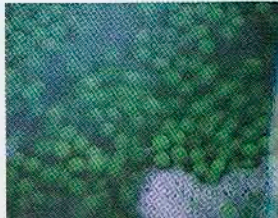
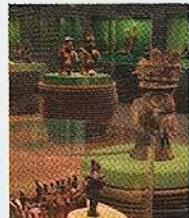
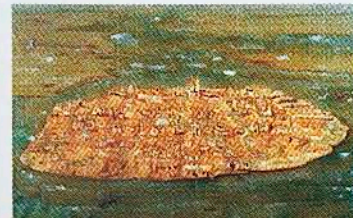
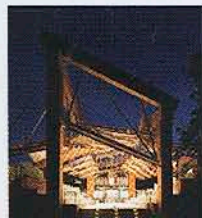
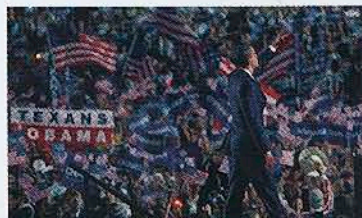
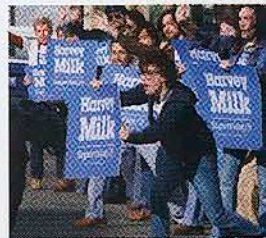
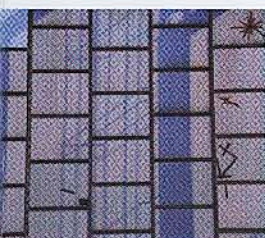
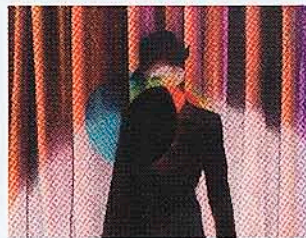
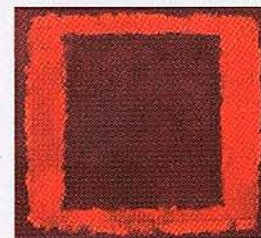
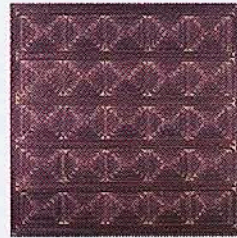
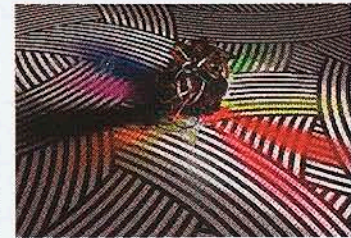
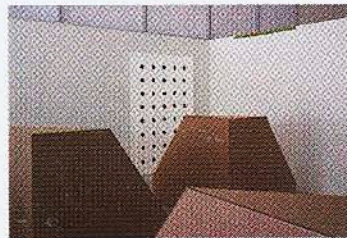
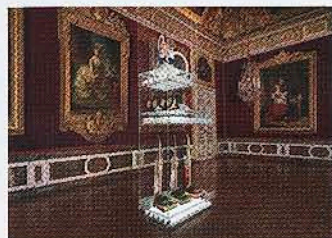
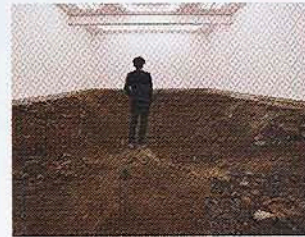
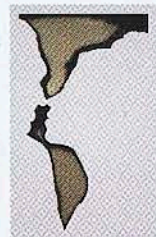
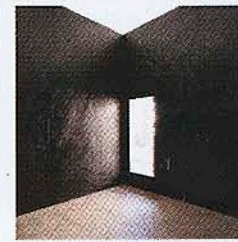
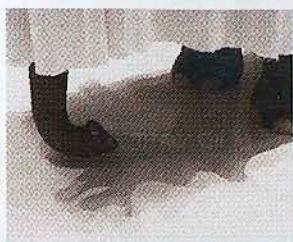
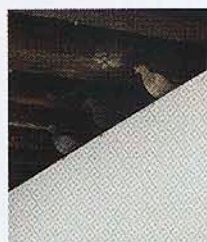
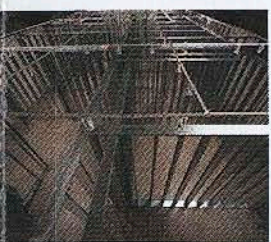
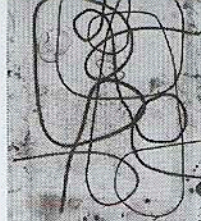


# BEST OF ARTFORUM

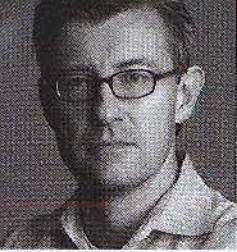
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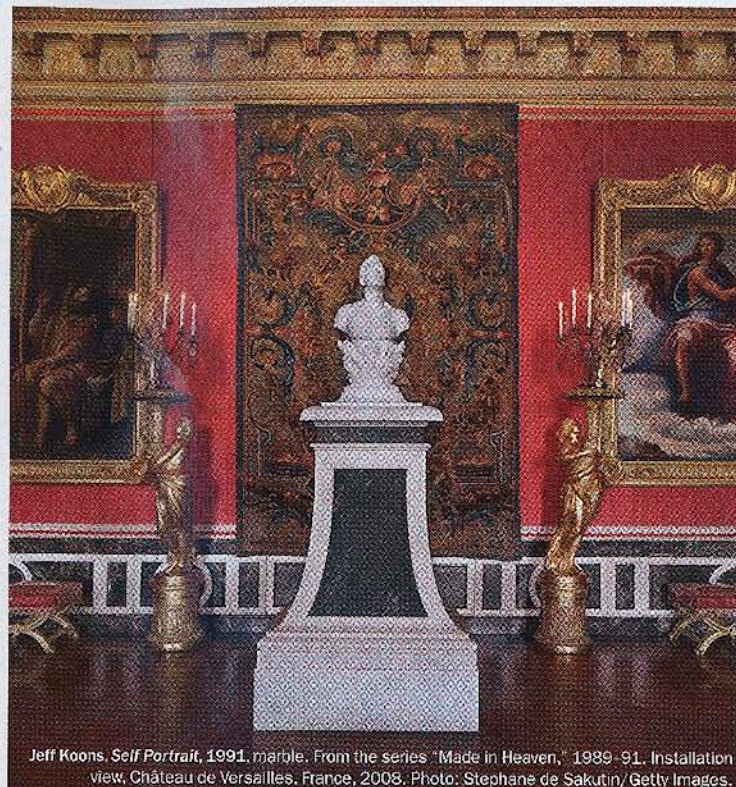
# Jack Bankowsky

JACK BANKOWSKY IS A CRITIC AND EDITOR AT LARGE OF *ARTFORUM*. HE IS CURRENTLY COCURATING (WITH ALISON GINGERAS AND CATHERINE WOOD) THE EXHIBITION "SOLD OUT: THE ARTIST IN THE AGE OF POP," WHICH OPENS AT TATE MODERN IN OCTOBER 2009.

**1** **Gustave Courbet** (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York) and **Petra ten-Doesschate Chu**, *The Most Arrogant Man in France: Gustave Courbet and the Nineteenth-Century Media Culture* (Princeton University Press) I know it's lame to award the top slot to a gilded oldie, but the arrival at the Met of this breathtaking survey, coupled with my simultaneous discovery of Chu's 2007 study (recommended by none other than Courbet collector Jeff Koons), made an afternoon in the art-historical vault the contemporary high point of my year. I ogled *The Origin of the World* with eyes for La Cicciolina and glimpsed the artfulness of the Koonsian persona in the crafted posture of Courbet's self-portrait *The Desperate Man*. *The Most Arrogant Man in France* tells the story of an artist who conspired with the incipient mass media to create an image equal to his age—and it remains indelible in our own.



Gustave Courbet, *The Desperate Man*, 1844–45, oil on canvas, 17 3/4 x 21 1/2".



Jeff Koons, *Self Portrait*, 1991, marble. From the series "Made in Heaven," 1989–91. Installation view, Château de Versailles, France, 2008. Photo: Stephane de Sakutin/Getty Images.

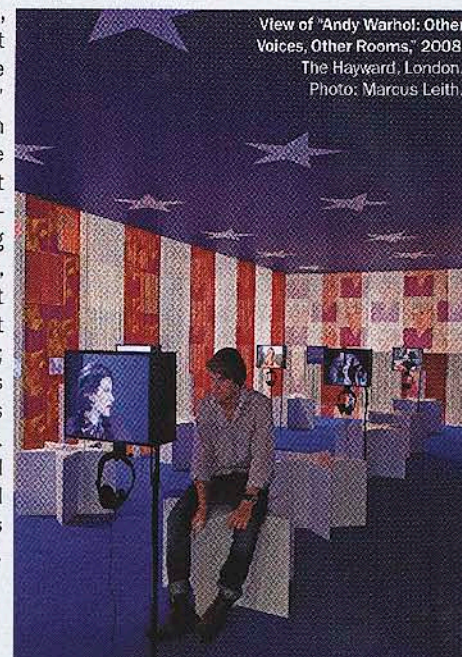
**2** **"Jeff Koons Versailles"** (Château de Versailles, France) Down goes a crystal chandelier; up goes a meticulously airbrushed, eight-foot, cast-aluminum pool toy shaped like a lobster. The most arrogant man in America stands proud in the Apollo Salon.

**3** **Damien Hirst, "Beautiful Inside My Head Forever"** (Sotheby's, London) Leave it to the most arrogant man in . . . Britain! Sullen dealers; surplus supply; the end of the art business as we know it? By the time the auctioneer opened bidding on the first of the staggering 223 lots in this single-artist sale, an auction of art had transformed itself into an auction as art. "You know," my neighbor whispered, "Hirst wins this even if the damn thing tanks." It didn't.



Damien Hirst, *Memories of Moments With You* (detail), 2008, diptych, gold-plated steel, glass, manufactured diamonds, each 35% x 54 x 4".

**4** **"Andy Warhol: Other Voices, Other Rooms"** (The Hayward, London, and Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, OH) The most decisive addition to the crowded Warhol chronology since the Düsseldorf Kunst Palast's 2004 "Andy Warhol: The Late Work," this survey, which opened at Amsterdam's Stedelijk Museum just in time to miss the 2007 "Top Ten" deadline, demands to be singled out at its current simultaneous stops (how Warholian!) at the Hayward and the Wexner Center. Organized by Eva Meyer-Hermann as a series of "cosmos"—a term perfectly capturing Warhol's infinitely expanding artistic universe—"Other Voices, Other Rooms" attempts to make good on the baseline insight that while the Warholian project may be anchored in the gallery, it is scarcely contained by it. Andy as publisher; Andy as promoter; Andy as TV producer and personality: That this show tackles his corpus as hydra-headed *Gesamtkunstwerk* makes the Hayward's distracting—OK, cheesy—exhibition design almost forgivable. Check out the center gallery devoted to Warhol and TV: Composed of hundreds of little-seen TV interviews with *grands hommes* and next-to-nobodies, this portrait of the artist as insatiable fan is enough to make "Other Voices" obligatory viewing.



View of "Andy Warhol: Other Voices, Other Rooms," 2008. The Hayward, London. Photo: Marcus Leith.

**5** **Kaikai Kiki at Nakano Broadway, Tokyo** The beauty of Takashi Murakami's viral industry is that it bitmaps the global art machine he navigates—even as he reinvents it. My personal favorite maneuver of 2008 was the tiny gallery he opened at Tokyo's Nakano Broadway shopping arcade, the roiling heart of *otaku* subculture. Here, amid the wounded-doll shops and endless stalls of porn, lies a storefront sanctuary so discreet that nobody stops there—except, of course, Murakami's intended quarry, the international art elite. Fitted with traditional tatami mats and a single Eames chair, this peaceful way station was cohabited on my visit by a shelf of pots from Japanese-influenced American ceramicists Otto and Gertrud Natzler and Myrton Purkiss and a trio of paintings by Kaikai Kiki art soldier Mahomi Kunikata. I'm not sure Murakami is "the Warhol we deserve," but he's the Warhol I need.



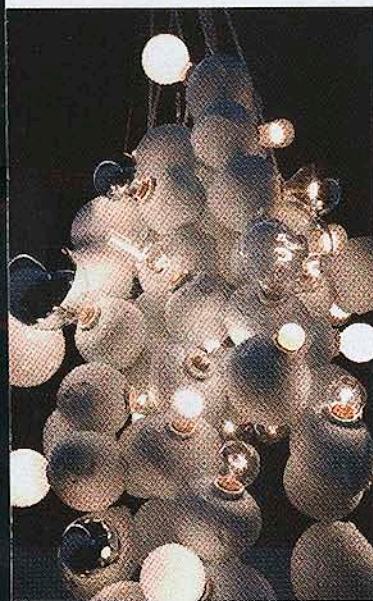
Exterior and interior views of Kaikai Kiki at Nakano Broadway, Tokyo, 2008. Photos © 2008 Takashi Murakami/Kaikai Kiki Co., Ltd. All Rights Reserved.

Paul Sietsema, *Figure 3*, 2008, still from a black-and-white film in 16 mm, 16 minutes.



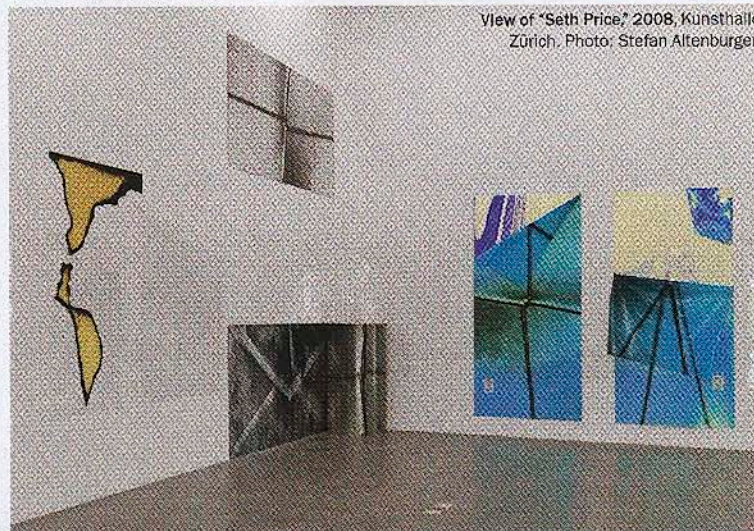
**6** **Paul Sietsema, *Figure 3*** I tumbled down a rabbit hole right in the middle of the gala opening of the Carnegie International. When I came to at the buffet, what I remembered was some ancient chalky treasure dissolving in a night-dark void. That, and the clickety-clack of a film projector. Later I would learn that Sietsema's filmic figments were inspired by a half-dozen artifacts from precolonial New Guinea, which the artist refashioned in newspaper and tape, painted in flame-retardant white paint, burned to their ghostly shells, and shot against a blackened ground. Hovering between phenomenal object and flickering celluloid, *Figure 3* is anxious making, unnerving, curiously enlivening.

**7** **Guyton\Walker (LAXART, Los Angeles)** In a year in which memorable solos catapulted the separate stars of Wade Guyton and Kelley Walker to fresh heights, an LA outing by their collaborative concern, Guyton\Walker, proved a sleeper highlight of the season. G\W is a nonstop reproduction machine, and here their site-specific, silk-screened paintings printed on canvas, Sheetrock, and the walls of the gallery—inside and out—put the white cube through its paces. Maybe it's their disarmingly DIY take on the digital everyday or their faintly absurd, sneakily pointed repertoire of primary materials—gallon paint cans, coconuts, lightbulbs (all deployed by the score)—but this two-man assembly line makes the old Warholian art-by-the-yard epiphany improbably new.



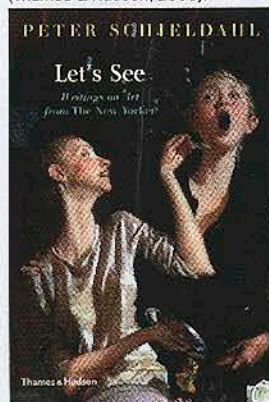
Guyton\Walker, *untitled* (detail), 2008, mixed media. Installation view, LAXART, Los Angeles. Photo: Joshua White.

**8** **Seth Price (Kunsthalle Zürich)** What Price shares with Guyton\Walker is an approach to graphic presentation that seems untenably facile until you realize that it is—and that in risking that, it isn't. This delightful, delirious meditation on art—or rather, art's blind spots—in the age of digital reproduction centered around a full-length film of a standard-issue artist's talk (Price's own) gone surreal. Meat-and-potatoes remarks on art and life give onto full-screen shots of the churning ocean and a gorgeously goofy riff on wine labels and symbolic exchange value.



View of "Seth Price," 2008, Kunsthalle Zürich. Photo: Stefan Altenburger.

Cover of Peter Schjeldahl's *Let's See: Writings on Art from The New Yorker* (Thames & Hudson, 2008).



**9** **Peter Schjeldahl, *Let's See: Writings on Art from The New Yorker*** (Thames & Hudson) Look, I agree with this writer about half the time, and I don't go to him for the same thing I do Benjamin Buchloh, but if anyone writing in these pages can get through this collection of occasional essays originally penned for the *New Yorker* without at least a few pang of jealousy, may I delicately suggest a correspondence course in English as a second language?

**10** **October 13, 2008** Farewell to that epic annoyance from the master of the flatulent water feature. The day that Olafur Eliasson's *New York City Waterfalls* ended its fifteen-week, \$15 million violation of the East River will go down as a high-water mark in the history of public art. And while the crew's on hand, can we do something about the Chicago lima bean? □



Dismantling of Olafur Eliasson's *New York City Waterfalls*, New York, October 13, 2008. Photo: Stewart and Stina.