Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty

Entertainment
by Dan Graham
and Tony Oursler
with Rodney Graham…

Playbill

Programmheft

DON'T TRUST ANYONE OVER 30

ENTERTAINMENT BY DAN GRAHAM AND TONY OURSLER RODNEY GRAHAM WITH

Francesca von Habsburg

HEAVENLY COLLABORATIONS

After a conversation with four other private collectors about how they collect and how they perceive their role in the art world, in June 2004 at Art Basel, Sandra Antelo-Suarez, the very charismatic director of TRANS> asked me if I were interested in co-producing a rock-opera with puppets by Dan Graham, Tony Oursler and Rodney Graham. At first the combination sounded so unlikely that I thought she was kidding. It sounded like a top of the pops of art getting together to rework a piece that Dan Graham had conceived for the Monnaie Opera in Brussels under Gerard Mortier in 1987. I had very seriously considered the role that I wanted Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary to play in the art world in the future, and consequently, I was looking for interesting new productions that focus on cross-disciplinary work and transcend the boundaries of traditional art. A collaboration that incorporates rock/punk opera, puppetry, video, and a libretto by Dan Graham was an opportunity not to be missed. Six months later, TRANS> and its co-producers presented the world premiere of *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty* in Miami, on the occasion of Art Basel Miami Beach 2004 to an overwhelmingly enthusiastic reception and tremendous reviews.

Dan Graham told me something today that is so insightful that I must quote him, because I believe it expresses the essence of this project. "Collaborations are innocent. If they become a power struggle amongst egos they fail."

The puppets play such an important role in this production, I wondered how their performance developed. When I asked Tony Oursler, he told me that initially he was very skeptical about the puppets because he prefers to leave a lot to the imagination. "The puppets always seem to be too much information and too overwhelming! But what was amazing is that Phillip Huber is such a great puppeteer and worked together with us on these composite characters, which started to become like these touchstones of American pop culture. So when you look at these puppets you start to think: well, that guy looks like Kennedy, or you think that guy looks like Neil Young, or that guy looks like Senator McCarthy, he looks like Jesse Helms, he looks just like one of the puppets! Phillip basically moved into my studio and he became very, very interested in the video's ability to amplify his moves with the puppets."

I called Phillip Huber and he told me that working in this sort of collaborations always stretches the artist. "What they do, is they request things from you that are extremely difficult if not impossible. Then in the attempt to realize their desires, you end up stretching yourself as an artist and creating things that you did not even know were possible. This was particularly true with this project when I was working with Tony Oursler on the video that he created. Staging certain video sequences, which I would never have chosen, created a whole different world for me to work in. In essence I told Tony that this project created a legitimacy for the marionettes as I had never expected, because they allowed me to use them as you would never be able to use a life actor, thus using the strength of the marionettes to the greatest advantage…" David Alexander keeps all that effort and creativity alive with his passionate dedication to the art of puppetry and an unwavering commitment for *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty*. He takes this responsibility very seriously, and keeps the spirit alive and well in the characters that Phillip, Dan, Sandra and Tony created.

Tony Oursler also worked with Laurent P. Berger to come up with a stage structure that would be like a box with two stages and at the same time acted as a screen for the projections. It is intimate because the puppets are small and enveloped in their own small world, while Tony's videos dwarf the Japanther band that they begin to look like puppets. When you have only two references on stage, then your mind jumps back and forth between both of them. But with a third layer, there is a rich experience, which makes *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty* so unique. Laurent wanted to design a cross between the white cube gallery space and the theatrical fourth wall, bringing these two art forms together in a physical sense. Everybody, especially Matt Tierney, realized that this was the common language that

they all shared when bringing their contributions together. And it took a man of great patience, humor and dare I say "trust" to just let that happen…

I would like to mention the artistry of Eugene Tsai who put together the most sensitive and appropriate sets for the Marionettes. This must have been quite a task, particularly with the numerous ending scenarios…

Working with Japanther was the suggestion of Teresa Seeman in response to Dan, who wanted to bridge the generations, so that the ex-hippies would bring their kids, who are now quite likely to be punks. They both represent strong anti-social statements from two subsequent generations. "Japanther is extremely relevant in that we are writing about the environment, social issues and change. Our violent aggressive presentation speaks to the time in which Matt Reilly and I where raised (the 1980's via Minor Threat!)," says Ian Vanek, the drummer in the Band. "We are humbled to be the band for this project considering its history and the other artists involved. Japanther is and has been called an art project. We started the group in 2001 to design a logo, make shirts, a tape and travel the world. The group was primary, the music was secondary. Later on we crafted a bare bones, aesthetically pleasing punk band." Their contribution creates tremendous tension in the work, which is very powerful.

Dan reconstructs history through his selections and reinterpretations of fragments from the past. He makes oblique allusions to mass culture, class and gender relations, the revolutionary spirit of both rock and punk music. His bonding with Japanther led them to co-write the enigmatic songs performed during the show. I remember seeing Dan and the Japanther boys sitting in the Botanical Garden in Miami South Beach, where this project was premiered in

December 2004, discussing rock and roll for hours! I am sure they all felt that the time was ripe for another youth revolution! They just couldn't agree on whether it would be a neo-punk one or a hippie revival.

Enter Rodney Graham. He wrote the most catchy and very nostalgic theme song for *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty*, and *Fourteen or Fight,* that accompany the videos. These provide an even wilder contrast to the whole production. In conversation, Rodney expands on his references: "America has always been responsible for youth culture in relation to the rest of the world. This is tied into the economic export of pop culture, so there is a fear of death, which involves a fanatical equation. In the time period when this work takes place, ideals were still in place above money, and the theme loosely traces this decline: from utopia to market. I was really thinking of Neil Young and trying to do something along those lines."

Bruce Odland works magic with the sound. I was curious how he managed to weave so many different contributions into a coherent whole. His poetic answer was: "If you have all the parts, the sound is like the ocean, by its nature everything floats in sound, it doesn't stop, it crosses all borders, it doesn't respect any boundaries between mediums. Your ears lead you through every experience so I just looked for the strongest story at all times. Sound is very dramatic. Your ears can hear many layers at the same time, something your eyes cannot do. It's just the way the brain works." Don't you just love how some people make it all sound so easy!

And when asked about what the collaborative work actually consists of, Dan gets straight to the point: "In institutions and museums we always talk about multi-disciplinary work and then we don't really know what we are talking about. Here you have a moment when everything comes together and then we don't know what to do about it. It's a hybrid. All my work is on the boundary of different things, but actually I want to call it the influence of Philippe Vergne and entertainment."

Final credits: How did this project really come about? Was it really down to the sharp eyed beauty whom I met in Basel? Tony confirms this by telling me: "Sandra was kind of looking around for interesting people to kind of help to bring the whole thing together. Without that happening, it would still be Dan sitting there having a coffee somewhere, saying, 'We have to get Japanether, Paul McCarthy and maybe Tony will come and do something, who knows!' What Sandra did, was say, this is going to happen *now!* We have a deadline and I am going to get the people. I didn't even know where the puppeteers came from—all these naïve kids, that just arrived here from god knows where, Cookeville Tennessee, I think… Then Sandra slowly revealed that people like you and Tim Nye and god knows who else, I mean I know that there are other people involved that I don't even know about, but were really behind the scenes, making this thing come together."

Without Valentin Essrich here in Europe, the production would most likely not have another incarnation at all. And the T-B A21 team has been magnificent. Daniela Zyman has been particularly instrumental in holding all pieces of this very intricate puzzle together and contributed an excellent article to this catalogue. Her patience and tenacity have created a feeling of stability and professionalism that everyone has great confidence in, especially me! Eva Ebersberger, Philipp Krummel and Barbara Horvath, who stayed up all night helping me transcribe these last minute interviews, are the most fantastic group of people I have ever had the pleasure to work with. I am sure that the whole team of artists and crew will agree with me on that! My heart goes out to Christian Schienerl for his work on this catalogue with Laurent P. Berger's and Philippe Dabasse's graphic design. Thanks so much to Jörn Weisbrodt for having the courage and the faith to bring this fabulous production to the Staatsoper Unter den Linden in Berlin! I would really like to thank Todd Eberle for taking the most wonderful photographs of the project in Miami. They are a vivid testimony of the extraordinary quality of the collective vision of all.

Francesca von Habsburg

Himmlische Zusammenkünfte

Kurz nachdem ich im Juni 2004 auf der Art Basel an einem Gespräch mit vier anderen Privatsammlern teilgenommen hatte, in dem es vor allem darum ging, wie sie sammeln und wie sie sich selbst innerhalb der Kunstwelt wahrnehmen, kam Sandra Antelo-Suarez, die höchst charismatische Direktorin von TRANS>, auf mich zu um anzufragen, ob ich an der Koproduktion einer Marionetten-Rockoper von Dan Graham, Tony Oursler und Rodney Graham Interesse hätte. Diese Kombination erschien mir im ersten Moment derart verwegen, dass ich eher an einen Scherz glaubte. Das Ganze klang, als würden sich die „Top of the Pops" der Kunst zusammentun, um dieses Stück – Dan hatte es 1987 für die Oper La Monnaie in Brüssel unter Gerard Mortier geschrieben – neu aufzuarbeiten. Ich hätte mir sehr ernsthafte Gedanken darüber gemacht, welche Stellung Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary zukünftig in der Kunstszene einnehmen sollte, und war gerade deswegen auf der Suche nach interessanten Neuproduktionen, vor allem solchen mit transdisziplinärem Ansatz, die traditionelle Grenzen aufbrechen. Ein Projekt, in dem Rock, Punk, Oper, Marionetten, Video und ein Libretto von Dan Graham zusammenwirken, wollte ich mir daher keineswegs entgehen lassen. Sechs Monate später präsentierte TRANS> gemeinsam mit allen Koproduzenten die Welturaufführung von *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty* im Rahmen der Art Basel Miami Beach; und sie wurde mit überwältigender Begeisterung rezipiert.

In einem Gespräch kürzlich mit Dan Graham offenbarte er eine grundlegende Wahrheit, die ich daher an den Beginn dieser Einleitung stellen will: „Zusammenarbeiten sind unschuldig. Werden sie aber zu einem Machtkampf zwischen Egos, sind sie zum Scheitern verurteilt."

Nachdem die Marionetten in dieser Produktion so wesentlich sind, machte ich mir natürlich besonders um sie Gedanken. Tatsächlich gestand Tony Oursler eine gewisse Skepsis ihnen gegenüber ein, da er persönlich es vorzieht, viel mehr der Vorstellungskraft zu überlassen. „Die Marionetten vermitteln sehr geballte Information; Phillip Huber aber ist ein brillanter Puppenspieler, und entwickelte gemeinsam mit uns diese Kompositcharaktere, die auf einmal zu so etwas wie Prüfsteinen amerikanischer Popkultur werden. Du schaust dir diese Puppen an und denkst, der Typ schaut aus wie Kennedy und der Typ sieht aus wie Neil Young und der da wie Senator McCarthy und der wie Jesse Helms (ein kunstfeindlicher Senator), der sieht aus wie eine Marionette! Phillip übersiedelte quasi in mein Atelier und entwickelte eine gewisse Besessenheit in der Frage, wie seine Bewegungen mit den Puppen durch das Video verstärkt werden können."

Phillip Huber, der Marionettenmeister, erzählte mir, dass Zusammenarbeiten dieser Art für einen Künstler immer sehr strapaziös seien: „Es werden Sachen von einem

verlangt, die sind extrem schwierig, wenn nicht unmöglich. Natürlich versucht man allen Wünschen gerecht zu werden, und dadurch entwickelt man sich auch künstlerisch weiter. Man macht Dinge, die man zuvor nicht mal für möglich hielt. Das galt ganz besonders für dieses Projekt, vor allem für meine Zusammenarbeit mit Tony Oursler an seinem Video. Seine Ideen zur Inszenierung gewisser Sequenzen, die ich selber nie ausgewählt hätte, eröffneten mir eine gänzlich neue Welt, in der ich mich bewegen konnte. Dieses Projekt verschafft den Marionetten eine Legitimität, wie ich das niemals erwartet hätte: Ich konnte sie auf eine Art und Weise einsetzen, wie das bei einem Schauspieler einfach nicht möglich wäre, und so ihre Kraft zum allergrößten Vorteil zur Geltung bringen." David Alexander ist es, der mit seiner leidenschaftlichen Hingabe zum Puppenspiel und seinem unerschütterlichen Engagement für *Don't Tust Anyone Over Thirty* all diese Anstrengungen und Überlegungen mit Leben füllt. Er nimmt seine Verantwortung sehr ernst und trägt diesen Geist in die von Phillip, Dan, Sandra und Tony geschaffenen Charaktere hinein.

Tony Oursler arbeitete auch mit dem Set-Designer Laurent P. Berger zusammen; sie entwickelten eine boxenartige Bühnenstruktur mit zwei Mini-Bühnen, die gleichzeitig als Projektionsfläche für die Videos fungiert. Das Ganze hat etwas sehr Intimes – die kleinen Marionetten in ihrer kleinen Welt –, während Tonys Videos die Band Japanther, die gleichzeitig auf der Bühne spielt, ebenfalls schrumpfen lässt, bis sie selbst ein wenig wie Puppen aussehen. Bei nur zwei Bühnen springt die Aufmerksamkeit des Zusehers quasi hin und her, da man beide Geschehnisse verfolgen will; kommt jedoch eine dritte Ebene hinzu, ist das eine großartige Erfahrung, und darin liegt auch die Einzigartigkeit von *Don't Tust Anyone Over Thirty*. Was Laurent hier vorschwebte, war eine Kreuzung zwischen dem „White Cube" eines Galerieraumes und der theatralischen vierten Wand, eine physische Zusammenführung zweier Kunstformen. Dies wurde von allen Beteiligten, ganz besonders dem Stage-Manager Matt Tierney, mit ihren so unterschiedlichen Beiträgen als die gemeinsame Sprache erkannt, die sie alle verbindet. Und es bedurfte eines Mannes von

großer Geduld, mit Humor und Mut, oder sagen wir „Glauben", um diesen Prozess einfach geschehen zu lassen.

An dieser Stelle möchte ich auch Eugene Tsai erwähnen, der mit großem Einfühlungsvermögen die Requisite für *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty* zusammenstellte – eine nicht zu unterschätzende Arbeit, vor allem in Hinblick auf die zahlreichen offenen Schlussszenarien. Die Zusammenarbeit mit Japanther war eine Idee von Teresa Seeman. Dan wollte die Generationen überbrücken: Die ehemaligen Hippies bringen ihre Kinder mit, die jetzt sehr wahrscheinlich Punks sind, genau wie die Japanther-Musiker – und Dan war seinerzeit ein Hippie. Beide stehen für dezidiert antisoziale Statements zweier aufeinander folgender Generationen. „Die besondere Relevanz der Band liegt darin, dass wir über Dinge schreiben wie soziale Themen und Umwälzungen. Unser gewalttätig-aggressives Auftreten verweist auf die Zeit, in der wir aufgewachsen sind (die Achtziger – viva Minor Threat!)", so Ian Vanek, der Drummer der Band. „Wir fühlen uns sehr geehrt, an diesem Projekt teilzunehmen, schon allein wegen seiner Geschichte und den anderen beteiligten Künstlern. Japanther stand und steht für ein Kunstprojekt. Wir haben uns 2001 zusammengetan, um ein Logo zu entwerfen und T-Shirts, eine Platte aufzunehmen und um die Welt zu reisen. Die Gruppe war immer das Wichtigste, erst dann kam die Musik. Später wurden wir zu einer ästhetisch ansprechenden Punkband." Der Beitrag von Japanther sorgt für enorme Spannung innerhalb des Projekts.

Dan rekonstruiert Geschichte, indem er Fragmente der Vergangenheit auswählt und neu interpretiert. Indirekt spielt er dabei auf Themen wie Massenkultur, das Verhältnis zwischen den Klassen und Geschlechtern und den revolutionären Geist von Rockmusik und Punk an. Seine Verbindung zu Japanther ließ diese die enigmatischen Songs schreiben, die während der Show aufgeführt werden. In meiner Erinnerung sitzen Dan und Japanther gemeinsam im Botanischen Garten von

Miami South Beach, wo das Projekt im Dezember 2004 uraufgeführt wurde, und diskutierten stundenlang über Rock 'n' Roll! Ich bin sicher, sie waren sich einig darüber, dass eine neue Jugendrevolution überfällig ist – nur dass sie sich nicht entscheiden konnten, ob es ein Neo-Punk- oder Hippie-Revival werden sollte.

Kommen wir zu Rodney Graham. Er schrieb den höchst markanten und sehr nostalgischen Titelsong für *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty*, ebenso wie *Fourteen or Fight* als Begleitung der Videos. Letztere stehen in noch wilderem Kontrast zur Gesamtproduktion. Im Gespräch holt Rodney aus: „Bei der Jugendkultur hat Amerika gegenüber dem Rest der Welt schon immer den Ton angegeben. Zu der Zeit, zu der dieses Stück spielt, galten Ideale noch mehr als Geld. Das Thema spürt diesem Wandel nach: von der Utopie zum Markt. Ich habe dabei tatsächlich an Neil Young gedacht und versucht, etwas in diese Richtung zu machen."

Bruce Odland ist ein Meister des Klangs. Ich wollte wissen, wie er es zustande bringt, so viele unterschiedliche Beiträge zu einem geschlossenen Ganzen zusammenzufügen. Seine poetische Antwort war: „Alle Teile zusammen klingen wie der Ozean, alles fließt ineinander, das hört nicht auf, es durchbricht alle Schranken und respektiert keine Grenzen zwischen den Medien. Klang hat etwas sehr Dramatisches. Die Ohren können viele Schichten zugleich hören, beim Sehen ist das nicht möglich. So arbeitet eben das Gehirn." Ist es nicht herrlich, wie manche Leute einem das Gefühl geben, alles wäre ganz einfach!

Fragt man ihn nach dem Wesen gemeinschaftlicher Arbeit, kommt Dan gleich zum Punkt: „In Institutionen und Museen ist stets die Rede von Multi-Disziplinarität, wobei niemand so recht weiß, was damit gemeint ist. Hier aber verhält es sich so, dass alles einfach zusammenkommt und wir nicht wissen, was wir damit anstellen sollen. Ein Hybride. Meine Arbeit bewegt sich immer in Grenzbereichen, doch entscheidend war sicherlich der Einfluss von Philippe Vergne."

Abschließend noch eine Bemerkung darüber, wie dieses Projekt tatsächlich ins Leben gerufen wurde. War es wirklich jener scharfsichtigen Schönheit zu verdanken, die ich in Basel kennen gelernt hatte? Tony bestätigt das, indem er mir erzählte: „Sandra sah sich nach interessanten Leuten um, die dieses Ding zusammenbringen würden. Dan würde noch immer irgendwo bei einem Kaffee sitzen und sagen – wir müssen Japanther engagieren, vielleicht kommen Paul McCarthy und Tony, und machen irgendetwas, wer weiß! Was Sandra tat – sie sagte, das Ganze passiert *jetzt*, es gibt eine Deadline, ich engagiere die Leute. Ich wusste nicht einmal, wo die Marionettenspieler herkommen – die kamen gerade von Gott weiß woher, aus Cookeville, Tennessee, glaube ich. Dann enthüllte Sandra nach und nach, dass Leute wie du und Tim Nye und andere – ich weiß, dass da noch Leute dabei sind, über die ich gar nichts weiß – dieses Projekt unterstützen."

Ohne Valentin Essrich hier in Europa hätte diese Produktion nicht über die Bühne gehen können. Das Team von T-B A21 war wunderbar: Daniela Zyman fügte die Teile eines komplizierten Puzzles zu einem großartigen Ganzen zusammen und verfasste einen wunderbaren Beitrag zu diesem Programmheft. Ihre Geduld und Beharrlichkeit in der Sache erzeugten jene Atmosphäre der Stabilität und Professionalität, in die alle, besonders ich selbst, Vertrauen setzten. Eva Ebersberger, Philipp Krummel und Barbara Horvath, die die ganze Nacht mit mir aufblieb und diese Interviews transkribierte, die sprichwörtlich in der letzten Minute geführt wurden, gehören zu diesem Team – der fantastischsten Gruppe von Leuten, mit denen ich jemals das Vergnügen hatte zu arbeiten. Ich bin mir sicher, dass die Künstler und die Crew von *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty* das genau so sehen! Mein Herz gehört Christian Schienerl, der diesen Katalog auf Basis des grafischen Layouts von Laurent P. Berger und Philippe Dabasse gestaltete. Ein großer Dank geht an Jörn Weisbrodt, der den Mut und das Vertauen hatte, diese großartige Produktion an die Staatsoper Unter den Linden in Berlin zu bringen. Besonders bedanken möchte ich mich bei Todd Eberle, der die wunderbarsten Fotos der Aufführung in Miami machte. Sie sind ein vitales Vermächtnis jener außerordentlichen Qualität einer gemeinsamen Vision.

DON'T TRUST ANYONE OVER 30 *(stylized logo text)*

Commissioner and producer	TRANS>
Curator/Artistic director	Sandra Antelo-Suarez

Collaborators

Conceived by	Dan Graham
Visual Conception and Videos by	Tony Oursler
Installation, Set and Light Design	Laurent P. Berger
Live Music	Japanther
Recorded Music	Rodney Graham
Script Adaptation	Dan Graham, Tony Oursler, Teresa Seeman and Sandra Antelo-Suarez
Script Editor	G. Roger Denson
Marionettes	Phillip Huber from Huber Marionettes & Company (design, construction and staging)
Puppeteers	Michael Carolan, Sarah Frechette, Daniel Luce, Kenneth Berman
Live Band	Japanther (Matt Reilly & Ian Vanek)

Co-producers

Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary, Vienna
Foundation 20 21, New York
Walker Art Center, Minneapolis
Voom/LAB, New York

World-premiere at Art Basel Miami Beach on December 1st, 2004

Production

Producer	Sandra Antelo-Suarez
Executive Producer	Miguel Antonio Roca
Assistant Producer	Köken Ergun, Manuela Arnal
Show Coordinator	Claire Pauley
Production Manager	Valentin Essrich
Stage Manager	Matt Tierney
Sound Designer	Bruce Odland
Marionette Drawings	Marie-Paule Macdonald
Costume Design	Carlos Soto
Photography	Todd Eberle
Props Designer	Eugene Tsai
Light Design/Video Operator	Urs Schönebaum
Puppet Costume Design	Sandra Antelo-Suarez, Claire Pauley and Dan Graham
Puppet Costume maker	Sarah Frechette
Video Editor	Joshua Thorson
Video props	Scarlett Hoof Graffland, Jason Sosco, Jesse Hamernan, Dan Walsh, Matt Dunn, James Ousler, Ilene Cohen

Theme song *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty* and *Fourteen or Fight* by Rodney Graham

Guitar, Vocals, Harp	Rodney Graham
Drums	Pete Bourne
Vocals & Guitar	David Carswell
Bass	John Collins

J. S. Bach

Li   Joey   Congressman Young

Neil Sky   Little Girl   Senator Albright

Sally-Anna   Dylan   Eisenhower

Daniela Zyman

GREETINGS FROM TOPANGA CANYON

Joey, Dan Graham, Tony Oursler, Laurent P. Berger
Paper collage with color pencil
Signed by Dan Graham and Tony Oursler

Youth is America's secret weapon. That's why we ask that the Constitution be amended. We suggest … (giggle) … we suggest that the required age to vote be fourteen, for Representative, fourteen, for Senate, fourteen … and … (giggle) … for President … *fourteen*.[1]

Topanga Canyon in 1968 is the home of hippies, outsiders, and teenagers. Like Neil Sky, the hippies have just moved to the countryside. Neil Sky is a rock musician and with his band, the Sky Tribe, they are some of the hottest hit makers of the day. The entourage consists of twenty-five-year-old Sally-Anna Jiminez, the drummer and tambourine player who was Miss Arizona in 1963, J. S. Bach, a fifteen-year-old whiz kid, who is the band's keyboard player, manager and accountant, Joey, the bass player, and lastly, Li, the backup singer and astrologer, who chooses the lucky dates for their gigs. These people are not only believers in and practitioners of rock and roll, they are also young, beautiful, and famous.

After a member of Congress invites Neil Sky to a rally to gain support for his efforts to lower the voting age to eighteen ("I say, if someone can die in combat, they can vote"), the young rock star goes on to use his fame and media appeal to mobilize the youth. Indeed, first Neil Sky instigates teenage riots on Sunset Strip and then throughout the nation. Finally, he maneuvers Sally-Anna into the Senate, so that she can be a spearhead for lowering the voting age to fourteen, then he doses the senators with LSD, and subsequently he becomes the youngest president of the United States of America. Having been elected on a platform of free dope, free love and getting his groove on, his first official act is to relocate all those people who are over thirty years of age to re-education camps, where they are liberally dosed with LSD. ("This is a revolution, man, and you're either with it or against it. Now which is it?") But our hero gets his comeuppance when he learns that ageism is a double-edged sword because there is always someone younger, faster and more ruthless. Neil Sky is deposed by his eight year-old adopted son, Dylan, an erstwhile runaway and his crew of friends.

This absurd and slightly melancholic tale of the young, beautiful, and mighty is based on the 1968 film, *Wild in the Streets*. The clean-shaven and body-beautiful version of the hippie rebel film is a popular arcadian comedy that revisits the trope of youth as America's greatest weapon in a purely hedonistic society. The denouement of the tragicomic plot is marked by the young heroes' staging of the "*reductio ad absurdum* of the hippies' generational politics." The film is based on a book by Robert Thom entitled *The Day It All Happened, Baby*, about the archetypical hippie moment in LA, when the acid got cut with crystal meth, the dreams of peace and love started to curdle, and the Manson Family was waiting in the wings.

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Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty closely follows the original story by refering to selected dialogues as well as the film's tone and humor, and its instantly recognizable character types. Still, the theatrical adaptation provides the original with additional layers of meanings, evokes multiple contexts, and speaks to recent developments in both mass culture and fine art. Performed in a mini-theater with a box-like stage structure, reminiscent of an art gallery's white cube setting, the puppet figurines, which were designed and crafted by puppet master, Phillip Huber, inhabit a tiny space no bigger than 4 by 2 meters. They share their carefully and sparsely staged habitat with the puppeteers who animate the performance, using cabaret-style puppetery (making the puppeteer visible to the viewer). On the opposite end of the stage's front wall, Ian Vanek and Matt Reilly, the musicians from the Brooklyn-based band, Japanthers, are squeezed in yet another go-go box. Their dark neo-punk rock offers a hint at the commentary on the hippies' failed ideologies.

Tony Oursler projects larger than life videos on the entire front white wall that depict some of the most exhilarating and psychedelic scenes from *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty*. Whether they are the images of young Neil's first experiments with chemical explosives in his parents home, his sexual encounters with Sally-Anna, the youth rallies, or drugging the senators with LSD, they do not illustrate the work. Instead, the videos are artistic expressions in their own right that determine the visual appearance of the entire rock opera. Through his videos, Oursler successfully brings the puppets to life and shows how these small inanimate objects have something mysterious at heart that is generated by "a subtle relationship between the movements of [the puppeteers'] fingers and the movements of the puppets attached to them, something like the relationship between numbers and their logarithms or between asymptote and hyperbola."[2] Oursler's videos also produce a unifying visual connection between the narrative sequences on the puppet stage and the intercepted live music of the Japanthers. Nevertheless, there is a unique dramaturgical effect created by the rapid movement between the attention focused on the puppets, the videos and the live music. The various genres exercised in

Opposite page *gegenüberliegende Seite:*
Neil Sky, Dan Graham, Tony Oursler, Laurent P. Berger
Paper collage with fabric
Signed by Dan Graham and Tony Oursler

Senator, Dan Graham, Tony Oursler, Laurent P. Berger
Paper collage with fabric and pencil
Signed by Dan Graham and Tony Oursler

the puppet theater, video projection and musical theater are intertwined in such a way that they create "extensions" between creative categories and schizophrenic displacements. The montage of puppets and puppeteers as well as the constant shifts in medium and scale reinforce a Brechtian sensibility that tries to reveal, rather than obscure the mechanisms of "live" "productions."

Not only is *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty* a self-consciously structured theatrical work that allows Dan Graham's original concept to unfold, it is also the product of a team of artists whose individual contributions coalesce in the shared project. It examines the awareness of the arts' increasingly complicated relationship to popular entertainment as well as the questions concerning the social

models associated with making art. Graham and his friends, however, do not understand entertainment as a grand spectacle. Instead, *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty* pursues an intimate path that affords oblique and humorous views of mainstream America, whereby humor is used to inspire further consideration and reconsideration. Their work is informed by an acute interest in their audience and its respective demographics in order to reveal social values and conventions and subtly disrupt the expectations of their "taste" by introducing worn out motifs and genres, often (and most satisfyingly) with an embarrassing effect.

At the same time, *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty* also reconstructs history through a revisitation of elements and fragments of the past. Here, Graham acts as the informed

Natural scene, Dan Graham,
Tony Oursler, Laurent P. Berger,
Paper collage, Signed by Dan Graham
and Tony Oursler

rock historian, who has written numerous essays on rock music and produced the 1984–85 video documentary, *Rock My Religion*. Oursler is an intimate cognoscente of the complex relationships between art and rock. He conducted a series of 12 interviews with key figures of the 1970s and 1980s, entitled *Synesthesia* (1997–2001) that reflects his acute interest in rock. Rock music has also been an influence on Rodney Graham's artistic oeuvre. Japanther's anarchic neo-punk style is suffused with subversion, and, ironically, strong anti-hippie attitudes. Laurent Berger, the piece's stage designer, has successfully designed a hybrid multi-media installation of puppetry and off-off theater that extends beyond the stage and into the audience area.

The drama of *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty* does not reside in the psychology of the incredible narrative, but rather, it is in the confrontation of different musical and ideological cultures as well as the resurgence of histories and counter-memories that have not yet been revised by the ideology of the present. Graham has elaborated on these ideas in his writings and artistic works. He has stated that "in historicism there is no real past, only an overlay of interpretations of a simulation of the past, but in opposition to this notion of history as a simulation, there is possible the idea of an actual, although hidden past, mostly eradicated from consciousness but briefly available in moments not obscured by the dominant ideology of newness." [3]

By using bits from *Wild in the Streets* that was made in the halcyon year of 1968 and remaining truthful to the film's over-the-top craziness that can be ridiculously sublime, Graham, Oursler and Graham offer a humorous glimpse at American counterculture from within as well as a bitter exploration of the atrophy of historical consciousness.

"For those of us who are now long past the age of thirty, the age at which you became useless, it is a bitter experience to look back and see how a generation was seduced by this cult of youth. We were blind to the fact that our beliefs were a by-product of the capitalist commodity fetishism and planned obsolescence we were supposedly against. The rock opera is the perfect form for such an exploration: it was born kitsch, and signaled the death of the delusion that rock music was inherently a 'revolutionary' form." [4]
Mike Kelley

1. *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty*, unpublished libretto
2. Heinrich von Kleist, *On the Puppet Theater*, 1811
   From An Abyss Deep Enough: Letters of Heinrich von Kleist with a Selection of Essays and Anecdotes.
3. Dan Graham, *Rock My Religion (1965-1990)*, Writings and art project. Edited by Brian Wallis, MIT 1993
4. *Wild in the Streets: The Sixties*, Dan Graham and Marie-Paule Macdonald, Edited by Imschoot, Uitgevers 1994

Daniela Zyman

Greetings from Topanga Canyon

Die Jugend ist Amerikas Geheimwaffe. Darum fordern wir eine Verfassungsänderung. Wir schlagen… (kicher)… als Mindestalter für die Wahlberechtigung vierzehn vor, für Kongressabgeordnete vierzehn, für Senatoren vierzehn… und… (kicher)… für das Präsidentenamt vierzehn. [1]

Im Jahr 1968 ist Topanga Canyon, in der Nähe von Los Angeles gelegen, die Heimstätte von Hippies, Outsidern und Teenagern. Wie Neil Sky sind auch die Hippies gerade aufs Land gezogen. Neil Sky ist Rockmusiker und gehört mit seiner Band Sky Tribe zu den angesagtesten Hitproduzenten seiner Zeit. Seine Entourage besteht aus der 25-jährigen Sally-Anna Jiminez, die Schlagzeug und Tamburin spielt und 1963 zur Miss Arizona gekürt wurde. J.S. Bach, ein 15-jähriger Wunderknabe, ist Keyboarder, Manager und Buchhalter der Band, Joey ist Bassist, und Li, Backup-Sängerin und Astrologin, die sich von den Sternen günstige Auftrittsdaten vorhersagen lässt. Sie alle sind nicht nur glühende Anhänger und Praktizierende des Rock 'n' Roll, sie sind auch jung, schön und berühmt.

Als ein Kongressabgeordneter Neil Sky einlädt, ihn in seiner Kampagne zur Herabsetzung des Wahlalters auf 18 zu unterstützen ("Ich sage immer, wenn jemand im Kampf fallen kann, dann kann er auch wählen!"), setzt der junge Rockstar seine Popularität und Medienwirksamkeit dafür ein, die Jugend zu mobilisieren. Neil Sky stiftet zunächst Teenageraufstände auf dem Sunset Strip und dann in ganz Amerika an. Schließlich manövriert er Sally-Anna als Gallionsfigur für die Herabsetzung des Wahlalters auf 14 in den Senat, verabreicht den Senatoren LSD und wird zum jüngsten Präsidenten der Vereinigten Staaten gewählt. Mit einem politischen Programm, das für freie Liebe, freie

Drogen und den richtigen Groove eintritt, besteht Neils erste Amtshandlung darin, die gesamte Bevölkerung über dreißig in Umerziehungslager einzuweisen, wo LSD in großzügigen Dosen verabreicht wird. („Das ist eine Revolution, Mann, und du bist entweder für uns oder gegen uns. Also wofür entscheidest du dich?") Allerdings muss unser Held am bitteren Ende erkennen, dass Alterspolitik ein zweischneidiges Schwert ist, da es immer jemanden gibt, der noch jünger, schneller und skrupelloser ist. In einem bitter-komischen Schlussakt, wird Neil Sky von seinem achtjährigen Adoptivsohn Dylan und dessen Freunden gestürzt.

Die absurde, mit leichter Melancholie versetzte Geschichte von den Jungen, Schönen und Mächtigen basiert auf dem Film *Wild in the Street* aus dem Jahr 1968. Diese aalglatte Version eines Hippie-Rebellen-Films ist eine arkadische Mainstream-Komödie, die auf dem Tropus von der Jugend als Amerikas größter Waffe in einer rein hedonistischen Gesellschaft aufbaut. Am Ende der tragikomischen Geschichte führen die jungen Helden die altersfeindliche Generationenpolitik der Hippies schließlich ad absurdum. Der Film entstand nach einem Buch von Robert Thom mit dem Titel *The Day It All Happened, Baby* über die Hippie-Bewegung in Los Angeles. Es beschreibt die Zeit, in der Acid mit Methamphetamin verschnitten wurde, der Traum von Frieden und Liebe schal wurde und die Manson-Familie schon in den Kulissen auf ihren großen Auftritt wartete.

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Opposite page *gegenüberliegende Seite:*
Li, Dan Graham, Tony Oursler, Laurent P. Berger
Paper collage with fabric and pencil
Signed by Dan Graham and Tony Oursler

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Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty hält sich eng an die ursprüngliche Fimstory. Einzelne Dialogszenen beziehen sich auf den Originaltext, und auch Tonfall und Humor des Filmes und seine unverwechselbaren Charaktere finden sich wieder. Die Bühnenfassung fügt dem Original allerdings auch zusätzliche Bedeutungsebenen hinzu und nimmt Bezug auf jüngste Entwicklungen in Massenkultur und Kunst. Im Mini-Theater mit Guckkastenstruktur bevölkern die Marionetten aus der Werkstatt von Phillip Huber Marionettes einen winzigen Raum von nur 4 mal 2 Metern. Ihren sorgsam und sparsam inszenierten Lebensraum

teilen sie sich mit den Puppenspielern, deren Beine sichtbares Element der Gestaltung sind. Am anderen Ende der Bühne sind Ian Vanek und Matt Reilly, die Musiker von Japanther, einer Band aus Brooklyn, in einer weiteren Go-Go Box zusammengepfercht. Auch in ihrem schwarzen Neo-Punk klingt die Aussage über das Scheitern der Hippie-Ideologien an.

Tony Oursler bespielt die weiße Frontwand mit überlebensgroßen Videos, darunter einige der anregendsten und psychedelischsten Szenen aus *Don't Trust Anyone Over*

Thirty. Die ersten Experimente des jungen Neil mit Sprengstoffen im elterlichen Heim, seine sexuellen Begegnungen mit Sally-Anna, die wilden Aufmärsche der Jugendlichen oder die Szene, in der den Senatoren LSD verabreicht wird, verstehen sich nicht als Illustration der Bühnenarbeit, sondern stellen eine eigenständige künstlerische Äußerung dar und prägen die visuelle Gestaltung der gesamten Rockoper. In seinen Videos erfüllt Oursler die Puppen mit Leben und zeigt, dass diese kleinen unbelebten Wesen ein inneres Mysterium besitzen. Dies erinnert an die Beschreibungen von Heinrich von Kleist zum Puppenspiel: Es verhalten sich die „Bewegungen seiner Finger (des Puppenspielers) zur Bewegung der daran befestigten Puppen ziemlich künstlich, etwa wie Zahlen zu ihren Logarithmen oder die Asymptote zur Hyperbel"[2]. Aber Ourslers Videos stellen auch einen visuellen Konnex zwischen der Spielhandlung auf der Marionettenbühne und den dazwi-

schen geschalteten Liveperformances von Japanther her. Die dramaturgische Wirkung ergibt sich aus dem schnellen Fokuswechsel zwischen Marionetten, Videos und Livemusik. Die drei Genres Marionettentheater, Videoprojektion und Musiktheater werden ineinander verschränkt und entfalten neue Ansätze zwischen kreativen Kategorien und einem Gefühl der schizophrenen Entfremdung. Die visuelle Montage von Marionetten und Puppenspielern und die Aufeinanderfolge von ständig wechselnden Medien und Größenordnungen intensivieren eine Brecht'sche Befindlichkeit, in der die Mechanismen der Liveproduktion nicht verhüllt, sondern sichtbar bloßgelegt werden.

Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty ist nicht nur eine bewusst strukturierte Theaterarbeit, in dem sich Dan Grahams ursprüngliches Konzept, das er 1987 gemeinsam mit Marie-Paule Macdonald entwickelte, entfalten kann, es ist auch

Stage, Dan Graham, Tony Oursler, Laurent P. Berger
Pencil and colored pencil on paper, Signed by Laurent P. Berger

das Produkt eines Teams von Künstlern, deren individuelle Beiträge im gemeinsamen Projekt verschmelzen. Das Werk setzt sich mit der zunehmend komplizierter werdenden Beziehung zwischen Kunst und Unterhaltung auseinander, aber auch mit Fragen der Gesellschaftsmodelle, die dem Kunstschaffen zugrunde liegen. Graham und seine Freunde verstehen Unterhaltung jedoch nicht als lautes Spektakel. *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty* verfolgt einen subtileren Weg, der schräge und humorvolle Blicke auf Mainstream America bietet, wobei Humor als Katalysator verwendet wird, der weitergehende Überlegungen und Reflektionen auslösen soll. Eingeflossen in die Arbeit ist auch das Interesse der Künstler an ihrem Publikum und seiner demographischen Zusammensetzung, um gesellschaftliche Werte und Konventionen bloßzulegen und Erwartungen subtil zu konterkarieren, indem sie schal gewordene Motive und Genres einführen, was oft peinliche (und höchst lohnende) Effekte auslöst.

Gleichzeitig rekonstruiert *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty* die Geschichte durch Verweise auf Elemente und Versatzstücke aus der Vergangenheit. Graham, dessen Sachkundigkeit durch zahlreiche Aufsätze über Rockmusik und seine Videodokumentation *Rock My Religion* aus den Jahren 1984–85 belegt ist, agiert hier als Rock-Historiker. Tony Oursler ist ein versierter Kenner der komplexen Beziehungen zwischen Kunst und Rock in den 1970er und 1980er Jahren, ein Thema das er auch in seinem Projekt *Synesthesia* (1997–2001) aufgenommen hat, einer Serie von zwölf Interviews mit Protagonisten jener Zeit. Auch das künstlerische Schaffen von Rodney Graham ist stark von seinem Interesse an Rockmusik geprägt. Der anarchische Neo-Punk von Japanther enthält eine gute Prise Subversion und ironischerweise ausgeprägte Anti-Hippie-Attitüden. Bühnenbildner Laurent P. Berger hat eine erfolgreiche Hybridmischung aus Multimedia-Installation, Puppenspiel und Off-Off-Theater geschaffen, die sich über den reinen Bühnenbereich hinaus bis in die Zuschauerränge auswirkt.

Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty bezieht seine dramatische Aussage nicht aus der psychologischen Auseinandersetzung mit der höchst unglaubhaften narrativen Struktur, sondern aus der nahtlosen Konfrontation zwischen den verschiedenen musikalischen und ideologischen Kulturen

und den ohne Interpretationsversuch präsentierten historischen Versatzstücken und Gegenerinnerungen, die vom ideologischen Revisionismus der Gegenwart unberührt bleiben. Graham, der sich in seinen Arbeiten und Schriften mit diesen Begriffen auseinandergesetzt hat, meint, es gäbe „im Historizismus keine wirkliche Vergangenheit, sondern nur eine Überlagerung von Interpretationen einer simulierten Vergangenheit; im Gegensatz zu dieser Auffassung von Geschichte als Simulation gibt es allerdings die Möglichkeit einer aktuellen – wenn auch verborgenen – Vergangenheit, die größtenteils aus dem Bewusstsein ausgelöscht wurde, aber in kurzen, von der vorherrschenden Ideologie der Neuheit nicht zugedeckten Momenten aufblitzt."[3]

Dan Graham, Tony Oursler und Rodney Graham verwenden epische Szenen aus *Wild in the Streets,* das im Schlüsseljahr 1968 entstand, und halten sich getreulich an den übertrieben schrägen und sonderbar erhabenen Gestus des Films. Damit gelingt ihnen gleichzeitig ein humorvoller Blick von innen auf die Gegenkultur der USA und eine bittere Auseinandersetzung mit der Atrophie des historischen Bewusstseins.

„Für jene von uns die die Dreißig, das Alter ab dem man wertlos ist, schon weit überschritten haben, ist es eine bittere Erfahrung zurückzublicken und zu erkennen, dass eine ganze Generation von diesem Jugendkult verführt wurde. Wir waren blind gegenüber dem Umstand, dass unsere Überzeugungen ein Nebenprodukt eben jener kapitalistischen Warenmentalität und geplanten Veralterung waren, gegen die wir eigentlich ankämpften. Die Rockoper ist eine perfekte Darstellungsform für die Auseinandersetzung mit diesem Thema: sie war von Anfang an Kitsch und läutete das Ende des Irrglaubens ein, dass Rockmusik eine dem Wesen nach ,revolutionäre' Kunstform sei."[4] *Mike Kelley*

1. *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty*, unveröffentlichtes Libretto
2. Heinrich von Kleist, *Über das Marionettentheater*, 1811
3. Dan Graham, *Rock My Religion (1965-1990), Writings and art projects*, Hsg. Brian Wallis, MIT 1993
4. *Wild in the Streets: The Sixties*, Dan Graham und Marie-Paule Macdonald, Hsg. Imschoot, Uitgevers 1994

THE ALIENATION EFFECT

Rodney I'm on my mobile. Is everybody there?

All Yes.

R Are you guys all in the same room?

Philippe Yes, we are all in the same room.

Dan Okay, let's get going.

P Let's ask Dan where the *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty* project really originated and when.

D It originated in, I think it was 1988, in Brussels. Chris Dercon was very involved with doing a production for Flemish television along with Jeff Cornelis. He had this idea for a collaboration with the Brussels La Monnaie Opera, which would be a small opera piece on stage, which would be broadcast, live on television. He picked, as Chris would do, architecture and art stars like James Coleman and Aldo Rossi. It was a spectacular idea, but it was very short, everybody had about eight minutes. So James Coleman gave his eight minutes to me, so I could do sixteen minutes. I don't know anything about opera, but I sure know rock opera. I was a little bit appalled by *Tommy*, I liked *Arthur* by The Kinks, but actually it was a mini-opera that The Who did called *A Quick One While He's Away*. It was about a

lorry driver whose wife had a quick affair when he was away. I was into this idea of using popular material. There was also a film called *Wild in the Streets*, which was a teenage film starring Shelley Winters and Richard Pryor, and the theme of the film was something that teenagers liked at the time because it was about a twenty-four year old rock singer who was approached by a congressman running for senator, kind of a Kennedy-style politician, and he was advocating that you only had to be eighteen to vote. The rock star agreed and eventually put into action, fourteen for voting and fourteen to be old enough to be President.

P When you first developed the project you also had a woman involved, Margaret?

D No, Marie-Paule Macdonald who I've collaborated with before on a Matta-Clark Museum. She is an architect, writer, involved in rock and roll and designed a nightclub for the Rolling Stones. So I thought she could do the set design for that project which was called *Wild in the Streets*. *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty*, the title of this new version, is saying all these things about hippie culture and the fact that they thought you might be dead when you are thirty. And of course Americans really don't like people getting old. It's a paradox. I was very interested in what happened after Sky became president. In the film, he puts everybody over thirty-five in rehabilitation camps and they're getting LSD in their drinking supply in the morning. I was particularly interested in hippie culture when hippies moved to the country. This was the time of Neil Young's first album and *Nashville Skyline* by Bob Dylan, and I wanted to costume the rock opera with late sixties, country hippie, in other words, peasant dresses. Actually, President Neil Sky's character is based on Neil Young and Sky Saxon of the group The Seeds. President Sky does this press conference at Camp David in a rustic hut, which is also a go-go cage from TV programs like *Hullaballu* or the English *Top of the Pops*.

P Why do you think America doesn't like people getting old?

D Because we came to America to be young. Donald Rumsfeld hit the nail on the head when he said 'Old Europe'. [Laughter] But the thing is, it's a contradiction because everybody gets old. The original opera was never produced but I did a

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small pop-up book on it with Marie-Paule for a publisher in Ghent. And then it occurred to me, maybe because I've seen—I can't remember seeing these things—I may have seen Mike Smith's puppet show, which was very early apparently, but the thing it occurred to me to do something like the puppet show called *The Fantastics*. I had the idea that people who were hippies now have kids, and maybe they can take their kids to learn about the sixties and see a puppet show. But of course, as it has been worked out by Sandra, we do this in art fairs and what I find happening is people who really love the puppet show are usually Jewish women in their late sixties who told me they smoked marijuana when they were younger, so it's nostalgic for older people. [Laughter]

T America has always been responsible for youth culture in relation to the rest of the world. This is tied into the economic export of pop culture so there is a fear of death, which involves a fanatical equation. In the time period when this work takes place, ideals were still in place above money, and the theme loosely traces this decline: from utopia to market. Timothy Leary said something like the best of all the old worlds moved west until they hit California and the there was no place left to go but space.

P It was not produced in Belgium?

D No. It wasn't produced in Belgium.

T Then there was a reiteration, it must have been ten years ago, when we first got involved together on it, which was when Marian Goodman got involved…

D Well, she had us in this meeting…

T Well, there was at least one meeting and plans were drawn up for an earlier version with you, me and the amazing Glenn Branca.

D Yes, it's because Tony is doing these things, and what I love about Tony's work is that he does a downscaled video. I didn't like spectacle, but I liked the downscale thing. I also liked the puppets, he was using and of course Glenn and I

collaborated on many things before, but it was a time when everybody was upscaling. In fact, Mr. Oursler was working with large things for David Bowie!

T That was shortly after that. I have always been interested in collaboration and crossover, and of course in love with rock and the possibilities it seemed to suggest, in terms of reaching out into a new public.

D That was just after. Whereas Glenn was very into the opera thing, I thought it was too upscaled. Also Tony always wanted to collaborate with me, so we gave him a golden opportunity to do a real collaboration on this project. He's been involved for a long time, he liked the concept. in terms of Rodney, he also wanted to collaborate with me, to do a tapestry for the original rock opera. Of course we all loved rock opera. I don't know if you love Kim Gordon, but Tony and I are very close to Kim Gordon of Sonic Youth.

T Absolutely.

C So Rodney, when did your involvement start?

R I guess it was about maybe…I don't know… Dan, I can't remember what year it was, but we talked about it quite a bit. You described the project to me. I was always excited about it and we had this fantasy of doing the tapestry at a certain point. But in terms of actually doing the music it was only recently that Dan proposed that I do the title song and the other song *Fourteen or Fight*, that was last summer. But we talked about it vaguely for years. I always was excited about the project, you know, but in terms of being directly involved, I guess it started last summer.

D I have to say one thing now because, when we talked about it with Marie-Paule Macdonald, when I redid the script, I co-wrote it with Teresa Seeman, who was an assistant of mine and who loves rock music. And also we should mention in terms of collaboration the soon-to-be superstar Japanther from Brooklyn. Actually, what I wanted for the original Brussels Opera was a group like the Beastie Boys or an amateur group just beginning, kids who could improvise. Now Japanther has written five new songs. It's very important that we have young energy.

T That ended up being one of your main focuses in the production, working with Japanther. You were working with them on the music right up to the end. I didn't have any connections with them at all except loving what they did. I worked on the visuals, which started back when we first began with Glenn and it began as an enormous machine that had animatronics on it because we thought we could never really afford to have puppeteers, so we were going to make animated puppets with video projections and actual kind of motion like Disneyland that would move so you'd sort of move around the room but it would also move in different ways. In this show, I was thinking how would the video and the puppets interact? Laurent and I designed the idea of a simple series of boxes within boxes. In other words, focusing the energy of the live band in a box on one side, and the puppets in a rectangle on the other side. This is all connected by one big video screen that can change scale when needed.

D I never heard that because I was so dedicated to this idea of downscaling. My big attraction to Tony's work is that it was so intimate and downscaled and at the same time, it would scare both children and parents. [Laughter]

P So the history of the project…You get involved, and Sandra, you enter the conversation…

Sandra Actually it was maybe about two years ago, no… when did Bush win the first time? A year after Bush won the first time, I started asking Dan about it, and he kept saying hippies are not ready yet, they are not ready to come back and I kept insisting. At that time we were doing a project with Dan, *Revisiting: Homes for America*; actually the filmmaker ran away with the film and we only have the VHS. So, at one point Dan said to me "Okay" and we started getting together. At the beginning, Dan was a bit skeptical, and rightly so, of having live music and the multiple overlayers. He did not want anything spectacular. However, I thought it was very important the idea of making it to be a bit schizophrenic, of really pushing that moment of frictions, extensions and overlays between the different elements. Also it was important that this be a collaboration of friends, the celebration of communal friendship. Earlier

on, this piece was going to be called *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty: Entertainment by Dan Graham and Friends*. In a phone conversation Dan came up with the "Entertainment" because he said he was not a professional director. The fact is, none of us have done theater per se, so there's no professional theater director, so, there are moments in which the piece is taken over by one element, then another element, elements that were done by the different collaborators, including musicians and sound designer. For me it was very essential, the coexistence of the three elements: video, marionettes and live band, the difference of scale between the puppets and the band. The two different windows in the proscenium: a landscape-like, horizontal, tight window for the puppets and the portrait/go-go cage for the band. Dan commissioned Rodney to do the theme songs *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty* and *Fourteen or Fight*. I thank Dan for agreeing for the band to be live, at one point we had a screaming conversation in which I said "It's important to have it." The other day, with Rodney we were talking about the possibility of his band playing live in the London version. In this sense, I see this work as a work in progress.

P What do you mean at some point you weren't ready?

D What Sandra did, she got first-rate professional people, which of course means we're bankrupt. [Laughter] It also has to be small scale because the puppet stage has to be a small stage, and although I proposed for older people with more money to buy opera glasses and then we'd charge them for the glasses, that hasn't happened yet. But actually Sandra got the most incredible professional people, including the best puppeteers.

S Phillip Huber from Huber Marionettes.

D Apparently the man in charge, we had some ego problems with him and we had to work through this. We also got an amazing stage designer from France…

S Laurent P. Berger.

D Who actually understands American culture the way only a German normally can understand American culture;

he was brilliant. Also the sound person, Bruce (Odland), is brilliant. We had brilliant people and it all came together. Finally Sandra asked me to be the director which I was very happy to be because I thought I was out of the picture for a while and I made some suggestions. There were some compromises, and actually Japanther was very instrumental in picking up my ideas. And Tony put in a lot of sex because we actually have older people who are very nostalgic about sexual things rather than young people, we don't have enough kids actually in the audience.

S Well, we dedicated it to the kids and to the spirit of rock and roll…

D It's a first rate theatrical production.

P Did you think that from the moment it was written in 1988?

D Well, I didn't really write it then, I just did some of the scenario, but I did a lot of writing with Teresa Seeman's help for this version.

T I wrote some short scenes, which are interior monologues—sort of daydreams, which the puppets have in their wooden heads!

P Looking at the sixties from 1988 or looking at the sixties from 2004, the context is very different.

S Yes, very.

T Also Dan and I are two different ages, which has always been a great dynamic between us. I first met Dan when I was a student and I saw him lecture and I had started to make my first videotape; I really loved the way he did installation. It was so much more complicated than anything anyone else was doing at the time and it was super important for my development. About five years later, I started a small editing company in New York with a bunch of other artists that was like a collective almost and I worked on *Rock My Religion*…

D Actually, the hippie section.

T The hippie section, and that's when Dan and I really became friends. This is before Sonic Youth was really even Sonic Youth, and at that time I was also producing a videotape with Kim Gordon, about architecture, the interior architecture of clubs in New York City, which was very influenced by your work. I liked it because I was becoming very interested in the theory behind rock, trying to understand how it functioned as a social force. I had just sort of broken up my band, The Poetics with Mike Kelley and John Miller by moving to New York, I was questioning the relationship between the audience and the performer, the whole system. I was doing more soundtrack music. Dan and I had a lot to talk about, so that's when we got together and we liked a lot of the same bands, so we shared a lot of the same interests but from slightly…How old are you Dan?

D Eighty-nine. [Laughter]

D No, sixty-three.

T I'm forty-eight.

D Actually Tony took all the drugs except LSD.

T Well…no, see…you didn't like drugs, neither of one of us liked drugs but we liked to talk about it as part of our artwork. People think I was a big drug guy but I was interested in the culture around it. How could you not be? It formed all the social codes, pop culture and psychedelic imagery. I never took LSD, I was very spooked by LSD. Salvador Dalí said he didn't need it because he was it! I agreed that art should operate on the same level.

D But your question to Philippe about the difference…See, in the late eighties I thought the sixties would come back and, actually, for the DIA Foundation project I want to have inflatable chairs which would have two-way mirror mylar, on top of inflatable vinyl. Actually, there's a small script for Erika Beckman, which was set in Poussin's painting about Arcadian innocence and was written about Apollonian hippies. So I was very fascinated that the hippie culture would come back at a certain point. But also, I'm a rock and roll historian. I wrote something, actually, it's a published

article in a catalogue for The Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven called *Country Trip*. It's about Neil Young's first album and *Nashville Skyline* by Bob Dylan. It's about that period, so I was always fascinated by that period in terms of costuming. The first costuming was done by Marie-Paule, it's more a kind of British 'mod,' whereas the costumes for this production are more country-hippie American.

T You basically did them with Sandra. We sat there and worked on them together, the three of us. Then you invited me to make comments on them together, the three of us, which was very strange because it dredged up memories of people and places from that time period. I forgot what a wild mix of times and materials the hippies were fusing— very wonderful.

D Yes. So I think costuming is very important and I guess that's about theater also.

P Looking at the piece when it premiered in Miami, there is a very strange flavor because we look at the sixties as this kind of strange golden era, almost like a utopian dream…

D Also you had Altamont, and in *Rock My Religion* I show the decay of that period, but I think this distance you're talking about is my Jewish tradition, dealing with Jewish satire like the films of Billy Wilder. It's about American culture seen from an ironic, humorous Jewish point of view.

C Rodney, how does your approach relate to what Dan just said because you, also, have been very involved in rock music, drugs and LSD, and making work about that; about that experience and rock. You're Canadian like Neil Young. What's your take on what Dan just said and also on the relationship between your approach and your work and that of Dan's and Tony's?

R Sorry…between my work and Dan's work?

C Well, I was interested in what Dan said, then thinking about your approach because you're Canadian so you have this similarity of background and conceptual thinking, plus an interest in music and bands, drugs, LSD…

R Like Tony, I was very influenced by Dan. Dan came to Vancouver quite a bit. You have the art school there and both universities and that's when I met him. I was a student. Dan's own pop music really encouraged me to pursue that. After that, it was just developing. I was always interested in it anyway. I was always in bands. I never thought of it as my work you know. In terms of influence, but I are you asking about the attitude towards the sixties?

C Both, I guess: the attitude towards the sixties and American culture. You're the non-American in this. I know it's similar culture but…

R If you ask me about the culture of music, especially pop music, it is actually dominated by American music of course, but so is Canadian I guess. I was thinking specifically following Dan's briefing on writing the songs for *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty*. I was really thinking of something in the spirit of Neil Young. Dan's writing is about incorporating that kind of Neil Young-type character or a combination of Neil Young and Sky Saxon. You've heard of Sky Saxon? So I've got to put myself in a Neil Young sort of position vis-à-vis the subject.

P Did Dan bring Jewish irony to the picture? Do you bring Canadian irony to your relationship with the sixties?

R There's an irony…yeah.

T Now I bring the ex-catholic paranoia. [Laughter]

D In other words 'guilty pleasures.'

T Exactly, yeah.

P When we were talking about younger artists, or younger than Dan, what do you think of this urge of people involved with visual art to embrace popular music, or rock music? It started when Dan…you started to write a lot about that, you did *Rock My Religion*. It was difficult to find an artist who was not involved in a band. Why do you think there is this connection between the visual and pop music?

T Well, I think that for me, and I have done a lot of interviews, I did a ten-hour interview series called *Synesthesia*, distributed by EAI, for which I interviewed a lot of artists and musicians about the connection between art and music, mostly with David West helping me. I did this with *The Poetics Projects*, a collaboration with Mike Kelley, so I think that artists look to, as Dan said, this idea of popular culture, and the easiest way to get to it is to kind of work in the vernacular. I think that kind of conceptualism led to really interesting uses of the vernacular. This is one of the reasons I wanted to use television; it was because when I grew up people were watching TV. It was the vernacular, and rock music, you know, the idea that anybody could just pick up a guitar, especially with punk. It became do-it-yourself and people, the whole idea of conceptualism, destroying the idea of craft. Before that, you had people in the institutions trying to learn, you know like, "I am going to learn how to use stone for fifteen years before I can become a master" or something like that. Then conceptualism comes along, and says you have the idea which is more important than the craft, and if your idea is good enough then you can jump over this hurdle of craft. It changed the way we make art and also music. People were seeking ways of finding a new audience, a new system all together: punk rock is just one happy result in a lot of ways. And that I think really opened up punk rock in a lot of ways, people who were really disturbed by the white room of the art world, the ivory tower, ought to move out into like stand-up comedy like Mike Smith.

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D I think the abstract expressionists loved jazz, and I think art was gradually getting away from play and was turning into business. I think what we like in the art world is a kind of communalism; I think in the seventies many artists like Richard Prince or Robert Longo for example, were in rock bands, and also of course Tony Oursler and Mike Kelley. The idea was a kind of communalism, a recreation in the community of the art world. And also there is the idea of the group rather than the artist as individual, who is an isolated businessman. Tony is right about the vernacular, but I also think it had a lot to do with the interest in performance in the seventies as well as punk rock, and I think what happened was there was a revival recently. People

are fantasizing about the sixties and seventies which they call neo-psychedelic–I think it's the same period–, and they want to have music inside museums and galleries, which I think is a big mistake because I think the most important place for music is in a cave-like structure, in other words, a derelict cellar-type situation, but I think Rodney Graham is taking advantage of this period, to actually go with it.

T Which is also where the first movie theater started, which was in caves. The first moving image was thrown on the back wall of a cave, because you had the perfect situation for a camera obscura, to say nothing of the first cave painting.

R Let's not forget that the acoustics of galleries are notoriously bad because the walls are all parallel. Do you know what I mean? They're the worst places for music.

P There's a name that comes back over and over again: Mike Kelley. Is he, was he, is he going to be involved with the project?

D No, he never was. But we had a fantasy, Sandra particularly, that Paul McCarthy could work with us, but he's sort of overbooked at the moment so he couldn't do this. And I think, I don't want to overdo it, I'm interested in people who are very good at their particular areas. I think Mike would have been great, he would have done something, but he's overbooked. Tony actually gave up some of his bookings just to work on this. Also, Paul and Tony and Rodney always wanted to collaborate with me, so we're giving them this chance.

S Mike Kelley was involved. He wrote the preface for the *Wild in the Streets* pop-up book done by Dan and Marie-Paule. I have approached him to write the preface for the upcoming book of *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty* as well. He is such a punk, it would be interesting to read his revisiting to the hippie culture.

T The funny thing about this project is its immersion into the experience rather than analyzing it, or deconstructing it, which I thought was really like a breakthrough for the

situation because, you know, like *Rock My Religion* is all about, you know, sort of stepping back. Well, you never had a rock band, did you?

D No, it's an essay. It's an essay.

T You never had a rock band. I know it's an essay.

D I made possible many things as a producer.

T Believe me, I know that. But I think in this one, it's very immersive, and that's why I think it's a great step for you, it's no longer Dan completely analyzing, if you look at the whole structure of the piece itself, there's a lot of referencing of course to history and so forth, but still it's a very pleasurable experience. There is a generosity in that position, which of course you have set up in situations in your pavilions and have facilitated in other situations but here we dive into the pool together!

D In other words I was responding to the situation of opera, which I never understood.

C But the difference between the seventies rock opera structure and this one, is this one is small, and intimate, which I like. There's something about the puppet show that's very intimate because you have to be close to puppets to see them and to see how they behave, as opposed to rock opera where everything is about distance and spectacle, lights…

D Oh, I think rock opera was a huge mistake, although I liked *Arthur*. So I was going back to the origins with The Who, *A Quick One While He's Away* but actually what I like is when things get very stupid they become very interesting.

T The thing about this particular puppet show, what happens, is that there's a mixture of, it's interesting that you brought up scale and the pomposity of the rock opera. We took television scale—something I have always been really fascinated with—this tiny screen, it has more to do with psychological space than actual physical space and brought it into a live format, …so you had this inversion

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happen: the actual play between, taking place in the wide screen of the puppets, then you have the live, the moment is happening with the band, and then you have the intermediary video playing between, it shifts scale between them, so you have this very interesting shifting of scale and time, you know…

D I think what Tony is saying is very important because my experience of television was being in a studio audience as part of a children's audience during a cartoon show which actually had a puppet, a live puppet. Also, *Howdy Doody*, that was very important. And what I was thinking for the Brussels Opera was that it'd be like a studio audience for one of these popular music TV shows, we would have the groups appear in a go-go cage: think *Howdy Doody* studio audience of kids with puppets. I don't know if you ever went to a TV show as a child. That was a big experience for me.

R …about you… on the *Howdy Doody* show?

D I was influenced by the *Howdy Doody* show on TV. Isn't this is where Paul McCarthy would have come in because he deals with this kind of period of terror through puppets when you're a child?

P Also during the launch in Miami, I couldn't take my eyes of it, the structure of the stage with the band on the side. At some points, maybe it was on one of the drawings done by the set designer, there was a mirror. For me there was a contagion, between the way you structure this piece and, Dan, your early performances in front of mirrors with the audience in the back of the reflection of the audience and the way to involve the audience in front of you. It's also still working within your pavilion, was it a decision?

D No, I was not part of that, but the thing is when I first did the performance audience-mirror, one of the first time was at Riverside studios and I had Static, which was Glenn Branca's first group and a performance with me using this mirror, so I always wanted to integrate that kind of performance, simple performance in front of the audience with the kind of rock narrative. But that wasn't my idea, this guy is quite brilliant, the French set designer, Laurent.

C Do you think Laurent was looking at your work?

D I don't know but he was looking at everything. He was quite brilliant.

T He looked at everything.

C There are structures with architecture and TV, and TV within architecture…

T We worked down the actual overall layout because Dan had come up with the idea of, okay, the puppets, the live band, the video…

D Sandra had the live band…[Laughter]

T Sandra had the live band, so Laurent and I came up with the structure that was the stage itself, which was the box, the wide screen format, kind of a 1950–60s little puppet stage which related to TV but also sort of had this wide screen format, and then the fact that the video would then cover the whole thing and then change scale as a kind of mediator between it, but my point is Laurent was a really incredible sponge, because he was looking at everything and totally open-minded. I met him only a short time before…

S Oh, I worked in this project for about 9 months, 24/7, but the crew worked less than 40 days…, it was very much of a communal energy then. The energy and tightness of the production is mirrored in the energy between the performance and the audience, another collaboration, I would say. The formal structure was set up by Dan, Tony and I which created this overlapping of textures, counterpoints, Dan's slogans and clichés and of course the script! This situation allowed us to be playful, exploring our kid side inside us. The result is this overlay of opera, puppet theater, video, live and recorded music, Dan's favorite and specific songs from the era, and so forth, how can you describe it? On the other hand, working with live performing marionettes gave us a structure what it needed to be done previously in videos. Culturally, the funny part is, the artists are United States or North American citizens, but the crew is a compilation of Bolivians, French, Turkish, Brazilian,

different generations, all of us above 30 except the band, plus they are neo-punk! The artists were so great to work with, everyone got completely immersed in the project. You really need to see it in that tight space to experience it, just as we were all sleeping in my studio…it was incredible…

D I think this became a theatrical experience, but actually there's a big conflict in this production, Japanther's parents were hippies, and Japanther are neo-punk and very anti-hippie and I think there is a real distrust of Japanther and the Neil Young-influenced *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty* but somehow we have to reconcile these things, songs, we have to bring everything together…

P That was also what was in the performance, the tension between what was happening on the stage and their music, that is so much not hippie. I don't know if you need to reconcile them because this tension is actually wonderful.

S Exactly…

T That makes the piece.

S That is what I call the joyful schizophrenic moments, pushing to create frictions…

T Everything is time-shifted in a science fiction way and I know Dan and I both really like science fiction, especially Philip K. Dick. So also in a way there's a time shift, there's a scale shift, the puppets are very small, so you can barely see them, and then they are bigger than anything, so they take over the human scale. At certain points, and I think that's really the strength of the piece, there's always these kind of conflicts. It also continues in the narrative, it's stripped down and written in a dumb way like a Neil Young song, yet there is a lot of truth to it. You can follow it as a silly story yet what is really interesting is that it has all these reflections to more complex issues happening now in politics. The dated elements show us how we are living in a loop on any number of levels…

C Also the live element of Japanther playing…but also you're aware that the puppeteers are making the puppets

move behind the screen, so you've got this proscenium arch, but you know like in Punch and Judy where it's almost like the first TV, and it's very violent too. There are people behind, the puppeteers are behind and then the puppets who seem to mimic the live action of the theater traditionally creating something much more low-brow, and popular culture. Then you have the band who're actually live, live when the young people and the puppets are kind of…

T Then at one point the puppets sing with the band. Which I love so much.

P There is for me something very strange about the piece, when people ask me what it is. Is that a theater piece? Is that a concert? Is that a video projection? I actually cannot find words to describe it. Like when people ask me what is Dan Graham's works. Is that architecture, is that sculpture, you fall into aesthetic language, semiotic. You fall between aesthetic categories, and what for me that is very strange with this piece, actually it doesn't match anything we know. There's not a word in the language we're using in aesthetic, there's a band, there's a puppet and nobody in art was interested, or is interested in puppets, it was really the enemy, [we say "stands as a sculpture".] and we don't know that. I'm very curious with this piece and about its legacy. Is the piece going to be able to change the way we perceive what a cultural project is? In institutions and museums we always talk about multi-disciplinarity and then we don't really know what we're talking about when we say that and here you have a moment when everything comes together and then we don't know what to do about it.

D It's a hybrid. All my work is on the boundary of different things, but actually I want to call it the influence by Philippe Vergne and Entertainment.

P What would be your take on that?

T My take is that… Later, I'm hoping to develop another version of the piece, which becomes a three-dimensional storyboard to experience the piece but in your own time in one way or another, and then we'll use animatronics. It'll use some of the actual puppets that would move, synchro-

nize with sound. I'm hoping to take a lot of the designs, imagery or some elements out of the videos and sets to accentuate them into a kind of musical, linguistic, sculptural installation storyboard that you would get the different facets as you move around in the space. It will give you more than what you will get in the show but less at the same time because it will be important, that it's two different experiences—otherwise they negate each other.

C That relationship between live performance and installation has a very long tradition back to the sixties and seventies. *I Like America and America Likes Me*, by Joseph Beuys, was a performance and then became an installation later. Likewise Joan Jonas' *Mirage* was a performance and then became an installation, Organic Honey's *Visual Telepathy*, a performance and an installation. So that relationship between the live performance and then an installation, which is both its own piece, but also has a relationship back to a live performance. What is it? Again that is another form of hybridity, that's another kind of questioning of the relationship between something that happens in real time and then is over, and something that exists over time.

T Yeah, I'm fascinated by it and I think that it's something I have been working on with performers quite a bit, time shifting (in) projected faces. Dan mentioned my work with David Bowie where I did some of the sets for his 50th birthday celebration at Madison Square Garden, then it became a TV show. So, it kept shifting from one thing to the next, I worked with Sonic Youth. I shot Kim doing certain songs for the camera trying to capture her performance into a kind of dummy. Some place between music and live performance as experiments and then rock videos with them. This cycling back and forth between what television or what film can take and give back to the live performance and what it can give back to the physical performance, I'm hoping that it will succeed somehow, that Dan and I can work together, because he has his own take on what can be done with performers using time delay and mirrors. I would love to take some of his, also elements of his performance and installation and try to evolve it in the storyboard, on a small scale we haven't really talked about it yet, but it would be great to bring some of that in as well.

P Rodney? Allo? Rodney Graham did we lose you?

C Rodney?

T He heard the word David Bowie and he hung up.

P He got bored with us. [Laughter]

D Well, the thing is, Rodney's never actually seen the performance.

[They dial Rodney's number. Voice operator saying the number cannot be completed as dialed. Rodney connected again.]

P We want to ask you a question. We're talking about what is going to develop out of the piece. We started with this idea that the piece brings together so many different aesthetic categories and the question was where do you go with that in terms of…not discipline…but, are we facing an aesthetic category we don't really know or to name, And as artists and people who do exhibition[s] we deal with that, and I was curious to know, within your own practice how do you negotiate these different disciplines, from photography, films, music, do you consider them as something different or is it just the same body, a constellation of activities?

R [INAUDIBLE] I have an ambivalent relationship to this kind of interdisciplinary activity in terms of music anyway because, as we were talking, because the ideal venues for those things are quite different, like the idea of the cave some kind of acoustical environment for music that's appropriate, its something you don't find in a museum or gallery context, and I find negotiating the different registers sometimes quite difficult, I don't really know if what I'm doing in music is really part of what I'm doing in visual art… I think they're really quite different stuff I think what Dan and Tony are doing with this. I think is recalling right away that I certainly couldn't get to be able to do myself.

T Not really to take issue with you, but I've seen many pieces of yours that involve music in museums and things that have worked quite well. One where you're playing

piano as a prisoner that was in that sound show at the Pompidou, that sound and light show…

D THE LSD bicycle piece.

R [INAUDIBLE] That was very avant-garde music…I think that in terms of pop music there's something about the environment, where you need to a certain kind of immersion and the volume…

T Oh, I see what you mean. The difference between rock …

C …so it does make a difference because in the live puppet show, Japanther play live, so we're suddenly watching them live. You're in a theatrical situation where you're in your seats watching a puppet show and suddenly there's live band element which is different from an installation— people are moving in and out of the room, the sound is part of that, they walk in or they walk out, it's part of something different, like with your bicycle piece, the LSD piece, you're looking at the record, you're looking at the projection, so it's part of something that's almost ambient. With the puppet show live performance you are in a situation where you're gathered together in a specific place, for a specific time, so the live element works very well in that situation.

S Yes, it does. On the other hand, it's also very much a white cube box rather than a black box. It became more of an installation kind of situation but again is a concert.

T It's funny because Laurent comes from (the) theater world, yet another world that's not really represented by anybody sitting in this room. It's the slickest performance thing that I have ever seen, I think, in the art world because of his professional ability to transform what you call the white box, so I think that it's amazing…

C But at the same time it's amazing because if you thing of the Punch and Judy show, it usually or often takes place on the beach, people gather around, and it's very small, in England anyway, people gather around in a small group and they watch it together sitting on the sand, and it's small like a TV, and it's kind of a canvas covered, sort of oblong

kind of object almost, which is different from being in a theater where you're surrounded by the architecture of the theater where the proscenium arch takes over, and this is not about proscenium arch, this is about an intimacy, the scale of the whole thing is small, isn't it? Even when it's a theatrical situation rather an installation, in both cases the scale of it is small, you must be fairly up close to the puppets because you do, you can't sit hundreds of feet away, have 500-seat theater and you're in the back, you won't see the puppets.

T Although I have to say I saw the Wooster Group recently and their scale is not much different from our puppet show, I think it is small in terms of Cats…

D I have to say this is anti-Wagner.

T In that sense of course it's tiny, but in terms of avant-garde theater it's certainly acceptable.

D What I thought of, I never saw it, but I thought of the Fantastics which was a kind of puppet show for children, I have never seen it but…

T …I didn't see it either.

D …I have never seen it either but that was where I had my mind. They were off-Broadway, they were in Greenwich Village, and much my life has been against, I can say it now, bringing artists into a kind of Wagnerian grandeur, and I think what happened in the video was, I won't mention names, but I'll mention one name Bill Viola, we got into the spectacle thing, also Douglas Gordon, and I want to downscale, and my attraction to Tony's work in the beginning was that he downscaling.

T I have always been interested in the idea of taking minimalist aesthetics and applying that to pop culture so another words can you take…you know…what is the smallest reductivist entity that will become a performer per se, so in my tapes you have worms, and all sorts of strange body parts acting as performer.

D I think the downscaling thing is pretty important given the issues of things in museums today and I think all artists are very attracted to this alternative version through the vernacular of rock music. I first got interested in rock music because my friend Robert Smithson was very enamored of Andy Warhol and Andy Warhol used to do his work by listening to rock music and when I did my first conceptual pieces I was listening to the Yard Birds, and the Kinks pop songs and I wanted to work a short form which was like pop/rock hit songs.

T I think working on a smaller scale has always been underrated because my belief in scale is that is not where things happen, it's psychological, it always happens in the mind and during the experience, it's an interior event, when you internalize the image then you really give it scale. But puppets, I always had a little bit of problems with puppets, because they were so complete. I want my audience to dream to make up there own world. I never liked the complete form so I was always resistant to Dan's attraction to the puppets themselves but I have since come around because there's something that happens with the audience that they work though these stereotypes in a very interesting way, because I think that the designs where you have these echoes of John Kennedy, echoes of Neil Young and other kind of rock stars and then you have the old guy who looks like that horrible Southern senator, what's his name? You know the guy who was against the arts…

S …Jesse Helms

T Jesse Helms… and then you have this Hendrix, sort of very sympathetic character and then there's the boy who becomes almost like a transvestite, because he looks like a middle-aged woman. So I think the choices of puppets opened me up to a new way of seeing you have time travel again types that trigger current and past pop cultural figures. I've always been into having art works be read on a number of levels and this adds a complexity to it.

D …a shop that had railroad models, and I would also go to get small dolls, Mike Kelley said he began as a feminist with his dolls, and as I started shopping around for these little dolls to put in my models I became very attracted to the doll culture that girls had that I missed out on.

T You have to because it's the yin yang, it's the opposite, it's your alter ego, all the feminist dolls, the female dolls that I produce they become this alter ego, it's the thing that boys don't get to play with dolls, it's fascinating, you become another person by doing it.

C I remember seeing that in your studio, the model for the pavilion, with the teenage girls with the mirrors, things that young girls have. I'm thinking that was very…

D …You mean the model from the *Day Care Center Computer*, *Cdrom*, *Cartoon library*, which wound up in another version when we did this structure for the Hayward Gallery in London.

C But it had girls, it was girls, because I remember thinking that was very unusual, but also not only spitting image…

D *The Spitting Image*.

C *The Spitting Image*. I remember watching a TV program in England, it was American in the 60s, it was puppets, it was a space…it wasn't *Star Trek*…what was that…? It was all puppets.

C The Thunderbirds!

T …It was so great!

C …In the spaceship

T Something about the lack of ability of these characters, because they are images but they are bound in a way, you think that they are able to do things but they really are not. I noticed this when shooting for two weeks with the master puppeteer. I kept thinking I was going to get more emotions, movements or articulation of the puppets, and I noticed that they really can't do that much so that they're this kind of stuck image. So the beauty of that is that they rely on the audience to create…

T …to project…

T …to project onto them. That's exactly it: you project onto them.

C That goes right back to what you were saying about the cinema starting in the cave with shadow because that's like the projection of the shadow, because the shadow puppets and the idea of these shapes that are archetypes, so you're going back to these kind of very powerful archetypal figures rather than…it's all anti-realism.

T Which has to do with the group producing an event, themselves, in themselves, which is really lost in pop culture now, with pop culture you're put in the position of the, you know I've said a million times, you're put in this kind of drug state, you're kind of in a trance, it's about escapism. What's wonderful about something like this, you become a participant as you watch it, as you have said that there are these three levels that kind of wash back and forth, and the audience has to put it together, and make up the story "it's about the 60s, but wait that's a punk band"! There's these little puppets and there's this happening, this projection, you know so you have to just weave it together.

D When I was just beginning as an artist I was very attracted to Bertolt Brecht and so I thought of using the idea of alienation effect.

T What is "alienation effect" (just for the record)?

D Alienation effect was making things strange because they don't live up to our normal expectations. I wrote this article about Dean Martin and his use of idiot cards, but what I wonder about this production, and I am a little suspicious about this, is how is it going to read in non-American cultures, because I think when you have Americans they look back at their own history and their own memories.

C But I think that American culture, and the history of American culture, is so well-known now in Europe that although there would be a different reading I think everybody was brought up on that, to a certain extent.

D Certainly the Brits! [Laughter]

P There's also something pathetic also, (grotesque). They are great things, you cannot take them seriously because there are little, strange, disgusting. If it were actors, you'd be like "Oh my god, Dan Graham has turned preachy" but because it's puppets you bring back this absolute 'uncomfort' with the narration.

D 'Discomfort', that would be like alienation of fact, a little bit.

S For me it was a political action as well, Bush had won the elections, and The Botanical Garden was a voting place, and it was also in the state of Florida. How do we reconcile our political disillusionment, everything we have been working, I mean, people that were active in the 60s, 70s, and my generation in the 80s and 90s, to get to where we have gotten, to go back to, I don't know, 70 years, or something, so for me it was a little bit of a trigger at that moment just because I knew also it was a voting place.

P Have to move to Canada.

D And of course Florida belongs to South Americans, or part of Florida anyway.

S We were going to do it there, remember?

T There's also a funny thing that I want to bring up, which is about the fact that the art world is fascinated with the idea of crossover, and it's been kind of my dream to be able to make art work that crossed out of the ivory tower and worked for people who have no knowledge of art, except that when you actually do it, then the art world is kind of scared by it, they can't really accept it.

P You become a populist!

T Yeah, in a way, if you do work with a bigger band, I have done something now with U2, in their current tour I did a collaboration with them where I projected into smoke, Bono is obsessed with human rights, So he has the UN human

rights read in between in the two halves of the concert, but I don't even really talk about it to the people in the art world, because you just see people's faces go blank, you know, like what does that mean…

D What it means is you're dealing with U2 the way you're dealing with Starbucks; it's the same when you go to Starbucks. Starbucks is too middle of the road. So I think it's not only that, it's the middle-of-the-road-ness but I think…

T …but again I work also with Sonic Youth, maybe you think they're middle of the road too… [Laughter]

T I recently did their video for a short tour that was about a week ago, where I did 2 hours of video for the entire set, but my point is what do you think about the idea of crossover, where things really actually get out of the art world?

P For me, if you look at the way the art world developed a little bit over the last 20 years. If your brand goes out of where it is supposed to go, then you have a lost product, and if you start to work with U2, the structure that support you economically is at loss because you're doing something where's there is nothing to sell, it's like highly democratic, Even within the utopia of the art world being avant-garde, the minute you reach this moment where it is actually democratic/populist, it's not about crossover anymore, it's about economy.

C That's why cinema has always had such a hard time within the art world, or film because it's democratic…

D I see being an artist a little like being an architect, you have certain things coming into the office and I think that's what Tony is thinking and you respond to them. But I also think public art was so dumb, including late Henry Moore was somewhat dumb, but when everything became public art, it became a challenge to try to work in that area. But the hardest thing of all is corporate art. We have a many artists doing corporate art but I think Tony is speaking about the public domain, another words, the larger public and I think artists after a certain point have to deal with that.

T …which this piece, I think, succeeds in doing. And I'm very curious about why, it seems, that the art world loves it. Like they said in Miami: "The art world loves puppets? No what was it? "Puppet…"? "Art loves puppets"?

S "Art Loves Puppets" yeah, Sam came up with the Art Loves special events section few years ago; well it was a special event of Art Basel Miami Beach, boy they were courageous to give us the platform.

C I think it's partly because it has that structure, where it takes place within the white cube, but it has this very strong visual element. I think people are beginning to accept video projections so they'll understand that within that, and then it's very cool, live music now, so it's also entertaining all of a sudden, it operates on these different levels and the fact that it's in a white cube rather than in a black box, theater, it's an event that's almost within a gallery, so when you project your film in a gallery, everyone sees it, when you project it in a theater nobody sees it, and I think this is that kind of hybridity that brings it to the art audience, they would not go and see a more classic piece of puppetry or other things. It wouldn't even get into their head to do that probably.
Yeah, and how can you go wrong?

T …about a dream that existed at one time in this country, and anyone who remembers that, in any way, shape or form is fascinated by it. That's what I love about this piece, is it that it kind of brings that dream back to life in such an interesting way, PEACE and LOVE, which is really why I wanted to work on it because I was a teenager during that time period and I have a very personal memories of it, I wasn't really in any way… you know I was just beginning thinking about art and so forth, but there was so much happening and then it's just evaporated… But you know what, I have a child now and I want him to feel peace and love to as a social unifying factor. In fact I want it too now. One of the scenes that I made for when sky is traveling around and gaining power comes from a real image that happened to me and my older sister in Vermont. We would hitch hike and collect bottles and cash then in for money to get a buzz (back then Vermont had a very hippie status and eco laws

like getting a nickel for a bottle) and we were camping and we went to this strange camping ground which was near the high tension electrical wires and a river. We met up with this strange group of people who we spent the night with who clamed to have been living with Charlie Manson in California and when things got hot they came to Vermont. So we cooked and camped out with them and I ask if they thought Manson had done it (as he was on trial then) and they defended him to the end. We all went nude swimming in the river the next day—this was the first naked girl I saw-ever- and I was glade the water was freezing! But the image of how close they were camping to the road and the power line somehow bothered me.

D So maybe it's another neo-60s project. In other words, everybody hates the 80s and 90s because it was so business oriented and we all have different nostalgia for that earlier period…
…but you were a square teenager. Is that what you're saying?

T No, no. No I wasn't, I was a hippie. I had long hair and I smoked pot once in a while. But that's just what everybody did. I loved to have people tell me stories of acid trips they took—it was like a fairy tale for me.

C We have to, Philippe and I, have to go to the train station, so we should probably end. But it was a fantastic discussion and I'm looking forward to getting together again…

P And the food was great. [Laughter]

C Yeah we can't tell you what the LSD was like yet, because we're still going up, you know…

T The only person I think we left out was Brecht. He is my man in terms of performance and theater; he had a theory about letting the audience know the mechanics of everything that was happening…

D …It's part of the alienation effect

T …and then that making them participants in it, making the experience richer, and making them part of it. I think that Sandra's idea of this combination, and Dan's idea of the combination of the three different things constantly shifting back and forth, this is the Brecht effect…

C …that's a great phrase: the Brecht effect.

T Well he had a name for it, the X-effect or something, the Estrangement effect.

All Thank you. Bye.

Diedrich Diederichsen

ECSTASY AND ABSTRACTION

It is interesting that one of the most important texts on the theory of rock music is neither a text nor is it by a theorist of rock music or the counter culture. Rather, it is by a visual artist. First of all, Dan Graham's *Rock My Religion* is a video, for which a transcription was made. The title, however, has also been used for the edition of his collected writings from 1965–1990 that includes this transcript. Secondly, it is the first systematic work concerning the connection between sexuality and capitalism as the basis of a cultural complex with many different, but nevertheless specific forms of appearance. Graham focuses on two symptoms of the American version of the complex. On one hand, there is the prehistory of a specific combination of socialist-utopian, ecstatic, and precisely regulated social formations that the protestant and other heretical sects have brought to America from England since the seventeenth century and that they then tested and developed. On the other, there is the aftermath of this development: rock and roll.

In reduced and simplified terms, Graham's thesis would be that this connection is the forgotten link to the counter culture that is based on pop music. When he formulated this thesis in the early 1980s, it was new and consequential. This was also the time when it looked like rock and roll could once again rejuvenate and reinvent itself as a messianic, transgressive culture by way of punk and New Wave. In New York, the so-called No Wave culture that combined

experimental rock music (James Chance, Teenage Jesus & The Jerks, Mars, DNA, later, Sonic Youth) with a Super-8 Film avant-garde (Scott & Beth B, Eric Mitchell, Lydia Lunch, later Nick Zedd, Richard Kern etc.) were actually successful at remaining in the realm of high art. In retrospect, one can, to a certain extent, identify artists like John Zorn, Jim Jarmusch, or Glenn Branca as products of this scene. During the No Wave movement, Graham was, at times, directly involved in the production of records by The Static and the Theoretical Girls. The return of an explosive mixture of elements from messianic religion and nihilistic aggression in the music of the early 1980s appeared to verify Graham's theory that he developed when considering people from the 1960s and 1970s, like Jim Morrison and Patti Smith.

These days, the diverse phenomena that have helped to shape rock and roll culture—especially its revolutionary Messianism—have taken on every day appearances in the society of the spectacle. For that reason, they have had to have been ripped out of their original context. Graham's video essay has become so pertinent because he has worked out the elements that—often unconsciously—make the important connections in rock culture. He exposed the subcutaneous traces of a genealogy, which at first seem to be comprised only of the particularly crude and clear appearances that do not make any foundational connections. Graham's theory of performativity, however, clearly

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exposes the latent element that determines the entirety of classic rock culture, namely, the stabilizing aspect of the performative act that creates community. Graham shows precisely how the celebrated sexuality of the individual, of the star, creates the sense of community. But the community is one that is produced in a quasi-religious manner by independently motivated individuals who have experienced transgressions vis-à-vis hyper-individual performers, instead of priests or sacrificial animals.

While the culture of rock has been read as a counterculture that has distinguished itself primarily through its rejection of institutions and organized its own institutions in opposition to and negatively towards them, Graham has shown that they have developed their own strategy for developing communities. Those strategies did not simply fall from the sky; rather, they came from a specific Anglo-American heretical culture. Graham has exposed a secret channel that connects different points, which would be invisible from the perspective of a typical historian. This would be something like an unconscious America that had repeat-

edly tried to re-invent community and sexuality in rituals. They would not have frequently had communist tendencies; rather, they would have feminist features, as Graham shows with the tradition that extends from the Shakers to Patti Smith. Consequently, the features of contemporary countercultures, such as alternative economic ideas, alternative sexuality, and alternative gender roles, that are all held together by the rituals of rock and roll, would not merely be an addition to a set of different contemporary ideas, so much as something that was historically and systematically bound together.

Today, these elements are no longer connected by genealogical stories, instead they appear isolated from each other. *Don´t Trust Anyone Over Thirty* concerns the ridiculousness of isolation as well as the surprising comedy of reconstructed connections. It also establishes a continuity with *Rock My Religion* with their shared interest in the history of countercultures. Disconnecting the youth culture from the historical moments in which they rebel or even only try to actively distinguish themselves only produces

a false abstraction. However, it is typical for the culture industry to operate with such abstractions as trademarks of products being launched. Youth culture always stand in close proximity to the market, so even in its critical and autonomous incarnations, they are commonly influenced by these abstractions.

Youth culture is not only a false abstraction, but it is generated out of the farcical film from the 1960s, *Wild in the Streets*, that serves as the basis for this puppet theater and is a grotesque model of rebellion and youth culture. The reason for exclusion that justifies a rebellion (i.e., youth does not belong to the society of adults) becomes the qualification for the exclusion (i.e., We, who are part of the culture of youth, exclude all who are not juveniles). This is a cycle of politics that are reduced to a formal element, namely the reason for exclusion. It is no longer the false abstraction of advertising or the instrumentalization of the culture industry, rather it is the false abstraction that regulates the public sphere, in which simple themes and so-called single issue politics determine public debates. Certainly, both issues are connected to each other: the public sphere conforms to the market and issues compete for attention.

What is particularly ingenious about the marionette play is its conceit that both false abstractions create a connection. On the one hand, there is the reduction of the counter culture to a single issue movement of youth and exclusively

juveniles and children, and on the other, there is the idiotic idea that the counter culture of the 1960s allowed itself to be boiled down to real political suggestions about the voting age and other crippled forms of the public sphere. A counter culture that has been brought down to the level of a false public sphere and a false economy is still in a position to transgress its own cultural system. The youth are interested in political representation and the political representatives are challenged by the cultural actors. In light of the present situation and the complete segmentation and segregation of life worlds, it is curious and comical that even the most laughable, childish, and warped counter culture of the 1960s has an advantage over each contemporary counter culture, which only operates on a, for the most part, very small social area.

There is still another conceit, namely, simultaneity. It is a tenderly reconstructive and profoundly silly device, it is the friendly negation of negation that opens the counter culture of trash to a remarkably misplaced empathy and engagement that is out of phase. It is the best that one can do for them. Contrary to precursors of such a culturally and theoretically reasoned, as well as childish, historical reconstruction, such as the discs and the videos in the late 1980s of the band, Redd Kross, Graham and his combatants also create a connection to the present. The one pop star today who deserves this title and even fits in all too well into this tragicomedy is Andre 3000 Benjamin from Outkast. He is the exceptional model for one of the marionettes.

Neil on Stage, Dan Graham, Tony Oursler, Laurent P. Berger
Paper collage with pencil and ink, Signed by Laurent P. Berger
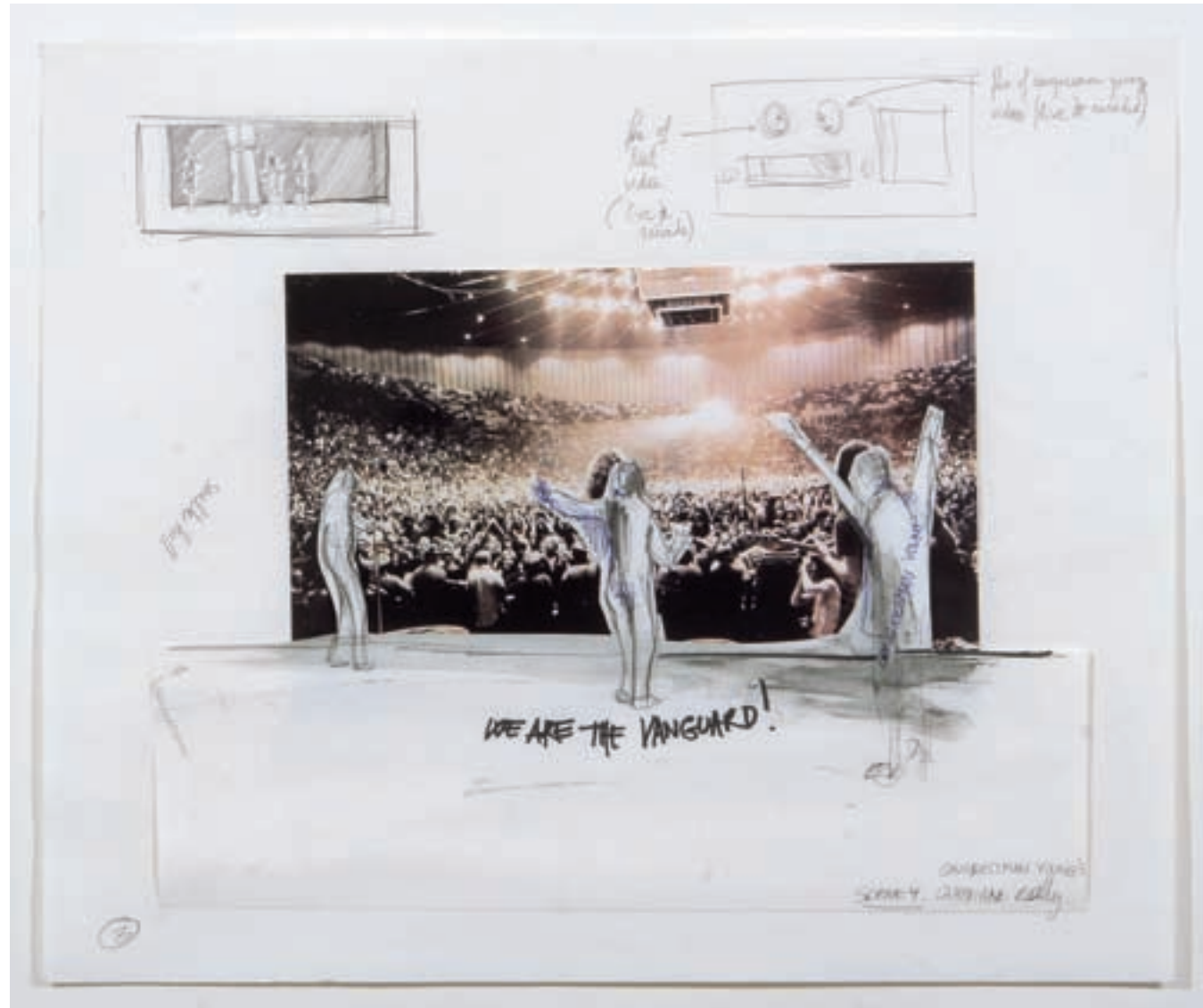
Diedrich Diederichsen

Ekstase und Abstraktion

Es ist interessant, dass einer der wichtigsten Texte zur Theorie der Rockmusik erstens kein Text im eigentlichen Sinn ist und zweitens nicht von einem Rockmusik- oder Gegenkulturtheoretiker stammt, sondern von einem bildenden Künstler. Dan Grahams *Rock My Religion* ist ein Video – von dem es allerdings eine Transkription gibt und das den Titel für die Ausgabe seiner Gesammelten Schriften abgab. Es ist die erste systematische Arbeit über den Zusammenhang von Sexualität und Kapitalismus als Grundlage eines kulturellen Komplexes mit verschiedenen, aber ganz spezifischen Erscheinungsformen. Graham konzentriert sich auf zwei Symptome aus der amerikanischen Version des Komplexes: Einerseits als Vorgeschichte die protestantischen und häretischen Sekten, die seit dem siebzehnten Jahrhundert aus England in die USA kommend dort eine spezifische Mischung aus utopisch-sozialistischer, ekstatischer oder genau reglementierter Gesellschaftsformen entwickelt und ausprobiert haben. Andererseits als Nachgeschichte dieser Entwicklung: Rock´n´Roll.

Diesen Zusammenhang zu behaupten und als vergessenen Zug Popmusik-basierter Gegenkulturen zu stärken, wäre, vereinfacht gesagt, Grahams These. Und sie war neu und folgenreich, als er sie in den frühen 1980er Jahren formulierte. Dies war allerdings auch eine Zeit, in der es so aussah, dass sich Rock´n´Roll als messianische und transgressive Kultur noch einmal erneuern könnte: durch Punk und New Wave nämlich, in New York speziell durch die so genannte No-Wave-Kultur, die experimentelle Rockmusik

(James Chance, Teenage Jesus & The Jerks, Mars, DNA, später Sonic Youth) mit einer Super-8-Film-Avantgarde verband (Scott & Beth B, Eric Mitchell, Lydia Lunch, später Nick Zedd, Richard Kern etc.), die tatsächlich in der High Art folgenreich bleiben sollte. Im Nachhinein kann man so verschiedene Künstler wie John Zorn, Jim Jarmusch oder Glenn Branca als mehr oder weniger direkte Produkte dieser Szene bezeichnen. Graham war an der No-Wave-Zeit teilweise direkt u.a. bei Platten von The Static und den Theoretical Girls beteiligt. Die zugespitzte Mischung aus religiös-messianischen und nihilistisch-aggressiven Zügen schien Grahams Position, die er an Personen der 1960er und 1970er wie Jim Morrison und vor allem Patti Smith entlang entwickelte, in den frühen 1980ern noch einmal zu bestätigen.

Heutzutage sind die diversen Phänomene, welche die Rock-´n´-Roll-Kultur und gerade ihre revolutionär-messianische Seite geprägt haben, alltägliche Erscheinungen der Spektakelkultur geworden. Dafür mussten sie jedoch jeweils aus ihrem ursprünglichen Zusammenhang gerissen werden. Grahams Videoessay ist aber vor allem deswegen so einschlägig geworden, weil er die – auch oft unbewussten – zusammenhangsbildenden Elemente der Rockkultur herausarbeitet und die subkutanen Züge einer Genealogie freilegte, die auf den ersten Blick nur aus besonders grellen und deutlichen Erscheinungen zu bestehen scheint, die nichts Untergründiges miteinander verbindet. Grahams Theorie der Performativität des Rock-

eine Öffentlichkeit regelt, in der einfache Themen und so genannte Single-Issue-Politik öffentliche Debatten bestimmen. Natürlich hängt beides auch miteinander zusammen: Die Öffentlichkeit selbst ist marktförmig und Issues (Themen) konkurrieren um Aufmerksamkeit.

Genial an dem Marionettenspiel ist vor allem ein Kunstgriff: die beiden falschen Abstraktionen bilden einen Zusammenhang. Zum einen die Reduktion der Gegenkultur auf eine Single-Issue-Bewegung von Jugendlichen, schließlich Minderjährigen und Kindern, zum anderen die idiotische Idee, die Gegenkultur der 1960er Jahre ließe sich auf real-politische Vorschläge zum Wahlalter und andere verkrüppelte Formen einer politischen Öffentlichkeit runterkochen. Die so auf das Niveau einer falschen Öffentlichkeit und einer falschen Ökonomie gebrachte Gegenkultur ist aber so immer noch wenigstens in der Lage, ihr kulturelles System zu überschreiten: Die Jugendlichen interessieren sich für politische Repräsentation, die politischen Repräsentanten werden von kulturellen Akteuren herausgefordert. Angesichts einer Gegenwart der vollständigen Segmentierung und Segregation der Lebensbereiche ist das kurios und komisch, zumal eben noch die lächerlichste, kindischste und verzerrteste Gegenkultur der 1960er dies jeder gegenwärtigen Gegenkultur, die immer nur auf einem meist sehr kleinen gesellschaftlichen Gebiet operiert, voraus hat.

Es gibt aber noch einen anderen Kunstgriff: die Gleichzeitigkeit liebevoll rekonstruierender und hochgradig alberner Stilmittel, ja die freundliche Negation der Negation, welche die Trash-Version von Gegenkultur wieder für eine merkwürdig verschobene Empathie und ein versetztes Engagement öffnet. Das Beste, was man für sie tun kann. Im Gegensatz zu Vorläufern einer solchen kulturtheoretisch durchdachten wie kindlichen Geschichtsrekonstruktion wie etwa diversen Platten und Videos der Band Redd Kross in den späten 80ern, stellen Graham und seine Mitstreiter auch einen Link zur Gegenwart her: Der einzige Pop-Star der Gegenwart, der diesen Titel verdient und dennoch auch nur zu gut in diese Tragikomödie passt, Andre 3000 Benjamin von Outkast, ist das ausdrückliche Vorbild einer der Marionetten.

entertainers macht hingegen vor allem einen Zusammenhang manifest, der latent die ganze klassische Rockkultur prägt: den gemeinschaftsstiftenden und stabilisierenden Aspekt performativer Akte. Graham zeigt, wie die am Einzelnen, am Star, am Performer zelebrierte Sexualität des Einzelnen und ihre individualisierende Kraft zugleich und gerade eine Gemeinschaft hervorbringt. Diese Gemeinschaft ist aber eine Gemeinschaft von durch – meist individuell motivierte – Überschreitungen hindurchgegangenen Einzelnen, die sich über hyperindividuelle Performer – sozusagen anstelle von Priestern und Opfertieren – quasi-religiös herstellt.

War bisher die Rockkultur als eine Gegenkultur gelesen worden, die sich im Wesentlichen durch Ablehnung von Institutionen auszeichnete und ihre eigenen Institutionen spiegelbildlich und negativ gegen diese ausrichtete, zeigte Graham, dass sie dabei durchaus eigene Gemeinschaftsbildungsstrategien herausgebildet hatte, die aber keineswegs vom Himmel gefallen waren, sondern aus einer spezifisch anglo-amerikanischen Häretiker-Kultur kamen. Graham legt einen eher geheimen Verbindungstunnel frei, der

unterschiedliche, von einer normalen Historiker-Perspektive unsichtbare Punkte miteinander verbindet. Dies wäre so etwas wie ein unbewusstes Amerika, das immer wieder versucht hätte, Gemeinschaft und Sexualität neu in Ritualen zu erfinden. Diese hätten nicht nur oft kommunistische Züge gehabt, sondern eben auch feministische wie Graham in der Kontinuität von den Shakern zu Patti Smith zeigt. Die Elemente der zeitgenössischen Gegenkulturen – alternative Wirtschaftsideen, alternative Sexualität und alternative Geschlechterrollen, zusammengehalten von den Ritualen des Rock´n´Roll – wären demzufolge weniger eine Addition verschiedener zeitgenössischer Ideen, sondern historisch systematisch miteinander verbunden.

Heute erscheinen diese Elemente voneinander meist ebenso isoliert wie sie von genealogischen Erzählungen nicht mehr zusammengehalten werden. Von der Lächerlichkeit der Isoliertheit ebenso wie von der überraschenden Komik rekonstruierter Zusammenhänge handelt *Don´t Trust Anyone Over Thirty* und stellt neben seinem Interesse an der Geschichte der Gegenkulturen auch in diesem Sinne eine Kontinuität zu *Rock My Religion* her. Wenn man

Jugend von den historischen Zusammenhängen abkoppelt, in denen Jugendliche rebellieren oder sich auch nur aktiv zu unterscheiden versuchen, erhält man eine falsche Abstraktion. Es ist typisch für kulturindustrielle Verwertungen mit solchen Abstraktionen als Markenzeichen von zu lancierenden Produkten zu operieren. Und es ist ebenso verbreitet, dass die auch in ihren autonomen und kritischen Versionen stets marktnahen Jugendkulturen, von diesen Abstraktionen beeinflusst werden.

Jugend ist aber nicht nur eine falsche Abstraktion, sondern generiert in der Farce, die diesem Puppentheater zugrunde liegt, dem Film *Wild in the Streets* aus den 1960ern, ein groteskes Modell von Rebellion und Jugendkultur. Der Ausschlussgrund, der eine Rebellion begründet (Jugend gehört nicht zur Gesellschaft der Erwachsenen), wird selber zum Kriterium des Ausschlusses (Wir Jugendlichen schließen alle Nicht-Jugendlichen aus). Dieser Zyklus einer auf ein formales Element, den Ausschlussgrund, reduzierten Politik ist nun nicht mehr die falsche Abstraktion der Werbung und der Verwertung durch die Kulturindustrie, sondern die falsche Abstraktion, die

JPNTHR

MIDTOWN No more Monday Mornings cuz I just Quit My Job. Everyone is saying I'm looking For A Job. I know where

JAPANTHER they'd be lost Among those buildings I hope I'm Never somewhere up in Midtown I know where we've been cuz we Made A record I hope I'm Never trapped beneath your rumble! I know where you'll be on the train to Midtown Standing AND starring

underneath Florecent lights tonight.

RIOT Its Going downtown LA is burning Its going down down

LYRCS

THE BOSS Zombies outside in the hall way 6 ft down they've been digging All day to Move back & FORTh I don't know why you would try & Run Away Resistence is Futile tomarrow becomes today when you see that sun Rising you know you 4 This survived Another Nightmare past And your still Alive.

JPNTHR

Selfish kids

oh you selfish kid that
all you had That's all
you have to give
what Are you Gunna due when
The cops show up for you
for All that shit you did
When you were Just A kid

whales

swimming Through These Basement
shows the whales don't seem to
know what direction They came
From or when They Need to
go. So follow your Father
Howards Sandy Beaches we All
Must die And don't Know The
Reasons theres No time to
talk About it THERES No
time to Heal time to
open wounds up.

LYRCS

GRAVY

All your Mother's stuffing and
Potatoes taste like Nothing
without gravy Baby it's Just
Dull & LVAME
Climb out your living grave
Fuck those Neon lights
thats Just How I behave RIDING
MY BIKE. there Are So Many
Monsters traps they set So
Well tear you flesh From Bone
& send you straight to HELL
Baby the Gravys Run out.

symptoms

And the sad sad story goes
your leaving leaving here
Good this time yeah
Maybe toMARROW
symptoms you
come
From your
Pus yeah

Don't trust anyone over thirty
Song by Rodney Graham

You cant do much in this heat
Except go wild in the street
I mean, its got to be at least a hundred and three
I'm stickin' to the trees cause my knees ain't right
They can ship you overseas but they cant make you fight

Seems you cant trust anyone over thirty
Based on the shit I've seen
Yeah, don't trust anyone over thirty
'Cause they're fuckin' old and their fuckin' mean
But you better learn to take it if you're gonna dish it out
There's always someone spoils your fun
When your fun has just begun

Its all downhill after twenty-three
I'm President Sky and I decree:
There's always someone spoils your fun
When your fun has just begun

You can't trust anyone over thirty
Based on the shit I've seen
Don't trust anyone over thirty
'Cause they're fuckin' old and their fuckin' mean

14 or Fight
Song by Rodney Graham

WE want the vote
14 or fight
We want the vote
14 or fight

T.V. sucks but that's alright
T.V. sucks but that's alright

14 or fight
We want the vote
14 or fight

Birthday parties suck but that's OK
Birthday parties suck but that's OK

SCHIZOPHRENIA

Sandra Antelo-Suarez

Welcome to *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty. Entertainment by Dan Graham and Tony Oursler with Rodney Graham*, the Vienna and Berlin versions.

I hope you have fun, as much fun as we had working on this piece. It is a continuous collaboration. It is a continuous work in progress. We only saw the entirety of the show the day it opened with a full audience. It is a work of collaboration with you, the audience, as well. Thank you for being part of it.

Envisioned as a genuine satiric history of the hippie generation and the end of the psychedelic era, the opera's tragi-comic narrative is the *reductio ad absurdum* of the hippies' "general politics" contained in the 1960s youth slogan: "Don't trust anyone over thirty." Seen from hindsight thirty five years later through the eyes of the 1960s youngsters now grown old, the effect is one of a bitter reflection over time, whereby we witness a hip generation's indictment of their own shadow seduction by the cult of youth and the fascistic tendencies that can overwhelm even the most idealistic movement left unchecked. Even more pertinent today, *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty* mirrors the disillusionment of a generation who must today grapple with their failure to stop growth of an extreme political and economic conservatism that today wages onslaught against the liberal ideals for which they so ardently fought from the 1960s on. Structurally, *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty* is a narrative comprised of joyful "schizophrenic" overlapping of textures, counterpoints, slogans and clichés. Continually splicing disparate media together—opera and rock, proscenium and the television screen, the 1960s and the 2000s, real people and puppets, the living experience and the final book—*Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty* deliberately separates the visual and the dramatic elements to underline how the narrative components overlap, while making the objects and subjects of time and culture interchangeable for both art and the audience.

The making of *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty* brought to us the little kid we all have within, enjoy the show!

Thank you:

Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty would of not been possible with out the artists generosity and magnificent work, Dan Graham, an aries/horse like me; Tony Oursler, a genius Taurus; and Rodney Graham. As you can see, I have been influenced by Dan's astrology fascination. I met Tony and Dan exactly ten years ago when I started TRANS>. A special thank to them, they made me explore my dreams. Phillip Huber of Huber Marionettes made a special contribution with the making of the puppets and the performance. Japanther—Ian Vanek and Matt Reilly—bought such amazing in depth energy.

A special thank you to Miguel Antonio Roca—dealing with a lot of negotiations and sense of humor—Laurent Berger, Koken Ergun, Bruce Odland, Matt Tierney, Eugene Tsai, Valentin Essrich, Urs Schönebaum and Carlos Soto, to all of them an applause.

The partnerships of our co-producers are as important, Tim Nye, Foundation 2021, the first one to give us his support; The Walker Art Center, my dear institution and colleagues; Voom, our film sponsor; and last but not least Thyssen-Bornemizsa Art Contemporary with Francesca von Habsburg's contagious energy and believes and Daniela Zyman, an amazing collaborator. Without our TRANS> and DTOAT believers, Sam Keller, Isabela Mora, Todd Eberle and Lauren Weiner, this project would of not taken place. The generous support of my friends Rosa and Carlos de la Cruz and Eileen Cohen, is very, very appreciated.

The list is long, I *still believe in Miracles*, (title of an exhibition by Hans Ulrich Obrist borrowed from a Douglas Gordon piece). This project has filled me with optimism, the same optimism that little Jack has at 1 and a half.

Schizophrenie

Willkommen bei *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty. Entertainment by Dan Graham and Tony Oursler with Rodney Graham*, Wiener und Berliner Fassungen.

Ich hoffe, Sie haben an diesem Stück ebensoviel Spaß wie wir bei seiner Erarbeitung. Es ist eine fortlaufende Zusammenarbeit, work in progress im besten Sinne. Seine ganze Kraft offenbarte sich uns nur an jenem Tag, an dem wir vor vollem Haus spielten. Denn es ist auch eine Zusammenarbeit mit Ihnen, dem Publikum. Danke, dass Sie ein Teil von uns werden.

Konzipiert als ein authentisch-satirischer Rückblick auf die Hippiegeneration und den Niedergang der psychedelischen Ära, erzählt die Oper die tragikomische Geschichte der *reductio ad absurdum* jener Hippie-Politik, die sich im Jugendslogan der Sechziger ausdrückt: „Trau keinem über dreißig." Ein Rückblick 35 Jahre später – durch die Augen der Jugendlichen von damals, inzwischen längst selber alt geworden – kommt einer bitteren Betrachtung über die Zeit gleich: Wir werden Zeugen, wie eine Hippie-Generation Anklage erhebt gegen ihrer eigene Verführung durch den Jugendkult und jene faschistischen Tendenzen, vor der selbst die idealistischste Bewegung nicht sicher ist. *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty* reflektiert – und ist darin relevanter denn je – die Desillusionierung einer Generation, die sich heute mit ihrem eigenen Versagen herumschlagen muss, einer extremen Politik samt deren Wirtschaftskonservativismus nicht Einhalt geboten zu haben, einer Politik, die heute gegen eben jene liberalen Werte zu Felde zieht, für die man ab den Sechzigern so glühend gekämpft hatte. In seinem Aufbau besticht *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty* durch sich „schizophren" überlagernde Strukturen, Kontrapunkte, Slogans und Klischees. Unterschiedliche Medien werden fortwährend ineinander gemischt – Oper und Rock, Bühnenraum und Fernsehschirme, die sechziger Jahre und die Jetztzeit, reale Personen und Marionetten, die lebendige Erfahrung und die Endabrechnung – *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty* trennt bewusst visuelle und dramaturgische Elemente, um aufzuzeigen, wie sich die narrativen Komponenten überlagern, während die Objekte und Subjekte von Zeit und Kultur für die Kunst wie für das Publikum austauschbar werden.

Die Produktion von *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty* brachte das kleine Kind in uns zurück, genießen Sie die Show!

Danksagungen

Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty wäre ohne die Großzügigkeit der partizipierenden Künstler und deren wunderbare Arbeit nicht zustande gekommen: Dan Graham, der so wie ich Widder/Pferd ist, Tony Oursler, der geniale Stier und Rodney Graham. Wie Sie sehen können, stehe ich hier unter dem Einfluss von Dans Faszination mit Astrologie. Ich bin Dan und Tony vor genau 10 Jahren begegnet, als ich TRANS> gegründet habe. Ihnen gilt mein ganz besonderer Dank, da sie meine Träume erfüllt haben. Philip Huber von Huber Marionettes lieferte einen besonderen Beitrag mit seinen Puppen und der Performance. Japanther – Ian Vanek und Lauren Weiner – steckten alle mit ihrer wunderbaren Energie an. Ein besonderer Dank auch an Miguel Antonio Roca, der alle Verhandlungen mit Humor und Geduld geführt hat und natürlich der Crew: Laurent P. Berger, Koken Ergun, Bruce Odland, Matt Tierney, Eugene Tsai, Valentin Essrich, Urs Schönebaum und Carlos Soto. Ihnen allen gebührt der Applaus.

Die Zusammenarbeit mit unseren Koproduzenten war von größter Wichtigkeit: Tim Nye, Foundation 20 21, der als erster seine Unterstützung zugesagt hat, meine Kollegen vom Walker Art Center, unser Filmsponsor Voom, und last but not least Thyssen-Bornemizsa Art Contemporary mit Francesca von Habsburgs ansteckender Energie und unerschöpflichem Glauben an die Sache, sowie Daniela Zyman, waren unglaubliche Partner. Ohne die Menschen, die an TRANS> und *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty* glauben, Sam Keller, Isabela Mora, Todd Eberle und Lauren Weiner, wäre dieses Projekt nicht möglich gewesen. Weiters danke ich meinen Freunden Rosa und Carlos de la Cruz und Eileen Cohen für deren großzügige Unterstützung.

Die Liste ist lang, I *still believe in Miracles* (der Titel einer Ausstellung von Hans-Ulrich Obrist, übernommen von einer Arbeit von Douglas Gordon). Dieses Projekt erfüllte mich mit Optimismus, jenem Optimismus, den der eineinhalbjährige Jack hat.

Dan Graham
Artist

Graham, born in Urbana, Illinois in 1942, lives and works in New York. Graham's cultural involvement began in the 1960s as a rock critic. An innovative first-generation conceptual artist, Graham has broken significant ground as a theoretician and writer by introducing rock music into the discourse of art, criticism, and cultural theory, culminating in the 1992 publication, *Rock My Religion*. He has won numerous awards, including the French *Vermeil Award* (2001), the *Skowhegan Medal for Mixed Media* (1992), and the *Coutts Contemporary Art Foundation Award* (1992). His work is included in important collections, and he has had recent solo shows at Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver, Canada (2003), Chiba City Museum of Art, Chiba, Japan (2003), Kitayushu Municipal Museum of Art, Fukuoka, Japan (2003), Marian Goodman Gallery, New York (2002), and Museo Serralves, Porto, Portugal (2001). Graham's work has also been presented in notable group shows as the LA County Museum of Art, Los Angeles (2004), Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona (2004), and the Venice Biennial (2004), among others.

Dan Graham, geboren 1942 in Urbana, Illinois, lebt und arbeitet in New York. Graham ist ein innovativer Konzeptkünstler der ersten Generation. Als Theoretiker hat er durch die Einführung der Rockmusik in den Diskurs über Kunst und Kulturtheorie Neuland erschlossen. Vorläufiger Höhepunkt dabei war seine 1992 erschienene Publikation *Rock My Religion*. Für seine Arbeiten erhielt er zahlreiche Auszeichnungen, darunter den französischen *Vermeil Award* (2001), den *Skowhegan Medal for Mixed Media* (1992) und den *Coutts Contemporary Art Foundation Award* (1992). Seine Arbeiten sind in renommierten Sammlungen vertreten. Letzte Einzelausstellungen: Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver (2003), Chiba City Museum of Art, Chiba, Japan (2003), Kitayushu Municipal Museum of Art, Fukuoka, Japan (2003), Marian Goodman Gallery, New York (2002), und Museo Serralves, Porto (2001). Wichtige Gruppenausstellungen: LA County Museum of Art, Los Angeles (2004), Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona (2004), Biennale di Venezia (2004) und viele andere.

Tony Oursler
Artist

Oursler, born in New York City in 1957, graduated from the California Institute for the Arts in 1979 and returned to New York, where he now lives and works. Oursler has specialized in installation, painting, sculpture, and video since the late1970s. His mixed media installations—in which theatrical objects such as puppets and dolls are layered with video projections and spoken text—are prefigured in the wildly inventive body of videotapes that he has produced over the past twenty years. Like Graham, Oursler's work has also considered the role of music in society; he has done projects with Sonic Youth as well as other music icons. His recent solo exhibitions include Jeu de Paume, Paris (2005), Musee D'Orsay, Paris (2004), Gallery Paule Anglim, San Francisco (2003), Lisson Gallery, London (2003), Parallel Lines Studio d'Arte Raffaelli, Trento, Italy (2002), Magasin 3, Stockholm Kunsthall, Sweden (2002), Lehmann Maupin, New York (2001), Metro Pictures, New York (2001), and Institute Valencia D'Art Modern, Valencia (2001). He has participated in notable group exhibitions as *Off the Grid*, Lehmann Maupin, New York (2002), *Black Box*, Kunstmuseum Bern (2001), and *Spectacular Bodies*, Hayward Gallery, London (2001).

Tony Oursler, geboren 1957 in New York, graduierte 1979 am California Institute for the Arts und kehrte nach New York zurück, wo er seither lebt und arbeitet. Sein umfangreiches Œuvre umfasst Installationen, Malerei, Skultpur und Video. In seinen Installationen projiziert er Videos mit sprechenden Menschen auf Marionetten oder Puppen, die „unheimlich" verzerrt gleichwohl die Assoziation eines lebenden „Dings" hervorrufen. Wie Graham hat sich auch Oursler intensiv mit der Bedeutung der Rockmusik für die Gesellschaft auseinander gesetzt und realisiert Projekte mit Sonic Youth und anderen Ikonen der Musikgeschichte. Letzte Einzelausstellungen: Jeu de Paume, Paris (2005), Musee D'Orsay, Paris (2004), Gallery Paule Anglim, San Francisco (2003), Lisson Gallery, London (2003), Parallel Lines Studio d'Arte Raffaelli, Trento, Italien (2002), Magasin 3, Stolkholm Kunsthall, Schweden (2002), Lehmann Maupin, New York (2001), Metro Pictures, New York (2001), Institute Valencia D'Art Modern, Valencia (2001). Wichtige Gruppenausstellungen: *Off the Grid*, Lehmann Maupin, New York (2002), *Black Box*, Kunstmuseum Bern (2001) und *Spectacular Bodies*, Hayward Gallery, London (2001).

Rodney Graham
Artist

Born in 1947, Rodney Graham attended the University of British Columbia (1968–71) and lives and works in his hometown of Vancouver. While Graham is commonly described as a conceptual artist, the scope of his artistic and intellectual pursuits defies categorization. As an artist, writer, musician, and actor, he has made works that range across media and subject matter, inventing new approaches to landscape, literature, popular culture, music, and sound. His recent solo shows include 303 Gallery, New York (2004), *Rodney Graham: A Little Thought*, Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles (2004), Donald Young Gallery, Chicago (2003), Hauser & Wirth, Zurich (2003), and Whitechapel Art Gallery, London (2002). His work has been featured in important recent group shows, including *Fast Forward*, Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie Karlsruhe, Germany (2003), *C'est Arrive Demien*, Biennale d'Art Contemporain, Lyon, France (2003), and *Crosscurrents at Century's End: Selections from the Nueberger Berman Art Collection*, Henry Art Gallery, Seattle (2002).

Rodney Graham, geboren 1947, absolvierte die University of British Columbia (1968–71) und lebt und arbeitet in seiner Heimatstadt Vancouver. Obwohl gemeinhin als Konzeptkünstler genannt, widerlegt die Bandbreite seines künstlerischen und intellektuellen Schaffens jede Einordnung in Kategorien. Als Künstler, Schriftsteller, Musiker und Schauspieler hat er themen- und medienübergreifende Arbeiten geschaffen, die neue Zugänge zu Literatur, Popkultur, Musik, Sound und Landschaft vorstellen. Letzte Einzelausstellungen: 303 Gallery, New York (2004), *Rodney Graham: A Little Thought*, Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles (2004), Donald Young Gallery, Chicago (2003), Hauser & Wirth, Zürich (2003), und Whitechapel Art Gallery, London (2002). Wichtige Gruppenausstellungen: *Fast Forward*, Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie Karlsruhe (2003), *C'est Arrive Demien*, Biennale d'Art Contemporain, Lyon (2003), *Crosscurrents at Century's End: Selections from the Nueberger Berman Art Collection*, Henry Art Gallery, Seattle (2002).

Laurent P. Berger

Artist and Set designer, lives and works in Paris. He creates videos, installations, performances, photographies, which were shown in several group exhibitions. He received a grant through Académie de France in Rome to work and reside at the Villa Médici during 1999–2000. He designs set and lights for several theater plays and Operas in various locations as Théâtre de la Colline (Paris), Théâtre de la Ville (Paris), Covent Garden (London), Opéra de la Monnaie (Bruxelles), Juneau-Theater (Alaska-USA), Weimar Opera (Germany). Currently he is preparing the set design for *Diptychon* at the Ruhrfestspiele in Germany and a solo exhibition *Dancing allowed* at the Gallery Volume! in Rome.

Künstler und Bühnenbildner, lebt und arbeitet in Paris. Seine künstlerische Arbeit umfasst Video, Installation, Performance und Fotografie. Zahlreiche Ausstellungsbeteiligungen. Er erhielt ein Stipendium der Académie de France, um in der Villa Medici in Rom zu leben und zu arbeiten (1999–2000). Er gestaltet Bühnenbilder für Theater und Oper, u. a. Théâtre de la Colline (Paris), Théâtre de la Ville (Paris), Covent Garden (London), Opéra de la Monnaie (Brüssel), Juneau-Theater (Alaska), Deutsches Nationaltheater Weimar (Deutschland). Zurzeit entwickelt er das Bühnenbild für *Diptychon*, das bei den Ruhrfestspielen aufgeführt wird. Nächste Einzelausstellung: *Dancing allowed*, Galerie Volume!, Rom.

Philip Huber

Master puppeteer for *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty*, is an internationally recognized "artist with marionettes," who is most widely known for his screen work as the marionette-animator played by John Cusack in the thrice nominated Academy Award film, *Being John Malkovich*.

Der international anerkannte „Künstler mit Marionetten", wurde berühmt für seine Arbeit im Film *Being John Malkovich*, in dem John Cusack den Puppenspieler gibt.

Japanther (Matt Reilly & Ian Vanek)

Japanther approaches music the way an artist might approach collage. By layering beats with organic drumming and heavily fuzzed bass guitar, the sound is made instanty distinct. To further their aesthetic, the band has even cutpay phones from booths and wires them as vocal mikes. For over three years this Brooklyn duo have toured the world while feverishly releasing records and making life long friends, with fun and friendship the core of their music. Challenges and strange spaces have always interested Japanther, and they find *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty* to be just that: strange and challenging.

Japanther nähert sich der Musik wie ein Künstler einer Collage. Beats werden überlagert von Schlagzeug und Bass, zur Steigerung ihrer Ästhetik verwendet die Band Telefonhörer als Mikrofone. Japanthers Punkrock definiert sich als organische, collageartige Zusammensetzung unterschiedlicher vokaler Harmonien. Seit mehr als 3 Jahren tourt das Duo aus Brooklyn durch die Welt und veröffentlicht fieberhaft Platten. *Don't Trust Anyone Over Thirty* entspricht ihrer Vorliebe für Herausforderungen und ungewöhnliche Orte.

Bruce Odland

Odland is a Sound Artist and Composer internationally known for his installations transforming city noise into harmonic music thus altering the emotional landscape of public space. Currently he is working on an opera with Wooster Group, and writing a book on how a *Hearing Perspective* provides needed counterpoint to this visual world with longtime collaborator, Austrian Sound Artist, Sam Auinger.

Der Komponist und Tonkünstler ist bekannt durch seine Klanginstallationen, in denen er aus Straßenlärm komplexe harmonische Strukturen filtert und so die emotionale Landschaft des öffentlichen Raumes verändert. Zurzeit arbeitet er an einer Oper mit der Wooster Group sowie an einem Buch (*Hearing Perspective*), gemeinsam mit seinem langjährigen Partner, dem österreichischen Tonkünstler Sam Auinger.

Eugene Tsai

Tsai lives and works in New York as an art director and designer. He has collaborated with artists including Gaetano Pesce, Robert Wilson, and Urs Fisher. His furniture and fashion designs have been exhibited in the US, Europe and Japan.

Der Art Director und Designer lebt und arbeitet in New York. Tsai arbeitete mit Künstlern wie Gaetano Pesce, Robert Wilson und Urs Fisher. Seine Entwürfe für Möbel und Mode wurden in den USA, Europa und Japan gezeigt.

Carlos Soto

Soto works in a variety of fields, encompassing performance, theory, fashion, and dramaturgy. He presented, with long-time collaborator Koken Ergun, the installation *Ote-Oceanwide* as a side-event of the 2001 Istanbul Biennial.

Sotos Arbeit umfasst die Bereiche Performance, Theorie, Mode und Dramaturgie. Er arbeitete mit den Regisseuren Robert Wilson, Richard Foreman und Kameron Steele. Gemeinsam mit Koken Ergun präsentierte er 2001 an der Istanbul Biennale die Installation *Ote-Oceanwide*.

Contents Inhalt

About T-B A21 | A new foundation for contemporary art, T-B A21 was founded by Francesca von Habsburg in Vienna, Austria. Its mission is to support through co-productions and unique commissions the creation of new works from artists that contribute important positions to the contemporary art practice. T-B A21 seeks to achieve this through multi-disciplinary projects that break down the traditional boundaries that define and categorize artistic expression in its different forms, whilst at the same time empowering the audiences with a living experience of contemporary artistic expression. The work of the foundation brings innovation to the core of the Thyssen-Bornemisza fourth generation's approach to collecting and patronizing the arts.

Über T-B A21 | Im Jahr 2002 wurde Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary unter dem Vorsitz von Francesca von Habsburg gegründet. Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary – kurz T-B A21 – hat zum Ziel, neuartige Koproduktionen und Auftragsarbeiten mit bedeutenden zeitgenössischen Künstlern zu initiieren. Richtungsweisende Positionen des zeitgenössischen Kunstschaffens zu etablieren und multi-disziplinäre Projekte, welche die traditionellen kategorischen Grenzen transzendieren, bilden dabei zentrale methodische Vorgaben sowie die aktive Einbindung des Betrachters in einen lebendigen Dialog mit zeitgenössischen Kunstformen. Die Arbeit der Stiftung stellt Innovation ins Zentrum der Sammlungstradition und des Mäzenatentums der Familie Thyssen-Bornemisza – ein Engagement, das Francesca von Habsburg in der vierten Generation fortführt.

TBA21 Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary