

# Art

MONTHLY

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Not In Our Name

Julian Stallabrass

Pluralism

Mark Prince

Marfaland

Adam E Mendelsohn

Letter from Delhi

Daniel Jewesbury



## ■ Part Object Part Sculpture

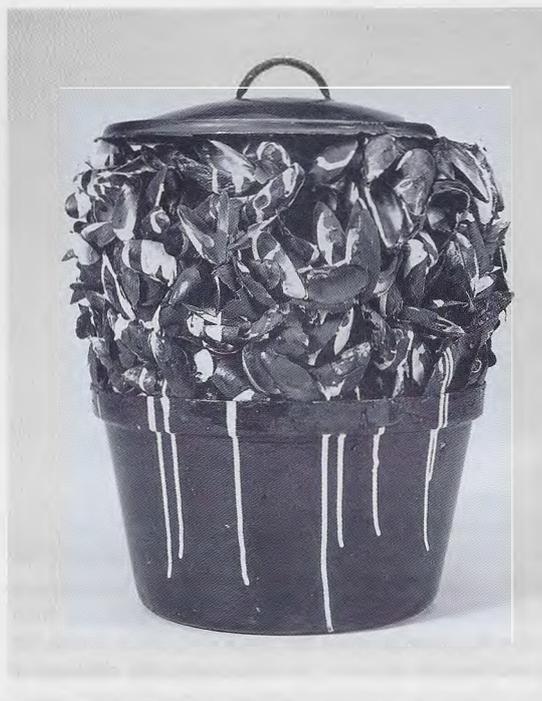
The Wexner Center Columbus Ohio

October 30 to February 26

Marcel Duchamp's three erotic objects of the 50s are pivotal for this exhibition's thesis that certain procedures of repetition and replication enable an aesthetics of intimacy, which here becomes an alternative foundation for a disparate collection of late 20th-century art. This show claims to test the adequacy of recent paradigms of provenance and motivation concerning art of the last 50 years, particularly those that privilege reactions to Minimalism, or those used by Rosalind Krauss and Yve-Alain Bois in deploying Georges Bataille's concept of *l'informe*.

Whatever interest is held by Duchamp's *Female Fig Leaf*, 1950, *Objet-Dard*, 1951, and *Wedge of Chastity*, 1954, concerns their dubious status as erotic mementos. Though cast, and later produced as multiples, these plaster and metal objects seem moulded by touch, with *Female Fig Leaf* fitting nicely into the palm of the hand, and *Wedge of Chastity* suggesting fingers pressed between labia. As a wedding present from Duchamp to Teeny Matisse in 1954, the latter is an especially intimate multiple. But as the trigger for Duchamp's concept 'infra thin' (the indiscernible but inevitable difference between copies or, more appropriately, defined by him in this context as the precise intermingling of the odour of cigarette smoke and the scent of the exhaling mouth), these works signify other prurient speculations. If heterosexual sex is the momentary moulding of hand/penis to vagina, the 'infra thin' is Duchamp's joke about the distinguishability of one cunt, or fuck, from another. A different order from the readymades, but copies nevertheless. As with Duchamp's breast and pudenda cover designs for André Breton's publications, it is this Surrealist predilection for sexual synecdoche that ties him to the early 20th Century as inexorably as the prevalent metonymy of his co-exhibitors' imagery pulls them into the present.

A first gallery encircles Duchamp's *Boîte-en-Valise*, 1935-41, with work by European and American artists, credited here with developing new models for an erotics of painting and sculpture. As nightmarish evocations of omnivorous genitalia, Louise Bourgeois's hanging bronze *Janus Fleuri*, 1968, and Lucio Fontana's terracotta *Concetto spaziale, Natura*, 1959-60, draw out a nihilistic anality from Lee Bon-tecou's works like *Fit*, 1959, a relief structure of stitched grey cloth influenced by Alberto Burri's 'sacchi', the delicately



Marcel Broodthaers  
*Mussels with White Sauce*  
1967

assembled compositions of hessian and other materials that are well represented in the show. Also in this gallery are several of Piero Manzoni's 'Achromes' whose haptic, often sybaritic materiality complicates his claim to have achieved an indifferent or inert finish. Achromatism, and its companion the monochromatic, make surprisingly frequent appearances for an exhibition about sensual experience. Often neutralising hyperactive surfaces, in this show they qualify Cy Twombly's patrician and uptight assemblages like *Untitled*, *Lexington*, 1948; Jasper Johns's plaster organ, *Flashlight II*, 1958; Fontana's perforated pink oil painting *Concetto spaziale*, 1962; Yayoi Kusama's *Accumulation II* (the phallus-covered couch from 1962); Marcel Broodthaers' *Panneau de Moules*, 1966 (a four-foot square board covered in mussel shells); Eva Hesse's anemone-like cube, *Accession II*, 1967; Robert Gober's *Bag of Donuts*, 1986; Allan McCollum's tray of yellow hand grenade forms, *Over Ten Thousand Individual Works*, 1987-91; Felix Gonzalez-Torres' lightbulb hang, 'Untitled' (*For Stockholm*), 1992; Rachel Whiteread's Hesse citation *Untitled (Twenty-four Switches)*, 1998; and of course the various Duchamp multiples, like *Fountain* and *Hat Rack*, here in their handmade 1964 versions.

Have I been missing out on something here? Is sex really



### Folk Archive

10 February  
- 23 April

An ongoing collection of contemporary folk and vernacular art from Britain and Ireland brought together by artists Alan Kane and 2004 Turner Prize winner Jeremy Deller with curator Bruce Haines.

### Doppelgänger

10 February  
- 23 April

A full colour, stereoscopic, dance-screen installation comprising four projections, directed and choreographed by Liz Aggiss and Billy Cowie.

### Interactive Installation: Reuben Henry and Karin Kihlberg

Until 4 February

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### A Crossroads of Cultures - The Garman Ryan Collection

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- 26 February

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Jasper Johns  
*Light Bulb II* 1958

better in monochrome – the enveloping white sheets, the ejaculation into darkness? Notwithstanding the challenge of 'Part Object Part Sculpture' to minimalist orthodoxy, I would speculate that a latent censorship prevails, in thrall to an Anglo-Saxon puritanism of rigour and entropy still overseen by minimalist and process spokesmen like Donald Judd and Robert Smithson. Otherwise, why the continuing stigma besetting psychedelia, Minimalism's nemesis, and the exclusion of energy-suffused non-western 60s works like Hélio Oiticica's polychromed 'bóldes' with their homoerotic tribute to *favela* gangsters, or David Medalla's polymorphously-perverse bio-kinetic machines?

And this brings us to a feature of the show that cannot be easily dodged. Too many of the artists included by curator Helen Molesworth in 'Part Object Part Sculpture' are covered by Krauss in *Formless* or other publications. Molesworth studied with Krauss (who even contributes an essay to the catalogue). To her credit, in reploughing these old furrows Molesworth digs up the politics that Krauss works so hard to bury – in this case concerning relationships, intimacy and the gift as motivations for artmaking. Even so, it is unlikely Krauss would have found the show's reorientation unflattering. In paradigm reappraisals we expect tyrannicide and Molesworth's accommodation of *October* magazine's artists and theorists makes her an epigone rather than a revolutionary. It is an achievement to secure loans of this quality, but where some of the show's curatorial arguments are refreshingly unfamiliar,

the artists themselves certainly are not. This continuing cult of accommodating Duchamp cries out for another tyrannicide and a curatorial year zero. Gilles Deleuze's provocation 'conceiving of the history of philosophy as a kind of ass-fuck' is appropriate here. Either ass-fuck Duchamp curatorially or forget him altogether, as artists largely have done.

Yet the excitement generated by some of the Wexner galleries effects a productive sublimation of Duchamp. Across from the McCollum hand grenades, now a trippy Teletubby mustard field, are four schizopaintings – Broodthaers' mussels, a Lynda Benglis encrusted paint paddle, a piss-stained mattress of Whiteread's, and Kusama's pink phalluses. Turning towards Gonzalez-Torres' light bulb curtain, everything flips into Bizarro-Habitat – the Kusama couch next to a Gober cat litter piece; a Broodthaers suitcase on the ground and his mussel coat-hanger on an adjacent column; and the kitschy-koo framing of Bruce Nauman's *Eleven Color Photographs*, 1966-70, on a back wall. Walter Benjamin's insight, that the plush 19th-century bourgeois interior represents a desperately futile resistance to depersonalising capitalism, could extend to these artists' feverish gymnastics of re-signification as a last-ditch attempt to confound capital's narcoleptic museumification of all errant culture. Well, it's too late guys – it's already part of the show. ■

MARK HARRIS is an artist living in London and Cincinnati.

## Richard Tuttle

Whitney Museum of American Art New York

November 10 to February 5

The Richard Tuttle show, which opened in San Francisco and which is currently at the Whitney Museum in New York from where it tours to Des Moines, Dallas, Chicago and Los Angeles, is an exciting exhibition, even if somewhat reduced for its New York showing. It makes the space in which it is installed pulse gently, especially the walls, and indeed it would seem that Richard Tuttle is above all an artist who makes walls – and reliefs – do things they would not normally do.

The exhibition's catalogue makes strong play for the way Tuttle's works have been shown, or how his shows have looked, as spaces, through the use of documentary photos and of exhibition-specific texts. It also includes quite a

# LAING solo

open competition for emerging artists

The Laing Art Gallery is inviting submissions for three solo shows. Selector: Susan May, Head of the Arts Council Collection, Hayward Gallery.

Competition deadline: 17 February 2006

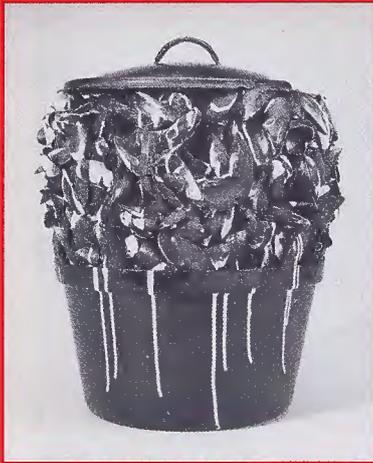
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**Philip Jones Griffiths/  
Magnum Photos**  
*Civilian victim Vietnam*  
1967

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