

UGO RONDINONE

**I ♥
JOHN
GIORNO**

**RICHARD BOSMAN • PHONG BUI • ANGELA BULLOCH
ANNE COLLIER • VERNE DAWSON • JUDITH EISLER
JOHN GIORNO • MARK HANDFORTH • MATTHEW HIGGS
PIERRE HUYGHE • FRANÇOISE JANICOT
SCOTT KING • ELIZABETH PEYTON • UGO RONDINONE
ERIK SATIE • KENDALL SHAW • MICHAEL STIPE
BILLY SULLIVAN • RIRKRIT TIRAVANIJA
PETER UNGERLEIDER • JOAN WALLACE • ANDY WARHOL**

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INTRODUCTION

Laura Hoptman

Ugo Rondinone: I ♥ John Giorno is a sprawling, multi-part exhibition that presents the extraordinary life and work of the poet, artist, activist and muse, John Giorno. Encompassing thirteen venues around Manhattan and featuring paintings, films, sound installations, drawings, archival presentations and a video environment, this retrospective includes work both by Giorno himself, as well as work that he has inspired.

I ♥ John Giorno is also a work of art by Giorno's husband, the Swiss artist Ugo Rondinone, who has been creating sculptures, paintings, drawings and multi-media installations for almost three decades. With this project, Rondinone presents a prismatic portrait assembled from thoughtful arrangements of the materials, experiences and relationships that have defined Giorno's astonishingly wide-ranging artistic career. Foremost, though, the project is a joyous celebration of Giorno's ubiquitous presence in contemporary culture, as well as his myriad contributions to it.

For more than half a century, Giorno has moved effortlessly from one cultural milieu to another: from Beat poetry, to the heart of the Pop art explosion, to performance at venues ranging from Judson Church to CBGB, to the activist trenches of the AIDS crisis, to the mixed media, mixed use art world of the *fin de siècle*. He has always defined himself first as a poet, but as one who looks at poetry through the lens of visual art. This ambidexterity between the literary and the visual has marked a career in which words and objects are intimately connected.

Born in Brooklyn in 1936, Giorno studied at Columbia University where he was shaped by reading the works of avant

garde poets like Federico García Lorca and more contemporary radicals like Allen Ginsberg. As a young poet in New York, his friends were poets like Ginsberg and Peter Orlovsky, but also artists, like Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns, and, most consequently, Andy Warhol, who cast the young Giorno as the sole protagonist in his classic film *Sleep* (1963). This mix of the poetry of direct experience, found object and Pop art inspired Giorno to write poems composed of phrases plucked from found print sources like newspaper headlines. His first major publication, *The American Book of the Dead* (1964), was a single, book-length poem composed entirely of found content. In 1965, he met William Burroughs and Brion Gysin and found kinship with their experiments in the "Cut-up," a method of word permutation and collage meant to elide the distinction between words and images. Around the same time, Giorno began to transform his poems into forms by silkscreening them on posters, handbills and T-shirts. In 1968, he made his first "Poem Painting," beginning a series that he would turn to periodically over the next fifty years. "Painted like a poet," as he has said, their unwavering format is comprised of stacked words in emphatic capitals, silkscreened on canvases with smooth monochrome backgrounds. Like street signs, they can be simultaneously looked at and read.

Understanding that sound was another way to embody language, and encouraged by his friend, the electronic musician and inventor, Bob Moog, Giorno experimented with magnetic tape during the sixties, manipulating and layering his own voice, as well as recording other poets reading their poems. In 1969, he had the idea to distribute these taped poems telephonically, creating an interactive conceptual art work that allowed the public to call a telephone number to hear a randomly selected poem. Included in *Information*, a

1970 exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, *Dial-A-Poem* became wildly popular, and remains his best-known, most frequently exhibited work of art. Giorno's fascination with more contemporary methods of distributing poetry to a wider audience led to his creation of the nonprofit record label Giorno Poetry Systems in 1965. Hundreds of the most important voices in poetry, music and art of the late twentieth century were recorded by Giorno over the 25 year period that the label was active, including John Ashbery, Allen Ginsberg, Diane di Prima, Amiri Baraka, John Cage, Frank Zappa, Philip Glass, Patti Smith, Lou Reed and Laurie Anderson, among many others.

Collaboration and inspiration elide at many points in Giorno's career and his projects with fellow artists span three generations. After his work with Warhol and Giorno Poetry Systems in the 1960s and 1970s, in the 1980s, Giorno collaborated with visual artists Keith Haring and Richard Bosman, who illustrated books of his poetry. In 1998, the French artist Pierre Huyghe made a contemporary version of *Sleep* starring Giorno, and in 2003, Thai artist Rirkrit Tiravanija created a 10-hour film of Giorno performing his entire poetic repertoire. Over the years, many artists have been moved to make portraits of Giorno including Kendall Shaw, Elizabeth Peyton, Billy Sullivan, Verne Dawson, Judith Eisler and the singer Michael Stipe, who in 2011 made a moving black and white film of Giorno's face that served as the official music video of the REM song, "We All Go Back to Where We Belong."

Rondinone's homage to his life partner, *I ♥ John Giorno*, is the latest, and by far, the most ambitious collaboration of Giorno's career. The project unfolds in eighteen chapters, each a distinct exhibition sited in a nonprofit space in Manhattan. Every chapter takes the form of an immersive installation designed by

Rondinone and dedicated to a body of work, an interest, a relationship or a collaboration that has marked Giorno's life. This includes his poetry, painting, sound work and performance; his recording projects and his founding of Giorno Poetry Systems; his AIDS activism; his Tibetan Buddhism; and his vast personal archive that comprises a history of radical art and poetry in New York during the second half of the twentieth century. Several installations feature portraits of Giorno by different generations of filmmakers, painters, videographers and musicians. One consists of a single work: a multi-channel video installation by Rondinone consisting of multiple images of Giorno performing one of his recent epic poems.

Ugo Rondinone: I ♥ John Giorno is a unique artistic and curatorial experiment. The cooperation between so many disparate nonprofit institutions in New York in the presentation of a single project is similarly unprecedented. The singularity of this monumental hybrid of artwork and exhibition is testament to the breadth, variation and longevity of Giorno's ongoing career, as well as Rondinone's artistic vision. Those lucky or stalwart enough to visit all eighteen installations of the exhibition will come away with an idea of both of these artists' achievements. In its size and ambition, *I ♥ John Giorno* can be seen as a citywide work of public art. At the same time, it is an intimate expression of love and inspiration between two artist partners. It is an astonishing gesture of love on Giorno's part to give the sum total of his life's work to Rondinone as material for his own artwork. Perhaps it is equal only to Rondinone's conception of an artwork as big as Manhattan to do justice to that gift.

IDENTITY

Scott King

Entrances of Participating Institutions, New Museum Lobby, Washington Square Windows

Ugo Rondinone asked Scott King to make a graphic identity for the exhibition *I ♥ John Giorno* that is visible at each partner institution and throughout New York City.

King explains his process: "I made a false start with this project. When Ugo Rondinone asked me to make the graphic saying 'I ♥ John Giorno,' I immediately thought he wanted something 'designed' ... but he didn't, he wanted 'my voice' to say 'I ♥ John Giorno.' It's a subtle difference, maybe not one visible to the untrained eye. As simple as this design looks, it actually took me a long time to finish—partly because I don't know John personally, so it was a struggle to claim that I ♥ him, and partly because it is so hard to use the 'I ♥' without copying the original Milton Glaser 'I ♥ NY': a piece of typographic design so enormously successful that it has long since passed through 'design cliché and into the realm of international language. Anyway, in the end, I spent a lot of time reading about John Giorno—I did my research—then one morning I woke up, sat at the computer and typed out."

King's artistic practice through pop culture, image production and public art stems from his work as a graphic designer. In the 1990s, he worked as art director of *i-D* magazine and creative director of *Sleazenation* magazine. He has also produced work for many influential figures including the Pet Shop Boys, Michael Clark, Malcolm McLaren, Morrissey, and Suicide.

WE ALL GO BACK TO WHERE WE BELONG, JOHN

Michael Stipe and Dominic DeJoseph

High Line Art

Michael Stipes's video *We All Go Back to Where We Belong, John* (2011), featuring John Giorno, is installed as part of High Line Channel 14, High Line Art's ongoing outdoor video program located on the park at 14th Street. In 2011, Michael Stipe and Dominic J. DeJoseph directed two video pieces for this song, one with Kirsten Dunst and another with Giorno. Created in the style of Andy Warhol's *Screen Tests*, these stark, simple portraits, upon their release, became the final visual representation for the band R.E.M.

Stipe explains the creation of the videos: "I first met John Giorno in the mid-1990s at a small party in Kansas for his great friend William Burroughs. He was easily one of the most charismatic and physically stunning men I had ever had the pleasure to meet. Many years later, in New York, I went to the opening of *Andy Warhol: Screen Tests* at the Museum of Modern Art. I saw John standing alone, quietly, in the middle of a crowded room. I approached him, we spoke, he hugged me, and that was that. In 2011, my band R.E.M. was writing the last three songs we would ever record—I was struggling to finish the lyrics—and I woke up one night in the middle of a dream. In the dream I had approached John and my neighbor, the actress Kirsten Dunst, and asked them each if they would participate in a video piece to accompany the song. Without hesitation they both said yes. In *We All Go Back To Where We Belong, John*, I asked John to sit quietly for the length of the song. I hit 'record' on the video camera, and surprised him by singing the song a cappella as we filmed. His reaction is just what I had hoped for—surprise, delight, embarrassment, a calm amusement—exactly like my dream. The song has been performed three times—once for John, once for Kirsten and once at Carnegie Hall."

THANX 4 NOTHING

Ugo Rondinone

Sky Art

For his 70th birthday in 2006, John Giorno wrote the autobiographical poem *THANX 4 NOTHING*. Beneath its apparent clarity, this work of maturity and wisdom evokes the poet's past with gratitude: "I want to give my thanks to everyone for everything, and as a token of my appreciation, I want to offer back to you all my good and bad habits."

Filmed barefoot on a Parisian stage by Ugo Rondinone, Giorno turns away from literary genres of confession and elegy, contrasting them with the legendary image of the poet as a moralistic sage.

Rondinone describes the creation of the work: "In the fall of 2011, I filmed John Giorno in the old vaudeville theatre, Palais des Glaces in Paris. I filmed him 24 times in a black tuxedo and 24 times in a white tuxedo and from all four sides. Each side was filmed in four different shot sizes—close-up, medium shot, three-quarter shot, wide angle shot. For each take, John Giorno performed the entire poem *THANX 4 NOTHING*. The challenge was to synchronize each frame exactly to the pace of the diction of the poem."

Referencing drugs, alcohol, and sex, Giorno delivers a spiritual act of transmission in a mix of biting irony and Buddhist wisdom. Love and treachery, friendship and rivalry, benevolence and malevolence are all acknowledged without any value judgments, even when it comes to America, which he thanks "for its neglect."

JOHN GIORNO ARCHIVE

Ugo Rondinone

Sky Art

The installation of *THANX 4 NOTHING* is surrounded by the John Giorno Archive (1936–ongoing), a facsimile of Giorno's original archive made up of 15,147 documents. The archive mixes his private life and artistic life through remnants of family albums, travels, social engagements, and documentation of poetry, performance and visual work. Each digitized element has been reproduced on a sheet of colored paper and adapted to a standard A4 scale. The entirety of the installation has been arranged chronologically and displayed on the walls of Sky Art in a grid. Colored poem drawings, paintings and prints by Giorno from 1966 to the present are also hung atop this installation, creating a panoply of color and content that mirrors his rich history.

Visitors are invited to dive further into Giorno's life by looking at binders of archival material, compiled by archivists Marcia Bassett and Anastasia Clarke, that are available on nearby tables. With its publications, posters, photographs, records and products, this archive makes the diversity of Giorno's work tangible.

Rondinone remarks about the archive: "When I saw John Giorno's archive for the first time in 2000, I was impressed by its vast size and how he had methodically organized the archive in a timeline by dating and labeling the boxes with archival material dating back to 1936. Giorno's archive is the main reason I am doing the exhibition. The challenge was to present a literary archive as a visual exhibition."

SLEEP AND OTHER WORKS

Andy Warhol

Swiss Institute / Contemporary Art

SLEEP AND OTHER WORKS at Swiss Institute presents John Giorno's relationship with Andy Warhol as both lover and muse. Giorno first saw Warhol's work in 1962 in an exhibition which included Warhol's famous Campbell's Soup Can works at the Sidney Janis Gallery in New York. Giorno met Warhol later that year at his first solo show at the Stable Gallery, and the two became close friends and lovers. Warhol went on to depict Giorno in multiple contexts, from his short films made at private parties and on weekends with friends to a series of *Screen Tests* (1964–1966) that were themselves an extension of Warhol's insatiable obsession with portraits. In a static, silent, black-and-white style, with neither narration nor action, these filmed faces evoke photographs, and their tight, close-up composition and formal pose derive from early photo booth portraits made by Warhol in 1963, which are also on view.

Giorno and Warhol's monumental collaboration is *Sleep*, Warhol's first long film. Giorno describes the creation of the work: "In August 1963, Andy started shooting *Sleep*. It was an easy shoot. I loved to sleep. I slept all the time, twelve hours a day every day. It was the only place that felt good: complete oblivion, resting in a warm dream world, taking refuge in the lower realms. Everything awake was horrible. Andy would shoot for about three hours, until 5 A.M when the sun rose, all by himself."

After a month of shooting, Warhol was faced with editing a large number of rolls of film. He ultimately decided to loop some of the shots he had made, remembering a concert organized by John Cage in 1963 of Erik Satie's 1893 piece *Vexations*, where an 80-second composition was repeated over more than 18 hours. According to Giorno, at the official premiere of *Sleep* at the Gramercy Arts Theater in January 1964, Warhol used *Vexations* to accompany the screening. Giorno describes the work's appearance: "Andy was terrified that it would be perceived as a gay movie, perceived as a gay man's filming another gay man. That's why *Sleep* looks like what it does; it doesn't even look like a man half the time. It looks like light and dark, like an abstract painting."

AUDIO AND VISUAL WORKS OF JOHN GIORNO

With works by John Giorno and Ugo Rondinone

Red Bull Arts New York

Red Bull Arts New York presents a selection of John Giorno's audio works amidst a dense display of visual pieces generated from his poems, reflecting the repetitive and layered nature of Giorno's poetry itself.

Offering random access to poems, Giorno's visionary work *Dial-A-Poem* anticipated mass-media communication and the commercial success of telephone hotlines. For *Dial-A-Poem*, Giorno asked 250 artists to record their voices, mingling the poetry of John Ashbery, the energy of Black Panther Party co-founder Bobby Seale, the minimalist music of Philip Glass and instructions for making a Molotov cocktail in a poem by Diane di Prima. It was not poetry as a literary genre that interested Giorno, but rather the presence of the voice as sound; a noise or a message recorded and then communicated intimately via the telephone. After an initial tryout organized by the Architectural League in New York in 1968, *Dial-A-Poem* became a sensation, jamming the telephone lines during the *Information* exhibition at MoMA in 1970. "The majority of the calls," Giorno remembers, "came between nine in the morning and five in the afternoon, which means in New York people imprisoned in their glass office buildings, sitting behind desks nervously dialing." The *Dial-A-Poem* phone line, which has been reprised for this exhibition, can be reached by calling (641)793-8122.

For the Paris iteration of *Ugo Rondinone: I ♥ John Giorno*, Rondinone incorporated the text of Giorno's poems on scrolling video screens which simultaneously play the audio of Giorno's performance of the poem. These works are featured at Red Bull Arts New York amidst drawings and paintings by Giorno, all made in collaboration with his longtime designer Mark Michaelson. Between 1965 and 2004, Giorno worked with sound engineer Bob Bielecki to create 14 sound poems. Bielecki is known for his innovative use of technology, and together he and Giorno pioneered experimental audio work. All 14 sound poems can be heard on earphones attached to monitors suspended from the ceiling of the gallery that simultaneously show the text of the sound poems.

In the lower gallery eight songs recorded by The John Giorno Band are available for listening through headphones, along with photos taken by Kate Simon of The John Giorno Band performing at CBGB. Active from 1982-89, the original band included percussionist David van Tieghem, guitarist Pat Irwin and bassist Philippe Hagen. Giorno then went on to work with other artists including Lenny Kaye, Charlie and Adam Roth, Mike Osborne and David Conrad among others. Throughout the band's existence, Giorno used his poems to create musical compositions and performances, chanting the works to highlight their repetitive, lyric quality. The John Giorno Band never released an album during its existence, but, in association with the festival, Red Bull Arts New York has produced an LP with the group's eight songs.

The lecture hall at Red Bull Arts New York features a single channel, looped installation of Ugo Rondinone's recording of John Giorno performing *THANX 4 NOTHING*.

JOHN GIORNO AND TIBETAN BUDDHISM

With works from the collection of the Rubin Museum of Art

205 Hudson Gallery – Hunter College Art Galleries

“When you’re a Buddhist, you work with your mind in meditation, and with various practices you train the mind to realize its empty nature. Strangely, that’s the way I make poems! Maybe it’s developing the ability to see what arises in one’s mind, how it arises and its nature, that makes Buddhism very sympathetic to poets.” — John Giorno

Giorno was first introduced to Buddhism during his undergraduate studies at Columbia University in 1956 as part of its Core Curriculum. After several trips to India during the 1970s, he discovered Tibetan Buddhism and became a disciple of Dudjom Rinpoche (1904–1987), master of the Nyingmapa lineage, which Giorno actively helped to promulgate in the United States.

Every New Year since 1986 Giorno has welcomed Buddhist masters and students to his home for the traditional fire ceremony, during which the obstacles of the previous year are released to usher in the new one. For this exhibition, Giorno’s personal shrine from his home, which is decorated with intricate brocade from the sacred pilgrimage site of Banaras in India, has been relocated to the gallery space. Additionally, selected from the collection of the Rubin Museum of Art, a group of eighteen thangkhas—Tibetan paintings—are also on display along with two from Giorno’s personal collection.

Padmasambhava, the founding figure of the Nyingmapa order, is depicted in a number of the works. Considered to be a “Second Buddha” in Tibet, Padmasambhava played a predominant role in the advancement of Buddhism across Tibet in the 8th century. Padmasambhava is endowed with superhuman qualities and shown through Tibetan iconography in a variety of forms.

Guru Pema Drakpo is one of the most wrathful depictions of Padmasambhava, an illustration of the powerful energy required to neutralize and transmute the obstacles that inevitably arise on the path to Enlightenment and spiritual accomplishment. He holds in his hand a vajra or “Diamond Thunderbolt,” a symbol of Enlightenment and a ritual object. Padmasambhava is believed to have been essential to the dissemination of the teachings of the *Vajrakila*, also known as the “Diamond Dagger,” throughout Tibet.

Conversely, Guru Pema Jungne is a more peaceful depiction of Padmasambhava. Known as the “Lotus-Born,” he is often shown sitting on a flower and dressed in the robes of a monk, teaching Dharma to the people. In his right hand he holds a diamond scepter, while in his left he holds a skullcap of clear nectar.

AIDS TREATMENT PROJECT

With works by John Giorno and Peter Ungerleider

205 Hudson Gallery – Hunter College Art Galleries

205 Hudson Gallery presents material from Giorno’s AIDS Treatment Project begun in 1984. Conceived as a direct-action program, Giorno described it as “my personal effort to combat, with all-pervasive compassion, the catastrophe of the AIDS epidemic. Cash grants for emergency situations: back rent, telephone and utilities, food, nursing, alternative medicine not covered by Medicaid, taxis, whatever is needed. Money given with love and affection.”

Facilitated through his non-profit foundation Giorno Poetry Systems, many artists in his LP series, such as William Burroughs, Allen Ginsberg, and Patti Smith, among many others, donated their royalties to the AIDS Treatment Project. Giorno also organized benefit performances at the Beacon Theater with artists including Debbie Harry, Philip Glass, Laurie Anderson and Sonic Youth; and posters from these concerts are included here. The AIDS Treatment Project concluded in 2004, though Giorno has continued to help poets and artists since with medical problems.

Peter Ungerleider’s film *Loving Kindness*, presented with the AIDS Treatment Project documentation, is a portrait of Giorno that focuses on his work with the AIDS Treatment Project interspersed with his musings on death within the Tibetan Buddhist tradition.

JOHN GIORNO DANCING

Kendall Shaw

Bertha and Karl Leubsdorf Gallery – Hunter College Art Galleries

The Bertha and Karl Leubsdorf Gallery displays works by Kendall Shaw depicting his close friend John Giorno. In 1963, Shaw took photos of Giorno dancing that later inspired his spare paintings whose black outlines and colorful silhouettes depict Giorno's body in motion.

Shaw recounts: "At twenty six, Giorno had a trim, young and elegant figure, but his face was oddly mature, and as rough and craggy as a rocky Sicilian landscape. My camera captured lines when he danced naked to rock and roll. Found lines and shapes were precise, actual and real, not imagined."

The works were first exhibited at the Tibor de Nagy gallery in September 1964. For the first time, a number of Shaw's original photographs will also be exhibited alongside the paintings.

GRASPING AT EMPTINESS

Richard Bosman and John Giorno

Bertha and Karl Leubsdorf Gallery – Hunter College Art Galleries

Also on view at the Bertha and Karl Leubsdorf Gallery is *Grasping at Emptiness*, a collaboration featuring Giorno's 1978 eponymous poem and 20 drawings by Richard Bosman. Bosman's dynamic depictions of frustration evoke Giorno's poem about a fraught end to a relationship.

Bosman recalls: "The inspiration for the images came from Chinese comic books that I would get in Chinatown, as well as other comic books such as *Creepy*, *Eerie* and *Weird Tales*. I made drawings in black ink, but then with the context of the poems, the meaning would change dramatically. It was a lot of fun going to the dark side. I think the poems and images both do that."

This book was published in 1985 by the Kulchur Foundation, an independent press and granting organization that supported poets and critics now primarily known as part of the New York School.

1. Bertha and Karl Leubsdorf Gallery
Hunter College Art Galleries
Hunter West Building
132 East 68th Street
New York, NY 10065
leubsdorfgallery.org
Wednesday-Sunday, 1pm-6pm

2. Sky Art
555 11th Ave
New York, NY 10036
skyartny.com
Tuesday-Saturday, 11am-6pm

3. The Kitchen
512 West 19th Street
New York, NY 10011
thekitchen.org
Monday-Friday, 11am-6pm

4. Red Bull Arts New York
220 West 18th Street
New York, NY 10011
redbullartsnewyork.com
Wednesday-Sunday, 12pm-7pm

5. The High Line
On the High Line at 14th Street
New York, NY 10011
arthehighline.org
On view daily, 7pm-11pm

6. White Columns
320 West 13th Street
New York, NY 10014
whitecolumns.org
Tuesday-Saturday, 12pm-6pm

7. 80WSE Gallery - Broadway Windows
Broadway at East 10th Street
New York, NY 10003
steinhardt.nyu.edu/80wse
On view 24 hours, 7 days a week

8. Howl! Happening: An Arturo Vega Project
6 East 1st Street
New York, NY 10003
howlarts.org
Wednesday-Sunday, 11am-6pm

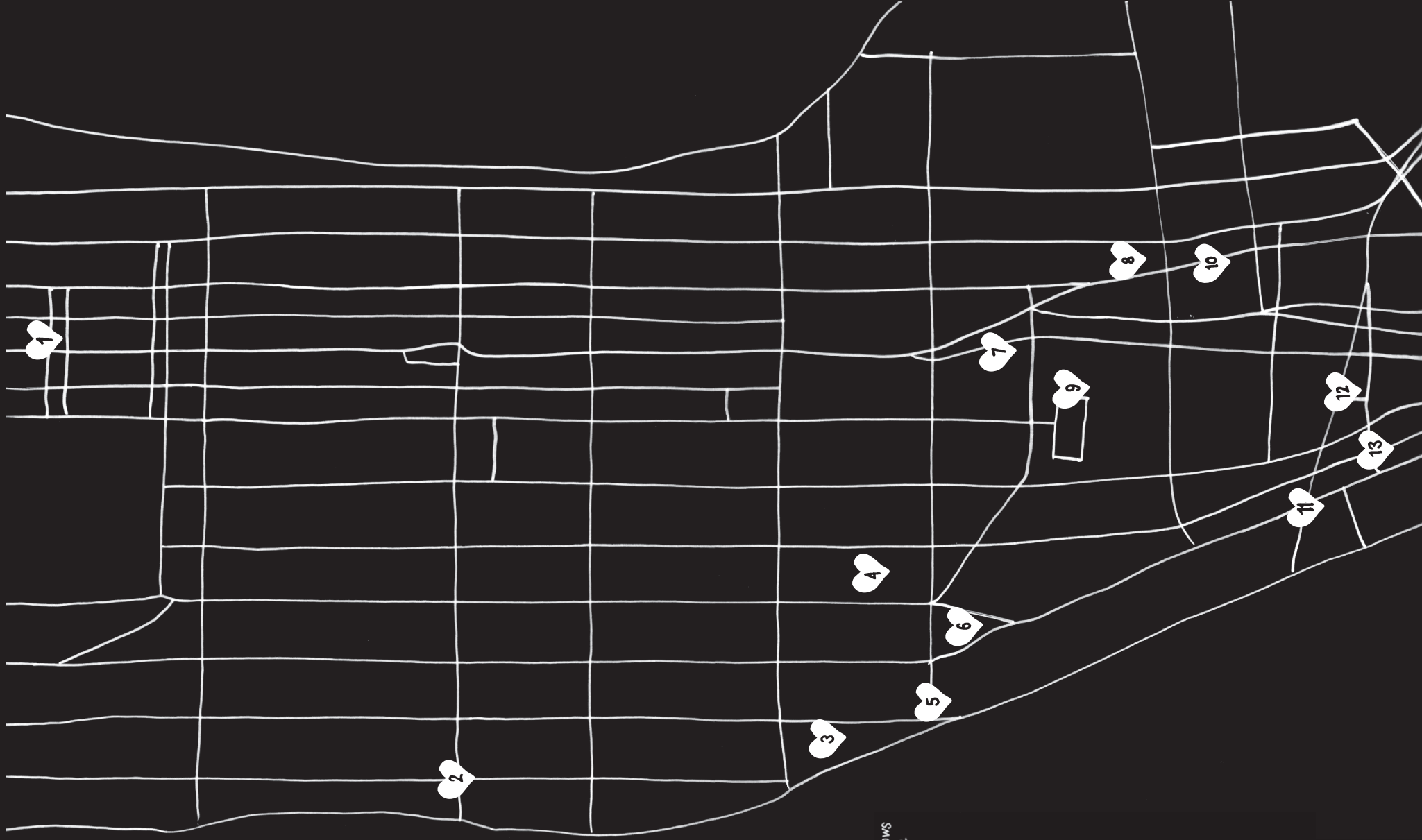
9. 80WSE Gallery - Washington Square Windows
Washington Square East at Washington Place
New York, NY 10003
steinhardt.nyu.edu/80wse
On view 24 hours, 7 days a week

10. New Museum
235 Bowery
New York, NY 10002
newmuseum.org
Tuesday-Sunday, 11am-6pm
Thursday, 11am-9pm

11. 205 Hudson Gallery
Hunter College Art Galleries
205 Hudson Street
New York, NY 10013
205hudsongallery.org
Wednesday-Sunday, 1pm-6pm

12. Artists Space
55 Walker Street
New York, NY 10013
Please visit artistspace.org for
information on public programs.

13. Swiss Institute / Contemporary Art
102 Franklin Street, Front 1
New York, NY 10013
swissinstitute.net
Wednesday-Sunday, 12pm-6pm



SLEEPTALKING

Pierre Huyghe

Howl! Happening: An Arturo Vega Project

Pierre Huyghe's 1998 piece *Sleeptalking* reconsiders the depiction of John Giorno in Andy Warhol's *Sleep* thirty-five years after its premiere. Huyghe visited Giorno in his loft at 222 Bowery with the intention to recreate Warhol's *Sleep* and to have a conversation with Giorno about his life. Huyghe spent 5 days interviewing Giorno for over eight hours a day, and on their final day together filmed Giorno sleeping on the same bed featured in Warhol's *Sleep*.

In the final work, Huyghe overlaid his footage of Giorno with Warhol's, and through subtle shifts, Giorno's time-marked face imperceptibly changes and rejuvenates. This return to the original, revealed in the film by a slow fade-out, is accompanied by the poet's voice. Giorno describes the context of the creation of the film *Sleep* and his memories of working with Warhol. As part of a series of works about the notion of interpretation, Huyghe associates Warhol's *Sleep* with the dreams and utopias of the 1960s. Awoken from his long slumber, the sleeper now speaks and becomes an actor in a different reality, evoking the time he lived and its history.

JOHN GIORNO READS

Rirkrit Tiravanija with intervention by Mark Handforth

The Kitchen

"As I watched John perform, I felt the great wave of energy and compassion, the force of life that John was transferring onto us (his listener, his viewer, his audience). With that thought, I felt the urge to ask John if he would let me record this gift that he had managed to sustain in his being throughout his existence." — Rirkrit Tiravanija

In the summer of 2008, Rirkrit Tiravanija filmed John Giorno performing his poems, memoirs, and music work. Tiravanija's work, *untitled 2008 (john giorno reads)*, was originally shot on 16mm black-and-white film (now transferred to video), and runs 10 hours and 6 minutes. Filmed in Giorno's studio, *untitled 2008 (john giorno reads)* spans five decades of work. The work is visible inside a plywood pavilion that Tiravanija designed as a reconstruction of Giorno's studio. The installation also includes a bench made by Mark Handforth specifically for this work.

PHOTO PORTRAITS OF JOHN GIORNO

Françoise Janicot

The Kitchen

Giorno's performances between 1974 and 1999 were extensively documented by French photographer Françoise Janicot, who traveled to performance and poetry festivals with her husband Bernard Heidsieck, Giorno, and fellow artists and friends. A selection of these photographs is on display at The Kitchen.

JOHN GIORNO SCULPTURE PORTRAIT

Joan Wallace

The Kitchen

Joan Wallace's sculpture portrait, *Split Girl / Man Sleeping (Trying to Keep Things Still)*, references Andy Warhol's 1963 depiction of John Giorno in *Sleep* by featuring stills from the film silkscreened onto rotating plywood panels. The muted green monochrome structure contrasts the work's dynamic nature, which considers the legacy of Pop Art amid a larger critique of appropriation.

GIORNO POETRY SYSTEMS

With works by Angela Bulloch and Anne Collier

White Columns

A specially curated presentation of the Giorno Poetry Systems (GPS) is presented at White Columns. Launched in 1965 in the context of the ongoing civil rights movement and the Vietnam War, GPS sought to create a new audience and relevance for poetry. The sleeve of the 1972 double album *Dial-A-Poem-Poets* features a manifesto-like declaration by Giorno: “At this point, with the war and the repression and everything, we thought this was a good way for the Movement to reach people.”

Giorno’s ambition for GPS led to the release of more than fifty recordings on vinyl, cassette, CD and video formats by an extraordinary range of poets, performers and musicians, inspired by his exposure in the early 1960s to the innovative practices of Andy Warhol, Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns and the members of the Judson Dance Theatre. Reflecting on their influence, Giorno has observed: “The use of modern mass media and technologies by these artists made me realize that poetry was 75 years behind painting and sculpture, dance and music. And I thought, if they can do it, why can’t I do it for poetry?”

Angela Bulloch and Anne Collier were invited by Matthew Higgs to respond to the physical and recorded archives of GPS. Bulloch’s *Happy Sacks* (1994-2015) create a communal environment where the audience can relax and listen to the entire GPS back-catalogue, which is available to scroll through on iPads. Displayed as a digital slide show on LED screens, Collier has documented the vinyl albums, CDs and video-tapes featuring original photography and artwork by artists including Les Levine, Robert Mapplethorpe, Jimmy De Sana, Peter Hujar and Keith Haring that were distributed by GPS between 1972 and 1993.

PAINTINGS OF JOHN GIORNO

With works by Phong Bui, Verne Dawson, Judith Eisler, Billy Sullivan and Elizabeth Peyton

White Columns

A number of portraits of John Giorno are on display at White Columns, exemplifying his influence on several generations of artists. While the works reflect the admiration artists feel for the poet’s work, the portraits also show their interest in his presence. Elizabeth Peyton describes this attraction: “I asked John if he would let me make a portrait of him in 2007... I had been to more than a few of his readings... I think I was really moved to take action after seeing the film *Rirkrit* made of John reading all of his poetry—it blew my mind... I really wanted to make a picture to contain John’s gentle and radical John-ness...”

These portraits affirm the vital energy of Giorno, which is characterized by two opposing forces: an inexhaustible physical power in his stage performances, and a spiritual wisdom acquired by a meditation practice spanning several decades. Perhaps most poignantly, they reveal Giorno’s relationship to painters from the New York art scene, including Billy Sullivan, Verne Dawson, Elizabeth Peyton, Phong Bui and Judith Eisler.

T-SHIRT POEMS

John Giorno

White Columns

The installation at White Columns also includes a selection of John Giorno's T-shirt poems from 1965-2016, with phrases ranging from poetic fragments to enigmatic aphorisms related to different projects that Giorno has organized over the years including Giorno Poetry Systems, AIDS Treatment Project, and various exhibitions.

READINGS AND PERFORMANCES

Artists Space

Artists Space has organized a series of public programs to accompany the exhibition that, while taking cue from the broad influence of John Giorno's work, will focus on the queer overlap of reading and performance. The series will feature an expansive group of artists and poets, placing those who came of age as peers of Giorno in the influential East Village poetry scene alongside figures who trace numerous other positions within today's extended landscape of North American poetics. Readings in the series will be recorded, with videos published online, in tribute to Giorno's inventive approach to the distribution and publication of the written and spoken word.

Please refer to the events schedules at ilovejohngiorno.nyc and artistspace.org for further details.

EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

The Brooklyn Rail

With Guest Editors Laura Hoptman and Mónica de la Torre

The Brooklyn Rail's summer issue is devoted to *Ugo Rondinone: I ♥ John Giorno* and organized according to the sections of the exhibition, which taken together offer an overview of Giorno's life, work and collaborations. Edited by poet Mónica de la Torre and curator Laura Hoptman, the issue includes contributions by poets, musicians, artists, critics, holy men and art historians, and is illustrated with photos and documents chosen from Giorno's vast personal archive.

SELECTED PUBLIC PROGRAMS

OPENING RECEPTION

Wednesday, June 21, 5-8PM

How! Happening, Hunter College Art Galleries, The Kitchen, Red Bull Arts New York, Sky Art, Swiss Institute, White Columns, 80WSE Gallery

JOHN GIORNO, FANNY HOWE, MÓNICA DE LA TORRE

Friday, June 23, 7PM

Artists Space, 55 Walker Street

TEACHING WITH KHENPO TSEWANG DONGYAL

RINPOCHE

Saturday, June 24, 3PM

Hunter College Art Galleries,
205 Hudson Street

JOHN GODFREY, MAX BLAGG, CAROLEE

SCHNEEMAN, PENNY ARCADE, ILKA SCOBIE, JASON NAPOLI, TOMMY PICO, STEFAN BONDELL, JEFF WRIGHT, PRECIOUS OKOYOMON, RIN JOHNSON, JAMESON FITZPATRICK, DIANA HAMILTON, EL ROY RED, KEVIN KILLIAN, DODIE BELLAMY, AND MORE

Saturday, July 1, 3PM

Marble Cemetery, 41 1/2 2nd Avenue

FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS: TEACHING WITH KHENPO TENZIN NORGAY RINPOCHE FROM THE PALYUL CENTER

Saturday, July 8, 3PM

Hunter College Art Galleries,
205 Hudson Street

RECORD RELEASE PARTY OF THE JOHN GIORNO BAND'S "I'M ROCK HARD" (1982-1989) ARTIST EDITION LP, PRESENTED WITH JANANI BALASUBRAMANIAN'S PARTICIPATORY AUDIO INSTALLATION, *IOS-A-POEM*

Thursday, July 13, 7-9PM

Red Bull Arts, 220 West 18th Street

SOUNDS OF THE STREET: RUBIN MUSEUM BLOCK PARTY

Sunday, July 16, 2:30PM

Performance by John Giorno
17th Street between 6th and 7th Aveue

JONAS MEKAS IN CONVERSATION WITH STUART COMER

Tuesday, July 18, 7PM

Swiss Institute, 102 Franklin Street, Front 1

DIAL-A-POEM RADIO MARATHON, CURATED BY LAUREN ROSATI

Saturday, July 29, 12-7PM

Red Bull Arts, 220 West 18th Street

JANANI BALASUBRAMANIAN'S *IOS-A-POEM*

Saturday, July 29, 12-7PM

Red Bull Arts, 220 West 18th Street

For August events and more, please refer to the events schedule at ilovejohngiorno.nyc.

BIOS

ABOUT JOHN GIORNO John Giorno (*b.* 1936, *New York City, USA*) is an artistic innovator who has been defying conventional definitions of poet, performer, political activist, Tibetan Buddhist, and visual artist since he emerged upon the New York art scene during the late 1950s. In the 1960s, he began producing multi-media, multi-sensory events concurrent with Warhol's Exploding Plastic Inevitable. He worked with Rauschenberg's Experiments in Art and Technology (E.A.T) in 1966, and with Bob Moog in 1967-68. His breakthroughs in this area include *Dial-A-Poem*, which was first presented in 1968 at the Architectural Society of New York and was later included in the MoMA's Information exhibition in 1970. His contributions are significant to many culturally defining moments: the Beat generation, Pop Art, Punk, the Pictures Generation, and the hip-hop era. His work is included in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris; and Queensland Art Gallery/ Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane; among others.

ABOUT UGO RONDINONE Ugo Rondinone (*b.* 1964, *Brunnen, Switzerland*) is a renowned mixed-media artist who lives and works in New York. Recent solo shows include: *your age my age and the age of the rainbow*, The Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow; *let's start this day again*, Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati; *every time the sun comes up*, Place Vendome, Paris; *girono d'oro + notti d'argento*, Mercati die Traiano, Rome; *becoming soil*, Carre d'Art, Nîmes; *seven magic mountains*, Art Production Fund and Nevada Museum of Art/Desert of Nevada; *vocabulary of solitude*, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam; *Ugo Rondinone: I ♥ John Giorno*, Palais de Tokyo, Paris; *golden days and silver nights*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney; and *artists and poets*, Secession, Vienna. His work is in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, and the Dallas Museum of Art, among others. Upcoming shows include *the world just makes me laugh* at Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, Berkeley; and *good evening beautiful blue* at Bass Museum of Art, Miami.

CREDITS & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

UGO RONDINONE: I ♥ JOHN GIORNO

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Ugo Rondinone: I ♥ John Giorno was first presented at Palais de Tokyo, Paris, from October 20, 2015 - January 9, 2016. Thanks to Jean de Loisy, Florence Ostende, Pauline-Alexandrine Deforge and the entire team at Palais de Tokyo for their support in making the New York edition possible.

Ugo Rondinone wishes to express his utmost gratitude to all the participating artists, supporters, and institutions, in particular the organizing committee led by The Kitchen, Swiss Institute, and White Columns. Special thanks to exhibition coordinator Alison Coplan for her

tireless commitment to this unique project, as well as to the ever genial Studio Rondinone. And, last but not least, to John Giorno, with love.

Special thanks to Alexandra Aguiar, Adam Bartos, Michelle Bennett, Jennifer Brennan, Anastasia Clarke, Elizabeth Dee, Risha Lee, Eva Presenhuber and Markus Rischgasser.

Ugo Rondinone: I ♥ John Giorno at Hunter College Art Galleries is made possible by the generous support of the David Bershad Family Foundation, the Susan V. Bershad Charitable Fund, Inc., Arthur and Carol Kaufman Goldberg, the Leubsdorf Fund, and Agnes Gund in support of the Curatorial Certificate Program.

Ugo Rondinone: I ♥ John Giorno at The Kitchen is made possible with support from Eleanor Cayre and Lonti Ebers; annual grants from Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts and Lambent Foundation Fund of Tides Foundation; and in part by public funds from New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council and New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

Red Bull Arts New York wishes to thank Samsung Electronics for their generous donation.

Ugo Rondinone: I ♥ John Giorno at Swiss Institute is made possible in part with public funds from Pro Helvetia, Swiss Arts Council, the New York State Council on the Arts, with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature, and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council. Main sponsors include LUMA Foundation, the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, and Friends of SI. Swiss Institute gratefully acknowledges its Leading Partner UBS, Stella Artois as Benefactor, Swiss Re as Public Programs Presenting Sponsor, Vitra as Design Partner, SWISS as Travel Partner and UOVO Fine Art as Relocation Partner.

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Ugo Rondinone: I ♥ John Giorno is made possible in part by public funds from the Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia. The *I ♥ John Giorno* organizing committee gratefully acknowledges generous support from Van Cleef & Arpels, the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts and LUMA Foundation. Thanks to Almine Rech Gallery, Brussels, London, New York and Paris; Elizabeth Dee Gallery, New York; Esther Schipper, Berlin; Galerie Eva Presenhuber, New York and Zürich; Gladstone Gallery, Brussels and New York; Galerie Kamel Mennour, London and Paris; Kukje Gallery, Seoul; and Sadie Coles, London for production support. Additional thanks to Ophelia and Bill Rudin as well as the General Consulate of Switzerland in New York for their gracious contribution, and to agnès b. for in kind support.