



JOE SOLA

TAKING A BULLET



photo by:
Andrew Z. Davis
Producer of the film *Volcano* (1997)
35mm black and white film
shot during the magic hour
September 22, 2005

JOE SULA TAKING A BULLET

WITH ESSAYS BY IRENE TSATSOS & JAN TUMLIR
INTERVIEW BY STUART HORODNER

EDITED BY ERIN WRIGHT

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Irene Tsatsos, Curator
Karl Erickson, Program Coordinator

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6522 Hollywood Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90028
www.artleak.org

Atlanta College of Art
1280 Peachtree Street NE
Atlanta, GA 30309
www.aca.edu

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t 323 957 1777 | f 323 957 9025

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4 INTRODUCTION

CAROL STAKENAS

Director, Los Angeles
Contemporary Exhibitions

Whether Joe Sola is perpetually crashing through his studio window or elaborating on the slow burn of Los Angeles County Museum of Art, he flirts with disaster, enticing his viewers to consider the impact popular culture has on our contemporary psyche. Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE) is pleased to offer this publication for Joe Sola's first solo exhibition, *Taking a Bullet*, to give further insight into his provocative practice as well as provide an essential record of his performance, *Film Actors Make Conceptual Art*. Needless to say, bringing together all the various components of this project required the time and talents of many individuals. I would like to express my appreciation to those who helped make *Taking a Bullet* a reality.

LACE is truly grateful to the LEF Foundation and Atlanta College of Art. LEF Foundation and Wexner Center for the Arts generously supported the production of *Army ranger reaching for new spirit warrior (from mankind project) near Mulholland Drive, Los Angeles*, and both LEF Foundation and the Atlanta College of Art provided essential support for the creation of this catalogue.

Additionally, the American Cinematheque at the Egyptian Theatre, Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, California Community Foundation, City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, JPMorgan Chase Foundation, LLWW Foundation, Los Angeles County Arts Commission, Morris Family Foundation, and LACE's members all contributed much appreciated support that enabled LACE to realize the exhibition, screening and performance aspects of this project.

Special thanks to the film actors, Joshua Coleman, Anthony Cran, Jonathan deLima, Ted Travelstead, and Wayne Brian for taking the risk to make art in public with Joe.

My heartfelt thanks to Irene Tsatsos for her ongoing support of Joe Sola's work and for writing one of the accompanying essays for this publication. To Jan Tumir for also contributing an essay and to Stuart Horodner for his lively interview with Joe, and for his alliance in bringing this exhibition to the Atlanta College of Art Gallery in Atlanta, GA.



Finally, to LACE's Board of Directors and our wildly dedicated staff members, Bridget DuLong, Karl Erickson, Matt Lipps, and Katy Robinson, as well as LACE's many consultants, interns and volunteers, including: Jessica Basta, Gary Cannone, Jeff Cain, Chad Clark, Tony Do, Robert Fontenot, Robbie Herbst, Lori Labrado, Adam Overton and Lia Trinka-Browner, thank you all for your tireless commitment to making remarkable art happen.

Studio Visit

2005, digital video with sound, 8 minutes

6 **KEEP IN IT REAL**

IRENE TSATSOS

A friend told me about an article in *The New York Times* which reported that the concept that our actions have consequences, and our subsequent ability to control our impulses, is controlled by a portion of the brain that does not fully develop until we reach our 20s. No wonder adolescents can seem so reckless in their behavior, so blindly eager to do what it takes, however dangerous or contrived, to seem cool to their crew, to seem connected, to seem a part of a tribe. It's all a part of an intense desire to create a fiction of acceptance, of doing anything we can to manufacture a feeling of belonging that seems real.

Though well into his 30s, Joe Sola still does a few things that might seem reckless. In *Studio Visit* (2005), he invites people into his studio, makes them comfortable in a cozy chair, states briefly that what they are about to see is art and that it's safe. Then, entirely unexpectedly, he jumps through a pane of glass, out the window of the studio, and lands amid the glittering shards on the ground below. He has performed this piece about twenty times, often discreetly recording on videotape the startled reactions of his guests. In my experience, the surprise of the jump made what followed seem even odder. My own reaction—to squeal “Are you okaaayyyy?” from between the shards of glass in the gaping window frame—struck me as silly and irrelevant as soon as the words left my mouth. Grinning from his place on the tarp-covered cardboard boxes, the artist scampered off easily, without a scratch, and jogged gracefully around the building back into the studio. And so now what, I thought? Are we to start our conversation all over again? He started the visit with a climactic event, and throughout the rest of the visit I found myself wondering if there would be another scripted scene, like in a Hollywood film. Will he fall through a secret trap door in the studio, or go behind a wall and vanish? Will he spontaneously combust? If I don't like what else he shows me, can I jump out the window, too? It was a great stunt he pulled, and funny, yes, but it is one that leaves a feeling of unease, of instability, like a familiar narrative has been disrupted.

Sola makes himself vulnerable by jumping through a window, opening himself up not only to the possibility of actual pain but also illustrating physically the emotional vulnerability of anyone (artist or otherwise) who presents anything they have made for the consideration and

appreciation of others. After all, being an artist presenting work in a studio to a curator is nothing if not an act of intimacy, and with intimacy comes both vulnerability and trust. But his action engenders feelings of vulnerability in his guests as well, by subverting expectations—what we trust will happen—in this context. After all, despite occasional fantasies, who actually jumps through a window just after, indeed just because, someone has entered a room? Yes, a subversion of the conventions of a given social or professional situation can be freeing, and Sola's giddy enthusiasm after pulling off this stunt is engaging and contagious. One can imagine him as a teenager watching Starsky or Hutch jump out the window, saying to his buddy, "Cool. Dude, that's how I'm gonna ditch math on Monday." Yet something exists beyond the initial humor and delight—something dark, or at least disconcerting. It may seem like a simple reckless stunt, but *Studio Visit* is in fact conceptually grounded in a critique of a most ubiquitous type of American imagery. Sola believes that many of our culture's deeply held paradigms come from Hollywood cinema, and it is these paradigms that he brings into contemporary art discourse. His source material is the Hollywood action film genre, and he appropriates from it liberally in his artwork. The dramatic and initially funny gesture of *Studio Visit* provides the first hint of Sola's artistic engagement with Hollywood action films. Importantly, it also belies the artist's complicated and contradictory feelings of fascination and discomfort with the authority these films command in popular culture.



Studio Visit

2005, digital video with sound, 8 minutes

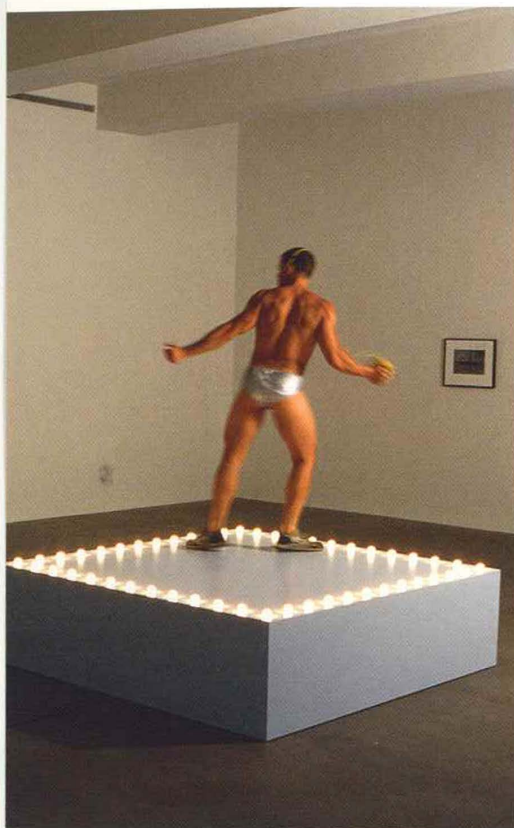
Sola has had a longstanding interest in the relationship of Hollywood cinema to the construction of male identity; that is, to images of masculinity as promulgated by the American film industry. In this light, by jumping through the window, Sola seems to be thinking that if he earnestly learns a trick (from a stunt trainer in the Valley, where he also gets the breakaway glass required to do this trick safely), he will be as macho as a stunt man. But like the teenager that lacks impulse control and succumbs to peer pressure to be cool, Sola's jumping out of a window, "just like in the movies," is a wincing reminder of the very real, human limitations of our efforts, however earnest, to achieve our potential, to feel actualized, powerful, alive. It is this "real-ness," this example of





Studio Visit

2005, digital video with sound, 8 minutes



"Untitled" (Go-Go Dancing Platform)

Felix Gonzalez-Torres

1991, wood, light bulbs, acrylic paint,
and Go-Go dancer in silver lamé bathing suit,
sneakers, and Walkman (when installed publicly)
21.5 x 72 x 72 in.

Installation view: Felix Gonzalez-Torres
"Every Week There is Something Different"
(week two), Andrea Rosen Gallery,
May 2–June 1, 1991.

©The Felix Gonzalez-Torres Foundation.
Courtesy Of Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York.

Photo by Peter Muscato

aching human desire to connect with others (in this case, the curators visiting the studio), that is the motivating force behind *Studio Visit* and Sola's work in general. Ultimately the act of bravado in *Studio Visit* is tempered by considerable ambivalence toward Hollywood's one-dimensional representations of masculinity, and reveals instead Sola's intense desire to appropriate self-conscious artifice as a means to initiate conversations about things that are real, that really matter.

Therefore, in a larger sense, Sola's work asks: to what degree does veracity or even plausibility depend upon affirmation through representation in mass imagery? In other words, what is really real—what we feel and think, or what is seen by mass audiences and therefore accepted culturally? Those representations of culture as distributed through conventional means, like the mass entertainment of Hollywood or, indeed, the rarefied and authoritative environment of the fine art institution, or what we hold true on a personal level?

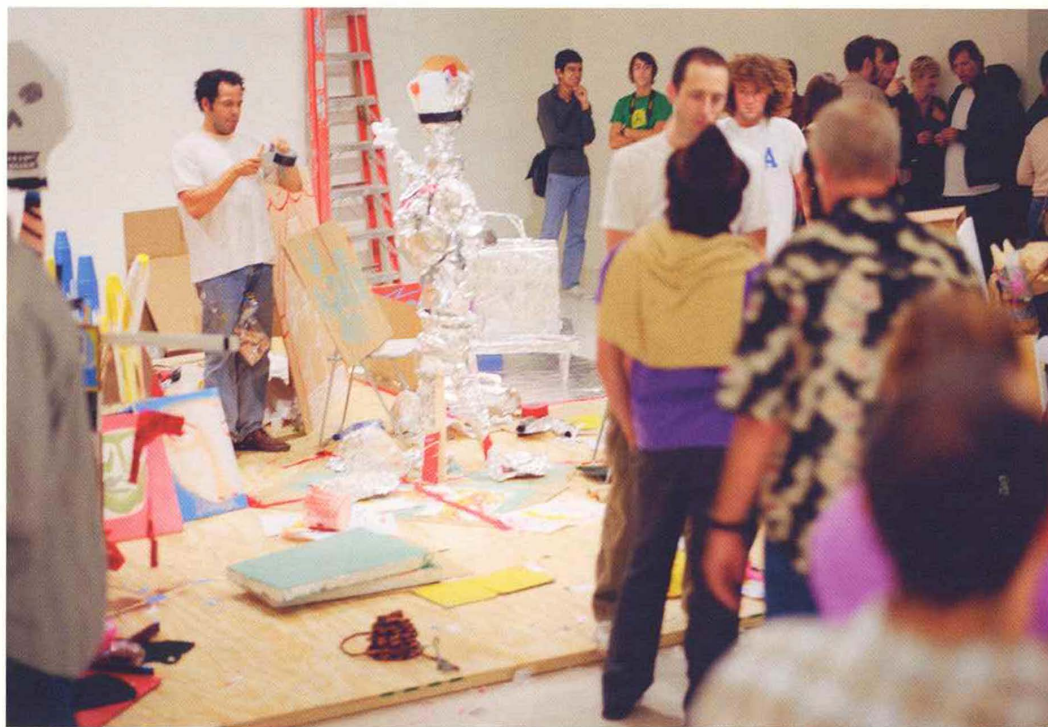
Sola also raises these questions in his piece *Film Actors Make Conceptual Art* (2005), in which he provides a small group of actors with an ample and diverse supply of low-tech materials such as duct tape, cardboard boxes, styrofoam cups, wood, and aluminum foil. These common materials, while not unfamiliar to viewers of contemporary sculpture and installation art, nonetheless lack the iconic references to high art (unlike, say, oil paints, easels, and brushes). At the exhibition's opening reception, using these quotidian materials, the actors-as-artists are invited to create art. The only parameter assigned to the actors/artists is the boundary of the pedestal-cum-stage on which they are situated, like "*Untitled*" (*Go-Go Dancing Platform*) (1991) by Felix Gonzalez-Torres, in which a well-built male dancer wearing only sneakers, tight underwear, and headphones, dances on a platform in the gallery for an unannounced 5 minutes. The residue of *Film Actors Make Conceptual Art*—the pedestal/stage and the artwork made that night—remain on display throughout the duration of the exhibition. Like a trusting film director with an ensemble cast, Sola lets the actors/artists improvise with the materials offered in their rendering of contemporary art. Again, it is his desire to appropriate a Hollywood construct, a situation, one that weds conventions of fine art and popular cinema, for his critical intervention and participation. What is actually created by the actors/artists, and how that product is received by audiences, matters less. For Sola, it is a given that *Film Actors Make Conceptual Art* is both an unmediated event and, conversely, an entirely fabricated one.¹

¹ I'm reminded of a passage in *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius* (Vintage Books) by Dave Eggers in which the narrator, while waiting in a hospital's ER to learn of his friend's status after an attempted suicide, describes vividly his own uncomfortable self-consciousness in this moment because he's already seen "echoes of similar experiences in television, movies, books, blah blah." He goes on: "So instead of lamenting the end of unmediated experience, I will celebrate it, revel in the simultaneous living of an experience and its dozen or so echoes in art and media, the echoes making the experience not cheaper but richer, aha! being that much more layered, the depth luxurious, not soul-sucking or numbing but edifying, ramifying."

Sola's creative contribution in this piece exists in his determination of the terms on which signifiers of the movie industry (actors) relate to the accepted art space (gallery) and familiar materials (art supplies, pedestal).

Similarly, in the "ruins" series (2005) Sola asked curators at museums where his work has been exhibited to select and email him pictures of the exteriors of their institutions. Sola then renders in watercolor the façades of these institutions precariously perched on piles of rubble, as if they themselves are subject to the threat of creeping erosion. Sola describes these images as employing the cinematic structure of the action film, which relies on destruction of iconic structures that we if not cherish then at least take for granted, such as *Independence Day* (1996), in which the White House is blown up, or *Escape From New York* (1981), which, you might grimly recall, depicts, among other things, a jet airplane flying into a lower Manhattan tower as well as a glider landing atop one of the towers of the World Trade Center. In the way people in Los Angeles might make a film about the destruction of Los Angeles, such as *Miracle Mile* (1988), in which the entire city gets destroyed, or *Volcano* (1997), which centers around a volcanic eruption in the La Brea Tar Pits and features museum guards evacuating the paintings from a Hieronymus Bosch exhibit at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Sola appropriates strategies from the Hollywood industry by implicating and using the people within the cultural institution under examination—i.e., the curators—to produce the images in this body of artwork. By submitting images of their museums to Sola, the curators at those institutions, like the makers of those blockbuster Hollywood films, are participating in the spectacular fantasy of the ruin of their very own institutions (and in all likelihood rendering images of their own obsolescence as well).

Sola says that, as an audience member, there is a kind of perverse pleasure in seeing Hollywood depictions of one's world in ruin, something cathartic or perversely comforting about seeing, for example, a futuristic Los Angeles as in *Blade Runner* (1982) or, back in 1981,



Film Actors Make Conceptual Art

2005, film actors, paper, paint, plastic wrap, rope, wood, tinfoil, styrofoam cups, duct tape, saw horses, cardboard boxes, platform, dimensions variable

photo by Sally Peterson





Film Actors Make Conceptual Art

2005, film actors, paper, paint, plastic wrap, rope, wood, tinfoil, styrofoam cups, duct tape, saw horses, cardboard boxes, platform, dimensions variable

photo by Sally Peterson



Film Actors Make Conceptual Art

2005, film actors, paper, paint, plastic wrap,
rope, wood, tinfoil, styrofoam cups, duct tape,
saw horses, cardboard boxes, platform,
dimensions variable

photo by Sally Peterson

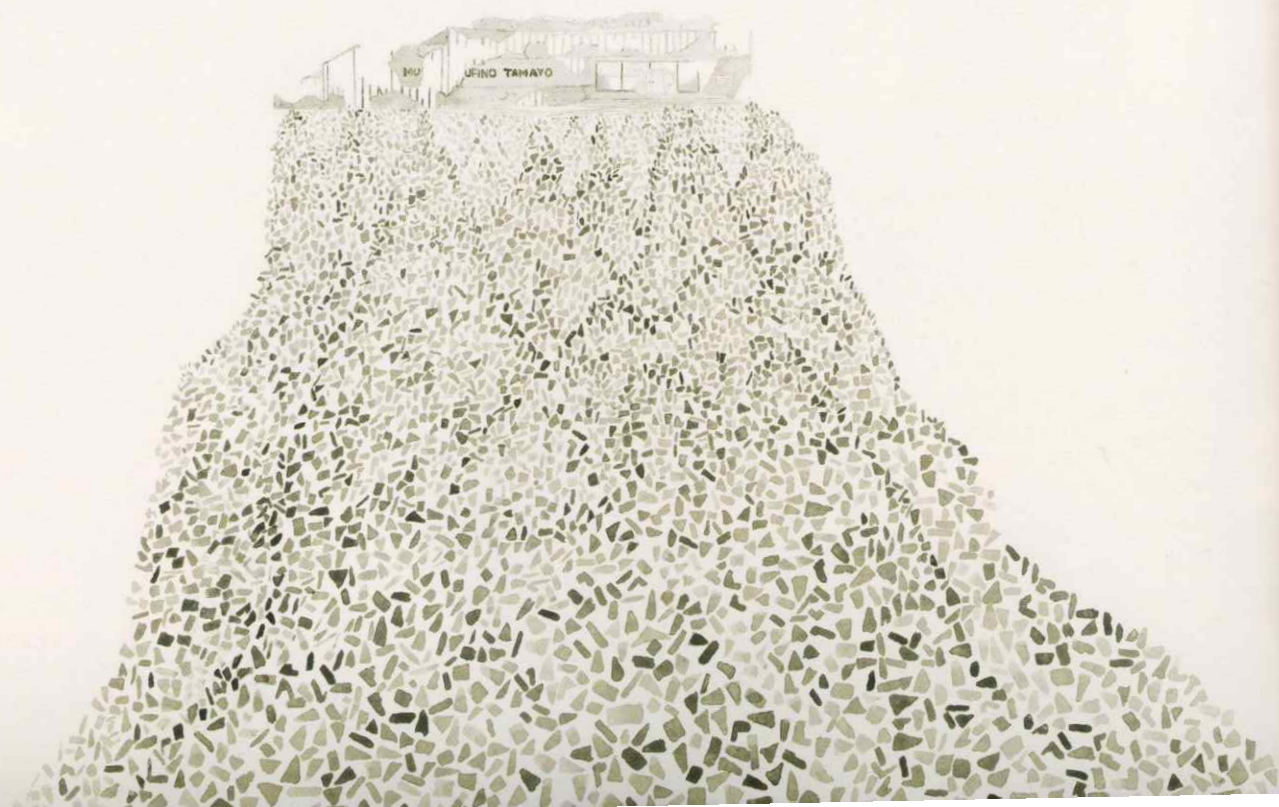
obviously pre-9/11, a tower in lower Manhattan being impaled by a jet airplane. I think the comfort is not necessarily in the act of seeing depictions of ruins, but in our ability to leave the theater (or the gallery) after having done so reassured that Los Angeles, or wherever we live, is more or less intact, at least for the time being. In the "ruins" series Sola appropriates Hollywood narrative conventions to subjugate his and our anxiety about seeing what we cherish destroyed. His work relies on the simple feeling that in times of turmoil or transition (that is, all the time) we can derive illusory comfort from the notion that something, anything that is familiar, however flawed, is still intact.

Joe Sola goes to great lengths to create a world in which he gets precisely what he wants; that is, ability to interact with others within a cinematic construct, even if that construct means getting pummeled by a football team or jumping through a window. In using cinematic tropes (and, indeed the physical mechanics of cinema) as he does, Sola has devised a method of both critiquing the power of Hollywood cinema, as well as participating in it. Using this strategy and these tools, Sola creates complicated work that celebrates its own accomplishment but, importantly, simultaneously depicts the familiar feeling of not getting that for which one yearns, despite the effort, the really sincere effort, and the very strong desire. Beyond the initial humor of much of his work lies a disturbing, uncomfortable, very human vulnerability. The images in Sola's work—hands trying to but never quite meeting (*Army ranger reaching for new spirit warrior (from the mankind project) Near Mulholland Drive, Los Angeles*), grinning through the pain of being bombarded by a team of football players (*Saint Henry Composition*) laughing giddily after jumping through a window (*Studio Visit*), iconic cultural institutions sitting precariously on piles of rubble ("ruins" series), a thrilling roller-coaster ride with hot porn stars (*Riding with Adult Video Performers*)—are funny at first. Yet they add up to representations of frustrated desire, an urgent craving, a longing for intangible satisfaction. Like cutters, who feel alive because they can see the blood flowing from their own skin, Sola's work, though not as directly abusive of the body, reflects a keen desire to feel something, to be here, now. Is it really real, this thing I think I have? Is this it?





*More Cinematic Los Angeles County
Museum of Art on Fire*
2004, digital video loop with sound

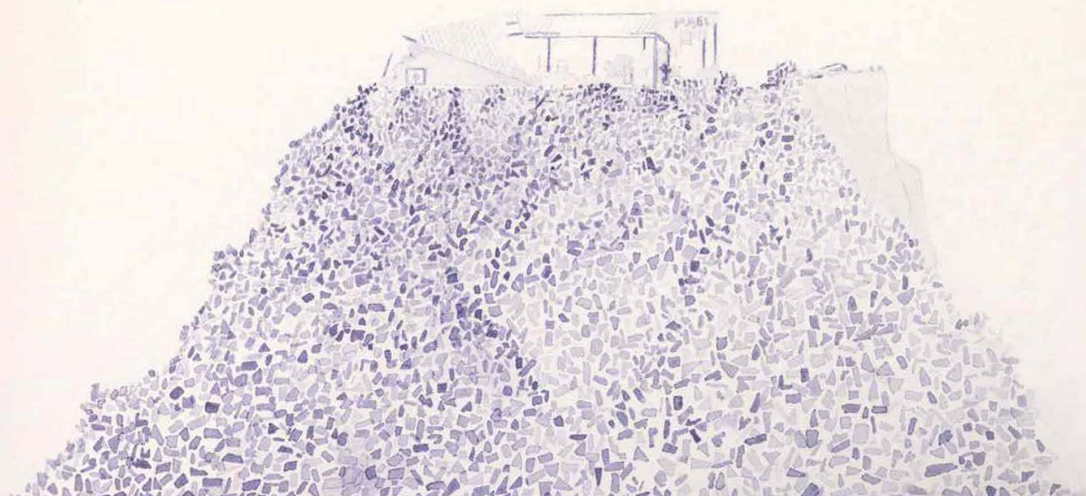


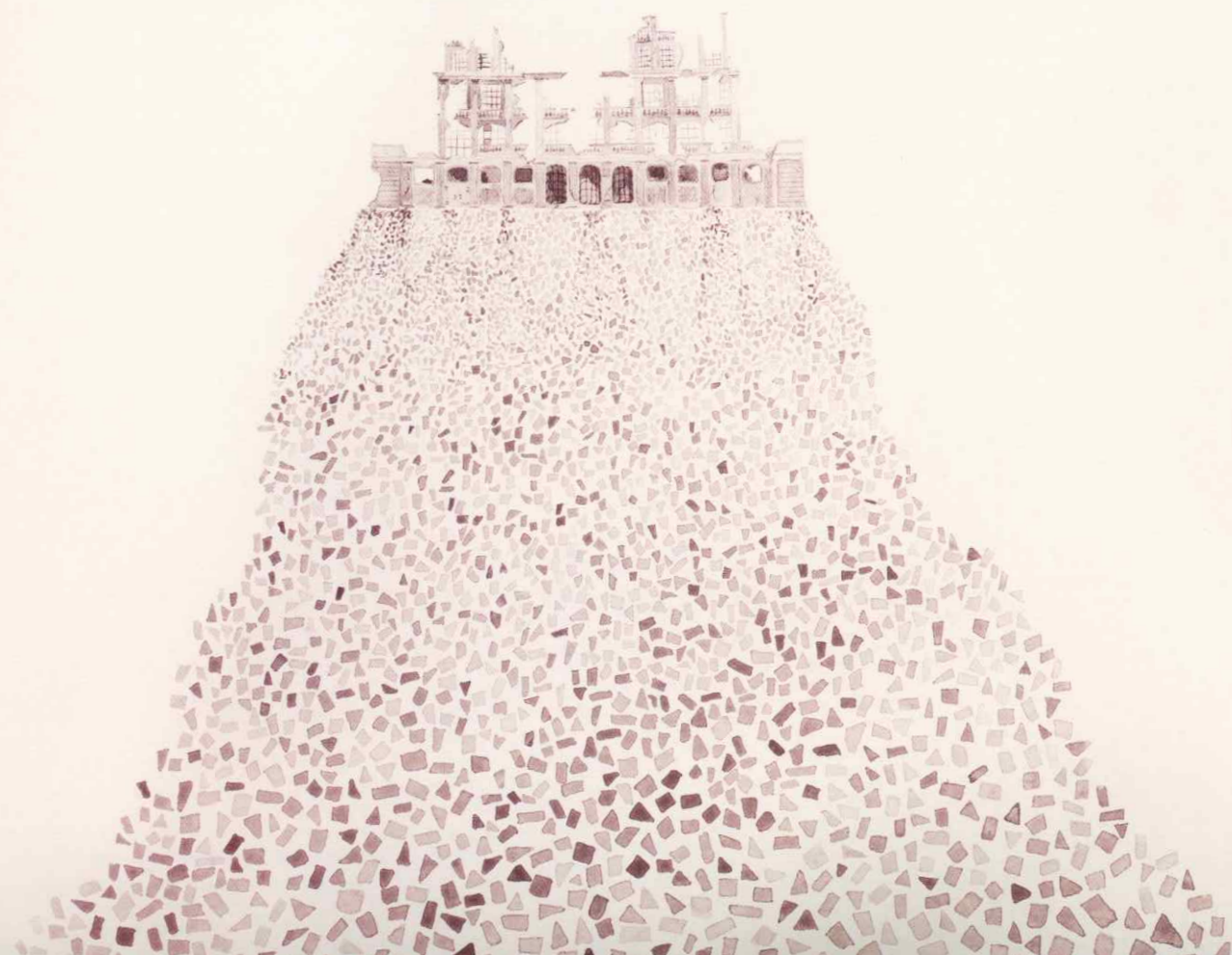


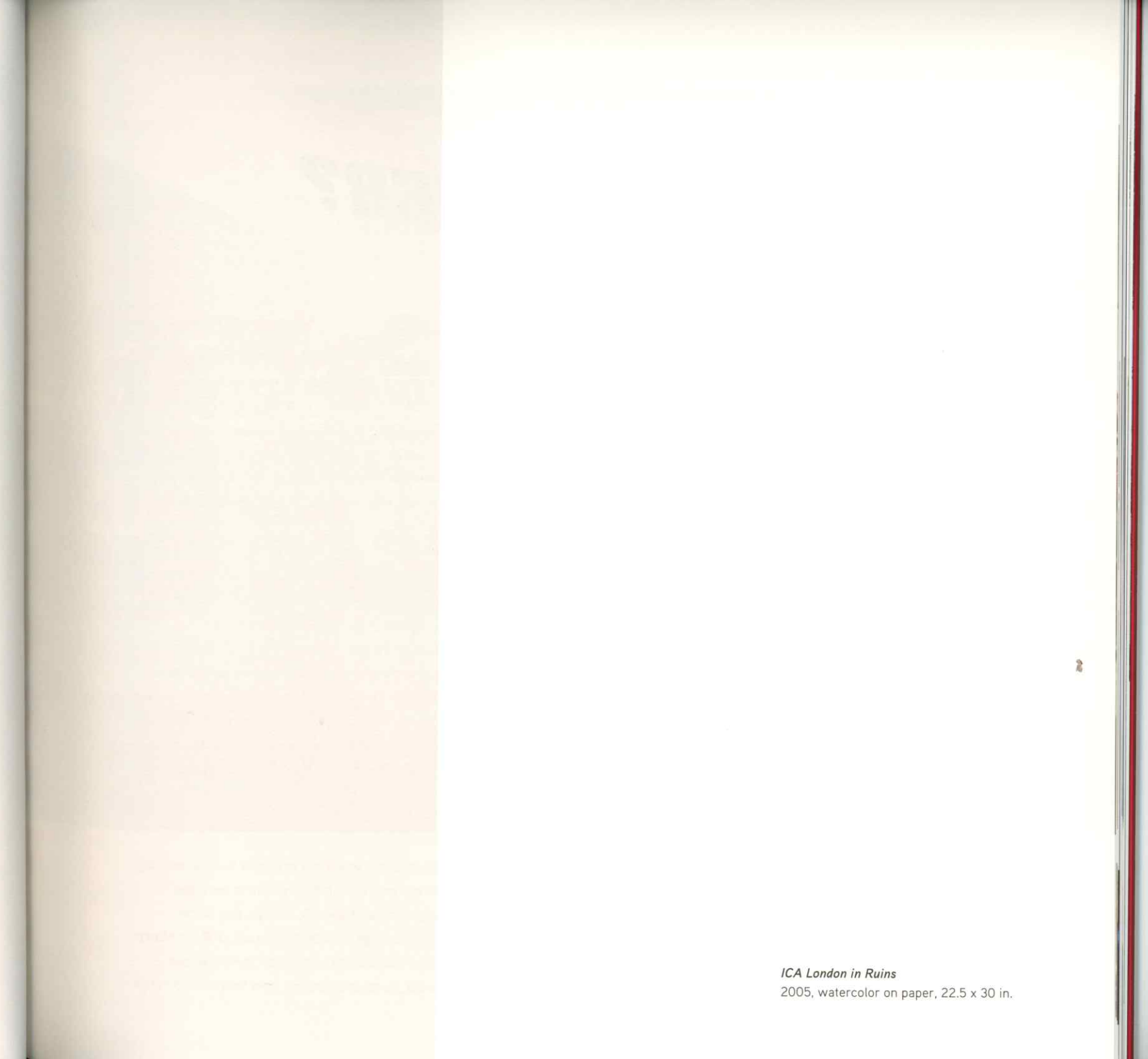
Museo Rufino Tamayo in Ruins

2005, watercolor on paper, 22.5 x 30 in.

Santa Monica Museum of Art in Ruins
2005, watercolor on paper, 22.5 x 30 in







ICA London in Ruins

2005, watercolor on paper, 22.5 x 30 in.

OUT OF WATER?**I**

So far, Joe Sola has realized a number of projects in a variety of media—film and video, installation and, more recently, drawing—that take in a range of thematic concerns. In both form and substance, an outward inconsistency is courted or simply conceded to. Either way, the artist stands behind it, secure in the assumption that a signature through-line will eventually take shape. After all, his eyes are what we look through; they are the ultimate cause of everything we see. Even when Sola steps forth to become the object of our gaze, as he occasionally does, it is to momentarily distract us from this fact, only to remind us, perhaps later—he is still there at the subjective core of the work.

In one way or another, Sola, the artist, is always his own favored protagonist. He often trains his camera upon himself, as in *Saint Henry Composition* from 2001, where he submits to repeated physical pummeling from a high school football team in the American heartland. Yet although his presence there, very much in the “thick of things,” compels our undivided attention throughout the length of the piece, it is ultimately just the physical index of a consciousness that retreats to the wings in order to direct. *Saint Henry Composition* has garnered its fair share of interest for the obvious reasons: it is “High Concept,” as they say in Hollywood, meaning both novel and spectacular. One imagines it to be largely accessible to the same non-art audience that is, after all, featured right alongside the artist. Whether or not this comprises as well an audience for this particular work, Sola at least takes the possibility into account, which is in itself significant.

The non-art perspective is regaled with the unambiguously empirical action of bodies colliding. Then there is the somewhat more ideologically driven process of distinguishing between harder and softer bodies, rural and urban bodies, generic and specific bodies, and so on, which certainly factors as well into the pleasure this footage affords. Inasmuch as *Saint Henry Composition* blithely restages a series of oppositions that continue to divide the US public bitterly, one might assume that it is in fact the harder, rural and generic view that is vindicated



Saint Henry Composition
2001, digital video with sound,
5 minutes 7 seconds





Saint Henry Composition
2001, digital video with sound,
5 minutes 7 seconds

in the end. Sola, dressed in everyday "civilian" garb, is ultimately worn down, disappearing beneath a piled-on mass of football uniforms. In terms of ideological symbology this could mean the triumph of the "red states" over the "blue states," of "low" sport over "high" culture, of traditional morality over progressive ethics, etc. However, all of the above perceptions are available as well to the "other side," the audience of artworld "insiders" for whom the work is actually made, and this includes the frisson of a potential, but unlikely, defeat at the hands of their (our?) "other."

All content that has been made accessible to this largely imaginary public of "outsiders" is also accessible to the "insiders"—in fact, it is accessible as such: as layered, polyvalent content—which already begins to suggest an undemocratic discrepancy. This "second" meaning, which pertains to context, or better, to the relations between two divided contexts, is pointedly not shared. The whole realm of connotative in-reading belongs to art alone. Underlying and enfolding what is given forthrightly by way of the literal, denotative image, a whole range of interpretative cues gradually emerge, but only to that audience that has been trained to watch critically. Radiating outward from a central absence, a vanishing point simultaneously obscured and indicated by the likewise central, but fading, presence of the author-as-protagonist, one may sense the pull of "ulterior motives." Thought-formations crystallize on the cutting-edge of the image, evidence of the ambivalent intentionality of an artist who is also manifestly an American citizen, and therefore one who is at least as internally conflicted as every other American, and perhaps even more so.

2

One may want to recall the legacy of '60s and '70s performance art and its tacit equation of bodily pain with authentic being, as well as, by extension, a measure of artistic quality and success. Sola has revealed that the process of making *Saint Henry Composition* left him impaired, relegated to walking with a cane for several weeks. Yet even if the physical risks are in this case comparable with those assumed by such artists as Chris Burden and Gina Pane, for instance, the specific character of the act itself could not diverge further from their precedent.

The po-faced demeanor of those earlier artists echoed the scrupulously uninflected ambiance of their settings, these being typically studios or galleries, the ones they already occupied, emptied out (but only to a point) for purposes of documentation. A kind of studied nonchalance prevailed on all decisions related to place and its particular affect; clearly, the idea was to uniformly blur the specificities in order to make the totality recede as background. At the same time, one specificity was always retained and systematically augmented: that of apartness. Although they

were forced to learn the language of so-called "New Media" before the rest of the artworld, this first generation of body artists consciously purged their work of any of its conventional markers, maintaining the greatest possible distance from the gaudy TV show interiors that were representative of the time, as well as their aesthetic take on the outlying world. This context of conventional mediation was to a great extent what they were working against.

A salient, if not central, aim of Chris Burden's seminal *Shoot*, for instance, is to resensitize an ostensibly desensitized public to the reality of violence. By isolating the climactic moment of wounding from its narrative rationale and displacing it into the lab-like interior of the empty art studio and/or gallery, Burden wants violence "itself" to bleed through the layers of defensive myth and fantasy that shroud all media products. The artist wants to traumatize us as well as himself; he wants to victimize us by vicarious implication and, even worse, to indict our passivity as the principal cause of the violence we have passively witnessed—all of it. The analogy between camera and gun "shots" that opens Susan Sontag's *On Photography* is in this way rendered concrete, and following Burden's lead, we are made to account for what goes on at either end of the lens and the barrel.¹ In Sola's work, however, this analogy is from the first moment redundant, old hat. The media screen has advanced on the terrain of The Real to the extent that the two may no longer be pried apart. They have become virtually equivalent, and the surest sign of this fact is provided by contemporary TV fare like *Jackass* that resumes the very same strategies of measured self-destruction that the "body artists" once deployed in the interest of "claiming space"—that is, in the language of sociology, to open a zone of autonomous, authentic being at the heart of the media spectacle—only now it is rather to renounce space and to dissolve oneself wholly into the pixilated flux.

Sola's general sensibility is perhaps closer to *Jackass* than Burden, but this is not to suggest any sort of aesthetic backsliding. Nor is his work free of negativity; rather, in place of the "big" oppositions that once dominated the artistic agenda—between reality and fiction, freedom and constraint—he pursues the "smaller" and more specific ones. This shift in focus begins with the awareness that the space of artistic production can no longer be separated in any kind of essential way from the larger space of culture. In effect, Sola never simply assumes the art

Scenes 1–5 of *Climaxes 1966–2001*
2002, digital video with sound,
1 minute 30 seconds



context to be the given and proper context of his work. Even, or especially, when the artworld appears in it in the specific form of an acknowledged content, as in the recent video *More Cinematic Los Angeles County Museum of Art on Fire* (2004), it is treated as just that: a world (and not the world).

3

More Cinematic Los Angeles County Museum of Art on Fire bears an obvious relation to the famous Ed Ruscha painting *Los Angeles County Museum of Art on Fire* (1965-68), but whereas that work was strictly an imaginary construct, this work is only partially so. The smoke that issues from this familiar building is of course a special effect, but the decision to empty out its occupants, as in a fire drill, is for real. The various figures that have gathered outside on the lawn, their backs to the camera, to watch "helplessly" and/or "excitedly" as their institution "burns," have mostly been selected from the offices of the County Museum. Following a brief rehearsal, they enact their response to the imagined disaster, and one cannot help but think that what is happening for us, via montage, is also partly a reflection of what is happening for them—that is, that the image of the institution on fire is conjured up collectively.

Like the teenage football players that are put through their paces in *Saint Henry Composition*, the group of employees that stands outside the *More Cinematic Los Angeles County Museum of Art on Fire* also comprises a world, one that, due to its inclusion within this particular framework, will become known in measured increments of distance from and proximity to the artworld. Loudly patterned Lycra stretched across padded, muscle-enhancing armatures gives way to tailored flannel, cotton and tweed, the toned-down and tasteful corporate suit; although worlds apart, both are equally "uniform." Included within the context of Sola's work, these two worlds become comparable, and through comparison, also partly knowable in their specificity.

Scenes 6-10 of *Climaxes 1966-2001*
2002, digital video with sound,
1 minute 30 seconds

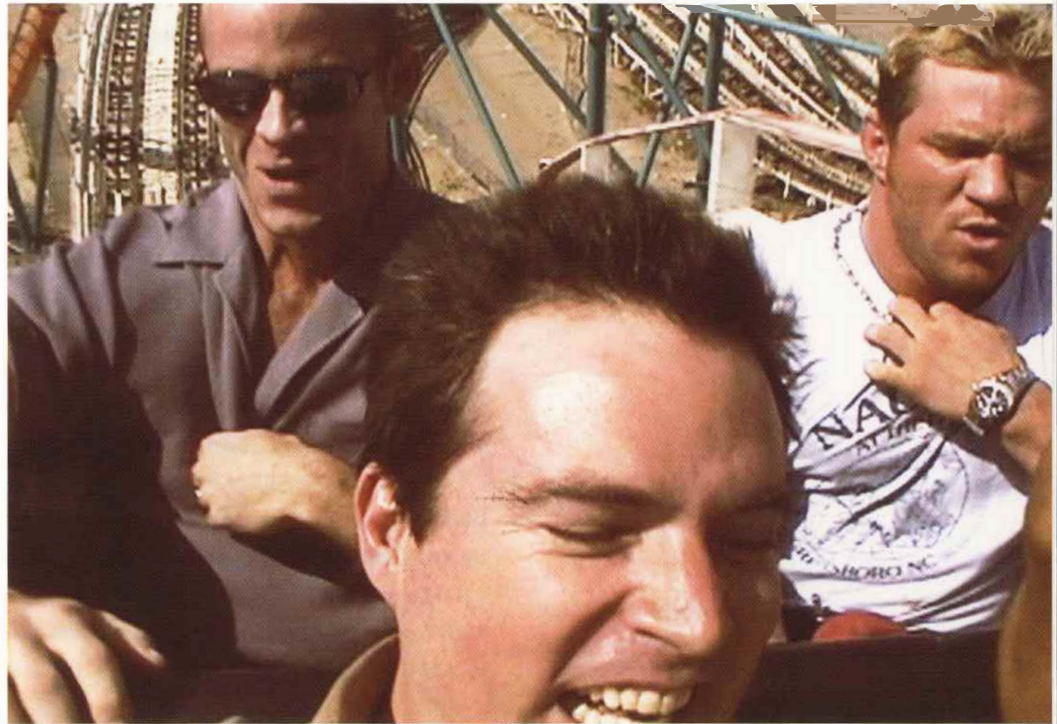
In this way, the artworld is asserted not as the "first world" of authentic, sovereign being, safely cordoned-off from the mediated unreality of the world at large, but an in-between "third world." Somewhat like the operating table that is the meeting ground of the sewing machine and



umbrella in that famous Lautréamont quote appropriated by André Breton and the Surrealists, art becomes the context of comparison making.² The Saint Henry football players and the employees of the County Museum appear in Sola's work as themselves, but with a crucial caveat: they have been made to rehearse and enact their occupations before the camera. They have been estranged from their everyday lives in relation to the process of the shoot, which is as openly structured as that of any Hollywood film.

By openly dramatizing the process of documentation, Sola clouds the facts of what the image shows. From the first moment, that is, he actively undermines belief in the image in favor of a suspension of disbelief. As noted, the appearance of the artist-as-protagonist at the center of the work is our first critical cue, but the same holds true even when the artist is not visually present. Either way, gentle infiltration is Sola's *modus operandi*: the artist, manifestly "post-studio," inserts himself into a succession of outlying worlds, contaminating their homogeneity, and also by extension their credibility, their status as "real worlds." On the surface, this would appear to be the exact inversion of a prior idea of art serving as a zone of purification, but this is to ignore the purity of the image one ends up with.

One especially telling instance of just such a pure image may be found in *Riding with adult video performers* (2002), a short video in which Sola piles into a roller-coaster car with a group of physically impressive porn stars and then records their combined experience of the ride with a hand-held camera. Over and above the fact that it is more "straight" in its orientation as documentary—there is no editing, no montage, of the subject matter; whatever happens on the ride happens as well in the film—purity here involves a precise calibration of internal oppositions which are so evenly torqued that the result is somehow free-floating. Here, again, the artist appears as an emblem of normalcy. Although a member of the artistic community, he is simultaneously representative of the generic audience that has infiltrated the very center of the frame and, as such, he is also the mean against which the physical



Riding with adult video performers
2002, digital video with sound,
1 minute 25 seconds

peculiarities of the assembled adult performers may be measured. As with the football team in *Saint Henry Composition*, these are bodies first and foremost; bodies that have been patiently sculpted via intensive dietary monitoring and countless hours logged at the gym. Like artistic works, these bodies have been rendered almost autonomous from the minds of their makers as things to be seen. Annexed to the world of art by way of Sola's video, these bodies become doubly objectified.

The physically demanding world of adult film performance is inscribed into Sola's work in the "lighthearted" documentary manner of a "fun day off." At the same time, the context of the roller-coaster ride is acute in its relation to the context of cinema generally, and porn specifically, as it testifies to their origins in sheer funfair spectacle. Full-length feature films likewise carry us along a track that is structured to attain ever more delirious peaks of psycho-physiological investment, and this is all the more true in the case of porn where the climactic moment reaches deep into the body of actor and audience alike. Sex, like violence, provides film with its archaic ur-image of the body "beside itself," as the film critic Linda J. Williams puts it.³ However, in order to provoke this loss of control, this regression, an immense technological apparatus is brought into play. This is the side of cinema that is critiqued as authoritarian and, to an extent, Sola is participating in this critique, but he does so in a nuanced (as opposed to unilateral) fashion. Simultaneously "cutting to the chase" and undermining it, he puts the performers into a highly dramatic situation over which they have as little control as him. Throughout the length of the ride, Sola's facial expressions and physical bearing register the pull of all the same forces that are operating on his adult film entourage, and yet, as the author of the work, he claims absolute control.

Here, also, the experience of the performers and audience can be seen to intersect, but only because both have been denied their conventional roles. Via the figure of the artist, the once-passive audience has been placed into a central, controlling position inside the filmic frame, whereas the performers, due to their lack of control, are pushed to the margins where fiction touches The Real.

Scenes 11–20 of *Climaxes 1966–2001*
2002, digital video with sound,
1 minute 30 seconds



Sola has applied a similar logic in his play with the tropes of the conventional Hollywood action film. Works like *Come Ons* (2000), *Gogogo* (2001) and *Climaxes 1966-2001* (2002) all involve a blunt-surgical reorientation of the viewer's narrative expectations around climactic sequences that have either been subtly displaced, wholly excised or, conversely, proliferated. In both *Come Ons* and *Gogogo*, these same "trigger-words" ("Come on!" and "Go!") that are mouthed by stressed heroes moments before the crash and/or explosion that will send them flying through the flaming hoop of the frame are simply piled together. One film after another is cued up to plainly not "deliver the moment," as they say in The Industry. In *Climaxes 1966-2001*, Sola does basically the opposite by editing out everything but "the moment," and yet the outcome is similar. This kind of filmic deconstruction implies a familiar assault on the experience of narrative pleasure, coitus interruptus, but with a crucial qualification: it is not puritanical in its aim, so much as tantric. Released from the authoritarian machinations of plot movement, the audience is left fluttering like a collection of moths about the climactic flame. This sensation, which could ostensibly last a very long time, is not unpleasant—to the contrary.

Moreover, Sola pointedly does not renounce the imagination of disaster that sustains these films as well as our emotional investment in them. Rather, he blurs it; he rinses away its moral substrate of guilt and regret; he psychedelicizes it. This same desire that draws the body into the arena of high-contact sports also draws the eyes toward fire, as well as toward such films as *The Towering Inferno*. In Sola's work, all film is essentially "disaster film," and it is the irresistible spell that disaster casts over every one of us that is the particular source of his own fascination. Culture, "low" and "high" alike, is accordingly understood as a vast mechanism that structures, in various ways, the experience of regression to a pre-cultural state. Whether we think in preemptive or causal terms, the imaginary is that which always either impedes or becomes The Real. The FX-enhanced images of burning, collapsing buildings in film always bear a direct relation to the real disaster of riots, earthquakes and fires, especially in Los Angeles where the imaginary and The Real have become almost parallel conditions. As Sola well understands, to move to LA is in itself to court disaster.



This point is crystallized in the recent piece *Army ranger reaching for new spirit warrior (from the mankind project) near Mulholland Drive, Los Angeles* (2005), which again devolves upon that crisis moment in film where the narrative tapestry thins out to a single strand that is either going to spirit us safely to the conclusion or snap. The emblematic image of LA by night, its receding landmass crisscrossed with streets and freeways and lit up like a gigantic circuit board, straightaway focuses our gaze as cinematic rather than televisual. In television, which is the medium of "The Same," everything that happens, happens to someone else; in cinema, which is the medium of "The Other," everything that happens happens to us. The two hands, which appear from the bottom and top of the frame, are therefore our hands, as if the camera had simply been substituted for our own heads. Simultaneously, though, these are pointedly not our hands; they are not even the hands of the same person.

A leisurely observation of this site in its specificity, as well as its function as a filmic setting, is key to understanding this film, which only "looks like" a Hollywood film. In effect *Army ranger reaching for new spirit warrior (from the mankind project) near Mulholland Drive, Los Angeles* is less a film than an image, projected, with additional movement. Unfolding in a single steady take, its frame stays put for long enough for us to locate ourselves in and around it. Its vantage places us high, as on the edge of a cliff or hilltop home, the most propitious point from which to gain this sort of picture-postcard view of the city. It is a cliché, an image that immediately locks into registration with the image we already have in mind, stored in our individual archives of beautiful and/or degraded moments, memorized through repetition. And the moment those hands appear in the frame that simply reconfigures it as another kind of cliché, dramatic rather than documentary. The transition from the one image to the other is made effortlessly, and this in itself corroborates the already existing proximity they bear in the imagination—the image of the high-flying "good life" (because one can measure success in LA by the extent of one's view of the city) and the image of the disastrous fall.

Scenes 21–30 of *Climaxes 1966–2001*
2002, digital video with sound,
1 minute 30 seconds

We have all heard it before: "Be kind to those you pass on your way up because you may meet them again on your way down." *Army ranger reaching for new spirit warrior (from the*



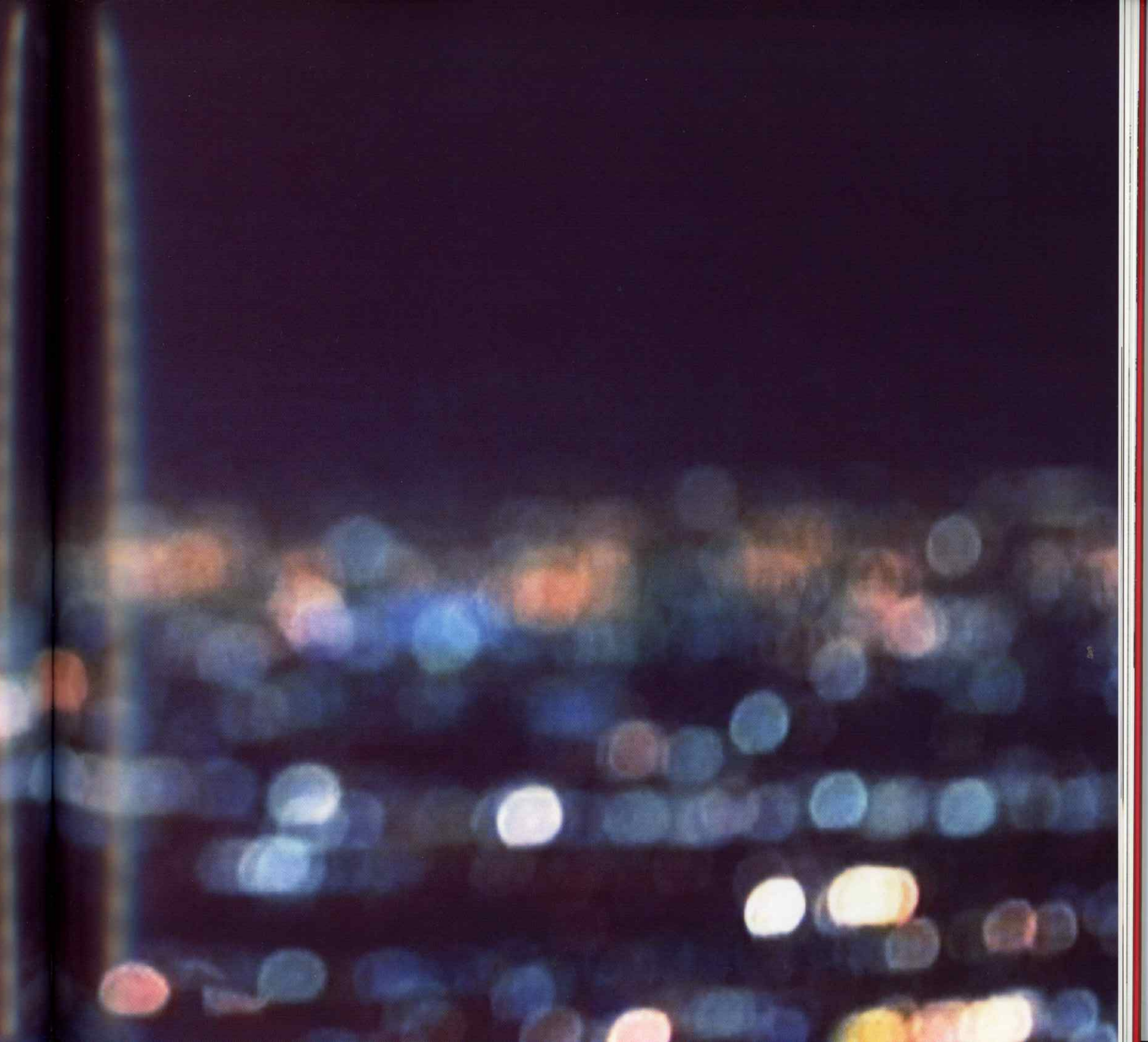
mankind project) near Mulholland Drive, Los Angeles locks onto that interim moment, allowing us to imagine a before and an after, without resolving anything in a narrative sense. One hand reaches up and the other reaches down; they stretch every digit but cannot seem to grab hold of each other. The musical score swells appropriately—another cliché, aural this time, cueing up its own given set of responses—but its momentum is curbed by the image, by its condition of strained stasis. One thinks of Michelangelo's famous rendition of the moment of conception on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel—the cliché to end all clichés?—for there also everything devolves upon the act of touching. The spark that passes from the finger of the Supreme Maker to that of the made is allegorically linked to the "energy" that is conducted by the artist's brush and that gives to its marks a life-like being. In film, it is instead in the edit that we must seek the spark, the motivating intentionality or intelligence required to transition across every interval. Between any two consecutive frames, deathly stasis intrudes, the threat of "losing the plot" is both immanent and imminent, and requires constant attention.

As an allegory for montage, *Army ranger reaching for new spirit warrior* (from the *mankind project*) near Mulholland Drive, Los Angeles, invokes the specter of dysfunction, "losing the plot," but without giving in to it. In a figural sense, the seam between one frame and the next is not only exposed, but pulled so wide open that it threatens to swallow the film in its entirety. At the same time, the filmic "spell" is never broken; either that, or we have awoken to find ourselves in exactly the same dream-like place—that is, even the climax of critical/deconstructive revelation is withheld in this case. Instead, we are suspended midway between mystification and enlightenment in a manner that parallels the suspension of the filmic image between disaster and salvation. And, again, this is not at all unpleasant.

Army ranger reaching for new spirit warrior (from the *mankind project*) near Mulholland Drive, Los Angeles is tantric, like the bulk of Sola's work in video and film, because it aims to prolong, rather than curtail, the spectator's pleasure. Were the hands in the film to connect, they would restore the current of narrative momentum, and we can imagine the outcome even as we reconcile ourselves to the fact that it is not likely to happen. Here and now, they can only try; they can simply fail to connect, or else succeed in prolonging the thrill that precedes contact. As it







happens, the initial sense of desperation between them gradually gives way to erotic languor, as if the fingers were only straining to tickle each other.

In time, also, a different sort of attention sets in, at once more distracted—in that it never exceeds the frame of the image and is thereby seemingly devoid of a self-reflexive moment—and more analytical—in that it moves within the image-frame as within a world. Self-reflexivity traditionally requires separation, distance: consciousness must be allowed to peek “behind” the image, as behind the Hollywood sign, to take in its structural support system. In conventional narrative cinema, the literal scaffolding of production is expressly designed to disappear, and much the same holds true for Sola’s film. He does not turn the gaze of the apparatus upon itself because this is not where he locates The Real; it does not reside in machinery so much as the image “in and of itself.”

5

In time, the morphological differences between the two hands become increasingly acute: although both are impressively masculine specimens, one is more so than the other. One is rougher, visibly etched with the experience of hard physical labor, a life lived outdoors, among other men; the other is largely free of such signs and marks, more shielded from the elements, even slightly pampered. These various details appeal to what might be termed our extra-diegetic consciousness in that they confirm the outside occupations of the two men who have lent their hands to this film. As the title suggests, one is a “man’s man”: a former soldier who, we may assume, is considering a second career as actor. The other, conversely, is somewhat of a “broken man,” one who is in the process of reclaiming his manhood by way of regular weekend retreats into the forest with like-minded men, where loosely scripted psychodramas of venting and bonding are ritually enacted. In either case, the viewer must conflate the hand’s “real life” function with its fictional function in Sola’s film; it is an operation that should at least temper the absorptive allure of this high-tension moment. In itself, the image of these truncated extremities both point the gaze to the center of the frame and provide it with an escape route (to that outlying place where their bodies remain). As Roland Barthes’ essay on *The Third Meaning*

Preceding pages:
Army ranger reaching for new spirit warrior
(from the mankind project) near
Mulholland Drive, Los Angeles
 2005, 35mm film transferred to DVD
 with sound, 3 minute loop

Scenes 31–35 of *Climaxes 1966–2001*
 2002, digital video with sound,
 1 minute 30 seconds



makes clear, however, this back and forth movement of spectatorship between immersion in film's fictional world and a continually dawning recognition of the "real world" elements that comprise it is not only not disruptive of narrative pleasure, but integral to it.⁴

Every dramatic film contains a documentary of its own making. It borrows its object-world of settings, props and costumes from the world outside its frame. It reorients the purpose and function of all these various things in line with its own particular narrative requirements, but it is also occasionally reoriented by them. The objective quality that Walter Benjamin defines as "auratic"—that which pertains to the object's "presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place where it happens to be," as well as "the history to which it was subject throughout the time of its existence"—is largely subsumed by technical reproducibility, but a frozen, forensic record of it remains behind for all time.⁵ And as with thing and place, so too with person: every filmic character is simultaneously an actor performing. The camera records the actor's "presence in time and space" as well as the actor's "history"—all the previous roles that have lead up to this one.

These are generic conditions, latent in every film, but Sola renders them overt and emphatic: what his film is of is also what it is about. The hands that stretch toward each other in *Army ranger reaching for new spirit warrior (from the mankind project) near Mulholland Drive, Los Angeles* are those of experience and innocence, "Old Hollywood" and "New Hollywood," the rugged individual who plays himself and the pretty boy who has no self apart from the parts he plays. Between them lies the only city in the world that could serve as their common home—the documentary home of these actors as well as the dramatic home of their various characters. Moreover, when Sola's film is screened for the first time as part of the LACE exhibition for which this essay is written, it will itself become embedded in the landscape it represents. LACE, not coincidentally, is a civic venue devoted to the exhibition of contemporary art that is located on Hollywood Boulevard, in the very heart of touristic LA's celebration of movie-making. Always somewhat incongruous or out of step with its context, LACE invites a mixed patronage, equally divided between artworld "insiders" and those "outsiders" who simply "drop in" not knowing what to expect. When Sola's film makes its debut here, it will be attended by a public of art-savvy Angelenos who will be able to place themselves within the city on the screen, while at the same time pondering the implications of this fact. To project oneself into the frame of a Hollywood film that is actually a work of art within an art space that is actually in Hollywood will no doubt be a highly provocative experience, and yet I suspect that this work carries another "secret" payoff, this one reserved for those "others" who chance upon it while working their way down the Avenue of the Stars and, perhaps for the first time in the history of LACE, find it to be just what they were looking for.

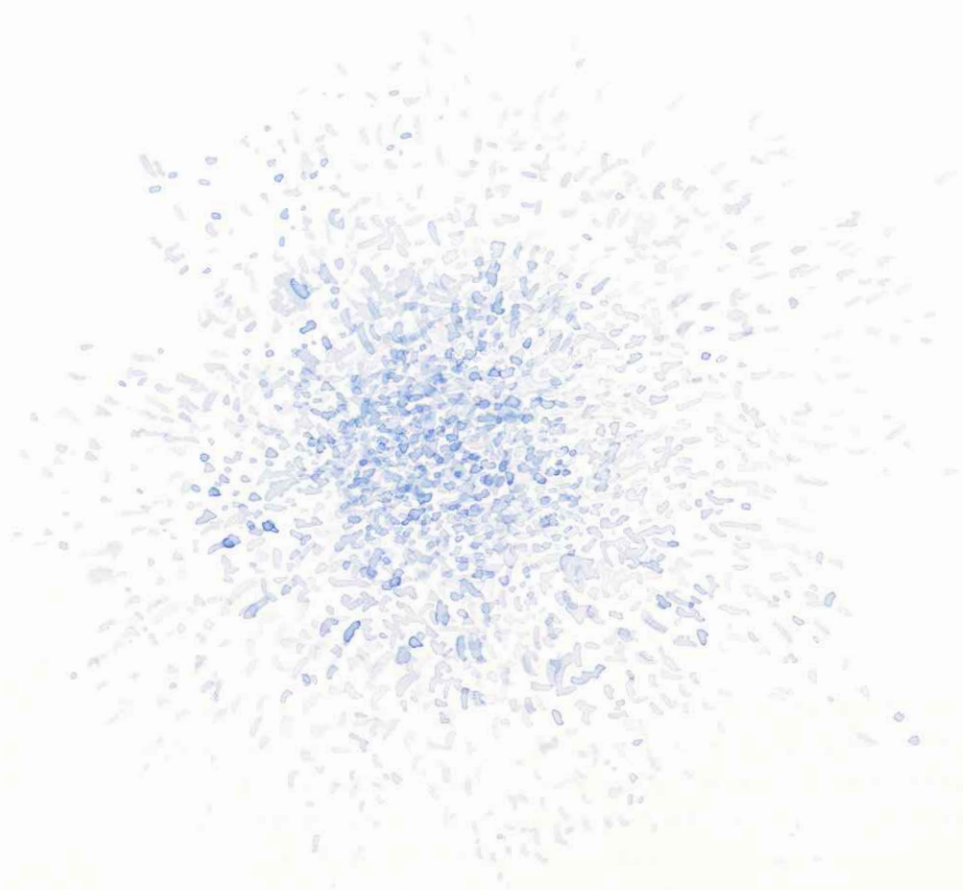
¹ Susan Sontag, *On Photography*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 1977.

² It is from the Comte de Lautréamont's *Les Chants de Maldoror*: "Beautiful as the chance encounter, on an operating table, of a sewing machine and an umbrella."

³ Linda J. Williams, "Film Bodies: Gender, Genre, and Excess," *Film Genre Reader 2*, ed. Barry Keith Grant, University of Texas Press, Austin, 1995, pg 143.

⁴ Roland Barthes, "The Third Meaning," *Image, Music, Text*, trans. Stephen Heath, Fontana, London, 1977.

⁵ Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn, Schocken Books, New York, 1969, pg 220.





Men in Black

2002. watercolor on paper. 11 x 15 in.

Ghostbusters

2002, watercolor on paper, 11 x 15 in.



44 **INSIDE THE STUDIO'S**

ACTOR

**INTERVIEW BY
STUART HORODNER**

Stuart Horodner *Your work deals with masculine idols and ideals—action heroes, porn stars, yourself. What is the quality you most admire in a man?*

Joe Sola Groucho Marx said he looked for the purest misery in the most perfect joke. I admire a person who laughs good and hard and deep.

Stuart *Gigi Levangie Grazer (novelist and wife of film producer Brian Grazer) writes, "...if you wait 20 minutes, tragedy is comedy. You just have to get through the 20 minutes." What were your first experiences with art? Were you making it or looking at it?*

Joe When I was twelve my mom took me to downtown Chicago, we lived in the suburb River Forest at the time, to a double bill of *Un Chien Andalou* and *Blood of a Poet*. From the first scene of the eye being slit open I was shocked, confused, scared, on the edge of my seat, I wanted to go home, I wanted to stay. I didn't know quite what that was at the time, and it took me some 20 or so years to figure out what that was (I am a very slow person)... art. I try to find that confusion, attraction, repulsion in my own work as well as other artists' work I enjoy.

Stuart *Maybe Janet Jackson's tit popping out at the Super Bowl is our equivalent of that infamous eye and razor scene? Seeing the Joseph Beuys retrospective at the Guggenheim, in my teens, really shifted my rather conservative ideas about what art was and what it could be. Blocks of fat, explaining pictures to a dead rabbit, and "everyone as artist" just changed me. Have I told you how notorious you are in my classes? I have shown Come Ons to so many students, and they just love Armageddon Rental.*

Joe Fissures in the media spectacle are very seductive. I often think of OJ being chased by the police in his Bronco with people along the road holding out signs to him. I wish I had been there holding a poster that read "go juice go" for him and all the people watching the chase, so that I could participate in the spectacle on the screen. OJ and the Bronco was the

first moment when the cinematic world and the real world collapsed, boundaries blurred. My project *Armageddon Rental* was one way that my work crossed over into that screen space. In one simple gesture, inserting my own three-second climax of the asteroid exploding into the same spectacular climatic scene in a Blockbuster video copy of the Michael Bay film *Armageddon* and returning it to the video store, my images became a part of that distribution system and a part of the original film. It is an immediately gratifying strategy, staking my position in relation to the dominant media, to that fantasy screen space. Just put your images right in there. Put it in power. It's similar to *Come Ons* and *Gogogo*; I appropriate big gun action films and make films about what I see truly floating across of the surfaces of these strange narratives...hysteria!

Stuart *Before I forget, kudos to your mom for taking you to see the Dali/Bunuel film. My mom turned me on to "three hankie" films like Random Harvest, an amnesic love story with Ronald Colman. What did you learn by doing the Saint Henry Composition?*

Joe That's the first time I've heard the word "hankie" in an interview! I never played football in high school and certainly not at the University of Michigan where I studied American Literature. The closest I got to the players, apart from all the games I watched on the television, was at a Michigan game when I snuck onto the field while the players were "psyching" themselves up for the game. On the sideline amidst the TV crews, police, coaches, and huge support staff, players formed a circle around one player and, at different times, lunged at him with all their force. After one guy was hit a couple of times someone else took the center. Being so close to such a heightened level of concentration and aggression made me think that football players are unlike so many other people or athletes. With *Saint Henry Composition*, I put myself into that competitive space again and took some licks from the team while working with them for a week. It's a violent sport that beats you up, but at least you're with a group of like-minded people. In life you get punched and pushed around, but you are usually alone, or with one other person.



Come Ons
2002, digital video with sound,
1 minute 37 seconds



Gogogo

2001, digital video with sound, 1 minute

Stuart *That psyched up and crunched feeling sounds like being at an international biennial! If we are judged by the company we keep and the quality of our enemies, do you have any comments about riding a rollercoaster with porn stars and asking actors/models to make art?*

Joe There's a lot of crossing over in these projects, as in a lot of my work. In the case of *Riding with adult video performers*, I get to "act" on the screen with some of the best known performers in the Los Angeles gay porn industry. I cross over onto the screen, become a part of their world, and they get to "act" during our short trip on the climax of a rollercoaster. In *Male Fashion Models Make Conceptual Art* and *Film Actors Make Conceptual Art*, I am taking the "players" out of their worlds and putting them into my art world. Making the screen subjects make work! The piece really flies when you can witness the creative process in action, the men in the gallery during the opening reception gluing boxes together, crushing tinfoil into abstract shapes, chatting with visitors, using power tools and paint galore. I've created a box where the actors/models can publicly create. They have total freedom. No holds barred. I think that's why the guys like doing the performance so much.

Stuart *Freedom is why we all got into this business right? I've been thinking about your Studio Visit performance...a piece that I enjoy vicariously through the cell phone calls I get from colleagues who have just experienced it. Charlie Chaplin said, "The secret to performance is entrances and exits." And Preston Sturges said, "A pratfall is better than anything."*

Joe Freedom from, freedom to, freedom of...yes. When you get down to it, that space that you go to create something, to make something, that dark quiet space, that crackling euphoric space, is the only place that can't be controlled by all the other mechanisms in life that are trying to do just that. That free space in French linguistic theory they call *Jouissance* I liken to biting into a slice of pizza from my favorite pizzeria. In my *Studio Visit* performance that moment just before I jump through the window I know that I'm throwing it all up for grabs, that I'm going to really change what is going on in the studio. There's a build up before I jump out my window. I talk about various projects and exhibitions, ask if they'd like to see a new performance. Then I jump out the window, breakaway glass streaming everywhere, leaving the guest or guests, there, alone: confused, afraid, concerned, shocked, angry, and floored. Something does happen. We all are confronted with something then.

Stuart *Yes, pizza. Another topic rarely discussed in interviews. I can still taste a slice from my old neighborhood in the Bronx. What do you think about "nominative determinism," that names are prophetic? Like I'm a curator named StuART and you are an artist whose last name is SoLA, and your work plays with film culture and fantasy?*

Armageddon Rental
2001, VHS video with sound, 3 seconds





Joe It's all in the names. There's a lot in a person's name, that's why there was so much fuss in the bible about naming people, or trying to find out the name of "God." Everything is in the name. Sounds and shapes of words can determine so much; Borges first turned me on to this idea. A friend here says that road rage exists because of the tearing engine-like sounds of the expression.

Stuart *I didn't know you studied American Literature, but it makes sense. Your titles are so precise; you take language seriously. What other writers have influenced you?*

Joe I have read Thomas Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49* five times! Pynchon is so clear and so clever. The fourth chapter of his *Gravity's Rainbow* has a quote floating before the chapter begins that reads "'what?' —Richard M. Nixon." He's able to, with one quotation, in the middle of a voracious, topsy-turvy, pre- and post-apocalyptic world, show how the absurdity and confusion inside the book is just like Nixon acting as if he were surprised about Watergate. I also think a lot about Jean Genet, his flowery prose wraps itself around some really horrific scenes of abuse and violence. His language brought power and liberation to the horror and pain in his characters' worlds. Stuart, I can't stop thinking of the name Janet Jackson. It won't go away.

Stuart *Try repeating the name "Fausto Melotti" a few times, that'll remove Janet from your head. I've never read The Crying of Lot 49 but will have to in advance of your show. When I gave a talk about my curatorial projects in LA recently, I mentioned that part of my process was to swim around in the artist's world of influences and interests. I'm in Joe-land now, so it'll be some Pynchon. I've always gravitated towards poetry but a while back I was on a terrific Philip Roth jag. There's a great section in American Pastoral where he says, "Getting people right is not what living is all about anyway. It's getting them wrong that is living, getting them wrong and wrong and wrong and then, on careful reconsideration, getting them wrong again. That's how we know we're alive: we're wrong." His recent The Plot Against America is scary good; a twisted historical fantasy right in line with that Nixon quote.*

Joe That is an amazing piece of prose! Life is mostly failure. We don't have too many successes in life, mostly misses or flat out flops. That's it. That's all. I heard you lecture out here at Art Center College of Design where you spoke about reading poetry as a guide to the world. There is so much pleasure in language. I really like to listen to people talk, people I don't know, and probably wouldn't get to know, talking about their own worlds, their own families, complaining about their boss, baseball team, Janet Jackson's tit, etc. There are so many pictures out there. Back to the first question you asked me, one of the qualities I

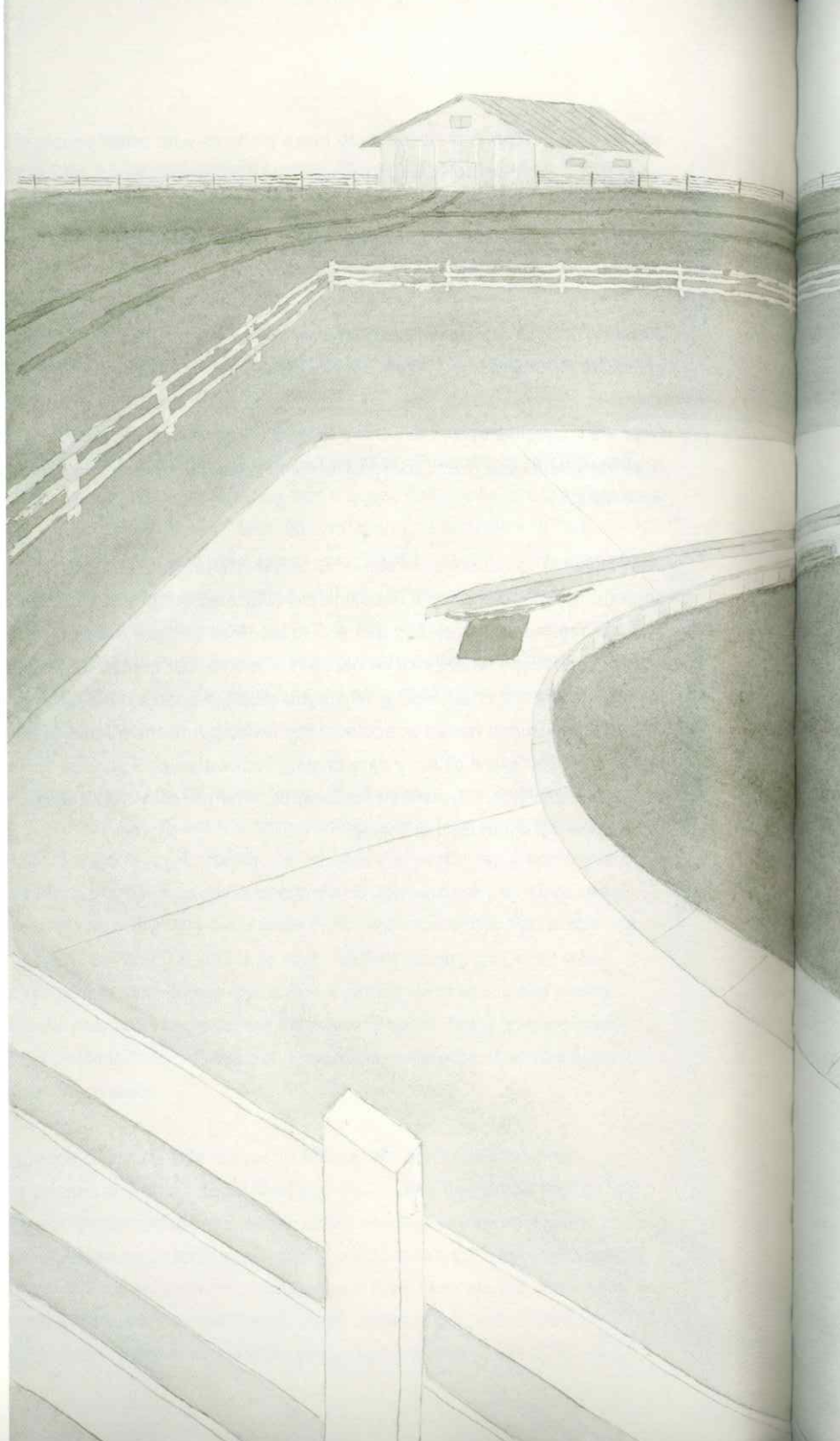
admire in a person is their ability to make pictures with other people in conversation. It's an art form. One person starts to shape something with words, then the other person, over drinks, dinner, on a walk, in the studio, adds something to the picture, and back and forth you go until you end up somewhere totally new. It's exciting. I try to surround myself with those kinds of people.

Stuart *This kind of shaping things is why I drifted into curating and writing, working between the artist and the audience. It's fertile and flexible space.*

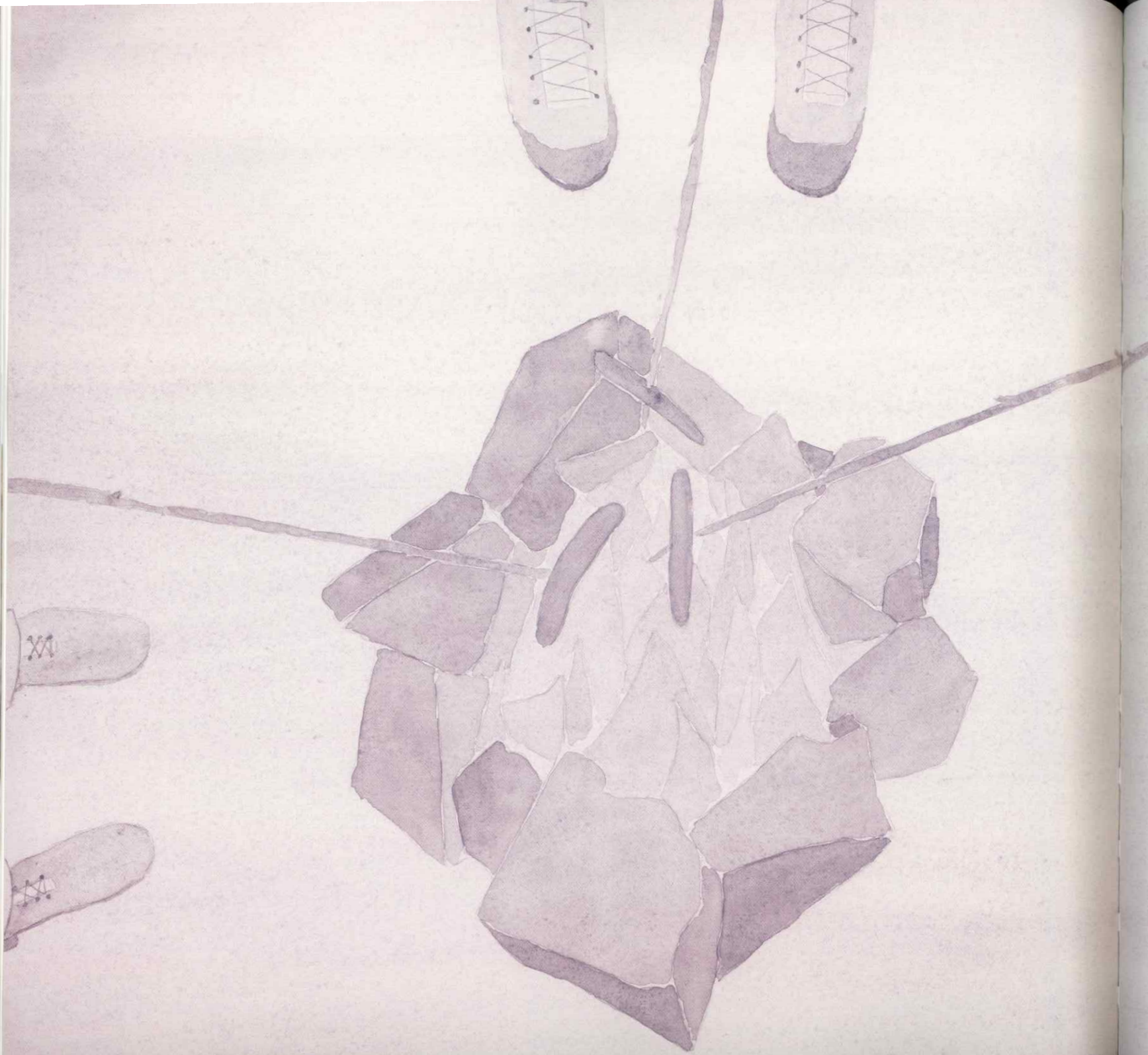
How are you feeling about this survey show, a unique moment in the development of your work—happening in the city where you live and then in Atlanta? How do you think about the audience for your work?

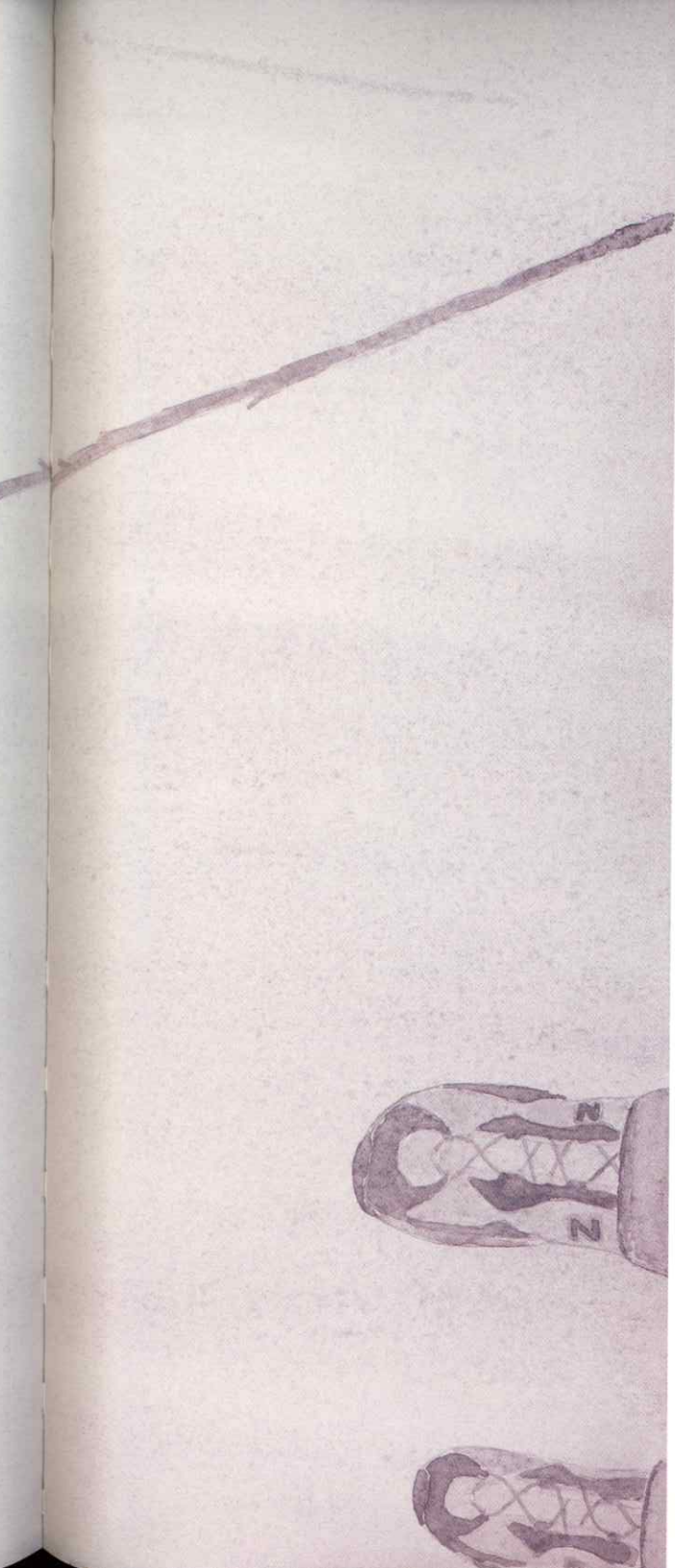
Joe My work is about my relationship to film; its images, structures, and spectacles are something that most people in our media saturated culture can relate to. What's so exciting about living in Los Angeles is that you're so close to the means of production, the materials, and the landscape where this all happens. Cinema just creeps into the landscape, whether it's that strange familiar feeling when you stumble upon a building that was used in *True Lies* or the Brady Bunch house or accidentally walking into the middle of a scripted shootout on Hollywood Boulevard or forty cars driving backwards on Figueroa Street. Cinema saturates the landscape here. I'm sure all landscapes, whether they are Chicago, Fargo, or Atlanta, all have some variation on this theme.

Country Pool
2005, watercolor and pencil on paper,
15 x 22.5 in.





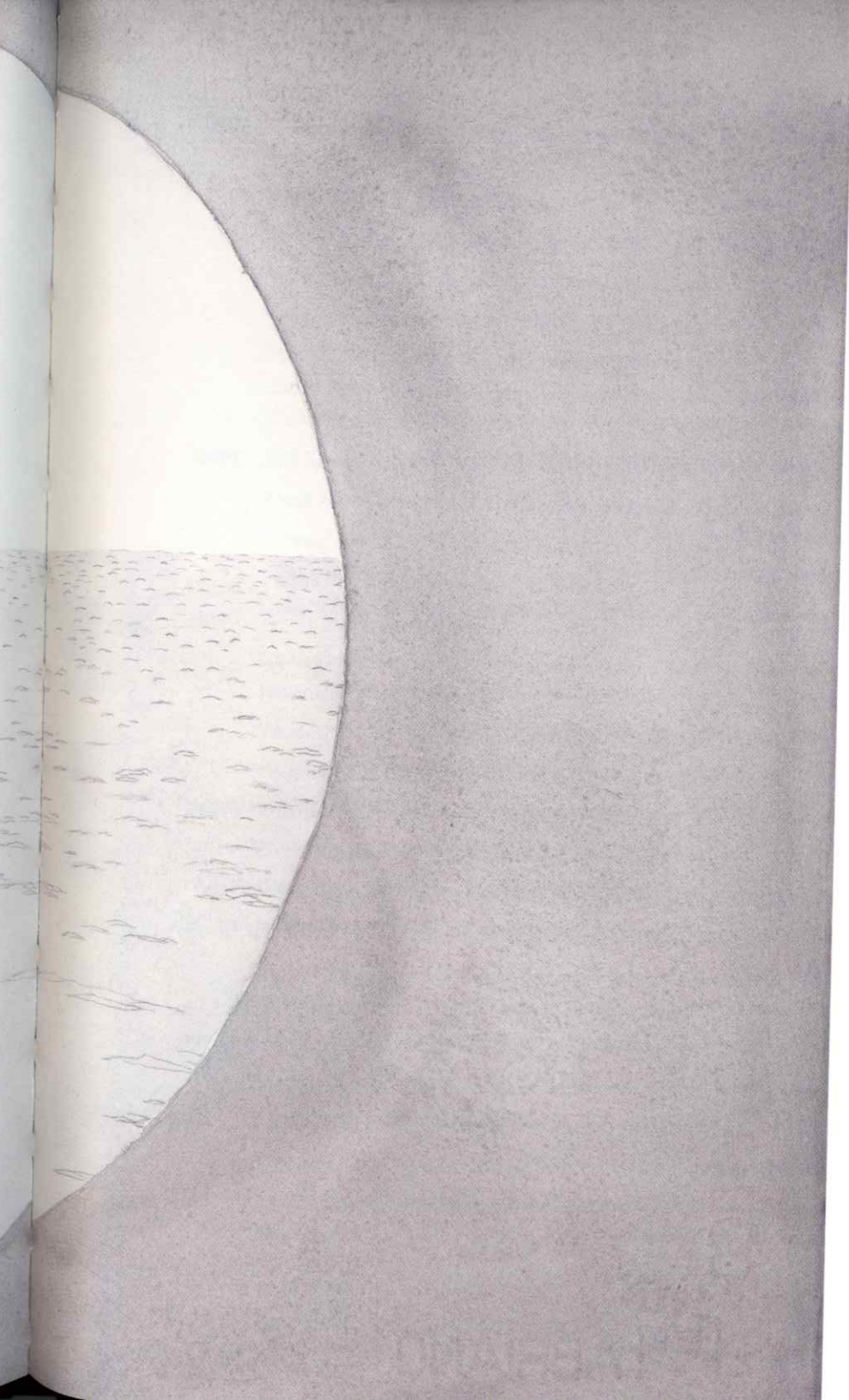




Hot Dogs

2005, watercolor and pencil on paper,
11.25 x 15 in.





Telescope View

2005, watercolor and pencil on paper,
15 x 22.5 in.

JOE SULA

EDUCATION

- 1999 Master of Fine Art, Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles, CA
 1989 Bachelor of Art, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2006 Atlanta College of Art, Atlanta, GA
 Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, OH
 2005 Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, Los Angeles, CA (exhibition catalogue)

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2006 "Reckless Behavior" J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, CA (screening)
 "Humor Me" Artspace, Kansas City Art Institute, Kansas City, MO
 2005 "Rogue Wave 05" LA Louver Gallery, Los Angeles, CA (exhibition catalogue)
 "Landmarks" Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, Portland, OR (exhibition catalogue)
 "Things Fall from the Sky" Evanston Cultural Center, Evanston, IL (exhibition catalogue)
 "Still: Things Fall from the Sky" UCR/California Museum of Photography, Riverside, CA
 "Dreaming of a More Better Future" Reinberger Galleries, Cleveland Institute of Art, Cleveland, OH
 2004 "Ritalin" Art2102, Los Angeles, CA
 "Pop, Play, Replay" Contemporary Artists Center, North Adams, MA
 2003 "17 reasons" Jack Hanley Gallery, San Francisco, CA
 "Recon/Decon" Pacific Film Archives, Berkley Museum of Art, Berkley, CA
 "tonite!" Spagnagna Gallery, San Francisco, CA
 "Corporeal Punishment: The Body of Evidence Lies Naked and Bruised," Video Mundi, Chicago Cultural Center, Chicago, IL

- 2002** "California Biennial," Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach, CA
(exhibition catalogue)
- "Brand Spanking New," Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, OH (screening)
- "Gimme Shelter" Museo Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City, Mexico (screening)
- "WORDSinDEEDS" Portland Institute of Contemporary Art, Portland, OR
- "Heaven Knows I'm Miserable Now," LOW Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
- "How Do We Know the Sky Isn't Really Green and We're not Just Colorblind?"
Johan Grimonprez Video Lounge, Project Room, Santa Monica Museum of Art,
Santa Monica, CA
- 2001** "City Game," Centrum Beeldende Kunst, Rotterdam, Netherlands (screening)
- "Alone Again, (Naturally)," The Standard Hotel, Los Angeles, CA
- "Forever Infinite," Black Dragon Society, Los Angeles, CA
- "Fluxus Revisited," Art in General, New York, NY
- 2000** "In Site 2000," San Diego, CA + Tijuana, Mexico (screening) (exhibition catalogue)
- "Short Video Works," Instituto Cubano del Art e Industria Cinematografico,
Havana Biennial, Havana, Cuba (screening)
- "VA(MEDIA.DOC).VA," Association for Contemporary Art, Sophia, Bulgaria
- "LA Freewaves Festival," Los Angeles, CA (screening)
- 1999** "RE: Rauschenberg," Marcel Sitcoske Gallery, San Francisco, CA
- "Cold Drink," Artists Space Gallery, New York, NY
- "Videophoto" Bucknell Art Gallery, Bucknell University, Lewisburg, PA
- "5th Mostra De Video," Centre de Cultura Contemporania de Barcelona, Spain
- "Geneva Media Arts Biennial of Moving Images," Center for Contemporary Images
Geneva, Switzerland (screening) (exhibition catalogue)
- 1998** "Inventory," White Columns Gallery, New York, NY
- "Second Nature," New Wight Biennial, New Wight Gallery, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA
- "Caption," Three Day Weekend, Los Angeles, CA
- "Pandaemonium," The Lux Center, London, England (screening, exhibition catalogue)
- 1997** "Current, Undercurrent: Working in Brooklyn," Brooklyn Museum of Art, Brooklyn, NY
(screening)

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- 2001** Wexner Center for the Arts Residency, Columbus, OH
- 1999** Virginia Center for the Creative Arts Fellowship, Amherst, VA
- 1997** Jerome Foundation New York City Media Arts Grant, St. Paul, MN
- 1996** Lyn Blumenthal Memorial Fund Grant, Chicago, IL

**FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS,
& RESIDENCIES**



Barney's Drive Through Shirt

2003, light jet print, 10.25 x 13.5 in.

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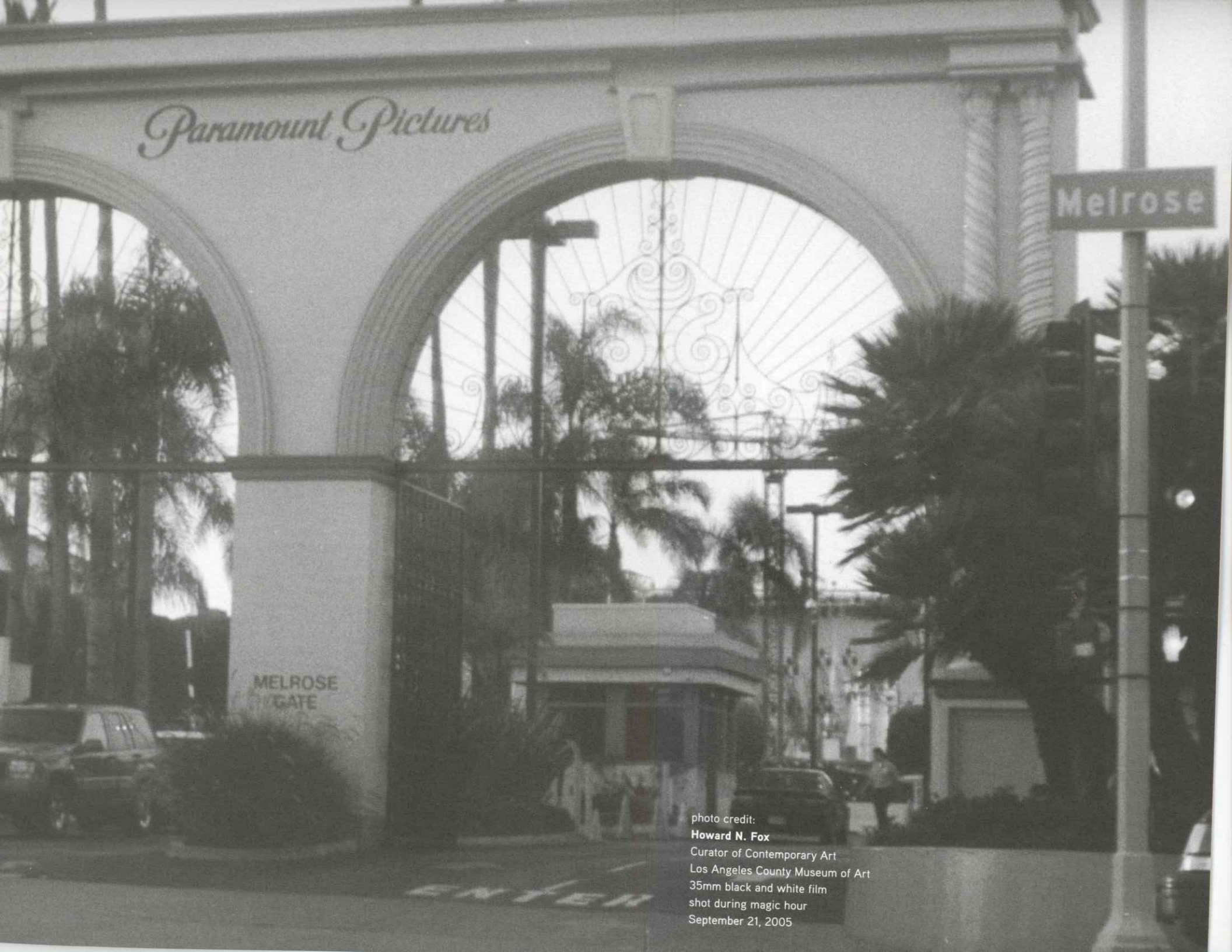
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