

**ISBN 978-0-9913772-0-6**





1.

footage from a 1969 TV show played in a perpetual time-coded loop: a Beach Boy crooning for the camera, sloe-eyed and benign, lips falling in and out of sync with three takes of the same song.

a meticulous collection of popular artifacts chosen for their veiled cultural histories, uncomfortable associations, and protracted afterlives.

the inverse was also true, as each object could similarly be defined by its suppression.

high tops the brand stopped producing when they were found on the feet of every corpse of the Heaven's Gate cult; a doctored image of a nude Princess Diana. Between the poles of mass production and mass dissension,

pipes (disguised as lipstick, encasing fake flowers, and as a mock highlighter); a Kmart-distributed album by psychedelic rockers Silver Apples; Lynda Benglis's notorious 1974 Artforum advertisement; and the first issue of October.

object as outlaw, discourse as censor,  
and viewer as consumer.

Funhouse—both the Stooges album as well  
as the fun-house setting in Orson Welles's  
Lady from Shanghai, Less an "object maker"  
than a collector, fan, researcher, or archivist.

objects come into being and  
eventually (at least in the popular  
consciousness) they cease to exist.

## 2.

Things never end up the way you intend.  
the tattered copy of Shakespeare's Henry V  
(c. 1599) propping up my wobbling bookshelf.  
no offense to Shakespeare or to Henry V,  
for that matter, it just happens to be  
the perfect thickness for the job.

In the old projection room at the  
converted movie theatre the feel  
of a backroom contraband dealer,  
from the route up the rear stairwell down  
to the pristine vitrines plopped onto the  
scuzzy carpet.

Resembling a black marketeer's  
disparate showroom  
Lady Liberty's doppelgänger  
outside a casino in Las Vegas.

Maldistribution:  
It's a word which usually refers  
to the unequal distribution of  
wealth, but which defines a kind of  
repurposing that creates ambiguity  
in its reception. an illustration  
accompanying Michel Foucault's essay  
on the phrase 'Ceci n'est pas une pipe'.

Fingering a trail from crack-pipe roses to Michel Foucault, it's not hard to come to the conclusion that not only images can be treacherous.

### 3.

Riddled with double takes, knockoffs, and near misses, \_\_\_\_\_'s poker-faced, Wunderkammer-ish show was the bad trip I couldn't take often enough this summer

#### 4.

an avid collector of objects, ephemera, and blurred distinctions between truth and fiction, particularly in the way mass audiences construct their mythologies.

drawing attention to a societal compulsion to produce tales of intrigue and heroic, yet tragic, figures, grasps at the origins.

Ivory Neige, L'Origine du monde, Magic Eraser, 2012, a photographic triptych of an assemblage of personal effects set into the space underneath his kitchen sink includes his own copy of L'Origine Another, more personal, layer of correspondence is that Chambers was a childhood neighbor in Las Vegas, where he was raised.

the empty center is also a perceptual crawl space. Viewers may enter Ivory Neige through its center while they are visually barred from fully entering the reproduction of L'Origine due to the strategically placed box of Ivory Snow.

L'Origine is obscured and abstracted by the fleshtones of the mother and child who appear on the Ivory Snow box cover. In fact, it is Chambers, who posed as the Ivory Snow mother, covering L'Origine's X-rated feature.

"99 and 44/100% pure" girl, a writing surface that has been erased, reused, altered as it retains traces of its earlier form, extracts points of contact between institutionalized art and pulp histories to create a multilayered record.

## 5.

the asterisk-like *Black Suns/Black Holes from Inner Experience* by George Bataille, 2010 also augments the indoor/outdoor dynamic with an audible street sound composition, *Quartet 2*, 2011

## 6.

Each object is an instance of discordance, an embodiment of the conflicting desires of multiple authors, audiences, and authorities.

is a connoisseur of such contrarian bits of culture. He collects artifacts whose intended appearance and meaning are augmented, and often suppressed, by misuse, mythologizing, or market-capitalization.

He pulls equally from popular and avant-garde histories, and from both visual and musical sources. Carefully arranging his found objects and appropriations in focused, minimal presentations—including vitrines, musical scores, and poems—

He calls attention to his material and its accumulated readings. Isolating and abstracting these artifacts and stories, he enacts a further modification, encouraging additional interpretations rather than a distilled understanding.



Checklists, liner notes, and essays explain only enough to engage the viewer in the contradictions of the “altered” objects that they describe.

The cabinet *Fromage de Guerre* juxtaposes the spy fiction of Gérard de Villiers with cheese over the space of two glass shelves. Each novel, as evidenced by its book jacket, absurdly sexes up a real-world theater of war. Villiers’s “cheesy,” digestible fiction by accompanying each paperback with a wedge of a fromage native to the book’s setting—for example, Celtic cheddar for *Furie à Belfast*.

literally inverted the scores of music by John Williams, Martha Reeves and the Vandellas, Charles Mingus, and others by arranging the upside-down and backward pages of each work to be performed by a string quartet.

high and low, familiar and obscure, suggest parallel, if not intersecting, narratives.

Extending the bizarre logic of a 1967 *Esquire* article that provocatively pairs actress Sharon Tate with aphorisms from Chairman Mao’s *Little Red Book*, he configures two reel-to-reel tape players to spool an electronic composition around the bodies and accoutrements (e.g., a bayonet or Coke bottle) of moving dancers costumed like Tate’s *Esquire* Maoist rebel.

He at once inhabits the “culture industry” of easy-to-swallow entertainment postulated by Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer and positions himself as its critical dissident. It is not surprising that the histories that invokes concern nonconformists and anarchists, from basketball misfit Bison Dele to black bloc protests. ’s visual and aural arrangements disrupt cultural orthodoxies and hierarchies, sending objects and viewers on imaginative, often wayward trajectories.

## 7.

Okay, this one wins the award for Longest and Most Intriguing or Is That Pretentious Title of a Musical Composition.

Ready? Here goes: Music from

The Trip (1967) in the style of a Schoenberg/Gershwin tennis match, observed in passing by Dr. Oskar Janiger, for String Quartet, Electric Bass, Electric Guitar and Percussion.

a musical acid trip that interweaves the modal and chord structures of Schoenberg and Gershwin with music derived from the 1967 Peter Fonda film.

Porgy and Bess meets Pierrot Lunaire meets Electric Flag? Composed in commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the City of West Hollywood, the work "focuses on the avant-garde diaspora in Los Angeles' influence on the psychedelic history of the Sunset Strip."

## 8.

metallic c-print of 'Slash' image of Spock;  
metallic c- print of 'Fakir' image of Lady Diana;  
counterfeit Nike SB Dunk 'Heaven's Gate' shoes;  
The Trip original movie posters  
with original censorship stickers;  
Bison Dele, last game-worn jersey;  
The Beach Boys, 'Never Learn Not to Love'  
45 RPM single;  
Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse- Tung;  
Esquire Magazine December 1967 editorial featuring  
Sharon Tate, 'A Beginners Guide to Mao Tse-Tung';  
Life Magazine December 1969 editorial featuring  
'The Wreck of a Monstrous Family';  
Polish film poster for Weekend U Berniego;  
Polish film poster for Miłośc Szmaraqd I Krokodyl;  
archival pigment prints of unused alien prototypes  
from the film 2001: A Space Odyssey;  
archival pigment prints of storyboards  
from the unrealized film The Story;  
'Love Roses' disguised pipes;  
'Lipstick' disguised pipe;  
U.S. Postal Service stamps depicting  
The Statue of Liberty at  
New York, New York, Las Vegas;  
The Silver Apples' debut LP with  
Kmart 99c Special Sale sticker;

Artforum magazine November 1974 featuring ad for Lynda Benglis at Paula Cooper Gallery; 'Hi-Liter' disguised pipe; October Magazine No. 1, Spring 1976, featuring Michel Foucault, "Ceci N'est Pas Une Pipe"; video featuring The Beach Boys performing 'Never Learn Not to Love' live on the Mike Douglas show with: 1. original sound 2. Charles Manson singing 'Cease to Exist' 3. 'Never Learn Not to Love' (studio version); archival pigment print of Bob Dylan's hair; archival pigment print of flames of monk self-immolating; Knabe baby grand piano; c- print of woman with spectrum-dyed hair; Rode NK1 tube microphone; DR microphone stand; Kicker Comp 15 bass speakers; Shure SM58 microphone; Ultravoice XM8500 microphones; spectrum-colored XLR cables; Samson Servo 1200 amplifier; Yamaha EMX 212S power mixer; Shuggie Otis 'Freedom Flight' LP; two Allen Ruppertsberg color xeroxes;

Rogue Warrior by Richard Marcinko with stickers; Post-WWII German postcard with overprinting; Post-Islamic-Revolution Iranian banknote with overprinting; British pound coin with over- stamping (I.R.A.); metallic c-print of Barker Ranch, Death Valley, CA; two glasses of seawater; yellow polypropylene rope forming two nooses; Leonard Nimoy-designed monogrammed towel; counterfeit Leonard Nimoy-designed monogrammed towel; Malcolm McLaren business card; counterfeit Malcolm McLaren business cards; Gustav Metzger object; counterfeit Gustav Metzger objects; silver gelatin print of plastic flower; metallic c-print of L.A. Times recreation of Patricia Hearst's point of view on Mel's Sporting Goods, site of SLA shootout, May 16th, 1974; The Lost Continent of Mu by James Churchward; Library of Congress facsimile of The Jefferson Bible by Thomas Jefferson; Vietnam War-era Vietnamese Bible; Tijuana Bibles - Jean Harloe and Clark Gable;

The Beatles, The Beatles (White Album);  
Kiosk displaying various books and magazines  
modeled after Jean-Luc Godard's "ideology shop"  
in One Plus One.

## 9.

mining the mundane objects of capitalism and its reflection in the cultural agenda through assemblage and display-based works, challenging the designated meanings of everyday objects as they enter into dialogue with one another.

approaching simple and mostly utilitarian commodities as reflections of their collective or individualist identities,

decoding dismissed or undiscovered subtleties in contemporary culture,

allowing unspoken connections to come to the fore.

orchestrating a significant mass of objects each depicting a singular narrative while connecting with one another in oblique ways.

idolizing a pair of desire objects that are impossible to attain,

the sneakers stand as a symbol of social status despite their failure to enter mainstream manufacture.

the definition of core value and its fluidity finds its most versatile form in Spectrum, a multimedia installation combining sound, technology and physics to orchestrate an unlikely symphony. Two pocket size vibrators, placed inside a baby grand piano, make the piano's tonic cords create a high pitched noise reinforced by a microphone, while the connected speakers stimulate the microphones hanging from the ceiling, causing them to swing back and forth. The result is an impressive spectacle of visual and audio stimulation for the viewers, similar to a Rube Goldberg machine, ridiculing the set notions attached to commodities inside the frame of utilitarianism.

## 10.

Able assembler of cultural ephemera that are rich with associations. In a manner reminiscent of his gallery-mate Carol Bove, displays shelves of antique books, juxtaposing titles ranging from The Official Guide to the Best Cat Houses in Nevada to Frantz Fanon's The Wretched of the Earth. A display case works a cylindrical theme, combining Lynda Benglis's infamous Artforum dildo advertisement with glass tubes you can buy in bodegas that hold tiny paper roses but double as crack pipes. The Benglis ad led to a palace revolt that gave rise to October magazine, whose first issue, in the same case, features a drawing of a pipe with the Magrittean caption "Ceci n'est pas une pipe." And there's much, much more.

**11.**

free-form and basically subordinate  
to the process of trawling for the stuff  
It's not the collection that matters, but  
rather the collecting.

a 1967 Esquire article about  
Sharon Tate and a business card from  
Malcolm McLaren, among hundreds of others.

**12.**

but the main event was the music, written by \_\_\_\_\_, a frequent collaborator of Mr. Kelley's, and performed primarily by eight musicians playing everything from harp to slide guitar. They crashed and churned through rock and roll, heavy metal, and music that conjured up films noirs, horror movies, game shows, bowling alleys and even the avant-garde.



### 13.

String Quartet No. 2 greets visitors at the museum's entrance with drones, wails, hums, and hammerings that mimic the sounds of a city street. Together, the bass, cello, viola, and violin conjure a car alarm, a halting train, and a helicopter overhead. Drawing loosely from both String Quartet No. 2 (1983) by Morton Feldman (American, 1926-1987) and the use of everyday sounds in the works of experimental composer John Cage (American, 1912-1992), offers a composition that simultaneously describes waste—those sounds we consider irksome or superfluous in our daily lives—as well as the blurred distinction between representation and abstraction in music.

Enveloping CAM's Courtyard, Sines (for Michael Asher) (2011) is a four-channel installation in which silence interposes extended individual sounds, each with a singular, unerring pitch. Each monotone sound, here a "sine wave," is ascribed a specific color,

as offers the experiential possibility of synesthesia, or the marriage of two senses. The work nods to the early interventions of conceptual artist Michael Asher (American, born 1943), which featured subtle (even invisible) visual or architectural shifts within the space of a gallery. For his presentation at CAM, creates a quartet of extremely minimal sounds and their invisible color counterparts as a test of the viewer's changeable perception of the space. Deriving each individual sound from a different tone scheme and synesthetic color, the work suggests that the monotone in music is what the white monochrome is to painting.

#### 14.

upstairs installation about malappropriation particularly notable with its vitrines of cultural products, repurposed in sinister ways.

**15.**

The pulse, the product of emphatic bowing,  
is the field across which small differences play  
out and weave about extended tones.  
When something like melody appears,  
an ascension counters an act of grounding  
in the bass to cleave a space down the center  
of this tenuous but ravishing body,  
making way for a wash of—a concerto for—  
feedback.

**16.**

The Beach Boys apparently recorded a song written by Charles Manson. Nike reportedly designed (but never produced) sneakers inspired by the fact that the members of the Heaven's Gate religious group all wore its footwear when they committed mass suicide.

These are the kinds of bizarre stories, often touching on cults like the Manson Family and the Symbionese Liberation Army, that L.A.-based [redacted] plumbed in his New York debut.

Greeting visitors were made-in-China Counterfeit Nike 'Heaven's Gate' SB Dunks (2011) bought online and displayed in a vitrine.

The show proved [redacted] to be an expert purveyor of such histories, conveyed in multiple mediums and with an appropriately knowing tone.

Since getting his MFA in 2001, where he studied with Michael Asher, the Arizona native has worked for Mike Kelley and had L.A. solos at Human Resources and Public Fiction.

At the opening \_\_\_\_\_ gave a performance, Folk Action and Non-Genre III for Belt Sanders and Female Black Metal Guitarist, that suggested a critique of expressionism. Two long, shallow wooden troughs lay on construction horses, while a guitarist wailed, \_\_\_\_\_ spread brightly colored powder along the length of the troughs, and then launched two handheld wood sanders down them, grinding the pigment into the wood.

\_\_\_\_\_’s artistic persona was, of course, less that of expressionist than deejay and researcher. Kiosk (2011-ongoing) is a set of wooden shelves displaying dozens of books and magazines, including oddballs like The Official Guide to the Best Cat Houses in Nevada alongside classics like Frantz Fanon’s 1961 study of colonialism, The Wretched of the Earth. Countercultural titles like Angela Davis’ autobiography and Abbie Hoffman’s Steal this Book accompany L. Ron Hubbard’s Dianetics and Ed Sander’s The Family, a study of Manson and his followers.

Other works identify quirky Hollywood tales, ‘The Trip’ (2011) consists of censored posters for the eponymous 1967 feature. When movie studio execs got nervous about the tagline “A Lovely Sort of Death,” with its tongue-in-cheek LSD acronym, they simply covered it up with yellow stickers, which remain in the posters in view.

But perhaps the strongest works are the four vitrines that display various found objects, more or less closely associated by subject of form. Maldistribution Case No. 1 (2011) juxtaposes numerous freight cylinders, for example Lynda Benglis’s infamous 1974 Artforum dildo ad with issue one of October (founded in 1976 in protest against said ad) opened to a page that features a drawing of a pipe with the Magritte-style caption :ceci n’est pas une pipe.” That, in turn, refers to a grouping of small glass tubes that contain paper roses-- the ostensibly romantic gifts are often repurposed, according to urban lore, as crack pipes.

If one were to quibble, one might ask whether any of the material so lovingly researched means much to him personally. His treatment of the found objects and stories seems steeped in contemporary art's lingua franca of distanced irony; the viewer comes away engrossed and slightly horrified (Nike sneakers based on a cult suicide??) but also feeling a bit empty. one wonders what he might do if the material he mines elicited blood and tears for him rather than cool fascination.

## 17.

I particularly loved \_\_\_\_\_'s performance-cum-video-cum-assemblage Supergroups 3 - 8, 2013—four-channel synchronized footage of iconic rock groups ranging from the precious (Beatles) to the avant garde (Throbbing Gristle) with a few cameos by the artist himself. It's a good piece to stand wobbily in front of, getting lost in the deceptively humble-looking performance-object, permeating the limits of its own physicality.

18.

*"I haven't blocked out the past. I wouldn't trade the person I am, or what I've done—or the people I've known—for anything. so I do think about it. and at times It's a rather mellow trlp to lay back and remember."*

—TED BUNDY

*"look down on me, you will see a fool. look up at me, you will see your lord. look straight at me, you will see yourself."*

—CHARLES MANSON

Accouterment, bric-a-brac, chingaderos,<sup>1</sup> collectibles. Look closely to feel the wealth of atmospheric information and you will come to find yourself in the realm of a mad man; among the belongings of a serial killer.

has been pushing the fake together in order to carry on the hopelessness of modernism with each shunning glare of anything "post" or posited as change. Like any artist foraging for relevancy in this age, , as well as his work, speaks of art as Ted Bundy

speaks of life: but the question is, what is there to remember?

His work is forged from a past to be profited upon. These forgeries speak of remonstrance to the legal, to the sheltered. They reach to the impeachment of the straight and narrow.

How has he come this far from the secretive markings made during his nascent journeys of the late 80's at CalArts before turning to the fakirs and the 'fuckery' of fakery? Who was he then that he is not now?

much is needed in the way of understanding and communication to dissolve the forces behind \_\_\_\_\_'s current work in concordance with the past that inevitably projected him forward. However we look at this oeuvre—to glance down at a fool, to peer up at a homemade 2 god, to shake in fear at an imposed self-reflexivity—there is sure to be a diligence to the ethic and a postulation at the epithets: we all cannot be among these collections for long, lest our bowels become sliced by their over-arching need for apostrophe.

Such apostrophes were given by the entomologist turned writer Dr. A. Hadlen Schmailer. Strangely enough it was \_\_\_\_\_'s work that charged Schmailer with the impetus to work in the realm of art as a liaison between the thinking of an artist and that of the layman (similar to the ways lawyers must intervene in the understanding of the interactions between serial killers and the world outside them).

The poetry Schmailer generated by being introduced to \_\_\_\_\_'s work delves ferociously into the realm of the fantasy by his current collections. One such work concerned with \_\_\_\_\_'s most recent work on display at Cirrus Gallery, reads:

However Blunt,  
The passages are more rare  
Than few.  
Far and between,  
We distance ourselves.  
We endure the shelves,  
Upon shelves these spectral ideas  
Which we find littered inside ourselves



When we realize a rhythm and time,  
With these specious indices.

—from *Enduring Sophocles*, A. Hadlen Schmailer, 2012<sup>3</sup>

Schmailer's words capture the *modus operandi* of his work has long since derived from outside forces as a way of commenting on the relationship between viewer and subject.

Like the mirror work, *Funhouse II (Lady from Shanghai)*, 2012, which causes the individual to become immediately enthralled by their own image replicated into many perplexing sighs, Schmailer authenticates the multi-faceted derision we hide inside ourselves. These other accouterments, the spilled nail polish, fake dog excrement, Led Zeppelin memorabilia, and rat eaten cockroach traps, whether gathered by a serial killer—as if mementoes from pale corpses—or gathered by \_\_\_\_\_—mementoes for pale corpses—cause us to look inside ourselves, something we are not often comfortable with doing. But why does \_\_\_\_\_ do it differently than all the other artists

out there? So much of contemporary art, noted in myriad artist's statements, proclaims its pertinence and purpose as being a mirror unto the visitor or viewer's mind/soul. So much of contemporary art fails at this, mainly because the trick consists of a large stick berating a horse's already mangled corpse. Here lie the victims of \_\_\_\_\_, not because they are lifeless but mainly because their work is no longer functioning.

While Thomas Salmon, former consultant for the \_\_\_\_\_ Collection Museum Donations Program, states that "\_\_\_\_\_ 's collection leads a path for insight into the important issues of our times—gender, race, identity, and empowerment—each fakir given support to their singular voice and unique vision." Schmailer says otherwise, in that "while \_\_\_\_\_ commemorates the possibility of comment, he truly revamps the idea of ideas. There is no insight but that which lies in the world of the viewer"<sup>4</sup>

In terms of the Charles Manson quote above it seems Salmon is looking towards \_\_\_\_\_'s collection as a hermaphrodite is viewed by the wholly sexed while Schmailer wishes to endure no subject without the understanding that he, Schmailer, is the one doing all the 'empowerment' if it is indeed there.

However \_\_\_\_\_'s earlier work is to be compared to his current implications of fiction, there is a right and a wrong way to breach the safety of simply clicking 'like' on any of his works as if they were Facebook posts. While Salmon does just that, clicking 'like' with the smug self-assuredness of any of the collectors \_\_\_\_\_ wishes to find money in, Schmailer yet again harks back to finding \_\_\_\_\_'s earlier works.

After the secret imagery work of \_\_\_\_\_ which cannot be discussed in this essay for lack of permission from the artist and general comprehension by the reader [I have failed several times before to convey these works only to see fervent lividness in the letter to the Editor section of many a magazine

(e.g. Please see my previous articles on the subject, "Unearthing a Paleontology of \_\_\_\_\_", The Harvard Art Review, Feb 2010, Harvard University Press, or "Demanding an Apology for the Fakir: The Collective Stylings of \_\_\_\_\_", Artform Magazine, January 2006)],

where else is Schmailer, another high-ranking and dedicated \_\_\_\_\_ scholar (having written several books on the artist himself), supposed to go? In "A Letter to Myself", Schmailer amidst all of his own collection of information on the artist while embroiled in the task of writing one of such books, remarks on the beginnings of \_\_\_\_\_'s work: "There wasn't a lawless expectancy nor a divergent thought. How many times do we concur that such a virus will end us all, technologically derived or not? I haven't spent enough years with the secrecy of adamant thought nor have I become beleaguered with the precept of a dialect notwithstanding.

And we make more profit and more literature  
in regard to “those who have come to  
fake a plague versus those who have come to  
fake memorabilia to save”,  
this person, who fakes plagues, comes to oversee  
construction and production for the enemy.  
This person collects his faked fates.  
This person maps and surreptitiously  
bombs the realities optimists see in his pedantic revelry.  
I am not sure if these ideas are  
wanton or as ephemeral as this  
grey smoke from my wilting and heated Nat Sherman...”<sup>5</sup>

In Schmailer’s words the defeat at his  
self-conscious inability to  
divulge any understanding of \_\_\_\_\_’s  
work builds the image of a layman,  
an outsider, a psychologist,  
a family member attempting  
to understand the motives and the  
emotion (or lack thereof) of a  
serial killer. Those bullet hole stickers  
on \_\_\_\_\_’s Funhouse II piece never fail  
to mesmerize me in their mockery.  
Such an image, an imitation violence  
against a reflective surface, one that  
holds the viewer in gaze upon themselves,  
pushes towards an evidential

serving to commemorate the feelings of  
past’s predecessor and the futility  
of trading the person you are for the  
person you have become (in Bundy’s terms),  
yet those stickers cause you to realize  
you are the same shape that has always been  
there.

These collections of \_\_\_\_\_’s are nothing  
in the way of his virus works and nothing  
in the way of the secret CalArt’s something  
or another, the other chingaderos,  
that no one will hear of again.  
These collections serve to perpetuate  
his fakir madness, his semicolon  
at the brink of a discourse in nomen-  
clature; we see nothing worse than that which  
is evident in naming what is in ourselves.

If we are meant to become disposed at  
the “tastelessness versus taste deserved”  
aspect granted by his collection of  
fakes, we only need to discuss such matters  
with ourselves rather than the masses

any statement we use to define ourselves.  
So, who do you believe, the serial killers  
whose words begin this essay, or the battling  
intellects? Whether you follow the nonplussed  
Schmaier or the evidently excited  
Salmon, the words of the serial killers  
still ring true. Their thoughts are not as cryptic  
as the book by Guy de Cointet that rests  
on the top shelf of \_\_\_\_\_'s Memento Mori /  
Gag Cabinet, 2012, yet just like Manson says,  
when we look them straight in the eye, we shudder  
at the reflection and quickly turn away  
when it becomes evident it is we  
who are standing there.

1. Span.—knickknacks, lit. 'fucking things'
2. Here the author refers to the deaf character named Singer from McCullers' *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*, Re: Chapter 8
3. Schmaier, Hadlen A., *Collections of Intent Driven Rhetoric*, *Enduring Sophocles*, pg 9-10, University of California Press, 2012
4. Schmaier, A. Hadlen, "Notes on Collections and Nomenclature", pg 36, Yale University Press, 2011
5. Schmaier, A. Hadlen, "A Letter to Myself", Yale University Press, 2006.

## 19.

There's a story, reported in memoirs  
and elsewhere, that in 1976, when Martin Scorsese  
filmed *The Band's* farewell concert, Neil Young played  
his hit "Helpless" with a rock of cocaine  
in his nostril. A drawn-out effort  
purportedly followed to edit this  
cocaine out of Scorsese's documentary  
*The Last Waltz*. Artist \_\_\_\_\_'s installation  
*Magnified / Erased* (2014) includes a big,  
black-and-white image of a cocaine flake  
blown up to impossible proportions,  
with a small TV monitor on a  
cart in front of it playing zoomed-in footage  
of Young's nose. Something's happening in and  
around that nose, but it's hard to tell what.  
The installation is one of the highlights  
in the genuinely elegant show  
about history as myth.

## 20.

's large-scale sculpture dominates the front of the gallery, greeting viewers upon entrance like a beefy bouncer at a club.

In "Magnified/Erased" (2014), revisits American musician Neil Young's nostril as seen in *The Last Waltz* (1978), a documentary made by Martin Scorsese about The Band's last concert. It's now a well-documented fact that when Young came onstage to sing "Helpless," he forgot to clean up the traces of his pre-performance coke habits. Later, Scorsese had to pay big bucks to clean up the screen version of Young's nose, joking that it was "the most expensive cocaine I've ever bought." In 's piece, he slows down and zooms in on Young's nose in the film; behind the video loop hangs a blown-up photograph of a flake of cocaine. Two American legends up-close and personal — drugs and rock stars — reveal that living on stardust isn't sustainable or pretty. Here we see the cloak of fame overturned; no one can maintain appearances forever — not even pop itself.

adds to this theme of spiritual deficiencies with “L’Affaire de La Chasse spirituelle” (2014), a collection of “stolen” books. One of them, *Famous All Over Town*, a story about a Mexican-American guy growing up in LA, was written by author Daniel Lewis James but published under the pseudonym Danny Santiago. The Latino name led readers to interpret the book as partial autobiography, but the truth is that Santiago is really James, a white man who wrote as a Chicano. How much does that knowledge affect our reading of the text? It’s up to each individual to decide. A woman named Dania Sanchez reviewing *All Over Town* on Amazon, wrote: “I’m not disappointed to learn the Danny Santiago is really Danny James. I’m actually pleasantly surprised that a Caucasian can capture the Chicano way of life so realistically.”

’s piece questions how much “real” personal history matters when communicating a larger cultural narrative.

## 21.

### DO NOT ENTER

Though the sign is sun-bleached and splintered, its message—painted in bold black letters—couldn’t be any clearer. The warning stands before a small village of graffiti-tagged outbuildings, including a shuttered gas station and a boarded-up school.

The latter brims with a flotsam of shattered mirrors, disarticulated furniture, crumbling ceiling tiles, and an old Laffargue upright piano that still carries a note or two despite being stripped down to a skeletal, dry-rotted carcass. Outside, a maelstrom of mutilated palm trees form circular, triangular, and ovoid configurations—some aligned like plump Cohibas in cigar-box formation, others splayed in meandering herring-bone patterns that evoke slaughtered sentries—serve as elegiac effigies to this modernist manifest-destiny fantasia.

Welcome to Desert Center, California (population around 200). Incorporated in 1921 by teetotaling preacher and cotton farmer Stephen Ragsdale,

who bought the land from a local prospector after he rescued Ragsdale during a mid-desert breakdown, the now nearly ghosted township was created as a centrally located traveler's oasis virtually equidistant from Phoenix and Los Angeles. Though the iconic palm "tree-ring circus" wasn't planted until the early 1990s—before the center fell into permanent disrepair in the early aughts—for decades the space has stood as a charming, 24-hour fascination off the I-10 for weary road warriors.

"It's kind of like the demise of the roadside attraction, but it's got this weird quality to it, too: the decrepit California Stonehenge," says [redacted] as we drive up to the site. "I love these quasi-mystical places where somebody nominates something and says, 'This is now Desert Center.' These people just made up myths. Here, the myth has fallen into disrepair, but it also has this quality of being something because somebody decided they were going to make it into something."

On April 2, [redacted] hopes to create his own carnivalesque spectacle amid this spartan setting with a 24-hour-long performance, tentatively titled Desert Center, featuring a group of musicians who will mimic and respond to traffic patterns inside the circular central palm outcropping. Billed as a "dusk to dawn" work, the crepuscular piece stems from [redacted]'s ability to delicately meld music, performance (or "directed improvisations"), film, installation, and appropriation, as well as some sculpture, in order to tease out layers of forgotten or obfuscated histories buried in the literary, cinematic, and musical firmament of the megalopolis that is Los Angeles.

Think of it as a Southwestern symphonic analog to Danh Vo filtered through the prism of 1960s psychedelia, Freudian notions of the uncanny, the sound experiments of John Cage or Karlheinz Stockhausen, and California conceptualism from Baldessari to Bas Jan Ader and Kelley to Michael Asher.

In the past, he's composed original sound works from scratch or based on inverted and/or reflected interpretations of classical, experimental noise, and pop music. Sometimes he'll play these live with string and rock quartets, or simply imprint them on a vinyl lacquer (an acetate master used to imprint records) that he'll manipulate alongside live musicians.

For the VSF inauguration, christened the 30-foot-long corridor with a recorded inverted string quartet iteration of the Charles Manson–penned Beach Boys tune “Never Learn Not to Love” piped through a five-channel speaker system embedded in the walls. For the sculpture garden, he contributed an imposing replica of the Capitol Records spire (also inverted) that appeared to play the courtyard—like a needle on vinyl— with a flashing light that blinked out Morse code for Hollywood.

Today, 's work relies on very few made (or even displayed) objects. Over the past decade, he's presented various selections of books (like Joan Didion's White Album against Andy Warhol's A) between coprolite (aka dung stone) bookends reused those books in a kiosk “displaying

various books and magazines [proto-feminist literature, Frankenstein, Hunter S. Thompson's Hell's Angels, and Dianetics] modeled after Jean-Luc Godard's 'ideology shop' in One Plus One.” This past summer at Maccarone gallery, 's New York solo debut featured egg vibrators playing drone music from the strings of a baby grand and a performance with belt sanders, DayGlo dust, and a female black-metal guitarist. Despite the breadth of cultural oddities he mines, says he does have a “weird personal connection” to the material he works with. Often, the work involves making esoteric associations between various cultural moments. After creating a musical commissioned by the city of West Hollywood called Music from The Trip in the Style of a Schoenberg-Gershwin Tennis Match, he searched out original posters from Jack Nicholson's 1967 psychedelic feature The Trip, with censor stickers slapped over the reference to LSD.

The poster acts as a gateway drug to the histories, while the musical, which was performed at the King's Road Park pavilion, was a recombination of Schoenberg and Gershwin. It references not only



The Trip, but also a real match by the famed composers/tennis partners as observed in passing by Dr. Oscar Janiger, L.A.'s godfather of Isd, who reportedly "treated" Nicholson before he wrote the screenplay for the film.

Born in Scottsdale, moved from Arizona to Ventura, California, and then to Las Vegas by the time he was in preschool. The firstborn son of a commercial real-estate broker and a junior high school English teacher, he worshipped at the altar of SoCal punk rock, and his first encounters with art came in the form of checking out books on Warhol and Duchamp at the local library and making skate culture-influenced zines with his brother. discovered Kelley as a teenager, while visiting art schools throughout California. "Mike's Monkey Island installation happened to be up at the Geffen," he says. "I remember one work he'd made using mandrake root and semen. I was like, 'Really, you can do that?' You can make a drawing with mandrake root and semen, and that can be in a museum?" "That was integral to my early understanding of what art could be". On the basis of some "quasi-political juvenalia," he got into CalArts—studying under

artists like Mary Kelly and Prina—though he eventually left, finishing his degree at the University of Arizona. At the time, was interested in prints made from found images—sourced from vintage advertisements or, say, a Rod McKuen poetry book—which he then jammed up in a printer, creating forced abstractions.

In Tucson, however, he pivoted away from visual art into creative writing. His stories were "totally trashed and hated on," he says (coincidentally, by a professor who was also busy deriding an author who'd become the department's most notable alum: David Foster Wallace). While 's own attempts at postmodern fiction were mostly dismissed by his mentors, his ability to craft complex narratives (typically in the form of experimental accompanying essays) has always been a key component of his practice, which expanded further on his return to CalArts in 1999 as an mfa student.

He focused on visual arts during his master's program, but he also took music composition and musicology classes. In 2003, after an introduction by Prina, Mike Kelley enlisted to engineer records for Destroy All Monsters, and the two continued to collaborate until, and after, Kelley passed away in 2012. "We had a pretty intense relationship. He was a guy I had lunch with two or three times a week and I was at the studio on a regular basis, and you just get a lot from that," says [redacted] on the ride to Desert Center, choking up a bit at the mention of his former boss. The weekend before Kelley committed suicide, [redacted] had two performances, one of which Kelley attended. The two had also worked on installing Kelley's last realized piece, Mechanical Toy Guts, as part of a Los Angeles Free Music Society group show at Mara McCarthy's gallery, the Box.

Perhaps the most lasting impression Kelley made on [redacted] was via their collaboration on the Judson Church Horse Dance, produced inside [redacted] the basement gym at New York's Judson Memorial Church as part of Performa '99.

On two sides of the gym they positioned opposing bands (each with its own conductor), who played music derived from Kelley's 2005 Gagosian spectacular, "Day Is Done," while dancers paraded around in horse costumes and played basketball. "It was an attempt to create a piece that integrated itself into the site, and that was my introduction to working site-specifically," says [redacted] "It really brought it together for me." A year after that performance, [redacted] was offered his first large-scale solo, at the L.A. alternative space Human Resources in 2011. At the time, he was busy painting large monochrome canvases as a vehicle for contextualizing his ready-made objects. For his exhibition "Maldistribution," he displayed various items—including the Heaven's Gate shoes, the Trip posters, and the Dele jersey—on their own, publishing an accompanying book of essays.

"In a way, I was paring down my own interference," he says. "I wasn't even looking at myself as an artist at that point but, rather, as this person selecting these objects with these backstories." From there, [redacted] began engaging more with spaces.

In 2011, his installation String Quartet No. 2, based on Morton Feldman's 1983 composition and John Cage's experiments, employed a recorded string quartet (violin, viola, cello, bass, playing in a lower register) with individual speakers representing each instrument to mimic street noises against the concrete architecture of Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis. A year later, for a piece entitled Funhouse after the Penultimate Sequence of The Lady from Shanghai, performed at Greystone Manor, in L.A., for the laxart/ Pacific Standard Time closing party, he enlisted a rock quintet to play reflections and inversions of the Stooges's Fun House album, while turning their backs to the audience and facing a semicircle of mirrors, as an ode to the penultimate fun-house shoot-out scene in Orson Welles's The Lady from Shanghai, which was shot on the Paramount Lot.

"I think there's something about my work that addresses spectatorship and the problem of spectatorship and approaching an art show or pop culture or music as a spectator instead of a participant," he says. "I'm interested in testing the condition of spectatorship and that continuum between spectatorship and participation or culpability."

's fascination with durational compositions grew out of a conversation a few years ago with Robert Wilson, who described how, at the beginning of his career, he would embark on day-long performances. Last fall, and Andrews (an Angeleno appropriation artist who also worked for Kelley) created a six-hour piece, Split Chorale for Viljo Revell, which was performed last fall at Nuit Blanche in Toronto. (It was originally intended to run for 12 hours but was halved due to logistical issues.)

The piece featured choristers on a balcony, cued by a video of fake choristers projected onto a mushrooming central column before them, performing a tone-based Stockhausen-inspired composition meant to dialogue with the brutalist Viljo Revell-designed structure. The performance, says , served as a "test run" for Desert Center, where he'll install another outward-facing mirror in the center of the tree ring and various players— "everything from small string orchestras to electronic musicians to people doing Cage-ian things, like tuning radios"—will take shifts over 24 hours.

“Some of the music I’ve been writing is sort of ‘motorik,’ Kraftwerk-style German driving music,” says, noting that “it was originally conceived to follow traffic patterns, but since we’re so far out, rush hour doesn’t really mean anything. The strings would be more like dusk and dawn, and they will be doing all of the glissandi to imitate when cars go by. You’re actually moving up and down the neck of the instruments to sort of simulate the Doppler effect.”

Understandably, spending 24 hours in the middle of the desert watching teams of musicians huddled around a ritualistic-looking mirror installation while mimicking wave-frequency effects might not seem like the clearest entry point into an oeuvre.

as wide-ranging and dense as ’s. Then again, his work was never intended for the drive-by gawkers of the art world. “It’s almost like you have to enter into his logic universe to apprehend the ideas he’s proposing through his objects,” says Andrews. “It’s a practice that will reveal its rationales over time.”

After Andrew Berardini, Brian Boucher, Teresa Choi, Mary Beth Crain, Alicia Eler, Laura Fried, Michael Haight, Micheal Ned Holte, Christina Catherine Martinez, Kurt Mueller, Stephen Prina, Roberta Smith, Michael Slenske, Catherine Taft, Catherine Wagley, O.C. Yerebakian

ISBN 978-0-9913772-0-6  
Blank Verse 2009-2015

Edition of 100  
Los Angeles Contemporary Archive (LACA)

Special thanks, Cal Tabuena-Frolli, Hailey Loman, Jennie  
Warren