary Art
220 E. Chicago Ave., 60611
312/280-2660

In *Pay For Your Pleasure* (reprise)—Joe Scanlan's variation on Mike Kelley's original *Pay For Your Pleasure*, which Scanlan helped install at the Renaissance Society a number of years ago—brightly colored, vertical banners, each bearing a short quotation and a large portrait of a cultural luminary, line the perimeter of the gallery. The benign smiles and words of famous thinkers, artists, and political activists bestow their wisdom on us, the audience. *The common stock of intellectual enjoyment should not be difficult to access because of the economic position of him who would approach it.*

—Jane Addams

The celebratory optimism of the banners (in marked contrast to the tone of Kelley's original choices, which emphasized the alluring criminalized image of the artist, even including a clown painting by John Wayne Gacey) cheers us on: Democracy! Capitalism! Public art! But how are we to understand what is proposed within these walls in, say, 20 minutes? Can we read and make sense of these texts; turn, contemplate the lone object in the center of

the gallery—a pair of basketball shoes—and comprehend what Scanlan is proposing? *There is no use in distinguishing between the mores of a nation and the objects of its esteem, for all of these things . . . are necessarily intermingled.*

—Jean-Jacques Rousseau

Such an "object" sits on a pedestal in the center of the room, under Plexiglas: Nike Air Jordans. Shoes. Athletic shoes. Leather, polyurethane film, polyurethane foam, rubber, nylon, plastic, air. Designed for the greatest athlete of all time, Michael Jordan. The beautiful, talented, virtuous Michael Jordan. We contemplate the athlete's shoes, discarded by someone who, perhaps, played exhilarating basketball games, burning the rubber soles on the pavement, exerting the body for a slam-dunk. They might smell of the exhausted pleasure of walking off the blacktop court in the afternoon, the sun glaring in the eyes, the ball nestled against a hip bone. *Can we ever have too much of a good thing?*

—Miguel de Cervantes

Are the Air Jordans art? Scanlan proposes that since we have assigned a value to these particular shoes higher and more meaningful than either their monetary value or their use value, then we, as a capitalist culture, might have a definition of art under which these

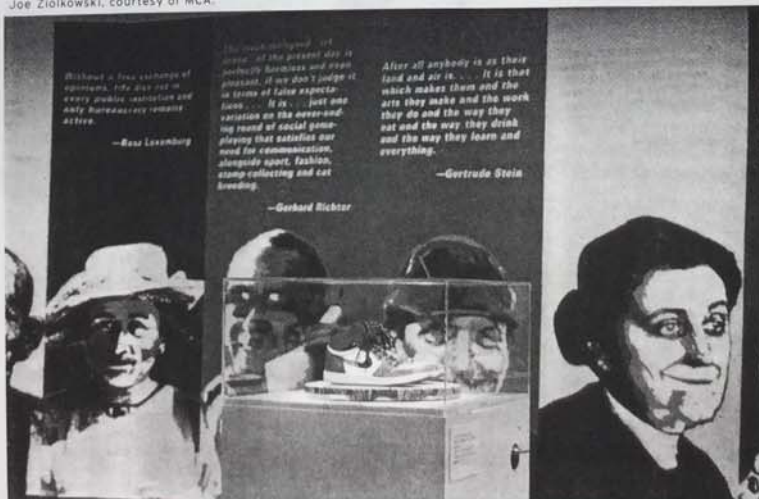
shoes qualify. The Air Jordans are more fetish than merchandise, permeated by our affection for sports and competition, for the beauty of the muscular body, by our idolatry of Michael Jordan. Best of all, the mass-produced basketball shoes afford us the pleasure of possessing something that a famous person—Michael Jordan!—owns as well, fulfilling the promise of both democracy and capitalism. *My key is . . . abandon any art form that costs too much. Insist that it's as cheap as possible . . . and also that it's aesthetically correct. After that, anything goes.*

—David Hammons

Scanlan's oeuvre and art writing actively refuse distinctions between high and low, art and design, decorative and functional. *Pay For Your Pleasure* (reprise) further denies originality or uniqueness: Scanlan refuses to re-make the shoes, but he willingly re-makes another artist's piece. Yet while employing a visual and conceptual strategy similar to Kelley's, Scanlan collapses the distinction Kelley sought between symbolic and direct action by inducing, instead, an act of recognition.

Maria José Barandiarán is a Chicago-based writer.

Joe Scanlan
Pay For Your Pleasure (reprise), installation view, 1998; Photo by Joe Ziolkowski, courtesy of MCA.



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CHICAGO

JOE SCANLAN
MUSEUM OF
CONTEMPORARY ART

In 1988, while working for the Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago, Joe Scanlan coordinated the production of the work for Mike Kelley's *Pay for Your Pleasure*. Kelley's installation presented forty-three colorful floor-to-ceiling banners, each with a portrait of a noted thinker or artist. Accompanying each portrait was a short quote from the subject giving his or her opinion on the transcendent and positive potential of violence and destruction. These banners served as a backdrop for a small painting of a clown by mass-murderer John Wayne Gacy, then awaiting execution on Illinois' death row.

Ten years later, Scanlan returned to Kelley's mechanics in *Pay for Your Pleasure* (reprise). His work is less an homage to the earlier work than an application of its procedure (juxtaposing a culturally authoritative discourse with an object all too real) to different material. Forty-nine

banners covered the entire space with the portraits and quotes of a highly various crowd—mostly figures from a modern liberal-arts curriculum (Erasmus and Cervantes, but also Frantz Fanon, Emma Goldman, and Mark Leyner), with a few pop-culture wildcards thrown in (funkster George Clinton, for example). The meeting of, say, Camus, Goethe, Monet, Jane Addams, and Cher is puzzling and contradictory, but the unrelieved cultural dogma creates a seductively proselytic mood vaguely like that of a fresco cycle in a chapel. Given equal stature, each quote carries the compelling weight of aphoristic certitude. (No sources are given in the exhibition or the catalogue, so the texts must literally be taken on faith.) From Plutarch's "We admire the work, but despise the workmen" (the only time Scanlan repeated one of Kelley's choices) to Hegel's "The Few assume to be the deputies, but they are often only the despoilers of the many," Scanlan highlights the uneasy relationship between the elite and the masses; he subjects it to an operation of doubt and confusion that reveals slippages in the distinctions between high and low culture and the relationship of art and commerce, and considers how value is constituted—and to whose benefit.

The banners provide the setting for the installation's centerpiece: a pair of used, size 11 Air Jordans theatrically enshrined in a Plexiglas vitrine. Inserting a quarter, viewers could watch the spotlight sneakers slowly revolve for a few minutes. Presenting Nikes as Nike, a thrift-shop throw-away on a museum pedestal, Scanlan conflates the holy relic with the modernist museum icon. Humble as the old shoes appear to be, they retain a powerful connection to Jordan, the basketball demigod whose name they bear, made somewhat poignant, almost folksy, by the ostentatious cultural authority that surrounds them and the self-selected museum-going population viewing them. A few blocks from Chicago's store-cum-spectacle Niketown, and a quick cab ride from the arena where His Airness became a figure of mass devotion, Scanlan created a kind of chapel for contemplating the missed opportunities of contemporary art, a commemorative altar to its contradictory hunger for mass relevance and elitist code.

—James Yood



Joe Scanlan, *Pay for Your Pleasure* (reprise), 1998, mixed media. Installation view.

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Art, commerce converge in 'Pleasure'

By Kevin M. Williams

STAFF REPORTER

Think of Steve Martin in the "Saturday Night Live" skit where he sang a song about King Tut that had its roots in the blockbuster exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

*Shoulda won a grammy/
Buried in his jammies.*

This explosion, this insinuation of commerce into the world of art, beats a direct path to artist Joe Scanlan's latest show, "Pay for Your Pleasure (reprise)."

Essentially an exploration of what's for art and what's for pay, Scanlan's work takes a very simple form. As you enter the Museum of Contemporary Art's Refco Projects room, your eyes are drawn to a multiplicity of brightly colored banners, each containing the outline of a famous historical figure, and a quotation from that figure about art and sometimes, obliquely, commerce.

"I have problems with this kind of convergence of art and commerce, like two trains heading for each other on the same track," said Scanlan. "It's something that people have always complained



AL PODGORSKI/SUN-TIMES

Artist Joe Scanlan pauses beside his show's centerpiece, a pair of first-edition Air Jordan basketball shoes, at the Museum of Contemporary Art.

about, and each moment seems to be the most extreme, until the next moment comes."

As a work of art, "Pleasure" is one of those insidious things that creeps into your consciousness like a subliminal time bomb. It's deliberately provocative, but you don't genuinely realize how much, until you see the work's centerpiece, a

pair of first-edition Air Jordan basketball shoes.

"They help to focus the piece on Chicago," said Scanlan.

"They're inarguably a good thing, and popular, and aesthetically pleasing. If this is what art is, beautiful things that reach a lot of people, and are very popular, here you go. Top this."

"Pleasure" is actually a reprise, based on a 1988 show titled "Pay for Your Pleasure," by California artist Mike Kelley. The 36-year-old Scanlan assisted in the production of Kelley's piece, which featured colorful banners that contained statements of artists and writers about how art exists in its own world, beyond law and morality.

Scanlan asks different questions in the same context, but they are no less interesting and compelling, especially in light of the recently closed "Renoir's Portraits" exhibition at the Art Institute of Chicago.

"If I approached this critically, people would just tune it out," said Scanlan, whose Chicago roots include schooling at the School of the Art Institute and positions at the Renaissance Society.

"I had to go about it in a backwards way, to make it seem so good, to have all these people from history step forward and be

so positive about the marriage of art and commerce, that viewers would think 'Wait a minute, maybe this can be problematic.'"

There are a host of other issues raised by Scanlan's creation, such as accessibility of art, widespread success and just what is wrong with everyday objects achieving the status of art?

Scanlan explored these questions somewhat over the course of a series of essays written for a London art magazine, in which he proposed other objects as works of art even though none were produced with the intention of being art. In an odd dovetailing of past and present, his first essay offered

Air Jordan sneakers as an example of this artistic non-art.

"Things like these, what their aesthetic qualities and the design of the object say about society, makes them just as profound as any work of art. Air Jordans are

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'Pay for Your Pleasure'

- Through March 29
- Museum of Contemporary Art, 220 E. Chicago
- Admission, \$4-\$6.50
- (312) 280-2660

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'Pleasure'

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incredibly well-designed, inform and alter our behavior, are socially volatile with the labor question and people getting shot over them. It would be hard to find a more culturally rich and faceted thing."

Surrounded by Scanlan's room filled with quotations, thoughts of great thinkers about arguably great things, you *do* begin to wonder, if not about the nature of art, about what kind of mind places Cher and George Clinton alongside Cato and Jane Addams.

"There were certain people that I knew I wanted, like Erasmus," said Scanlan. "Others were serendipitous. I'd be reading the newspaper, and Cher would say something. She actually says a very wise thing in this piece ['All of us in-

vent ourselves. Some of us just have more imagination than others.'] I wanted to show, also, that it is possible for people other than philosophers to have interesting thoughts."

Unlike many artists, who refuse to name a favorite work, Scanlan does indeed have a favorite quote in "Pleasure," from writer Miguel de Cervantes, which asks "Can we ever have too much of a good thing?"

Scanlan leaves the answer up to the viewer of "Pleasure," a show that works on many levels, even for those disinclined to think great thoughts about the nature of art.

"The show is approachable," said Scanlan. "It's just banners on the wall, in explosive colors. People don't necessarily have to think about the deeper meanings, if they don't want to. I don't mind if someone just skates through it and has a chuckle now and then. That's OK."