

BAD REPUTATION

Edgar Allan Poe, Deep Purple, and Haus Salve Hospes

Backyards

Sometimes, particularly in the suburbs, or in those areas on the very fringe of urban areas which can't properly be called suburbs (or in certain small towns ...), large green hedges surround lush green lawns, separating the street from the backyard, the sidewalk from the patio, the pedestrian from the lawn-chair lounge. Often these hedges are planted or trimmed relatively close to the ground so that simply the idea of a separation is enacted by relatively low-slung ribbons of green. But just as often they are grown to greater heights, rising seven, eight, or nine feet from the earth and more, effectively obliterating the ground-level views from one side to the other. Gazing through the hedges remains the only means of visually transgressing such a lofty and well-designed wall of foliage, finding the holes within the yellowed and thinned portions of the hedge and peering inward, into the hedge, and then through to the other side.

Within hedges

If a hedge has a certain bulk to it, a depth of a few feet or more, and if it has matured enough to allow for some larger yellowed and thinned patches to develop, it may be possible to enter the hedge itself and to find repose there, however briefly, between the lawn and the sidewalk, or the lawn and yet another lawn. (I've done this myself many times, although not in recent years ... the hedge I most often explored was a hemlock hedge, which was adjacent to a stand of mountain laurel, and there were endless depressions, cavities, and channels within the foliated structure where I could find space in which to reside.) Within a hedge there's a peculiar in-between sensation (as I remember it), a hovering in the middle of two distinct zones, which were intended to be partitioned off from one another, however gracefully, by the presence of the hedge. (The hedge behind the Haus Salve Hospes has a wild, uneven quality to it, with shoots and branches jutting out in all directions. Clearly at one time it was a tamer hedge, trained to a very particular height and depth, and yet now it has grown out and spilled beyond its original geometric configuration. But the earlier design is still recognizable, and the hedge is not in such a state as to be beyond restoration. It is somewhere on a journey from its role as a formal garden wall toward a more bohemian, free-flowing existence.)

Walls

In 1846, Allan Poe writes: *But the Prince Prospero was happy and dauntless and sagacious. When his dominions were half depopulated, he summoned to his presence a thousand hale and light-hearted friends from among the knights and dames of his court, and with these retired to the deep seclusion of one of his castellated abbeys. This was an extensive and magnificent structure, the creation of the prince's own eccentric yet august taste. A strong and lofty wall girdled it in. The wall had gates of iron. The courtiers, having entered, brought furnaces and massy hammers and welded the bolts. The external world could take care of itself.*

Walls

In 1981, *Tilted Arc*, 120 feet of Corten steel forged into a slight arc and set at a slight tilt, was first installed at 26 Federal Plaza in downtown Manhattan. Among the arguments made against the sculpture and in favor of its removal had to do with the plaza's accumulation of graffiti, waste, and litter, apparently prompted by the presence of the steel arc. In addition, the claim was made by Judge Re, whose office was located in the office tower of 26 Federal Plaza, that an increase in the rat population had been observed since the arc's arrival. He wrote: "We have never experienced a rodent problem of the present enormity in this area. Exterminators are called regularly, at a considerable expense, to rid our Courthouse of this hazard." Additional claims were made during the lengthy court that the arc was particularly suited to function as a blast wall for terrorists. A federal physical security specialist elaborated that the arc would "vent explosive forces not only upwards but also in an angle towards both buildings." In 1989 the arc was removed.

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Within buildings

Edgar Allan Poe continues: *It was a voluptuous scene, that masquerade. But first let me tell you of the many rooms in which it was held. There were seven—an imperial suite. In many palaces, however, such suites form a long and straight vista, while the folding doors slide back nearly to the walls on either hand, so that the view of the whole extent is scarcely impeded. Here the case was very different; as might have been expected from the duke's love of the bizarre. The apartments were so irregularly disposed that the vision embraced but little more than one at a time. There was a sharp turn at every twenty or thirty yards, and at each turn a novel effect. To the right and left, in the middle of each wall, a tall and narrow Gothic window looked out upon a closed corridor which pursued the windings of the suite. These windows were of stained glass whose color varied in accordance with the prevailing hue of the decorations of the chamber into which it opened.*

Outside buildings

Richard Serra has stated explicitly, more than once over several years, that his work has little or nothing to do with decoration, that his works never decorate or ornament the sites in which they are placed. Seen (as I did) in person, or from the many existing photographs, the arc has a highly ornamental quality to it, draped across the plaza like some long, low-slung snake. The snake became particularly mysterious at night, after the office building at 26 Federal Plaza emptied out, casting long, curved shadows across the plaza. It is then that the graffitiists came out (I imagine), perhaps under the mixed light source of a full moon and the obsessively bright night-time flood lights surrounding the area, turning the minimal Corten surface into a Gothic web of words, insignias, and symbols, not all of them pleasant according to reports. (Richard Serra writes: “Several of the speakers complained about people pissing on the sculpture or about the obscene content of graffiti scrawled on its surface.”) In addition, the urine could have had a particularly ornamental effect on the Corten steel, which is designed to rust slowly to a ruddy orange as a natural result of its oxidation process.

Decoration

And Poe: (...) *That at the eastern extremity was hung, for example, in blue—and vividly blue were its windows. The second chamber was purple in its ornaments and tapestries, and here the panes were purple. The third was green throughout, and so were the casements. The fourth was furnished and lighted with orange—the fourth with white—the sixth with violet. The seventh apartment was closely shrouded in black velvet tapestries that hung all over the ceiling and down the walls, falling in heavy folds upon a carpet of the same material and hue. But in this chamber only, the color of the windows failed to correspond with the decorations. The panes were scarlet—a deep blood color. Now in no one of the seven apartments was there any lamp or candelabrum, amid the profusion of golden ornaments that lay scattered to and fro or depended from the roof. There was no light of any kind emanating from lamp or candle within the suite of chambers. But in the corridors that followed the suite, there stood, opposite to each window, a heavy tripod, bearing a brazier of fire that projected its rays through the tinted glass and so glaringly illuminated the room. And thus were produced a multitude of gaudy and fantastic appearances.*

Backyards

The views from the back windows of the Haus Salve Hospes stretch out across the lawns (which need reseeding), across the hedges (which needed re pruning), and into the park lands on the far side of the hedges. The park lands are dotted here and there by large clusters of trees, the occasional full purple beech tree figuring prominently among them. It occurred to me that a fence might be a good idea, set parallel to the hedge, but on this side of the Haus Salve Hospes, in front of the hedge at some distance to allow traffic to flow somewhat steadily behind it if need be. The fence should be portable, I reasoned, ready to be up and moved at a (few) moments notice, and relocated anywhere else in the world where a fence might be needed. It should be made of wood, the most common material for fences that I am accustomed to (besides the classic chain-link fence, which I knew I didn't want), and it should be completely enveloped in purple ... a deep, dark, Gothic purple. *(But, in spite of these things, it was a gay and magnificent revel. The tastes of the duke were peculiar. He had a fine eye for colors and effects. He disregarded the decora of mere fashion. His plans were bold and fiery, and his conceptions glowed with barbaric lustre. There are some who would have thought him mad. His followers felt that he was not. It was necessary to hear and see and touch him to be sure that he was not.)*

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- Tom Burr, 2000

[This text was written to accompany Tom Burr's solo show entitled *Low Slung*, curated by Karola Grässlin, held at Kunstverein Braunschweig (September 16 – November 12, 2000). It was published in Karola Grässlin (ed.), *Low Slung*, Kunstverein Braunschweig, Verlag Lukas & Sternberg, New York, 2000, pp. 12-19. It was later re-published in *OCTOBER*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, n° 100, Spring, 2002, pp. 28-33. Excerpts from this text were also printed in Will Bradley, Henriette Bretton-Meyer and Toby Webster (eds), *My Head is on Fire but my Heart is Full of Love*, Charlottenborg Udstillingsby, Copenhagen, 2002, pp. 81-84.]

Gravity Moves Me

Gravity moves me. It drags me across the floor at a particular pace, and it tosses me face down on the ground periodically, pushing my cheek solidly against the floor, holding me there while I'm catching my breath, holding on to it as long as I can. From down there, I think about the floorboards I'm pressed against, about other floorboards in other rooms, and tiles, and expanses of carpet. I think about vast poured concrete spaces and asphalt-covered parking lots. I ruminate on the many low, flat surfaces of the earth, its superficial layers, its underpinnings and its coverings, its floors, sub floors and joists, its sodden mud and its cracked dirt, its wall-to-wall pile and scattered area shags.

Gravity concerns me. It ages things. It pulls on things and causes things to falter and fall. It works on objects and people the same way, the fibrous contractile tissue of my muscles comes under the same pressure as the multiple veneers of a sheet of plywood, both engineered to withstand the ravages of many passing months but both incapable of warding off the cumulative damage long term. Months turn into years, things warp, buckle and bend; slide shift and fade; slacken and fray.

(I made a sculpture a decade ago out of plywood panels trained and coaxed into a long curve and painted a deep purple, then secured with long metal stakes driven into the ground. It was made to conjure up, or act a bit like another, larger sculpture made two decades earlier out of Corten steel, a material with a much slower aging process, a more gradual admission of demise. Ten years later my purple wooden impersonator, well-traveled but somewhat world-weary, shows her age in a variety of ways across the surface of her skin and throughout her multiplied bone structure. The curve is slightly less pristine after years spent outdoors, and after other years spent having the individual parts and sections packed up in storage warehouses, waiting. But the purple remains vibrant somehow, despite the snow and the sun, and the many fecal trails left by bugs and birds and roving dogs. In a certain light, and from certain angles, she looks as young and fresh as she did a decade ago. I saw her again recently, after several years, quietly installed inside a courtyard in a town not far from Paris, her violet complexion chromatically consistent with the fallen autumn debris at her feet. I ran my hands over her volume in a moment of fleeting objectophilia, feeling her curved form, then backed away as a swarm of lady bugs began to cover the sun drenched swath of wood I was fondling.)

Gravity amuses me. Its stark, harsh message makes me stammer and laugh, and blurt out. It makes me grin. I tend to resist its pull on my face by smiling, at nothing, like an idiot or a sage. I tend to resist its pull on my body through repetitions that strengthen and stabilize the mass of my muscles as long as I can. I impersonate plywood; I try to act like steel. Frequently I give in. I rest for a while. I collapse, catching my breath and holding it, letting my body have its individual parts and sections be pushed and pulled by the full weight of gravity's force, down to the ground. Moved by weight and mass and seriousness, I lie there, smiling for no reason. I lie low and I ruminate on the low, flat surfaces of the earth, its parquet floors and its plywood subfloors, its green lawns and its gravel drives, its wall-to-wall pile and its scattered area shags.

- Tom Burr, 2011

[This text was written to accompany Tom Burr's eponymous solo exhibition, curated by Florence Derieux, held at FRAC Champagne-Ardenne, Reims (4 February – 17 April, 2011). It was published in *Picpus*, London, n°5, Spring, 2011, n. p.]

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ENTRE NOUS

September 17 - October 21, 2017

Opening Reception, Sunday September 17, 2017, 4-7 pm

With works by Tom Burr, Robert Bittenbender, Claude Cahun, Vincent Fecteau, Ian Markell, Vernon Price, Johannes Paul Raether, RIA-B, Willem de Rooij, Ser Serpas, Susanne M. Winterling.

- 1 Tom Burr
Edgar Allan Poe, Deep Purple, and House Salve Hospes, 2000
Published in Karola Grässlin (ed.), *Low Slung*, Kunstverein Braunschweig, Verlag Lukas & Stromberg, New York, 2000, pp. 12-19; *OCTOBER*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, n°100, Spring, 2002, pp. 28-33.

Gravity Moves Me, 2011
Published in *Picpus*, London, n°5, Spring, 2011, n.p. on occasion of exhibition *Gravity Moves Me*, FRAC Champagne -Ardenne, Reims (2011); *Mousse*, Issue #46, December 2014 - January 2015, p. 182
- 2 Robert Bittenbender
Untitled, 2017
Drawing, mixed media, artist frame
12 3/4 x 15 3/4 inches (32.4 x 40 cm)
Unique
- 3 Claude Cahun
Qui ne craint pas le grand méchant de loup remet la barque sur sa quille et vogue à la derive, 1936
Gelatin silver photograph with hand applied pigment, framed
12.75 x 15.75 inches (33.25 x 40 cm)
Jersey Heritage Collections
- 4 Vincent Fecteau
Untitled, 2001
Paper maché, paint
10 x 9.5 x 17.5 inches (25.4 x 24 x 44.5 cm)
Private Collection
- 5 Ian Markell
California Duplicate DY68-01, 2017
Stainless steel, cold rolled steel, pornographic casting photographs, various hardware
6 x 18 x 62 inches (15 x 45.5 x 157.5 cm)
Unique
- 6 Vernon Price
Shimbaree Shimbarah, 2013 - 2017
C-Print, artist frame
37 3/8 x 41 3/8 in (95 x 105 cm)
Ed. 1/3 + AP
- 7 Johannes Paul Raether
Schwefelrose, 2010
Glass, wood, dyed canvas
3 x 28 inches (7.5 x 71 cm)
Ed. 1/3

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- 8 RIA-B
Tender Robbing Caron Covers Strapped Jocks: Cups Overfloweth with Extra Padding, 2011/2017
Acrylic paint, wood, cast iron
Dimensions variable
Unique
- RIA-B
Subtraction Through Addition I, 2017
Plated brass, glass lens
1.4 - 2.4 inches (3.5 - 6 cm)
Unique
- 9 Willem de Rooij
Nuts, 2011
Gelatin silver photograph, framed
9.25 x 11.6 inches (23.5 x 29.5 cm)
Ed. 12/15 AP
- 10 Ser Serpas
Wabi Sabes Que, 2017
Mixed Media
24 x 24 x 36 inches (61 x 61 x 91.5 cm)
Unique
- 11 Susanne M. Winterling
Untitled (Cembalo Company), 2017
from series *Teen Beat I*, 2010
Inkjet Print, passpartout
12.5 x 15.5 in (31.75 x 39.40 cm)
Special edition 1/1 + 2 AP

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Tom Burr (b. 1963, New Haven, Connecticut) lives and works in New York, NY. Graduated from the School of Visual Arts, New York, NY (1986) and attended the Whitney Independent Study Program, New York, NY (1987-1988). Recent solo exhibitions include *Tom Burr/New Haven*, Bortolami Gallery, New Haven, CT; *Stages*, Maureen Paley, London, England; *Surplus of Myself*, Westfälischer Kunstverein, Münster, Germany. Recent group exhibitions include *concrete realities*, Bortolami, New York, NY; *Touchpiece*, Hannah Hoffmann Gallery, Los Angeles, CA; *SUR/FACE: Mirrors*, Museum für Angewandte Kunst, Frankfurt, Germany; *Benz Bonin* with Cosima von Bonin, Skulptur Projekte, Münster, Germany; *Question the Wall Itself*, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN. Collections among others include: AĪSHTI Foundation, Beirut, Lebanon; Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, MD; Berezhdivin Collection, Santurce, Puerto Rico; Centre Pompidou, Paris, France, FRAC, France; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA; Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany; Migros Museum, Zurich, Switzerland; MOCA, Los Angeles, CA; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY.

Robert Bittenbender (b.1987 in New Jersey) lives and works in New York, NY. Received his BFA from Cooper Union, NY (2011). Recent solo exhibitions include *The Aviary*, Lomex, New York (2016); *Metropolitan*, High Art, Paris, France (2015). Selected group exhibitions include *Under the Volcano*, Lomex, New York, NY (2016); *Bloody Life*, Herald St., London, UK (2016); *Wasteland*, Lomex, New York, NY (2015); *Summer Group Show* (curated by Rob McKenzie), Greene Naftali, New York, NY (2015); *These Are Not My Horses*, James Fuentes, New York, NY (2015); *Flowers in the Attic*, Bed Stuy Love Affair, Brooklyn, NY (2015); *Appel of the Earth*, High Art, Paris, France (2015).

Claude Cahun (b. 1894 - 1954) born as Lucy Schwob in Nantes, France into a Jewish intellectual family; daughter of Maurice Schwob, publisher of the newspaper *Le Phare de la Loire*, and niece of Symbolist writer Marcel Schwob. Distanced herself from her famous family by adopting the sexually ambiguous name Claude Cahun, 1918; published under this name in *Mercure de France*, reporting on the trial of Oscar Wilde. Moved from Nantes to Paris; wrote for a variety of journals, including *Philosophies*, *Disque Vert* and the avant-garde homosexual review, *L'Amitié*. Joined Association des Ecrivains et Artistes Révolutionnaires (AEAR), 1932, left the following year, disenchanted with its close affiliation to the French Communist Party (PCF) and hostility to any aesthetic other than social realism. Joined anti-fascist Contre Attaque group founded by Georges Bataille and André Breton, 1934. Left Paris permanently by 1938, moving to the Schwob family summer retreat on Jersey, Channel Islands, Active in Resistance during Nazi occupation; arrested and condemned to death, 1944; spared with the island's liberation, 1945, never recovered from incarceration. Continued to live and work in Jersey until her death in 1954.

Vincent Fecteau (b. 1969 in Islip, NY) lives in San Francisco, California and received a B.A. from Wesleyan University in 1992. His work was featured in the 2002 and 2012 Whitney Biennials; he has been exhibited in museums and galleries throughout Europe and the United States, including solo exhibitions at the Art Institute of Chicago in 2008 and Kunsthalle Basel in 2015, the Carnegie Museum of Art in 2013, and the Secession, Vienna in 2016.

Ian Markell (b. 1991) lives in Los Angeles, California. He received his Bachelor of Fine Art from The Cooper Union, New York City, NY in 2014. Recent solo exhibitions include *Image of A Stylish Servant* at Born Nude in Chicago in 2015, as well as THEPERFECTSUIT, at the Strongroom in Los Angeles in 2014. Recent selected group exhibitions include *A Sensuous Appearance of the Idea*, Bad Reputation, Los Angeles in 2016; *No! I am No Singular Instrument*, curated by Samuel Kenschil, VSF, Los Angeles, 2016; *No Hope No Fear* at the Swiss Institute Rome, organized by Taylor Macklin, Zurich, *9800,501 (c) (3)* at Foundation in Los Angeles in 2015, *Austere* at 100 Wilshire, Los Angeles in 2015.

Vernon Price (b. 1975 in Abingdon, VA) lives and works in Los Angeles, California. Graduated with a BFA from Art Center College of Design, Pasadena and a MFA from the University of Southern California in 2011. Recent exhibitions include *Repetition Standard*, Mathew NYC, NY (2017); *Exhume/ Consume*, Mathew NYC, NY (2017); *Bottom Floor*, Charlie James Gallery, Los Angeles (2017); *Venus in Pieces*, Mathew NYC, NY (2014); *Love is Still Colder than Capital*, Mathew Gallery, Berlin, Germany (2013).

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Johannes Paul Raether (b. 1977, Heidelberg, Germany) lives and works in Berlin. His practice traverses various platforms in Performing and Visual Arts as well as in the Humanities by the way of his SelfSisters (alter egos), which emerge at various sites in public and corporate spaces. His works and performances were shown in Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (2017), transmediale, Berlin (2017) the 9th Berlin Biennale (2016) Berliner Festspiele (2016), Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2016), Fridericianum, Kassel (2015) and KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin (2013). Recent Solo exhibitions include Kunstverein für die Rheinlande und Westfalen in Düsseldorf (2017), Transmission Gallery, Glasgow (2015) and Ludlow 38, New York City (2014) Raether publishes regularly in *Texte Zur Kunst* and co-edited the book *Zeig Her, Führ Vor, Tausch Ein. Performance—Art—Academy* (2013). He received the Villa Romana Price (2015) and was Artist in Residence at the Leuphana University Art's Program (2016). Since 2016 he is Professor für Freie Kunst at Kunstakademie Düsseldorf.

RIA-B (b. 1989 in Cincinnati, OH) is based in Los Angeles, California. He graduated with a BA from Pitzer College in 2012. Upcoming exhibitions include: *Poses* workshop and performance with Alexandro Segade and Malik Gaines (A.R.M.), Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY (2017); Luringen workshop and performance with Alexandro Segade and Malik Gaines (A.R.M.), KUIR Festival, Bogota, Colombia (2017); Past exhibitions include: *To an Otherwise Unknown Event*, Bad Reputation, Los Angeles; *The Legend*, DD55 Gallery, Cologne, DE (2017); *Aperture*, BLAM Projects, curated by Peter Hickok, Los Angeles, CA (2016); *Walk Artisanal*, 3716 Eagle Rock Blvd., curated by Peter Harkawik & Miles Huston, Los Angeles, CA (2016); *BOFFO Block Party*, BOFFO, Fire Island Pines, NY (2014); *The Legend*, Rogalund Kunstsenter, Stavanger, NO (2015); *New Directions 2010: Down + Out*, Wallspace Gallery, Seattle, WA (2010).

Willem de Rooij (b.1969 Beverwijk/Netherlands) lives and works in Berlin, Germany. He studied art history at the University of Amsterdam and art at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie and the Rijksakademie in Amsterdam. Recent solo exhibitions include *Ebb rains*, Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane (2017); *Entitled*, MMK2, Frankfurt am Main (2016); *The Impassioned No*, Le Consortium, Dijon (2015); *Character is Fate* at Witte de With, Rotterdam (2015); *Untitled* at Kunstverein München, Munich (2012); *Crazy Repelled Firelight*, Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York (2011) and *Intolerance*, Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin (2010). In September 2017 there will be solo exhibition at KW – Institute for Contemporary Art in Berlin. De Rooij's work can be found in the collections of Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, MUMOK in Vienna, Hamburger Bahnhof in Berlin, Centre Pompidou in Paris, MOCA in Los Angeles and MOMA in New York.

Ser Serpas (b. 1995 in Los Angeles, CA) lives and works in New York, NY. Serpas graduated with a B.A. from Columbia University, NY in 2017. Upcoming exhibitions include *Current Projects*, curated by Quinn Harrelson, Miami, FL (2017); Recent exhibitions include *Clay Club*, SculptureCenter, (with Hayley Silverman), Long Island City, NY (2017); *Prick Up Your Ears*, Karma International, curated by Taylor Trabulus, Beverly Hills, CA (2017); *Cabin Pressure*, BBQLA, curated by Quinn Harrelson, Los Angeles, CA (2017); *Dumbo Open Studios*, Smack Mellon Gallery, (with Donna Huanca), Brooklyn, NY April 2016. Commissioned performances include *Crumbling World Runway*, Moma PS1, Sunday Sessions, curated by India Menezes, Long Island City, NY (2017); *Variegated*, National Sawdust, Selkie Sessions, curated by Alexandra Marzella, Brooklyn, NY (2016).

Susanne M. Winterling (b. 1970 Rehau/ Oberfranken, Germany) lives and works in Berlin, Germany. Received MFA from University of Fine Arts, Hamburg, Germany; MA in Philosophy/ Art History, University Tübingen/ University of London; Founding member of Art Collective *Isotrop*. Selected solo exhibitions: Kunstverein Langenhagen, Langenhagen (2016); *Space Elevator: Streetbodies and Donkeydreams*, The Cologne Room (Bad Reputation), Los Angeles (2015); Parrotta Contemporary Art, Stuttgart (2014); Hiromi Yoshii Raponggi, Tokyo (2014); Ludlow 38, New York (2014); Kunstverein Amsterdam (2014); Silvermann Gallery, San Francisco (2013); Parrotta Contemporary Art, Stuttgart (2012); Fotogalleriet, Oslo (2011); Badischer Kunstverein, Karlsruhe (2010); Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst, Bremen (2009); Artissima, Turin (2009); Moscow Center for the Arts, Moscow (2007). Selected collections include Goetz Collection, Munich; Federal Collection of Contemporary Art, Berlin; Saatchi Gallery, London; De la Cruz Collection, Miami; Zabludowicz Collection, London.