The Global Work of Art

World's Fairs, Biennials, and the Aesthetics of Experience

Caroline A. Jones

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For Saffron Jade,

already enmeshed in the world

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Old World/Biennial Culture

National literature does not count for much now, it is time for the epoch of world literature and everyone must help to advance this epoch.
—JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE, 1827[1]

But I didn't paint him because he was a Jew; a painter paints as a painter not because he's a Jew.
—JOZEF ISRAËLS, 1909[2]

When the Archbishop of Paris saw his *Cottage Madonna* in the Salon, he said to the eminent Jew: "Mr. Israëls, you are a great Catholic."
—FRANK W. GUNSAULUS, of Jozef Israëls, 1912[3]

Art is endless as the world: it *is* the world.
—MAX LIEBERMANN, of Jozef Israëls, 1901[4]

In reality, people muzzled by the economy can only think freely if they can free themselves in thought. . . . The recognition that thought has to be of some use is the first stage of knowledge.
—BERTOLT BRECHT, "Who Needs a World View?" 1930[5]

Old Beginnings in Venice

The Venice Biennale was born in the dusk of the nineteenth century, its ontogeny recapitulating the ontology of world's fairs. Opening its doors in 1895, *la biennale* came to be celebrated by Venetian students parading as Renaissance proponents of the liberal arts, dressed for that moment when "genius" changed from an attribute of place to the possession of a cultured individual (fig. 3.1).[6] Such festivities were expected in a biennial event dedicated "in perpetuity" to a celebration of the king's wedding anniversary. Events could also be staged by works of art. The very first

Figure 3.1 Parade of art students dressed as the medieval "Liberal Arts," at the opening of the first Venice Biennale in 1895, as documented in Lazlo Glozer, ed., *Garten der Künste, Hundert Jahre Biennale: Souvenir de Venice*, Jahresring 42, Jahrbuch für moderne Kunst (Cologne: Oktagon, 1995). Photograph from Osvaldo Böhm, Venice; photographer: C. Naya.

biennial in 1895 boasted one such work, designed to form a cosmopolitan public with scandalous flair.

Propelled by rumors about this canvas, you would have entered the Palazzo dell' Esposizione and headed toward the back. There it was, crammed into Gallery D on your left: *Il Supremo Convegno* (The Supreme Meeting; fig. 3.2), painted by Giacomo Grosso, famous professor from the Accademia Albertina in Turin (whose president had asked officials to place this work "of audacious and fantastical composition" in a good light).[7] You would have stood close to the plane of Grosso's canvas in this crowded room, sucked in by a vortex of painted fabric swirling up to a triumphant female nude straddling a coffin. In the surviving photographs we see her with other pearly-skinned nudes who peer cautiously into the coffin's opening, where a ghastly yellow face can be made out. The snuffed candle, torn blossoms, and clerical interior reinforce the *vanitas* theme: Don Juan is dead.

There's nothing stylistically shocking here, but the scene (evocative of a Satanic mass or Bacchic celebration) pressed all the decadent, symbolist buttons there were to push in 1895. As with Picasso's *Science and Charity* from that same year (plate 14; paralleling *Last Moments*, his genre painting destined for the 1900 Paris world's fair), the international style was academic realism, larded with moralizing allegory and addressing a public assumed to be secular, modern, and cosmopolitan. As the leaders of that first biennial knew well, shock could be expected in the conservative Italian context:

> [Grosso's] work reached the exhibition on the 10th April 1895. As soon as it was removed from its packing case, it astonished everyone who saw it. . . . For those whose task was to hang the artwork, the only worry came from the strong contrast of colors that could disturb the viewing of the surrounding paint-

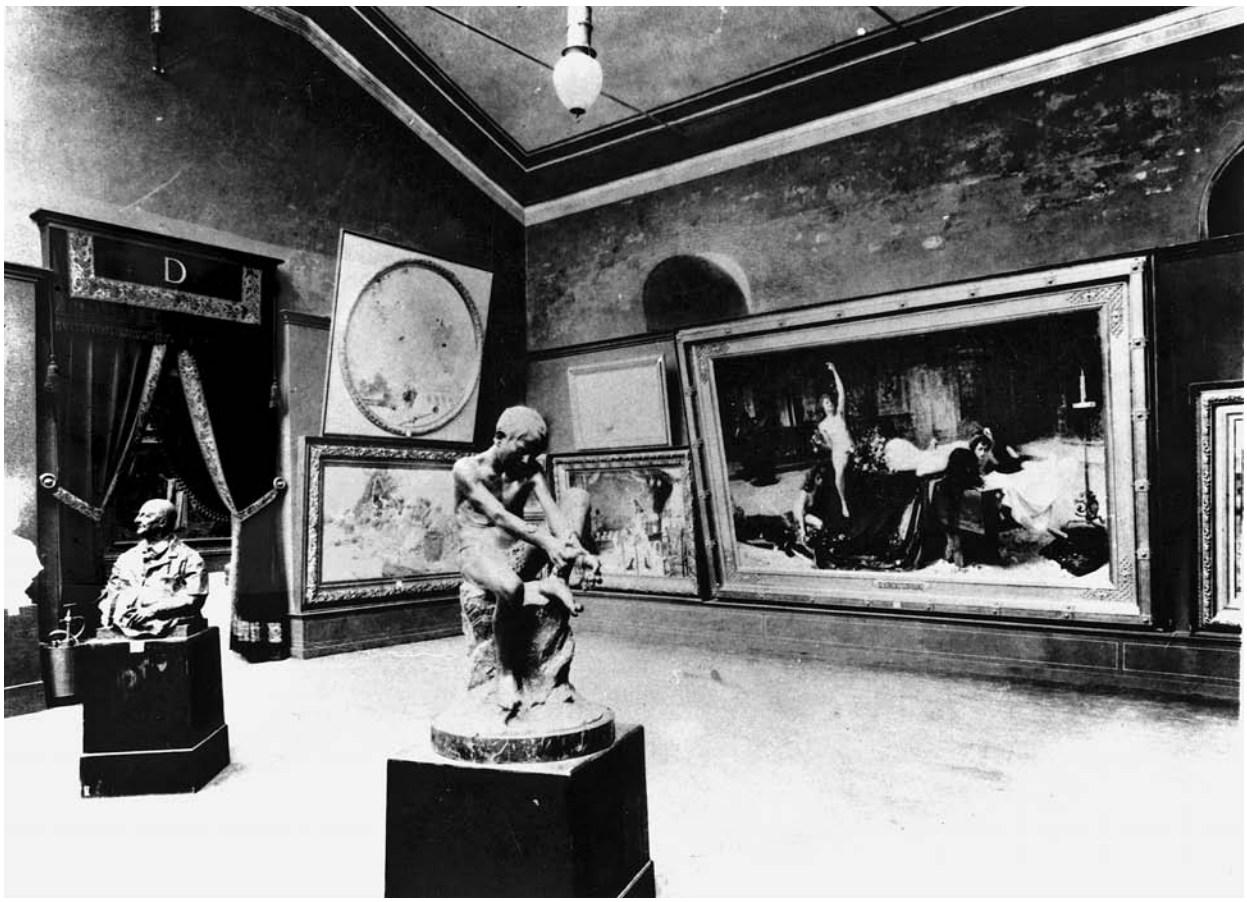

Figure 3.2 Giacomo Grosso, *Il Supremo Convegno*, 1895, as installed at the first Venice Biennale, 1895. Photograph: Giacomelli (Venezia). Archives of the Venice Biennale (ASAC).

> ings, whereas for the managers of the Exhibition, the unease was due to the subject matter of the painting, which could offend the morality of the visitors.[8]

The day after it was unpacked, the Catholic Patriarch of Venice wrote mayor Riccardo Selvatico (the biennial's founder), "asking that the work which he had heard about, should not be exhibited." Selvatico shrewdly submitted the question to committee, which helpfully refused to censor the painting. "The clerical press cried out about the scandal, the foreign and Italian press also mentioned the circumstance, fueling public curiosity all the more. At the end of the Exhibition, the prize assigned by a popular poll was awarded to Grosso's painting, which resulted in yet further polemic."[9] Thus it becomes clear that Grosso's provocation was welcomed into the first Biennale to "form the public," defeating local conservatives and church leaders by attempting to modernize Venice. The biennial's characteristic mix of publicity and populism was born, its independence from state and church secured through the invocation of an "international" committee revoking local mores.

Doubtless few knew of the strident pamphlet then circulating in Paris—*Pas d'Exposition en 1900!* The Venetian experiment opened just as the world's fair was being deemed defunct. The relay is precise: in 1895 the city of Nancy, France (where the pamphlet originated), passed a resolution opposing funding for another exposition in Paris, while the city of Venice, Italy, funded the world's first international biennial.[10] The biennial concept aimed to break free from centralized national control, while seizing the publicity apparatus of a national world's fair. Founded by artists and a mayor-poet in a modestly sized historic city, the Venice exhibition was free from distracting assemblies of goods, machinery, and sideshows; it constituted itself as a *trade-specific* venue for art. And

trade was an explicit goal: it was hoped that *La Serenissima* would become a center for sales of contemporary art; the biennial would take a portion of the sales.

Unlike the exhaustive and exhausted universal exposition, the new model would be precise, nimble, and frequent. The *grands expositions* had been fueled by rampant industrial competition—a contest Italy was bound to lose. Art was another matter. Venetians ruled a city thick with artists who prized its apparent indifference to the gears of industry. Even as rhetorical blindmen identified fairs' engine rooms, propeller blades, and plumbing as the exciting impetus for a truly modern art, the biennial was born to rehabilitate the old machines of painting. Dusting off the prizes, anointing slightly worn-out art movements, and reproducing the national theatrics that the fairs had promulgated, *la Biennale de Venezia* arrived, plumping for cosmopolitanism in the world picture.

How perfect that world's fairs were being opposed at exactly the same moment! The screed from provincial Nancy didn't stop the 1900 Paris exposition but certainly seeded the compensatory Exposition Internationale de l'Est de la France, which opened in Nancy in 1909.[11] Once the 1900 Paris fair concluded, a young Parisian law student, H. Georges Berger, took up the history of the anti-fair sentiment. He decided in his published *thèse* that the politicking, the arguments, and the expositions themselves should come to an end; his arguments give the European background against which the biennial was emerging. As he summarized the claims of opponents to the expositions:

> The Expos are active agents of this bad politics that one calls internationalism and cosmopolitanism, which cause a country to lose its originality, its proper character, rendering it feeble because it becomes less coherent and placing it at the mercy of its neighbors who, better advised or stronger, have conserved intact the traditions that are most often instrumental to the grandeur of nations.[12]

Proponents just as fervently desired the mark of cultural leadership that the international expos represented, with toy palaces of a diplomatic *rue des Nations* lining the Seine (fig. 3.3):

> A city such as Paris, is it not made to be admired? Should it surround itself by a veritable great wall of China? Should it enclose itself like the sacred cities of Islamism? . . . No, we don't live in a cloister, behind grillwork barriers, and an influx of foreigners should not terrorize us.[13]

Berger's 1901 publication channeling these Orientalist specters found pro and con arguments both outmoded. The *expositions universelles* had done their job. If they had initially been indispensable for their didactic character, countering xenophobic protectionism and fostering free trade, at this dawn of a new century they seemed outré and passé. Berger thus endorsed the suggestion of one senator who called for the repeating expos to be replaced by permanent institutions—*Musées généraux* and *Musées commerciaux* (general and commercial museums)—freeing regions to conduct smaller, trade-specific events showing only art or only industry.[14] Seemingly unaware that Venice was pioneering this very path, Berger concluded in favor of

> those many partial expositions of all imaginable types organizing themselves in many places—to the exclusion of the great international solemnities having the pretension of being universal.[15]

Venice was crafting just such a trade-specific substitute for those "great international solemnities," hoping for a nimble market in contemporary art; critics in the twenty-first century similarly ask whether biennials are still relevant, now that "art fairs are taking over."[16] Yet biennials still proliferate around the globe, suggesting the enduring appeal of the old world's new model.

This book would not have been written if biennials had not been replicated well beyond the originary instance in Venice; I argue that the contemporary art biennial is linked to a far longer past. This constitutes my first assertion, within which are two claims—that the biennial replaced the vast expositions that were the subject of the previous chapter, and that by inheriting and building on an "international" art audience, biennials have proved adaptable and resilient. Tracing continuities between the biennial and its antecedents in the fairs, I find evidence for historical connections linking fairs, tourism, biennials, and spectacular urbanism, but also contend that changing artistic tactics have reframed these discourses, offering a critical globalism for the present. Originally parallel to

Figure 3.3 *Rue des Nations* at the 1900 Exposition Universelle, showing the pavilions of Turkey, the United States, Austria, and Bosnia-Herzegovina, stretching on to Hungary, Great Britain, Belgium, Norway, Germany, and Spain, with the Eiffel Tower looming behind. Photograph from *Paris Exposition Reproduced from the Official Photographs* (New York: Peale, 1900).

salons, the biennial came to replace them. Originally a replacement for the world's fairs, the biennial came to incorporate their event structures.

We can debate the ethics or benefits of these types of exhibitions, but demonstrably the existing art world cannot live without them. Some estimate there are one hundred, others two hundred. Some say they have passed their peak; some argue that even more are needed.[17] Biennials have proliferated, in part, through the support of supranational sources of funding—EU, Baltic, UNESCO, or Africalia—as well as the expected national cultural agencies and ministries. But such entities are themselves stimulated by the global pressure for representation, and public desires for the world pictures that biennials induce. The benefit of the biennials' discursive reach is likewise perceived by corporations such as Illy, Sonatel, Nivea, Tecno, Generali, BMW, Audi, and Hitachi (among hundreds of others; fig. 3.4)—duly noted in catalogues that associate them with highbrow cultural exchange. I asserted in chapter 2 that these quintessentially "contemporary" concatenations are structurally indebted to perennial international exhibitions of the past. This chapter will examine just which features of those earlier world pictures were replicated. Openings for inter- and multinational capital and geopolitical ambitions—a key feature of the fairs—are clearly present in the much smaller biennials. More so than in the fairs, the multifarious global goals of biennials must contend with

Figure 3.4 Pages of logos crediting sponsors of the Venice Biennale in catalogues for the 51st, *The Experience of Art*, 2005, curated by Rosa Martinez (*left*), and 53rd, *Fare Mundo*, 2009, curated by Daniel Birnbaum (*right*).

local politics, against which they are sometimes explicitly staged.

At the same time that I argue for continuities with nineteenth-century expositions, however, I want to propose that the proliferation of the biennial format has stimulated aesthetic shifts, which in turn have changed the nature of the art world (an argument worked out most fully in chapters 5, 6, and 7). Eventually the working of art began to incorporate the festal structures of both fairs and biennials. Biennial culture grew to embrace *experience*—whether unknowingly echoing earlier displays or sagely upending them.

"Biennial culture" has been my shorthand to designate the practices and appetites fueling artists' and viewers' commitments to *art as experience*—and correspondingly, biennials are the event structures in which this taste has been cultivated, its aesthetic codified and defined. Using the word *culture* aims at lassoing artists' and visitors' practices into a functional amalgam of cosmopolitan denizens who move into and out of this world—not an "art world" exclusively, since repeat visitors to biennials may be local citizens, students, or travelers who otherwise have little interest in art.[18] As an art historian rather than a social scientist, I am primarily concerned about the fate of art and artists in this biennial circuit, but I am also after the desires of the subject constructed by these workings of art—of which I am one. I will interrogate my own experience to analyze the dominance of installation art and projected video during the rise of biennials in the 1980s, and the emergence of performative events in the 2000s, linked to specific geopolitical, economic, and aesthetic conditions.

This leads to my second assertion: along with recurring exhibitions that do not use the word *biennial* in their titles—Manifesta, *documenta*, Monumenta, Guangzhou/Baltic Triennial, and Performa—such entities as the brand-new Bienal de las Fronteras (announcing itself in 2014) confirm that the recurring international show forms itself against the backdrop of the ur-biennial, *la Biennale di Venezia*.[19] This history evolves in punctuated equilibrium: Venice was alone in its biennial for five decades, but after its bold replication in São Paulo by an Italian-Brazilian businessman in 1951, biennials instantly proliferated. Far from privileging contemporary biennali as exceptional, I suggest that their proliferation post-1990 is a *second* wave, echoing an earlier epoch in which inter-

national aspirations announced themselves in biennials founded in Tokyo, Madrid/Havana, Paris, and Alexandria (all in the 1950s), as well as Sydney, Rabat, and Baghdad (in the 1970s)—most of which have not continued to the present. Whatever the causes of this punctuated equilibrium, its bumpy rhythm echoes in the global biennali of today.

Critics berate the biennial structure as being a bad way to present art or a miserable way to see it. Others praise the utopianism of biennials for achieving what the French call *mondialisation* ("worldliness-making"), in distinction to commerce-driven globalization.[20] Yet the biennial infrastructure itself is rarely questioned, seen as little more than a contemporary container for existing works of art.[21] I contend, however, that the biennial format played a significant role in what has come to be known as contemporary art in the age of its global circulation. It is because of the biennials' links to event structures, tourism, and apparatuses of knowledge-production that these exhibitions have produced and participated in the longer-term epistemic shift from objects to experience chronicled in this book.

The central question then becomes: What are the conditions of possibility for the global work of art? What are the situations that allow artists to be described as "international" in the nineteenth century or "global" in the twenty-first, when they might hold one nation's passport or pay taxes in another? Cosmopolitanism plays an increasingly important role in this history. In the last chapter, we saw how Hiram Powers utilized the fairs, ramping up from grand tourism to build a larger public at multiple levels of the world economy, through the cosmopolitan circuitry of universal exhibitions. Yet the price of this was critique, as activists Ellen Craft and William Wells Brown performed a counternarrative of the different (unspeakable sexual violence, adumbrated by *Punch* magazine's *Virginian Slave* and Craft's prior performances of the "tragic octoroon").[22] Such operations are paradoxical, initially diminishing the work's cosmopolitanism—its status as exemplum of the "universal" aesthetic of the Neoclassical style—by revealing its links to "difference." As the previous chapter describes, the market for Powers's sculpture could recuperate this critique, adopting abolitionism's own internationalism and embracing the "token" of proliferating *Greek Slaves* in tabletop reproductive forms.

Building on that analysis, in this chapter we will explore how relations of power and visuality, dominant and minority discourses, artist tactics, and receptive frictions worked in the case of an artist who did not just encounter biennials and fairs but grew up in their embrace. We will examine how a nineteenth-century Jewish painter from the Netherlands, Jozef Israëls, could win the international jackpot—but only by becoming the "Dutch Millet."

This leads to my third assertion: art objects are not fixed bearers of meanings that can be shipped around and translated so that locals "get" some universal message. To restate the book's thesis in another form: the moment a work is inserted into a world's fair or international biennial it becomes a matter of understanding how it is thereby produced as *always already translated* in order to speak of *difference itself*. Being able to "speak of" difference allows the art work to begin to process the more resistant *differend*, examined more fully in chapter 5. As the case of Israëls will illustrate, the semantic analogy (an international language speaking difference) holds for the first biennials as well as the world's expositions that sired them—since Israëls showed in both. Although ideologically constructed as autonomous art objects ready for comparison, the paintings and sculptures examined here signified by virtue of the world picture in which they were situated. Negotiating with that circumstance over a century, artists devised extraordinary tactics to contest and control their interpellations (we will return in this chapter to Courbet's, Manet's, and Picasso's efforts in this regard, and the next chapter will broaden our survey to Latin America). Developing over decades, world pictures have now become active sites for artists' explicit tactics of what I term "critical globalism"—a dialogical characteristic of the working of contemporary art.

The shift from objects to experience will be addressed more fully in the concluding chapters. What I want to emphasize here is that the shift to "actions" includes the visitor, in a long history beginning with the "big shows" and the blindman's trope of turning against spectacle in favor of multisensorial, reflective knowing. It is the visitor who must make sense, and as long as we are talking about biennials, we are talking about the multiplication and fragmentation of world pictures and the politics of the partial view.

Philosophically trained curator Daniel Birnbaum

echoed this way of thinking in his 2009 statement for the 53rd Venice Biennale, which he directed:

> A work of art is more than an object, more than a commodity. It . . . must be seen as a way of "making a world." A few signs marked on paper, a barely touched canvas, or a vast installation can amount to different ways of world-making.[23]

Or, indeed, different worlds altogether. Birnbaum picks up on the time-honored trope of the artwork as *a* world (the quotation marks allude to Heidegger), an idea already evident in the Max Liebermann epigraph about Israëls, and dating back to the Renaissance.[24] But I am arguing also that artworks are inserted *into* biennials' representations of *the* world, multiplying perspectives on that very picture. Arguments with Heidegger's singular world picture were already set out in previous chapters, but there is no denying that a concertized "world picture" is an ideological effect still propelled by "world" exhibitions. Certainly at the moment of the biennial's founding in Venice, the modern world-as-picture was robust. As this book argues, however, such totalizing configurations would soon collapse. In the second half of the twentieth century and first decades of the twenty-first, art approached event; the viewing subject became a participant in the networked construction of meaning, and an epistemic shift was at hand. Subjects of art today must assemble fragments of multiple worlds, entangled and enmeshed in being. Today, there is no longer an "outside" from which "the picture" can be framed. Most crucially, I want to historicize theory and curatorial themes as themselves markers of the shift I want to trace—evidence of the moment at which they became not only possible, but necessary positionings of the contemporary subject molded and produced by biennial culture. Rather than works of art I want to interrogate how art *works.* Art circuits, once international, are now global.

Repetition and Difference

Because "perennial," biennial culture is resistant to history; there is little scholarship examining its relation to the fairs, or how it works to mask that relation.[25] The biennial came into being as a trade-specific miniature of, and antidote to, the exhausted and overanalyzed world's fair. The Venetians intended to focus purely on art, long privileged within the cosmopolitan trading cultures that their city was keen to reinvent. And if world's fairs had to be rejected to form the biennial, now it is the *art* fair that must be disavowed for the biennial to stay "contemporary." Such relations are hidden because they are foundational, and foundations work best when buried.

The repeating structure of the biennial, to retain and build an audience, must be renewed by an ever-emerging future; in this way the past is endlessly deferred, its lessons unexamined. As curator Rosa Martinez put it in her statement for the 2005 Biennale in Venice:

> [A biennial] looks beyond the present and into the future. . . . Biennials are the most advanced arena for this expanded field precisely because they do not function like museums. Museums are temples for the preservation of memory. . . . Biennials are a context for the exploration and questioning . . . of the present.[26]

Biennials' perpetual construction of their futurity is rooted, of course, in the very "preservation of memory" that Martinez abjures. As Gilles Deleuze argued in *Repetition and Difference*, the recurring holiday that "differentiates" itself from the routine of passing days is constituted as such *only in repetition*.[27] The storming of the Bastille is not yet Bastille Day—likewise, it is only in repetition that a biennial can be such, and only by linking to a recent past can it claim to have always shown us the future. While the concept of a *recurring* fair was not as explicit in the first international grand expositions, a decennial rhythm was quickly established. The biennial would reject that as being perpetually out of date. It adopted instead a more rapid cycle alluding to the shows mounted by national academies and independent artists' groups, but consolidated as an every-other-year rhythm.

It is astonishing but true that the principles we hold to be biennials' definitional legacy—that they be international and recurring—only slowly took shape in the planning for that first art biennial.[28] In documents from the earliest deliberations among Venetian town councillors in 1893, there is an expressed intention of "perpetuity" but only a passing indication that the institution being established was for a *repeating* exhibition—the key phrase is "*ad ogni biennio*"—every two years. As late as 1894 it

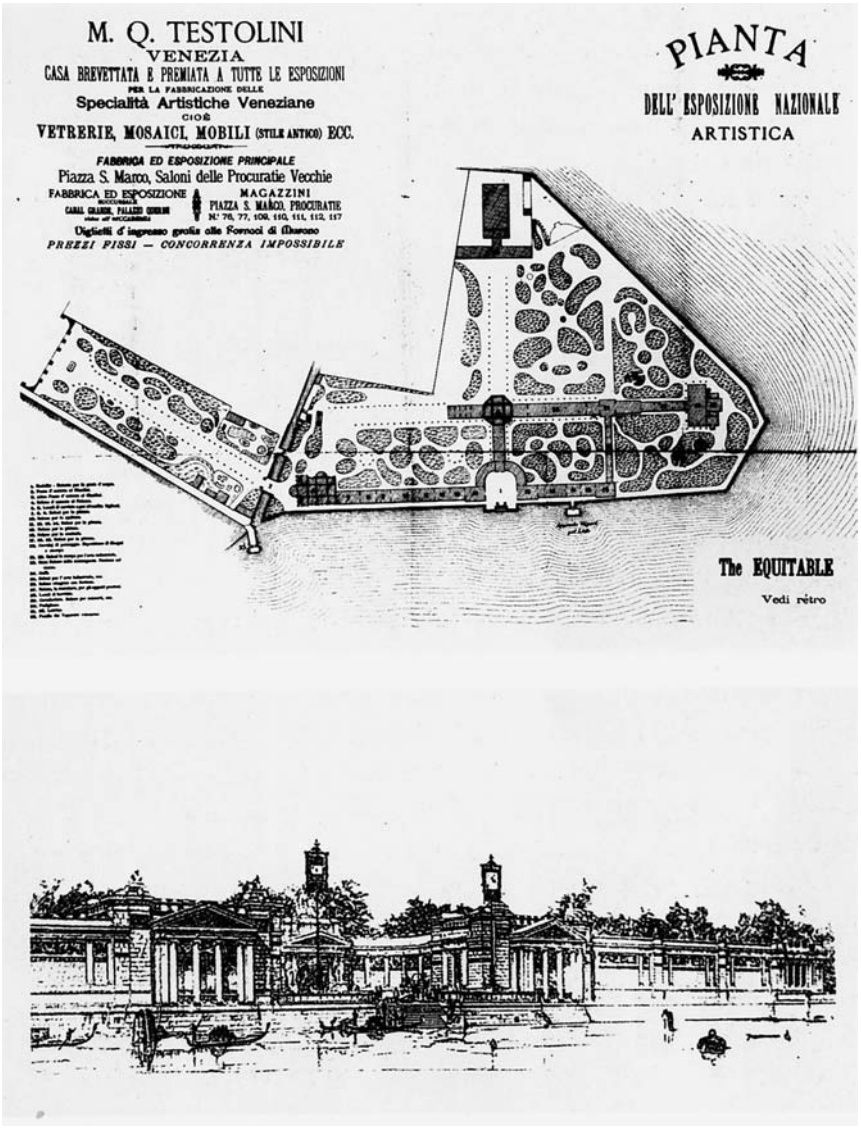

Figure 3.5 National Exposition of the Arts, Venice, 1887: plan of the Giardini showing location of the pavilion and elevation of the grand entrance as seen from the canal. Image courtesy John Clark.

was still assumed this would be a *national* show, modeled on the exposition of Italian art that had been mounted in 1887, also in the Giardini (fig. 3.5).[29] The desire for an international purview was recognized by the town council only on March 39, 1894, when councillors voted that this biennial event would be "*Nazionale ed Internazionale*" (national and international). Vagueness about its repeating intentions remained endemic, however; the first exposition's poster merely announces, "1895, Esposizione Internazionale d'Arte della Cittá di Venezia"; only in later materials do we read "*Prima* Esposizione Internazionale" (plate 13).

All of this was worked out in town meetings led by the Biennale's preeminent founder: poet and mayor Riccardo Selvatico, along with radical politician Antonio Fradeletto and philosopher Giovanni Bordiga. In the first summary offered to the session meeting in Saint Mark's square on April 19, 1893, the group proposed that the city create an unnamed "institution of public utility and benefit" with the intention to "record perpetually" the "twenty-fifth wedding anniversary of the Italian King and Queen"—Umberto and Margherita of Savoia. Thus commemoration was inserted at the heart of the putatively future-oriented event, only later determined to be biennial and international. Applause greeted the blatant flattery of the commemoration,[30] but representatives also articulated pragmatic hopes for a future "benefitting the reputation [of the city, and] creating an art market" (that is, a market

Figure 3.6 Max Liebermann, *Munich Beer Garden*, 1884. Bayerische Staatsgemaeldesammlungen a.k.a. Neue Pinakothek), Munich. Image courtesy bpk, Berlin/Neue Pinakothek, Bayerische Staatsgemaeldesammlungen, Munich/ Art Resource, NY.

for *contemporary* art) in a town long famous for its picture trade.[31] To get all this done, and to guarantee international participation, the opening show was postponed to 1895.

In that early stage of planning, the small Venetian committee advising Selvatico came to internationalism slowly, but it soon became the core of their ambition. They proposed that such a scope could only be guaranteed by a *comitato di patrocinio* (patron's council, or committee on patronage) consisting of invited international artists. These would ostensibly serve as far-flung scouts determining artists to be invited to the first show, and as advisors to its jury; they would also spread word of the new event and create its international profile. Fradeletto and his colleagues seasoned the *comitato* with members of avant-gardes from around Europe: Secessionists, Symbolists, and international Realist artists. At the last minute, however, someone greased the list with a few conservative academicians, perhaps to smooth relations with the still-strong Italian academies. ("Secessions" were precisely withdrawals from state-sanctioned academies.) The result illustrates the power of internationalism to overcome local fractures and produce the image of a united front. Artists who would have been in confrontation in their home situation, such as Max Liebermann, a Munich Secessionist in touch with colleagues across Europe, were brought together with arch-academicians, such as Anton von Werner, painter of nationalist history machines and director of the Munich Academy. They appeared on the Venetian roster as members of the German "team," with Liebermann's Impressionist *Munich Beer Garden* installed in the first Biennale (fig. 3.6). Von Werner's meticulous, fossilized history tableaux, painted in the grand academic

Figure 3.7 Anton von Werner, *Die Proklamierung des Deutschen Kaiserreiches* (The Proclamation of the German Empire), 1885. Bismarck Museum, Friedrichsruh, Germany. Image courtesy bpk, Berlin/Bismarck Museum, Friedrichsruh, Germany/Art Resource, NY.

manner (fig. 3.7), were not represented. State-sponsored painting was ignored in favor of works made for cosmopolitan, bourgeois, private collections.

While Fradeletto and his committee waged internationalist peace through such appointments, Venice's mayor courted national approval through the planned homage to the "nozze d'argento delle loro maesta." Prizes were solicited from the surrounding towns of the Veneto, much as taxes and tithes had once been demanded by the doges. The future gleamed, as Venice declared its independence from Paris and established a market for contemporary art. Such claims for futurity must always be placed in relation to a past, usually apostrophized as "the museum." In the case of Venice, the "museum" was the city itself.

The perceived decadence of *La Serenissima* had been festering ever since Napoleon's conquest and art-extraction a century before. But while the cultural fossilization of Venice was to be reversed by the dynamic Biennale, the two were in fact united through the touristic devices we have met in the fairs: the guidebook, the catalogue, the fairground map, the tourist-friendly hotel, transportation infrastructures, photographic mementos, and heritage sign systems—the importance of which had already been established by the Grand Tour. This history directly informed the biennial, as indicated by early posters, which often depict visitors consulting an authoritative guidebook—rather than looking at art. The 1920 poster by Augusto Sezanne is particularly apposite here (plate 19). The painting being ignored by the guidebook-consulting ladies recapitulates the *vedute* (views; fig. 3.8) produced by Canaletto or Guardi for British scions on the Grand Tour, emblematizing Venice's twin gods (the church and the customs house) blessing the city's rule of the Adriatic.[32]

Figure 3.8 Francesco Guardi, *Venice: The Punta della Dogana*, 1780s. Oil on canvas, 18.7 × 23.8 cm. National Gallery, London. Bequeathed by Mrs. Elizabeth Carstairs, 1952 (NG6156). © National Gallery, London/Art Resource, NY.

The guidebooks, itineraries, and secular perspectives on the city brought to the Biennale and its art something familiar from the Grand Tour. But despite its manifestly repetitive nature, the biennial also aspired to stage the city as freshly renewing. In such a dynamic, relations to the local are foundationally insecure (plate 19), as the wonderfully witty 2005 Venice Biennale poster series by the Milan branch of global advertising firm McCann Erickson made clear. Mimicking Sezanne's poster from almost a century before, the image reveals bemused tourists consulting their guide—only they are in decidedly non-Venetian settings and don't appear to be near any art. The 2005 poster may have mocked the tourist, but it also acknowledged the productive disorientation the art world seeks in the now expanded reach of the contemporary biennial.

Parallels can thus be drawn among centuries of recurring exhibitionary forms; some suggest structural relations that endure over time, while others reveal punctuating events and ruptures that establish new traditions on the historical continuum. For example, when successive curators of the Venice Biennale pushed to open the formerly military and industrial buildings behind the Giardini in the 1980s, their initiative formed one moment of origin for today's expanded urban biennials and the longer shift to experience this book explores.[33] Standard art spaces, heavily decorated in the nineteenth century and slowly mutating into twentieth-century white cubes, were leveraged by a new postindustrial aesthetic in tune with rougher aesthetic operations and emerging attributes of the postmodern. As the twenty-first century opened, youthful experiments in process yielded uneven but dy-

namic experiences for the visitor, with objects giving way to environments and performative provocations.

This is the trajectory that was fracturing the 1930s world picture of Heidegger into multiplied and contrasting views, in which both artist and public are always already enmeshed and actively producing. Venice set up that condition of possibility but did not contest the geopolitics of its day (indeed, national pavilions set them in concrete). The biennials mimicking Venice's experiment—begun by the Brazilian city of São Paulo in 1951—would radically change and multiply world pictures; spaces for differends and dialogue emerged.

Contemporary, post-1980s biennials often share the root condition of Venice: a historical city with humiliation in its recent past. The biennial is intended to announce a different future. It crafts a metropolitan destination imaginatively detached from national troubles (*Havana*, not a Cuban biennial; *Istanbul*, not a Turkish biennial; *Johannesburg*, not a South African biennial; and so on). Interestingly, as Lawrence Alloway points out in one of the few comprehensive histories of the Venice biennial—written just before it abandoned its market structure in 1969—the proximate inspiration and regulatory models for Venice were found in recently federated German cities' art association exhibitions, rather than the equally repeating, but centrally funded Paris salons.[34] If fairs were difficult for noncentralized nation-states to pull off (Germany and Spain, for example), biennials were surprisingly accessible. Cities with fragile or contested relations to their nation-states have tropisms toward biennial culture and prove attractive to the "world citizens" who want cosmopolitan identities and destinations to match. Grappling with modern histories of totalitarian regimes, or at the very least "complicated" pasts, present-day biennial cities range from Havana in the collapse of the Soviet imperium to Gwangju, Istanbul, Taipei, and the autarchies of the Arab Emirates. These aspiring institutions may deploy the art experience to galvanize an emergent polity or to frame and aestheticize aging urban facilities such as dockyards, schools, military depots, industrial plants, or religious establishments—structures that were never so loosely "public" before. Infusions of biennial culture can produce a future for these buildings and can even exorcise a painful past through explicit acts of site-specificity, as curators work with artists to produce event-based art and a kind of "documentary exorcism." Alternatively, sites are delocalized by equally explicit acts of disorientation. These modes of critical globalism are explored in chapter 7 and elsewhere. Not incidentally, these cosmopolitanizing operations also prove useful to tourism, expanding the base of the city's attractions from a memorialized past to a more dynamic present and future. I take as exemplary this quote from the press release for the 2005 ninth Istanbul biennial:

> [Curators Charles] Esche and [Vasif] Kortun will not be using any of the historic monuments located in the historical peninsula preferring to work in sites that have a more common reference to post-industrialization, the physical legacy of modernity and the shift to a consumer economy.[35]

Thus we may compare the Venice *Corderie* (cord-making factory) to an Istanbul tobacco warehouse or margarine plant, while acknowledging shared desires to position spottily modernized third-world cities as "postindustrial."[36] Again, it is not the viewing of discrete art objects that make latter-day biennials contemporary but their offer of *experiences*. Art is to be situated in an expanded urban situation or a global condition, the postindustrial seen as "more common" and contemporary than "the historical peninsula."

Even in Venice, claiming the Giardini for the biennial exposition had specific urban significance. Napoleon's 1797 "liberation" of Venetians from the "tyranny" of the world's oldest republic was sealed with a 1807 declaration that a *giardini pubblici*—a public garden—would be formed from property seized mostly from the church. When the founders of the biennial chose this same physical site, they did so cannily, effecting "the most decisive change for the area since Napoleon's original decree" but in effect *reprivatizing* the territory and subtracting green space from public use. Venice, the former republican city-state capable of snubbing Rome's authority for five hundred years, could now demonstrate its usefulness to the young nation of Italy by reasserting its former function as portal to the world (local park visitors be damned). This was a Janus-faced operation. In reclaiming its symbolic mantle as a former maritime empire, Venice could contribute worldliness to the nation-state, while at the same time invoking its past as a cosmopolitan hotbed of liberal arts, republican theory, and free speech—historically re-

sistant to the papacy and Rome. In this we see the pattern of so many other biennials, branding their cities as transformational sites or gateways mediating between the nation and a wider world.

As the patterns examined here reveal, the biennial is politically statist but ideologically cosmopolitan—it secures a kind of nationalism only by transcending such a concept through appeals to a world-public, even as "national" pavilions clearly concretize and emblematize various states. The founding of a biennial pledges to renew knowledge, to belong to a wider international community, to brand a city, and to bring a new world picture to visitors through an encyclopedic art exhibition. Curator Massimiliano Gioni's 2013 Venice Biennale, *The Encyclopedic Palace,* makes these ties to the European Enlightenment project explicit. But biennials of the twenty-first century no longer necessarily refer to Euro-American Enlightenment precepts, particularly when party-state systems or autocracies are in charge.

"Cosmopolitanism" may fit awkwardly within biennial culture as the model expands to Asia and the Middle East. Generated by the Greek Cynic Diogenes in the fourth century BCE and upgraded by the Stoics around 300, the concept of the *kosmopolitês* or "citizen of the world" stood in explicit contrast to the *polis*-specific advocacy of Plato and the Athens school. If the cosmopolitan could resist local law as unfairly constraining, his (rarely her) "cosmic" identity could also be swept into empire—as when Alexander or the Romans took over the local *polis* in the name of a "universal" imperial subject. "Politics" contests transcendence—and cosmopolitanism is haunted by the arrogance of a claim to power that authorizes itself through a transcendent identity answerable only to an "internal" government of the self.

When we hear cosmopolitanism being claimed, we need to ask *to what cosmos* is this polity attached? The most powerful impetus for self-governance came with Augustine, whose fifth-century vision made a cosmopolitan city of god available to anyone, anywhere on earth. As long as they were Christian.[37] More generously, perhaps the invocation of world-citizenship invites art and visitor alike to enter the place of protected free speech, a cultural space defined, for this book, by the recurring biennial. The cosmopolitan world picture in the contemporary ambit is ruled by the politics of the partial view. It is precisely unfixed and open to debate; blind epistemology is welcome. The invitation is tendered to a global art world, inviting all to an event that might (through the force of culture and discourse) balance geopolitics, leverage military risks, "represent" conflict but not enact it, and yes, lubricate capital—all by letting art work. The rule combines local pride with status travel appeal, attracting both nationals and foreigners whose business might replace the inherent inequality of extraction-based economies. From historic Venice, which yearned to expand beyond a waning Grand Tour into a contemporary art market, to the UAE, whose recently founded biennials are part of the Emirates' plan for a future without oil—the rule of biennial culture holds that there is educational benefit in art, pitching the exhibition to a local or national population as something that will pay off in the "creative industries" and educated populace to come.[38]

Biennali thus conduct politics by other means. As with world's fairs before them, they were staged as pacifist alternatives to other kinds of conflict. In the end, of course, such effects cannot be proven. Clearly, Paris's 1937 fair could do nothing to stop world war. But we will never know whether London's 1851 great exhibition actually did stop the spread of "Chartist riots." And there is synchronicity in the founding of the modern Olympic Games at the same moment as the Venice Biennale (1894; fig. 3.9). French aristocrat Baron Pierre de Coubertin got seventy-nine delegates from nine nations to meet together in Paris to form the Comité Internationale Olympique, planning for the first modern games to be held in Athens. For Coubertin, there was added significance to creating an Olympian athleticism following the French defeat in the Franco-Prussian war, which he blamed on a lack of vigor in his compatriots. Both Olympics and the Biennale were theaters of representation, sharpening competitive skills while lessening the risk that they would be tested in war. As Coubertin put it in 1892, "Let us export our oarsmen, our runners, our fencers into other lands [and] the cause of Peace will have received a new and strong ally."[39] In at least one documented instance, such contests did blunt military adventures—or at least French senators thought so when they argued in 1895 that the whole territory of Luxembourg had been lost while France was dithering over the next fair.[40] A world picture was being shaped, but with merely symbolic rewards.

The second half of the nineteenth century, when fairs peaked, was a time of expansionist nationalism, with borders, maps, and flags fluctuating as "the race for

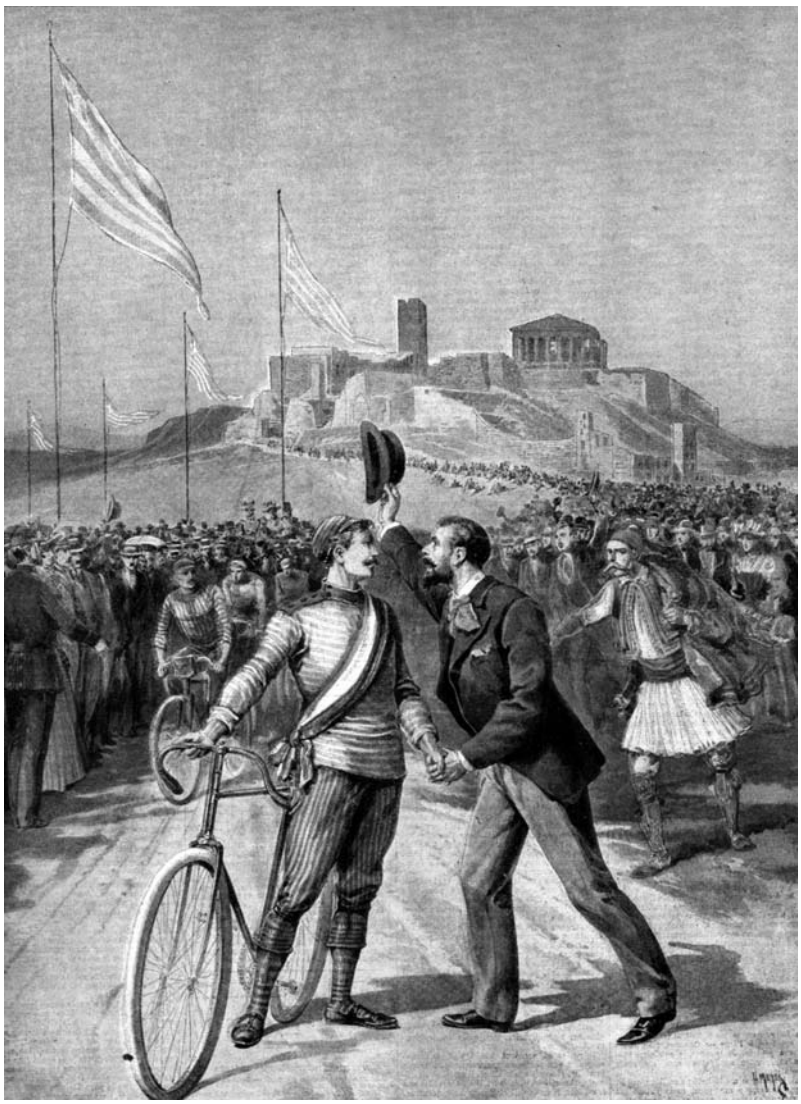

Figure 3.9 Frenchman Paul Masson wins a cycling event at the first international Olympic Games (conceived in Paris in 1894, held in Athens in 1896), as envisioned by Henri Meyer for *Le Petit Journal* (Paris), April 26, 1896. Image courtesy HIP/Art Resource NY.

Africa," the opening of Japan, independence movements in South America, and local wars carved continents into new configurations. Given the complexity of the period, what was bequeathed to the biennali from the fair's world pictures? One huge shift would be from the fairs' capacity to concertize representations of an entire nation to the biennial's cosmopolitan urbanism, where space had to be allotted for little national "pavilions." This toyland world-picturing in Venice followed the *rue des Nations* model from the 1878, 1889, and 1900 Paris expositions. Built deeper and deeper into the Giardini, the pavilions emerged in an order that represented the flows of colonial world power and the shifting status of nation-states.[41] The "pavilion," etymologically linked to the butterflied wing-flaps of a royal tent, was theoretically temporary. But as they became ever more permanent, pavilions ripened as sites for critical globalism.

The previous chapters drew links between theory, pilgrimage, art, and tourism; these rituals were well in place when *la biennale* opened in 1895. But rather than blind epistemology comprehending "the meaning of the age" from the gnashing of dynamos in machine halls, the biennial offered merely the symbolic capital of art. The evolving set of economies that had replaced the aristocratic Grand Tour—universal expositions, crystal palaces, imported natives, industrial innovations, exotic goods, and package tours—would be converted in Venice to more mimetic aggregations as art itself was pressed to represent these aspects of the world picture. Artists themselves would need to bring the industrial, the mul-

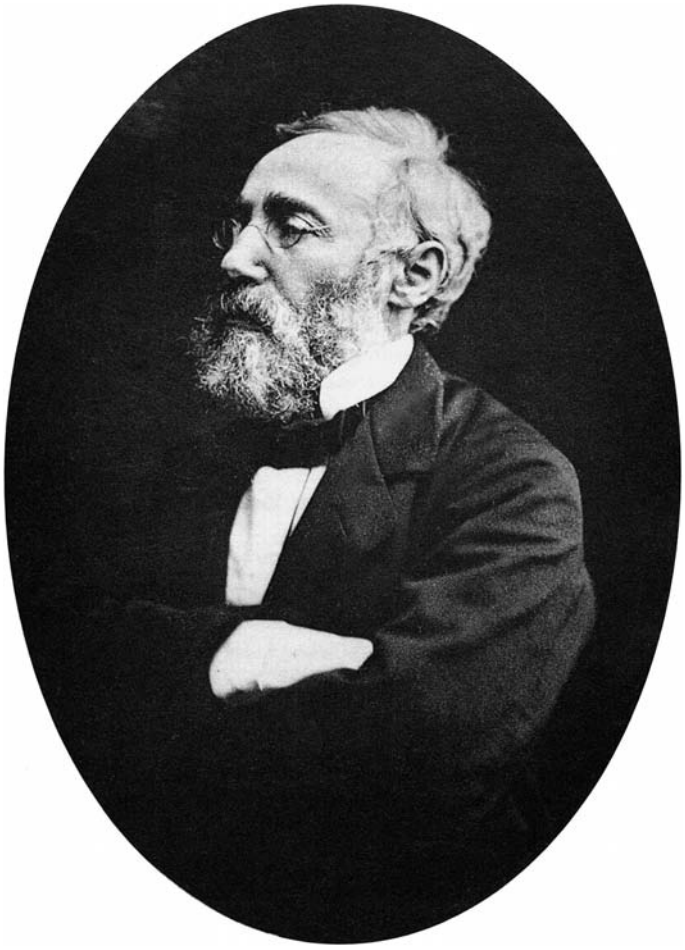

Figure 3.10 Jozef Israëls, a founding member of the Venice Biennale's *comitato patrocino*, in a photograph taken in 1881, well before he won the gold medal at the 1900 Paris Exposition Universelle. From Dieuwertje Dekkers et al., *Jozef Israëls, 1824–1911* (Groningen, 1999).

tisensorial, the social, and the immersive *into the working of art*—gradually producing an aesthetics of experience.

The objects in the fairs and biennials themselves had agency. Exhibitors didn't always ship things back—goods were tendered to those who had paid for them at the fair, and local museums were seeded by purchase prizes.[42] At the new Biennale, a percentage flowed into the coffers for every work sold, continuing the economics of the fairs and financing the recurring exhibition on an ongoing basis.

It makes sense that this "trade-specific" relay passed to Venice. The fairs' linking of tourism, the art market, and replication (artisanal if not industrial) were also robust in Venice, responding to centuries of trade. The poster for the very first Venice biennial (plate 13) suggests the festal structures long touted to upper-class travelers on the Grand Tour. It advertises refreshments, fireworks, and regattas. Here the centuries-long role of Venice in establishing (grand) tourism itself as an "aesthetics of experience" cannot be overemphasized. Staging religious and civic ritual in the lagoons was routine at least since 1000 CE, when landed gentry would have their loyalties secured for the polity of the Venetian city-state via invitations to spectacular events such as the annual Ascension Day "Marriage of the Sea." In that mystical rite, tax-paying visitors from the Veneto could see the sacred union of the city and the Adriatic consecrated in mid-lagoon, as the doge cast a gold ring off the official state barge into the water. In Venice, "experience" was always already aesthetic, with the brilliant banners of the doge whipping in the ocean breezes—later captured in the trembling emotion of Winckelmann's ekphrastic prose, the Romantic tropes of Lord Byron, the resonating "stones of Venice" in Ruskin's writings, Sargent's limpid watercolors, or even Thomas Mann's sublime limit-experience: *Death* in Venice. But "experience" was also a pedagogical directive: sexual and diplomatic mores were to be taught in Venice to the virginal and insular English gentleman, who thereby gained his education in the culture, and ways, of the world.[43] Desire was thus robustly woven into the Venetian leg of the Grand Tour, and threads through the Biennale's seductions even today.

Subjects, Nations, Artists

The shared presumption of exhibitionary structures, from the Expositions Universelles to biennial "platforms" of experience, is that the artist must both represent her tribe and become transcendently *international*. The thesis articulated thus far still holds: the artist who would become international would need to speak a global language, but would just as often be understood to speak of her own representative difference. Difference could become *differend*, so linked to violent erasure of the human that only performative event could stage it.

We have seen how this operated with Hiram Powers. He sought to be universal in his Neoclassical style but was reinscribed by desiring viewers into the racial politics of abolitionism; free men forcefully connected his anodyne work to the unutterable violence of slavery back in the United States. This chapter turns to another nineteenth-century case study linked more closely to Venice, that of the Netherlandish painter Jozef Israëls (fig. 3.10). This

Figure 3.11 *Rembrandt: In name van de Nederlandsche Schilderkunst breng ik u hulde* (Rembrandt: "In the name of Dutch Painting, I bring you tribute"). This cartoon by Johan Braakensiek was published in *De Amsterdammer*, January 27, 1895, and shows Jozef Israëls being crowned with laurels by the most famous Netherlandish artist of all time. From Dieuwertje Dekkers et al., *Jozef Israëls, 1824–1911* (Groningen, 1999), 42.

now-forgotten artist exhibited in the first great exposition in Paris to include the beaux arts, in 1855, was awarded a gold medal at the 1900 Exposition Universelle in Paris, and was named a founding member of the Venice Biennale's prestigious *comitato*. Israëls became a man of the world—within the constraints of what I call a "predicated internationalism," which links across time or space to pronounce a "Dutch Millet" or a "Rembrandt for today" (fig. 3.11).[44] Israëls has become sufficiently obscure to serve as a perfect case for studying what artistic tactics were needed for insertion into the world picture—whose moving scenography does not guarantee eternal fame.

Jozef Israëls was born in 1824 in Gröningen to a family of traders who kept ties to relatives in Germany but blossomed in their adopted Dutch home, where they founded a synagogue, a mikvah, and a cemetery.[45] Young Jozef passed the state exams for the royal art academy in Amsterdam, where he was taught a slick history-painting style buffed by occasional trips to Paris and studies with François-Édouard Picot and Paul Delaroche.[46] Interrupted by Paris's 1848 revolution, he returned to his Amsterdam studio, where he came to the attention of Tobias van Westrheene, the man choosing Netherlandish contributors to the 1855 Paris fair.[47] Israëls's career was launched with this selection of his work

for the Dutch section of the first beaux arts display in a world's fair.

A stylistic examination of Israëls's oeuvre reveals how expositionary culture formed this artist and shaped his ambitions to figure on the world stage. Notably, Israëls showed in the 1855 Exposition Universelle before ever having a painting accepted at the Paris Salon. If Powers utilized the circuitry of the fairs to distribute, popularize, and internationalize his preexisting *Greek Slave*, Israëls would alter the very fabric of his artistic subjectivity in confrontation with the worldly strategies he encountered and internalized at these events.

Israëls is documented in the biographical listing of the first Venice Biennale catalogue in 1895, information that is rehashed in the exhaustive report on the beaux arts from the 1900 Grand Exposition in Paris by Count Debord. These scripted biographies inevitably begin, as I have, with the artist's humble and provincial origins.[48] The artist is brought into the ruling capital of art and becomes transformed—becomes modern and international. In the case of Israëls, of course, the trope is sharpened by perceptions of race and religion that confronted anyone of Jewish background in the second half of the nineteenth century. If "cosmopolitanism" was increasingly used as a tag for the diasporal Jewish communities throughout Europe, this was because that attribute was shifting from its positive Augustinian valence to a negative cast suggesting "rootless outsider." Racial science ripened toward the end of the nineteenth century, and by the 1930s, "cosmopolitan" was synonymous with a suspiciously nomadic *foreign intellectual type*.[49] While the modern European Jew was cautiously tolerated as a token of (inter)national liberality, markers of ethnicity were blatantly produced around (and sometimes by) these historical figures. Thus we read in the first biennial catalogue that the young Israëls could only learn the "falsità della sua educazione" (the falsity of his development) by going to cosmopolitan Paris. Only after this, and only after a serious illness, could he rise into modernity as that predicated international, "the Dutch Millet."[50] By then, his paintings could be Dutch and international, local and cosmopolitan, modern and timeless, ethnic but also *universelle*.[51]

How did he get there? The history painting chosen by academicians for the Dutch section of that first French world's fair was competent but stiff: *William of Orange Meeting with Margaretha of Parma*, completed in 1855 and rolled for shipment as soon as it was dry.[52] The Parisian organizers had ostentatiously departed from the British by dedicating a building exclusively to the fine arts in their big fair; the stakes could not have been higher for a young foreigner entering the fray. Israëls's earnest if lugubrious attempt (plate 15) depicts a sixteenth-century meeting between William of Orange, the Protestant-born, Catholic-raised favorite of Charles V, and Margaretha of Parma, designated regent of the Netherlands and half-sister to the Hapsburg emperor Philip II. Despite her title, Margaretha had no army—hence she needed the support of Prince William, the ruling *Stadtholder* and spokesman for local noblemen and their militias. The frozen moment the tableau records is a specific day in April of 1565, when Margaretha was presented with a petition from the noblemen demanding an end to the Spanish persecution of Protestants. As Israëls wrote to a friend, this moment seemed "really interesting" and useful for representing his "fatherland," because

> Willem, who often acted secretively so that people never knew what he was thinking, at that Council meeting had openly aligned himself with the people, and with a wave of the hand had rejected Philip's edicts that he did not wish to promulgate.[53]

Embodying two warring Christian faiths, William represents reason and tolerance for Israëls. His "single gesture" is a raised hand of restraint that can also be read as an admonition, a blessing, or a promise of grace. Margaretha sits forward anxiously in her almost liturgical throne, swathed in the fabrics of court luxury, while William stands calmly in sober Protestant black under a frame of Neoclassical architecture, his posture conveying rhetorical power and Ciceronian poise. Note that the William in Israëls's painting is not the warrior he would become, thrown into martyrdom by a French Catholic assassin (the first political killing using a gun).[54] What Israëls (and the curator of the Dutch section) wanted to put into the materialized world picture of the beaux arts pavilion was a reminder that tolerance and pacifism were Dutch contributions to the Enlightenment. This was a story of politesse and secular coexistence lobbed into imperial, Catholic France.

Israëls must have swelled with excitement as he came to Paris and entered that beaux arts pavilion at the 1855

Figure 3.12 Exterior and interior of the Palais des Beaux Arts, avenue Montaigne and rue Marbeuf, photographed just prior to the opening of the 1855 Exposition Universelle, Paris. Images made available by Sylvain Ageorges.

Exposition, its dense hanging familiar from seasonal salons (fig. 3.12). French artists were in the front galleries; Israëls would have had to go around the sides and to the back to see the Dutch section. Reportedly, he and his compatriots did not fare well in this theater of comparisons; reviews were "far from flattering; nor did they look kindly on historical painting executed in Israëls's style." The painter himself wrote a friend, "I'm sorry the picture did not turn out better."[55]

Exacerbating this disappointment, right down the street and on the tips of every artists' lips was Gustave Courbet's freestanding *Pavilion du Realisme* (fig. 3.13). The sheer audacity of an artist mounting his own privately funded pavilion in confrontation with the federal

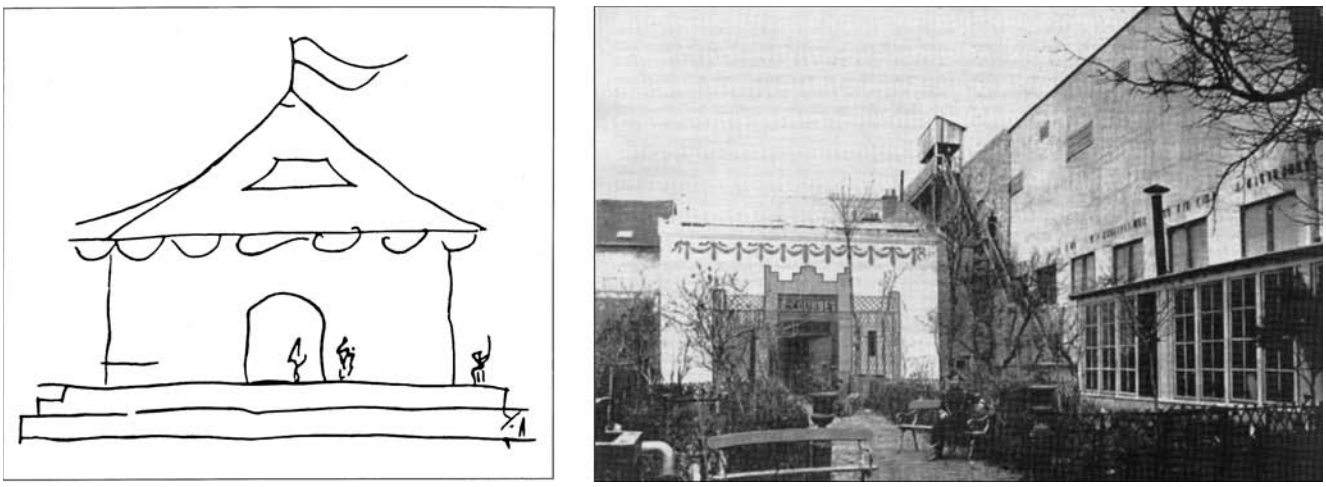

Figure 3.13 Sketch by Gustave Courbet of his design for the *Pavilion du Realisme* (from a letter to his patron Alfred Bruyas), and a photograph by C. Thurston Thompson of the pavilion as built, at 7 avenue Montaigne. Photograph originally titled *Fireman's Station and Division Wall between the Picture Gallery and Sugar Refinery*, from R. J. Bingham and C. T. Thompson, *Paris Exhibition, 1855*, vol. 1, no. 38, Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Both images courtesy Patricia Mainardi.

apparatus of an entire world picture certainly contributed to Courbet's scandalous success, which has gone down in art history as an avant-garde victory. But it's important to note that Courbet's enterprise was *not* opposed by the state. Located at 7 Avenue Montaigne, just a hundred yards from the official beaux arts pavilion, it was de facto endorsed by Napoleon III as a way of snubbing the "elitist" academy, which still controlled the official salons and selected works for the fairs.[56] Courbet, well aware of what he owed to the self-appointed emperor (and what he could offer by way of a programmatic populism), embedded a flattering portrait of the French leader, dressed as a rural huntsman, in the *Artist's Studio*—installed as the monumental centerpiece of his private display.

We have to imagine Courbet's paintings hitting the young Israëls like a slap in the face. These were thickly painted fusions of academic allegory and everyday being, with no great moments of history, no clear narrative, and only crusty brushstrokes knitting their motley figures into the landscape. Moreover, "Realism" was not realistic. If Israëls had labored to get a precise historical moment right, Courbet combined past, present, and future with fantastical abandon. Israëls would have grasped the pavilion's polemical function, the style of Realism that had been appropriated as an idea from literature, the poses of figures that had been taken from provincial visual culture, and the paintings' sympathy for the poor. With the memory of 1848 very close at hand, the ideology of Realism was supposedly accessible to the common folk, and in sympathy with their political struggle. Perhaps most salient for Israëls, Courbet depicted his workers—turned away from the viewer and absorbed in their labor—through references to Dutch seventeenth-century genre painting, adapted to a visceral materiality that was shocking at the time. This was universalism transcending or subtending the state—this was a new, populist model of visual art.

Israëls's Dutch teachers valued history and classical reference polished with skill, erudition, and varnish—priorities established by the French academy. Courbet—a Frenchman!—borrowed from a "lower" tradition of popular Dutch painting to upend that hierarchy. Courbet's Realism announced its interest in honesty, warmth, and directness; tokens of life experience replaced careful academic research. In reckoning with Courbet, Israëls would have to go back to the old demotic language of Netherlandish genre painting, enlarged to a massive scale and anonymized into a quotidian everyman.

Historians report that upon returning to the Netherlands from the fair, Israëls plunged into crisis. It could be resolved only by becoming blind to the fair's official ideology. Israëls is said to have fallen dangerously ill, taking himself for a rest cure to the North Sea coast in Zaandvoort, about ten miles from Amsterdam. Here he sat by the sea and contemplated a shifted world picture.

No longer would he aspire to knit together academic episodes revealing the fatherland's historical moments; now he had to imagine the universal solidarity of Realists, painting People, in a present-day World. Israëls returned to the studio and crafted his first response to Courbet: a humble fisherman and his children, haunted by death—*Alongside Mother's Grave* (a.k.a. *Passing the Cemetery*, 1856; plate 16).[57] Israëls's composition split the difference between two works by Courbet—the striding self-portrait of *Bonjour M. Courbet* and the struggling family of *Stonebreakers*—set in the particular scenography of the Dutch coast.[58]

This is the microhistory of a single artist risking a new international language but using it to speak of local difference. Amsterdam critics were quick to praise Israëls's new "sensitive poetry" of the crowd.[59] A Francophone Belgian critic, on the other hand, disapproved of the artist's use of the large format of history painting for genre scenes—an ambition traceable to Courbet, who had already been criticized on these grounds.[60] The homologies with Courbet go largely unmentioned in the literature, however, despite obvious similarities in theme and format between a work such as Israëls's 1861 *Shipwreck* and Courbet's 1855 *Burial at Ornans*—both featuring a horizontal frieze of figures grappling with death (fig. 3.14).[61] The latter was the centerpiece of the Realist pavilion, its refusal by the state what Courbet needed to justify his entire carnivalesque exhibition.[62] Yet it was Israëls's fate to become the "Dutch Millet," not the "Dutch Courbet." We have yet to explore why.

Secession founder, and fellow member of the Venetian *comitato,* artist Max Liebermann wrote of the older painter he so admired:

> Israëls once said to me, "No painter except Millet has been less able to draw and paint than I, and yet made such good pictures." In other words, like Millet, Israëls is not a man of talent, but a genius.[63]

This was written in 1901, as the aged Israëls was being lionized for a new century, celebrated by Liebermann as having "created the modern Dutch School"—including now-forgotten artists such as Bosboom, Maris, Mesdag, and Mauve, "each one [of whom] owes him something, just as today every painter has something of Manet about him."[64] Why the stubborn linkage of Israëls with Millet, when Courbet's Realist pavilion was clearly the source of most of these post-1855 paintings? Succinctly put, Jean-François Millet offered a better market. If Millet would learn to anonymize labor from Courbet, he would also domesticate and spiritualize it. Courbet was a communard painting the urban proletariat; Millet painted the rural poor in ways that could reinforce Jesus's message: "The poor you shall always have with you."[65] Such biblical allusions are evident in Millet's one canvas in the 1855 exposition, a kind of "holy family" approved by the cautious commissioners for the French display (plate 17).[66]

The "genius" of Millet or Israëls would be slotted into the fairs as a genius of place, not Romantic personality. This was how the gears of the world picture could keep turning: let French firebrands (Courbet) be tamed by Millet's enduring religious themes, let that international style (Realism) be domesticated with local color and people. Israëls's 1867 *Cottage Madonna* was shown in the 1882 Paris Salon, honoring the tutelary god of Dutchness via Millet-type sentimentality (fig. 3.15). For our larger arguments, the pertinent features are that a painter such as Israëls—a talented underdog enabled by tenuously secular state bureaucracies to find his way into international competition—had to *learn* his innocence, his "common" touch, and his channeling of a Protestant Christian "fatherland" in order to enter the international fray. That he achieved this synthesis is confirmed in my epigraph, from an anecdote reported by an American critic in 1912: "When the Archbishop of Paris saw his *Cottage Madonna* . . . , he said to the eminent Jew: 'Mr. Israels, you are a great Catholic.'"[67] Doubtless relayed to the critic by Israëls himself, the story's "Catholic" reference could also be heard as "catholic," channeling the kind of cosmopolitanism universalized by Augustine but in some danger of obliteration in the wake of the Dreyfus affair.[68]

Thus Israëls's worldliness is not a critical globalism that pushes back against the forces of globalization, but rather, it *is* emblematic of the rules as they functioned for nineteenth-century artists. A British critic questioned the Francophone insistence on Israëls as a "Dutch Millet," citing the fact that Millet was behind Israëls generationally and less successful on the exhibition circuit:

> To regard Israëls as being a kind of interpreter of Millet to Holland is not in accordance with the facts. . . . If we call Israëls the Dutch Millet, it must be by way

Figure 3.14 *Top:* Jozef Israëls, *De schipbreukeling* (The Shipwreck), also known as *Fishermen Carrying a Drowned Man*, 1861. Collection of the National Gallery, London; documented here in a posthumous reproductive print (1912) made for Gilbert Chesterton, *Famous Paintings* (London: Cassell and Co.). Image courtesy HIP/Art Resource, NY. *Bottom:* Gustave Courbet, *Burial at Ornans*, 1849–50. Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

> of comparison, not of affiliation; and we must be at liberty to call Millet the French Israëls.[69]

But we are not "at liberty" in this way. The unreflective marketing via Millet continues, even in the website for Britain's National Gallery, where Israëls's *Shipwreck*—acquired following its successful showing at the 1862 London fair—is dutifully celebrated as being "redolent of Millet."[70]

Israëls was more than willing to accept the rules of the game. Consciously annealing Realist subjects with Rembrandt's interiors and van Ruisdael's landscapes, he redeployed these Dutch modes in a modern Realist vernacular governed by the French, thereby becoming

Figure 3.15 Jozef Israëls, *The Cottage Madonna*, 1867–70, shown in a reproductive print made for the journal *The Studio* in 1902. The original oil painting, then in the collection of "Alexander Young, Esq.," is now at the Detroit Institute of Arts. The painting was shown in 1905 at the Venice Biennale; its title was probably provided by a London dealer.

highly successful on the international circuit—until the appearance of Cubo-Futurism and abstraction, which problematized Realism forever after. To suggest his reach by 1900, Israëls was celebrated in a series of German "Kunst der Gegenwart" monographs along with Rodin, Corinth, Degas, Delacroix, and Dante Gabriel Rossetti—but not Millet![71] His representation in the materialized world pictures of fairs and biennials reveals a career equal in its success to any biennial artist working today, mingling commercial galleries and salons with expositions and biennials, showing in more than thirty venues on two continents, like clockwork, over five decades.[72]

To conclude our analysis of Israëls's case is to see him edging into the twentieth century and grappling with Impressionism, the next international style (plate 18). Continuing the trope of provincialism, Israëls was described

by a 1902 critic as a rough autodidact, admired "for the nervous vigor of an untaught hand, [laughing] at *la belle peinture*."[73] But "nervous vigor" would soon be reinterpreted as Impressionism, with France once again setting the standard—as we saw in chapter 2, contributing what would be celebrated in the United States as "our" Impressionist style during the 1904 exposition in St. Louis. Modernism, registered in the gestural, personal mark that fractures the sealed surface of academic finish, becomes not just a style but a geography (literally, a geo-graphy or world-writing), emanating from France to mark a universal cosmopolitanism. Achieved through pilgrimage and the channeling of international styles, Israëls's worldliness could then be inhabited insouciantly. It is that secular, cosmopolitan style that garbs Israëls in the 1908 self-portrait illustrated here.

Again: artists who will enter the world picture must adopt the prevailing international language and use it to speak of difference. Thus Israëls depicts himself as a contemporary urban European (watch fob, bowler, and all) but stands before one of his better-known Jewish paintings, *David before Saul* (1890s), as if acknowledging his delicately leveraged position.[74] Attending the eighth international Zionist congress in the Hague in 1907, he was finally comfortable appearing in explicit relation to what Marx had identified as "the Jewish Problem." Even while painting Jewish subjects as "old folk" or denizens of a biblical past, the artist utilized an increasingly Impressionist style, signaling a secular bourgeois attitude.

Potentially, a given artist will be gifted enough to expand and extend a prevailing international style, perhaps even stretching it to set a new norm. A brilliant tactical move would be to reveal the centralized style's debt to a peripheralized other, generalizing from an enforced difference to craft a universalized message—I have read Picasso's *Guernica* in this light.[75] Such maneuvers may require relocation to a center; Israëls was not willing to move to Paris, and so accepted terms that Picasso would refuse. For the founders of the first Venice Biennale, Israëls was just the man to grace their *comitato*; his art would provide the "proof of concept" for a safe, midcourse modernism that had been canonized in France, would be endorsed in Venice, and could be celebrated in Paris at the 1900 Grand Exposition with a medal for this master. Do such recipes for success extend into the twenty-first century? Most of the ensuing chapters attempt to answer this question; here, a prolegomena to that account.

Biennial Culture

Of course the media suffusing biennial culture have changed, with a dramatic shift from the once-stable typologies of sculpture, paint, and paper to the more open-ended modes of video, installation, performance, and other situations producing "experience" in the contemporary subject. But have the tropes identified with the case of Israëls vanished? Visitors today may be invited to examine "peasant da Vincis" at the Chinese pavilion in Venice (fig. 3.16), or enter Cai Guo-Qiang's "cultural melting bath" in Lyon rather than look at a picture, but one wonders again at the marks of difference being represented—or ostentatiously dissolved. "Experience"—which once included taking a bone-rattling railroad or carriage trip to the metropolis to see an exposition, imagining the fate of (Powers's) nubile Christian slave or (Israëls's) shipwrecked Dutch family, then concluding with a restorative stop for tea outside the pavilion—may now be bundled into a total sensory package via immersion in Cai's steaming bath of Chinese herbs (plate 34).

Biennial culture is what results from artists metonymically capturing *for art* all of these energies, which accumulate as visitors trained from such experiences come for more. When Cai Guo-Qiang was asked to coordinate the representation of China five years after showing in Lyon's biennial, he conveyed both utopian aspirations and technological simplicity in his staging, reinforced by Yung Ho Chang's spindly bamboo "pavilion." As if working the timeworn apparatus of the grand expositions' display of colonial peoples, for this first "Chinese pavilion" in Venice, Cai put villagers themselves on display for his version of "predicated internationalism" ("peasant Da Vincis"). True, they were not asked to dance or cook in a "Chinese village"—their flying machines were ostensibly what was on view. But in the Biennale's all-important opening events both the rural farmers and their homemade gizmos were rendered performative spectacles. As the rural inventors attempted to get their clattering machines to levitate, the resulting explosions and failures left art-world visitors nonplussed. Was the dysfunction anticipated by Cai, the canny global artist making a Surrealism out of his own rural Others' utopian dreams? Or did Cai himself

Figure 3.16 *Top:* Sun Yuan (born 1972, Beijing) and Peng Yu (born 1974, Heilongjiang, China), installation view of *Farmer Du Wenda's Flying Saucer* at the 51st Venice Biennale, 2005. Photo by Sun Yuan. Courtesy of the artists and Cai Studio. *Bottom:* Yung Ho Chang, *Bamboo Shoots*, for the Chinese pavilion, installed in the Giardini Vergini at the 51st Venice Biennale, 2005. Courtesy Yung Ho Chang/Atelier Feichang Jianzhu.

wish to admonish the worldly jet-setters with this display of Chinese ingenuity and materialized fantasy of an "escape" from everyday existence (and, Westerners would assume, political hegemony)? Cai's 2005 event may have inspired the 2007 intervention by Ai Weiwei in which 1,001 Chinese citizens were brought to Kassel, Germany, at the expense of the *documenta 12* exhibition budget "in order to observe and be observed," mounting what the artist termed an "invasion of the West" by people ranging in origin from rural peasants to art students from Beijing.[76] Given these impresarial artists' sophistication, these attempts must surely be interpreted as critical globalism—but are they successful?

The answer is unclear. What *is* clear is the incorporation of the world's fairs' earlier festal structures not simply into the biennial, but into its art. The publicity machinery

Figure 3.17 Carlo Scarpa, sculpture garden for the Venice Biennale, 1952. Photograph: Eamonn Canniffe, ca. 2006.

of the exhibitionary apparatus is now itself the subject of highly sophisticated curatorial critique, as in the new, floating United Arab Emirates pavilion that opened at the 2009 Venice Biennale. Artist-performers of the "Jackson Pollock Bar" were invited to present a reenactment of the 2008 press conference in which the objectives of the future UAE pavilion were first announced. Addressing all possible pedagogical resources, then Swiss-based curator Tirdad Zolghadr also produced what theorist Maria Lind termed "the wittiest, and yet most thoughtful audio guide I have ever come across," detailing for visitors the "complex political, economic, social, and artistic situation . . . the curator worked through" as the autarchy's agent, a working-out of art and politics that Lind calls "the curatorial."[77]

Venice was not always hospitable to such nested parafictions and political metanarratives. It would take the strong arm of Hans Haacke's institutional critique in 1993 to bring such tactics to the table, here forcing the history of Fascism's role in the Biennale right into the exhibition (plate 23).[78] Fascist modernizations had funded the Biennale's archive, contributed a working library, and renovated the main exhibition hall. The formerly city-based event was nationalized, and an off-cycle film festival was instituted to seduce Hollywood as Fascism spread.[79] Following the war, the instrumentalized and battered Biennale was hygienically cleansed with international modernism, represented by a Carlo Scarpa garden that opened off the side of the main building in 1952 (fig. 3.17). Symbolically puncturing the fascist facade, this would be the setting for event-based "Aperto" (Open) artworks, organized by the Oreste artists' network in 1999. There, politics would infuse an increasingly global register, as later chapters detail.

What the successful biennial format guaranteed, as it began to be replicated and exported, was an emphasis on internationalism—yet the very meaning of "international" would dramatically shift into "the global" as the century progressed. At the outset, the Venetian founders had decided in 1894 that the new institution needed to have international representation "in order to get an approximate idea of the movements and production of artists for the people and civilizations of Europe."[80] No mention of the United States, nor Asia, Africa, Latin America, or Australia. These were largely outside the nineteenth century's "international" frame; the global was not yet at hand. The *comitato* as conceived in 1894 saw international representation as including "these names, the most

respected in the European arts, . . . chosen not only to represent individual truth and originality, and not only to write a luminous story in a varied contemporary art show, but also to distance the exhibition from the favoritism of a local consensus . . . so that our Venetian exhibition has from the first moment the best guarantee of a splendid success."[81]

Importantly, this founding concept of international *does not yet imagine the global*; there was no sense that areas outside Europe even had "art" worth looking at. The "will to globality" would not emerge until the shift from Cold War spheres of influence to millennial configurations of BRIC nations, NAFTA "favored nations," and Eurozones.[82] Back when Venice founded its biennial, the *comitato* eventually saw fit to include US artists living abroad, Whistler notable among them, but little else was needed for "international" to be claimed. Broadening came incrementally, with the first pavilion awarded to then–colonial juggernaut Belgium in 1907. The US pavilion came only during the fascist expansion in 1930, and then after World War II the global inched into view: Brazil in 1950/53, Egypt 1952, Israel 1952, Japan 1956, Venezuela 1956.[83] Global ambitions to include artists from regions such as sub-Saharan Africa, the Indian subcontinent, and China — efforts that proved highly problematic — would become palpable only with the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the definitive end of the Cold War.[84]

The question of "representation" (encapsulated by Israëls as the "Dutch Millet") became acute in the 50th Venice Biennale, when curator Francesco Bonami had the idea of producing a Palestinian pavilion. After learning that only countries officially recognized by the government in Rome could be given a pavilion, Bonami backed down and hired two architects to come up with a compensatory project. The results were giant replicas of the passports of Palestinians, "traveling papers" (issued by Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, or other nations) that were erected throughout the Giardini as stand-ins for the wandering and "siteless" population, the whole titled *Stateless Nation* (fig. 3.18). Journalistic accounts found it important to recount that Sandi Hilal, one of the two architects, is "a Palestinian born in Bethlehem"; others described her Italian partner, Alessandro Petti, as also "Bethlehem-based." Difference was thus marked and noted, identity politics secured (or possibly manufactured).[85] But Hilal, who then lived with Petti in northern Italy, was also required to speak a global language that allowed her design to function in the *mise en scène* of the spectacularized Giardini. She mutely represented some nation through her body and birth, yet together with Petti needed to comment on the constructed and negotiated nature of that condition. As Hilal explained the iconography of *Stateless Nation*:

> [Palestinians] are absolutely obsessed with travel documents of all kinds; we can't afford not to be. . . . If Palestinians are dispersed all over the world, and if we think of the Biennale as a metaphor for the world, then Palestinians should be dispersed all over the Biennale. . . . For us, this is the Palestinian pavilion.[86]

The sited/nonsited aspect of these discourses is important. Hilal and Petti's "pavilion" floated free of national architecture at Venice; it became truly global in its metaphorical dispersal through the *mappa mundi* of the Giardini's world picture. But again, this is not inherent in the art. And this contextual and conceptual working happened only in the biennial setting. When *Stateless Nation* was relocated to Birzeit University on the West Bank, the complexities of diaspora and global languages flattened into nationalism pure and simple. "Critical globalism" became "nationalism" once art's working encountered other politics on the ground.[87]

I have described a vast historical arc linking the search for world pictures and experience in the Grand Tour to the great expositions that industrialized that legacy for everyone. The Venice Biennale inherited and focused that trajectory purely on art. There was a utopianism in the Biennale's patron's committee, which would peacefully agree upon an established roster of fellow artists that might represent (European) international culture. Secessionists and academicians, expatriates and locals, but *artists all*, who would dispassionately adjudicate who could represent the world, and with what kinds of images. But all too soon the localizing ambitions of national pavilions emerged, carrying on the earlier formulae by which the artist would become "representative" of (his) national, ethnic, or civilizational difference. Objects in these pavilions would helplessly transmit differenced meanings, even as the commissioners of these national spaces would insist that they use international styles to do so.

International styles shift, of course. Installation and video art came to prominence in the 1990s, simultaneous

Figure 3.18 Sandi Hilal and Alessandro Petti, *Stateless Nation*, commissioned for the 2003 Venice Biennale. *Top:* as installed in the Giardini during the Biennale, June 2003. *Bottom:* as installed at Birzeit University on the Israeli West Bank (Palestine), October 2004. Courtesy the artists.

with an increase in global biennials. Perhaps the documentary "thereness" of much video recapitulated biennials' own roots in the national theatrics of the fairs, with their imperatives to register difference. For the 2000s, eventful, immersive, and time-based art forms have emerged, bearing dynamic relations to spectacle.

The national pavilions have played an interesting role in converting spectacle to globalist critique (plate 23). This more recent history claims *Germania*, Hans Haacke's smashing of the German pavilion's floor in 1993, as one of its inaugural moments. Haacke's violent iconoclasm freed the viewer to have an opulently auditory rather than merely ocular experience. This, per disability theorist Georgina Kleege, feeds the "theory of multiple senses" that blind epistemology requires (chapter 1): the ambient sounds of visitors' feet, crunching over the shards of marble from Albert Speer's 1937 renovations for Hitler, also foregrounded for Haacke the violence of the exhibitionary complex's continuation of "politics by other means." Thus Haacke—exquisitely conscious of "representing" Germany after the fall of Soviet rule—purges the past through demolition. But the national pavilion survives:

Figure 3.19 Hussein Chalayan, video component of *The Absent Presence*, 2005, as installed at the offsite Turkish pavilion at the Fondazione Levi in the Palazzo Giustiniani, 2005 Venice Biennale. *Top:* urban citizens recount their nationalities. *Bottom:* a geneticist (played by Tilda Swinton) is confounded by the failure of genotypes to match phenotypes and nation types. Images courtesy of the curator, Beryl Madra.

as a concept, an ideology, a funding structure, and a foil for critical globalism.

Comparatively recent biennali such as Istanbul or Guangzhou claim Venice's creaky national pavilion system is obsolete—a position already taken by São Paulo in 1951. But in concluding this chapter I will argue that the very nationalism embedded in the pavilion has proven to have unique value for staging a critical position, allowing the problematization of both spectacle and the ethnic state. These remanent national spaces provide a rare opportunity for artistic agents to speak within power and history, whether they are artists of established cultural capital (such as Haacke) or emerging potential (such as Hilal and Petti). Until the curtain falls on larger shows of power by nations, biennali have conceptual and political roles to play.

That play was in force at one of the most interesting off-site pavilions of the 2005 Venice Biennale, the heavily advertised commission for the Turkish state (plate 35). Adopting the Palazzo Giustiniani as her site, the curator for Turkey chose to present designer Hussein Chalayan's installation *The Absent Presence* (fig. 3.19).[88] The title it-

self can be interpreted as a kind of nonsite joke. It may comment on Turkey's nonpresence in the Giardini or reference the Ottomans' pervasive and underacknowledged influence on historical Venetian urbanism as a whole. Chalayan's installation, comprising projected digital video and sculptures, obsessively circulated around notions of national and ethnic identity in a surveillant society. It offered a world picture of picturing.

Haacke's *Germania*, Hilal and Petti's *Stateless Nation*, and Hussein Chalayan's *Absent Presence* surfaced the circuitry of biennial capital—a combination of real estate, historical positions, and current politics that assemble a world picture as seen from Venice at various moments. In the case of Chalayan's projected video, a looping narrative cast British actress Tilda Swinton as a nervous scientist determining the identity of "anonymous donors" by analyzing their clothing for trace DNA. The only trait that each donor was said to have in common was that "all had come to the city from elsewhere." Water was a pervasive metaphor for the London-based Chalayan's parable of cosmopolitan baptism, as Swinton's scientist peers into shallow basins, washes her face, or performs watery assays. "How accurate would our research prove to be?" questions the voice-over, and Swinton's character asks, "How was I supposed to know? Do you have the answer?" After much washing and splashing, the results of the scientific analysis are revealed to be consistently wrong. In the end the "Serbian" identifies herself as Japanese, the Slovenian as Turkish. In the final sequence, Swinton undoes her hair to a whispered voice-over: "Is this all there is to know?"

There were several risks here for commissioning curator Beryl Madra, most obviously the unproven "artist" (Chalayan is a professional fashion designer, not an artist per se). Turkey was at a delicate point in its political battle to be the first non-Christian country to enter the EU (described by some art-world denizens as "Fortress Europe" or the "Europe of Charlemagne").[89] Choosing Chalayan, a former Cypriot, to represent the Turkish state was itself incendiary, performing an aggressive cosmopolitanism in the face of Turkish-Greek tensions, smoothed over by the sponsor Turquality, which brands Turkish products for export.[90]

But if it had risks, Madra's choice was also savvy: Chalayan was a two-time winner of the British Designer of the Year award, with a growing reputation as a globalized "Muslim designer" operating on the edgy margins of the Western rag trade. His provocations had included a spring 1998 runway show called "Between," centering on a display of models wearing strategically diminishing garments designed to evoke Muslim coverings, progressively "abstracted" until only a veil remained above an otherwise naked model. As catastrophe would have it, the events of 9/11 buried Chalayan's explorations and they disappeared under a world of grief and suspicion. Subsequently he ventured back onto the scene with furniture that converted to precisely engineered nomadic garments with the hardened finish of airplane parts, accompanied by an escape-velocity space pod.

The selection of this edgy fashion designer as a national representative was not as unusual as it seems. Designers model the capacity to define a "difference" that will emerge as desirable in the circuitry of international styles. Chalayan wants art so that he can move beyond garment choice to a wider field where information triggers yearning and deeper thought, by citizens of the world and also viewers of art. How did the *Kuturstaatsministerin* answer a question about why Germany should support the Venice Biennale? "A myth. A provocation. A desire to travel." Less flippantly, Chalayan's vanishing chador prompted tears in the fashion audience, addressing what the designer said was "the cultural loss of self."[91] Some observers of the global swirl have seen hope in such emotional connections, conveyed through "a commercialism that does not transmit a regime's utopian dreams but addresses the personal dreams of the audience."[92] Critical globalism attempts to collectivize the personal, sharing experiences of the heterotopic to transformative effect.

Venice Biennale pavilions—off-site and in the Giardini—play a role in fostering an emerging globalist critique by their very existence, but also in the "mini-exhibitions" they increasingly stage. These can allow a single artist to develop a sustained meditation on the world picture in which the art works, and against which it labors to emerge. We have already touched on the traveling airships curated by artist Cai Guo-Qiang for the underfunded "temporary" Chinese pavilion constructed in the Arsenale at the 2005 Venice Biennale. In conclusion, I want to take a look at its architecture by Yung Ho Chang, providing one last example of the ways in which the micropolitics of art's workings can gnaw away at the macrostructures of the state to produce disobedient world

Figure 3.20 *Utopia Station* in the Arsenale at the 2003 Venice Biennale. *Left:* curators Molly Nesbit and Hans Ulrich Obrist sitting on the platforms designed by co-curator Rirkrit Tiravanija and speaking with postcolonial theorist Edouard Glissant, June 2003. Photograph by participating artist Pierre Huyghe, courtesy Molly Nesbit. © 2015 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/ADAGP, Paris. *Right:* ongoing website of downloadable posters for *Utopia* managed by e-flux (as of June 2014), http://www.e-flux.com/projects/utopia/.

pictures (fig. 3.16). Constructed of imported Chinese bamboo that arrived already weathered from its maritime passage, the "pavilion" designed by Chang was merely an elegant open cage stretching over the grass at the end of the Arsenale in the "Garden of the Virgin." Its construction required scores of skilled bamboo workers, who were also brought from China, in the mode of Chinese development projects all over the world. But Chang's airy structure suggestively occupied the territory mapped in the previous Biennale, in 2003, as the site of *Utopia Station*—possibly the largest staging of "experience" ever offered within the official structure of the biennale.[93] *Utopia*, devised by curator Hans-Ulrich Obrist, art historian Molly Nesbit, and artist Rirkrit Tiravanija (curators Chang knew well), had been a manifestly scraggly and conceptual project, spilling out of the Arsenale into the garden (fig. 3.20).[94] By contrast, Chang's ephemeral pavilion was intentionally empty, letting the Giardini continue its nonbiennial function as an urban garden. The only reference to the grand Western obsession with the good but perpetually unattainable place (eu-topos)[95] was provided by Cai's peasant imaginary of flying machines—the pure workers of the last great communist state paraded for a mortified art elite.

With the "peasant da Vincis" sent back home and the rented large-screen plasma display returned after opening week, late visitors to the Chinese pavilion encountered a few indoor works and a peacefully rotting bamboo structure.[96] Such trajectories became interpretable: Was the deliquescence of China's first national pavilion an authorized fall into grace? Was Chang alluding to a hidden power of the Chinese economy, to make peace with entropy? A dissolving pavilion undercuts the harsh edge of Chinese imperialism; yet peasant escape machinery (like the flying machine Tatlin built under Stalin) could not help but imply for Western viewers fantasies of escape from the gravity of the people's republic. One concept of a Chinese "nation" might be needed to make sense of a "Chinese pavilion," yet on another level, the world picture around it propels a much older cultural imaginary of "China"—as export material, as the source of demotic technical ingenuity, thrift, and gritty survival that both antedates the party-state and constitutes its enduring culture of admonition.[97]

These musings fuel a final provocation for this chapter from my own politics of world-picturing. Clearly, biennials are politically nationalist as well as utopian and globalist assemblies, but there is value in the very tension binding such divergent goals together in these recurring exhibitionary forms. I'd rather have had continuing repeats of the abandoned 1974 Arab biennial in Baghdad than a decade of wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, and now Syria. I'd rather have Chang's pavilion than corrosive expansion by ethnic Han into Tibet. I'd rather have Chalayan's video

than Islamic nationalism from the Turkish right. I'd rather have Allora & Calzadilla representing "America" than more drones in Pakistan (chapter 7).

We won't be given these choices, of course. Usually we are required to accept biennials as a function of the opposite trajectory (first war, then art). Yung Ho Chang's weathering pavilion is a perfect emblem in this respect, refusing imperial ambition for peaceful erosion before our eyes. Desires for world picturing enter a new phase in which the very terms of nation, internationalism, and world exhibitions must be subjected to skeptical pressure. My counterintuitive claim is that biennials' theatrical sites prove to be incubators for critical globalist art.

In sum, the international-universal and the national-local *enter together* in these exhibitions and are increasingly *taken apart* by the art within them. Tactics of savvy artists in the twentieth and now twenty-first centuries inform the equally thoughtful audiences for this art, who have learned to be open to experience, and to continue to let art work on them. In the case of the nineteenth-century visitors entering this game, experience-seeking subjects encountered art and accepted responsibility for making judgments, some at the level of radical appropriations (the abolitionists), and some on the bureaucratic plane of art history (Laborde, Delécluze). The rule of predicate internationalism reveals how the international implicates the nation, and how the universal summons difference.

We will see in the next chapter how São Paulo tried to play this game differently—refusing the "difference" that Europe had always read into its art—but we will also see how incredibly briefly that strategy worked. Seemingly necessary to our present world, biennials are also necessary for questioning their own necessity. Spectacles to consume, but not be consumed by, biennials require us to work, in order that art can. Thinking while looking, ruminating while renting rooms, critically reflecting while chatting, questioning while reading, mulling while eating, musing while walking, dreaming while sleeping, and—for artists, curators, and visitors alike—understanding the continuity as well as the potential for rupture in our desires for the world picture.

7

Critical Globalism, in Practice

So far Globalism seems to guarantee a rather bleak and cheerless future.
—EDWARD ALDEN JEWELL, 1943[1]

I am a field, an experience . . . the world is already constituted, but also never completely constituted.
—MAURICE MERLEAU-PONTY, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 1962[2]

It is better to disclose the confinement rather than make illusions of freedom.
—ROBERT SMITHSON, criticizing *documenta 5*, 1972[3]

Rational utopianism [uses] the knowledge of the probable to make the possible come true.
—PIERRE BOURDIEU AND LOÏC WACQUANT, *Reflexive Sociology*, 1992[4]

It is therefore essential to retain that the definition of evental sites is *local*, while the definition of natural situations is *global* . . . . The idea of an overturning whose origin would be a state of totality is imaginary. Every radical transformational action originates *in a point*, which, inside a situation, is an evental site.
—ALAIN BADIOU, *Being and Event*, 2005[5]

How is experience possible?
—IMMANUEL KANT, *Preisschrift*, 1791[6]

The Worldly Subject

The merely "comparative universality" of experience, per Kant, leads to corollaries explored in this book: experience has a history, and common sense is made, not born.[7] "Common sense" takes discursive and perception-sharing *work*—as the *New York Times* critic Edward Alden Jewell recognized in his nomination of

the new style he saw in Mark Rothko, Adolph Gottlieb, and Barnett Newman in 1943, as "Globalism": "I do not recommend it but the fearless might gingerly poke . . ."[8] Was that the moment when globalism became our next "international style"? It is difficult to see any formal stylistic commonalities today, but this conclusion argues for an emerging *common practice* that I have been referring to as "critical globalism," historically specific to the present.

If the transnational openings promulgated by Szeemann (exemplum of the curator-auteur, chapter 5) marked the full-bore turn to experience that has come to an apogee since 2005 (chapter 6), then one of its prior conditions was the Cold War founding of the São Paulo Bienal (chapter 4), which set up the possibility for the proliferation of biennali. In turn, the calving off of the first biennial from the fairs (chapters 2 and 3) allowed art to incorporate festal structures that it had long been shielded from by the disciplining of "beaux arts" institutions and their separated pavilions. Throughout this long history, commentators and artists have taken up blind epistemology (chapter 1) as a way to navigate increasingly massive exhibitions, assessing, with the tools of theory, the spectacles on display. "Hypothetical" blindmen are ripe for criticism, but the philosophical construct nonetheless compels consideration of alternative ways of knowing, staging a clear precedent for contemporary artistic practice: emphases on the multisensory, durational, and affective work of "feeling," constructing an aesthetics of experience that has worked to displace Western modernity's ocular confidence in the world-as-picture.

The history this book has charted was embroiled with experience from the beginning. Extending from the nineteenth-century fairs well into the 1930s, "experience" was the product of an encounter with the exoticism of the Grand Tour, compressed temporally into the space of display. Goods and humans, art and industry all "represented" the world-as-picture. In such grand expositions, experience was a transaction with the visitor for whom the fair was "a school, not a show." As the biennials took up this legacy, their early twentieth-century organizers replicated the fair's terms: experience was the result of a pedagogical transfer of knowledge and aesthetic standards from "central" civilizations to aspirants, who were expected to acquire cosmopolitan understanding through their apprenticeship to the event. Catalogues and photocompendia reinforced these representational and educational goals. The fair and its entertainments constituted an "experience economy" that would not be named as such until the 1990s (chapters 5 and 6), but its rules were clear: the "viewers" or "audiences" were passive and undifferentiated populations. If "shilling days" brought members of the working classes into confrontation with royals, the fair's contents were understood to be stable object lessons for both; like goods, recipients would be packaged (e.g., the "package tour"). Municipal managers included art-as-objects within the fair, nested in the beaux arts pavilion within a rebranded cosmopolitan center, the ensemble characteristic of the age of the world picture as instantiated in the map of national pavilions.

By the 1960s, this model had collapsed. Artists and audiences participated in dismantling the centralized message and passive model of experience. Prefigured in the thread of critique (blind epistemology) that wove through the discourse around such recurring exhibitions from the beginning, philosophical skepticism fueled artistic tactics that constructed multisensory, durational, and theoretical experiences as alternatives to the scripted path. Even at the peak of the fairs, theorizing artists and "blind" commentators refused the emerging experience economy and offered other kinds of experiences. Powers's anodyne Neoclassical sculpture *The Greek Slave* was confronted by performative abolitionists surfacing the racial politics of the "tragic octoroon" and the "Virginian slave" (figs. 2.3, 2.12). Neither Hiram Powers nor Jozef Israëls offered any friction with the fair apparatus, but Manet registered his experience of the fair's world picture in his large "sketch" in oil (plate 6) that looked down over the taxonomic display of the 1867 Parisian fair through disjunctive modern figures—classed and gendered "types" indexing a motley population. Manet, a centrally located and culturally empowered artist, followed Courbet in staging an alternative pavilion, outside the fair boundaries but drawing on its attentional infrastructures. Similar alternatives were pursued in the early twentieth century by Henry Adams and Marcel Duchamp, imaginatively fusing the virgins of traditional art with the dynamos that were the fairs' most sublime offerings; their blind metaphors contributed to "supersensual" subject positions and "carnalized" experience. The anthropophagy revived by Brazilian artists such as Hélio Oiticica and Lygia Clark (chapters 4 and 5) confronted the neutral units of geometric abstraction in the new Bienal de São Paulo with a

violent gustatory metaphor. In all of these turnings by audiences and artists, an alternative epistemology was being established. This conclusion claims them as constituting critical globalism in germ.

Previous chapters have explored how "experience" was radically reformed by artists and their agents, who embraced, multiplied, and ingested that category into the working of the art itself. A Heideggerian *world-as-picture* was transformed into nomadic curators' multiplied worlds and peripatetic artists' roving critiques. As Oiticica's *Tropicália* installations made explicit, experience and event were now the unpredictable outcomes of a live, durational engagement with sites and propositions, configured as the ongoing becoming of local but mobilized subjects. Another instance was *documenta*, first established as a "100-day museum," then delocalized and depoliticized by Harald Szeemann, who made of it a "100-day event." This in turn became a model for the "Aperto" structure in Venice, whose suspension instigated the founding of Manifesta, the mobile "anti-biennial." Even trenchant critics of Szeemann, such as artist Robert Smithson, were themselves pioneering duration and movement as key components of a peripatetic contemporary praxis. The market and the "experience economy" continued to boom, but the cancellation of the fair/biennial's long relation to the market for art objects in 1968 had some effect. In addition to producing the compensatory rise of the art fair (repeating only as of 1968), the severing of market relations freed biennials to experiment even more freely with experience, ostensibly unburdened from concerns about how durational or spatially contingent forms (video, performance, installation) could enter the art market. Even though art fairs themselves now embrace eventful art in emulation of biennials, I have argued that the monetizing of art-as-experience does not yet rule us as worldly subjects.

The contingency of this twisting, turning, but ever more transnational and transcultural set of developments has had both local and global impact, involving specific curators and exemplary artists as well as flows of cultural, political, and financial capital.[9] Optimistically, I have charted artistic tactics throughout this book as powerful alternatives to the market, on one hand, and to organizers' strategies of sublimation, on the other. From the first replication of the Venice Biennale in 1951 by São Paulo, through the Cold War orienteering of *documenta* in 1955, to expansions of the biennial form into Asia, Africa, and the Islamic Middle East, to Manifesta's curious migratory model, the recurring exhibitionary form has revealed its surprising suppleness, and artists have taken full advantage. By visiting and theorizing a set of those experiences, I have accepted that I myself am their subject, remaining open to the possibility of event, yet with a responsibility to unpack what Adorno would have called their "agonistic totalities." I nominate this process of openness, reflection, turning (and tossing) *critical globalism*, as both a posture of reception and a tactic by artists. As explained elsewhere in this book, I intend "globalism" here not to refer to a passive condition or context, but an *aesthetic operation*. It is analogous to "modernism" in its construction, in that I want it to designate the response of creative artists, who through stylistic and formal operations in their media, distinguish their art from industrial, technological, and mediatic processes. That is, modernism is to "modernization" as globalism is to "globalization." Following this rhetorical model, I take *globalism* to mark the active production of the subject, through aesthetic operations that take stock of contemporary modes of subjectivization in order to intervene in them. I might declare myself to be globalist, taking up this process to take control of it. Distinct from the common presumption of a pervasive logic of globalization, global*ism* here takes cognizance of the condition of being globalized to induce a reflective practice, either by artists or by the publics they form.[10]

Globalism, in this argument, emerges at the critical edge of an aesthetics of experience. The previous chapter claimed that the festal epiphenomena of the fair were eventually incorporated into art, producing in turn the aesthetics of experience and further intensifying broad transnational and transcultural effects. This is the logic connecting Manifesta, with its rhetoric of being an "anti-biennial," to the roving EU program for European Capitals of Culture (chapter 5), and the further proliferation of biennials. The potential for globalism, as a critical aesthetic practice, is effected by the art that curators invite into a given Manifesta iteration. Yet both Manifesta and the Capitals of Culture campaign bear traces, typical of our time, of efforts to construct the subjectile as an experiential self; the difference in outcomes can be attributed to the agency of art. Scrutinizing such parallels, I want to conclude by asking: What kinds of subjects have resulted from all this? What kind of imaginary worlds are

produced in the wake of the recent modes I've identified by which curators have structured experience in the post-millennium biennial (psychedelic, phenomenological, empirical, geopolitical, nostalgic, eventful)? Can we identify a new episteme in the recent hints of being enmeshed in spheres rather than "picturing" a world from without? To paraphrase Kant:

How is experience of this world possible?

The cynical view holds that the subject of that experience is inevitably a neoliberal one (an update to Kant's "cosmopolitanism"). This was the logical accusation hurled by Russian artists Aleksandr Brener and Barbara Schurz at the June 2000 press conference for Manifesta 3 in Ljubljana, where they brandished the slogan "Demolish Neoliberalism, Multiculturalist Art-sistem" and asked others to join their protest, aimed at taking the exhibition out of circulation. The many uprisings against neoliberal, market-driven globalization that began to coalesce around 1999 (with protesters confronting World Trade summits in Seattle and Genoa, for example) fueled a populist resistance to the global as *only* signifying "free market" conditions. "Antiglobalization" became the name for this opposition, castigated as protectionist, nostalgic, or resistant to progress. Suggesting the power wielded by world economic organizations—the World Trade Organization, Group of Eight, Organization for Economic Co-ordination and Development, and World Bank, among others—this nomenclature is dichotomized as "progrowth" versus "antiglobalization," with linguist and public intellectual Noam Chomsky protesting the binary from the left:

> No sane person is opposed to globalization, that is, international integration. Surely not the left and the workers movements, which were founded on the principle of international solidarity—that is, globalization in a form that attends to the rights of people, not private power systems.[11]

I want to avoid this binary altogether. Art, artists, and visitors certainly navigate within the considerable flows of capital from these power systems, and yet their more demotic forms of "globalization from below" can be parsed for traces of *critical globalism*. The system feeds both "good" and "bad" globalization; criticality contests their collapse into each other.

The complex maneuvers required are evident in the epistemological category I identified in chapter 1 as the organizers of art-world event structures (as opposed to the other two categories of artists or audiences, who encounter power in its capillary forms). During the postwar period when the aesthetics of experience were codified, curators and their commissioners (Szeemann and Bode, for example) constituted the interface between "publics" and governmental/fiduciary entities. Initially this would not be described in any way as globalization from below. Entering the game in the 1990s, Manifesta organizers could claim that their attempts to engage the underdeveloped East were responding to locals' professed desires for global capital. While seemingly demotic, this tracks well with the developmentalist agenda of the World Bank and other NGOs. Supposedly, artists from these formerly socialist economies craved *a market* for their works and didn't care if this meant accepting the cultural boundaries of "the Europe of Charlemagne." Or at least this is how Manifesta president Henry Meyric Hughes saw it: "Artists from the geographical periphery were much more interested in gaining exposure to and contact with the markets and media in the West than in conducting a muted conversation among themselves."[12] The "geographical periphery," in Manifesta-speak, is of course embedded in the medieval imaginary of a Frankish king, implying that artists have little access to a putatively global conversation *except* via the European, white, Christian market and its Western-educated curators. Thus we arrive at the question: *If capital wants to be global, is it merely the cultural telos of the biennial to advance that goal?* Must the world picture always be dominated by mimetic relations to a hegemonic monetary system?

Monetization does not foreclose micropolitics, in my argument. Artists have agency, and the "micropolitical" can become macro via the infrastructures of visibility built into art itself, potentially magnified by a massive exhibition. That is to say, the micropolitics of an intimate encounter with the working of art will produce heterotopic effects on the grounds of a single transformed subject, but those subjects will form collectives and aggregates in the massive discourses (blogs, Tumblr feeds, and standard journalism) launched by the biennial apparatus. Take the negotiations of difference that a fluent navigator of the global such as artist Yinka Shonibare produces, identified in his statements from a recent roundtable on

globalism: "The artist working in Delhi or South Africa can no longer fulfill an exotic desire, but they can surely construct one." The mordant commentary here is twofold: the artist can either pander to the desires of a centralized Western market for ethnic difference, or can negotiate the violence of the differend in full knowledge of its seductive alterity, equipping the viewer with the tools for deconstruction and the "tearing" of the subject (as Foucault would demand). Shonibare's position is one that I would identify with critical globalism:

> The aesthete does not have to be reactionary. My reclamation of aesthetics has more in common with the strategies of a trickster who is utterly impossible to place . . . at home with confusion yet politically astute. Beauty is political when it is appropriated by the "other."[13]

Paraphrasing Bourdieu, critical globalists use the probable as their medium, entering the spectacle of the contemporary biennial and transforming what happens in that glare to make room for other possibilities to emerge. This is the utopian precondition for building a different relation to world, enmeshed in its lively confusions rather than fixing it as a picture.

In clear distinction from neoliberal globalization, yet fully aware of its logic, critical globalism makes demands on the viewer to question what conditions their view, curated as it is by a range of nomadic global curators coming in the wake of Szeemann in the new millennium. This curating now confesses itself as explicit, thematic, *opinionated*—as when Daniel Birnbaum posted his curatorial travails on the walls of his 2009 Venice Biennale and incorporated feedback from others entering the fray (plate 33, fig. 5.15). The valiant efforts of commissioner Okwui Enwezor (the first non-European curator of a *documenta*) to hold neoliberal capitalism at bay in his sometimes tendentiously political *documenta 11* (2002) reflected similar ambitions, and met with mixed success. The pioneering *documenta 10* by Paris-based curator Catherine David had produced the conditions of possibility for such an openly political edition, identified by Enwezor in particular as revelatory. In her critical assessment of the exhibitionary form in 1997, David produced *100 Days, 100 Guests*, an eventful structure that explicitly addressed the demolition of "universalism" and the emergence of globalized modernities, yet insisted that her curatorial vision had not pandered to exoticism or folklore:

> The problem of universalism also arises with respect to non-Western cultural zones where the object of "contemporary art" is often no more than a very recent phenomenon, even an epiphenomenon, linked, in the best of cases, to an acceleration of the processes of acculturation and cultural syncretism in the new urban agglomerations, and in the worst, to the demand for rapid renewal of market products in the West.[14]

David goes on to observe that in using media, those emerging from colonial situations have "privileged avenues in music, oral and written language (literature, theatre), and cinema forms," which she views as having traditionally contributed to "strategies of emancipation."[15] Those durational and alternative sensory media (acoustic, performative, projective) were indeed increasingly important in the critical globalism taken up after the turn of the millennium, as witnessed in the next *documenta* by Enwezor.

In specific encounters in that 2002 exhibition, the trajectory of the visitor/subjectile could do the global work of art. Take the installation produced by the Atlas Project, in which the artist Walid Ra'ad traded in *doubt*, opening a productive aporia in the smug left politics that sometimes afflicted *documenta 11* (figs. 7.1, 7.2).[16] Utilizing the apparatus of a fictive bureaucracy (à la Szeemann) to produce distance from the emotions of war and the bombast of Western postures of engagement, Ra'ad's Atlas Group presented its dry forensics, producing a symphony of dubiety in the biennial subject. The skeptical visitor found herself wondering: could science really restore a color photograph found at the bottom of the Mediterranean, and identify it as a disappeared Lebanese citizen? The micropolitics of one's own position were also "on view." Visitors to *documenta 11* from the United States would certainly feel the force of such a question differently from, say, a Syrian, especially given the timing of the exhibition's opening, just months after September 11, 2001. Thus the traumatic subjects evoked in the Atlas Group narratives, which include disappeared citizens, mutilated cars, and trapped historian-gamblers, stimulated other kinds of questions as well, heightened

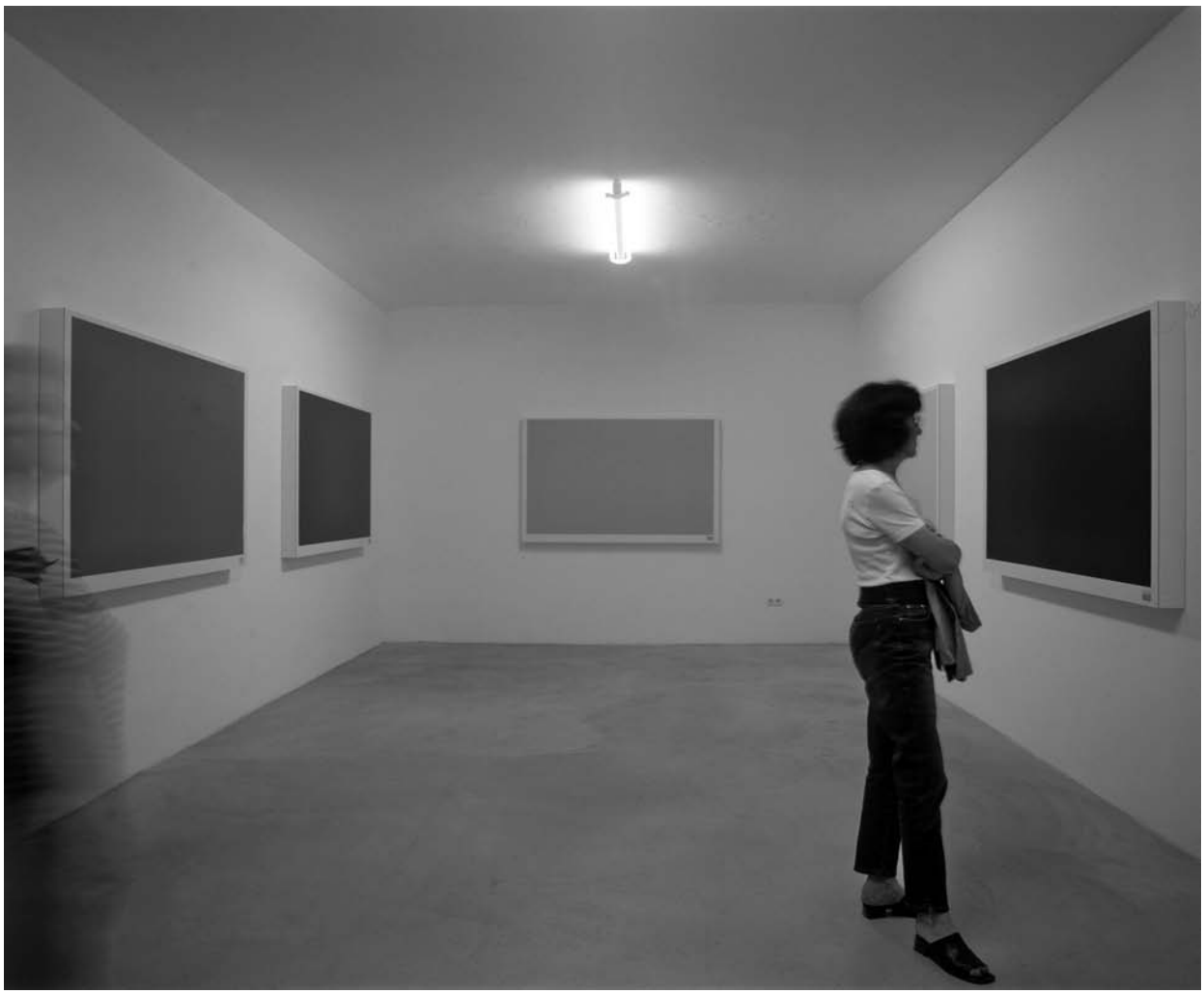

Figure 7.1 A viewer at *documenta 11* in Kassel, Germany, 2002, looking at *Secrets in the Open Sea*, 1975–94, by the Atlas Group (Walid Ra'ad). Photograph: Ryszard Kasiewicz. © documenta Archiv.

by Ra'ad's sophisticated graphic style: Who is manufacturing the carefully catalogued bullets that have entered these Beirut apartment buildings? How are the stolen European cars transported, and to whom are they sold? Are the proceeds funding Hezbollah in the Golan Heights or Syrian bombings in Beirut? As the Atlas Group's parafictional installation unfolded, the darkly sub- or supranational narratives of terrorism became metanational sagas of entanglement, a critique of capitalism and brutality that had no certain villains, but only constant questioning as its goal.[17]

The working of Ra'ad's art is only one example of the leveraging of spectacle that I have argued is an important aspect of the aesthetics of experience, itself a precondition for critical globalism. Blindness, experience, event, doubt—these are seductions to knowledge that interrupt the aura of accurate reportage often claimed by the surrounding exhibits ("document," "manifest") and the municipal, national, or regional preening behind them. These interruptions also nuance the documentary textuality that Catherine David identified in 1997 as the evident vehicle for "strategies of emancipation" from Western peripheries, since Ra'ad is limning a melancholic poetry of entanglement in a world that is always suffused by global economies and politics. This is posed definitively against any essentialisms that imagine "picturing" or "documenting" difference as stable constructs. Critical globalism makes use of the spectacle, like a lens turned just the right way to illuminate—or burn—suffusing doxa.

Whether biennial culture is offering art that nego-

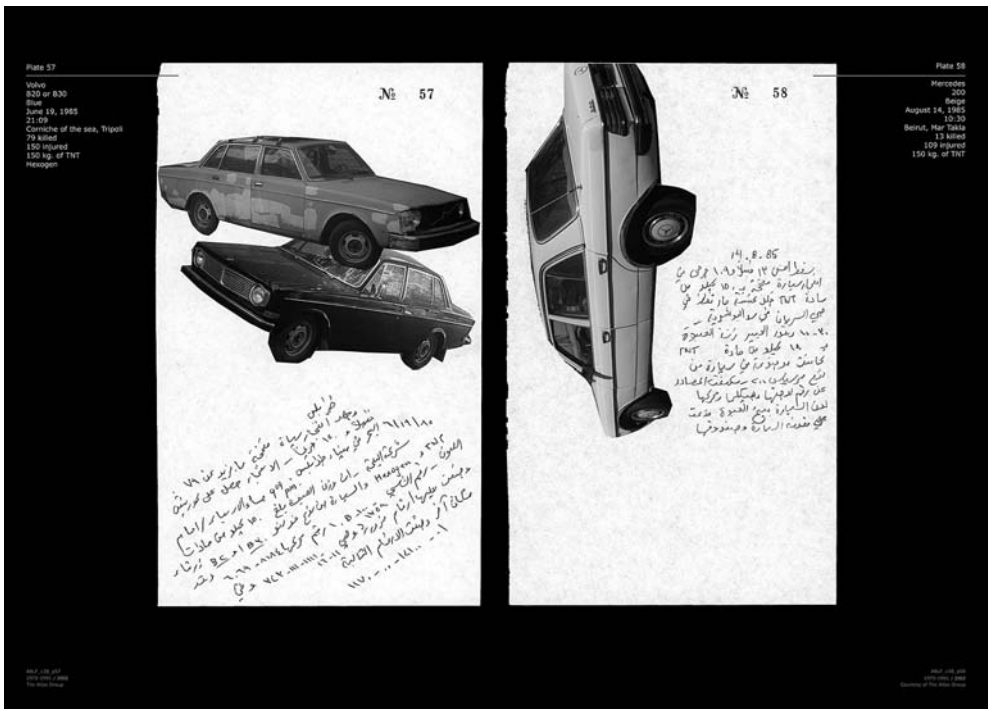

Figure 7.2 Walid Ra'ad/Atlas Group, *Notebook volume 38: Already been in a lake of fire_ Plate 57–58, 1991/2003* (one of nine digital color prints, each 30 × 42 cm). Courtesy Paula Cooper Gallery, New York. © Walid Ra'ad.

tiates differends, fosters imaginary escape, or immerses us in media, its infrastructures increasingly acknowledge diffuse and distributed forms of knowledge production that can achieve remarkable democratization. These cascading chains of mediation may mimic the circulation of global capital, but they are also vectors for its critique. For example, although the perceiving "you" is continually emphasized in Olafur Eliasson's biennial installations, that only gives a name and an address for the tension between technological mediation and the ever-renewing rhetoric of experience that saturates biennial culture. Eliasson's pronomial "you" is the site at which various apparatuses come into focus, and experience juggles the local and the cosmic, the material and the sublime. That is, transnational subjects can certainly lubricate globalization and global capital (not the least as tourist dollars saturate each biennial hub). *But they can also convey the tools for implementing their own power/knowledge effects.* Eliasson, drawing from the countercultural edge of systems thinking, wants to leave the power plug visible, or engage the city's inhabitants through posters and surveys. This stands in poststructural opposition to Szeemann's romantic hope that art might be a closed system where the artist "imagines a world" in autochthonic bachelor fashion. It also provides a more optimistic gloss on Althusser's notions of interpellation—by becoming aware of the apparatus, *you* have some agency within it, entering a world that is "never completely constituted," as Merleau-Ponty put it, in a phenomenology that would profoundly affect Eliasson and other postwar artists.

The task of artists and their curators is amenable to traditional descriptions: they must produce sensible boundaries between art and everyday existence. They must inaugurate the viewer's awareness of having an experience in the presence of art, and augment that viewer's aesthetic recollection. The responsibility of art-world visitors is to craft from this a judgment—seemingly, we are still subjects of the Enlightenment (chapter 6). What has changed is the tactics of artists who would be global. Increasingly, they work any one of these encounters *as medium* and open it for rupture and reflexivity. This, I have argued, is how the aesthetic of experience can be productive, and how critical globalism can emerge. If we would be nonpassive visitors, then we have to enter Eliasson's titles, and interrogate, for example, the circumstances of *Your Black Horizon* (fig. 7.3). An off-site pavilion staged in contrast to the "branding" of national pavilions elsewhere in the 2005 Venice Biennale, the purpose-built (but eminently movable) structure was designed by London-based architect David Adjaye in collaboration with Eliasson, and put in place for the sole purpose of offering a complex

Figure 7.3 Olafur Eliasson and David Adjaye, *Your Black Horizon*. *Left:* off-site pavilion at the 2005 Venice Biennale. *Right:* interior shot of the installation, with visitors. Commissioned by Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary.

experience of contemporary art. The collaboration was commissioned by the Thyssen-Bornemizsa Art Contemporary Foundation (TBA21), Habsburg-era aristocracy melded with German steel fortunes. Wanting to build on the success of his discursive, spectacular *Weather Project* at the Tate Modern in 2002, Eliasson nonetheless aimed for something edgier as an experience. Adjaye's architecture led viewers into gradually deepening darkness; finally they entered a dark room embedded with strips of LED lights, occluded so that only a glow was faintly visible. *Your Black Horizon* foregrounded the experiencing body and the ruminating discourse of the visitors bumping around within. But then its working spooled out over time. It is not enough that the dim illumination waxed and waned in a twelve-minute cycle; biennial culture ensured that wall labels, webchat, flickr photos, exhibition catalogue, press coverage, and word of mouth were part of the production of the subject. We learned through these supplements that the lights cycled as a function of photon levels measured at this site in the Venetian lagoon from dawn to dusk. Suddenly the embodied experience of wandering in the near dark (or the memory of having done so) was amplified by questions about the compression algorithm. Was it temporal—each hour sped up to yield a single minute? Or was it a stochastic sampling, one minute *sampled* every hour? *Your Black Horizon* even wormed its way into a darker space of anxiety about a global future without oil, an "event horizon" of black nights and lurking silhouettes. Experience thus blossoms out from the individual body, potentially to inform a body politic with actionable views on global warming and our role in the Anthropocene.

These works of Ra'ad and Eliasson are exemplary of many that construct us as situated in a world of complex geopolitical dimensions. They are in a market (Ra'ad's works can be sold as objects, Eliasson and Adjaye's assemblage was commissioned and later moved to Croatia, where its reference to Venice will be lost), but for the biennial visitor they offered themselves as "free" experience.[18] They suspended the immediate referents of economimesis for the longer working in which we might contemplate economies; this is what I take to be critical globalism. Such experiential art occupies the legacy propelled by a Clark or Oiticica (chapters 4 and 5), staged by visionary curators such as Guy Brett in London or Kynaston McShine in New York, and fostered by Szeemann and others eager to mark the historical shift from object to subject in biennial culture. At the same time, these exquisitely critical practices revive phenomenology's *intersubjective* side, now expanded to reference our networked interdependence. Just as the once peripheral networking activities around fairs and biennials were inserted into its very structure (chapter 5), so the contemporary aesthetics of experience extends beyond the moment of contact. Discourses and memory-work adumbrate and construct experience as such, reinforced by flows of information forming their own technologies of memory, reproducing

"experience" in its virtual forms online. We should savor the irony of the fact that this configuration of flows—the very sign of contemporaneity—links us back to the systematic bureaucracies of empirical knowledge in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, moving from Enlightenment encyclopedic ambitions, to the apparatus of the world's great expositions, through their publications, souvenirs, and encounters, to the inheritor and archive of all these modes: the World Wide Web.

The bureaucratic division of human activity that was bequeathed by the fairs to the world, and which the contemporary biennial both confounds and recapitulates, had perhaps no better advocate than Victor Cousin (1792–1867), the French philosopher and educator who spoke of art's autonomy as if it were a product of the fairs' divisions: "Il faut de la religion pour la religion, de la morale pour la morale, comme de l'art pour l'art."[19] Far from producing art as strictly autonomous, however, the kind of taxonomies that Cousin's philosophy bequeathed to the exposition (plate 7) would challenge art's very "aura." As Walter Benjamin put it, "The phantasmagoria of capitalist culture attains its most radiant unfolding in the World Exhibition of 1867."[20] What neither Benjamin nor Cousin could have imagined was how the expansion of "art" (post-Duchamp, and then post-Oiticica) would turn these bureaucratic designations inside out. Art as antiretinal, art as event, would benefit the aesthetics of experience rather than the traditions Cousin had in mind. Duchamp's urinal worked through the *Blind Man* to turn us from spectacles of "international painting and sculpture" toward "new thoughts" for objects, later invested in the precision optics of the artist's carnalizing rotary devices (chapter 1). Many decades later, Haacke's smashing of the Nazis' marble floor works to expose us kinesthetically to the turning of globalism against a nationalist history (chapter 3), and the posthumous mobilization of Oiticica's *Parangolé* inside the 1994 São Paulo biennial (fig. 5.9) summons a specifically Brazilian history to tear subjects from complacent colonialism, while troubling the covert universalisms of globalization. Such spatialization and specialization are part of what the fairs bequeathed, codified by Cousin, or framed for Teddy Roosevelt as *The World's Work,* parsed in sections for visitors to the 1904 St. Louis exposition (chapter 2). The subject of such events was occasionally configured as capable of supersensory theory: the exploratory and theorizing blindman, the progeny of bachelor machine and dynamo at the fair, the creative appropriator (via anthropophagy) of commodity culture. That the sensing turned out to work the differend in an expanded aesthetics of experience offers hope.

The history summarized in this chapter suggests that "experience" is most often promised during intense spikes in technological change and transformations in human labor, the latest being "cognitive capitalism."[21] That hypothesis governs as well the case of Heidegger, in his troubled yearning for an age *before* the one in which the world picture was enframed by modern technologies of the image, enabled by epistemologies of scientific rationality and "standing reserves." In the face of taxonomized bodies and structures of knowledge, Heidegger imagined a lost experiential wholeness, an art and culture that would be unbureaucratic, unmediated, untranslated. In this concluding chapter, Heidegger's totalized world picture is accepted as a component of what is. But various artistic tactics have destabilized its instrumentality and opened onto alternatives that just might be changing "the age" of the world-as-picture, politicizing and historicizing it, while enmeshing us in its visceral realities through art, viewer activation, and *desire*.

To contest the lapsarian aspect of Heidegger's philosophy, I have emphasized the possibilities worked out in encounters with art and the ruptures they engender: the politics of the partial view, the multiplication of world pictures, and entanglement rather than enframement. Such alternatives have emerged in my narratives as a result of desiring-production in mobilized local viewers, subsequently shared. Globalist art can only work on the ground of individual theoric journeys, punctuated by ruptures and misprisions that construct subjects who entertain productive criticality and doubt. Claims to "experience" are, at their best, components of an injunction to the viewer: think, participate, challenge first impressions, be a*live* in your embodied head.

Global Workings of Art

In this penultimate section, I want to explore how and when world pictures give access to critical globalism: What practices induce that kind of politics? When are eruptions of "experience" articulated and valued as a critical rhetoric in art, and against what implied alternatives?

American pragmatist John Dewey has emerged periodically as a theorist of the tension between experience and the regimentation of modern life; he remains pertinent for the globalist.[22] Dewey's opinion of the political importance of experience for democracy was foreshadowed in his rejection of the epistemic plans for unifying knowledge *in advance of any encounter* with the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair.[23] Bemoaning the division that organizer Hugo Munsterberg had blithely placed between "phenomena and purposes" for the first scientific congress on social psychology to be held at the fair, Dewey made a rousing plea for experience as unifying both:

> Such divisions, if they have any effect at all, can only operate prejudicially to the freedom and completeness of the intellectual discussions of the congress. The essential trait of the scientific life of today is its democracy, its give-and-take, its live-and-let-live character. Scientific men of today are struggling hard and successfully to break down previously existing artificial walls separating different sciences, and to secure a continuous open and free field of inquiry.[24]

For Dewey, the open field of inquiry was what the 1893 Chicago Exposition had already put on view, its rising outlines on a literally "open field" could be seen from his nearby office at the young University of Chicago. The extraordinary wonders of electricity and magnetism "did *not* come from the business men" in Dewey's account. They came from the play of ideas born of open inquiry and from collegial encounters, gifts given freely by men of science—a parallel to the inherently democratic gifts of art.[25]

This is the heart of Dewey's 1934 opus *Art as Experience,* where the pleasures of aesthetic play inevitably triumph over monetization or instrumentalization. Aesthetics in this pragmatic account emerge from fresh encounters that propel "an adjustment of our whole being with the conditions of existence."[26] Rather than Heidegger's nearly simultaneous musings on art as a redoubt from modernity, Dewey positioned aesthetics as *the* site where modernization might be processed kinesthetically, through direct experience. This would guide a kind of new knowledge that could be restorative rather than destructive. Our being *will* be adjusted to the new industrial forms of existence—but art will also produce the space for doubt, reflection, discussion, democratic debate—and an enrichment of the subject so produced. For Dewey, the aesthetic of experience was both sensualist and indebted to technology—the "push-pull" engineering theories of mind that were even then being codified as Gestalt psychology.[27] Stimulated by modernists such as John Marin, who would be the US representative (along with Jackson Pollock) at the 1950 Venice Biennale, Dewey saw how art could "organize energies" for progressive politics:

> Repetition of uniform units at uniform intervals is not only not rhythmic but is opposed to the experience of rhythm. . . . As the eye moves it takes in new and reënforcing surfaces, and careful observation will show that new patterns are almost automatically constructed. . . . The organic demand for variety is such that it is enforced in experience, even without much external occasion.[28]

Life and art work in rhythms that are dynamic, not machinic or mathematically regular. As we look at the reproduction of *Movement: Seas after Hurricane* from 1947 (fig. 7.4), we have Marin's cues (in the painting's title and loose brushstrokes) to what Dewey was thinking about, and with. Marin's repetitions refuse "uniform units," replacing the mechanical measures of the geometer with the intuitive riffing of jazz or the dynamic countersteps of boogie-woogie. These negotiations with the differend of African-American culture would also inform Pollock's work, there with Marin's in the theater of nations at the Venice Biennale (fig. 7.5).[29] Such ambitions would become more explicit in Dewey's wake, as a generation of "American-type" painters brought mythic themes together with a gestural "automatism" to confront the actual automation then going on in rapidly industrializing nation-states. Their hopes to bridge past and present, native and international, local and cosmic, were what led critic E. A. Jewell to announce: "'Globalism' pops into view."[30] Linked increasingly (through discourse and the bodies of its painters) to masculine "action," this gestural painting defied the intellectualism of postwar existential philosophy. Such "acts" were quasi-physical rather than metaphysical; even poetry became "the *act* of the mind" and "the *act* of finding" in Wallace Stevens's formulation (emphases added).[31] In this ambiance, the curators

Figure 7.4 John Marin, *Movement: Seas after Hurricane Red, Green, and White, Figure in Blue, Maine*, 1947. Marin was a US representative at the 1950 Venice Biennale. Courtesy Peter A. Juley & Son Collection. Smithsonian Museum of American Art, J0045311. © 2016 Estate of John Marin/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

preparing the US pavilion for the 1950 Venice Biennale (two Alfreds: Frankfurter and Barr) put their retrospective of John Marin together with a survey of six younger artists—Pollock was identified by critics as a "special case" among them. Quite consciously, the two curators intended to signal the emergence of a new generation, but also an ideology of "freedom" in their own eclectic choice of gestural, expressionist artists for a European biennial still recovering from the Fascist regime, and dominated by a conservative Realist style.[32] While this display certainly traded in Cold War ideologies, my invocation of Dewey is meant to complicate that now reflexive interpretation of "top-down" programming for the subjects of newly global art, and to point out the many alternatives that were proliferating on the ground. Dewey was plumping for art as experience at the most demotic level possible. Many kinds of art could remain open, *as free experience,* for people in the fragile democracies of the postwar epoch. What was important was keeping the subjects of those democracies open and adaptive, informed and engaged, in a world that would not remain a "picture" but was evolving rapidly into "spheres" of influence and codeterminacy.

It is a truism that there was a politicization of art in the newly reenergized biennial culture during the immediate postwar period. The conjunction of Marin and Pollock at the US pavilion in Venice was poised between Dewey's writing on "art as experience" and the triumph of São Paulo's Concretist Bienal. As a marker of the tentative and extemporaneous nature of the art world of 1950 Venice versus 1951 São Paulo, we have no installation photographs of the interior of the US pavilion, only indications of what specific paintings were inside.[33] What the US showing did was participate in the staging of figurative *versus* abstract (as in São Paulo's 1949 museum show), while alluding to the US shift toward a gestural expressionism that was bidding to be the next international style.[34] More speculatively, by positioning Marin as the "tradition" that might anchor an artist such as Pollock for European viewers, the curators contested alternative legacies for postwar abstraction (whether Mondrian or Max Bill, these were strictly European and geometric). While some US writers alluded to a specific European Existentialist discourse in discussions of the canvas as an "arena in which to act," they also hoped to find a nativist origin for their art.[35] Whether existentialism was itself responding to Dewey is a useful question, but in any case it would contribute to a coding of Pollock's traces of body movement as unalienated "free" labor, paralleled on the

Figure 7.5 Jackson Pollock, *No. 12*, 1949. Oil on paper laid down on Masonite, 31 × 22½ inches. Shown at the US pavilion, Venice Biennale, 1950. © 2016 The Pollock-Krasner Foundation/ Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

European side by theories of *informel* (the unformed existential act), and in Asia by emerging Zero and Gutai "concrete" actions. In this dramatically transnational conversation, objects began to be read as merely the repositories of event-traces, migrating through the next generation of artists as Happenings and later "Pollockian performatives."[36] As we've seen, Happenings became a worldwide movement that fed artists such as Oiticica and drove curators such as Szeemann. The desire was clear: to free the exhibitionary complex from its strictly nationalist orientation (chapter 5)—diagnosed by Oiticica as "diarrhea" and by artist Michael Heizer as Bern's "depression" (plate 32).[37] Dewey helps us to understand that while Szeemann certainly served the grinding machinery of neoliberal capitalism, this does not foreclose the parallel possibility for producing critical subjects or openings from eventful art.

Dewey's *Art as Experience* provided one significant pathway out of the 1940s, equipping readers to address the congealed problematic attached by Heidegger to phenomenal experience.[38] With further contributions by Adorno and the posthumously published writings of Walter Benjamin, a critical attitude evolved that would continue to question the terms of experience, and resist its instrumentalization by commodity capitalism. This criticality threaded through branches of Conceptual Art that began to engage in events and restore contact with the body.[39] Szeemann's curation followed this lead, bringing erotic (if hypergendered) stylings and a romance with "mythologies" to make eventful art happen, diverting expositionary culture from its object-driven logic to more diffuse openings onto the subjectile. The cracking of the art world's media bureaucracies and sensory hierarchies were part of the demand to represent difference and eradicate nationalism—all systematic gains for contemporary artists and visitors to the art world. In sum, world pictures curated within Cold War constraints could always be processed under the reign of capital, but an emerging openness to process and event also undid some of that logic. Pollock and Marin were paraded under nationalism's banner, but via Dewey they gave us the tools to unlock painting from vision, to engage the body in visceral perception, to feel rhythms contrapuntal to industrial order, and to embrace a future of critical globalism.

The moment of critical globalism even allows us to feel an embedded suffusion in the world rather than a place of distanced or transcendental reason. Without abdicating our responsibility to reflect on all the nets, webs, and forces in which we are entangled, we have considerable space for aspirational globality. The information flows generating 1970s art prefigured this pairing of experience and engagement—as the rigorous conceptualism and *antropofagia* of Oiticica showed. Was there an "international style" that Oiticica had to enter in order to speak *Tropicália*'s difference? Suggestively, we can now amalgamate his works to the hybrid genre of "installation art," canonized in the 1980s.[40]

Installation came of age within an already global art circuit that was not necessarily "Western." Although dialectically connected to the now globalized parergon of the white cube, installation formed its negative critique as specifically engaged with the Other, from Beuys's Eurasian assemblies of the early 1960s, to Oiticica's *Babylonests* or the *Blindhotlands* of Cildo Meireles in the 1970s, to Betye Saar's *retablo*-like environments of the 1980s, and on to artists of the 1990s and turn of the millennium I will be discussing below.[41] The global workings of art came to rely on installation, along with its partners, performance and projected film/video. Installations took advantage of

the redolent postindustrial sites that became common aspects of biennial culture after the 1990s; multisensory approaches were typical. Chapter 5 recounts the ways in which Oiticica and Szeemann played different roles in installation art's emergence, noting the former's immersive *Tropicália* (1967) and the latter's *Grossvater* (1974), where the "white cube" model of gallery space derived in Secession-style modernism became definitively corrupted. The subtle shift in terminology passed through the curator-as-auteur (where the curator would offer "an installation of art") to the artist-as-curator (where "installation *art*" was the thing).

Installation art's relation to difference is historically linked to the emergence of critical globalism. As with Lyotard's agonistic differend, the "otherness" in installation art is not an easily consumable image but a place to be and become different, an immersive site for negotiating the ethical existence of the Other. This situational aesthetic includes various setups from the 1960s and 1970s, such as Oiticica's *Tropicália* and Cildo Meireles' *Blindhotland* (chapter 5). But I would also extend it to include more recent formations, whether they propel visitors to wander among parafictions presented by the Atlas Group, or invite them to come repeatedly to experience the accumulated *écriture feminine* of Ann Hamilton's whispering, bleeding walls in the 1999 Venice Biennale (fig. 7.6). Hamilton's differend is literally without speech; she works the ur-difference of the nonverbal, of craft labor, of "woman's work."

The Other surfaced in installation art can be this fully distributed difference inflicted on gender, or the geopolitical differencing of nation or indigene. Within European biennials, this genre can merely revive a European "Other"—as in the 2013 edition of the biennial in Venice, where posthumous "installation art" was made from the neogothic manuscript pages of Carl Jung's 1913–40 "Red Book," unbound and mounted in an immersive configuration behind an entrance guarded by the spectral mask of Surrealism's founder, André Breton. This edition of the biennial had many such moments, in which curator Massimiliano Gioni staged Germanic visionaries such as Jung or Hilma af Klimt as the repressed Other of European rationalism, kindred spirits to self-taught artists now propelled from obscurity.[42] A more sophisticated positioning was the 2009 installation resulting from curator Daniel Birnbaum's invitation to George Adeagbo, whose magpie African studio setups reference an always already globalized consciousness. Adeagbo's installation was positioned in a corner between two galleries in this biennial thematized as *Fare Mondi* (Making Worlds). Arranged around the visitor were Bulgari ads, newspaper pages, canned homilies ("art is love, and love is art"), Jesus imagery, African wood sculptures, and stylish Venetian boots.[43] Even the trinity of plugs left dangling from the ceiling's corner by the biennial maintenance crew seemed to hold some kind of cross-cultural significance in Adeagbo's installation (fig. 7.7). Installation fosters immersive speculation.

Is it purely coincidence that the codification of installation art in the 1990s came at the same cultural moment that biennials proliferated to form a network around the world? Was it the new biennials of the 1990s, emerging from the end of apartheid in Africa or Soviet clientism in Eastern Europe or Cuba, that rendered the art world truly global for the first time? Such correlations are never simply causal. But I suggest that the shift from object to experience codified in installation art became the canon of twenty-first-century biennial culture in part because the immersive experiences thus fostered meet our most fervent desires to know a complex, anthropological world in an experiential way. Suspended, in this account, are any claims to "authenticity" in this experience of the Other. We enter the realm of representation at the biennial and become aware that we too are representing. In this way there is a remarkable leveling of the playing field on which the differend can be negotiated, and can potentially be heard.

The offering of "experience" and the multiplying of worlds that installation art made vivid also presented a pragmatic solution to economic limits on curatorial or artistic emplotment. As Doris Salcedo commented about her Istanbul biennial installation of old chairs tumbled into an alley, the resulting metaphor for the chaos of war was all-purpose: "I'm not narrating a particular story, I'm just addressing experiences" (fig. 7.8).[44] Her personal negotiations with violence in her native Colombia became generalized in Istanbul's global biennial, forming floating metaphors via the homeless furniture of peoples displaced by globalization more generally. And while installations could have complex moving parts and durational components (Hamilton's weeping walls) or stimulate an eventlike forensic among surprised viewers (what happened here? How did those chairs *get* there? Is this part of

Figure 7.6 Ann Hamilton, views of the installation *myein* in the US pavilion at the Venice Biennale, 1999. Materials: four skylights, glass and gridded steel wall (18 × 90 feet), wood table, white cloths, mirrored glass, vinyl powder, auger system, electronic controllers, plaster, recorded voice, digital audio, computer, sixteen speakers. Photograph: Thibault Jeanson; courtesy Ann Hamilton.

Figure 7.7 George Adeagbo, *La Creation et les Creations!* (2009). Installation in three parts with found, bought, and commissioned objects from Western Africa and Europe, at the 2009 Venice Biennale, *Making Worlds* (curated by Daniel Birnbaum). Photograph: Giorgio Zucchiatti. Historical Archives of Contemporary Art (ASAC), Venice Biennale.

the biennial?), event-based programming could also be a bargain. Fly in the artist instead of shipping expensive, indemnified artworks. Let her find some chairs, bring in some pigment, hire a local set of workers (job-creation!), or otherwise make do. Sometimes, contributing the sweat equity of your own installation art is the price of being a critical globalist, as artist Martha Rosler commented after participating in the Venice Biennale of 2003: "I see the international exhibition as a grand collector and translator of subjectivities under the latest phase of globalization. This is far from trivial."[45] Szeemann himself noted prophetically in 1971, when he had to cut the budget for *documenta* 5: "We can't rely eternally on moving originals around."[46] When artists began to move faster than objects, and information more easily than either, it reinforced pressures already coming from the radical edge of art practice, and events emerged as fundamental to the biennials' art, rather than just its festal peripheries.[47] After controversially winning the Gold Lion at the Venice Biennale in 1964, American artist Robert Rauschenberg declared that he was giving up painting in favor of performed events. By the time Tino Sehgal won the same award in 2013, eventful art had itself become central to the biennial apparatus. What I have claimed is that this emphasis on ephemeral experience now drives the working of art and critical globalism, giving increasing responsibility to the public for making a common sense.

The crisis of the object in the art world of the 1960s entered our story through the "vanguard" that curators wanted to program in Rio, London, Tokyo, New York, and Bern (chapter 5). It was already seen as political in those contexts but became dramatically more so during the protests at the 1964 *documenta* and 1968 Venice Biennale. Local art students and international biennial artists coordinated attacks against the continuing sale of art objects out of the exhibition in Venice, which had

Figure 7.8 Doris Salcedo, *Untitled*, 2003. Installation for the 8th International Istanbul Biennial, comprising 1,550 wooden chairs. The location is Yemeniciler Caddesi No. 66 in the Karaköy neighborhood of central Istanbul. Photograph: Muammer Yanmaz. Image courtesy of Alexander and Bonin, New York.

provided the main revenue for the event since its founding in the 1890s. *Documenta*, which wasn't selling works, could nonetheless be tarred with the same brush, as when Smithson harangued it for peddling "visual fodder and transportable merchandise." Smithson also participated vociferously in the boycott of the 1971 São Paulo Bienal, castigating the US organizer (Gyorgy Kepes) for technophilia and "crewcut teamwork" that masked the darkness of ongoing political violence.[48] Venice ceded to these new realities, and stopped functioning as a broker of sales. Art fairs immediately took up the slack.[49] Yet the forced conversion from a market economy to a nonprofit environment did free biennial art. Smithson's call for "a dialectics that seeks a world outside of cultural confinement" and his judgment that "it would be better to disclose the confinement rather than make illusions of freedom" were at least conceivable within the new nonprofit status of biennials—difficult for the fundraisers but inspiring for

artistic agency.[50] Again, pragmatic considerations played a role; high-definition projected video, when it emerged in the 1990s, was an attractive late-coming alternative to the complexity of installations. Szeemann had consigned video to a separate program at *documenta 5* in 1972, as did Catherine David at *documenta 10* in 1999, analogizing it to cinematic forms. By the time of Szeemann's Venice offering in 2001—*Plateau of Humanity*—white cubes were tessellated with black boxes, and installations were balanced by durational video as a core constituent of his ongoing "Museum of Obsessions."

Video's emergence as a spectacular addition to biennial culture can be dated with some precision to Jean Clair's Venice Biennial in 1995, where commissioner Marilyn Zeitlin presented Bill Viola in the US pavilion. Viola's video installations did not engage the biennial's rubric of "identity and alterity"—while commissioners and artists are "encouraged" to attend to the theme, they often don't. In the event, Viola's *Buried Secrets* brought computer-orchestrated, extremely high-definition recording and projection technologies into viewers' experience in a way that seemed to go beyond cinema. Visitors entering the dowdy pavilion moved into blackness, where they were drawn in by large-scale rear projections that felt intensely proximate and nothing short of *magical*. The exhibition catalogue's cover captures the set up: hovering figures, larger than life, in stunning detail, at the end of a darkened room (fig. 7.9). The image illustrated is from *The Greeting*, completed that year. Accompanied by a sound track in which a muffled roar comes into audition, then fades away, the ten-minute sequence shows two women joined by a third, the third moving ever-so slowly into contact with the woman in front, to whom she whispers something, then pulls away. Significantly softening his startling deployment of these new, high-definition technologies with slow-motion playback and sumptuous color, Viola's imagery also mined the traditional forms and compositions of devotional art from the Italian Renaissance (the primary iconographic inspiration is Jacopo Pontormo's annunciation painting *The Greeting*, from 1528–29). Augustinian brands of cosmopolitanism can be heard in the pavilion curator's claim: "The cultural references are comprehensible and reverberate for everyone."[51]

Figure 7.9 *Bill Viola: Buried Secrets*, cover of the catalogue for Viola's exhibition at the US pavilion for the 46th Venice Biennale, June 11–October 15, 1995. The cover illustration shows a still from *The Greeting*. Photograph: Kira Perov.

Everyone? Despite the artist's avowed interest in Buddhism, the "cultural references" of *The Greeting* are embedded in a very Christian iconography, and a very Western history of art. Markers of difference elide in this sublimation of experience, and the reverberations here work mostly for citizens of Augustine's City of God, invited in "to experience states of being that hover between polarities: between the normative and the extraordinary, waking and sleep, order and chaos, quietude and violence, life and death."[52] Viola's *techne*—in this case gorgeous computerized projection—was made approachable through the iconography of a two-thousand-year-old faith. This encapsulation does not open onto the kind of fragmented and questioning subject generated by critical globalism. Not that immersive video is incapable of producing the useful state of the subjectile. Pipilotti

Figure 7.10 Pipilotti Rist, *Homo sapiens sapiens*, as installed in the off-site Swiss pavilion at the Chiesa San Stae, Venice Biennale 2005. Photograph: A. Burger. © Pipilotti Rist; courtesy the artist, Luhring Augustine, New York, and Hauser & Wirth.

Rist's off-site installation for Switzerland in 2005 managed to pull this off, in the projection-installation *Homo sapiens sapiens* (fig. 7.10). Rist's lush and sensual imagery did not seek the comfort of traditional iconography but bared its feminist agenda via angels of libido, released to flow over the interior spandrels of the baroque church of San Stae in Venice. Rather than demanding a black cube to "suspend" the viewer outside of time and space, the artist used the architecture, taking advantage of the next generation of digital technology to "tie" her imagery to the symmetries of its ceilings' peaks, punctuating the traditional devotional space. Rist thus opens a dialogue between architectural projections of religious transcendence and virtually embodied ones—with frictionlessness converted from spiritualism to the body's lubrication of itself in the throes of desire. As if responding to her compatriot's nonprocreative bachelor machines (Szeemann died that year and was honored at the Biennale), Rist's projection turned the essentialized terrain of Szeemann's "la Mamma" into a polymorphous playground.

Was there a global subject in this mockingly Technicolor Switzerland? Earth mothers were simply girls playing in dirt; the demands of sexual reproduction shifted to ludic encounters of supple, near-androgynous bodies without a care in the world; scopophilia was ever-so-slightly queered ("Homo" sapiens) in a countercultural Eden playing out for viewers lying prone on cushions down below.

Rist's installation should ring familiar. Resonating with Mariko Mori's *Wave* or Oiticica's *Eden Plan*, its viewers are pushed to reflect on meditative states and creative leisure. But Rist's delirious dis-organization of the oceanic, so satisfying to the Swiss commissioners and most art-world visitors, nonetheless ended up triggering a clash of nations. *Homo sapiens sapiens* became a problem for the Holy See, which forced the closure of the installation and its removal from the (supposedly decommissioned) Catholic premises. We can consider this exemplary of the contestations of the differend, where silencing is one available move in response to the Other. Allowing art to continue its negotiation through visitors' aesthetics of experience would be preferred.

Performance, installation, and video—genres examined in this chapter—can choose to be oblivious of the global apparatus or can take up tactics that focus on its effects. Surprisingly, traditional national pavilions (inspired by the *rue des Nations* at the 1889 and 1900 Parisian expositions and built into the Giardini at Venice as early as 1904) have proved productive in opening onto critical globalism. A signature moment came in 1993, with Hans Haacke's smashing of the German pavilion's Fascist floor (discussed briefly in chapter 3). Invited to demonstrate a newly united Germany's leadership of the twenty-first century, the German-born, US-based Haacke was simultaneously excavating the complex past of the German state and creating the circumstances to visualize its desire for a *tabula rasa* on which to erect an ambitious future, in which, post-*Wende*, it could aspire to be the cosmopolitan leader of twenty-first-century globality. Reinforcing the message was the pavilion's pairing of Haacke with Nam June Paik, the unusual duo (two New York artist-immigrants from West and East) providing an indication of the reunited German state's global inclusiveness. The noise of Paik's booming videos was balanced by the crunching of Speer's marble floor under visitors' feet, Haacke's austere intervention more than holding its own in experiential terms. Paik fully engaged with the requirement to both represent and transcend difference for the new world: he positioned himself in the catalogue and statements as a *mudong* (Korean shaman), in an intentional echo ("from the East") of German artist Joseph Beuys's shamanic performatives. Haacke, in turn, made sure visitors got the point of his creative destruction, posting a photograph on the entrance to the pavilion documenting Hitler's visit to the charged site sixty-one years earlier (plate 23). We might point to this as a moment of canonization, both for the aesthetics of experience (Haacke: the multisensorial crunch, the clouds of dust, the violent work of the concept, the "earthworks" ambiance; Paik: the immersive video environment, the *Global Groove* tradition) and for a politicized critical globalism. Both artists were awarded that year's Golden Lion for the best national pavilion, a ringing endorsement for Germany's embrace of cosmopolitics.[53]

The previous chapter insisted that "experience" encompasses such complexity, particularly as it plays out over time and accrues depth in its discursive extensions. Indeed, the importance of Tino Sehgal to this argument is not yet exhausted. I alluded earlier to his 2005 contribution to that same German national pavilion in Venice: "Tino Sehgal! Tino Sehgal! It's so contemporary, contemporary! Two Thousand Five, courtesy the artist" (if memory serves). As the sponsor, German investment firm DekaBank, described it on their website, Sehgal was "assembling meaning through directing people rather than creating objects," aligning with their stated motto of "making opportunities possible."[54] The potential for critique emerges in Sehgal's own telegraphic reference to the economics of biennial desires—viewers and curators' valuation of the "contemporary"—and the biennials' offer of "free" experience that is nonetheless already delivering us to the corporate sponsor and multiplying cultural capital for all concerned. Recalling the resonance of Philip Morris's multinational goals with Szeemann's transnational ones, such a statement from DekaBank's global capital does not own *all* the "opportunities" here. Nor does Sehgal's readiness to sell his works and to offer, like the culture industry itself, "an organization of subjectivity" deny the potential for a critical globalism.[55] In the illusion of self that I carry with me, I remember and report this piece in my own way—as my first experience of "a Sehgal." It was, for this unwitting visitor, a disarm-

ing and charming experience, destabilizing the "invisibility" of the guards and putting them front and center as amused, and amusing, interlocutors. In that first encounter, I didn't know that one could discuss art and the global economy with Sehgal's interpreters, but I would know better the next time around.[56]

The discursive layering onto experience is often where a critical globalism accrues. Sehgal's work certainly managed to churn the butter of the German state in 2005—"After all, the pavilion is an advertisement for our country, an opportunity for Germany to show itself to the world from its best side: outward-looking, creative and up-to-date."[57] But it could also be positioned by the pavilion's curator, Julian Heynen, as an implied critique of the object and its (national/globalized) economies:

> Tino Sehgal's work, as a bold extension of conceptual art, is at the same time an attempt to rethink notions of production in a globalized world fighting over resources.[58]

Heynen's reference to "resources" might be colored by the experience of working with Sehgal, who refuses to fly in airplanes, with their large carbon footprints, and insists on slower forms of transport such as boats and trains.[59] Questions of globalism increasingly entail not just reflection on the "fight over resources" but economimesis writ large—the recognition that the art world itself models and instantiates economic relations. Can we practice a globalism that is more about attitudes and less about altitudes in transit? Can we have that "hive mind" promised in 1980s postmodernism, so that we can think together about thinking, in order to think, and act, differently?

Practicing Critical Globalism

These questions, and this rhetoric, reveal the tangled aspirations of critical globalism, which is not a movement but an assemblage of agents whose collective momentum does not always push in the same direction. Generated by artistic practices and curatorial ambitions, critical globalism is also mobilized by visitors in reception of these workings in biennial exhibitions. "Rethinking notions of production in a globalized world," for example, might also have described curator Heynen's choice for the 2003 Biennale, Martin Kippenberger (1953–97), whose *Ventilation shaft, METRO-Net World connection, Venice* was posthumously installed in the suddenly localized "German" pavilion, conceptually tunneling from the empty vestibule in Venice into "connector shafts" in Leipzig, Los Angeles, and Kassel (fig. 7.11).[60] It is hard to reconstruct from the available documentation whether visitors to the German pavilion in 2003 *actually felt* the gusts of wind and *heard* the rumbles from the global subway—or whether these were haptic and auditory hallucinations induced by the famous jokester's last gambit. Similarly, while most recognize the ironic thrust of Kippenberger's notion of a massively linked world—a global village connected by simple subway stops—others earnestly explain that these "faux subway entrances lead nowhere physically, but conceptually link the major cities and people of the world." If Syros, Greece, and Notre Dame des Bois, Quebec, count as "major cities," then we can agree with this optimistic reading—definitely a possible utopia given the friendly cosmopolitanism that Kippenberger counted on in "spreading a good mood."[61]

Conceptualism is the crucial coin of critical globalism. And conceptualism allows problematization of the located biennial, as when Belgian-born, Mexico-based artist Francis Alÿs was asked in 1997 to produce a piece for the apodictically named *In-Site* biennial near the US-Mexico border. For this supposedly "site-specific" biennial, Alÿs created *The Loop (Tijuana–San Diego)*, "us[ing] his commission fee to travel south from Tijuana, across to Australia, north up the Pacific Rim and south through Alaska, Canada, and the United States, reaching San Diego without having crossed the Mexico-US border."[62] Far from the dissolving tactics of the trans, Alÿs limns the arbitrary but deadly border through a paranoid operation of avoidance. What is exhibited is an empty gallery space and a postcard describing this political mapping of the globe; visitors are encouraged to take one and "wish you were here" (fig. 7.12). Alÿs's deft gesture—whether or not he really caused so much fuel to burn, or subjected himself to so much jet lag—surfaces the preening localisms that undergird every biennial infrastructure (even the "nomadic anti-biennial," Manifesta), in this case savaging the art-world utopianism of *In-Site*'s "in-sight" with a brutal assertion of the border's actual violence for those at its uneven edge. An homage to this precedent was Javier Téllez, who accepted an invitation to the same biennial in 2005 and offered *One Flew over the Void (Bala*

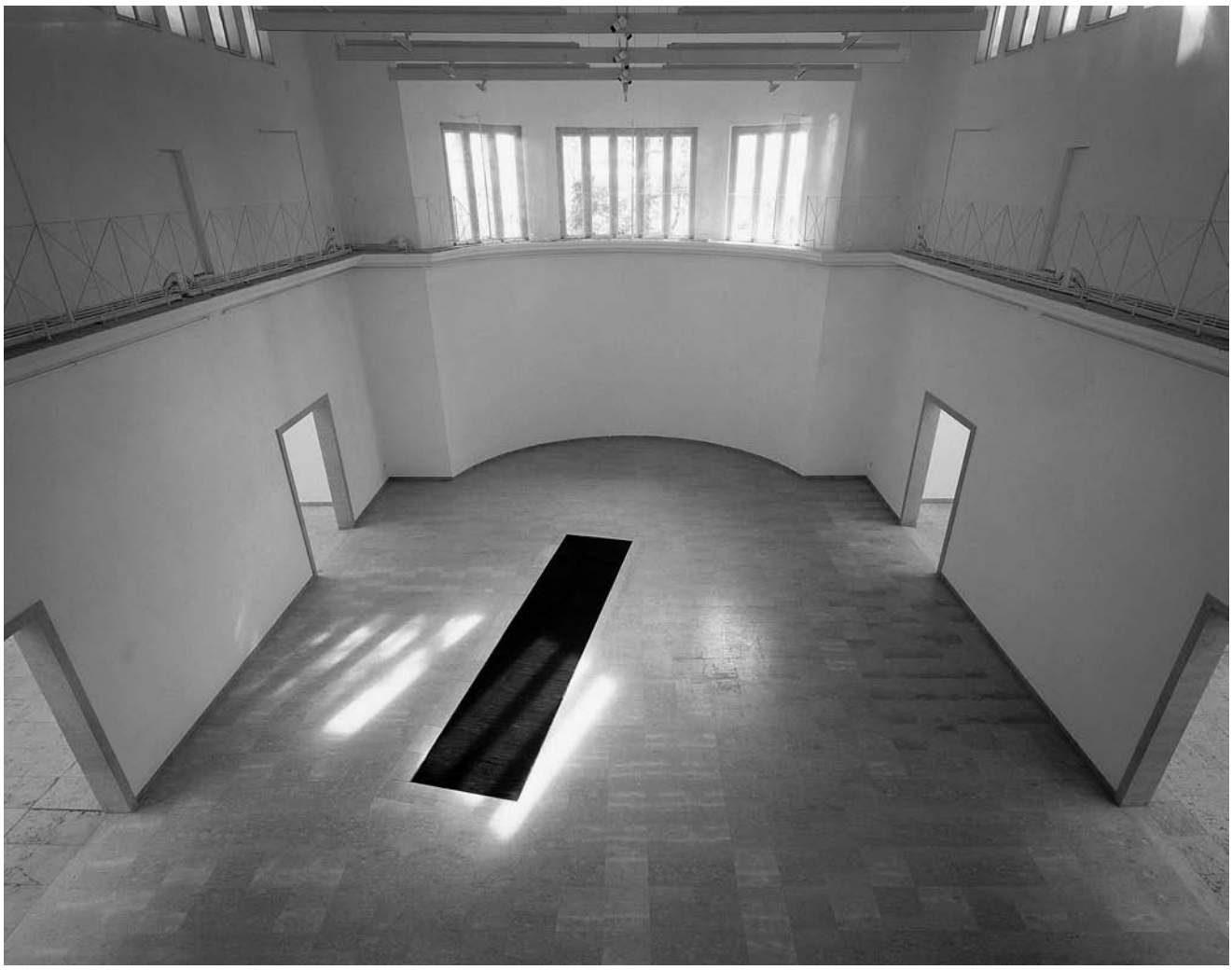

Figure 7.11 Martin Kippenberger, *Ventilation shaft, METRO-Net World connection, Venice, 1993–2003*, as installed posthumously in the German pavilion at the 50th Venice Biennale, 2003. Other connections could be found in Syros, Greece; Dawson City, Canada; and Gaubuenden, Switzerland (among other sites). © Estate Martin Kippenberger, Galerie Gisela Capitain, Cologne.

Perdida), a performance that similarly "transcended" the border, this time by means of a human cannonball shot from the Mexican side to the United States. Carrying his US passport, the trained cannonball gymnast constituted the "stray bullet" of the work's title (*bala perdida*), freely passing over the border that others would find violently shut against them.[63]

Politics are embedded in such suggestive stagings, giving critical globalism's conceptual rhetorics a distinct advantage. The subject's world picture can be altered by merely thinking about Alÿs's absurd trajectory (one needn't even engage the phenomenology of looking at the postcard). Watching the video of Téllez's performative gesture does a lot of the work of art: cheers and mariachi songs from the Mexican side accompany the hired human cannonball in his successful transit to the completely empty US beach. These asymmetries echo the previous chapter's point about economimesis and the parergon, where the discursively informed operations of "reflection" and interpretation become wrapped into the aesthetics of experience as it unfolds in time. The gestures made by Kippenberger, Téllez, and Alÿs make it clear that if we understand the national pavilion or sited biennial as a collection of architectures and places, then its capacity for meaning is limited. But in this book the national pavilion, site-specificity, and even "biennials" are understood as concepts, ideologies, and funding structures that give artists' transnational and transcultural critiques

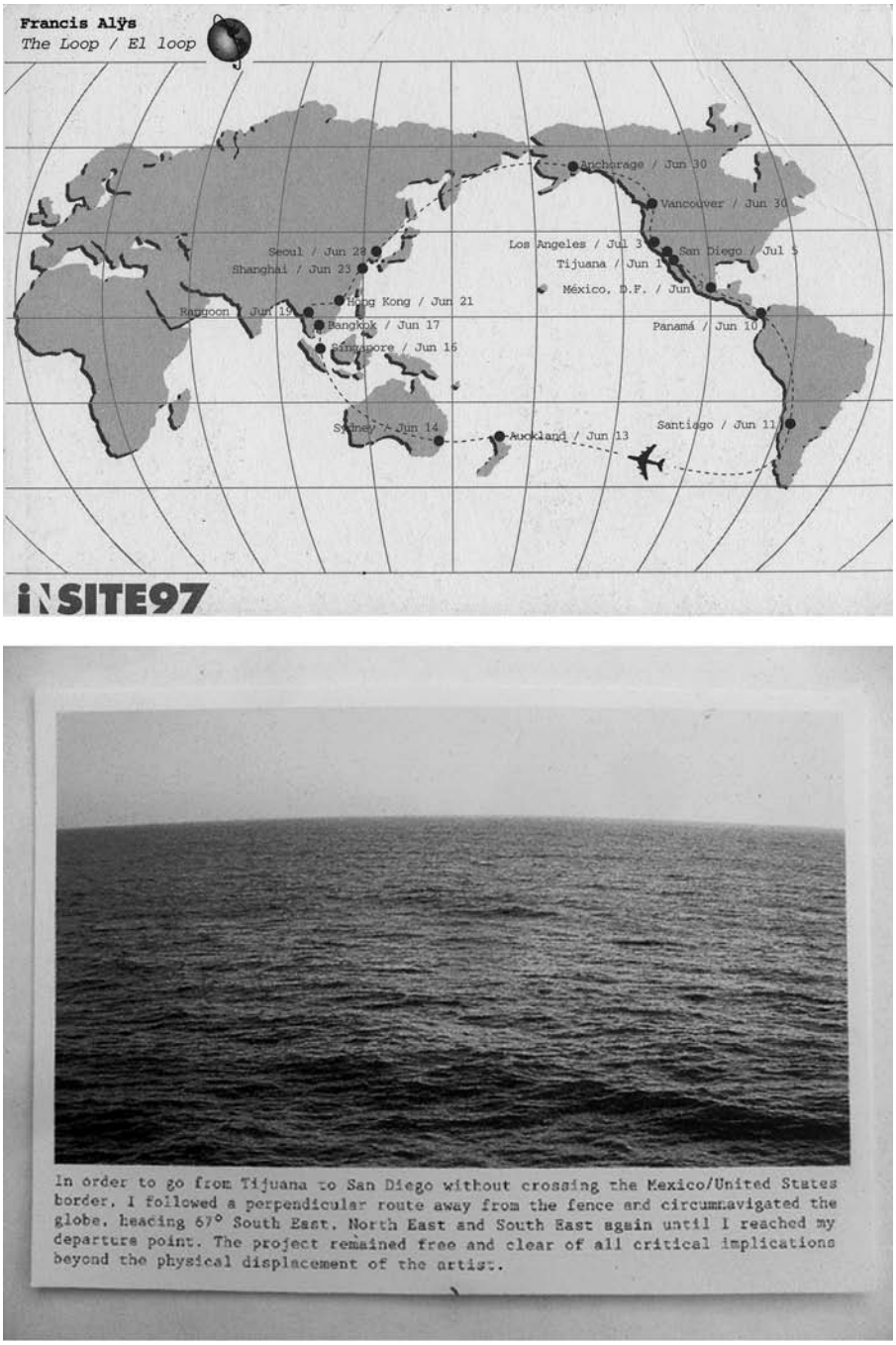

Figure 7.12 Francis Alÿs, *The Loop (Tijuana–San Diego)*, 1997. Ephemera of an action (postcard produced for *In Site* biennial on the Tijuana–San Diego border). Courtesy the artist and David Zwirner Gallery, New York/London.

traction and bite. The structures erratically incorporated into the Venice Biennale, built for other mercantile and diplomatic purposes, have increasingly been repurposed and drawn into the mercantile and diplomatic workings of biennial culture. The theatrical politics of "nation" are *manipulable signs*, engaging with architecture in a most productive way.

This is how we might understand the contrapuntal interventions set up in the Spanish pavilion at the 2003 and 2005 Biennales. The first was by Santiago Sierra, who underscored the remanent nationalism of a Europe only partially unified as the EU (fig. 7.13). Blocking off the austere modernist entrance of the Spanish pavilion with crude cement blocks mortared together, Sierra engaged

Figure 7.13 Santiago Sierra, *Muro Cerrando un Espacio* (Wall Enclosing a Space), intervention at the Spanish pavilion, 2003 Venice Biennale. Visitors turned away at the front (shown at left in a photograph by Walter Robinson for *Artnet* online magazine, June 13, 2003) could, with a Spanish passport, enter in the rear (shown at right in a photograph by Javier San Martin).

in his characteristic combination of negative aesthetics and the foregrounding of working-class trades.[64] What viewers could discover only by asking around or peering behind the pavilion was that *some* people were getting in. Those with current Spanish passports (supposedly obviated by the EU) were allowed to enter through the back door after submitting themselves to a guard instructed to inspect their documents. They could then wander in the eerie darkness of the unreconstructed black interior, littered with remnants from its previous installation in the off-cycle architecture biennial: a cave for the blindman's ruminations.

What could Antoni Muntadas do in the Biennale's next iteration to trump such a darkly nihilistic, conceptual move? As Arman once responded with *Le Plein* (1960) to Yves Klein's *Le Vide* (1958) in the Parisian gallery of Iris Clert, so Muntadas stuffed the pavilion Sierra had voided. Muntadas aimed for bureaucratic plenitude, filling the pavilion with information and an impersonal ambiance that evoked the anodyne architectures of transportation hubs (fig. 7.14). Part of his decades-long interrogation of translation as a transcultural operation, Muntadas's Spanish pavilion was a magisterial summary of all things transitional, transnational, transitory—yet endlessly durational. "Waiting" was apostrophized as a standard bureaucratic position as well as a prerequisite for the experience of hotly desired sites of culture: lines at the Uffizi were equivalent, visually, to lines at an immigration office or airplane hub. In contrast to the impatience solicited by Sierra's closure, Muntadas invited us to wait. As usual in these spaces of global administration, we were given stuff to do. One could spend hours (as I did), hanging on the telephones and listening to the coolly narrated history of the Venice Biennale: states buying their way into the Giardini, or invited by Italians eager to curry favor with this year's oil barons (Venezuela) or that year's colonialists (Belgium). Through the thick and thin of Fascism, war, and revolution, the history Muntadas "translated" for us revealed how the national pavilions had sprouted or put on new facades, how nations had appeared and disappeared, how these shifting world pictures changed the context for art's working.[65]

Critical globalism does not want to destroy biennial culture (viewers' habitus of going to these events in regular rhythms to "see what's new" in the art world, curators' ambitions to take aim at one in a series, municipalities' desires to host one and brand themselves forever). It thrives on the rupture of the event—which, as I've argued, has everything to do with biennials' recurring structures. Artists who are parts of this culture use its ever-

Figure 7.14 Antoni Muntadas, *On Translation*, intervention at the Spanish Pavilion, 2005 Venice Biennale. *Top:* visitors in the installation–as–"waiting room." *Bottom: On Translation: Stand By*, duratrans lightbox (edition of three), one of several installed in the pavilion. Courtesy of the artist.

enlarging venues to focus on *where we are* in an entangled world, to make us aware, through experience, not of our distanced relation to a picture but of our enmeshment in *situations*. But even as these modes proliferate, some metropolitan intellectuals have gone on record to question whether their cities should found such a seemingly inevitable cosmopolitan event. "To Biennial or Not to Biennial?" asked Bergen, Norway.[66] Art-world agents in New Delhi similarly queried in 2005 whether a biennial would be "appropriate to urban developments that envisage the statist capital becoming a global city in the near future."[67] Entertaining concepts such as "Venture Culturalism," these Indian cosmopolitans eventually decided *no*, even though they dreamed that a biennial could "push against the conservatism of art markets" with eventful art forms.[68] This book is necessarily a history of biennials that happened but with an interest in the interstices of capitalized infrastructures: little gaps or larger fissures in which we might find and nurture the essential biota of critical reflection.

Critical globalism, of course, is only part of the lumbering beast that is biennial culture. It is fatuous to think that an artist inserted into these vast assemblies could single-handedly dismantle them. Yet we have witnessed

periodically how an artist might publicly withdraw from "fraudulent categories [of] cultural confinement," as did Smithson in 1972, or might use the small lens of the biennial apparatus to protest rampant nationalism.[69] More typically, the artist confronting a biennial opportunity accepts the risk and hopes that somehow they will be able to generate something *open to art's working*. Of course there are anxieties about reputational failure, particularly for artists agreeing to the burden of "representing" their country.

The artist entering a world picture approaches such a challenge knowing there will be a staggering investment of time, creative energy, and grinding labor. The global languages available since the late 1990s allow for video, installation, and performance as "new media," joining enduring traditions of painting, sculpture, drawing, and photography. Jennifer Allora and Guillermo Calzadilla, an artist team from Puerto Rico, made the most of this range in their 2011 US pavilion in Venice, using extravagant combinations of sculptural installation, projected video, and performance for a meta-installation they named *Gloria*. With endearing idealism before the opening, Allora described the project as "an important reaction to everything else in our so-called contemporary society, where it's all about texting and instant messaging and everything is so far away from the here and the now and the present. *Anything that refocuses the moment is a luxury*" (emphasis added).[70] With a commissioning curator who wanted them to "make work that critically engaged the notion of national identity and Americanism," the artists produced a biting constellation in which trained gymnasts (many with experience representing the United States at various Olympics) performed lengthy routines on sculpted effigies of American culture, from American Airlines seats to a treadmill running on an overturned military tank.[71] In the juxtaposition of such mordant critique with Allora's idealism, we can see how critical globalism still wants the magic of a focused encounter with art's working.

"Refocusing the moment" might rupture the everyday, constituting the luxury of art's working and yielding the special aesthetics of experience. Visitors inculcated with the "expectancy register" fostered by contemporary art, exaggerated in the festal impermanence and recurring rhythms of biennials, will know the rules of this game that has expanded to emphasize duration and openness to event.[72] From the subset of the art world that is biennial culture, visitors demand the rupture of embodied experience, and artists work the differend. Subjects of art's working will expand to form a larger public. How does the artist approach such a task? Joan Jonas, selected to represent the United States at the 2015 Venice Biennale, began by building on an installation she had previously mounted for Kitakyushu, Japan. Already global, her work incorporated Arctic indigenes and Nordic myths; now her imagination was following a set of kites made in traditional shapes and intense colors during a residency in Japan, reflecting on an Asian vernacular tradition but bringing transcultural metaphors to bear:

> Kites soaring like birds or used to judge distance, to signal, to carry fire, to banish evil, for communication, to carry a child, to carry an adult, to bear a message, for psychological warfare, to lift a thermometer, to collect electricity, . . . hung in partly random formation from the ceiling and backlit with paper forms emphasizing translucent fragility. I think of this as a setting for a play about presences, whisperings, startling reminders, sounds of wind in the eaves of a shelter, and an invisible force of wind to complete the picture.[73]

As a subject formed by biennials, I was eager to engage Jonas's "startling reminders," mobilized by her characteristic admixtures of videos, evocative drawings, and sonorous performances with/within recordings (plate 37). Within the endlessly charged space of the US pavilion, Jonas's work necessarily engaged relations between the local and the global, the national, and the para-/supra-/infra-national. In the event, it also lyrically engaged the question of the world as a planet full of creaturely experiences, human and nonhuman.[74]

What seems certain in approaching any biennial is that art now helps us experience enmeshed existence in a world that is no longer masterable as picture. What do I continue to hope for, as one viewer among hundreds of thousands? For small ruptures, new experiences, and reframings of the urban context to which I'll return (the "invisible force of wind" at my back); for art's working on me to produce new ways of being in a time that is suddenly Anthropocene. And ultimately, through this "experience-book," I seek ways of forming a common sense and find-

ing a shared public. Visiting the 2015 Venice Biennale confirmed this ambition. It involved, as I have advocated throughout this book, a turn into the blindman's path. To exit the searing sunlight and enter a dark, cool pavilion was just to begin the process of feeling my way. Sharpening the need for blind epistemology, "a theory of multiple senses," I attended to things as slight as "an apprehension of an atmospheric change," perhaps a room with trees that slowly approached, or one whose walls were flecked with minute geometries of precisely cut paper (what the artist could fit in his suitcase en route to Venice), or Joan Jonas's shifting soundscapes of wind, wheat, water, and oral epic.[75] Blind epistemology doesn't mean closing your eyes to the constraints and circuits of globalization. It demands layering them onto the kinesthetic appreciation of an installation, so that the humid experience of the weird pink fluid suffusing Pamela Rosenkranz's Swiss pavilion, for example, can be knowingly connected to the corporate promises of the global pharmaceutical industry.[76]

What Goethe called "tender empiricism" is in order when approaching any art's working, never more so than with the blind epistemology I'm advocating in service of a critical globalism.[77] As we surface our presuppositions, layer discursive experiences onto sensorial ones, and bring sense memory to cognitive reflection, we all have work to do. With little but the imaginaries of art in my narrations, I have polemicized for the "tearing" of the subject from complacency. I've written the trajectories of those subjectiles as a critique of the normative world-as-picture, through acknowledgments of viewer desire and durational, enmeshed becomings. The aesthetics of experience does not explicitly offer a politics. Experiencing and desirous viewers need, continually, to make one.