

ne
ee
rt
ir
9

- 2 Artists Anonymous
- 3 Phil Ashcroft
- 4 Lee Campbell
- 5 the Centre of Attention
- 6 Maria Chevskva
- 7 Matthew Collings
- 8 Jimmy Conway-Dyer
- 9 Sacha Craddock
- 10 Stuart Cumberland
- 11 Adam Dant
- 12 Marlene Dumas
- 13 Stephen Farthing RA
- 14 Rose Finn-Kelcey
- 15 Jaime Gilli
- 16 Rose Gibbs
- 17 Alex Hamilton
- 18 Peter Harris
- 19 Pablo Helguera
- 20 Russell Herron
- 21 House of O'Dwyer
- 22 James Howard
- 23 Catri n Huber
- 24 Saron Hughes
- 25 Sayshun Jay
- 26 James Jessop
- 27 Jasper Joffe
- 28 Lee Johnson
- 29 Soni a Khurana
- 30 Peter Lamb
- 31 Cathy Lomax
- 32 Amanda Loomes
- 33 Robi n Mason
- 34 Bruce McLean
- 35 Hugh Mendes
- 36 Frog Morris
- 37 Al ex Gene Morris on
- 38 Chl oe Mortimer
- 39 Stephen Nelson
- 40 Henri k Potter
- 41 Harry Pye
- 42 Danny Rol ph
- 43 Marti n Sexton
- 44 Bob & Roberta Smit h
- 45 Terry Smit h
- 46 Eva Stenram
- 47 Matthew Stone
- 48 Geral di ne Swayne
- 49 Chri s Tosi c
- 50 Josef Val enti no
- 51 Markus Vater
- 52 Edward Ward
- 53 Mi chael Ward
- 54 Dougl as Whi te
- 55 Charli e Wool ley

57 *The high price of success*

Following your own ideals, principles and values, not other people's. The problem is how to reconcile that with other people's ideals, principles and values.... Georgina Adams (Editor at Large, *The Art Newspaper*)

Immanuel Wallerstein wrote in his essay 'Utopistics' about historical choices of the 21st century. In order to find a new sense of fulfillment, individually and collectively there will be a tendency towards increasing the number of de-commodified institutions.

In Wallerstein's words 'I think we move in the direction of de-commodifying a lot of things which we historically commodified. And this could be a very decentralized process. If you look at a lot of movements around the world, local and social movements, what they are objecting to in many ways is commodification.'

Hans Ulrich Obrist (Co-Director of Exhibitions and Programmes and Director of International Projects, Serpentine Gallery)

(Clearly have to preface this with acknowledgement that I'm speaking as a paid up, card-carrying member of the comfortable-angsty-self-loathing-professional-middle-class, living in a democratic society - and, as such, my answer is less logistical/practical, and perhaps more emotional.) What makes me free? To have

ambitions. To have the drive and ability to attempt to achieve them. And to muster enough perspective so that I can enjoy the ride, despite the legion of set-backs I inevitably encounter along the way... My particular brand of freedom is clearly very much a work-in-progress... Hector Proud (Managing Director, Idea Generation)

Dancing. Matthew Higgs (Curator and Artist)

Not owing anyone anything. A clear conscience. A good night's sleep or a good bottle of wine. Soraya Rodriguez (Director, Zoo Art Fair)

Arrangement denial bloated head parakeet refer bedstead. John Moseley (Writer)

A good PA!!! Mrs Fatima Maleki (Collector)

If you think in terms of something 'making' you free then you are not. Freedom is unconditional, indivisible, sovereign, unaided, unallied, unconstrained, uncontrolled, unconnected and unmade. A similar linguistic horror - 'for free' - is not only grammatically incorrect, but dangerous! If we associate trade with the concept of freedom, if we associate production with its existence, we shall one day lose all comprehension of it. Tara Cranswick (Artist)

wh
ma
yc
fr
!

Jasper and Harry in Café Oto, Dalston 4 September 2009

Jasper: *My idea is that rather than me writing an essay and you writing an essay is that this time we draw a cartoon strip instead.*

Harry: Yeah, I'm not so sure about that. Mainly because doing a cartoon would take quite a while to get right. I think we'd be putting ourselves under pressure to be funny or limiting ourselves by trying to squeeze what we wanted to say into a speech bubble. Do you know what I mean? I think it would be better if we had illustrations and it just said: Jasper Joffe in conversation with Harry Pye.

J: *I think it should be, Jasper Joffe talks about the Free Art Fair with Harry Pye.*





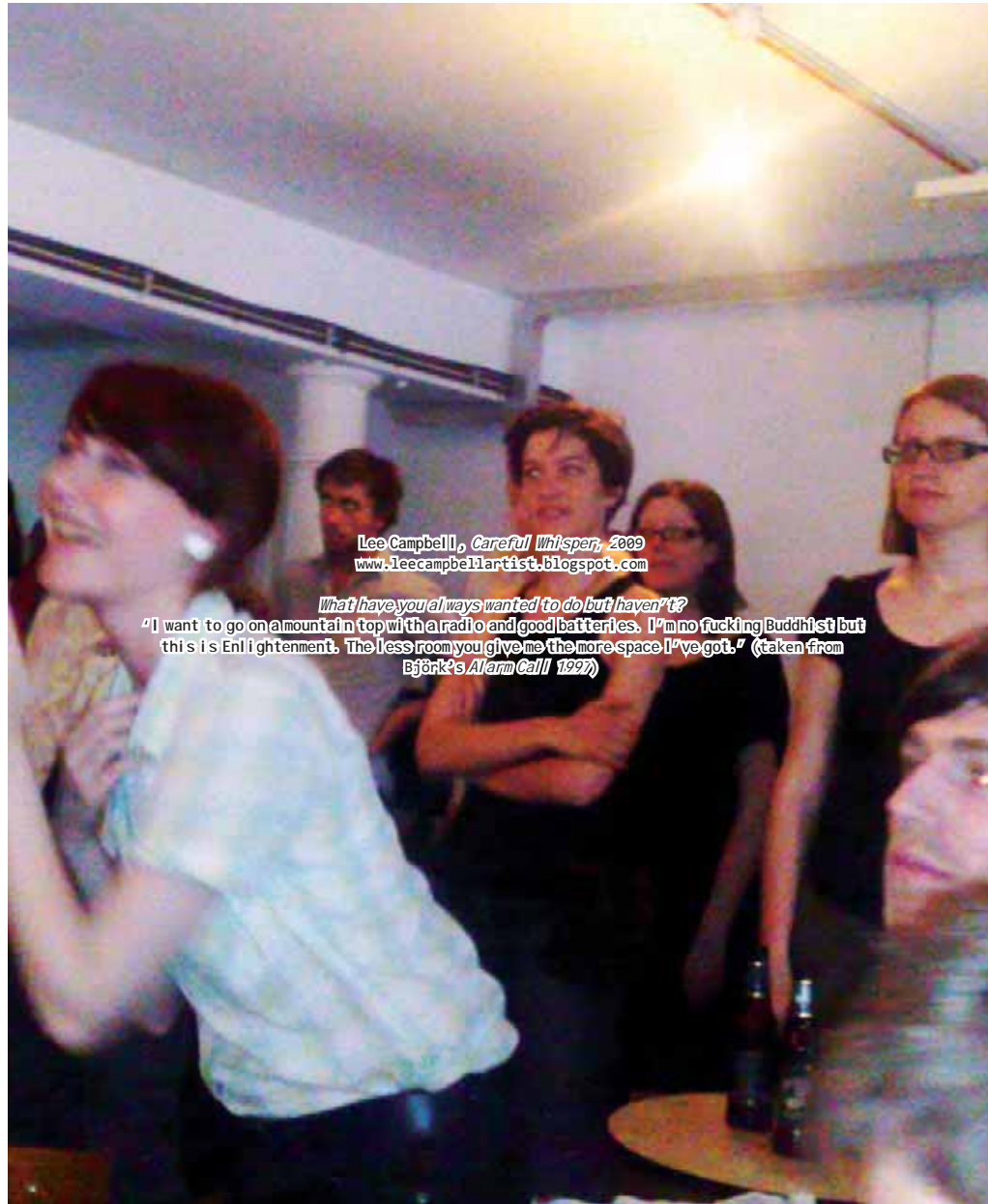
Artists Anonymous, *War, afterimage*, 40x30cm, 2009
www.artists-anonymous.com

*What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
Killing people who are asking dumb questions.
"If there was anything else I would rather like to do than what I do,
I would fucking do it."
(Boomer Petway)*



Phil Ashcroft, *Michigan*, acrylic on canvas, 101x76cm, 2008
www.philashcroft.com

*What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
See a yeti in its natural habitat.*



Lee Campbell, *Careful Whisper*, 2009
www.leecampbellartist.blogspot.com

What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
"I want to go on a mountain top with a radio and good batteries. I'm no fucking Buddhist but this is enlightenment. The less room you give me the more space I've got." (taken from Björnk's *Alarm Call* 1997)



the Centre of Attention, *Untitled (Free Art Fair)*, red square paintings,
dimensions variable, 1999- ongoing
www.thecentreofattention.org



Mari a Chevyska, *Free and easy [Plunged - head first]*, oil paint on canvas, 41 x 41 cm, 2009
www.mummeryschnelle.com

What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
To make a film - but I am happy to inhabit the dream without sacrificing time to the tedium of making it.



Emma Biggs and Matthew Collings, *Melchior*, oil and collage on canvas, 75 x 150 cm, 2008,
courtesy FAS, London
www.emmabiggsandmatthewcollings.net

What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
A picture like early Chagall.



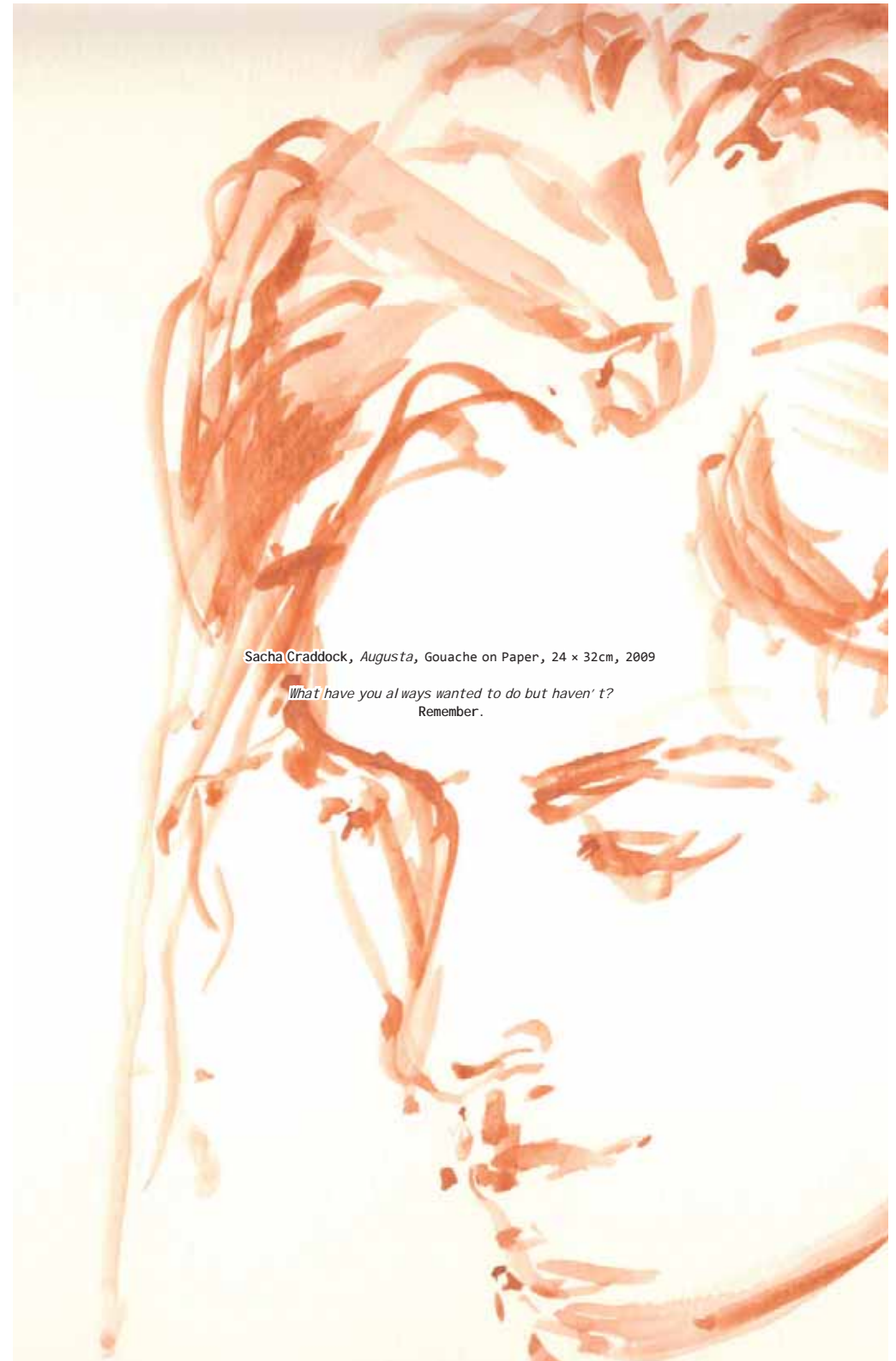
H: Okay, whatever. Shall I start asking you questions? Can you say something about being an artist? In some countries the government does more to support the artist. Do you think the artist has an important role to play in society?

J: No, not really. Ha ha. I think an artist is someone who devotes all their time, or as much as they have left after earning a living, to doing something they love. Money is a by product rather than an aim. A few artists do make money but most don't. I think the Free Art Fair is liberating for artists. If you sell a painting it often goes with sucking up to a collector. You might have to be polite to someone you don't like or listen to what they want rather make the work you want to do. I think by giving a work away at the fair you make yourself feel stronger. It makes you feel good.



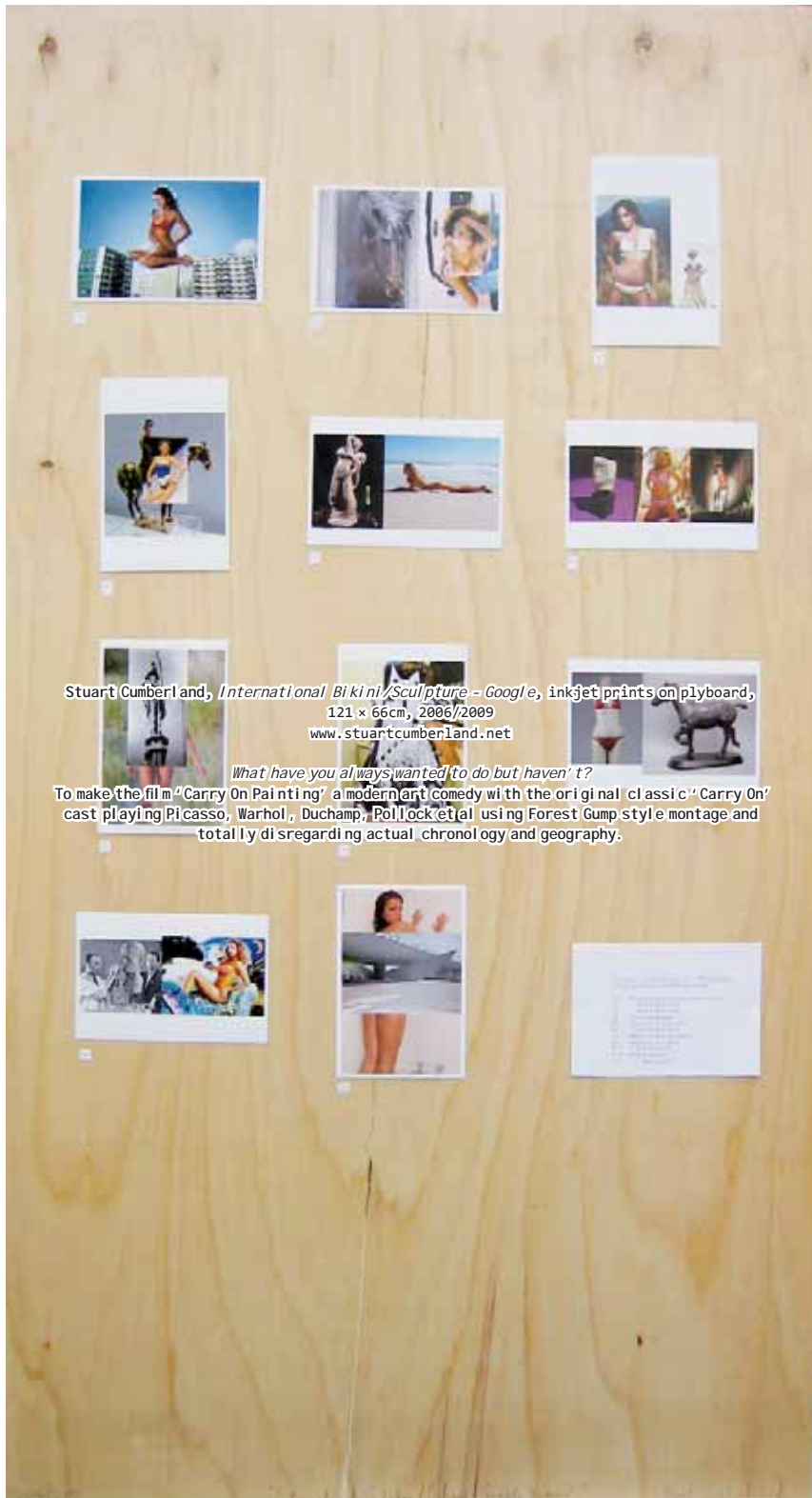
Jimmy Conway-Dyer, *Design for Straw Doll Suit*, collage and paint on paper, 90 x 40cm, 2009
www.jimmyconwaydyer.com

*What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
A cartwheel.*



Sacha Craddock, *Augusta*, Gouache on Paper, 24 x 32cm, 2009

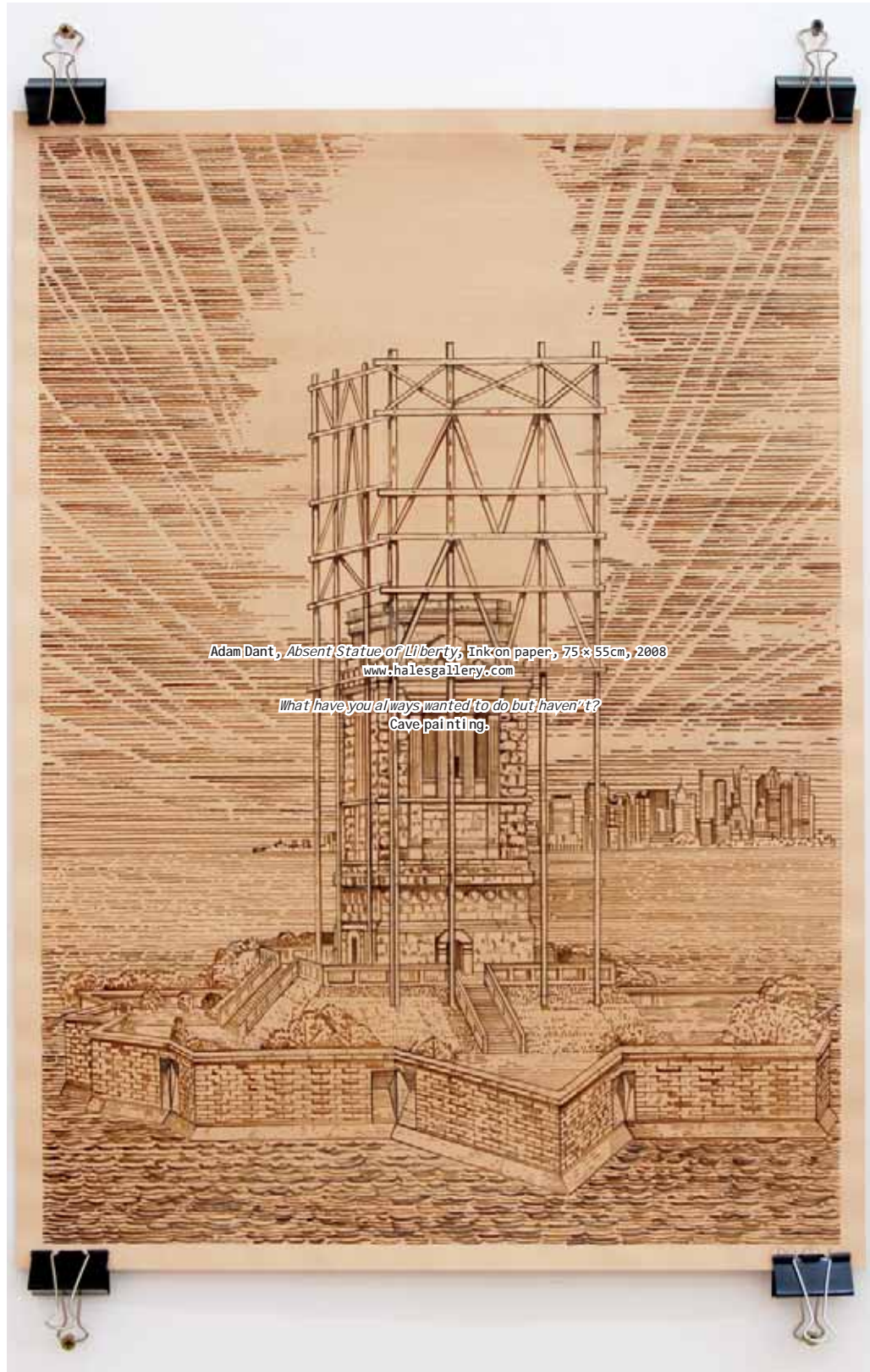
*What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
Remember.*



Stuart Cumberland, *International Bikini/Sculpture - Google*, inkjet prints on plywood, 121 x 66cm, 2006/2009
www.stuartcumberland.net

What have you always wanted to do but haven't?

To make the film 'Carry On Painting' a modern art comedy with the original classic 'Carry On' cast playing Picasso, Warhol, Duchamp, Pollock et al using Forest Gump style montage and totally disregarding actual chronology and geography.



Adam Dant, *Absent Statue of Liberty*, Ink on paper, 75 x 55cm, 2008
www.halesgallery.com

What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
 Cave painting.

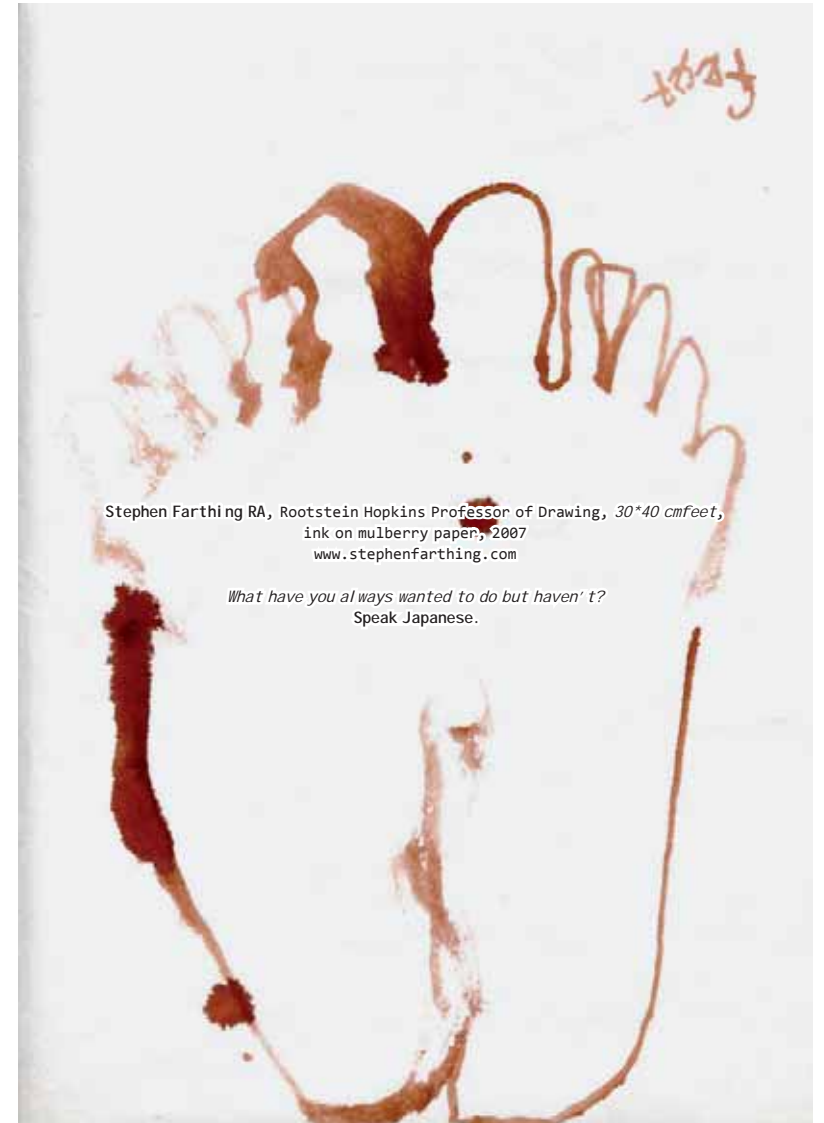


Mariene Dumas, *The Lot nr.*, Work on paper, 35 x 25cm, 2009
www.frithstreetgallery.com

What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
 One thing I've always promised myself to do, was to organize my life so that I would stay away from people (also e-mails, telephones... etc) for a while maybe even for only two full days in a row and only concentrate on painting, but I've never managed that, maybe deep down always felt I don't deserve this. Time is the biggest luxury, the biggest gift to give. But by your question, you probably meant - what type of art work or subject matter did I not feel free to do, but really wanted to... I don't really think in those terms or did you mean something totally different? Maybe I always wanted to answer all questions about my art. Oh, maybe I should start all over again!

The Lot nr. Mariene Dumas 2009

*© Mariene Dumas 2009
 100% ART FAIR*



Stephen Farthing RA, Rootstein Hopkins Professor of Drawing, 30*40 cm feet,
 ink on mulberry paper, 2007
www.stephenfarthing.com

What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
 Speak Japanese.



Rose Finn-Kelcey, *Rip-Roarling Harum Scarum*, paper-cut, 27 x 21cm, edition (2 out of 5), 2009
www.1sculpture.org.uk

*What have I always wanted to do but haven't?
I have always wanted to stop thinking.*



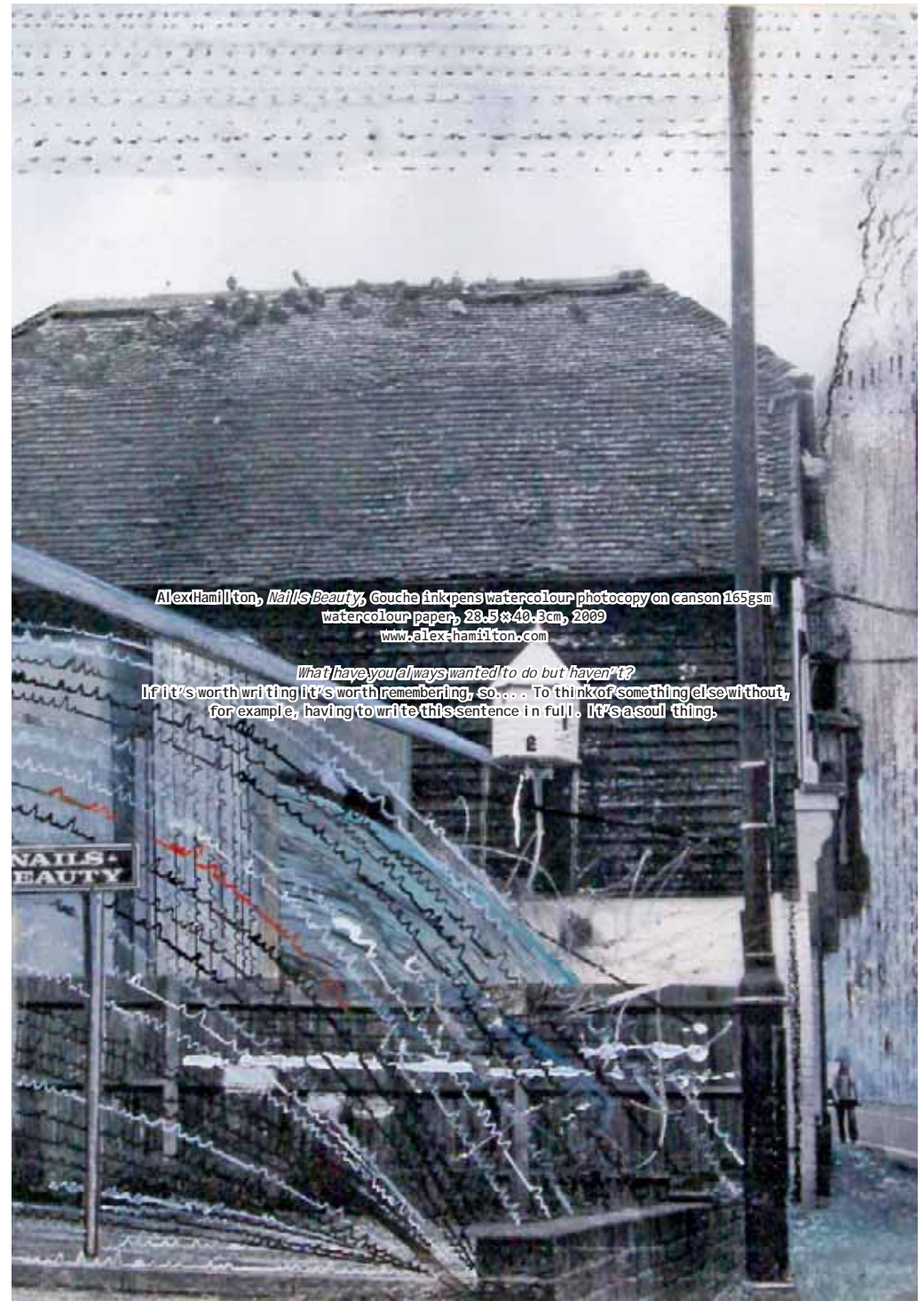
Jaime Gili, *18 de octubre 18*, acrylic on paper, 45 x 23cm, 2009
www.jaimegili.org

*What have I always wanted to do but haven't?
Teleportation.*



Rose Gibbs, *Blown Away*, Bronze, 10 x 20 x 20cm, 2009
rosiegibbs@hotmail.com

*What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
I have always wanted to be fearless.*



Alex Hamilton, *Nails Beauty*, Gouche ink pens watercolour photocopy on canson 165gsm
watercolour paper, 28.5 x 40.3cm, 2009
www.alexhamilton.com

*What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
If it's worth writing it's worth remembering, so... To think of something else without,
for example, having to write this sentence in full. It's a soul thing.*



Peter Harris, *Piece of paper touched by Queen Latifah and signed by Peter Harris*,
29.7 x 21cm, 2009
www.peterharrisart.co.uk

*What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
To have a perm like Jasper Joffe.*



Pablo Helguera, *There Must Be Corroboration*, collage, 23 x 30.5cm, 2008
www.pablohelguera.net

*What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
To sing at La Scala in Milano.*

There must be corroboration.



Russell Herron, *Kora Kumor wearing a Russell Herron T-shirt*,
 dimensions and materials variable, 2008
www.russellherron.com

What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
 I don't have an answer to this question.



House of O' Dwyer, *Untitled (Aigues-Mortes) Debabyface Series*, digital print,
 29 x 21cm, 2002-09
thehouseofdwyer@yahoo.co.uk

What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
 Everything!

H: Do you think you're only rich when you're giving or that the best way to feel good about yourself is to do things for others?

J: In my daughter's nursery they have a sign that reads: *Love is the only thing you get more of when you give it away.*

H: What sort of people have got their hands on the free art?

J: All types. One time a homeless guy got a painting and then sold it to someone else in the queue, and paid for a night in a shelter for him and his friend. I like the idea of someone who doesn't own a home, owning an artwork.

H: That must give you a warm glowing feeling.

J: *Of all the projects I've done, The Free Art Fair has been the only one that has been universally approved of. Before we did the first one a few people said it wouldn't work but after it took place everyone, the artists and the audience, seemed really happy. There's something about the Free Art Fair which makes people feel happy.*



PRICES SLASHED

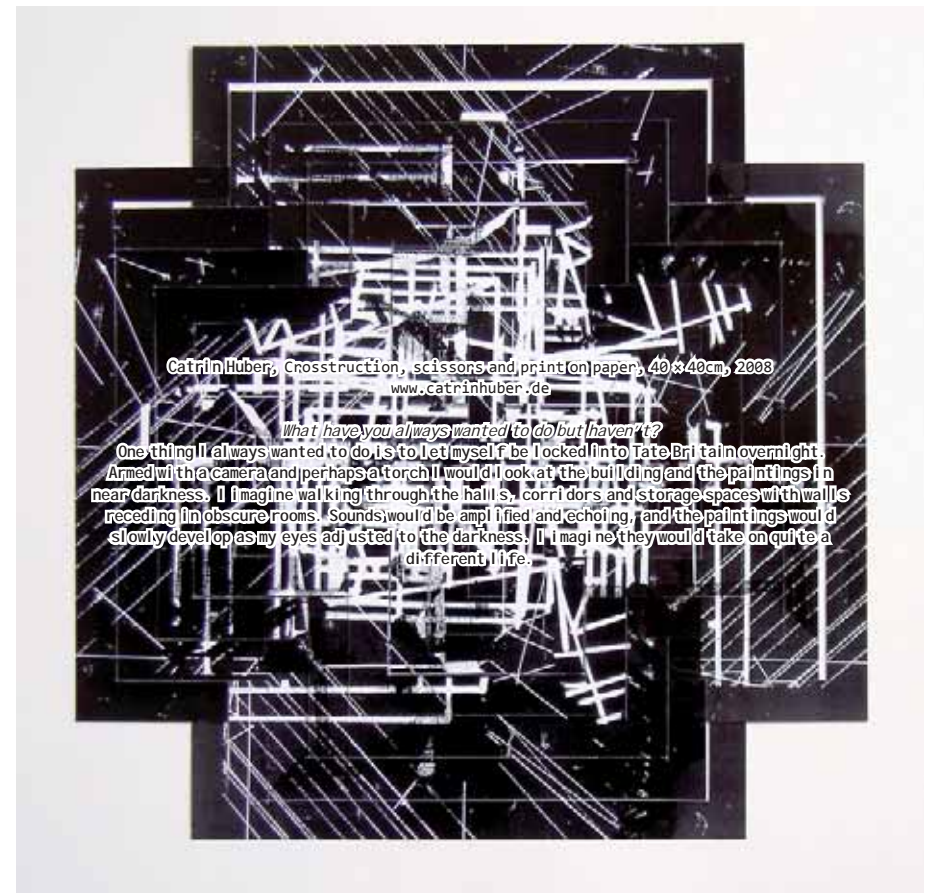


James Howard, *Diamonds are a dog's best friend*, 480 x 240cm, PVC banner, 2009, courtesy of the Artist and Sartorial Gallery, London
www.luckydice.com

*What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
I have always wanted to set fire to someone.*

*Diamonds are a
dog's best friend*

52 CARATS OF LOVE FOR YOUR DOG

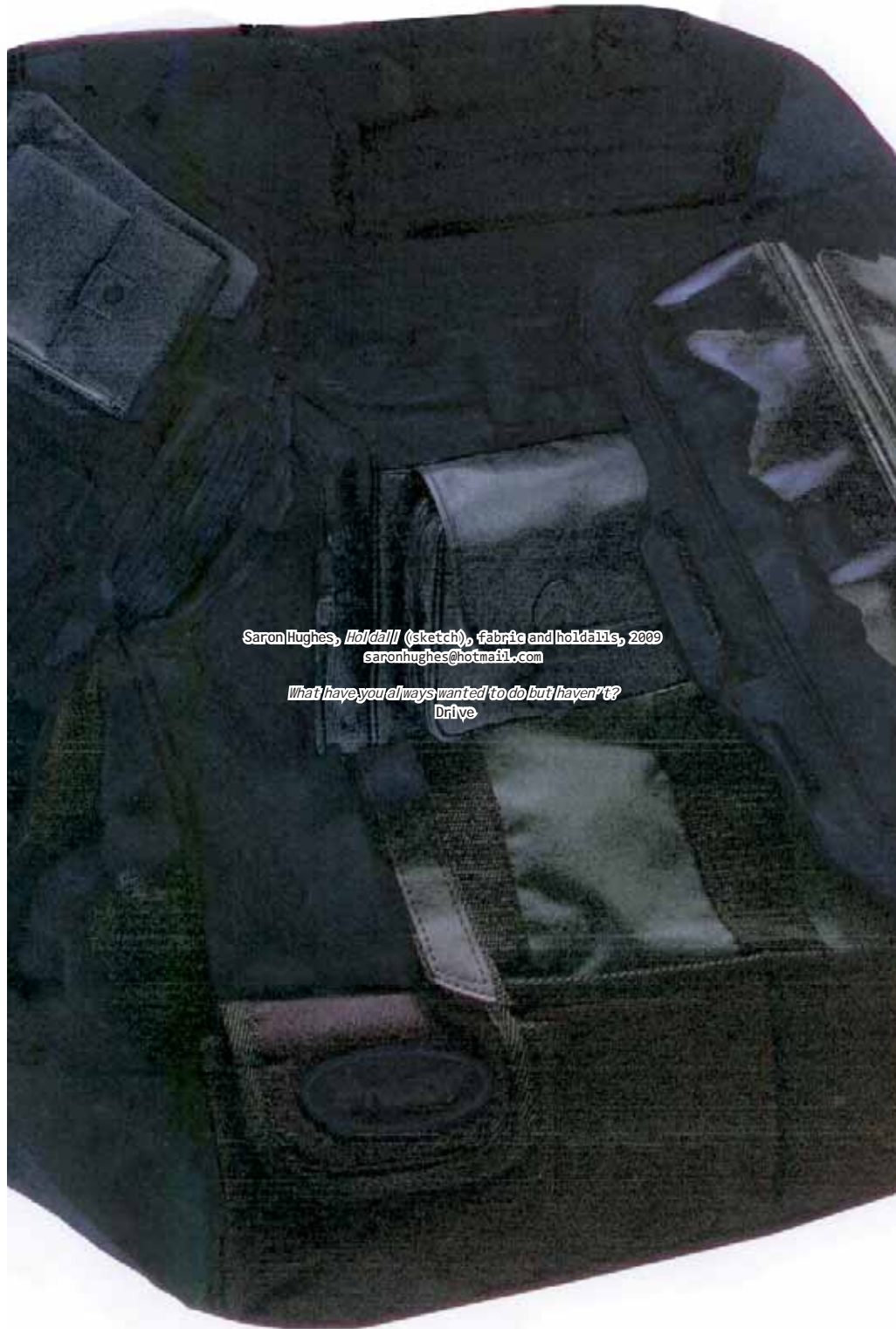


Catrin Huber, *Crosstruction*, scissors and print on paper, 40 x 40cm, 2008
www.catrinhuber.de

*What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
One thing I always wanted to do is to let myself be locked into Tate Britain overnight. Armed with a camera and perhaps a torch I would look at the building and the paintings in near darkness. I imagine walking through the halls, corridors and storage spaces with walls receding in obscure rooms. Sounds would be amplified and echoing, and the paintings would slowly develop as my eyes adjusted to the darkness. I imagine they would take on quite a different life.*

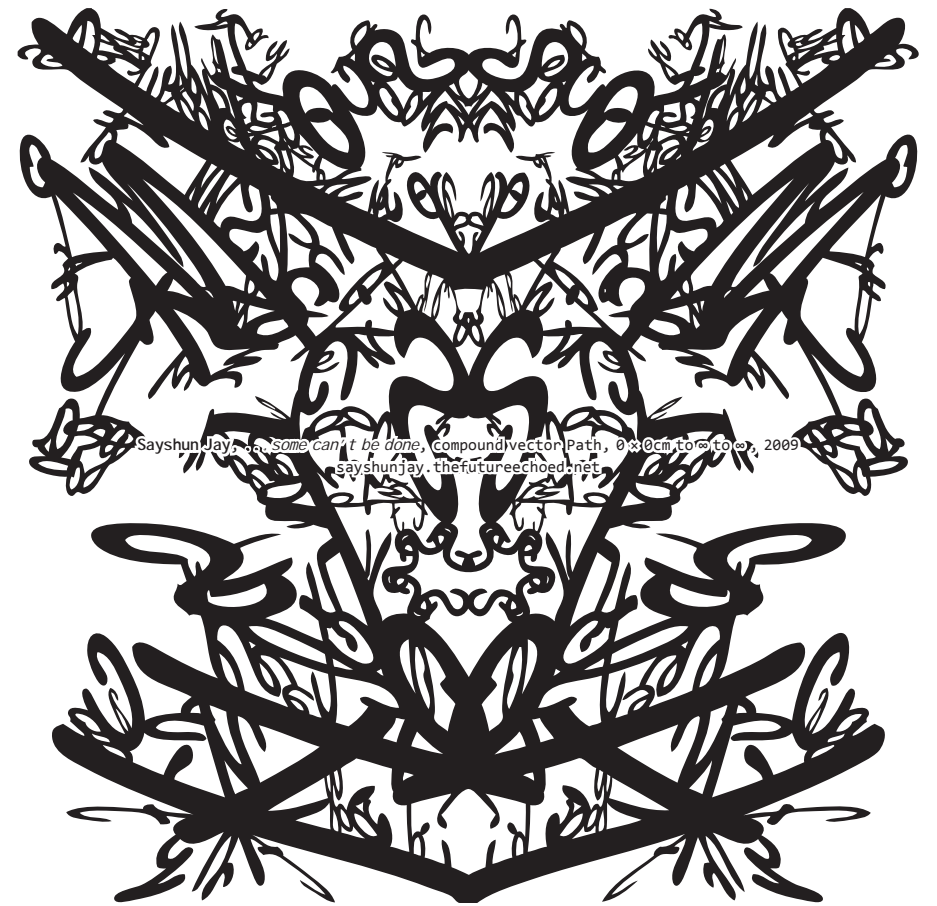


H: Yes, it appeals to my sense of humour. It's always reminded me of Reggie Perrin and his Grot shops. It's a silly idea but not a stupid one.
J: Once you start doing things for free you get over the idea you need to pay for everything. I was really hungry the other day and this cafe was closing up, they weren't selling stuff, so I just asked whether I could have a croissant and the guy gave me one. A silly little example, but it made me feel good, and a tiny bit liberated from buying stuff all the time.



Saron Hughes, *Hollidall* (sketch), fabric and holdalls, 2009
saronhughes@hotmail.com

*What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
Drive.*



Sayshun Jay, *Some can't be done*, compound vector path, 0x0cm to infinity, 2009
sayshunjay.thefutureechoed.net

... further scrambling through old sketch books the artist came across a quote by the writer written when he was a young man.

"I want to run away and join the circus, the circus life is just the life for me" - Steven Street.

questions arose.

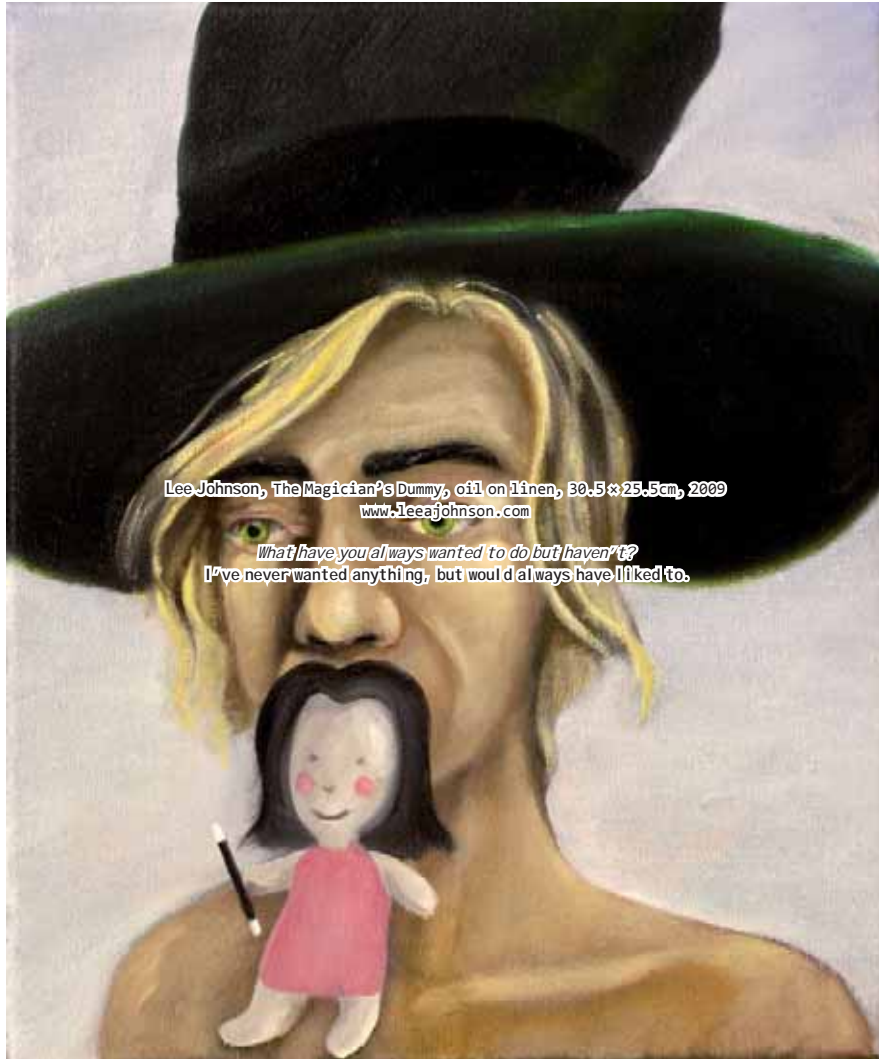


James Jessop, *Subway Fiction Burning Candy Car*, oil and acrylic on canvas, 250 x 171 cm, 2009
www.sartorialart.com

What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
 I always wanted to paint a New York subway train in 1980s style graffiti, it's a retro thing I love. These days it's very hard to spray one. You can get up to 12 months in prison. There are a few old scrap trains in New York to paint, but that's no good to me, it has to be done illegally. Instead for now I have started painting replica New York subway trains with graffiti on them in a fictional 1980s Bronx environment.

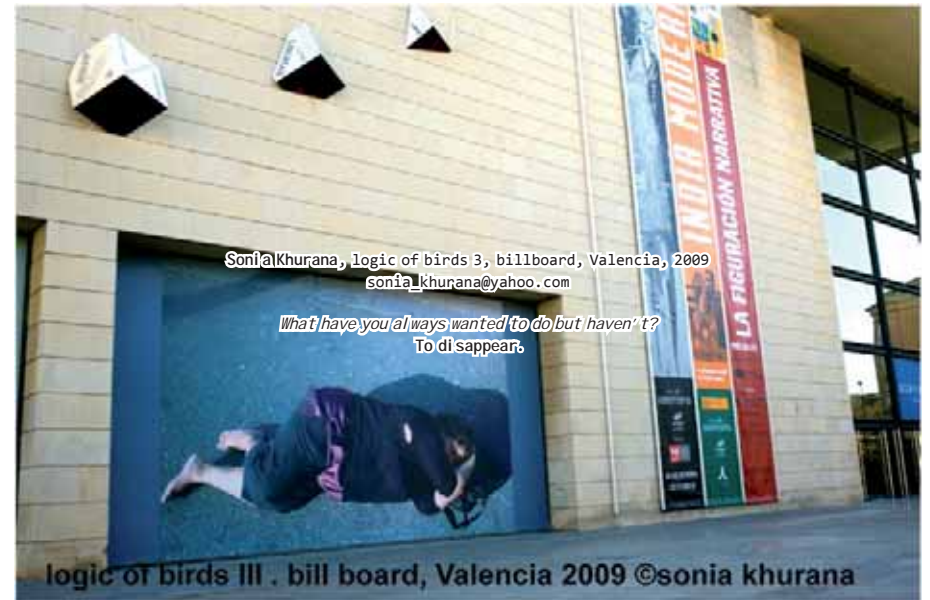


Jasper Joffe, studio shot, 2009
www.jasperjoffe.com
What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
 Have sex with a virgin, win a fist fight, take drugs, run for parliament (though not in that order).



Lee Johnson, *The Magician's Dummy*, oil on linen, 30.5 x 25.5cm, 2009
www.leeajohnson.com

*What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
I've never wanted anything, but would always have liked to.*



Sonia Khurana, *logic of birds 3*, billboard, Valencia, 2009
sonia_khurana@yahoo.com

*What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
To disappear.*

logic of birds III . billboard, Valencia 2009 ©sonia khurana



Peter Lamb, *Tierfrau*, digital print on dibond, acrylic, collage, spray paint
208 x 160 cm, 2009
www.peterlamb.org

What have you always wanted to do but haven't?

I've always wanted to make a huge mural of one of my collages. Or a massive digital print. I'd like to show it in an architecturally interesting space like a church or museum.

H: Why did you start the free art fair?

J: I usually say to have an alternative to the commercial art market alienating frenzy of VIP Frieze or something like that... But really I think it just occurred to me that if you have gave away the entire show you wouldn't have to put up the show and then take it all down if you hadn't sold anything. It was an idea for a show which would have a happy ending.

H: Why do we say, 'music business', and 'art world'?

J: Because art is meant to be good in some way, a world not a business, some people might think artists are in it for fame and money but really they would be better off being lawyers or bankers or models if they wanted that stuff. There is something more about being an artist than what you get out of it.



Cathy Lomax, *Man Mask*, oil on linen, 81 x 60 cm, 2009
cathylomax.blogspot.com

What have you always wanted to do but haven't?

There are lots of things that I want to do now, but I haven't always wanted to do them because I try and do everything I want.



Amanda Loomes, *Recovery*, digital 'G' type print, 60 x 46cm, 2009, www.amandaloomes.net

*What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
I have always wanted to win the Turner Prize.*



Robin Mason, *Diagram 1 to 15*, gouache on paper, wood and string, 101 x 66cm
www.cityandguildsartschool.ac.uk/staff/painting_staff/robin_mason

What have you always wanted to do but haven't?

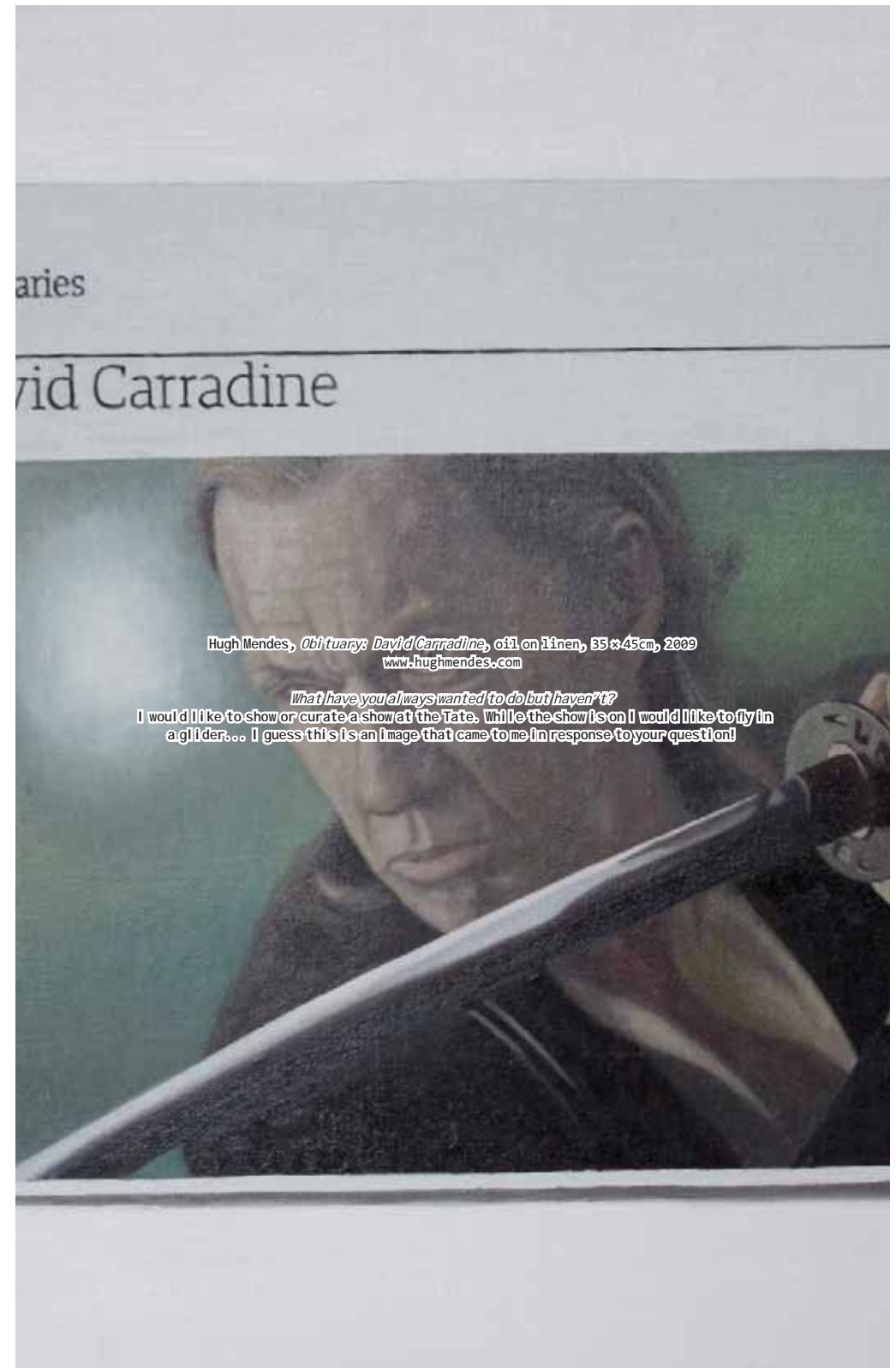
We sleep beneath the dissected star fish, the exploratory life of mushrooms and the wondrous blossoming, cherrying, budding, of vintage school wall charts. They question our reverie. Their deep blue black, brown black backgrounds expressing through contrast the delicacy of nature. We are their viewers; their reflection mirrors the moment of discovery, of revelation in Aachen where they peeped between others with their silent poetic sublimating desire to be owned. We look after them now and I have always wanted to make a series of works as educational wall charts with diagrammatic images that ask more questions than answers given.

Arch of Art is a place for a public view of Whitehall, The Mall a
 umberland Avenue - It is not a place for a Private Vie
 iring the Square and addressing Admiralty Arch, referencing 1
 of the Kiss and framing the Endless Column and the new Ta
 lence in Parliament Square. The structure of this great work
 lishment (see Q.E.2, in Trafalgar Square) will be determined
 artists, architects, scientists, engineers, philosophers, write
 osers and builders that it will house. Academic decisions ab
 where, who, what and when will not be tolerated. The art
 tect, etc. will be celebrated at all times and all creative decisio
 e upheld and implemented. Art will be in the hands of the ar
 not in the minds of government officers. Out of their minds, it
 ands and Bruce McLean, silk screen print, 94 x 110cm, framed, 74 x 89cm unframed ~~the Great Arch of Art in Trafalgar Square, failing that the New House~~
 work. A haus to house great works of art - no Harvey Nicho
 r skinny hang window display attitudes. No installations, no
 itioning as a tack on con, no education programmes,
 nistration, no curation, no directors, no keepers, no security,
 sors, no patrons, no experts, no academics, no text, no theori
 ommissions, no speciality shopping, no franchise restaurants,
 as, no private views, no logos. Art is the way, not in the way
 e. Wayside pulpit, early conceptual street works- sites speci
 of the cost of the building will be spent on the works, the wo
 y the building, which will not be repositioned, stored, exhibit
 oned or deconstructed from time to time in other buildings.

Bruce McLean, silk screen print, 94 x 110cm, framed, 74 x 89cm unframed

What have you always wanted to do but haven't?

Will I do with colleagues the Great Arch of Art in Trafalgar Square, failing that the New House of Parliament (circular) in Parliament Square.



Hugh Mendes, *Obituary: David Carradine*, oil on linen, 35 x 45cm, 2009
www.hughmendes.com

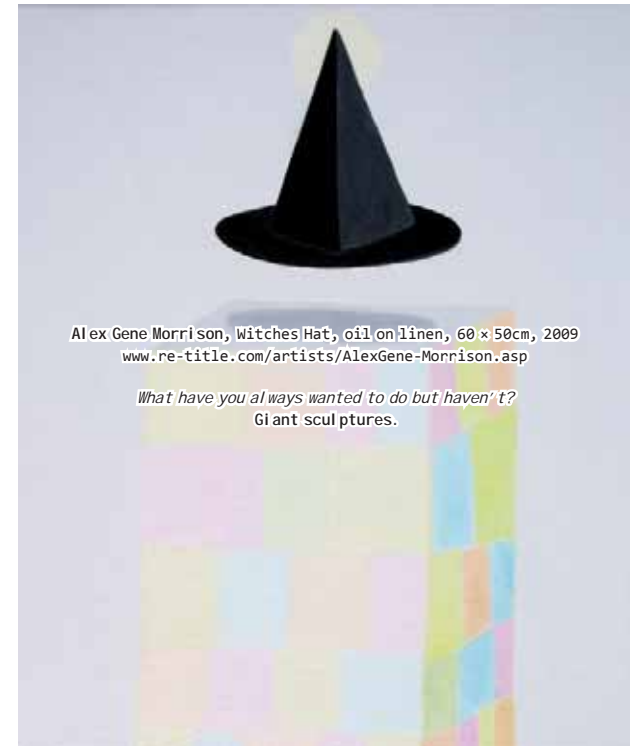
What have you always wanted to do but haven't?

I would like to show or curate a show at the Tate. While the show is on I would like to fly in a glider... I guess this is an image that came to me in response to your question!



Frog Morris Performance Artist, photo by David Edwards
www.frogmorriss.net

What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
I have always wanted to have my own late night TV show.



Alex Gene Morrison, Witches Hat, oil on linen, 60 x 50cm, 2009
www.re-title.com/artists/AlexGene-Morrison.asp

What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
Giant sculptures.



Chloe Mortimer, Vincent Van's Cock, Mixed media, 32 x 32cm, 2009

What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
 To be with all my family at Christmas time and get on with them instead of fight.

cm

Stephen Nelson, Blow up, SLR camera and 35mm film, various sizes, 2009
 stephen1son@yahoo.com

What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
 Recreate a coral reef and
 then sink it to become a new reef ... oh and also score a goal at Anfield.



H: Why is this the last Free Art Fair?
 J: It's the last one in London. I think it's nice to have a beginning, a middle, and an end, and not repeat yourself. I would love to take all the artists and art to Venice, New York, or Miami. That would be fun.
 H: How come this time it's at The Barbican?
 J: I liked the idea of giving away art in an institutional or public space, so that someone can walk into a place you normally expect just to look or listen to something and go home with a piece of art. It changes the relationship between the public and the space. I think in a way we will be decorating the Barbican with art for a week which will be an interesting experiment to see whether the art can stand up to it. And also there's so much empty wall space in big museums and galleries. I think they should have more art up. Any more questions?



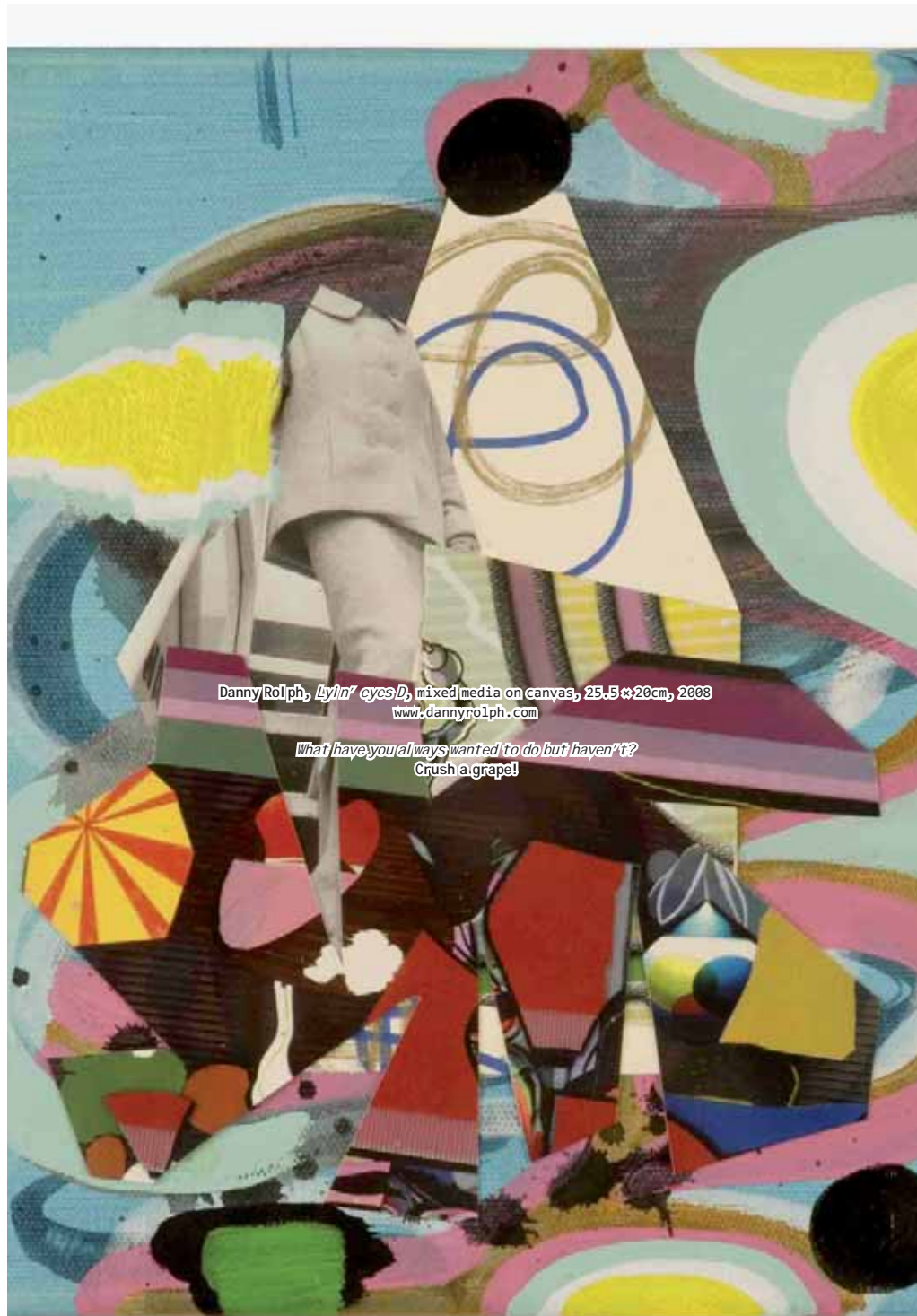
Henri K Potter, *Studio Floor, third Panel*, floor, tape, transfer letters, varnish, 100 x 120 cm, 2009
www.henrikpotter.com

What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
 Put on a show at the Ruby House 3, the abandoned Chinese take-away on Stoke Newington High Street.



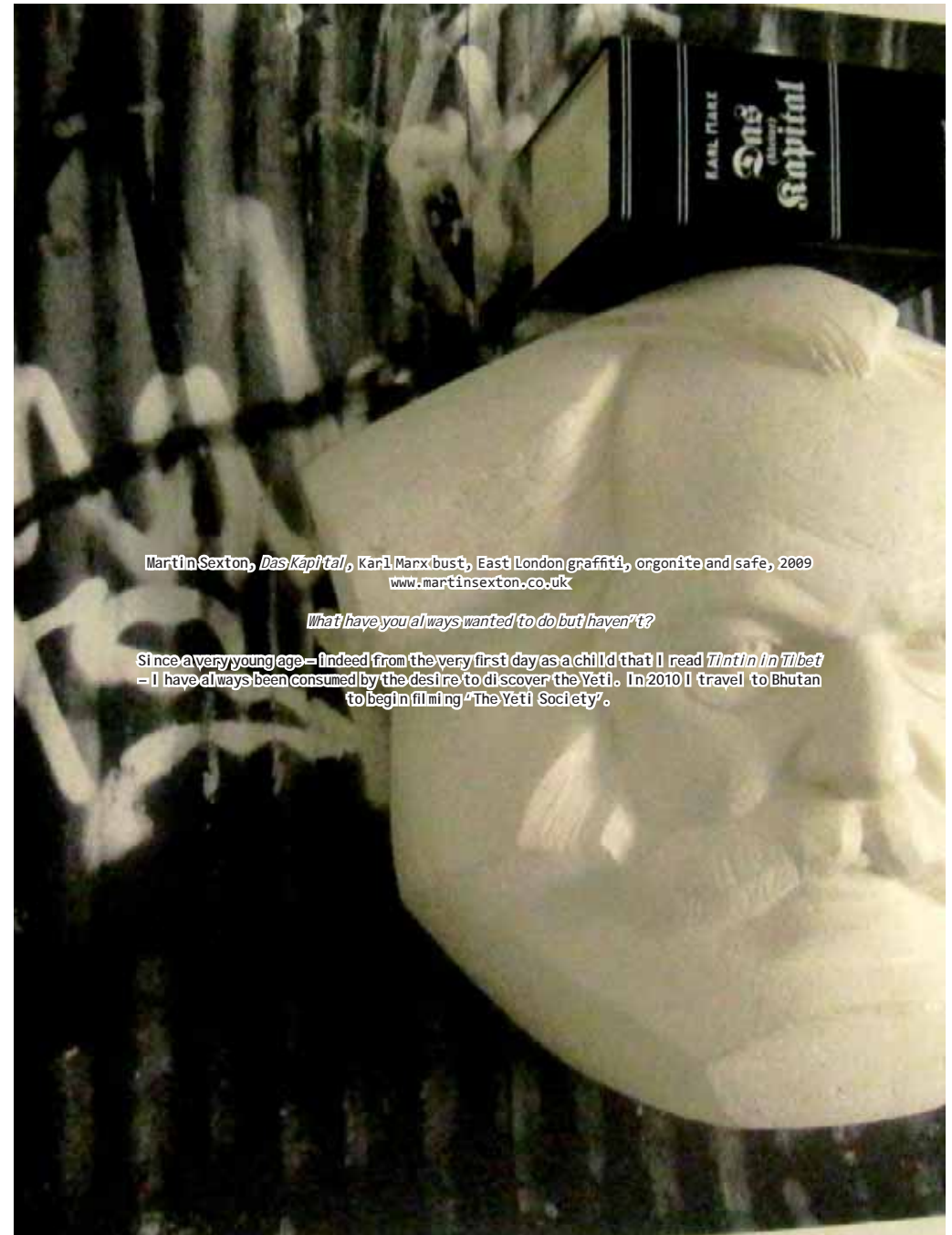
Harry Pye, *Whose Goals It?*, acrylic on canvas, 201 x 297 cm, 2009
www.sartorialart.com

What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
 I have always wanted to sit down at a piano or pick up a guitar and make beautiful music that made other people feel inspired.



Danny Rolph, *Lying eyes*, mixed media on canvas, 25.5 x 20cm, 2008
www.dannyrolph.com

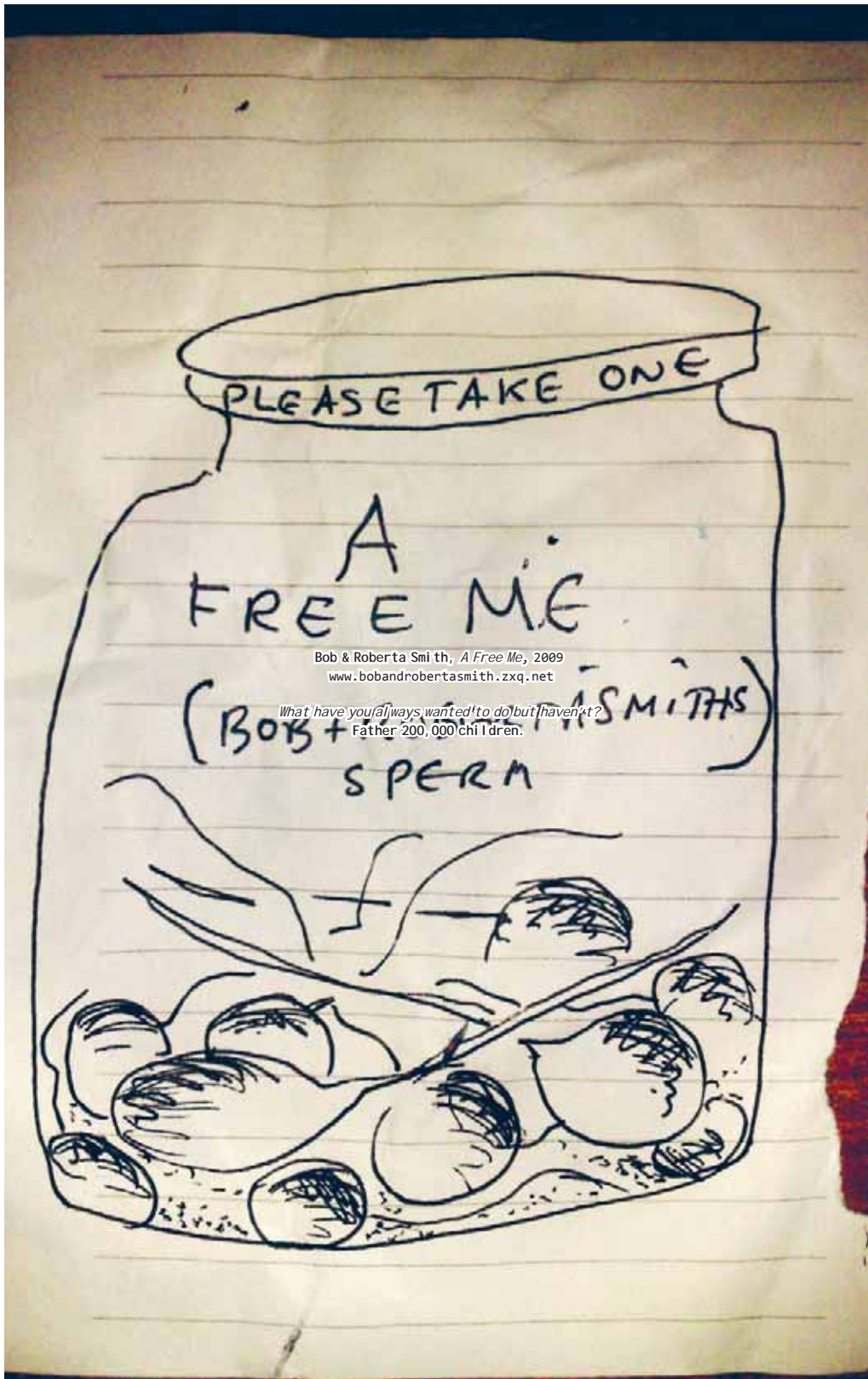
*What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
Crush a grape!*



Martin Sexton, *Das Kapital*, Karl Marx bust, East London graffiti, orgonite and safe, 2009
www.martinsexton.co.uk

What have you always wanted to do but haven't?

Since a very young age – indeed from the very first day as a child that I read *Tintin in Tibet* – I have always been consumed by the desire to discover the Yeti. In 2010 I travel to Bhutan to begin filming 'The Yeti Society'.



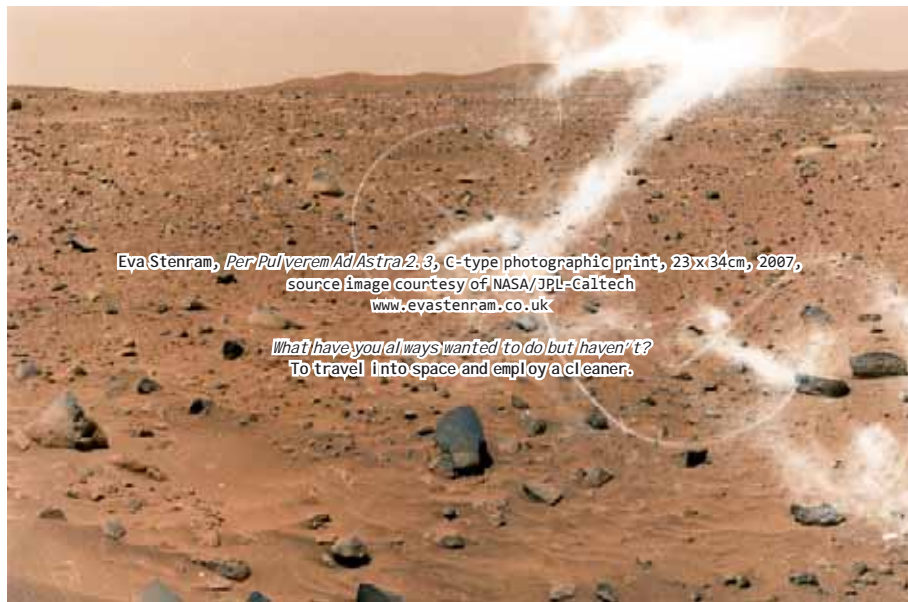
Bob & Roberta Smith, *A Free Me*, 2009
www.bobandrobertasmith.zxq.net

*What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
Father 200,000 children.*



Terry Smith, *Half Measure (detail)*, Wooden ruler half erasered, 100 x 10cm, 2007
www.arts.clara.net

*What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
Take a three week holiday.*



Eva Stenram, *Per Pulverem Ad Astra 2.3*, C-type photographic print, 23x34cm, 2007, source image courtesy of NASA/JPL-Caltech www.evastenram.co.uk

*What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
To travel into space and employ a cleaner.*



H: The Beatles had a shop where they gave everything away free and in Amsterdam people would paint bikes white and say anyone could ride them. Do you think the Free Art Fair is a bit of a 60s hippy style idea?
J: *No I hate hippies!*
H: Charles Saatchi says if you're going to spend £1000 on an artwork, don't think about investments just make sure you pick one that will give you £1000 worth of pleasure. Do you have any tips for people thinking of trying to get a work from The Free Art Fair?



Matthew Stone, *Everything Is Possible*, vinyl on wood, dimensions variable, 2008, courtesy of UNION optimismAsCulturalRebellion.blogspot.com

*What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
I have always wanted to fully explore the spirit world.*



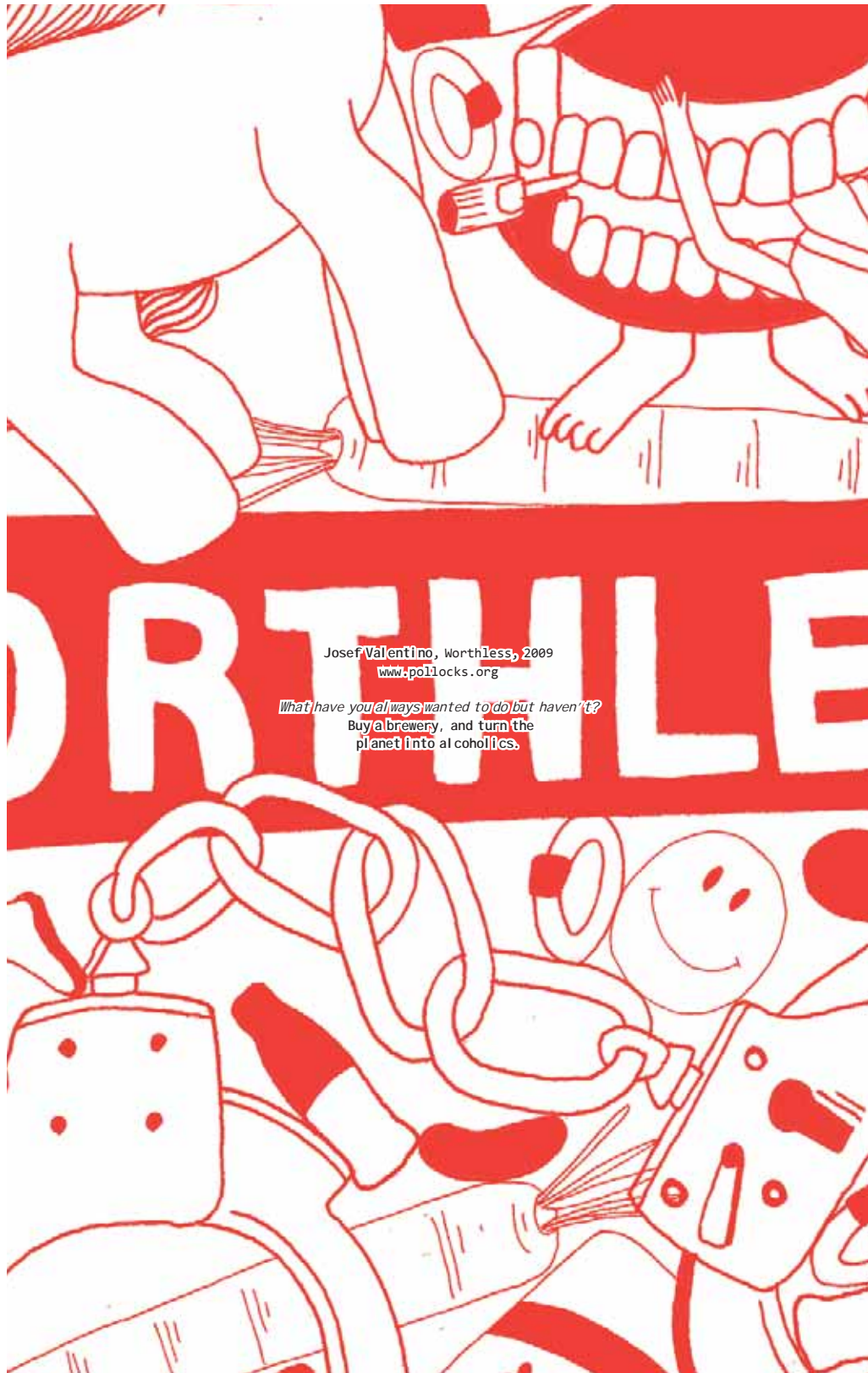
Geraldine Swayne, *Call Girl*, oil on canvas, 80 x 80cm, 2009
www.geraldineswayne.co.uk

What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
I've always wanted to walk into Battersea Dogs Home and walk out again with several hairy dogs, take 'em home and treat 'em RIGHT...arf arf arf arf.



Chris Tosic, *Free*, pigment and paint on wood, 16 x 28cm, 2009
www.christosic.co.uk

What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
Put in earplugs, State the problem in words as clearly as possible, Use an unacceptable color, Breathe more deeply, Humanize something free of error, Use fewer words, Just carry on, Listen to the quiet voice, Remove ambiguities and convert to specifics, Emphasize the flaws, Remember those quiet evenings, Do nothing for as long as possible, Go slowly all the way round the outside, Disconnect from desire.



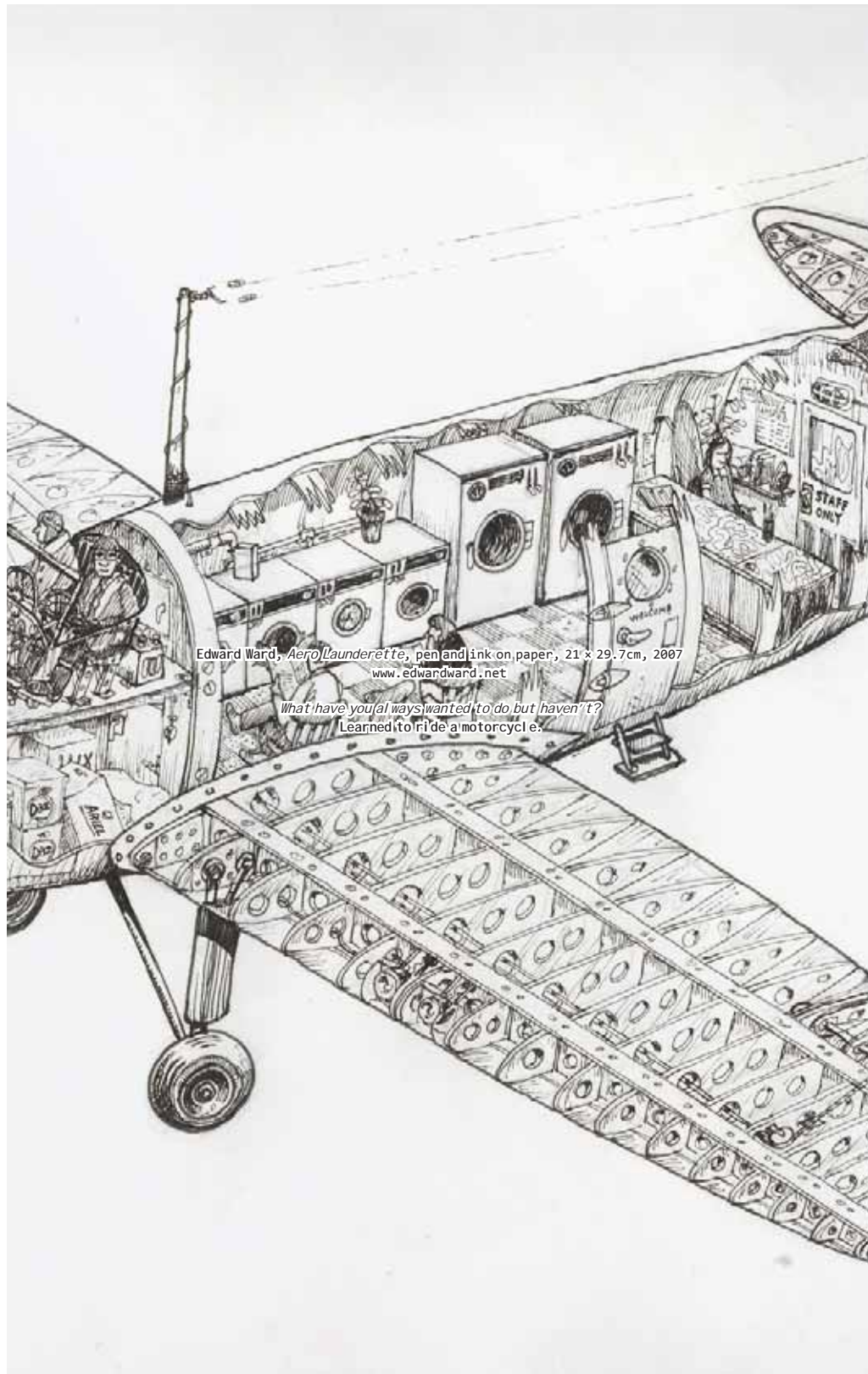
Josef Valentin, *Worthless*, 2009
www.pollocks.org

*What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
Buy a brewery, and turn the
planet into alcoholics.*



**A show where we show all the money in the world.
The show will be called : " The evil bird laughs ."**

Markus Vater, *2000/2009*
www.markusvater.com



Edward Ward, *Aerollaundrette*, pen and ink on paper, 21 x 29.7cm, 2007
www.edwardward.net

*What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
Learned to ride a motorcycle.*



Michael Ward, *Interior 2009*, mixed media on canvas, 90 x 90cm, 2009
www.michaelwardartist.com

*What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
I've always wanted to own a large marine aquarium with reef sharks in it.*



Douglas White, *Elephant*, Beech, roots, steel and brass, 95 x 30 x 90cm, 2009
www.douglaswhite.co.uk

*What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
Salvage a shipwreck.*



Charlie Woolley, *Join us or fuck you*, Paper, 119 x 84cm, 2009
www.davidrisleygallery.com

*What have you always wanted to do but haven't?
Use more glitter.*

The high price of success

The art market is far from being a free market. What would it look like if it were? Anyone could choose to make art, anyone could see it, buy it, exhibit it and write about it. In reality of course, galleries vet purchasers, artists form cliques, collectors shun the unrecognised, museums pander to political correctness and auction houses pilfer from buyer and seller alike.

As a regulated market then, who does it benefit and is it worth changing? With the exception of recent intellectual property legislation and the regurgitative power of the museum, it is not the state that generally regulates the art market, but a network of private individuals with disproportionate economic or cultural power. In this it is not dissimilar from the prevailing economic system, but the economics of art follow special rules and art occupies a particular space in the spectrum of modern social life.

Art production is distinctive in two essential ways. Firstly, the product is made to be alienated; its destiny is to transfer hands, to circulate. As aesthetic expression it is, from conception to consumption, surplus, excess, the productive squandering of time and effort. Secondly, the alienated artifact decreases or increases in value when consumed. Its cultural affect, accumulates like dust and grime on a canvas. It is the portrait that haunted a child from above the piano, the first sublime sensations stirred by representations of the human form. In this respect, unlike the commodity the value of which is destined to be annihilated by consumption, unlike these mirrors which reflect but do not hold, art soaks up and stores human sensibility and becomes a vehicle for it.

However, most polemics that celebrate art's power of social transformation would draw on a utilitarian view that a good portion of art, as a social good, should be held as public property. But as art is

increasingly at variance from common and acceptable notions of the good it is hardly possible to maintain that the consumption of any one element of it is better a public possession than a private treasure. Museums make art spectacular; they position art as something over and above the individual in a booming voice that says 'I am more than you', an outside that is her interminable truth. Taste is managed, human intimacy is forlorn, lost is the commitment to invest in another individual's creative freedom, people are divided; and all this for over a tenner.

The money trick

At some point in our recent history Western culture has seen a sea change: the pursuit of money has become virtuous. Not a new view, but never one as pervasive as it is today. In the art world, supposedly a realm of freedom outside of instrumental reason, the saturation of this ethic has had particularly severe consequences. Fuelled by the world of speculative finance, success is now measured by price, the economic has subsumed its antipode, the aesthetic, with the result that the art work is reduced to a commodity and all that goes with it. Far from 'hostile worlds' wherein ne'er the twain of beauty and price may meet, the artworld has orchestrated the subsumption of the distribution of art, both to command where it ends up, and vigorously control and exploit its value as a financial asset.

One important effect of this is that price, rather than expressing value, acts dynamically in relation to it. Once price becomes symbolic, a sign that can be manipulated, the discourse about an artefact becomes more important than the content itself. Worse, if economic worth becomes a criterion of judgement, then there is no natural end to the ascending cycle of holding something in esteem and raising its market price; they complement one another in the most sinister of ways. The most obvious consequence of this is

that the masses are excluded from participating on equal terms in their culture. A less apparent result is that artists' work is not circulating; it is stacked in studios and storage, haplessly waiting for the right exposure where it can realise its inflated market price.

If artists have successfully separated themselves from the world of work, and attained freedom and control over what they produce, this emancipation is nothing if they don't think about its circulation, distribution and consumption. If the tension in the modern artworld is the subsumption of the estimation of the aesthetic value of an artwork to its exchangeable value, even if an artist doesn't care so much for the money as for the recognition, price has become the overarching determination of success.

Artists have been drawn into the extremes of a struggle over livelihood on the one hand and a need for recognition on the other. But rarely is it the artist herself that insists on high returns and very little money actually needs to change hands for art to be productively consumed. Productive consumption here means the sale augments the total cultural experience of society. It is much better, in most circumstances, to sell six paintings for £500 each, than one for £3,000.

Distributing affect

The conventions of private views illustrate how injurious high prices are to the audience and art lover alike. The higher the tag, the better the canapes, the whiter the walls, the more morbid the experience becomes.

The Free Art Fair, following some great traditions of experimentation with the distribution of art, has gone a long way to showing how, by making irrelevant the socio-economic status of the audience you change the moral character of the event. But so ingrained is the connection between worth and price, in last year's show at least, the giving away for free merely

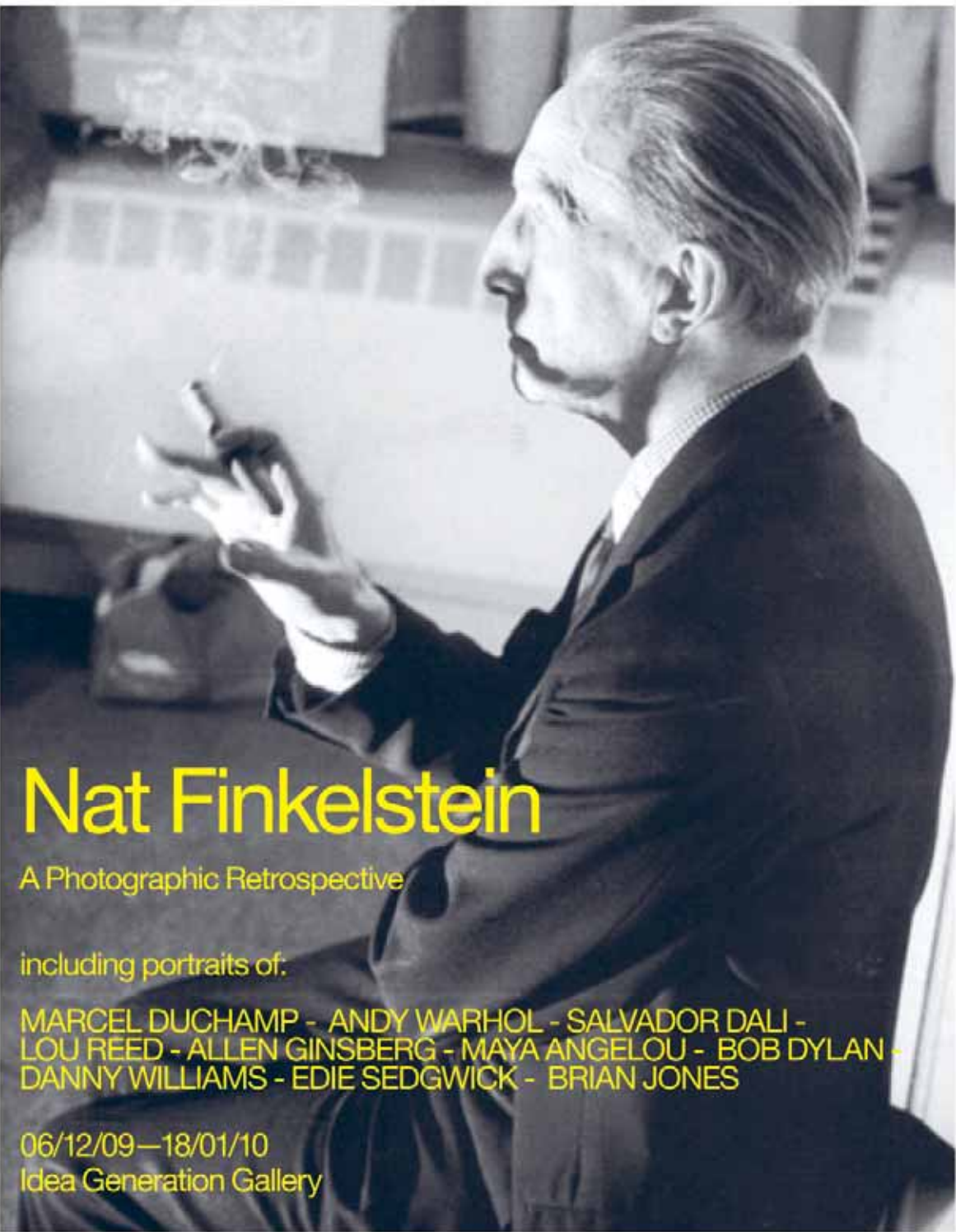
reversed the spectacle without upsetting it - economic value was still very much on visitors' minds, and it failed to shift the focus onto a discussion of the art itself.

Imagine the positive upheaval however, if at a show say of ten pieces, the artist or dealer elected to form a hustings and give free one work to the most passionate plea, the most eloquent appraisal, the most sincere of reflections that were delivered from the floor. Would this not shift the balance to a considered discussion of the real (aesthetic) value of the art? Can you imagine it being detrimental to the fortune of the other pieces in the show?

Widening accessibility to art is no longer about pumping public money into this or that museum acquisition, or über-managed exhibition. Those funds would be better spent giving emerging artists a basic income to allow them to function in a precarious market. It means getting art into more private lives (which, with the invasion of the internet, are increasingly public anyhow) widening the experience of the work, heightening the possibility of productive encounters with it.

Dialogue, not money, is the real currency of the art world, it is discourse that binds it together, forms the artists' cliques, the dealers' whispers and the critics' nods. The straightjacket of high prices merely ratifies this exclusivity, creating scarcity, stasis and mimicry. Brave it is to stand against this current but unless more do, those with the greatest wealth will continue to dictate what can be said, seen or heard.

Erik Empson, 2009



Nat Finkelstein

A Photographic Retrospective

including portraits of:

MARCEL DUCHAMP - ANDY WARHOL - SALVADOR DALI -
LOU REED - ALLEN GINSBERG - MAYA ANGELOU - BOB DYLAN -
DANNY WILLIAMS - EDIE SEDGWICK - BRIAN JONES

06/12/09—18/01/10
Idea Generation Gallery



Engage with critical debate.
The latest in visual arts, film, music, theatre
and new writing with Aesthetica.

www.aestheticamagazine.com

UK based. Six issues per year. Available nationwide from
newsagents, galleries, WH Smith and Borders

Gallery at:	Where to find us:	Get in touch:	Opening times:
	11 Chance St London E2 7JB ☛ Liverpool St ☛ Old St	www.ideageneration.co.uk galler@ideageneration.co.uk +44(0)20 7749 6850	Sunday to Friday 12—6pm Admission Free

• FLUX

A Labour of Love

Autumn 2009

*The
Hysterical
Issue*

including
Grayson Perry
Dollskabeat
Wendy & Jim
White Lightnin'
Jeremy Scott
Gary Numan
Arthur Cravan
Truckers



Free People

Jasper Joffe thought of the idea, and is responsible if it all goes wrong.

www.jasperjoffe.com

Pei fen Sung is a director who gets the right people in the right places.

www.peifenfneart.com

Maria Venanzi made sure the artists sent her something (anything) to put in the catalogue. In real life she is a lawyer.

Henrik Potter is an artist and fine manager of volunteers.

Lee Campbell and Frog Morris got people to perform.

Paulus Dreiholz designs this catalogue freely.

www.dreibholz.com

Wolfram Wiedner did the original website which Jasper messes up.

www.wiedner.co.uk

Hector Proud and Anna Vinograd at Idea Generation said yes to Marta Bogna and friends telling the whole world.

www.ideageneration.co.uk

Kate Bush and Katrina Crookall liked the idea of Free at the Barbican, and from then on Katrina has worked with Kate Bush, Kate Ballard, Kathryn Bailey, Ann Berni, Peter Sutton, Michael Richards, Lee Dobson, Abi Wood, Nigel Walker, Steven Donald, Rachel Taylor, and some other people to make it happen.

www.barbican.org.uk

Cherry Haynes and all the nice people at Calverts print our handbook.

www.calverts.coop

Art Magazines, and Van Drivers, and Insurers and Paper People and everyone else give freely.

An army of volunteers whose names are not yet known work heroically to stop looters and answer questions.

The artists give their art which is what it is all about.

Some are thanked, many remain thankless.

The Free Art Fair 2009 is supported by:



Public Relations by:



And with thanks to Pernod Ricard UK



J: All the work at the fair is literally priceless, so you can just think which piece will make you happiest.

H: Are there any 'special' artists you would have liked to have had in this year's fair?

J: Picasso, Goya, and Velazquez would have been good, and perhaps a site specific piece by Mattisse.

H: What next for Mr Joffe?

J: Well, Harry, I've got a big surprise up my sleeve. It's an exciting new project... The Jasper Joffe Auction House. Don't you think we might sound annoying, and people won't find the jokes funny or even realise they are jokes?

H: Well aren't we trying to get to the point where we say what we want, and live our lives and be free?"

J: I guess so.

at

kes

u

ee

u

Kids; as in mine, not Michael Jackson sense of term.

Kenny Schachter (Art Dealer)

Free - I'm not free. Now, a lot of publications seem to think that I am but I'm trying to kill that assumption and actually become expensive again.

Ana Finel Honigman (Journalist)

A long walk along the cliff tops, or a swim in the sea. Stella Vine (Artist)

I haven't had a proper job for many years, choosing my bedroom instead as my office. For me being free is the ability to go for coffee and read the paper everyday without anyone on my tail wanting to contain me in a grey cubicle.

Francesca Gavin (Writer and Editor)

Caspar David Friedrich's *Monk by the Sea*.

Kathleen Soriano (Director of Exhibitions, Royal Academy of Arts)

Sadly, money. Richard Dorment (Art Critic)

What makes the Barbican Art Gallery free is our exhibition programme in The Curve, which showcases three site-specific artist commissions every year. The Curve hopefully liberates artists to work on a new scale, and gives the public a chance to come along, have a look and discover something new without paying a penny.

In our current Curve exhibition Robert Kusmirowski has constructed an uncannily realistic World War II bunker. Be amazed!

Katrina Crookall (Senior Manager, Barbican Art Gallery)

Given Jeffrey's diary commitments this week, I'm afraid he is not able to write an article for your catalogue, nor to give you a quote on being free. Sorry. Alison Prince (Personal Assistant to Jeffrey Archer)

My head, my heart and my body make me free.

Sir Norman Rosenthal (Curator)

When you don't have to pay for your children's education. Toby Young (Journalist and author of *How to Lose Friends and Alienate People*)

Listening to loud music.

Pei fen Sung (Director, The Free Art Fair)

Bernini's sculptures; swimming in the sea; Nabi; oysters and white wine at Grand Central in the company of good friends.

Maria Venanzi (Director, The Free Art Fair)

The Free Art Fair 2009

12-18 October 2009

www.freeartfair.com

Barbican Centre

Silk Street

London EC2Y 8DS

www.barbican.org.uk

FAQs

Q: Why are you giving away the art?

A: Because it seems like a nice idea. The people who want it, not only those that can afford it, will be able to own a great piece of contemporary art. It offers an alternative to the market frenzy which we see at this time of year and says that art is worth more than what it sells for.

Q: How do I get my hands on a piece of art?

A: On Sunday 18 October, come to The Barbican with your registration form filled in. Then people drawn at random will get a chance to choose art (you won't know what's gone when you make your choice). It's all a bit more complicated than that so take a look on www.freeartfair.com for more details and a form.

Q: There's no queue?

A: That's right. This gives everyone a fair chance to get hold of brilliant art, they only have to spend a nice Sunday at the Barbican. The giveaway is designed to get people to commit to a piece of art they love, not just take anything they can get.

Q: Who are these artists?

A: They are all artists whose work we love. All the artists have been selected on the strength of their work in order to make a fantastic show.

Q: Did you ask them to do anything special this year?

A: We said to the artists be free by making something you have always wanted to. Many of the artists expressed their freedom by completely ignoring this idea.

Q: Shouldn't the artists get paid for their hard work?

A: It is great if artists are well rewarded for their art. Most artists earn very little money from their work and that is bad. The Free Art Fair is not saying art is worthless. It is saying art is worth more and about more. Most artists don't become artists to get rich, though it's nice if it happens, they do it for various reasons often including that they love art.

Q: Why are you doing it at The Barbican this year?

A: The great people at The Barbican have at short notice allowed and supported us to put it on there. It shows that big institutions can do innovative projects in the huge connecting spaces which normally don't have much in them except signs, coffee shops, and some posters.

Q: Why is this the last Free Art Fair?

A: Everything is done without any money changing hands, and we receive no grants or anything like that, because it wouldn't be fair to get money when all the artists are giving away their art for free. So it's a lot of work and we don't want to keep repeating ourselves. If someone wants to take the whole thing to Miami, New York, or somewhere new then maybe we will make a comeback.

th

fr

ar

fa

o