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 JOACHIM MOGARRA (FR) - KEITH TYSON (GB) - JACQUES VILLEGLÉ (FR) - JULIA WACHTEL (USA) - OLAV WESTPHALEN (D) - VIRGINIE YASSEF (FR)

## HOTEL CALIFORNIA

RICHARD JACKSON, MIKE KELLEY, MARTIN KERSELS, PAUL MCCARTHY,  
 SPANDAU PARKS, ALLEN RUPPERSBERG, JIM SHAW

EXHIBITION FROM 27 JUNE TO 31 JULY 2008  
 OPENING NIGHT 26 JUNE 2008



Spandau Parks

From Richard Jackson, born in 1939, to Martin Kersels, born in 1960 - not to mention Mike Kelley, Allen Ruppertsberg, Jim Shaw, Spandau Parks, and Paul McCarthy- these Californians have defined, and undeniably continue to define one of the most important and most active contemporary art scenes of our time.

Their refusal to subscribe to trends in the art market or to play by the rules, non-conformity, mixing of medias (painting, sculpture, performance), and a mounted offensive against conventional standards in American society have allowed them to escape the formalities inherent in the market... Much to the delight and benefit of some courageous collectors and young galleries in the early nineties. One finds it hard to imagine that in the mid-nineties they were considered to be young artists.

In May 1994, during the initial years of the gallery, we produced Paul McCarthy's first solo show in France, establishing ties with other Californian artists of his generation. Nearly fifteen years later, we are still collaborating with their students – namely, Mike Bouchet and Adam Janes. For this reason, it seemed important for us to highlight this golden generation of artists that played such a fundamental role in shaping the identity of the gallery.

In a way, one could even say the collection of works selected for «Hotel California» maps this evolutionary journey :

*Skinny Bear* is the most radical example of McCarthy's 'giant toys' created between 1992 and 1994. Series of five or six works, each different and unique, these giant stuffed animals- both ironic and monstrous- literally 'toy' with our archetypal childhood emotions of amusement and fear.

*Skinny Bear*, standing on a wooden table with one sinister-looking arm (the unfortunate fate of the artist's model?) hanging from beneath its lifeless fur coat, could easily pass as a leftover prop from one of McCarthy's performances.

*Big Baby* by Richard Jackson is the latest installment of *The Dining Room*, a pictorial orgy shown in the gallery in June 2007, which parodies the American notion of a family dinner.

The baby, tiniest member of the family, has been enlarged to colossal size, becoming a maniac painting machine.

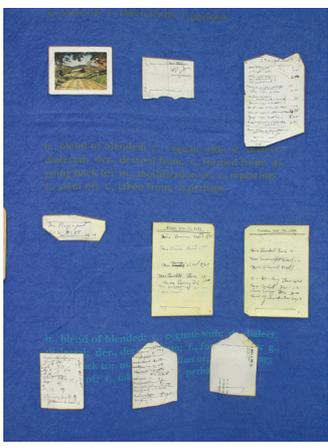
All of the pieces in the show explore American society through rather abstruse analogy. Two magnificent works from the series *Alteration* by Allen Ruppertsberg are no different. On a pair of canvases -one white, one blue- positioned face to face, Ruppertsberg extracts the social customs inherent in American society from the subtext of a dressmaker's order book dating from the 1950's. The original and the facsimile both integral to this work co-exist on a plane that operates as much in the world of art as that of fashion.

Jim Shaw's *Left Behind # 3* is probably one of the most successful paintings from his tarp series. Adapting an immense backdrop of Dodger Stadium from the sceneshop of a 1930's-era theater, Shaw has re-invented this spectacle by substituting a row of bicycles covered in precious stones that run over a sequence of funerary markers memorializing the names that dug the grave for Communism. Here the two worlds of cartoons and Craft Art collide to form a political vision of a fallen America.

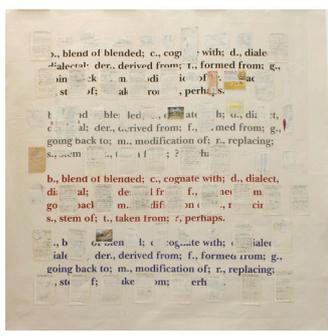
Martin Kersels comes to us from the world of musical performance. His massive physical proportions associated to a dancer suppleness have allowed him to integrate the grotesque and the excessive in his choreographies. *Podium for an idiot conductor* is exactly what it claims to be: a podium built for the conductor of an orchestra of idiots. The costumes and miscellany of props- whips, bells, and ping-pong racquets- seem as incongruous as they are necessary for a symphony played by twenty or so musicians, which actually took place at the gallery during the 2005 show «Orchestra for Idiots».

Mike Kelley's Series of ten *Banners* from 1989 are exceptionally distinct in the way they integrate symbology. Each banner by this emblematic artist of the Californian scene, given either its subject or its signature, is an icon, representing the style of the artist and the language of «Californians».

And last but not least, Spandau Parks the « outsider », the « loner », cited as much as if not more often than the other artists of this exhibition is the contemporary of Paul McCarthy. Parks has progressively painted on the same twenty canvases day by day for the past twenty-five years. The layering of the paint gives his work a sculptural quality that forms reliefs while also creating relentless, undefinable forms. The details from photographs taken of the actual paintings were presented by the gallery in 2004 and are included in this show. These are the only witnesses to his profound and fanatical work.



Allen Ruppertsberg



Allen Ruppertsberg

**UPCOMING EXHIBITION:**

**SEJA MARGINAL, SEJA HEROI**

WITH : MARCELO CIDADE, DIAS & RIEDWEG, MAURICIO IANÊS, ANDRÉ KOMATSU, LAURA LIMA, JARBAS LOPES, MARIANA MANHAES, HENRIQUE OLIVEIRA, SARA RAMO, MATHEUS ROCHA-PITTA, THIAGO ROCHA-PITTA, MARCO PAULO ROLLA, LUIS ZEBINI

10 SEPTEMBER - 19 OCTOBER 2008

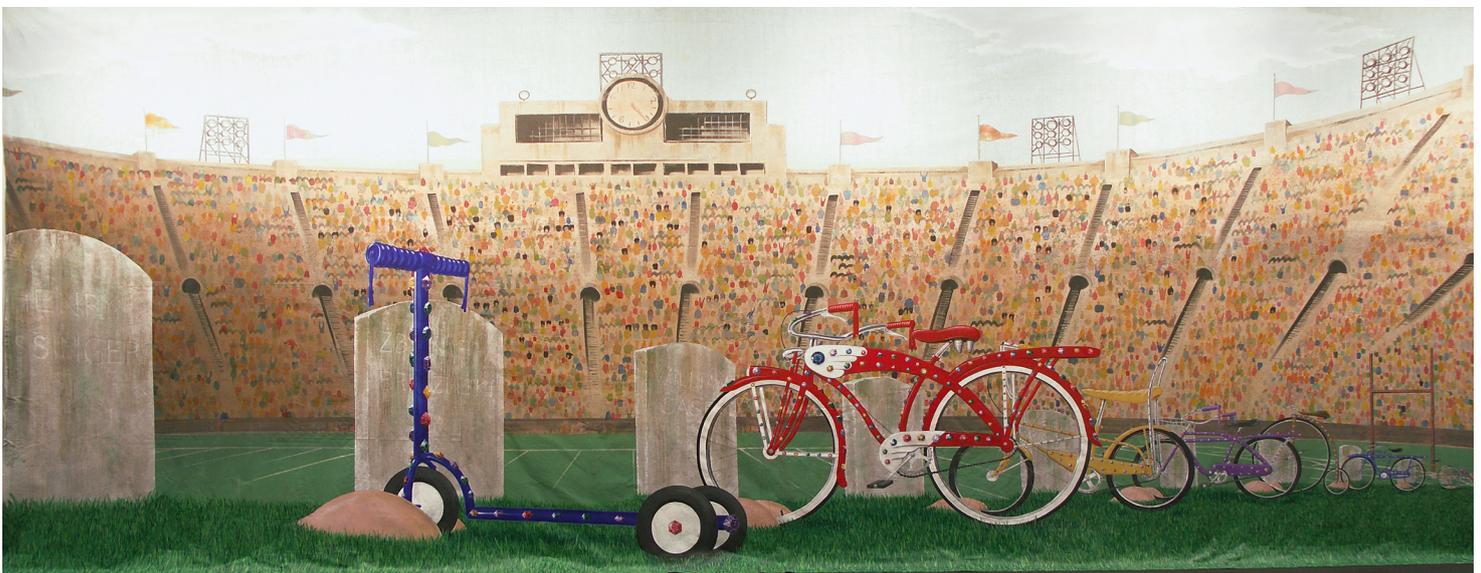
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+331 46 34 61 07 // GGPV@WANADOO.FR



Mike Kelley



Jim Shaw