

Susan Silton, *twisted*, video still, 2003.



NIÑA YHARED (1814) is one of the youngest and most important representatives of performance art in Mexico. Recognized in both Mexico and abroad, Yhared's work specializes in the diffusion and promotion of action-art. She earned her bachelor's degree at the National School of Painting, Sculpture, Engraving and Visual Arts. She has presented her work at "Del Chopo" University Museum (UNAM), Ex Teresa Actual Arts Forum, Mexico City Museum, Spain Cultural Centre, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Tucson, Arizona, and the National Museum of Mexican Art. She has published *Sea Fairies* (2001), a collection of 35 tales and ink drawings, her erotic poem collection *Seasons of Desire* (2005) and *A Nymphs' Banquet* (2008). www.yhared.com

IFEEL DIFFERENT

**BUSTAMANTE • LUNA
DUNCAN AND ODELL
SAAR • SILTON
YHARED (1814)
WOJNAROWICZ
GUTIERREZ**

CURATED BY JENNIFER DOYLE



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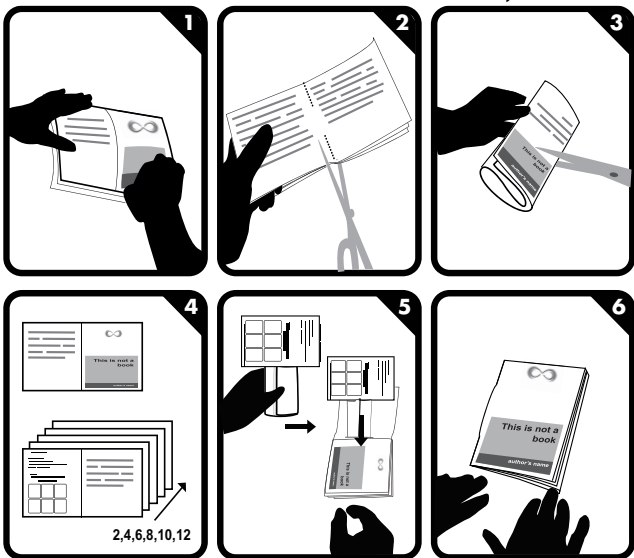
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When James Luna performs depression as *The History of the Luiseno People*, his performance may appear as autobiographical, but that alcoholic depression is named by the artist as history — and it has an art historical twist: there is nothing quite so “American” as the icon of the “Sad Indian” memorialized by James Earl Fraser’s *End of the Trail* (1915). A Native artist will embody for some spectators and critics a sentimentalized narrative of extinction in spite of his living presence. An artist who once exhibited himself as an artifact under museum glass, *(The Artifact Piece, 1987-1990)* is all too conscious of the ways in which his forms of expression are always already overwritten with history - as both a romantic fantasy and traumatic legacy. Luna pushes back on this fact here with an installation that feels paradoxically open (as we are welcomed into a bachelor’s chair, to sit in his place) and closed (that place is one of emotional withdrawal and isolation from “holiday cheer”). It also pokes fun at our fantasies about Native histories — is the

David Wojnarowicz’s *Untitled (Hugar Dead)* (1988-89) is a difficult work by almost any standard: a posthumous portrait of the artist Peter Hugar, the work is structured by the artist’s rage at mass, homophobic indifference to the AIDS crisis. The text of a rant is layered over images of Hugar’s body, and the work demands much from the viewer who must not only look, but read. In doing so, we keep company with Hugar’s body, with the artist’s anger and with his passion, too. *TSOFOMO (In the Shadow of Forward Motion)* is a montage of emotional and visual intensity. Wojnarowicz’s voice haunts us with stories of tenderness, frustration and outrage. *TSOFOMO* is animated by the radicalized sincerity of a queer punk ethos — there can be no missing that this artist means it. In both works, Wojnarowicz describes the profundity of the divide between those who feel normal and those who feel normalcy’s horrors — but perhaps most unsettling (and moving) is the steady and structuring presence of love and desire within the stories told by these two works.

Feel Your Way Through It

The sophistication of jaded art consumers is a form of social armor, worn against the culture of exclusion that defines the official spaces of art consumption (commercial galleries, blue chip museums and fairs, MFA and Art History programs). When it comes to tone and affect, self-conscious, self-referential irony can seem like the path of least resistance for both contemporary artists and the people who admire their work. Most people are just good enough at this to attend art events and feel weird.

Given that our defenses are usually up in these settings, the last thing one expects in an art space is sincerity, even — or perhaps especially - when it is our own. But, of course, we do have feelings in these spaces — we don’t check our emotional lives at the door. And these artists know it.

The works in this exhibit mine overlapping territories — the affective and material texture of sentimentality, the association of love and loss, displacement and emotional withdrawal, difference and emotional excess. Some of these works also manifest a commitment to art and emotion as sites of transformation — in which art is imagined as revolutionary, or reparative, exactly in its capacity to make us feel differently.

In the work gathered here, on the surface at least, some of these artist’s feelings appear to us as specifically theirs and/or as belonging to specific artists’ bodies in particular social and historical locations. These are not the transcendent feelings of the universal but rather the dense, the confusing, the over-determined feelings of the particular. Of being queer, of being Other, of being exiled, or feminine, or exotic. These “feelings” are, in other words, both personal and political.

LACE both champions and challenges the art of our time by fostering artists who innovate, explore, and risk. We move within and beyond our four walls to provide opportunities for diverse publics to engage deeply with contemporary art. In doing so, we further dialogue and participation between and among artists and those audiences.



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Monica Duncan and Lara Odell tell a quieter story in their collaborative performances for their video projection, *Living Pictures*. The two position themselves in the most ordinary of settings — parking lots, park benches, sidewalks. They stand still, dressed alike in hues that pick up on details in the background — they become part of the landscape. Hidden in plain sight, they make for uncanny figures — two women connected to each other, and frozen

indulgent) — on the offense and the defense. author's voice is rude (explicit, frank, aggressive) and exposed (maudlin, be undone by one's desire, by one's love (both as verb and as object). The disaster, tracks just this investment in the sentimental — in how it feels to a poetic text which appears to be written from within the haze of romantic sentimental in place of the sexual.” Raquel Gutierrez’s “The Pink Room,” may have with his sentimentality: love is obscene precisely in that it puts the X has ‘huge problems’ with his sexuality, no one will be interested in those Y Discourse. He continues: “The moral tax levied by society on all transgressions affects passion still more than sex today. Everybody will understand that Barthes makes his observation about the obscenity of sentiment in *Lover’s*

and more unsettling. scene of melodramatic spectatorship into something else, something darker momentum that tears have on their own — spilling over from the contrived strangely powerful. *Neapolitan* becomes oddly moving in its revelation of the didn’t. The endless loop of the artist sobbing on her couch is both funny and over and over again, eventually the tears would stop flowing. But they couch for this performance, she expected that as she watched this scene

scene of a depressing Christmas what we expect from a work of this title?

Lezley Saar ventures into similar territory — one I am tempted to call “sentimental ambivalence.” Saar works explicitly with the textures of sentimental culture in her portraits of extraordinary and anomalous figures — men and women cast out, displayed, but also sites of identification, fascination, and desire. Her large banner portrait of Dorothy Champ (a Broadway actress and artist who gave up the stage to teach the Bahá’í faith in 1919) feels not contemporary, but archival - a figure head for a long-lost Mulatto Nation. This archival feeling is true of the smaller works that frame it as well. These characters, boxed in and on display, are curated here as some were curated then (like the “Venus Hottentot” Saartji Bartman and the albinistic Rudolf Lacasie, indexing the Other in nineteenth-century sideshows). Under Saar’s loving hand, though, they also feel cared for. Collectively they defined American sentimental culture even as they marked its borders as embodiments of the strange, the exotic, and the different. Saar asks us how we feel about them, now.

Roland Barthes once observed that “it is no longer the sexual which is indecent, it is the sentimental.”¹ We might take this observation to indicate the association of the sentimental with the florid, the maudlin, the excessive and the indulgent. Nao Bustamante’s *Neapolitan* (2008) features a video of the artist weeping as she watches, rewinds, and watches again the end of *Fresa y Chocolate* (Strawberries and Chocolate). The monitor is shrouded in domestic ornaments and grandmotherly doilies — not genteel white lace, however, but a riot of garish crochet. Bustamante has said that when she sat down on her

1 Roland Barthes, *Fragments of a Lover’s Discourse* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978), p. 158.

Lezly Saar
Marseille, 2004
 Acrylic on lace, 31" x 16"

Lezly Saar
Another Country, 1999
 Acrylic and mixed media, 22 1/2" x 16" x 3 1/2"

Lezly Saar
Rumor has it, 2004
 Acrylic on lace, 23" x 13 1/2" x 3 1/2"

Lezly Saar
Popeye Perry, 1999
 Acrylic and mixed media, 14" x 19" x 4"

Lezly Saar
Law of Desire – Frances O'Connor and Colon T Urdike, 1999
 Acrylic and mixed media, 14" x 19" x 4"

Lezly Saar
*Aunt Ann frequently had visions of a kneeling goat surrounded by six praying
 ows*, 1998
 Acrylic and mixed media, 22 1/2" x 14" x 2 1/2"

Lezly Saar
Fanny Mosebury was forever encountering Spirits, 2000
 Acrylic and mixed media, 23" x 16" x 4"

Lezly Saar
Detroit, 1999
 Acrylic on lace, 34" x 25"

Lezly Saar
Rumor has it, 2004
 Acrylic on lace, 23" x 13 1/2" x 3 1/2"

Susan Silton
Twister 1, 2003
 Piezo pigment print
 5" x 6 5/8" image, 29 5/8" x 23 5/8" frame

Susan Silton
Twister 4, 2003
 Piezo pigment print
 5" x 6 5/8" image, 29 5/8" x 23 5/8" frame

Susan Silton
Twister 6, 2003
 Piezo pigment print
 5" x 6 5/8" image, 29 5/8" x 23 5/8" frame

Susan Silton
twisted, 2003
 Single-channel video, silent

- Jennifer Doyle, Curator

in the "bitacora mujer." "Bitacora" is an odd word: a writer's traveling desk, a box holding a ship's compass, a writer's closet. These images are taken from Yhared's study of women's rooms in her travels — the women's room is private and reproducing (and reproducing) difference. This work invites us to let our guard down as we step into another world.

in that connection. In their sameness and stillness, they appear in these projections as melancholy apparitions, visible - but queerly stuck (together) in another dimension.

Susan Silton also taps into a story of difference and mood by unpacking the formal possibilities of the twister as an allegory for feeling different — and for transporting us, like Dorothy, from one place to another. The video installation *twisted* projects only the image of a person's face as they hold a sealed jar of water in their hands and shake it to make a miniature twister. We see not the twister, but the intensity and satisfaction that each person experiences when they finally achieve the goal. This video is accompanied by three of Silton's series of prints of tornados (developed from photographs taken by storm chasers). Miniaturized natural disaster, these works gesture toward the problem of scale raised by intense emotional states — they, for the person having them, feel world shifting.

Where Silton uses the tornado to stand in for the movement of the self from one state to another, Niña Yhared (1814) approaches art itself as a fantastical space of transformation. *Consultario Mágico, Dra. Niña* was staged in a storefront in a Mexico City metro station underneath one of the city's largest medical complexes. Yhared (1814) set up a healing center, inviting metro passengers to participate in a ritual promising to heal maladies using art and magic. The video documenting this action shows participants expressing skepticism even as they join in. Behind this performance is a surprising optimism and sincerity — the artist is not pulling the wool over the participant's eyes — she openly invites passersby to participate in a performance art piece, recast as a healing ceremony. As the men and women close their eyes, and tilt their heads backwards, they remind us of the power which can be mobilized by the suspension of disbelief. LACE visitors are greeted by Yhared's visual research

RAQUEL GUTIERREZ is a performance writer and cultural activist. She is a co-founding member of the performance art ensemble, Butchalls de Panochttan. *THE PINK ROOM* is a passage from her *Malathon: Low Human Toxicity*, addressing the politics of desire and urbanization in LAs transnational communities.

Mom?
Mama?
Mama, ayúdame... me estoy portando muy mal.
La estoy sigiendo, mama, no la quiero dejar en paz... No, she hasn't called the police... yet. Pero eso es a lo que me refiero... I don't want to be arrested mom. I've been drinking a lot. Es por eso que no la llamaba todos esos meses. Tenia una pena. Y mucha rabia. Todo me duele. Todo me duele.

here. It would be like that for the next 2,000 days.
Can you stop being Nomi Malone? Let me see you through the mascarara, la mascarara, the mask.
When you finally leave me and i know it's real, the pain becomes unbearable. Please don't take my drug away... because then i become dangerous to myself...

List of Works

Nao Bustamante
Neapolitan, 2003, 2008, 2009
mixed media, radical craft

Monica Duncan and Lara Odell
Living Pictures (Laundromat, Evening Shopper, Burn Tower, Picnic at the Park), 2003
Video, approximately 10 minutes each

James Luna
History of the Luiseño People: La Jolla Reservation, Christmas, 1990
Installation and performance

Lezley Saar
Dorothy Champ: Broadway Star and Bahá'í Activist, 2002
Acrylic and mixed media on fabric, 98" x 55"

Lezley Saar
Saartji Baartman, Hottentot Venus, 1999
Acrylic and mixed media, 25" x 18" x 3 1/4"

Lezley Saar
Rudolf Lucsie: Albino of Black Madagascar Lineage, 2001
Acrylic and mixed media, 36" x 24" x 4"

NAO BUSTAMANTE is an internationally known performance and video artist originating from the San Joaquin Valley of California. Her work encompasses performance art, sculpture, installation and video. Bustamante has presented at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Arts, and the Kiasma Museum of Helsinki, among other sites. In 2001 she received the prestigious Anonymous Was a Woman fellowship. Currently she is living in New York and holds the position as Assistant Professor of New Media and Live Art at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

www.naobustamante.com

JENNIFER DOYLE is the author of *Sex Objects: Art and the Dialectics of Desire* (Minnesota, 2006), and is an Associate Professor of English at the University of California, Riverside. *Sex Objects* was a finalist for a LAMBDA Literary Award and received Honorable Mention for the Alan Bray Memorial Book Prize. She is co-editor of *Pop Out: Queer Warhol* (Duke, 1996), and author of essays on contemporary art, gender and performance. Her writing on fútbol Angelino appears in the collaborative art project *Municipal de Fútbol* (Textfield/ Christoph Keller, 2008), "Art Versus Sport: Managing Desire and the Queer Sport Spectacle" appears in X-TRA (Summer 2009), and her polemic "Blind Spots and Failed Performance: Queer Theory, Feminism, and Abortion" will be published in the Fall 2009/Winter 2010 issue of Qui Parle. She blogs about the cultural politics of soccer at From A Left Wing.

This exhibition is inspired by research for her upcoming book, *Critical Tears: Art and the Politics of Emotion*.

Why should I get all chasing amy on you for these other angry apes that stood atop you squeezing your life out lights out, like I do right now
 Why should it matter?
 phantom lump in my throat and in my pants.
 These are the ghosts on my back as I slide my hand down yours and feel a

to go limp when danger lies ahead.
 rock to his head. It was the cane liquor that saved his life that day. It's easy
 husband off of her and detains him as abuela mad bumrushes the man with a
 border town except one time abuela's cousin walks by and pulls the violent
 The alcoholic alderman that beats my mom's mom in a Salvadoran/Honduran
 I order you another gimlet unaware that Catalino Villatoro esta presente.

Estas bien bueno papi.
 cringe at your cannibalizing whiteness sing-song-singing it into my ear.
 And really for as much as I wanted you to call me papi, I would undoubtedly
 You humor me because from the get-go you never wanted a daddy,
 Pattern begets pattern, lover enacts parent
 reproducing fatherly love vices and facial tics.
 mothers and their forlorn lovers

chupando carne y huezos
 Lobos
 Wild beasts
 Fantasmas
 Fiera
 Furious

There is fury in my heart as I try to forget all the people I know back home that have been where I'm about to go tonight. Pues, tu querias riot grrl and they come in different sizes chico—they come in bitch, whore, slut and you wanted to kiss their pain away chulo with your silver tongue and soft touch. What happened to all the good intentions?

I'm already jumping to conclusions. This doesn't make for a very good first date, as soon as we decide that that's where we want this to go. It's just supposed to be one song, especially since a thug don't really dance. But, damn girl, you make it different here on this dance floor where anonymity is just another hallucinatory sedative of seduction.

Even on this dance floor, even when you're just a nervous St. Bernard, that for one reason or another could not identify the beat, the beat that often marks me as excessive, regressive traits thanks be to mestiza-je. The slow gallop of a popular cumbia tune.

1-and-2-and-uh-3-eeh-and-a-4
 1-and-2-and-uh-3-eeh-and-a-4
 1-and-2-and-uh-3-eeh-and-a-4
 1-and-2-and-uh-3-eeh-and-a-4

Traipsing sans purpose because our rhythms are so off.

You move faster than you should, perhaps you confuse my pudenda for some awkward stripper's pole and you feel the intrinsic desire to bump up against it as I could find pleasure there. I may be self-conscious but I'm not a fool.

Or maybe I am because all I want more than anything is for you to stop dry humping me on this empty dance floor. Me estas dando pena. There is nobody

JAMES LUNA believes that installation and performance art "offers an opportunity like no other for Native people to express themselves without compromise in the Indian traditional art forms of ceremony, dance, oral traditions, and contemporary thought." His installations have been described as transforming gallery spaces into battlefields, where the audience is confronted with the nature of cultural identity, the tensions generated by cultural isolation, and the dangers of cultural misinterpretations — all from a Native perspective. Luna has affected audiences from across the US, Canada, Japan and the UK in their views of Native people and other cultural perceptions within their boundaries. Using made and found objects, Luna creates environments that function as both aesthetic and political statements. Luna is a Luiseno Indian who lives on the La Jolla Indian Reservation in San Diego County, California. He has taught part-time at UC San Diego for the last several years. He received his BFA from UC Irvine in 1976 and an MS in Counseling from San Diego State University in 1981. www.jamesluna.com



Nao Bustamante, *Neapolitan*, mixed media/ radical craft, 2003, 2008, 2009.

Why don't we fast forward twenty five years, 2000 days and one night of 134

really a crisis of bisexuality that you are having, you just want to be abused. you're only attracted to my potential for being fucked up. Maybe this is not habit. You tell yourself "oh she's cute, I could experiment with her." Except dance the night away on quicksand and nothing is going to happen to you. The trying to get away from this compulsion is the equivalent of thinking you can don't you?

They make me so mad. And when I get mad, I get even. And getting even happens when I'm on top of you. It sucks because you like it when I get mad,

How's that for post-feminist?

Every time you walk into the room I hear a sexy and sinister song called "The Pink Room" that continues to make its way onto my angry sex soundtrack.

They make me mad.

on me after their done cutting their own flesh right open. Dig their heels, defy every bit of authority they can, they turn the knife psychic and physical annihilation turn me the fuck on. Damage is my aphrodisiac. white powders and evading fatherly touching unbefitting. Girls who survive Damaged girls aren't born, they're made--perfect homecoming queens soiled princesses, the town whore, the neighborhood bad girl, malas manas, snorting violation, it was Laura, Donna, Audrey and Shelly that broke my heart. It must have been the water. Montezuma's Revenge ain't got nothing on the kind of anguish that can make you want to eat the pain of rape right off of a girl.

text messages and non-stop phone calls:

We move the conversation to the dance floor.
You are at your most beautiful under the light of this disco ball.
I bet I say that to all the girls.

The furious fieras fantasmas that have walked this space beneath us,

the space between us, the space bequeathed onto us. This evening you listened to me as I made the case for critical theory and its liberating possibility, its alleviatory charms for the ills of my canton, the small part of the isthmus where part of me originates siempre sin permiso sin papeles.

no permission no papers
and you heard it and when I said it even I believed it
in the penumbra of a concrete island; its institutions I access with many papers and asking always asking for permission to speak because silence is consent and god knows I was silent but not that night. That night I knew I made an actual decision to make love to you like I was in it. That night we bounced off the walls and then I bounced you on my lap. It was glorious.

Except you didn't want glory hosanna to the highest. You wanted a horror picture, to be scared shitless. A Freddy Krueger to call your own, a freeway killer with an available trunk to cannonball inside of; you always want to be inside of me.

What kind of white girl wants to play damsel whore to my dormant King Kong, one in a long line of angry apes, a sexy beast's history of violence that shaped itself as our New York love story.

In LARA ODELL's individual and collaborative works, performance anxiety, doubling and multiples, camouflage and disguise, stillness and movement are recurring subjects, mutating across media ranging from video to drawing and animation. Static beings come to life in her animated drawings, and live beings remain still in her videos — a drawing tells a story and a narrative in video paints an image. Odell has shown in Novosibirsk, Russia; Beijing, China; Habana Vieja, Cuba; New York, and Los Angeles. She has art degrees from Alfred University, SUNY Buffalo and UC Irvine. www.lararadell.com

MONICA DUNCAN's time-based and sculptural work investigates the nature of visual and temporal perception through camouflage, stillness and the surrogate body. Her work has been exhibited at the 11th LA Freewaves Festival, Los Angeles; BSI Contemporary Art, Beijing, China; ZKM, Karlsruhe, Germany; LACMA, Los Angeles; and forthcoming La Casa Encendida, Madrid, Spain. Duncan received her BFA at NYSCC at Alfred University and is currently a graduate student in the Visual Arts Department at University of California, San Diego. www.monica-duncan.net



James Luna, *History of the Luiseño People: La Jolla Reservation, Christmas*, installation and performance, 1990.

James Luna performed *History of the Luiseño People: La Jolla Reservation, Christmas* during the *I Feel Different* opening reception on 20 October 2009.

David Wojnarowicz and Ben Neill, *TSOFORMO (In The Shadow of Forward Motion)*, video still, performed 1989, recorded 1991, edited 2004. Image courtesy of PPOW.



Raquel Gutierrez ||| “The Pink Room”
inspired by the music of Angelo Badalamenti
(work-in-progress)

I have a lot of explaining to do.

My name is Raquel and I'm an addict. I keep falling off the gravy train, that pussy wagon, the psychic auto-gang bang, the unsolicited onanistic intimacy. I just don't know what it is about... them—but I like them... A LOT.

This ain't no coming out story, just a little bit of truth. And I don't know about you but I need to wear a mask when I tell a little bit of truth.

You know my period and my tits—they came at 11. I was afraid. I just dribbled the basketball out in the backyard trying to temper my anxiety about the horror movie transpiring in my white cotton picked intimates. One day I would need a fix.

But that's not the first time. One man, one finger, one pretty crystal blue water in some Caribbean beach, a few seconds in the crotch of my bathing suit. Asking politely to do it again. I should be so lucky.

1990, age 13 I found words and images with the eruption of Twin Peaks. It was with much ardor that I felt not a pang of pre-adolescent lust but the desire to know whom the fuck killed Laura Palmer.

I was still innocent though my penchant for bad girls had begun here in this small logging television town where there was a spectrum of hot and damaged females both good (la Donna Hayward) and bad (la Audrey Horne).

LEZLEY SAAR works with the over-determined figures and materials of American sentimental culture. Her large banner portrait of Dorothy Champ (a Broadway actress and artist who gave up the stage to teach the Bahá'í faith in 1919) seems as if it was made in another time, as if someone tore it from the walls a spiritualist meeting hall. Champs's crystal tears center a salon style display of Saar's mixed media portraits of singular figures of difference —Sartti Baartman and Rudolf Lucasic, for example. These characters, boxed in and on display, anchor a story about the figures who defined American sentimental culture even as they marked its borders as embodiments of the strange, the exotic, and the different. www.beitzelgallery.com



Monica Duncan and Lara Odell, *Living Pictures (Laundromat)*, video still, 2003.

Nina Thared (1814) performed *Bitacora Mujer* during the *I Feel Different* opening reception on 20 October 2009. She also performed *Besame Mucho* at Wildness (The Silver Platter at 7th/ Rampart) on 13 October 2009 and a series of public interventions on Hollywood Blvd. as a part of her LACE residency.

Nina Thared (1814), *Consultario Magico, Dra. Nina*, video still, 2006.



DAVID WOJNAROWICZ was a prominent and influential figure in New York's downtown art scene from the late 1970s until his death in 1992. Recognized as one of the most potent voices of his generation, Wojnarowicz's singular artistic achievements place him firmly within a long-standing tradition of the artist as visionary outsider. His work is both deeply personal and intensely political. Often overlapping text, paint, collaged elements, and photography, Wojnarowicz created provocative narratives and historical allegories dealing with dialectical themes of order and disorder, birth and death. LACE first exhibited Wojnarowicz's work in 1984 in *Emblem*. www.ppowgallery.com.

SUSAN SITON is a photographic and video-based artist living in Los Angeles. Her work explores how observations are shaped and distorted by socialization and media, and how perception frames and limits our definitions of identity. This conceptual framework is supported by the use of diverse media—including photographic processes, video, installation, and offset lithography—which collectively challenge viewers' assumptions about what and how they perceive. Siton's work has been exhibited at Angles Gallery, Susanne Wehmetter Los Angeles Projects, Rosamund Feisen Gallery, and Army Center for the Arts/Pasadena, as well as internationally in Berlin and Frankfurt. Currently her work is included in LACMA's *New Acquisitions/ New Work/ New Directions 3: Contemporary Selections*. She is the recipient of a Phean Award in Photography and a grantee of the 2002-2003 COLA individual artist award. www.susansiton.com



Lezley Saar, *Rudolf Lucasic: Albino of Black Madagascar Lineage*, acrylic and mixed media, 36" x 24" x 4", 2001.