

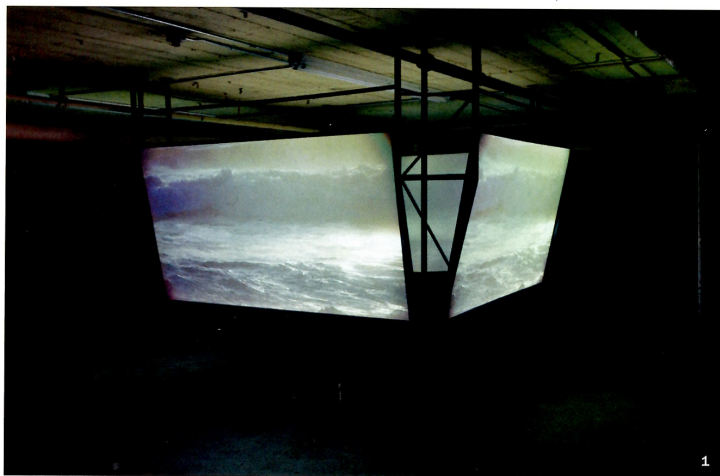


# Sarah Lehrer-Graiwer

SARAH LEHRER-GRAIWER IS A WRITER IN LOS ANGELES WHO PUBLISHES THE JOURNAL *PEP TALK*, CO-RUNS THE FINLEY EXHIBITION SPACE, AND TEACHES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA. SHE IS THE AUTHOR OF *LEE LOZANO: DROPOUT PIECE* (AFTERALL, 2014).

1

**356 S. MISSION RD., LOS ANGELES** As soon as it opened, just under two years ago, 356 S. Mission Rd. made a major—and majorly uplifting—impact on LA's local culture. The effect has only deepened with each exhibition, performance, screening, conversation, workshop, and culinary event presented there since. Combining commercial gallery, kunsthalle, bookstore (an outpost of the much-beloved LA institution Ooga Booga), and artists' studios, the collective compound represents a new, fluid, seemingly self-sustaining institutional model that gives me great hope. (I pretend no distance: I'm an active member of its community.) Of all its shows this year, each of which could have its own entry here, I was most entranced by the amazing suite of Alex Katz's towering, panoramic flower paintings, which confirmed what 356's inaugural presentation of Laura Owens's work had already suggested: This is the best room I have ever viewed large-scale paintings in, period. Meredith Monk's epic vocal performance and, on another occasion, Michael Clark's dance amid Katz's parade of immense blooms were historic for those present. More recently, I've been bewitched by Jesse Fleming's stunningly affective video installation, *The Halftime Show*, 2014, which felt like an alien percept or a slow-motion fall through psychic space.



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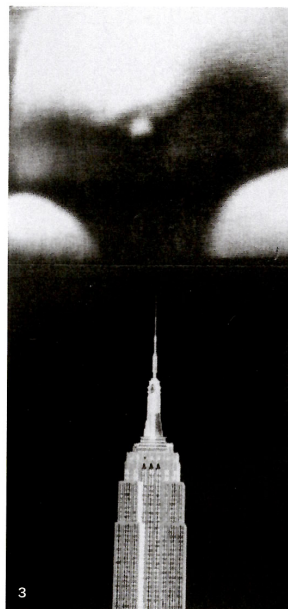
**MARIA LASSNIG (MoMA PS1, NEW YORK; CURATED BY PETER ELEEY WITH JOCELYN MILLER)** A lifetime of excessive introspection, skillful curiosity, and exuberant self-doubt is a heroic thing indeed. Over more than seventy years, Lassnig's long-haul conviction in art as a searching pursuit of precisely such reflections led her to develop a unique technique of self-portraiture, feeling the self and its vacuities from the inside out through a demanding practice she called "body awareness." Laying bare the distortions, liquidity, and engrossing grotesquerie of subjective perception, she depicted the somatic sensation of being in a body: intense, trapped, confrontational, alien, fragmented, warped, and sensual. Her film *Kantate*, 1992, is an astounding and moving document.



1. Jesse Fleming, *The Halftime Show*, 2014, four-channel HD digital video projection, color, sound, 13 minutes 38 seconds. Installation view, 356 S. Mission Rd., Los Angeles. Photo: Erica Wilcox. 2. Maria Lassnig, *Kantate*, 1992, 35-mm film transferred to digital video, color, sound, 8 minutes. 3. Sturtevant, *Untitled*, 1997, laser copy on paper, 3% x 1%".

5

**MARK ROEDER (MICHAEL BENEVENTO, LOS ANGELES)** The deadpan regionalism of Roeder's black-and-white "Antipaintings," 2008–, is a personal consideration of place as a golden state of mind—becoming-native as geohistorical intimacy, landscape as self-discovery. Yet when it comes to painting, he prefers feeling not entirely at home. In these one hundred paintings about photography and the digital circulation of pictures, Roeder's melancholic emphasis on the last native Chumash in California, the last grizzly, and the century plant's once-in-a-lifetime blossoming aptly sums up the zeitgeist: Our tides need turning and ways of life are ending.



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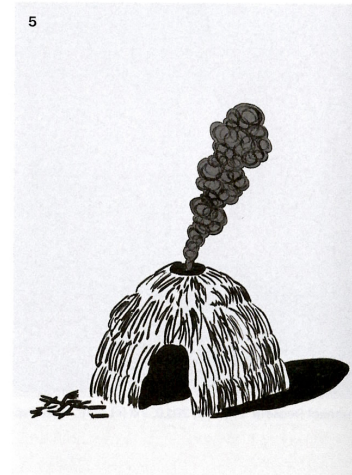
**BRUCE HAINLEY, UNDER THE SIGN OF [SIC]: STURTEVANT'S VOLTE-FACE (SEMIOTEXT(E))**

I will be challenged, thrilled, and electrified by Hainley's mind-expanding study of the proleptic and vertiginous force of art and intellection known as Sturtevant far longer than the decade or so the author spent meticulously investigating his razzle-dazzle subject (now, sadly, deceased). Constantly questioning the written form that criticism and history take, Hainley's book is, miraculously, both detective story and sci-fi yarn, an act of love and an act of war, play and manifesto, poem and polemic—in sum, killer art.

4

**MARIA BAMFORD AT THE COMEDY PALACE, LOS ANGELES**

I peg my best hopes for the future of critical thought on stand-up comedy, and none more than Bamford's. Always deep in character, she is a high-strung virtuoso of voices, a sense of psychological pain and self-conscious sensitivity, a comic of complex neurosis and compassion. The only thing more fun than watching her live is getting to see her refine material over multiple appearances, as she did during a residency at my neighborhood venue's free weekly stand-up show.



4. Maria Bamford performing at The Comedy Palace, Los Angeles, January 22, 2014. Photo: Sam M. Varela.

5. Mark Roeder, *Antipainting (Multidimensional-Chumash Lodge for Health Nuts)*, 2013, acrylic, graphite, and ink on canvas, 18 x 24".

