

normal tempering provided by parents and siblings where they are taught to see the nuances and ramifications of decisions. Those times when they find out that it can be okay and correct for the good to be bad, when understood in context. Parents are often separated and at odds during the formative years of their children, making it harder for them to feel part of something. With a new sense of societal induced value judgment it has become more important to us that the Mayor be virtuous than effective. Where do they look for heroes? They look to themselves. But the heroes are reflections not images, and the desire is for recognition not assimilation.

The comfort of regionalism that placed people in sub context no longer exists and the individual and traditional adolescent investigation has been displaced by a uniform process of creativity delivered by technology becoming more and more "user-friendly." Where once with friends we pretended in the woods to our own narrative now we have the universal narrative of the demographically driven market. It should come as no surprise that this form of indoctrination should produce a different form of consciousness in our youth with creativity becoming a reaction rather than an action. Kids more depressed than ever before in history because they feel inconsequential. They are not individuals unless they stand out and self-assertion is the index of that reference.

With children becoming empowered and making more choices comes the inevitable difference in the choices that a child might make versus those of an adult. When these choices are so prescribed, then they become no choice at all. Answering a question is not the same as proposing the question. Important eye-hand coordination, but what is "play" in a virtual playground. The colors in nature are not as bright, the images not as seductive, the time not so controlled

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291 Church Street  
New York, New York 10013  
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# ALL DRESSED UP

*December 21, 1995- January 27, 1996*

**Scott Carpenter**  
**Alix Lambert**  
**Mariko Mori**  
**Camille Norment**  
**Wolfgang Tillmans**

*Curated by Steven Rand*

In many ways regionalism is over as if it never existed. It began to wane thirty years ago, and now much is gone for good. The Global Village doesn't look as good as it sounds. Especially if you're in your twenties.

"All Dressed Up" addresses the idea that history has been discredited by a young generation and its artists in favor of a self-referential process of validation. "Perhaps Warhol's thought that anything could be art was a model, in a way, for the hope that human beings could be anything they chose, once the divisions that defined the culture were overthrown. Beuys' claim that everyone was an artist is a corollary to Warhol's sweeping egalitarianism, or its pendant".(1)

Egalitarianism has killed the moral heroes and replaced them with survivor heroes. Adults always knew that famous ball players were "hitting home runs" off the field too. The kids didn't, they would understand as their desires caught up. Doctors, lawyers, politicians, teachers and others who were once the heroes and role models of these children have all been exposed. Survival reality accompanies image in everything from movies to literature to pop culture. Television families that we once emulated are no longer role worthy, but who have we substituted for them?

"Unstable times and economic depressions, by depriving people of their satisfactions as well as their power and prestige and habitual ways of regulating self-esteem, increase their narcissistic needs and their oral dependence."(2) Depression is no longer the exception. Being shielded from life's "realities" at one time, we now try to prepare kids for life as soon as possible. It gets increasingly difficult to distinguish adult concerns from adolescent concerns. As a society we stress what's right, no longer relying on the family to correct personal deviation, to help us tell right from wrong. Children without the benefit of traditional families tend to adopt society's views without the





Mariko Mori Tea Ceremony III c.1995 photograph 5'x4'

the grass not as green as when viewed on the “tube”. Artists have traditionally referred to or referenced history and art history in their art making. This is a generation turning to itself for that reference. On one hand a return to romantic images of past "movements" (hippie, beat, dandy, etc.) without the original ideology, reinterpreting intent, and on the other a sense of history's irrelevance, with the feeling that if it didn't happen to them they can't trust the interpretation or even its existence. Hard to blame.

The desire is to be relevant, relatable, tribal, and truthful making work by which they identify each other. Alienation art with the universal "I", rather than the universal "we." An art to deal with a society of decreasing choices presented otherwise. Not intended to be formal, precious or historical, and if similar work has been done, no longer is it the great taboo that it was, but rather a reinforcement of substance. It is the search for the question.



Scott Carpenter My Shirt, Donohue, and Me c.1994 photograph 37.5"x16"

Mariko Mori's photographs take responsibility. Her work places the ancient tea ceremony and its implied respect for the guest in the middle of downtown Tokyo. In a desire to reference a romantic time that she was never a part of, she accepts the traditional role of mother and nurturer traveling back in time from the future to help. She comes with good news and promise, to create order where she sees none, offering direction to those executives who have lost their way. She has seen where they are going.

Scott Carpenter's videos and stills also place the artist within the work. Having appeared in the audience asking questions on such daytime talk shows as Sally Jesse Raphael, Phil Donohue, Geraldo Rivera and others he approaches that validation that only TV confers. Being seen by perhaps 100 million people in combined exposure puts him in a very select group, again emphasizing the individual. Only there is no talk on his "talk show" and his role reinforced by the inclusion of the shirt which he wore, the concrete evidence of radio waves and the spoils of fame.



Alix Lambert Untitled c.1994 photograph in light box 5' x 4'

Alix Lambert's concerns deal with reassessment of role expectation and definition. In other works she has confronted issues of what makes a woman a man, and what makes convention a ceremony. Here she examines the essence of person by reconfiguring her body with "plastic surgery", existing as surrogate to society, externalizing values and rendering herself immobilized, unable to see or function.

Camille Norment finds herself similarly outside the "world". Estrangement, alienation, expectation and role issues are also concerns in her work. Her work "Over the Rainbow" made of white oxford shirt material with button down fronts covering a pot "of gold," where neither the pot nor the gold is shiny. Instead, there's more "work" to be done, and the goal never realized. The new equality for women in school but not in the "real" world.

Wolfgang Tillmans is the chronicler of his generation. He is the imagemaker that while photographing others is recording his own life. Pointed in the banality of the



Camille Norment Over The Rainbow c.1995 mixed media 18" x 36" x 36"

images, these are pictures of collaboration between the subject, the generation, and the photographer. These are photographs of tribal marking, seminal in their insistence of person and egalite. Reality felt. The insistence of recording as an index and context of being, at the end of a century.

This work is important in that it represents more than artistic vision. It speaks of a new generation that has had to fend for itself in a unique way, confronting the most influential, self involved, generation in history, that will relinquish control begrudgingly at best. A reluctant ruler stepping down only when shown it is time.

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1. Beyond the Brillo Box- Arthur C. Danto p.4 The Noonday Press c.1993  
2. The Psychoanalytic Theory of Neurosis-Otto Fenichel, M.D. p.406 Norton and Co. c.1972

Special appreciation to:  
Saul Ostrow, Patrick Callery, Paul Ha, Casey Kaplan,  
Michael Duncan, AFA, and Nancy Wender