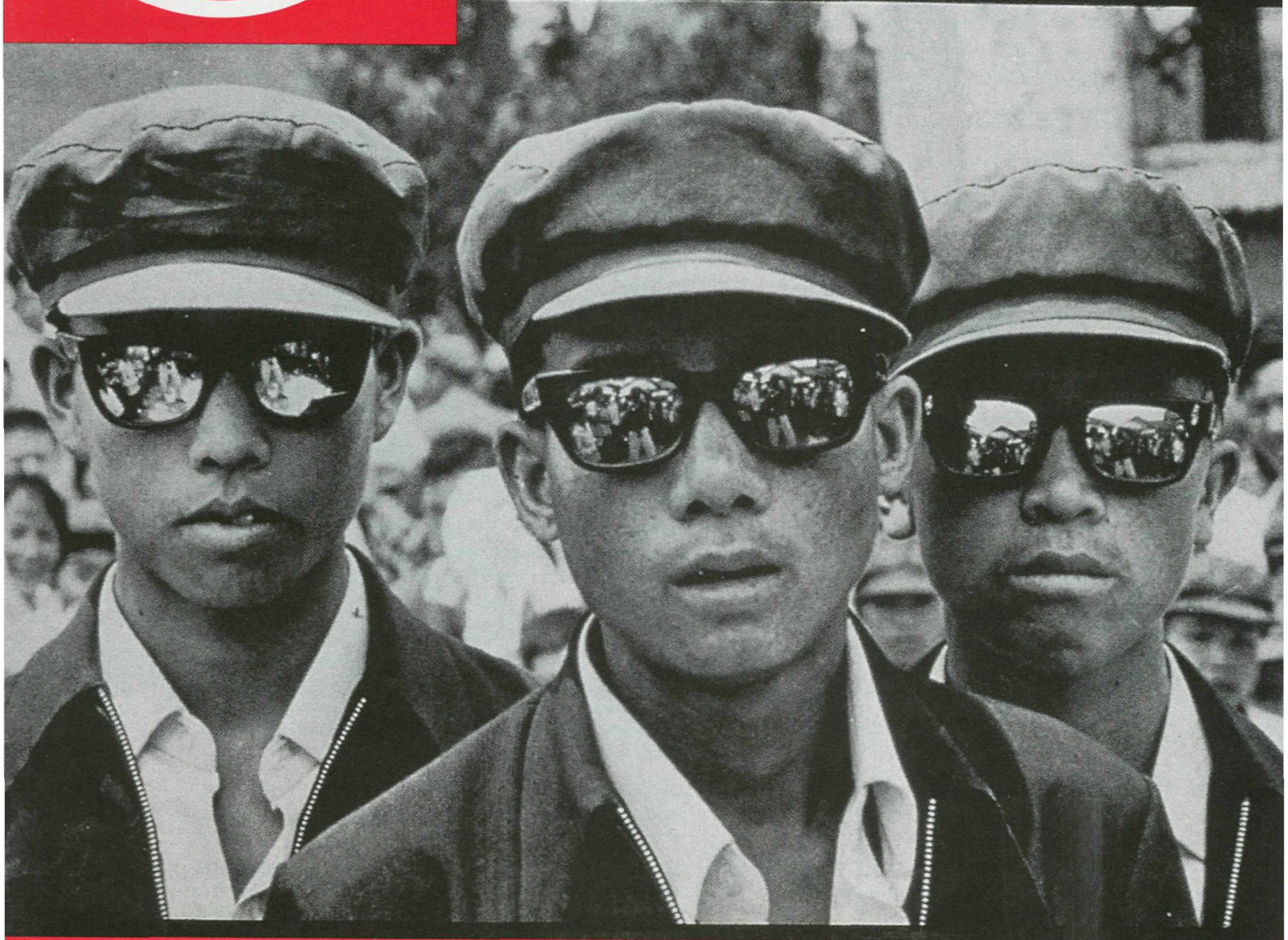


THE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE OF THE
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CHINA
Fifty Years Inside the People's Republic

MATRIX
Ken Goldberg/*Ouija 2000*
Peter Doig/*Echo-Lake*
Anne Chu/*Untitled*

Now
30th MFA Graduate Exhibition

Contents



New Exhibitions

China

Fifty Years Inside the People's Republic 4

Now

The 30th Annual MFA Graduate Exhibition 10

Continuing Exhibitions

Roma/Pacifica

The Phoebe Hearst International Architectural Competition and the Berkeley Campus, 1896-1930 6

Equal Partners

Men and Women Principals in Contemporary Architectural Practice 7

2x2

Architectural Collaborations 7

MATRIX Exhibitions

Peter Doig

MATRIX 183 Echo-Lake 8

Anne Chu

MATRIX 184 Untitled 9

Ken Goldberg

MATRIX 186 Ouija 2000 10

Public Programs

Notes on Public Programs 11

Calendar of Events 13

The Collection Galleries

The Collection on View 14

Drama from Kabuki 14

Fragments of the World

From Collage to Readymade 15

Features

Off the Wall

Arts and Minds 16

Behind the Screen at PFA

The Time of Their Lives 17

Departments

Letter from the Director 2

Campus Connection 18

Community Connection 19

Museum News 20

Member News 21

General Information 22

The Museum Store / Cafe Grace 23

PFA Winter Highlights Back cover



Ken Goldberg

MATRIX 186 *Ouija 2000*

www.bampfa.berkeley.edu/matrix/ouija

Through March 26

Net art will be canonized in the year 2000. *Artforum*, a monthly art journal, has instituted a regular column entitled "Gadget Love" dedicated to covering the "hot.list" of technology. For the first time, the Whitney Biennial, a barometer of contemporary art trends, will feature "Web-related and digital art," including Ken Goldberg's MATRIX project for the Berkeley Art Museum. In our increasingly tech-savvy society, the acceptance of net art as art has been remarkably rapid. This development contrasts with the early histories of video, film, and photography that were characterized by the conflict between their status as art and as technology. John G. Hanhardt, former curator of film and video at the Whitney and currently senior curator for film and media arts at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, is quoted in the *New York Times* as saying that Internet-based work has taken about half as long as video art to be included in a Whitney Biennial. Hanhardt credits the canonization of the then new medium of video in the early to mid-1970s as laying the groundwork for rapid development and acceptance of Internet-based art, and the lineage from video art to net art is widely embraced within the theoretical discourse.

Synthesizing art and technology, Ken Goldberg's work encourages participation. Visitors to his projects can keep a garden alive, experiment with United States currency, or predict the future. He also takes his work into actual space, creating complex installations such as *Mori* (1999), much as artists such as Bill Viola and Gary Hill brought video out of the box and into the realm of installation. Goldberg's work reflects a skepticism about technology and is characterized by a sharp sense of humor. Rather

than asking viewers/users to trust him and what he presents—in other words, to suspend disbelief—Goldberg encourages, perhaps even taunts them into a resumption of disbelief to counteract the overwhelmingly enthusiastic and uncritical public embrace of technology. Comprehending the limits of technology and engineering, he brings out the underlying anxiety regarding science that has always plagued progress. Goldberg intends not to impede progress but rather to encourage skepticism because, as philosopher Michael Idinopulos writes in Goldberg's upcoming book *The Robot in the Garden: Telorobotics and Telepistemology on the Internet*, "Skepticism is often treated as a... 'philosophical' issue with no real consequences for everyday life.... This view is deeply and importantly mistaken."

Ouija 2000, Goldberg's MATRIX project, is an on-line Ouija board with its planchette (the spade-shaped pointer that moves to indicate the Ouija's answers) mounted on a robotic arm. A digital video camera broadcasts an image of the board over the Internet. Participants logging on to the Web site are given instructions for using the computer mouse as a planchette. **Ouija 2000** is available twenty-four hours a day, and participants come together to "play" with up to twenty others at a time. The program randomly answers a selected slate of questions pertaining to each user's life in the new millennium. The computer aggregates the motions players make with the mouse to move the planchette on the robotic arm. Thus, the answers to questions will appear as if by "magic" or "mystical intervention" as no single user can control what the answers will be.

As technology continues to impact experience and communication, Ken Goldberg's net art installations explore the remnants of authenticity, knowledge, and truth in our digital experience.

Heidi Zuckerman Jacobson
Phyllis Wattis MATRIX Curator

Now

The 30th Annual MFA
Graduate Exhibition

May 20 through July 2

Now: The 30th Annual MFA Graduate Exhibition continues the tradition of a collaboration between the UC Berkeley Department of Art Practice and the UC Berkeley Art Museum. For the last three decades, every summer one of the museum's galleries has been devoted to a selection of new work by Master of Fine Arts candidates. Each year the students are provided with the experience of participating in a museum show, and the community is exposed to some of the most exciting and promising new artists in the Bay Area. Graduates of Berkeley's MFA program have included Enrique Chagoya, Jay DeFeo, Walter diMaria, Mark diSuvero, Sam Francis, Shirin Neshat, Deborah Oropallo, Jim Pomeroy, and John Zurier. The seven artists featured in the 2000 exhibition—Barbara Ellen Campbell, Aaron De Beers, Nemo Gould, Ajean Alexandra Lee, Dale MacDonald, Mally Mehryar, and R. Yauger Williams—promise to provide yet another diverse and provocative exhibition of contemporary art.

Heidi Zuckerman Jacobson
Phyllis Wattis MATRIX Curator

The annual MFA exhibition at the UC Berkeley Art Museum is made possible by the Barbara Berelson Wiltsek Endowment.