

CRITICS' PICKS

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BEST OF 2010

2010 CURRENT PAST

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For his performance at this year's Berlin International Film Festival, **James Benning**, California's reigning auteur of landscape cinema, used his HD camera to rephotograph and reframe all the portraits of his friends and family depicted in his seminal 1991 road-trip film *North on Evers*, then slowed them down and projected them onto the large screen of the Arsénale Cinema. Benning then read aloud the original diaristic text that had appeared, in handwritten scrawl, across the bottom of the screen in the original film. The overall effect could easily have been one of weepy-eyed nostalgia, had it not been for the expert hands of an artist whose sustained dialogue with his own work continues to intrigue a loyal audience of followers while eradicating the boundaries between his own art, politics, and private life.



Keren Cytter, *Four Seasons*, 2009, still from a color video, 12 minutes.

In terms of museum shows this summer, Stockholm was the place to be, with the stellar traveling **Ed Ruscha** painting retrospective occupying the ground floor of the Moderna Museet, and **Keren Cytter** down in the basement. If anyone had had any doubts about Cytter's genius, it took only this labyrinthine "best-of" maze of her films, forming a precarious echo chamber, to bring us round to her humorous existentialism and knack for the multitudinous absurdities inherent in quotidian banter.

Despite my aversion to superlatives, **Karla Black's** current outing at Capitain Petzel in Berlin suggests that she is the most interesting sculptor of her generation. Her sensitivity to the tactility of "soft" materials such as cellophane, paint powder, and sugar paper is perhaps rivaled only by her sense of rhythm; both are equal collaborators in this remarkable symphony of forms that gives me great hope for 2011, when Black will take on the Scottish pavilion in Venice.

Travis Jeppesen is a Berlin-based writer whose latest book, Dicklung & Others (BLATT Books, 2009), is a collection of poetry.

Zehra Jumabhoy

Nikhil Chopra, Manish Nai, Simryn Gill

There's magic in the everyday, theorist Michel de Certeau claimed. Sometimes it's easy to believe him. Like when a man, attired in the sky-blue shirt and cream plus fours of a Victorian flaneur, silently made his way along the sweaty, crowded streets of Mumbai, pausing at scenic spots (a bridge during a smoky sunset, a park encircled by colonial-era architecture) to give passersby the impression that they had stepped into a "picturesque" nineteenth-century postcard. This was performance artist **Nikhil Chopra's** *Memory Drawing X*—his forty-eight-hour journey across the city in January.



Nikhil Chopra, *Memory Drawing X*, 2010. Performance view.

By contrast, **Manish Nai** did not take his audience onto the streets but rather opted to bring urban squalor into the white cube instead. "Extramural," at Mumbai's Galerie Mirchandani + Steinruecke, re-created the down-at-heels glamour of the filthier sections of the metropolis. A site-specific "mural," with an abstract pattern traced onto the wall with grey gouache, shuddered with nonexistent color one minute, while at another it resembled the scratch marks to be found on any of the city's numerous besmirched partitions.

But it was Singapore-born **Simryn Gill's** first show in India, "Letters Home," that made the most

Julia Langbein

"La carte d'après Nature," "Second Hand," Elina Brotherus

disturbing use of ordinary people and sites. To celebrate this "homecoming," collector Amrita Jhaveri hosted a dinner party on September 9 at Camelot, a furniture store nestled in a lush garden in South Mumbai. As we gazed (bubbly in hand) at *A Small Town at the Turn of the Century*, 2001—photographs of multiracial Malaysians, their heads hidden beneath succulent fruit (a lady with her face obscured by a melon, a man with mangos dangling onto his shoulders)—we speculated as to whether this was Gill's comment on race, the self-destructing humdrum of community life, or the handiwork of a tipsy fairy.

Zehra Jumabhoy is the Steven and Elena Heinz Scholar at the Courtauld Institute of Art, where she is working on a Ph.D. on contemporary Indian art.

Sarah Lehrer-Graiwer

Dianna Molzan, Blinky Palermo, Los Angeles group shows

The best show of the year that I saw was hands down **Dianna Molzan's** "The Case of the Strand" at Overduin and Kite. The unresolved strangeness and dry-but-goofy formal humor of her meticulously dressed and undressed sculpture-canvases have stayed with and thrilled me for the past 382 days, since it opened its two-month run in November 2009. Abstract painting gets subtly processed through the aesthetic logic of midriff-baring crop tops, revealing cutouts, piping, pigeon droppings, 1980s wrapping paper, coffee-table legs, ceramic flecking, chocolate cake, and Southwest adobe—unexpectedly and thankfully, laughter is Molzan's mode of transcendence.

Resonating with Molzan across nearly half a century of art history, "**Blinky Palermo: Retrospective 1964–1977**" at LACMA is a long overdue and much appreciated survey. From the "Cloth Paintings," initiated in 1966, to mirror objects and totems, Palermo's bodies of works continue to mesmerize with crystalline simplicity, vivid chroma, and charged but understated graphic iconicity that rivals the aleatory, meditative pleasures of staring at your favorite LP cover—or anything stoned.

Tied for third, in LA, are the several thoughtful reconsiderations of the group show format that straddled the calendar, in particular "Support Group" organized by **Michael Ned Holte**, which opened at Thomas Solomon Gallery at Cottage Home in May; **Brian Kennon's** solo show "Group Shows," which opened at Steve Turner Contemporary in July; and, most especially, "**Houseguest: Frances Stark Selects from the Grunwald Collection**" at the Hammer Museum (currently on view). While group shows too often fade into forgettable résumé filler, these exhibitions reconceived the curatorial genre's relevance as the ongoing formation of a personal community of ideas and as a communal experiment of curated sociality.

Sarah Lehrer-Graiwer is an art writer, curator, and educator living in Los Angeles.

Quinn Latimer

Rosemarie Trockel, Lili Reynaud Dewar, Carol Rama and Leonor Antunes

If the exhibitions that lingered long and low in my consciousness this year had a sound track, it just might be Nina Simone's 1966 expert generational delineation "Four Women." So, to begin: **Rosemarie Trockel's** small, dazzling survey at Kunsthalle Zurich comes first, last, and always. As I wrote for this website, "Deliquescence of the Mother" was a dream (or nightmare) of domesticity and its oft-gendered (dis)appointments. It deftly showcased her magisterial "knitted pictures," collages, and, most triumphantly, her recent pale and lucid ceramic sofas, which demonstrated that her work remains as astonishingly seminal as ever.

By contrast, **Lili Reynaud Dewar's** show at Kunsthalle Basel was distilled in the extreme, though no less affecting. At its center was a huge, geometric wood-and-mirror structure—part modernist spaceship, part Suprematist monument—with an interior wall showing a video projection of the artist's mother seated on an African-patterned throne, theatrically relating the story of a 1970 Sun Ra concert she had attended, then slowly dancing to



Dianna Molzan, *untitled*, 2009, oil on canvas, 24 x 20".



Rosemarie Trockel, *Departure*, 2010, acrylic, graphite, and paper on paper, 15 x 17 1/2".

NEWS | DIARY | **FILM**

Newest Entries

Amy Taubin on *Nénette*

Michael Joshua Rowin on *Hadewijch*

S. James Snyder on *I Am Secretly an Important Man*

Nicolas Rapold on Weimar Cinemas at MoMA

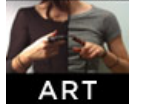
Jonathan Rosenbaum on *Shoah* and *Night and Fog*

Michael Joshua Rowin on Lou Castel

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GLADSTONE GALLERY

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HAUNCH OF VENISON III

the freaky, frenetic sounds of the master himself. The séancelike work—evoking the speculative fervor of spirits Sun Ra, Ettore Sottsass, and Dewar's mother's own youth—haunted me for weeks.

The third show was still more trim—not even a proper exhibition at all. No matter: **Carol Rama** and **Leonor Antunes**'s beautiful, sinister installation—an erotic chamber drama in a palette of black, gold, and tan—in Isabella Bortolozzi's booth at Art Basel was more considered than most museum retrospectives. Antunes's black rope and brass sculptures glittered against the nonagenarian Rama's black leather and inner-tube works, while a geometric floor (black squares, gold lineation) mirrored both. It occurs to me now that all three shows occurred in a particularly feverish Swiss spring—April to June—the season of (art) awakenings, and birth and rebirth, of course.

Quinn Latimer is a poet and critic based in Basel, whose first book, Rumored Animals, won the 2010 American Poetry Journal Book Prize, and will be published in 2011.

Joanna Fiduccia

Carol Bove, Blinky Palermo, Renwick Gallery group exhibitions

On a visit to **Carol Bove**'s exhibition at Kimmerich in New York last March, the gallery assistant kindly asked me to refrain from blowing on the peacock feathers. Apparently, a number of visitors had been so disarmed by Bove's exquisite compositions that they had committed surprising lapses in decorum, and the gallery had begun preemptively beseeching the rest of us to control ourselves. Truth be told, Bove's sumptuous mantles of feathers on canvases were enticing. In this show, arrangements of organic, ornamental, and industrial materials participated in a familiar conversation about display, but they were so prodigiously, yes, *beautiful* that conventionality was compressed by the heightened atmosphere—not banished but rather made to shimmer like one of Bove's veils of silver chain.



Blinky Palermo, untitled (T-formiges Objekt mit Gouache) [T-shaped object with Gouache], 1967–72, gouache on pressed paper and mixed media, 81 1/2 x 127 1/2 x 1 3/8”.

Lynne Cooke's "**Blinky Palermo: Retrospective 1964–1977**" may have been organized through the joint effort of other institutions (Dia:Beacon and the Hessel Museum and CCS Galleries at Bard College, where the exhibition's tour will conclude next year), but this doesn't make its debut at LACMA any less magical. Palermo's first US retrospective covers his principal productions while remaining intimate and uncluttered, the work occurring with the paradoxical bewilderment and *naturel* of a missing link, or a benediction.

The series of group exhibitions at **Renwick Gallery** last year reinvigorated the space and set a high standard for animated, intelligent shows. Curated with brio, they proposed connections as well as parleys among richly eccentric work from artists such as Margarete Jakschik, Katja Strunz, Talia Chetrit, and Valerie Snobeck, alongside historical singularities such as Francesca Woodman and Charlotte Posenenske. The first exhibition, in May, included a cozy evening of screenings from artists and collectives, including Heather Guertin and Josh Tonsfeldt, interspersed with a reading by Wayne Koestenbaum, who began with an excerpt from Gertrude Stein's *Tender Buttons*: "More of double. A place in no new table. A single image is not splendor . . ." A fitting overture to the Renwick's jubilant many.

Joanna Fiduccia is a writer living in Los Angeles, and a Dickson Fellow in the art history department of the University of California, Los Angeles.

Colby Chamberlain

Matthew Day Jackson, Jamie Isenstein, "The Original Copy"

Tired of confronting his own effigy in *The Tomb*, 1967, Paul Thek complained, "Imagine having to bury yourself over and over." This was precisely the underlying strategy of two compelling solo exhibitions this year.

Matthew Day Jackson's "In Search of" at Peter Blum Chelsea was riddled with allusions to his own demise, including a fabricated account of his disappearance after a cross-country road trip. Jackson introduced the conceit in a faux-documentary video that shared its title with the exhibition—a nod to both a 1970s television program of the same name and Bas Jan Ader's *In Search of the Miraculous*, 1975, the artwork-cum-



Jamie Isenstein, Installation Shots (axe, harp, log), 2010, HD videos on infinite loops, projectors, pedestals,

transatlantic-journey that led to the Dutch artist's untimely (yet suitably romantic) death at sea. The video's narration recontextualized the exhibition's accompanying sculptures either as clues to Jackson's purported vanishing or as materialized artifacts from a fictional civilization—what Jorge Luis Borges would call intrusions of a fantastic world into the world of reality.

The bearskin rugs, trick coffins, and legless armchairs that **Jamie Isenstein** inhabits for hours at a time (and over which she hangs a WILL RETURN sign upon leaving) are all haunted by the artist's eventual death. The innovation of Isenstein's most recent occupancy of Andrew Kreps Gallery was to apply that same play of presence and absence to other conventions of exhibiting. As much as Isenstein drained from her feats of endurance any personal charisma by concealing her body but for a stray arm and leg, she suctioned the aura from a suite of new sculptures by barring them from the premises, revealing them only in looped videos projected against the gallery walls.

It is significant that Jackson and Isenstein established these distinct engagements with sculpture by means of media, namely digitally projected video. In that sense, they provide an addendum to the complex history charted in MoMA's daring "**The Original Copy**"—daring because its proposition that sculpture and photography are intimately bound disturbs the museum's famously stalwart divisions among mediums. As recent bodies of work by Erin Shirreff and Sara VanDerBeek also suggest, sculpture is moving in new directions as it passes through the camera lens.

Colby Chamberlain is a Jacob K. Javits Fellow in the art history department at Columbia University and a senior editor for the online magazine Triple Canopy.

Lee Ambrozy

Gu Wenda, Zhou Yi, "West Heavens"

Ink traditions may lay fallow in the contemporary art world, but consecutive openings of two retrospectives by **Gu Wenda** (at Yan Huang Art Museum in Beijing, of early works in a literati style, and at He Xiangning Art Museum in Shenzhen, of experimental ink on paper), plus a solo exhibition at Shenzhen's OCT Contemporary Art Terminal of work informed by literati traditions (lots of human hair—either braided or ground into fine powder resembling ink), flirted with an ink revival. The exhibitions were followed by a symposium on experimental ink painting, held at the University of Chicago's new center in Beijing and organized by Wu Hung, where Gu appeared one step ahead of scholars and critics alike. Few people versed in the literati tradition concern themselves with the "contemporary" art world, a schism that allows works like Gu's *Pseudo: Modern Meaning of Totem and Taboo*, 1984–86, to appear timeless, even new, against a contemporary art landscape.



Gu Wenda, *Mythos Of Lost Dynasties - Modern Meaning of Totem and Taboo*, 1984–86, ink on rice paper, silk boarder scrolls, 9 x 23'.

Zhou Yi's first solo exhibition in his hometown of Beijing, mounted at C5 Art after Zhou had returned from more than a decade in the US and a thorough indoctrination in American art schooling, represents a new kind of Chinese artist: the kind no longer working overseas in intellectual exile, but returning home to thrive. Zhou is a "foreign" local. His aesthetic is governed by rules rather than a visual value system, and his colorful works are informed by his knowledge of color theory and rooted in play—hence an installation/creation scene including a mural and filled with crumpled painted paper, stackable erasers, and strange shapes made from dried acrylic paint. Zhou's form of abstraction is categorically ambiguous but fascinating to behold.

Advancing the current China-India conversation, "**West Heavens**" (at various venues in Shanghai) introduced Indian artists to the Chinese art landscape, bursting through the reigning self-reflexive mentality that tends to see China as the axis of the non-Western art world. "West Heavens" included Nilima Sheikh and Raqs Media Collective as well as Chinese artists such as Qiu Zhijie, and was accompanied by a lecture and publication series. As the first major show to introduce arts from greater Asia, it exceeded an outdated China/West dichotomy and explored common issues. Significantly, half of the works occupied a former dormitory for British monks in an old Shanghai concession neighborhood near the Bund, forming a new postimperialist conversation on the ruins of a former ideological fortress.

Lee Ambrozy is editor of artforum.com.cn. Her first major work of translation, Ai Weiwei's Blog, is forthcoming from MIT Press.

Kaelen Wilson-Goldie

Yto Barrada, Etel Adnan, Saloua Raouda Choucair, Tania Bruguera

The best and most boisterous show of the year in Beirut came courtesy of two artists who would seem, on paper, totally incongruous together. **Yto Barrada** is a young French-Moroccan photographer and filmmaker who has been experimenting lately with rambunctious sculptures and automated matchbox car racetracks. **Etel Adnan** is an octogenarian Greek-Lebanese poet and painter who has been making diminutive canvases of abstracted mountain vistas for decades. Their double-barreled exhibition, which ran from April through July, was Galerie Sfeir-Semler's strongest to date, and the first to really fill the cavernous industrial space. The



View of "Saloua Raouda Choucair," 2010.

juxtaposition of Barrada and Adnan accentuated similarities rather than differences, as both artists are obsessed with color, nature, the lives of ruined cities, and the politics of colonial histories.

Opening concurrently, but closing much too soon, was an exhibition at Maqam as tiny and delicate as Sfeir-Semler's show was big and bold. At ninety-four years old, **Saloua Raouda Choucair** should be regarded as a living legend in Lebanon, honored for her uncompromising approach to sculpture over the past six decades; she does for stone and wood what the poet Adonis once did for words. Sadly, though, most of Raouda Choucair's public sculptures are out of circulation; she hasn't had a major exhibition in years; and, beyond not remembering her work, few among Beirut's youngest generation of artists even know who she is. But for five weeks this spring, Maqam exhibited a luminous collection of her gouaches on paper from the 1940s and '50s. These rare two-dimensional pieces illustrated the artist's mind at work.

Tania Bruguera's "Huelga General" at PAC Murcia was a much-needed antidote to a shambolic Manifesta. Part of Cuauhtémoc Medina's series "Dominó Canibal," Bruguera designed a large-scale protest mural to be executed over a six-week period by professional painters and members of the public. Inside the Sala Verónicas, a former convent, a brick (from a work by Jimmie Durham) in a glass vitrine (from a work by Kendell Geers) acted as a trigger for Bruguera's project. High overhead, a young man sat perched on rickety scaffolding and painted patiently in an otherwise silent space. Compared to a biennial trying too hard, "Huelga General" felt elegant, efficient, and smart, a piercing response to an immediate political crisis.

Kaelen Wilson-Goldie is a critic based in Beirut.

Steven Cairns

Duncan Campbell, 6th Berlin Biennale, Richard Hamilton

Artists Space's presentation in March of **Duncan Campbell's** *Make it New John*, 2009, gave a further twist to his fifty-five-minute film, which I had previously seen at two of the institutions that had commissioned the work: Chisenhale, London and Tramway, Glasgow. Alongside the film, which centers on the ill-fated DeLorean DMC-12 and the Northern Irish political landscape that facilitated the luxury cars' production, was a vast collection of early-1980s, DeLorean-related printed matter that amplified the film's nostalgic contexts and further tested viewers' resilience to aesthetic seduction.



Duncan Campbell, *Make it New John*, 2009, still from a 16-mm film, 51 minutes.

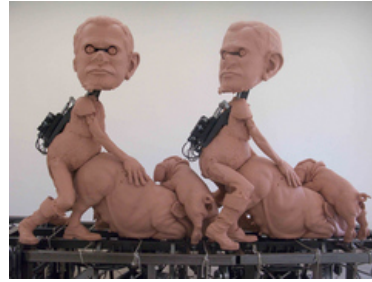
Despite the challenging structure of **Kathrin Rhomberg's 6th Berlin Biennale** and the often-abstruse combinations of works on view, I continued to question (long after it had closed this autumn) what, in fact, I had found so challenging. Highlights of the modest forty-three-artist show included Henrik Olesen's dismantled and archived Powerbook G4, wittily titled, *I do not go to work today. I don't think I go tomorrow/Machine Assemblage I-II*, 2010, and **Phil Collins's** *marxism today (prologue)*, 2010, which dug into a history surprisingly absent elsewhere in the exhibition. Spread over six disparate locations, the biennial situated itself within Berlin's current socio-political contexts—a contrast to previous editions, which have emphasized Berlin-centric themes through the choice of works.

In London, a solo show at the Serpentine Gallery reaffirmed the significance of **Richard Hamilton's** career. While his recent works didn't pack the same punch as his celebrated works from the '60s, '70s, and the '80s, they acted as points of reference in an enduring practice that has consistently proven itself in tune with the contemporary zeitgeist. What was most shocking here was that the humanity so effortlessly captured in works from his back catalogue still resonates today.

Aram Moshayedi

Jeff Koons's *Bowl With Eggs* on the 210 Freeway, New Atlantis Enterprises, Paul McCarthy

Few exhibitions this year rivaled the peculiar sight of **Jeff Koons's *Bowl With Eggs*, 2009, abandoned on the 210 freeway**, moments after it had been unhitched from the truck responsible for its safe delivery from Carlson & Co. to the artist's studio. On the same day that a video of the incident made its way onto YouTube with the title "jeffkoons.3gp," the legendary art-fabricator announced that it was ceasing operations after almost forty years in the business. Many took this all to mean that the end was near, if it hadn't come already. **But in Los Angeles, where the cultural climate is by now post-post-apocalyptic (already itself a cliché), there was the promise of a new paradigm, inaugurated by the formation of a research initiative called New Atlantis Enterprises.**



Paul McCarthy, *Train, Mechanical*, 2003–2010, mixed media, dimensions variable.

The brainchild of artist Piero Golia, with collaborators Sarah Lehrer-Graiwer, Lesley Moon, Justin Von Der Fehr, Kevin Lubrano, Janine Armin, Anne Mathern, and Paige Marton, NAE has endeavored for the past seven months to conduct research for an ever-expanding client base and to utilize its showroom-like headquarters in the Pacific Design Center as an ongoing display of this somewhat scientific process. In the mire of conventional exhibitions, NAE has been a welcome addition that provides more questions than it does answers. But this year also witnessed the westward expansion of L&M Arts, which opened in Los Angeles with a presentation of three masterfully produced sculptures by the city's own **Paul McCarthy**. The show displayed McCarthy's technical abilities, his unparalleled perversion of scale, and a level of material experimentation matched only by Disney's Imagineers. If the accidental disposal of Koons's *Eggs* a few months earlier onto a California interstate represented imminent doom, McCarthy's exhibition proved that the old guard would not go easily. When the end appears to be near, we can rely on McCarthy and the younger upstarts like New Atlantis Enterprises to remind us of our ongoing responsibility to stand at the forefront of innovation and culture and, ultimately, to ask the important questions about the ability of animatronic sculpture to accurately convey the sense of George W. Bush fucking a pig.

Aram Moshayedi is a writer and assistant curator of the Gallery at REDCAT in Los Angeles.

Julia Langbein

"La carte d'après Nature," "Second Hand," Elina Brotherus

Surprise is a legitimate reaction to finding one of the year's best contemporary exhibitions in Monaco. The inaugural show at the Nouveau Musée Nationale de Monaco's Villa Paloma, "**La carte d'après Nature (The Map After Nature)**," curated by photographer Thomas Demand, acknowledges that surprise. The show plays on the deep strangeness of the one-mile-squared leisure kingdom, on its heights of both nature and artifice, in works like Chris Garofalo's intricate ceramic models of impossible sea creatures and Saâdane Afif's absurd topographical map of a wave (*Strategie de l'inquiétude* [Strategy of Unrest], 1998). The artist-as-curator is one of the most interesting features of the show: For example, in designing a trompe l'oeil velvet-curtain wallpaper to surround Magritte's paintings, he has (in his words) "taken many liberties where a professional curator might be accused of infringing."



Elina Brotherus, *Baigneuse, orage montant (Bather, rising storm)*, 2003, color photograph, 27 1/2 x 31".

Liberties taken by professional curator Anne Dressen at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris created the dynamism of "**Second Hand**," a seven-month-long group show in which the expansive, permanent modern-survey collection of the museum was "infiltrated" by copies, imitations, and appropriations, from a Modigliani by legendary forger Elmyr de Hory to Olivier Mosset's striped canvas *Untitled*, 1974, whose uniform bands are only infinitesimally wider than Daniel Buren's. Playful interspersing of the "lookalikes" threw the spectator into investigative mode, ready to examine the authenticity of the masterpieces of the permanent collection.

Elina Brotherus's photographs and videos have a consistent relationship with the history of

painting, but one that is subtler than direct copy or citation. In a retrospective and then a follow-up show of new work at [gbagency](#) in February and March, one saw an initial confessional phase in the 1990s give way to an investigation of the compositional conventions of nineteenth-century painting, from the romanticism of *Model Studies*, 2002–, in which figures are viewed from the back against expansive landscapes reminiscent of Caspar David Friedrich, to the academicism of a marmoreal nude in *Baigneuse, orage montant* (Bather, rising storm), 2003.

Julia Langbein is a Ph.D. candidate in art history at the University of Chicago.

Eugenio Viola

Marina Abramović, Paul McCarthy, “Sk-Interfaces”

“The Artist Is Present,” Marina Abramović’s dazzling retrospective at MoMA, was certainly among the finer exhibitions of 2010. Beyond the complex and constant play of references in her oeuvre, the show spectacularly reasserted the presence of the artist/shaman through a durational performance and a controversial decision to re-enact her historical performances. This was a solution that succeeded on a curatorial level, where the effect was unquestionable, as well as on a theoretical level: Abramović affirmed the radical subversion *hic et nunc* of the performative act while managing to stall the attenuation of “presence” that is a consequence of theatrical recreations.



Marina Abramović, *The Artist Is Present*, 2010, Performance view, Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2010. Photo: Marco Anelli.

“Pig Island,” Paul McCarthy’s first retrospective in Italy, was also noteworthy. The exhibition at the Palazzo Citterio (organized by the Fondazione Nicola Trussardi) was a journey into the artist’s hallucinatory *weltanschauung*, made via residual traces of past performances and found objects, all staging outrageous situations, verging on the obscene. Each installation presented pairs of figures that challenged boundaries and broke interpretive registers. The space as neutral container was transformed by the convergence of McCarthy’s works, and therein the social dynamics of politics and culture were subjected to symbolic, devastating, tragicomic and self-satisfied bad taste.

By contrast, “Sk-Interfaces,” which closed in early 2010 at the Casino Luxembourg, disrupted the present state of affairs and exposed artistic practices thriving on the margins. The exhibition investigated the best of Biotech art by focusing on an abrupt rematerialization of the art object in the passage from *net* art to *wet* art. Here, artists—faithful seismographers of their own time—absorbed the speed of technological innovation with a lucid madness, appropriating biotechnologies and genetic engineering while participating in the gradual spread of technology and science to the world of art. Standout pieces in the exhibition by Eduardo Kac, ORLAN, Stelarc, and *Art Orienté objet*, among others, were emblematic of these contemporary approaches.

Translated from Italian by Marguerite Shore.

Eugenio Viola is a critic and Project Room curator at Madre Contemporary Art Museum in Naples, Italy.