

STONESCAPES

Why would you say
something if it's off camera?
What point is there existing?

Warren Beatty on Madonna, *Madonna:
Truth or Dare*

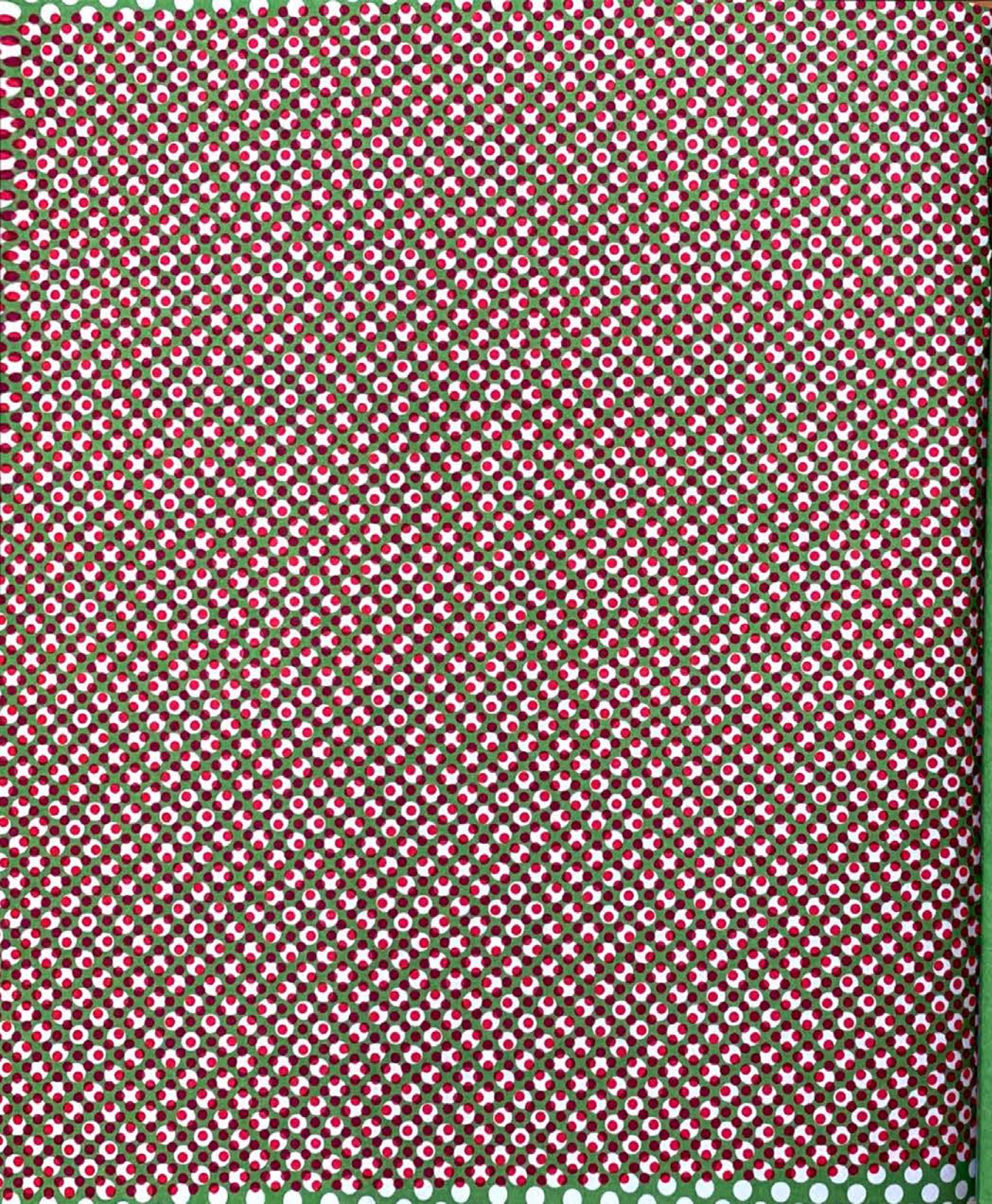
CONVERGENCE

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INTRODUCTION

“Convergence,” the current exhibition at *Stonescape*, was inspired by the questions: How do contemporary artists respond to a world that is increasingly about the spectacle and the cult of personality; a world in which technology and social media is ubiquitous and often pervasive?

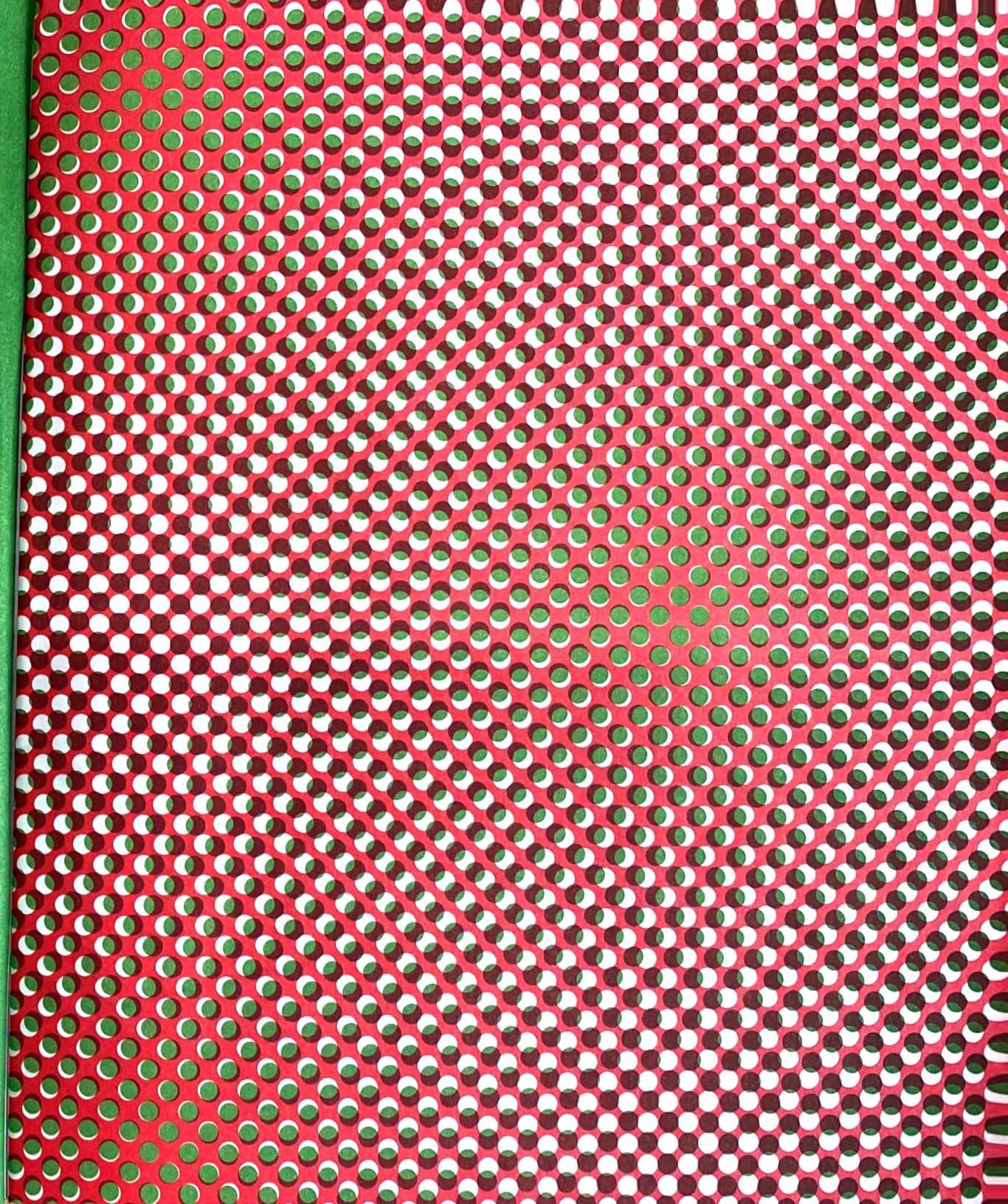
Pop Art in the 1960s, with its focus on the consumer and the celebrity, precipitated the blurring of boundaries between high and low culture. More recently, we have witnessed an almost complete collapse of those hierarchies. Art, luxury goods, fashion, commodity, celebrity, branding and identity are now inextricably intertwined.

This exhibition considers the means by which contemporary artists explore these issues. They work in a variety of media, notably film, performance and installation, but also in more traditional formats such as painting and photography. Strategies are various and include the subversion of paradigms through the appropriation of technology, advertising techniques or the use of celebrity imagery. Performance, video, and the utilization of language as a material reduce

the speed at which the viewer is able to receive and process information. The muddling of reality and fiction effectively obscures meaning, or at least, leaves its interpretation open, thereby frustrating the desire for a work to be easily apprehended. Collaborative and appropriative practices defy authorship and easy categorization, upending the more didactic strategies that were a hallmark of previous generations of artists.

While each of the artists in “Convergence” confronts these issues, they are all working out of diverse perspectives and experiences. Some of the artists, such as Amalia Ulman and Bill Hayden, have grown up amidst reality television, the Internet and the proliferation of celebrity culture; while others including Karl Holmqvist, Mark Leckey, Bernadette Corporation and Antek Walczak are part of a generation that straddled the divide, witnessing its formation. And then there are artists like Andy Warhol and Lynn Hershman Leeson, whose work foresaw these concerns by decades.

“Convergence” represents the fifth exhibition at *Stonescape*, Norman and Norah Stones’ Napa Valley property. As with previous installations, the exhibition has been organized using works solely from their personal collection.



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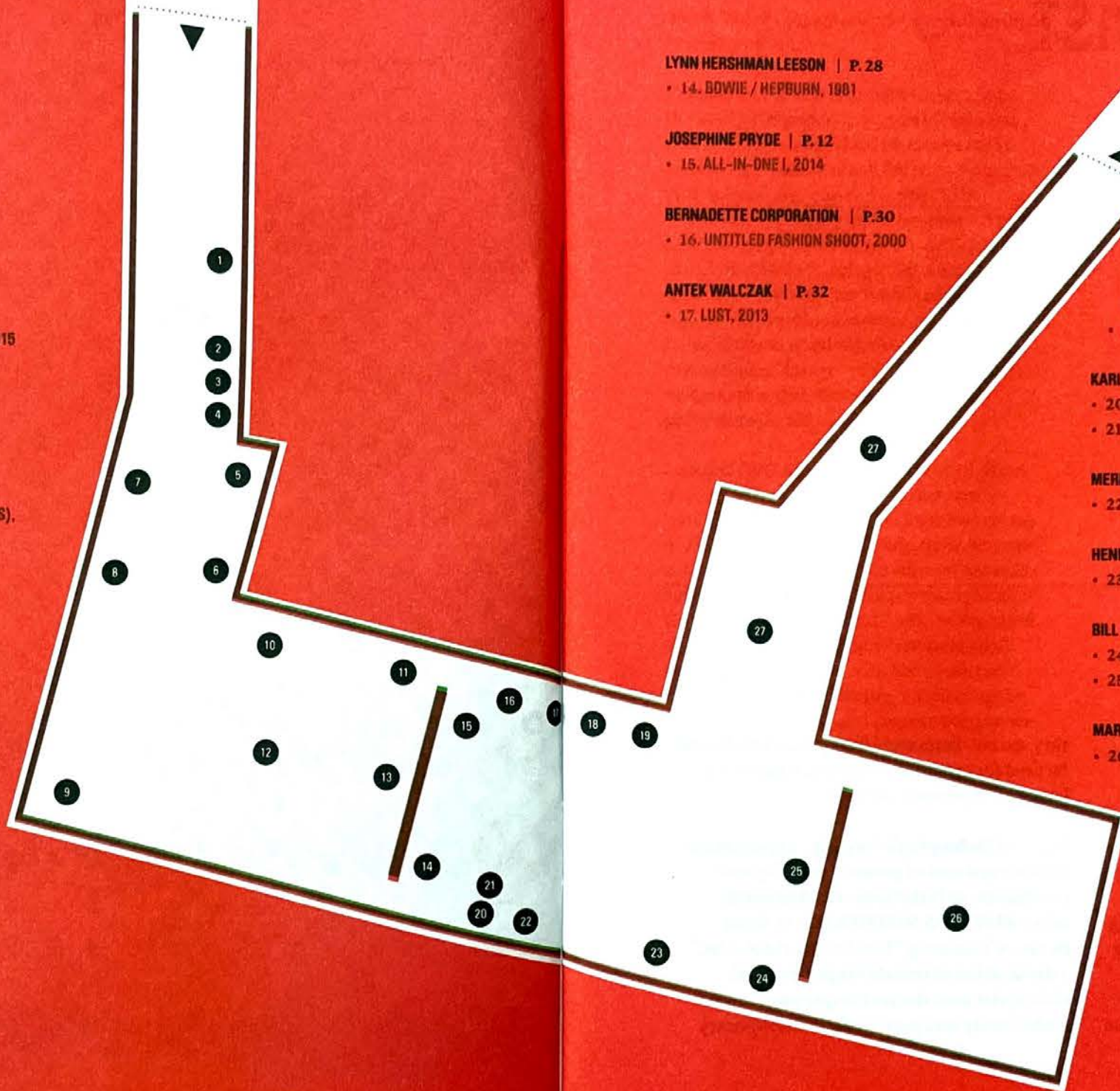
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KARL HOLMQVIST

b. 1964; lives and works in Berlin

1. WHO RUN THIS MOTHER, 2011

Neon

39 3/8 x 51 1/8 x 1 3/4 inches

Edition of 3

20. UNTITLED (WALLPAPER), 2013

Poster wallpaper (71 PDFs)

Dimensions variable

21. UNTITLED (BIG ASS PAINTING), 2015

UV ink on canvas with metal buttons

70 7/8 x 70 7/8 inches

KARL HOLMQVIST's primary medium is language. His practice has its genesis in concrete poetry and performance and it is only in the last few years that Holmqvist has begun to make objects such as sculptures, wallpaper and paintings, all of which continue the artist's exploration into the potential of language. Holmqvist appropriates text from both high and low culture, unmooring them from their traditional or original meaning through repetition, or as Holmqvist describes it "transforming things through reuse."¹ He continues: "I'm repeating these phrases because

they are out there, and I like to see what they can be used for in this other context, which is my language experimentation."²

Many of Holmqvist's language experiments explore systems of power, sexuality and commerce, as is the case with the neon, *WHO RUN THIS MOTHER* (2011), from Beyoncé's hit song "Run the World (Girls)," a declaration of female empowerment. Holmqvist uses the text to question the authenticity and power of a contemporary

celebrity's engagement with feminism and gender politics.

Holmqvist further probes these issues in *Untitled (Wallpaper)* (2013) on view in the main gallery. Comprised of 71 repeating panels, the work was exhibited at Kunsthall Charlottenborg, under the title "Give Posters a Try," a play on Holmqvist's own catchphrase, "Give Poetry a Try." Individual panels form an encyclopedia of inspiration, including Christopher Wool's early and iconic text paintings (now regularly selling for millions at auction); the lyrics to "Lady Marmelade;" images of Freddie Mercury; and text that questions the efficacy of philanthropic aid, among others.

Untitled (BIG ASS PAINTING) (2015), from a series of work that takes on sexism, homophobia and racism, is installed on top of the wallpaper. With deadpan humor and a nod to New York punk culture of the mid-1980s, not to mention the poetic stylings of Gertrude Stein, the word "ASS" is repeated and reordered, rendering it nonsensical. Holmqvist also plays with the modernist device of the grid painting, employing the silver "BAD" buttons to impose tongue-in-cheek order over the composition.

JOSEPHINE PRYDE

b. 1967; lives and works in London and Berlin)

2. A CONE, 2015

C-print
31 3/8 x 24 3/4 inches
Edition of 3

3. A FRIEND, 2015

C-print
31 3/8 x 24 3/4 inches
Edition of 3

4. GIFT FÜR MICH, GALERIE NEU CHRISTMAS 2013 (2), 2015

C-print
31 3/8 x 24 3/4 inches
Edition of 3

12. THE HUNGRY MESSENGER, 2015

Miniature rideable train, tracks,
aluminum simple buffer stops, steel
fancy buffer stop
train: 17 x 11 x 182 inches overall

15. ALL-IN-ONE I, 2014

C-print
22 3/8 x 18 7/8 inches
Edition of 3

2016 Turner Prize nominee, JOSEPHINE PRYDE, works in a variety of media, most prominently photography, and draws upon a variety of sources such as the natural sciences and 20th-century modernism, portraiture, fashion and advertising.

Pryde's subject matter might seem quotidian at first glance, however, she peels away the layers of visual culture to offer a shrewd social critique rendering an image that is inimitably hers. Case in point is *All-in-One* (2014), a

photograph that originated with the request of a friend to create advertising images for a line of swimwear. Pryde demurred explaining that type of work wasn't something of interest to her, but she did use the clothing as a prop in creating a body of work that relates more to her modernist forebears than to product photography.

The series of images that appear in the entry gallery illustrate the sensation of

touch, and offer a sly commentary on society's fascination with technology, which increasingly serves as a tool that enables us to curate our identities. In *A Cone* (2015), the model touches a found object much as one would a smartphone, as if trying to retrieve information, while the text in *A Friend* (2015) alludes to the sanitization of online personas. *Gift für Mich, Galerie Neu Christmas 2013* (2) (2015) depicts one of the nearly identical sweaters that Pryde received from her dealers as a holiday present. The artist noted that when she asked prospective art students during interviews why they were applying to the school, the gesture of hand to chest, seen in the photograph, was often accompanied by the response, "I am doing it for myself."³

Originally exhibited at The Wattis Institute in San Francisco, *The Hungry Messenger* (2015) is a 1:10 scale reproduction of a train with a Union Pacific engine, original graffiti, and a working whistle. The train, meant to be ridden by guests, runs through the space, though it never completes a full circuit. Rather, it comes to an anticlimactic stop before backing up to its starting position. In a conversation with the artist / writer / gallerist, John Kelsey, he noted that the train travels, but ends up going nowhere, critiquing the notion of "progress."⁴ The installation can also be seen as a comment upon the current manner in which art is consumed and the requirement for art to be entertaining or spectacularized in order to warrant our attention.

PIERRE HUYGHE

b. 1962; lives and works Santiago de Chile and New York

5. SINGING IN THE RAIN, 1996

Pedestal, shoes

pedestal: 11 7/8 x 34 1/4 x 34 1/4 inches

Edition of 3

6. A JOURNEY THAT WASN'T, 2008

C-print

33 7/8 x 49 5/8 x 1 3/4 inches framed

Edition of 10

PIERRE HUYGHE's work is as diverse in material as it is visually compelling and enigmatic. Subjects from the animal world abound, from films that depict a Noh mask-wearing monkey in post-tsunami Fukushima; or a dog named "Human" with a single pink leg; to his zoodrams which are precisely conceived landscapes filled with plant and aquatic life. Those works, along with Huyghe's performative, time-based pieces, present the viewer with new or alternative realities.

Though often considered part of the Relational Aesthetics group of artists, a movement in which the viewer is integral to the construction of meaning, Huyghe is often described as making works that are "indifferent" to the viewer – where ideas are not pre-digested, overly determined or reliant upon the viewer to be the maker of meaning. The artist explains, "I'm trying not to do for; the television does for; I'm trying to be indifferent to the presence ... I'm trying as much as I can not to think for them. I'm trying to be

indifferent to the fact that there is a gaze or not a gaze on the work."⁵

Singing in the Rain (1996), which is displayed as a pair of golden shoes placed atop a scuffed pedestal, is such a work. An homage to Gene Kelly, it can only be activated once a year, the anniversary of his death. On February 2, regardless of the presence of an audience, a performer can don the shoes and restage Kelly's routine from the iconic 1952 film.

An example of Huyghe's work originating from the natural world, *A Journey That Wasn't* (2008) is a photograph based upon the artist's film of the same name. In the film, an expeditionary crew travels to Antarctica in the hopes of locating an albino penguin. There is some question as to whether certain aspects of the trip are accurate, including its title, suggesting that a journey never occurred, thereby obscuring the line between fact and fiction.

RYAN GANDER

b. 1976; lives and works in London

7. AND YOU WILL BE CHANGED (CENTRE POMPIDOU, PARIS), 2014

digital video, color, sound (French spoken, English subtitles)

duration: 10 minutes

Edition of 3

RYAN GANDER's work can be described as a string of narratives or associations that the artist weaves. He merges reality and fiction, often asking the viewer to supply their own connections. Gander employs a variety of media chosen to suit the context and content of the work – from lectures, to photography, sculptures, installations, performances, works on paper, and public projects.

Gander often references artists or art historical moments in his practice, and he frequently draws

upon his own life for inspiration. For example, Gander has made a series of sculptures based upon the playful architectural structures, or forts, built by his daughter, Olive. And he is not immune to taking aim at himself and the conditions of the art market: at a recent installment of ArtBasel Miami Beach, Gander employed an actor to pose as a future version of himself, reduced to selling trinkets to art fair goers.

Like Pierre Huyghe, Gander is another artist who surveys the liminal space between

reality and fiction, and in one instance, invented an entire group of artists known as the “Blue Conceptualists,” giving life, and work, to certain artists of the movement. Stemming from Gander's close engagement with Huyghe's practice, *And You Will be Changed (Centre Pompidou, Paris)* (2014) explores the power of memory and imagination of the viewer. The video follows Emma Lavigne, the curator of the Huyghe retrospective at the Pompidou, as she walks through the recently de-installed exhibition. Lavigne offers the viewer a tour of the show, speaking about the works as if they were still on view. The title speaks to one artist's deep experience of another artist's work, and subsequent transformation.

MARK LECKEY

b. 1964; lives and works in London

8. TRANSFIGURING (RGB), 2013

LED screen

57 × 44 ½ inches

Edition of 3

26. FIORUCCI MADE ME HARDCORE, 1999

DVD

duration: 15 minutes

Edition of 20

MARK LECKEY works primarily in video with found footage in order to reflect upon the power of music and fashion in the creation of self-image; he addresses our relationship with the past and the possibility of transformation within our daily existence. Martin McGeown of Cabinet gallery, who has long represented the artist, recalled of Leckey around 1997, "At that time one of his demons was nostalgia. It haunted him as a kind of condition, a sickness. He was trying to rid himself of it, but also re-experience it."⁶

Installed in the back gallery is *Fiorucci Made Me Hardcore* (1999), an early and iconic work by Leckey, in which the artist collaged together found footage of British dance subcultures from the 1970s, 80s and 90s, setting it to club music punctuated by sirens. The video was precipitated by a conversation between Leckey, McGeown, Gavin Brown and the curator Emma Dexter in which Leckey claimed that music video was the most exciting art form of the time. Challenged by Dexter, Leckey made *Fiorucci*

Made Me Hardcore, describing the title as expressing "something trite and throwaway and exploitative as a jeans manufacturer can be taken by a group of people and made into something totemic, and powerful, and life-affirming."⁷

Though the work presaged Internet access and our current fascination with online video content (e.g. YouTube and Vevo), it affirms the power of the music video as a disseminator of style and culture, depicting the individual in moments of sheer abandon.

Transfiguring (RGB) (2013) depicts Hibiscus, a founding member of The Cockettes, a theater group based in Haight-Ashbury in the late 1960s. While the group was initially part of the underground, they quickly gained notoriety and the interest of mainstream media, at which point Hibiscus left the group due to divergent philosophies. Leckey presents Hibiscus in extreme close up, covered in his trademark glitter, seemingly suspended in time, almost like a religious icon. Indeed, the title suggests a moment of metamorphosis from the earthly to something beautifully ethereal.

RIRKRIT TIRAVANIJA

b. 1961; lives and works in New York, Berlin and Chiang Mai

9. UNTITLED 2011 (POLICE THE POLICE), 2011

Pencil on wall, silkscreened t-shirts, steel
312 x 312 inches walls

“Convergence” is the third *Stonescape* exhibition to include *untitled (police the police)* (2011). It is an installation that evolved out of an ongoing series of “Demonstration” drawings, works that were sourced from demonstrations or protests published in the *International Herald Tribune*. The Stones commissioned Rirkrit Tiravanija, who formulated an installation based upon the history of the San Francisco / Bay Area, a region with a long-held tradition of political activism and engagement.

The installation is intended to develop over time. Art students from Thailand and San Francisco initially spent two weeks reproducing images on the walls of the art cave on fresh ground, as well as layering image over image. Per the instruction of the artist, the students have come back periodically to add further demonstration drawings to the wall, obscuring some of the original drawings and making other areas illegible. The process is intended to

continue until the wall’s surface is completely black. The last round of additions included images from the protests in Oakland over the police shootings in Ferguson, Missouri, and the subsequent rise of the Black Lives Matter movement. Awareness of such events has been elevated as a result of our ability to capture cell phone video, allowing for immediate availability to the public.

Tiravanija is most often associated with “Relational Aesthetics,” a term branded by the theorist Nicolas Bourriaud to describe a type of art that functions as a site for discussion and exchange. Here, collaboration between artist and viewer is essential and Tiravanija’s piece, *police the police*, is emblematic of this approach. The artist who conceives of and directs the work, the students who generate the work, the audience who views the work, even the historical facts of the protests that inspire the work, are all implicated in the meaning of this piece, bringing to light different perspectives on political and social concerns while reaffirming the power of both an individual as well as a communal voice.

ANDY WARHOL

1928-1987; lived and worked in New York

10. BLUE MOVIE, 1968

Screenprint on silver mylar

36 ¾ x 47 ½ inches

ANDY WARHOL, best known for his silkscreen paintings of Campbell's Soup cans and celebrity portraiture including Elizabeth Taylor and Marilyn Monroe, was also a prolific filmmaker. The Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh currently holds about 350 films and 4,000 video tapes by the artist, many featuring members of the Factory. Warhol began making film early in his career, the first of which was *Sleep* (1963), starring John Giorno. Warhol's films were groundbreaking: some are time-based

(*Sleep* clocked in at 321 minutes, *Empire* (1964) is even longer), and they often pushed sexual boundaries.

Blue Movie (1968), a still from the movie of the same name starring Viva and Louis Waldron, is one of the first films Warhol made after Valerie Solanas's attempt on his life. It was also the first film widely released in theaters in the United States to include actual intercourse, though in typical Warhol fashion,

he offered a tongue-in-cheek description of its storyline, which included some discussion of current world events. "According to the program note, 'Blue Movie' is 'a film about the Vietnam War and what we can do about it,'" wrote Vincent Canby in his review of the movie for *The New York Times*.⁸ He goes on to say, "Stag films aren't supposed to be sweet" referring to the unscripted and rather tender interaction between the stars.⁹ The film opened at the Garrick Theater in New York in July 1969 and played for about a week before the police raided the theater and confiscated the tape.

While some, including the New York Court, may have labeled *Blue Movie* as pornography, Warhol saw it as striving to depict reality. And in some sense, the film is more "real" than what viewers encounter in the scripted reality television shows so popular today. In an interview published in *Vogue*, Warhol stated, "I think movies should appeal to prurient interests. I mean the way things are going now - people are alienated from one another. Hollywood films are just planned-out commercials."¹⁰

ALEX ISRAEL

b. 1982; lives and works in Los Angeles

11. SELF PORTRAIT (SWIMMING POOL), 2014

Acrylic and bondo on fiberglass

96 × 84 × 4 inches

ALEX ISRAEL engages contemporary themes of branding and celebrity while he references the particular topography of Los Angeles via a practice that includes paintings, videos, sculptures and even a line of sunglasses. Producing many of his works in the Warner Brothers lot, Israel uses Hollywood as the backdrop for his practice, utilizing forms and strategies commonplace in “show business” to subvert his relationship to art history and the marketplace.

In collaboration with Warner Brothers set designers, Israel began to make a series of “Flats,” stuccoed paintings that took the form of windows or doors from houses found in the aspirational neighborhoods of Los Angeles. The term “flats” derives from the sets resembling home interiors or building facades that are disassembled and stored when a show is not being filmed. A pair of flats and a backdrop painted to resemble a vivid sunset particular to the West Coast were used on the set of Israel’s

web-series, “As it LAys,” where he conducted television-style interviews with celebrities such as Oliver Stone and Ian Ziering, former star of “Beverly Hills 90210.” In these interviews, the artist appears in a suit donning his line of sunglasses, and asks the celebrity questions that upend the sanitized fare standard to late-night talk shows.

Self Portrait (Swimming Pool) (2014) is from Israel’s series of self-portraits, the design of which began as a graphic logo for the artist’s online presence, and was used in the introduction of “As it LAys.” Originally including color blocked areas denoting features such as a beard and hair, the form has now become a standardized structure for the artist to merge his identity with LA themes and aesthetics. This particular painting of a swimming pool and drain was inspired by Israel’s visit to the *Stonescape* property in 2014 and in particular his experience of James Turrell’s *Stone Sky, 2005*. The work also pays homage to the art historical significance of the swimming pool in Los Angeles culture, from Ed Rucha’s photographic series to David Hockney’s iconic works.

PHILIPPE PARRENO

b. 1964; lives and works in Paris

13. MARQUEE, 2011

Transparent perspex, 80 lightbulbs 105W, 1 shadow maker
and 3 flicker 2D playing firelight effects

13 ¾ × 86 ⅝ × 35 ⅜ inches

PHILIPPE PARRENO investigates popular culture, celebrity, the passage of time, mortality, desire, and the relationship between reality and fiction. His works range from witty and celebratory (for example, a series of large-scale birthday candles or aluminum Christmas trees that function as decoration for one month of the year and sculpture for the remaining eleven months) to intense personal studies that are tinged with pathos.

As part of "Revealed," the last *Stonescape* exhibition, Parreno's video, *Marilyn* (2012), was screened at a local theater. The work, which is set in Monroe's suite at the Waldorf Astoria, reincarnates the actress with the help of technology. The camera serves as her eyes, through which we see the room; a computer program gives voice to her words; and a robot recreates her handwriting. As the video progresses, and her haunting words are repeated, the viewer comes to understand that what they

believe to be the actress is, in fact, an invention, which can be seen as a metaphor for her identity as "Marilyn Monroe."

Parreno's work not only bridges the technological and artistic worlds within his practice, but he extends the partnership to the orchestration of the exhibition venue itself, determining how we move through the space and ultimately how we experience the installation. For example, Parreno's recent exhibitions at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris and the Park Avenue Armory in New York included music as a mechanism by which artworks and events were triggered.

Marquee (2011), part of a series initially begun in 2006, references the vintage theater signage that typically announced films along with the actors in starring roles. Each of Parreno's marquees is unique in form with chasing lights that can be programmed in a variety of ways. This particular example was included in the aforementioned "H (N)Y P N(Y) OSIS" show at the Armory as well as the 54th Venice Biennale. *Marquee*, with flashing bulbs but no announcement text has a ghostly quality, suggesting an age past, at the same time that it implies a liminal space, hinting at events to be experienced beyond.

LYNN HERSHMAN LEESON

b. 1941; lives and works in San Francisco

14. BOWIE / HEPBURN, 1981

Photo collage
9 ½ × 7 inches

19. FREUD / MONROE, 1982

Ektacolor c-print
22 × 33 inches
Edition of 3

LYNN HERSHMAN LEESON's practice is performance and installation based, and she pioneered the use of digital art forms as early as the late 1970s. Hershman Leeson engages in social commentary vis-à-vis our relationship to technology by documenting identity in an age of seamless consumerism and surveillance, and by tracking how humans interface with machines in real and virtual spaces.

Hershman Leeson's most iconic body of work

investigated the construction of female identity as well as the creation of a virtual reality. Beginning in 1974, Hershman Leeson took on the persona of Roberta Breitmore, a fictional character or "agent" whom she brought to life and documented through everyday activities such as obtaining a driver's license, getting a bank account, or going on a date. Hershman Leeson performed Breitmore until 1978, recording her through photographs, a diary, and drawings, among other methods.

From 1981 to 1984 Hershman Leeson explored media images of celebrities and historical figures in a series she titled "Hero Sandwiches." *Bowie / Hepburn* (1981) and *Freud / Monroe* (1982), both works from the series, collage or splice images of complementary personalities, thereby creating a completely new individual with surprising results. For example, Katharine Hepburn was perceived as a modern and independent woman for her time, countering traditional notions of femininity. David Bowie, on the other hand, was often described as androgynous or gender-bending, forging a unique identity or identities through fashion and his ambiguous attitude towards sexuality. Collaged together, images of these trailblazing individuals appear eerily similar, a yin to the other's yang.

In *Freud / Monroe*, Hershman Leeson turns the images on their heads, quite literally, inverting one over the other, leaving their eyes to overlap. Here, she has combined Marilyn Monroe, the Hollywood bombshell and sex symbol, with Sigmund Freud, the man credited with founding the field of psychoanalysis and theorizing that sexual repression was a root of our psychological troubles.

BERNADETTE CORPORATION

Established 1994; lives and works in New York

16. UNTITLED FASHION SHOOT, 2000

C-print

28 3/8 x 20 inches

Edition of 2

Consisting of core members Bernadette van Huy, John Kelsey and Antek Walczak, **BERNADETTE CORPORATION** emerged in the mid-1990s downtown New York City as party promoters-cum-fashion designers. Theirs is a practice of clothing design, branding, filmmaking, publishing and object making that uses the identity of a firm to disrupt standard models of consumption. Humorously explaining the corporate structure of their endeavors, they write, "We call ourselves a corporation because

corporations are everywhere, and it impresses people ... pretending we are business people while we sleep all day like cats." ¹¹

From its inception, Bernadette Corporation, whose membership has fluctuated over the years, has explored fashion, in particular branding, styling and design. From 1995 to 1998, their investigations were realized in a series of prêt-à-porter fashion collections variously inspired by the urban styles seen on the Lower East Side, the

television show "Baywatch," Japanese manga and motorcycle culture. The group's first gallery show, which included the fashion line along with photographs styled by Bernadette Corporation, was in 1997 at American Fine Arts, a space run by Colin de Land.

In the late 1990s, Bernadette Corporation dissolved, then came back together to work on a self-published "fashion" magazine called *Made in USA*, a reference to Jean-Luc Godard's "worst movie"¹² of the same name. The first issue included translations of essays by French film critic, Serge Daney, as well as fashion reports and interviews. The second issue of *Made in USA* was made in response to an invitation to participate in the Walker Art Center's group show, "Let's Entertain," in 2000. Bernadette Corporation's contribution to the exhibition was a fashion campaign and photo shoot which ultimately appeared in the magazine. The group went on to make a third issue of *Made in USA*, and then discontinued the magazine in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 2001.

Untitled fashion shoot (2000), styled by Bernadette Corporation and photographed by Cris Moor, was one of the images that appeared in the second *Made in USA* issue, and is like much of Bernadette Corporation's work in that it upends the viewer's expectations for conventional forms of visual communication. They access the aesthetic and the structure of the typical fashion shoot as an opportunity to expand the form. By placing the model, hair still in rollers, in what appears to be a storage space, Bernadette Corporation wages an open-ended critique of the fashion industry.

ANTEK WALCZAK

b. 1968; lives and works in New York

17. LUST, 2013

Oil on canvas

60 x 56 inches

ANTEK WALCZAK is an artist, writer and filmmaker based in New York. He was a member of the aforementioned Bernadette Corporation, and as well, works in collaboration with artists Mathieu Malouf, Sam Pulitzer and Bill Hayden (the latter also included in "Convergence") as part of an ongoing project called "War Pickles," a roaming pickle shop that plays with commodity culture and the gallery system in humorous fashion. Antek's work, which often utilizes coding or algorithms, analyzes how we receive and

negotiate information. He examines linguistic systems within a visual realm, reflecting on what it means to operate as a thinking and creating agent (e.g. an artist), in an ever-evolving semiotic matrix.

Lust (2013), titled after one of the seven deadly sins, is from Walczak's 2013 series of oil paintings that appeared in the exhibition, "New Transbohemian States," at Real Fine Arts gallery in Brooklyn. The paintings

have antecedents in concrete poetry and Andy Warhol's "Dance Diagram" paintings, executed in the early 1960s, and follow Walczak's fascination with animation.

The paintings depict classic cartoon characters (in this case, Woody Woodpecker), and operate like a visual linguistic game, both facilitating and, at times, frustrating the flow of information. Walczak used the paradigm of state transition diagrams which are typically used in computer science to model behaviors, in this case the condition of the contemporary artist within the context of the art market. *Lust* is a portrait of anxiety, offering up a humorous critique of the system, while acknowledging the desire (from the standpoint of both artist and collector) so integral to the system itself.

CINDY SHERMAN

b. 1954; lives and works in New York

18. UNTITLED FILM STILL [#27], 1979

Black and white photograph

40 x 30 inches

Edition of 3

CINDY SHERMAN emerged in the late 1970s as part of the “Pictures Generation,” a term that arose from the seminal 1977 Artists Space exhibition, “Pictures,” curated by Douglas Crimp. The group, which worked primarily in photography and video (ushering in a period that proclaimed the “death of painting”), was known for its strategy of appropriating images from mass media, in particular advertising and film.

From the beginning, Sherman has used herself as a canvas, employing elaborate makeup, prosthetics, costuming, backdrops and lighting to transform herself into archetypes or characters. She also borrows from paradigms such as the centerfold or the history painting, creating a framework that allows her to explore typologies within these parameters.

Untitled Film Still [#27] (1979) is from Sherman’s most iconic series, the “Untitled

Film Stills,” comprising 69 black and white photographs made between 1977 to 1980. This body of work is reminiscent of film noir and B movies, with familiar, though not explicit, narratives and characters, and is voyeuristic in nature. Here, a woman with a blonde bob wearing a shirt with a leopard print collar sits at a table. Lit cigarette in one hand, a half imbibed martini in front of her, she has been crying as evidenced by the rivulets of black mascara that run down her cheek. Film stills were not necessarily individual frames from a movie, but rather images that are reenactments or that capture the essence of the film for the purposes of advertising. Just as real film stills are based upon performances, so too are Sherman’s photographs. In this sense, writes Amada Cruz, “Sherman’s *Untitled Film Stills* are not only photographic records of performances, but, inversely, performative accounts of filmic images.”¹³

MERLIN CARPENTER

b. 1967; lives and works in London

22. AMY WINEHOUSE, 2014

Acrylic on canvas

84 x 84 inches

MERLIN CARPENTER, though schooled in England, spent the early 1990s working in Cologne under the German painter Martin Kippenberger. Like Kippenberger, Carpenter has a sense of humor, which he directs towards a critique of art institutions and the art market. Through paintings, sculptures and installations, sometimes using appropriated or readymade material, Carpenter scrutinizes the role of luxury goods and branding within the contemporary art world, and touches on issues of taste.

Carpenter is perhaps best known for his project "The Opening," initiated in 2007 at Reena Spaulings Fine Art in New York, and continued at other galleries such as Overduin & Co. in Los Angeles and *dépendance* in Brussels. In this series of works, the paintings were created during the opening, or preview, as a performance and then left in place for the duration of the exhibition. Paint bucket in hand, Carpenter would write on the canvas panels phrases such as "Die Collector Scum" or "Kunst = Kapital"

(Art = Capital). Some examples, such as those made at Overduin & Co., are far more calligraphic in nature, with paint sprayed across the surface like an Abstract Expressionist painting. The series serves as a commentary on the art collector's desire to own a recognizable work by a well-known artist. As well, it is an underhanded dig at the modernist notion that the immediacy of such performative gestures allows for the expression of the unconscious.

Amy Winehouse (2014) is from the exhibition "Decades" at Overduin & Co. in which Carpenter staged an installation of paintings in the style of Warhol screen prints. This aesthetic is now ubiquitous and consonant with the decoration of social spaces like cafes, offices, or other places of commerce. The portraits included celebrities such as Audrey Hepburn, Al Pacino from the movie "Scarface," and Debbie Harry ("Blondie"), as well as the English singer, Amy Winehouse, seen here. Careful examination reveals that, unlike Warhol's silkscreens, these works are hand-painted, not screened. As well, while Warhol reused the same cropped image within a series, Carpenter has altered each of the portraits individually allowing for slight compositional differences. The critic Olivian Cha has suggested that Carpenter's use of a construct with which we are so familiar, the celebrity silkscreen, says more about how we digest these images than the stars themselves. "In the same way that celebrity is not about the singularity of individuals but the construction and distribution of singularity by mass media, art now follows a similar logic of circulation and consumption."¹⁴

HENRIK OLESEN

b. 1967; lives and works in Berlin

23. UNTITLED, 2015

Black and white printed card on perspex

80 3/8 x 60 3/4 inches

HENRIK OLESEN explores identity and sexuality from a variety of perspectives: from art historical imagery and methodology, to scientific theory, as well as the histories of legal codes, politics and technological development. Olesen's practice takes the form of texts, assemblages (or de-assemblages as the case may be), archival boards, posters, sculptures, and less frequently, painting.

Olesen's investigations, in many cases, result in portraiture, whether referencing his own history

or that of others. For example, in "Revealed," the previous installation at *Stonescape*, a computer and printer had been disassembled, each part adhered to a sheet of Plexiglas, a metaphor for the bodies of the owners or users of the technology. "*I Am Sir, Your Obedient Servant*" (2011), a drawing based upon a Francis Picabia homage to Guillaume Apollinaire, was a portrait of Alan Turing, the English World War II codebreaker, who was persecuted when his homosexuality was discovered.

Untitled (2015) is a portrait of Gianni Versace, the openly gay fashion designer of the eponymous label who was tragically murdered outside of his Miami Beach villa in 1997 by serial killer Andrew Cunanan. Olesen conceived of this work, which has a grid pattern that seems to recede in the center, as a sort of optical illusion. While the work appears to be created digitally, the piece is actually comprised of meticulously hand-collaged images of the designer's face, with the exception of a small abrasion on the right side, meant to reveal the method of its making.

BILL HAYDEN

b. 1984; lives and works in New York

24. UNTITLED, 2015

C-print

20 x 13 inches

Edition of 5

This photo in collaboration with Heji Shin

25. EARLY AFTERNOON IDYLL, 2015

Inkjet wall mural, phone ringer, xerox print
dimensions variable

Like a number of artists in the exhibition, **BILL HAYDEN** works collaboratively, as part of the previously mentioned “War Pickles” project, and as a graphic designer for Bernadette Corporation’s recent institutional exhibitions. His own work in photography, sculpture and installation considers ideas around identity, while engaging the relationship between irony and sincerity in contemporary mass culture. The artist employs appropriated visual strategies from the realms of fashion and advertising, and

parlays his own identity into a branding device, thereby calling into question the authenticity of the image of the artist.

Untitled (2015) and Early Afternoon Idyll (2014), both from Hayden’s most recent gallery show at Real Fine Arts in Brooklyn, use the format of a high fashion magazine shoot to suggest the malleability of the artistic persona and the intersection between celebrity and artist in a contemporary setting.

Untitled is an image taken in collaboration with the photographer, Heji Shin, and shows Hayden, hands on hips, wearing a turtleneck—a look that is shorthand for “artsy.”

The installation, *Early Afternoon Idyll (2015)*, is comprised of multiple elements. The left side, a vinyl print, depicts a sexualized Hayden in a designer suit, rather incongruously lounging on a couch in a derelict setting, while the Xerox print on the right side shows him in the same environment, this time strumming a guitar. These two roles, the model and the musician, suggest that that style and “coolness” are requisites in the development of an artistic persona. An old telephone box set into the wall, archaic but functional, might be interpreted as a metaphor questioning the ability of the artist to communicate their position among such constructions.

AMALIA ULMAN

b. 1989; lives and works in Los Angeles

27. THE DESTRUCTION OF EXPERIENCE, 2014

Mixed media installation with video, *The Future Ahead*

Dimensions variable

AMALIA ULMAN works in a variety of media including text, video essays, installation and digital media to explore issues related to gender, celebrity, desire, and class. Ulman's practice, often seen through the lens of social media, is never too divorced from her own biography.

Ulman is most recognized for her project "Excellences & Perfections," which unfolded over the course of a few months on Instagram. As part of the project, Ulman created an online

persona of the same name, documenting her "life" through selfies. The narrative tracked a particular chronology that anyone who watches reality television, follows certain Internet celebrities or reads tabloids might find familiar. It goes like this: The small town girl with dreams of becoming a model becomes a girl about town with a sugar daddy who pays for drugs and breast implants. Insecurity is followed by depression and then rehabilitation. The images Ulman posted were aspirational and seductive,

and they fooled many. Ulman explains, "Part of the project was about how photography can be a signifier of class, and how cultural capital is reflected in selfies. Another aspect consisted of undermining the pretension that social media is a place striving for authenticity."¹⁵

The Destruction of Experience (2014) was originally conceived as an installation at Evelyn Yard in London, and has been restaged by Ulman for *Stonescape*. The work is comprised of two spaces, the first being the waiting room of a health clinic, while the second space is likened to a new-age retreat, both designed with an aesthetic that the artist describes as "sublime ordinariness."¹⁶ Within the office setting, Ulman explores womanhood, in particular the notion that a woman should not age – or that she should fight it with an arsenal of procedures. This is laid out in the accompanying *The Future Ahead* which, using the structure of a conspiracy theory video, suggests that Justin Bieber's forced forehead lines (the "Office Blind Pose" or OBP) are an attempt to masculinize the singer who is hiding his true identity as a female. The second zone includes a series of posters referencing the life cycle of a woman as well as a saccharine text that might be found in a greeting card or on a coffee mug. At the end of the tunnel is an altar of sorts, dedicated to Dr. Marijn Dekkers, the former CEO of Bayer Pharmaceuticals who, in this context, has been elevated to the status of a guru, or a quasi-religious figure. The passage through these spaces guides the viewer to nirvana, "the imperturbable stillness of mind after the fires of desire, aversion, and delusion have been finally extinguished, that stillness that comes with the destruction of time. The destruction of Experience."¹⁷

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