

whitewall

THE LETTER

SOUNDS, SCENES, AND STAGES

For the summer issue, *Whitewall* has shifted its focus to a realm not yet covered in these pages: **performance**. Embracing an array of media, like our use of the term "contemporary art," "performance" for us extends far beyond a stage and spotlight to music, video, sound, film, and (of course) performance art.

Since the art world goes on vacation for much of the summer, we've planned a few trips for you to get through the lull. We'll begin in New York, where we'll visit **Terence Koh** in his studio. Head-to-toe in white, as one would expect, Koh will divulge the nature of his performance, the genius of auctioning socks on eBay, and his friendship with the self-dubbed "grandmother of performance art," Marina Abramovic. He sees himself and Abramovic as peers. As he poses for veteran contributor **Slava Mogutin** outside his studio in the freshly fallen snow, eyes closed, and cradling a snowy owl, it becomes clear why.

The question of "Why?" will lead us to a coffee shop in downtown New York for the first interview in two years with **Daft Punk's** Thomas Bangalter. The notoriously press-shy, electronic duo Daft Punk is the group sampled for Kanye's 2007 hit "Stronger." Over lattes you'll find out why Bangalter and Guy-Manuel de Homem-Christo chose to channel their creativity into music and performance. Bangalter, to our delight, is well learned in high- and low-brow culture as well as contemporary art. He references Matthew Barney and Warhol with ease. And when your cups are empty, Bangalter must go – he's on the next flight out to **Los Angeles**.

And fortunately, so are you. To get a better look at performance we'll head to a performance mecca, in film, at least – Los Angeles. We're bored with the old comparison to New York. We get it and so does gallery owner **Jeff Poe**: New York wins when it comes to sheer mass of galleries. To show you how apples-and-oranges this mentality is, we'll have Aaron Rose and Joshua White meet you at your hotel to cruise around the city in a fitting black Chevy Caprice to check out the usual art haunts but also show you some spots you'd never see otherwise.

While still in L.A., you'll catch up with **Doug Aitken** at his studio in Venice. His work with film, photography, and projections often flirts with performance. Whether it's wild animals let loose in a motel room, individuals carrying out mundane tasks, or people projected onto a well-known cityscape, Aitken's work embraces the wonderful characteristic of performance that is chaos.

From the Sunshine State we'll head southeast to Miami, where **David Lynch** has created a diamond and dome-specific video for Art Basel Miami Beach. Although this is his first time working with diamonds, Lynch seems quite comfortable in the dome, a common architectural feature used in a meditation community in Iowa he frequents.

With your mind at ease after all that meditation you'll be ready for the last leg of the trip. We'll arrive in Europe just in time for the opening of the Venice Biennale and the grand opening of the **François Pinault Foundation's** newest home, the historic Punta della Dogana. Pinault is a force of nature when it comes to collecting. Not only will we have the pleasure of speaking directly to the collection's mastermind, we'll get to hear from the people that he surrounds himself with: the curators he trusts enough to handle his art.

Had enough yet? We hope not. Your trip is just getting started.

Whitewall, summer 2009