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Parkett Vol. 88: Kerstin Brätsch, Paul Chan, Sturtevant, and Andro Wekua

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The new *Parkett* Vol. 88 begins with a dialogue entitled “Staging an Opera of Knowledge” between the marvelously articulate *Herbert Lachmeyer* and *Jacqueline Burckhardt*. *Juri Steiner* considers the Zentrum Paul Klee’s Summer Academy in Bern and debates what is accomplished in today’s art school “laboratory” relative to the passionate utopian pedagogy of the early twentieth century. This volume also features an Insert project by artist **Silke Otto-Knapp** and an unfurling discussion between abstract painter **Suzan Frecon** and her daughter, poet **Marcella Durand**, revealing a portrait of a truly painterly family.

About **Kerstin Brätsch** and the rising German “Das Institut”, *Massimiliano Gioni* observes: “these are paintings that swarm with proto-cellular life, or whose planes of color ripple like television static.” Gioni affirms that like many artists of her generation, Brätsch takes painting to a new level of inflation, often through the use of abstract icons assembled from a constant stream of clashing computer graphics. *Fionn Meade* speaks on behalf of Brätsch’s shifting roles from curator, producer, and performer to persona, exhibition designer, and collaborator. According to Meade, the work is like a “beta test” for a new product only to become fragmented, corrupted, and dispersed. *Beatrix Ruf* contemplates Brätsch’s approach to the problems of authenticating art in a thoroughly commodified world. For her *Parkett* edition, Brätsch and Das Institut have produced what they term a fashion “parasite patch,” whose versatile layers of fabric fasten to a pre-existing garment.

Also in this issue of *Parkett*, **Paul Chan** has unapologetically written a poem catching us in his intellectual snares. Other writers tackle Chan's idealistic affinity for heroes of the avant-garde, and *Alan Gilbert* addresses the overwhelming writing and life of the Marquis de Sade, asserting that Chan is similarly committed to collapse art and politics into a grim and obscure endgame. In "Liberation in the Loop," *Boris Groys* observes Chan's use of filmic devices and interprets the narratives of his video projections as the haunting "eternal return of the same." Conversely, *Carrie Lambert-Beatty* investigates the fieldwork behind Chan's version of Beckett's "Waiting for Godot," staged in the empty wake of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans. Just how did Chan gain the trust of the local community, and what does this reveal about art's tactical relationship to the outside world? For his *Parkett* edition, Chan has repurposed a clothbound textbook cover as a compelling silkscreened panel titled, "The Libertine Reader, 2011."

Parkett is inspired to feature **Sturtevant**, the infamous punk of appropriation. As *Stéphanie Moisdon* claims in her essay, Sturtevant may be the only contemporary artist "to have incorporated Warhol's true logic of... the series, the surface, the machine." *Roger Cook* marvels at how Sturtevant, now in her eighties, has "relentlessly floated to the top," enabling us to experience and demystify the fetishism at the heart of art production, reception, and distribution. **Paul McCarthy**, who is himself the subject of one of Sturtevant's recent video works, applies his own logic to Sturtevant's highly intellectual practice. Sturtevant's *Parkett* edition is an animated film of two toy dogs singing a duet of "What a Wonderful World."

Andro Wekua is not just an artist but an excavator—uncovering stranded artifacts and piecing together a nostalgia with alarming physical presence; his isolated figures occupy disintegrated interiors. *Douglas Fogle* considers these compositions "machine[s] for dreaming" and a "psychic palimpsest" that embodies the past. *Negar Azimi* attests to how he fashions his work from reconstructed memories, photographs, overheard stories, and dreams. *Daniel Baumann* forgoes any direct reference to Wekua's art and instead offers an account of one of the most indefensibly elegant, yet dysfunctional luxury sports cars of all times: the Aston Martin Lagonda. "...form and substance are the vehicles that carry a thought out into the spaces that we occupy with our bodies." Wekua's edition "Black Sea Lamp" emits cool, soft light behind handmade blue-colored glass.

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