

The vision of jazz is of black guys in nice sharkskin suits faithfully living a tradition through performance. Sweaty, stoned, drunk, they reach into their souls to reveal the pain of existence through a spirituality that their musical practice allows them to reach. The god in the pit of their stomach pushes their lungs and limbs to produce sounds we can hardly manage, new sounds. Today contrivance is taken for granted and Hip Hop appears as the commodified representation black musical culture. Its promoters know they've got a hot product, a new gospel to sell.

There is a new music/new jazz of today, a scene dominated, oddly enough, by classically-trained musicians such as John Zorn, Mishe Mengleberg and Dave Douglas, who are tired of the strictures of the classical tradition. New jazz is a hybrid of written music and improvisation, and it grew out of the revival of free jazz. Free jazz was itself a response by largely black players to the white take-over of bebop, and is often dated to October 1, 1964, the "October Revolution" performance by flugelhornist/painter Bill Dixon. No writing, just playing. Freedom for the soul, a study in listening, mind meets gut.

—Mike Hansen

## Laboratory



#1



#2



#3



#4



#5



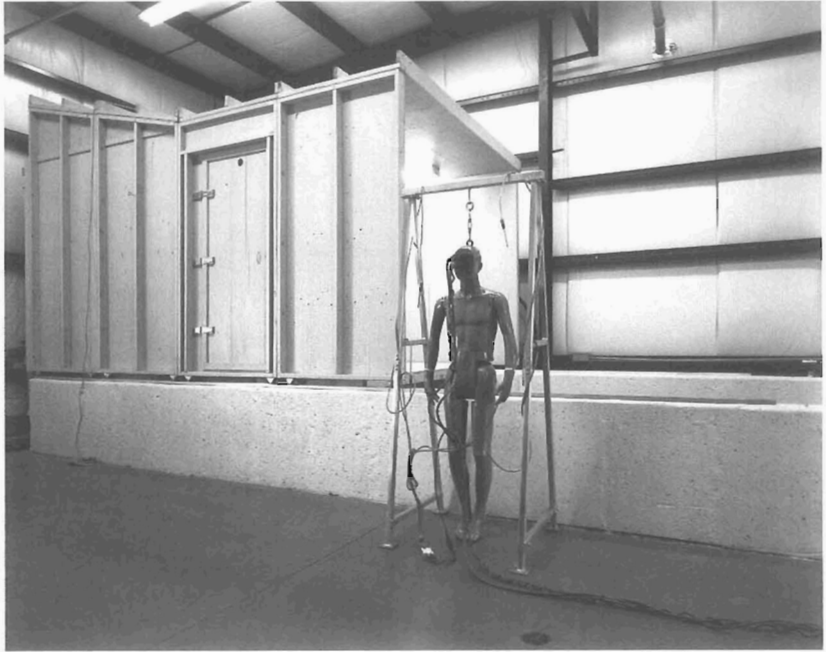
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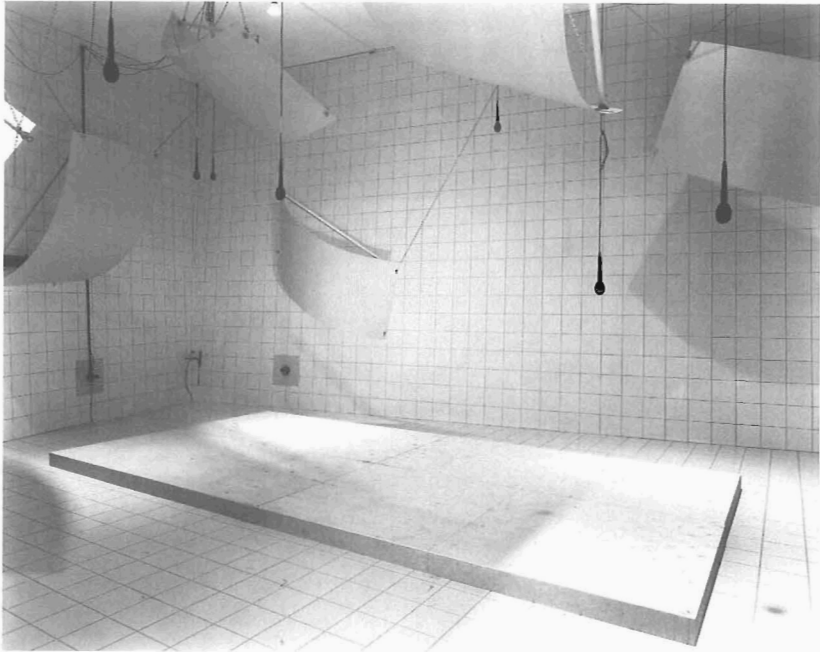
—Lynne Cohen

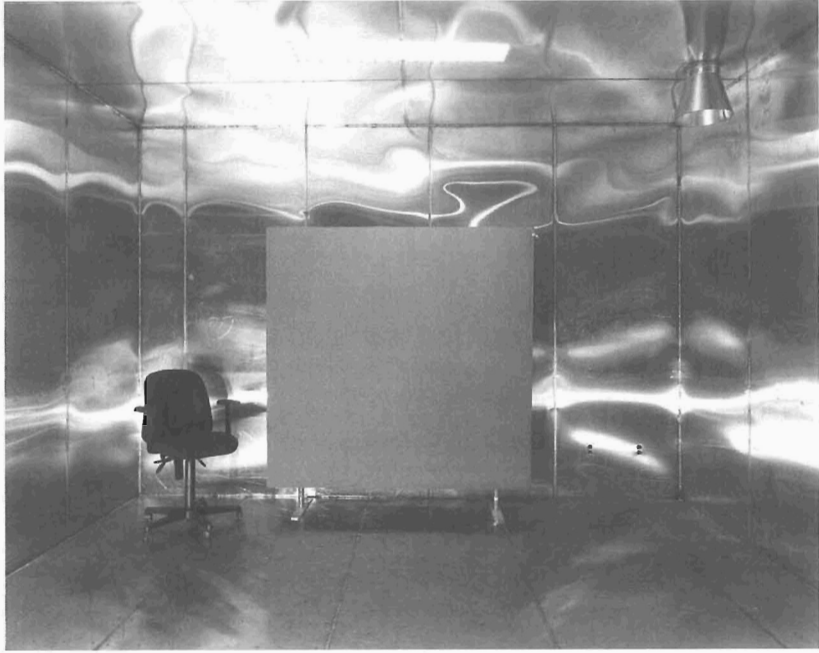
## Labour

No one wants to hear about it. Too time-consuming. (see "Process")

—Janine Marchessault













## Landscape

Reducing the landscape to an idealised modality of nature or built heritage is to forget that its history is inherently linked to the progressive taming of the most inhospitable confines: forest, mountains, seas and deserts haven't always been considered as landscapes. Are not the real territories to explore today notably the ones that we don't see simply because of our immersion in them: these impure and extensive lands of the urban?

At a time when we don't exactly know how to deal with the speed and the power of the various phenomena transforming the planet, the concept of landscape can be a strategic tool to colonize the mutations that are taking place. In-between mental and material constructs, the landscape idiom liberates a zone of indecisiveness that allows us to think about the potentials of a multi-layered reality. Beyond the green and decorative picturesque to which it is too often confined, the landscape is above all a vehicle for the apprehension and the transformation of the territory. If the mediation of the landscape can be transfixed by reductive values which are legitimised by tautologies of harmony and control, its underlying mechanisms, however, remain entirely plastic. Everything can be a landscape. More than ever, the stake is to hold together differences. The landscape, as a shared and open project, may be the vehicle for these hybrid consistencies.

—Luc Lévesque

## Law

In breaking a statue one risks becoming a statue...

—Jean Cocteau

How can a prohibition against images be enunciated? Is there not something profoundly contradictory about the very representation of the law forbidding representations of the absolute? Would not the law inevitably transgress itself in its own pronouncement? Would it not, indeed, stimulate the very iconophilia that it prohibits—this according to the irreducible imbrication of law with desire, proscription with enjoyment—and thus undermine itself in its very enunciation?

The issue here involves somewhat more than the double bind attendant on every law in its self-universalizing force and promise. Hegel had already identified that initial problem, a logical one, in his chapter on "Force and the Understanding": this is the paradox of a law rendered vacuous by its formal repeatability and hence binding powers.<sup>1</sup> It involves more, too, than the performative self-contradiction of a pronouncement delegitimizing itself precisely by virtue of its own legality. To pronounce the *Bilderverbot* is itself to assume legislative authority—thus to identify



with the origin of the law, even if only in order to speak of it and on its behalf—in this sense committing self-idolatry precisely in order to restrict or limit it, contaminating transcendence in the very effort to protect its purity, assuming the essential guilt it would deter. *Follow me! do not follow me. . .* Is not the *Bilderverbot* in this respect the most self-transgressive of all laws? Invoked in order to be violated—does it not indeed exemplify the ultimate impossibility of the law as such? There is, however, more than one way of responding to such an impossibility.

At issue here is not only the familiar psychoanalytic point (regarding the return of the repressed as neurotic symptom), nor only the Foucaultian one (concerning the positive productivity of the law in its very negativity). One might remark with equal cogency—this will be my essential argument—that if every prohibition both incites and requires a corresponding transgression, it is also conversely the case that through its apparent selfinfraction the law only binds us closer (although to what remains undetermined). In this case the law's very inability to authorize itself may testify equally to an even deeper, if perhaps ultimately inscrutable, prohibition—but perhaps equally to the claim of an unspeakable desire.

Perhaps something more than dialectical reciprocity is at work in such a chiasmus of law-and-transgression. Perhaps in this doubly contaminating movement of self-deregulating regulation and self-regulating deregulation, another relationship both to the law and to the image may begin to announce itself.

#### Note

1 G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 79–103.

—Rebecca Comay

Excerpted from “Materialist Mutations of the *Bilderverbot*,” *Public 15: Icons & Idols*, 1997.

## Ledger

Joe was eaten by a tuna.  
 Marietta was convinced by a spermatozoa.  
 Clarence was indoctrinated by a curtain.  
 Sally was bitten by a jack-in-the-box.  
 Mory was trounced by a gram of saliva.  
 Tina was capsized by a porcupine.  
 Salvador was perforated by a weather balloon.  
 Ursula was basted by a porthole.  
 Nikolai was reconstituted by a bat.  
 Grace was hurtled by a steam engine.

Clint was laminated by a milkjug.  
 Teresa was suctioned by a wheatfield.  
 Uri was impressed by a squid.  
 Renée was misplaced by a cloudburst.  
 Gudbrandur was ploughed by a recipe for marzipan.  
 Wendy was castrated by a daydream.  
 Vincent was summoned by a wolf.  
 Maureen was purged by a type of ship called an ocean liner.  
 Kamahl was infiltrated by a vestibule.  
 Lena was deleted by a meadow.  
 Mark was marked by a mark.  
 Astrud was catapulted by a fragrance.  
 Boris was yanked by a glyptodon.  
 Doreen was pilfered by a sundial.  
 Jim was reimbursed by a falling ocelot.  
 Nutricia was cross-checked by a carpet sample.  
 Clive was reconfigured by a trampoline.  
 Indira was courted by a sundial.  
 Lance was lanced by a lance.  
 Veronica was crimped by a taxidermed stork.  
 Jeremy was exorcised by a gearbox.  
 Serena was orchestrated by a continental shelf.  
 Guido was pummelled by a kaleidoscope.  
 Fatima was pursued by a confessional.  
 Theodore was detonated by a vaccination.  
 Deborah was lubricated by a chihuahua.  
 Patrick was inculcated by a rickshaw.  
 Aurelia was magnified by a rip.  
 Steven was agitated by a spiral.  
 Kimberly was ratified by a celery stalk.  
 Kurt was harpooned by a fire alarm.  
 Mauve was pigeonholed by a cathedral.  
 Derek was improved by a moustache.  
 Sabina was martyred by a snowflake.  
 Avery was lectured by a goalpost.  
 Temperance was expunged by a century.  
 Sebastian was imagined by a girdle.  
 Jill was stampeded by a sprocket.  
 Vladimir was mummified by a cricket match.  
 Tammy was approved by a centipede.

—Steve Venright

## Like

If each word gained weight through use, “like” would be the heaviest word in the English language. Earlier definitions suggested both affection and equivalence. As a linguistic stepping stone to a post-literate, digital culture, the crucial ascendancy of this word signals an end of monogamy (replaced by interchangeable partners) and an end of language’s ability to distinguish and differentiate. Like is a word that has taken the place of countless other words in the language, it is a bridge, a pronounced moment of grammatical intrusion (saying like is like saying the word “comma”). Finally, it is a linguistic parasite so strong that future dictionaries will contain just one word. Like.

—Mike Hoolboom

## Lobby



—Lynne Cohen

## Love

Unlike sex, love is impossible. Lacan tells us sex—the sexual relation—is impossible: “What one calls sexual bliss is marked, dominated, by the impossibility of establishing, as such anywhere in the enunciable, the unique One which is important for us, the One of the relationship ‘sexual relations.’” But Lacan, as everyone knows, was no feminist. What, in part, he was getting at is in the heart of what he understands of the maculate processes of being masculine: “Phallic jouissance is the obstacle which stops man arriving at jouissance in the body of the woman, precisely because what he gets his bliss from is the jouissance of his own organ.”<sup>1</sup> It is Zeno’s paradox: Achilles’s arrow never arrives at the spot that Briseis has just vacated. But, of course, Briseis has never completed her second step either, and the One which is pursued in the sexual act, the One of sexual union, is the One of the Real numbers, and it is itself infinite, because, like the step away from the speeding arrow, the price of its completion is death.

This, oh best beloved, is the sole point from which love is comprehensible: the realm of paradox, the necessity and impossibility, the union and the infinite incompleteness, the generosity and the fatality of love. Unlike sex, love is not eternal. Sex is just an instinct. Let us also say: It is an instinct that is incapable of finding satisfaction under any but the most



fantastical conditions, conditions that, at any one time, can exist only for the tiniest proportion of the population, and then only for split seconds of historical time. The flamboyance with which he pursued sexual gratification would seem to suggest that the Emperor Tiberius never achieved it. Confronted with the man who boasts constantly of his conquests, or worse, whose lackeys boast of them for him, one doubts the veracity of the tales of the harem of Haroun al-Raschid, and believes instead in the endlessly deferred delights of Scheherazade. This is where love emerges, through the truly secular delights that, unlike the divine, can never be attained.

Love, after all, is pure and holy only if it is love, that is to say, if it is unrequited. Divine love can always be fulfilled, in the mystics' aching visions, in the deaths of virgins and martyrs. But human love can find no peace in death with which it waltzes endlessly. The humble, sublunary love is always fouled in the mires of the bodies here below; it is always a pale shadow of itself, its own retreating echo, fading even as it speaks. The narcissist is uninteresting: the narcissist's lover, the nymph Echo, disappearing, swallowed in the marshes of her own unanswerable love—that is a creature as worthy of respect and devotion as the will-o'-the-wisp desire she follows in her internal exile. This is love, and there is more of it about today than ever before. It has ceased even to be desirable. Perversely, that can mean a return to the body, a reconstruction of jouissance, apart from the tedious tyranny of the prick. A tyranny whose reign is, in any case, credited with far more power than it really has; whose ominous grip on the conduct of human affairs is profoundly overrated, and whose ability to provide a lasting sense of good cheer is clearly inadequate to the planetary gloom it is charged with dispelling. The good news is that love has a history: it is only sex that endures.

Love has a strange history; the story of frustrated communication. I take it that the most fundamental quality of human beings is that we are social, cultural creatures, and that our common destiny is to share, to communicate, not for any particular purpose other than to speak to one another, to strike sparks, to be and to become cultured creatures. Everything else—politics, economics, sex—is subordinate. The reproduction of the species is incidental to the communicative business of love. But as it has emerged in the twentieth-century West, love is a bogus communication, premised on the hidden, shameful, puritanical account for sexual action. That shame, as Lacan imagined, laid the foundations for a genital sexuality that lies incommunicado. For once (and only once) McLuhan was right: in sex, and sex alone, the medium became the message.

But now, thank God, we can at least begin to see the far side of this enormous dead weight of hypocrisy and its necessary other, sexology. A terrible virus has not only caused deaths, but has made lives take on a particular shape. If ever it was envisaged as an Old Testament plague driven by a vengeful and malicious god, then the virus, as viruses will, has had its own revenge.

In the wake of HIV and AIDS, there is more perversion, not less—a further reduction in the “natural” and “reproductive” functions of sexuality.

In the absence of a governing image of sexuality, of love, of everything that is central to the secular worlds of Anglo-Saxony (whose commonest curse and blessing is “fuck,” the mana of the West), there emerges a mode of sexuality that has even less to do with reproduction, less to do with satisfaction, less to do with orgasm, less to do with penetration, less to do with the medium, and more, much much more, to do with the message. Sex becomes love at the moment it no longer is an end in and of itself. Even self-love needs, demands, an other to complete the vicious circle of Narcissus, the slippery Echo in which vanishes the otherness of the self, to itself in the narcissism—the newest pitfall in the romantic history of love.

Note

1 Jacques Lacan, *Le Seminaire livre XX: Encore* (Paris: Seuil, 1975), 15.

—Sean Cubitt

Excerpted from “The Love That Can’t Remember Its Name,” *Public 10: Love*, 1994.