

Re-performance: History as an Experience to Be Had

Review: *Los Angeles Goes Live: Performance Art in Southern California 1970–1983*
Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, Los Angeles

Beginning in the fall of 2011, the Getty's massive initiative, Pacific Standard Time: Art in L.A. 1945–1980 (PST) hit Los Angeles, unearthing with its powerful momentum a complex and generally dormant history of collaboration, collective energy, and performance. The context for a restorative project such as PST's is fraught, at once raising questions about the critical potential of re-performance, the broader possibilities in re-visiting history, and the shifting function of curatorial practice, in which the production of experiences increasingly has come to be understood as a form of economic output. Looking to the Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE) programming for the exhibition, performance series, and publication project *Los Angeles Goes Live: Performance Art in Southern California 1970–1983* (LAGL) as a key site for re-performance activity, my line of inquiry begins with the following question: How can the LACE commissions be understood as symptomatic of shifts in how histories, memories, and meaning are produced today?¹ In short, how are we "feeling" the world around us?²

Models of Experience-making in *Los Angeles Goes Live*

The production of experiences today constitutes a ground zero of sorts in the complex collision of critical discourse and contemporary forces in the economy, and the museum apparatus stands as the mediator between these

two forces in the interaction of art and its publics.³ Re-performance and live event structures have begun to flood art institutions, in many cases paradoxically promising viewers a unique and new experience by promoting history as an experience to be had today. Once relegated to and indeed championed for its outsider status, performance has become another curatorial function fully ensconced in the museum. The re-conceptualization of history and memory by way of the production of experience is not the result of the museum acting alone, but rather reflects a shift in how we as viewers, historians, makers, writers, curators, subjects, and citizens relate to history.⁴ Although LACE is an alternative space not bound by the specialization of labor traditionally found in museums, we nonetheless find the institutional novelty of re-performance and "the live" alongside the venue's longstanding dedication to performance-based work.⁵ As the title of LACE's programming suggests, "liveness" and active engagement with histories of Los Angeles characterized their nine commissions (including an exhibition and eight performances), but how the live was activated in relation to the archives became the point of artistic intervention throughout.⁶

Re-performance strategies call into question the permanence of the archive, often times displacing the document in favor of live re-enactment. The eight commissions that were part



of the performance series at LACE operated in relation to the spectrum of re-performance models that has emerged over the past ten years. In addition to the much discussed Marina Abramović exhibitions, *Seven Easy Pieces* (Guggenheim Museum, 2005) and *Marina Abramović: The Artist is Present* (Museum of Modern Art, 2010), here in Los Angeles we also readily recall the 2008 Allan Kaprow retrospective, *Allan Kaprow: Art as Life*, at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), in which over forty “reinventions” (Kaprow’s term) of the artist’s happenings were produced. In these reinventions, research and discussion around the original score opened the performance up to dialogue with the present while still recalling the past.⁷ However, as Carola Dertnig provocatively suggested in her review of the exhibition in this publication, perhaps the “missed opportunity of the Kaprow retrospective [was] the consideration of Kaprow’s documents as performance pieces themselves.”⁸ Siting the performance “work” in these live reinventions, the Kaprow retrospective reiterated what Rebecca Schneider has aptly identified as a “faulty distinction between text and performance.” In many of the LAGL commissions there was instead a precarious but constant movement between document (image, text) and performance (live event). Projects such as Liz Glynn’s *Spirit Resurrection* and *Black Box*, Dorian Wood’s *Athco*, or *the Renaissance of Faggot Tree*, and Heather Cassils’s *Cuts: A Traditional Sculpture*, extended the ideas at play in re-performance strategies, embracing the “rhizomatic spread” of performance and, in some cases, pushing the original source almost to the point of unrecognizability.

Liz Glynn’s *Spirit Resurrection* foregrounded the overwrought relation between performance and its archives, engaging issues of access as they

determine our relation to and interaction with cultural memory. While the project was a platform for manifold events and re-inventions, the “performance” in *Spirit Resurrection* was the physical and conceptual unpacking of the archive of the 1980 Public Spirit Festival, which was the first large-scale performance festival in Los Angeles.⁹ Co-sponsored by LACE and the PST Festival, Glynn’s project materialized in two discrete, although not mutually exclusive, works: *Spirit Resurrection*, parts of which occurred throughout the time span of the LAGL programming, and *Black Box*, which was a ten-day happening staged during the PST Festival. Before any live events took place, the now-digitized documents in the LACE archive and statements by the original artists on their performances and the possibility of re-performance were posted on a website. *Spirit Resurrection* then extended forward to engage performance artists today and bring the energy of experimentation from the historical event into the contemporary moment. To this end, artists gathered at a potluck workshop to discuss ideas for re-inventions. A subsequent series of these re-inventions took place at venues across Los Angeles, most notably at *Black Box*. Operating alongside *Spirit Resurrection*, *Black Box* was a physical site where the anything-can-happen ethos of the Public Spirit Festival was re-staged in the form of live events. Through her investigation into the records “housed” at LACE, Glynn performed the dual meaning of the concept of archive, pointing to its function as both a repository for knowledge (the website) and an active process (the potluck and subsequent re-inventions). As Derrida has described, “the archivization produces as much as it records the event.”¹⁰ In other words, the archive is a performance structured around accumulation and ordering, which builds meaning into the event. In a sense a microcosm



Preceding spread
Remnants of a performance by The Sunday Scag at Liz Glynn's *Black Box*, January 24, 2012. Organized by LA><ART. Photo by Calvin Lee.

Above
Dorian Wood, *Dorian Wood is Faggot Tree and Killsonic is Killsonic in Dorian Wood's "Athco, or the Renaissance of Faggot Tree," October 9, 2011.* Photograph, 14.19 x 9.44 inches. © Dorian Wood 2011. Photo courtesy of Eddie Ruvalcaba.

of the *LAGL* programming, Glynn's project probed the variant ways the past can be experienced, or resurrected, for contemporary artists and audiences.

Dorian Wood's *Athco, or the Renaissance of Faggot Tree* (2011) also evoked re-birth. Wood presented multiple strands of Los Angeles cultural history as they coalesced around the respective collaborative projects of Asco (founded by Harry Gamboa, Jr., Willie F. Herrón III, Gronk Nicandro, and Patssi Valdez in the 1970s) and *Premature Ejaculation* (the duo of Rozz Williams, from the band Christian Death, and performance artist Ron Athey).¹¹ Wood's *Athco* enacted thirty-one significant figures in Los Angeles cultural history through their personas. Viewers were directed by a brochure through the grassy grounds of Barnsdall Municipal Park in Hollywood, where a series of tableaux vivant had been constructed. The guided movement mimicked a tour through a wax museum. The liveness of the bodies, though, recalled the uncanny vignettes orchestrated in the Laguna Beach Pageant of the Masters, which enact, as David Román has described, "how live performance remembers not only performances from an earlier historical moment but also the prior archives of those past performances."¹² Turning the archive of images into a live experience, Wood's manipulation also re-visited the performative aspects of Asco's *No Movies* from the seventies.¹³ *Athco* proposed that the performance is not necessarily the action, but rather the ways in which identity and meaning are constructed through representation. By linking the archival media images that documented the original bodies-in-performance to Wood's performance of the image—not the live action—the "inter(in)animation" of the sites became the performance.¹⁴ Like Glynn, Wood deployed strategies of re-performance for the purposes of recuperation, bringing to the institutional

center activity heretofore understood as peripheral. Positioning his own body at the end of the tour/procession, however, Wood offered a release from the frozen bodies by way of an enlivened performance of his own persona.

The artist's body came to center stage in Heather Cassils's *Cuts: A Traditional Sculpture* (2011), which took on similar issues of representation and authenticity. Interpreting and synthesizing iconic works by Eleanor Antin and Lynda Benglis through the lens of contemporary body politics, Cassils employed the now institutionalized feminist histories of these two artists to re-enact processes of transformation. In contrast to the large-scale surveys of Los Angeles histories undertaken in the projects of Glynn and Wood, Cassils's project was more intimately based in the personal experience of growing her body into a traditionally masculine muscular form. Additionally, *Cuts* did not involve a live performance for viewers. Instead, it took the form of a durational performance that occurred over a twenty-three week period prior to the opening of *LAGL*. The resulting installation, on view in the LACE project space, included a grid of fifteen photographs (*Mind Over Matter: Performance Document*, 2011) and a three-channel video (*Body Composition*, 2011), which emphasized themes of labor and consumption.

In these elements of the installation, as well as in her *FAST TWITCH//SLOW TWITCH* (2011), which compressed twenty-three weeks of training into a twenty-three second time-lapse video, Cassils documented the changes in her body. This deployment of the body as a sculptural object was, according to Cassils, drawn from Antin's *Carving: A Traditional Sculpture* (1972), in which Antin crash-dieted for forty-five days and daily photographed her body from four vantage points. Antin's project is presented as a grid of one hundred and

eighty photographs, which echo in the format of *Mind Over Matter: Performance Document*, as well as in the serial documentation of Cassils's body rotating in space to reveal it from four vantage points in *FAST TWITCH//SLOW TWITCH*. Cassils, though, radically changed the format and augmented the documentation in an attempt to convey the process and physicality of the body, as well as its surface presence, which appears as a third element in the installation in *Advertisement (Homage to Benglis)* (2011). Drawing inspiration from Benglis's *Advertisement* (1974), in which the artist posed naked for a centerfold image in *Artforum* wielding a double-sided dildo between her greased thighs, Cassils created a series of centerfold images of her own gender-bending body. At LACE, viewers saw a wall of the gallery covered with glossy photographs of the artist's "cut" body and sultry gaze. This image was also included in Cassils's zine *LADY FACE//MAN BODY* (2011). With the publication of a zine, Cassils has put the images produced out of the durational performance into media circulation. Unlike Benglis's *Advertisement*, which ran in the mainstream art media, Cassils's images move within the sphere of underground publications. With *Cuts* (the durational performance and all the works produced out of it), Cassils looks back on the possibilities opened up by the projects of Antin and Benglis in order to look forward towards new systems of representation that might complicate the binaries that order our bodies, and at the same time reveals the slipperiness of siting the "work" in performance.

The Role of Re-performance

Like Glynn, Wood, and Cassils, I too want to look back to historical events, figures, and performances, yet at the same time look forward and consider more carefully the heavily debated

concept of re-performance that has underwritten much of my discussion to this point. Having increasingly come to dominate dialogues concerning the production and display of performance art and its histories, the unstable concept of re-performance is an actuality that demands our critical attention.¹⁵ A cursory examination of the performance work commissioned for *LAGL* reveals a wide range of projects developed under one "re-" heading or another—re-performance, re-imagining, re-invention, re-creation, re-enactment, re-staging, and so on. As commissions for a historically oriented programming series, the *LAGL* projects, though not all re-performances *per se*, were in explicit dialogue with the past. Consequently, many of the issues raised in discussions of re-performance surface here as well.

Framing is a vital mechanism in acknowledging and enacting the distance between then and now—the historical event and its contemporary iterations in cultural memory. The projects at LACE are characterized by their explicit and yet, in terms of intentionality, ambiguously defined shifts in framing. Cassils's piece, for instance, drew out similar questions around authenticity and representation to those posed in the 1970s works by Antin and Benglis, but she positioned the images of her body within a familiar visual language of contemporary media/tion. Cramming

Following spread, left

Heather Cassils, Day 1, 02-20-10, 2011. Digital photography/video still from channel 1 of *FAST TWITCH//SLOW TWITCH*, Large-scale digital projection. © Heather Cassils 2011. Photo courtesy of Heather Cassils.

Following spread, right

Heather Cassils, Day 140, 07-20-10, 2011. Digital photography/video still from channel 1 of *FAST TWITCH//SLOW TWITCH*, Large-scale digital projection. © Heather Cassils 2011. Photo courtesy of Heather Cassils.







the images together in the quick stream of time-lapse imaging, *FAST TWITCH// SLOW TWITCH* evacuated the process of its slow build-up of information, framing the viewer's experience within the vernacular of fast-paced drama. Moreover, the video, buried within a stream of documentation of various projects by different artists outside of Cassils's installation, was overshadowed by the enactment of persona in the centerfold images, which shifted focus away from the process and towards the surface of the image. In Glynn's *Spirit Resurrection*, the decentralized sprawl of the 1980 Public Spirit Festival was framed within the logic of a web interface and, with the exception of a few performances at off-site locations, the live events became concentrated at a singular site, Glynn's *Black Box*, and branded as an after-party for the PST Festival. What happens in the cases of Cassils and Glynn is a simultaneous re-staging and disavowal of presence in relation to experience, resulting in performance-based projects that both explore the dimensions of performance's remains or, to draw a phrase again from Schneider, "performing remains," and rely on familiar narratives of performance's disappearance.¹⁶

Opposite, top

Heather Cassils, Installation image of Advertisement (Homage to Benglis), 2011. Photograph and Xerox copies; Key art: 30 × 40 inches, and tabloid-sized Xerox: 11 × 17 inches. Key image © Heather Cassils and Robin Black 2011. Wall installation © Heather Cassils 2011. Installation photo by Joshua White. Image courtesy of LACE.

Opposite, bottom

Dorian Wood, Pony Lee Estrange is Rozz Williams and Jason Savvy is Ron Athey in Dorian Wood's "Athco, or the Renaissance of Faggot Tree," October 9, 2011. Photograph, 14.19 × 9.44 inches. © Dorian Wood 2011. Photo courtesy of Eddie Ruvalcaba.

The lingering promise of presence wrapped into such narratives perpetuates the ideals of the modernist art discourse, transferring the aura of the art object, with its basis in ritual and its claim to historical authenticity, on to the subject, or quite literally the body of the artist or artists.¹⁷ In other words, if it was the art object that had stood between the cult of the self and the artist's actual person, then in performance art such a mitigating force is absent. The *tableaux vivant* in Wood's project and the centerfold image in Cassils's work enact *aura vis-à-vis* the artists' personas, which, with the institutional support (fiscal and cultural) of a powerhouse like the Getty, are played out within the contours of spectacularized experience.¹⁸ In some ways, what we see re-performed are the problems always already present in performance art production. Carrie Lambert-Beatty and Amelia Jones have respectively investigated the function of re-performance as pointing to performance's ability to spread across multiple sites, and as a means of exploring the limitations and uncontrollable permutations of performance and its histories.¹⁹ With the rhizomatic tendencies in performance come costs (the perpetuation of authenticity, aura, and spectacle) and benefits (the elucidation of distance from historical events, as well as an exploration of the processes of history and memory making).²⁰ If we are willing to accept the balancing act between these costs and benefits (as we do in many aspects of our lives), the question becomes: Why now? Why have performance and, subsequently, re-performance gained so much institutional traction today?²¹ I want to examine re-performance here as it functions within a service economy that has increasingly become organized around principles of performance and experience.

The Possibility of Re-visiting History

The impulse for such a “re-” turn, or return, finds an early footing in feminism and the model offered by revisionist feminist literature. In 1972, feminist scholar Adrienne Rich proclaimed, “re-vision—the act of looking back, of seeing with fresh eyes, of entering old texts from a new critical direction—is for women more than a chapter in cultural history: it is an act of survival.”²² In the act of revision, as Liedeke Plate goes on to describe, history becomes “a space open to multiple revisits from the perspective of the present.”²³

Motivated by the desire (and necessity) to overturn the singular authority of the dominant patriarchal structure, revisionist literature has given voice to the multitude of identities and experiences that constitute our cultural memory, as well as bringing models of such multiplicity into broader cultural understanding.²⁴ Abramović’s 2010 retrospective, *The Artist is Present*, was heavily critiqued precisely for its attempts to shut down this multiplicity of histories in favor of a singular, authoritative (and copyrighted) experience. Many critics, including Jones and Lambert-Beatty, have articulated the potential of re-performance to do exactly the opposite, echoing instead the directives of revisionist literature to re-visit history as a means of opening it up and, by extension, claim multiple authorships in the archiving—which is also to say *production*—of cultural memory. The fact that both revisionist literature and re-performance, however, find assimilability within an economic system fueled by consumer choice might complicate the critical empowerment found in such strategies. As Plate has argued in relation to revisionist literature, “for feminist writers, rewriting is a literary form that combines narrative strategy with feminist praxis, [but] for publishers, re-vision is a means of selling books with low risks at low marketing costs.”²⁵

Plate’s proposition that revisionist literature has found a market as a result of (rather than in spite of) the canonical works that they critique, has significant ramifications for our current conception of re-performance. If, as Plate suggests, re-visiting is a necessary and integral part of canon formation, as well as a retailing strategy offering new and improved experiences, then is re-performance another in a lineage of critical re-visitations of the past destined for co-option?

The re-staging of Suzanne Lacy’s seminal *Three Weeks in May* (1977) as *Three Weeks in January: End Rape in Los Angeles* (2012) brings this question into focus, at once pointing to the activist and socially engaged roots of Los Angeles performance art history and to the spectacularization of such a past in the process of its legitimization. An LAGL commission and part of the PST Festival, *Three Weeks in January (TWIJ)* was linked to nearly fifty events throughout the city and included hundreds of voices. As the press circulated during the events stated, *TWIJ* was an attempt to “re-define the past work in terms of its relevance for today.”²⁶ Lacy’s interventionist art project in 1977 was already a performance functioning as a platform for numerous events that occurred throughout the city over the course of three weeks.²⁷ Focused on bringing attention to the personal experiences and political realities of sexual

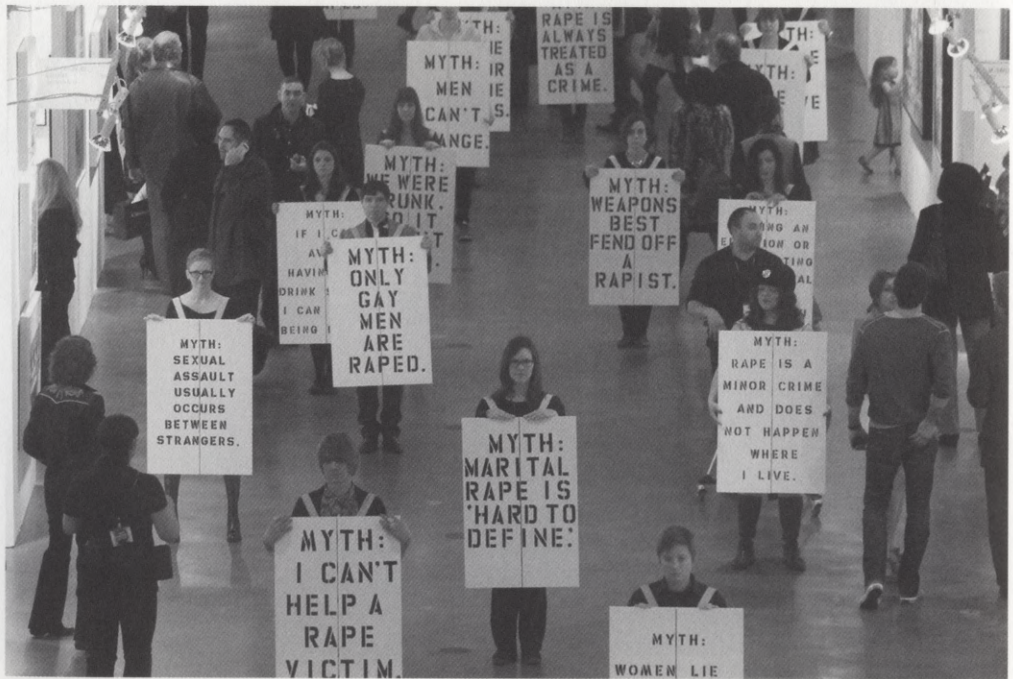
Opposite, top

Suzanne Lacy, *Los Angeles Rape Map* installed at Deaton Auditorium, Los Angeles Police Department, as part of *Three Weeks in January*, 2012. Photo by Meg Madison. Image courtesy of LACE.

Opposite, bottom

Suzanne Lacy, *Press Conference*, January 12, 2012, as part of *Three Weeks in January*, 2012. Photo by Neda Moridpour. Image courtesy of LACE.





violence in Los Angeles, *Three Weeks in May* consisted of consciousness-raising workshops, a series of performances, including Leslie Labowitz-Starus's *Myths of Rape* (1977), an interventionist news media and public radio campaign, and the *Los Angeles Rape Map* (1977), on which Lacy sited and documented each reported rape with the red block letters R-A-P-E.²⁸ While these elements reappeared in *TWIJ*, their contextual frames had shifted drastically. The amount of institutional support backing the project made it possible for *Rape Map* (2012), for example, to move from the location of the 1977 map in the arcade of the City Mall to the highly visible entrance of the Los Angeles Police Department central headquarters. A press conference at LAPD headquarters, which included a statement by Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, inaugurated the project, and *Candlelight Vigil at the Los Angeles Rape Map* (2012) was held there at the end.²⁹ Moreover, the 2012 iteration extended its scope to address sexual violence against men, in prisons, and in war. The project was also structurally re-conceived in relation to contemporary social media, including campaigns on Twitter and Facebook, and spread throughout the city in the form of banners, pins, stickers, etc.

Opposite, top

Suzanne Lacy, UCLA Clothesline Project at Downtown Women's Center, January 21, 2012 as part of *Three Weeks in January*, 2012.

Photo by Neda Moridpour. Image courtesy of LACE.

Opposite, bottom

***Myths of Rape* (2012), performance by Audrey Chan and Elana Mann, a reinterpretation of Leslie Labowitz-Starus's *Myths of Rape* (1977), part of Suzanne Lacy's *Three Weeks in May* (1977). Photo by Neda Morid.**

The campaigning, including the Internet platforms and public workshops, provided forums for community members to share their stories of violence. At the end of the three weeks, *Storying Violence: A Cross-Disciplinary Conversation at the Top of City Hall* (2012), gave the opportunity for selected civic and community leaders to deconstruct the language of such dialogues and address the question: How do media narratives frame public discourse around sexual violence?³⁰ The mining of these complex connections between media narratives, public discourse, and, I would add, cultural memory, is, as *Storying Violence* makes clear, at the center of *TWIJ*. Although truly inspiring for its success in mobilizing civic and community support, garnering public visibility around such topics on a large scale, and reflecting the progress that has been made in the anti-rape movement, the project also reminds us that times have also changed in other ways. The role of media has exponentially increased and, as a result, campaign strategies, including activist-oriented social campaigns, have adopted the tenants of market-driven branding. Retaining the iconography but updating the technology, for instance, *TWIJ* utilized the aesthetic cues of the 1977 Rape Map—its aged yellow coloring, grid pattern, and stencil typography—as a ground to create an identifiable brand for social networking sites, as well as for pamphlets available at every event, on an interactive website, on banners along Hollywood Boulevard, and on “I Know Someone Do You?” stickers that were circulated widely. (I saw them in places ranging from a bus stop in Long Beach to a college campus kiosk in East Los Angeles.) The iconography of the *Rape Map* within this marketing strategy, as well as the installation of a new *Rape Map* in front of LAPD headquarters, recalls the past as a symbol in order to sell a present experience of, as Lacy described in relation to the *Candlelight*

Vigil during a panel discussion, “old school organizing.”³¹

If the multitude of voices within the social media were a part of the project, as Lacy explained in her opening remarks for *Storying Violence*, then the *TWIJ* project can be understood as being constituted by everything happening around it, from the structures of organized events to the conversations had in them to the writing about them and to the venues that housed them. I question, then, the choice to re-stage Labowitz-Starus's *Myths of Rape*, one of a series of re-inventions produced under the umbrella of *TWIJ*, as the opening night performance for the Los Angeles Art Show at the Los Angeles Convention Center. Organized by Audrey Chan and Elana Mann with Mecca Vazie Andrews, *Myths of Rape* (2012) included thirty participating performers, each donning a tri-fold sign with a myth of rape printed on it. As the group moved through the convention center foyer and exhibition hall in a choreographed pattern, they periodically stopped and shouted out the myths printed on the signs and then opened the signs to reveal the facts, which were also called out. This beautiful composition unfolding in space re-framed the gesture as an artwork, which, as Labowitz-Starus expressed in conversation, was not the intention of the original event.³² Within this new context, what had been conceived as an activist piece was re-invented as an aesthetic event with political dimensions—an event that had been brought safely back into the fold of the art market as one of many events occurring under the *TWIJ* brand.³³ In being located within the market-driven space of the art fair and, specifically, staged at the exclusive premier party, *Myths of Rape* perhaps too readily reminds us that any campaign must find funding somewhere. Consequently, what we find in *TWIJ*'s manipulation of media is

a simultaneous critical subversion of media strategies (as in the deconstruction of their narratives) and a deployment of the unabashed marketing strategies of modern campaigning with the costs and benefits of institutional support that lie therein.

The Rules of Engagement in an Experience Economy

Compounded with the assortment of possibilities offered by such re-visitations are the tenants of a new business world constructed around models of performance in everyday life. As Joseph Pine II and James H. Gilmore wrote in the revised edition of *The Experience Economy* (2011), “to realize revenue growth and increased employment, the staging of experiences must be pursued as a distinct form of economic output. Indeed, in a world saturated with largely undifferentiated goods and services the greatest opportunity for value creation resides in staging experiences.”³⁴ Referencing the seminal work of performance studies theorist Richard Schechner, Pine and Gilmore develop a set of terms (experience, stage, memorable, personal, revealed over duration, sensations) and concepts (drama, script, theater, performance, audience) meant to re-frame experience as a mechanism of valuation.³⁵ If we extend the logic of their marketing strategies to the realm of performance art (where it ostensibly began), we may come to a statement like this: In the ongoing efforts to establish new display methods for the archives of performance art histories, we must find ways these archives can be *staged* to create a *memorable experience* and engage the viewer's *sensations* beyond what is typically expected. The terms of a memorable experience play out differently within the projects at LACE: a DIY intervention into Los Angeles space through the establishment of a temporary “speak-easy” in Glynn's *Black Box*; a “series of

unique events" in Lacy's *TW/J* defined largely through the spectacular opening and closing ceremonies, as well as the project's social media presence; or as an activation of public space (a park) through the theatrical staging of personas from Los Angeles history in Wood's *Athco*. The live directive from the title of LACE's programming reverberates here, for in a perhaps unexpected turn, history has gone live, sensorializing the archive through the mechanisms of re-performance and the staging of it as a "new" experience (itself the beginning of a new archive). What began as experience (a performance) and was transferred into a material good (the archive) is now folding back on itself, so that recalling the performance works of cultural memory means to re-frame them within the structures of experience-making today. As Plate has suggested in relation to revisionist literature, "an economy that is geared toward producing memories should certainly make us wary of the kind of memory into which we are buying. Producing competing memories as consumer goods, it is also an economy that puts re-vision at the heart of economic culture and consumerism at the center of rewriting [or re-performing] as a memory-practice."³⁶ Echoing the costs and benefits explored throughout this text, her cautionary words resonate deeply as we continue to consider the mobilization of re-performance strategies as modes of experience-making within and outside of art institutions.

Megan Hoetger is writer and critic currently working between Los Angeles and Berkeley, California.

- 1 Another primary site for performance activity was the PST Performance and Public Art Festival (co-presented by the Getty Research Institute and LA><ART), which brought together a dizzying array of performance works over an eleven-day period in January 2012. It would take more space than I have here, but the festival is worthy of in-depth analysis in terms of its ambitious scope, the significance of individual projects within it, and the intense marketing campaign undertaken by its sponsors.
- 2 The poetic connotation of "feeling" here is drawn from Alvin Toffler, *Future Shock* (New York: Random House, 1970). While Toffler's argument is largely flawed and riddled with sweeping generalizations, it has also been highly influential: over six million copies have been sold to date; it has been reprinted seven times since its release, most recently in 1999; it has been translated into over ten languages; it was made into a movie narrated by Orson Wells in 1972; and it has been cited in nearly twelve hundred social science publications since 1970. While many more recent theoretical texts have examined such shifts, *Future Shock* points to changes in popular conceptions of the individual's perceptual, or spatial-temporal, understanding of the world and of experience.
- 3 Changes in museological practices, which have been emerging simultaneously to the rise of relational art practices since the 1990s, have brought increasing attention to the field of performance art. Such shifts can be traced back to institutional critique projects by artists such as Fred Wilson, whose seminal *Mining the Museum* (1992) positioned the artist as curator of objects from the holdings of the Maryland Historical Society, and, alternatively, to the broad range of practices gathered together under the heading of Relational Aesthetics by Nicolas Bourriaud in his influential text of the same name from 1998.
- 4 The subject of the recent Forum section in *Art Journal* was devoted to exploring just these shifts as they have occurred in the art world. Organized by Amelia Jones, it included contributions from artists and curators. See Amelia Jones et al., "Forum: Performance, Live or Dead," *Art Journal* 70.3 (Fall 2011): 32–58.
- 5 For more on this history of LACE, see Jacqueline Pagani, "Mixing Art and Life: The Conundrum of the Avant-Garde's Autonomous Status in the Performance Art World in Los Angeles," *The Sociological Quarterly* 42.2 (2001): 175–203.
- 6 For more on the paradoxical notion of liveness, see Philip Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1999).
- 7 LACE played a significant role in the Kaprow reinventions as the venue that re-staged Kaprow's seminal *18 Happenings in 6 Parts* (1959). Working in conjunction with MOCA, LACE invited artist Steve Roden to organize the event. For more see LACE's press material at <http://www.welcometolace.org/exhibitions/view/18-happenings-in-6-parts/>.
- 8 Carola Dertnig, "Allan Kaprow: Art as Life," *X-TRA Contemporary Art Quarterly* 11.2 (Winter 2008): 37–42, 41.
- 9 The Public Spirit Festival, which took place in May and October 1980, brought together many of the artists we saw being historicized in PST. It was largely the result of the work of the Highland Park Art Agents, which included now-well-known Los Angeles-based artists and members of the performance art community Paul McCarthy, John Duncan, Barbara T. Smith, and Linda Frye Burnham, among others.
- 10 Jacques Derrida and Eric Prenowitz, "Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression," *Diacritics* 25.2 (Summer 1995): 9–63, 17.
- 11 The Los Angeles-based collective Asco was active between 1972 and 1987. Premature Ejaculation formed in 1981.
- 12 David Román, *Performance in America: Contemporary U.S. Culture and the Performing Arts* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 151.
- 13 For more on these performative aspects, see C. Ondine Chavoya and Rita Gonzalez, eds., *Asco: Elite of the Obscure, a Retrospective, 1972–1987* (Ostfildern, DE: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2011). For a detailed discussion of Asco's early interventions into systems of representation, also see Chon Noriega, "Your Art Disgusts Me: Early Asco 1971–1975," *East of Borneo*, November 18, 2010, <http://www.eastofborneo.org/articles/your-art-disgusts-me-early-asco-1971-75> (accessed on November 3, 2011).
- 14 The term "inter(in)animation" is drawn from the work of Rebecca Schneider, who has described performance as unfolding across multiple spatial-temporal sites. For more on this see her *Performing Remains: Art and War in Times of Theatrical Reenactment* (London: Routledge, 2011).
- 15 The recent *Art Journal* Forum, organized by Amelia Jones, and the multiple articles that have circulated since Marina Abramović's 2005 *Seven Easy Pieces* at the Guggenheim Museum and especially after Abramović's 2010 retrospective, are proof of the urgency within the academic and professional communities to grapple with the problems and potentials posed by the concept of re-performance. See Jones et al., "Forum: Performance, Live or Dead," and Jones, "'The Artist is Present': Artistic Re-enactments and the Impossibility of Presence," *Art Journal* 70.3: 32–58; Pii and Galia Kollektiv, "Retro/Necro: From Beyond the Grave of the Politics of Re-enactment," *Art Papers* 31.6 (2007): 44–51; Carrie Lambert-Beatty, "Against Performance Art," *Artforum* 48.9 (May 2010): 209–12; Jenni Sorokin, "Mythology and the Remake: The Culture of Re-performance and Strategies of Simulation," *East of Borneo*, October 10, 2010, <http://www.eastofborneo.org/articles/19> (accessed on November 5, 2010); and Martha Rosler, "The Second Time as Farce," *Idiom Magazine*, February 21, 2011, <http://www.idiommag.com/2011/02/the-second-time-as-farce> (accessed on March 3, 2011).
- 16 The phrase "performing remains" is the title of Schneider's recent book and the concept is explored at length in her chapter "In the Meantime: Performance Remains," which also gives a detailed overview of the concept of disappearance as it emerged in the foundational period of the performance studies discipline. Peggy Phelan's statement that "performance's only life is in the present," in her 1993 *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance*, can be seen as a rallying call for the discourse of disappearance in performance.
- 17 See Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility," in *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings, Volume 3, 1935–1938*, edited by Howard Eiland and Michael W. Jennings, translated by Edmund Jephcott, Howard Eiland, et al. (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2002), 101–133. My development of the notion of persona in relation to aura is indebted to the work of Isabelle Graw. Her analysis of the connection between the contemporary market-reflexive potential of art production and current techniques of power in the Foucauldian sense through a systematic investigation of art's relation to a burgeoning celebrity culture, as well as a concept of the artist as "exceptional being," has been invaluable to my understanding of the function and site of the aura today. See Graw, *High Price: Art Between*

- the Market and Celebrity Culture*, translated by Nicholas Grindell (New York: Sternberg Press, 2009), 157–228.
- 18 As Guy Debord's *Society of the Spectacle* (1967) makes clear, this has been an issue in performance art practice since its inception, and as in the case of aura and authenticity, a critique of the spectacle also re-emerges. In "Retro/Necro: From Beyond the Grave of the Politics of Re-enactment," the authors cite Debord's "paralyzing circular discourse" as "haunting" the current re-performance trend (Pil and Galia Kollektiv, 45).
- 19 See Jones, "The Artist is Present," and Lambert-Beatty, "Against Performance Art."
- 20 This notion of cost and benefits is drawn from Jones, "The Artist is Present."
- 21 This is in part related to shifts in the international art market towards socially engaged and highly contingent works, which has, as Claire Bishop has described, occurred with the expansion of the biennial circuit. See Bishop, "Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics," *October* 110 (Fall 2004): 51–79. I would add to this observation that because of this successful expansion, traditional art institutions are just now beginning to realize the full potential of performance art histories within a burgeoning experience economy.
- 22 Adrienne Rich cited in Liedeke Plate, "Remembering the Future; or, Whatever Happened to Re-vision?" *Signs* 33.2 (Winter 2008): 389–411, 389. Also see Rebecca Schneider's analysis of Rich's notion of revision in her "Foreword," in *Performing Remains*, 1–31.
- 23 Plate, 390.
- 24 The way such re-visions have made their way into our cultural consciousness, as Plate describes, is exemplified in the market for books around classics like *Aladdin*, which focus on the stories of Jasmine or the genie; or, in another example, the story of *Little Red Riding Hood* told from the perspective of the wolf. See Plate, 401.
- 25 *Ibid.*, 399.
- 26 Taken from the LACE press statement for the *Three Weeks in January* project. See <http://www.threeweeksinjanuary.org> (accessed on January 15, 2012).
- 27 *Ibid.* Lacy's terminology here is drawn from the LACE press statement for the *Three Weeks in January* project.
- 28 The archival material from these 1977 activities appeared in multiple exhibitions within PST. Both the *Los Angeles Rape Map* and the *Rape Reports* (sound recordings of Lacy reading the filed reports) were on view in MOCA's *Under the Big Black Sun*; documentation from the other performances, such as Leslie Labowitz-Starus's *Myths of Rape*, were included in *Doin' It in Public: Feminism and Art at the Woman's Building*; and video documentation from the media campaign was in the Getty Research Institute's *Greetings from L.A.: Artists and Publics, 1945–1980*.
- 29 *Three Weeks in January* was co-sponsored by LACE and the PST Festival and co-presented with the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, Code Pink, the Rape Treatment Center, Woodbury University, and Otis College of Art and Design.
- 30 I was an invited member of the social media for Lacy's *Storying Violence*. In a response based on my personal experience of the event, I explore these ideas at greater length. See <http://anotherrighteoustransfer.wordpress.com/2012/01/31/megan-hoetger-responds-to-suzanne-lacys-storying-violence-a-cross-disciplinary-conversation-at-the-top-of-city-hall/> (accessed on March 12, 2012).
- 31 This phrase is drawn from a talk Lacy gave during the panel discussion "Performing Activism: Mediagenic Art from *Three Weeks in May* to the Occupy Movement" at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, on June 7, 2012.
- 32 In her talk at MOCA, Lacy described the re-interpretation of *Myths of Rape* as being "constructed as a master class between Labowitz-Starus and a younger generation of feminist artists interested in re-inventing."
- 33 As the didactic material distributed at the performance explained, this re-invention was meant to activate the space of the Los Angeles Convention Center through a series of movements enacted by the thirty participating performers and was inspired by "traditions of feminist agit-prop, the Occupy Wall Street (OWS) movement, and the Arab Spring," utilizing, for example, the call and response techniques developed at OWS to punctuate the movement with a recitation of the myths and revealing of the facts. This process was enacted by the signs, which opened up to reveal the fact lying behind the myth. The problem perhaps lies in the activist orientation still claimed by the piece despite the shift in contextual framing that took place. The question was poignantly articulated to me by Labowitz-Starus: "Does legitimizing an activist act de-legitimize the activist ends?" While certainly there is no single answer to this question, it points to problems embedded in the processes of legitimization.
- 34 B. Joseph Pine II and James H. Gilmore, *The Experience Economy* (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2011), iv.
- 35 Pine and Gilmore, "Work is Theater," *The Experience Economy*, 153–79. The authors lay the traditional terminology of business language on top of the terminology developed by Richard Schechner in his analysis of the cultural structures that frame performance, so that, for example, "customers" are now understood as an "audience," or the commodity "offering" becomes the "performance." For more on Schechner's ideas, see his *Performance Theory* (New York: Routledge, 1988).
- 36 Plate, 402.

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