

NOW
 ONLINE
 SHOP
 INFO
 JOIN

EXHIBITION HISTORY

PUBLIC PROGRAMS ARCHIVE

SCHOOL PROGRAMS

YOUTH PRESENTS

GROUP TOURS

CURATORIAL

SEARCH 

CURATOR'S PICKS

Part of the role of being a curator at the New Museum of Contemporary Art is to stay aware of what is happening in all areas of contemporary culture. In this section of the web site, the New Museum curatorial staff shares some of their favorite gallery exhibitions, films, book, plays and more! This section is frequently updated, so check back regularly.

John Waters

American Fine Arts, Co. at P.H.A.G., Inc.
 through March 22, 2003

Until recently, John Waters was best known as a cult figure thriving in film's seedy margins. What's perhaps most enjoyable about his current solo "art" show (one using the vocabulary of film) is that it foregrounds tangible traces of the qualities that have largely become lost in his current reincarnation as quasi-mainstream darling (a Broadway staging of *Hairspray* is all the evidence of this transformation one needs). His witty and dark humor, obsessiveness, and more than a hint of his telltale perversity are found in full force here, recalling Waters's old aesthetic tricks even while delivering new punches.

When you walk in, you'll probably find yourself playing with Waters's *Funny Face*. Inside a lightweight, circular plywood box covered with a plexiglass cover sits a photographed, cartoonish outline of a head whose nose is formed by a loose metal chain. You can pick it up and turn the entire object, finding a different nose every time—more fun than you might actually think. Plus, Waters slyly renders us complicit in his (our?) desire to tweak the famous proboscis of Barbara Streisand who starred in the movie *Funny Face*.

The rear of the gallery houses the strongest works in the show. For each day, Waters keeps file cards of "to do" lists and then meticulously marks them off as they are completed. He has photographed each file card and placed them into framed suites ranging from 16-308 file cards. Together the photographs reveal his ritualistic obsessiveness that borders on neurosis. He has left them completely unedited—be sure to look closely, as some pretty hard to come by phone numbers are waiting for the taking.

In his *Self-Portrait #3*, Waters cobbles together eight photographs of himself taken by Greg Corman. Each of the images is defiled by Waters in various ways, using push pins, fake cockroaches, duct tape, and pen scribbles. In overdetermined, giddy Waters-style, this piece epitomizes all that is most grandly base about Waters himself. Delightful and disgusting, violent and virtuosi, the show invites a rare, off-

CURRENT EXHIBITIONS ////

INFO ////

MUSEUM HOURS

Tuesday - Sunday: noon - 6 pm.
 Thursday: noon - 8 pm.
 Closed Monday

STORE HOURS

Monday-Sunday: 12pm-6:30pm
 Thursday: 12pm-8pm

LOCATION

583 Broadway
 (between Houston and
 Prince Streets in SoHo)
 New York, NY 10012

JOIN US ////

Become a member of the New Museum.

SHOP ONLINE ////

center kind of pleasure.

-AP

Video Acts: Single Channel Works from the Collection of Pamela and Richard Kramlich and New Art Trust

P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center (an affiliate of the Museum of Modern Art)
through April 2003

While these days it's par for the course to encounter artists using video as their preferred medium, this has certainly not always been the case. In fact, in the late 1960s, when small, affordable, portable video recorders fell into the hands of a few enthusiastic pioneers, a new breed of art production (and reception) was instantly born, changing the face of contemporary art as it then stood. Artists including Joan Jonas, Vito Acconci, and Bruce Nauman used the medium to magnify the economic/capitalist imperatives of art and to make visible the subjective (read: classed, raced, gendered) body as inherently involved in art (and cultural) production. Video emphasized temporality, process, and autobiography, linking it to other modes of performance-based production of the time. Video Acts showcases more than one hundred single channel pieces, dating from the mid-1960s up to the late '90s. The exhibition offers an unbeatable resource for those interested in tracing a trajectory of the medium's rise in contemporary art. And, because the works share a common provenance (they are all part of Pamela and Richard Kramlich's vast video collections) they also address ongoing questions about the collecting of ephemeral works. While there's probably too much to view here in one sitting, Video Acts offers a smart solution to the usual problems of video exhibition by showing all the works simultaneously on separate monitors or projectors. It's pure pleasure to roam through the kaleidoscopic offerings, settling in front of old favorites and making new discoveries.

-JB

Pierre Huyghe: The Hugo Boss Prize

Guggenheim Museum
through May 4

In Pierre Huyghe's mind, the ideal audience for his exhibition would be a colony of penguins. Indeed, this is an apt metaphor for communities with systems of communication beyond human linguistic knowledge, not to mention being a humorous representation of the masses. Sitting before Huyghe's sculpture, which is presented as one out of two acts in the exhibition, the audience is swallowed up by the dark and left as silent, anonymous silhouettes: propped in various lazy poses, lounging on the carpet like it's a Sunday afternoon. Yet, as much as the piece whets the audience's theatrical appetite, the thick, pervasive fog settles on the stage only to alert us to the absence there, to the lack of spectacle for our hungry eyes.

The second installment incorporates sound, animation, video, and sculpture to create a film without narrative or any allusion to specific time. Using modernist architecture as its historical point of departure, the exquisitely dark film presents us with two 1970s-era French government housing projects, now