

JOHN WATERS CHANGE OF LIFE

During the past forty years, the celebrated and always controversial film director John Waters—once crowned "The Pope of Trash" by William Burroughs and now hailed as the genius behind Broadway's smash-hit musical *Hairspray*—has moved from the margins of culture to the mainstream. Ever subversive and happy to raise the issues that polite society works hard to suppress, Waters has helped to liberate us from social restrictions and norms. In that process, he has created hilarious and provocative filmed entertainment. And since he picked up a still camera more than ten years ago, he has reinvented himself as a powerful and perceptive visual artist.

Scrutinizing videotapes of over-the-top Hollywood movies and forgotten art films that had long obsessed, amused, and fascinated him, Waters started to photograph video stills off his television screen. The hilarious, erotic, rude, revealing, and sometimes poignant moments that he captured became the raw material for artworks that Waters began to call his "little movies." In these novel photographic sequences, Waters continues to skewer cultural symbols and stereotypes, and to elaborate on the cultural and subcultural themes that have been central to all his work: race, sex, sanctimony, glamour, class, family, politics, celebrity, religion, the media, and the allure of crime.

John Waters: Change of Life, published on the occasion of Waters's first major museum exhibition, presents a survey of his still photographic works and stills from his earliest and seldom-seen no-budget films: Hag in a Black Leather Jacket, Roman Candles, and Eat Your Makeup. The book also includes images of objects from Waters's personal collection that reflect his ongoing fascination with photographic imagery, the mass media, and some of the more outrageous expressions of American popular culture.

Accompanying these artworks, film stills, and quirky images are contributions by notable cultural and art historians that zero in on Waters's cinematic mind and photographic eye, and on surprising artworks that speak for themselves in more subtle and complex ways than might ever be expected.

210 illustrations; 180 in full color

JOHN WATERS CHANGE OF LIFE

exhibition co-curated by
MARVIN HEIFERMAN AND LISA PHILLIPS

with contributions by

MARVIN HEIFERMAN GARY INDIANA LISA PHILLIPS BRENDA RICHARDSON TODD SOLONDZ

Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, in association with the New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York

JOHN WATERS: CHANGE OF LIFE

New Museum of Contemporary Art February 8–April 18, 2004 Co-curated by Marvin Heiferman and Lisa Phillips

The exhibition

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is sponsored by New Line Cinema.



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LA MARTINIÈRE

John Waters "Cry-Baby" doll by Joe Nero from the personal collection of John Waters

TITLE PAGE TOP

John Waters's first 16mm movie camera
from the personal collection
of John Waters

TITLE PAGE BOTTOM

John Waters's first 35mm still camera
from the personal collection
of John Waters

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LIZ TAYLOR'S HAIR AND FEET, 1996

Hair: twenty-six chromogenic prints

Feet: seven chromogenic prints

Checklist #28

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EVERYTHING ALWAYS LOOKS GOOD THROUGH HERE!
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NEW MUSEUM TRUSTEES AND STAFF

SPONSOR STATEMENT

We are tremendously honored to be a part of the New Museum of Contemporary Art's exhibition *John Waters: Change of Life*. For over thirty years, John Waters has explored the art of filmmaking in a profoundly unique way. With an enduring body of work and a thriving film community in Baltimore, John is living proof that a filmmaker can break any boundary set before him or her, provided he or she does it with style, integrity, and vision.

From Multiple Maniacs to Pink Flamingos to his breakthrough with Hairspray, it has been a singular joy to have played a part in his infiltration of American cinema. John continues to be an important and beloved member of the New Line family, and we are delighted that the New Museum of Contemporary Art has chosen to recognize his influence on popular culture and on contemporary humor with this timely and important exhibition.

From February 8 to April 18, 2004, people from all walks of life will have the opportunity to experience the far-reaching works, influence, and details of John's art. We are proud to work with the New Museum as lead sponsor and hope art, literature, and film lovers will enjoy this rare opportunity to explore the mind of one of the most controversial, influential, and wonderful voices in contemporary art.

Robert Shaye

Co-Chairman and Co-C.E.O

New Line Cinema

Michael Lynne

Co-Chairman and Co-C.E.O

New Line Cinema

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project has been under discussion and planning for several years. Brenda Richardson initiated the idea for an exhibition of John Waters's photography and brought it to the New Museum's attention several years ago. We are grateful for her ongoing involvement and participation as a contributing author to the book.

Several people made valuable contributions to the research and organization of the project: Leith Johnson and Joan Miller of the Cinema Archives at Wesleyan University, which houses John Waters's archives; Tracey Frey, Susan Allenbach, and Tanner Almon in John Waters's office; Dennis Dermody; Alpesh Patel, Executive Assistant, Director's Office, and Erin Barnett, Joanne Leonhardt Cassullo Curatorial Fellow, at the New Museum; Maurice Berger; Leon Falk; Doug Singsen; and Daniel McDonald, Christine Tsvetanov, and the rest of the staff at American Fine Arts.

All production aspects of both the book and exhibition have been expertly handled by Melanie Franklin, Curatorial Coordinator, and beautifully designed by Lorraine Wild and her associate Stuart Smith. We are most fortunate to have outstanding contributions from Brenda Richardson, Gary Indiana, and Todd Solondz who provide insights into John's work not previously shared with the public. Michelle Piranio's diligent work as editor and proofreader was invaluable during the production of this book. We are also grateful to Eric Himmel, Susan Richmond, and Justine Keefe at Abrams for publishing and distributing the book in conjunction with the exhibition.

The exhibition would not be possible without the extremely generous contribution of New Line Cinema, stalwart supporters of Waters's vision for over three decades. Special thanks to Michael Lynne and Robert Shaye for their support of this project.

In addition, we are most appreciative of support from the Judith Rothschild Foundation.

Our thanks to Vince Peranio, John Waters's longtime production designer, who has designed a vital component of the show that captures the spirit of John's vision and his domestic environment.

Finally, we are most indebted to John Waters, whose vision and insights have informed the whole conception and process of this project.

This book and the exhibition
John Waters: Change of Life
are dedicated to the memory of Colin de Land.

HE HAS SEEN "IT" Lisa Phillips

What does John Waters dream about? The Wicked Witch of the West? Jesus Christ? Dorothy Malone's collar? Russ Meyer? True Crime? Sex Addiction? Art?

Waters's world is a special place of his own creation—a zany, anarchic, darkly humorous vision of America where nonconformity is taken to new extremes, hierarchies are overthrown, and tastelessness is embraced with abandon. Over a career spanning four decades, Waters has plied his offbeat personal aesthetic through filmmaking, photography, writing, and performing. At first he operated on the margins as an underground figure, but during the course of forty years he has become a cult hero. And now, with the musical *Hairspray* appearing on Broadway to great acclaim, he threatens to become a mainstream institution.

With the 8mm Brownie that his grandmother gave him for his seventeenth birthday and some shoplifted film, Waters made his first movie, *Hag in a Black Leather Jacket* (1964), while still in high school. Two years later, when he was asked to leave NYU for smoking marijuana, he already had the ambition, the drive, and the courage to take on a wholesale reevaluation of American Family Values. By the time he was twenty-seven, he had written, directed, and produced eight films, including the cult classics *Pink Flamingos* (1972) and *Female Trouble* (1974). After becoming a major force in the independent film movement with his extremely subversive films, Waters's audience grew (as did the movement) and he was finally given the opportunity to work within the Hollywood system writing and directing films such as *Hairspray* (1988) and *Serial Mom* (1994). In the early 1990s, while continuing to make films, Waters also took up photography with great passion, creating works that he dubbed his "little movies." Mostly elaborate sequential compositions of pictures from movies taken off his TV set, these photographs expand on his film work while standing alone as a body of work. They also point to Waters's roots in art and the underground—where figures such as Andy Warhol and Robert Rauschenberg moved fluidly back and forth between media.

Waters's journey from margins to mainstream has been a fascinating trajectory; in the process he has continually challenged preconceived values and helped to transform societal attitudes. It's a journey that could only have happened in late twentieth-century America, with its profound social

upheavals and transformations. Who would have imagined that the "Sultan of Sleaze" would end up a national cultural treasure? The irony of the situation is not lost on Waters: "I was nervous only once, when the Baltimore Museum of Art gave me a three-day retrospective of films in 1985. Somehow I was suddenly respectable. It was as if magically, the films had changed content in the cans over the years. Here I was being honored for work I had feared being imprisoned for a decade before." Things that created shock waves in the 1960s now seem sedate compared to the real-life confessions on day-time talk shows and reality television claiming primetime attention today. But Waters has doggedly pursued his vision from the beginning, working on the edge as a prophet and a tastemaker, developing his art as a photographer and a filmmaker, and earning himself a place in the pantheon of true American iconoclasts.

Whatever medium he chooses to work in, Waters always spins a consistent world view, relent-lessly questioning notions of what is "normal" and what is "different," what is "good" and what is "bad." Scandal, sleaze, tastelessness, and celebrity are the prime ingredients of Waters's artistic time bombs, which release rage and anger through black humor. His outsider subjects confront the hypocrisy and the cruelty of daily life—their oppression and despair at being fat, gay, outlaws, freaks, or failures—with humor.

Waters's sensibility was already evident even in early childhood. As a young boy, he was drawn to the violent fantasies in fairy tales—the evil Queen in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* and Captain Hook in *Peter Pan* were his favorite characters, the ones he related to. He staged disasters and car wrecks with toys, and found scary/funny figures like Clarabelle the Clown from *The Howdy Doody Show* particularly appealing. According to Waters, when he was seven, his fate was sealed when his parents took him to *The Howdy Doody Show* in New York City. There, he saw how they used multiple Howdy Doody puppets and many cameras to produce the show. Waters was thrilled by "the lie of it all," by the underlying artifice. Soon he was back home in Baltimore making serious pocket change by creating his own crazy puppet shows full of mischievous antics for the neighborhood kids.

As he evolved from puppet shows to live-action films shot in and around his parents' Baltimore home, his creative vision began to take hold. Increasingly attracted to low-life outcasts, freaks, and weirdoes, by l967 Waters had assembled a ragtag group of friends and eccentrics that included cross-dressers, shoplifters, and drug users. They formed Dreamland Studios—the film and repertory company that provided the foundation for Waters's subsequent films, from *Mondo Trasho* (1969) to *Hairspray*. The company included Mink Stole, Mary Vivian Pearce, David Lochary, and Waters's muse, Glenn Milstead (Divine), who just so happened to be the "girl" next door (he lived six doors down from Waters when they were in high school).

Moving back and forth between Baltimore, New York, and Provincetown, Massachusetts, during the 1960s, Waters frequented vanguard galleries, fringe clubs, and counterculture bookstores. He

took in the work of Andy Warhol, the Kuchar brothers, and Kenneth Anger, and read *Film Culture*, *Evergreen Review*, and everything published by Grove Press. He was coming of age in a particularly fertile period of political and social ferment when conventional values were all up for question, alternatives were continually being proposed, and various liberation movements proliferated. The line between high and low art was eroding as new complexities arose that rendered old binary oppositions passé. In these watershed years, Waters emerged as a true American original. Like so many disaffected adolescents, he dropped out of school, took drugs, and made a virtue of being different. But he had a particular genius for turning that virtue into the substance of his art.

Whether making puppet shows, films, or photographs, Waters invariably directs and redirects material from daily life to create dramas that refocus our attention on his particular loves and obsessions, fears and loathings. The media is a principal obsession (he subscribes to 118 magazines) and he carefully collects material from real-life sources—particularly lurid tabloids such as the *National Enquirer* and the *Globe*. Clippings, headlines, ads, and film stills assembled in scrapbooks and on elaborate bulletin boards form the underpinning of much of his art. His fanatical observation of daily life plays into his brilliant satirical vision: he is unsparing in his rants against everything from fashion victims, walkathoners, gentrification, vegetarianism, and liberal attitudes to the U.S. mail service, pro-lifers, hippies, computer gamers, and boring film classics. And, he holds a special loathing for middle-of-the-roaders. On the other hand, he is equally passionate in his love of books, novelties, jokes, oddities, hairdos, adult comics, religious paraphernalia, and notorious media personalities. His library, which he loves to arrange, features titles in the areas of extreme weather, psychological illness, sex, Nazis, Catholicism before the Reformation, and high society. His early photographs are mostly serial collages of pictures he (re)takes directly off the TV set of his favorite films, including *Boom, Peyton Place*, and *The Bad Seed*.

Waters's auteurism has a particular focus around the subjects he loves and hates. His consistent preoccupation with fame, perversions, religious fanaticism, crime, and abjection (vomit, garbage, assholes) are all pressed into service of the larger themes of class distinction, race relations, suburbia, the family unit, and sexual preference. The dangerous, the dirty, the naughty (he loves puke green and rats), the weird, the filthy, and the flagrantly erotic bump up against upper-middle-class refinements in combustible juxtapositions. (Waters has a series of Cy Twombly prints hanging in his dining room and a Gregory Greene bomb factory installation in his attic.) Commonly held assumptions about what is "normal" or "good" are reshaped by his carnivalesque and camp vision. Waters questions and lampoons social mores and standards of "normality" at every turn—in the films through the unsophisticated yet authentic viewpoints of Baltimore's working class and low life. His protagonists' stubborn adherence to unpretentious, honest, and somewhat righteous attitudes is a send-up of high culture linking Waters to other brilliant social satirists of his generation such as Matt Groening (*The Simpsons*) and Roseanne Barr, whose poignant depictions of the working class in America have struck a popular chord.

Waters has mixed and matched, cross-dressed, exchanged, and mutated the foundations of our values in both obvious and subtle ways. In his photographs he has overlaid the wicked witch with the good witch of Oz; cast Charles Manson in a number of look-a-like scenarios (Manson copying Brad Pitt, Richard Gere, etc.); titled a figurine of Jackie Kennedy Jackie Copies Divine's Look (2001); and in his early film Eat Your Makeup (1967), he cast Divine as Jackie Kennedy in a remake of the Zapruder film. Waters questions what is real and what is fiction. How close do we all come to being sinister and criminal? How are criminals and stars alike treated as celebrities by the media? Is there beauty in the ugly, the obvious, or the unnoticed? In his world view, everything can be seen as containing the potential for its opposite.

The constant reversal of roles and value systems in Waters's art extends to his formal values as well—in particular, his love of "bad form," "bad photography," and "bad filmmaking." He has made a virtue of the bad or the failed, using techniques considered by most to be "crass," "tasteless," or "gimmicky"—Odorama, cheap effects, jumpy camera movements. He has further commemorated these principles in his photographs with works such as *Despair* (1995), where frames credit Alan Smithee, the pseudonym used by the Director's Guild of America when a director has removed his name from a film; *Straight to Video* (2000), implying that a film is so bad it will never be theatrically released; and *Hair in the Gate* (2003).

In It (2000), Waters photographed a picture of Jackie Kennedy and paired it with a frame that reads: "She Has Seen 'IT'." What is "IT"?—Camelot, privilege, power? Blood, death, misery? The dream, the nightmare, the god, the monster, the lie, the truth? Waters has also seen "it." He's seen how the media has perpetrated a mythic ideal of the family, of political dominance, of the miracles of consumption—and how it also loves the dark side—the rampant pathologies, the fascination with obesity, mass murder, celebrity misfortune, and other tragedies. As a true visionary, Waters has seen the seamless image and the cracks in it; he understands the need for artifice and the need for it to serve a higher purpose.

JOHN WATERS: CHANGE OF LIFE

WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

with comments by John Waters Dimensions are given in inches; height precedes width.

PHOTOGRAPHS

1. A COLD WIND, 1992

Four chromogenic prints, 3½ x 5 in. each, 12½ x 15% in. (framed) Image: 7 x 10 in. Edition of 8

Collection of Emily Apter and Anthony Vidler

Drink. Have fun. Die. The End. "High Concept" goes arty.

2. DIVINE IN ECSTASY, 1992

Chromogenic print, 10 x 13 in., 16% x 20% in. (framed) Image: 10 x 13 in. Edition of 8 Collection of Zachary and Amy Lehman

One glorious second between rape and Catholic sainthood. Divine goes to heaven.

3. GOSSIP, 1992

Two chromogenic prints,
3½ x 5 in. each, 7½ x 13% in. (framed)
Image: 3½ x 10 in. Edition of 8
Collection of Todd Oldham and Tony Longoria

Edie pisses off Divine. All my early films pitched in just two single shots.

4. SLADE 16, 1992

Sixteen chromogenic prints, 3½ x 5 in. each, 7½ x 85½ in. (framed) Image: 3½ x 81½ in. Edition of 8 Courtesy of the artist

You fall in love as a teenager, get pregnant, and have an illegitimate child. Then your baby catches on fire and your boyfriend puts it out; presto—a happy ending.

5. TRUE CRIME #2-SCRAMBLEHEAD, 1992

Six chromogenic prints, 3% x 5 in. each, 16% x 17% in. (framed) Image: 10 x 10% in. Edition of 8 Private Collection

Manson robot. Brainwashed. Murderous.

Bad teeth. Cute.

Villains are always the best part.

6. MANSON COPIES DIVINE'S HAIRDO, 1993

Two chromogenic prints, 5 x 7 in. each, 20% x 16% in. (framed) Image: 10 x 7 in. Edition of 8 Collection of Nan Goldin

Without knowing it, Manson pays homage to Pink Flamingos and loses the battle for the "filthiest person alive."

7. PEYTON PLACE-THE MOVIE, 1993

Sixteen chromogenic prints, 3½ x 5 in. each, 7½ x 83½ in. (framed) Image: 3½ x 79½ in. Edition of 8 Collection of George Stoll

Cutaway shots stand in for sex, '50s style; frigidity, orgasm, incest, and rape (Hollywood abstract).

8. BAD SEED, 1994

Nine chromogenic prints, 3½ x 5 in. each, 7½ x 48½ in. (framed) Image: 3½ x 44¾ in. Edition of 8 Collection of Todd Oldham and Tony Longoria

One evil second from my childhood heroine's "big shocker." I wanted to be her. I still do.

9. FOREIGN FILM, 1994

Eighteen gelatin silver prints, 3½ x 5 in. each, 12½ x 50½ in. (framed) Image: 7 x 44½ in. Edition of 8 Collection of Mr. & Mrs. Bernard L. Shaw

Genet. Moreau. Masochism. Lick the boots, poison the animals, worship the buckle. Forget the filler, get to the good parts. Subtitles equal sex!

10. INGA #1, 1994

Six chromogenic prints,
5 x 7 in. each, 37½ x 13½ in. (framed)
Image: 29½ x 7 in. Edition of 8
Courtesy of American Fine Arts, Co./
Colin de Land Fine Art, New York

When a Swedish art film meant dirty, the way it should be.

11. LANA BACKWARDS, 1994

Eight chromogenic prints, 5 x 7 in. each, 11% x 63 in. (framed) Image: 5 x 56% in. Edition of 8 Collection of Todd Oldham and Tony Longoria

Show the outfit, see the ass, worship the ultimate star one second longer than usual. Leaving the room never looked so sexy. To hell with entrances.

12. PEYTON PLACE—THE DOCUMENTARY, 1994

Sixteen chromogenic prints, 3½ x 5 in. each, 7½ x 83½ in. (framed) Image: 3½ x 79½ in. Edition of 8 Private Collection

Write a bestseller, leave your husband, move to New York, become a drunk and die. Grace Metallous, my own personal literary saint.

13. ROSS HUNTER TURNS INTO DOUGLAS SIRK, 1994

Five chromogenic prints, 5 x 7 in. each, 11% x 41% in. (framed) Image: 5 x 35 in. Edition of 8 Collection of Todd Oldham and Tony Longoria

A legendary Hollywood hack meets the ultimate auteur dead center of a famous dissolve.

14. SELF-PORTRAIT, 1994

Ten chromogenic prints, 3½ x 5 in. each, 7½ x 53½ in. (framed) Image: 3½ x 49½ in. Edition of 8 Collection of Brenda Potter and Michael Sandler

Low self-esteem. Some days I pretend I'm Don Knotts all day long.

15. DESPAIR, 1995

Five chromogenic prints, 3½ x 5 in. each, 7½ x 28½ in. (framed) Image: 3½ x 25 in. Edition of 8 Collection of Ben Stiller

The final humiliation of a disastrous film experience— Director's Guild of America style.

16. DIVINE IN PRAYER, 1995

Six gelatin silver prints, 8 x 10 in. each, 16% x 55 in. (framed) Image: 10 x 47% in. Edition of 8 Collection of Pamela and Arnold Lehman

A spiritual reaching out— Hallmark meets Dreamland on Easter.

17. DOUBLES, 1995

Two chromogenic prints, 3½ x 5 in. each, 7½ x 13½ in. (framed) Image: 3½ x 10 in. Edition of 8 Collection of Constance R. Caplan, Baltimore

> Elizabeth Taylor gets in drag to become Divine.

18. EDITH TELLS OFF KATHARINE HEPBURN, 1995

Two chromogenic prints,
3% x 5 in. each, 8% x 11 in. (framed)
Image: 5 x 7% in. Edition of 8
Collection of Vincent and Shelly Fremont

The toothless berate the humorless.

19. LEADER, 1995

Eight gelatin silver prints, 3½ x 5 in. each, 7½ x 43½ in. (framed) Image: 3½ x 40 in. Edition of 8 Private Collection

Ultimate classic film sequence; altered, glamorized, and given a new ending.

20. OTTO, 1995

Eight chromogenic prints, 5 x 7 in. each, 11¼ x 63 in. (framed) Image: 5 x 56 in. Edition of 8 Collection of Elizabeth Lecompte

Director best remembered for his meanness to movie stars begins Jean Seberg's tragic journey to the car trunk.

21. PASOLINI, 1995

Four gelatin silver prints, 3½ x 5 in. each, 7½ x 23½ in. (framed) Image: 3½ x 19¾ in. Edition of 8 Collection of Jim Jarmusch

Pimples.
Rough trade Christ.
A holy card for the damned.

22. WILLIAM CASTLE, 1995

One chromogenic print and one gelatin silver print 5 x 7 in. each, 11% x 20% in. (framed) Image: 5 x 14 in. Edition of 8 Collection of Todd Oldham and Tony Longoria

Maybe Hitchcock was the copycat.

23. ZAPRUDER, 1995

Twenty-four chromogenic prints,
3½ x 5 in. each, 1st section: 7½ x 86½ in.;
2nd section: 7½ x 36½ in. (framed)
Images: 3½ x 84½ in. (1st section);
3½ x 36½ in. (2nd section). Edition of 8
Collection of Jean Stein

Divine is Jackie Kennedy; then, now, forever.

24. DOROTHY MALONE'S COLLAR, 1996

Ten chromogenic prints,
5 x 7 in. each, 11½ x 77½ in. (framed)
Image: 5 x 69½ in. Edition of 8
Collection of Carl Ehrhardt and Elizabeth Hazen

An entire career told through a signature costume affectation.

25. EAT YOUR MAKEUP, 1996

Seven gelatin silver prints, 3½ x 5 in. each, 7½ x 38¾ in. (framed) Image: 3½ x 35 in. Edition of 8 Collection of Patricia Gidwitz

Sometimes credits are the only things that count. Go ahead, model yourself to death.

26. FACE-LIFT, 1996

Twenty-one chromogenic prints,

3½ x 5 in. each, 1st section: 7½ x 102½ in.;

2nd section: 7½ x 7½ in. (framed)

Image: 3½ x 100½ in. (1st section);

3½ x 5 in. (2nd section). Edition of 8

Collection of Susan and Michael Hort

Elizabeth Taylor's cosmetic stitches inspire John Waters's mustache. All you need is a look.

27. I, MARY VIVIAN PEARCE, 1996

Thirteen gelatin silver prints, 5 x 7 in. each, 9% x 95% in. (framed) Image: 5 x 90% in. Edition of 8 Collection of James A. Mounger

I, A Woman meets Multiple Maniacs the ultimate female sexploitation pose.

28. LIZ TAYLOR'S HAIR AND FEET, 1996

Hair: twenty-six chromogenic prints, 5 x 7 in. each; feet: seven chromogenic prints, 5 x 7 in. each Hair: 39% x 49% in.; feet: 5% x 49% in. (framed) Image: 39 x 48% in. (hair); 4% x 48% in. (feet) Edition of 8 Collection of Patricia Gidwitz

So famous, you don't need a face.

29. MOVIE STAR JESUS, 1996

Eighteen chromogenic prints,

3½ x 5 in. each

Vertical section of cross: 46½ x 8½ in.;

horizontal section of cross: 7½ x 38½ in. (framed)

Image: 42½ x 5 in. (vertical section);

3½ x 34½ in. (horizontal section). Edition of 8

Collection of Ross Bleckner

Erotic, S&M inspiration celebrated with astonishment.

30. SEVEN MARYS, 1996

Seven chromogenic prints, 5 x 7 in. each, 11½ x 56½ in. (framed) Image: 5 x 49 in. Edition of 8 Collection of Jo Andrews and Steve Buscemi

Baby Jesus' mothers meet one famous nellbox. Oh, Mary. Hail Mary.

31. TRUE CRIME #1, 1996

Four chromogenic prints, 5 x 7 in. each, 11% x 34% in. (framed) Image: 5 x 27% in. Edition of 8 Courtesy of American Fine Arts, Co./ Colin de Land Fine Art, New York

Kate Millet's child-murdering heroine
of *The Basement* is released from prison after
decades of cosmetology lessons.
Free at last! Free at last!

32. TWELVE ASSHOLES AND A DIRTY FOOT, 1996

Thirteen chromogenic prints with velvet curtains, 5 x 7 in. each; curtain: 22 x 139 in., 9% x 96% in. (framed) Image: 5 x 91 in. Edition of 4 Courtesy of Rena Bransten Gallery, San Francisco

Where the sun don't shine; censorship, taboos, and self-awareness.

33. ANN-MARGRET, 1997

Five chromogenic prints, 3½ x 5 in. each, 7½ x 28½ in. (framed) Image: 3½ x 25 in. Edition of 8 Collection of Estelle Schwartz, New York

Kitten with a Whip—three eyes and an attitude.

34. MOVIE STAR JUNKIE, 1997

Eight chromogenic prints, 9% x 12% in. each, 16 x 103% in. (framed) Image: 9% x 97 in. Edition of 8 Collection of Johnny Depp

Minimalist holes of cinematic seriousness.

All actors yearn to play drug addicts.

35. BIG MONDAY, 1998

Chromogenic print, 16 x 24 in., 23 x 30% in. (framed) Image: 16 x 24 in. Edition of 8 Collection of Todd Oldham and Tony Longoria

The weekend grosses are in. Does the picture hold? What film could be so low to only play on Monday?

36. BOOM!, 1998

Seven chromogenic prints, 3½ x 5 in. each, 7½ x 38% in. (framed) Image: 3½ x 35 in. Edition of 8 Collection of Elleen and Peter Norton, Santa Monica

The ultimate cutaways for the elitist Joseph Losey enthusiast.

37. GRACE KELLY'S ELBOWS, 1998

Eight chromogenic prints, 5 x 7 in. each, 11½ x 62½ in. (framed) Image: 5 x 56 in. Edition of 8 Collection of Robert R. Littman and Sully Bonnelly

Zeroing in on a woman's beauty fetish style.

38. HIT YOUR MARK, 1998

Six chromogenic prints, 9 x 13% in. each, 15 x 89% in. (framed) Image: 9 x 83% in. Edition of 5 Courtesy of American Fine Arts, Co./ Colin de Land Fine Art, New York

A triumphant "still" that would never be in any press package.

39. IN MY HOUSE series, 1998

At Home; In My Dishwasher; In My Freezer; In My Private Files; Under My Sink; Under My Bed; In My Car; In My Video Closet; Under My Covers with Me; In My Mind Ten chromogenic prints,

Ten chromogenic prints,
16 x 20 in. each. Edition of 5
Courtesy of American Fine Arts, Co./
Colin de Land Fine Art, New York
and Collection of Todd Oldham and Tony Longoria

Snooping on yourself in your own home can really be revealing.

40. JAYNE, 1998

Three chromogenic prints, 3% x 5 in. each, 7% x 18% in. (framed) Image: 3% x 15 in. Edition of 8 Collection of Kim Hastreiter

Spontaneous combustion.
Only she had the power.

41. MANSON COPIES DOROTHY MALONE'S COLLAR, 1998

Two chromogenic prints, 5 x 7 in. each, 11% x 20% in. (framed) Image: 5 x 14 in. Edition of 8 Collection of Bob Ritner

So evil, so unoriginal.

42. MARK #1-MARK #15, 1998

Series of fifteen chromogenic prints, 14 x 19% in. each, 20% x 25% in. (framed) Image: 14 x 19% in. Edition of 5 Courtesy of American Fine Arts, Co./ Colin de Land Fine Art, New York and Collection of Todd Oldham and Tony Longoria

The grips on the set of *Pecker*made me drawings on the floor without
even knowing it.

43. MENTAL, 1998

Nine chromogenic color prints, 5 x 7 in. each

1st section: 10% x 59 in.;

2nd section: 10% x 9% in. (framed)

Image: 5 x 56 in. (1st section); 5 x 7 in. (2nd section)

Edition of 8

Collection of Mayer Rus

Scenery-chewing with the glamour girls.

Too big for one wall!

44. PIMPLES, 1998

Eight chromogenic prints, 5 x 7 in. each, 11½ x 62½ in. (framed) Image: 5 x 56 in. Edition of 8 Courtesy of Arthur Roger Gallery, New Orleans

What makeup people are paid to cover. The first "kill" of a movie star's publicity campaign.

45. PLEASE GOD, 1998

Chromogenic print, 3½ x 5 in., 7½ x 8¾ in. (framed) Image: 3½ x 5 in. Edition of 16 Private Collection

Everybody has a bad day.

46. PUKE IN THE CINEMA, 1998

Ten chromogenic prints,
5 x 7 in. each, 11% x 76% in. (framed)
Image: 5 x 70 in. Edition of 8
Collection of Nancy and Joel Portnoy

Action! A special effect that always delivers.

47. SONNY FOR PRESIDENT, 1998

Five chromogenic prints, 3½ x 5 in. each, 7½ x 28½ in. (framed) Image: 3½ x 25 in. Edition of 8 Courtesy of American Fine Arts, Co./ Colin de Land Fine Art, New York

Sometimes, a hairdo is enough.

48. SOPHIA LOREN DECAPITATED, 1998

Six torn chromogenic prints, 8 x 10 in. each, 14% x 66% in. (framed) Image: 8 x 60 in. Edition of 8 Courtesy of Pamela Markham Heller

Stalkers-the downside of celebrity.

49. SULLEN COOKIE, 1998

Six gelatin silver prints, 5 x 7 in. each, 11% x 48% in. (framed) Image: 5 x 42 in. Edition of 8 Collection of Perry Pater Dallas

Before Nan Goldin, still in Baltimore. Divine's "daughter" forever.

50. THREE SIRK MIRRORS, 1998

Three chromogenic print cut-outs
14 x 26 in. (framed). Image: 7 in. diam.
(1st oval); 5 in. diam. (2nd oval); 3½ in. diam. (3rd oval)
Edition of 8
Collection of Nayland Blake

Discover, isolate, take home, and make your own. There's no such thing as a bad movie.

51. BUCKLE UP. 2000

Fourteen chromogenic prints,
5 x 7 in. each. 1st section: 8% x 92% in.;
2nd section: 8% x 9% in. (framed)
Image: 5 x 91 in. (1st section); 5 x 7 in.
(2nd section). Edition of 8
Courtesy of American Fine Arts, Co./
Colin de Land Fine Art, New York

Fear of flying, movie style.

52. CLARABELLE, 2000

Two chromogenic prints, 8 x 10 in. each, 14% x 26% in. (framed) Image: 8 x 20 in. Edition of 8 Collection of Janice and Mickey Cartin

The ultimate psycho; aggressive, violent, and ready to squirt your child with seltzer water.

53. CONDEMNED, 2000

Four gelatin silver prints, 5 x 7 in. each, 8% x 31% in. (framed) Image: 5 x 28 in. Edition of 8 Collection of Richard D. Marshall, New York

The Catholic Church, Tennessee Williams, Archbishop "Kitty" Spellman my first inspiration.

54. FARRAH, 2000

Eight chromogenic prints with cut-outs, 8 in. x various widths ranging from 10 to 11% in. 16% x 96% in. (framed) Image: 9% x 88% in. Edition of 8 Collection of Robert R. Littman and Sully Bonnelly

Everybody looks better with the most famous hairdo in the world.

55. IT, 2000

Two chromogenic prints,
9% x 14 in. each, 16% x 34% in. (framed)
Image: 9% x 28 in. Edition of 8
Collection of Vincent and Shelly Fremont

Jackie Kennedy is God!

56. JULIA, 2000

Two chromogenic prints, 5 x 7 in. each, 8% x 17% in. (framed) Image: 5 x 14 in. Edition of 8 Collection of Pamela and Arnold Lehman

What is beauty? Each decade decides differently.

57. MANSON COPIES RICHARD GERE, 2000

Two chromogenic prints, 5 x 7 in. each, 8% x 17% in. (framed) Image: 5 x 14 in. Edition of 8 Collection of Linda O'Keeffe

Charlie's parole hearing suddenly goes upscale. Maybe they used the same stylist.

58. RETARD, 2000

Ten chromogenic prints,
5 x 7 in. each, 8% x 73% in. (framed)
Image: 5 x 70 in. Edition of 8
Courtesy of Aurthur Roger Gallery, New Orleans

Oscar-bait never looked so silly.

59. SCENE MISSING, 2000

Chromogenic print, 16 x 24 in., 22% x 30% in. (framed) Image: 16 x 24 in. Edition of 8 Collection of Nancy and Joel Portnoy

Editing. Loss. Divorce. Death.

60. SEIZURE, 2000

Seven chromogenic prints, 8 x 10 in. each, 14% x 76% in. (framed) Image: 8 x 70 in. Edition of 8 Courtesy of American Fine Arts, Co./ Colin de Land Fine Art, New York

Japanese school children had epileptic fits from exposure to bad imitation Rothko paintings.

61. SELF-PORTRAIT #2, 2000

Five chromogenic color prints, 8 x 10 in. each, 14% x 56% in. (framed) Image: 8 x 50 in. Edition of 8 Collection of Tama Janowitz and Timothy Hunt

> Marketing John Waters a match made in hell.

62. STRAIGHT TO VIDEO, 2000

Chromogenic print, 1 x 1% in., 20% x 18% in. (framed) Image: 1 x 1% in. Edition of 8 Private Collection, New York

Ultimate "wrap party" present from a star to their director after a disastrous movie shoot.

63. TOILET TRAINING, 2000

Nine chromogenic prints, 5 x 7 in. each, 8% x 66% in. (framed) Image: 5 x 63 in. Edition of 8 Collection of Nancy and Joel Portnoy

All serious actors seem to think this shot proves their commitment to their craft.

64. THE HOT SEAT, 2001

Eleven chromogenic prints, 5 x 7 in. each, 8½ x 80½ in. (framed) Image: 5 x 77 in. Edition of 8 Collection of Themistocles and Dave Michos, San Francisco

Death penalty, cinematic clichés, and the porno of capital punishment.

65. SHUT UP, 2001

Chromogenic print, 30 x 40 in., 36½ x 46½ in. (framed) Image: 30 x 40 in. Edition of 8 Courtesy of American Fine Arts, Co./ Colin de Land Fine Art, New York

For the office wall of a powerful woman executive.

66. BIRTH CONTROL, 2003

Eighteen chromogenic prints,
5 x 7 in. each. 1st section: 8% x 99% in.;
2nd section: 8% x 29 in. (framed)
Image: 5 x 98 in. (1st section); 5 x 28 in. (2nd section)
Edition of 8
Courtesy of Dianne Elise Strauss,
Portfolio Group, Santa Fe

Movie stars! Doctors! Nurses! Push! The miracle of birth can end so badly.

67. BLACK AND WHITE CURTAINS, 2003

Seven chromogenic prints, 5 x 7 in. each, 11½ x 55½ in. (framed) Image: 5 x 49 in. Edition of 8 Collection of Harvey S. Shipley Miller

Everyone deserves their own stage.

68. HAIR IN THE GATE, 2003

Durst Lambda digital prints, 8% x 12 in. each, 14% x 90% in. (framed) Image: 8% x 84 in. Edition of 8 Collection of Harvey S. Shipley Miller

"Money" shots of big-budget epics ruined by careless camera crew someone would be so fired!

69. LAST CALL, 2003

Eight chromogenic prints, 3% x 5 in. each, 7 x 43% in. (framed) Image: 3% x 40 in. Edition of 8 Courtesy of American Fine Arts, Co./ Colin de Land Fine Art. New York

An alcoholic's daily fear zero in on sobriety.

70. MANSON COPIES BRAD PITT, 2003

Two chromogenic prints,
5 x 7 in. each, 8½ x 17½ in. (framed)
Image: 5 x 14 in. Edition of 8
Collection of Vincent and Shelly Fremont

A snipe hunt. Find same framing.

Same type glasses. Same look. Manson knows he's more famous.

71. PYRO, 2003

Eleven chromogenic prints, 5 x 7 in. each, 8½ x 80½ in. (framed) Image: 5 x 77 in. Edition of 8 Courtesy of Arthur Roger Gallery, New Orleans

A rewritten, re-edited, and redirected narrative that was never there in the first place. Now I have final cut!

72. RETURN TO SENDER, 2003

Durst Lambda digital print, 47 x 30 in., 53% x 36 in. (framed) Image: 47 x 30 in. Edition of 8 Collection of Harvey S. Shipley Miller

The mailman is tricked into drawing and writing for my art enjoyment.

73. TEN CHANGE-OVER MARKS, 2003

Ten chromogenic print cut-outs, 6½ x 40 in., 9½ x 43 in. (framed) Image: 6½ x 40 in. Edition of 8 Collection of the Judith Rothschild Foundation

Nothing carved, punched, or scratched into celluloid should go unnoticed.

74. 308 DAYS, 2003

Durst Lambda digital print, 48% x 116 in. (framed) Image: 42 x 110 in. Edition of 4 Courtesy of American Fine Arts, Co./ Colin de Land Fine Art, New York

Exhausting. Make a list. Check it twice.

Do something! Get busy!

75. WICKED GLINDA, 2003

Chromogenic print, 16 x 24 in., 22½ x 30½ in. (framed) Image: 16 x 24 in. Edition of 8 Collection of Patricla Gidwitz

The Good Witch and the Bad Witch morph into the ultimate screen heroine.

76. WRITER'S BLOCK, 2003

Six chromogenic prints, 5 x 7 in. each, 11½ x 48½ in. (framed) Image: 5 x 42 in. Edition of 8 Collection of Tama Janowitz and Timothy Hunt

A color everybody's seen but never noticed can stop you in your tracks.

SCULPTURE

77. SECRET MOVIE, 2000

Chromogenic print on pedestal Pedestal: 6 x 7 x 108 in.

Image: 3½ x 5 in. (three images to be interchanged)

Edition of 4

Courtesy of Rena Bransten Gallery, San Francisco

A movie title so undiscovered, so ironically beautiful that I can never share it with the outside world.

78. JACKIE COPIES DIVINE'S LOOK, 2001

Doll on pedestal with glass dome, Doll: 15% in. tall Pedestal: 30% x 13% x 13% in.; dome: 10 x 20 in. Edition of 4

Courtesy of Rena Bransten Gallery, San Francisco

Jackie visits Pink Flamingos and still looks elegant.

79. SNEAKY JFK, 2001

Doll on pedestal with glass dome, Doll: 16% in. tall Pedestal: 30% x 13% x 13% in.; dome: 10 x 20 in. Edition of 4

Courtesy of Rena Bransten Gallery, San Francisco

Maybe once, JFK was so jealous of Jackie's fame that he snuck into her closet and put on her look and felt so stupid he never did it again.

80. FLOP, 2003

Needlepoint pillow on pedestal 16 x 26 in. Edition of 4

Courtesy of Dianne Elise Strauss, Portfolio Group, Santa Fe

Celebrity box office shame old money style.

81. FUNNY FACE, 2003

Photocopied drawing on plywood, metal chain surrounded by aluminum casting with Plexiglas top 18 in. diam. x 4 in. casting, ½ in. Plexiglas top Edition of 5 Courtesy of American Fine Arts, Co./

Colin de Land Fine Art, New York

John Waters as a toy; a parent's concern.

EARLY FILMS

82. HAG IN A BLACK LEATHER JACKET, 1964

8mm, black and white, 17 min. Courtesy Dreamland Studios

When I thought film editing magically happened by itself inside the camera.

83. ROMAN CANDLES, 1966

Three 8mm reels shown simultaneously, color and black and white, 40 min. Courtesy Dreamland Studios

Home movies in Baltimore; early, early Dreamland. "Let's put on a fucked-up show!"

84. EAT YOUR MAKEUP, 1967

16mm, black and white, 45 min. Courtesy Dreamland Studios

Theatre of the Absurd; all shot on my parents' front lawn.

EPHEMERA

Selected objects—displayed in a context room designed by Vince Peranio to reflect John Waters's working process and sensibility—include: posters, movie props, marketing, and publicity items from Waters's films; selected clippings from Waters's scrapbooks, notebooks, and bulletin boards; souvenir and merchandising items from television shows and movies collected by Waters; magazines and publications that reflect Waters's eclectic influences and interests; framed photographs, historical, religious, and popular cultural memorabilia from Waters's home and studio.

Ephemera items are courtesy of the Wesleyan University Cinema Archives and John Waters.



Born 1946 Lives and works in Baltimore, Maryland

SELECTED ONE-PERSON EXHIBITIONS

2003

Flop, Rena Bransten Gallery, San Francisco, CA
Hair in the Gate, Portfolio Group-Salon
Privé, Santa Fe, NM
Hair in the Gate, Albert Mereola Gallery,
Provincetown, MA
Hair in the Gate, American Fine Arts, Co.,
New York, NY

2002

Galleria Emi Fontana, Milan, Italy Arthur Roger Gallery, New Orleans, LA

2001

Galerie Emmanuel Perrotin, Paris, France

2000

A Two Year Old Choked to Death Today on an Easter Egg, Hallway, London, UK

A Two Year Old Choked to Death Today on an Easter Egg, Albert Mereola Gallery, Provincetown, MA

A Two Year Old Choked to Death Today on an Easter Egg, Georg Kargl Gallery, Vienna, Austria John Waters, Arthur Roger Gallery, New Orleans, LA

Straight to Video, American Fine Arts, Co., New York, NY

Straight to Video, C. Grimaldis Gallery, Baltimore, MD

Straight to Video, Greg Kucera Gallery, Seattle, WA

1999

John Waters: Photographs, Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, OH

1998

Low Definition, American Fine Arts, Co., New York, NY Low Definition, Albert Mereola Gallery, Provincetown, MA Low Definition, Parco Gallery, Tokyo, Japan Marks, Gavin Brown's Enterprise, New York, NY

1996

Director's Cut, American Fine Arts, Co.,
New York, NY
Director's Cut, Pace Wildenstein MacGill,
Los Angeles, CA
Director's Cut, Arthur Roger Gallery,
New Orleans, LA
Director's Cut, Galleria Emi Fontana, Milan, Italy
Director's Cut, Galerie Emmanuel Perrotin,
Paris, France

1995

My Little Movies, American Fine Arts, Co., New York, NY My Little Movies, Galerie Christian Nagel, Cologne, Germany My Little Movies, Aeroplastics Contemporary, Brussels, Belgium

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2003

Twentieth Anniversary Exhibition, Gavin Brown's Enterprise, New York, NY

2002

Art Downtown: New Photography,
25 Broad Street, New York, NY
Enough About Me, Momenta Art, Brooklyn, NY
Hair Stories, Adam Baumgold Gallery,
New York, NY
Screen Memories, Contemporary Art Center,
Art Tower Mito, Tokyo, Japan
Sans Consentment, CAN-Centre d'Art Neuchâtel,
Neuchâtel, Switzerland
Something, Anything, Matthew Marks Gallery,
New York, NY

2001

Boomerang, Exit Art, New York, NY
American Fine Arts, Co. at Pat Hearn,
New York, NY
Galeria Marta Cervera, Madrid, Spain
Albert Mereola Gallery, Provincetown, MA
Skank, Plus Ultra, Brooklyn, NY

1999

Focus: Photographs by Painters, Sculptors, and a Filmmaker, Thomas Segal Gallery, Baltimore, MD

1998

GhostStory, Kunstlerhaus, Vienna, Austria Peep Show, Vankin Schwartz, Atlanta, GA Pop-Surreallsm, The Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Ridgefield, CT When Worlds Collide, Center for Contemporary Art, Glasgow, Scotland

1997

Biennale de Lyon, Lyon, France
Essence d'un Sens (Sentir du Regard),
Passage de Retz, Paris, France
Photo-Op, Cincinnati Contemporary Art Center,
Cincinnati, OH
Someone Else with My Fingerprints,
David Zwirner, New York, NY

1996

Art at Home, Ideal Standard Life, Spiral Garden 1F, Tokyo, Japan

1995

Summer Group Show, American Fine Arts Co., New York, NY

FILMOGRAPHY

2004

A Dirty Shame

2000

Cecil B. DeMented 35mm, color, 87 minutes

1998

Pecker

35mm, color, 87 minutes

1994

Serial Mom

35mm, color, 95 minutes

1990

Cry-Baby

35mm, color, 85 minutes

1988

Hairspray

35mm, color, 92 minutes

1981

Polyester

35mm, color, 86 minutes

1977

Desperate Living

16 & 35mm, color, 90 minutes

1974

Female Trouble

16mm, color, 89 minutes

1972

Pink Flamingos

16 & 35mm, color, 93 minutes

1970

Multiple Maniacs

16mm, black and white, 90 minutes

1969

The Diane Linkletter Story
16mm, black and white, 10 minutes
Mondo Trasho
16mm, black and white, 95 minutes

1967

Eat Your Makeup 16mm, black and white, 45 minutes

1966

Roman Candles three 8mm reels shown vertically, color and black and white, 40 minutes

1964

Hag in a Black Leather Jacket 8mm, black and white, 17 minutes

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1999

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Yeager, Steve. Divine Trash. New York: Stratosphere Entertainment.

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2003

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Still from PINK FLAMINGOS, 1972

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BRENDA RICHARDSON is a curator and writer who has contributed to catalogues on Bruce Nauman, Gilbert and George, and Willem de Kooning, among other artists.

TODD SOLONDZ has directed five critically acclaimed films, including *Welcome to the Dollhouse*, *Happiness*, and *Storytelling*.

Jacket:

John Waters. **TWELVE ASSHOLES AND A DIRTY FOOT**, 1996 (detail). Thirteen chromogenic prints with velvet curtains, 5 x 7 in. each; curtain: 22 x 139 in., 9% x 96% in. (framed). Image: 5 x 91 in. Edition of 4. Courtesy of Rena Bransten Gallery, San Francisco Photograph by Ian Reeves



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