

DOVE BRADSHAW

THOMAS REHBEIN GALLERY

COLOGNE

*2011*



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Thomas Rehbein Gallery  
Cologne  
*2011*

D o v e B r a d s h a w  
Thomas Rehbein Gallery, Cologne  
June 10-August 31, 2011

This all looks great, Dove! Congratulations!

AnnTemkin, Chief Curator of the Museum of Modern Art, New York

I was pleased to see your exhibition at Thomas Rehbein Gallery: it was striking and impressive!

Dr. Volker Adolphs, Curator and Head of Exhibitions, Kunstmuseum Bonn

Congratulations on your exhibition and the beautiful catalogue!

Donna de Salvo, Chief Curator the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

It looks wonderful! Congratulations on the exhibition and catalogue.

Isabel Derveau, The Morgan Library, New York

Thank you so much for your wonderful works. They are truly astonishing.

Ulay, Artist

It's clearly an important exhibition, and I'm grateful to you for bringing it to our attention.

Lloyd Wise, Reviews Editor, ARTForum

What a great looking exhibition, congratulations! Thank you very much for keeping me in the loop. It really looks beautiful.

Cooke Marony, Gagosian Gallery, New York

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Anne de Fornel, PHD,

The Compositions and Visual Work of John Cage, The Sorbonne, Paris

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Dove Bradshaw  
Thomas Rehbein Galerie, Cologne, 2011

1. *2√0*, 1971/1998

Glass, acetone

This is a 1978 edition of the 1971 sculpture, the earliest work on view. “Made of conjoined twin glass bulbs it contains clear liquid, designed to function horizontally as a level and vertically as a clock. In action the liquid moves from one bulb to the other, voiding and filling, contingent upon time and gravity.” Charles Stuckey

2. *SPACETIME*, 2011

DVD, 23.22 minutes,

Music: John Cage: *Ryoanji*, 1983-5

“We’re confronting now it seems to me in the very full way that her work is itself working—the identity, not the separateness, but the identity of time and space...” John Cage observed in conversation with Thomas McEvelley, July 1992. The film’s title was derived from this remark about Bradshaw’s *Contingency* series; its subject is the 1971 sculpture, *2√0*. The work is designed to have alternate presentations: situated vertically it is a clock; set horizontally it is a level. This duality led to engaging John Cage’s *Ryoanji*, a duet for a percussionist and another instrument—here an octobass flutist and a timpanist. Cage gave the first copy of this to Bradshaw shortly after its release.

3. & 4. *Shrivel, thud [Contingency Jet], Evolution [Contingency Jet]*, 2007

Silver, liver of sulphur, varnish, gesso on linen

The chemical reagent, liver of sulphur, was released from an eyedropper onto a leaf of thin Italian silver mounted on beeswax over arches paper. Overtime the chemical continues to change the image.

5. & 6. *Contingency Pour I and II*, 1984 -2006

Silver, liver of sulfur, varnish, gesso on linen

“The paintings involve a chemical reaction *in flagrante*, a progressive devouring of the silver by the chemical reagent liver of sulphur leaving a crystal residue. The rough skin of the surface is changing, in a slow dynamism interacting with the atmosphere.” Joel Simpson. “The process is no less mysterious than irrepressible and the artist and viewer alike can only welcome transformation outside their control.” Charles Stuckey



8. *Home*, 2008

Honey Locust thorns

Built into a pyre, a “drawing in space.”

11. *And so. And all.*, 2004

Daguerreotype

[Its] overall somberness suits a recurring theme: the vanitas or memento mori. (In life there is death, and vice versa) ...[it] makes visual rhymes of a skull and egg—an end and a beginning.“

David Frankel

12. *Quick Construction*, 2006

Silver, liver of sulphur, pigment, beeswax on handmade paper

The composition is made by throwing cardboard templates by chance. “Most intriguing, they are works on paper in a series ironically called *Quick Constructions*. In fact they employ a laborious technique, but their beginnings with pieces assembled at random recalls not only Cage but Duchamp—[particularly] in his *Three Standard Stoppages* (1913-14) which was generated by dropping three one-meter lengths of thread from a height of one meter.” Roberta Fallon

14. *a man lost in a desert always turns right*, 1990

Titanium dioxide, zinc sulphate, varnish, gesso on linen

Half the squares are fixed, the other half are not. “Marcel Duchamp said, speaking of Utopia, that we won’t be able to reach it till we give up the notion of possession. And this work of Dove’s confronts possession complete-ly.” John Cage

15. *Contingency Pour [Rome]*, 1996

Silver, liver of sulphur, varnish, gesso on linen

Thick German silver was applied with varnish on gessoed linen. The chemical reagent, liver of sulphur was poured onto it when flat and left to affect the contingent area.

16. *Obstruction*, 1990

Silver, liver of sulphur, titanium dioxide, varnish, beeswax on linen paper

One half of the work changes with the atmosphere, the other by attrition

17. *Crack in the Air*, 2003

Honey Locust thorn, pigment, varnish

Covered in unfixed alizarin crimson pigment, danger is accentuated. The title derives from the artist's visualization of a growing thorn 'cracking' the air, similar in form to wall cracks.

19. *Without Title*, 1990/2010

Soapstone, incised with the word "indeterminacy"

The piece originally was a test strip prepared for another work. For twenty years it existed as a paperweight; one day it was discovered broken; it was finished 'indeterminately.'

20. & 21. *Screen I*, 1990 and *Screen II*, 2011

Gesso applied to wet linen.

22. *Indefinite*, 1977

Newsprint, mat board, wooden frame, glass, mount and nail

With an art restorer, the artist reviewed the length of time each material of a standard frame would last un-changed in museum conditions.

23. *II series, Nothing, 2*, 2004

24 karat gold over bronze

A goose eggshell. The first casting of broken eggshells was in 1969. During its exhibition at the Art Institute of Chicago, the curator of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Art, Charles Stuckey wrote:

"Hypersensitive to its surroundings, the fragile sculpture trembles slightly at the footfall of any approaching viewer. The convex and concave surfaces of the half eggshells, with their jagged edges, are full with reflected images of the viewer as an agent of interaction and the surroundings."

24. *Waterstone*, 2011

Limestone, separatory funnel, water

"The gradual erosion of stone underlines the irony that water, although a gentle element, can 'destroy.' Over time the water penetrates flowing downward eating away the rock as it seeks the lowest place." Thomas McEvilly

25. *Medium*, 1992/2011

Photograph on Plexiglass, Merce Cunningham Dancer, Victoria Finlaysen

The dancer is a medium for the choreographer, but the work also points to the pain involved.

26. *Partial Portrait*, 2009

Plaster embedded in wall as standing figure, normal height

Plaster portrait of the artist emerging through the wall.

27. *Silence Speaks*, 2006-2010

Titanium dioxide, varnish, oil, gesso on linen

Layers of oil are applied, next cut with a razor blade, rubbed with unfixed pigment.

28. *Performance Burned*, 1992/2004

The 1992 Metropolitan Museum of Art postcard made from a 1978 gelatin silver print in the collection

“In 1976, Dove Bradshaw “claimed” (her coinage) a fire hose in The Metropolitan Museum of Art by posting a label next to it that identified it as her work. An early example of indeterminate work, it was entitled *Performance* (since 1993) in anticipation of a seemingly ceaseless engagement with the museum as well as the inevitable contingent nature of a fire hose. The Duchampian gesture of the *objet trouvé* is expanded on two fronts here by the object’s *a priori* placement in an art space and by its intact function. Whenever the label was removed she replaced it. After two years of this engagement, she made a postcard of the work and quietly placed a stack of them for sale in the museum shop postcard rack, restocking whenever they sold out. In 1980 her ongoing gambit prompted the museum to acquire her photograph of the fire hose in order to produce their own postcard. This, too, sold out. In 2006, not satisfied that the museum had properly recognized the work as a sculpture, Bradshaw sold an updated label to New York collector Rosalind Jacobs who in time offered this label to the museum. The fire hose became a sculpture in their permanent collection as of December 31, 2007. This month the Museum will mount an official label next the fire hose.” Charles Stuckey. This history offers a guerilla alternative to the traditional circuits of ownership and distribution. In conversation with McEvelley about Bradshaw’s work, Cage notes how “Marcel Duchamp said, speaking of Utopia, that we won’t be able to reach it till we give up the notion of possession. And this work of Dove’s confronts possession completely.” Anna Katherine Brodbeck

31. *(A)claimed Object*, 1979/2011

The Kunstmuseum postcard self-produced

In 1979 the artist ‘claimed’ a hygrometer in the Kunstmuseum by affixing a label to it identifying it as her work. For this exhibition she produced the postcard of it. Her focus on this atmosphere-measuring instrument was a harbinger of her future involvement with paintings whose chemically treated surfaces cause them to change with the atmosphere. The title is a pun.

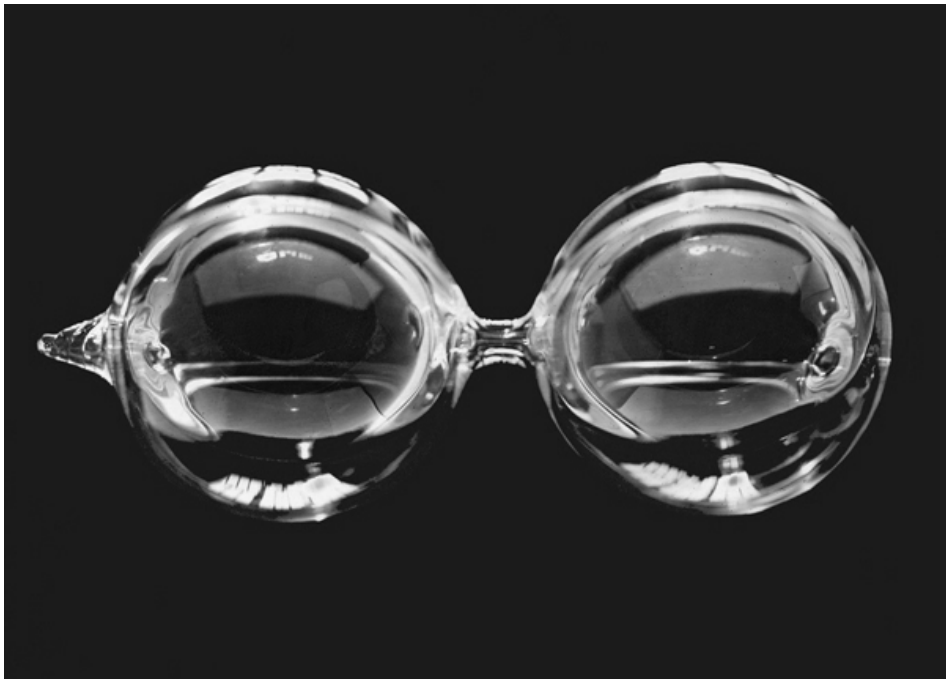
Originally not conceived as art, it was designed to function horizontally as a level, vertically as a clock. Later when left uncalibrated, it became a work by resisting the notion that space and time are measurable. The title is a nonsense mathematical formula — drawing attention to the Western attempt to define things with a nod to Eastern mysticism.

Dove Bradshaw



1.  $2\sqrt{0}$   
*1971*  
Glass, acetone  
*2 1/2 x 5 x 2 1/2 inches*

Next page: 2. SPACETIME  
*2011*  
DVD  
*23.22 minutes*  
 $2\sqrt{0}$  sculpture filmed in action as a clock and as a level  
Accompanied by John Cage: *Ryoanji*, 1983-65  
For octobass flute and percussion



The work of Dove Bradshaw works with our changing conceptions of time and space which we have assumed for a long time are two different things. She's involved, as we are in our lives, because of art, with an almost scientific procedure, so that she can experiment in such a way as to prove something. And she can subject us to the results of her experiments, which can open us to the life we are living. It's very curious and very true...

Dove's work is preparing us for a constant loss and a constant gain, and also of not knowing whether it's good or bad.

John Cage



3. Shrivel, thud [Contingency Jet]  
*2006, Activated July; photographed June 2011*  
Silver, liver of sulfur, varnish, beeswax on Arches paper  
*3 ½ x 3 ½ inches*





4. Epolution [Contingency Jet]  
2006 [*Activated July; photographed June 2011*]  
Silver, liver of sulfur, varnish, beeswax on Arches paper  
*3 ½ x 3 ½ inches*



5. Contingency Pour I  
*2006, Activated October; photographed February 2010*  
Silver, liver of sulfur, varnish on linen  
*76 x 66 inches*



6. Contingency Pour II  
*2006, Activated October; photographed April 2007*  
Silver, liver of sulfur, varnish on linen  
*78 x 66 inches*





7. Rehbein Galerie  
Cologne, 2011



8. Home  
2008  
Honey Locust thorns  
38 x 32 inches



9. Home, Contingency Pour II, Contingency Pour I



10 . Waterstone, Contingency Pour II, Contingency Pour I



11. And so. And all.

*2004*

Edition of 4

Scanned Daguerreotype on Duraclear

*12 ¼ x 15 ½ inches*





12. Quick Construction [Japanese]

2006

Silver, liver of sulfur, titanium dioxide,  
varnish, beeswax on linen paper

25 x 19 ½ inches



13. Thomas Rehbein Gallery  
Cologne



14. a man lost in a desert always turns right

*1990*

Titanium dioxide, zinc sulfate, varnish, gesso on linen

*30 x 30 inches*





15. Contingency Pour [Rome]

1996

Silver, liver of sulfur, varnish, gesso on linen

*17 x 14 inches*



16. Obstruction

1990

Silver, liver of sulfur, titanium dioxide, varnish, beeswax on linen paper

26 x 20 inches



17. Crack In The Air  
2003  
Thorn, pigment  
39 x 8 x 6 inches

Attracted by her use of indeterminacy, the practice of using chance and natural forces to act upon her work, Merce Cunningham invited Dove Bradshaw, along with William Anastasi, to become joint Artistic Advisors to his dance company in 1984. The resonances between Bradshaw's work and that of Cunningham's are clear; both made extensive use of chance procedures as part of their creation. Bradshaw's Contingency Series abandons traditional artistic practices and uses materials that react differently depending on environmental conditions, just as Cunningham abandons not only musical forms, but narrative and other conventional elements of dance composition—such as cause and effect, and climax and anticlimax.

Stephen Jones  
Christies Spring Catalogue, 2011



18. Contingency Jets and Without Title [Indeterminacy broken stone]  
Opposite page: Crack In the Air and II, Series, Nothing 3







19. Without Title

1990 / 2010

Soapstone, incised with the word "indeterminacy," broken by chance

1 3/8 x 36 x 6/8 inches





20. Screen I  
1990  
Gesso on linen  
*7 1/2 x 7 1/2 inches*



21. Screen II  
2011  
Oil, gesso on linen  
*7 ½ x 7 ½ inches*



22. Indefinite

1977

Newsprint, mat board, glass, wooden frame, mount and nail

*12 1/2 x 11 5/8 inches*





23. II series, Nothing, 3  
2004  
18 karat gold  
*2½ x 5 x 2½ inches*

## WATERSTONE

...Bradshaw's...Waterstones...focus attention on the ongoing process of disintegration....there are still deeper spiritual implications ...of disintegration, as the entropy theory clearly bears a resemblance to Taoist thought. Tao means "the way" according to the Tao Tê Ching, the classic text attributed to Lao Tzu, the Way may also be called the Valley Spirit or the Water Spirit or the Mysterious Female. The nature of the Water Spirit is that it seeks the low ground. When water has reached the lowest point, it has returned to the state of the Uncarved Block, to the Mysterious Female. Bradshaw, then is using the Way, or the Water Spirit, in the...Waterstones; the liquid flows downward eating away the rock as it seeks the lowest place.

The essence of the Way is ceding control, holding oneself back from intervention as much as possible....[Bradshaw] has said, in reference to her role with her materials, "I like to withdraw," meaning that after setting up the situation she lets the forces of nature take charge and go their own way. Though not the western style, this is nevertheless a strategy for control. As the Tao Tê Ching says, "The sage's way is to act without striving" (LXXXI). "Those that would gain what is under heaven by tampering with it--I have seen that they do not succeed" (XXIX)...A basic image in Taoism is water's ability to wear away stone--a foundational point of Bradshaw's...Waterstone works. "Nothing under heaven is softer or more yielding than water," says Lao Tzu, "but when it attacks things hard and resistant there is not one of them that can prevail" (LXXVIII). A modern text on Taoist art observes that everything is characterized by perpetual motion because everything is infused with a need to return to the Tao; dripping water, for example, is seeking to return to the Tao. This relationship is encapsulated in the Taoist term for landscape painting, shan-shui, mountain-water. "The term for landscape," a modern scholar writes, "...is...symbolic of the [constant interaction of the] Yang and the Yin. Yang and the yin, in turn, come through in Taoist alchemy as mercury and sulfur, the male and the female of the cosmic marriage. Awareness of this fact was supposed to inculcate in the artist painting a shan-shui "a worshipful attitude, making it a ritual act of reverence in praise of the harmony of Heaven and Earth."

There seems a dualism in yang and the yin, yet the Tao Tê Ching says they "produce oneness" and in the Taoist painting tradition this was called I-hua (one-painting or painting the oneness). Extrapolating from this idea one could say that Bradshaw's Waterstones are an attempt to paint the oneness. The disintegrated state of entropy, the eating of water into stone, are symbols of dialectical reality, the abandonment of Identity and Excluded Middle--a glimpse of the other side of the crack."

Thomas McEvilley



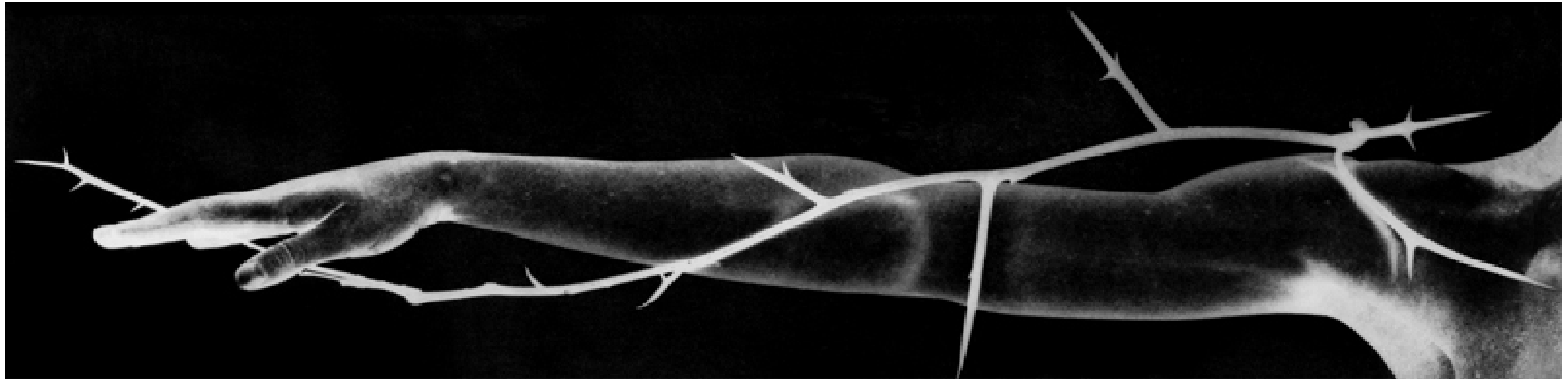


24. Waterstone

1996

Limestone, separatory funnel, water

*Limestone: 12 x 12 x 12 inches; separatory funnel: 1000 ML*



25. Medium  
1992  
Duraclear film  
*9 1/2 x 29 inches*







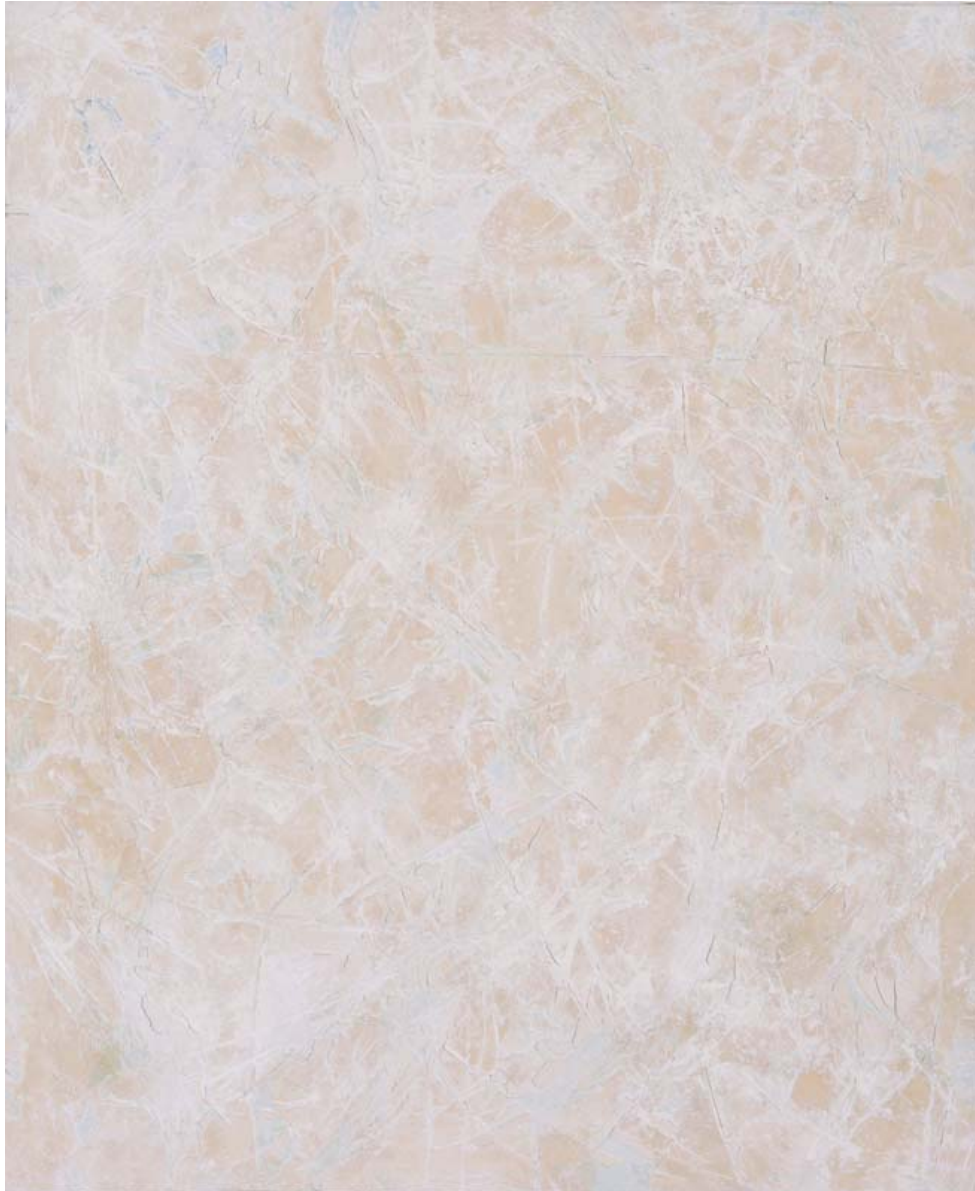
26. Partial Portrait

2009

Plaster casts of the artist's foot, face, left hand embedded flush in the wall

*Embedded: foot on floor with hand and face at artist's height*





27. Silence Speaks  
*2006-2010*  
Pigment, oil on linen  
*17 x 14 inches*



**Fire Extinguisher**

Dove Bradshaw, American, b. 1949

Gelatin silver print, 6 1/4 x 4 1/4 in., 1978

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert E. Klein, 1989 1989.1095

In 1976, the conceptual artist Dove Bradshaw "claimed" a fire hose in The Metropolitan Museum of Art by posting a label next to it that identified it as her work. Next, she had the fire hose photographed, produce postcards of her piece, and quietly placed them in the Museum's store. They sold briskly. This postcard reproduces the photograph, *Fire Extinguisher*, now in the Museum's collections.

Printed in the U.S.A.

01-07482-1 © 1992 MMA

28. Performance Burned

1976 / 2004

Metropolitan Museum postcard, 1992

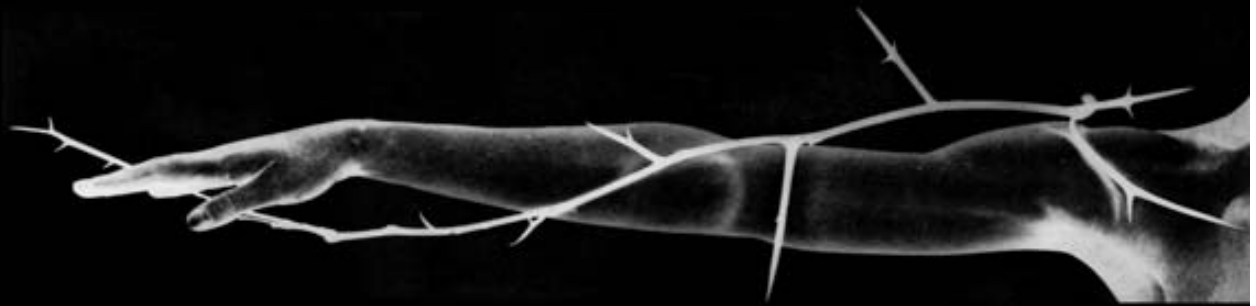
6 1/4 x 4 1/4 inches



# DOVE BRADSHAW

JUNE 10 - JULY 30, 2011

THOMAS REHBEIN GALLERY  
AACHENER STR. 50674 COLOGNE



29. Medium  
Thomas Rehbein Poster, Edition Number 2 of 24  
2011  
Archival inkjet print  
*13 x 19 inches*

# DOVE BRADSHAW

THOMAS REHBEIN GALLERY  
AACHENER STR. 5  
COLOGNE

JUNE 10 - JULY 30  
2011



30.  $2\sqrt{0}$

Thomas Rehbein Poster, Edition Number 2 of 24

2011

Archival inkjet print

*13 x 19 inches*



Objected Object, 1979  
Kunst Museum, Dusseldorf  
KUNSTMUSEUM DUSSELDORF  
In 1979, the conceptual artist Don Raudier "kissed"  
a piece of medical equipment, and the resulting portrait  
is held in the identified track record.

© 2011 by Kunst Museum

31. (A)claimed Object

1979

Kunstmuseum, Dusseldorf postcard, 2011

6 ¼ x 4 ¼ inches



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

John Cage, Stephen Jones, Thomas McEvelley, Mark Swed: texts

## PHOTOGRAPHIC CREDITS

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