

The Kings and I

Laurence A. Rickels talks with **Klaus Theweleit**



Above: **Klaus Theweleit**. Photo: Bernd Bodtländer. Below and opposite: **Andy Warhol**, *Self-Portrait*, 1986, synthetic polymer paint and silkscreen on canvas, six paintings, each 80 x 80". © 1994 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. Opposite, right: **Andy Warhol**, *Green Coca-Cola Bottles (detail)*, 1962, oil on canvas, 82½ x 57". Collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

In the academic family romance, many studies and movements can claim the authorship of Klaus Theweleit. His Male Fantasies—a two-volume German best-seller from the '70s, published in English by the University of Minnesota Press in 1987 and 1989—was the first in the corridors of scholarship to apply the tools of high literary criticism to all the cultural artifacts in the archive of a given era or concern, right down to the pulp of cheap soldier novels. In Male Fantasies, Theweleit read National Socialism's sex appeal between and behind the lines of the fantasy construction of gender difference going down in paramilitary groups (in particular, the bands of ex-soldiers called the Freikorps, which fought to win the peace after World War I). By digging masculinity and its construction around the sites of armed conflict where libido or destrudo are already digging it, Theweleit set a new standard for cultural, women's, and Nazi studies.

According to Theweleit's paradoxical intervention, only attention to masculinity as the unconscious constituent of sexual difference stands to fill out the missing person of woman. The eternal (or internal) focus on the feminine has always only given protection and projection to male anxieties hidden away but preserved inside every treatise on the feminine. Theweleit moved away from these dialectics of identity (including sexual identity), which always arrive at the same difference. Male Fantasies was thus also his work of caution to psychoanalytic culture critics against overreliance on homosexual positions and disposi-

tions in cure-all interpretations of fascism (and psychosis). Taking time with the material or text, the biology or biography, he set aside the shorthand and shortcut of analytic theory, allowing the time, work, and hovering attention of in-session analysis to unfold. Thus he was able to stay with the soldier boys' pleasure in making war and violence, which the texts he discusses set amid nondisplaceable images of incest, in particular of the shock of recognition going down between brother and sister.



In his most recent study, *Book of Kings* (volume two will be out this fall in Germany, volumes three and four are in the works), Theweleit explores the devastating effects of technology and group psychology on gender relations or relationships. The woman must go, so that Orpheus, the artist-thinker, can continue to produce over her dead body; through the cabling system that thus gets laid, he keeps in tele-touch with all the ghostly coordinates of his growing line of production. *Book of Kings* also differentiates the sound bites that cultural critics tend to broadcast on the basis of Walter Benjamin's directive that fascism comes directly out of the "estheticization of politics." Theweleit introduces instead the notion of "artist states" running parallel to the political states with which they must negotiate their own diplomatic status and immunity.

The po-mo diplomacies that artist-thinkers invent and enter into share a look with stateside politics, but they are not on the same continuum of meaning and decision-making. In the art-promotional setting, one wing of oppositional politics is always also the other or either wing. Theweleit examines the psychosocial formations in artist states, not for their family value of supersavings in libido, but for their compatibility with the new native habitat of relations with technology. The prospect of future generations coming soon is not the immortality plan of choice for the ego, artist, or group member, who doesn't want to go, to be history. In states of art, then, productivity, energy flow, merger with the machine take over where reproduction, couplification, and mourning were already left undone because outmoded.

The interview was held in the summer of 1993 in Freiburg, Germany. This fall, Theweleit is a guest lecturer at the University of California, Santa Barbara. The focus of his seminars: *Andy and Elvis*.

—LAR

LAURENCE A. RICKELS: I'd like to ask a question that comes out of the American reception of *Male Fantasies*. A certain feminist line of inquiry has drawn great benefit from this work; now that Marxism and deconstruction are giving each other the helping "and" at conferences on their political future, feminism would appear to be the only political movement still around, at least within university precincts, which is where politics for American intellectuals must begin. So, are you the proud father of these developments? Were you the first to present a deconstructive, genealogical work on phantasm networks with a feminist focus?

KLAUS THEWELEIT: In Germany, definitely. In America, developments in feminist theory ran parallel. But *Male Fantasies* doesn't really refer to feminist theory—I was mainly influenced by the French theories of the '50s and '60s that explored the body as the material basis of history. That body-based view overlaps with feminism in certain ways; once you start talking about bodies (male bodies and female bodies), you're in a place of feminist concerns. But *Male Fantasies* is about men, not women. A fundamental purpose determining the book, and indeed my entire work, is not to write about women, because that's what men have always done. Male history has always depended on the woman's body, whether used idiomatically or exploitatively; women

Excerpts from
Book of Kings
Volume 2
By Klaus Theweleit

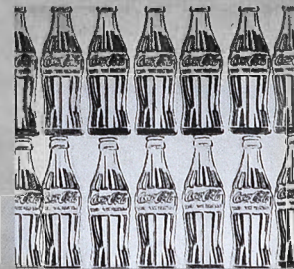


Not just any soda. Not just any can.

It is 1806, the battles of Jena and Auerstedt are being fought in Prussia, when Hegel looks out the window he recognizes the world spirit passing by on horseback. At Yale, another professor is filling bottles with the first artificially produced carbon dioxide . . . carbonic acid gas. Mineral water is born of the foam. This democratic soda is at the foundation of all series. In America, a series forms identity; but it con-

stitutes no "subject," just an American body. Coca-Cola will be hailed as the "greatest carbonated success of all time" . . . suck-cess.

In 1869, in Camden, New Jersey, just in time for the arrival of great herds of cattle from Red River, Joseph Campbell goes into the canning business, improving this preservation technology (which was invented during the French Revolution, and brought to America for the first time in



1794) and making it economical. Soon the can with the red-and-white signature is in every American household, one of the first brands to attain national distribution, "keeping the country together."

Campbell's, then, is *the* American can form. Painted, it isn't just any can, but the equivalent of the banner that Warhol's colleague Jasper Johns likes to paint into his pictures—a label with 50 stars and stripes. A can means *in hoc signo vinces* . . .

fill the gaps in the male system. They are here to serve a function. And history has been written on neither the female body nor the male body, but on a series of representations that glide above them, upward displacements that we take as real history, and that form the habitat of the history of ideology.

The French thinkers who inspired me insisted on reintroducing the body into histories of representation and ideology. That meant differentiating how the woman's body was set apart, according to breeding function, as object rather than subject of history, as victim of history, or as secret agency. This puts us on a connotative and linguistic level where certain similarities emerge to psychoanalysis, especially the work of Wilhelm Reich.

The turn to writing is also always autobiographical. I experienced a history of fascism through the bodies of my parents, who had no controlling interest in Nazism, but who went along with it: the early years of their marriage coincided with the early history of fascism, its rise to power corresponded to a certain upward mobility of their own, and this murderous double history stuck in or to them, and was immediately visible. They weren't killer figures, but they had no way or means to develop a resistance to fascism out of the limitations or inhibitions of their bodies. And this was the odd contradiction, between basically goodwilled people, in whom nothing malignant could originate, and a specific sort of inhibition, a specific kind of violence.

THERE IS A POINT OF CONTACT BETWEEN THE NEW WORK AND MALE FANTASIES: THE STORY OF ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE, THE ORGANIZING PARADIGM OF THE PRODUCING COUPLE.

My father was choleric, and there were blockages in his personality before which his emotions pulled up short. This was something that happened to millions. It wasn't an intention, it was a body block.

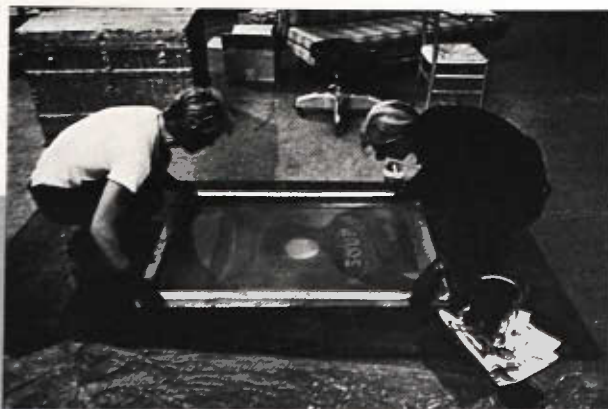
LR: *Your focus here on the couple takes us from your work on bodies to your newest work, which is on love and power and couple logic.*

KT: Yes, in *Book of Kings*, volume one, I focus on relations between men and women, not primarily on the political level but as relations of production, in particular in so-called artist couples. There is a point of contact between the new work and *Male Fantasies*: the story of Orpheus and Eurydice, the organizing paradigm of the producing couple, which is not so much about the tragic failure to call back the beloved as about a deliberate program of deliv-

ering the woman's body to Hades. In reanimating the body of the dead woman, the man produces new possibility—in other words, “art.” He keeps in touch with the dead woman, is cabled to her. With some authors, like Gottfried Benn, a lifelong model of production can be followed through three or four wives: Benn consciously reworked, inscribed, the bodies of these women. In European history at least since the Renaissance, this metabolization has been Eurydice's function in art production. Other authors who got with this program include Pound, Kafka, Rilke. I start to describe it with Monteverdi and his opera *Orfeo*, of 1607.

LR: *It seems that the more you contemplate love in these contexts, the more you admit the technological moment into your work.*

KT: The so-called muse in artist couples is in fact compatible with the technical aspects of production: I call her the mediatic woman. Author husbands marry typists, writers for the stage marry actresses and singers, painters pick models, filmmakers marry film editors. (Alfred Hitchcock married the editor he thought the most accomplished in England.) Plugged into technical media, these women complete the production line, indeed make it possible. But they occupy this position as sacrifices, because their role uses them up. After two or three years, say, when the man changes the direction of his production, another candidate for the role makes the short list. Then they become expendable in their production value, and



in this sign you will conquer. Warhol's cans burn the brand marking American meat into an image, from industrial tin with cow content plus design to painting, color, print,

sign—to modern, artistic, “two-dimensional” body; a body revolution. “Your soup can changed this country,” says actress Ruth Warrick to Warhol in a Broadway the-

ater on October 28, 1977. Warhol is ecstatic: “The first thing that she said, when she saw me, was”—this sentence.

Some people “live” somehow, others, more clever, record life. To record the soap operas that other people make of their lives is a way for Warhol not to deal with his own problems—that, anyway, is the word on him. But what are his own problems? As long as the recorders are rolling and the productions running, as long as no one's flipping



out, or claiming to be in love with him, or asking for money or for empathy or for better roles or for more of a say, all that destructive stupidity, he has none. “Everyone should be a machine. Everyone should like everyone else”—that's his official line.

The production belts of the Factory are overwhelmingly organized through pairs. Six

Far left: Ugo Mulas, Warhol, and Gerard Malanga screen-print Campbell's soup cans, ca. 1964–65. Left: Andy Warhol, *Telephone*, 1961, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 100 x 72". Collection of the Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh.

months into the Factory, Warhol forms with Gerard Malanga, his second-in-command, the dominant male couple of the first years, a couple of the Gertrude Stein/Alice B. Toklas type—this according to Warhol biographer Victor Bockris, who means that from the outside the two look both like a pair of gay lovers, modeled on the heterosexual rule, and like a production couple. It is pure production sexuality, though, as Malanga states for the record. Warhol's on-

commit suicide, or are replaced by new typists, actresses, and so on.

I think it's important to focus on the relations of production rather than on the theme of woman's idealization and exclusion. What is the material of literature, what is the stuff of movies? The material is in a real sense the bodies of the producers, who understand and situate themselves within relations of production. What is the material of poetry? Images and so on, yes—but also the transformation of the bodies of the producers. This is where metamorphosis comes from: trances, states of love, drug episodes, diseases, breakdowns, dead fawns. The works encode and express this; each has a trance side, a breakdown side, a drugged side, which decodes biographically as, That was when he was with this one or that one, this character is based on this woman. But in a larger sense the body is a material component of production, certainly in Modernism: with the abandonment of or emancipation from prefabricated themes, the body becomes the primary material of production as at no previous time in history.

Male Fantasies also saw fascism as a specific brand of reality production originating in a specific relationship between man and woman, and in the relation of their bond to the real, the animal, the political. In *Book of Kings* this reality production is derived from artist couples, and not just male/female ones; the male/female couple is often secretly or

openly augmented by a male couple. In the German text I use the English expression “male couple” because the German equivalent would signify homosexual involvement, which isn't necessarily the case. Indeed it's often the ultimate impossibility. The relationship or correspondence between Benn and Friedrich Wilhelm Oelze, for example, was so fundamental that one can say the older Benn wouldn't exist as author without this partner.

LR: *Is there a qualitative difference between two-sex and same-sex couples along these production lines? Does reproduction model or get in the way of production?*

KT: Birth envy is not a male fantasy. Men know that they themselves create and procreate—not by carrying the baby inside the body, like women, but

IN WARHOL IT'S THE DISAPPEARANCE OF AN UNDERGROUND CULTURE IN THE '70S THAT BRINGS HIM IN CONNECTION WITH THE SHAH OF IRAN AND OTHER POLITICALLY DUBIOUS RICH PEOPLE.

by taking away the children that the women carry to term. At age two or three, the child is handled in such and such a way, enters the school, then the factory or the army, and is remade all down the line. Only toward the end of *Male Fantasies* did I recognize that many of the mothers who were so enthusiastic about sending their sons to war were in fact glad to get rid of them: they had these monster sons, in whom the feminine and the animal had been erased. They didn't want them anymore, and were ready to see them go. The male body raised up through the ranks of all-male institutions is not biological, not sexual, but functional.

The second question posed in *Book of Kings*, in volume two, is, Where does political power start or stop playing a specific role? The artist is automatically bound up with technical media and with the public realm, two main outlets of political power. In the public realm, political discussion devours artistic discourse. The new technical media emerging from the '30s on, beginning with the radio, played in the hands of political powers: as early as 1931, the Nazis controlled the radio. The invention and development of radio are in fact part of military history, beginning with World War I. In the U.S. after World War I, there was even an attempt to make radio the exclusive property of the military.

I try to describe Benn's story in these contexts, which offer an important corrective to one explanation of fascism's connections with Modernism.

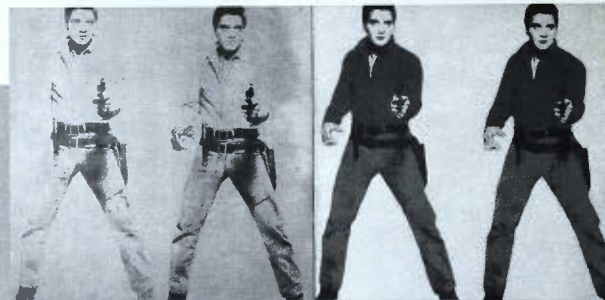


fire production of the first decade, the entire “underground phase,” that is, until around 1970, proceeds via alternating couples, all with a surface sexuality: “homosexual” with Gerard Malanga, Ondine, Lou Reed, Paul Morrissey, Bob Colacello, and

others; “heterosexual” with superstars Viva, Ultra Violet, Nico, Ingrid Superstar, Edie Sedgwick, Andrea Feldman, and so on. All these people have little to do with each other and everything to do with Warhol.

In *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol: From*

A to B and Back Again, compiled by Pat Hackett from Warhol's notes, the second person of each couple is designated simply as *B*. *A* stands for Warhol himself. The subtitle is less a joke than a description of production: what runs “from A to B and back again” is recording, the machine erotics of camera, tape recorder, telephone, all body contacts that don't include sex. It's like the two sides of a record: after A you play B, then A again, until the record



is worn out. You can't be that cool with people, Viva protested, and flipped out one day, over money. They never got back together. “In ten years I never talked to Andy

about anything personal”—it's the coworkers' chorus.

In the sexual indeterminacy of the series, in Warhol's own sexual indeterminacy—in

Left: Duane Michals, *Andy Warhol and His Mother Julia Warhola*, 1958, black and white photograph.

Below: Andy Warhol, *Elvis I and II*, 1964, silkscreen ink on synthetic polymer paint on canvas, silkscreen ink on aluminum paint on canvas, each 82" x 82".

© 1994 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. Collection of the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto.

Walter Benjamin didn't put it this naively, but an idea of his has been received along the lines that estheticism always leads to fascism. That's really dumb. There is no type of artistic production that automatically crosses over into a given political form or direction. Socialist, fascist, democratic—the societies are there, and they develop their own politics and dispositions. None of this is in the power of the artist, or of an artistic influence on society. It's the artist's material and he lives in it, is part of it, in his build, in his whole composition.

For reasons of production, the artist wants to use the latest media technology, which in Benn's case in the '30s was radio. Film and mass political movements like fascism entered into artistic production at that time; there's no way around it. But artists didn't become fascist or socialist because of the way they worked. The reasons I think were quite different: the political formations around 1930 were so restricted to the face-off between fascism and socialism that whatever lay between the two extremes disappeared. Benn, for example, was networked with Jewish intellectuals in Berlin who understood and supported his work. They disappeared. In a radical emptying out of the space of all possible relations, by 1933 not one of them was left.

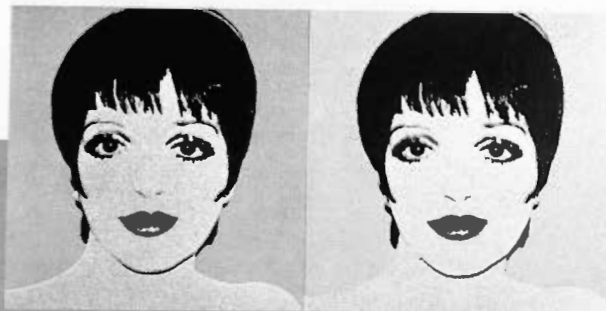
So Benn tried to stick to the radio, but he was taken off the air as early as '34 because of the "cultural bolshevism" of his earlier work. Faced with being unable to write or produce, Benn put through a

direct connection with the Führer. To get back his license to write, he tried to establish himself as a special or exceptional case, as Great German Poet with Führer-License, who could enjoy a fool's freedom in his production. And he did in fact write fascist texts on artistic discipline and German genius and so on. He wasn't anti-Semitic, but he believed in racial and biological bases of talent, and he believed in the breeding of genius. One can see in the cases of countless artists that the understanding of genius was a fascist one—the idea of the male genius who has special rights or privileges which he must seize at certain moments in history.

Benn tried this with radio and with the academy, and both attempts failed. With his writing prohibited and himself in danger of being sent to a concentration camp because of his earlier work, he ultimately fled back into the army, where in World War I he had served as a doctor, and where he had influential protectors. That was the end of his calculated experiment with fascist writing. In fact in 1945 he reappeared again as a Modernist poet. From his postwar work you would never believe he was with the fascists in '33 and '34. The turn to fascism had more to do with the public sphere, with the disappearance of the different poles, as I call them: the reality pole, the power pole, the intellectual pole, with which the artist-producer is cabled and connected. In 1932 to '33, Benn was surrounded by cut cables, and to secure an outlet for his writing he

turned to politics, that is, directly to the Führer. Knut Hamsun's case is very similar. Or, on the other side, consider Klaus Mann's turn to Stalinism in 1937 to '38. Production must continue, even under these totalized conditions. Art climbs over corpses, no matter whose, to keep going.

Political states contain parallel states, and artists understand themselves in terms of these parallels. In '30s Germany there was the expressionist state, which in 1933 Benn wanted to preserve at all costs. Freud was equally devoted to his psychoanalytic state; that's why he entered no political coalitions, and why he wanted to get rid of Reich in '33—not because he thought it was wrong to side, say, with the left, not because he didn't like Reich, but because he had already taken a side, that of his science. He was in the psychoanalytic camp. Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas formed an art state in Nazi-occupied France, in touch with the right—some cultivated Vichy people with whom they could converse—and with the left, as in their relations with Picasso, their so-called best friend. There's always this doubling, the friend on the right and the friend on the left, or the three or four, who can be played off against each other and balance each other out. The artist just wants to be left alone in his sphere so that production can continue. And that was Stein's purpose, right down to her claim, when the Americans liberated Paris, that she had been a victim of the Nazi occupation, which, miraculously enough, was not the case.



the transvestism of his films, in his face (through which, in his final decade, his mother's features increasingly shine out)—there probably lies, as with Elvis, a child from the series of dead siblings—not a twin, as in Elvis' case, but a small dead girl, the elder

sister who died before he was born, and whom he was supposed to replace but couldn't, because of the unmistakable evidence of his false sex.

Beginning in 1974 Warhol no longer hangs out with the crowd in the back rooms

of places like Max's. Instead, he takes his recording devices to the discotheque Studio 54, a place reserved for New York's upper five hundred and their hangers-on. His appearance at first seems unchanged: a zombie blond in dark glasses, the only one sober. Given packets of cocaine, he pockets them and throws them away later. He takes everything in and stores it (like Toulouse-Lautrec at the Moulin Rouge, says Bockris), "making friends" with Margaret



Trudeau, Liza Minnelli, Bianca Jagger, Jackie Kennedy, etc. He gets Hollywood stars to talk about their sex lives (on tape); later they beg him not to publish the transcripts.

Far left: **Andy Warhol, Liza Minnelli, 1978**, silkscreen ink on synthetic polymer paint on canvas, two panels, 40 x 40" each. Collection of the Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh. Left: **cover of Interview magazine with Nancy Reagan, December 1981**. Designed and painted by Richard Bernstein from a photograph by Cris Alexander.

(He never intended to anyway.)

The discourse doesn't "describe," it produces its effects. In the early '60s Warhol painted the stars, the ghosts, now he gets to know them. And the lady empresses, too: Farah Diba of Tehran and Imelda Marcos of Manila see New York; both plan art museums with large Warhol sections. There are gala dinners at despots' embassies . . . portraits of the ladies in the Warhol style . . . the Shah isn't

LR: Do the connections between political and art states continue to this day? I mean, are they TV compatible?

KT: Problems don't disappear, they change. In the book I don't stop with Benn. There is an Elvis chapter, and a chapter on Warhol. Elvis, say—you know his story with Nixon, the invitation to the White House and his appointment as drug cop, complete with badge and fantasies of diplomatic privileges. In a way, that was a result of his state having been sort of a gang, with him as leader. In Warhol it's the disappearance of an underground culture in the '70s that brings him in connection with the Shah of Iran, Imelda Marcos, and other politically dubious rich people. The mix of political, artistic, and homosexual undergrounds was gone; people had killed themselves, started earning money, quit, gotten famous; the underground network had vanished. (This was my own experience in the '70s—the feeling of being the only member of the student movement left who hadn't turned into a functionary.) In Warhol's case, the conditions of production regrouped around a series of couples—male couples, hetero couples, homosexual couples. In the same-sex involvements, a lack of physicality or sexuality was the rule.

LR: Why do you stress that? Surely so-called heterosexual couples often don't have sex.

KT: Yes, they stop having sex. Hitchcock describes it very clearly following the birth of his daughter. But it's important to see that the exhibition of sex

on the part of the the superstars of Warhol's factory—men, women, transvestites—was disconnected from Warhol precisely to keep production going. If anyone from those three categories of star had had an affair with Warhol, war would have broken out; production worked only because he kept himself sexually off-limits. This is a characteristic feature of the Warhol state. And if even the possibility of a sexual connection seemed to be approaching, Warhol simply pulled out his "gad-get"—he started shooting, or recording, or taking Polaroids. All his connections were technical. But that isn't just Warhol's story. In fact, I would like to replace the object concept in psychoanalysis with the abject, abject in the sense of jacked into the cable or decoupled. The abject makes itself into a producing subject through a cabling connection. The primal state is that of the cut-off abject.

LR: Aren't there more volumes in the works somewhere over the completion of volume two of *Book of Kings*?

KT: Yes, volume three will center on Freud, volume four on Louis-Ferdinand Céline.

LR: *Freud—a complete version of what you began in Object-Choice: All You Need Is Love, which has just been translated into English?*

KT: Yes, that was a preview for those who don't want to wait for the slow completion of the large-scale project.

LR: In the introductions to the American editions of

volumes one and two of *Male Fantasies*, it's emphasized that you offer an alternative to going brands of psychohistory, one that treats the material in a completely different way. Now you're writing a Freud biography. How will that be metabolizing its material? Not psychobiographically but historically, or in some other way?

KT: I don't subscribe to psychohistory as a concept, since psyche and history are the same thing. Historians are limited because they think they can separate the two: they have their source materials, their political documents, but they miss out on the body, architecture, how people moved, how they perceived time and space. Physis and psyche occupy a space of nonopposition, as Reich insisted, in distinction from Freud, who saw the psyche as an "auxiliary construction." I'm writing not just a Freud biography but a book about the role psychoanalysis played in the building up of human perception in the 20th century.

Freud said that if he could have described the psychic apparatus chemically or electrically, he would have, but he couldn't; it was a mistake of his followers' to disconnect psychoanalysis from chemistry, biochemistry, drugs, and mediatic perception. The revenge that ensues is that chemists have no notion whatsoever of psychoanalysis, but increasing power, which is gruesome. The two sciences should have been, should be, allied. Psychoanalysis on a medical level vanishes with the new

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Warhol, despite a series of people working on a revolution in perception. The '60s world doesn't crack open over anything like "Hitler," it empties out into political stalemates, hard-line parties (the RAF, the Weathermen), middle-class rigidities, drug declines (self-destruction without produc-

tion), despair over "personal failures" and "inadequacies," resignation. Above all, it defines itself negatively in disappearing from the public sphere.

In the '60s everyone starts being interested in everyone else.

In the '70s everyone drops everyone else. The '60s are filled to the rim.

The '70s are empty.

Being left over is a hard problem to solve, in 1970 as in 1930. In 1930, the evac-

Left: Andy Warhol, *Campbell's Soup Can Cream of Chicken*, 1962, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 71 3/4 x 52". Collection of the Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh. Below: Andy Warhol, *Printed Dollar Bill* (detail), 1962, silkscreen ink on canvas, 6 x 10".



uation of an entire world of production occurs through an external political power. In the early '70s it has more to do with another force: the force of prowling egos seeking their own decline, dissolution,

transformation. (Compared to this, gravity is like the drift of a snowflake.) That Warhol ceases to be underground means in the first place that the underground itself ceases to be. Keep running on

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so bad when he buys pictures.

A "sale" ... Warhol "sold out," the newspapers report. What happened? In the end, the filling of emptiness with aristocracy, power, money? In part. It seems to me that something happens in New York (and in the "Western world") in the early '70s that resembles what went on in Berlin around 1930; a world empties out. The world of the '60s crashes apart. Not because of Warhol—despite people like

FLOOD / JACKIE O. *continued from page 118*

with *Time* and *Newsweek* and *People* and *Town and Country* and a treacle flow of anecdotes by Peter Beard, and Dominick Dunne, and Carolina Herrera, and Peggy Noonan, and whoever answered the phone and made some copy available. Down the road, a portion of the material may be a meaningful part of a larger mosaic; some of it may sink to the bottom of the sea of transient opportunity. Out of it all, one quote sticks with me, from an essay by John Russell for *Time*. "Think of the plots that are being hatched down there, she would say, looking down from the balcony of the Four Seasons Restaurant, with her Schlumberger bracelets dangling over the edge." How deliciously Proustian the intimation of a slight tinkling noise, and the implied bouquet of expensive aromas. We know from some little moments in *New York* magazine's eulogy that Kennedy Onassis could be just a tad catty, so let's add to the image an imaginary remark about toupees and flambés, or a tiny sonic squeak of impatience when the check mistakenly arrived at the table and Russell made an abortive attempt to pay. I would prefer to believe that Kennedy Onassis had a marker out on the world that could never be repaid. In return, the world could pry and probe all it wanted, but the object of its curiosity was basically a woman who married and had children and made some mistakes and straightened them out to the best of her ability and died earlier than statistics would indicate she should have. If all she left was the echo of Schlumberger bracelets clinking over a crowded dining room, so be it. I suspect that her legacy is a bigger deal—otherwise my mother would never have been so touchy about her—but we'll never know until the riot of anecdotes has been stilled and the power of her absence can be assessed. □

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RICKELS / THEWELEIT *continued from page 83*

analysis on a medical level vanishes with the new discoveries in chemistry, with which it stays out of touch; chemists remain applied scientists because they don't learn from psychoanalysis, and psychoanalysis is about to forget what it was and could be.

Freud's science emerged from a typical production line of male couples. But in producing a specific male couple with a particular psyche, psychoanalysis left unattended the chemistry between the producing partners in couples (male/male, male/female, female/female) at the threshold to drugs, to the media. If one could chemically access these crossover points, the turn to political power would no longer be a need. But that's not the book's main concern. Its question is: how can or should human beings be described at the end of the 20th century?

Along that line, the question of volume four is: what happened to language in this century? It looks as if language historically won't get the chance really to live out the freedom it gained in the first three decades of the century. Maybe humanity and written language will get a harsh divorce. But before everything else, writing books is playing games. More than a third of them are pictures of all sorts. So what's really in them is the result of a montage; the reader has the chance to do his own version. □

THEWELEIT EXCERPT *continued from page 83*

underground itself ceases to be. Keep running on empty: that's no go. The immediate journalistic explanation, "Oh, he's sold out," says nothing at all.

In the early '70s Warhol does pretty much what Gottfried Benn does in Germany in the early '30s (modified according to the conditions of the different decades): for Benn, a compulsive nonemigrant, the only option is to try to keep some basis of production through the academy, the radio, or through special permission from Hitler. When that doesn't work, he retreats from the public sphere, first into life as a municipal employee, then into the relative safety of the army. Warhol's opportunities and conditions are better than Benn's. First and foremost: in the vacuum that's being generated, he can make money. Money, lots of it, is the only thing the overground has to offer. At a show in Paris, Warhol solves the money problem with the rumor that he will never paint anymore, he will only make movies; these are the last Warhols on the market. It is 1974, and Warhol is almost exclusively producing portraits of industrialists and politicians. He and Fred Hughes later declare that year the "Year of Money-Making."

The cynicism that everyone confirms as part of the Warholian "attitude" of vacillation and oscillation (Victor Bockris: he was "typically two-sided") is seldom seen for just what else it is: the instrument of stasis, of equalizing the tension between the poles. Warhol's cool, "ironic," "indifferent," "cynical" attitude prevents the dominance of any one pole. Everything must be cynically balanced, devalued and revalued, so that it can oscillate in his empty space rather than filling it. The center must remain empty so as not to disturb his powers of perception. It is a (peculiar) fact that the perceptive powers of people who are filled up with ideas (even good political ideas) are often severely disturbed or limited. The powers of perception, the talent, the gift, appear to be characterless, or to function best without character.

Out of all this come Warhol sentences like "The first ideas are the best ones." One must right away convert what inspires one into art. Don't stop when something doesn't work; do it differently, on the spot. In any event, produce something. There's something to learn from everything—except from the invisible ash heaps of the unproduced, which drag you down. Inner emptiness must externalize or express itself in *objects*; it wants to fill. Those who are already filled, the people with good ideas, don't produce, at least not art. This is precisely why psychoanalysis produces no artists: it works to fill the center.

"This is precisely why" there are no dream images à la Salvador Dalí or Luis Buñuel in Warhol's first movies, *Sleep* and *Empire*. No one appears at the win-

dow of the Empire State Building because it is empty at night—empty like the Campbell's cans, empty of dreams like John Giorno's rest in *Sleep*. "Nothing happens" in the films, and on the faces of the audience appears the film of *their* emptiness: "Oh, that's boring." The artists' discourse taken least seriously is the discourse of their emptiness, which they say collides with the emptiness (meaninglessness) outside in the so-called world, and which they incessantly emphasize must be experienced. The discourse that's second hardest to accept concerns the filling up of emptiness through their work, the production of objects with special auratic appeal. "I like being a vacuum," Warhol said. Individual emptiness—along with a fully developed perceptual apparatus, and the availability of a muscle or two—generates the possibility of productive energy.

Of Warhol, one could say: empty at the "center" but filled out on the periphery. The "empty subject" is completely filled (up) by an endless number of peripheral contacts, which tend to sublimate or sublimate themselves: what's important? Nothing—that is, everything is equally important. The "vacuum" is a shredding machine—a humorous one. The dancer on the high wire, empty balloon over empty abyss, laughs. (Warhol would have liked to have been a dancer more than a painter.) But the laughter isn't "everything." Jonas Mekas said of Warhol's films that after a while one finds in them, after the whiling away of emptiness and sameness, a "reality gap" in which one enters a new perception, and also into one's own stream of consciousness, which one enters only through the exertion of a certain *duration*. Emptiness/laughter/reality gap lead to a state of *duration*—the state of time that belongs to the series, seriality's breakthrough into trance.

The energy that comes out of emptiness requires "phase equivalencies," ways to amalgamate with external streams and events. Then, draining away, it can make connections, close circles, produce. "Phase" was one of Warhol's favorite words for people's states, the changing states of his coworkers in particular: *she's going through a phase right now*—this or that won't work with *that person right now*. "This is our year of the insane," he said after being shot by Valerie Solanis; he didn't care to reproach her with anything more than this. But he didn't want to work with her *in this phase*. This is our money-making year . . . it's portrait time now . . . now film . . . the every-night-at-Studio 54 phase . . . the church-every-Sunday phase . . . and now let's do something for *art*. The phase concept follows from the unending succession of alternating couples in production. Warhol always gets "mad" in the Factory when someone disturbs the harmony in the succession of production connections . . . disturbs the circles of a rose is a rose is a can is a canvas.

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Work is work is work is $e=mc^2$. . . and if I had really guessed that Andrea seriously wanted to kill herself, I would have tried to help her . . . but how could I have guessed it? . . . with her energy . . . everything was working so well in that phase . . . Why the hell do people jump out of their phase identity?

What do I want from Reagan? Nothing . . . but now is Reagan time (since nothing else is going on) . . . is it my fault that everyone has turned off their transmissions/radiations and is hiding or marrying or making money or committing suicide? If the people with money are having their art phase right now . . . are buying pictures . . . stuffing museums . . . the White House . . . well then, hand over the money . . . come along with the interviews . . . and why jump out of the phase and tell the newspaper how stupid they are. . . . You can have a second phase that runs a parallel course . . . one year later: "I hate these people" . . . that works . . . and all that by phone, reported to Pat Hackett. □

BASUALDO / AGUILAR *continued from page 89*

a current show organized by Catherine David, curator of the Documenta X exhibition in Kassel, Chris Dercon of the Witte de With Center in Rotterdam, and the Projeto Hélio Oiticica. The show started in Rotterdam and is traveling to Paris, Barcelona, Lisbon, and Minneapolis. Funnily enough, it will come to Brazil only at the end of its run, late in 1996.

Everything remains to be done in the case of Clark. Only a small part of her work has been shown—the work of the "Bichos" (Bugs) period, around 1960–64. A great deal of research needs to be done if she is to be understood; her archives are in the Museo de Arte Moderno in Rio de Janeiro. This is a crucial step before realizing the "Máscaras sensoriais" (Sensorial masks) show for the Bienal. These works are masks built to provide different auditory, tactile, visual, and olfactory experiences; we're going to make copies of them, so that the public will be able to wear them.

We're also planning interactive works for people who volunteer to participate in a deep-psychological experience. We're picking a group of assistants to act as the "therapeutic companions" that some psychological clinics use—it's a concept based on the work of Franco Basaglia, who tries to bring down the walls of the mental institution and integrate the psychotic into some kind of human circuit, as a process of healing. Clark used to say that she treated her patients like artists who weren't producing work. This is an important idea, showing how the artwork pales in significance for Clark compared to the link between patient/spectator and artist. And this link could be totally sensorial, totally nonmaterial. There is a need to demonstrate Clark's importance in international contemporary art. I'm convinced that art history from the '60s and '70s is going to have to be refigured around her; her significance will eventually be recognized as equal to Robert Rauschenberg's or Yves Klein's.

The support functions otherwise in the case of Schendel, who tries to make it transparent. In all her

works she shows how the support becomes an obstacle. In this sense her work resembles that of Malevich. Her latest works comprise almost imperceptible traces on white rice-paper; before these she showed wooden stakes painted black and set in front of white supports, so that they figured as line. There is no relationship, then, between figure and ground in these works. In fact it is impossible to establish what is the line and what is the plane; both are reversible. Historically, this seems to me a very important experience.

We have to open up all these projects that have been shut out of art history, we have to document them. The difference between Bienal Brazil Siglo XX and the XXII Bienal is that the former spoke of Brazilian art and the latter speaks only of art. In that sense, I see Bienal Brazil Siglo XX as a history of how Brazilian art stops being Brazilian and becomes simply art.

CB: *When did that happen?*

NA: I think this happened in Brazil precisely with the work of Clark, Oiticica, and Schendel. The coming of an artist like Tunga, for example, would have been impossible without this trinity; likewise the arrival of José Resende and Jac Leirner—who, paradoxically, are better known today than their predecessors. But I think when the public learns about these three artists, who inaugurated contemporary art in Brazil, the works of Resende, Carlos Fajardo, Leirner, Angelo Venosa, Frida Baranek, and Tunga will be better understood. People will see that this is not just a group of talented young individuals, but a group of artists who respect and recognize the work of their predecessors.

CB: *Do you think Argentinean, Brazilian, or Venezuelan art has the power to force a new reading of contemporary art history?*

NA: Certainly. It's interesting—for a long time, all these countries were searching for an identity. In the Bienal Brazil Siglo XX, the Modernist trend appeared as a search for a national identity. Artists set aside this search just when their countries became autonomous. When art stopped being Argentinean, Colombian, Venezuelan, it became art.

This will be very clear at the Bienal in the exhibitions by Jesus Soto, Libero Badii, Edgardo Vigo, Pablo Suárez, Maria Fernanda Cardozo, and Hugo Zapata—artists left out of European shows like "*Der zerbrochene Spiegel*" (The broken mirror, at the Kunsthalle in Vienna). Those shows are very limited—they always include the same artists. It is an endless chess game where the outcome is a tie, and in one way or another it amputates art. But a rescue is going on, and I'm happy to be a part of it. □

Translated from the Portuguese into Spanish by the author, and from the Spanish by Adriana Saldarriaga.

1. Nelson Aguilar, statement on the XXII Bienal, July 1994.
2. Oswald de Andrade, "Manifesto Antropofágico" (Cannibal manifesto), in *Obras Completas de Oswald de Andrade: La utopía antropofágica* (Complete works of Oswald de Andrade: the cannibal utopia), São Paulo: Ministry of Culture of São Paulo and Editora Globo, 1990.

SCHWABSKY / COLOR FIELD *continued from page 97*

It's easy to like the clarity and openness of early Caro or Poons, but their best recent work offers the more difficult pleasures obtainable only by submission to visual confusion and psychological ambiguity. This art has

come to reflect ironically on its own development, and in contrast to that of the Minimalists, its development has outstripped its origins, for both good and bad. Perhaps at this point these artists would be better off just conceding the mainstream, for quite probably over the long haul the chasm that has seemed to separate these painters from their Minimal counterparts will all but close. Far more than Minimalism, Color Field to day seems theatrical, flamboyant and artificial. Strategically detached from its original critical framework, its profligate, sometimes grotesque concatenations of texture, color, and shape could be ready to retrofit to our virtually realized fin de siècle.

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1. Brian O'Doherty, *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space*, Santa Monica: Lapis Press, 1986, p. 26. First published in *Artforum* XIV no. 7, March 1976; XIV no. 8, April 1976, and XV no. 3, November 1976.
2. See Anna C. Chave, "Minimalism and the Rhetoric of Power," *Arts Magazine*, January 1990, pp. 44–63. Of Caro, Noland, and Olitski, on the other hand, Charles Harrison has suggested that "we might wish to acknowledge that their work is in certain respects free from implication in the manipulative and managerial aspects of that culture which puts them to use." *Essays on Art & Language*, Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1991, p. 260, n. 23.
3. Donald Judd, "Specific Objects," 1965, republished in *Complete Writings 1959–1975*, Halifax: The Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1975, p. 184.
4. Michael Fried, "Art and Objecthood," in Gregory Battcock, ed., *Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology*, New York: Dutton, 1968, p. 12. First published in *Artforum* V no. 10, Summer 1967.
5. "Caro Noland Olitski," Joseloff Gallery, University of Hartford, Hartford, Conn., 28 April–15 June 1994; "Anthony Caro: A Major Survey of Recent Sculpture on the Occasion of the Artist's Seventieth Birthday," Andre Emmerich Gallery, New York, 14 April–27 May; "Larry Poons," Salander-O'Reilly Galleries, New York, 5–30 April.
6. Leo Steinberg, "Other Criteria," *Other Criteria: Confrontations with Twentieth Century Art*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1972, p. 79.
7. Odilon Redon, *To Myself: Notes on Life, Art, and Artists*, trans. Mira Jacob and Jeanne L. Wasserman, New York: Braziller, 1986, p. 148.
8. Max Kozloff, "The Inert and the Frenetic," *Renderings*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1969, p. 254. First published in *Artforum* IV no. 7, March 1966.
9. My account assumes that the later (1958) version of Greenberg's 1948 essay "The New Sculpture," published in *Art and Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), preprogrammed the "formalist" reception of Caro's sculpture. Fried has subsequently directed attention to the notion of "syntax," also taken up by Greenberg, as more central to his understanding of Caro than that of "opticality." See "Theories of Art after Minimalism and Pop: Discussion," in Hal Foster, ed., *Discussions in Contemporary Culture* no. 1, Seattle: Bay Press, 1987, pp. 71–72. In relation to Caro, though, the term "syntax" remains more a suggestive metaphor than a substantive concept.
10. Karen Wilkin, *Caro*, Munich: Prestel Verlag, 1991, n.p. Interestingly, Thierry de Duve reports that "sculptecture" ("sculptitecture" without the *i*) was a neologism coined in the '60s for what came to be known as Minimal art. See his "The Monochrome and the Blank Canvas," in Serge Guilbaut, ed., *Reconstructing Modernism: Art in New York, Paris, and Montreal, 1945–64*, Cambridge: MIT Press, 1990, p. 269.