



# Jessica Morgan

JESSICA MORGAN IS CURATOR OF CONTEMPORARY ART AT TATE MODERN, WHERE SHE ORGANIZED, WITH CATHERINE WOOD, "THE WORLD AS A STAGE," ON VIEW THROUGH JANUARY 1, 2008. UPCOMING PROJECTS FOR THE TATE INCLUDE AN EXHIBITION OF WORKS FROM MEXICO CITY'S COLECCIÓN JUMEX AND A JOHN BALDESSARI RETROSPECTIVE SCHEDULED TO OPEN IN 2009.

**1 Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, "Expodrome" (Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris/ARC, Paris)** A generation of artists who have long been concerned with questioning the status quo of exhibition making—and therefore largely steered clear of standard-fare solo or thematic shows—have now arrived at a point in their careers when they are being invited to present "comprehensive retrospectives" of their work in major art-world institutions. Gonzalez-Foerster wisely resisted lapsing into convention with her stunning journey through the unusual spaces of the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, in an exhibition that was organized by Angeline Scherf and included many collaboratively made works. With the sound of falling rain (*Promenade*, 2007), a topographic map representing various metropolises at night (*Panorama*, 2007), a son et lumière environment (*Cosmodrome*, 2001), and a retrospective of the artist's films, the show immersed visitors in the quintessentially synesthetic experience of place that Gonzalez-Foerster specializes in.

**2 Markus Schinwald (Centre d'Édition Contemporaine, Geneva)** The ever elusive Schinwald continued to frustrate any attempt to pin down his practice in his own brilliant reversal of the retrospective revelation. Various known as a video artist, choreographer, sculptor, painter, and eccentric fashion designer, Schinwald revealed all—but it was visible only through distorting lenses mounted in small circular holes in the walls of a long, constructed corridor running through the galleries. Peering through these port-holes, one could make out Schinwald's work, apparently perfectly installed on the other side. So near, and yet so far...

**3 Pawel Althamer, "One of Many" (Fondazione Nicola Trussardi, Milan)** Possibly one of the greatest artists of our

time, Althamer here made apparent the concepts behind his constant return to the human form and in particular his own self-portrait. This retrospective, organized by Massimiliano Gioni, explored a multitude of aspects of the human condition, largely through the multiplication of Althamer's own image in sculpture, film, and other media. In a text accompanying the exhibition, the artist declares, "It is a major achievement to realize that the body is only a vehicle for the soul. I feel like a cosmonaut in the suit of my own body. I am a trapped soul. The body plays a role of a dress, of an address. My bodily address is Pawel Althamer."

**4 Christopher Williams, "For Example: Dix-Huit Leçons Sur La Société Industrielle (Revision 5)" (Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Bologna, Italy)** Organized by Gianfranco Maraniello and Andrea Viliani, this overview of Williams's work shed light on the artist's extraordinary capacity for insightful institutional critique. The museum's Brutalist architecture—whose bastardization over time, Williams seemed to suggest, paralleled the decline and erasure of the radical history of the city of Bologna—was returned to its original form, while Williams's images enacted an investigation into the convergence of design, politics, empire, and industrial modernization.

**5 Sanja Iveković, "General Alert: Works, 1974–2007" (Fundació Antoni Tàpies, Barcelona)** With biting wit, Iveković's "Double Life" series from the mid-1970s investigates the effect of advertising on our daily lives and on gender roles. In a reversal of Cindy Sherman's approach, Iveković set about matching existing snaps and portraits of herself with "source material" discovered in subsequently published magazines. Her own actions thus simultaneously embody and herald the media images from which they

derive. Organized by Croatian curator Nataša Ilić and Kathrin Rhomberg, director of the show's original venue, the Kölischer Kunstverein, this retrospective also featured a number of recent pieces, among them Iveković's "real-time memorial"—a *tableau vivant* based on a photograph of soon to be deported Roma and Sinti victims of the Holocaust.

**6 Tino Sehgal (CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, San Francisco)** Aptly enough for an artist whose works exist in real time and are devised as personal encounters in which "interpreters" follow his oral instructions to enact ephemeral but infinitely repeatable actions, Sehgal's first retrospective, and his first US exhibition, takes place indefinitely, with one work at a time, starting with his earliest pieces and little by little moving closer to the present. Those able to make repeated visits to the Wattis (whose director, Jens Hoffmann, organized the show) will notice the varying nuances of an oeuvre addressed explicitly to the viewer.

**7 David Hamilton (Biennale de Lyon, France)** Curator Eric Troncy can be counted on not to follow art-fashion dictates, and with the one artist he chose for the multicurator Lyon biennial he once again triumphed, raising the stakes for photographer Hamilton, an artist perhaps best known for the indecency charges upheld against his work in the UK in 2005. Retrieving Hamilton's photography for serious consideration, Troncy not only produced a stunning installation of retrospective depth, but also pointed to the gray zone in the art world where populist work is shunned without real scrutiny.

**8 Elmgreen and Dragset, "The First Day of My Life" (Malmö Konsthall, Sweden)** In another astonishing rethinking of the

retrospective format, Elmgreen and Dragset presented visitors with a Kafkaesque sequence of doors embedded in a white wall of the gallery space, any of which could be opened. What would the act of decision bring about? How to decide which direction to take? To what extent are our decisions predetermined? These were some of the many questions raised by the illusion of choice in this exhibition (organized by Jacob Fabricius). The artists' work was installed behind the doors, each of which seemed to offer a different path, perhaps to the same place.

**9 Rudolf Stingel (Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York)** In two equally stunning installations (curated by Francesco Bonami at the organizing institution in Chicago and by Chrissie Iles in New York), Stingel demonstrated the art of restraint in his first, long overdue retrospective. The artist perpetually hovers between seduction and refusal in his painterly works (whether oil on canvas, metallic foil, or carpet), and both shows succeeded where few surveys do, in leaving one with the desire to see more.

**10 "WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution" (Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles)** Connie Butler's survey of feminist art was the product of an extraordinarily inspiring amount of research from which we will all benefit in years to come. With little-seen works by Mary Beth Edelson, Marta Minujin, Adrian Piper, Martha Rosler, and Ewa Partum, "WACK!" was brimful of innovative retrospectives waiting to happen—one of which already took place at Musée d'Art Contemporain de Barcelona when Joan Jonas gave an incredible rereading of her own work, the unofficial number eleven of this Top Ten. □

1. Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, *Tapis de lecture* (Reading Carpet), 2000–2007, reading materials and carpet. Installation view, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, 2007. Photo: Marc Domage. 2. Markus Schinwald, *Les Boîtes* (The Boxes) (detail), 2007, black-and-white photographs and mixed-media boxes, each 9 1/4 x 9 1/4 x 9 1/4". Photo: Sandra Pointet. 3. View of Pawel Althamer, "One of Many," 2007, Palazzo Apolloni, Milan. Foreground: Pawel Althamer, *Self-Portrait as a Boy*, 1993. Background: Pawel Althamer, *Matějka with Son*, 2006. Photo: Roberto Marossi. 4. View of Christopher Williams, "For Example: Dix-Huit Leçons Sur La Société Industrielle (Revision 5)," 2007, Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Bologna, Italy. 5. Sanja Iveković, *Osobni naziv* (Personal Cuts), 1982, still from a color video, 3 minutes 40 seconds. 7. David Hamilton, *The Age of Innocence* (detail), 1970–1989, three of thirty-four color photographs. Installation view, Biennale de Lyon, 2007. Photo: Blaise Adion. 8. View of Elmgreen and Dragset, "The First Day of My Life," 2007, Malmö Konsthall, Sweden. 9. View of "Rudolf Stingel," 2007, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago. 10. Mary Kelly, *Post-Partum Document: Documentation III, Analysed Markings and Diary-perspective Schema* (detail), 1975, one of ten Perspex units containing crayon on white card and sugar paper, each 14 x 11". From "WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution."

