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‘Clothes Make the Man’: The Male Artist as a Performative Function

AMELIA JONES

‘[T]here is much to support the view that it is clothes that wear us and not we them; we may make them take the mould of arm or breast, but they mould our hearts, our brains, our tongues to their liking.’ (Virginia Woolf)

J. C. Flügel, whose important book The Psychology of Clothes (1930) analyses the uses and effects of bodily adornment, defines the crucial role of clothing in interpersonal articulations of identity among subjects:

Apart from face and hands ... what we actually see and react to are, not the bodies, but the clothes of those about us ... indeed the very word ‘personality’, as we have been reminded by recent writers, implies a ‘mask’, which is itself an article of clothing. Clothes, in fact, though seemingly mere extraneous appendages, have entered into the very core of our existence as social beings.

To cite an old aphorism, then, clothes ‘make the man’, or rather, as Anne Hollander has modified this claim, ‘[c]lothes make, not the man, but the image of man ...’ Extending Flügel’s and Hollander’s insights, I would add that the image of ‘man’ given through the clothing of male subjects is far more heterogeneous and mutable than arbiters of conventional masculinity would like to admit. Identity is not fixed by clothing but takes its meanings through an exchange between subjects, communicated through sartorial codes (as well as, of course, codes of skin color, body type, gesture, etc.).

Flügel also establishes the centrality of sexuality in determining the vicissitudes of fashion: ‘of all the motives for the wearing of clothes, those connected with the sexual life have an altogether predominant position.’ Extrapolating from Flügel’s observation, dress can be understood as expressing identities in coded terms that signify affiliations of gender, class, race, nation, profession, and sexual orientation, with sexuality taking ‘altogether [a] predominant position’ in this adoption of sartorially determined codes of selfhood. Given what writer Bridget Booher has termed ‘clothing’s ability to accentuate or confound sexuality’, the way we ‘package our bodies’ can be revealing not only of the self-assumed sexual identity we are attempting to project but of the ways in which we relate to cultural norms of gender and sexuality.

Clothing both defines and obscures the gendered, sexual body, veiling its physical form with a mask of signifying material; it acts as what Roland Barthes calls a ‘poetic object’ to be exchanged between wearer and observer in the negotiation of identities (which, while clothing works to fix them, always remain open in ‘a double dream ... of identity and play’). Barthes cites Hegel’s poignant observation that ‘as pure sentience, the body cannot signify; clothing guarantees the passage from sentiment to meaning ...’. Fashion resolves the message from the abstract body to the real body of its reader. The assumption of ‘real’ bodies aside, Hegel notes that it is clothing that allows communication to occur between subjects, that allows one to speak to the other as a discrete being (signified as ‘different’ through dress). Without clothing, Hegel argued, both bodies would appear ‘the same’; clothing marks differences in the body image.

This essay will extend these general observations about clothing and identity (especially of a gendered nature) to the figure of the western male artist, examining the ways in which conventional masculine identities have been reinforced or subverted by artistic dress. Tracing strategies of self-construction on the part of modernist male artists of the nineteenth century, when the profession of the artist was stabilized and came to entertain increasingly rigid self-presentational codes defining the artist as white, male, and anti-bourgeois, the essay will then address the increasingly ironicized conception of male artistic identity from the turn of the century onward. It will end by discussing the post-WWII period and the dramatic self-presentational performances of male body artists Yves Klein, Robert Morris, and Chris Burden, highlighting their unusual, strategic adoption of bourgeois clothing in the 1960s and 1970s.

While I have discussed elsewhere the more general ways in which contemporary male body artists negotiate the ‘phallus’ of western masculinity, this essay deals more specifically with these artists’ relationship to mainstream bourgeois masculinity through sartorial display. By stressing the vestimentary modes of self-presentation-in-performance among them, I highlight here a particular and highly charged paradox for male body artists: the suggestion that their very dependence on corporeal display — their self-projection of artistic identity through clothing and other body codes made visible through performance — marks them as exhibitionist and so, in psychoanalytic terms, as...
feminized. As self-determined objects of spectatorial desire, male body artists negotiate masculinity from a position of femininity. Their sartorial self-presentation, then, plays a crucial role in their complex and ambivalent relationship to dominant codes of masculinity.

Within the texts and the visual representations that comprise every art historical study, the body of the male artist is both central and hidden, both represented yet, on the surface of things, ignored. This male body, with the inevitable prerogative assigned to it under the masculinist art historical system, must be both present and absent. Within conventional art history, the modernist genius must have a body that is visible as male. And yet this body must be naturalized (made invisible) in order for the rhetoric of transcendentalism to do its work successfully: the artist as divinely inspired is effectively disembodied, and ostensibly de-sexed, in the art historical text. As phallocentric substitute for God, the figure of the male artist affords an exaggerated model for examining modern western masculinity. This 'present/absent' body of the male artist is clothed in particular and highly motivated ways. Clothing makes the body of the male artist both visible (allowing it to signify) and invisible (rendering it in the naturalized, and so seemingly transparent, codes of masculine genius). Changing conceptions of artistic identity and of masculinity in general can be inferred from contrasting vestimentary codes. What Barthes terms the 'poetic object' of clothing can be read as a 'keyboard of signs' signalling changing conceptions of self and other, masculine and feminine, artist and bourgeois.

From modernism to postmodernism, a central concern of the male artist and those photographers and painters who represent him has been the rather blatant signalling of 'creativity' as his key attribute. Because of shifting conceptions of artistic subjectivity and changing relationships between the artist and the social, creativity, however, is signified differently from period to period. As Raymond Williams has argued, the identity adopted by the artist — who, he stresses, is invariably masculine within modernism — not only stresses 'creativity' as its basis, but operates through a rejection of bourgeois culture and of the femininity associated with bourgeois domesticity. Increasingly throughout the nineteenth century and particularly with the rise of the early twentieth-century avant-gardes, 'the bourgeois was the mass which the creative artist must either ignore and circumvent, or now increasingly shock, deride and attack.' However, given the contradictory attitudes — the 'diachronic range' — of the bourgeois, the artist's resistance could be expressed in one of two very different modes: through an elitist stance opposed to the 'vulgar, hidebound, moralistic, and spiritually narrow' bourgeois subject or through a populist position, in which the artist would align himself with the exploited worker and expunge from his purview the feminizing domesticity of bourgeois commodity culture.

The adoption of particular types of clothing, as I have already suggested, is a primary mode of marking the artist's alignment with one or another of these 'anti-bourgeois' identities. Nineteenth-century photographs of male bohemians, for example, construct a male artistic subject who is exaggeratedly 'creative' in his slightly mussed version of bourgeois or working-class garb. Painters, in particular, are visually signified in the portrait photograph either through their untamed manes of hair, heavy beards and moustaches, and slightly scruffy jackets and vests or artist's smocks, or through their meticulous self-construction as aristocratic dandies. Their suits are generally monochromatic, in the darkened fabrics that signal their disaffection vis-à-vis bourgeois culture (black, Elizabeth Wilson has written, 'is the color of bourgeois sobriety, but subverted, perverted, gone kinky'). In a sense the artist thus dressed is constructing himself as 'worker' or 'aristocrat' of culture; in either case, the artist marks himself as transcending bourgeois culture — as Williams points out, while the artist may identify with the exploited worker, his 'creative art [is always marked as]... more than simple labour', as holding spiritual and aesthetic value.

These rebellious modifications of bourgeois clothing types are striking if one compares society portraitist Nadar's 1856 picture of Louis Blanc, a prominent socialist politician, to his images of artists
and writers (Fig. 7). The subdued, even morose, Blanc sports a vest under an impeccable suit — snugly fitted with smooth, wide lapels — and neat bow tie; his right hand clutches fine leather gloves, and his hair is neatly trimmed and swept aside of a clean parting. In this portrait, which may well have functioned as a publicity image for the politician, he signals his status through an appropriately sombre and visually low-keyed outfit of clearly fine quality. As a thinking man and a representative of the people, he signifies himself as comfortably ‘bourgeois’.

On the other hand, Nadar’s portraits of artists and writers present subjects studiously ‘uninterested’ in clothing (though the homogeneity of their garb suggests that this disinterest was perhaps disingenuous) or scrupulously turned out as dandies. Thus, Théophile Gautier (a painter turned romantic poet and novelist), aggressively projects a dramatically ‘creative’ persona in an 1857 portrait, wearing a light artist’s smock, loose scarf and open-collared blouse (Fig. 2). While he aligns himself with the working classes, Gautier differentiates himself from their perceived anonymity and brute physicality, confirming his creativity, in Williams’ terms, as ‘more than simple labour’; he also clearly signals his disdain for bourgeois sartorial conventions.

Contrastingly, in a portrait by Nadar from 1858, Eugène Delacroix dresses in smartly turned out clothing, fashioned as a dandy (Fig. 3). Delacroix’s gleaming dark suitcoat (perhaps of satin), shiny vest with watchkey, and flamboyantly tall collar create a striking picture of elite masculinity that contrasts strongly with the constrained image presented by the politician Blanc and with the messy creativity of Gautier. Here, in Williams’ terms again, the artist stakes himself out as an aristocrat of culture, beyond the ‘vulgar’ tastes of the bourgeoisie.

Why did this subtle system of sartorial differentiation develop during the nineteenth century, with the artist establishing an increasingly defined set of vestimentary codes in opposition to those marked as bourgeois? While artists from earlier centuries were privileged in their ability to construct themselves visually through self-portraits or pose for painted or sketched portraits by other artists, the development of the photographic portrait in the nineteenth century enabled those other than the extremely wealthy or artistically skilled to define their own images. As John Tagg has argued, ‘To have one’s portrait done’ was one of the symbolic acts by which individuals from the rising social classes made their ascent visible to themselves and others and classed themselves among those who enjoyed social status. As photography gave members of the growing bourgeois class access to self-imaging, it became increasingly urgent for those aristocrats and artists who wished to differentiate
themselves from the 
arrivé tastes of the bourgeois to adopt poses and vestimentary effects that marked them as different from conventional middle-class style. Accordingly, and in consonance with Williams’ argument, artists tended to align themselves with the working class, taking on the sartorial signifiers of the peasant or labourer (used jackets, rumpled fabrics, messy hair, or, in the case of Vincent van Gogh and Paul Cézanne, actual peasants’ clothing) or to construct themselves through the aristocratic codes of the dandy or his peripatetic colleague, the flâneur.

As Elizabeth Wilson has argued, dandyism, which first developed in the figure of Beau Brummel in late eighteenth-century England then permeated nineteenth-century French culture, is inextricably linked to the transitory nature of capitalism, which ‘frequently throw[s] ... up ambiguous rebels whose rebellion never is a revolution, but instead a reaffirmation of the Self; the dandy, whether aristocrat, artist or romantic radical ... is above all anti-bourgeois.’ The artistic dandy is a figure of the vast Parisian metropolis, with its teeming crowds and threat to individualism; he survives by performing himself, adopting and playing out an anti-bourgeois identity such that he distinguishes himself from the crowd. For the romantic poet Charles Baudelaire, the creative work of the artistic dandy/flâneur is differentiated from that of the common labourer: he is a heroic and elegant aristocrat, ‘combating and destroying triviality’ in the face of the ‘rising tide of democracy which invades and levels everything.’ Confirming the dramatic image of Delacroix in the photograph by Nadar, Baudelaire describes this artist as a primary example of the privileged dandy: ‘Sceptical and aristocratic, he only knew passion and the supernatural through his forced intimacy with the world of dreams. A hater of the masses, he really only thought of them as iconoclasts ...’

Especially for the dandy, clothing plays a major role in what Christopher Lasch has termed the modernist ‘culture of narcissism’ where life ‘becomes a work of art’. Showing an exaggerated attention to bodily appearance that is marked as feminine (as Jules Barbey d’Aurevilly wrote in 1844, for dandies ‘as for women, to seem is to be ... [a dandy] is a woman on certain sides’), the dandy defines himself against the grain of conventional masculinity. Ironically, the feminized dandy wields ‘personal style like a weapon’ against the onslaught of depersonalizing capitalism but also against what Christine Buci-Glucksmann has identified as the feminization of the male subject under the increasing commodification of everyday life in the modern city. Thus for Buci-Glucksmann, the Baudelairean flâneur represents a tendency among male modernists to appropriate the feminine paradoxically to defuse their own anxieties in relation to the emasculating gender and class instabilities of modern urban life. In this way, moving beyond Delacroix’s still masculine if aristocratic dandyism, creative men such as Oscar Wilde, Barbey d’Aurevilly himself, or the fictional aesthete, Des Esseintes, in J. K. Huysmans’ novel À rebours (1884) sported the velvet and satin leisure clothing associated with an upper-class femininity (Fig. 4).

From the mid-nineteenth century onward, then,

Fig. 4. Napoleon Sarony: ‘Oscar Wilde’, New York January 1882; Courtesy the Library of Congress, Washington, DC.
male artists tended to present themselves along one of two stylistic lines: as identified with the coarsely-dressed worker or peasant or with the rarefied, aristocratic stance of the dandy/flâneur. Although the worker artist persona transgresses the boundaries of class to situate the artist as opposed to mainstream bourgeois masculinity, the dandy (especially in the extreme forms adopted by Wilde, Barbey d'Aurevilly, and other aesthetes) confuses the borders delineating gender and sex roles — a far more highly threatening move in relation to artistic subjectivity. While both personas involve performative activity, the latter, in its challenge to both bourgeois and working-class masculinity and its stylistic closeness to feminine or homosexual self-presentational modes, appears more dangerous to the eyes of those accustomed to reading the codes of patriarchally defined masculinity.

It is thus not surprising that the worker artist has become the mainstay of traditional narratives of modern art history from Van Gogh, trundling his canvases dutifully out into the fields, to Jackson Pollock, depicted in well-known series of images by photographers such as Hans Namuth in jeans and t-shirt, straining to fling paint energetically across a wide expanse of canvas. While discussions of these artists' works has rested on an assumption of their virile, heterosexual masculinity, artists whose dandified masculinities compromise the machismo of the modernist artistic genius — such as Marcel Duchamp and Andy Warhol — make their bodies visible (as aberrant), broaching the forbidden question of sexuality vis-à-vis male artistic production.

The self-presentational strategies of artists such as Duchamp and Warhol threaten too in that they subvert the notion of artistic creativity as a sublimation of personal style. Flügel offers this point in averring that the relative fixity of post-French revolutionary fashions in men's clothing — which he describes as the 'Great Masculine Renunciation' of the 'brighter, gayer, more elaborate, and more varied forms of ornamentation' then relinquished to women's fashion — has enabled men to sublimate their narcissism and sexual energy toward more socially useful avenues of expression than those available to women (such as scientific and artistic creativity). With this process comes the transformation of men's 'desire to be seen . . . into the desire to see', which 'may itself remain unsublimated and find its appropriate satisfaction in the contemplation of the other sex, or it may be sublimated and find expression in the more general desire to see and know.'

Flügel's highly invested model could account both for the hegemonic claim men have had on artistic subjectivity, and for the tendency of male artists to objectify and fetishize the female form in their art through scopophilic voyeurism — through what feminists have extensively explored as the dynamic of the 'male gaze'. In fact, feminist film theorist Kaja Silverman draws on the Lacanian model of this dynamic to argue that Flügel inadvertently makes clear that exhibitionism is as fundamental to masculinity as it is to femininity and that voyeurism is not a sign of pure power but an indication that the 'male subject is as dependent upon the gaze of the Other as is the female subject, and as solicitous of it . . . The Great Masculine Renunciation must consequently be understood not as the complete aphanisis of male specularity, but as its disavowal.' Just as the Lacanian 'gaze' shows the subject up as incomplete and lacking, so the masculine renunciation of high fashion can be understood to be a sign of the male subject's occlusion of his own exhibitionism (his objecthood), his failed desire to see (in Flügel's terms, to 'see and know' as a cultural creator) rather than be seen (as an object of art or voyeurism in general).

Extending Silverman's argument, it would follow that men who do not renounce sartorial display are acknowledging their own exhibitionism (their desire to see and be seen). Here, I would argue, lies the radical potential of self-presentational strategies such as Duchamp's and Warhol's: by enacting masculinity in alternative ways, presenting the male artist as a feminized object of art historical desire, they expose the assumption of masculinity built into the art historical model (or, for that matter, the modern western conception of subjectivity) and deny its 'neutrality'. Duchamp's most flamboyantly disruptive self-presentational strategy was his feminine 'masquerade' as Rose Selavy in photographs taken by Man Ray (1920–1) (Fig. 5). Here, he adopted the accoutrements of bourgeois femininity, performing himself against the grain of normative models of artistic subjectivity during this period. What makes Rose Selavy interesting is 'her' intersection with the performative — and in many ways authoritative (masculine) — artistic self Duchamp projected throughout his career; Rose enables Marcel to eschew the macho worker/painter identity in favour of an ambiguously gendered persona.

Jackson Pollock, who is conventionally gendered as heroically male, provides a strong contrast to such ambiguities. Supporters of Pollock such as Clement Greenberg mask their interest in Pollock's virile body, which nonetheless serves as the armature on which all claims to his artistic genius are constructed; they can do this because Pollock aligned himself with recognizable codes of masculinity (and hence of artistic authority) active in US culture at the time — such as those identified with Marlon Brando, James Dean, the cowboy, and the Beat nonconformist. In her book on Jackson Pollock, Ellen Landau discusses at some length, if uncritically, Pollock's alignment with a 1950s, supposedly 'nonconformist' masculinity, as embodied in 'rebel hero' figures such as Marlon Brando (particularly in his roles as motorcycle rebel in The Wild One [1953] and as Stanley Kowalski in A Streetcar Named Desire [1959]). She argues that Brando is, like Pollock, a 'primitive and passionate . . . atavistic brute whose
instantaneously erupible feelings were more intensely conveyed physically than verbally.\textsuperscript{42} Emphasizing the salience of sartorial codes, she explains that Pollock ‘became famous in his tee shirt (à la Marlon Brando), paint-spattered loafers, and jeans.’ Throwing into question her own determination of such codes of masculinity as ‘non-conformist’, she also describes Pollock’s other related personae (all macho and working class), including the booted cowboy — a mass-media cliché of masculinity in US culture.\textsuperscript{53}

Conversely, Duchamp and Warhol disclocate the
usually inextricably connected categories of masculinity and artistic prowess. Thus, comparing the infamous image of Pollock from *Life* magazine, clothed in what appears to be a denim worker’s jacket and jeans, cigarette dangling, arms and legs crossed defensively as he leans cavalierly against his drip painting, *(Fig. 6)* to Warhol’s performative 1960s portrait by Chris Makos, the contrast between the artist/worker and the artist as dandified and bi-gendered becomes strikingly clear *(Fig. 7).* In the picture of Warhol, titled *Altered Image* and presented as a tribute to Rose Sélavy, Warhol stands de-

![Jackson Pollock: is he the greatest living painter in the United States?](image)

*Fig. 6. 'Jackson Pollock: is he the greatest living painter in the United States?', spread from 'Life' magazine, 8 August 1949.*
Fig. 7. Chris Makos: ‘Altered Ego (Andy Warhol in Tribute to Rrose Selavy)’, c.1960s.

murely in blond wig and make-up, wearing jeans, a button-down shirt, and a rather aggressive plaid tie.45 While Pollock’s garb and pose signal the cool nonchalance of a Brando-esque working-class stud, Warhol’s figure reads as ambiguously but aggressively sexualized. From neck downward, his slight body and coy posture (with hands gently clasped over his genital area) transform him into the quintessential college nerd, effeminate from the perspective of US norms of working-class masculinity; his face and hair, however, abruptly turn this reading aside. Just as with Duchamp’s coiffed and cosmeticized ‘Rrose’, Warhol’s partial drag shifts him into the realm of the blatantly gender performative. Both Duchamp and Warhol make attractive women, yet both (via context46 and/or the inclusion of contrasting, masculine codes) let us ‘know’ they are ‘men’, encouraging us to question how a ‘man’ — or more specifically an ‘artist’ — is defined by confusing the vestimentary codes of artistic subjectivity.

Duchamp and Warhol play out their identities, marking artistic subjectivity as performative and sexualized.47 Male effeminacy confuses modernist interpretation by exposing the eroticism involved in any interpretive act. By crossing the gendered codes of artistic subjectivity and production, Duchamp and Warhol disallow the occlusion of desire that facilitates the authority of the modernist critic: projecting his or her desires onto the (hidden, male) body of the artistic subject to construct the meanings of his works, the critic must mask this investment through the rhetoric of aesthetics in order to ensure the transcendentality of (male) artistic genius and to legitimate her or his readings as ‘correct’. Such masking is troubled by the feminizing strategies of Duchamp and Warhol.

The French nouveau réaliste Yves Klein provides a more ambivalent example of this ironized relationship to male bourgeois and artistic subjectivity. While Klein is one of the few artists whose self-performativity reached the level of Duchamp’s or Warhol’s, his performativity was consistently articulated in dandified but definitively masculine, rather than feminized, terms. Somewhat late in his brief life of 34 years, Klein decided he was an artist. Taking on both Delacroix (the dandy) and Van Gogh (the worker) as models, Klein employed their romanticized personae and conceptions of artistic creativity to stake a claim to a distinctly modernist mode of genius.48 Although he appears to have been thoroughly invested in this conception of divine genius, which we tend to associate with artists such as Picasso and Pollock, Klein manifested his relationship to this model in a vastly different manner — notably through the ironized vestimentary codes of the dandy. For example, in the famous Anthropometries of the Blue Period performance held at the Galerie Internationale d’Art Contemporaine in 1960 for an audience of 100 invited guests (who were requested to wear evening clothing), Klein sported a tuxedo and white tie49 (Fig. 8). His body was central to the action of the piece, as he directed several women to cover themselves with Kleinian blue paint and to stain canvases with their paint smeared bodies.50 And yet, as flamboyantly dandified as Klein’s formally dressed body was, the photographs of the event show that he effectively veiled it behind the classic — and, within patriarchal culture, more readily visible — trope of modernist painting, the naked female form. He kept himself clean, hovering among the women to direct their movements. As Klein himself wrote of this event:

At my direction, the flesh itself applied the color to the surface, and with perfect exactness. I could continue to maintain a precise distance from my creation and still dominate its execution. In this way, I stayed clean. I no longer dirtied myself with color, not even the tips of my fingers. The work finished itself there in front of me with the complete collaboration of the model. And I could salute its birth into the tangible world in a fitting manner, in evening dress.51

Separating himself definitively from the physical act of painting, with its ooze and sweat, Klein remarked elsewhere that ‘I would rather put on my tuxedo and wear white gloves ... [than dirty] my hands with paint.’52 Klein’s adoption of formal dress served to distinguish him from the highly invested emotionalism of 1950s abstract painting and to ironize the notion of...
the painter as worker/genius. While his anthropometries images, like Pollock's paintings, were produced by the application of paint onto a canvas that was usually laid on the floor, Klein, in fact, was explicit about his desire to differentiate himself from Abstract Expressionism: 'I would like to make it clear that this [anthropometries] endeavor is opposed to “action painting” in that I am actually completely detached from the physical work during its creation.'53 Specifically, then, through this elegant evening garb, Klein distanced himself from the Abstract Expressionist exploitation of the sartorial codes of the labourer.

Klein, as a young French artist coming of age in a decade dominated by American culture (both in art discourse and in popular culture), was driven to construct himself in opposition to the Pollockian model, of artistic genius. At the same time, given Klein's own investment in spiritual notions of artistic creation, his irony performs a double function: he is both modernist hero (he who transcends the everyday to produce great art), and postmodern critic of artistic machismo. The encoding of his clothing as specifically not working class and not everyday bourgeois but as formal and dandified positions him, within the performance context, in opposition to the histrionic and angst-ridden Pollockian genius as well as to the mundane 'vulgarity' of the bourgeois: ironic, self-aware, differentiated from his bourgeois audience by his meticulous self-control and brilliant creativity.

Flamboyantly cross-gendering acts such as those by Warhol and Duchamp have the potential to dislocate the alignment of artistic subjectivity and masculinity so crucial to modernist art historical structures. Klein's more firmly masculine dandyism, too, refuses to support the kind of facile machismo of dominant American models of the male artistic persona (though it certainly reinforces his authoritative masculinity in other ways).14 From around 1960 onward, however, western male artists increasingly frequently adopt quintessentially middle-class, masculine clothing — that is, not the 'creative' variations on bourgeois dress common in the nineteenth century, nor the working-class garb taken up by artists from Cézanne to Pollock, but the everyday

Fig. 8. Yves Klein performing 'Anthropometries of the Blue Period', 1960, Galerie internationale d'art contemporaine, Paris. Photograph by Harry Shunk, New York.
business suits or formal wear donned by middle-class men. What does this more recent shift signify about artistic subjectivity? Does this clothing signal affiliation with the very bourgeois class from which modernist and avant-garde artists have attempted to differentiate themselves for almost two centuries? I want to suggest that, in contrast to the meanings circulating around earlier modernist adaptations of bourgeois clothing, in late capitalist western culture this adoption of everyday bourgeois clothing signifies a kind of defiance — and one involving what we might call postmodern irony. Extending Elizabeth Wilson’s argument about the transitory nature of capitalism and its encouragement of the dandified cult of self, we could say that within late capitalism’s culture of the simulacrum (as it has been described by theorists of the postmodern such as Fredric Jameson, Jean Baudrillard, and Guy Debord) artists’ deployments of the signifiers of middle-class stability read as parodies of the modernist conception of a stable, unified (and implicitly masculine) western subject and, by extension, of the male artist/genius.

Emerging from more explicitly anti-modernist contexts and expressing more overtly antagonistic stances toward male artistic genius, Robert Morris and Chris Burden approach artistic subjectivity from perspectives that differ markedly from that of Klein.55 Morris began his career as an abstract painter in the late 1950s, but soon thereafter became involved in modern dance and performance, theatrical media that challenge modernist (and particularly formalist) notions of high art practice.50 His piece 21.3, performed at the Surplus Theater, New York, in 1964, expanded on the performance sensibility he had developed through these connections to attack the art world directly. Dressed in the quintessentially professorial attire of a tweed coat, tie, and dark-rimmed glasses, Morris approached the podium placed on stage and, meticulously choreographing every gesture, began to read a classic text on iconology cribbed from art historical father-figure, Erwin Panofsky.57 His voice, however, was obscured through a tape loop that fed his words back to the audience out of sync. and overlapping one another. In this way, while Morris adopted the accoutrements of a particular type of bourgeois masculinity, he obscured the paternal voice of art history, scrambling those authoritative words that have become enshrined as the foundations of the discipline.

Morris’s outfit signals a masculine intellectual and academic authority that is ironicized and marked as performative through the garbling of the spoken text. Emerging from the context of experimental dance and performance, Morris was beginning to establish the concerns that would a few years later propel New York Minimalism and Conceptualism: an interest in phenomenological concerns, the relationship of the body to its situation and of the work of art to its environment and to the body of the viewer. In this case, he signals his own position vis-à-vis conventional mobilizations of the (male) body as a site of intellectual authority and so a locus of cultural privilege. At the same time, performing himself as critical of mainstream academic art theory (in its enactment through the male body), Morris simultaneously situates himself as beyond its bourgeois pretensions.

Chris Burden emerged from a slightly different context, working not in the increasingly hegemonic New York scene but in Los Angeles. Trained at the University of California, Irvine, where California light and space artists Robert Irwin and Larry Bell and (briefly) Robert Morris taught, Burden was certainly well aware of the prevailing artistic interest in phenomenological issues (an interest that, in its common expression in art discourse and practice, showed no critical consciousness of issues of gender or sexuality). At the same time, Burden gained the advantage of being distanced from hegemonic representations of the artist/genius emanating from New York. Like Morris, he performed ironicized and ambivalent versions of masculine, artistic subjectivity through the enactment of his variously clothed body, particularly in the theatrical pieces of the early 1970s. While his most famous performances — such as Shoot (1971), in which he had himself shot in the arm by a friend, or Trans-Fixed (1974), where he directed a colleague to crucify him onto the roof of a Volkswagen — seem directly to reinforce the machismo claimed for the male artist (and this might explain their popularity), in many other pieces he performs an ambiguous masculinity. Thus, he often exposed himself to situations of exaggerated vulnerability or extreme passivity in relation to the audience — as in Prelude to 200 or 110 (1971), where he had himself strapped to the floor by copper bands next to buckets of water holding electrical wires — or bruised and cut his own body (in Through the Night Safely (1973)).

In other performances Burden, like Morris, specifically addressed the role of vestimentary codes in constructing or subverting masculine subjectivity. As Burden himself had described I Became a Secret _Hippy_, performed in 1971 at the Museum of Conceptual Art in San Francisco, for example, ‘I took off my clothes, jeans and a t-shirt, and lay on the floor on my back. A friend hammered a star shaped stud into my sternum. I then sat in a chair and had all my hair cut off. Finally I dressed in some FBI clothes...’58 The photograph Burden has chosen to document this performance shows him standing rigidly, hair shaved in military style, wearing his ‘FBI clothes’ (Fig. 9). As he notes in his description, however, this blatantly conformist outfit hid a biker’s silver stud, hammered into the artist's martyred flesh. Parading as a bureaucrat, and a ‘pig’ at that (a particularly charged figure in the US in the early 1970s), Burden’s action implies that the vestimentary self always both constructs yet simultaneously masks psychological elements of the subject.
Transforming himself from male artist (in de rigueur jeans and t-shirt) to functionary (with a hidden, macho secret), Burden marks both as malleable, performative.

In Shadow, held at Ohio State University in 1976, Burden explains that he ‘dressed in clothes which I thought would fit people’s preconceptions of an avant-garde artist, i.e. a fatigue jacket, pockets stuffed with notebooks, film, and a tape recorder, opaque dark glasses with chrome rims, a black cap, levis and a striped t-shirt. These clothes were in no way characteristic of my normal attire’ (Fig. 10). The piece, which for Burden consisted of his entire stay in Columbus, culminated in what students and faculty ‘believed to be the performance’: Burden sitting behind a screen, illuminated in profile, reading the audience descriptions of several of his previous performances. ‘The following day,’ he concludes, ‘was supposed to have a question-and-answer period with students. But I remained elusive, answering elaborate speculations with a simple “yes” or “no”’.

Merging a Warholian facade of indifference with an elusive self-presentational strategy (the artist as shadow, marked in the photographic document of the piece only as a visible trace projected onto a hovering screen), Burden both enacts and troubles preconceived notions of artistic subjectivity. Signified through clothing — the ubiquitous t-shirt and jeans and artistic paraphernalia — Burden’s self-as-artist is, he tells us, a definitive fake. Both I Became a Secret Hippy and Shadow explicitly mobilize sartorial codes to play out and ironicize contemporaneous notions of the masculine self — from the ‘artist’ (bohemian rebel) to his antithesis, the state-employed FBI agent. Burden doesn’t thoroughly repudiate conventional masculinity, as Warhol could be said to have done, but he enacts it as an ambiguous function — transformable specifically through changes of clothing.

Both Burden and Morris epitomize the ironicization of (masculine) artistic subjectivity in the post-1960 period through the visible codes of sartorial display. In these performative works of Burden and Morris, not only is the artist as sexual object ironicized, but the conception of self is reduced to the mutable visible surface, that externally defined and clothed body that signifies social and sexual positionality. As noted, such an exhibitionist articulation of masculinity through vestimentary codes itself has feminizing connotations: the male body, veiled and made to mean through clothing, is the object of the audience’s spectatorial gaze. The identity of the male artist is marked as contingent on an exchange of visual information rather than anchored in phallic inevitability (the brute physical ‘fact’ of the penis-as-phallus that has served to secure male privilege in modern western culture).

In the burgeoning industrial era of high modernist culture, as Elizabeth Wilson suggested, clothing enabled male artists to establish alternative selves to
that ostensibly fixed bourgeois subject of the modern metropolis; under late capitalism, male artists (whether consciously or not) ironicize this bourgeois subject — and his intimate connection to the figure of the artist — by adopting his vestimentary image in performative contexts. It is certainly no accident that this effusion of performative experimentations with artistic subjectivity has occurred within the same periods in which various oppressed groups have challenged the hegemony of the white, middle-class, male subject — threatening many male artists while freeing others to explore alternatives to conventional

Fig. 11. Jeff Koons advertisement, from ‘Art in America’, November 1988.
masculinity. Rose Sélavy was produced during feminisms’s 'first wave', while the emergence of Warhol, Klein, Morris, and Burden coincided with the rise of the civil rights, feminist, and gay rights movements in Europe and the US in the 1960s and 1970s, including the explosion of feminist body art projects exploring the contingent, sexualized nature of the identity of the embodied subject.

Unfortunately, the 1980s, the Bush-Reagan/Thatcher decade, witnessed a retrenchment in the self-presentation and media representation of the (male) artistic subject. From a feminist point of view, it is worth being wary of the ways in which masculine performativity can be too easily recuperated into rather predictable and self-serving clichés of male artistic prowess — such as in the deliberately heterosexist and misogynist self-performative works by an artist such as Jeff Koons. In a 1988 advertisement for Sonnabend Gallery, for example, Koons fashions himself in blue-jeans and a black shirt (coded as art world garb), his hair carefully coiffed and blow-dried and face cosmeticized (Fig. 17).40 While he could be — à la Duchamp or Warhol — thus to subvert male artistic subjectivity through self-display (marking it as part ‘feminine’, part ‘masculine’), by surrounding himself with two bathing beauties in bikinis and a screaming pony (whose open jaws, placed over Koons’s crotch, not so subtly symbolize his rigid phallic organ), Koons ultimately reaps the benefits of an extremely conventional form of masculinity. Constructing himself via the commodity system (an advertisement in Art in America), Koons deploys postmodern irony in a calculated fashion, subverting any attempt at criticism before it begins.61

In the hands of the male artist, then, the ironic adoption of bourgeois or ‘artistic’ clothing can serve within particular contexts to revivify the very tropes of masculinity that have empowered male artists since the nineteenth-century bohemian or dandy/flâneur. What the clothed male artist’s body means is contingent on its specific contexts of production and reception. While dress can be mobilized to contest or unfix gender, class, and ethnic distinctions, it can be and often is employed to reinforce — whether through opposition or ironic parody — conventional notions of difference. Not only do clothes ‘make, not the man, but the image of man . . .’, they are mutable signifiers that can be contextualized within different historical moments to subvert or reinforce anglo, middle-class masculinity’s hegemonic claims to unified and empowered creative subjectivity and to the production of culture itself.

Notes

1. I would like to express my gratitude to the University of California, Riverside, for providing me with an Affirmative Action Career Development Award which enabled my completion of this essay, and to thank the members of the editorial board of the Oxford Art Journal for their comments and suggestions and Craig Krull for his assistance with obtaining photographs for illustrations.


4. Anne Hollander, Seeing Through Clothes (University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1978), p. xvi. I leave aside here the gender exclusion put into play by the original aphorism and sustained by Hollander since this essay takes as its subject the effects of clothing in constructing the identity of the specifically male artistic subject.

5. Flügel, The Psychology of Clothes, p. 25. Drawing on Flügel’s research, Paul Schilder, a professor of psychiatry, adds to this: ‘Whatever article of clothing we put on immediately becomes a part of the body-image and is filled with narcissistic libido.’ Schilder, The Image and Appearance of the Human Body. Studies in the Constructive Energies of the Psyche (International Universities Press, New York, 1950), p. 203. I am grateful to Joanna Roche for bringing this source to my attention.

6. Bridget Booser, ‘Learning the Language of Clothes’, Duke Magazine, vol. 79, no. 3, March–April 1993, p. 4. This is not to suggest that we simply make a free and willful choice from a range of neutral options to determine our sartorial identity. Any such ‘choice’ is, of course, always already culturally and ideologically inflected. Judith Butler argues this point brilliantly in her discussion of the broader alignment of each subject with a gendered identity: ‘there is no subject who decides on his . . . on the contrary, gender is part of what decides the subject . . .’ Butler’s suggestion that ‘the materiality of sex is constructed through a ritualized repetition of norms’ is neatly extrapolable to the sartorial codes that define such ‘materiality’. Judith Butler, Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex (Routledge, New York and London, 1993), p. x.

7. Roland Barthes, The Fashion System (1967), trans. Matthew Ward, Richard Howard (University of California, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1990), pp. 236, 255. The dream of identity is, for Barthes, ‘to be oneself, and to have this self/be recognized by others’ (p. 255); the dream of play is the fantasy by which we assume ourselves that in buying this jacket, these shoes, we define ourselves as free from the conventionality of ‘mainstream’ fashion.

8. Hegel, Esthétique (Aubier, Paris, 1944), vol. III, 1st part, p. 147; cited by Barthes, The Fashion System, p. 258. While we can accept Hegel’s point on a metaphorical level, when followed through literally his argument (not surprisingly) completely ignores the signifying effects of the subject . . .’ Butler’s suggestion that ‘the materiality of sex is constructed through a ritualized repetition of norms’ is neatly extrapolable to the sartorial codes that define such ‘materiality’. Judith Butler, Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex (Routledge, New York and London, 1993), p. x.


15. Williams, *The Politics of Modernism*, pp. 44–7. Williams is clear about the excoriation of femininity: the ‘bourgeois family’, which in turn is a ‘covering phrase’ for the rejection of women, is an abhorrent artist, who generally comes from an attitude-structure and must thus reject it at all costs to mark himself apart from these origins (thus Nietzsche with his ‘great resentment and hatred of women’), p. 57. Williams also stresses the continual shifts of these modes across periods and geographical contexts. This desire to repulse the feminine runs throughout European and US modernism. Barbara Ehrenreich, for example, discusses the radical changes in the US in the 1950s (related closely to the Abstract Expressionist group and friendships), examining their driving motivation to reject domesticity and the feminine and, in many cases, their direct, personal abuse of women. See Ehrenreich, ‘The Beat Rebellion: Beyond Work and Marriage’, in *The Heart of Men: American Dreams and the Flight from Commitment* (Anchor Books, New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Auckland, 1983), pp. 52–67.

16. Elizabeth Wilson, *Adorned in Dreams: Fashion and Modernity* (University of California, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1985), p. 189. I should stress here that I am reading these outfits through black and white photographs, sometimes quite crudely printed; my descriptions of fabrics and colours are approximate.


18. Nadar is the pseudonym of Gaspard-Félix Tournachon. All of these portraits are reproduced in Nadar (Giulio Einaudi editor, Torino, 1973) and in André Barret, *Nadar: 50 Photographies de ses Illustres Contemporains* (André Barret, Paris, 1975). Nadar’s portraits are particularly good examples since, as Roger Cardinal has argued, his skill as a caricaturist—a producer of the ‘portrait-charge’ (portrait-sketch possessing an extra degree of verve and emphasis)—translates into his remarkable photographic portraits, which accentuate aspects of the individual’s self-presentation but without grotesque distortion. See Roger Cardinal, ‘Nadar and the Photographic Portrait in Nineteenth-Century France’, in *The Portrait in Photography*, Graham Clarke (ed.) (Reaktion Books, London, 1992), especially pp. 7, 13. I could also have turned to *cartes-de-visite* images by A. A. E. Disderi or R. J. Bingham, photographers who churned out commercial portraits that were sold in large numbers to the public. Interestingly, in the *carte-de-visite*, the artist is often depicted posing auspiciously before the canvas cradling palette and smocks, poised in an avant-garde crouching posture, like a demigod or demi-garde, with one arm thrust up high. In contrast with the *carte-de-visite*, the artist is often depicted with the attributes of his profession—as if to reinforce this vestimentary encoding of creativity. For examples of dramatic portraits of artists in smocks, posed auspiciously before the canvas cradling palette and brushes in hand, see Elizabeth Anne McCauley, A. A. E. Disderi and the *Carte de Visite Portrait Photograph* (Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1985), p. 81.

19. By no means did all artists and writers dress like bohemians or dandies. The poet Emile Augier, for example, presents himself in conservative bourgeois dress in his portrait by Nadar; tellingly, however, Jules Barbey d’Aurevilly, the afficionado of the dandy, described Augier in the following way: ‘Augier is the poet without ideal and without profundity. He is essentially the poet of the bourgeois. He makes them happy’ (my translation). See Barret, *Nadar*, p. 92. Thus, while not every artist dressed in an anti-bourgeois manner, those who did not could be said to be signalling their bourgeois affiliations.


21. See also Nadar’s 1865 portrait of a dandified Edouard Manet, in which the artist sports a dressing polka-dot tie, dark vest, and jacket; in Barret, *Nadar*, p. 111.

22. Of course, as Griselda Pollock and Roszika Parker have noted, the ‘concept of the artist as a creative individual is a modern one’, hence it is not surprising that the artistic subject (as expressed through sartorial codes) becomes increasingly codified in the modern period; in ‘God’s Little Artist’, p. 82. Furthermore, in his article on ‘Change and Permanence in Men’s Clothes’, A. Hyatt Mayor argues that the growth of industrial capitalism promoted the establishment of clearly defined fashions and, furthermore, that ‘professions stimulate fashions’, which would explain the modern artist who generally comes from an attitude-structure and must thus reject it at all costs to mark himself apart from these origins (thus Nietzsche with his ‘great resentment and hatred of women’), p. 57. Williams also stresses the continual shifts of these modes across periods and geographical contexts. This desire to repulse the feminine runs throughout European and US modernism. Barbara Ehrenreich, for example, discusses the radical changes in the US in the 1950s (related closely to the Abstract Expressionist group and friendships), examining their driving motivation to reject domesticity and the feminine and, in many cases, their direct, personal abuse of women. See Ehrenreich, ‘The Beat Rebellion: Beyond Work and Marriage’, in *The Heart of Men: American Dreams and the Flight from Commitment* (Anchor Books, New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Auckland, 1983), pp. 52–67.


27. Baudelaire, ‘The Life and Work of Eugène Delacroix’ (1863), in *The Painter of Modern Life*, p. 56. Interestingly, Baudelaire is driven to counter the conventionalism of his characterization of Delacroix as a ‘perfect gentleman’ by an assertion that, on closer look, Delacroix has ‘much of the savagery’ about him. This immediate infection of Delacroix’s dandyism marks the danger of its feminizing effects; Baudelaire must recuperate Delacroix for the masculine artistic subject position, hence his savagery and ‘spirit of dominance’ (pp. 56, 57).


32. Barbey d’Aurevilly’s feminizing dandyism is apparent in Nadar’s portrait of him from around 1860–1865, in which he sports a lavish satiny robe with large oriental clasps. See Barret, *Nadar*, p. 69.

33. Although, to complicate the situation, Jacques Lacan points out that virile display (for example, that of the worker artist) has the effect of feminizing the male subject: ‘The fact that femininity takes refuge in this mask [the function that dominates identifications of self/others], because of the Verdrängung inherent to the phallic mark of desire, has the consequence that, in the human being, virile display itself appears as feminine.’ Lacan ‘The Meaning of the Phallus’ (1958), in Juliet Mitchell and Jaqueline Rose (eds.), *Feminine Sexuality: Jacques Lacan and the *coède freudienne*’, trans. Jacqueline Rose (W. W. Norton, New York and London, 1985), p. 85.

34. Homosexual self-presentation modes were just beginning to be defined around the turn of the century, with Wilde one of the most visible figures in this articulation. On the periodicization of the notion of the ‘homosexual’, see Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume I: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (Vintage Books, New York, 1980). Quentin Crisp, in his introduction to Barbey d’Aurevilly’s book, observes astutely that while Barbey d’Aurevilly, in the mid-nineteenth century, interpreted the effeminacies of the dandy in terms of female subjectivity and an aristocratic sensibility, ‘[nowadays … the dandy] would undoubtedly have been thought to be homosexual’; ‘Introduction’, in Barbey d’Aurevilly, *Dandyism*, p. 10.

35. Jackson Pollock, for example, has described in dramatically masculinist terms as a ‘demigodic genius’ who paints in ejaculatory ‘paeanisms of passion’, Clement Greenberg and Ivan Karp, cited by Ellen Landau in Jackson Pollock (Abrams, New York, 1989), pp. 11, 16.

36. Art history has generally worked to suppress the sexual ambiguity Duchamp and Warhol put into play. I have tried to address Duchamp’s equivocal en-genderings in my book *Postmodernism and the En-Gendering of Marcel Duchamp* (Cambridge University Press, New York and Cambridge, England, 1994), and a few scholars have begun to tackle Warhol’s challenges to heterosexist notions of masculinity in important ways. See, for example, Caroline Jones’s ‘Machine in the Studio: Changing Constructions of the American Artist, 1945–1968’, PhD diss., Stanford University, 1992, especially pp. 244–53. Jonathan Katz has begun to
surface more specifically the homosexuality of many US artists since the 1950s that has been erased or suppressed in art historical accounts; see his essay 'The Art of Code: Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg', in Whitney Chadwick and Isabelle de Courtivron (eds.), Significant Others: Creativity & Intimate Partnership (Thames and Hudson, London and New York, 1993), pp. 189–207.

37. Flügel, Psychology of Cloth, pp. 110, 111, 118.


41. For an extended discussion and reproductions of the Rrose Sélavy images see my chapter five, ‘The Ambivalence of Rrose Sélavy and the (Male) Artist’, in only the Mother of the Work’, in Postmodernism and the Ex-Gendering of Marcel Duchamp, pp. 146–90.

42. Landau, Jackson Pollock, p. 15. Fionna Barber has written a more critically astute analysis of Abstract Expressionist clothing as a signifier of a particular, troubled, masculine subjectivity in the Cold War period, ‘T-Shirts, Masculinity, and Abstract Expressionism’, paper delivered in the Visualizing Masculinities session at the Association of Art Historians, London, April, 1993. Barber argues that the working-class t-shirt entered masculine outerwear fashion after WWII, when it was ‘incorporated as a signifier of a healthy, normal heterosexuality’; Brando’s character from A Streetcar Named Desire ‘could be read as personifying in a particularly virile and macho form the newly remasculinized workforce in heavy industry after World War Two . . . n.p. The feminist ethnographer Gayle Rubin has examined how gay men have appropriated these very same vestimentary tropes of masculinity — particularly from Brando’s leather-clad rebel in The Wild One — in order to differentiate themselves from the mainstream stereotype of gay men as effeminate; in Gay Male Leather 1960–1990, paper delivered at UCLA, 25 May 1993.

43. Landau, Jackson Pollock, pp. 13, 240. Notably, according to Landau, although Pollock became famous as a t-shirt and jeans clad rebel, he always ‘dressed in tweeds, expensive shoes, and a buttondown shirt when he went into New York City. As Greenberg explained, “He didn’t want to look like a damned artist when he went to Fifty-seventh Street.” ’ Landau, Jackson Pollock, p. 240. Apparently, Pollock exaggerated his affiliation with working-class masculinity when performing himself as an artist for the camera, but was only too happy to reproduce this affiliation in his undocumented forays into the public. Pollock clearly differentiated his ‘artist’ self from his ‘everyday’ self.

44. ‘Jackson Pollock: Is he the greatest living painter in the United States?’, Life, vol. 27, no. 6, 1949, 8 August, p. 42.


46. Duchamp’s photographs have always been reproduced in contexts, such as the 1921 issue of New York Dada, that clearly signal the ‘woman’ to be himself in drag; the Makos image, too, is described as a portrait of Warhol.


49. According to McEvilly, Klein’s tuxedo was blue; in Yves Klein: Conquistador of the Void, p. 60.


53. Klein, ‘Due to the Fact That’ (1961), cited by Nan Rosenthal in ‘Assisted Levitation’, p. 124. Rosenthal argues that Klein was also responding to Paris’ own action painter, Georges Mathieu, who produced abstract paintings in public performances. Furthermore, she notes that Klein’s generation of artists in Paris were well aware not only of the Life article on Pollock, but also of Hans Namuth’s portraits of Pollock painting; pp. 124 and 135, note 135. See also Sídra Stich’s discussion of Klein’s relationship to Pollock, Mathieu, and to the important body painting performance pieces by the Japanese Gutai group in Yves Klein, exh. cat. (Canz Verlag, Stuttgart, 1994), pp. 187–91.


55. In the British context, Gilbert and George have also performed in mainstream clothing, making their signature an adoption of conventional masculine attire. In their ‘living sculpture’ series, begun shortly after they initiated their collaborative artistic persona in 1967, Gilbert and George wear bourgeois clothing — white shirts, ties, worsted suits — as a uniform in order to, as one historian has argued, ‘eliminate issues of choice and vanity in the living sculpture (precisely those elements valorized by the nineteenth-century dandy/filsner as setting him apart from the depersonalized subjects of the modern metropolis).’ Brenda Richardson, Gilbert & George, exh. cat. (The Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, 1984), p. 8. For discussions of the living sculpture see pp. 17–18; and Carter Ratcliff, ‘Gilbert and George: The Fabric of Their World’, in Gilbert & George: The Complete Pictures 1971–1985 (Rizzoli, New York, 1986), p. 11.


57. Berger points out that Morris’s lecture notes for this event include elaborate directions for each gesture and facial inflection (‘Lift text left hand’, ‘look at feet’, etc.); in Labyrinths, pp. 1, 3. See also Kimberly Paice’s description of 21.3 in Robert Morris: The Mind/Body Problem, exh. cat. (Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1994), p. 160. Unfortunately, I was not able to obtain permission to reproduce Peter Moore’s photograph of 21.3; his widow, Barbara Moore, has closed his photographic archive. The photograph is reproduced alongside both Berger’s and Paice’s descriptions.


59. Chris Burden, p. 76.

60. The advertisement was reproduced in Art in America, vol. 76, no. 11, November 1988, p. 51.

61. I should stress the polemical nature of my reading of Koons’ work as singularly masculinist here. I must admit that I am always amazed by Koons’ capacity to generate debate. In this sense, his work could be said to be extremely successful: it continues to outrage in a time when this is virtually impossible, sparking discussion over issues of sexuality, artistic authority, and the blurring of the boundary lines between pornography and art. While the cultural significance of his work as it has been received within the art world has tended towards a reactionary reinforcement of conventional masculine privilege, there are certainly receptive contexts (such as, hypothetically, the conservative US Congress, which has recently attempted to censor ‘pornographic’ art work) where Koons’ work would have more radical effects.