

TEXTS

anthony bond cartesian corpse

background

The Tilted Stage captures fundamental concerns that have informed Mike Parr's work over more than thirty years. We have included all the major forms that Parr has experimented with; performance is at the core but sculpture, drawing, print making, film, photography and text all grow out of performance or feed back into it. This exhibition differs from Parr's previous installations because it is deliberately constructed to take advantage of the unique opportunity to use the Bond Store at the Tasmanian Museum & Art Gallery (tmag) and the converted church at Detached. Paul Green's marvelous photographs demonstrate how these sites have informed and extended the works. The performance of *Cartesian Corpse*, which accompanied the opening of the exhibition *The Tilted Stage*, and the pages of this book, are significant indicators of themes that flow throughout the installation in both venues.

From the early days the principle site of Parr's work has been his body and his immediate surroundings, including family and friends who figured strongly in many of the early performances. Parr's body as a site for art invariably employs formal imbalance or incompleteness. This undoubtedly reflects his intimate personal experience of living without a left arm, but it has come to represent a more complex study of mental and physical imbalance. *Cartesian Corpse* confronted us with his disembodied head presented on a tilted stage for as long as possible, his body was obscured beneath the platform. A society, however utopian its ideals, that does not acknowledge the complicity of body in consciousness invariably leads to catastrophe. Parr's works affirm this by constantly insisting on the centrality of the body to lived experience and by extension to the tilted stage of politics. After the performance, Parr's living head was replaced by a lifelike cast of his head dressed in a military officer's hat, a direct reference to his father. This military image also brings nationalism, war and authority into play: these are subplots for Parr's practice as a whole.

Another component of *Cartesian Corpse* is the film *Major/Minor*, which was shot at the Art Gallery of New South Wales (agnsw). In this film Parr, wearing 1940s military uniform and his father's moustache, sits on a chair

framed in an archway between the old courts. Behind him through the arch is the oversized and somewhat hysterical salon painting *Vive L'Empereur*, 1891, by Edouard Detaille. The painting shows a cavalry charge complete with rattling sabres and snorting horses, it is a classic heroic image of war that nonetheless denies its real horror. On his lap Parr holds a replica of his head also in military cap. It is the same head that replaced his live head after the performance in Hobart. The camera shoots two sequences of viewpoints one from the level of the artist's head, *Major*, the other from the disembodied head on his lap, *Minor*. Each shot starts with a close up of one of these heads, then makes an extreme oblique zoom to settle in close focus on a detail of one of the paintings in the colonial galleries, which include well known works by Australian artists such as Streeton, Roberts and Lambert. The colonial courts at AGNSW have a clear resonance with this colonial room in Hobart where the horizontal dimensions are very similar. The plasma screen showing the film from AGNSW is placed centrally on the long wall just as Parr's figure sits at the centre of a long wall of paintings in Sydney. The barred windows on the Bond Store walls echo the paintings on the gallery walls. The sumptuousness of the gallery setting for these nationalistic paintings contrasts however with the spare convict quarters upon which that nation-building was founded.

The association between the military figure from World War II and these paintings of a dawning Australian identity is clear as our leaders continue to identify Australianness with military exploits. The oblique shots and extreme zooms in the film suggest the tiltedness of this identification. They also anticipate the presence of oblique perspectives in the exhibition in Hobart, for example *The Tilted Stage*, the *Black Wax Wedge* and many other slanting forms throughout the installation. There are overarching narratives associated with these forms and other recurring elements in Parr's work, but it would be limiting to interpret the complex connections too literally or prescriptively at every level. The defining quality of art by Parr is an intensely charged experience that directly engages the individual viewer's associations and memories. Although there are some very clear messages in all Parr's works they are also filled with resonances that can lead beyond these direct communications to more personal reactions for each viewer and each single encounter. The tension of oblique form, imbalance and incompleteness is part of a personal language that is used throughout but its potential connotations are sensitive to the context and the life experience of the viewer.

The personal language of loss goes beyond an exploration of the experience of the individual dealing with incompleteness. It is deliberately mapped onto the social body and histories of thought that seek to elevate intellect to the exclusion of body. Parr questions the validity of Descartes' proposition 'I think therefore I am.' Perhaps we should also acknowledge that I feel pain, I feel love or arousal, I enjoy the smell of a damp dog therefore I am. The consequence of Cartesian logic and the history of post-enlightenment thinking had the terrible consequence in modern history of separating reason from embodiment. In this respect at least Parr has something in common with Joseph Beuys, whose personal experience of the Holocaust and his subsequent mental collapse gave rise to an artistic practice that looked back before modern times to an antiquity when the natural world was not seen as raw material for exploitation but as coextensive with our very existence. Parr's work often explores such aspects of self and society that are in conflict, for example contrasting analytical with expressive behaviour. Mind is after all more than intellect, more than linguistic expression; it is imprinted in every cell of our body not only the brain or even the neural system. Much of what we think we understand about the world is informed by signals that come to the brain from the body taken as a whole. Utopian dreams of an ideal society usually forget or deliberately repress this reality of lived experience. Freud knew that such repression cannot last forever and when the repressed returns it can be traumatic at a personal level, but that there is also a broader social consequence. The catastrophe of the Balkans after Tito is painful evidence of this return in a cultural context.

the rooms

The exhibition is constructed room by room to harness the spatial and atmospheric quality of each space. While the exhibition reveals a continuity of ideas and forms, each room also stands alone as an installation. Sound is everywhere. Rather than insulate each room, carefully balanced sounds have been allowed to blend and add their voices to a chorus that amplifies the meaning and articulates the architecture, sometimes creating an atmosphere of hysteria.

level 1 : the basement

The lower level of the Bond Store was once ground level and it still has an earth floor. It has not been used by the public for five generations and we have kept it just as we were first shown it, including cobwebs, discarded timber and fragmented furnishings. The space is already filled with invisible

presences and the installation is in close dialogue with this atmosphere. In planning the exhibition this room became the engine from which the energy of the rest emanates. As you enter down a narrow flight of wooden steps you are confronted by the high end of a large wax wedge: *Black Wax Wedge*, 2007. The wedge runs diagonally away from you towards the far corner of the space between the rows of heavy timber columns finally disappearing into the earth floor. It feels like the tip of a much larger submerged form, part perspectival architecture, part organic/body. Thus it already announces a tension between nature and culture, and hints at the presence of the repressed, the unconscious and, of course, the tilted stage. The *Black Wax Wedge* in this confined space gives off a delicious smell of bees and

from the floor above occasionally you hear the buzzing of bees that Parr has used as part of the soundtrack to *Second Body Program*.

At the far end of the room you are drawn to a black and white projection that fills a screen from floor to ceiling: *House of Cards*, 2 May 2004. This is a performance in which Parr attempts to build a house of cards out of self-portraits printed onto thick paper. Working with one hand awkwardly supported by the stump of his other arm he gets to the second or third tier but then the stack collapses. His occasional exasperated grunts are accompanied by the sound of scrabbling and the clatter of falling cards. In this space the sound assumes a slightly threatening presence that reminds me of the clattering of the transformed hero's carapace in Kafka's dreamlike book *Metamorphosis*. Throughout the exhibition there are moments that remind you of dreams where you struggle hopelessly to achieve some urgent action. You try desperately to run from some unknown threat or towards an urgent encounter but you make little or no progress. This struggle of our unconscious to grapple with the material world has a parallel in a working methodology that Parr has always adopted in which he deliberately sets himself technical and physical hurdles as a form of aesthetic resistance. *House of Cards* shows this in performance but the same applies to his other activities. He constantly pushes his limits in printmaking by taking on increasingly challenging techniques to maintain a degree of struggle with the medium. The German sculptor Rebecca Horn has constructed body extensions such as drawing machines that evoke the idea of blindly scrabbling, leaving traces of her attempts to connect with the concrete world. This is a powerful metaphor for an existential dilemma of being in the world, which it seems to me applies equally to Parr.

On the long wall opposite the stairway a full length digitally altered portrait

of Parr leans against the wall: *Drip Self-Portrait*, 11 April 2006. In the photo Parr is dressed and made up as his bride persona. His gilded stump has been manipulated to make a drip-like form, the shape of an ibis' beak. At this point a word about the manifestation of the bride might be helpful. Parr made considerable efforts in his youth to overcome the psychologically castrating effect of his disability. In doing so he probably overcompensated for his dependency on women in the family. His assertive and sometimes domineering directorial presence in the early work is partly conditioned by this. In more recent times, changes in his family circumstances have led him to reexamine this denial of personal balance. Many men risk emotional self-mutilation by affirming their masculinity at the expense of their feminine other. The appearance of the bride is in part at least an attempt to roll back his overly controlling masculine presence. Parr is not a coquettish transvestite, his bride self-portraits are disturbingly recognisable and she is no sleeping beauty. She is at once touchingly vulnerable and truly appalling. A more obscure art historical association between Parr's bride and Marcel Duchamp keeps surfacing. As with Duchamp's own systems the clues evade resolution, leaving us nearly, but not quite, grasping at something profoundly important. Duchamp's alter ego *Rose Sélavy* comes to mind but more powerfully the strange and slightly sinister inference in Duchamp's *The Bride Stripped Bare by her Bachelors, Even*.

At the end of the room behind the stairwell a 40 watt globe dimly illuminates a figure in full bridal garb lying on a table. It could at first sight be a live performance but it is in fact *The Wax Bride*, 1998, from the collection of the AGNSW. She is first glimpsed through a gateway in a wooden fence that partly seals off the end of the room. The figure is framed in this opening and against an old stone wall flanked by two mysterious dark openings. The ceiling has very low heavy beams festooned with cobwebs that hang over the bride distinctly suggesting Dickens' Miss Havesham grotesquely caught in the time of her aborted marriage. Installed in this abandoned cellar the resonance with Duchamp's *Étant Donnés* in Philadelphia is very strong. Duchamp's bride is framed by a hole in a wall and seen through a peephole in a wooden door.

level 2 : entrance

The floor above is in fact the entrance level to the Bond Store and since it is filled with projections and sound it has to be entered via a passage that acts as a light and sound trap. The passage doubles back on itself slightly disorienting the visitor. It opens onto a ramp that leads towards a projected

text work: *Not the Hilton*, 2002. This text is couched in marketing terms, but as the title suggests, it describes a detention camp, not the Hilton. The sound accompanying the projection is Beethoven's *Für Elise* played backwards. The music remains recognisable yet changes its romantic ambience to something mechanical and relentless. Turning back towards the centre of the room a suspended screen placed obliquely presents Parr's dramatic and painful response to the disgrace of the previous government's detention policy: *Aussie, Aussie, Aussie, Oi, Oi, Oi (Democratic Torture)*, 2–3 May 2003. In this work we see Parr having his face sewn into a grimace in sympathy with the desperate and disoriented hunger strikers in Howard's detention camps. This is one of a series of works dealing with this subject, which marked a departure for Parr. His body language prior to this was not ostensibly a representation of anything beyond the reality of mind/body limits. However, the extraordinary events surrounding the Pacific Solution demanded a show of empathy. Parr felt strongly that he needed to say or do something rather than be complicit in the national disgrace and his body was the strongest language he had available to him as an artist.

At the far end of the room the text for *150 Programmes & Investigations*, 1972–73, is being projected, and adjacent to this is a monitor playing a sequence from *First Body Program*, 1973. Some of the *First Body* performances are acting out the written instructions from *150 Programmes & Investigations*. This very measured process of making an instruction and carrying it out to the best of one's ability, anchors what might otherwise be a theatrical gesture in the real. For example, *Integration 3 (a. leg spiral)* performance note: 'Coil a dynamite wick around your leg so that it makes a spiral from ankle to knee. Ignite the wick so that a track is burnt into your leg.' And another: *Push tacks into your leg until a line of tacks is made up your leg (Wound by Measurement 1)*. These works may seem like wanton acts of mutilation yet they adhere to a strict minimalist system of measurement. Parr never yields to expressive behaviour; any facial expression is a purely involuntary reaction to pain and is strictly managed by the artist. These actions insist on affirming the body as a site for sculpture as process. They can also be seen as a parody or reversal of the classical ideal that turns the body into a measure for architecture.

In the middle of the space two screens placed at right angles to each other show *Second Body Program*, 1975, and *White*, 2004–08. *Second Body Program* includes the instruction-based performances, such as *Push a fish up your nose* and *Integration 3 (a. leg spiral)*, but also more elaborate

performances done with groups of collaborators in 1975. Many of these have titles that relate to the theme of failed political utopias such as *Lenin poster*, *grid of blue sky*, *live fish* and *Marx-Father Heads*. In his performance space in Newtown in 1975, Parr arranged to have these performances filmed culminating in *Rules and Displacement Activities Part II*. In these performances Parr directed the collaboration of his friends while he worked around them, pouring honey over their bodies or molasses into their mouths, and in *Marx-Father Heads* scattering dead fish on their genitals. Images of Lenin and Marx were placed around them on the floor. In another section Parr proclaims his *LAFART Manifesto* to the chorus of *The East is Red*.

The film on the adjacent screen, *White*, 2004–08 is from the *Emetics* series and shows Parr drinking large quantities of milk laced with a powerful emetic, which he then violently throws up. There are moments when in spite of the serious intention of representing a violent rejection of the White Australia Policy, its juxtaposition with *Rules II* suggests the possibility of also ‘bringing up’ the excesses of these earlier works. Incidental coincidences in the juxtapositions might be momentarily hilarious but this is also cathartic laughter. The whole entrance level is filled with sounds emanating from the films. *Für Elise* backwards mingles with Parr’s declamation of the *LAFART Manifesto* and the tune of *The East is Red* interrupted by the violent sounds of projectile vomiting. It has the cumulative effect of a fairground with a steam carousel, creating the carnival effect of a film by Fellini. The room seems almost to spin about its axis and the sound seeps up through the old wooden floors bringing memories of this spectacle to haunt the other levels of the building.

level 3

Climbing up the narrow and uneven old wooden stairs to the next level we first encounter a brightly lit glass case in an otherwise dimly illuminated room. The case contains a cast of Parr’s head as the bride and a gilded cast of his stump. The bride is sometimes partly obscured by a mantilla on a high hair comb giving her an exaggerated height, which, like the stump, has an inevitable phallic connotation. Decapitated like this the bride resonates with the withheld story behind Duchamp’s *Étant Donnés*. She reminds us of the sleeping or embalmed bride in the basement and yet here she disconcertingly confronts our gaze as we arrive in the room. She takes on an almost talismanic presence that reveals the violence underpinning the segregation of mind and body.

Throughout the rest of the space multiple presences lurk amongst the columns that are found on each of the first three floors. Here though the columns become active players in the installation, seemingly multiplying the number of figures. The figures are *Bronze Liars (minus 1 to minus 16)*, 1996, from the collection of the AGNSW. The lighting is very subdued, even the light from the windows has been screened, in one case by a black square in memory of Malevich, a constant reference in the exhibition. The figures are sixteen bronze heads mounted on bases of beeswax. Here the metallic head and the organic body reiterate the Cartesian dilemma of mind/body disjunction. This use of materials is reminiscent of Joseph Beuys' language of organic and inorganic forms and in particular the bodily secretions of the bee. For Beuys the bee's ancient association with the goddess Astarte symbolised prehistoric harmony of nature and culture when mind and body were not yet set against each other. This association is provoked by the warm organic smell of beeswax and buzzing coming from below.

Parr modelled these self-portraits by working blind, standing behind the head feeling for the features. This was partly a way to introduce difficulty or material resistance in the process of visualisation. Parr knows his face so well after the thousands of etchings he has done, that making realistic likenesses would be too easy for him. Feeling his way with the soft wax from which the bronze was cast was one way to avoid illustrative likeness, but it also has connotations of scrabbling for contact with the concrete world as described in relation to *House of Cards*. With several of the heads he has subsequently smashed their faces with his fist, or whacked them with a block rendering them into almost abstract forms. However, in the dim lighting of the Bond Store, the faces seem to be emerging from the material, taking shape and coming to life as we look at them.

level 4 : cartesian corpse performance and installation

I have already outlined the set up for this room in my background notes and in my real time record of events in the beginning of this book. The space is animated with the sound of footsteps that seem to precede the viewer but also follow invisibly behind. The head on the tilted stage glows strongly in the far corner while the rest of the room is only dimly lit; it has a preternatural presence both in its performance manifestation and its subsequent displacement by *Minor* as a reminder of the father. The disembodied head of Parr continues the theme of Cartesian alienation and picks up on the underlying threat of decapitation and/or castration that

inevitably haunts this scenario.

The project space Detached has been built into an old church. Four white cubes each about 8 x 8 meters and over 4-meters high have been wedged two-deep into the two ends of the church. In the centre of the space the full height of the building is opened up, revealing the grand scale and exposing the original roofing timbers. The cubes on both levels can be opened up to the central void or sealed off using moving sections of the wall. In this installation the ground floor has been opened up to create one long gallery while the upper levels are closed off as if they were turning their backs to each other. The upper spaces have subtle top lighting provided by two scrimmed light boxes that provide an even overall shadowless light. It turns out that these spaces closely resemble the performance rooms Parr built in the 1970s and indeed in one of them an earlier performance is revisited.

The ground floor can be viewed thematically and has been arranged to allow connections to be drawn between works often made decades apart. On the right as you enter, two plasma screens display *Blind Obedience / Silent Majority*, 1998–2005, which enact a rational process that leads inexorably to no(n)sense. A series of words appear on one screen that has been generated by a logical systematic procedure. Parr looked up the synonym for the word synonymous, then the synonym of the synonym, and repeated this eighty times, terminating strangely enough with the word *dead*. The other screen shows numbers that Parr substituted for the twenty-six letters of the alphabet, which have been used to rewrite the eighty synonyms. The titles here form part of the work; they are powerful and dangerous political ideas.

Down the centre of the space *NOH Catalogue*, 2005, has been laid out in flat vitrines. This work has been made by overprinting absurdist headlines onto editions of the Daily Telegraph newspaper. Some pages have also been subtly altered by overlaying images from Parr's print repertoire in red ink. Although the headlines are extreme they nonetheless recognisably mimic and parody the subeditorial style of the Daily Telegraph. Some of these are slapstick but they resonate with the tone of the newspaper, for example 'Shap/Elle Pukes,' 'Mate Stuck in Hole,' 'Bomb in Dunny.' On the other side of the room, beyond the line of vitrines, there is a framed silkscreen print: *Malevich*, 2002. This white on white print repeats the Suprematist artist's name underscoring the ever-present theme in the exhibition of failed utopias. At the same time the red and black pages of the Daily Telegraph can be seen as a recapitulation of the graphic style of revolutionary Russia. On the right there is another print *Red Dread*, 1970, with the word 'READ'

repeated in declarative red type, by an accident of repetition the word 'READ' also becomes 'DREAD.'

This floor of *Detached* is animated by two sound tracks, one a muffled recitation emanating from the gallery above our head, the other from a projection that occupies most of the far end wall of the ground level gallery. *Breathless*, 2008, is a reconfigured version of a performance in which Parr holds a series of etchings to his face by sucking as hard as he can till he runs out of breath and the print falls to the floor. This action is continuously repeated until the artist becomes hyperventilated and unable to continue. The filmed version of the original performance has been stop framed and now advances in jerky individual shots. The sound track becomes more hectic as the artist struggles to catch his breath. The gasping and the sound of a bar from a modern classic endlessly repeated becomes a sawing rasping noise that gives the action even more sense of urgency. The images of his face captured in stills are grossly distorted by his effort and his declining grip on consciousness. On the wall adjacent to this projection are drypoint self-portraits: *And You*, 2008. These were done by copying an initial drawing as seen through a mirror. At each redrafting the images become more obscure and scratchy. These make a fascinating response to the struggle for control in the performance video. The room is set up so that the video runs for two cycles without the walls being lit, then it cuts out for an equal interval as the lights come up shifting the focus to the prints on the walls.

The full height of the central section of the church is dominated by a grid of twenty-four large framed photographs: *Murder Without Adjectives*, 2005. These are digitally manipulated images of Parr's collection of coats. He has accumulated thirty jackets and only three pairs of trousers; he thinks this reflects his obsession with the arm and ways of accommodating its absence. In each of these photos the left arm is stuffed into the pocket as he does when he is wearing them. Already this makes them seem somehow animated or occupied. The digital modification pulls aspects of them out of proportion swelling the shoulder or pulling a protrusion out of the arm. Some have voids in them or areas of erasure. I can't help associating these altered headless bodies with the battered heads of *Bronze Liars*. The overall effect is of a delusional state of mind, something like a bad dream, made more threatening by the words 'white' and 'murder' written on two of the jackets in chalk, which appear on a diagonal orientation in the grid.

In the white cube above the entrance to the building, the *LAFART Manifesto* printed on red paper has been pinned to three of the walls. Posters and

banners of Marx, Lenin and Mao float like a Suprematist installation up and across the walls. Some of them are embroidered in silk, which when reversed show the image in negative. Interspersed with the posters are photographs of a performance at the Museum of Contemporary Art during the Biennale of Sydney: *Revolutionary Reading*, 2008. On the fourth wall a plasma screen shows a video of this event. Parr sits at a table with *Minor*, the wax cast of his head wearing a military cap that also appeared in *Major/Minor* as part of *Cartesian Corpse*. Parr is reading a section of the Biennale catalogue backwards. He intones this disfigured text with the sonorous intonation of Mayakovsky reciting his revolutionary poems. Although the reversed text makes no literal sense, it is possible amongst the succession of words to catch a litany of art world jargon highlighted and stranded by loss of meaningful context. Like *Für Elise* played backwards, it seems strangely familiar yet grotesquely ungraspable. On the floor in front of the plasma screen two doormats are placed side by side; one printed with the word 'Male,' the other with 'Vich.' It is of course the most thematically utopian of the revolutionary painters, Malevich, but in one of those lateral connections Parr sets up it can also be *male witch*.

At the opposite end of the building on the upper level is the final room with two objects that dominate the glowing white cube on two adjacent walls: *Raft of the Eye of God*, 1990, (sections a. and b.). Section a. is a construction of black boxes with one long protruding section. Although it is very abstract, essentially four open rectangular volumes it is inescapably body-like. The extended cubic section points out at the viewer like the stump of Parr's arm, or is it God the Father's hand outstretched to Adam, or even a metaphor for the eye of a blind but knowing God? Section b. on the adjacent wall is a large gridded composition comprising thirty-two framed laser photocopies, which reproduce two self-portrait drawings done from memory. Two disembodied heads of the artist fill the grid. One is pushed up into the top right hand corner and is partly elided by scratchy marks; the other more legible head is upside down on the left pointing, it would seem, towards the eye of God. This toppling form completes the tumbling, groping, scrabbling and often disorienting progression through the rooms of the exhibition. The pointing black box on the other wall has a commanding material presence as an object that seems to push back on the viewer accusingly. On the other hand it could be seen as the brink of a void, in keeping with the many references to Malevich, whose black square was paradoxically a pointed declaration of the end of representation and at the same time provided a portal into the void and the possibility of transcendence.

Parr's whole project is certainly not about transcendence: it is urgently, sometimes violently, about facing up to concrete reality. Its structures rigorously engage with what is real about consciousness, body, and mind. By stretching himself and the viewer to the breaking point of rational and emotional engagement, Parr emphatically demonstrates where these limits lie in lived reality, not where we might normally chose to place

Anthony Bond

CARTESIAN CORPSE

A PERFORMANCE FOR
AS LONG AS POSSIBLE

MIKE PARR

PERFORMER

ANTHONY BOND

SCRIBE

PAUL GREEN

PHOTOGRAPHER





Cartesian Corpse

09:00 Am 21.11.08

Everything ready - await Mike's arrival. a powerful sense of expectancy everyone quiet, focused only as the traffic sounds outside become audible. 'fur Elise' or 'Esile ref' floats up to us - I had not realised how much it overrides other sounds - occasional eruptions can also be heard from 'white'.

9.27 Mike + Felicitas arrive. Mike changes from street clothes to pyjamas glad to see layers of warm underclothes - my feet already cold although it is a brilliant sunny morning. Mike checks floor to establish his final sleeping position. The recorded footsteps are very faint the track from major - minor are the most audible from this end of the room. Mike is concentrating for some moments before entering the wedge. Felicitas asks Mike if he is ready he nods rather grimly - it is as if it is an execution! Paula + Mark come forward to help insert him in the chair. The process entails a 3 meter lever that fixes the adjustable chair firmly in position. Once again it has echoes of some awful apparatus. everyone gathers to get a view of the process I think the "attendants" or orderlies who will be responsible for Mike's safety over the next days - hours are all anxious to get every detail just right.

Once Mike is in position I am sitting facing the image of his head on the plasma screen at the far end of the room. This will be my prevailing view of Mike for the duration. I avoided eye contact with Mike when he came in now I can stare at his trapped head on screen as much as I want. It is a comfort to know I can monitor him closely without having to intercept his direct gaze. The head on screen is much larger than the head itself appears when seen directly - isolated as it is in a large expanse of timber flooring. The tilted stage itself was beautifully constructed & now the timbers have been oiled it is a very warm rich colour. It is a sloping floor from ceiling to ground level at about 30° to horizontal. one side is up against the wall the other side nearest where I sit is open revealing the solid structure that supports it and nearly hidden amongst the beams the body of the artist. Sitting here near the vulnerable body looking at the glowing head strongly lit on the platform as seen on the screen. The Cartesian Split is strongly accentuated. nearly 10.00 Public come soon.

It sits in the room like a glowing minimalist sculpture almost like a projection into the hall

a civic clock tolls ten. That is something I had not expected maybe I did not need the little alarm clock I acquired yesterday. The first 2 members of the public - women - enter more cautiously to one side of the room and stand staring directly at 'the stage' - will they move closer - or look at the video? They edge a few feet nearer staring intently. In some ways it is such a simple sight that you might ask Why stay & watch - nothing but the odd blink is going to happen - yet it is a fantastically engrossing image - this isolated head on its glowing tilted stage. It is like a sublime landscape in the sense that you gaze at it and thoughts come into your mind - at one extreme of decapitation yet at the other this is not an object image at all the head is almost glorified by the enormous glowing ruff of the stage. People are being so quiet the recorded footsteps are now quite audible above the real time sound in the space. Only 10.15 days on & my bum is sore & legs are numb - I'll have to do a lap of the space every 20 minutes or so to keep going: it will be so much more demanding on Mike - trapped in there - he has been doing vipassana meditation so knows how to focus on the pain in the immobile body & come through to a quieter place - It does not always work though people tell me even if you are experienced you can have a bad session. Someone is looking at major-minor & making notes - a student or a journalist? Looking up at the screen image of the head I realise a curious contradiction (I think) Mike seems to be in meditation mode which required complete bodily awareness in order to move beyond it - however the body is hidden away - at least from our perspective. There is a cosmic shift from the image of the head - consciousness - and the bundled up body tucked away under the stage. A man comes in he walks all the way up & looks under the stage then moves back to the middle of the room, none of the women have tried this yet - I wonder if there will be a gendered difference to reactions here? A young woman comes up the stairs goes straight to the live projection then moves to the major/minor screen then moves across the room to get a good viewing point for viewing the stage. I think one at a time is a good - if rather tense audience experience. Of course anyone venturing into the space not only encounters Mike who is mute & entrapped but is faced by me - so far very conscious & looking towards them or writing notes. 'Esile ruf' sounds like church music - maybe I can take confessions.

• also light above/dark below - the metaphor holds



11.00 AM 21.11
 The bell tolls - Mike has been moving a bit more I hope the neck is not uncomfortable. at this moment no one but Felizitas & the security guard are here. The footsteps seem to be coming from above - I had noticed this before but it did not seem significant till now - we are under the roof so the impossibility of their direction makes them all the more disembodied almost out of time/out of space. There is a press call at 11.30 which I will go down for, hopefully no more than 15 mins. With press here maybe we will get a few coming up but not with film crews. oddly enough I don't feel like moving anymore. a few just come in including an obese man who has not taken his hands off his hips since he arrived the effect is of pushing his belly forward from his jacket - a few suits now surprisingly none of them stop to watch Meyer - minor. Two women & a man have just come up close - very interested to peer into the gloom to verify that the halos head has indeed a body. Mike has been fidgeting a bit his right arm closest to me, not sure if he wants to pull the blanket up over his shoulder a bit - whisper ask Ten on the way out.

ABC interview 11.30 hard to get back into media head space after getting myself into semi meditative condition. hopefully it was ok. coming back up saw Mike for the first time directly noticed his eyes open or half open I can't make that out on the screen from my chair. Felizitas has come up & is changing into the slip on shoes so she can climb up the wedge & wipe Mike's face. I can only see the action on screen. It is a touching ministrations & must make it easier to bear, next the glass of water.

Someone has come in and sat on the floor facing Mike. a middle aged woman, she sits with her hands clasped round her knees looking at Mike with her head cocked to one side.



The bell chimers noon - the watcher is still in place she too may be meditating, Two or three other people are also staying a bit longer. It is extraordinary how formal and deliberate this whole space feels given we have only inserted the 'stage' in one corner + head, Two plasma screens and my white chair in a hall that must be at least 30 meters long and about 12 wide. Mike has worked off the given space, emptying and all the junk so that the given architecture becomes very clear. It is a beautifully proportioned space with 7 windows evenly spaced along each of the long walls. The windows are square + barred, about 1.4 m x 1.4 m each. Mike has selectively blocked out windows to focus light onto the 'stage' and the matching window with my chair alongside it. When Mike first entered the hall he was struck by the two end windows like the eyes of the building. He held up his right hand blocking the right window and immediately came up with the idea of covering it with a wedge and starting an imbalance, one blind eye. Only 2 windows remain open + they are scrimmed over giving a glowing white cube of light. One behind me + one at the far end, the first side window to the right of the 'real time' screen. The major-minor screen is in the central window of that wall, just as Mike sat at the centre of the old courts in major-minor to be filmed. The effect of all these choices is to maintain entirely the integrity of the original space + to refocus it creating this oblique symmetry while making every adaptation stand out as critical markers of the space. The 'stage' is strongly lit by two light boxes suspended above the big roof beams and so not visible from the body of the hall. There is no other lighting except the 2 uncovered windows + one dim globe near the plasma screen of the live recording. Looking up / see we now have a dozen people in the room - so far all quiet + respectful. Jan Minder - the first mainlander - very taken with major-minor. Will French now on duty - Felicitas has left for a while. I am very tempted to start sketching but I am very out of practice + don't want to spoil a page - John Warwick's rule - no editing - maybe later.

When I am more out of it / may recover my lost draughting skills.

I am more out of it / may recover my lost draughting skills.



Into the afternoon Mike is moving a bit again resting his arm on one of the structural beams - repositioning his feet. Oh no it's just finding the tube! Note to check sound effects are happening on end plasma. Walked down to check sound with Will & noticed again how the major-minor structure reinforces the oblique structure of the room. Also how the zoom/focus shifts reiterate the conscious/unconscious aspect of the performance. As the camera zooms from the head of either major or minor to a detail of one of the colonial paintings it momentarily goes out of focus to a complete blur then opens up again into startling clarity. It is as if between the focus on the head and the focus on the painting there is a moment of occlusion. This very striking effect makes me think of Michael Fried talking about Courbet, how entry or merger into the image requires this moment of unconsciousness before being able to 'enter' or 'be within' the frame. I will return to specific shots during the performance as the drifting in and out inevitably becomes my own state.

I started trying to draw the perspective of the space but decided to cheat & put it on a page beyond the duration sequence so it is optional - very difficult to judge the extreme perspective of the windows. I have to try & draw the wedge to my left but it is somehow very difficult for me to get a grip on drawing what is away to the left - I have always faced a subject or included the right but never noticed before that the view over your left shoulder is difficult to bring into a conscious spatial frame - It must be a right over left orientation for me - So back to the oblique & imbalanced experience of the world the show exemplifies. I wonder if I could draw with my left hand if it would be resolved? It seems ~~hard~~ to be a major physical not just psychological block as if your left side was a stumbling block you have to somehow reach over to try & draw what is on the left - normally I would just reorient the chair but the structure of the performance ensures I can not do that. Thus unwittingly (perhaps) Mike puts me in his own shoes.

Anna Waldmann just came in had a close look under the 'stage' and whispered to me how claustrophobic the under stage looked. It seemed to affect her more than anything.



14. 21.11

Two o'clock Will French comes forward to change into slippers using a cloth to avoid collecting dust from floor to step up onto the stage to wipe Mike's face + offer water. We listened for sound but could not catch anything. Elizabeth will call Brian. Now Will is doing the bread stick in the bucket routine to start Mike's urine count - critical for the Doctor's evaluation

Mike asks to be raised 3cm in effect the movement of the bar proved to be considerable + we needed Mark to come + reset it + re-tighten the shoulder straps. at the same time we had Brian come to check sound - ^{throat} Mike's speakers are set + there is some sound will check at next administration 4.00 but during rehearsal any sound on either the wood or throat Mike was quite audible through the space + it's not now.

First toilet stop for me 2.35 + nuts, cheese, $\frac{1}{2}$ glass pinot + 1 Turkish delight - first snack today. I feel as if something like this every $\frac{3}{4}$ hour will keep me going well enough.

without my glasses or at least at this distance the image of Mike on the live screen is remarkably like his self-portrait in "Trojaned Horse" 84?

I now have a swipe card 10/10 # + master key so I can get round the place at need day and night - privilege! in fact I am feeling comfortable with staying put as it stands. Paul Green returns from site shots around the museum + detached he may be stretched to come up with very different shots how by hour - some shots of the space will help.

I missed the bell It is 15.08 already. The rain has started rattling down on the roof above us - Tasmania the emerald Isle has been very brown for months it clearly needs this but why this week? The roof by the way is very steep, above the big beams at less than 2.4 I guess, there is a vast prism of timber supporting the slate tiles. ^{Timber} beams, roof ridges & diagonal braces articulate the vault in a way that Anselm Kiefer would very much appreciate.

on the beam directly in front of me is a text in ultramarine paint S. Le 7/12/03 and off to the left a bit AG SHELVERTON -

Graphitti from more than a century ago. I understand the brilliant pigment was used to mark the bags that were stored here. This floor of the bondstone was used for the most vulnerable - desirable items - sugar, flour, women, it was above flood level and more easily defended from intruders.

A very wet Nick Mitsoich just came in - Le has spotted major/minor and gone for a prolonged look - good! Now he's gone but look who just walked in - Not less than Daniel Thomas - how nice to see him here Daniel of course wanted to know what I was writing I got shy & wouldn't show him.

I tried the left hand view of the wedge I was right It is very clumsy even got the perspective of the floorboards wrong - later I may be able to do some more haptic efforts the mind sometimes does prevent you seeing - Drawing may be the best medicine for the Cartesian problem.

Felizitas has returned to help Will it must be nearly 4.00 pm. face wipe & then water Brian has come to check sound levels.



4.00 while Will + Felizitas minister to Mike 3 women came in Mum, daughter + Gran I suspect - Mum is very interested + seems to appreciate the wiping and feeding, daughter + Gran are more uncertain + long back whispering to each other. David Stephenson came in just arrived from Sydney. Felizitas tells me Mike does not think he has urinated but WE know he has done fine - I hope he is not wandering already.

Sirens outside - The wet weather must be causing havoc - I hope it does not put people off tonight - They tell me there is lots of action on all levels of the museum though + at Detached already.

A young woman just came in immediately came quite close in front of Mike, smiled awkwardly - I can see in the screen that Mike is looking a bit grumpy - She comes to the side peering in to see the hidden body 3 of her friends have come up now - art students I am certain - they are very interested in underneath - apparatus - 3 move now all straight to the side - girl no 1 has gone back to the front and is gazing at Mike, the rest still clearly more interested in the mechanics than in the image or what it might convey. Now they have seen Major minor, that is worth worrying about 'how'. now they come back to Mike + the stage, they are putting it together bit by bit - they are art students.

4 elderly slightly round people have arrived to replace the students very taken with the image of Mike & Major minor. One

shows concern for the underneath but not the others.

Paul Green has moved to large format camera.

a group of 5/6 men in blue came in stood way back then left - I could not see if it was police or fire or a security firm - I believe they have extra security for tonight. I hope it is not bother! other people trickling through 3 or 4 at a time which is perfect for the space. you can still hear the absurd feet.



The hour turns & up comes Craig Judd, good he could make it back for the event. He joins Jenny the curator who has taken his role here, she has spent quite a bit of time up on level 4 today. From being a bit uncertain she seems to have become very involved.

A young family has arrived mum dad & two boys about 8 I guess - HORN The big Cruise ship must be leaving! - Mum explains what the boys are seeing & they look at the live screen but miss major minor. It must seem quite unusual to children but they are good at atmosphere & we have plenty of that - the air in the room has become denser as the day goes by - the family come up close to look at the understage & me. They look somewhat astonished - appropriate response I guess! A large bald man in blue arrives - must be security. It is getting colder now I will need to add layers later, hopefully Mike is covered enough.

In the viewfinder of Paul's large format camera he has framed the wedge so that it is equally balanced by the ceiling structure above - seen this way there is almost as much light up in the vault as on the wedge - It should make a great shot like the prism of the roof echoing the slope of the wedge. It is upside down in the viewfinder which helps equalize the two volumes. When seen by the naked eye we correct giving the positive form ^{wedge} more weight than the void of the roof cavity. Sitting here learning about left & right learning and the "intelligent" eye that corrects for meaning thereby deforming reality is proving very productive. It will be interesting to see when the control of reason relaxes if some return to seeing "as is" takes hold.

[middle aged suits appearing must be nearly 6.00 pm. Gallery Guides too I hope they have seen the text it might help them with a few queries.]

Inversion in the viewfinder correcting vision is interesting in relation to the mind/body theme too I think, may come back to that



18.00 21.11

Opening time Bill Sheehan just came up with digitaries they are interested in Major-minor-^{they are} coming over. We are introduced trying to be quiet but, it does unsettle Mike so I send them off. The gentleman was the head of the Govt department that runs the gallery. back to inversion - Mike uses that quite a lot now I think of it - for example in 'Raft of the Eyed God' one of the heads is inverted + in several works from the 80s. Looking at the world upside down is more radical than seeing it obliquely - Baselitz for example routinely shows figures inverted - has done since 70s. It is a basic trick for art teachers getting students to detach tonal structure from simple appearance. There is of course a metaphorical parallel with revolution turning accepted order on its head. Looking on's head (especially if you are overturned) as a form of social connection. There are feelers here that worm their way into many of the ideas Mike has inserted into this exhibition.

The Wedge in the Space looks new by comparison with the battered old timber & brick of the bondshore but it also looks timeless - or maybe more ^{from} of a different place, its insertion here has a very strange quality. It sits perfectly as a site specific sculpture but is obdurately inserted as the white cubes have been at Detached.

The art scene mixing now with saints some spend more time than some of the casual passers by - taking in the image quality Mike has given the space - I wonder what they are thinking - it is hard to read. getting close to max 25 now I think. some chatting - greeting but very constrained not like any opening crowd - I wonder if you could get this in Sydney? Surprisingly quite a few stay 10-15 mins not bad during a function (I can smell wine - surprising must smell like that all the time) Very few people seem amused - I just saw one - most almost seem in awe I have heard - "Incredibly powerful atmosphere" - Surprising how many either feel this or at least play along as if they did - many really curious about understage - almost getting in!! Rolan + Tony appear! Brian Zubicka, Joanna Meudelman - Janis + Gene. Brian really gets the space - Joanna wants to tickle Mike with a feather! Toni Waka!



Shany was Anna Schwartz
Wendy I think it was Tony

Andrew Cameron, Hod Frankham, Brian Sherman - They keep
coming. This is a very engaged audience compared with earlier the
atmosphere of the space seems to be getting through. Shany Gladwell
and Tania. Anna Schwartz, Sally Breen - Shany very excited will
stay around a few days talked about "Crisis last tape" very apposite!
Mike has closed his eyes people are gossiping - Shany - but very discreetly
During the installation we talked about Beckett - in theatrical terms he
came as close to breaking the ritual of repeated performances to create
at least the feeling that this is really happening - This is absolutely the
strongest point of Mike's performance there is no illusion here even
though all this peering at the "workings" suggests people almost can't
believe it. That is not to say that a disembodied living head does not
lend itself to interpretation we can not help ourselves - it is in fact
more accessible to such interpretation by each and every viewer precisely
because it is not dressed up in any way - It is just his head on a tilted
stage. His expressions represent nothing but his physical & mental
state at the moment. This unscripted non expressionist "presentation"
is not a "representation" yet it allows all of us to unload our personal
& culturally acquired baggage onto it. This may not take imagistic or
specific symbolic or narrative form but may linger as emotional states
or as ideas that hover beyond the fringe horizon of consciousness.
At one level it invokes tenderness. It is very satisfying to see his
attendants wipe round his eyes, mop his brow before his regular glass &
water. He has gained power over us by making himself incredibly
vulnerable since yesterday people's concern for his well being has been
extraordinary even visitors have been asking 'caring' questions. Some
have been mesmerised for long periods of time - maybe meditating in
sympathy - empathy rather or better still solidarity.
Having said this there are occasions when Mike wants to provide some
very specific narrative - Annamaria 010101 for example or the bird
performances. The detention camp works are the outstanding example.
This though in addressing his work as a whole with all the intelligence &
anxiety yet it is open to individual response & to the atmosphere
of this space - more than one person asked me about Gohshi.
We will see tonight

The crowd is dissipating now - Thinking of Ghost - This performance has charged the atmosphere so that anyone prone to "seeing things" would very likely see them here. I recall the few occasions when I have attended events or been in places where circumstances & conversation - Storytelling has created this kind of thick charged feeling and something seems to have been manifested to people. In this case it is not disembodied atmosphere there is a lead on a tilted stage & that re-absorbs all the energy into itself. Felizitas is back to minister - this must have been the most strenuous 2 hours became of sound but awareness of so many colleagues & friends watching. Now it is quieter the sounds from below and the recorded footsteps are finding a perfect balance - we should have recorded the room really to capture this fluctuating ambience.

[20.10 Second too break - the party is still buzzing downstairs - fantastic feedback from people the energy of the whole thing seems to have communicated & the Museum staff seem very happy.]

One woman told me that Level 4 made her feel very peaceful & quiet. quiet I understand but maybe Mike's meditation at this stage could convey a sense of peace - I assured her that the work's intensity could harness whatever energy you brought to it so clearly she was disposed to find peace.

Two girls just came up to say how strange the room made them feel - me too! How does he do it? hopefully these pages give some ideas to work on, formal structure of the space, a commitment to realism, personal focus that draws down whatever the space & the audience can yield, no definitive answer though. I do recall Marina & Ulay doing a performance for me in Port 1983 maybe? they did a duration piece 10-5 in the Gallery entrance - It was also very intense - I had staff working elsewhere in the building who claimed the tension in the building was such that they could not bear to be there any longer & had to go home. Others sat with the artists for the full time. The text is going places I did not intend - I can see little sparks of mysticism popping up & this is not my thing nor is it Mike's or at least I did not think it was. Andrew & Cathy just came by to say it was a really important show - It seems the buzz is very good indeed even nothing like it anywhere - in 02!!
wow

21.00

21.11

The 8.00pm ministrations were deferred since it was not possible with a constant presence of at least 25 people and Mike was in any case not keen on more water. Felizitas will do the 8.00 feed now & maybe defer the lights down till 10.00pm. The dip stick shows he is passing the water OK.

People are still coming in - several staying some time in quiet & meditative states.

Mike calls for blanket adjustment. I have had a blanket ^{for myself} delivered in case I need it later as well. - Its the feet mostly - staying up here I can control the cold - when I went out I started uncontrollable shuddering.

Penny & Tero both leave they need to be fresh tomorrow. Will is on duty & Gostas & Paul are both here. There are still 6 people here watching.

Strange sounds turn out to be in the courtyard as empty crates are dragged out after the party, I keep thinking every sound is part of the system we have going here which is so immersive that external sound seems more like a fault in the system.



10.00 pm and they are still coming up here at the stroke of 10.00.
here comes Will with the 1000 wipe + water.

No sign of Anna yet, she should be here by now - maybe hard to find
Way in now opening is over.

Mike is resting on his chin maybe getting tired

Now everyone has gone & the sound of footsteps is very dominant
I keep looking up to see who is coming - It is completely relative -
With no one else here I have had a chance to look more at

the video major minor. Mike planned his shots very strategically
& it is worth paying attention, for example when the camera
returns to major after a long shot of a naked corpse in foreshortened
perspective major has a smile on his face before the camera
slides off to another image - the only time I think when there
is such a grin the next image is an impossible burst of seashells
can it be from Long's Fantasy or nymphs etc

The zoom to the lady with the ruff - an obvious preview of the stage as ruff.

Anne + Sarah just arrived Then Anna + Harry in fact another
6 just came up stairs - I thought the night was over...

Mike seems to have dropped off - Will is going to wipe his face
with a cold cloth and see how he responds. We now have
a dozen people here and it is approaching 11.00. Mike has
roused & is stretching.



The clock struck 11:00 pm. It is getting colder which will help me stay awake. Looking again at Major Minor the camera comes into really close focus on the Major Minor group then sleers past one w the other often capturing minute textural detail of the face or cap then blurs out before refocusing on a detail such as a pair of crossed hands on a woman's breast, a shroud in Ashtons mine, a shearer's head in the shed, a bushranger in 'Bailed up' the mine entrance as a black rectangle (another metaphor for unconsciousness) in 'Fire's On'.

From major to a pastoral, from minor to the harbour, from major to Coogee beach and so on.

This hall has some of the same feel as the Shearer's shed. It is the same era, same texture + colour. Here you can see the stained imprint of sacks of flour or sugar imbedded into the old planks. The image of hard labour that created a nation and gave the Impressionists a repertoire is here - you can see how easy it is to romanticise and yet the evidence of the stones, the graffiti and the bars on the windows stands as anything but a romantic reminder of what the mid 19th Century was like here.

It is coincidental but I recently read Kate Grenville's novel 'Secret River'. Although the evocation of 18th C London + Australia is beautiful at one level as the places in their way were / are the story of the people caught up in poverty + deportation + their tragic encounter with incomprehensible indigenous culture left a very bad taste. I fully believe the substance of her text but it has made it hard for me to look at the landscape round Sydney & simply enjoy it. I feel for the first time what I always knew - It was an unmitigated disaster + guilt has to lay over appreciation.

11:55. pit stop
Red wine + Turkish delight only.

24:00
00:0021:11
22:11

midnight. Claire takes over from Will.

We will ask Mike if he is happy to be woken after a short nap in place - but need to watch he is not leaning on a windpipe or vein. // David Walsh was here & it seems he was incredibly complimentary to Penny about setting the bar very high. // It's so late yet we still have a dozen people in the room - must be after dinner. Saw Wendy Whiteley when I had my 11:55 pit stop she was very sweet. Talking of which someone just came over and gave me a sprig of pink roses + a sweet smell.

Mike has been raising his head high - stretching his windpipe & easing his neck muscles / guess & intermittently lowering his chin onto the ledge. He can doze in that position as long as his head does not slip forward. (So far I do not feel tired - that "frozen couldn't sleep if I tried stage" - no idea what it will be like in the morning.)

When the head tips forward onto the block it causes the cheeks to push up & the mouth to purse - It reminds me of an image of a man's head Guillotined which Damien Hirst had himself photographed with. When he pulls back up it returns to the image of "Frozen horse" I recalled earlier. There are multiple facial configurations but all of them are fairly grim - This is disconcerting for me because the Mike I know is more often than not laughing or very occasionally expressing rage at some political lunacy we are discussing - but never this gloomy introspective quality - I guess that is meditation & concentration for you. Paul is back so I guess you will have an image to go with this passage.

Mike's head is pushing up at an odd angle - but now he has dropped his chin onto the ledge he is cat napping again I think.

So now it is Saturday - still going fine and two new visitors have just shown up - it seems Hobart steps up late.

The disembodied steps have become a very strong force in the room there are those regular steps from major minor but there are the earlier recorded ones that seem to be too real - someone walking overhead - particularly over the stairway suggesting someone coming up but sometimes walking right over my head - there is no floor above. Thinking of Golts - as I did - the sound of Mike puking up milk downstairs reminds me of a programme on ABC in which a bunch of exorcists talked about possession + throwing up the devil. Mike would probably equate the Howard years with a possession that indeed needed to be thrown up! I must ask him if it was a purely personal response to a reinstitution of a White Australian policy or did he also think of it as an exorcism in the diabolic sense. - Three more people just arrived + yet more - youngish people animatedly gesturing to describe the formal relationships in the work Mike is awake now. One is quite transfixed by M/M while the other has eyes only for Cartesian Corpse. Right now Mike is looking a bit like a martyr in some medieval icon, head back a bit to the side, his 3 parts to slip away then pulls back again shakes his head opens the eyes wide + keeps going - big yawn - sets me off he almost smiled back - seems to be OK.

10 to 2:00 and then turn up Leggy lady in gold skillets + 2 men Slightly Dazed - one thinks I once wrote a comment in his winery/museum guest book criticising his music - sounds most unlike me - never do guest books unless ecstatic - He insisted on seeing what I had written about him - paranoid/guy

Two o'clock 6 visitors still here - Mike adjusting his feet on the blocks - Claire preparing Sponges & drink. 4 more arrive, new 1 drink. After a 15 minute stay they moved on only one remains standing by the real time video staring at the stage.

The Floor here nearly prevented us from having the event here as it is very uneven and thinner boards laid over the top & the original at right angles to them have split and large ships have come off them. At first it seemed 815 inches would look us out but the concept of Cartesian Corpse was so central to the exhibition we pressed the point & subject to limiting numbers to 25 at a time we were able to proceed. 25 is quite enough anyway as the sounds are at least as important as any other component & with a crowd that becomes inaudible. The top boards are not perfectly aligned and seem to slightly zig zag down the hall. In places they have been patched but elsewhere they are falling apart. Standing down one end you can also see that they rise and fall presumably over the beavers making gentle hills & valleys. This has something of Grenville's "broken bridge" about it.

2.30 a Spin pit stop wine & Turkish delight again. 3 new people in the space when I returned. Two standing sideways on to the wedge looking as if were over their shoulders at Mike - I have been collecting "looking at art poses" lately - I note that in exhibitions of paintings many people step forward on one foot but let the other leg suspended as if ready to flee. This sideways glance is a new one. Since the earlier confrontation I am getting a bit paranoid myself about describing visitors. There are some interesting new ladies fashions in Hobart that might work better in a hot climate - minis & half length stockings with suspenders - not seen here for a long time - It is now close to freezing at near 3.00 PM. It was like this in Liverpool when I did the hi enoch teens in bare midriffs in wet & freezing weather.



3.00 comes + Chima is ready to administer but Mike has taken a cat nap - he looks ok. Felizitas turns up - she should be in bed but she fixes up the foot blanket before going back to bed. Now penny is back maybe no one can sleep.

The walls are punctuated by windows 7 along each long wall - under the windows there is a piece of timber the same depth as a brick but it runs the length of the wall as a base for the windows. Above the bricks are similar but they are not continuous - a little more than twice the width of the window only. The brickwork is $1\frac{1}{2}$ bricks thick. The beams are tree-like pieces of timber with beams on top. Star shaped configurations of beams 300×100 cm run above the big beams and diagonal braces run off them to normal roof beams, rafters + battens topped with slate. Having just been outside I can attest that the 'attic' we are in holds the heat very well, it's cold in here but really horrible out there.

Ten leaves at 5.30. Paul finding it very cold goes to look for a heater or else go to hotel for a hot shower - NO he is back empty handed.

Two young men arrive seeming quite seriously interested. Spend some time with M/M.

four o'clock comes + here is Claire with the ministrations.
The 2 boys sit on the floor to watch.

Just starting to get those sudden droops - slumps and feeling
the cold move.

- 4.30 5 min pit stop // Berocca + Turkish delight - seems to have
the required effect at least for now // The security guards
down stairs are gathered around a heater - it is a cold wet
night - we did not need to worry about the heat!
Came back to see Paul huddled in a doona. It's still
warmer here than down stairs.

Earlier on I trespassed onto slightly mystical ground and once
again I had a vision of Mike as one of the desert fathers.
He could sit on top of a column for 30 years and come to know
himself thoroughly. I wonder though if performance - duration works
that require meditation and fasting don't come very close to the
privations undergone by some of the saints. Is the difference
purely intentionality or is it possible to characterize both
within one frame - is it possible to extract the divine from
the equation? In both cases the practitioners would claim
that the outcome of their labours enables them to help others
well is that what Mike would claim, not in so many words
but he does believe his actions apply to the body politic +
can have revelatory effects for others, it is clearly not
about the self or self-expression, self is a medium not
the message. Embodiment on the other hand may be medium
and message. Vipassana meditation does have a strong
Buddhist teaching attached to it but this does not
necessitate divinity. It is first about the body +
then about staying divine in order to be free to
choose a path that seems right.

Bell rings 5.00

Fortunately I can turn the page + get away from that morass. It should be getting light soon we have almost made it through night one!

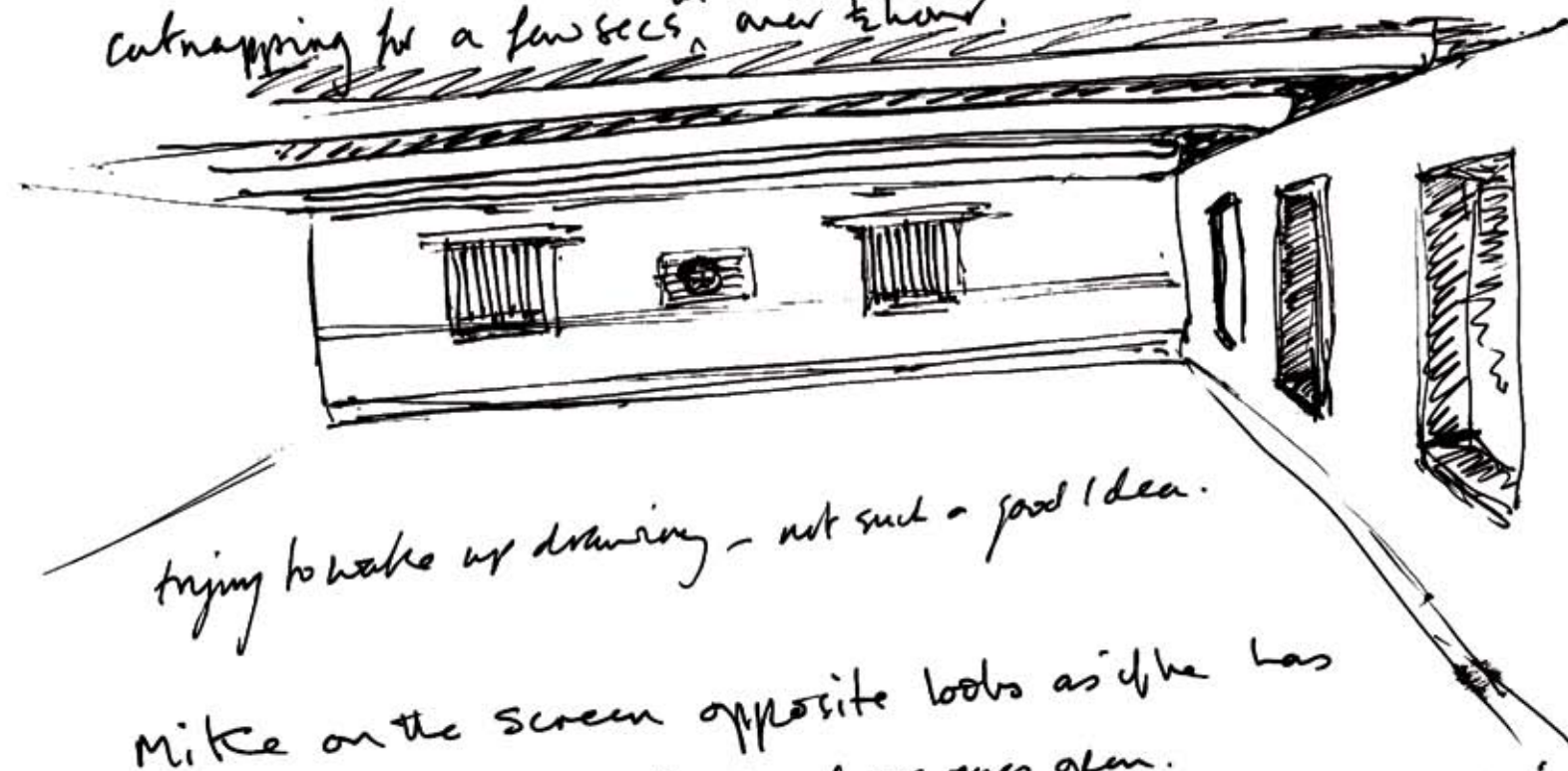
Mike has been asleep for about 10 mins - he is resting on his chin but I think it is time for a cool wipe he could get in too deep. Claire called his name to wake him explained he had been out 10 mins and would he like a wipe + alcohol, he took a moment to come into focus then nodded. He also needed his blanket adjusting. Now he is exercising by wanking his legs - stepping on the foot rest.

The first visitor comes with the Dawn checks out Mike + the plasma + leaves. pale light starts illuminating the window behind me.

bell tolls for 6.00. Claire mounts wedge to wipe Mike's face
+ Elizabeth arrives for next shift.

I am now feeling the lack of sleep - hopefully as the day wears on the
clock will kick in + override the sleep deprivation + the cold.

cutnapping for a few secs ^{at a time} over 2 hours.



trying to wake up drawing - not such a good idea.

Mike on the screen opposite looks as if he has
recovered somewhat - head up eyes open.

6.47. pit stop Smirs -

Paul up & breezy already visitors starting to turn up



Mike's head on screen looks very Francis Bacon this morning or is it Lucian Freud - he is managing well though. It was the cold that got to me, Mike has been practising cold + has his thermal underwear. With any luck it will warm up today even if it freezes over tomorrow night.

So far it seems as if anything useful has already been said about the performance, short of documenting every visitor but that would be a bit peripheral to the event.

Anna came in & draped her fur coat over my shoulders - she was very concerned to see me shiver. Actually I am freezing now but the fur certainly warmed me up for a moment. Apparently it has cleared up a bit again.

Looking back over the pages I see my writing has slipped badly so now is the time to try & start the day somewhere closer to the first hours yesterday.

Anna asked me if I had started wondering why I was doing this to myself - I may well as the next 24 hours roll on but to date the thought never occurred to me. I said I would do it & I thought I could, I did not anticipate cold, neither did Mike. Taking on something that you have no experience of & hanging in whatever happens for as long as you can is sure or less how I have got from day to day anyway. The Bell strikes 8.02



* Malevich may not only intend his black squares as a denial of representation he made them into very substantial painted surfaces. He could be evoked as manifesting material - a paradox that opens up the transformative role the viewer of art is asked to play.

08.00 22.11

Elizabeth comes forward on the strokes of 8.00 to administer the necessary. everyone in the official party has moved on to the events roster so we may not see them till later.

Elizabeth wipes around Mike's eyes from here watching the screen 30 meters away she seemed to be blurring his features - smearing yellow/green over his features - maybe it was an after image of the above versa they are using.

Mike's image on plasma is placed at the centre of the end wall symmetrically between the two barred windows as I draw it at 6.00 am. It is on an oblique angle to the real head on the 'stage' even though it is formally very stable in the space. The two barred windows are like dark eyes in the building and being square they inevitably reference back to Malevich. From a distance the 'portrait' on the screen has a very painterly appearance a figurative icon between two suprematist denials of representation.

Mike has a hate/love relationship with Malevich I think. Much of the iconography in this exhibition reflects Mike's rejection of utopian ideologies and by extension the artist who best exemplifies its spirit. There is another side to Malevich however. The black square is like a poster declaring the end of representation, this is after all an important step towards a conceptual art that replaces representation with presentation. Malevich uses heroic language that Mike parodies in LAFART. Malevich sees himself as an aviator a bit like Yves Klein he has absurd ambitions but as Kleins do they become self parody and at the same time they open pathways for artists who come after them. *



The image of Mike on the screen is of course a real time relay of his head caught on a fixed video camera. It is not a painting and in a sense it is a trace of the real rather than a representation. The live recording of performance is closely tied to the history of conceptual art & body actions. Mike's insistence on "realism" in all his work makes him aware to the duplicity of both Klein & Malevich - at detached two mats 'Male' & 'Vich' suggests both the duplicity and the witchy bit about the Void. However Mike also knows that both artists deliberately built in contradictions in both their lives & their art. When Klein asks us to believe his 1955 catalogue of Merodimmes since 1947 is authentic he also sets it up in such a way as to prove it is a fabrication - why? because Art is a means to get to an idea but should not be taken as literal truth in itself. take Klein's image of the leap into the Void he deliberately makes 2 versions which contradict each other & seem to disprove the authenticity of the leap. However when you look at the image of the artist arching into the sky his face yearning desperately upwards you know the 'dream' It is true regardless of how it was made. Klein asked for faith not belief in the literal truth of the process. Par on the other hand does no such thing however one might justify it for him the actuality of actions - the body - time - instructions - anchor his art (& the art of Abramovic, accorci Oppenheim) during the 70s ^{in the} real.

Andrew & Cathy came by on their way to the cruise & reiterated how important the performance & the show was for them. Julie & Ray was most concerned about her brother's health & urged me to take care of him - the family pulls together again.

Anne arrived & will go out on the cruise at 11:00 - She has gone to get me cough drops & boiled sweets.



Will returns + he & Elizabeth prepare the 10.00 refreshment.

Mike's use of material as a whipping boy for the Soviet states makes sense particularly as his whole body of work is against transcendence in art & in politics but I have not asked him why or when he took against Marxism & the States that used or misused Marx's ideas. People's radical inclination from our generation tended to hang on to the idea of advanced socialism even after Stalin's show trials, Hungary & some even after Czechoslovakia. It may be that being married to Felicitas whose family had first hand experience of the Soviets and then working in Eastern Europe as a young artist precipitated his anger. It is also true that the Intellectual left including Sydney University art history Department were not impressed by Mike's rejection of all that. The tensions between those who might otherwise have been expected to champion his work & Mike were painful & Mike never forgave them even when years later they tried to adopt him. Mike is clearly not a conservative or even a small liberal perhaps he is something like an anarchist - I have not had that conversation but like many of us disappointed by Democracy & Marxist states the temptation to question government in its traditional authoritarian mode is strong.

10.30 a sudden influx of cruise bound art lovers on their way to the Jetty.

Some of Mike's performances in the past decade have been about expressing his empathy for the detainees of Howard's policies. Not just his empathy but hopefully his audience's empathy for them. How though does empathy play out in a piece like Cartesian corpse? He makes no appeal for our empathy to any third party or at least not in any immediately obvious way. This is just him on a tray. Surely though he does not seek or need our empathy for himself - he put himself in there after all. Firstly the title suggests that this is not about Mike or about a third party but it is about consciousness & the human condition in general. He may present an image of alienated body but there is also an empathic element



- When I say includes us I mean that if we choose to follow the decorum requested as an audience we are involved potentially fatally.

Cartesian Corpse & our Empathy. We may speculate on what it might feel like to be Mike by wondering how we might feel ^{staying} for the duration with the artist certainly heightens this imaginative identification. Putting yourself in the place of another is always a good starting place. Clearly this performance requires some experience of meditation specifically a form that focuses on the body to enjoy & then overcome its complaint. All of us can do this if we want to or if we have been introduced to it. Already we would be exercising the very process the title Cartesian Corpse suggests - acknowledging body's complicity in consciousness.

The form of the work corresponds to this same exploration. The head separated from the body that is relegated to a dark subterranean space while the head is illuminated on a sunlit stage. Empathising with the meditative process makes us realise how central body is to mind we then see the context of Cartesian logic of separation. We can understand how social & cultural systems that demand this separation are dangerous & fatally flawed. You can argue this with logic but experiencing it through empathetic engagement with another's actions makes this realisation internal or embodied. This is the sense in which I think this work is structured around empathy.

The structure of this performance deliberately makes the artist dependent on a team or others directly responsible for his wellbeing but also on a certain decorum on the part of the audience. This dependency models Mike's experience growing up with a missing arm. My wife recently broke a bone & had her arm in a sling the first day she exclaimed 'Now I know how Mike feels'. I had to do many essential & intimate things for her. In the catalogue essay I describe some of the effects of this dependency. By exacerbating the problem by 'removing' the whole body Mike includes us all.

Will comes out with water + towel at noon. I start nodding off will get me some water. I'll need to get strategies in place for tonight - even take an hour like Paul if it comes to it. try Fresh air with lots of sugar + water and avoid the ants.

Mike was nodding off all last night + has come good today - maybe catnaps would do but how to stay on the chair?

Curating + its boundaries response to questions on tilted stage

Crossing lines as a curator is something we consider often, for example when curating a group show how far does the curator go in establishing the concept before selecting artists + talking this through. Some curators believe it's their role to form the concept + select artists whose work can readily be adapted.

They may also select sites for the artists rather than looking together then helping the artist get everything they need permissions, budgets, etc. I strongly believe that the process should be one of collaborative considerations where the artist is the arbiter of concept + site although they may enjoy suggestions + detailed discussion on the options.

A curatorial concept should grow out of closely observed current practice, artists may well be chosen because their work exemplifies this tendency but they will not be asked to illustrate the curatorial concept. Others go further and say the curator selects an artist and stands well back - that doesn't work because there is a responsibility to assist the artist on having identified them to ensure they have an adequate space, budget, interpretation, press for their specification.

→ Current studio practice should be the starting point for the curator's ideas NOT Theory let alone any concept extrinsic to studio practice



→ performance collaboration but it is very much Mike's performance and it can fairly be said to sum up the key concerns of his life's work. So it can hardly be my work. The exhibition as curated show is definitely a collaboration - the works are not. In the end, I see myself as documenter and to a degree as an object since my presence is factored in formally.

In the last hour I began to thin not least because two people you are crossing the line on thin that in group shows I prefer the artist holds the key position the curator is disjunctant and for single artist shows and

What has been different is the time & access to space we have had to develop the exhibition over many months. We have made at least 6 trips to Hobart to work with space - consider options, change our minds and finally bring some work that we needed just in case. 85% of the show is as we saw it a month ago but when we looked at works in the spaces some things just had to be changed. Those decisions were made together but more often than not suggestions came from Mike & I either agreed strongly or put forward alternatives or pointed out what looked like drawbacks with Mike's suggestions. My process was to try and understand the work as a whole & distil an exhibition that captured the breadth yet showed the main concerns that run through very different bodies of work. After years of working together but most of all the last year working on the Tilted Stage I think Mike & I have reached a fairly good understanding and difficult discussions were rare.

It was John Warwick the designer who asked if the performance was a collaboration & Mike said yes! I said NO! but the Yes won out - I still think I am only here to provide a real time but subjective view of what happened. Shaving the sleep deprivation makes it look like →

Suddenly we seem to have reached audience limit - I guess there is a queue downstairs again Felizitas + Will doing their change over.

→ They should also know the contemporary + historical context that creates this work the artist should too but the curator may have access to more extensive data. This is crucial if it is to be thematic group show + to make sure the artist knows the context the curator sees them in + likes it!

Continue the curator role bit: What can a curator bring to a collaboration? If a curator is going to work with an artist they need to know the work very well or quickly become very familiar with the work first/then the existing texts - never start with someone else's text. It might be quite wrong or it simply reflects another intimate view + you might bring something quite different - No artists' advice on text is usually ok but even then go to the work + the artist + talk through your common understanding. Once you know the work really well you are in a great position to talk to the artist about the work and to gauge appropriate contexts for its display + interpretation. The artist can probably manage without you but may enjoy + benefit from discussion - a sounding board. I find that happens a lot even when there is no project at hand. Then the curator may be in a better position to work through ~~the~~ institutional issues, securing space, budget, resources etc. Publication is also important not just for content but for overseeing design + production values. Most artists have a great sense of space and installation but some don't. A good curator should be able to help with that particularly in an institution where they know the walls, lights, + peculiarities of the space - sightlines etc. intimately.

Back down to 2 visitors I wonder what causes the bulges. No sooner written than a dozen more arrive!

It continues to be a very attentive + respectful crowd considering it is Saturday, Hobart, and the Mercury just bashes it.

Three o'clock + there seem to be more extraneous sounds than I have noticed before. Some pop rhythm distant but pervasive - maybe car or kids headset. Some plant right next to the window near me tonight. More traffic + sirens and things that go brrr! Given the rich tapestry Mike has created it is a bit of a pity. The piece works so well at night when outside is quiet. Some people still pick up on the footsteps. When I dropped back to 3 people the extraneous sound dried up too - footsteps hallelujah!

Mike sometimes drops his head into the hole so his upper lip seems to be supporting him often after this he does a tiny stretch back up.

There was a guided tour today + the guides say it was very rewarding very good crowd really interested and they do have the text to work with. The response from general public is surprisingly strong and that is a great relief.

Seen in profile Mike looks like major or minor - a little like Geoff his dad - I had never thought that before it must have been the link of the cap + the mustache in major. at the moment his head is just right, clear of the ring. he glumps when he gets tired though till the chin rests on the ledge. I think he may be asleep. I just ^{accidentally} kicked the skirting board + woke him his head is now clear of the ring but he looks very stern.

Felizitas looks after the 4.00 pm ministry, Gotaro arrives.
 The "shock" man from Mercury was back today looking for a story
 gave him a good news one maybe he'll write it - probably not.
 There has been a very varied crowd today all ages literally dodged to school.
 average stay 15-20 mins several are returnees I recognise from yesterday.

I was pleased last night that several people saw the tilted stage/wedge/
 cruciform corpse in terms of the wedge pattern in Parr's work but
 in particular the wedge with Nixon at Oxley in the 80s? & its precursor
 Vito Accorci! At this moment 6 people are standing like
 statues facing either the stage, the live video or Major Minor - looks
 like wax works till one looks up to find the footsteps.
 I think Mike has made a decision & we may not have to
 freeze again ^{all of} tonight - thank God - If I stay up again I shall be
 a zombie on Sunday.

At 5.00 pm the room is full - I think the boat must have returned. And down comes the rain - This roof is very responsive to heavy rain.

Daniel Thomas is fascinated by trays - minor (of course) looks forward to talking about it on Wednesday. Penelope, Amanda, Sally, Anne all clustered around it.

Back to that question about what made me get into the performance thing. Firstly the catalogue needed to be a good post-mortem document with immersive pages that would capture the feeling of the performance & the installations. It would be possible to write a formal account based on video or reported responses with a few hours of observation but we wanted the images and the text to be real time, an endurance piece like the event itself. Someone would have to give a moment by moment account - subjective because in real time an objective account would read like a railway timetable. I was certainly not going to let anyone else do it. Then the method of reproduction within the design came up. It was John Warwicker who asked the collaboration question - It was to do with how it was presented. His view was that if it was a collaboration it should be a handwritten journal facsimiled right into the catalogue page by page rather than being edited & put under images. So this is what we have.

The experience may at times sound painful - It was - the cold mainly - but being allowed to participate - offer solidarity has been fantastic. I have a glimmer of an idea now of what it would be to really be an endurance artist. The disconcerting part is that Mike keeps a strict distance during performance so the social friend is transformed into a stern and uncommunicative judge. I look forward to getting him back next week.

6.00 pm has struck and things are quieting down a bit. Tens is here with the remediation on time.

Shawn Gladwell is back too. He wanted to talk to Mike about Douglas Gordon's installation with a light bulb & a test the test describes an experiment done with a decapitated head up to 30 secs after beheading. after 10, 20 & 30 seconds diminishing but recognisable responses, slower & muscular to calling the subject's name.

The decapitated effect is strong when his chin is on the ledge. Instead before a similarity to the Damien Hirst photo of a Guillotined head, Gordon sounds cleaner & tougher to me.

Hirst & Gordon have taken a horrific route to speak of the separation of head & body - one that announces death as the proving ground. Parr in all his body performances - measurement by wound has established powerful signs of the integration of the two & in Cartesian Corpse he both acts it out & represents it virtually.

Perhaps my double page spread in Art and Australia in 2006 "performing the self" has something to do with this. On the left Mike Parr holding a cast of his head in front of his groin. On the right Christophorus Allori "Judith & Holofernes" 1660? In this Allori paints his Self portrait as the beheaded Holofernes hanging by the hair from the hand of Judith. Judith was modeled on his lover who had jilted him. In this twin set it is not only beheading but unmaking.



Gotaro sets up his 16mm camera. First he gets some long shots of the space then moves in for a closer frame on the stage. Paul shoots Gotaro. Gotaro moves to the side of the room & runs off to get some lights to illuminate the scene. He has a harness to carry the camera for his action shots.

19.00 22.11
becoming colder now already I guess you feel it sooner if you are dog tired. Still 6 or 7 people here at a time sometimes more often for a long time.

I would like to interview one or two of the stayers find out what they are getting from the performance. They are mostly women but not exclusively. The men are hard to read but often the women have concerned/caring body language & facial expression. One young red head earlier looked almost ready to weep, very tender - of course I could be misreading the signs.

I approached 3 women about to leave who had been here about half an hour & asked them what they thought of the work - what it gave them.

They all associated it with the space with confinement (convicts) the older lady had just wandered in not knowing what to expect. She said it is incredibly eloquent - of what? - of human dignity, suffering with humanity, coping with confinement. They all agreed in principle and of course there is no information out there especially for the one who did not know about it, the other may have read the Mercury but they would not have learned much there.

The message of human forbiddance spirit in the face of dreadful adversity is exactly what is going on - I have been talking of it in philosophical terms but that is the gist & they got it in one - they were not empathising with Mike per se but with the principle he wants to convey.

This is very satisfying because it agrees with what I was arguing regarding empathy at 11.00 AM today.

he circles around the front quite slowly then repeats with camera much lower. he now climbs up & circles round Mike. Once filming is complete Mike is extricated from the wedge - goes to the chair & leans at once.

MARGINAL NOTES BELONG ON 20.50 PAGE



Saying something
like this

Thinking of Spinoza in goal you can break my body
but as long as I can think you can not imprison me.
Sounds like a reversal of Mike's counter Cartesian proposition
but it marks a spirit whereby physical prison even
torture can not destroy memories - Maybe in Spinoza's
time interrogation was a bit blunt & brutal not as
sophisticated & relentless as the treatment of USA
prisoners under the Terror laws. Even then men
who have been systematically brutalised for years come
back damaged but resilient enough to start again.

8.00pm

Mike announces "Performance is coming to an end" This signifies
that Gotaro should start filming & that in about an hour Mike
will be extracted from the wedge to sleep for an indeterminate period.
He has now decided not to sleep here but get dressed & leave at once.

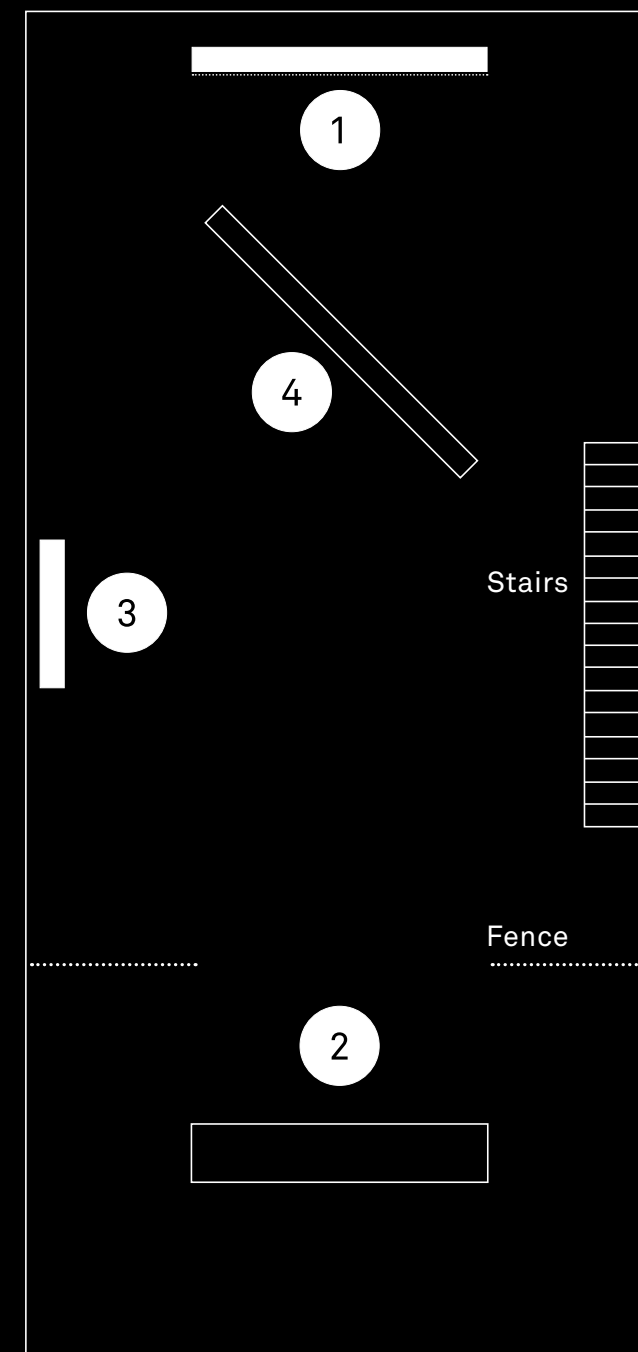
Gotaro brings in his 16mm camera takes several wide
shots then zeros in onto the wedge. He makes two
passes high & low then moves onto the wedge to start
circling round Mike. Mike wants a long shot of the fixed
camera image on the far wall - a long & difficult shot for light.
back and forth between the live head & screen head.
Then as it was impossible by hand they got hold of a wheelchair
& wheeled Gotaro back and forth.
Finally after all the photos & film
Mike was extricated from the wedge, Mike put in his
place, Mike changed and left the building.



THE TILTED STAGE

TMAG

LEVEL 1 BASEMENT



- 1 House of Cards
- 2 The Wax Bride
- 3 Drip Self-Portrait
- 4 Black Wax Wedge









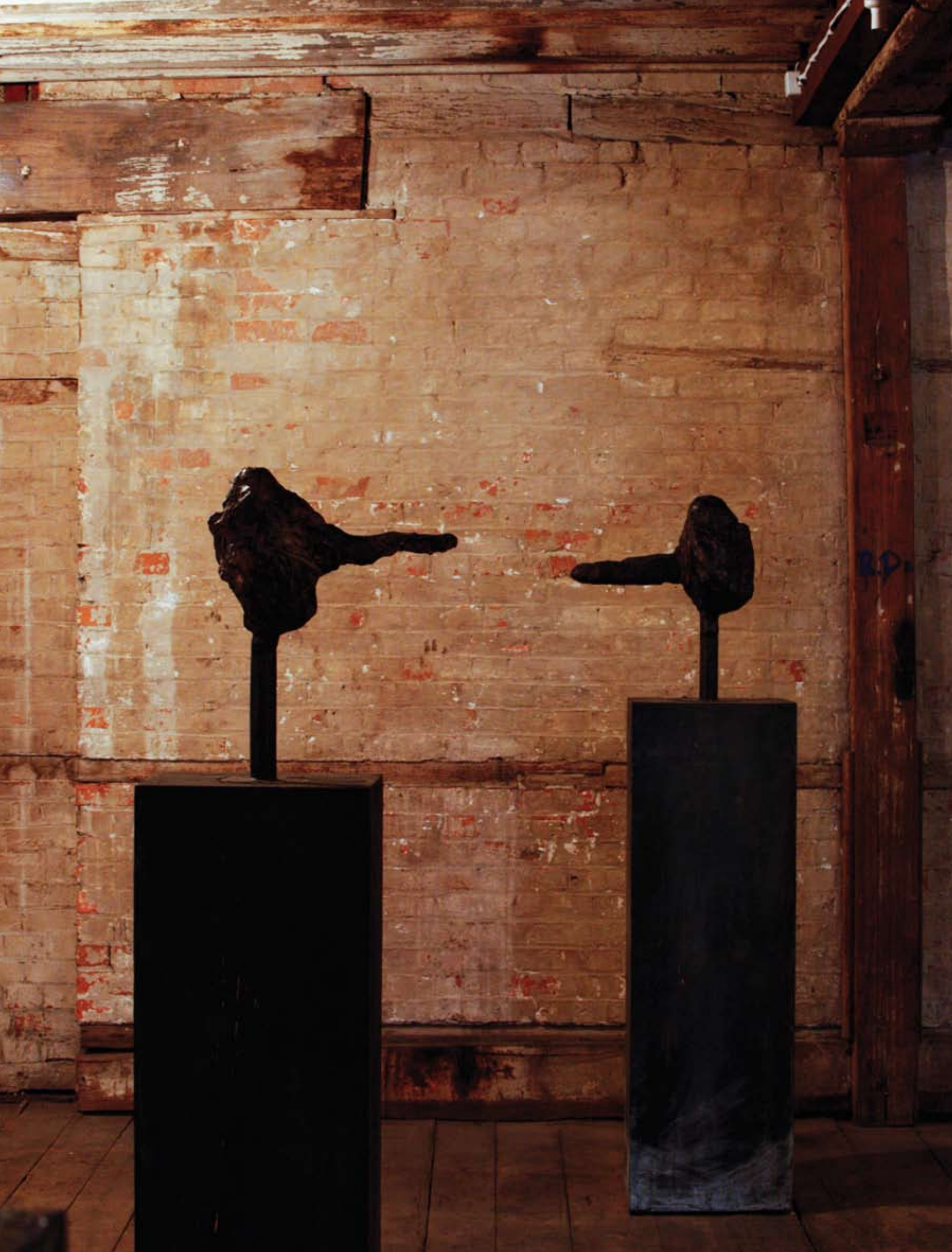








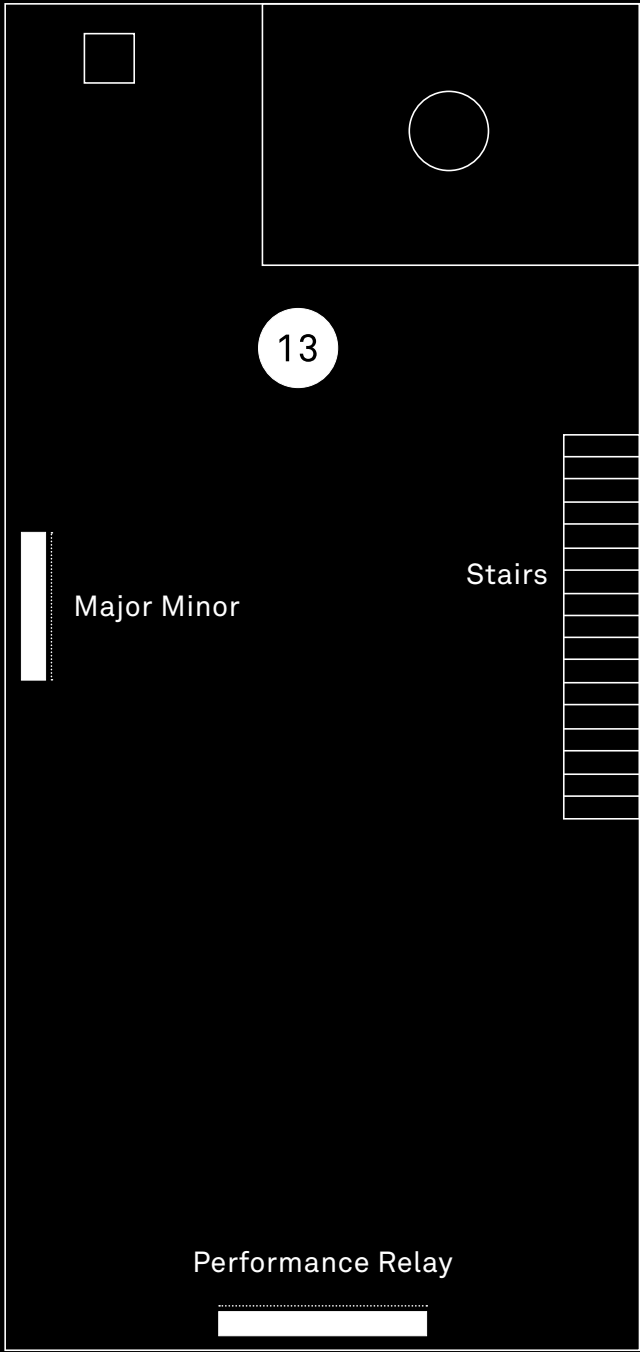








LEVEL 4



13

Cartesian Corpse

Cartesian Corpse
Performance Relay

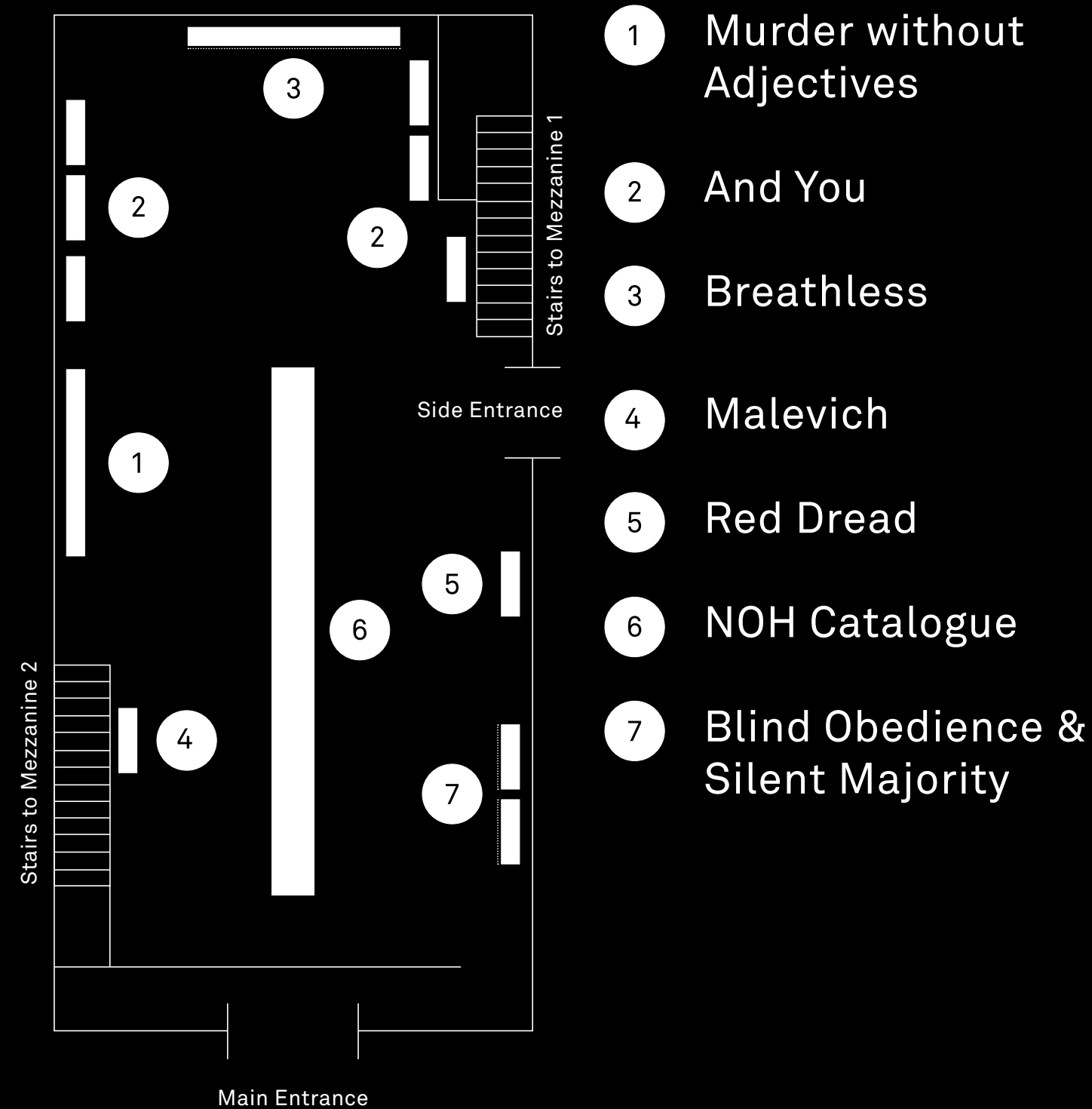
Minor

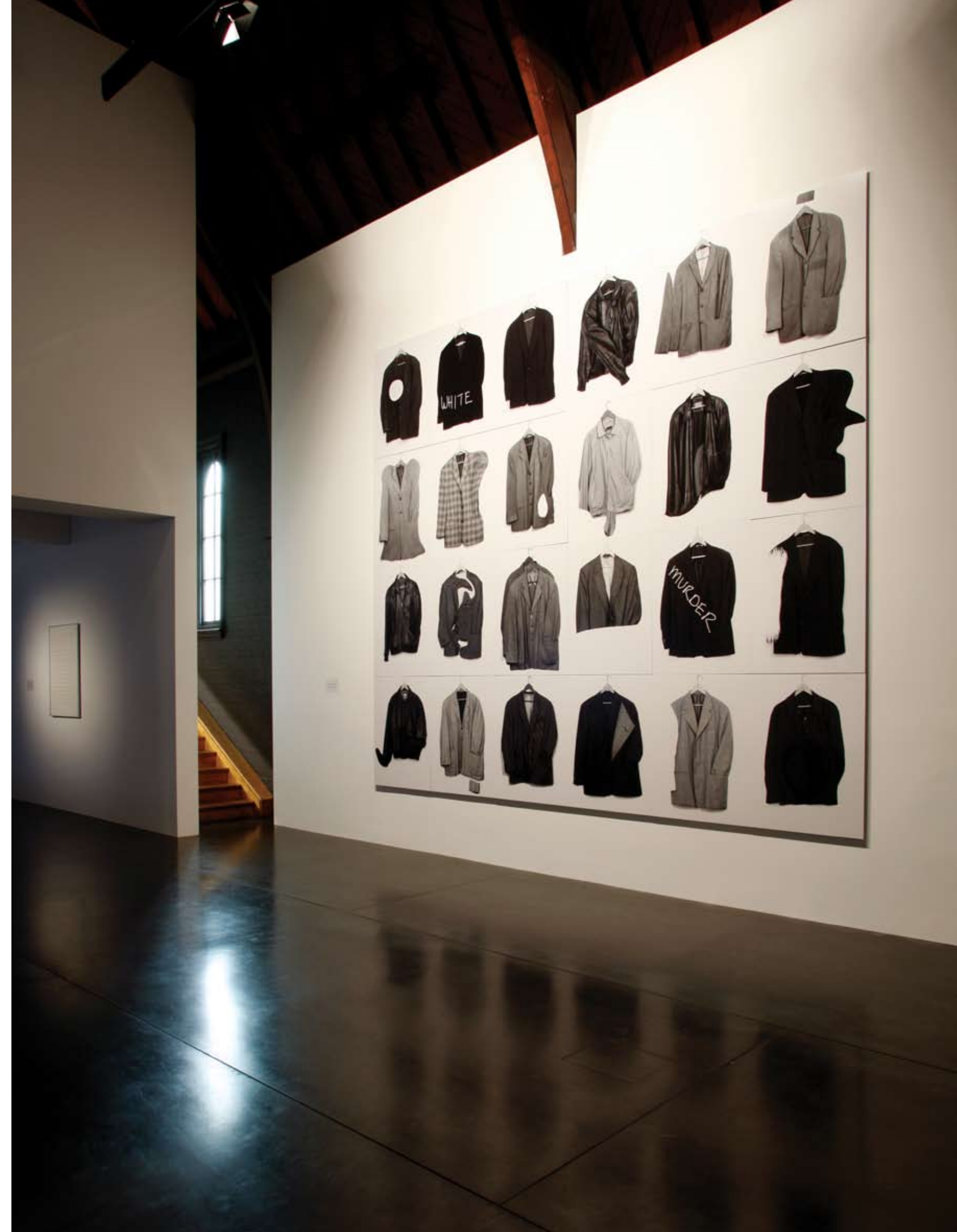
Wedge

Major / Minor

DETACHED

GROUND FLOOR











16.1

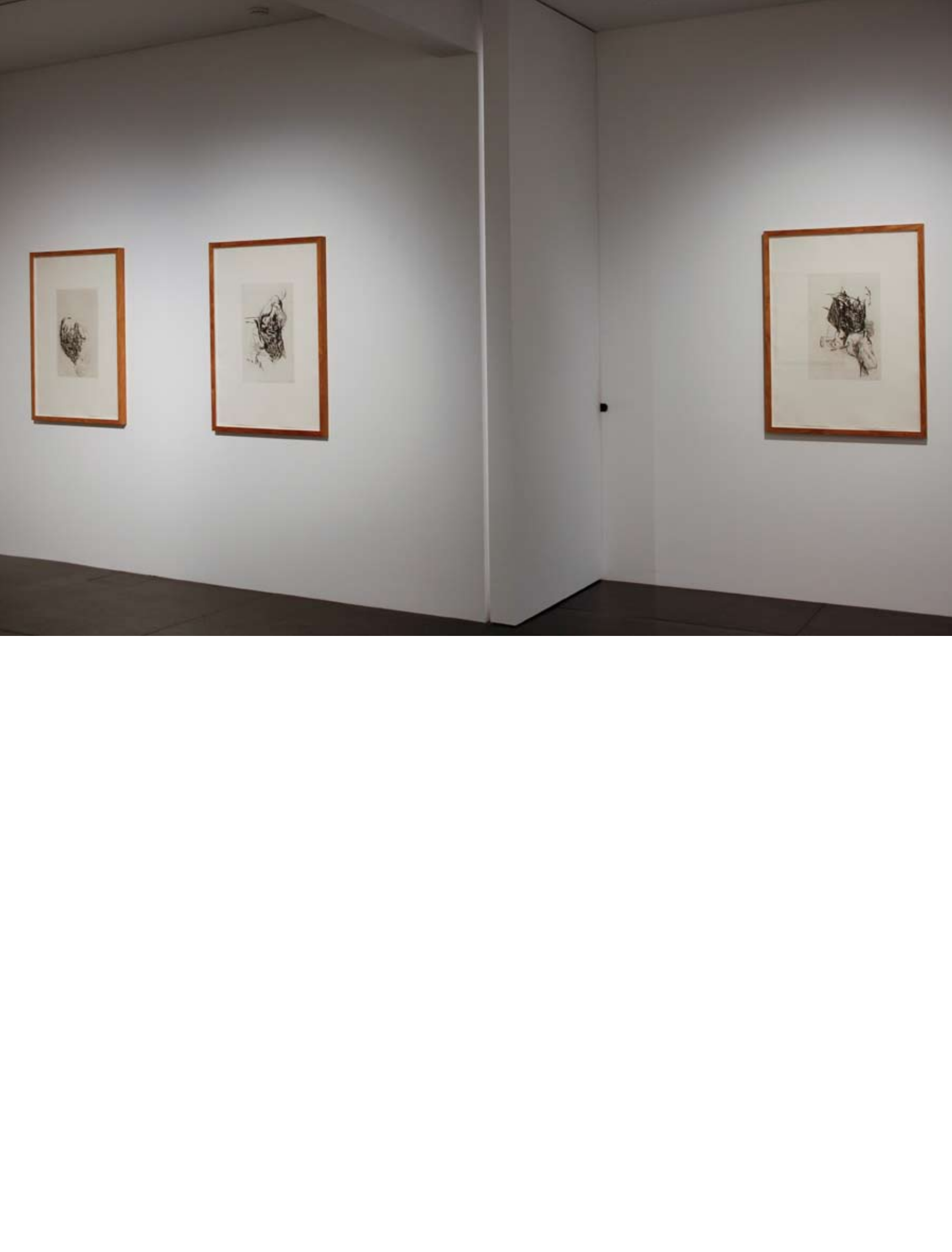
John Doe 2000



16.2

John Doe 2000







B. You

11. 11. 11

preparation



WIM
WIM
WIM

11. 11. 11

preparation











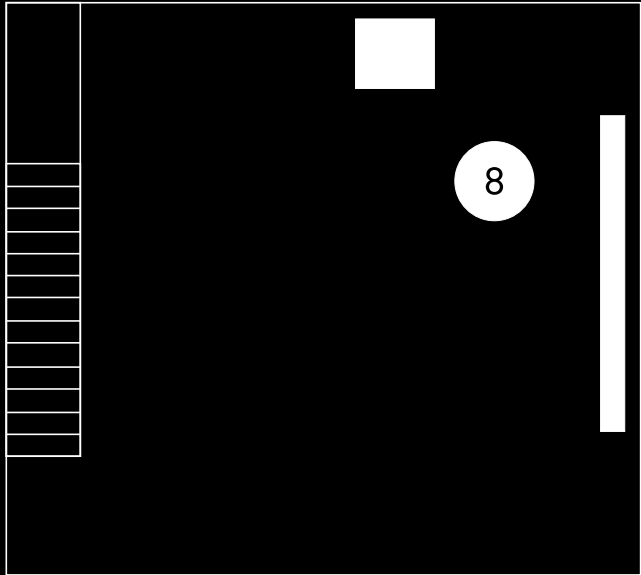




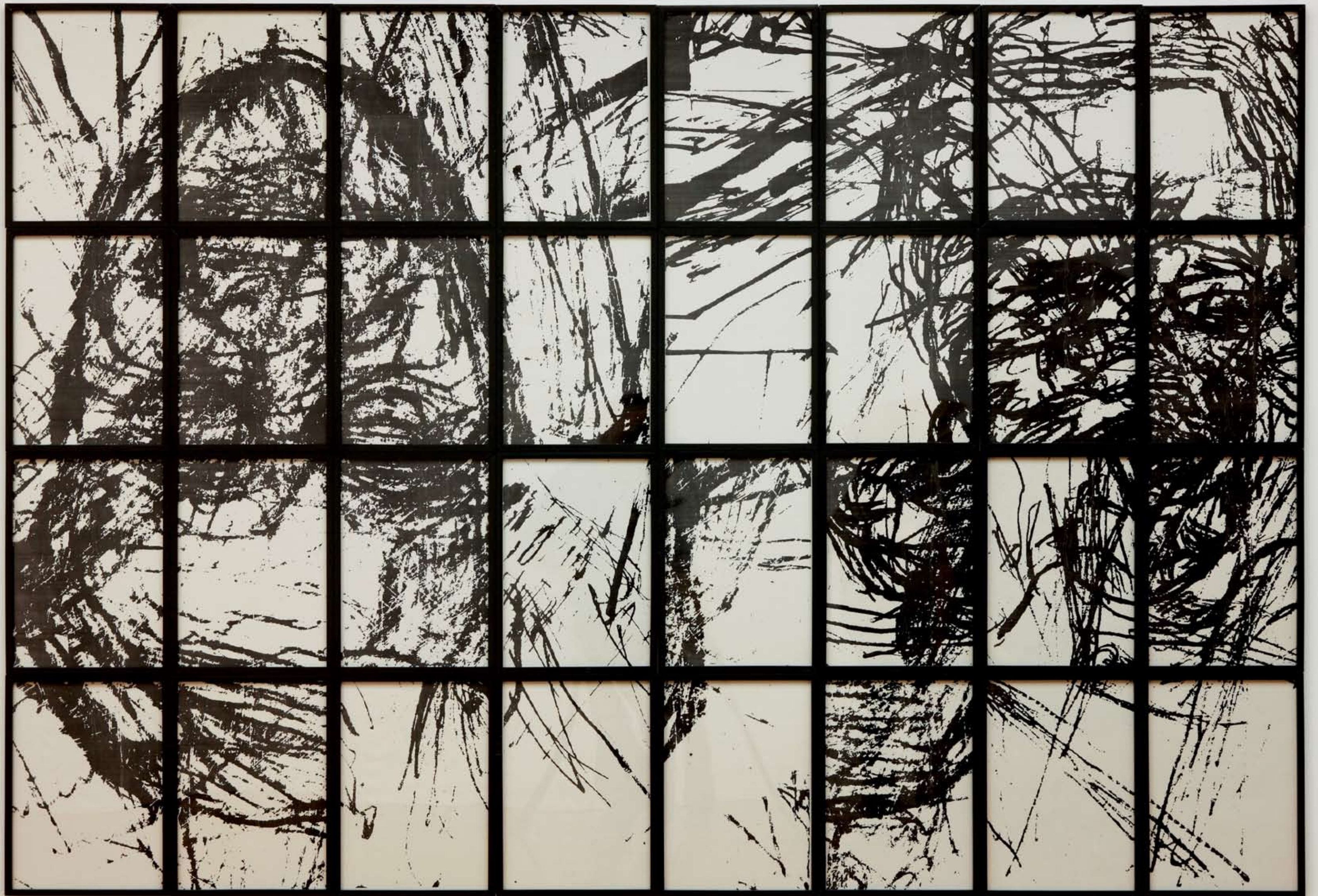


Mezzanine 1

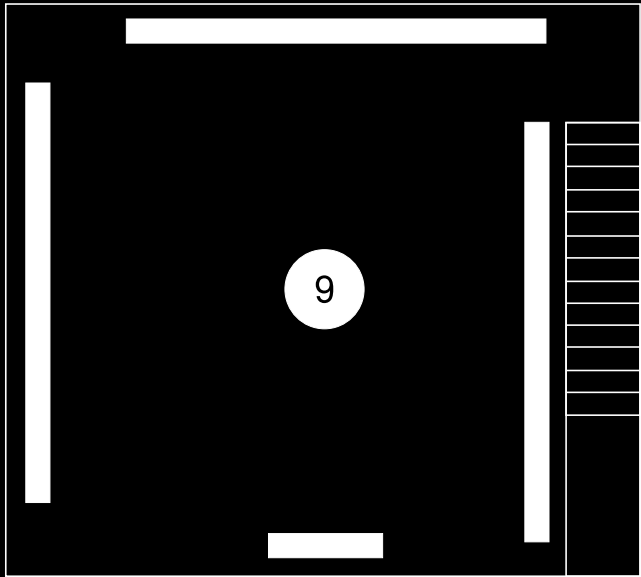
8 Raft in the Eye of God







Mezzanine 2



9

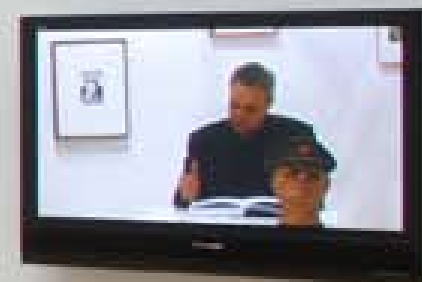
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MALE VICH



MALE

VICH

LIST OF WORKS

TMAG

LEVEL 1 (BASEMENT)

1.

House of Cards, 2 May 2004

DVD. Edition of 4. Aspect Ratio 4:3. Duration – 29:42.

Closed session performance, Artspace, Woolloomooloo, NSW, Australia.

Performer: Mike Parr. 16 mm camera: Mark Bliss. Sound: Tiegan Kollosché.
2.

The Wax Bride, 1998

Mixed media; Dimensions variable.

Model maker: Keith Rae.

Collection: Art Gallery of New South Wales, gift of the artist 2001.
3.

Drip Self-Portrait, 11 April 2006

C-type photograph; 180 x 100 cm.

Performance photograph: The Lab Studio, Waterloo, NSW, Australia.

Performer: Mike Parr. Photographer: Paul Green. Make-up: Chizuko Saito.

Digital manipulation: Felicity Jenkins.
4.

Black Wax Wedge, 2007

Wax, ply; 4 sections, overall dimensions 120 x 40 x 1000 cm.

Casting: Nicholas Dörrer. Private collection, Tasmania.



LEVEL 2

5.

First Body Program, 1973

DVD. Edition of 4. Aspect Ratio 4:3. Total duration – 15:40.

Remediation of:

- A

Push tacks into your leg until a line of tacks is made up your leg

(*Wound by Measurement 1*). Sydney. Duration – 00:34.
- B

Using sharpened matches push matches between your teeth until your mouth is filled with matches. Sydney. Duration – 01:26.
- C

Hold a lighted match in your mouth ... until the roof of your mouth is burnt

(*Wound by Measurement 3*). Sydney. Duration – 00:12.
- D

Blood-Unity Structure (after Brancusi's Endless Column.)

Performer one cuts a line into the top of his/her forearm with a scalpel.

Performer two incises the underside of his/her forearm placing the forearm atop the first performer's arm so that the two wounds align and their blood co-mingles. Performer two incises a wound in the top part of his/her forearm.

Performer three repeats the same sequence of actions as Performer two, continuing through Performers four, five ... All performers should take
- care not to let any portion of their bodies intrude into the camera frame.*

To facilitate the process of the work, the cameraman can interact with the performers, providing them with instructions as to the progress of the work.

It is very important that the final 'Blood Unity Sculpture' fills the frame, giving the impression of transcending, rising upwards, serially, endlessly, like Brancusi's Endless Column.
- E

Sydney. Duration – 02:15.

Have a branding iron made up with the word 'ARTIST.' Brand this word on your body. Sydney and Neuchatel. Note: *In Neuchatel I asked for volunteers to step forward, arguing that this was their opportunity to be accredited as artists. No one followed my example.*

Duration – 00:40.

F

Slash your wrists and arms. Smear the blood on your face.

Sydney. Duration – 01:41.

G

Have a burning match dropped on your bare chest

(*Wound by Measurement 4*). Sydney. Duration – 00:34.

H

Using a sharp instrument cut around your thigh so that a leg ring is made

(*Wound by Measurement 5*). Sydney. Duration – 01:28.

I

Stuff your nose with bread. Push matches into your nose. Ignite the matches.

Sydney. Duration – 01:33.

J

Re-open old wounds. Sew up the wounds (*Wound by Measurement 6*).

Sydney. Duration – 02:12.

K

Slash your fingers ... let the blood fall on your eyes ... until your eyes are filled with blood. Sydney. Duration – 02:02.
- Performances from:
- Rules & Displacement Activities Part I*, May 1973.

Central Street Gallery, Sydney, NSW, Australia.

Performers: Mike Parr, Felizitas Stefanitsch, Noel Sheridan, Julie Parr, Michael Callighan, Ted Colless.

16 mm camera: Ian Stocks. Sound: Janos Urban, Julie Parr.

Editing: Mike Parr, Albie Thoms.
6.

Second Body Program, 1975.

DVD. Edition of 4. Aspect Ratio 4:3. Total duration – 11:05.
- Remediation of:
- A

Lenin poster, grid of blue sky, live fish.

Performance Note: “*Lenin's bodiless head covered by a grid of nine colour photographs of the blue sky. Small, live tinfoil barb fish are dropped on the photographs. Their thrashing bodies disrupt the photographs. Lenin's face emerges through the interstices.*” Duration – 00:22.

B

Integration 2 (Push a fish up your nose).

Performance Note: “*The performer should tilt back his head and push a small fish up his nose... so that the fish's wriggling tail hangs down over the performer's upper lip. With a free hand the performer should splash iodine across his nose and face and down over the fish (reeling from the impact of the asphyxiating iodine).*”

Duration – 00:07.

- C

Marx Father.

Performance Note: “*Two men and two women lie naked on the floor. Round river stones together with posters of Marx and Lenin are placed behind their heads. I dump clusters of dead fish onto their genitals and pour black molasses into their mouths.*” Duration – 02:49.
- D

Reading of the LAFART Manifesto (Mike Parr) and *The East is Red.*

Performance Note: “*Nude performers are covered in honey. Photographs of the blue sky and a tree in the park are dropped onto their bodies. Matted sections of the LAFART manifesto slide into place interrupting the filmed record of the performance as a choral rendition of ‘The East is Red’ and the reading of the LAFART manifesto swell on the soundtrack.*” Duration – 02:35.
- E

Integration 14 (Red Vomit).

Performance Note: “*I eat white bread soaked in ipecac and red vegetable dye. As I begin to vomit a vein in my right arm (just inside elbow joint) is incised so that a long line of blood flows down my arm (in conjunction with the red vomit which led in a line to a red pool between my feet on the floor). We communicate the idea of fluids running out of, down, pooling: the image of the pool being associated with the Unconscious as the source of collective ritual and myth. The walls of the Performance Room are covered by the decapitated poster heads of Marx, Lenin, Mao and the LAFART manifesto.*” Duration – 01:24.
- F

Integration 3 (a. Leg Spiral).

Performance Note: “*Coil a dynamite wick around your leg so that it makes a spiral from ankle to knee. Ignite the wick so that a track is burnt into your leg.*” Duration – 00:22.
- G

“*I can’t break out of this thing on my own.*”

Performance Note: “*I can’t break out of this thing on my own and the responsibility for not breaking out of the situation can’t, after the event, be put on my head. It happened because of all of us.*” Duration – 00:35.
- H

Identification No. 5 (Totem Murder #1).

Performance Note: “*I lie rigidly still on the floor of the performance room. Various performers pour white feathers on my body until my body is a mound of feathers. Rodney the rooster is slaughtered in the performance room. His dangling body is swung like a censer above the mound of feathers so that the feathers are sprinkled with blood. The camera looks at the rooster’s severed head, my eye and the decapitated heads of the Marxist heroes on the walls.*” Duration – 02:47.

Performances from:

Rules & Displacement Activities Part II, 1975
The Performance Room, 54 Holmwood Street, Newtown, NSW, Australia.
Performers: Mike Parr, Felizitas Stafanitsch, Julie Parr, Tim Parr, Celestine Elia, Alexandra Morphett, Michael Callaghan, George Pavlu, Melissa Mitchelll, Jennifer Farrar, Ted Colless, Noel Sheridan, Bruce Cameron.
16 mm camera: John Delacour, Gary Hanson, Ian Stocks, Celestino Elia.
Sound: Chris Tillam. Photographers: George Goldberg, Felizitas Stefanitsch.
Editing: Chris Tillam, Mike Parr.

7.

White, 2004–08

DVD. Edition of 4. Aspect Ratio 4:3. Duration – 13:59.

Digital manipulation: Video 8. Sound: Mike Parr, Tiegan Kollosché.

Remediation of:

White, 2 May 2004.
Closed session performance, Artspace, Woolloomooloo, NSW, Australia.
Performer: Mike Parr. 16 mm camera: Mark Bliss. Sound: Tiegan Kollosché.

8.

Aussie, Aussie, Aussie, Oi, Oi, Oi (Democratic Torture), 2–3 May 2003

DVD. Edition of 4. Projection on suspended screen.

Aspect Ratio 16:9. Duration – 38:03.

Artspace, Woolloomooloo, NSW, Australia.

Performer: Mike Parr. Photographers: Paul Green, Felizitas Parr, Dobrila Stamenovic.

16 mm camera: Mark Bliss. Sound: Tiegan Kollosché.

Co-performer: Felizitas Parr.

9.

Not The Hilton, 2002

DVD. Edition of 4. Projection on suspended screen.

Aspect Ratio 16:9. Duration – 25:50.

Digital manipulation: Debra Petrovich. Sound: Mike Parr.

10.

150 Programmes and Investigations, 1971–72

35 mm slide projection.

.....

LEVEL 3

11.

Bronze Liars (minus 1 to minus 16), 1996

16 pieces, bronze and beeswax; dimensions variable.

Casting: Bruce Clayton.

Collection: Art Gallery of New South Wales, purchased 1996.

12.

Yourizen, 2008

Life cast self-portrait head in silicone rubber and plaster cast gilded with silver leaf. 2 states (with/without mantilla).

State 1: vitrine 33 x 53.5 x 69 cm; on plinth.

State 2: vitrine 38 x 53.5 x 69 cm; on plinth.

Model maker: Eleanor Woodhead. Casting/gilding: Garry Manson.

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LEVEL 4

13.

Cartesian Corpse, 2008

Performance / installation: 2 states.
- State 1: *Cartesian Corpse, performance for as long as possible*, 21–22 November 2008. Tasmanian Museum & Art Gallery, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia. Performer: Mike Parr. Co-performer and performance curator: Anthony Bond OAM. Photographer: Paul Green. Cinematographer: Gotaro Uematsu.

State 2: Performer replaced with life cast self-portrait head, *Minor*

Performance / installation components:

Minor, 2008
Life cast self-portrait head; approx. 50 x 23 x 20 cm.
Model maker: Eleanor Woodhead.

Wedge, 2008
Jarrah timber; 240 x 511 x 700 cm.
Constructed by: Paul Colegrave and Richard Kowaluk.

Major/Minor, 11–12 October 2008
16 mm converted to Blu-ray Disc. Aspect Ratio 16:9. Duration – 09:15.
Closed session, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, NSW, Australia
Performer: Mike Parr. Curator: Anthony Bond OAM. Producer: Lisa Corsi.
Cinematographer: Jackie Farkas. Camera Assistant: Simeon Bryant.
Make-up: Elka Wardega. Model Maker: Eleanor Woodhead (for *Minor*).
Gaffer: Pete Wood. Photographer: Paul Green.
Production assistants: Gotaro Uematsu and Claire Taylor.

Cartesian Corpse Performance Relay, 2008
State 1: Live HDV video relay. Aspect Ratio 16:9.
State 2: HDV video recording. Aspect Ratio 16:9. Duration – 36:31:36.
Performer: Mike Parr.
Co-performer and performance curator: Anthony Bond OAM.
AV technician: Brian Martin.

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DETACHED

GROUND FLOOR

1.

Murder without Adjectives, 2005

Digital prints; 27 parts (only 24 exhibited), 99 x 74 cm each.
Unique state.
Photographer: Paul Green. Digital manipulation: Felicity Jenkins.
Courtesy of the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery, Melbourne & Sydney.
2.

And You, 2008

Drypoint and carborundum; 5 panels: image size 60 x 40 cm, sheet size 108 x 78 cm each, framed; diptych, 108 x 156 cm overall (image and sheet size 108 x 78 cm each), framed.
Edition of 6, 1/6.
Printer: John Loane, Viridian Press, Canberra.
3.

Breathless, 2008

DVD. Edition of 4. Aspect Ratio 4:3. Duration – 08:01.
Digital manipulation: Video 8.

Note: remediation of *100 Breaths*, 2003
Closed performance, 106–108 Henderson Road, Alexandria, NSW, Australia.
Performer: Mike Parr.
16 mm camera: Mark Bliss. Sound: Tiegan Kollosché.
Performance Note: *100 Breaths* was first performed at the Art House, Perth, in 1992, and the only performance to be given subsequent performances. This was possible in the case of *100 Breaths* because hyperventilation means that each performance is unpredictable and different. Repetition thus produces the difference that is the aim of Parr’s works as a whole.

4.

Malevich, 2002

Silkscreen print on rives paper; 120 x 70 cm, framed.
Edition of 40, 1/40.
Printer: Larry Rawling.
5.

Red Dread, 1970 (2000)

Remediated as a silkscreen print on rives paper in 2000; paper size 100 x 70 cm.
Edition of 40, AP.
Printer: Larry Rawling.
Courtesy of the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery, Melbourne & Sydney.
6.

NOH Catalogue, 2005

Stamped typeface and intaglio on each page of 57 Daily Telegraph newspapers; 40.3 x 57 cm each.
Unique state.
Printer: John Loane, assisted by Marina Neilson, Julie Holmes, Natalie Sanders, Alison Dumbleton, Y. Y. Lee, Antonia Aitken and Angela O’Brien-Malone at Canberra School of Art.
7.

Blind Obedience / Silent Majority, 1998–2004

DVD diptych. Edition of 4. Projected text. Projected numbers.
Blind Obedience: The synonym for the word synonymous was looked up in the *Funk & Wagnalls Standard Dictionary* and then the synonym of the synonym repeated eighty times terminating the process with the word *dead*.

Silent Majority: Numbers were substituted for the twenty-six letters of the alphabet reading in order from one to twenty-six and this substitution was used to re-write the eighty words of *synonymous-dead* as eighty numbers.
Digital manipulation: Video 8.

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MEZZANINE 1

8. *Raft in the Eye of God*, 1990
Section (a) Matte black acrylic painted customboard; 60 x 120 x 60 cm.
Section (b) 32 framed laser-photocopies of two memory self-portrait drawings;
each 43.5 x 31.5 cm framed.
Courtesy of the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery, Melbourne & Sydney.

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MEZZANINE 2

9. *Here*, 1975–2008
Installation
Note: *Here* is based on the original Performance Room, 54 Holmwood Street, Newtown, NSW, Australia, which was constructed for *Rules & Displacement Activities Part II*, in 1975.

Installation components:

Revolutionary Reading, 2008
DVD. Edition of 4. Aspect ratio 16:9, sound: stereo. Duration – 30:53.
MCA, Sydney, NSW, Australia (part of the Public Program of the 2008 Biennale of Sydney:
Revolutions – Forms That Turn, curated by Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev).
Performer: Mike Parr. Camera: Dougal Phillips.

Revolutionary Reading, 2008
C-type photographs; 8 panels, 70 x 50 cm each.
Performer: Mike Parr. Photographer: Paul Green.

LAFART, LIGHT IN A LOAD OF SHIT, 1975
Seven silkscreen manifestos, unlimited edition; 50.8 x 37.5 cm.

Marx-Father Heads, 1975
Silk posters (monochrome); 78 x 51 cm each:
7 pieces: 3 Lenin posters (2 in positive, 1 in negative); 2 Marx posters (1 in positive, 1 in negative);
2 Mao posters (1 in positive, 1 in negative).
Paper posters (colour); 53 x 37 cm each:
4 pieces: 2 Marx posters; 2 Engels posters; 1 Mao

MALE / VICH, 2008
Cair mats; 35 x 50 cm each.
Lettering: Will French.

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