



# PreMillennial

**SIGNS  
OF  
THE  
SOON  
COMING  
STORM**

Mike Stevenson  
Ronnie van Hout



The True Artist Helps the World  
by Revealing Mystic Truths.

This publication is dedicated  
to all who seek the Truth.

THE ARTISTS AND DARREN KNIGHT GALLERY WISH TO THANK THE FOLLOWING  
FOR THEIR ASSISTANCE WITH THIS EXHIBITION:

Eion Abernethy, Kirsten Browne, Mary-Louise Browne, Rex Butler, Elizabeth Caldwell, Katherine Chadwick, Christopher Chapman, Darryl Cowie, Jenepher Duncan, Joanne Harris, Greg Hawking, Giovanni Intra, Robert Leonard, Catherine Lomas, William McAloon, Chris McAuliffe, John McCormack, Athol McCredie, Hamish McKay, Suzie Melhop, Linda Niccol, Gwynneth Porter, Chris Saines, Paula Savage, Brigid Shadbolt, Allan Smith, Bala Starr, Andrew Thorn, Greg von Menge, Clare Williamson

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MIKE STEVENSON AND RONNIE VAN HOUT ARE REPRESENTED BY:

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PreMillennial has been organised by the Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney in association with the artists and participating venues in Australia and New Zealand.

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## The Problems With Paranoia

by Rex Butler

For regular viewers of *The X-Files*, *PreMillennial* cannot but appear like something of a re-run. The very title of the show suggests the apocalypse, as though we were helplessly waiting around for the world to end. It evokes a time of dark fanaticism and evil plots. (Chris Carter, the creator of the original *X-Files*, has even devised a TV series with a similar name based on this premise.) Mike Stevenson presents us with a number of contemporary "classics" — a Daniel Buren stripe painting, Sherrie Levine's *After Walker Evans*, a Cindy Sherman untitled film still, a Jeff Koons advertisement — which, when held under ultra-violet light, reveal lurid right-wing tracts written in invisible ink. Ronnie van Hout arranges a hobbyist's plastic models to conjure up a cryptic scenario of UFO invasion, military evacuation, hastily erected checkpoints and poisoned water. The two artists throughout their careers have been fascinated with the idea of the art world as a kind of conspiracy. Stevenson has invented intricate tableaux of assassination and political intrigue taking place around the great icons of Minimalism and has produced a number of scurrilous fake video covers lampooning prominent art world figures. Van Hout has explored the notion of art involving such para-normal experiences as psychic channelling, out of body experiences, multiple personality disorders and mind control. For both, art implies a form of paranoia, the encrypting and decoding of secret

But take a closer look and things become more complicated. As in *The X-Files*, a kind of debate is going on between the artists. Stevenson, for his part, is a true believer. He really does seem to give credence to the various plots he elaborates. His art is presented straightforwardly as the story the art world does not have the courage to tell, repressed by its officials and institutions in a massive conspiracy aimed at excluding — who? Well, artists like Stevenson himself perhaps. Van Hout, on the contrary, is a sceptic. His work attempts to debunk the notion of art containing some deeper meaning, argues that it is the



Mike Stevenson, "Decline of Western Civilisation Pts.3 & 4" VHS video production 218min, 1990

spectator and not the artist who bestows significance upon it. Take, for example, his artist's book *Mephitis*, in which a series of small black and white photographs showing a dummy moving around an imaginary art gallery is interwoven with a pornographic short story recounting an experience of phone sex. The implication is that with art the spectator turns himself on, only plays with himself. He never actually comes into contact with the other person, the artist. Or think about the whole analogy drawn in this exhibition between Duchamp's Fountain and a wishing well. Maybe, van Hout is suggesting, Duchamp's famous

readymade is nothing but what we want it to be.

All this, of course, is like the split between Mulder and Scully in *The X-Files*. On the one hand, Scully is a non-believer or at least an agnostic, who constantly has to caution Mulder against his more extravagant hypotheses. On the other hand, Mulder really does seem to take seriously the possibility of mechanical bugs from outer space, people suddenly dissolving into a pool of liquid, cover-up and fraud reaching to the highest levels of government. The emotional and sexual interplay between the two constitutes the narrative tension of the show, but it is necessary for a more profound reason as well. That is, it is logically and not just dramatically necessary that these two opposed viewpoints be presented. Why? Consider Mulder first of all. He contends that everything is part of the plot, from which nothing is exempt. But there is a problem with this, which undoubtedly has occurred to the more discerning viewer: if what he is



is right. But then consider Scully's point of view. She argues that all this talk of alien invasions and government deception is crazy. There is no plot and science will eventually discover the answers. But — again, the terrible possibility opens itself up to the viewer — what if this explanation itself was part of the cover-up, what if Scully herself, whether wittingly or not, was part of the conspiracy? Mulder's most paranoid speculations are not to be denied, and in a way their very refutation only confirms them. Mulder and Scully, in other words, cannot be separated; their conflicting attitudes each imply the other; they represent not so much two different people as the two necessary attitudes with which we must confront the world (and the fact that, as the series has progressed, the two have moved closer together, with Mulder becoming more sceptical and Scully more open-minded, seems to suggest this).



Ronnie van Hout, "Be Someone Else" cut vinyl on vinyl, 1997

What does all this have to do with art? Recall what the German philosopher Immanuel Kant said about art in his *Critique of Aesthetic Judgement*, originally written in 1796. Think of Mulder and Scully as a pair of squabbling art critics. Think of the *Critique of Aesthetic Judgement* as *The X-Files* of the 18th century. What does Kant say about art there? Using an analogy taken from the teleological proof for the existence of God, he argues that, looking at a complex and seemingly ordered work of art, we must assume a meaning and intention to it, that it was put there by its maker for us to see. Thus, when confronted by a difficult or obscure work of art, we should ask not simply "What does it mean?" but "What did its maker mean?" In response to our own bewilderment, we must suppose a consciousness that is like our own only less bewildered. It is this assumption of purposiveness, of an intention to communicate, that allows us to begin to interpret it. By assuming it has a meaning for another and is meant to be understood by us, we can start the process of imagining ourselves as its maker and thereby give it a meaning. As Kant says, this "law of reflective judgement" consists in treating what we seek to but do not yet comprehend "in accordance with such a unity as it would have if an understanding (although not our understanding) had furnished it to our cognitive faculty as if to make

Immediately after this, however — and this is perhaps what distinguishes art from paranoia, a mere projection onto the other — Kant goes on to qualify this “law of reflective judgement”, imposing a certain limit as to its applicability, how far it may be taken. He continues, after that passage we have just quoted: “Not as though, in this way, such an intention should really be assumed (for it is only our reflective judgement to which this idea serves as a principle — for reflecting, not determining); but this faculty thus gives a law only to itself and not to nature”. In other words, directly after assuming a necessary intentionality to the work of art, the spectator must also think that this intentionality is only his own, that the work has no meaning before he comes to it. The spectator, therefore, is caught between having to attribute meaning to the work and thinking it has none; he must ask both whether it has no meaning because he has not understood it yet and, even when he has apparently grasped the meaning of the work, whether there is another behind that.

It is this that opens up the whole dialectic between the work and its audience in modern art, with each trying to out-guess and outwit the other, the perpetual oscillation between the work having no value and the work having another or more value. At this point, both credit and credibility become issues in art, for we would say that the possibility of art actually having a value only arises insofar as the very value of art itself can be questioned. This is perhaps why van Hout shows his social security documentation alongside his art here, for it raises the problem of whether art has any value, whether the artist is always as it were out of work. Certainly, it is only in the light of this paradoxical logic that we can begin to think through two of the most puzzling conjunctions in contemporary art. Take, for instance, van Hout’s playing around with different authorial personae. As the critic Robert Leonard notes, a whole series of van Hout’s works simply appear to be copies of those by other artists: Polke, Salle, McCahon, Trockel, Nauman. He seems to have no signature style except the very absence of one. Indeed, we cannot but read a number of his recent works precisely as allegories of this fractured, divided authorship: his Paul McCarthy dolls made up of various bits-and-pieces that turn out to be a self-portrait; his vinyl prints devoted to Jerry Lewis’ split personality film *The Nutty Professor*; his...

existing parts there is no clearer illustration of art as a readymade, the assembling of others' prior ideas.

Of course, even this strategy is not new, as a panel accompanying "Be Someone Else" acknowledged by pairing the name "Ronnie van Hout" with that of "Richard Prince". For a long time now artists have tried to destroy their signatures, to make impossible any resort to themselves as the final arbiters of the meaning of their work. But — our first strange conjunction — the more artists have tried to destroy their signature, the more they have emerged as the figures determining the reception of their work. Certainly, van Hout himself still claims his works as his own, still speaks of himself, as his numerous interviews attest, as the guiding intelligence behind his oeuvre. In our post-modern times, we are more obsessed than ever with the cult of the author. Indeed, the value of his signature is increased not depressed by attributing to it many apparently different and unrelated things. It is called originality. (Hence the unexpected and troubling affinity between the exercise of total appropriation van Hout is engaged in and artistic originality.)

Or we might think that van Hout is endeavouring to expose the necessary assumption of intentionality required for the interpretation of art, demonstrating that the work contains nothing except what the audience puts there. Think of the cassette players plugged into casts of the artist's head in *Father, Son, Holy Ghost*, or the empty Elvis suit which he hangs on the wall waiting for someone to fill it, or indeed the painting "Be Someone Else", which is the very credo of Kant's aesthetic judgement. Van Hout here and in all his other "pathetic" gestures, his hopelessness, unemployment and self-proclaimed "sickness", is trying to destroy the underlying credibility of art. He is wanting to show it means nothing, is worth nothing, is only a fruitless search for identity like the band audition posters he shows of people listing their favourite rockstars. And yet — second strange conjunction — what history shows is that it is just those who have tried to expose the deceit of art who end up being accorded the greatest status, those who have tried to demonstrate it has no value who end up being the most rewarded by it. Marcel Duchamp as game player and gambler, Joseph Beuys as charismatic shaman, Yves Klein as charlatan or prankster, Andy Warhol as automaton or machine: all tried to say that it was others who gave them their selfhood, but it is for just this reason that they

audience, the more authoritative and canonical it became. The more it attempted to say nothing, the more it was understood to speak of everything. Just as the nothing in common to their various works became their signature, so their very declaration of the absence of meaning became their meaning.

We see the same inversion from Stevenson's point of view. He at first strikes us as the antithesis of van Hout. He truly does believe in a meaning out there. As opposed to van Hout's protean disregard for authorial consistency, his exquisitely rendered charcoal drawings are all about the pursuit of a singular and recognisable hand, a style. As opposed to van Hout's apparent lack of anything to say, Stevenson's work is characterised by the relentless search for the truth. He has seemingly been putting together the pieces of the same Big Picture throughout his career. His work has the same dogged consistency and candour of the zealot. It lacks that irony and self-consciousness that makes the rest of us normal. Indeed, it is tempting to call him a high Modernist as opposed to van Hout's post-modernism. (Certainly, there is a constant evocation in Stevenson's work of the great monuments of Modernism: Donald Judd's polished cubes and rectangles, Christo's wrapped environments, Walter de Maria's lightning field, etc.) He does not rejoice in idleness, unemployment, uselessness, as does van Hout, but bemoans the decay and lack of seriousness that characterises contemporary culture (the titles of some of his mock videos are *The Decline of Western Civilisation: The Minimalist Years* and *The Auty Report*). But at the end of all this, of course, we must ask: is Stevenson serious? Does he really intend all this or not? Just like Scully who is able to remind Mulder that insofar as he knows what he does the plot cannot be total, so we might say that Stevenson's own art is the very thing he condemns, the same self-contradictory attempt to speak about a hidden plot when he is undoubtedly part of it, to speak about the decline of Western civilisation when he is a symptom of the same decline. Stevenson in fact is not entirely stylistically or compositionally consistent and is just as derivative in his way as van Hout. He too shows in "insider" galleries like him. But does the fact that Stevenson's work can speak about the plot like this mean that the art world conspiracy is not as strong as he originally thought or that he himself is part of the plot? There is always this undecidability between there being no meaning and there always being another meaning. As van Hout (Scully) becomes Stevenson (Mulder), so Stevenson

reconciled, can also never be separated. They are the two sides of that internal division that characterises both the artist (between having and not having a style) and the spectator (between being the artist and himself).

Art, then, as the title of this show indicates and as Kant already spoke of, is precisely pre-millennial and not millennial. The attempt to discern a final meaning or purpose to the work of art is always necessarily self-contradictory. Before doing so, we must ask how we could come to know this, whether we give a rule only to ourselves and not to nature, whether that intentionality we see there is only ours or not. And yet, on the other hand, we cannot think art at all without some end or purpose in mind, even if it is the very lack of an end or purpose. It is not so much a question of an end or a lack of an end, the millennial or the non-millennial, therefore, but as Kant put it a "purposiveness without purpose" or a "finality without end": an endless end or penultimacy, the pre-millennial. This paradoxically is the perpetual state of art. Or as another thinker once put it in a similar paradox: if the symptom of the end of history was the collapse of our sense of linearity, of us being able to propose a meaning and destiny for ourselves, then perhaps the very evidence that this end has already taken place might be the fact that we do not realise it. And yet, insofar as he himself can speak of this, we would not yet be at this end. In a beautiful twist, then, we might say that for him the year 2000 has come because it has not and has not because it has. For him too, like Kant, the end has at once already occurred and never will. Every moment of time is this end, brings this end closer, and defers it, ensures that it will never arrive. For him too, the very form this end takes — the end we experience — is pre-millennial. The present and indeed the future is already understood as its own ruin, its own archaeology (and, indeed, we might want to think of van Hout's little models here as the ruins of a kind of modernism, the layers of Stevenson's drawings as the strata of a future archaeology).



# For Paranoid Critics

by Giovanni Intra

*This book is a fascinating account of a unique patient population: struggling young artists who have come to the artistic center of America but, at some point, feel defeated by the overwhelming competitiveness of the subculture. Gerald Alper, a psychotherapist specializing in this heretofore unstudied group, draws upon his own artistic background to form an empathetic bond with these troubled, talented individuals. He provides unusual insight into the relationship of the artist to his own creativity, his teacher, his imagined public, and his therapist.*

Dustjacket blurb, Gerald Alper, M.S., *Portrait of the artist as a young patient: psychodynamic studies of the creative personality*.<sup>1</sup>

*Conceptualism* – roll that word around in your mouth as if it were a piece of chewing gum. Then spit it out upon the pavement. Do the same with the words *appropriation* and *postmodernism*, and feel the pleasure you take from doing this. Before you on the concrete there are three – perhaps more – pink, masticated blobs, sunken caricatures of what you most hated. You take a sigh of relief, perhaps spit again on the grave of your victims, and walk away.

But it's not as easy as that – is it? For you find that the sorry corpse under your feet has in fact taken the supernatural liberty of sticking to your foot, indeed it almost threatens to pin your shoe to the ground. No problem – chewed-over rubber is no match for *your* boot. So you prise your steel-cap off

on your way. But look! what is happening? – the awful golem has now decided to take the form of an endless string to which you are now attached, puppet-like. You let out a few strong and justifiably harsh curses and attempt, with all your might, to pulverise this tenacious zombie once and for all and to truly separate yourself from it – and you sincerely mean *it*, for it bares no resemblance whatsoever to any human you ever saw. You would like to progress, to get on your way, on to better, less boring and more edifying things, thank you very much.

You succeed! Your foe is vanquished. Yesterday's gum, now well behind you, will probably attach itself to the cloven hoof of some other unlucky devil. What do you care – it's not your problem anymore! What you have left behind will never enter your thoughts again – let it be cremated by the sun or be scraped up by the cruel pick of a street cleaner. May these cast-off abstractions never be inspiration to anyone, or if they are – to hell with them.

You stroll off – a happy spring in your gait. What could be better? It's early Summer, you're in New York, you're walking to your opening, you are in the art magazines and you're in the money. Vainly, your glossy eyes turn to the skyline, and then to the sky; you whisk through West Chelsea sure that every dealer is peering curiously out their window at you – you well-dressed and distinguished sod! – and that every artist is muttering sarcastic incantations in your honour. But who the hell cares? – you're invincible.

Is your name Julian Schnabel? Jeff Koons? Rebecca Horn? Dale Frank? You are none of the above, but you're of the same league: a supremely self-confident being, one who has done so very much more than the required leg-work – and doesn't everybody know it!

Blown-up? – of course you are – and why not?

You're bounding away happily when something arrests your pace. It's nothing much, but it slows you down a little. Something on the pavement begs to differ with your jack-boot, and when you look down – your first glance below crotch-level in some thirty-five minutes – you see an object which is very horrible indeed. Partly this thing is horrible because it is so familiar, uncanny even – but you were not here today, yesterday, or even the day before, were you? This is not your usual route. What is it that dares to interrupt your march? Is this some native of the pavement? An adhesive dejecta from a McDonalds



thought you had quashed – It's those pellet-sized globules of gum which you had so ceremoniously jettisoned from your septic mouth. It's the whole of art history, sucker!

Your brow boils, pus streams from your ears. You quote Artaud at this thing in order to loosen its grip. OK then, Norman Mailer!

Nothing works.

Noticing the ground for the first time in your life you observe that there are not one, not three, not five of these things – but thousands. There must be millions of pink, trodden-on schools, movements and artists who are now glaring revengefully up at you from their unhygienic public purgatories. You can see their faces now and you know them well, because you – young God – were responsible for casting them from the canon, making insulting renditions of their profiles, forcing their bodies through that meat-grinder otherwise known as 90's irony. How great it was to hurl your spleen at those piteous wrecks who had once gotten in your way! How confident you had felt after securing that fail-safe contract with the Dark One! But now look at you! – they've caught up with you again! – they're about to smother you! – and not with kisses but with fists, stupid.

And they have. You're on the pavement, W. 20th St. Horizontal. No one cares. Reunited not only with your old foes but with the corrupted residues of saliva which you used as a lubricant of expulsion, crusty as it is by now. You pretend not to acknowledge your former disputes with this newly auspicious crowd – Why, you plead, would anyone despise such a nice, cult-loving, self-helping, tax-paying, movie-watching, photorealist soul as yourself, one who has sought only to expose the truth? Your pieces were not insults – they were acts of love! *Acts of love* you repeat! You have been misread! No answer. The forces of Good are knocking some sense into you. Eating your notebooks. Pressing their dirty fingers into your mobile telephone. Calling your editor, your gallerist (speaking in your voice, of course) and making jokes at the expense of the only two people who you bow to in the world. Suddenly you don't have a career anymore. In the meantime, they have cancelled the lease on your Rancho Santa Fe apartment and offered your library to Whitecliffe Art School, your black clothes collection to the Salvation Army, your unsold paintings to The Museum of Folk Art. Your trust-fund has just been spent by a charity which

One by one, each of your victims takes their revenge: Walter de Maria pelts your earlobes with one-thousand brass rods! – Daniel Buren peels stripe width strips of skin from your naked body – The Nutty Professor played by Eddie Murphy lowers the full weight of his body onto your right arm! – Colin McCahon tattoos unspeakable passages from Revelations on your forehead! – Linda Benglis throws you into a vat of boiling foam rubber! – and Donald Judd drops you in a steel cube and then welds it up personally! As a self-fulfilling prophecy, my friend, you are beginning to remind me of the most abused Kienholz tableaux.

But art crushes everyone eventually; you always thought that. If it were not for its antagonistic spirit, art would have become boring to you long ago. It's pleasant, after all, to be crushed – crushed, that is, by your own imagination. So you might as well have your say, right? Before you go.

So you spit back your summa at the invisible but ever present enemy in one final, neo-expressionistic rant:

- \* *Don't believe anything Mark Van de Walle says – paranoia eats critics for breakfast.*<sup>2</sup>
- \* *Paranoia is a new Olympic sport; an "extremist sport" like bungee-jumping, suicide, and drug addiction, to abuse a Paul Virilio citation.*<sup>3</sup>
- \* *Paintings are the maggots; paranoia is the flies; artists are the rotten meat.*

<sup>1</sup> New York Plenum Press, 1992

<sup>2</sup> "A short history of the coming apocalypse," in, *Echoes: contemporary art at the age of endless conclusions*, Monacelli Press, 1996 pp 212-224

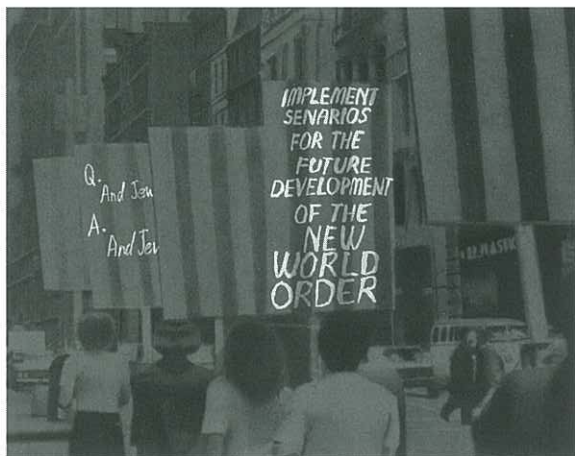
<sup>3</sup> A "Dr. Touzeau" cited in *The art of the motor*. trans. Iulie Rose. Minnesota University of Minnesota Press. 1006. 002.



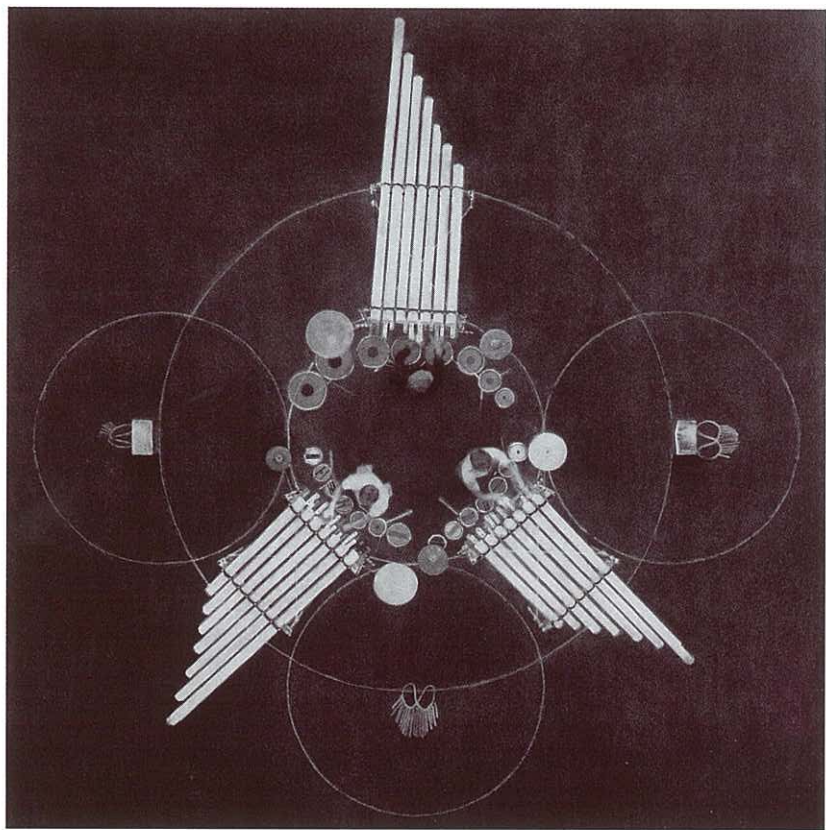
# **PreMillennial**

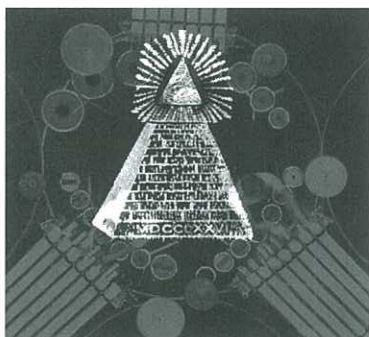
Mike Stevenson





*from Artforum 1981*

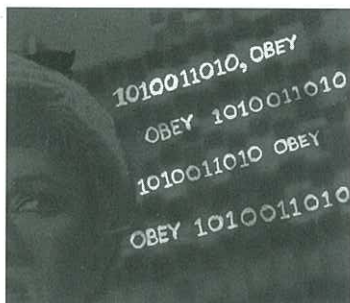




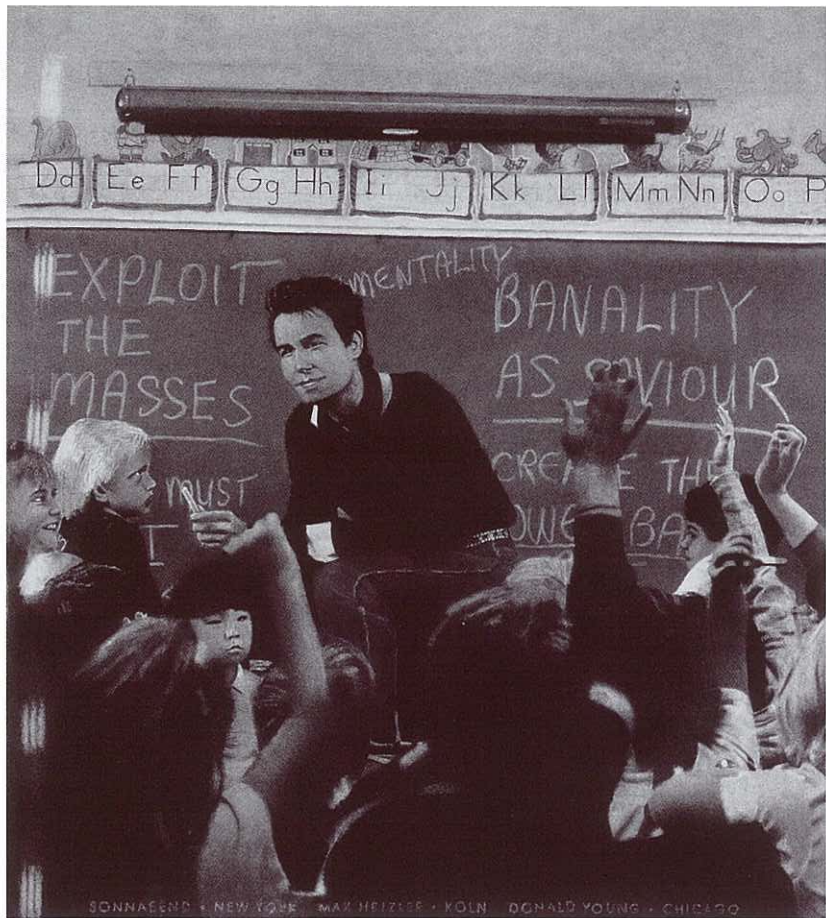
*from Art New Zealand 1985*

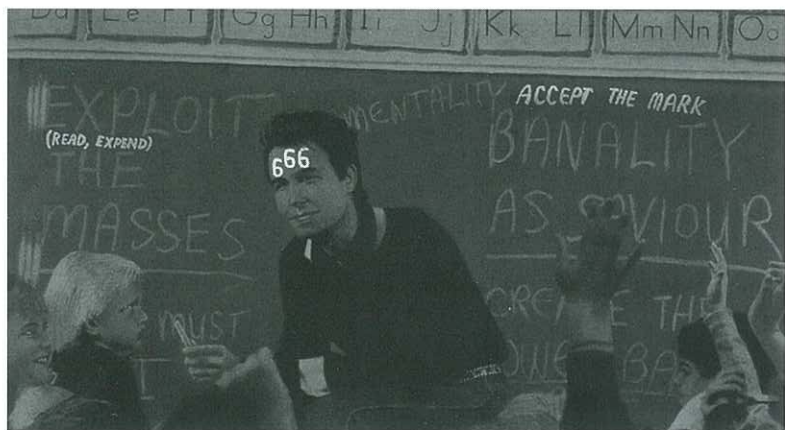






*from* Time 1986





*from Artforum 1988*





*from Artworks 1996*

# **PreMillennial**

Ronnie van Hout



Well







Fountain





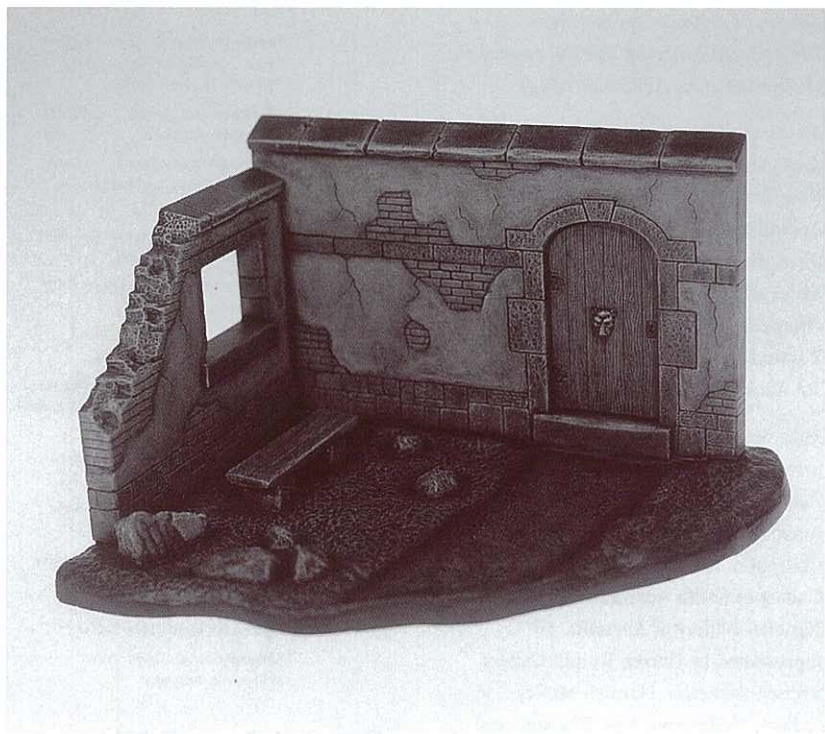
Gorilla





Oil Drums





House Ruin



# Mike Stevenson

Mike Stevenson was born in 1964 in Inglewood, New Zealand. He studied at the Elam School of Fine Arts in Auckland, graduating in 1986. From 1987 to 1993, he lived in Palmerston North and exhibited in both New Zealand and Australia. He has resided in Melbourne, Australia since 1994.

Stevenson has received two grants from the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand: to mount an exhibition in Australia in 1990 and to undertake a three month research tour of the United States of America in 1991. He was awarded a Fellowship by Creative New Zealand Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa in 1995.

Mike Stevenson is represented in both private and public collections in New Zealand and Australia including; Auckland Art Gallery, Chartwell Collection, Manawatu Art Gallery, Art Gallery of South Australia and the National Gallery of Australia. He is represented by Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney, Australia, Hamish McKay Gallery, Wellington, New Zealand and Lombard - Freid Fine Arts, New York, U.S.A.

## Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 1997 *Let those who ride decide*, the physics room, Christchurch, New Zealand  
*Vehicles for artists who are no longer famous*, City Gallery Wellington  
Te Whare Toi, New Zealand
- 1996 *Mike Stevenson*, Darren Knight DKW, Melbourne, Australia  
*How NASA mooned the Avant-Garde*, Australian Centre for Photography, Sydney, Australia
- 1995 *First Warning*, Hamish McKay Gallery, Wellington, New Zealand  
*Mike Stevenson*, Darren Knight DKW, Melbourne, Australia  
*Video A.R.T.*, Teststrip, Auckland, New Zealand
- 1994 *Decline of Western Civilisation Pt3: the Minimalist Years*, Hamish McKay Gallery, Wellington, New Zealand  
*The Easyrider*, Gregory Flint Gallery, Auckland, New Zealand  
*Some Latter-Day Art*, Darren Knight DKW, Melbourne, Australia
- 1993 *Badlands*, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, New Zealand  
*Badlands*, Manawatu Art Gallery, Palmerston North, New Zealand  
*Badlands*, Darren Knight DKW, Melbourne, Australia

## Selected Group Exhibitions

- 1997 *Drawings*, Annina Nosei Gallery, New York, USA
- 1996 *The Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art*, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide  
*Reservoir*, Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery, Lake Macquarie, Australia  
*Recent Acquisitions*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- 1995-96 *Hangover*, Waikato Art and History Museum, Hamilton; Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth; Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin; Robert McDougall Art Gallery, Christchurch, New Zealand

- 1995 *A Very Peculiar Practice, Aspects of Recent New Zealand Painting*, City Gallery Wellington Te Whare Toi, New Zealand
- 1991-92 *Distance Looks Our Way*, Pubellon de las Arles, Expo, Seville; Stelling Gallery, Leiden, Holland; Centro Cultural de Conde Duque, Madrid; Centro Cultural de Caja Espana, Zamora; Centre Civic Casa Elizalde, Barcelona, Spain; Auckland City Art Gallery; City Gallery Wellington Te Whare Toi; Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui, New Zealand
- 1989 *After McCahon*, Auckland City Art Gallery
- Constructed Intimacies*, Inaugural New Zealand Moet and Chandon Art Foundation Touring Exhibition, Auckland City Art Gallery; Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui; National Gallery, Wellington; Robert McDougall Art Gallery, Christchurch, New Zealand
- Leonard, Robert 'Smokers Please', interview, *Midwest* 4, pp 33-39, 1994.
- McAuliffe, Chris 'The Illuminarti', *World Art*, #2, pp 22-27, 1996.
- McDonald, John 'The Shock of the Decadent', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 9 March 1996.
- McDonald, Ewen 'Reservoir', exhibition catalogue, Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery, 1996.
- McKenzie, Robyn 'Of Cults and Conspiracies', *The Age*, 11 October 1995.
- McKenzie, Robyn 'Technique Counts in Sex and Politics', *The Age*, 19 June 1996.
- Pound, Francis 'In the Wake of McCahon: A Commentary on After McCahon', *Art New Zealand* 52, Spring 1989.
- Rooney, Robert 'Just Deserts', *The Australian*, November 12-13, 1994.
- Sowden, Tim 'Mike Stevenson', review, *Art and Text* No.55, October 1996.
- Sayers, Andrew 'Two Drawings by Mike Stevenson', artreview, National Gallery of Australia, Issue No.5, Autumn 1996.
- Stranding, Douglas 'Bad Habits', *Badlands* exhibition catalogue, Gregory Flint Gallery, Auckland, 1993.
- Stranding, Douglas 'Between Remembering and Forgetting - Painting at the Periphery', exhibition catalogue, 'Distance Looks Our Way', Wellington, 1992.

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- Craig, David 'Can You Guess Where I'm Calling From?', exhibition catalogue, Gregory Flint Gallery, Auckland, 1994.
- Craig, David 'If I Can't Wear My Old Wrangler Shirt I'm Not Going', exhibition catalogue, Hamish McKay Gallery, Wellington, 1994.
- Green, Charles 'Mike Stevenson' review, *Artforum*, May 1995.
- Greason, David 'Mike Stevenson', exhibition catalogue, 1996 *Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art*, Art Gallery of South Australia, 1996.
- Huppertz, Danny 'Dr Chapman's Group Therapy', review, *BROADsheet*, Vol. 25, No.2, Winter 1996.
- Intra, Giovanni 'Hangover' review, *Art and Text*, No.54, May 1996.
- James, Bruce 'Chapman's Casper', review, *Art Monthly Australia* No.88 April 1996.
- Koop, Stuart '1996 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art', review, *Art and*

# Ronnie van Hout

Ronnie van Hout was born in 1962 in Christchurch, New Zealand. From 1980 to 1982 he studied at the Ilam School of Fine Arts, Canterbury University, majoring in Film Studies. The artist has lived and worked in Wellington, Auckland and Melbourne and currently resides in Christchurch, New Zealand.

In 1994 Ronnie van Hout was granted a studio residency through the ELBA Art Foundation in Nijmegen, Holland and in 1996 he participated in the artist-in-residence program at the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery (in association with Taranaki Polytechnic) in New Plymouth, New Zealand.

Ronnie van Hout has received grants from the QE II Arts Council in 1986 (New Artists Grant), 1989 (Professional Development Grant), 1993 (Travel Grant) and was awarded a Fellowship by Creative New Zealand, Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa in 1996.

Ronnie van Hout is represented in both private and public collections in New Zealand and Australia including: Waikato Museum of Art and History, Hamilton, Robert McDougall Art Gallery, Christchurch and the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne. He is represented by Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney, Australia and Hamish McKay Gallery, Wellington, New Zealand.

## Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 1997 *The Nutty Professor*, Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney, Australia
- 1996 *Father, Son, Holy Ghost*, Manawatu Art Gallery, Palmerston North, New Zealand  
*I'm Not Well*, Hamish McKay Gallery, Wellington, New Zealand  
*You Stink*, Teststrip, Auckland, New Zealand  
*Mephitis*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, New Zealand  
*I'm OK*, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, New Zealand
- 1995 *Skin Problems*, Teststrip, Auckland, New Zealand  
*Mephitis*, Darren Knight DKW, Melbourne, Australia  
*I Forget*, Hamish McKay Gallery, Wellington, New Zealand
- 1994 *Room To Let - The Deathland Panels*, Hamish McKay Gallery, Wellington, New Zealand  
*Detour - All Roads Lead To The Same Place*, ELBA Art Foundation, Nijmegen, Holland
- 1993 *Installation*, Hamish McKay Gallery, Wellington, New Zealand  
*When Art Hits The Headlands*, Cubewell House, Wellington, New Zealand  
*Band Embroideries*, Gregory Flint Gallery, Auckland, New Zealand

## Selected Group Exhibitions

- 1996 *road to love*, curated by Mikala Dwyer, Sarah Cottier Gallery, Sydney, Australia  
*Nostalgic*, curated by Zara Stanhope, Monash University Gallery, Melbourne, Australia  
*Failure*, curated by Julian Holcroft, Linden Gallery, Melbourne, Australia  
*Exactly*, curated by Vivienne Shark LeWitt, 200 Gertrude Street, Melbourne, Australia  
*Flying Nun Anniversary Art Exhibition*,

- 1995-96 *Hangover*, Waikato Museum of Art and History, Hamilton, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin and the Robert McDougall Art Gallery, Christchurch, New Zealand
- 1995 *A Very Peculiar Practice, Aspects of Recent New Zealand Painting*, City Gallery Wellington Te Whare Toi, New Zealand
- Sculpture*, Hamish McKay Gallery, Wellington, New Zealand
- 1994 *Rock'n'Roll Art Show*, Teststrip, Auckland, New Zealand
- Sad Sketches*, Teststrip, Auckland, New Zealand
- Photography Show*, Hamish McKay Gallery, Wellington, New Zealand
- Elvis in Geyslerland*, Rotorua Art Gallery and Museum, Rotorua, New Zealand
- 150 ways of Loving*, Artspace, Auckland, New Zealand
- 1993 *Paintings from the Future*, Teststrip Gallery, Auckland, New Zealand
- After, After McCahon*, Cubewell House, Wellington, New Zealand
- Suffer*, Teststrip, Auckland; Hamish McKay Gallery, Wellington, New Zealand
- Leonard, Robert *Overimpressed*. art/text No. 57. May - July 1997
- McKenzie, David *Ronnie van Hout - The DevilFinds Work for Idle Hands*, interview, *Hangover* catalogue, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery and Waikato Museum of Art and History, 1995
- McKenzie, Stuart *Junk joint*, Artforum February-March 1995, pp 39-40
- Neate, Robin *The King of Comedy - The Cinema, Cezanne, Nazi's and Sausages*, interview, *Midwest Number Six*, 1994.
- Neate, Robin *Ronnie van Hout*, review *Art & Text* No.54 May 1996.
- Oberg, Stephanie *Father, Son, Holy Ghost*, exhibition catalogue, Manawatu Art Gallery, Palmerston North, New Zealand, 1996.
- Shark LeWitt, Vivienne *Exactly*, exhibition catalogue, 200 Gertrude Street, Melbourne 1996.
- Smith, Allan *A Very Peculiar Practice: A User's Guide*, catalogue essay, *A Very Peculiar Practice*, City Gallery Wellington Te Whare Toi, New Zealand, 1995, pp 6-14.
- Stanhope, Zara *Nostalgic*, exhibition catalogue, Monash University Gallery, 1996.

## Selected Bibliography

- Davis, Leigh *Learning to Read*, catalogue essay, *A Very Peculiar Practice*, City Gallery Wellington Te Whare Toi, New Zealand, 1995, pp 16-20.
- French, Blair *Model Images; The Recent Photography of Ronnie van Hout*, *Art New Zealand*, Number 56 Spring 1990
- Hurrell, John *In Search of Intelligent Life (with or without Ronnie)*, catalogue essay, *'I'm OK'*, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, New Zealand



## Mike Stevenson

*from* Artforum 1981, 1997 pastel & ink on paper 103 x 66 cm

*from* Art New Zealand 1985, 1997 pastel & ink on paper 78 x 76 cm

*from* Time 1986, 1997 pastel & ink on paper 64 x 74 cm

*from* Artforum 1988, 1997 pastel & ink on paper 79 x 72 cm

*from* Artworks 1996, 1997 pastel & ink on paper 66 x 101 cm



## Ronnie van Hout

Well 1997, painted plastic, 1:35 scale

Fountain 1997, painted plastic, 1:35 scale

Gorilla 1997, painted plastic, 1:35 scale

Oil Drums 1997, painted plastic, 1:35 scale

House Ruin 1997, painted plastic, 1:35 scale

# Venues

## CONTEMPORARY ART CENTRE of SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Contemporary Art Centre of South Australia  
ADELAIDE, JUNE 1997

## Australian Centre for Contemporary Art

Australian Centre for Contemporary Art  
ACCA is affiliated with Monash University  
MELBOURNE, JULY - AUGUST 1997

## DARREN KNIGHT GALLERY

Darren Knight Gallery  
SYDNEY, SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 1997



City Gallery  
WELLINGTON  
91 Place St

City Gallery Wellington  
WELLINGTON, NOVEMBER 1997 - JANUARY 1998

## DUNEDIN PUBLIC ART GALLERY

Dunedin Public Art Gallery  
DUNEDIN, FEBRUARY - APRIL 1998



McDougall Art Annex  
CHRISTCHURCH, MAY 1998



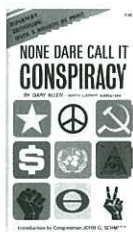
Auckland Art Gallery  
AUCKLAND, MARCH - APRIL 1999



"The Late Great Planet Earth"  
BY HAL LINDSEY WITH C.C.  
CARLSON



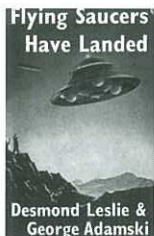
"Communion, Encounters with the Unknown"  
BY WHITLEY STRIEBER



"None Dare Call It Conspiracy"  
BY GARY ALLEN



"When Boutros Boutros-Vader  
descends"



"Flying Saucers Have Landed"  
BY DESMOND LESLIE & GEORGE  
ADAMSKI



"From Outer Space To You"  
BY HOWARD MENCER



Conversation with an extraterrestrial,  
Heaven's Gate website



Home page, Heaven's Gate  
website



Red Alert, Hale-Bopp brings  
closure

from: Ronnie van Hout

masking

fuzzy ellipses  
+ circles

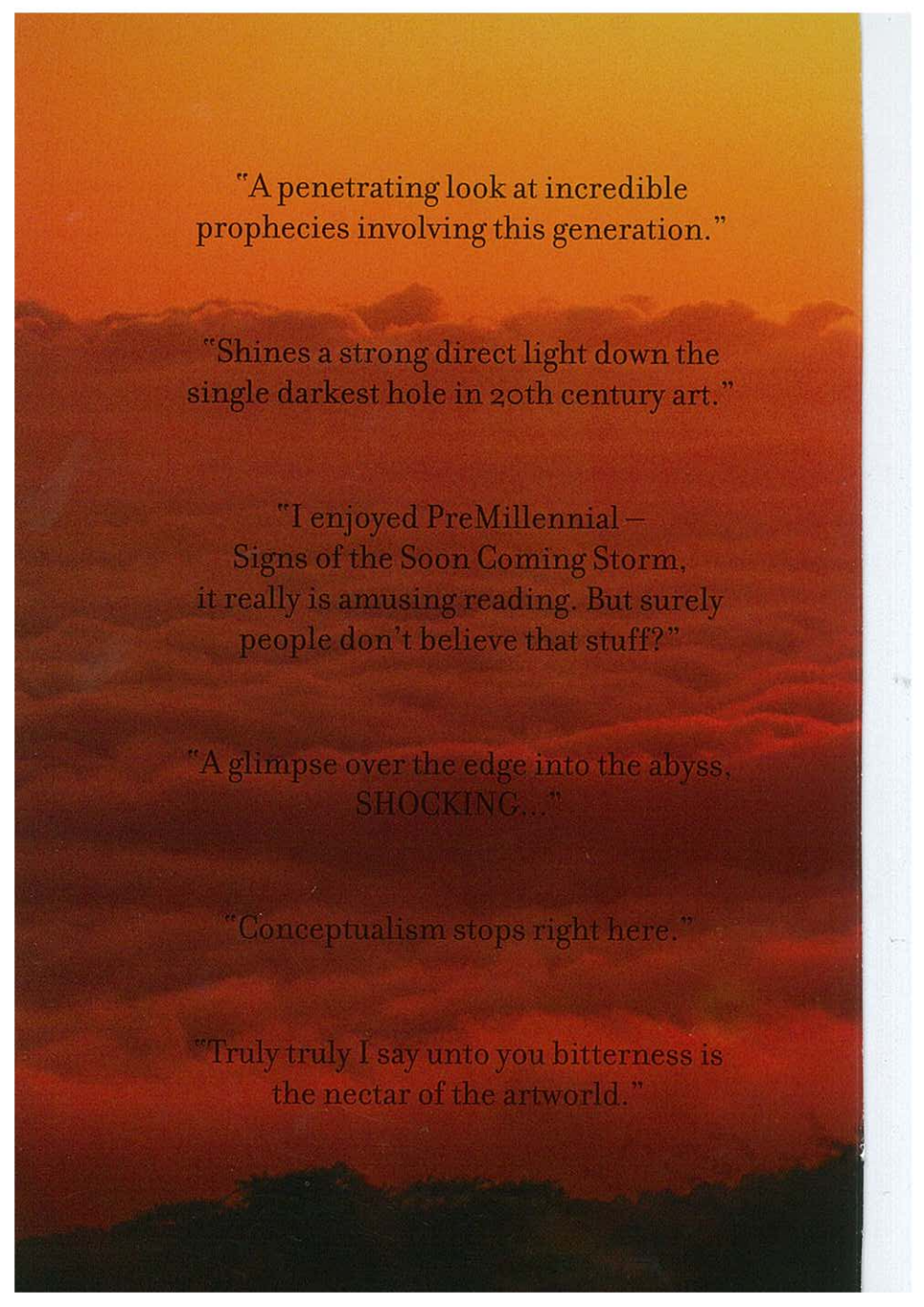
Good luck,  
Cheers Ronnie

- see Yall Mike

- see Yall Mikey

By the way  $\beta$  PRE-MILLENNIAL has 2 NS





"A penetrating look at incredible prophecies involving this generation."

"Shines a strong direct light down the single darkest hole in 20th century art."

"I enjoyed PreMillennial – Signs of the Soon Coming Storm, it really is amusing reading. But surely people don't believe that stuff?"

"A glimpse over the edge into the abyss,  
SHOCKING..."

"Conceptualism stops right here."

"Truly truly I say unto you bitterness is the nectar of the artworld."