

significant as a social hub on the frontier of radical lifestyle choices, avant-garde culture, and collectivist politics intersecting in Los Angeles. Important cultural figures such as John Cage and Galka Scheyer lived there at various points; many other social elites passed through. The siting of the exhibition *Routine Pleasures* in the Schindler House subtly acknowledges the significant social and political history of this experimental Los Angeles residence as a part of that lineage. As a dynamic experiment in social engagement, the house was as much Pauline's as Rudolf's space. Eventually, the Chaces moved out and the Neutras moved in. Schindler and Neutra, two Viennese immigrants who would largely define Modern architecture in Los Angeles, quickly turned from housemates into rivals fighting over clients and projects. By the end of the 1920s, Rudolf and Pauline split up, too, but they continued to co-exist at Kings Road, off and on, in relative harmony. One thing becomes two, as two things becomes one, in ceaseless repetition—a house as a contraption for which there was no manual.

everyday objects and images, in which the plane of the tabletop serves as a literal and critical horizon for the merging of work and pleasure. "Temporal Landscape," borrows a curious phrase from one of Gorin's train people, in consideration of time as material or site, with an emphasis on repetition, routine, paying attention, and accounting. "The Observer Effect" includes artists whose projects eventually subsume the work of their subject under observation, even as that subject threatens to undermine or overtake the observing artist in an involuntary act of reciprocity. "Plural Delectation—Twin Brain" is devoted to the pleasures of collective activity—particularly in the form of duos which, like Farber and Gorin (or Godard and Gorin before them), represent a kind of "twin brain" of dialogue and creative partnership. Some artists are situated in more than one space; some could be easily moved from one room to another; some work is situated between or adjacent to the four studios, as well as in the surrounding garden spaces. These gatherings are necessarily fluid, in the sense that many other connections between artists in the exhibition could be imagined.

R. M. Schindler designed and built his residence on Kings Road in West Hollywood in 1920-1922, and the house was a radical manifestation of what the architect defined as Space Architecture. Designed for two couples—Schindler and his wife Pauline, along with engineer Clyde Chace and his wife Marian—the four contiguous studios of the residence suggest another table of additions, a train of studios that also served as living rooms and bedrooms, obliterating clear boundaries between the categories of life and work. Schindler, who was attracted to the naturalist pursuits in the expansive landscapes of California, and Yosemite in particular, described the Kings Road house as a conflation of a cave and a tent: two things in one. Indeed, the tilt-slab concrete walls, punctuated with long, vertical slits of glass, are suggestive of a cave, while light sliding canvas door panels loosely insinuate a tent, with the abundant gardens beckoning beyond: Beautiful as the Schindler House is inside, it quickly conditions inhabitants to venture outdoors. It serves as a conduit of movement from inside to out and back again, with multiple entrances and exits.

The house is undeniably significant for its formal inventiveness—its tilt-slab concrete and sliding canvas doors, its pinwheel plan—but arguably it was just as

In short, *Routine Pleasures* continues: continues burrowing a termite track, moving forward from Gorin's film to essay to seminar class to exhibition to publication, each a product of "eager, industrious, unkempt activity." The artists chosen for this exhibition all have at least two things in common: They represent the termite tendency, or some version of it—at least in the estimation of the exhibition organizer—and they work or have worked extensively or formatively in the geographical context of the Southern California. (The West Coast climate is more conducive to termites—arguably this is true for termite artists, too.) I will also admit I have worked with many of these artists before—in the context of another exhibition, or in my writing, or on a syllabus for a class (and, in a few cases, all of the above). This represents another sense of continuation—my own routine pleasures in returning to the work of these particular artists, often again and again. (Please see pages xxx-xxx for texts on all of the artists in the exhibition.)

Likewise, the authors who I've invited to contribute to this publication are colleagues whose thinking often occupies my own. Julia Bryan-Wilson's book *Art Workers: Art and Radical Practice in the Vietnam War Era* was a significant text on my *Routine Pleasures* syllabus. Here, Bryan-Wilson takes up _____. Edward Sterrett _____. A handful of the artists in the exhibition also appear here as authors, with new or reprinted text. Sarah Lehrer-Graiwer _____. James Benning's text ____; Harry Dodge _____. Pauline Oliveros ____ text scores. The essay I've written to accompany this exhibition, "Termite's Advance," comprises a sequence of shorter texts, each chewing on a particular idea or motif, all together delineating a complicated networks of tracks following from Farber's essay and paintings and Gorin's film, as well as some of the artists in the exhibition and other examples of the termite tendency. Designed by Mark Owens, this publication binds together two things in one volume—a kind of handbook for the exhibition as well as a reader that ambulates beyond the exhibition and perhaps, eventually, back into the classroom.

The exhibition follows four trajectories to and from the publication, with each assigned to one of the four studios of the Schindler House. "A Table of Additions," includes Farber's 1979 painting *Birthplace: Douglas, Arizona* (which is also featured in Gorin's film), and points to a variety of approaches to the still life and its incorporation of

At the time of writing the "Termite Art" essay, Farber was attending to a series of expansive, shaped, chromatic abstractions on multiple panels of paper; and then a few years later, shortly after moving from New York to La Jolla to teach at the University of California–San Diego, he became a painter of carefully composed confluences of still life and landscape that pointed most directly toward A) the history of cinema, B) autobiographic or diaristic content, often incorporating fastidiously reproduced handwritten notes, and C) the physical stuff of everyday life (candy wrappers, flora, toys)—all of which intersected on the surface of his works. Despite their peculiar, hovering bird's eye view, the later paintings, and the process by which they came to be, more readily evoke the tunneling termite tendency he identified and promoted nearly a decade before he turned from abstraction toward representation.

Gorin's *Routine Pleasures* takes up—and takes on—his colleague Farber's termite, expands upon its implications, follows its trajectories and its digressions (while initiating plenty of new trajectories and digressions, too). The exhibition and publication that share this title intend to trace a similar network of tracks some 30 years after Gorin's film, and over a half-century since Farber's first identified the prodigious little critter. This intention follows—I suspect—from a quality Farber later called "continuation," with implicit regard to his own criticism, which was eventually done in collaboration with his wife, painter and writer Patricia Patterson:

It's an idea that's been missing from criticism. Continuation involves constant attempts to stretch out the moment—as in *L'Amour Fou* [directed by Jacques Rivette]—expanding its parameters step by step. In the Rivette, it involves moving back from a romantic discussion between two neurotics to see the space they occupy, then to perceive the space as a stage. Then their discussion as a rehearsal, and so on; Altman does it with more and more layers of voices on the soundtrack.

Continuation is about entry. It's anti-conclusive, it stresses involvement, and it grows out of the termite notion. You keep moving forward and extending the time element as you move out.

Routine Pleasures is an essay film in which Manny's work plays an essential role and my closer-than-close relationship to him is abundantly evoked. It is not a documentary on Manny (he never appears in it). It is a meditation on method and work, the American landscape, the male imaginary, the high and low of American culture, the materialist nature of artistic imagination, friendship, the endless obsessive pursuit of details... In short, if asked what it is about, I find myself forced to say simply that it is a film about *about*.

This exhibition is, in a similar sense, not "about" Gorin's *Routine Pleasures*, but takes the film as a point of departure for a number of trains of thought. I'm thinking of that film as a kind of jury-rigged engine that I can drop into different kinds of vehicles—the class, an exhibition at the MAK Center for Art and Architecture at the Schindler House, this publication—that I then drive into a proverbial ditch, with the hope of driving out again, eventually. And preferably with passengers. (Along with trains, one could also imagine the engine from Gorin's dented Citroën, which appears in miniature in his film.) Such an engine might be what Henri Michaux in another context described as a "contraption for which there is no manual." Gorin is not in the exhibition, nor is his film. My use of it—and him—as my engine might represent another kind of hijacking.

There is another important metaphor at work here. In 1962, writing for *Film Culture* magazine, Manny Farber described a tendency that he defined as "termite art"—or, as accumulative variations of the phrase: "A peculiar fact about the termite-tapeworm-fungus-moss art," Farber asserts, "is that it goes always forward eating its own boundaries, and, likely as not, leaves nothing in its path other than the signs of eager, industrious, unkempt activity." He opposes this termite to the white elephant—a behemoth work of chest-puffery striving too hard for accreditation in the highest precincts of Art. Writing for *Film Culture*, Farber's examples of termites and elephants were largely drawn from the lessons of then-recent cinema, evidencing his voracious viewing habits—his routine pleasures at the movie theater. But, in retrospect, it would be difficult to not understand this termite in proximity to Farber's other work as a painter.

subject followed closely from Gorin's film, as did a related question about the relation of labor to pleasure. In some sense, the class performed these questions as much as it answered them: Over the course of the semester, we learned to work together by working together, routinely. And we eventually found pleasure in do so.

The classroom is a remarkable space, or it can be under the right conditions. I'm not referring to the lack of windows or walnut laminate folding tables or crummy digital projector in this particular classroom: It was remarkable despite its physical flaws, and from my perspective at least the *Routine Pleasures* class ended much better than it started. Some time after the course concluded one of my students privately expressed appreciation for her experience, with this caveat: "It seemed more like an exhibition than a class." The statement was startling—more so, in fact, than any accusation of pedagogical hijacking—in part because I didn't know what it meant. Or whether or not it was intended as a compliment. Perhaps I was too startled to ask her. So, I set aside interpretations of judgment and took it as a provocation for further investigation, eventually resulting in an exhibition and this publication. I also remembered that I had already named an exhibition—my first—after a film, Jacques Rivette's languid romp from 1974, *Celine and Julie Go Boating*. In an accompanying statement, I noted that, "The exhibition is not *about* or *based* on the film. I prefer to think of the exhibition as a reflection of Rivette's film—an imperfect reflection, perhaps, like the image in a funhouse mirror."

When I've told people I'm organizing an exhibition titled *Routine Pleasures*, I am often asked: "What is it about?" (The question typically follows a compliment about the exhibition's title, for which I am always eager to give all due credit to the filmmaker—indeed, it's a terrific title! How could I claim otherwise, as often as I've used it?) I invariably try to explain Gorin's film, talk about the "train people" in it and film critic and painter Manny Farber who's not in it, then digress into details or private jokes related to the film. Then I usually encourage my interrogator to *just watch it*—"it's readily available on video"—the film itself being stubbornly resistant to easy explanation or summary: for some, a liability, but to me, a great virtue. For his part, Gorin has described his film as follows:

TRAINS OF THOUGHT: AN INTRODUCTION

Michael Ned Holte

...termites—yes, but the good kind.

—David Graeber, *The Utopia of Rules: On Technology, Stupidity, and the Secret Joys of Bureaucracy*

This publication coincides with the exhibition *Routine Pleasures*, which takes its title from the 1986 film by Jean-Pierre Gorin. In 2012, I taught a seminar course at CalArts, also titled *Routine Pleasures*. I screened Gorin's film on the first day of the class and then again for our last meeting. A few weeks into the semester—after a screening of Gorin and Jean-Luc Godard's acidic *Letter to Jane*, which I followed with Laurel and Hardy's raucous *Hog Wild*—a few of the students returned from a break, and with some hesitation but certain diplomacy they asked me where I was taking them. It was a good question. Still, I hadn't anticipated being accused of hijacking a roomful of students that willingly signed up for the class. My answer to their investigation was necessarily improvised, both expansive and digressive, not unlike the class itself; the short version would be something along the lines of: "I don't know, exactly." Their question, and my need to respond to it in a way that was honest but somehow reassuring, immediately led me to articulate a theory of teaching that sounds obvious, but needed to be stated, given the circumstances: As a teacher, one might never know where one is taking his or her students until they get wherever they are going. A lot of this depends on the students and their collective disposition. In this case it was a terrific group, and indeed one of our subjects (granted, we took up many) was the idea of the collective, and what it means to work and create collectively—as a duo, a club, a class, a band (of outsiders), or a Deleuzian wolf pack. This

Routine Pleasures: checklist (in progress—October 20, 2015)

JAMES BENNING

Single painting after Forrest Bess

Three-piece installation called *after Dickinson*.

- a) a crumpled piece from a crashed B52 that I found in Hanoi in 1999.
- b) a chromed volcanic rock
- c) an envelope poem I made after Dickinson

?: A quilt I made by hand after a quilt by Missouri Pettway

JENNIFER BORNSTEIN

Collectors' Favorites, 1994, video

2 - 3 etchings:

?: *Buster Keaton on Crutches*, 2004, etching

?: *Union Projectionist Reading A Book Between Reels*, 2003, etching

?: *Map of Trails in Griffith Park, Drawn from Memory While Waiting for the Bus in New York City*, 2003, etching

CENTER FOR LAND USE INTERPRETATION **

Information kiosk pertaining to model railroading in U.S. [Title, etc. TK]

Lay of the Land, complete book of CLUI newsletters

HARRY DODGE

The Time-Eaters, 2014, video, 41 minutes

MANNY FARBER

Birthplace: Douglas, AZ, oil on board, 1978

Collection: Doug Simay, San Diego
doug@simayspace.com
858-450-0348 / 858-454-6141

LUCKY DRAGONS

TBD

ROY McMAKIN

TBD

?: *The Chest of Drawers Behind James Jamesson and Jimmy Fanz in Raging Stallion Studios' Timberwolves*, 2014, painted maple in 12 shades of brown
<<http://domesticfurniture.com/work/chest-of-drawers-behind-james-jamesson-and-jimmy-fanz-in-raging-stallion-studios-timberwolves/#image-6>>

CARTER MULL

TBD (3 – 4 flower arrangements?) <http://www.cartermull.info/images/01_a_Mull_Carter_Liste_02.jpg>

NEWSPAPER READING CLUB

TBD

PAULINE OLIVEROS

Tuning Meditation, 1971, recording from 1979 performance at The Kitchen

Cheap Commissions, 1986, flyer

STEVE RODEN

365 x 433, 2012, installation with three books
<<http://www.inbetweennoise.com/works/365x433/>>

MANNY FARBER

Road and Tracks, oil on board, 1981

Collection: Robert Walsh, New York
robert_walsh@condenast.com
914-760-9713

JUDY FISKIN

50 Ways to Set the Table, 2003, video, 26 minutes

2 – 3 photographs, TBD

MAGDALENA SUAREZ FRIMKESS & MICHAEL FRIMKESS

4 – 5 ceramic works, TBD

?: Condorito

?: Olga Ramos, 2013 (Magdalena)

?: Mt. Sinai Hookah Co. (Michael)

??

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GALERÍA PERDIDA

No matter how much you push the envelope, it'll still be stationery, 2014, video, 10:22
< <https://vimeo.com/78308517> >

+ TBD

SARAH LEHRER-GRAIWER

Index of Lee Lozano's Notebooks: I am indexing LL's private notebooks - something I started while working on the book and then put on hiatus, I plan to return to and finish the index later this year/early next year and turn it into a book. The index is over a hundred pages and growing.

SIMON LEUNG

War After War, 2011, video, 90 minutes

New performance (lecture on Warren Niesluchowski, written by SL, read by WN)