

# monuments to heroic failure



## SEAN LOWRY

Perhaps it is little more than a knee-jerk response to the scale, duration, sometime political sanctimony and immersive theatricality that has dominated video installation during the last decade, but it nonetheless appears that defiantly unheroic content and relatively modest exhibition formats are back (again). In keeping with art's trajectory since the 1960s (categorised in terms of critical and conceptual genealogies rather than by discipline), this tendency is reappearing across modes of production ranging from sculpture to lo-fi media, performance and music. Characterised by a tendency toward absurd juxtaposition, collage and the abject, this is a moment that once again resembles formations that have typically appeared in response to times of extreme wealth, poverty and unrest. Historically, tendencies toward collage appear in times of war, trauma, anger, pessimism and conflict. But unlike so-called post-'9/11' work, this broad middle-fingered response to the pessimism of the times prefers to be playful rather than sanctimonious. In short, it reflects the consumptive constipation of the times by providing direct evidence of its refuse and detritus beyond the default of allegory, metaphor and irony. Still looking to escape the incontrovertible cul-de-sac of irony, some artists are beginning to wonder if it might somehow be possible to find a form of poetry that begins rather than ends in ironic estrangement? Although the explicit foregrounding of cynicism and irony has long been considered passé, subjectivity is still partially moderated by a suspicion toward the taking of ideas or images at face value. Acknowledging the omnipresence of irony throughout contemporary culture, but unable to transcend it, these artists now see it more as a tool of

production rather than as an exhibited end. An acknowledgement of both the rejection of aspirations toward originality and the conflicting desire to create, the figure of the artist still struggles to respond poetically to the many seeming and impending disasters facing humanity. This text traces this tendency, from a showcase exhibition in New York to the strategies of emerging Sydney artists, and finally to certain popular cultural formations.

### 1. UNMONUMENTALITY:

At first glance, much of this work appears simultaneously apocalyptic and celebratory. Although reflexive oscillation and attenuated indecision still shields the artist from appearing literally political, this new "unmonumentality" is nonetheless finally as related to real world events as it is to art historical prototypes. But how, if at all, is this emerging unheroic moment distinct from pre-millennial abject tendencies of the early 1990s? Can we use the same 'neo' rather than 'post' defence used to distinguish the 1990s from the 1960s? As much as a form might be repeated, its exact historical context can never be repeated. As much about anticipating an unremarkable future as historical nostalgia, this collusion of the attitude, humour and attention span of popular cultural formations within the drier reflexivity of contemporary art, lies somewhere between Dada, Rauschenberg and a Beckettian sense of repeated failure. Duchamp's proposal that "INFRA-slim" meaning be found in the space between elements was of course elaborated by Rauschenberg's 1950s assemblage of painting/sculpture hybrids, called *Combines*. Today, ideas, styles and methodologies are being continuously hybridised, but nominating and exhibiting hybrid art in and of itself is no longer the point.

Following Rauschenberg's lead, the abject last returned to the fore during the early 1990s in response to the collapse of a 1980s art-market parading simulated commodities. Now, once again it is gaining currency. Witness recent exhibitions such as *Unmonumental: The Object in the 21st Century*, at the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York, in which objects that appeared to be rescued from the rubbish heap were juxtaposed with other forms of material collage in a format that upon first glance resembled an undergraduate exhibition on steroids. Temporary and fragile, artificial yet organically rhizomic, triumphant yet disposable, here the body is conspicuous in both presence and absence. For curator-in-residence at the Centre for Curatorial Studies at Bard College, Trevor Smith, although much of this work was "not figurative per se", it nonetheless employs "scale, structure" and objects "associated with the body" in order to "produce a quality of embodiment" that still manages a "withholding, indeterminate relationship to the viewer".<sup>1</sup> According to Smith, this new work occupies an intriguingly "minor place", which although not a "sea change", does nonetheless "suggest a refusal to accept that the expanded field of art can be usefully merged any further into the arena of the spectacle".<sup>2</sup>

For Senior Curator at the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York, Laura Hoptman, the neologism "unmonumental" describes works that deliberately lack monumentality as opposed to necessarily being "anti-monumental".<sup>3</sup> Collectively, the otherwise individually intimate works territorialised every available space in all three galleries of the imposingly impressive new architecture of the New Museum of Contemporary Art located in the Bowery. In some ways, seemingly contradicting the underlying premise of the exhibition (disappointingly featuring mainly North American and European artists), the sheer scale of the curatorial project was paradoxically epic. Perhaps this is simply a reflection of the inherently contradictory condition of art itself, being at once elitist and democratic yet at the same time gloriously pointless. The pointlessness of this unmonumentalism is of course unapologetically referenced against the so-called real world and its crumbling symbols and broken icons.

Free from pedestals, supports or partitions and scattered in unheroically modest proximity to the viewer, this is work that Director of Special Exhibitions at the New Museum of Contemporary Art Massimillo Gioni describes as “a sculpture of fragments”, and “debased, precarious, trembling form”.<sup>4</sup> For Gioni, these works display “an almost schizophrenic division between the desire to dissolve into the world and the need to fortify their own borders”.<sup>5</sup> As the line between artist and curator blurs even further, the relationship between exhibited works becomes increasingly and sympathetically chaotic. Indeed, participating American artist Tom Burr, recently described his approach to appropriation as “curatorial” and his practice as both “a questioning of the terms of originality” and, “with a tear in (his) eye, an endless impulse to forge something from found material”.<sup>6</sup> Once again, these are artists defined in terms of their practice, rather than in terms of individual works. One piece, which is reminiscent of the last, in turn alludes to the next, and then another and so on.

Hoptman, in describing this tendency within contemporary sculpture, sees “two distinct but intimately related ideas: *assemblage* and *unmonumentality*”, with the former a “strategy to achieve the latter”.<sup>7</sup> For Hoptman, the “organisation of disparate pieces into a coherent narrative” is an important distinction “between twentieth- and twenty-first century assemblage”.<sup>8</sup> Although both “are amalgams of discrete objects”, for Hoptman, strategies of organisation have superseded chance.<sup>9</sup> This is of course a form of chaotic organisation that reflects the way that search engines or specialised interest publications present commonalities (i.e. in a sea of disparate images, fonts, sounds and commodities) as opposed to Rauschenberg’s classic analogy of disparate subjects in a newspaper. It is this organisational structure that for Hoptman, places contemporary assemblage beyond the “anything goes edict of post-Duchampian sculpture”.<sup>10</sup> Reminiscent of Claude Levi-Strauss’ description of the *bricoleur*, who, although still employing the hand, uses it for “devious means”, some contemporary artists see bricolage as a means by which the readymade is attributed a certain use value through addressing dominant cultural formations. Although grotesque and carnivalesque, these works nonetheless invite an intimate relationship with the viewer as a consequence of their profound modesty and unheroic presentation. This modesty serves as an understandable response to a world already filled to breaking point with commodities and waste. This mock celebration of an apocalyptic universe on the verge of being completely filled with plastic rubbish might of course also contain limited biodegradable or dissolvable elements, which “act as monuments in reverse”.<sup>11</sup>

Moving on from the curatorial premise and organisational structure of this showcase exhibition format, things are not necessarily as easy to read. It is not always possible to read important differences between works simply by looking. American artist Heather Mekkelson for example, employs a peculiarly distinct approach to many other artists playing around with the idea of debris. Using photographs of the aftermath of natural disasters, she meticulously and forensically recreates compositionally isolated parts of a debris strewn scene, using carefully manipulated new and fabricated materials in order to re-present parts of a landscape. In other words she physically represents the chaos of randomly strewn debris without actually physically appropriating debris. Reminiscent in forensic approach (but not exhibited outcome) to the work of German artist Thomas Demand, Mekkelson’s careful and considered attention to production and detail throughout her sculptural installations stands in stark contrast to the mix ‘n’ match re-sampling logic of her contemporaries.

On another tangent, Sydney artist Anne Kay feels compelled to note that the plastic that she has consumed throughout her life will probably outlive her. As a consequence, Kay decided to collect all the plastic waste consumed domestically within one year (from February 2007 to January 2008). Rather than discarding the food containers, plastic packaging products and bags that entered her life, she instead cleaned and collected them, both as an investigative exercise, and as a means of producing “something”. “More than a substance” according to Roland Barthes, “plastic is the very idea of its infinite transformation”.<sup>12</sup> Intrigued by the contradiction between collecting and caring for such immortal yet debased detritus, Kay finally presented *The Figure of Plastic: What can be owned, borrowed or thrown away* (2008) at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Sydney. Occupying a place at the earnest end of the unmonumental spectrum, although playful, the tone

in Kay’s work is serious and more critical than celebratory. At another end of the unmonumental spectrum, we find the plastic bag sculptures of emerging Sydney artist Biljana Jancic. Coupling the politically autonomous aspirations of minimalism with the return of the abject, these sculptures finally appear more playfully celebratory than apocalyptic in tone. More resistant to interpretation than early 1990s work that played with a coupling of minimalism and the abject, they appear to reflect humanity located simultaneously in the temple and in the toilet. For Jancic, they are “an embodiment of static... filling out space with interference and anxiety”.<sup>13</sup> Here, the monumental scale of the sculptures clash with the instability of the plastic bags and tubes used to produce them. For Jancic, their monumentality of scale “is betrayed by the banality of the materials” subsequently revealing “neither the presence of a body or an architecture”, but rather “something uncanny”.<sup>14</sup> Her plastic bags filled with air occupy space with a triumphantly bland presence. Open a door or window and they move slowly together with the invisible air of their ephemeral substance. On one occasion the bags were exhibited outdoors and they even lunged aggressively and unexpectedly in a gust of wind at startled onlookers. In contrast with the politically pointed dimensions found within Kay’s work, Jancic’s flight from interpretation is an uncluttered response to the idea of the unmonumental.

Meanwhile, Sydney artist Honi Ryan’s unmonumental failures take the form of silent dinner parties. Started in Ryan’s shared apartment in Germany in 2006, not initially as an artwork, but rather as a social experiment in response to the apparent inescapability of communication technologies and language, these silent dinner parties were staged as a response to the social rituals and routines embedded within domestic space. Ryan has little interest in bringing this work into a gallery context (even as documentation). Between late 2006 and 2008 Ryan staged two silent dinner parties in Cologne, four in Sydney and one in Melbourne.<sup>15</sup> All participants in *Silence* were given the same set of instructions:

*Please do not use words or your voice.*  
*Please do not read or write.*  
*Try to make as little noise as possible.*  
*Stay with it for 2-3 hours.*<sup>16</sup>

Since these silent dinner parties take place in the physical world they can never actually be silent. As a consequence, underwriting their very undertaking is an advance resignation to their failure. Other forms of communication invariably replace conversation and hitherto unheard noises soon echo loudly. For Ryan, it is therefore about “accepting a certain humility in your work... a lack of grandeur... an unimposing nature”.<sup>17</sup> Even the noise of their inevitable retrospective verbal deconstruction and the subsequent demand for documentation in an art world that claims to be dematerialised further cements their resignation to failure and futility. Ryan states; “we continue to fail in life, until we fail at life”.<sup>18</sup> Consequently, it is here that “we can recognise accomplishment in failure... in humble, hidden and whispered forms”.<sup>19</sup>

## 2. RUPTURE, FASHION AND RETURN:

Ideas simmering away since the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-centuries finally bubbled through to collective imagination by the 1960s. Just like the ideas of thinkers such as Nietzsche finally found a point of rupture within ideas such as poststructuralism, deconstruction, and intertextuality, or those of Duchamp and Picabia found wider acceptance within the two horizons of the neo-avant-garde (the 1960s and 1980s respectively), faint but analogous microcosmic echoes can be observed in popular cultural formations. This is not to suggest that they are mutually interchangeable but that it is possible to ascertain certain similarities within recurring patterns of rupture, fashion and reaction. Just as end of art history projections are partially retrospectively attributed to literal millenarianist anticipation, consensual anticipation of the next decade’s tendencies can cause rupture. Although also typically a reflection of cultural amnesia and bringing simmering nostalgia to boil, the event of consensual rupture is nonetheless significant. Observers of shifts, ruptures and returns in post war popular music, for example, will notice that by the seventh or eighth year of each decade, literal anticipation coupled with a reaction to that decade’s predominant tendencies will bring about some kind of consensual rupture. In 1957 it was rock ‘n’ roll. In 1967 it was psychedelia.



In 1977 it was punk. 1987/1988 saw electronic dance music and hip-hop gain wider acceptance. It is never new, just widely embraced for the first time. Although the seeds of punk are found in The Stooges in 1969, 1977 was the year in which popular consensus broke with the Sex Pistols. Similarly, although the seeds of contemporary electronic music can be found in both Kraftwerk and Brooklyn Hip Hop during the 1970s, it wasn't until the late 1980s that they reached a point of wider acceptance. Just as in art history, two-way streams of legitimisation are in effect. The subsequent rupture retrospectively gives the historical prototype its value. Although the echoes appear ever fainter as popular culture splinters into smaller sub-genres, once a former rupture matures to bombast (as had developments of the late 1960s matured to pomposity by the late 1970s), the climate will be ripe for something like punk to spit on it.

Histories are of course also anticipated, epitomised and projected within the projected flights of individual figures. The impact of heroic figures such as Hendrix or Pollock invariably lead to cliché and subsequent reaction. When an educated David Bowie first unleashed his iconic androgynous, glam gender bender look he wasn't prepared to feel usurped by the primal trailer nudity of Iggy Pop. Despite the seemingly unbeatable outrageousness of Bowie's extroverted distortions of camp, he admittedly felt eclipsed by Iggy's raw "I'm naked. So what? Where do we go from here?" Fast-forward to 2008, seemingly decades after every derivative incarnation of the rock star had been played out, and to the dilemma of the unknown, historically reflexive and subsequently unheroic Charles Lomas of lo-fi two-piece Sydney band Great Apes. In an age of exhausted and fragmented icons, Lomas chooses to prance, posture and quip in unflattering underpants and an old T-shirt. Not wanting to repeat history, yet aware of the impossibility of avoiding it, his lyrics, written over music composed by programmer/drummer Steve Allison, reflect their meta-rock conviction to heroic failure:

*Which song is worth keeping Steve?  
Which song is worth keeping Steve?  
I'm wearing my heart on my sleeve  
So which song is worth keeping Steve?  
What, if these lyrics aren't good enough?  
Don't you know putting words to your tunes is tough?  
If you're not satisfied do it yourself.  
I'm sick of putting these masterpieces back on the shelf.<sup>20</sup>*

Although unheroic posturing in underpants, Kay's carefully washed plastic rubbish, Jancic's plastic bag sculptures, or Ryan's silent dinner parties do not constitute a cultural sea change, they nonetheless constitute an understandable response to high production values in a culture clearly breaking under the strain of its excess, waste and fragmented icons. Just as the "Pictures" generation once reacted to the heroic commodities of late modernism, or the return of dematerialised tendencies in the 1990s

was in part a reaction to the simulated commodities of postmodernism, these monuments to heroic failure are in part served as a reaction to this decade's dominant tendencies in video installation (as epitomised for Sydney artists by the lengthy, quasi-documentary works featured throughout the 2006 *Biennale of Sydney*, the production values of artists such as Shaun Gladwell, or the multi-channel video work of artists such as Marilyn Fairskye). As to whether this new unmonumentality finally offers any more than a subtle reinvention of Rauschenberg, Fluxus or 1990s grunge is yet to be seen. It is however significant to note why and that it is happening (for the minute).

Perhaps this idea of rupture in 2008 is exacerbated further by symbolic echoes of the fortieth anniversary of arguably the biggest post-war rupture—the explosive events of 1968. Another potential impetus is the unprecedented size of the global art market. After a brief slump in the early 1990s, the international art market has grown into something even unimaginable during the last art market boom of the 1980s. Moving on from simply acquiring, collecting and exhibiting, it has now managed to point unprecedented resources at commissioning and producing 'projects'. Artists as varied as Matthew Barney, Olafur Eliasson, Richard Serra, Damien Hirst, Douglas Gordon, Phillippe Parreno, Mariko Mori and Rachael Whitehead have all produced projects during the last decade on such a monumental scale that teams of people and enormous resources were required to realise them. For some artists, spitting upon this grandiloquence is a task not dissimilar to punk's reaction to the super stadium concept rock bands of the 1970s. These recent tendencies toward unheroic unmonumentalism represent a reflexive attempt to present the fragmented detritus of late capitalism with a flaccid middle finger.

### 3. PARADOX AND POSSIBILITY:

Reminiscent of the delusional expressions of individuality created via Myspace/Facebook styled customisation and personalised playlists, the paradox of generic individualism also reduces the contemporary artist to a mashing cobbler of the endlessly unrepeatable one-off. To a certain extent, fragmentation has dispensed with the possibility of unified opinion, style and hit records. Yet this phantasmagorical illusion of transcending the twentieth-century's infinity of mechanical reproduction and shared icons ignores the fact that market domination has now evolved to accommodate the paradox of generic individuality. For the time being, this unmonumental work will be resistant to easy art market absorption. More Rauschenberg than Warhol but still a little Haim Steinbach, this work still contains but does not foreground saleable irony. To continue in the naive hope that heroic possibility will again be made possible seems no less clichéd or unthinking than to maintain a cynical negation of innovation and poetry altogether. Art reduced to the creation of distance from a prototype, in which decipherment affords temporary intellectual interest, rarely aspires to poetry. Although still protecting the artist from the feeling that without it art itself would seem futile, irony itself has long been a *fait accompli*. But it is still easier to move from naivety to cynicism than it is to move from cynicism to anything else. Like a repeated joke, value is lost in repetition as quickly as is the emotive value of the expressive gestures it discarded. Art that can confidently poke its head above this landscape must display an awareness of this contradiction. Yet part of the chess game of identifying and exploiting potential ruptures is to exploit cultural amnesia. While it is difficult to sustain the paradoxical conviction that there is any truth to discover within a discourse that denies truth we can still have fun along the way. Turn on, tune in and drop out again (on weekends and public holidays).

According to Benjamin Buchloh in 1994, the question as to whether a framing of art history in terms of authors and anti-authors has become "utterly futile and methodologically unacceptable" needed to be considered together with the possibility that "Duchamp and his legacies simply do not constitute a sufficiently substantial—existentially and aesthetically complex—visual culture."<sup>21</sup> Although Buchloh wished to resist "lapsing into a melancholic call for old conventions of representation, types of artistic subjectivity, and models of aesthetic experience", as epitomised by "tragic artists such as Picasso and Pollock", he nonetheless warned that in continuing to expressly focus efforts on avoiding this fallacy, the question as to whether the legacies of Duchamp had finally fallen short of their historical potential should not be ignored.<sup>22</sup> Perhaps the interesting part of the problem field is floating somewhere in-between and inherently unresolvable. It is certainly a bittersweet time

to attempt art. Never before has there been more to graze upon or more facilitating infrastructure, yet conversely, less chance that anyone will care or notice (unless you evoke a moronic witch-hunt against naked children in art). The second-hand influences of contemporary art have seemingly never been greater yet mattered less.

Where modernist art was served as an allegory for progress and suffering, postmodern art was served as an allegory for boredom (as indicated by such boredom-inducing features as repetition and seriality); artists now treat all of these ideas as tools of production. In an alternating rhythm of homology and heterology, of appropriation and excretion, art continues to mutate into an endless pantomime of empty signifiers, all trying on the clothes of art, yet finally existing as fetish. As Dubuffet once famously stated: "Art does not come and lie in the beds that we make for it. It escapes as soon as its name is uttered—it likes to preserve its incognito. Its best moments are when it forgets its very name". The future condition of art cannot be known, for only the criteria of the past and present can be brought to bear upon it. No one has a crystal ball. The conditions of the present will however affect that future. For Nietzsche, as a consequence of the quest for meaningful reflection upon a lack of meaningful purpose, humanity has by way of its "error" become "so deep, delicate, inventive as to bring forth such blossoms as religion and the arts".<sup>23</sup> At least some of us wish to continue indulging that contradictory yet consensual "error" that we call art. It is of course folly to suggest that artists produce (that is serve the consensual projection of) art under any pretence that it not to be experienced by others. Art is a narcissistic and schizophrenic activity, even paradoxically, within its own attempts at self-reflexive redemption and denial. Awareness of its contradictions, coupled with a still unknowable poetry (that now finds its beginning rather than its end in ironic estrangement) can facilitate a beautifully frustrating feeling of heroic failure and with it a complementary desire to construct and share our monuments to failure. Sophisticated contemporary art is at once auto-critical, self-reflexive and narcissistically celebratory. And, despite its often-constipated intellectual ambitions, it acknowledges that as a consequence of the birth of the viewer and irrespective of its skills at playing chess, it must relinquish the task of interpretation.

Despite the claims of its once aggressive factions, the expanded problem field that is contemporary art exists as a consequence of the unresolved tension between its aesthetic and anti-aesthetic constructions. Much like the aforementioned cul-de-sac of irony, contradictions and endgames are now considered more as a means of production than as an exhibited end. Are significant historical innovations and ruptures all ultimately reducible to tools of production? Despite the many nuances of his later work, the legacy of Duchamp is most significant for resituating emphasis from that of 'making' to that of 'choosing'. The so-called neo-avant-garde is of course also retrospectively responsible for enacting this shift by making Duchamp their exemplar. Now, after a long battle, 'choosing' and 'making' are arguably attributed relatively equivalent value. In other words, exactly produced and prosaic fragments are both attributed a role within the development of meaning. Given that the language of reconstructive sampling has overtaken ironic strategies of appropriation, and given that quotation and repetition has become habit, forms of artistic production whose trajectories find their beginning rather than their end in ironic estrangement can now be constructed upon their foundations. Duchampian choice is meaningless outside a response to art history predicated upon the value of making. Conversely, art could not have forged a path alongside the infinity of mechanical reproducibility without resituating the value of choosing over making. Ultimately, this tension between the value of 'choosing' and 'thinking through making' remains beautifully unresolved. Perhaps it is as a consequence of this tension that contemporary cultural production maintains its momentum? Following the collapse of the modernism/postmodernism dialectic, the figure of the artist, who appears to carry on, 'as if' originality is somehow still possible, yet without really believing so, resorts to an agnostic position. For the believer, art serves as an index of culture in general. For the non-believer, art is equalised with the culture it once claimed to index. For the agnostic, art and non-art are equivalently contestable propositions.

Positioned in a doubly paradoxical moment after the projected end of history, with irony as a starting point rather than its exhibited end, this is not the 'position of no position' paraded within postmodernism. This is not fence sitting but an acknowledgement of uncertainty in order to move forward. This is accepting that there might actually be merit and small 't' truths on both sides of our battles. Just as Robert Rauschenberg once described his *Erased de Kooning Drawing* as a celebration rather than a negation, one person's endgame can be another's poetry. Rather than outright refuting the possibility of originality, the figure of the contemporary artist has more likely re-branded it as possible, but extremely unlikely. To finally ascertain whether this new unmonumentality is in any way significant really depends upon a subjective comparison of the strategic value of historical precedence versus an assessment of qualitative 'maturity' across time. In other words, do you prefer the band that did it first to the band that did it better? These are of course deeply subjective and contradictory considerations. Do we have to decide? After all, it is only art. Does it really tell us anything useful about the choices and contradictions inherent within the human condition? Sometimes we have no choice but to decide. As soon as you know that you exist, you are, irrespective as to what you *do* or *don't do*, political. As opposed to sinners, we are born contradictions. To exist is to destroy. To stop is to die. Leaving behind us nothing but a trail of fragmented and ultimately ephemeral monuments to our heroic failures. We finally exist both as individuals and as a collective. And, as American critic Eleanor Heartney has proposed, perhaps culture is nothing more than a consequence of the unresolved tension between the demands of the individual and of the collective.<sup>24</sup>

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Trevor Smith, 'A Minor Place', *Unmonumental: The Object in the 21st Century*, New York: Phaidon, 2008: 185

<sup>2</sup> Ibid: 190

<sup>3</sup> Laura Hoptman, 'The Way We Were', *Unmonumental: The Object in the 21st Century*: 138

<sup>4</sup> Massimillo Gioni, 'Ask The Dust', *Unmonumental: The Object in the 21st Century*: 65

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Tom Burr, '1000 words, Tom Burr talks about "Addict Love", 2008', *Artforum*, February 2008: 260

<sup>7</sup> Laura Hoptman, op cit: 128

<sup>8</sup> Ibid: 132

<sup>9</sup> Ibid: 133

<sup>10</sup> *The New Yorker*, 19 March, 2007: 38. Quoted in ibid: 138

<sup>11</sup> Massimillo Gioni, op cit: 72

<sup>12</sup> Roland Barthes, 'Plastic', *Mythologies*, trans. Annette Lavers, New York: Hill and Wang, 1972. Quoted in Lane Relyea, 'Debris and Immobility', *Art Journal* Vol 67 No 1, Spring 2008: 6

<sup>13</sup> Biljana Jancic, email correspondence with the author, 7 July, 2008

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Information for interested participants: info@hedonics.com.au

<sup>16</sup> Honi Ryan, *Silence*, 2006–08. Email correspondence with the author, 11 July, 2008

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> 'Steve', from *Great Apes* EP, self released, 2008. See: www.myspace.com/greatapesband

<sup>21</sup> Benjamin Buchloh, *October 70*, Fall 1994. Reprinted in M. Buskirk and M. Nixon (eds), *The Duchamp Effect: Essays, Interviews, Round Table*, Cambridge, Mass: October Books, MIT Press, 1996: 3

<sup>22</sup> Ibid: 4

<sup>23</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, 'Aphorism 29', *Human, All Too Human* (1878), London: Penguin Books, 1977

<sup>24</sup> Eleanor Heartney, 'In Praise of Uncertainty', *Critical Condition: American Culture at the Crossroads*, Cambridge University Press, 1997: 7