



QUEER VISUALITIES

Reframing Sexuality in a Post-Warhol World

Oct 19 - Dec 7, 2002

University Art Gallery
Staller Center for the Arts
Stony Brook University

Essay by Jonathan D. Katz

Director, Larry Kramer Initiative for Lesbian and Gay Studies, Yale University

Acknowledgements

I want to thank Assistant Professor Carl Pope, Department of Art, University at Stony Brook, for curating this exhibition. I also want to express my gratitude to Assistant Professor Christa Erickson, Department of Art, University at Stony Brook, for curating the film/video component of *Queer Visualities* and for designing the print and web exhibition catalogues and the announcement card. Special thanks are also extended to Associate Professor Jonathan Katz, Yale University, for writing the catalogue essay and for his assistance with the organization of the exhibition and the conference. I also want to thank the Petrig Collection, Long Island, NY, Deitch Projects, NYC, Jessica Murray Projects, Brooklyn, NY, and the Andrew Kreps Gallery, NYC, for their generous participation in this exhibition.

I gratefully acknowledge the generous support of the Cowles Charitable Trust and the following departments and organizations affiliated with the University at Stony Brook: Office of the Provost; Office of the Dean of Students; the Humanities Institute at Stony Brook; and the Friends of the Staller Center.

Special thanks are also extended to members of the Staller Center for the Arts staff: Pete Pantaleo, and Michelle Wacker, for installation assistance; Gallery Assistants Esther Marie Chagaris, Linda Chesney, Sydney Ku, Vincent Louie, Yan Ruan, Rachel Sheriff, and Jin Zhou; Gallery Interns Donna Marie Barbe, Glenda Fernandez, Donna Lipschutz, Thilo Schuster, and Christopher Vivas; Liz Silver, Technical Director, Neil Creedon, ATD, and the Staller Center Technical Crew, for exhibition lighting; and Marge Debowy, Assistant to the Gallery Director.

Most of all, I wish to thank the artists and collectors for sharing their work with the Stony Brook community.

Rhonda Cooper,
Gallery Director

Reframing Sexuality in a Post-Warhol World



Andy Warhol's 1964 print "Birmingham Race Riot" framed in an overtly decorative, faux-baroque white frame of questionable taste by the artist Cary Liebowitz. A famous image of racial injustice first framed by a newspaper photographer, then reframed by Warhol as a work of fine art, reframed yet again by Liebowitz – this time literally – and here reframed yet again as the totemic image of this exhibition. An immediate, searing record of the civil rights movement made to function in a different context by Warhol, yet another by Liebowitz, yet another by me. A decrescendo of sorts – real violence to reportage to reproduction, distanciation, normalization, reinvestment, resuscitation, remove. Such is the afterlife of images, a storm-tossed career in which meaning is always negotiated through current needs and investments – no permanence, no guarantees.

This exhibition is, broadly, about such reframings, about art as a quotation inside a quotation inside a quotation, the endless reframing exposing the inherently constructed quality of representation, even at its most putatively natural. Warhol was hardly the first to realize this – Manet's *Le déjeuner sur l'herbe* beat him there by almost exactly a century – but he is the artist who most powerfully framed the issue for our generation. And, not least for my purposes, he stands like a colossus at the intersection of this most modern recognition about the unnaturalness of representation, even photographic representation, and another form of representation even more powerfully framed in terms of nature, sexuality. For Warhol is the ur-queer artist, a man who repeatedly, the recent LAMOCA retrospective notwithstanding, framed himself and his work as queer, who actually femmed it up in public.

To understand sexuality as inherently unnatural, as but representation can seem counterintuitive, or at least did so until Foucault's pathbreaking *A History of Sexuality*. Our customary Freudian inflected notion of sexuality sees it as interior, not anterior – an inchoate, rushing stream of needs and desires which can assuredly be dammed but which will nonetheless spill out in various unanticipated ways countering its repressions. In contrast, Queer theory finds sexuality more anterior than interior, less an inchoate rushing stream than a citation of cultural codes which occupy a position and thereby place us on a social map. What was it Oscar Wilde wrote in this vein over a century ago? "Want to fall in love? Well then recite love's litany." To be in love is to represent oneself as being in love, there is nothing more to it than that. Queerness in this frame is the acceptance of a discursive position, a self-framing. Like the idea that there is no representation segregated from the history of other representations, and that all images continue to shed and accrue meanings with time, so too sexuality as a representation of selfhood shifts.

Images have a history and so do sexualities and the truth of all things historical is that they change. Liebowitz's Warhol materializes this historical moment in our discourse, framing Warhol as central for precisely his acknowledgement of how things can't be permanently framed. Every artist in this show likewise reframes historical significations – from Kass' refracting of Warhol through a lesbian feminist lens, to Lemcke's poetic play with Indonesian shadow puppets to Cronin's embrace of a Victorian embrace. Diaz offers a Pollock made current through precisely the decorative effects, so gendered, so colonized, their originator rigorously eschewed. And so this essay framing this show is likewise marked by its historical moment, and writing it, I can already feel how it's framed by its time. "Presentness is grace."

Essay by Jonathan D. Katz

Director, Larry Kramer Initiative for Lesbian and Gay Studies, Yale University

Patricia Cronin



Memorial to a Marriage, 2002
Plaster maquette, 5 x 19 x 9-1/2"
Courtesy of the artist and Deitch Projects, NYC

Alejandro Diaz



Painting No. 69, 2002 (detail)
Paint, crystal, and glitter on canvas, 60 x 180"
Courtesy of the artist and Jessica Murray Projects, Brooklyn, NY

Chitra Ganesh



Unnatural Disappearance, 2002 (detail)
Mixed media installation, 144 x 168"

Karen Heagle



Diane and Jonah, 2001
Acrylic and collage on paper, 41 x 26"

Joe Heidecker



...in the eyes of..., 2000
Beads on found photograph, 30 x 26"

Deborah Kass



Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, 1994
Silkscreen and acrylic on canvas, 24 panels,
88 x 132" overall

Rudy Lemcke



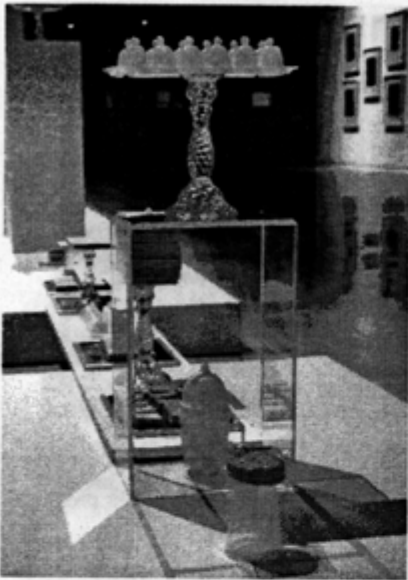
The Uninvited, 2001
Video installation, dimensions variable

Scott Lifshutz



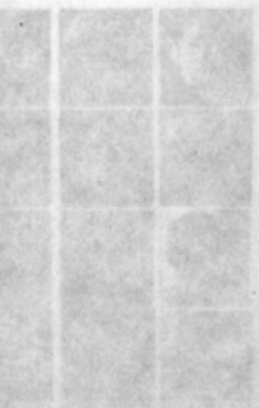
Poppy Orange, 1996
Oil on canvas, 40 x 40"

Franco Mondini-Ruiz



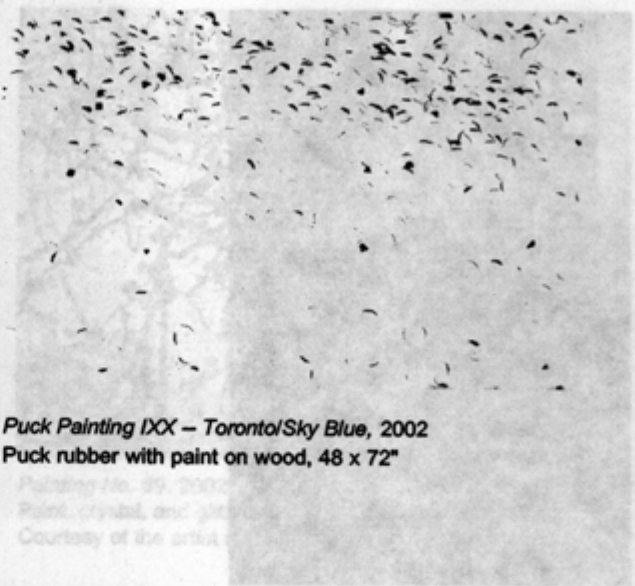
High Yellow: Long Island, 2002 (detail)
Multimedia installation, 68-1/2 x 456 x 36"

Deborah Kass



Portrait of the Artist as a Silkscreen and acrylic on glass, 2002 (detail)
68 x 132" overall

Liss Platt

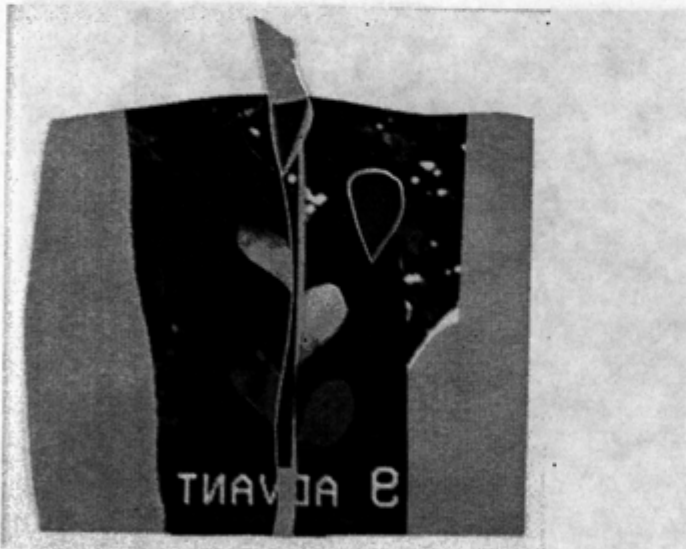


Puck Painting IXX – Toronto/Sky Blue, 2002
Puck rubber with paint on wood, 48 x 72"

Painting No. 99, 2002
Paint, crystal, and glass
Courtesy of the artist

...the view of...
"95 x 95" on photograph, 30 x 36"

Hiroshi Sunairi



Advantex 9, 2001
C-print collage, 18 x 14"
Courtesy Andrew Kreps Gallery, NYC

Scott Lisantz

Poopy Orange, 1998
Oil on canvas, 40 x 40"

Steed Taylor



Watching TV, 2001
Silver gelatin print, 31-3/4 x 31-1/2"

Acrylic and collage on paper, 41 x 28"

Rudy Pankke

The Unity
Video, 1998

Sam Van Aken



World's Most Amazing Video, 2000
Multimedia installation, dimensions variable

Andy Warhol & Cary Liebowitz



Birmingham Race Riot, 1994
Silkscreen 32 x 36"
Framed in found frame by Cary Liebowitz
Courtesy Petrig Collection, Long Island, NY

STALLER
CENTER FOR THE ARTS
UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY

STONY BROOK
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Queer Visualities Conference

Thursday, Nov 14
Stony Brook University, Long Island NY

Friday, Nov 15
Stony Brook Manhattan

Saturday, Nov 16
Stony Brook Manhattan

for information: queervisualities.net

Hiroshi Sugita

Rosco Taylor

Advantex 9, 2001
C-print collage, 18 x 24
Courtesy Andrew K...

