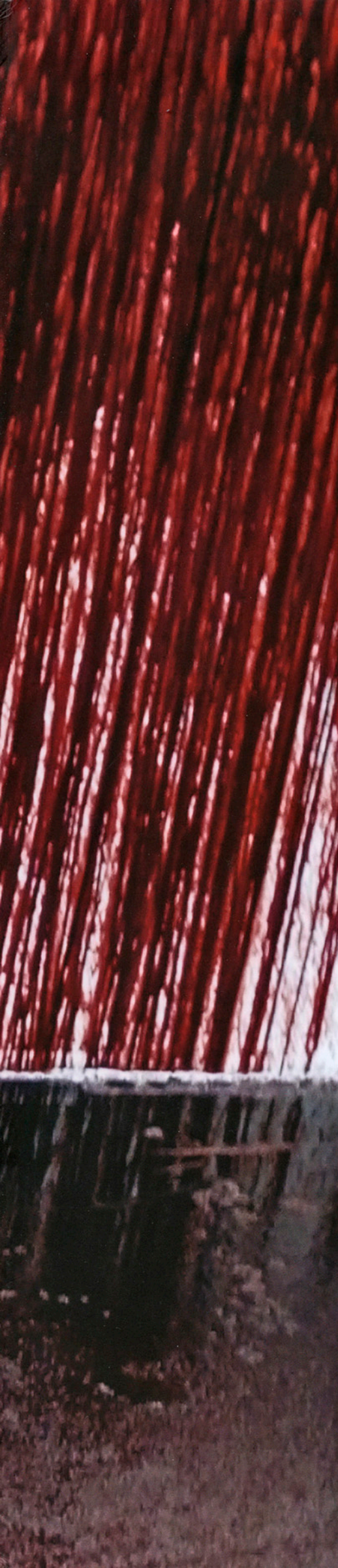


# Daniel Joseph Martinez



A life of disobedience

HATJE  
CANTZ



Daniel Joseph Martinez (b.1957) is an internationally exhibiting artist who grew up in Los Angeles. For over thirty years, he has divined sociopolitical fault lines in the American psyche and carefully placed conceptual and perceptual explosives into them. This volume, with essays by Michael Brenson, Hakim Bey, David Levi Strauss, Gilbert Vicario, Lauri Firstenberg, Arthur C. Danto, Linda Norden, and Rachel Leah Baum, chronicles selected works from 1978 to 2008, concentrating on the work of the past sixteen years—from his controversial intervention in the 1993 Whitney Biennial to his *Divine Violence* piece in the 2008 Whitney Biennial, and including his contributions to the San Juan Triennial in 2004, the Cairo Biennale in 2006, and the Moscow Biennial in 2007. A variety of further installations, text works, paintings, photographs, sculptures, animatronics, and videos complete the catalogue.

Martinez is a Professor of Theory, Practice, and Mediation of Contemporary Art at the University of California, Irvine, where he teaches in the Graduate Studies Program and the New Genres Department.

248 pages, 377 color illustrations

**Hatje Cantz**

A life of  
disobedience

In the age  
of apocalyptic  
despair and  
utopian hope

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# Daniel Joseph Martinez

with texts by

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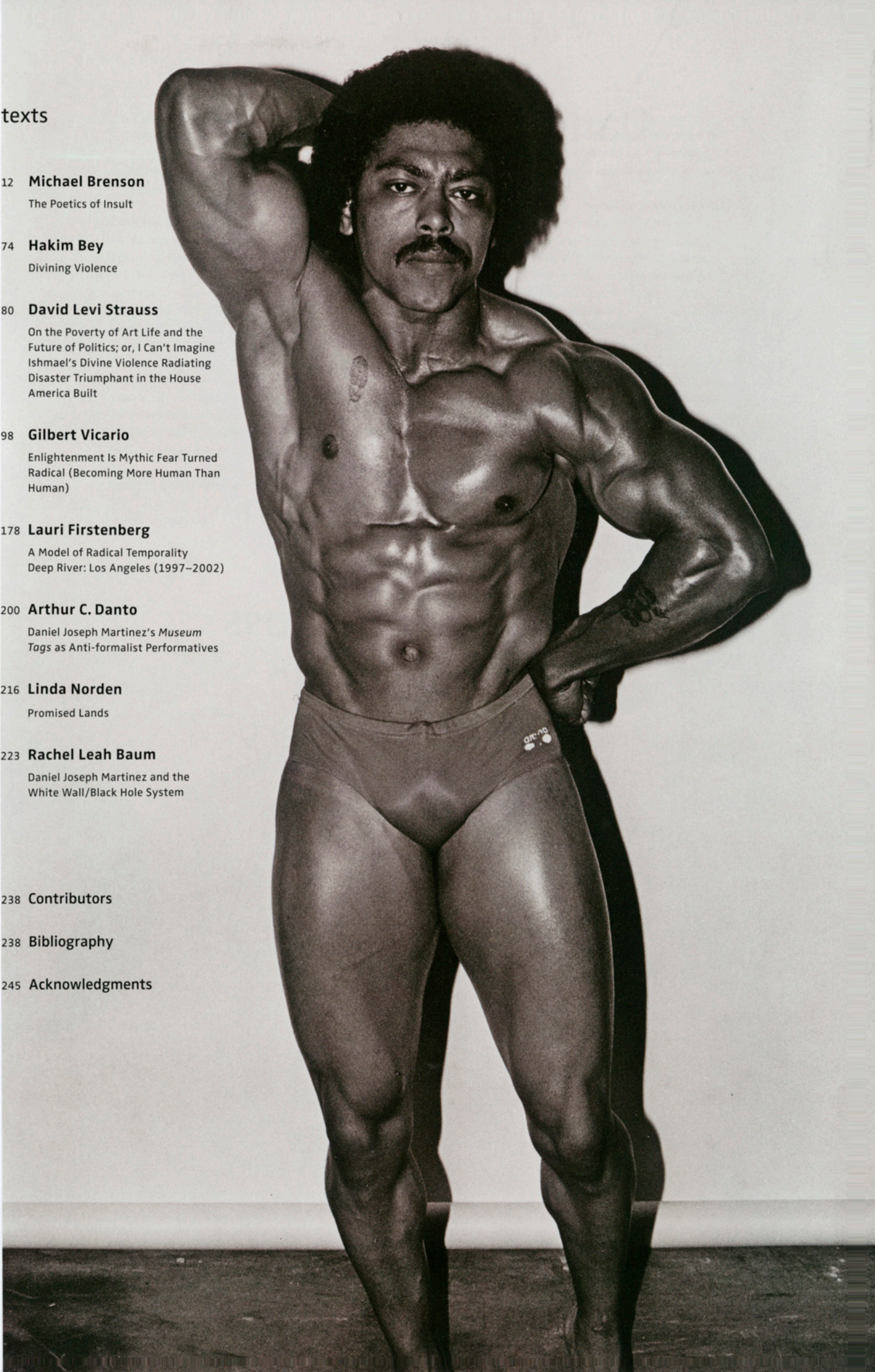
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# Daniel Joseph Martinez and the White Wall/Black Hole System

by Rachel Leah Baum

The white wall is always expanding and the black hole functions repeatedly. You will be pinned to the white wall and stuffed in the black hole.

The face is a politics.<sup>1</sup>

The work of Daniel Joseph Martinez is an ongoing examination of the ways in which the symbolic systems of language and representation create subjects. "Scraped again": this is the Greek origin of the word *palimpsest*. It refers to abrading one text from a wax tablet or parchment in order to inscribe another on the same surface. "Beyond," "over," "exceeding" writing: this is the derivation of the contemporary term *hypertext*, referring to multivocal documents, assemblages of multiple authors, or open, authorless collages of writing. Against identity, against the false ownership of signs, against the closure of meaning through which power defines and disciplines its subjects, Martinez advocates sabotage, desertion, fraud, and laughter.

The white wall/black hole system described by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari is the regime in which language is framed through exclusions and oppositions to create differential identities, the most primary being the self of power and the subject other. Recall that the word/concept of *subjectivity* is tied to that of *subjection*—to subjugation and submission. This is the lesson of Deleuze and Guattari's critique of all systems of individuation, from psychoanalysis to citizenship. Their (anti)model is particularly resonant in the context of art, the use and analysis of representation.

To picture coercion and domination as a white wall and a black hole is to invoke Robert Smithson's notorious metaphor of the gallery as a detention cell for art, comparable to those meant for the criminal or the insane.<sup>2</sup> Martinez inherits this overdetermined reading of the white room and extends it further into a concept of cultural difference. For Deleuze and Guattari, the white wall can be described as the screen of discourse, the field of authority on which the social is ordered: "Subjectification is never without a white wall upon which it inscribes its signs."<sup>3</sup> The black hole is a compartment into which one is "stuffed" and confined by acceding to the repressive categories of language and identity. For Martinez, the white wall of social visibility and power is also the wall of ethnic whiteness. The black hole of entrapment in identity

1. Both epigraphic quotations are from Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 177, 181.

2. Craig Owens, "From Work to Frame, or, Is There Life After 'The Death of the Author,'" in *Beyond Recognition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 129.

3. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 167.

4. *Ibid.*, 168.

5. *Ibid.*, 178.

6. *Ibid.*, 168.

7. This phrase is a play on the chapter titles of philosopher Manuel De Landa's *A New Philosophy of Society: Assemblage Theory and Social Complexity* (New York: Continuum, 2006), which include "Assemblages against Totalities" and "Assemblages against Essences." De Landa works from the notion of assemblage formulated by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus*. *Assemblage* might be described as a changing fabric of interconnected forces and energies without any consolidated unities or universals, such as subject or object. It can also be understood as a fluid or transient composite of "multiplicities," points of expanding and proliferating relation. In the context of Martinez's animatronic clones, the material artifice of the artworks and their conceptual strategies of decomposing identity make these machines read as action figures of Deleuzian assemblage.

8. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 190, 399.

9. Excerpt from the opening of the 1982 film *Blade Runner*, directed by Ridley Scott.

is primarily the space of cultural otherness, the dark recess that marks a gap or vacuum in the field of white.

Like all structures sketched by Deleuze and Guattari, the white wall/black hole system is radically reversible and mobile: "either black holes distribute themselves on the white wall, or the white wall unravels and moves toward a black hole combining all black holes. . . . It is certain that the signifier does not construct the wall that it needs all by itself; it is certain that subjectivity does not dig its hole all alone."<sup>4</sup> Also like other philosophical structures in their writings, this one is described in terms of the body, specifically the face. On a basic iconographic level, the white wall is the very face of cultural mastery, with all of the violence and ideals that this implies: "If the face is in fact Christ, in other words, your average ordinary White Man, then the first deviances, the first divergence-types, are racial: yellow man, black man. . . . Racism operates by the determination of degrees of deviance in relation to the White-Man face."<sup>5</sup>

The embodiment of subjection is the facade: the face/wall-speech/hole. This is not only a projection of the face of power. It is the factory of all faces, the manufacturer of all identity—"the abstract machine that produces faces."<sup>6</sup> Martinez's work seeks to transgress—often physically—the institutional facade and to confront viewers with the fundamental claim that they are living politics, that they are already hung on the white wall and framed in the black hole. In a sense, we are all constructed by force, to varying degrees symbolic and physical. Martinez's art will often trace these lines of force, like Deleuze and Guattari, at the two levels of the body and language.

## Assemblages against Subjects<sup>7</sup>

Humans are made exclusively of inhumanities . . . Assemblages are passionate, they are compositions of desire.<sup>8</sup>

Replicants were used . . . in the hazardous exploration and colonization of other planets. . . . Special police squads . . . had orders to shoot to kill, upon detection, any trespassing Replicant. This was not called execution.<sup>9</sup>

The simulacrum is never what hides the truth—it is truth that hides the fact that there is none.

The simulacrum is true.<sup>10</sup>



My body is an exchanger of time. It is filled with signals, noises, messages, and parasites. . . Transformation, deformation of information.<sup>11</sup>

The President's first press conference from the Star Wars Peace Platform got off to a shaky start when power failed, causing a period of weightlessness for the President and his staff.<sup>12</sup>

Technology is making gestures precise and brutal, and with them men.<sup>13</sup>

Frankenstein is now a member of the family.<sup>14</sup>

In work by Martinez across different media, the body of the artist performs allegories of the collective. To represent a multitude without imaging an other, Martinez doubles himself and enacts symbolic gestures of resistance and refusal.

In the animatronic sculpture works, Martinez has reduplicated himself as protest against identification, multiplying the black holes in the white wall of social self-representation until it is more void than plane. These bodies are composite under the latex skin of the mirrored self. Assemblages of metal, rubber, wire, cloth, and hair, they are also ciphers for all sites of struggle, revolt, and sacrifice. Physiognomically singular—but implicating and integrating all of the bodies that share their space—Martinez's reduplicated self invokes the paradox of identity and its loss described by Artaud: "anarchy and unity are one and the same thing, not the unity of the One, but a much stranger unity that applies only to the multiple."<sup>15</sup> The viewers who converge on these vignettes of dispossessed bodies supplement the scenes with their own presence, receiving the laughter, standing erect and still above the writhing fallen man, or dodging the pumping blood from the artist's fingertip.

In counterfeiting the self-contained body of the artist, these works short-circuit the values of artistic production conceived as originating from within an integrated, individuated subject. Synthetic compounds constitute the chemical formula for the plastic skin of these figures. Beyond this, though, the animatronics are synthetic compounds of identity: partial and mobile references recombined into a deceptively specific body, that of the artist himself. Rap music, Ridley Scott, Yves Tinguely, the code of the samurai knight, military drone technology, Joseph Beuys, suicide bombers, Walter Benjamin, hip-hop fashion, Adorno and Horkheimer, the Abrahamic religions, and minimum-wage service workers—the stuff of each of these bodies is an impure and unstable alloy of literature, pop culture, political violence, and myth.

Martinez's use of oblique and multiple identifications should be read as a model of political agency. The subjective affinities and social reciprocity necessary for individuals to act in concert can occur only where identity is understood to be constructed, contingent, and in flux. Only the violent politics of funda-

10. Epigraph quotation to the chapter "The Procession of Simulacra," in Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, trans. Sheila Faria Glaser (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994), 1.

11. Michel Serres, *The Parasite*, trans. Lawrence Schehr (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 72.

12. Excerpt from the opening scene of the 1987 film *Robocop*, directed by Paul Verhoeven.

13. Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia: Reflections from a Damaged Life* (London: NLB, 1974), 40.

14. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude* (New York: Penguin Press, 2004), 196.

15. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 158.

16. *Ibid.*, 59.

17. Serres, *The Parasite*, vii. The translator's preface addresses the multiple meanings of the word *parasite* in French: "In French, the word has three meanings: a biological parasite, a social parasite, and static. The English *parasite* corresponds to only the first two meanings in French."

18. See Freud's 1919 essay "The Uncanny" and his discussion of the concept of "the double."

19. For a discussion of Kant's ideas in this context, see Seyla Benhabib, *The Rights of Others: Aliens, Residents, and Citizens* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 131–32.

mentalist identity that seeks purity of self and annihilation of the other can deny difference. In staging acts of asocial bodily chaos within the highly programmed cultural space of the gallery, Martinez, with his violent clones, attracts and activates the atomized viewers, forming a temporary collective of visceral and profane engagement. The reduplicated, damaged bodies dislocate the neutral observing subjects and put the containment of their identity at risk.

Martinez's work seems to illustrate Jacques Rancière's proposition that any political subjectivity beyond the destructive claims of sectarian or totalitarian "unity" must acknowledge the incomplete and penetrable nature of identity. The subject without internal difference—be it at the level of individual, community, or culture—is a form of psychosis, not sanctity. Although much of the artist's production is self-portraiture, this fact in itself is vital to presenting the model of the displaced self, what Rancière calls the *heteron*, the man of many parts.<sup>16</sup> These bodies are not inhabited by a subject, least of all Martinez. They are masks for the performance of being other—any other. They create fields of social and somatic estrangement that disturb the boundaries of self like "parasitic" static distorting the signal of electronic waves.<sup>17</sup> The energy that is scrambled and degraded is the coherence of the subject, its closure and fixity. Unlike the deadly hijacker that Freud's *doppelgänger* represents,<sup>18</sup> these dying machines warn the viewer not of their own death but of their potential for complicity in the death of others. By siphoning off an aura of selfhood, these violent robots implicate the viewers as spectators of suffering in the gallery and beyond.

In the film *Blade Runner*, slang for a "replicant" mechanical android is "skin job" because its appearance of humanity is an illusion, its flesh an artificial envelope. Their nonhuman status justifies their use as weapons and sex dolls, as well as explains the sanction to kill them if they manage to infiltrate earth, as killing a replicant is in effect morally meaningless. Martinez seems to suggest that such dehumanization is not science fiction but social reality—that in imagining the other as our instrument, we can turn anyone into a skin job. The images of prisoners in Abu Ghraib stacked like mannequins or posed as if in the tableaux of hell painted by Hieronymus Bosch testify to our capacity to use as objects those whom we have erased as subjects. Any understanding of identity that doesn't open in vulnerability onto difference becomes a cipher of power. To incorporate the alien is the only real agency one has within the constraints of subjectivization. Turning inside out to share space with the other is, paradoxically, the only autonomy we have.

Martinez recognizes that "the politics of the one"—in the Kantian model—underlies the fundamental unit of the social.<sup>19</sup> The vision of collective engagement that is the artist's ideal depends on the articulation of

the self as a sort of place saver for the other. And this position is always put at risk as agonized or monstrous. Martinez's refusal to deploy a body not his own in this way is a model against subjecthood—where this term refers to identity consolidated through exclusion. One definition of *dehumanize* is “to render mechanical,” as in behaviors or emotions. Martinez makes this subjective relation concrete. His band of self-destructive replicants depicts the dangers of positive identity—its effects of racism, nationalism, and war. Martinez's self-portraits tear at the social surface of the self to reveal that there is no such thing as a disposable skin job. By definition, collectivity and emancipation require the self to become other, at both the scale of the “one” and the scale of the multitude. As Rancière explains, this “is the power of the *one more*, the power of anyone” to create a “people.”<sup>20</sup> Without this additive, receptive composition, the violence of persecution and purgation is inevitable.

In Martinez's 2002 animatronic sculpture titled *To Make a Blind Man Murder for the Things He's Seen (or Happiness Is Over-rated)*,<sup>21</sup> the figure that kneels on the floor, in a posture both sacred and abject, does not belong here. Harsh laughter does not belong, and neither do razors. Dressed in the nondescript uniform of a worker—janitor, mechanic, factory body—he performs an act of ritual violence that becomes no less strange with robotic repetition. Suspended continuously at a moment of divine absurdity, this figure of reanimated dying cycles through a spectacle of ecstasy, a priest-machine dispensing last rites for everyone in the world. For Martinez this figure is an evocation of Japanese novelist Yukio Mishima, whose own theatrical final scene of honor suicide and sacrificial murder followed an unsuccessful military coup against the government in 1970. Mishima's crisis was aesthetic—yet it played itself out in political violence. Having lost his desire to write while surrounded by the gray, globalized culture of contemporary Japan, he sought to return both the nation and his own artistic imagination to the social and spiritual traditions destroyed by modernity. The laughable anguish of Mishima, a knight-errant storming the office of a petty military bureaucrat, is not unlike that of Martinez's anonymous supplicant worker, street cleaner, or handyman, who holds gallery visitors hostage to his drama of fatal self-assertion.

The figure contains the voice of the artist as well, emitting recorded laughter during every episode of mutilation. By sharing the face and voice of the artist, this machine represents an abdication of identity through repetition and dispersal. By multiplying the mask and installing impostors in place of the self, Martinez is proposing a subject that never belongs. Insofar as this figure is an impersonation, it is also an unraveling of the bindings of identity, a replacement of the singularity of the artist with a cipher-surrogate

20. Ibid.

21. The title of this work includes a line from the lyrics of a rap song written by Michael Franti and Spearhead, “Keep Me Lifted,” from the *Chocolate Supa Highway* album (Capitol Records, 1997): Hey yo I am the glorified of the story / Child of a high crime rate category / They explore connect me to an I.Q. test / Like a rat in a cage I'm trapped with the rest projects / But now I make my life go flip / Like Malcolm comin' out the pen and shit / Upliftment from a triffin' scene / To make a blind man murder for the things he seen.

22. Owens, “From Work to Frame,” 129.

23. The title of Martinez's piece derives from Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans. John Cumming (New York: Continuum, 1993).

24. See Benhabib, *The Rights of Others*, 131–32.

25. Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*.

to simulate his presence. This proxy body of the artist is alien in its failure to constitute a subject beyond its outward disguise, as well as in the radical act of self-negation that it performs. As a hallucinated double, it has the asocial status of a monster or ghost—but beyond this aspect of the uncanny and unnatural, it also insists on a radical defiance of social space. In this work, the obscenity of madness and suicide is staged in the wrong type of confining cell, one for art.

Robert Smithson described the alienation of the artist from his work in terms that resonate with Martinez's self-separation machines: “Some artists imagine that they've got hold on this apparatus, which in fact has got a hold of them. As a result, they end up supporting a cultural prison that is out of their control. . . . Museums, like asylums and jails, have wards and cells—in other words, neutral rooms called ‘galleries.’”<sup>22</sup> For Martinez, this apparatus is not just the art institution but also identity itself. The body as a social surface is a space of confinement, of objectification. To make the body inauthentic is to sabotage identity and the social constraints that define it. Martinez's suicidal double is truly an escapee, a deserter—not in its attempted self-annihilation but in its status as a copy, a circulating counterfeit.

This decoy's diversion allows the real prisoner to walk free. And he does, reappearing elsewhere as Daniel Joseph Martinez, as if brought back from the dead. Although it is contained within white walls, the kneeling twin will have the last laugh, again and again on an electronic loop.

*Call Me Ishmael: The Fully Enlightened Earth Radiates Disaster Triumphant*,<sup>23</sup> is an animatronic figure installation exhibited at the 2006 *Cairo Biennale*. The artist's proxy body convulses on the floor, bucking and kicking in cycling seizures. Like the wrist-slitting “death” in the artist's earlier robotic self-portrait, *To Make a Blind Man Murder for the Things He's Seen*, this paroxysm doesn't climax but rather subsides and then resumes; the violence is performed anew again and again. This individuation of violence is a consistent theme in Martinez's production, most notably in his use of names and references to specific individuals or groups. When it is embodied, as in the animatronic figures, this violence symbolizes the limit-state of political subjectivization, which is death.

The Kantian tenet of the “right of humanity in one's person” no longer holds.<sup>24</sup> What Martinez returns to repeatedly is the demonstration of this tenet's failure through the spectacle of violent self-destruction. The subtitle of the 2006 robot—*The Fully Enlightened Earth Radiates Disaster Triumphant*—is a quotation from Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer<sup>25</sup> on the failure of the ideal of personal sovereignty described by Kant: the consolidation of self that was to have liberated the individual from fear has instead released global violence. The rationalist

and the zealot reinforce each other in the state of war, and the Enlightenment's *cogito* can quickly devolve into a model of the subject defined by the dictum "I am, therefore I kill." The subject understood as a whole and self-present agent is the most dangerous, because this very integrity depends upon excluding difference. The other is, by definition, a threat insofar as it represents an alternative to the ideal, sovereign self. As Rancière explains, from the point of view of the affirmative self, the other is a negation: "identity is first about fear . . . , which finds on the body of the other its object."<sup>26</sup> Martinez uses the proper name to dissolve this oppositional structure of identity. The writhing body wears the hip-hop accessory of a name-plaque belt buckle studded with rhinestones which spells out "Ishmael," a complex figure shared and divided among the three biblical religions that identify followers as "children of Abraham." For Islam, Ishmael is a direct ancestor and prophet,<sup>27</sup> for Christianity a figure of illegitimacy,<sup>28</sup> and for Judaism a penitent traitor. By having the self-portrait bear this name, Martinez has offered his body as the violently contested ground for the origins of Western cultural identity. Ishmael is a cipher for the definition of the self through difference. For Jews, he's an Arab; for Christians, he's a Jew; and for Muslims, he's a forefather of Mohammed. With its pounding fists and rolling eyes, the prone "Ishmael" seems shattered by the force of these three conflicting voices; its mouth is a rictus of clenched teeth trapping inside any prophecy from Torah, Bible, or Koran. Ishmael is the ultimate *heteron*, the man of many parts.

To internalize these primitive and absolute differences in one body as well as to restore the shared name to this body constitute a demonstration of common origins and a glimpse of ambivalent, fragile reconciliation. Ishmael, while a figure of schism, is also the last point of brotherhood in the biblical traditions.

Sheathed in Martinez's own skin made plastic and dressed in white street clothes, the figure grinds itself against the floor as if splitting its seams. Barely contained inside the simulation of the proper body is the image of the body as bomb. Although wired to convulse mechanically rather than explode, *Call Me Ishmael* shows a man suspended between life and death. Beneath his shirt are fuses and timers. They are the circuitry of advanced special effects illusion, not of detonation, but the uncanny effect of the programmed body is the same. By making this figure an image of himself, Martinez works against the pervasive societal abstraction of violence that is deepening with each year of war statistics. In the entertainment industry of current political ideology, Baghdad is a Hollywood Thermopylae. There is nothing behind the phalanx of screens through which the daily experience of death is mediated. In this new form of the theater of war—so often conflated with "first-person

26. Rancière, "Politics, Identification, and Subjectivation," *October* 61 (Summer 1992): 64.

27. Both Jewish and Islamic traditions consider Ishmael to be ancestor to the Arab people. However, in Islam both Ishmael and his brother Isaac are considered prophets, whereas in Judaism Ishmael is considered a heretic and the potential usurper of Isaac's power, until he repents and cedes authority to his brother.

28. The Epistle of Saint Paul to the Galatians 4: 22–23: "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman [Ishmael] was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise." For Christians, the child of the free woman represents the promise of freedom of Christianity itself, the covenant of grace; thus, Ishmael is a negative figure who represents continued bondage to rejected Judaism.

29. The government-commissioned video game *America's Army* is a recruitment and training tool that simulates conditions in the Middle East. See <http://www.goarmy.com/aarmy/>.

30. Full title: *Redemption of the Flesh: It's just a little headache, it's just a little bruise; the politics of the future as urgent as the blue sky.*

31. Serres, *The Parasite*, 61–62.

32. Donald Kuspit, *A Critical History of 20th-Century Art*, chap. 2, part 3: "Spiritualism and Nihilism: The Second Decade," from <http://www.artnet.com/magazine/features/kuspit/kuspit3-17-06.asp>.

33. *Ibid.*

shooting" from home<sup>29</sup>—the suicide bomber is an eruption of the Real.

In *Redemption of the Flesh* (2008),<sup>30</sup> Martinez designed a scaffold of metal to support an absurdist prosthetic consisting of a latex replica of the artist's left arm and hand melded with, and simultaneously impaling, the realistically rendered carcass of a rabbit. The hand mimes the gesture of a gun, with the metal nozzle of the paint sprayer emerging from the "barrel" of the index finger. The layers of aerosol mist that gradually form a mural of dripping red seem to reference simultaneously Jules Olitski's airbrushed color fields and the wall behind a firing line execution.

Part Aesop's fable via Joseph Beuys, part AK-47, and part graffiti machine, this factory-scale cyborg is above all a sort of baroque and perverse instrument without a function, a misbegotten invention without a logical use. More cynically, it is a Picabian diagram of the devolution of human violence from action to image, a result of our increasingly simulacral social experience, mediated as it is by layers of screens. It is a dystopian reading of Michel Serres's cross-species structuralism: "The well-run machine does not copy the bodies of animals and their organic system, but rather our relations among ourselves."<sup>31</sup>

Most directly, *Redemption of the Flesh* invokes Yves Tinguely's self-destructing mechanical installation *Homage to New York*, which burst into clouds of smoking rubble in the garden of the Museum of Modern Art in 1960. Insofar as *Redemption* seems to stream gore onto the walls of the gallery, it is less self-destructing, however, than whimsically malevolent—a hemorrhaging assembly-line robot. In the tradition of Surrealism and Dada, it is a misdirected innovation performing a "gratuitous act,"<sup>32</sup> the heir of Lautréamont's sexual congress between a sewing machine and an umbrella. Donald Kuspit's summary of Duchamp's thinking about the readymade is particularly apt in relation to this crossbred structure:

As he said in 1946, he "wanted to get away from the physical aspect of painting. I was more interested in recreating ideas in painting . . ." . . . He finally abandoned painting for readymade objects. The question is what ideas they recreated. He wanted art to be an "intellectual expression" rather than an "animal expression," but his very physical readymades—in a sense, they are more physical than a painted picture, for they occupy real space rather than create the illusion of it—may be an animal expression in intellectual disguise.<sup>33</sup>

Like a victim of the sorceress Circe or of modern rogue genetics, the known, inhabited body of the artist is fused by flesh to another being, as if through an interrupted curse or a mad scientist's whim. Human hair gives way to animal fur as rabbit skull and hand meld into one knotted structure. The long claws of the impaled animal hang limply, the anatomical gun of the spread fingers being the superior weapon. Like the previous allegories of otherness played out in Martinez's robotic figures, this amputated fragment collapses the space between hunter and prey, technological man and natural animal, sentient human and instinctual beast. A hybridity beyond cultural difference, this is the ultimate estrangement and violation of the subject—the limit experience of loss of self within a vaster unification with the animal.

There is no pretense of dissolving into nature, however, as this mutated limb is merely a small fraction of a huge industrial machine. The rabbit-arm is attached to a bulky framework of rods and motors that slides along a supporting structure of steel bars. It's an awkward contraption of bicycle chain gear loops, spiraling pneumatic hoses, pressure dials, a translucent drum of red liquid, and a flashing safety light. The apparatus seems too large in scale and power in relation to the small element of latex flesh that it support and directs. The gun-gesturing hand emerging from the broken jaws of the red-eyed rabbit emits brief, arching spurts of "blood," more like a children's water pistol than a projectile weapon. Indeed, this is the infinite stage blood of Hollywood cinema, the decorative splash that marks the mass violence of thousands of fictional shoot-outs and hundreds of play-acted wars. As it recharges and moves on its frame, the mechanism mimics a movie camera on a dolly; as it sighs and grinds, it gears up for another volley of scarlet spray. It demonstrates the triumph of simulation over the suffering of real bodies.

At the 1993 *Whitney Biennial*, each visitor was given a metal tag of the type that signals that a day's admission to the museum has been granted. Like every other object in that uniquely defined space, the visitor was sorted and labeled, registered for transitory inclusion. Martinez used this token of belonging as a means of dispersing the personal voice into an entropic collective, fragmenting a statement of identity and resistance into a thousand open and mobile signs carried on unknown bodies. The work's title—*Museum Tags: Second Movement (Overture)*; or, *Overture con Claque (Overture with Hired Audience Members)*—refers to theatergoers (collectively called a claque) who are paid to applaud a performance. Thus, the title suggests that the visitor is contracted not just to represent and disseminate the artwork by wearing it but also to endorse the message. That message appeared in full on one of the six versions of the tag. On the other five, the statement was broken up into

34. Text from the work *Popular Front of Tijuana* (2008) by Martinez, an architectural installation in the atrium of the newly founded contemporary art museum in Tijuana, Mexico.

35. William S. Burroughs, *Queer: A Novel* (New York: Penguin, 1987), 1–2.

36. Rancière, "Politics, Identification, and Subjectivation," 64.

37. Clark Nova is the name of a typewriter in the novel *Naked Lunch*. William S. Burroughs, *Naked Lunch: The Restored Text* (New York: Grove Press, 2004). This science fiction book follows the adventures of William Lee (Burroughs's pseudonym for his first novel, *Junky*) through geographical and mental states both real and fictional. His journey starts in the United States, where he is fleeing the police in search of his next drug fix. Eventually he gets to Mexico. Other "places" in the novel include "Interzone," "Freeland," and "Annexia." The navigation of borders is a major theme of the book, as the main character is perpetually on a mission or on the run, entering or fleeing states across patrolled boundaries. Parallels are clear between this novel and the triangulation of references to Cuba, Mexico, and the United States in the installation.

existential-sounding phrases with very different modes of address. "I CAN'T" read like a declaration; "IMAGINE" like a command; "EVER WANTING" and "TO BE" like oblique description; and finally "WHITE"—a direct signifier. Text attached to one's body in this way usually reads as a personal claim or expression, a self-marking, as in political slogans or the logos of rock bands. Having tied the wearing of the text tags to the procedural, administrative system of museum admission, Martinez was able to impose these signs on his audience, undermining the self-fashioning that most message pins denote. These labels are designed to fail as reflections of identity at every level. The complete text itself was already an ambivalent and open-ended statement that evaded definition of the speaker's race. Race was only an absence, a speculative refusal—"I can't imagine." The first-person pronoun acted as a shifting designation, referring to whomever used it. The only instance in which the texts became fully denotative was when a white visitor donned the "white" badge. In that case, it functioned to make redundantly visible the race that never otherwise requires description or label. As in so much of Martinez's work, the proper noun and the proper body were multiplied and detached from the self. Shuffled out of order and misused, any language of identity is detachable and temporary, a mask rather than a skin. And any reflections are dislocated and flipped, creating what is perhaps a mirror likeness but also an illusion.

### Refugee/Refusé

The options open were few indeed, and not very palatable: to rally round the flag, either in the flesh or in one's idealism, or to become a refugee. / Either action would mean a betrayal: of oneself. He was faced with the question of whether / to go underground or to emigrate.<sup>34</sup>

The rudeness of many Americans depressed him, a rudeness based on . . . the proposition that for social purposes, all people are more or less equal and interchangeable.<sup>35</sup>

Identity is first about fear: the fear of the other, the fear of nothing, which finds on the body of the other its object.<sup>36</sup>

The animatronic installation by Martinez that includes extensive supporting text is titled *Have you seen my Clark Nova*; or, *I want to vomit in your mouth and hope you gag on your insipid lies (dancing is still the only way to start a revolution)*, containing a reference to a novel by William S. Burroughs.<sup>37</sup> This 2007 work consists of banners and a mechanized figure of Cuba's dictator lurching atop a large plywood structure. It looks like something between a work by Carl Andre and a seedy children's display, with the signage and mechanical puppetry of an unfinished

department store window or amusement park attraction. The small automaton is attached by a chrome pole to the top of a plywood box, his writhing jig reflected in its mirrored upper surface. This top panel pivots after every cycle of dancing, flipping the figure 180 degrees into the interior of the box and sealing itself into a blank wooden crate before rotating once more to create a platform stage for the gesticulating figure.

The idea that Cuban Communism is shabby theater is the evident reading. Castro is portrayed with a toothy grimace that opens repeatedly into a wide scream. Whether the puppet is meant to be dancing, laughing, or thrashing in pain is unclear. The only sound is the metallic whine of the gears of the mechanism. Dressed in oversize fatigues and combat boots, with bushy beard and signature cigar, the automaton takes on the features of a recognizable icon—but also a stock character. In the first sentence of *Naked Lunch*, the Burroughs novel referenced in the work's title, the protagonist is pursued by a "devil doll stool pigeon" from the government.<sup>38</sup> This scarecrow Castro has a similar uncanny effect. He is rendered a banal grotesque through the repetition of his trick performed with brute, jerky motions, his face chomping the air in a blank, manic rictus. Like Pulcinella/Punch of the commedia dell'arte and traditional marionette plays, he is a deformed and chaotic figure, a manifestation of the Lord of Misrule who has been reduced to performing a handful of customary standard vignettes for a passing, distracted audience.

It's also difficult not to think of our own political culture, in which subversive imagery often comes in the form of juvenile satire, while the mainstream mass media operates as an organ of the government. Certainly after 2001, it has been difficult to distinguish the administration perspective from that offered by the Fourth Estate. Cuba would seem to have a certain ideological innocence in this regard, in comparison with our own situation of dark complicity. *Have you seen my Clark Nova* seems designed in particular for a U.S. audience, as we seem to get our most effective nationalist caricatures presented through puppetry in a Hollywood movie like *Team America: World Police* (2004) or the *Daily Show's* "Gitmo." The first parodies the steroidal jingoism of American wartime pop culture, while the second is a character modeled on the ubiquitous *Sesame Street* toddler Muppet, but wearing the long beard of an "Islamic extremist." This fluffy fake inmate sends reports to a fake anchorman on a fake news program on the subject of being held without trial in America's Cuban political prison at Guantanamo Bay. When the people who write for *Comedy Central* are your generation's John Heartfield and George Orwell, Fidel Castro in mechanical effigy (or in life) is surely having the last laugh.

The closed box itself is both banal and enigmatic. Transforming the "stage" into an unmarked shipping

38. Burroughs, *Naked Lunch: The Restored Text*, 3.

39. Press release, The Project, New York, 2007.

40. Fires of Hell, Greece; King Mob, Great Britain; Revenge of the Hebrew Babies, Israel; Sane Thinkers School, Japan; Peace Conquerors, Belgium; Creativity Movement, United States.

crate invokes the clandestine trade of stowaways and smugglers. This work has been displayed only in Mexico City, and the political borders that it references must be understood not only as the U.S. relation to Cuba but also as the relation of both to the "other" America "below." The text banners carry ecstatic, diaristic fragments of narrative about exile and orgasm, political impotence and sexual conquest. Both graphically and semantically discontinuous, they seem to be the shattered or recovered pieces of a delirious castaway's journal, broken reflections on expulsion and wandering, violence and sublimity. One passage of text states, "i strangled him dead / abandoned by / parents by / friends by / America by the / pricks i have sucked"; another says that "they are nationless as long as they are alive." This contradictory object, both container and spectacle, is itself surrounded by unattributed language.

Migrant, asylum seeker, refugee, "illegal": between Mexico, Cuba, and the United States, these are the official identities of subjects in suspension, always in between and en route. The ideal of an isolated, self-contained state thriving through equality becomes a sinister, creaky jack-in-the-box toy. Reality is the dangerous struggle toward another horizon, "where the / world curled as / if from fire" (in the words from a banner in the installation). For Martinez, identity is a *brouillon*—French for the rough draft of a text and a term related to the words for cauldron and vortex. It implies productive disorder and mixing, recombination as a fertile process.

The ongoing project *Divine Violence* was exhibited in 2007 at The Project in New York, in the form of 121 gold-painted panels with black text, arranged from floor to ceiling in a running grid (2007). *Divine Violence* is described as "a continuing research project aimed at naming all the groups in the world currently attempting to enforce politics through violence."<sup>39</sup> It becomes clear that the names catalogued across the walls necessarily represent a small and arbitrary sample from a potentially infinite archive. As of the 2008 *Whitney Biennial* installation, Martinez had collected over seventeen hundred references to groups alternatively defined as terrorist factions, nationalist political parties, paramilitary organizations, or state agencies. The titles displayed on each panel range from the recognizable (Al-Qaeda, CIA, Ku Klux Klan, Mossad, Irish Republican Army, MI6) to the poetic and unfamiliar (Fires of Hell, King Mob, Revenge of the Hebrew Babies, Sane Thinkers School, Peace Conquerors, Creativity Movement).<sup>40</sup> Written as they are on luminous gold tablets, each panel has the quality of an idol, eliciting a moment of nervous submission.

On first encounter, this enclosing field of panels suggests several associations, including an absurd surfeit of the plaques commemorating the bequests of museum donors, the faceplates of stacked crypts in a

sanctuary, and the towers of bullion in the concrete fortress guarded by the soldiers at Fort Knox. From the memorial wall to the vault or archive, each of these symbolic readings is evocative of death and power. Together they create the atmosphere of a monument—at the same time that the viewer registers the serial grid format of Minimalist art.

The aesthetics of the industrial and the sacred compete at every level in this work. The evenly spaced rows of metallic rectangular panels reference machine production, while the material detail of the surfaces indicates that each unit is uniquely hand rendered. While the medium is the flecked gold of automotive paint, with its synthetic enamel sheen, it is applied to a wood panel, a support associated with medieval religious images. The layers of gestural underpainting on each panel create almost holographic effects. The glossy, molten metallic surfaces appear to swirl and change tone depending on the viewing angle. As visitors scan the units one after another, a vast range of brushstroke forms and a spectrum of closely related hues are revealed. This rich and subtle variation imbues the repetitive, abstract installation with an unsettling, alchemical intensity, as if each painting were the product of a ritual, a singular invocation. Adding to this paradoxical model of serialized fetishes or painterly cenotaphs is the use of text. Each panel displays a unique set of hand-lettered black words rendered with a precision approaching the mechanical. This element of inscription heightens the feeling of talismanic conjuring—yet at the same time, it clearly operates in the tradition from Cubism to Conceptualism of the anti-auratic device that cancels out pictorial metaphor and illusion to insist instead on the plane of language. This is text as social symbol, participating in the realm of discourse rather than in divinity. The combination of gilded field and stark, printed letters is a material translation of the concept behind the work as a whole: secular and sacred, territory and theology, governments and God are in conflict behind these words. What they all share is violence, and this force is represented in its infinite manifestations through the subtle visual distinctions that differentiate the panels.

The underlying premise of Martinez's collection and recording of these names is to chart the metastasizing spread of both cellular and endemic political violence—from "pockets of resistance" to revolutionary movements. From small bands of anarchist youth (Britain's Angry Brigade) to the paramilitary mercenary forces of superpower states (Blackwater), *Divine Violence* indexes the "ever-growing rhizome of political terror."<sup>41</sup> An important element in Martinez's choice of references, the relativity of scale directly reflects the fading of the logic of nation-states under the regime of globalized finance and communications. With the commercial and technological permeability of

41. Press release, The Project, New York, 2007.

42. Arjun Appadurai, *Fear of Small Numbers: An Essay on the Geography of Anger* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2006), 100.

43. Gerald Raunig, *Art and Revolution: Transversal Activism in the Long Twentieth Century* (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2007), 246.

44. Walter Benjamin, "Critique of Violence," in *Reflections* (New York: Schocken Books, 1986), 287.

45. German National Socialism (Nazism) was founded under the title of the German Workers' Party in 1919. Hitler attended one of its meetings that year and was thereafter an active member. While the Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (NSDAP) didn't take over the government until 1933, by 1927 it was a well-developed ideological force within Germany. The two volumes of Hitler's *Mein Kampf* were published in 1925 and 1926.

state boundaries represented by multinational corporations and the Internet, allegiances are no longer monolithic, no longer divisible into such categories as the First, Second, and Third worlds, with their direct ideological alignments.

Instead, there is a proliferation and nesting of conflicts connected by lines of force such as religious enmity or ethnic rebellion. As Arjun Appadurai explains in his recent account of the asymmetrical nature of most contemporary struggles, local sectarian and territorial conflicts are "complex fractal replicas of larger struggles."<sup>42</sup> This centripetal spiraling that governs wars between both neighborhoods and nations has many forms, from religious to racial antagonism. The vectors of violent difference are innumerable and ubiquitous, scarring and scorching the land between villages and hemispheres.

Parallel to these bomb craters and mass graves is the geography of security, from the West Bank wall and fencing between the United States and Mexico to wiretapping, no-fly lists, and new modes of detention. Extension of disciplinary power is outstripping the evolution of the law, and many nations are transitioning to custom models of "might makes right." Martinez represents the dark side of the "cartographic fantasy" of current anti-terror security culture, the zones of identification and migration control associated with the monitoring of political activity, as in the restructured system of "European borders."<sup>43</sup> His map sketches in the evasive societies that occupy the terra incognita at the conceptual edges of patrolled and surveilled states, the regions of belief—if not land—where "There be monsters" is inscribed.

At the same time, he insists that the danger exists both within and without, in the familiar forms of government as well as in the evil stranger. Walter Benjamin describes sanctioned police violence in terms that echo the fear of terrorism, reminding us that the law too can easily become a means of attack: "Its power is formless, like its nowhere-tangible, all-pervasive, ghostly presence in the life of civilized states."<sup>44</sup> By naming, side by side, state institutions and rebel groups, Martinez insists on this mirror image of potential brutality.

Benjamin's writings constitute a primary conceptual theme of the installation, and the title of Martinez's artwork, *Divine Violence*, is taken from the philosopher's 1921 essay "Critique of Violence," in which the writer comes to terms with the ethics of revolution. Formulated in the lengthening shadow of incipient Fascism, Benjamin's analysis of divine violence reads like a proposition that should have been fulfilled.<sup>45</sup> The "magic circle" of state violence with which Fascism would bind Europe might have been broken by the "law-destroying" power of divine violence in the form of total revolt. For Benjamin, divine violence explodes all structures of both discipline and rights.

Because rights are dictated by the state, they are implicated in the system of repression. Whether disguised as natural law or as justice itself—what he calls “mythic,” transcendent categories—dispensation by the state “makes it all the more threatening, like fate.”<sup>46</sup> In the simplest terms, Benjamin defines divine violence as “the revolutionary killing of the oppressor,”<sup>47</sup> action that entails the absolute destruction of existing powers, a force that “in annihilating . . . also expiates.”<sup>48</sup> Martinez’s project demonstrates the Manichaeic escalation of political terror between opponents, be they state and insurgents or factional contests over land, religion, and rights. Martinez’s testimonial listing of agencies and doctrines of killing—whether white supremacist movements, secret police, or mujahideen—demonstrates Benjamin’s warning that “from the point of view of violence . . . there is no equality, but at the most equally great violence.”<sup>49</sup>

For the 2004 San Juan Triennial in Puerto Rico, Martinez installed woodblock prints on features of the streetscape throughout the La Perla district. This area of the city, given over to drug crime and violence, had been largely forsaken by police authorities. The work, *If Only God Had Invented Coca Cola, Sooner! Or, The Death of My Pet Monkey*, consists of multiple texts posted on building walls, telephone poles, and derelict storefronts, all displaying messages in a variety of voices, from phrases that resemble slogans to oblique, poetic invocations of nature: “DON’T WORK” and “the world is hollow and I have touched the sky.” The mode of address shifts from command to declaration to introspective reflection. Many texts are also hybrids of capitalization and typography, rendering their intended audience and meaning yet more unfixed: “I PROMISE to be good” and “beneath THE ASPHALT, the beach.” The fractured and cryptic signage seems to represent both the breakdown of order—authority and protection—within this civic space and the possibility of self-creation that is left open when that order is withdrawn.

In a somewhat parallel work for the Estación Tijuana gallery in Tijuana, Mexico, entitled *Touch of Evil* (2005), Martinez used large text banners on the facade and grounds of the exhibition space. The texts combined references to the German leftist Red Army Faction with statements of cultural critique, in academic prose, on the colonial legacy of Mexico as the primitive “New World” to Europeans and, by extension, the marginal subordinate of the United States: “the nineteenth century dislike of realism is the rage of caliban seeing his own face in the mirror”; “we are all baader-meinhof.”

The dislocated and remnant texts that Martinez uses in such works recall the perspective of 1960s radicals talking about the present—that uniquely out-of-sync voice that you get from figures like Italian journalist Oriana Fallaci. There’s something cracked

46. Benjamin, “Critique of Violence,” 297.

47. *Ibid.*, 298.

48. *Ibid.*, 297.

49. *Ibid.*

50. Oriana Fallaci’s article “Anger and Pride” was originally published (in Italian) in the newspaper *Corriere della Sera*, Sept. 29, 2001.

51. During the 1968 Tlatelolco massacre prior to the 1968 Mexico City Summer Olympics, Fallaci was shot three times, dragged downstairs by her hair, and left for dead by Mexican forces. According to Margaret Talbot, her former support of the student activists “devolved into a dislike of Mexicans”: “The demonstrations by immigrants in the United States these past few months ‘disgusted’ her, especially when protesters displayed the Mexican flag. See Talbot’s profile, “The Agitator: Oriana Fallaci Directs Her Fury toward Islam,” *New Yorker*, June 5, 2006.

52. Thomas, doubting Christ’s Resurrection, touches his wounds in John 20: 24–29.

about the nostalgia and something deliberately misplaced about the juxtapositions. Although not a source for Martinez, Fallaci’s bizarrely personalized politics capture the tone of the language games the artist himself plays when he collages political references. In her notorious tract against Muslim culture, written shortly after 9/11, Fallaci described the paradox of the United States as an aggressor: “Well, in my view America frees the plebes. Everyone is a plebe there. White, black, yellow, brown, purple, stupid, intelligent, poor, rich. Actually the rich are the most plebeian of all. . . . But they are freed, by God. And in this world there is nothing stronger or more powerful than freed plebes. You will always get your skull cracked when you go up against the Freed Plebe. And they all got their skulls cracked by America: English, Germans, Mexicans, Russians, Nazis, Fascists, Communists.”<sup>50</sup> For Fallaci—stuck in the traumas of 1968—Mexicans and Muslims are nearly interchangeable as violent rogue cultures: “I don’t love the Mexicans,” Fallaci has said, referencing the abuse she endured at the hands of Mexican police in 1968. “If you hold a gun and say, ‘Choose who is worse between the Muslims and the Mexicans,’ I have a moment of hesitation. Then I choose the Muslims, because they have broken my balls.”<sup>51</sup> Because of the polyphony of voices in Martinez’s art, there is often a similar anti-logic of political belief. The assemblage of texts mimics an authentic voice that has been stranded on some island of history where it has devolved into a political glossolalia, a schizophrenic eruption of the language of revolution.

In the extensive series of performance-based photographs, *Coyote: I Like Mexico and Mexico Likes Me (More Human Than Human)*, of 1999–2002, Martinez pictures himself and his collaborators in scenes of violence and pain that seem to reference a range of genres, from old master painting to Hollywood movies, science fiction to war journalism. Each photograph within the series has an extensive title referencing a characteristic combination of themes—high and low, literary and first-person, political and pop cultural. Many of the images use meticulously realistic special-effects makeup to simulate wounds. In a work from the series, Martinez is shown disemboweling himself. This work reads like a contemporary, cinematic version of a brutal medieval depiction of punishment by Satan or an enemy army—or even like a present-day Caravaggio’s *Incredulity of Saint Thomas* (ca. 1602–3), where Christ guides the apostle’s finger into the deep cut in his side.<sup>52</sup> Here it is the modern individual in his isolation and egotism who seeks proof that he is alive in death or dead in life by destroying the limits of his body.

Also conjured by these scenes are Mexican folk *retablos* of sacred hearts, diseased limbs presented in hopes of a divine cure, and bloody penitential rites.

Art-historical associations are layered one atop another. A woman resembling Frida Kahlo presents Martinez's severed head to him on a platter, conflating Mexican Surrealism and Renaissance depictions of Judith and Holofernes, Salome and Saint John the Baptist. In another, the artist holds his own severed ears, redundantly full of pierced holes, like some grunge van Gogh. By crossing Hollywood violence with biblical violence, Mexican art history with European art history, Martinez has again pictured the internal other and the divided self—his most persistent theme. In staging the mutilation and defilement of the “proper” body, he shows it to be rent from within and never whole. What is illusion, he seems to insist, is the idea that we are safely distinct and distant from those we hate and fear.

### Other Spaces

I believe that between utopias and these quite other sites, these heterotopias, there might be a sort of mixed, joint experience, which would be the mirror. The mirror is, after all, a utopia, since it is a placeless place. In the mirror, I see myself there where I am not, in an unreal, virtual space that opens up behind the surface; I am over there, there where I am not, a sort of shadow that gives my own visibility to myself, that enables me to see myself there where I am absent: such is the utopia of the mirror.<sup>53</sup>

Let me also wear / Such deliberate disguises<sup>54</sup>

In the 1996–98 series entitled *is it an operation or an apparatus; terror must be maintained to uphold the empire*, Martinez photographs himself at scenes of violence and tragedy, wearing a black-and-white mask made from a photograph of his own face. Often slightly out of focus and strangely composed, he looks like a passing ghost captured by the camera. In part an homage to David Wojnarowicz's impersonation of Arthur Rimbaud in his staged photographs of 1978–79, where the artist depicted himself in a queer *bohème* of contemporary New York City, *is it an operation* is also an invocation of the mass-memorial events that had already become a feature of American culture before September 11, most notably in the aftermath of the Oklahoma City bombing of 1995. In many of the images, Martinez is pictured at sites that seem to have healed over through time, becoming anonymous again to the uninitiated. Often they are sites connected to ethnic struggle and violence, such as Bloody Sunday in Derry, Northern Ireland, in 1972; the Jewish ghetto in Venice (instituted in 1516); or the massacre of Native Americans at Three Rivers in Pittsburgh.

By disguising himself with his own face in these spaces, Martinez depicts the inaccessibility of the

53. The heading, “Other Spaces,” references the title of a 1967 essay by Michel Foucault, “Of Other Spaces” (“Des espaces autres: Hétérotopies”), in which he describes *heterotopia* as a site of mixture and collection, containment and exclusion. Examples include prisons, vacation resorts, museums, cemeteries, and ships. See archive of Foucault texts at <http://foucault.info/documents/heteroTopia/foucault.heteroTopia.en.html>.

54. T. S. Eliot, “The Hollow Men” (1925), sect. 2, stanza 2, lines 3–4.

55. Foucault, “Of Other Spaces.”

56. Initially inspired by the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal, Martinez chose to contact prisoners on Pennsylvania's death row by letter. Prior to his arrest for shooting a police officer in 1981, Abu-Jamal was a Black Panther Party activist and journalist. (He authored several books from behind bars, including *Live from Death Row* [1995], *Death Blossoms* [1997], and the collection *All Things Censored* [2000, 2003].) The conviction was contested from the beginning, and controversy about Abu-Jamal's guilt and the role of institutionalized racism in law enforcement and the courts has made him a major figure for advocates against the death penalty. Although denied any exchanges with Abu-Jamal himself by prison authorities, Martinez established a fourteen-month correspondence with a group of other inmates awaiting execution, during which time he sent them guidance on drawing techniques for self-portraiture, as well as texts on art and philosophy. Martinez then collected and exhibited the drawings.

experience of extreme violence to language, the impossibility of detaching it from embodied presence or communicating it to others. He also refracts any fixed ethnic identification by placing himself at sites specific to cultural conflicts separate from his own background. Immune from the particular context of their persecution, Martinez suggests that there is a universal solidarity among the ghosts of those murdered in the name of politics, and that the power of these sites of ideological bloodshed can be tapped by the living for strength to resist all oppression. In defining heterotopia, Michel Foucault describes this as “the space that claws and gnaws at us.”<sup>55</sup>

In another project about the limits and potentialities of self-representation, Martinez disseminated skills of self-portraiture to prison inmates, making one of his own primary artistic practices into a viral force (*Free to the People*, 1996–97).<sup>56</sup> In this extreme form of subjection, where the body is physically expropriated and destroyed by the state, Martinez used the politics of the face against power. An act of symbolic repossession, the self-portrait opens up the fixed identity of the radically exiled, the criminal and murderer awaiting execution. Against the newspaper photo, against the mug shot, against the courtroom sketch, against the picture window of the death chamber, there are drawings of men originating from the other side of the face—painstakingly delineated contours made to confront the mask.

Martinez connects the institutional practices of the museum to the construction of historical memory in the installation *A Meditation on the Possibility of Romantic Love; or, Where You Goin' with That Gun in Your Hand: Bobby Seale and Huey Newton Discuss the Relationships between Expressionism and Social Reality Present in Hitler's Paintings* (2005). This installation, centered around ten white, “abstract” paintings, uses mock curatorial gestures to integrate the incompatible voices of historical Fascism and American civil rights radicalism, totalitarianism, and dissidence. More than the clashing references of the work's political content, this set of paintings, texts, and sculptural elements demonstrates the strange power of institutional conventions to convincingly frame and package almost anything. This is a dare, of sorts, that challenges the viewer to see past the legitimating format of wall texts and paintings, neatly ordered for programmed consumption. A large reproduction of a still from the Zapruder film of the Kennedy assassination hangs at the entrance to the gallery, offering the first thematic bracketing of the work. The museum-label texts that neatly gloss each painting do not supply the identifying facts and interpretive summaries the viewer expects, however; rather, they contain short didactic paragraphs of political philosophy. If the viewer attempts to factor in the project's title, separating the voices of artist, author, and institution



quickly becomes an absurdist exercise. Who is engaged in the art-historical “discussion” mentioned in the title? The gap around which any reading of the work is structured is the unknown curator-author who offers dull and disturbing political aphorisms instead of art-historical authority.

The words are those of Hitler, but his authorship of the signage texts is not identified, so the viewer is prompted to read the excerpts from *Mein Kampf* as explanatory information following museum conventions.<sup>57</sup> The first reflex of the viewer is to ascribe the words to the artist and apply them to the interpretation of the artwork. In that case, are these white monochromes an earnest or a satirical homage to Suprematism and that movement’s direct politicization? Is Martinez summoning up Malevich in 1919: “I have ripped through the blue lampshade of the constraints of color. I have come out into the white. Follow me, comrade aviators! Swim into the abyss?”<sup>58</sup> One has to read the texts very carefully indeed to identify the dangerous sentiments amid the awkwardly composed but banal rhetoric of statecraft—statements such as “generations of rabble without honor deserve no freedom”<sup>59</sup> or “The state is a means to an end. Its end lies in the preservation and advancement of a community of physically and psychically homogeneous creatures.”<sup>60</sup> This language of domination and purification makes the paintings themselves signify on the level of race. Not only is the symbolic white of the artistic avant-garde being invoked but also the ethnic white of cultural power. This theme, in turn, ties in with both the Black Power references in the work’s title and the small white silhouette objects perched on an adjacent windowsill—the outline of armed Panthers in their signature berets traced from a famous photograph.

Martinez names Hitler as a fellow artist, making the Führer’s missing paintings the titular subject of the exhibition. This shifting identification among multiple unlocatable voices within the work echoes Rancière’s claim that political consciousness and conscience are predicated on a self that is composite, mobile, and incomplete: “the life of political subjectivization is made out of the difference between the voice and the body, the interval between identities.”<sup>61</sup> By stringing together references to singular figures representing disparate moments and forces, Martinez is able to interrupt conventional historical and cultural categories and insist on the imperative of keeping political identity radically open.

In *The House America Built* (2004), Martinez reconstructs the Montana cabin of the “Unabomber” Theodore Kaczynski, a Berkeley professor of mathematics turned anarchist hermit, made infamous by bombings that targeted corporations and academics associated with technology and globalization, from individual scientists to American Airlines.

57. Adolf Hitler’s autobiography, *Mein Kampf*, was published in Germany in 1925–26 by Secker and Warburg Verlag.

58. This is Malevich’s famous declaration as translated in Larissa Zhadova, *Malevich: Suprematism and Revolution in Russian Art, 1910–1930* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1982).

59. Excerpted from the text accompanying *Abstract Painting, White, Number 136*.

60. Excerpted from the text accompanying *Abstract Painting, White, Number 682*.

61. Rancière, “Politics, Identification, and Subjectivization,” 62.

62. Krysten Crawford, “Martha: ‘I Cheated No One’: Lifestyle Diva Invokes Mandela as She, Ex-broker Prepare to Appeal 5-Month Sentences” (July 20, 2004), <http://money.cnn.com/>.

63. See Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*.

64. See the exhibition website: [http://www.newseum.org/exhibits\\_th/fbi/video.aspx?item=fbi\\_exhibit&style=f](http://www.newseum.org/exhibits_th/fbi/video.aspx?item=fbi_exhibit&style=f). The “Explore the Unabomber’s Cabin” feature: [http://www.newseum.org/exhibits\\_th/fbi\\_feat/video.aspx?item=unabomber\\_int&style=k](http://www.newseum.org/exhibits_th/fbi_feat/video.aspx?item=unabomber_int&style=k). Kaczynski has protested the inclusion of his house in the *G-Men and Journalists* show. As the pop-legal website *The Smoking Gun* explains, “Imprisoned Unabomber Ted Kaczynski is upset that his former Montana cabin is on display at a Washington, D.C., museum, contending that the FBI’s decision to allow its ‘public exhibition’ runs counter to his victims’ desire to limit further publicity about the deadly terror spree. Kaczynski, housed in the ‘supermax’ federal prison in Florence, Colorado, learned of the cabin’s display via a June 19 [2008] ad in the *Washington Post*, according to a handwritten letter he recently sent to a three-judge U.S. Court of Appeals panel.” See: <http://www.thesmokinggun.com/archive/years/2008/08/12081unabomber1.html>.

Kaczynski himself modeled the building directly on the Walden Pond cabin of Henry David Thoreau, author of the famous protest tract *Civil Disobedience* (1849) and abolitionist, ecologist, and philosopher of nonviolent political resistance. Therefore, the house was already an ideologically overinvested copy and a historically displaced simulation even before Martinez’s re-creation.

The cabin is painted in sugary pastels designed by celebrity lifestyle guru Martha Stewart. The simple pitched roof of the structure is sliced by the ceiling beams of The Project’s main gallery, as if it had grown within the space. Cut through the center, the building also pays homage to “anarchitect” Gordon Matta-Clark’s famous intervention that consisted of sawing a New Jersey house in half (*Splitting*, 1974). Martinez seems to suggest that this array of references is bound together by more than the easy paradoxes of art/kitsch, destruction/decoration, and politics/consumerism. Recall that Stewart was sentenced to time behind bars the same year (2004), while declaring her innocence with the strangely liberal, populist insight, “Many, many good people have gone to prison.”<sup>62</sup> Matta-Clark made much of his art out of vandalizing the property of others. Martinez is able to appropriate simultaneously Matta-Clark’s deconstruction of bourgeois social containment, Kaczynski’s call for a revolution against military-industrial domination, and Martha Stewart’s ornamental criminality, folding them together into a structure symbolic of his own cultural habitation. Distorted by the confines of the gallery space, but in turn provided with a veneer of propriety, the structure demonstrates the defining conflict of institutionalized critique, of fighting a system from within.

In a twist that only the most credulous and prescient Baudrillardian<sup>63</sup> could have foreseen, the cabin Kaczynski built has now become an artifact on exhibit in Washington, D.C. Moreover, Jean Baudrillard would be darkly thrilled with the ominous neologism of the institution’s name—the Newseum. At this “museum of the news,” the Unabomber cabin is on display in the show *G-Men and Journalists: Top News Stories of the FBI’s First Century*, which opened in June 2008. Other items in the exhibition include John Dillinger’s death mask, Patricia Hearst’s coat and gun, and the electric chair in which convicted Lindbergh baby kidnapper Bruno Hauptmann was executed.<sup>64</sup> The Newseum website that accompanies the *G-Men and Journalists* exhibition includes an interactive tour called “The Unabomber’s Cabin.” The website user is directed to “click on the items inside the cabin to get a closer look at the life of a mad hermit.” One can activate pop-up text boxes of information by clicking on digitally rendered images of Kaczynski’s belongings as they are re-created from a photograph of his home taken by the FBI. The website user can thereby “uncover clues” about such evidence as the manifesto “Typewriter” or,

uncannily, the “Bed,” where “the oil and dirt stains on the wall outlined Kaczynski’s body in repose.”

It is simply impossible to open to analysis a cultural program so cynically transparent as the “möbius-spiraling” simulacrum of the Unabomber as curated by the Newseum. Quoting Baudrillard directly regarding our present hyper-reality “*unhinged by simulation*” is the only recourse.<sup>65</sup>

Is any given bombing . . . the work of leftist extremists, or extreme-right provocation, or a centrist mise-en-scène to discredit all extreme terrorists and to shore up its own failing power, or again, is it a police-inspired scenario and a form of blackmail to public security? All of this is simultaneously true, and the search for proof, indeed the objectivity of the facts does not put an end to this vertigo of interpretation. That is, we are in a logic of simulation, which no longer has anything to do with a logic of facts and an order of reason. Simulation is characterized by a *precession of the model*, . . . the models come first.<sup>66</sup>

The facing mirrors of Kaczynski imitating Thoreau are as nothing to the infinite regress of the digital re-creation of the cabin, with its virtual smudges of embodied habitation. The model and the copy precede and construct the real—a concept Martinez continuously explores.

At the 2006 inaugural exhibition of the LAXART gallery, which featured the work of Martinez, the central installation was largely camouflaged. The architectural alteration of the main gallery space, a work entitled *Flesh Eating Prosthetic (phagocitage des prothèses): How I Fell in Love with My Dirty Bomb (Opium des Volks)*, consisted of eight tons of asphalt and eight hundred pounds of lard. The five-inch-thick slab of asphalt covered the new floor of the recently renovated gallery, creating a dark, grainy layer that was both instinctively familiar, being the material that coats most of Los Angeles, and invisible, being an architectural “prosthetic” that replaced and mimicked the underlying ground plane. This is the “site” work to Robert Smithson’s 1969 “nonsite” Pour series *Asphalt Rundown*, in which he spilled a large dump-truck bed full of the material down a construction site excavation cliff outside of Rome. Asphalt is the material of airport runways, an association that conjures up the hijacked jets of the 1970s, including Black September’s manipulation of the German government at the 1972 Olympics, which Martinez references in this work. It is the material of highways, those vectors of invasion, occupation, and expansion that have secured empires from ancient Rome onward. Asphalt is access: it is ownership; it is power.

65. Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, 16.

66. *Ibid.*

The asphalt field was then edged with impacted lard, which obscured the crisp join between the standard white drywall and the altered floor. While lard as an art material is wholly overdetermined by its association with Joseph Beuys and his mythic Nazi-plane-crash hypothermia, it is used by Martinez in this installation more like Richard Serra’s thrown molten lead—Serra performed *Splashing* in 1968 at gallerist Leo Castelli’s West 108th Street warehouse. Serra played on the concept of “casting,” hurling the liquid metal overhead from an industrial ladle, thus casting it like a fishing line rather than pouring it into a traditional mold to create a discrete object, the conventional artistic definition of casting. Serra flung the lead at the wall-floor juncture, thereby framing the space with the artwork, rather than the inverse.

The organic, sensory impact of the heaped and spread fat competes with the image impact of the iconic political scenes. Despite the invocation of outrage and bloodshed, it is the quiet, colorless, and literally spatially marginal lard that discomfits the visitor. The encounter between the viewer’s embodiment and the encircling clots of uncontained animal tissue is much more pressing as a sign of violence than the multiply mediated photographic images of past crises.

Martinez wants to draw attention to the power of material presence and transgressed or misused space. As Minimalists like Serra understood, disrupting the neutral propriety of the gallery architecture by manipulating viewers’ sense of their body space is a far more direct means of stimulating physical and social self-consciousness than addressing the eye alone through pictures. In this context, the pictures are images from the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City, a landmark event in civil rights history because of the “Black Power” salute performed by U.S. athletes Tommie Smith and John Carlos (for which they were banned from subsequent competition). Other pictures relate to the Palestinian terrorist attack on Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympics, in which eleven Israelis died. While this imagery may not be vivid in the historical imagination of many gallery visitors, Martinez’s insistence on marking the threshold between audience and picture with the spilled internal flesh of a fellow animal in effect guarantees a freshly activated and productively estranged looking.

In the transferred Super-8 video entitled *i shit on the order of the world, we all die, some know when, some not (what i lack is mercy, forgiveness and compassion)*; or, *Is this a spitting clown*, from 1992, Martinez seems to channel Bruce Nauman in a schizophrenic overlap of impersonations. It is as if the figure from Nauman’s 1987 video installation *Clown Torture* had pulled himself together and gone on the offensive, trading his abject antics for a calm, repeated hawking of gobs of saliva onto the camera lens. Face partially hidden behind a Pierrot mask, Martinez

pivots his head slowly before loosing the wads of spit that then slide down the screen. The revenge of the tortured clown crossed with a crude and aggressive version of Nauman's 1966 *Self-Portrait as Fountain*, Martinez's video almost seems aimed at enlisting those predecessor figures in a street fight. Vito Acconci lurks somewhere in there as well, ready to jostle and bite. Incorporating these performative art-historical identities into the staging of his own body, Martinez sets up a funhouse mirror that multiplies and spreads artistic authorship to a new level of critical diffusion.

In the video *Hollow Men* of 2005, hands wearing grotesque rubber costume gloves of various monsters repeatedly feather the pages of a small flip-book. Printed in black and white in the book are sequential photographic stills of an advancing phalanx of riot police, with visored helmets, shields, and gloves. While the thick distorted rubber hands spread the pages with a flutter, the voice of Colonel Kurtz gives a soliloquy on war atrocities and the transcendent beauty of killing "without judgment." The hands change from bony green talons to raw red stumps, from gray with black claws to deformed and swollen with dirty nails, the large floppy fingers scratching at the paper. The audio from Coppola's 1979 *Apocalypse Now* winds on with Brando's low, intimate rasp, as if it's synched to the primitive cinema of the moving flip-book images. It is impossible to decipher the location or the date of the police action that's depicted as the small figures march and engage, again and again. Like the remembered horror Kurtz describes so lovingly, the event in the book has no identifying names or history—only the blurred partial letters of the word "POLICE" written large across the chest of the figure closest to the camera.

The video also draws on a 1925 poem by T. S. Eliot with the same title. One epigraph to the poem is "Mistah Kurtz—he dead," a reference to Joseph Conrad's 1902 novel *Heart of Darkness*, which is also a source for Coppola's film. Martinez uses the opening stanza of Eliot's text as the epigraph to his own work, thereby linking himself to the chain of embedded quotation.

Martinez's *Hollow Men* plays on the dislocation that marks scenes of violence, particularly when they are processed to dissolution by the entertainment industry of the contemporary news media. Appropriated, excerpted, and collaged, the horror of war and disaster as we receive it on our electronic screens is modular and recycled, made unreal to a point beyond the simplicity of fiction. *Hollow Men* is about this inaccessibility and distortive mediation. As telepresence replaces embodied experience to an ever greater degree, the division between those who inhabit violence and those who consume it as shadows on the cave wall of the Web and TV can be evoked best through the words of Colonel Kurtz explaining the

67. From the transcription of the audio to *Hollow Men*, as it is reproduced in the catalogue for the United States Pavilion of the *Tenth International Cairo Biennale*, in the section on the work of Daniel Joseph Martinez titled *The Fully Enlightened Earth Radiates Disaster Triumphant* (Houston: Museum of Fine Arts, 2006), 39.

68. *Heteroglossia* is a term used by Mikhail Bakhtin to describe multiple voices or types of speech within a text. M. M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982).

69. Leonardo da Vinci, *Codice Atlantico*, quoted by Jacques Lacan in "Agency of the Letter in the Unconscious," in *Ecrits: A Selection* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1977), 146.

70. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 400.

71. Serres, *The Parasite*, 123.

72. Tariq Ali, "Why They Happened: The London Bombings," *CounterPunch*, July 8, 2005.

73. Spoken by the character of Mishima, in the film *Mishima: A Life in Four Chapters* (1985), directed by Paul Schrader and written by Paul and Leonard Schrader.

74. Serres, *The Parasite*, 35–37.

75. Michael Franti on a factory machine he manned that inspired music by his first band, the Beatnigs. Interview with Elizabeth A. DiNovella, "Louder than Bombs: A Profile of Michael Franti—Rap Singer," *The Progressive*, Feb. 2002.

76. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 367.

77. Adorno, *Minima Moralia*, 217.

78. *Ibid.*, 141.

79. Georges Bataille, "Unknown: Laughter and Tears," trans. Annette Michelson, *October* 36 (Spring 1986): 90.

80. Samuel Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, act 1.

81. Excerpt of dialogue from the 1956 film *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, directed by Don Siegel.

82. *Ibid.*

83. Hardt and Negri, *Multitude*, 196.

difference between seeing and understanding: "I've seen horrors. Horrors that you've seen. . . . But you have no right to judge me. It's impossible . . . to describe what is necessary to those who do not know what horror means. Horror."<sup>67</sup>

In early photographic series from the 1970s, Martinez explored bodily self-construction and the staging of identity in ways that are still at play in his current work. In *I used to eat lemon meringue pie till I overloaded my pancreas with sugar and passed out; It seemed to be a natural response to a society of abundance* [*Body Builders*] (1978), huge men in small swimsuits twist and flex in front of a white wall; their oiled dark skin, either black or deeply tanned, shines like a beetle's carapace. Some of the men look into the camera, while some frame themselves as elaborate objects, eyes turned away. Many of the figures are cut off at the knee or ankle, as if the eye is magnetized by the mass of the torsos. In *I always wanted the ears of Buddha, the will of Nietzsche and the body of Mishima* [*Beauty Pageant*] (1979), the images are more in the candid "street" style of figures passing through the frame, caught in a moment of activity. Young women wear banners across their chests that read "Petite Teen," "Petite Junior," and "Little Miss," distinctions that clearly have important significance in this alternative society. In the photographic flash, behind the curtain of a darkened stage, the women look harshly painted and tense. They stand in disconnected clusters, as if waiting to embody "beauty" at any moment, poised to transform. Not unlike Martinez's later work in self-portraiture that re-creates, masks, and distorts the body, the figures in these two subcultures manufacture their identities by shaping and styling their bodies. Against the idea of the body as a natural form that contains and reflects a coherent self, these groups overtly masquerade, displaying the artifice of their exaggerated appearance.

## Heteroglossia: Another's Speech, Another's Language<sup>68</sup>

O cities of the sea, I behold in you your citizens, women as well as men tightly bound with stout bonds around their arms and legs by folk who will not understand your language; and you will only be able to give vent to your griefs and sense of loss of liberty by making tearful complaints, and sighs, and lamentations one to another; for those who bind you will not understand your language nor will you understand them.<sup>69</sup>

Learning to undo things, and to undo oneself, is proper to the war machine.<sup>70</sup>

We know nothing of the simplest or most direct operations—addition, multiplication, composition, combination—when it has to do with us. Alas, we can only subtract, analyze, kill.<sup>71</sup>

The bombing of innocent people is equally barbaric in Baghdad, Jenin, Kabul as it is in New York, Madrid or London.<sup>72</sup>

I come out on the stage determined to make people weep. Instead, they burst out laughing.<sup>73</sup>

The blind man will carry him and the cripple will be the guide. One furnishes energy, the other information. . . . Matter and voice. This cybernetics gets more and more complicated, makes a chain, then a network. Yet it is founded on the theft of information. . . . It is merely necessary to . . . withdraw knowledge from the greatest number. In the end, power is nothing else.<sup>74</sup>

We started making rhymes to the rhythm of the machine.<sup>75</sup>

Any passage to the limit belongs as such to the vague.<sup>76</sup>

Happiness is obsolete: uneconomic.<sup>77</sup>

The joke of our time is the suicide of intention.<sup>78</sup>

*The unknown makes us laugh.*<sup>79</sup>

Estragon: What about hanging ourselves?  
Vladimir: Hmm. It'd give us an erection.<sup>80</sup>

"Boy says his father isn't his father and the woman says her sister isn't her sister?"

"That's pretty close. I knew you'd been studying hypnosis, but when did you start reading minds?"

"He doesn't have to read them. I've sent him a dozen patients since it started."

"What is 'it'? What's going on?"

"I don't know, a strange neurosis, evidently contagious—an epidemic of mass hysteria.

In two weeks, it's spread all over town."

"What causes it?"

"Worry about what's going on in the world."<sup>81</sup>

The relationship with the human body is maimed from the outset. . . . Culture defines the body as . . . the object, the dead thing, the "*corpus*."<sup>82</sup>

We need to use the monstrous expressions of the multitude to challenge the mutations of artificial life transformed into commodities.<sup>83</sup>

Not in my name.<sup>84</sup>

The real war will never get in the books.<sup>85</sup>

84. This phrase is a widely used protest slogan in opposition to the war in Iraq, from 2002 to the present.

85. Walt Whitman, *Specimen Days in America* (London: Walter Scott, 1887), 125.

86. Foucault, "Of Other Spaces."

87. Serres, *The Parasite*, 70.

88. Henry David Thoreau, "Civil Disobedience." See full text at [http://www.transcendentalists.com/civil\\_disobedience.htm](http://www.transcendentalists.com/civil_disobedience.htm).

89. Interview with Angela Davis conducted by Jennifer Byrne, for Australian Broadcast Corporation's program *Foreign Correspondent*, May 25, 1999.

90. Theodore Kaczynski, "Industrial Society and Its Future (Feelings of Inferiority: Section 20)" (1995). See full text at website: [http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Industrial\\_Society\\_and\\_Its\\_Future](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Industrial_Society_and_Its_Future).

91. Adorno, *Minima Moralia*, 162.

92. *Ibid.*, 50.

93. Excerpt of dialogue from the 1987 film *Robocop*, directed by Paul Verhoeven. This dialogue occurs in a scene of dismantling, testing, and rebuilding the arm of a superstrength robot that may have taken on independent consciousness.

94. Adorno, *Minima Moralia*, 146–47.

95. This quote is widely attributed to Karl Marx, in a letter from Marx to his son-in-law Paul Lafargue. However, it has also been attributed to Friedrich Engels.

96. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 473.

97. This quote is from John Jay Chapman (1862–1933), a civil rights lawyer, writer, and critic who was active in political agitation for racial equality and justice. Robert Andrews, *The Columbia Dictionary of Quotations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 708.

98. This quote has become an anarchist slogan attributed to Emma Goldman (1869–1940); it derives from an incident recounted in her biography. See Emma Goldman, *Living My Life* (New York: Knopf, 1931), 56.

From the standpoint of the mirror I discover my absence from the place where I am since I see myself over there.<sup>86</sup>

Maybe I understand the message only because of the noise.<sup>87</sup>

Under a government which imprisons unjustly, the true place for a just man is also a prison . . . where the State places those who are not *with* her, but *against* her.<sup>88</sup>

Q: (Jennifer Byrne): Let's have a look at your early revolutionary days—I'd just like to talk a bit about that. Does it all seem slightly unreal to you now, or in fact all too real?

A: (Angela Davis): Well I think it probably seems . . . hyper-real.<sup>89</sup>

Self-hatred is a leftist trait.<sup>90</sup>

Running in the street conveys an impression of terror. The victim's fall is already mimed in his attempt to escape it. The position of the head, trying to hold itself up, is that of a drowning man, and the straining face grimaces as if under torture. He has to look ahead, can hardly glance back without stumbling, as if treading the shadow of a foe whose features freeze the limbs. Once people ran from dangers that were too desperate to turn and face, and someone running after a bus unwittingly bears witness to past terror.<sup>91</sup>

All human sacrifices . . . deceive the god to whom they are made . . . and dissolve his power.<sup>92</sup>

"He signed a release when he joined the force. And he's dead. We can do pretty much what we want."  
"You're gonna be a bad motherfucker!"  
"Hey, hey. Look, he's watching us!"<sup>93</sup>

What has become alien to men is the human component of culture, its closest part, which upholds them against the world. They make common cause with the world against themselves, and the most alienated condition of all, the omnipresence of commodities, their own conversion into appendages of machinery, is for them a mirage of closeness.<sup>94</sup>

If that is Marxism, then I am not a Marxist.<sup>95</sup>

The undecidable is the germ and locus par excellence of revolutionary decisions. Some people invoke the high technology of the world system of enslavement; but even . . . this machinic enslavement abounds in undecidable propositions and movements that, far from belonging to a domain of knowledge reserved for sworn specialists, provides so many weapons for the becoming of everybody/ everything, becoming-radio, becoming-electronic, becoming-molecular. . . . Every struggle is a function of all of these undecidable propositions and constructs *revolutionary connections*.<sup>96</sup>

If American politics does not look to you like a joke, a tragic dance; if you have enough blindness left in you . . . then you yourself pass into the slide of the magic-lantern; you are an exhibit, a quaint product, a curiosity. . . . You are part of the problem.<sup>97</sup>

If I can't dance—I don't want to be part of your revolution.<sup>98</sup>

A war machine ... takes peace as its object directly, as the peace of Terror or Survival.<sup>99</sup>

It is a matter of producing ourselves, and not things that enslave us.<sup>100</sup>

We have to get together, assembling, resembling, against whoever troubles our relations.... Our collective is the expulsion of the stranger, of the enemy, of the parasite.... whatever the size of the group ... the transcendental condition of its constitution is the existence of the Demon.<sup>101</sup>

Words like inhuman, sterile, cold—they became cool.<sup>102</sup>

It's hard to say what went on in her head as the liberation went awry.... The jump out of the window was her jump into illegality.<sup>103</sup>

Everything that was directly lived has moved away into representation.<sup>104</sup>

We are in the epoch of simultaneity: we are in the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed.<sup>105</sup>

For a man who no longer has a homeland, writing becomes a place to live.<sup>106</sup>

Write, like him ... on the black, shadowy back of chance; write on the outside that you will show the others while hiding your hand ... don't stop writing on the wrong side of chance, disorder, noise, on the wrong side of your own circumstances, and even in their flesh.<sup>107</sup>

"Professor O'Blivion, do you think erotic and violent TV shows lead to desensitization? To dehumanization?"  
"Is the microphone on? The television screen has become the retina of the mind's eye."

"—Yes."

"That's why I refuse to appear on television, except on television. O'Blivion is not the name I was born with. It's my television name. Soon, all of us will have special names, names designed to cause the cathode-ray tube to resonate."<sup>108</sup>

*This is the way the world ends*

*This is the way the world ends*

*This is the way the world ends*

*Not with a bang but a whimper.*<sup>109</sup>

99. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 421.

100. Guy Debord, "Theses on Cultural Revolution," in Tom McDonough, ed., *Guy Debord and the Situationist International: Texts and Documents* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2004), 61.

101. Serres, *The Parasite*, 56.

102. Ad Reinhardt, *Art as Art: The Selected Writings of Ad Reinhardt*, ed. Barbara Rose (New York: Viking, 1975), 24.

103. Karin Bauer interviewed in 2008 by Richard Huffman.

"Everybody Talks about the Weather . . .": An Interview with Karin Bauer." See the website [baadermeinhof.com](http://baadermeinhof.com). Bauer discusses editing the book by Ulrike Meinhof, *Everybody Talks about the Weather . . . We Don't: The Writings of Ulrike Meinhof* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2008).

104. Guy Debord, opening thesis of *Society of the Spectacle*. See Thomas Y. Levin, "Dismantling the Spectacle: The Cinema of Guy Debord," in McDonough, *Guy Debord and the Situationist International*, 324.

105. Foucault, "Of Other Spaces."

106. Adorno, *Minima Moralia*, 87.

107. Serres, *The Parasite*, 135.

108. Excerpt of screenplay dialogue from the 1983 film *Videodrome*, directed by David Cronenberg.

109. Last stanza of T. S. Eliot's poem "The Hollow Men" (1925).

I am Alexander the great

I am Diogenes the dog

The dog?

I nuzzle the kind, bark at the greedy and bite louts

What can I do for you?

Stand out of my light

