



# MIRIAM KATZEFF

MIRIAM KATZEFF IS THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF ARTISTS SPACE IN NEW YORK. SHE IS ALSO THE COFOUNDER OF PRIMARY INFORMATION, A NONPROFIT PUBLISHER OF ARTISTS' BOOKS, WRITINGS, AND RECORDINGS.

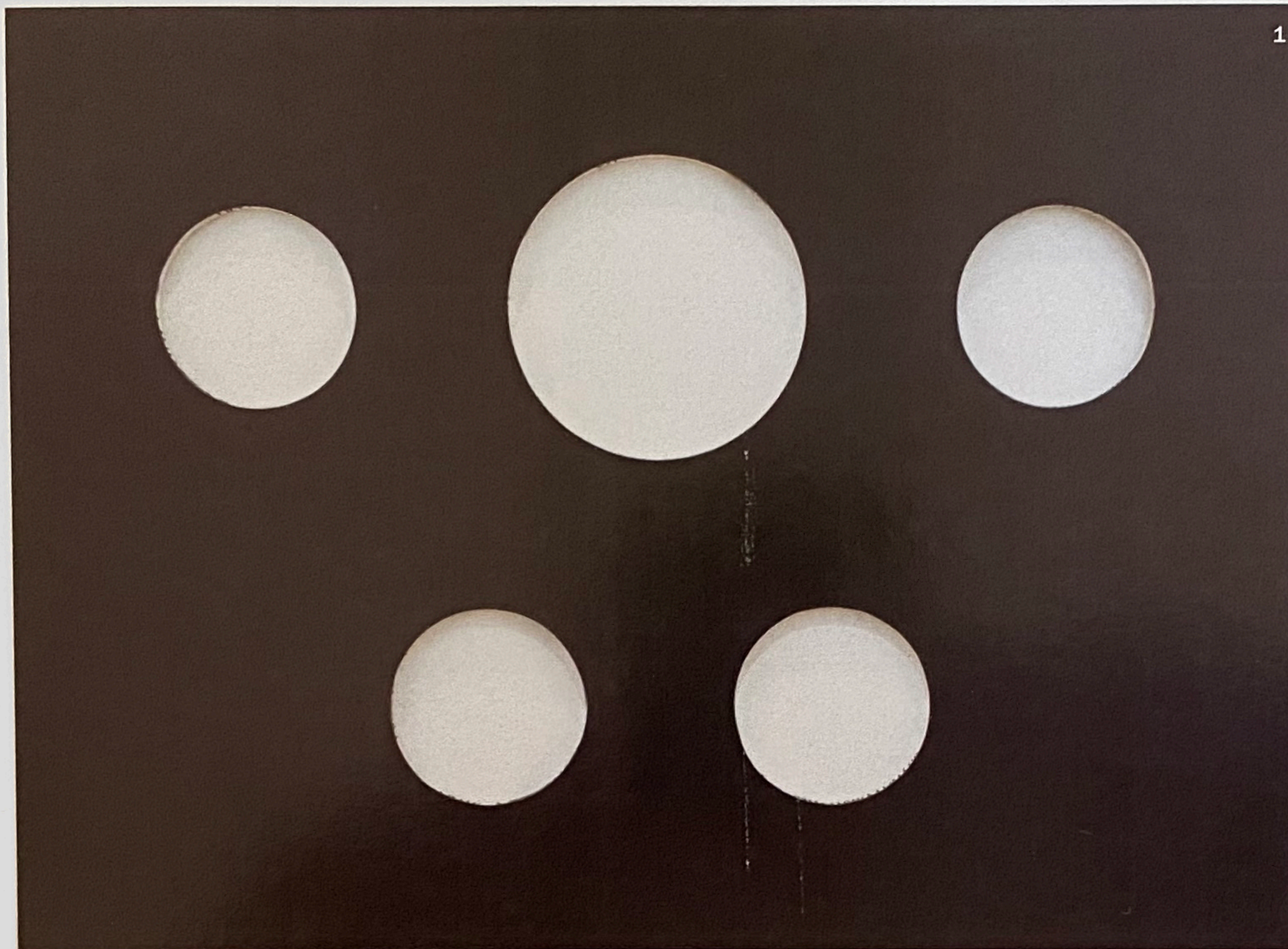
1

## STEVEN PARRINO (SKARSTEDT, NEW YORK)

With their broad range of subcultural and art-historical influences, Parrino's twisted and torqued paintings often overwhelm their surroundings. Yet the grand setting of Skarstedt's town house muted the harshness of this work, revealing its rich dialogue with postwar artists such as Lucio Fontana, Piero Manzoni, and Frank Stella. The combination of horror, violence, and punk nihilism that permeates Parrino's art in other settings was not absent entirely, however: A selection of "Amphetamine Monster-Mill" collages, 1994, exposed a sinister undercurrent of disaster and dread.

2

**RASHID JOHNSON, *NATIVE SON*** Johnson's feature film updates Richard Wright's classic 1940 novel and brings it into present-day Chicago. Beautifully shot, the narrative builds slowly to its frenetic ending. Loyalists might be offended by the liberties Johnson took with the book, but some key elements—such as a liberal white family that collects art by black artists and repeatedly commits micro-aggressions—feel perfectly fitting for the ambient racism of Trump's America.



**1.** Steven Parrino, *Stockade (Existential Trap for Speed Freaks)*, 1988–91, enamel on canvas, 76 × 104". **2.** Rashid Johnson, *Native Son*, 2019, HD video, color, sound, 103 minutes 41 seconds. Bigger Thomas (Ashton Sanders). **3.** View of "Josh Kline: Climate Change; Part One," 2019, 47 Canal, New York. Photo: Joerg Lohse. **4.** Kate Crawford and Trevor Paglen, *ImageNet Roulette*, 2019, facial-classification application. Installation view, Fondazione Prada, Milan. Photo: Marco Cappelletti.

3

**JOSH KLINE (47 CANAL, NEW YORK)** Walking through doors coated with national flags and sand sourced from disparate regions of the world, viewers entered dispiriting rooms containing Kline's visions of cities in ruin. International borders broke down in vitrines housing melting blocks of ice that slowly submerged government buildings. Though we can make personal decisions to reduce our carbon footprint, Kline suggests, the cause of our oblivion is structural—and its inevitability impossible to escape.



4

**TREVOR PAGLEN AND KATE CRAWFORD, *IMAGENET ROULETTE*** A short-lived app created by artist Trevor Paglen and Microsoft researcher Kate Crawford, ImageNet Roulette deftly exposed the biases inherent in artificial intelligence to a broader public. Building on the desire for selfie-oriented apps (such as FaceApp), this viral project allowed users to upload photographic self-portraits to be analyzed with classifications from ImageNet, a database of images employed to train machine-learning algorithms. The often offensive, bizarre, racist, and sexist results showed that AI is far from neutral and contains all the human error, prejudice, and misjudgment of an addled teen rating faces on Hot or Not. Shortly after the app's launch, ImageNet announced it would remove 1.5 million photos from its training set.





5. View of the Whitney Biennial 2019, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Foreground: Pat Phillips, *Untitled (Don't Tread On Me)*, 2019. Photo: Ron Amstutz. 6. Henrik Oleson, *Red Square*, 2019, aluminum, enamel, hardware, tape. Installation view, Galerie Buchholz, New York. 7. Gregg Bordowitz addressing a crowd in front of the Food and Drug Administration building, Washington, DC, 1988. 8. View of "The Conditions of Being Art: Pat Hearn Gallery & American Fine Arts, Co. (1983–2004)," 2018, Hessel Museum of Art, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY. From left: Peter Fend and Ocean Earth, *RAPID Methane Gas Station*, 2000; Claire Pentecost, *Molecular Invasion*, 2004; Issue of *Artforum*, September 1998. Photo: Chris Kendall. 9. Charline von Heyl, *Tondo*, 2017, acrylic and charcoal on linen, 80 x 80". 10. View of "Martine Syms: Big Surprise," 2018, Bridget Donahue, New York.

## 8

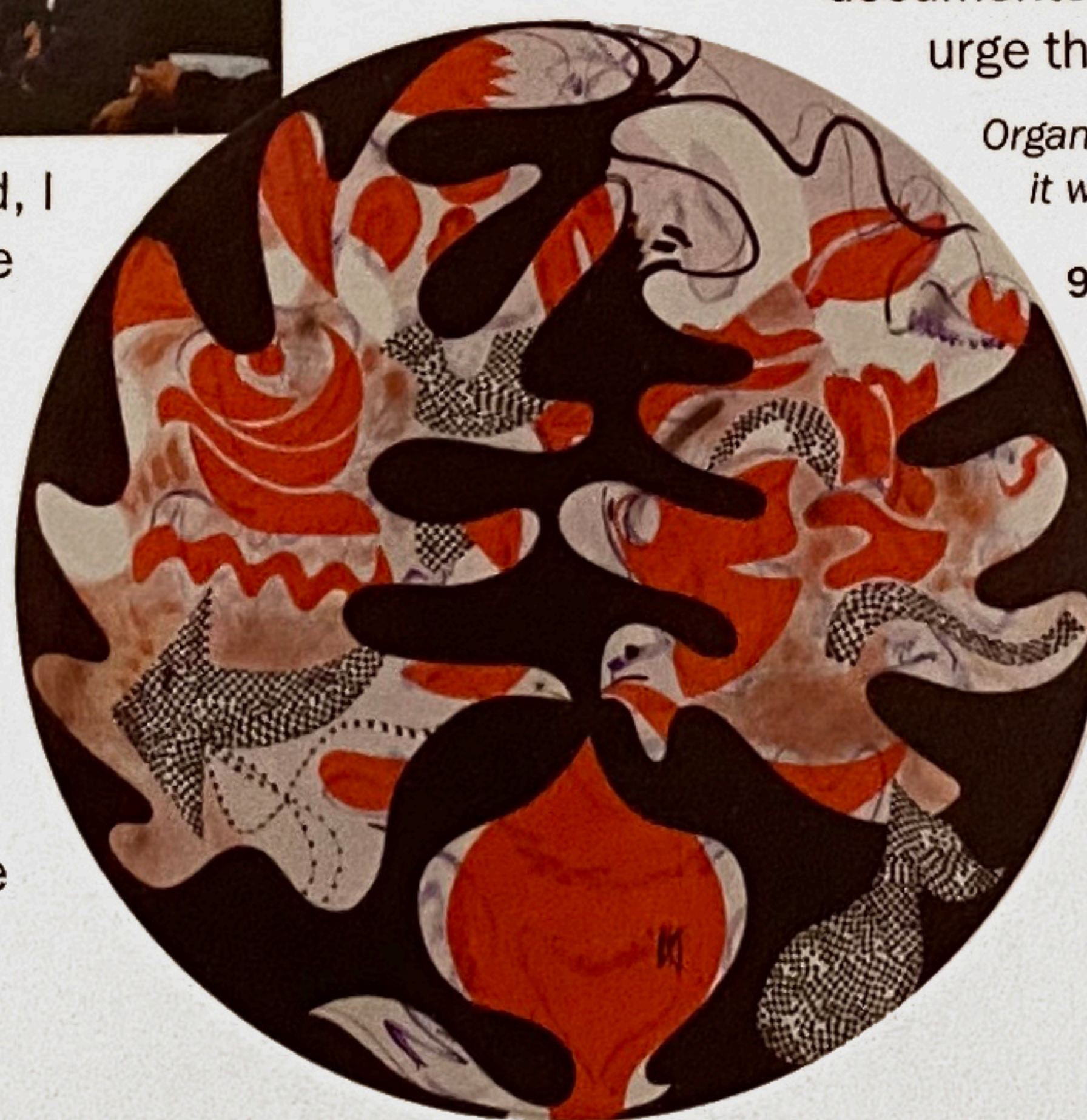
"THE CONDITIONS OF BEING ART: PAT HEARN GALLERY & AMERICAN FINE ARTS, CO. (1983–2004)" (HESSEL MUSEUM OF ART, ANNENDALE-ON-HUDSON, NY; CURATED BY JEANNINE TANG, LIA GANGITANO, AND ANN BUTLER) Entering the art world just as American Fine Arts was closing in the early 2000s, I often felt like all of my favorite discoveries from the '80s and '90s had shown there or at Pat Hearn at some point in their careers. At Bard, I visited this exhibition with an older friend, who noted how strange it was to see AFA and PHG installations re-created in an elevated museum environment. But I thought it was fitting: Here, students who would otherwise only ever have heard about the mythology of AFA and PHG could encounter the work firsthand. The exhibition included iconic pieces by artists closely associated with the galleries, including Lutz Bacher, Alex Bag, and Andrea Fraser, while placing well-known artists such as Mary Heilmann back in Hearn's often-politicized context. Notably, the show also highlighted Tishan Hsu, whose timely art is once again receiving recognition. I was most grateful for the accompanying publication, which provides a range of texts fleshing out the two galleries' social history, and a full exhibition time line.



XAVIERA SIMMONS, "WHITENESS MUST UNDO ITSELF TO MAKE WAY FOR THE TRULY RADICAL TURN IN CONTEMPORARY CULTURE" (*ART NEWSPAPER*) Prior to the publication of "The Tear Gas Biennial," Simmons's article was the most discussed piece of writing on the Whitney Biennial among my friends. Addressing the many critics who claimed this year's Biennial wasn't "radical enough," the text reflects on the burden white critics place on artists of color to perform radicality in specific ways and calls on those critics to openly acknowledge whiteness. White critics must better educate themselves about the lineages of artistic influence, Simmons writes, and the field of art criticism must diversify.

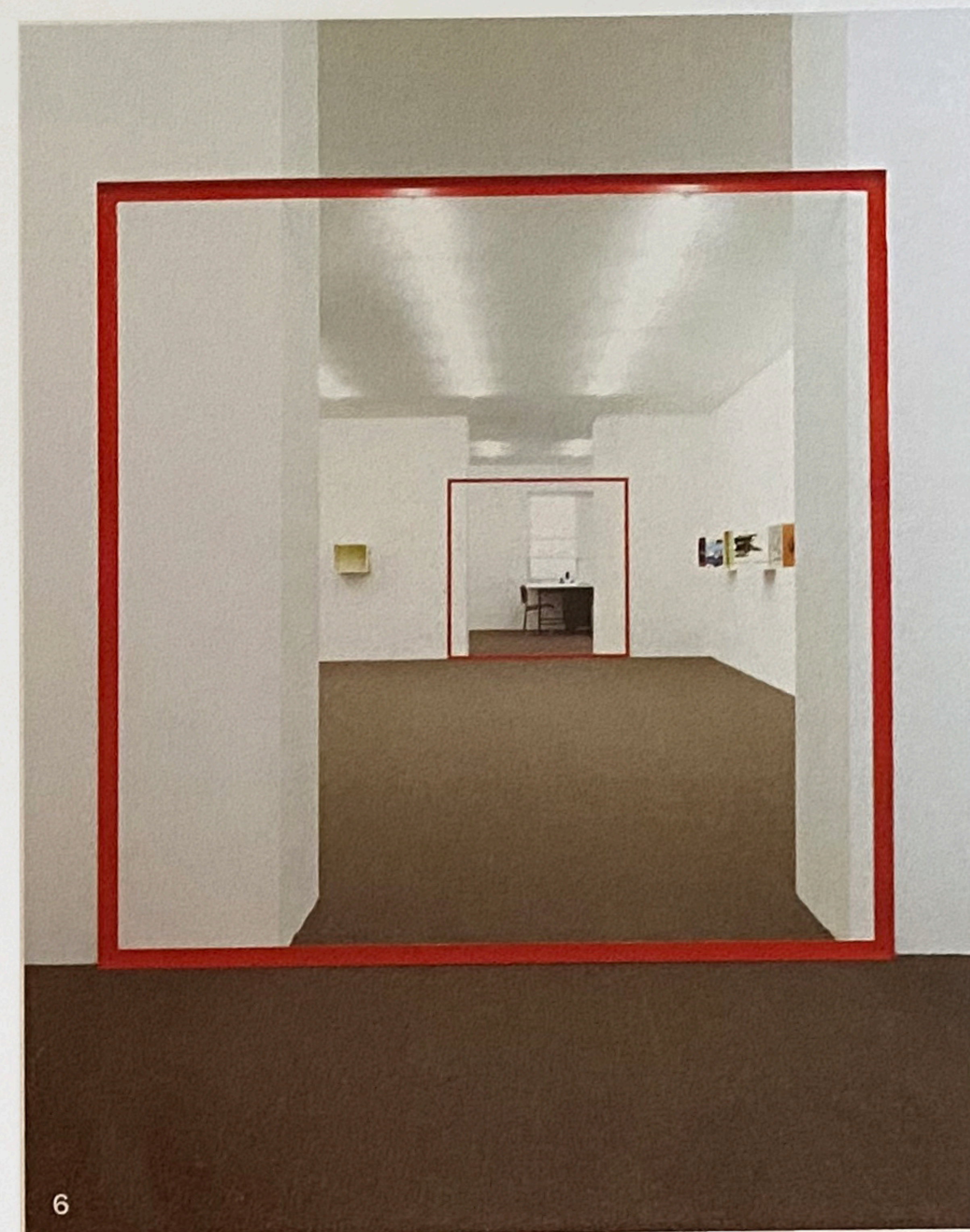
## 6

HENRIK OLESON (GALERIE BUCHHOLZ, NEW YORK) Pasted to the wall next to a Judd stack of two empty glass boxes, a sheet of text invoked Deleuze and Guattari's famous "bodies without organs": NO MOUTH NO TONGUE NO TEETH NO BELLY NO ANUS. Artworks throughout the show refused to perform their expected functions: A corner sculpture formed a right angle but was hung askew; a metal-and-glass door suspended in the center of the gallery was the backdrop for another text; and the *Red Square* works, 2019—a sequence of installations that framed the entryways, descaling the gallery and drawing visitors in—were painted yellow on the reverse side, jarring visitors as they exited. Olesen's minimal forms continue to disarm with their details and studied imperfections.



## 9

CHARLINE VON HEYL (PETZEL GALLERY, NEW YORK) Von Heyl's enigmatic paintings encourage the viewer to slow down and consider the complexities of her line, shape, and color and the connections among her disparate works. In her *Poetry Machine #1, #2, and #3*, all 2018, regal, disembodied female heads perch on graphic platforms against transparent layers. Black line work becomes a fluid pattern overtaking other patterns in *Tondo*, 2017, while in *La Vache Qui Rit (The Laughing Cow)* and *5 Signs of Disturbance*, both 2018, similar shapes and line work reappear as strange hieroglyphics.



## 7

GREGG BORDOWITZ (ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO; CURATED BY ROBYN FARRELL AND SOLVEIG NELSON) Since the 1980s, Bordowitz's artwork and activism have centered on people affected by AIDS as the public response to the crisis has evolved from ostracizing victims to sensationalizing their stories to the present-day tendency toward erasure, with the scale of people living with HIV often overlooked. Bordowitz, who has lived with the virus for more than thirty years, creates nuanced portraits that provoke an unexpectedly wide range of emotion. For the video *Habit*, 2001, he intersperses footage of his daily routine with material shot during a trip to South Africa, where he documented the efforts of the activist group Treatment Action Campaign to urge the government to distribute antiretroviral medication.

Organized by the Douglas F. Cooley Memorial Art Gallery, Reed College, Portland, where it was curated by Stephanie Snyder.



## 10

MARTINE SYMS (BRIDGET DONAHUE, NEW YORK) Installed as a hyperactive installation with photographic wallpaper and photographs laser-cut with text, *Mythicbeing*, 2018 (pronounced "My thick being"), is a four-monitor interactive installation focused on a gender-neutral avatar of the same name. The title plays on the word *thicc* but also alludes to Adrian Piper's cycle "The Mythic Being," 1973–75, for which the elder artist adopted a male alter ego. At Bridget Donahue, Syms invited visitors to text with *Mythicbeing*. Its responses—drawn from a voluminous database of the artist's writings—were so darkly witty I couldn't stop texting with the moody avatar. □