

THE TITLE AS THE CURATOR'S ART PIECE\*

A SUMMER SHOW BY MATHIEU COPELAND

\*Show title #347, by Stefan Brüggemann

A painting exhibition with Jaroslaw Flicinski & Claude Rutault

A spoken word exhibition with Douglas Coupland, Nick Currie (aka Momus), Karl Holmqvist, Tomas Vanek, Lawrence Weiner & Ian Wilson

*The Title As The Curator's Art Piece*\* acts as a multi-layered exhibition, a series of successive exhibitions in one given space, at a given time. A neutral 'all over' curating, constantly expanding in time, two independent exhibitions within a concomitant space are unified by the time of the exhibition.

A spoken word exhibition.

When addressed, the gallery staff act as a voice in mediating the worded artworks as instructed by the artists, may these be sentences, poems, free conversations, instructions, texts, haikus...

Each day of the exhibition, Nick Currie (aka Momus) releases a different Chinese Whisper in the gallery space, constructing an unique accumulation of murmurs. A piece revealing itself through time, that contributes to an exhibition in constant becoming.

For Karl Holmqvist's work the play by Jean Cocteau *La Voix Humaine (The Human Voice)* will be repeated (and not performed!) throughout the duration of the exhibition, exacerbating the length and the pauses of the original text. Holmqvist, whom in his own words hates the faggoty pretentiousness of Cocteau ('love conquers hate—everything comes to those who wait'), uses readers of both sexes acting as a reminder of the sex-change that took place in 1949 when actor Klaus Kinski played this one-act play that was written for an actress.

Tomas Vanek creates a new distributive situation, by offering several sentences from his on-going project *Particip n°39* each day of the exhibition. All taken from the collected statements of single sentences that we all experience – that are most familiar to everybody (please send similar statements to [tomas.vanek@cbox.cz](mailto:tomas.vanek@cbox.cz)). Playing on the nature of the sentences and the gender they adopt through the reader, in their accumulation these sentences construct the work, as they contribute to an exhibition in process.

Whenever asked to hear the piece by Ian Wilson, the gallery staff will engage the word 'time'. Playing on the time of a piece (*Time* being Wilson's first discussion piece from 1968), the work insists on the main constituent that is ultimately at the core of all spoken word pieces: time.

Lawrence Weiner's piece *AS LONG AS IT LASTS*, verbalises its title and as such offers consideration of the nature of the work (after all, the work need not be realised!), and highlights the fundamental principle embedded in all spoken word works; that they only last the time it takes to tell them.

Artist and writer Douglas Coupland's contribution is, akin to all the pieces, to be experienced only aurally as a shared engagement. As such, it asserts that the spoken word exhibition is fundamentally of the same nature as that of the artworks, which are words.

A painting exhibition.

Claude Rutault's piece *D/M associated 307 (159+1+2+145)* is a composite piece that associates an old existing painting acquired from Bonhams auction house for the exhibition, that is repainted the same colour as the wall onto which it is being hung, and a series of small canvasses (painted the same colour as the wall onto which they are being hung), which become the silent captions for all other works or vacant spaces in the gallery.

Jaroslaw Flicinski realises a new series of wall paintings for the exhibition, all immersed within a subtle light environment. As an echo to Rutault's piece where the nature of the paint is decided arbitrary by the nature of the support, Flicinski plays upon the paradox of the support becoming an active work, with the visual indeterminacy of a constant blur of whites, this piece replays the assertion that the process of a wall painting in a gallery is fundamentally a process of decay and disappearance, as is the original absence of a seeming-less white motif on a white background.

As in the spoken word exhibition where the materials (the words) that constitute the exhibition are what constitute the artworks, the material that constitutes both the works by Flicinski and Rutault is the physical structure of the exhibition, the physical space.

If in the title the whole program of an exhibition is revealed, the show title by Stefan Brüggemann—which cancels itself by stating a title as curator's piece as an artist's piece—illustrates the exhibition's concerns with self-referentiality and denial. An exhibition where what *is* is not what one approaches, but what constitutes the space as a series of successive exhibitions in a given space, at a given time.

*Blow de la Barra*

Claude Rutault (Born in 1941, at the Trois-Moutier, lives and work in Vaucresson, France), established in 1973 the fundamental assertion underlying the entire body of his work: "A canvas braced on a stretcher, painted the same colour as the wall on which it is hung." Rutault has since, until 1999, established 274 propositions for artworks. Articulated as written propositions codified underneath the generic terms of 'definitions/methods', these specific texts act as the instructions for the realisation of the works.

For the exhibition, Rutault has written the d/m associated 307 (159+1+2+145).

"Actualised by Mathieu Copeland for a group exhibition in London, June 2006, drawn up according to the modalities as written in the d/m 159bis, 1986-1996, upstream/downstream.

The work relies on the d/m 1bis, 1997: to repaint a painting, i.e. an existing work, of the same colour as the wall on which it is hung. A photograph of the painting, and the characteristics allowing its identification, are addressed to Claude Rutault, prior to the opening of the exhibition.

This painting is accompanied by a small stretched canvas painted with the same colour as that of the repainted painting. This small painting becomes the silent caption of the repainted painting (d/m 145, 1985), and is displayed where a caption would usually be hung.

Identical small paintings, of the same colour, are hung on each of the other walls, also becoming the silent captions of the other works in the exhibition.

This work can be adapted to the presentation of any collection, public or private.

The results, due to the method used, are always different, and the number of realisations of the work are not limited."

Claude Rutault, Vaucresson, June 2006.

Mathieu Copeland: I would like to begin with a very natural question given the piece that you are realising for the exhibition; could you discuss the replacing of the *definitions/methods* #1 established in 1973 ('a canvas braced on a stretcher, painted the same colour as the wall on which it is hung') by the *definition* #1bis of 1997 ('to repaint a painting, i.e. an existing work, of the same colour as the wall on which it is hung')? What are the implications brought by this change of (pre?)-proposition?

Claude Rutault: To replace the *d/m* 1 by the *1bis* plays on the paradox of producing a new painting without increasing the number of existing paintings, an idea that obviously leads to many developments. (This principle exists in another form in the *d/m* 68 collection 4, art for art, that has kept being built since 1980). With regard to the number of artworks that we can see coming and going every day in galleries, museums, antique shops, auction houses - it is impossible not to ask ourselves: why should we add another one? My material dealer sells 40,000 stretched canvasses a month!

MC: But it also raises the problem of nihilism (denying the possible vision of an original painting by covering it up, by its destruction). This also reminds us of the idea of the palimpsest (a constant cover up, here giving way to the existence of a new artwork), echoing beautifully the sentence by Douglas Huebler: "The world is full of objects, more or less interesting; I do not wish to add any more."

CR: To evoke an attitude toward nihilism. Difficult question. To be nihilist is to consider dominating values, here those of art, as obsolete, and therefore to attempt to liberate ourselves from their diktat. You seem to consider the act of repainting in those terms. If I refer myself to Heidegger's text about Nietzsche in the "Roads to Nowhere", there is such an idea, to the extent that -- if you refer to my exhibition at the Musée d'Art Moderne & Contemporain in Geneva [exhibition held earlier this year, where Rutault repainted works he had realised between 1958 until 1973] -- what is dominant in my work is not the destruction, but really the construction, or at least the opening toward a possible construction. I have been working for the past few months on a text that deals with the idea of 'repainting'. There is, in repainting an ancient work, the simultaneity of two movements. First to put in reserve definitively the moment of a dead image (I am only stating the situation here), and secondly to put forward the painting, that remembers that something existed previously. I only affirm that the construction overtakes the erasure (the term that I prefer to that of destruction).

MC: Where do you situate the text (the d/m) within the artwork (and within your work in general)? Could you state the link between the texts (the d/m) in regard to their physical realisation, and does the text predate the artwork - and even act as an artwork?

CR: The text of the d/m is not the artwork. The painting is written so that somebody else can actualise it according to his/her own understanding of the text, and according to his/her own taste. Otherwise, why write it? The writing supposes that the painting can be realised, and is not a form of poetry. Furthermore, the person who undertakes the charge of the work does not acquire a text, but a painting realised from the text. The description (a kind of a contract) can only be delivered after the actualisation: it bears, beside the address where the piece is realised, the dimensions of the walls and canvas, and a colour sample. This description has to be actualised every time that one of the parameters of the realisation of the artwork is modified. The artist and the person who takes on the piece both keep a copy of these. It is a part of the history of the artwork.

MC: The painting only exists through the realisation of the terms (énoncé) as written in the text. The person who takes up the realisation of the piece acquires an artwork that he may have seen in a given context (gallery, exhibition, article, or through the text itself as the mental image that is generated). When we consider the text itself, it bears all the possible realisations. Can the same be said about the painting? Apart from the realisation that we see, the multitudes of all the possible remain, all those un-shown and un-realised?

CR: The question of the actualisation in regard to the infinite possibilities. Lets take the colour for instance: when I write that the canvas is painted the same colour as the wall, the colour is not mentioned. Therefore the person who acquires the work has to choose the colour, if he does not do so, there won't be any artwork. But, to choose one colour is to the detriment of all other colours. Luckily due to the nature of the text itself, due to its existence and its lack of precision, or rather its generality, one can change the colour whenever one wishes. Nothing being fixed (paint, form, colour, number, format, place, hanging), when you witness the actualisation, the artwork remains to be done. To succeed or to fail are now relative, tomorrow we will do better, or worse. That's life!

MC: I am struck by the comprehension of the medium 'exhibition' that transpires from all your d/m (from 1 to 274) from 1973. May it be the physical comprehension of the exhibition space -- and its structure (by questioning the captions, by questioning the size of the walls constituting the exhibition etc...) -- as much as your consideration of the time of the exhibition and the time *within* the exhibition (an artwork that evolves during the time of the exhibition, as in your *Exhibition limit 1 from 1976 - d/m 50*).

If your d/m implies a consideration of painting, could you tell me how consideration of the exhibition naturally enters your thinking? What is your conception of the exhibition, and how has this evolved to date?

CR: In a way, there is no exhibiting of my painting, there only is a position and actualisation in a given moment. From one given text, the results are different. Even if it is predefined, in this work nothing is fixed. Take as an example the exhibition that you are building; lets suppose that it will travel. The results will be with no doubt very different. Maybe another painting repainted, a number of artworks very different... and yet, it will be the same artwork.

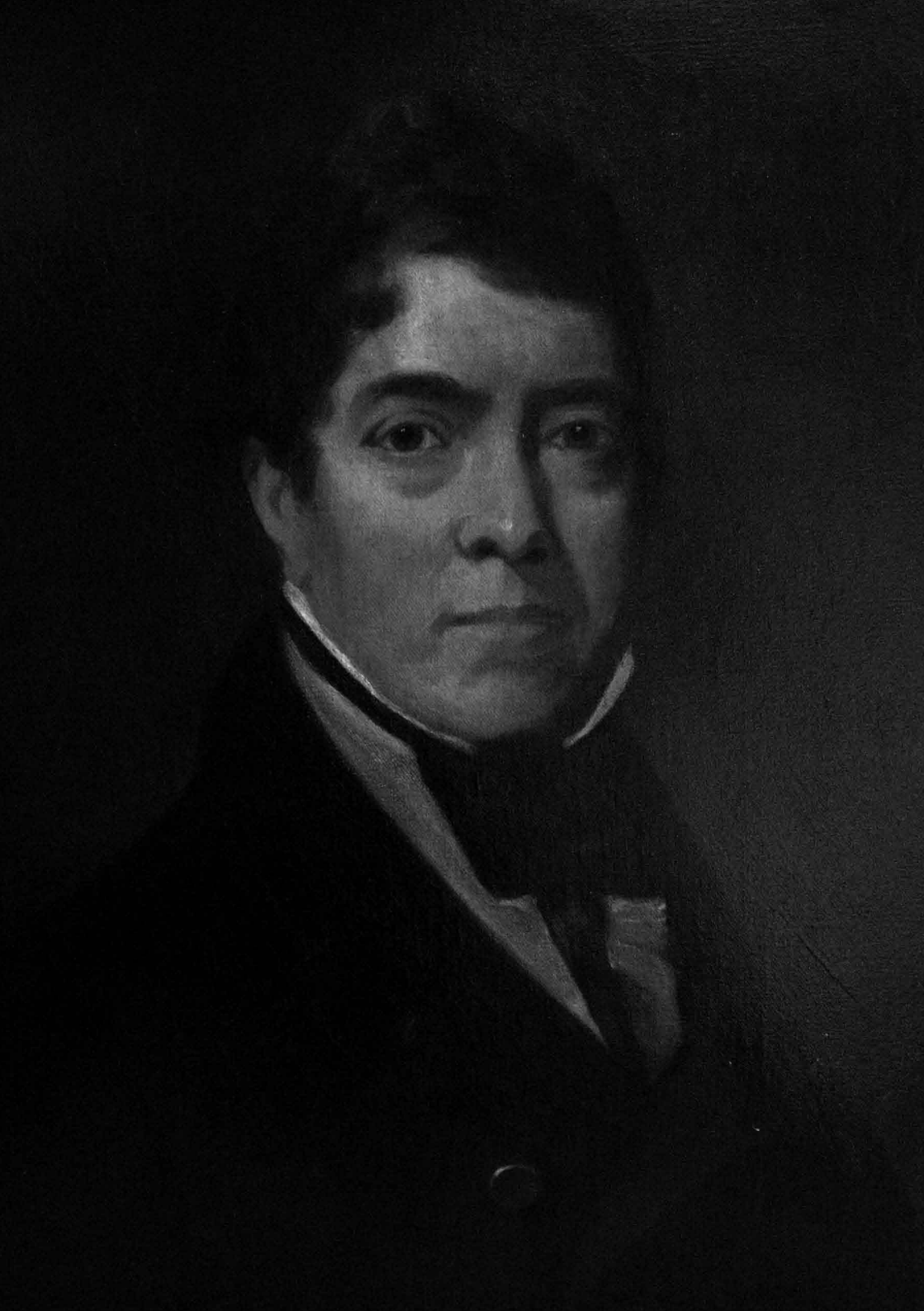
At the beginning of my work, I included processes such as *d/m 50* that you are referring to, and that I am still willing to realise. Yet today, I have left behind this voluntarist attitude of mine, and I leave everything to evolve following a more natural rhythm. My painting (*peinture*) possesses this particularity of not being a painting (*tableau*) anymore, and neither a wall painting. It does not suffer time, time is the mainspring of the artwork. I do not experience problems of wear or restoration: "a stroke of paint, a stroke of youth." My painting does not represent time, it lives it.

MC: There may not be an exhibition of your painting, but I believe that your painting bears all the forms of an exhibition. Therefore, if we can naturally see its permanent future in the present result, it is also beautiful to see that many of the propositions that you have written incarnate the abstraction of a space. The painting *does* the exhibition, taking into consideration all that characterises the idea of the exhibition.

CR: There is no difference, due to the text, between an actualisation in a gallery, a museum, or at a collector's house. The artwork, if the d/m is correct, will be different from one place to the next, each space exercising its own prerogatives and its constraints. That is the reason why I insist that the painting is first written, as everything stems from there, yet without the text being the painting. This text, in general, has holes, lacks, that the person who undertakes the realisation of the piece has to meet; therefore we understand its importance, the consequence being that I cannot store the artworks, as he/she is the one who will render visible the painting. I am no longer the prime spectator of my artwork. As an anecdote, there are more than half of my works that I have not seen. Anyhow the artwork does not exist, we could even say that the successive actualisations of a d/m are what pushes it a little further every time.

*After Sir Henry Raeburn*  
Portrait of Sir Brooke Boothby, bust length.  
76 x 63.5cm (29 15/16 x 25in).

Brooke Boothby, a Derbyshire landowner, intellectual and poet. Boothby was involved in the thriving literary community of Lichfield in Staffordshire, that pursued the ideals of Sensibility vigorously. One of his achievements was publishing the Swiss philosopher Rousseau's autobiographical dialogues













Klaus Kinski, in *Die menschliche Stimme*, (*The Human Voice*), 1949, Berlin

Nick Currie, perhaps better known as Momus, is an electronic folk singer with twenty albums to his credit. Since 2000, when he held a solo installation and performance show at LFL Gallery in New York, he has been working as an artist. Among others, in 2005 he held at joint show I'll Speak, You Sing at Zach Feuer Gallery, New York, with Mai Ueda, and in 2006 he spent three months as an Unreliable Tour Guide at the Whitney Biennial. His new album Ocky Milk is due in August 2006, and he is currently working on a book of fake biographies of classical composers for Paris publishing house La Volte. <http://imomus.livejournal.com/>

Mathieu Copeland: To begin with is the question of your relation to production and labour, which I believe relates to the work that you are doing for this exhibition where you will produce a text a day (tailoring each following text according to the responses received from the previous). This question also arises in light of the discipline that you are imposing on yourself on your website/blog (writing a text a day), or as you have said differently on your album *Stars Forever*, your desire to "record a song a day".

Nick Currie: I suppose I have some kind of Protestant work ethic (or, as my friend Pat Kane puts it, a "play ethic")! But it's not so much work for its own sake, more the fact that I like actions which represent a commitment by the artist to do something, a promise. I like the idea of a work of art being a series of appointments, nodes, points which can wrap flexibly and adaptively around a situation, rather than being a monologue or a *fait accompli*.

I'm interested in responsiveness, interactivity, feedback, and in the oral tradition. In all the art shows I've done, I've made a commitment to be in the gallery each day in person. This isn't just because I'm a performance artist rather than someone who makes objects, but because I need to react to the situation in the gallery, and specifically, to the people passing through it. I want, as with my *Stars Forever* project, to tailor-make something for the people who come. But I also want to learn from their responses.

In my LFL show *Folktronia* the exchange took the form of me teaching people my songs and recording (in the role of an ethnomusicologist) their inaccurate reproductions. I also contracted to work people's personal histories into the mythology of an imaginary new land. At Zach Feuer Gallery in 2005 I tried to 'mesmerise' visitors with a continuous flow of stories which resembled the tales Scheherazade tells in the *1001 Nights*. And in the Whitney Biennial, as the *Unreliable Tour Guide*, I found myself unexpectedly becoming a sort of comedian; "the Bob Newhart of New Art." This was, I suppose, because I responded to the laughter people greeted some of my announcements with, and began to move, as a result, in the direction of art comedy. It struck me that there are too few art comedians (although some would say there are too many)!

MC: I believe that your relation to story telling and your wish to have the audience mesmerised is pursuing the desire, that you have previously described as, to create 'mental soundscapes'. I would like to confront these 'mental soundscapes' with those of 'emotional landscapes'. The cognitive aspect embedded in the mental seems diluted into an environment that only (mainly?) exists as feelings and emotions, when what matters is not so much to understand, but to experience.

NC: I suppose this comes back to the distinction between text and texture. It's complex, because they aren't mutually exclusive: text can be used texturally (I'd say this is mainly what mesmerises us when someone is talking seductively), and texture can become a language. Or else text can be used as a motor, a propeller, an oar: we can use plot, for instance, to propel the audience to a place where they're suddenly lost, disoriented, and forced to pay attention to texture in order to regain their bearings. A good trick to startle people out of their habits!

I think one of the functions of art is to move people from recognition towards cognition. Since language is a system of recognitions (and in this sense it's digital, it takes the analog curves off reality, forcing us to leap from one pre-fabricated idea to another), we need to disrupt it, or use it to go to an unfamiliar place. I relate this to Viktor Shklovsky's notion of 'ostranenie', the deliberate

making-strange. But also, when it comes to sound art, R. Murray Schafer's idea of 'schizophonia' (the separation of sounds from their sources) can have the same effect. But in a way all these estrangement devices have become all-too familiar, and we constantly need to seek out new ones.

MC: You said on *Stars Forever* that "You really think that you can replace the whole music industry, that you can record everything yourself... you can post MP3s on a website you have designed entirely yourself" to conclude that you "Bypassed the music industry." Following on this idea of production, especially self-sufficiency and auto-production, how does this affect? your position towards the arts and music industries, and in a wider sense, towards society?

NC: I think I wanted to replace everyone in the music industry because I had a general sense (based on sad experience) of its incompetence and its bad motives. I don't feel that about the art world -- at least, not yet! -- and so I'm much more willing to delegate with confidence, to let it do what it's good at. And what might that be? Well, networking, I suppose! But also, just looking and listening. Choosing the right places to stop, look and listen. The music industry is too noisy a place for useful listening to happen. I trust the art world's essential quietness.

Kafka once said: "We're each looking out at the world through a tiny peephole, so it's at least important to keep the peephole clean." The music industry's peephole seemed dirty, so I turned away and tried to scratch my own holes to peep through. Those 'holes' might have been things like 20th century cabaret, or a reconstruction in my imagination of what that might have been like.

It's interesting, your question really asks about being an outsider, but puts it in terms of production rather than status. But of course production is always to some extent a collective activity, and I think it would be foolish to deny this, or try to make a sort of Kaspar Hauser model of production. Oddly enough, I've always felt that I've been willing to be a complete insider, populist and accessible, but because my sales have been minimal I've 'maximised my marginality'... without ever quite falling off the map, or ceasing production. In fact, I've become, if anything, more profligate, productive, promiscuous and prolific (all those 'p' words!), substituting longevity and sheer quantity of output for peak spikes of popularity.

Weirdly enough, I think my art world work is now more 'mainstream' than my music, which has become increasingly hermetic and arty. I choose to be hermetic in a populist medium and populist in a hermetic one, perhaps! My instinct is to give the medium what it lacks.

MC: I would like to discuss your relation to portraying and caricature. In many ways, as a recording artist, your albums use all the anecdotes that characterise you. An approach furthered by *Momus*, which dresses a (more or less) accurate portrait of yourself. I have always been fascinated by what can be seen as portrait in negative (in the photographic sense), where you approach the essence through a reversed image. When considering this, how do you feel with this kind of 'mise a nue', of stripping back to the fundamentals, and who do you think is revealed ultimately, *Momus* or *Nick Currie*?

NC: I think I was interested, from the beginning of my music career, in cabaret as a basic technique. That often meant staging real desires and impulses as if they were fake. It was a defence mechanism by which I hid my real crimes (or thought crimes) by flower-arranging them in a bouquet with many fake confessions. Needless to say, people like *Bataille* and *Mishima* and *Gide* were central to the way I framed this project. A mask could 'confess'. One could make a self-portrait -- and a shameful one at that -- which would make a whole society blush.

Ah, and at this point I have to mention that one of the first things I did when I came to London in 1984 was attend the lectures of a shrink called *David Badcock* at the LSE, lectures given under the title *The Psychoanalysis of Society*. There you have it: a society could be laid on the couch and psychoanalysed, just like a sick individual. (*Adorno* and the other members of the Frankfurt School had analysed

Germany in the same way in works like *The Authoritarian Personality*). So I made diagnostic portraits of Britain for a while. Then I stopped doing that, and escaped into love for just one person, and then to Japan (a society I love). There was a brief return to the satirical technique when I returned to Britain in the late 90s. But then, with *Stars Forever*, I began to make individual portraits of people, mostly Americans, which became a collective portrait of America. At first a very positive one, but later (with the composition of *Folktronic* and the *Folktronia* installation in 2000) more caricatural.

Of course, the portrait of America was also a self-portrait; I focused on Scots-Irish themes, re-casting America as a plastic folk concoction; a Japanese video game set in the Appalachians during some sort of hillbilly goldrush. And yes, you could say that this is a sort of "portraiture in negative": each time I portray an individual I'm actually portraying a whole culture, and each time I portray a culture I'm actually portraying myself. (I suppose I'm a bit of a cultural determinist.)

As for what's Nick Currie and what's Momus, I like to think that there will be Momuses long after Nick Currie, the eco-system which supports the current incarnation, has decayed. Momus is cultural DNA, he just uses whatever flesh is to hand. Mostly he's interested in telling awkward truths, suggesting design improvements, and laughing.

MC: Finally, I wanted to discuss what you described as 'Analogue Baroque', and later as 'Info Deco'. These two terms seems to highlight in many ways the program that you established for yourself, and they hold deep reading keys for your work as a whole. How do you feel about these now? And can these be models that are applied into the performative pieces that you are developing in the gallery and museum context?

NC: I think Analogue Baroque and Info Deco were both ways to look at the relationship between decoration (banished from Modernism, of course, in 1908 with Adolf Loos' essay *Ornament and Crime*) and information. It seemed to me that post-modernism and information technology were working together to flip us right back across the Modernist age, back to the folk era of artisans. A computer, of course, allows us to make decorative work like an artisan. It also encourages us to make a new version, spread over the internet, of oral folk culture -- that eternal game of Chinese Whispers by which we all sample each other's work, changing it slightly and passing it on. A post-modern amateur folk 'copyleft' culture thus replaces the modern professionalized copyright culture.

I still find these genre terms useful, because I think we're still in that age. My Blow de la Barra piece will rely on the web to transmit a daily Chinese Whisper, an oral instruction, to the gallery staff. They will spread this rumour and report back to me the reactions of the public. That in turn will influence the way I respond the next day. My Whitney performance as the *Unreliable Tour Guide* was analogue (and baroque) because I was there in person, my words mediated electrically through my bullhorn. This will be more digital: I'll be arriving in the gallery daily, but transmitted electronically. Some errors will no doubt have to be corrected... or exaggerated until they become something interesting.



*Star*, Jaroslaw Flicinski, latex, 3.5x3,5m, 2000, private collection (Verdelais,F)

Raimundas Malasauskas is a curator at the Contemporary Art Centre, Vilnius, [www.cac.lt](http://www.cac.lt), where he also co-produces CACTV, [www.cac.lt/tv](http://www.cac.lt/tv), and So-Called Records. He has continuously investigated issues of eventology and contemporary syncretism, manifested in his interviews with George Maciunas, Mario Garcia Torres, Dora Garcia, Seth Siegelaub, Rammelzee, Ian Wilson, Darius Miksys, Tino Sehgal and others, and in projects such as his forwarding of the telepathic message of Robert Barry to Jonathan Monk, in *During The Exhibition The Gallery Will Be Open* (Jan Mot Gallery, Brussels, 2003). Among others he curated BMW: The IX Baltic Triennial of International Art (CAC Vilnius and ICA, London, co-curated with Sofia Hernandez Chong Cuy and Alexis Vaillant, 2005).

Raimundas Malasauskas: Shouldn't the Summer show be about Summer?

Mathieu Copeland: Summer days are the longest and Summer shows are the longest ones of the gallery programme. Since a great number of works featured in the show concern time, and since the show takes place during the Summer, a natural digression would be that this show mirrors the Summer. Furthermore in many ways it is an exhibition about exhibitions.

Imagine if all exhibitions were done with direct regard to external causes -- the Summer for the Summer show, Christmas at Christmas time, football during the World Cup! -- events we all share, and yet somehow which are so distant to whom we are. How wonderful would this be? The curator would just address external causes and have a minimum (at best no) personal input in the realisation of the exhibition!

I was thinking about exhibition titles. I was talking with Stefan Brüggemann about his Show Title #347 *The Title as the Curator's Art Piece*, and reminded myself of this beautiful sentence by Confucius "If the name is not correct, the words will not ring true." I guess my thought is that everything implicates everything else.

RM: So shall we say that the first rule for the show is to always address an external cause, even if it is another show? Is it true that the show has to produce artists and curators? Regarding Stefan Brüggemann, I understand that perhaps the title must curate the show, or is the title an art-piece as well as a curator?

MC: If you think about how the exhibition evolves in its construction, the spoken word exhibition is made of words, the painting exhibition is made of paint, and even the title of the exhibition is made of a title. All the works address their own external causes, their constitutive elements, and their very nature.

I am intrigued by this conception of producing; the side effect of any exhibition being the birth of the curator and the affirmation of the artists, it is such a beautiful proposition.

The title curating the show is the logical extension of the original use -- to frame the show -- and if not curating per se, then at least it should announce and enounce the programme that the exhibition will follow. In this case, I believe it shows the inner construction (and self-referential nature) of the exhibition. Sometimes I think that the exhibition exists first and foremost through its title and its poster (i.e. all its worded and graphic aspects). These are the first encounters that one experiences. In many ways, these are also the ultimate, since as you enter the show you are confronted with the works, and after all, the exhibition is only the side-effect to what is present.

RM: But it is still referring to itself, no? So the fourth rule (I think you've mentioned the second and the third one) is to stay contradictory, is it not? And don't you think that a splash of paint or a table could be a title for the show (remember *The Parliament of Things* in Bruno Latour)? I would be also interested to see a show curated by a table - it's such a great trope of objectivity in philosophy and academia. I think a table, or a group of tables, could curate a really nice show. My next question will be "which artwork would you like to live in?" Not to live with, but to live in. Or maybe something else, it depends on what you answer.

MC: Pablo León de la Barra has told me about your proposition for a Biennial: to invite a number of artists for the first edition, and then always to invite the same artists for each subsequent edition. Nature following its course, with either change of careers and natural death, this exhibition would ultimately become a wonderful one-person monograph! Furthermore, the curator becomes an unanimated object, maybe finally being the table (as in *inanimate object*) you mention?

For the exhibition, Claude Rutault realises a piece that includes the instruction 'to repaint a painting, i.e. an existing work, of the same colour as the wall on which it is hung'. So to go back to your question, imagine the multi-layered environment that

one could inhabit there. On the surface, all is calm, yet beneath it, we would find ourselves at the permanent crossroads of an inanimate image and a monochrome, both in constant dialogue!

RM: I think it would be a fair concept to develop a Biennial with always the same set of artists, then the exhibition would become a community, a club or a Royal Biennial Society. The new members would only be accepted following the last will of the deceased old members. I proposed it for the Torino Triennale, maybe they will do it? Perhaps curators for this Triennial could always change, no? Would you like to be an artist of this Triennial? And don't forget to tell me which artwork you would like to live in.

MC: The last thing we want in a perennial exhibition is novelty. And I am sure it is best that the invited artists should be just such, artists. However, I am very much prone to the idea and understanding of natural decay, and I am very excited thinking of an exhibition that decays as it is being constructed – that lasts until it naturally runs out (runs out of energy, runs out through natural process, even runs out by boredom and uninterest, and then finally disappears). Jaroslaw Flicinski, who for the exhibition realises several wall paintings, has been talking about this in the same terms: “A very ephemeral process just like life. It's exciting when a wall is growing up and forming, and it's sad when it's going down and disappearing.”

When thinking of this exhibition I thought about these two lines from songs: “Look at the news, it looks like a movie,” and “Are you sure which side of the mirror you are on?” If I had to live in a work of art, of these two sentences it may well be in the latter!

RM: I really like the second sentence. Would you like to live on both sides of a mirror? (It's probably easier than being on both sides of the door at the same time, no?) I think that you are building an environment for your friends and yourself to live in. However I would say the decay of the exhibition (as of any other assemblage of forces) is just its transformation into something else. What would you like your exhibition to transform into?

MC: I fully agree that the exhibition is a space to inhabit, I still like to believe that this is something that becomes an ever-expanding invitation, and that within this purpose-built seated facility, anyone can join in. Whereas regarding the decay, this is only following a natural process, and in the decay, it is reaching for a full disappearance. If nothing gets lost and nothing gets created, but all is transformed (the fundamental process of Lavoisier), then can we say that in igniting a process that becomes a permanent generative process, the exhibitions are just a momentum in extrapolation – a piece of time forming itself as all its constituents are disappearing? If we believe that an exhibition is to transform into anything at all, is it to be into a pure structure, within its set parameters?

RM: Do you mean the Summer show transforms into an Autumn show? Or into another Summer show?

MC: Or remains the same, as an exhibition in constant expansion and following its natural course. In this mirroring, an exhibition is of the same material as the pieces that construct it, and whose own disappearance is only an extension to the process once ignited. Not so much becoming another exhibition, but one that mirrors the evolving process you mentioned. And if time dictates the content (and we should remember that Summer shows have always traditionally been painting exhibitions), we shall believe that within an existing history all that is inserted is simply within a journey. Nothing is forever. A mediated process that mirrors the time they construct, and that naturally, and desirably, reaches its own disappearance, or rather its own reformation. The collision of several exhibitions results in numerous forms, and constantly generates forms of exhibitions.

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*Blow de la Barra*

35 HEDDON STREET LONDON W1B 4BP TEL + 44 (0) 20 7734 7477 [www.blowdelabarra.com](http://www.blowdelabarra.com)