



The Brief, Subterranean History of Reese Palley Gallery, San Francisco, 1969-1972.

Organized with Constance Lewellan
Cushion Works, SF Feb 29-Apr 4, 2020

64 projections (1965-70 / 2019) Peter d'Agostino

Peter D'Agostino, 64 Projections (1965-70), January 26, 1971

64 Projections (1965-70), 35mm slides transfer to digital video with sound, 8:00 min loop

"The first image I photographed that became the basis of the 64 projections project was of light streaming through the oculus of the Pantheon in Rome. The slides from that year in Italy in 1965-66, those that followed when I returned to New York (1966-68) and my initial two years in San Francisco (1968-70) formed a database of images for the project. I arrived at 64 images by sorting through hundreds of slides that focused on light in a wide array of contexts—from natural settings to TV screens photographed with different 35mm photo film stocks, including color, BW, and infrared. The basic strategy was to position the slides up & down / inside & out to arrive at sets of 8 ($8 \times 8 = 64$). In order to play a continuous loop, I supplemented the 64 images to fill the 80 slots of a Kodak Carousel projector slide tray with 16 additional slides: 8 images of the number 8, plus 8 more of the figure 8 on its side to represent an infinity symbol: ∞ ." D'Agostino is best known for his *World Wide Walks* that explore natural, cultural, and virtual identities through physical walking and virtually surfing the web.

*The Brief, Largely Subterranean History of Reese Palley Gallery,
San Francisco, 1969–1972*

Cushion Works
February 29–April 4, 2020

Checklist

Early Exhibitions

Plastics West Coast
News clipping

Carol Lindsley
Resume

Carol Lindsey and Reese Palley, 1969
Silver gelatin print

140 Maiden Lane, 1969
Silver gelatin print

Other City
Poster

Lee Krasner
Brochure

Milton Avery
Announcement

Billy Al Bengston, Ed Ruscha, Frank Lloyd Wright
Poster
Brochure
News clipping

New York Painting
Poster

The Cellar Gallery

The following represents a chronology of Conceptual Art exhibitions at Reese Palley Gallery. It includes information for exhibitions that carry no archival trace.

Wayne Campbell, September, 1969

Announcement

Installation images

News clipping

Campbell inaugurated the Cellar Gallery with a show consisting of sculpture and drawing, including *Bright Idea Piece*, a light bulb painted black, and *My Dimensions Tied up in the Lotus Posture*, a box formed with steel and rope.

Bruce Nauman, December 9, 1969–January 10, 1970

Poster

Art Make-up (still)

Nauman received his MA at UC Davis in 1966 and left the Bay Area just before his Reese Palley show, which included *Video Corridor for San Francisco: Come Piece*, one of the artist's first corridor installations, though virtual in nature. The installation consisted of two closed-system video cameras, two monitors, and a mirror placed in such a way that viewers traversing the space and attempting to maintain their image in the monitors could not stay in the picture as linearity was confounded.

Nauman also debuted *Art Make-Up* (1968), a film loop of the artist painting his body four different colors: white, pink, green, and black. In each 10-minute segment, Nauman appears tightly framed by the camera against a blank background, shirtless, and visible from the torso up. Dipping his fingers into a small dish of makeup, he smears his face and body with the thick pigment until entirely covered. He begins with white makeup before applying pink, green, and black, layering each color on top.

Joel Glassman, February 10–March 7, 1970

Poster

Most works were made from industrial discarded materials found by the artist in the streets late at night. In a 1979 Berkeley Art Museum catalogue, curator David Ross wrote that in recent years Glassman had “given up photography and video for bodybuilding as sculpture.”

Stephen Kaltenbach, March 13–April 14, 1970

Poster

News clipping

Peaked Floor, blueprint

Room Cube, blueprint

Kaltenbach, who attended UC Davis alongside Nauman but living in New York, returned to the Bay Area to create an installation for Reese Palley consisting of two room—one comfortable and dimly lit, the other exceedingly hot and bright. The “star room,” as Kaltenbach called it, was painted with ten thousand Lumina dots on the walls, floor, and ceiling. Visitors sat on pillows in total darkness until their eyes adjusted and bits of light enveloped them in limitless space. Kaltenbach wanted visitors to feel “adrift.” The hot room was fitted with the brightest bulbs available, warmed with a sauna heater, and covered with reflective paint. The artist also showed his 1967 *Room Construction* blueprints for spaces that were largely or completely impossible to enter. While the artist considers the blueprints finished works, the physical constructions have been realized on four occasions.

Liz Phillips, Sound Structures, March 4, 1970

Material unavailable

Sound Structures was an installation that made use of a radio frequency capacitance field generated from a piece of metal placed under a rug. Resulting sounds were picked up on AM radios set around the room, initiated and changed by the entrance and movements of participants through the field, their bodies acting as conductors, grounding the field and generating sound. As participants moved toward the center of the field, the frequency of the sound heard coming from the radios went higher and resulted in heterodynes (new frequencies by combining or mixing two frequencies). Crucial to the artist's design of this complex environment were the important sonic possibilities unlocked by spontaneous group formation and play among the participants.

On March 16, 1970, Palley opened a large gallery on 93 Prince Street in SoHo, the third exhibition space in the neighborhood behind Paula Cooper and OK Harris. From time to time, the East and West Coast galleries traded exhibitions: Bay Area artists Terry Fox, Howard Fried, and Paul Kos had shows in New York, and the German artist Klaus Rinke's New York exhibition came to San Francisco. For a time directed by Dave Hickey, the gallery hosted Gordon Matta-Clark's first show, as well as exhibitions by Sturtevant and Yoko Ono and John Lennon.

Terry Fox, May 19–June 13, 1970

Corner Push, performance documentation. *Terry Fox*, University Art Museum, Berkeley, CA, 1973.

Cover, *Performance Anthology: Source Book for a Decade of California Performance Art*, Contemporary Arts Press, 1980.

Opening My Hand as Slowly as Possible, performance documentation. *Avalanche Magazine: Number 2*, 1971.

Asbestos Tracking, performance documentation. *Avalanche Magazine: Number 2*, 1971.

News clipping

Fox performed several private actions at Reese Palley, including *Opening My Hand as Slowly as Possible*, *Corner Push*, *Asbestos Tracking*, and *Impacted Lead*, which consisted of firing bullets close together in a straight line so that they formed a small bar of lead in the wall. After the opening, the party continued at Museum of Conceptual Art (MOCA) with an appearance by the Cockettes.

Howard Fried, June 16–July 11, 1970

Announcement

Untitled (Green Drawing #8), 1972

The announcement shows the artist installing *All My Dirty Blue Clothes* (1970) at Oakland Museum for its Pollution Show, a work which was ultimately rejected by exhibition organizers and removed before the show opened. The Reese Palley exhibition consisted of *7 States of Openness* (seven sculptures about problem solving); *Baby You Send Me* (documentation of an unfinished piece); *Studio Relocation* (documentation of an aborted attempt to use the gallery at the San Francisco Art Institute to deposit his belongings while he was moving to a new studio); *The Fifth State of Openness* (a tube with milk and other elements); *Approach Avoidance I*, 1970 (a film based on the psychological

condition of approach avoidance, where the desired goal creates a situation of stasis); and *No Man is an Island*.

Untitled (Green Drawing #8) (1972) was created while Fried was under psychiatric care at the California State Hospital in Napa. Fried writes: "Usually sitting at a desk I would position my right eye as close as I could to the point on the paper on which I was working where the tip of my pen contacted its surface without my vision falling out of focus. With my head in this position I would hold the tip of my pen on the surface of the paper as lightly as I could and wait for this process to fill the paper. When it did the drawing was completed. Each successive drawing became finer in the sense that the marks I made were more highly resolved or smaller. Each successive drawing took longer, much longer, than the one before had taken. *Untitled (Drawing #1)* took about 40 hours. *Untitled (Drawing # 9)* took over a year. I don't know how many hours."

John C. Fernie, July 15–August 8, 1970

Announcement

John Fernie was a graduate of UC Davis. There is little information available about his Reese Palley exhibition, though Barney Bailey, the gallery preparator at the time, remembers having to water the sculptures. In the late 1970s, Fernie left California for Colorado, where he worked for his father in the family banking business. Fernie is currently the president of a financial management company.

Dennis Oppenheim, Ground Mutations, October 27–November 21, 1970

Poster

Ground Mutations, documentation

Ground Mutations II, documentation

News clipping

From a church standing on its steeple to rings carved in a snow-covered field, Dennis Oppenheim's vast and unpredictable oeuvre spans Conceptual, Performance, Land, and Body Art, sculpture, video, and photography. "I have never been able to be what they call a signature artist," he once said. Oppenheim attended CCAC and received an MFA from Stanford. He died in 2011.

Peter D'Agostino, 64 Projections (1965-70), January 26, 1971

64 Projections (1965-70), 35mm slides transfer to digital video with sound, 8:00 min loop

"The first image I photographed that became the basis of the 64 projections project was of light streaming through the oculus of the Pantheon in Rome. The slides from that year in Italy in 1965-66, those that followed when I returned to New York (1966-68) and my initial two years in San Francisco (1968-70) formed a database of images for the project. I arrived at 64 images by sorting through hundreds of slides that focused on light in a wide array of contexts—from natural settings to TV screens photographed with different 35mm photo film stocks, including color, BW, and infrared. The basic strategy was to position the slides up & down / inside & out to arrive at sets of 8 ($8 \times 8 = 64$). In order to play a continuous loop, I supplemented the 64 images to fill the 80 slots of a Kodak Carousel projector slide tray with 16 additional slides: 8 images of the number 8, plus 8 more of the figure 8 on its side to represent an infinity symbol: ∞ ." D'Agostino is best known for his World Wide Walks that explore natural, cultural, and virtual identities through physical walking and virtually surfing the web.

Robert Kinmont, March 17–April 10, 1971

Announcement

Catalogue

Barney Bailey email

Born in Los Angeles in 1937, conceptual artist Robert Kinmont spent his early years outside the small rural town of Bishop, California, before settling in Sonoma, his home of over 30 years. The artist's approach and process have continuously been informed by his deep connection to the California landscape, evident in the recurrent use of natural elements such as wood, dirt, copper, and water. In the 1970s, Kinmont took a 30-year hiatus from his art practice to study Zen Buddhism and work as a carpenter.

Paul Kos, April 14–May 7, 1971

Announcement

Roping Boar's Tusk, super 8 transferred to video, color, silent, one minute

News clipping

Sand Piece, documentation, two silver gelatin prints

Kos took advantage of Maiden Lane's two stories for his iconic *Sand Piece*, a work exploring the kinetic properties of natural materials. To realize the piece, Kos poured a literal ton of sand on the second story of the gallery, which filtered through a small hole in the floor over the course of days — a larger than life hourglass — to form a crater-like mound on the Cellar Gallery floor. While Kos's work was ambitious in both scale and content, Lindsley was always open to challenging ideas and, as Kos notes, "generously agreed...allowing me to set my concept into form." He also premiered *Roping Boar's Tusk*, a film in which he plays the cowboy vainly and romantically attempting to rope a distant volcanic plug. Other works in the show were *Red Sand Piece*, *Walking Catfish*, *Blind Cave Fish*, *Mutation Reversal*, and *Death Valley Zoom*.

Linda Trauth, June, 1971

News clipping

One of few women featured in the Palley program, Trauth's exhibition incorporating weavings and hangings from mesh and filigree was described by San Francisco Chronicle Thomas Albright as a "brilliant showing" that balanced "funky toughness and gossamer elegance." Additional information about the show, including images or further statements, are unavailable.

Tom Marioni, Allan Fish Drinks a Case of Beer, August 10, 1971

Three silver gelatin prints

This 8-hour event under the artist's pseudonym was initially described as "the construction of a situation and environment while becoming increasingly intoxicated." Allan Fish was a name the artist initially employed when he worked as a curator at the Richmond Art Center.

550 Sutter Street

The gallery moved to a larger space on 550 Sutter Street in September 1971. There were two buildings with separate entrances and a walk-through area that connected at the back. The larger, main exhibition space was entered from 550. The second, smaller room was the old Elizabeth Arden store

with a garden entrance where Boehm birds were shown at nearly all times, save for a show of drawings by Alterton Aspry.

Reese Palley
Sales brochure

Nancy Graves, Sculpture/ drawings/films, September 11–October 16, 1971

Announcement

Advertisement

Princess Alexandra and Carol Lindsey, silver gelatin print

Nancy Graves (1939–1995) was an American artist of international renown. A prolific cross-disciplinary maker and thinker, she developed a sustained body of sculptures, paintings, drawings, watercolors, and prints. She also produced five avant-garde films and created innovative set designs. Graves gained prominence in the late 1960s as a post-Minimalist artist for innovative camel, fossil, totem, and bone sculptures that were hand formed and assembled from unusual materials such as fur, burlap, canvas, plaster, latex, wax, steel, fiberglass, and wood. Made in reaction to Pop and Minimalism, these works reference archaeological sites, anthropology, and natural science displays. Suspended from the ceiling or clustered directly on the floor, these early sculptures also engaged with Conceptualist ideas of display.

Terry Fox, Hospital, October 23–November 6, 1971

Artforum, February 1971

For his second Reese Palley show, Fox created an environment which metaphorically communicated his experience living with and dying from Hodgkin's Disease, a blood cancer that starts in the lymphatic system. This starkly dramatic environment included partially erased blackboards chalked with figures relating to the costs of medical care, a white enamel bowl and cloth, a bare hanging light bulb, and wires snaking across the empty white floor to two tape recorders that reproduced the sounds of Fox breathing and chanting.

Mabou Mines, November 23, 1971

Announcement

Contact sheet

The New York-based experimental theater group performed *The Red Horse Animation*, their first piece, and Samuel Beckett's *Play*. Founded in 1970 and named for a location in Nova Scotia where the group spent several months of the year, Mabou Mines was David Warrilow, Lee Breuer, Ruth Maleczech, JoAnne Akalaitis, and Philip Glass. Their inspiration derived from European avant-garde theater, such as the Berliner Ensemble, as well as The Living Theater.

Stephen Kaltenbach, January 10–January 29, 1972

Announcement

Sunset, digital photographic reproduction

The cornerstone of the exhibition was a 1970 painting called *Sunset*, inspired by two experiences the artist had while high on drugs. The exhibition also included *Spaced Collages*, which Kaltenbach describes as follows: "The collages were multiple copies of the same photographs that were cut into filigree patterns so that each layer was visible. I put a matte between each layer so that there was a

1/16th inch space between each copy. I called them *Spaced Collages* as they were physically separated from each other and visually represented a drug experience.”

John C. Fernie, February 1–March 4, 1972

Announcement

Fernie’s installation consisted of live plantings.

Howard Fried, March 11–April 8, 1972

Announcement

Fuck You Purdue, 16mm transferred to video, 25 minutes, 1971

Sea Sell Sea Quick at Saw/Sea Soar, 16mm transferred to video, 40 minutes, 1971

In *Sea Sell Sea Quick at Saw/Sea Soar*, Alec Lambie and Barney Bailey act as waiters attempting to take an order from Fried, who plays the indecisive patron. The video camera and set are mounted on a platform swinging in opposite directions, underscoring his extraordinary uncertainty. Fried plays dual roles in *Fuck You Purdue*, enacting an angry dialogue in an pseudo army barracks. The video was inspired by Fried’s brother, Billy, a Marine, whose drill instructors were named Ward and Purdue. Their sole off-duty exchanges consisted of “Fuck You, Ward” and “Fuck You, Perdue,” the film’s only dialogue. Also included was *Seaquick*, an installation dealing with conflict resolution symbolized by two people on a teeter totter. The unannounced gallery action was videotaped on the final day of the exhibition. The apparatus consisted of two parallel pipes welded together on a stand. Two nude males on either end of the greased pipes attempt to keep the teeter totter in action; when the balance is upset, one man slides off the lower end of the apparatus, leaving the other, the victor, high in the air without a counterbalance. The show also featured *The Library*, described by the artist as a pile of “bookish” sculptures under a section of wallpaper (previously shown at DeSaisset Gallery and Museum at the University of Santa Clara) and *Long John Silver versus Long John Servil*, photographic documentation of Fried’s performance in the streets of San Francisco.

Interview with Carol Lindsey

News clipping

Klaus Rinke, April 15–May 13, 1972

Announcement

Gooding and Palley arranged to bring an exhibition of Rinke’s photographs from the New York gallery to Sutter Street. Specific content is unknown. The German artist was a founder of the School of Düsseldorf with Sigmar Polke, Gerhard Richter, Blinky Palermo and Günther Uecker. He also worked with Joseph Beuys and Bernd and Hilla Becher. His work is integral to the radical artistic movements that emerged during that period, which include Performance Art, Body Art, Land Art, Conceptual Art, Process Art and Action Art.

Tom Marioni, The Creation, April 16–May 13, 1972

Announcement

The Creation, performance documentation, nine silver gelatin prints

The Creation, performance documentation, painted photograph by Linda Montano and posted to the artist’s former home in Marin County.

The Creation was a seven-day, live-in piece. On each day, Marioni made a work or action that referred to the seven days of creation.

James Melchert, May–June, 1972

Announcement

News clipping

Melchert's show included *Faces*, two slide projections overlapped on a single screen combining the left and right sides of various artists' faces, one image dissolving into the next, but never matching. The artist also showed photography work such as *How Do It/How you Think You Do It?*

John Woodall, June 28–July 29, 1972

Material unavailable

Woodall constructed two camera obscuras that projected images from the street onto a screen in the windows of the gallery.

The End of Reese Palley Gallery

News clipping

Reese Palley Gallery closed on August 17, 1972. In typical fashion, Palley divested himself of his possessions, and for the next 20 years traveled the seas in his boat, aptly named *Unlikely*.