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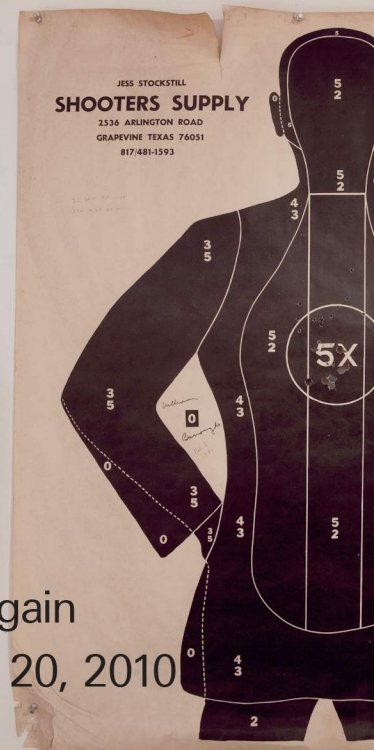
Panoramic view of William S. Burroughs' bedroom in "the Bunker" at 222 Bowery, New York City. Photo: Daniel Pérez

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Rip It Up and Start Again January 19–February 20, 2010

William S. Burroughs
presented by John Giorno

Charles Henri Ford
presented by Mitchell Alguis & Christopher Müller

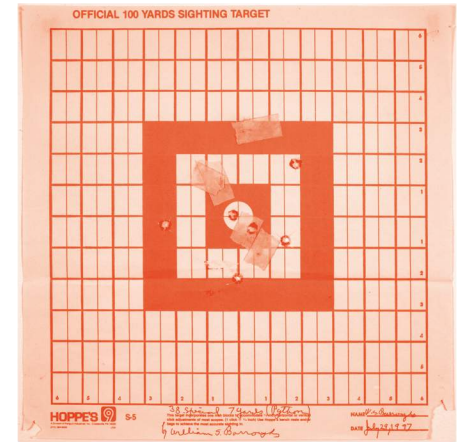
Ray Johnson
presented by Bill Wilson and Stefan Kalmar

Philippe Thomas
(readymades belong to)
presented by Claire Fontaine

Arthur Russell
presented by James Merle Thomas

William S. Burroughs
presented by John Giorno
b. February 5, 1914, St. Louis, Missouri
d. August 2, 1997, Lawrence, Kansas

In the 1980s and 1990s, William S. Burroughs became an icon of pop culture and postmodern literature. Nevertheless, his collages are relatively unknown. Burroughs’ art works can be understood as the visual expression of his “cut-up” writing technique, which he used to construct linked scenarios for his protagonists in novels such as *Interzone* and *Imaginary City*. “The photo collage is a way to travel that must be used with skill and precision if we are to arrive [...] The collage as a flexible hieroglyph language of juxtaposition: A collage makes a statement.” – William S. Burroughs, 1962.



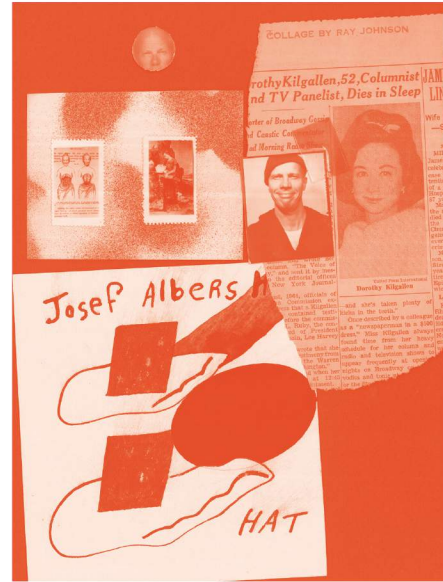
William S. Burroughs, *Target #5* (July 29, 1997), 1997 Courtesy John Giorno. Photo: Adam Reich



André Breton, *Young Cherry Trees Secured Against Hares*, Cover by Marcel Duchamp, Published by Charles Henri Ford, View Editions, New York 1946, Collection of Daniel Buchholz and Christopher Müller, Cologne

Ray Johnson
presented by Bill Wilson and Stefan Kalmár
b. October 16, 1927, Detroit, Michigan
d. January 13, 1995, New York City

American artist Ray Johnson attended Black Mountain College between 1945 and 1948. Johnson is regarded as the founder of the “Mail Art” movement which proposed a model for a utopian society where communication takes place without barriers, i.e., where social distinctions have ceased to exist. Ray Johnson’s extraordinary collages — which can be understood as a critical commentary on New York’s art scene — are as little known today as the fact that he gave Andy Warhol his first camera.



©Ray Johnson Estate, Courtesy Richard L. Feigen & Co.



Philippe Thomas (readymades belong to everyone®), *Pétition de Principe*, 1988. Collection M.J.S., Paris – Deposit Collection Musée d’Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean, Mudam Luxembourg

Philippe Thomas
(readymades belong to everyone®)
presented by Claire Fontaine
b. July 7, 1951, Nice, France;
d. September 2, 1995, Paris, France

Beginning in the 1980s, Thomas continued the anti-subjective tendencies in the arts that had begun in the 1960s, analyzing fictional authorships and artistic identities both critically and concretely. Under the cover of a fictional public relations agency named readymades belong to everyone®, he realized various art projects. The main aim of these projects was to undermine the marketing strategies of institutional promotion. Central themes of his creative work are the renunciation of authorship, the contexts of meaning, and the determination of art production by economic processes. Thomas attempted to question art world developments in the 1980s as well as the role of artist mythologies.



Philippe Thomas (readymades belong to everyone®), *Pétition de Principe*, 1988. Collection M.J.S., Paris – Deposit Collection Musée d’Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean, Mudam Luxembourg

John Giorno
b. May 22, 1951, Oskaloosa, Iowa;
d. April 4, 1992, New York City

Beginning as a classically trained cellist, Arthur Russell rose to prominence in the late 1970s and early 1980s as both an experimental musician and a producer of eccentric disco music. Associated with other New York City artists and musicians working in and around nontraditional venues for music and performance, Russell performed with minimalist composers, including Glass and Reich, and served as musical director at The Kitchen in the late 1970s. Russell also performed at events alongside Gordon Matta-Clark, Yvonne Rainer, and Allen Ginsberg, worked with pop musicians such as David Byrne and DJ Nicky Siano, and was part of the legendary “Studio 54.”

Arthur Russell, photo courtesy Audika

Christopher Müller
b. May 22, 1951, Oskaloosa, Iowa;
d. April 4, 1992, New York City

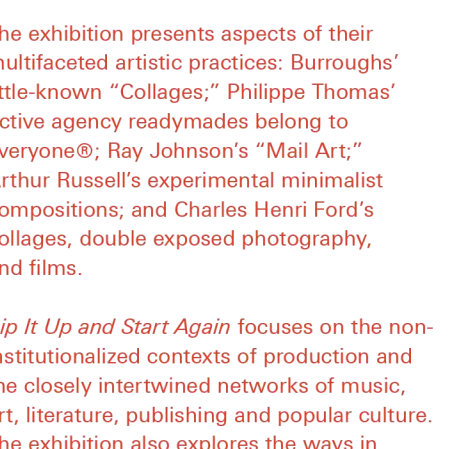
Together with Daniel Buchholz, gallery owner and art historian Christopher Müller has been running Daniel Buchholz Gallery, Cologne/ Berlin since 1996. During the last years he was engaged in the the work of the artist Charles Henri Ford. Together with Daniel Buchholz and Mitchell Algis he organized an exhibition called *Charles Henri Ford – The Garden of Disorder*, providing an overview of the artist’s work. Amongst others, this exhibition was shown at Wolfgang Tillman’s exhibition space Between Bridges in London in 2007.



Claire Fontaine

James Merle Thomas
b. May 22, 1951, Oskaloosa, Iowa;
d. April 4, 1992, New York City

James Merle Thomas lives and works in San Francisco as an independent curator, critic, and researcher. He is currently completing his doctoral dissertation in contemporary aesthetics and politics at Stanford University. His ongoing curatorial project, *I’m Sorry, But This is How I Learn* takes its name from a lyric by Arthur Russell, and is an exploration of the conceptual linkages between repetition and education. To date, the project has been presented in various exhibition projects, lectures, and essays, including a symposium on post-Minimalist aesthetics at Stanford University in April 2008, and in the essay “Let’s Go Swimming” (published in *Look Behind Us, A Blue Sky*, Hatje Cantz, 2007). James Thomas was assistant curator for several group exhibitions, including the 7th Gwangju Biennale (South Korea 2008) and the 2nd Seville Biennale (Spain 2006/07).



James Merle Thomas

Rip It Up and Start Again January 19–February 20, 2010

Programs

Sunday, January 31, 12 pm
Book Launch, *Be Nice, Share Everything, Have Fun*, edited by Stefan Kalmár and Daniel Pies, published by Walther König

Wednesday, February 3, 7:30 pm
Poetry recital with John Giorno

Wednesday, February 10, 7:30 pm
Screening of Charles Henri Ford’s *Poem Posters* (1967) 16mm, color, sound, 24 mins

Rip It Up and Start Again was conceived by Stefan Kalmár as a dual exhibition—his last for Kunstverein München (*Rip It Up*) and as one of his incoming exhibitions (*Start Again*) for Artists Space, which Kalmár has been heading since July 2009.

The exhibition brings together works by William S. Burroughs, Charles Henri Ford, Ray Johnson, Arthur Russell and Philippe Thomas (readymades belong to everyone®), each presented by another invited artist, acquaintance, friend, academic and/or admirer.

In the spirit of artistic strategies that could be characterized by the title of the exhibition *Rip It Up and Start Again**, all of the exhibited artists worked with collage in the broadest sense: reconfiguring existing image worlds.

In their lifetimes these artists were admired by artist peers, but have received only marginal recognition within art historical discourse and amongst a younger generation of artists working today.

* The title, *Rip It Up and Start Again*, is taken from the title of a book by Simon Reynolds who in turn took the title from a song by the Scottish post-punk band Orange Juice.