A VISUAL & PERFORMANCE ART CATALOGUE



IRRATIONAL EXHIBITS

A CATALOGUE OF VISUAL & PERFORMANCE ART . LOS ANGELES 2001 - 2019

FOUNDER AND CURATOR Deborah Oliver	IE 1: 06.29.2001	IV
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IRRATIONAL EXHIBITS Essay by **Jacki Apple**

By the turn of the 21st century most performance art works were presented in a theatrical context before seated audiences. At the same time the accelerating growth of digital technologies, gave rise to a younger generation of viewers who were primarily consuming mediated culture through the ubiquitous screen. In response to this cultural shift curator and producer Deborah Oliver set out to return performance art to its process-based visual art roots by resituating it in the immersive environment of the art gallery. Hence the conception of Irrational Exhibits as a situation in which the audience would become participating viewers free to interact in real time with a broad range of live actions of varying durations by a diverse group of artists.

The first Irrational Exhibits was manifested in 2001 in the five rooms of Track 16 Gallery's 30,000 square foot space in Santa Monica to be followed by seven more in 2002, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009, 20011 at Track 16, and the last two in 2016 and 2017 at LACE in Hollywood. Central to all these one-night events was the group show concept in which the artists each constructed installations that functioned as the settings for their evolving actions. All the performances were happening simultaneously, but were not necessarily of the same length, nor were they representative of a shared esthetic. What they had in common was a physical engagement with the body and materials, and the risk-taking process of making the work in front of the audience in real time.

Much like going to a museum, the viewer becomes the curator of his/her experience, selecting what to look at and for how long. However, audiences could navigate the space at their own pace choosing their degree of engagement, with one major difference - the works they were watching were changing in front of them. In sharp contrast to seeing individual works in a theater, they are not passive receivers but active ones. They have the option as to how to move through the spaces, to circulate, browse and return, or spend immersive time with one piece at a time. Either way creating a degree of shared experience between viewer and maker in process.

Oliver's commitment to this structure was a response to her observation of how detached we have become from a sense of community and shared face-to-face experience in this age so dominated by media culture, and its concurrent sense of loss. Embedded in her curatorial philosophy and choices is a critique of how digital technology has distanced us from our connection to the materiality of our environment and the physicality of our own bodies and labor in the creative act of producing something out of it. Thus Irrational Exhibits celebrates works that embrace unpredictability, the messiness of biological and organic processes and materials, and the chaos of our times. It embraces the riskiness of this kind of performance art-making, and accepts the potential for failure in the act.

Many of the pieces presented in Irrational Exhibits have been shaped by to the history and precedents set by performance artists of the 1970's in both Los Angeles and New York, but with their own contemporary interpretations. In Irrational Exhibits both men and women have tested the limits of the body and physical endurance, and interacted with organic materials such as water, mud, clay, dough, honey, eggs, jam, ice, stones, flower petals, and processes of binding, wrapping, bandaging, shaving, mock surgeries, painting, drawing, and hand writing. Content has been wide-ranging. Artists preoccupations with questions of identity, gender, sexuality, otherness and culture are as present as ever. Other artists have taken on environmental issues, popular culture, politics, including those of the art world, competitive sports, and the ethics of science, biology and technology and dystopian futures. But in 21st century Los Angeles Irrational Exhibits artists represent a full cross-section of ethnicities, races, cultures, and esthetic sensibilities. As in visual rather than theatrical performance, the manipulation of props abounds. They have included locomotion devices such as a tricycle, a red wagon, wheelbarrows used like taxi rickshaws, as well as various mysterious handmade mechanical contraptions. Puppets and dolls, masks, and fabric play roles. Various articles of clothing including a full color spectrum of burkas, one hundred T-shirts, and army camouflage take on social significance. Game-playing scenarios utilize basketballs, ping-pong balls and paddles, and toy soldiers.

With anywhere from eighteen to thirty artists participating in each event, many in multiple years, there is a raucous circus-like atmosphere that invites participation. Thus audiences attending Irrational Exhibits have willingly and often enthusiastically consented to taking part in an exploratory event in which all their senses are activated. They have been asked to climb ladders, offer commentary, engage in conversation, lick a performer's body, touch, smell, and taste known and unknown substances. They are free to accept or to simply observe. Artists, curator and viewers put themselves out on a limb together, knowing as in real life some things turn out to be transformative and illuminating, while others do not always succeed as anticipated.

As a faculty member at University of California, Irvine teaching performance art, Oliver developed and evolved Irrational Exhibits in conjunction with her own pedagogical practice, emphasizing process and materiality over theory, and encouraged experimentation in ideation as well as content.

As a collaborative event Irrational Exhibits is as much about being present and open to possibilities, and different ways to perceive and question the nature of our reality, as anything else.

Most of all it re-establishes the position of performance art as a live interactive visual art form.



IE1:

CURATED BY DEBORAH OLIVER AND LIDA ABDUL AT TRACK 16 / BERGAMOT STATION JUNE 29TH, 2001

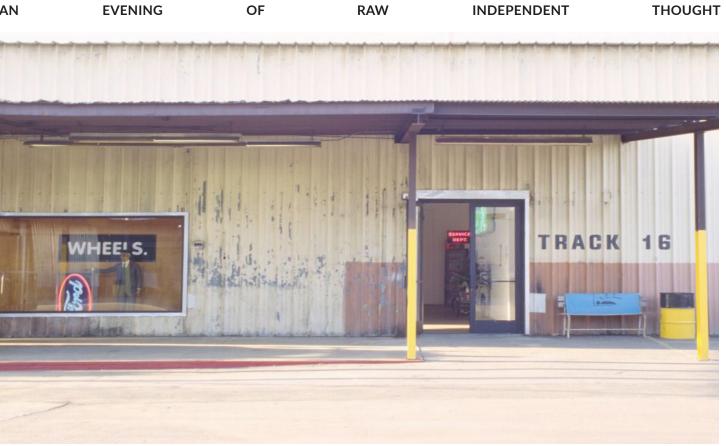
ARTISTS Liz Young . Tony Mendoza . Claudia Bucher . Jeff Cain . Asher Hartman Mary Cecile Gee . Juan Capistran . Lida Abdul . Peter Schroff . Anne Bray . Steve Irvin . Ann Perich . Barry Morse . Josie Roth . Peter Frank & Fluxfix . Seth Cooper

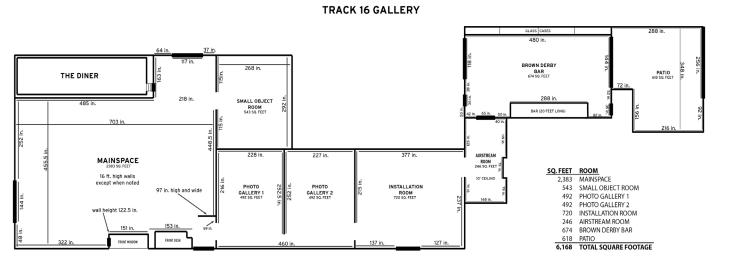


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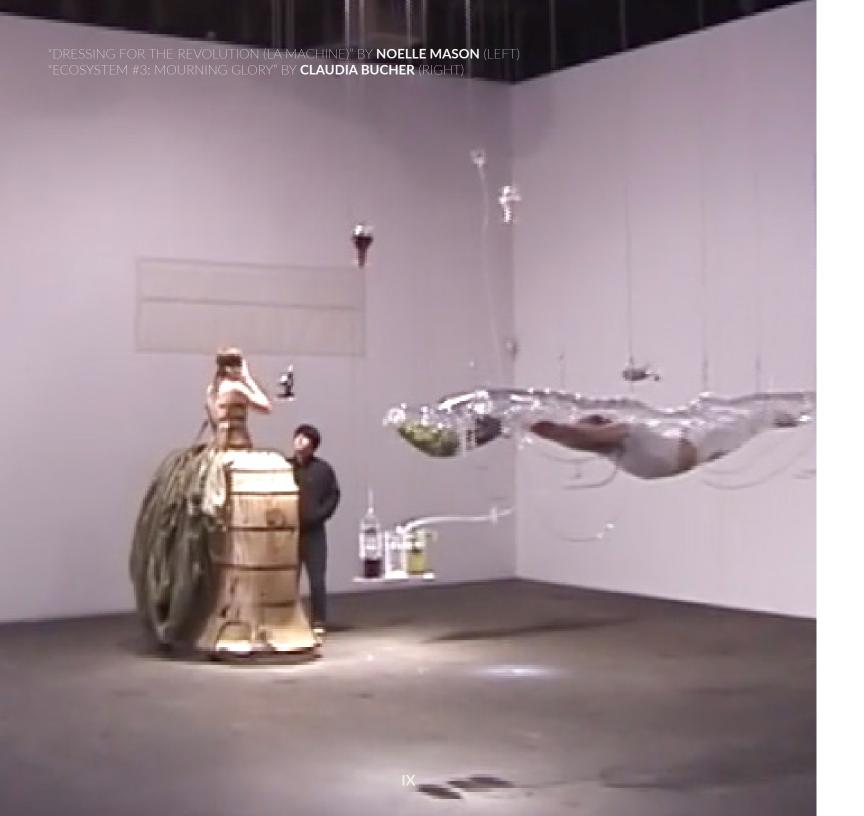


IE2:

CURATED BY DEBORAH OLIVER AND LIDA ABDUL AT TRACK 16 / BERGAMOT STATION APRIL 18TH, 2003

ARTISTS Lida Abdul . Claudia Bucher . Kent Anderson Butler . David Burns . George Domantay . The Elizabeths . M. Micole Hebron . Elizabeth Tobia . Elizabeth Tremante . Noelle Mason . Peter Schroff . David Khang . Slang: Danielle Brazell & Tre Temerilli . Joe Santarromano . Janie Geiser . H Shahani





Much like going to a museum, the viewer becomes the curator of his / her experience, selecting what to look at and for how long. At Irrational Exhibits audiences could navigate the space at their own pace choosing their degree of engagement, with one major difference: the works they were watching were changing in front of them.



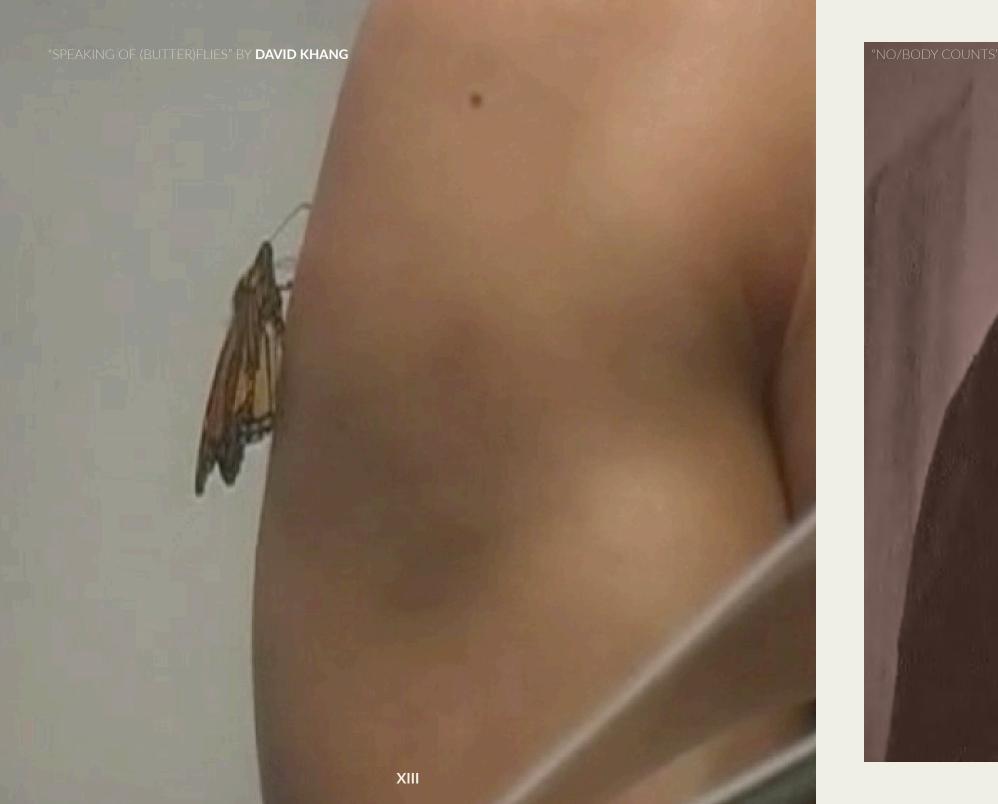


IE3:

CURATED BY DEBORAH OLIVER
AT TRACK 16 / BERGAMOT STATION
OCTOBER 23RD, 2004

ARTISTS Lida Abdul . Mariel Carranza . Ed Pelissier . Asher Hartman . Curt Lemieux . Marcus Kuiland-Nazario . Noelle Mason . Brian Stansbury . Steve Shoffner . Liz Young Gul Cagin . Chusien Chang . Hunter Hazen . Habib Kheradyar . Jitka Havlickova . David Khang . Ingram Ober . Ben Shaffer . Young Chung . Lucas Michael . Rika Ohara . Tony Do









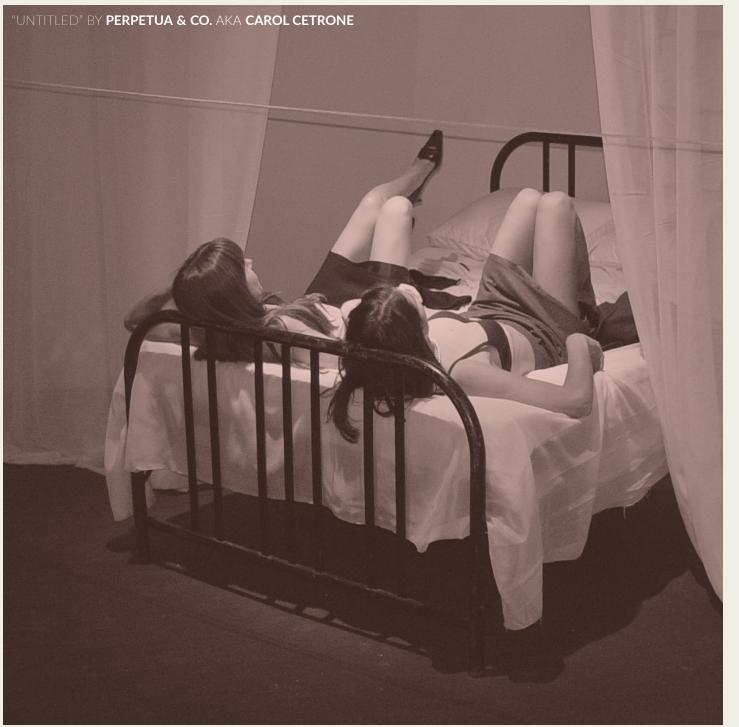
IE4:

CURATED BY DEBORAH OLIVER
AT TRACK 16 / BERGAMOT STATION
NOVEMBER 19TH, 2005

ARTISTS Tony Banuelos . David Burns . Claudia Bucher . Julie Lequin Mariel Carranza . Carol Cetrone aka Perpetua . Zack Davis . Elizabeth Tremante . Micole Elisabeth Hebron . Kristin Elizabeth Calabrese . Janice Gomez . Douglas Green . David Khang . Tiffany Trenda









IE5:

CURATED BY DEBORAH OLIVER
AT TRACK 16 / BERGAMOT STATION
OCTOBER 21ST, 2006

ARTISTS Brian Black . Ryan Bulis . Seann Brackin . Gul Cagin . Erdem Helvacioglu Mariel Carranza . Doran George . Dave Ghilarducci . Janice Gomez . Joe Hernandez . Stephanie Hutin . Florencio Zavala . Andres Janacua . Noelle Mason . Ingram Ober . Carrie Paterson Ed Pelissier . Nancy Popp . Marisol Rendón . Steve Shoffner . Matt Wardell . HK Zamani . Amitis Motevalli





E



IE6:

CURATED BY DEBORAH OLIVER AT TRACK 16 / BERGAMOT STATION NOVEMBER 3RD, 2007

ARTISTS Gabriela Arreola . Benjamin Bellas . Justin Cooper . Brian Black . Ryan Bulis . Anne Bray . Deborah Oliver . Janice Gomez . Amanda Browder . Stuart Keeler . David Burns . Kent Anderson Butler . Andrew Buehler . Mariel Carranza . Kristina Faragher . Curt LeMieux . Tim Folland . Dave Ghilarducci . Cathalijne Kapteyn . Anastasia Yumeko Hill . Daniel Corral . Sean Best . Noelle Mason . Helia Rabie . Eusebio Travis Sevilla . Steve Shoffner . Elizabeth Watkins

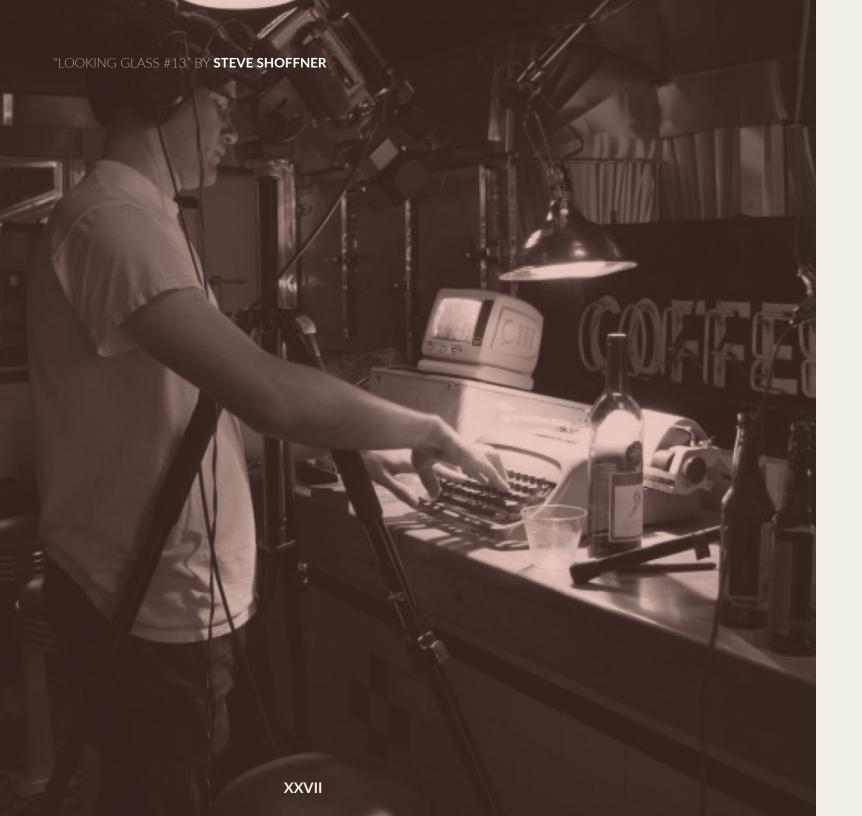


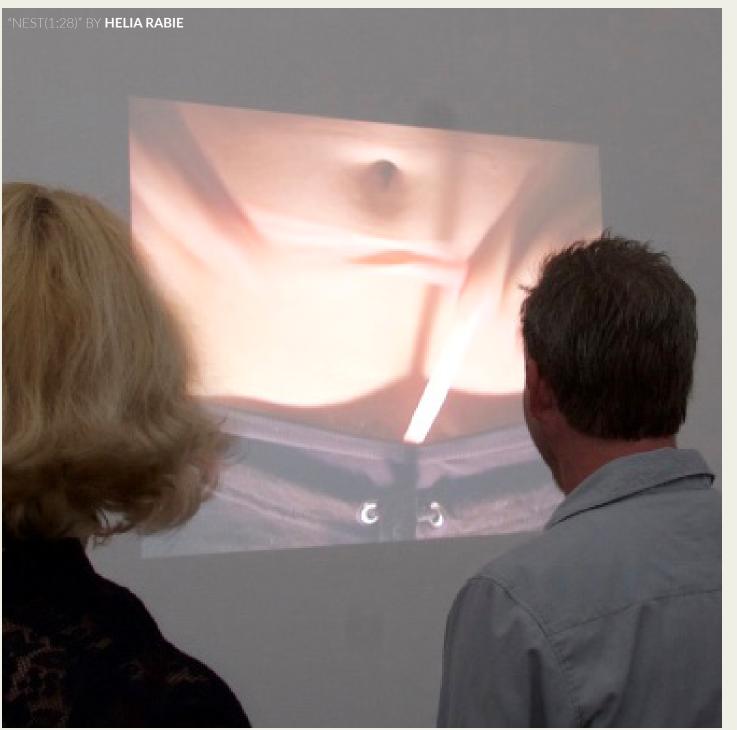




A group of artists explore and confront the dangerous and disturbing landscape of the 21st century: an environment in which one treads the shifting catastrophe terrain o f with delusions safety, where human and relationships subject technological are to intervention desensitizing media overload. and

XXVI





XXVIII



CURATED BY DEBORAH OLIVER
AT TRACK 16 / BERGAMOT STATION
MARCH 7TH, 2009

ARTISTS Brian Black . Ryan Bulis . Kent Anderson Butler . Gul Cagin . Mariel Carranza Svetlana Darsalia . Asher Hartman . Adam Overton . Lindsey Walker . Nicole Hayashida . Joe Hernandez . Emilie McMahon . Alejandra Herrera . Steve Irvin . Marcus Kuiland-Nazario . Leigh Ann Hahn Dana Maiden . Lizabeth Eva Rossof . Jamie McMurry . Paul Oshima . Jason Keller . Tony Banuelos . Seth Pringle Shane Quentin . Natalie Jean Klibanow . Helia Rabie . Jules Rochielle Sievert . Steve Shoffner . HK Zamani







The audience BECOMES part of an

ever-evolving world spending as much time as they wish with each of the works shown, or by moving freely through the gallery.

XXXI



IE8:

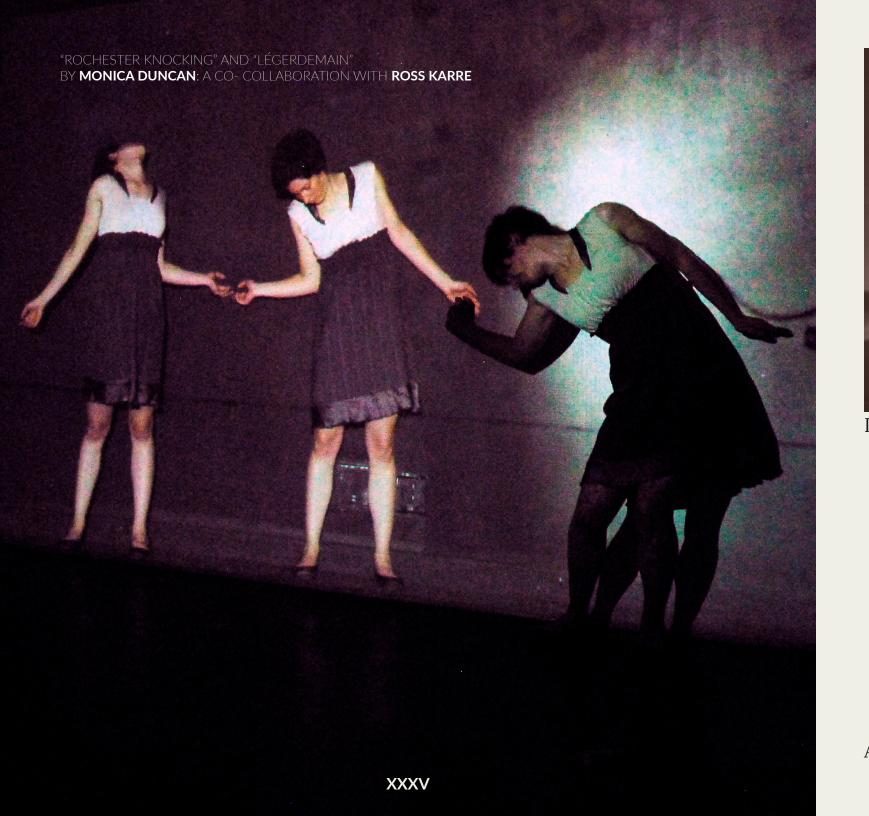
CURATED BY DEBORAH OLIVER
AT TRACK 16 / BERGAMOT STATION
APRIL 16TH, 2011

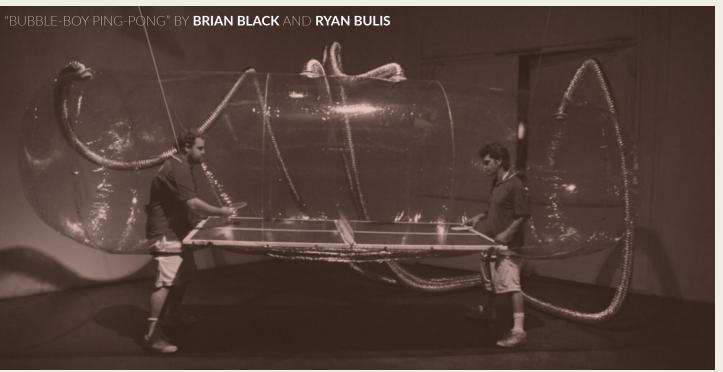
ARTISTS Brian Black . Ryan Bulis . Jarred Cairns . Mariel Carranza . Carol McDowell . Carol Cetrone . Alexis Disselkoen . Aaron Valenzuela Monica Duncan . Ross Karre . Kristina Faragher . Curt LeMieux . Rochelle Fabb . Alec Fraiser . Brennan Gerard . Ryan Kelly . Thinh Nguyen . Liz Nurenberg . Nancy Popp . Christy Roberts . Steve Shoffner . Ian Trout . Kim Alexander . Del Zamora . Juan Garza



XXXIII







CHRISTY ROBERT, DEFORESTED DEFROSTED BY CHRISTY ROBERTS



IE9:

CURATED BY DEBORAH OLIVER
AT LACE
JUNE 8TH, 2016

ARTISTS Claudia Bucher . Ryan Bulis . Brian Black . Kent Anderson Butler . Marsian De Lellis . Monica Duncan . Samantha Mohr . Kristina Faragher . Janice Gomez . Flora Kao . Curt LeMieux . Juan Meneses . Thinh Nguyen . Liz Nurenberg . Nancy Popp . Bradford Chan Prairie . Lara Salmon . Liz Young









Reports

f i e l d t h e





How do we, as artists, negotiate these shifts as they arise?

How do we stay connected within a confused cultural fabric?

How do we function in an increasingly dense physical environment?

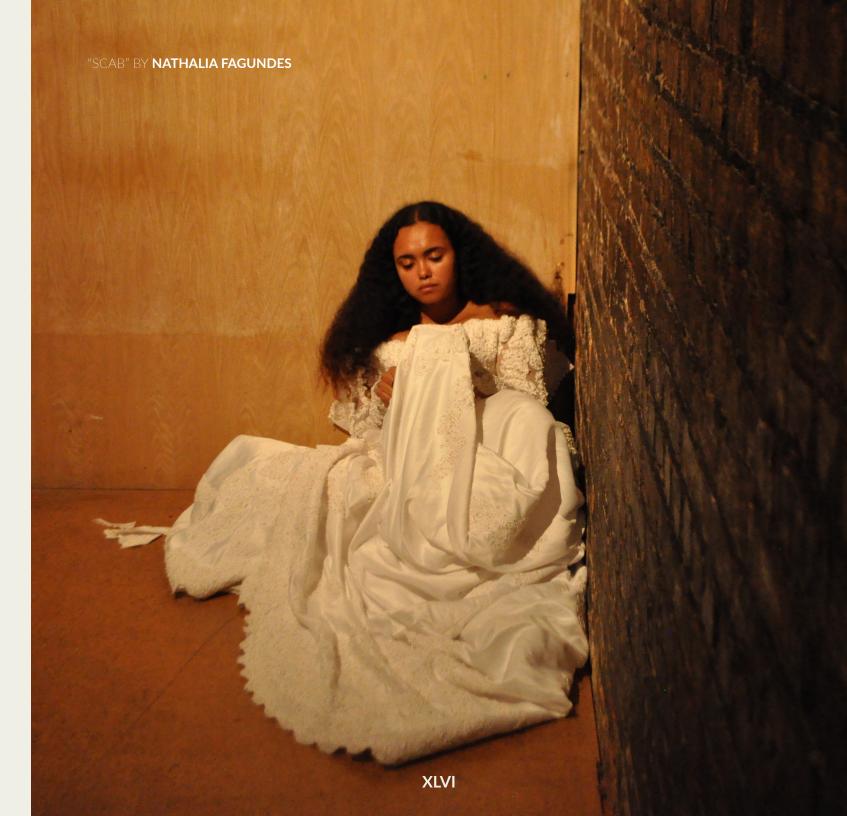


IE10:

CURATED BY DEBORAH OLIVER
AT LACE
JUNE 3RD, 2017

ARTISTS Zeina Baltagi . Michael Bizon . Claudia Bucher . Jarred Cairns . Juan Capistran . Reanne Estrada Chistina Rhee . Nathalia Fagundes . Janice Gomez . Adele Han Li . Steve Irvin . Curt LeMieux . Thinh Nyugen . Cindy Rehm . Lara Salmon . Eduardo Sanchez . Alexander Smith . Freddy Villalobos . Sichong Xie . HK Zamani











Mapping The Divide

unpredictability, Works that embrace biological the messiness o f a n d organic a n d materials, processes the chaos o f times. a n d our

IE11:

CURATED BY DEBORAH OLIVER
AT TRACK 16 | MONTE VISTA | TIGER STRIKES ASTEROID | GALLERY 515 | MUTABLE STUDIOS
THE BENDIX BUILDING
NOVEMBER 9TH, 2019

ARTISTS Amanda Maciel Antunes . Jamie Burris . Feminist.AI . Linda Franke . Steve Irvin . Prima Jalichandra-Sakuntabhai . Galia Linn . Amitis Motevalli . Anaeis Ohanian . Priyanka Ram . Cindy Rehm . Jinal Sangoi . Jerod Thompson . Michael Thurin . Teresita de la Torre . Sichong Xie . HK Zamani . Kim Zumpfe



XLIX









Place-Making And Social Memory

The act of remembering is a form of resistance, a way of identifying and defining our changing personal and social needs.





IMAGES (left to right)

- 1. Kristina Faragher, Curt LeMieux, Rochelle Fabb and Alec Frasier IE8 / 2. Mariel Carranza and Carol McDowell IE8
- 3. Peter Frank and Fluxfix IE1 / 4. George Domantay IE2 / 5. Alexis Disselkoen and Aaron Valenzuela IE8 / 6. Claudia Bucher and Julie Lequin IE4 / 7. Gul Cagin and Erdem Helvacioglu IE5 / 8. Brennan Gerard and Ryan Kelly IE8 / 9. Matt Wardell IE5 / 10. Joe Hernandez and Movement IE5 / 11. Deborah Oliver, Sarah Russin, Kent Anderson Butler IE9 / 12. Ian Trout and Kim Alexander IE8 / 13. Ingram Ober IE5 / 14. Tony Mendoza IE1 / 15. Carrie Paterson IE5 / 16. Steve Shoffner IE5 / 17. Crowd Shot IE9 / 18. Joe Hernandez and Emilie McMahon IE7 / 19. Sichong Xie IE10 / 20. Paul Oshima, Jason Keller and Tony Banuelos IE7 / 21. Daniel Corral IE6 / 22. Laurie Steelink, Caesar Delgadillo, Sean Meredith and Tom Patchett / 23. Steve Irvin IE10 / 24. Marcus Kuiland-Nazario IE3 / 25. Crowd Shot IE6



CURATOR'S NOTE:

I came to curating out of a desire to find commonality within my peer group, to create an unmediated critical dialogue and social connection. My philosophy is best articulated by Nicolas Bourriaud's theory of Relational Aesthetics, which he defines as "a set of artistic practices which take as their theoretical and practical point of departure the whole of human relations and their social context, rather than an independent and private space." The artist can be more accurately viewed as the "catalyst" in relational art, rather than being at the center. This particular concept and most importantly the artist as "catalyst" is the core of who I am professionally. I create actions and environments of actions, which in turn create community. It is my passion and way of life. Though I can express these ideas theoretically, and lecture on the precedents and context for these art forms, the goal of the work itself, as well as my work as teacher, curator, and artist, is profoundly experiential. I'm looking forward to beginning the next iteration Irrational Exhibits.

- DEBORAH OLIVER

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my appreciation and gratitude to all the people who have contributed to making this project possible.

Thank you to all the artists that have created extraordinary performative works in the eleven iterations of Irrational Exhibits over the past twenty years.

To Laurie Steelink, Gallery Director at Track 16 Gallery, for her years of commitment to and support for this project. Laurie worked with me as a co-producer from the first Irrational Exhibits in 2001 through 2011 for the eighth exhibition at the gallery's thirteen thousand square foot space at Bergamot Station, Santa Monica. It truly wouldn't have been what it became without her.

Tom Patchett, Track 16 gallery owner, who committed wholeheartedly to this project over a ten-year time span and donated resources and time to the artists and myself during the installation of the exhibitions.

Gallery Preparator, Cesar Delgadillo and Cindy Ojeda, who patiently worked on all aspects of the press, the programs, reservations and the admissions process for each show.

Gracious thanks to Lida Abdul my Performance Art Teaching Assistant at UCI in 2000 and 2001 for her critical input. It was through these conversations that I migrated from doing performative work in the theater to durational performance art and video in the gallery. To Steve Irvin, for connecting us with Laurie Steelink and the entire team at Track 16 gallery, my creative home for ten years.

Special thanks to Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, Executive Director Sarah Russin who co-produced the Irrational Exhibits: Reports from the Field and the Irrational Exhibits 10th Anniversary: Mapping the Divide exhibitions at LACE. A champion of the L.A. arts community, she committed many resources to the project.

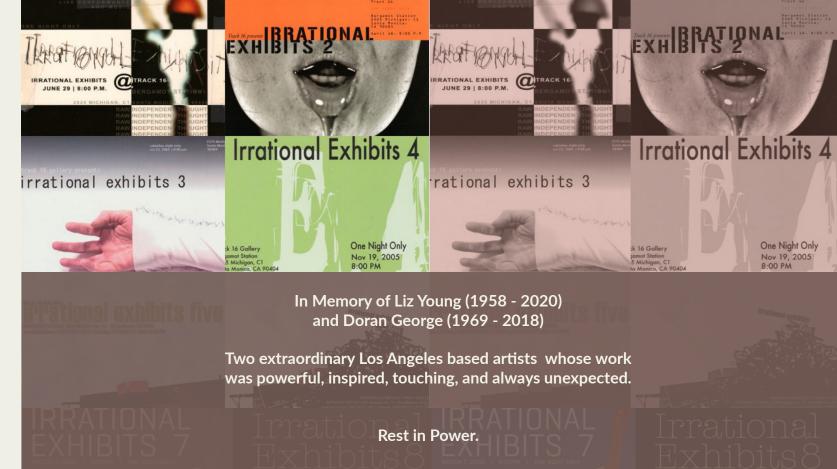
Many thanks to the LACE team, Fiona Ball, Programs Manager, Andrew Freire, Operations Manager, and Laurel Gregory, Curatorial Assistant for Irrational Exhibits 9 for their enthusiastic professional support.

My heartfelt appreciation and thanks to Jacki Apple for writing an insightful critical essay for the ten-year anniversary catalogue and countless feedback sessions throughout the evolution of this project. Gracious thanks to Rochelle Fabb and The Metabolic Studio, a direct charitable activity of the Annenberg Foundation, for their generous funding of the Irrational Exhibits 10: Mapping the Divide exhibition and the creation of the tenth anniversary catalogue. Much appreciation to the all the participants in the Irrational Exhibits 11: Place-Making and Social Memory at the Bendix Building in LA. I would like to acknowledge the generous support of Sean Meredith, Track 16 Gallery Director, and Caesar Delgadillo, Track 16 Gallery Preparator. My gratitude, to the following galleries who provided their exhibition spaces; Tiger Strikes Asteroid Gallery, Carl Baratta and J. Louise Makary, Monte Vista Gallery, Emily Blythe Jones and Debra Broz, Mutable Studio, Christine Meinders, Gallery 515, HK Zamani.

My gratitude to Amanda Maciel Antunes for her brilliant design of this catalogue, postcard, and social media platforms. Thank you Steve Shoffner/Fefifolios for the website and postcard designs 2001 - 2018, Fatima Hoang for postcard design 2007 and to Ginger Holguin and her UCLA students for their production expertise on many of the IE shows. A warm thanks to the photographers and videographers - Bill Beccio, Ian Byers-Gamber, Dominic De Vera, Yubo Dong, Laurel Gregory, Annie Martens, Paul Oshima, and Ramy Raoof. To Thinh Nguyen, Curatorial Advisor for IE11, Jerod Thompson, Associate Producer for IE 11, and my tireless team of production interns Bevery Siu, Diego Juarez, Dominic De Vera, Jose Tinoco, and Mimi Luong. Also to my students and Teaching Assistants at the University of California Irvine who have either participated in the Irrational Exhibits project or have been wonderful audience members reflecting critically on the work. Lastly, my friends and family -- Jacki Apple, Anne Bray, Ginger Holguin, Megan Williams, Tucker, Casey, and Ellie for providing me with advise, feedback, inspiration and critical support for the past two decades.

In Gratitude,

Deborah Oliver - Curator/Educator/Interdisciplinary Artist



Liz Young [IE1: 2001, IE3: 2004, IE9: 2016]

Doran George [IE5: 2006]



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