



IN PRINT
SUMMER 2005



SUBSCRIBE

SELECTIONS FROM THE
MAGAZINE:

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREVIEW
· Opening this week

**UPDATED
DAILY!**

ABOUT THIS ISSUE
· Remote Possibilities: A Roundtable Discussion on Land Art's Changing Terrain

Navigating the New Terrain: Art, Avatars, and the Contemporary Mediascape

In "Inside Out: Art's New Territory," a special section in the Summer issue of *Artforum*, a group of artists, curators and critics offer their views on the expanding geographic and conceptual topographies of contemporary practice. Here, read art historian David Joselit's "Navigating the New Terrain," which proposes that recent projects by artists like Janet Cardiff, Rirkrit Tiravanija, and Matthew Barney, while following from '70s Land art and the site-specific works of the '80s and '90s, ultimately describe the parameters of a new paradigm—"navigational" art." [READ ON](#)

FEATURES
· Tacita Dean on Tristan da Cunha
· Harry Cooper on art and music in the twentieth century

BOOKS
· Mel Bochner on Donald Judd

PERFORMANCE

NEW SCENE & HERD: The Artforum Diary



07.08.05 **Michael Ned Holte on Petra Haden and Stephen Prina**

It was a beautiful summer Friday evening in Los Angeles as I arrived at the John Anson Ford Amphitheatre for the world premiere performance of Petra Haden's a cappella remake of The Who's 1967 album, *The Who Sells Out*, presented by the Society for the Activation of Social Space through Sound (SASSAS). Encircled by lush flora, the Ford is a handsome, vaguely medieval fortress, its idyllic charms... [READ ON](#)

NEWS

BENJAMIN BUCHLOH TAKES POSITION AT HARVARD 07.08.05

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART PLANS CÉZANNE RETROSPECTIVE 07.08.05

GILBERT AND GEORGE ON "GINGKO PICTURES" 07.08.05

FOR AUSTRALIAN ARTISTS, RISING TIDES DON'T RAISE ALL BOATS 07.08.05

INTERNATIONAL NEWS DIGEST THIS WEEK: BARNEY AND BJÖRK TOGETHER ON FILM; SASKIA BOS HEADS FOR NEW YORK; SCHAFHAUSEN'S PLANS FOR COLOGNE'S INVISIBLE KUNSTHALLE

MUSEUM PREVIEWS

ANT FARM



Deprived of a centuries-old architectural history to rebel against, the Ant Farmers integrated architecture with art, design, and video, all with a singular wittiness. [READ ON](#)

Jackson Pollock, Rineke Dijkstra, Little Boy: The Arts of Japan's Exploding Subcultures, William Kentridge, Robert Smithson... [MORE](#)

BOOKFORUM
SUMMER 2005



CRITICS' PICKS
ONLY AT ARTFORUM.COM
HELEN MIRRA



The main gallery presents nothing more than a chest-high horizon line of 16 mm dyed-cotton banding imprinted with typewritten words—a perfect embodiment of Mirra's ascetic aesthetic. [READ ON](#)

NEW YORK
· "This Side Toward Screen"
· "We Could Have Invited Everyone"
· Vitally Komar
· "Make It Now"
· Sarah Gregg Millman

CHICAGO
· Helen Mirra

LOS ANGELES
· Robert Williams

SAN FRANCISCO
· Leslie Shows

LONDON
· Dayanita Singh
· Dan Holdsworth
· Lucia Nogueira
· Susan Stockwell

MILAN
· Ottonella Mocellin and Nicola Pellegrini

ROME
· Manfredi Beninati

BASEL
· Simon Starling
· Mickry3
· Marjetica Potrc

ELSEWHERE

links

CATRIONA
JEFFRIES
GALLERY

David Zwirner

OUTWIN BOOCHEVER
PORTRAIT
COMPETITION
WWW.NPG.SI.EDU

FISHER LANDAU
CENTER FOR ART

TASCHEN

emilyTsingou
gallery

ALAN KOPPEL
GALLERY
EDWARD LISPKI

I-20

HAUNCH
OF
VENISON
III



07.08.05 Pop Rocks

Los Angeles

Recent Posts

- Michael Ned Holte on Petra Haden and Stephen Prina
- Stuart Comer on the Serpentine Gallery's summer party
- Michael Wang on Robert Melee's Talent Show
- Glen Helfand on Richard Tuttle
- Brian Sholis on William Kentridge in Central Park
- William Pym on "Still III"

Archives

- July 2005
- June 2005
- May 2005
- April 2005
- March 2005
- February 2005
- January 2005
- December 2004
- November 2004



Left: Petra Haden and the Sell Outs. Right: Stephen Prina "live." (All photos: Tamara Sussman)

It was a beautiful summer Friday evening in Los Angeles as I arrived at the John Anson Ford Ampitheatre for the world premiere performance of Petra Haden's a cappella remake of The Who's 1967 album, *The Who Sells Out*, presented by the Society for the Activation of Social Space through Sound (SASSAS). Encircled by lush flora, the Ford is a handsome, vaguely medieval fortress, its idyllic charms heightened by its proximity to the decidedly un-idyllic 101 Freeway. I reached the stage in time to hear the end of the sound check. Petra was the sole performer on the recording, but is joined for live renditions by nine female vocalists—including her sister Tanya and Carla Commagere, who on this night looked nine-and-a-half months pregnant and was the undeniable center of attention. Throughout the sound check, I sensed some obvious nervousness, probably attendant to the word "premiere," but the rich harmony sounded great.

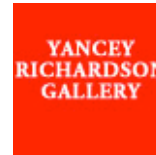
*I can't reach you
I strain my eyes
I can't reach you
I split my sides
I can't reach you*

After the sound check, I followed Tanya into the backstage bowels of the Ford, and—just as I was thinking it—she jokingly referred to the scene in This is Spinal Tap where the band gets lost in the backstage labyrinth. But this backstage scene was very mellow: No rock star shenanigans here. I said hello to opening performer Stephen Prina before heading to the patio to watch the audience arrive.

Reflecting the overlapping interests of the art and music communities, about half the crowd looked familiar. There were contingents with connections to Prina's alma mater Cal Arts (James Welling, Thomas Lawson) and to Art Center (Taft Green, Julian Hoeber, Joel Tauber, Lindsay Brant), where Prina taught before taking a job at Harvard. Dave Muller, chatting with Alex Slade and Mungo Thomson, showed off the tiny Ozzy logo on his black satin jacket. I was told that Dan Graham, who literally wrote the book bridging art and music, might show. He didn't, but I was somewhat placated by the appearance of honorary Professor of Rock Jack Black (who is dating Tanya) and Miranda July, whose film *Me and You and Everyone We Know* was debuting in Los Angeles and New York on that night.

Around 8:30, SASSAS organizer Cindy Bernard welcomed the crowd, and Prina, nattily attired in matching plaid vest and pants, took the stage, armed with an acoustic guitar. After a simple "Hi," he launched into Magnetic Fields standard "I Don't Want to Get Over You," which generated a few appreciative laughs at the line "I could dress in black and read Camus." Even Prina chuckled, uncharacteristically. With Prina's nods to Petra's Who redux, and his selection of a few choice cover songs, his admirers could contextualize the performance in relation to his larger, post-conceptual practice

links



of quotation and, uh, contextualization. But, it became clear that art-world fans weren't alone in the audience. For the uninitiated it might be difficult to know how to handle the oblique poetry and unadorned presentation of gems like "Galveston," "You Are My Sister," or "No One Calls Me Friend," and I'm sure a few classic rockers were befuddled by the performance (like, who are you? Who, who?). One guy audibly expressed his dissatisfaction. Prina, somewhat taken aback, nevertheless responded quickly to the heckler: "And I thought the Taco Hideout Lounge was a rough venue." (After the show Prina tells me he used to perform at said lounge in Galesburg, Illinois when he was sixteen. "And I used to do my chemistry homework there too.")



Left: Jack Black and Tanya Haden. Middle: Petra Haden backstage after the performance. Right: Becky Stark and Miranda July.

Then, with impeccable timing, Prina performed "All The Young Dudes." Dedicated appropriately if tautologically "to all the young dudes," Prina's, rather, um, straight rendition of the glam rock staple seemed to freak a few people out, especially when he picked out a young dude (with glasses) in the audience and expressed his interest in wanting him on stage, right then. The cover beautifully exploited the immanent tension between the art and rock audiences, implicitly asking: What's the difference between an "appropriation" and a "cover"? Or, between "Conceptualism" and "concept" album? (Of course the album cover of *The Who Sells Out* from 1967, with its giant can of Heinz baked beans and Oldenburgian Odorono deodorant, is an early example of pop-music sampling of Pop art.)

These questions hung in the increasingly chilly summer air as Petra and the Sell Outs took the stage and...hesitated. Petra announced that she was nervous, and took a swig of yellowish liquid from a plastic jug. "This is not pee—it's Throat Coat," she assured the audience, dashing any hopes of rock-star outlandishness. Nudged out of the procrastination routine by her Sell Outs, the nervous jitters suddenly gave way to the anthemic "Armenia City in the Sky."

Blame it on Roger Daltrey, whose voice and hair and ego never did it for me, but I've never liked The Who, so I had high hopes for Haden's a cappella album when I heard Daltrey hated it. (Pete Townsend, for the record, totally digs it.) Somehow it makes sense that a group of ten women could get past macho rock star posturing in order to tease out the best parts of The Who's concept album, particularly the complex vocal harmonics, nutty Radio London jingles—"Drink easy, Drink easy, Drink easy/Puh-lee-zee"—and mild-mannered psychedelia. Petra's vocalized versions of Townsend's back-masked guitar solos were flawless paeans to the master, and she was amusingly prone to erratic air guitar gestures, as if Townsend's spirit had suddenly taken over. The group blasted through the first side of the record, putting "Mary Anne with the Shaky Hand," "Odorono," and "Tattoo" through their paces.

With the opening notes of "Miles and Miles" the crowd burst into honest-to-goodness arena rock adulation. Lighters were lit and, uh, glowing cell phones were held aloft. (Puh-lee-zee.) The group nailed the expansiveness of the epic hit with their sublime harmony, but for my money, the highlight of the evening was the charmingly dated and goofy "Silas Stingy."

*Money, money, moneybags
There goes mangy Stingy
There goes mangy Stingy*

The set concluded and enthusiastic applause ensued. The group seemed flattered and a bit relieved. For an encore, they performed "Look Both Ways"—a Petra original, which the singer dedicated to her grandma Trudy. I walked out of the theater with "Silas Stingy" on the brain, and while waiting for my ace photographer to collect some parting shots, I tracked down a low key Jack Black and pestered him for his post-show reflections. "I'm not so good at spontaneous, out-the-door-quotes. Um, I think it was great!" Not exactly the *Face Melter* I was hoping for, dude, but it will do in a pinch.

