



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

## PACIFIC STANDARD TIME

Carrie Paterson

“Pacific Standard Time: Art in L.A. 1945-1980” is arguably one of the most ambitious art exhibitions ever planned. The venues for this unprecedented show include over 60 cultural institutions, dozens of galleries, and more than 20 cultural programming partners as diverse as the L.A. Philharmonic, Caltech, the LA Public Library and the Goethe Institute. The exhibition will run from October, 2011 through April of 2012 in close to 20 different cities throughout Southern California, and thus will be facilitated not only by museums, galleries and Getty funding, but also by one of California’s hallmarks: the freeway system. Notes Ann Philbin, the

director of the UCLA Hammer Museum, “The whole notion [is to turn] Southern California into one big extended museum with the freeways functioning as the hallways.”

The Southern California region comprises over 22 million people, over half of the state. Expected attendance is anticipated to be huge, and has organizers and participants anxiously bidding their time until October in sheer anticipation. Several of the shows-within-the-show will also be traveling internationally, reaching still more audiences in 2012. As the world gets ever smaller, one might imagine that “Pacific Standard Time” will set a precedent that could be fol-

lowed by a global exhibition in the near future.

The idea for “Pacific Standard Time” was seeded almost a decade ago at the Getty Foundation when the late Henry T. Hopkins, painter and former director of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, approached the Getty in 2002 about writing a book with Lyn Kienholz, who has also compiled an encyclopedia of more than 600 artists who lived and practiced in Los Angeles specifically during the post-war period through 1980. The Getty responded to Hopkins and Kienholz’ ideas with grants to ten regional institutions to begin collecting oral histories and archives of works, ephem-

era and documentation from the period’s notable Southern California-based artists. The next phase of grants began exhibition research, and the next, exhibition development. Some of the first people to be included in the 1945-1980 oral history project were Robert Irwin, Allan Kaprow, Betty Asher, Patricia Faure, Julius Shulman, Riko Mizuno and Edmund Teske.

“One of our objectives is to rewrite the story about how the Southern California art scene fits into art history internationally,” says organizer Gloria Gerace. Between 1945 and 1980 Los Angeles experienced a coming of age and first appeared on the map as an important inter-

national location for art production. But the exhibition posits it wasn't until 1979, with the opening of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, that the scene finally arrived on the international stage.

Even today, recognition for Southern California's art scene has room to grow. A relatively small collector base and number of galleries compared to the huge amount of artists in the region means that it is underexposed internationally and overshadowed by art collection powerhouse cities like New York and London. But with "Pacific Standard Time," the Getty hopes to put Southern California art into the limelight. California is sometimes defined by its commercial forces — like Hollywood, Silicon Valley and the biotech and aerospace industries. But a corollary exists in art as well: experimental approaches, innovation and fresh ideas have always defined the region.

As well, a strong legacy of conceptual art practices result from the number of art schools in the region, and make Southern



California unique. And in fact for "Pacific Standard Time," many schools like Pomona, Otis and Claremont, among others, are developing curricula for the school year specifically focused on the time period and the exhibition. These university classes extend well beyond the art departments into History, Cultural Studies and Art History. Related to this collaborative vein, "Pacific Standard Time" has also reportedly promoted unusually friendly dialogue among museums. "There has been an intense exchange among the curators," says Gerace. "They shared their

check-lists with each other early on in the process." Some artists are represented in up to four different shows, but each exhibition frames practices through a different lens.

Context will also be created by a ten-day performance festival in January 2012, which specifically highlights Los Angeles' contributions to the development of public art and performance art. Re-stagings and reinventions of important pre-1980 performances by artists like Judy Chicago, Eleanor Antin, Mike Kelley, Charles Gaines and James Turrell will integrate a younger

generation of artists, who echo themes from earlier works in new projects and performances as well as conduct reinterpretations of older works.

The reinvention of performance practice itself is constantly underfoot in Southern California, with artists reinvesting in well-worn strategies of alternative representation developed there: political agitation, site-specific intervention, the radical foregrounding of racial issues and the priority of cultural expression. The performance festival supplements the larger "Pacific Standard Time" exhibition and makes the monstrous show really have legs — featuring not only a time past, but the most current happenings.

"Venice in Venice," a preview featuring many of the artists in "Pacific Standard Time," organized by Foundation 20 21, appears at the Venice Biennale in July.

Previous page: ASCO, Instant Mural, 1974. Photo: Harry Gamboa. This Page: LESLIE LABOWITZ and SUZANNE LACY, In Mourning and in Rage, 1977. Media intervention performance (Los Angeles). Courtesy of artist. Photo: Maria Karras.

Berlin's got talent. Or at least you would think it does based on the number of artists living here. Klaus Wowereit, Berlin's mayor, had the idea to separate the wheat from the chaff with the exhibition "Based in Berlin." In November 2010 an open call for a "Leistungsschau" or "showcase" went out asking nearly every member of the local art scene to submit suggestions for who they thought would be interesting candidates for consideration in an exhibition that would be Berlin's "Younger than Jesus." It was signed, at the time, by four curators: Magdalena Magiera, Scott Cameron Weaver, Jakob Schillinger and Angelique Campens. Fredi Fischli was later added to this list. It was crowned with the oversight of a brand-named committee comprised of Klaus Biesenbach, Christine Macel and Hans Ulrich Obrist. Details emerged regarding a purported budget of one million euros and a plan to build a space to house the talent show and, possibly, future exhibitions.

## BERLIN BASED IN BERLIN

Aaron Moulton



Opening at Atelierhaus Monbijoupark. Photo: Amin Akhtar.

As the city had just seen a venue called the "Temporäre Kunsthalle" live up to its name, questions about what Berlin has and what it needs, especially if facilitated at such a level, became urgent and

prevalent. An open letter and petition protesting the event quickly followed. The lecture-heavy organization Salon Populaire began a dialogical tail-chase to confront the situation with a series of town

hall-style meetings. These included a swath of cultural producers demanding to know the project's intentions, how the curators were selected, how they were selecting artists, what the role was of the oversight committee, and so on. In a city where the art world infrastructure is administered and swayed almost totally by a few members of the commercial sector, this seemed as good an opportunity as any to address issues of criteria, necessity and transparency in what otherwise felt like a colonial gesture.

No venue was built in the end. The city's local institutions — including KunstWerke (KW), Hamburger Bahnhof, Neue Berliner Kunstverein (NBK) and Berlinische Galerie — hosted the event. A mix of Berlin's eclectic and entrepreneurial project spaces was invited in matrioshka fashion to make shows within the grand show and allow a truer reflection of the city's pulsing infrastructure. Atelierhaus Monbijoupark, a clearly soon-to-be