

G.V.G. Gallery



238 MARK FLOOD

ARTIST PAINTING BY PETERS

LYNN GOODE GALLERY
2719 Colquitt, Houston, TX 77098
(713) 526-5966

OPENING RECEPTION: Saturday, January 18, 6-8 PM
HOURS: Tuesday - Saturday 10:30 - 6:30, Thursdays 10 - 7
EXHIBITION WITH THE ARTISTS: January 23, 6PM

FIRST CLASS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 016188



career suicide

After decades spent making art, Mark Flood has remained true to who he was in the 90s, as he continues to probe the basic precepts and structures of the art world—or, as he puts it, to “fuck the frame.” But where does the Houston-based artist situate his work and influence now, when his ideas of irony, performativity, and ownership have become commonplace among younger artists in an increasingly appearance-based world? INTERVIEW BY PATRICK MCGRAW



Peters proves
beauty is in the eye of the beholder



NEW INTRODUCING "OUCHLESS" Curad Flexible Fabric Bandages

NEW **NEW**

STRETCHES To Stay Put On Bending Places!

Try this sample now!

Sorry your Curad Flexible Fabric Bandage sample has fallen off during handling. For replacement and postage refund write to:

Free Curad Sample
P.O. Box 2090
Hillside, New Jersey 07205

Limit one bandage per household. Offer expires 8/31/84.

SAVE 30¢ on Curad's "ouchless" Flexible Fabric Bandages

at your **ECKERD PHARMACY**

at your **ECKERD PHARMACY**

30¢

MAN BARRIER PROVIDES A FULL LINE OF BARBED TAPE SECURITY SYSTEMS

GENERAL PURPOSE BARBED TAPE OBSTACLE (GPBTO TYPE II)

The ultimate in physical security systems, GPBTO Type II is impossible to cross without the use of sophisticated breaching aids, is easily installed and is the most cost effective physical security system available. Man Barrier Corporation's GPBTO Type II is completely fabricated from Austenitic Stainless Steel and has been U.S. MIL-B-52775A Type II approved and certified to meet the product is installed at:

- Military Sites and Border Protection
- Industrial Complexes and Mining Facilities
- Utility Companies and Explosive Energy Sources
- Penal Institutions and Jails
- Commercial Warehouses and Storage Yards
- Communications Stations
- Riot Control

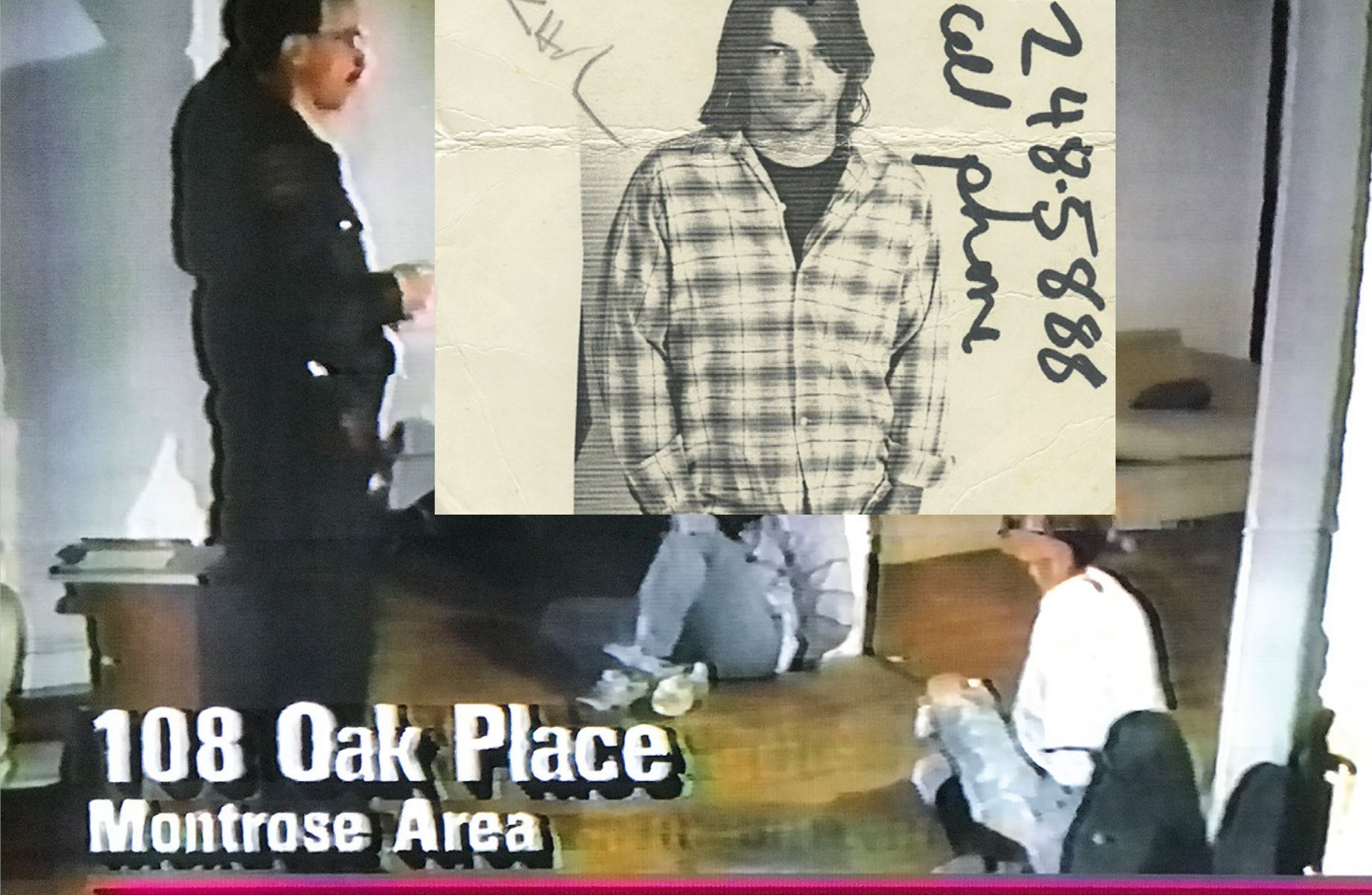
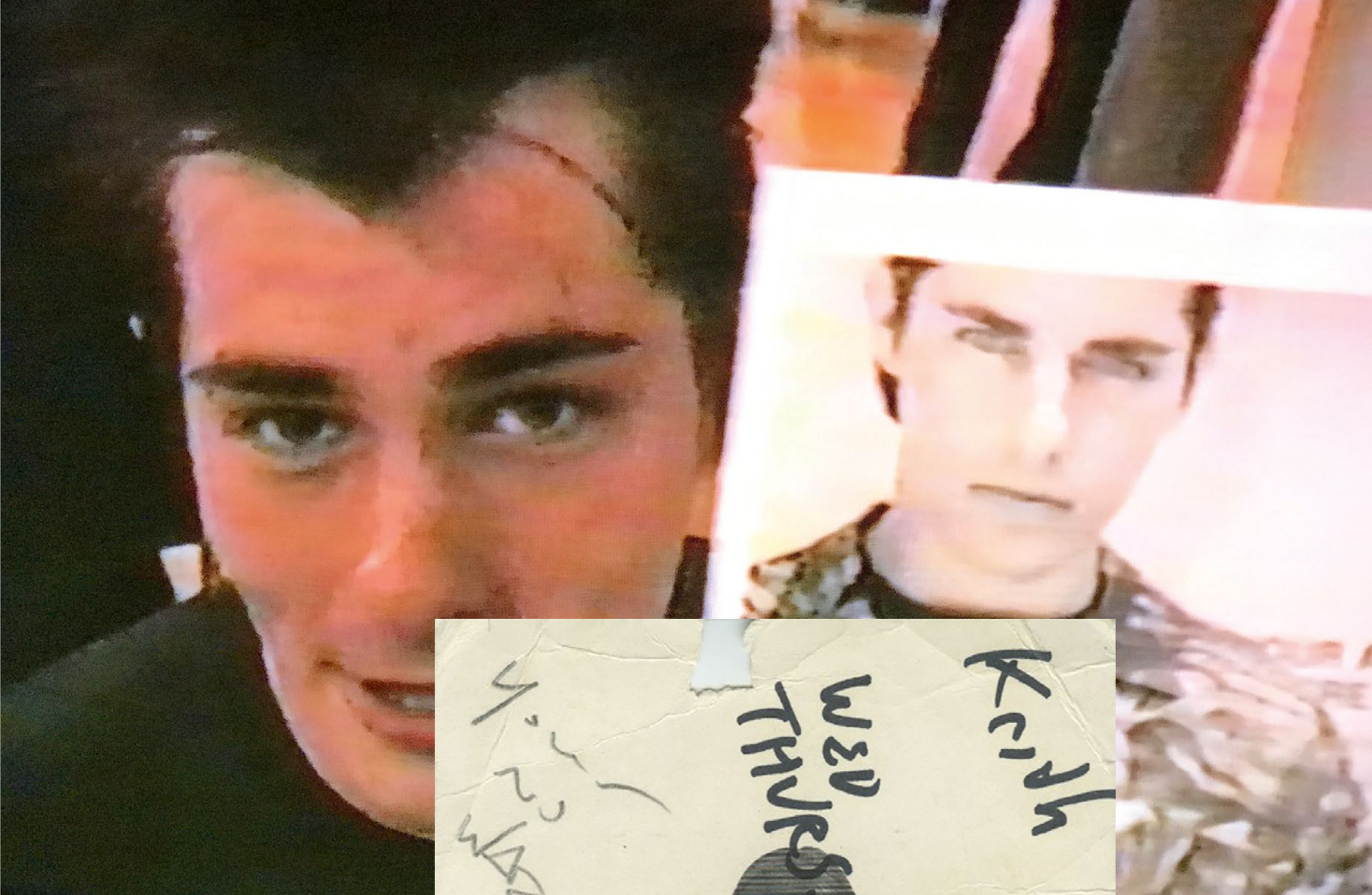
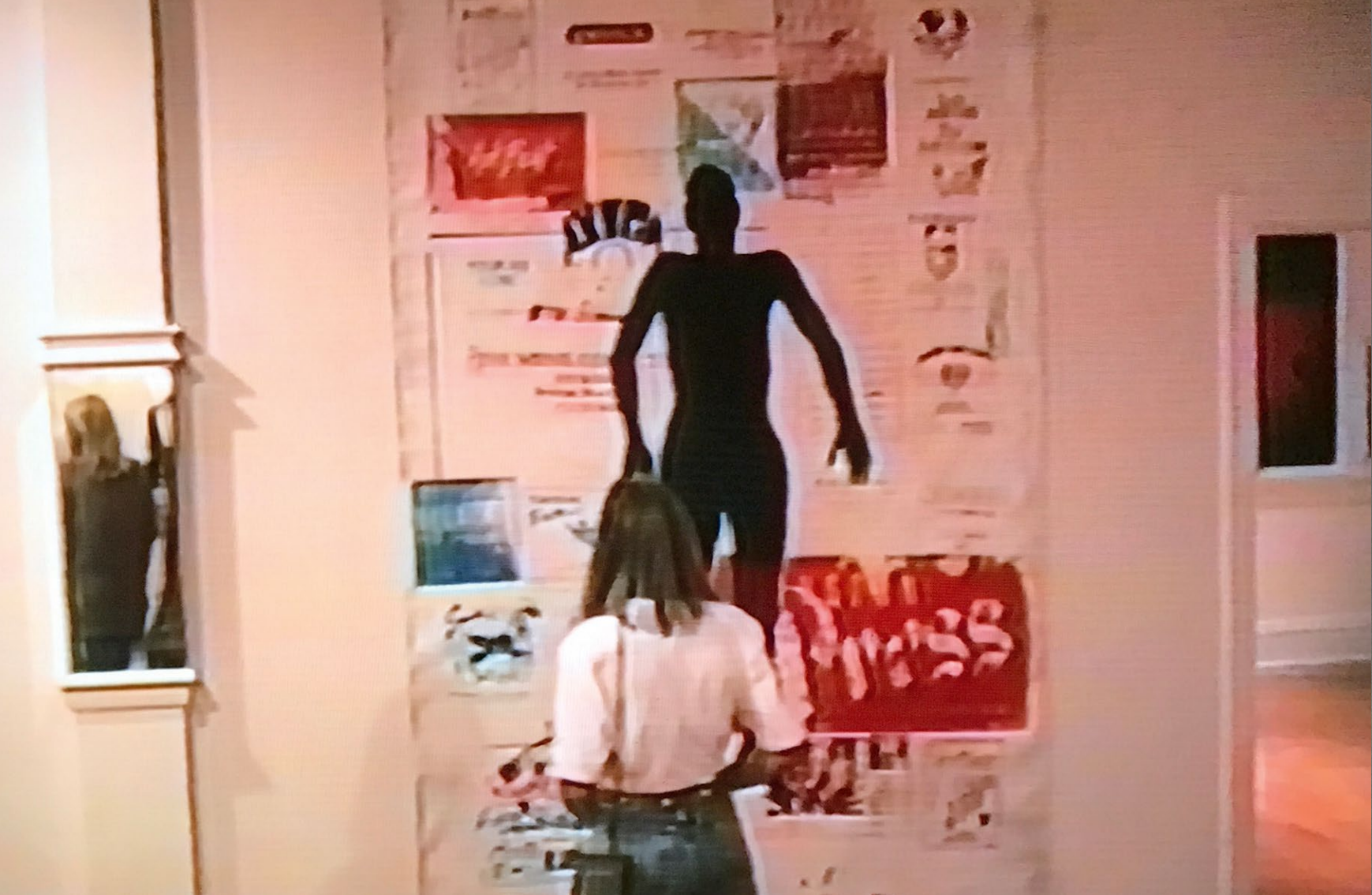
GPBTO can be installed on fences, on ground, under water, on structures, i.e. walls, buildings, towers, etc.

B.T.C.

"SINGLE COIL"

MAN BARRIER CORPORATION

12-B Road Hill Road, Dayton, OH 45424
(513) 244-2200, TELEX: 84 310
MANBARCO LYMU



**108 Oak Place
Montrose Area**



LIBERTY, 2003
STORMY, 2006
ASH FLOW ATM, 2008
AMERICA'S COOLEST WART SCENE, 2008
CHOOSE DEATH, 2009

Mark Flood isn't his real name, but rather the name that Flood, whose birth name is John Peters, chose for himself in 1992. The name change epitomizes much of Flood's work, which filters his ostensible reality into a kind of grand performance of "The Artist." Flood went so far as to hire a surrogate (also in 1992), a younger and more handsome guy named Peter, to stand in for him at his openings and pose for press photos, a prank that would easily fit into an episode of Nathan Fielder's show *The Rehearsal* (2022).

Much of the work that Flood makes today matured in the 90s, a time when his performativity was at its peak. The book *Mark Flood in the 1990s* (2022), which was compiled by his brother Clark Flood, details work from that time, such as the fake Andy Warhol portraits he made (under the alias John Klonos), the innumerable variations of black humanoid-form paintings replete with ads that companies had paid to have painted on the canvas, and enlarged silkscreens of various kinds of detritus from the life of an artist: human brains, American flags, rejection letters from Lynn Goode Gallery, printed out floor plans for the Menil Collection (where Flood worked), and an entire catalog of fake reviews and press releases that he wrote himself and published falsely as if they were published in magazines like *Artforum* and *Flash Art*.

In the second half of the 90s, after Flood participated in a project that integrated art into the set of the show *Melrose Place* (1992–1999), his work took on a distinctly somber tone. Whereas the work from the first half of the decade featured the debris and symbols of an extroverted artist glaring at the society around him, the post-*Melrose Place* work became almost exclusively internal and emotional, featuring characters hanging themselves and canvases scrawled with sentences that one would imagine finding in a suicide note. Works from the latter half of the decade

are almost violently disoriented: canvases are shredded, twisted, and knotted against themselves, while the frames are left bare and organized in a variety of geometric forms. Though the work settled down into more familiar forms by the end of the decade, Flood's depression worsened and apexed with his admitted suicidal ideation during the beginning of the millennium.

In recent years Flood's earlier works have started to be shown more widely, for instance at Karma in New York, the show for which *Mark Flood in the 1990s* was released. If anything, his work today has become a crystalized, almost professional vision of the mission statement devised in the 90s. For the show "ASTROTURF YELP REVIEW SAYS YES" at Peres Projects (Berlin) in 2015, Flood's concept of covering canvases in logos manifested to an almost orgasmic extent, with works displaying the logos for global companies like Boeing, Facebook, CBS, and YouTube, as well as cyber security charts, video game stills, and memes, elements that one would imagine finding in the work of a post-internet artist as opposed to a Gen Xer. For a 2017 show at MacCarone in New York, "GOOGLE MURDER-SUICIDE," new versions of his "lace" paintings (that he developed in the 90s), were shown, like *The Women's Cult* (2017), which features a somewhat bleached lace pattern framing classical figures.

PATRICK MCGRAW How much does performance play into your work? At times, it seemed that the performative aspect of your work was more important than the work itself. I'm thinking of some of the aliases you used, or the fake reviews that you had printed, or even using surrogates.

MARK FLOOD It's not a question of relative importance. All these creative possibilities arise together. If you want to make publicity, you have to have an exhibit, and to exhibit, you need art. It might be a good idea these days to have a music video ... It might be good to have a surrogate. It's a lot of work to try to do everything!

I've never tried to regulate my reality or control things. I'm making works of art, some unconventional, some for my own amusement, though I like to control the context. I like to play with the context; I call it "fucking the frame." When I started having a lot of money, my impulse was to pay everybody who participated in my events and to eliminate the real participants. I also thought about using sex dolls and robots to replace the audience, but the tech wasn't quite ready. I still have the vision of two naked sex-bots scissoring on the floor in a gallery full of relatively conventional art. I seriously considered hiring companies that provide fake crowds for political events to show up and protest my exhibits. But I never got around to it, and somebody told me they thought it had already been done.

PM How do you see your fake reviews in light of today's world, where it's increasingly difficult to discern the legitimacy of what you're seeing around you.

MF It's just old work that some people may enjoy. The situation hasn't changed much in 30 years.

sell some paintings—that'll make you legit; it make real fast.

Legitimacy is an empty concept; that's why it's hard to discern. Sell some paintings—that'll make you legitimate real fast.

PM How do you think you would function as a younger artist in today's world, where types of self-promotion like, for instance, posting on Instagram are almost a necessity?

MF Publicity and self-promotion have always been an inherent part of any artist's practice; just figure it out. Try doing everything wrong or telling people what you actually think. Fuck the frame! That gets attention.

PM In the book, your brother claims (ironically) that you created works as a pretext for publicity. What did publicity as an artist mean to you back then?

MF The same thing it means right now. People pay attention to you, and that sells art. If you want things written about you, write them yourself and pass them to the reporters. It's called a press release. If you give them a sandwich too, they will feel morally obligated to write about you. I'm not kidding—it's called a press conference.

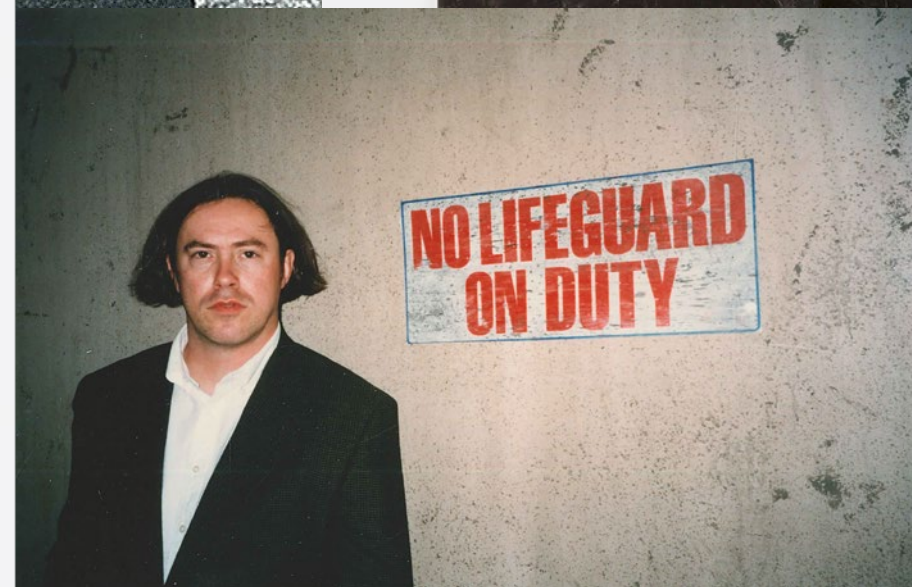
PM How much of this performance was a type of escapism, an escapism from the reality of your day jobs and the fact that you weren't able to make a full living off of your work?

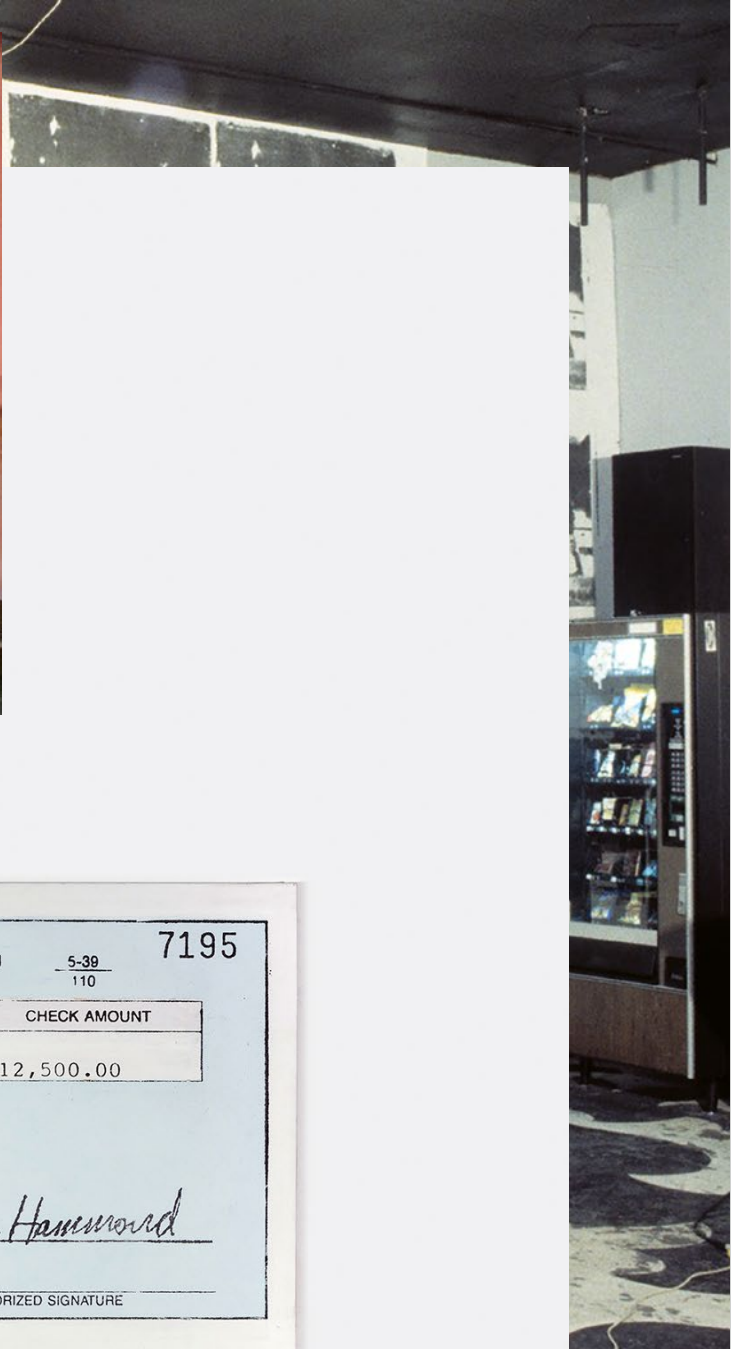
MF When I want to escape reality I do it in the conventional manner—weed, LSD, poppers, etc. And day jobs are great. If you have a job, you can finance your own art world and you won't have to submit to the gatekeepers who think they know what's going on.

PM In addition to a day job you were also performing with *Culturcide*; how much did *Culturcide* and your performance with them bleed into your work?



THE PRO, 2009
VIBRANT COMMUNITY 2, 2009
COKE ZERO SELF RESPECT, 2010
MEN'S V MAG, 2010
UNIVERSAL DONOR, 2010





THE INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART
955 BOYLSTON STREET
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02115

THE FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF BOSTON 5-39
110 7195

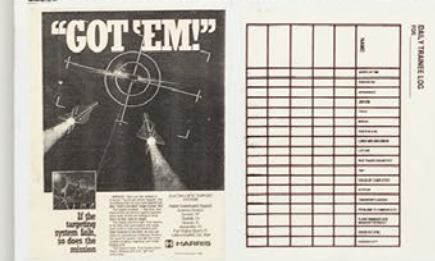
CHECK DATE	CONTROL NUMBER	CHECK AMOUNT
3-5-91	7195	12,500.00

PAY Twelve thousand five hundred and 00/100-----

TO THE ORDER OF Jon Peters
1701 Colquitt Street
Houston, TX 77098

Catherine Hammond
AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE

⑆007195⑆ ⑆01000390⑆ 941 12355



YOUR AD HERE
NEXT EXHIBIT SPRING 1990
CALL (713) 520-9338

YOUR AD HERE
NEXT EXHIBIT SPRING 1990
CALL (713) 520-9338

YOUR AD HERE

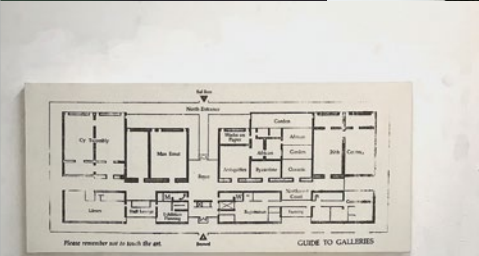
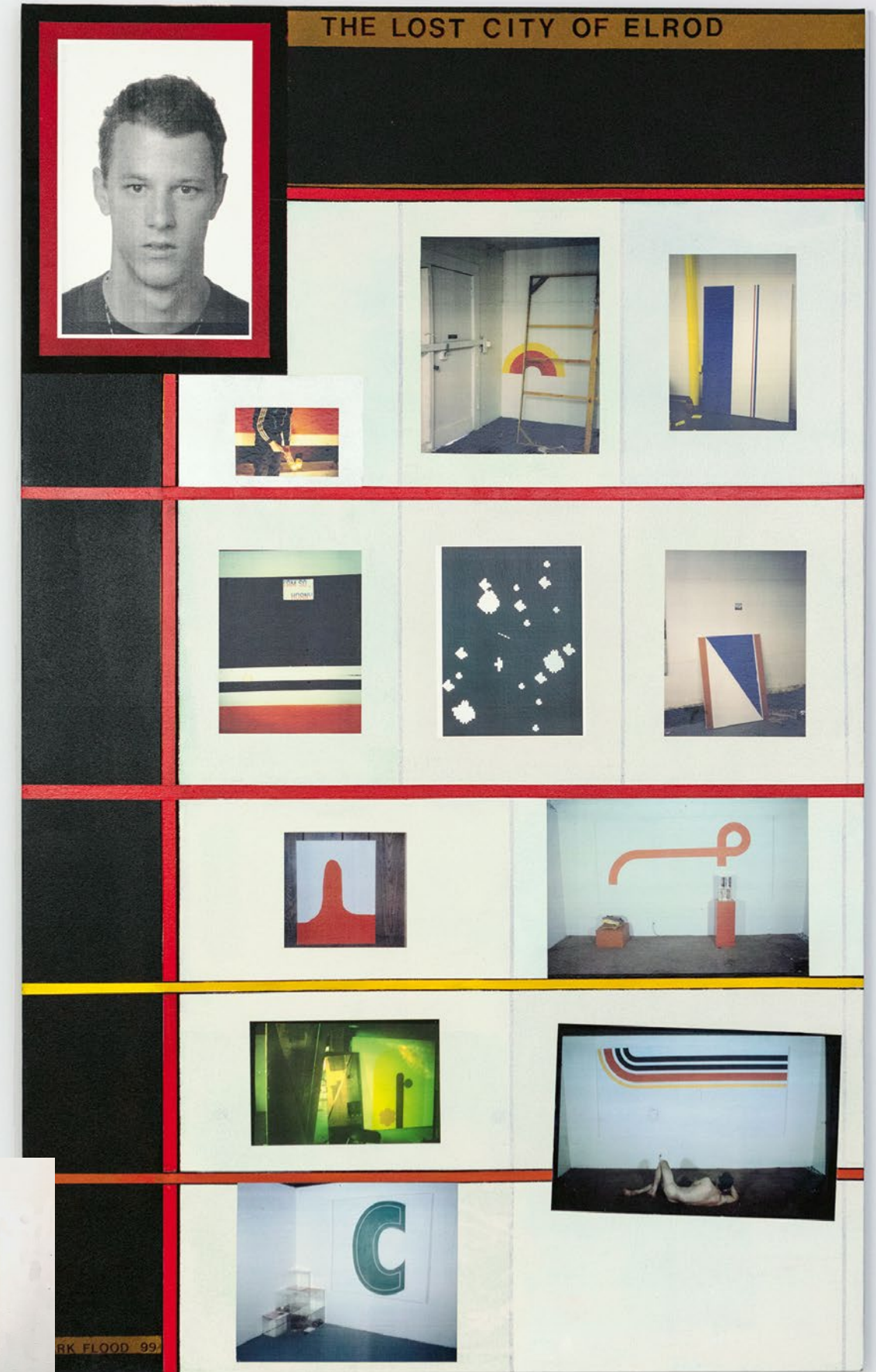
JOHN PETERS
Photo by: GEORGE HIXSON

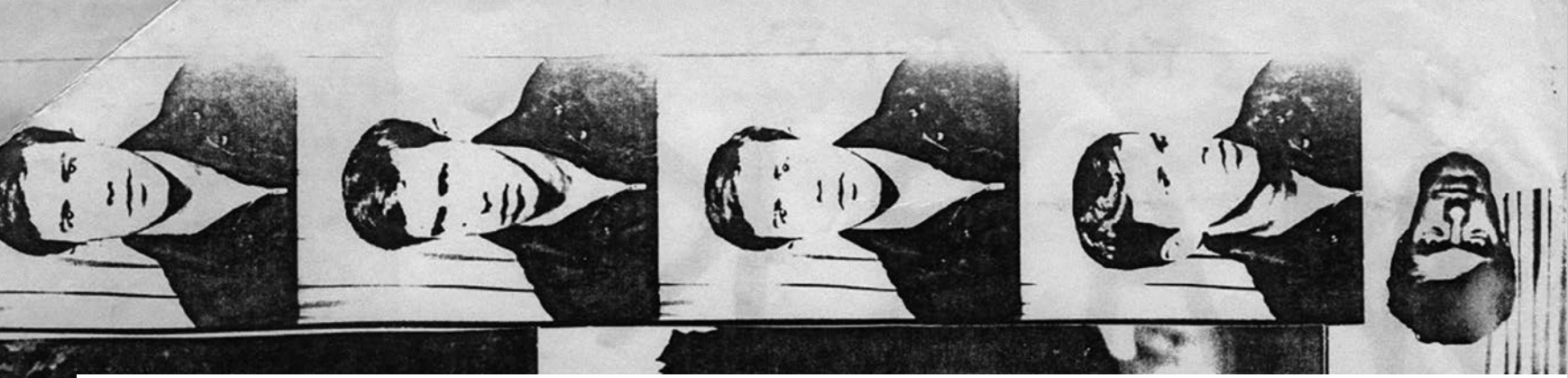


Mark S. ...

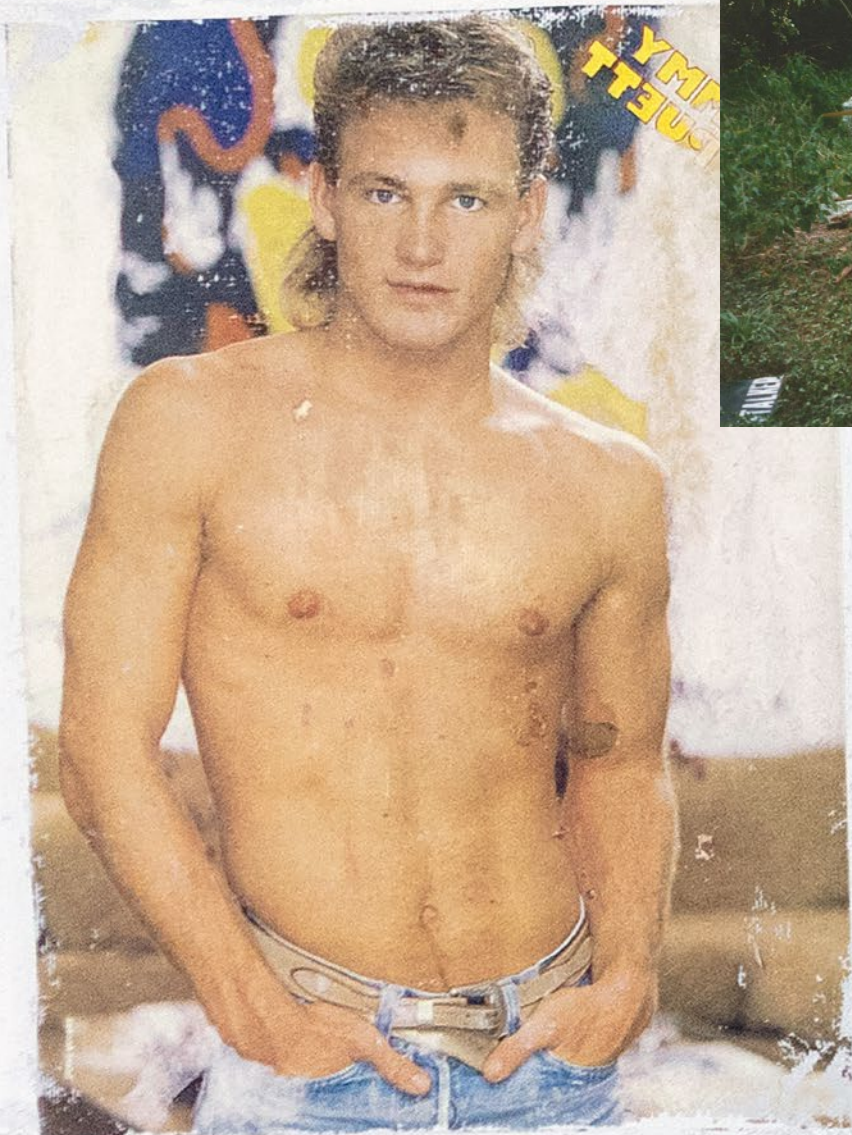
MARK FLOOD

JAN 24 7:00pm
CATAL HüYük





Not only will you be helping the 250,000 babies born each year with birth defects, but you will be eligible to win prizes.



ME AND MY DAD





IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO JOIN THE UNION OF INDEPENDENT ARTISTS PLEASE FILL OUT THE FORM BELOW, AND RETURN TO: UIA, PO BOX 61648, HOUSTON, TX 77208-1648. PLEASE INCLUDE A CHECK FOR \$10.00, IF YOU CAN.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE: daytime _____ evening _____

What is your primary reason for joining the UIA?

Would you like to help on a committee? Please check below.

City Arts Program

Freedom of Expression

Health Insurance

Membership

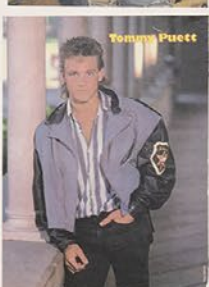
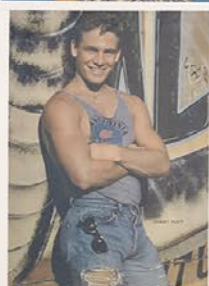
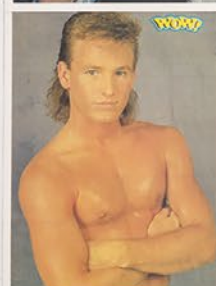
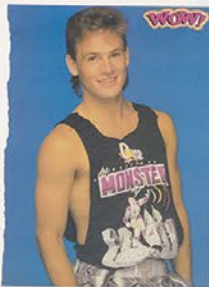
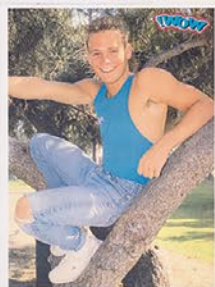
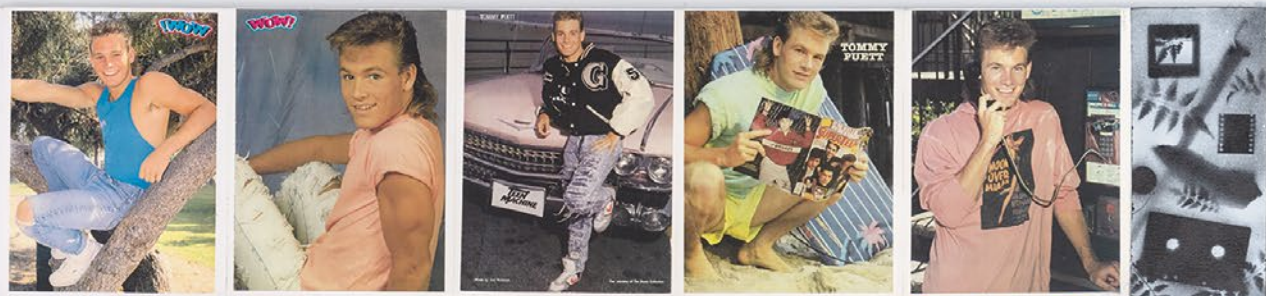
Newsletter

Park Art

MUSEUM

QUALITY





MARK FLOOD

BORN:
1985 Houston, Texas

EDUCATION:
1980 BA, UCLA
1985 MFA, UCLA

SELECTED ONE-PERSON EXHIBITIONS:

- 1989 Dorothy Golden Gallery, Santa Monica, California
- Danforth Museum of Art, Farmingham, Massachusetts
- 1988 Rona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago
- Germans van Eck, New York, New York
- 1987 Galerie Pierre Huber, Geneva, Switzerland
- Center on Contemporary Art, in cooperation with Boeing International, Seattle, Washington
- Anders Tomberg Gallery, Lund, Sweden
- Hillwood Art Gallery, C.W. Post College, Long Island University, Brook New York
- 1986 Edward Totah Gallery, London, England
- 1985 University Gallery, University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware
- New Orleans Museum of Contemporary Art, New Orleans, Louisiana
- 1984 Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, California
- Thomas Segal Gallery, Boston, Massachusetts
- P.B. van Voorst van Beest Gallery, The Hague, Netherlands
- 1982 Portland Center for the Visual Arts, Portland, Oregon
- 1981 Braathen-Gallozzi Gallery, New York, New York
- 1980 Tribal Art Museum, Santa Clara, California
- Pittsburgh Art Center, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
- 1979 The Museum of Modern Art, New York, New York
- Anthology Film Archives, New York, New York

AWARDS:
1989 Guggenheim Fellowship
1987 Pollock-Krasner Foundation Award
1984 New York Foundation on the Arts
1980 National Endowment for the Arts Award

SELECTED PUBLIC COLLECTIONS:
Cranbrook Academy of Art Museum, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan
The Menil Collection, Houston, Texas
The Museum of Modern Art, New York, New York
Minneapolis Art Institute, Minneapolis, Minnesota
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Massachusetts
University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii
Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, California
Walker Arts Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota



MEET JOHN PETERS

LIVE AND IN PERSON

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9, 6-8 P.M.

AT

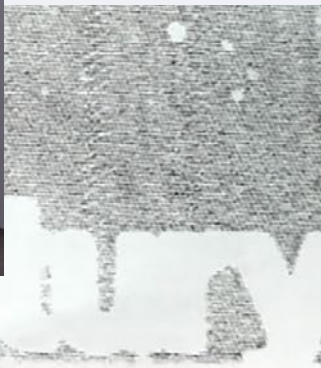
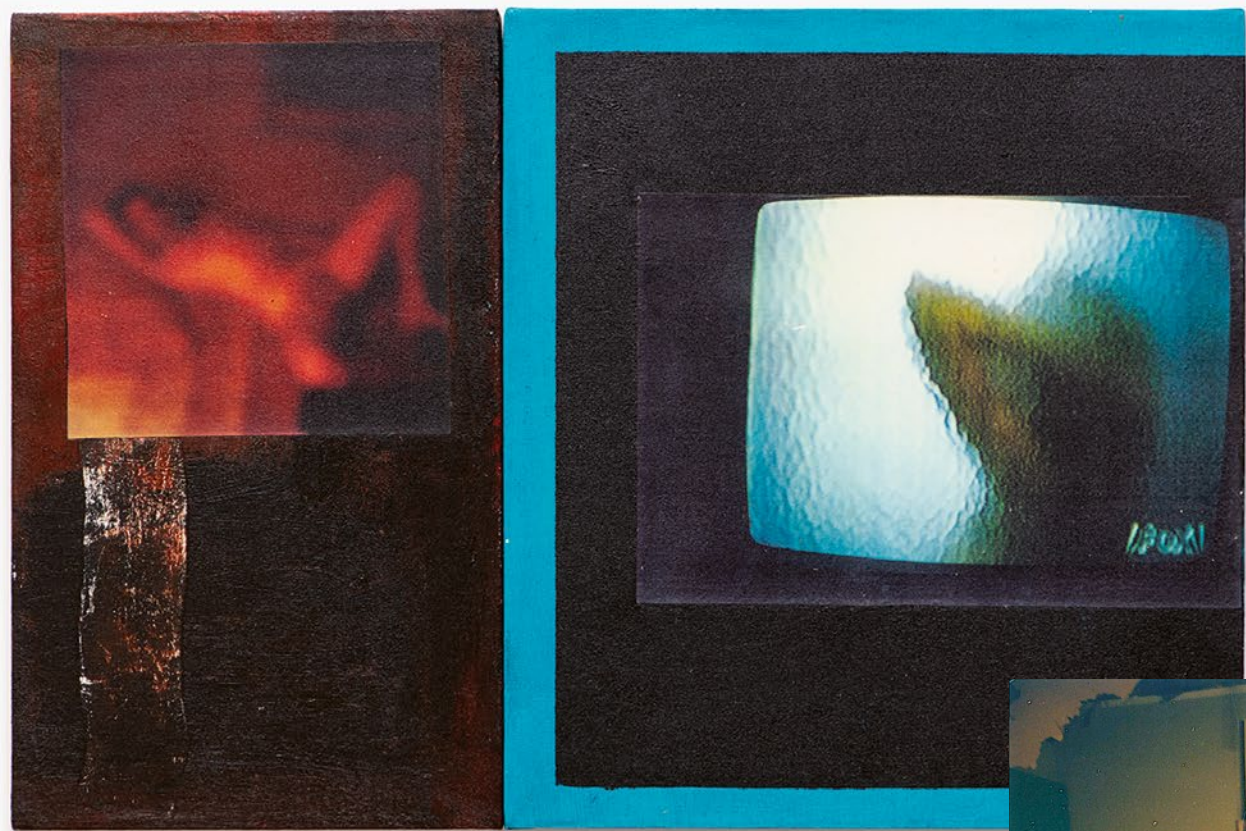
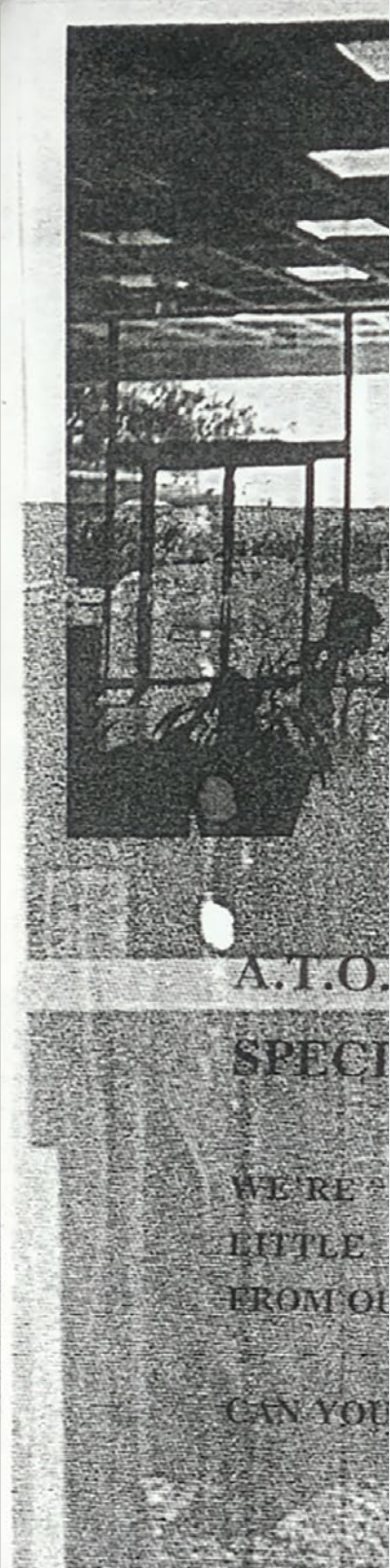
8.0

RESTAURANT

3745 GREENBRIAR

Mr. Peters will be autographing his Fall Shirt '91, the second in a series of 8.0 seasonal shirts.





YOUR AD
HERE

NEXT EXHIBIT SPRING 1990

CALL (713) 520-9338

YOUR AD
HERE

NEXT EXHIBIT SPRING 1990

CALL (713) 520-9338

YOUR AD
HERE

NEXT EXHIBIT SPRING 1990

CALL (713) 520-9338

YOUR AD
HERE

NEXT EXHIBIT SPRING 1990

CALL (713) 520-9338

YOUR AD
HERE

NEXT EXHIBIT SPRING 1990

YOUR AD
HERE

NEXT EXHIBIT SPRING 1990

CALL (713) 520-9338

YOUR AD
HERE

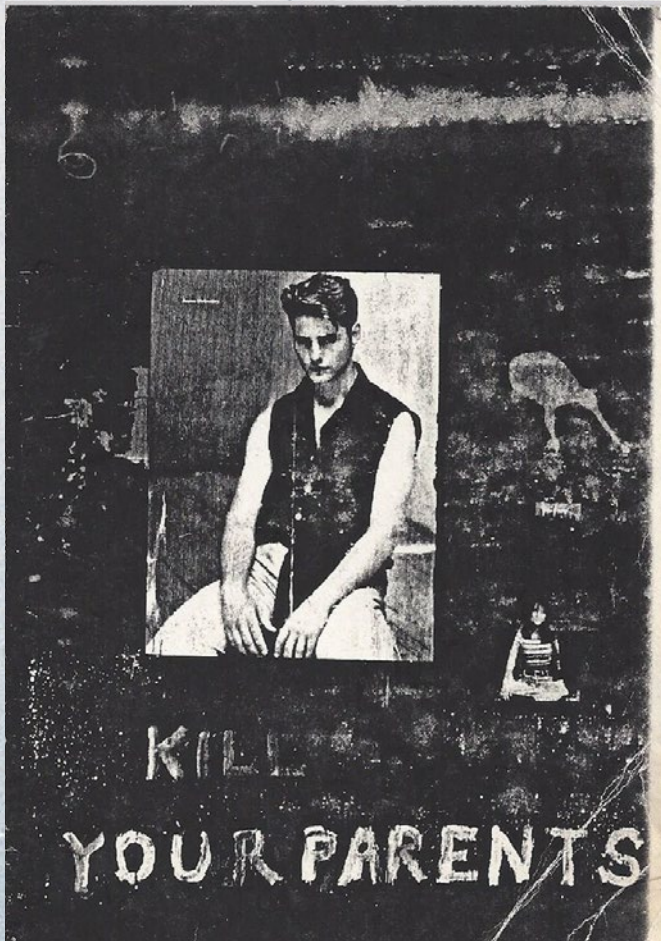
NEXT EXHIBIT SPRING 1990

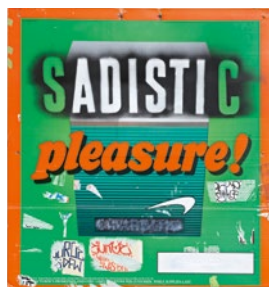
CALL (713) 520-9338

YOUR AD
HERE

NEXT EXHIBIT SPRING 1990

CALL (713) 520-9338





UNFRIEND YOU PARENTS, 2012
WITH RAILING, 2013
SADISTIC PLEASURE!, 2013
ANAL 2NITE, 2013
COWBOY MUTE, 2013
SURFER, 2013
BLUE CHIP EBAY 85, 2014

MF I think the bleed-through was minimal. There was an audience for underground music but not for underground art in Houston. I expected that the art world would pay no attention whatsoever to anything I did in the music world. And that was fine by me. The art and music worlds were completely unaware of each other, and that was fine by me. Some trick that was lame in one world would seem fresh in the other.

PM What kinds of tricks?

MF It's hard to remember. There was plenty of art about art, not so much pop music about pop music. People in the music biz had headshots, merchandise, but people in the art world didn't back then. In the art world, there were painters painting on other people's paintings in the 1980s—Julio Galan, Schnabel, COBRA. The situationists had done détournements, Duchamp had done assisted readymades, etc. But in the music world, overdubbing Culturcide music on top of somebody else's song, somebody else's recording, startled people. The audiences at gigs sometimes got annoyed, engineers in recording studios would say "NO."

PM In that vein, how do you view copyright and artists' exclusivity? Your work in general has accepted that all images are fodder.

MF In the old days, I was worried about being sued, but it never happened. Today, fair use gives artists freedom to steal. The digital makes everything available. It's better now.

PM Was implementing ads into your work an attempt to make a comment on the influence of capital in the art world?

MF No. I was trying to make something meaningful, something that was integrated into the real world as opposed to the art world. Is it possible to make art

I THINK MOST ART IS BAD, AND THAT DOESN'T CHANGE.

that is not arty? Ads that make money meant I no longer had to grovel before the art bureaucracy.

PM Why do you continue to use logos in your work?

MF I like to paint them because I'm interested in how corporations relate to people. I like to evolve the logos as a way of thinking about them.

PM How do you decide what phrases to put on your canvases?

MF I write them down when they cross my mind and then sometimes paint them. Maybe one out of 100. I pick the ones that seem powerful, sometimes for a particular show.

PM What's your opinion on the state of the art market and art world now, as compared to when the book *Mark Flood in the 1990s* was made?

MF During the 1990s, I was disengaged from the art market and just a tourist in the art world. I like the art world because I'm interested in art. I actually prefer the commercial side, because selling and buying art is exciting; that's where the action is. I think most art is bad, and that doesn't change. What always surprises me is that most of the people in the art world aren't interested in art.

PM In the book you're quoted as saying, "No one looks at your art; they just look at your slides." Do you think this is a precursor to the way that people view art on Instagram, or on similar sites where you just scroll through seemingly endless amounts of work?

MF Yes. Now everybody, not just the pros, can look at the endless flow of art. It becomes necessary to find a reason to dismiss 99 percent of it!

PM Do you think about the way your work is viewed today, in terms of the endless scrolling mediums it's viewed on?

MF You have to make your work stand out. It's a creative challenge. Following the perceived rules is the worst way to proceed. It's a dangerous game; that's why I call it career suicide. People want artists to be remote, elusive, mysterious. To be needy, to seek attention is a mistake, a huge turn-off. To explain what you're doing bores people.

PM Do you think that your works became more emotive as the 90s went on?

MF I try to avoid expressing my feelings in my art; it's boring. They may creep in, but who cares?

PM Do you have any plans to change your work?

MF Yes, I'm retiring. I'm just going to sell off the old stuff.

PM Are you still fucking the frame?

MF When I can. I would prefer to hire other people to do the fucking.

It's possible to see Flood's more performative works through the lens of Nicolas Bourriaud's relational aesthetics theory that he also developed in the 90s, which defines a style of art that's made about human relations and the social contexts within which they exist (everything can be art). But, because the tone and hijinks of his work, Flood almost has more in common with the unfortunately titled "culture jamming" culture from that time, which approached mass-consumerist globalized society with a cynical, often nihilistic dark humor that was best embodied by magazines like *Adbusters* that had managed to make it onto the shelves of mainstream American bookstores. Flood's work fits perfectly in this narrative as someone who saw all forms of content as a giant playground for his practice, and everything and everyone was an opportunity to "fuck the frame."

As Flood admits, he wasn't interested in disrupting a power hierarchy of channels of communication like,

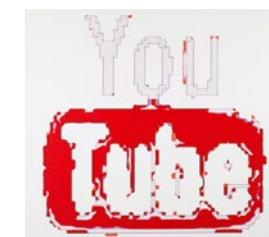
for instance, Hans Haacke, one of his heroes. But in the process he anticipated many tendencies that artists use today, from faking their own publicity and employing invented personas (whether consciously or unconsciously) to promote their work. Flood's work was a kind of "branded content," with his own name being the brand. He was quoted as saying, "No one looks at your art; they just look at your slides!" while talking about a show made with slides in the 90s. Today a direct analogy would be the endless scroll of Instagram and Twitter, where work is viewed at a speed that makes it impossible for people to see the art at which they are looking.

If nobody is really seeing your art, but just looking at it, the same goes for you. People are looking at you, but you're not seen. Flood pursued this line of thought directly and to the point of suicidal ideation. It's a point he's still pursuing today, until he retires from fucking the frame. There is no real Mark Flood, but rather a bricolage of various personas, invented identities, and marketing narratives, just like everybody else. **K**

Mark Flood was born in Houston, Texas, in 1957, where he continues to live and work. In coincidence with his collaboration with designer Matthew Williams on the ALYX Fall 2023 collection, his work will be the subject of two concurring exhibitions in January 2023, at Spazio Maiocchi and Peres Projects in Milan.

Patrick McGraw is a writer based in New York, editor of *Heavy Traffic*, and editor-at-large of *KALEIDOSCOPE*.

ALL IMAGES COURTESY OF THE ARTIST; PERES PROJECTS, BERLIN, SEOUL, MILAN; KARMA, NEW YORK, LOS ANGELES; MODERN ART, LONDON.



INFECTED CELL YOUTUBE LOGO, 2014
MIDNIGHT CLIENT LOGO GROUPING, 2014
RETURN ON EQUITY, 2015
CIVIL WAR (FLAG CULTURE), 2017
VOTER REGISTRATION CARD, 2017
AUTHORITY WITH FUZZY FLAG, 2018
BURN, 2019