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PT.1
Jeffrey Deitch
and Fab 5 Freddy

PT.2
Chris Martin
and Joyce Pensato

PT.3
Brendan Dugan
and Ari Marcopoulos

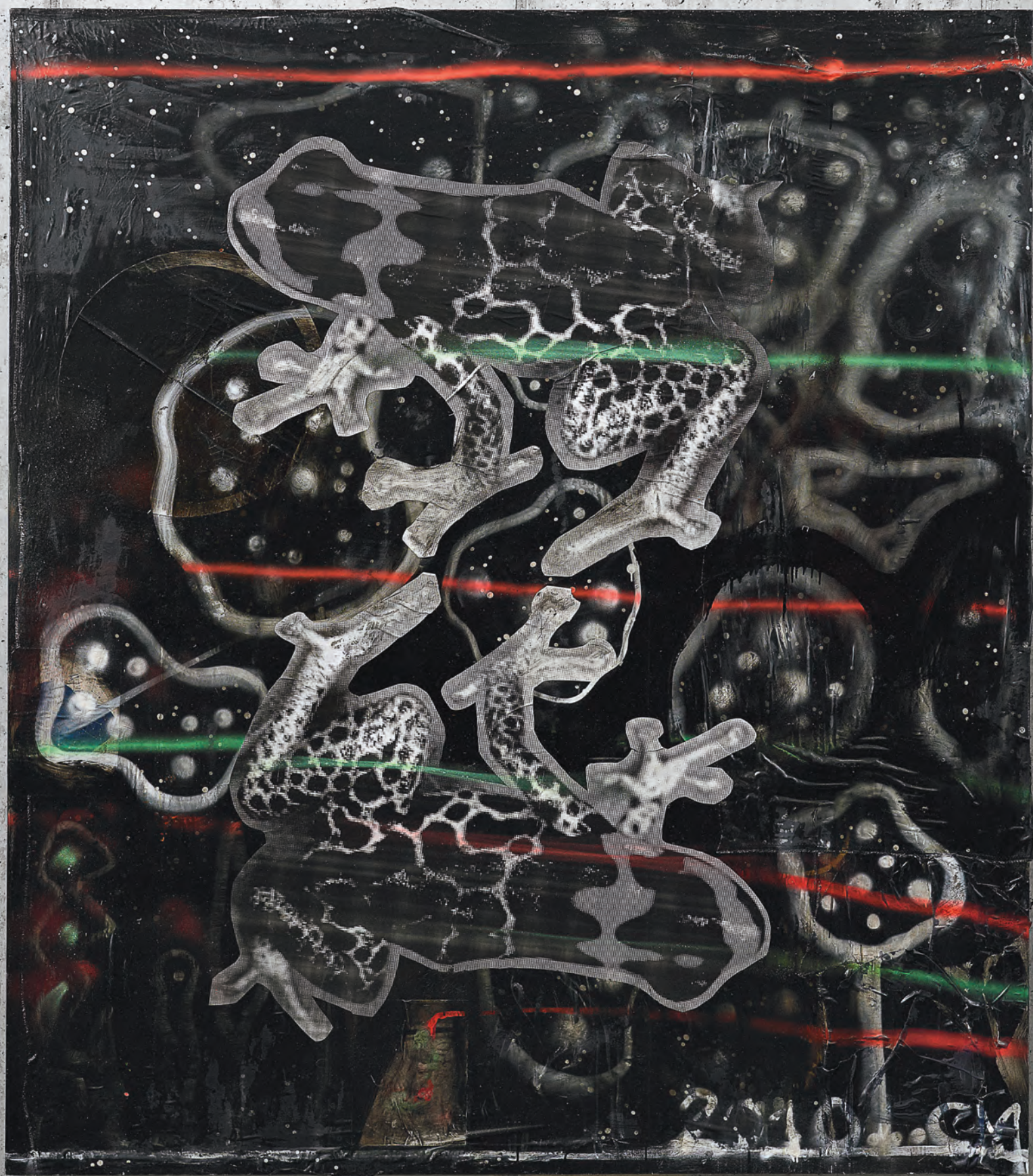
PT.4
Cecilia Alemani
and Marianne Vitale

NY

From the gritty urban feeling to the great sense of community, living and working in NYC provides endless inspiration and fuel for artists and creators. We have selected four pairs, from different generations and circles, to share memories and discuss perspectives. The result is a choral tale of convergences, strategies, connections, and old and new magics.

PT.2
Chris Martin
and Joyce Pensato





PREVIOUS PAGE Joyce Pensato, *Untitled (Mickey)*, 1995
Courtesy of the artist and Petzel, New York

Chris Martin I moved to New York in 1976 around the corner from CBGB's on Houston street. The building had no lock on the front door and a steady stream of artists, drug dealers and crazies paraded in and out. Glenn O'Brien and the sax player Robert Aaron lived down the hall. Basquiat had tagged the whole building and I could see his SAMO pieces all over town. The Mexican carpenter living next door used to bring us fresh peyote. It's easy to get nostalgic about the low rents and empty city now, but I also remember seeing people shoot guns at each other—scary stuff. Visually I was very drawn to early graffiti—like Blade and Lee—and the whole gritty neon broken glass on the sidewalk east village scene—the Mudd Club, St Marks Poetry project, Anthology Film archives...

Joyce Pensato I've always loved graffiti. It's an act of the moment. In the '80s it was all over New York. It was in your face, loud and clear. Now it's mostly in Bushwick and parts of Williamsburg. Graffiti is so powerful. Sometimes it's crude and sometimes the marks are as beautiful as Chinese script. When I would get stuck in my work, I would take pictures of graffiti on mailboxes and any available walls. There's always a sense of danger to it, like a performance, and freedom... I'm a wannabe graffiti artist. Back in 1997, my friend Malachi tagged me as "The Eraser." I painted it on my studio doors and there is stayed until I moved in 2011. I will be "the Eraser" forever.

CM I moved to a Williamsburg studio with Kathy Bradford in 1980—and that was really deserted. What is amazing to me now is that there were all these vacant lots—now it is all high-rise apartment buildings! I remember first meeting [you] with Joan Mitchell (wearing a full length fur coat) out near Grand Street and thinking "what the hell are they doing out here"! I got a big studio building in 1984 and was able to spread out and make lots of big paintings. I figured if the graffiti guys were able to go out and bomb a billboard in one night why couldn't I make a fourteen foot painting in a day? There is a picture of some of my paintings set out on a vacant lot in Williamsburg by the East River. There is also a twin photograph of those paintings with a big group of all of

us, with you and your dog Max lying on the ground. We used that for a poster for Sideshow Gallery in Brooklyn in 2005. Sideshow was a big space run by the artist Rich Temperio and he was wonderful because if you wanted to do something weird or fucked up he was like "great when do we start?". He was friendly with the plumbing supply store across the street and they let me hang paintings all over this empty building they had.

JP I moved into the area in the summer of 1979 after I left the Studio School. I got this incredible space. It was more than a studio—it was known as the ballroom. I slowly filled it up and made it mine, but it had no running water or heat. The neighborhood was like a small town in the '70s and '80s. I felt like I was in the wild west. There were so few of us spread around that we only became aware of each other on the L line. It was a struggle to get anyone over to see your work. I was so happy to meet [you] when [you] moved here. I remember this guy with his two little daughters saying Hi. He was an outsider like me. I was getting a visit from Joan Mitchell that day, so I thought: maybe there's hope.

CM Joyce, that ballroom of yours was the most powerful space in Brooklyn. When I first visited you there it was like *Holy Shit!* When I saw all those stuffed animals and totem objects covered in paint drips and all the paintings everywhere and the second story windows broken with pigeons flying around—I thought here is a woman who doesn't give a fuck about anything but painting. Your paintings were so raw and real. The serious painting scene had been very narrow then—minimal abstraction was king and it seemed that painters were supposed to find an image and stick to it. I suffered with that and destroyed a lot of paintings but there was a lot of great abstract painting going on—Brice Marden, Bill Jensen, Tom



Chris Martin (American, b. 1954) is an artist based in Brooklyn. He is represented by KOW, Berlin; Anton Kern Gallery, New York; and David Kordansky Gallery, Los Angeles. He will have solo exhibitions at Anton Kern, New York later this year, and Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin, in 2015.

Chris Martin, *Double Frog Midnight*, 2010
Courtesy of the artist and KOW, Berlin

Nozkowski, Elizabeth Murray, Peter Ache-son and Mary Heilman were big influences on me. I also remember those wonderful Haring black paper drawings appearing on the subways. Then Basquiat and Schnabel and the European painters started to be shown and it all exploded ...

JP I was way into young vibrant street artists like Basquiat and Haring. I also liked Schnabel, Andy Warhol, Jeff Koons, Cindy Sherman and Susan Rothenberg. But my influences were the old boys—de Kooning, Franz Kline... I loved all the bad boys, they were the cool ones to me. In the same way I love my buddy Christopher Wool's word paintings and his spray paintings—his touch has an urban feeling. Or if you look at his photos, [from the "East Broadway Breakdown" series] they are dark and gritty—so immediate. Just like his paintings, they scream at you. I think you can see this in my work, too. Being in the middle of 42nd street still gets my juices flowing, looking up at the big signs, being surrounded by crowds. The grit of New York City is in my DNA. I love the city. I love crowds. I enjoy driving around the city and discovering new places, new neighborhoods. I take my camera everywhere, and I am always ready to shoot.

CM I sometimes forget how crazy this place is until I visit other cities and come back—and then I realize how intense New York is. It seemed a lot more gritty and scary back then. And

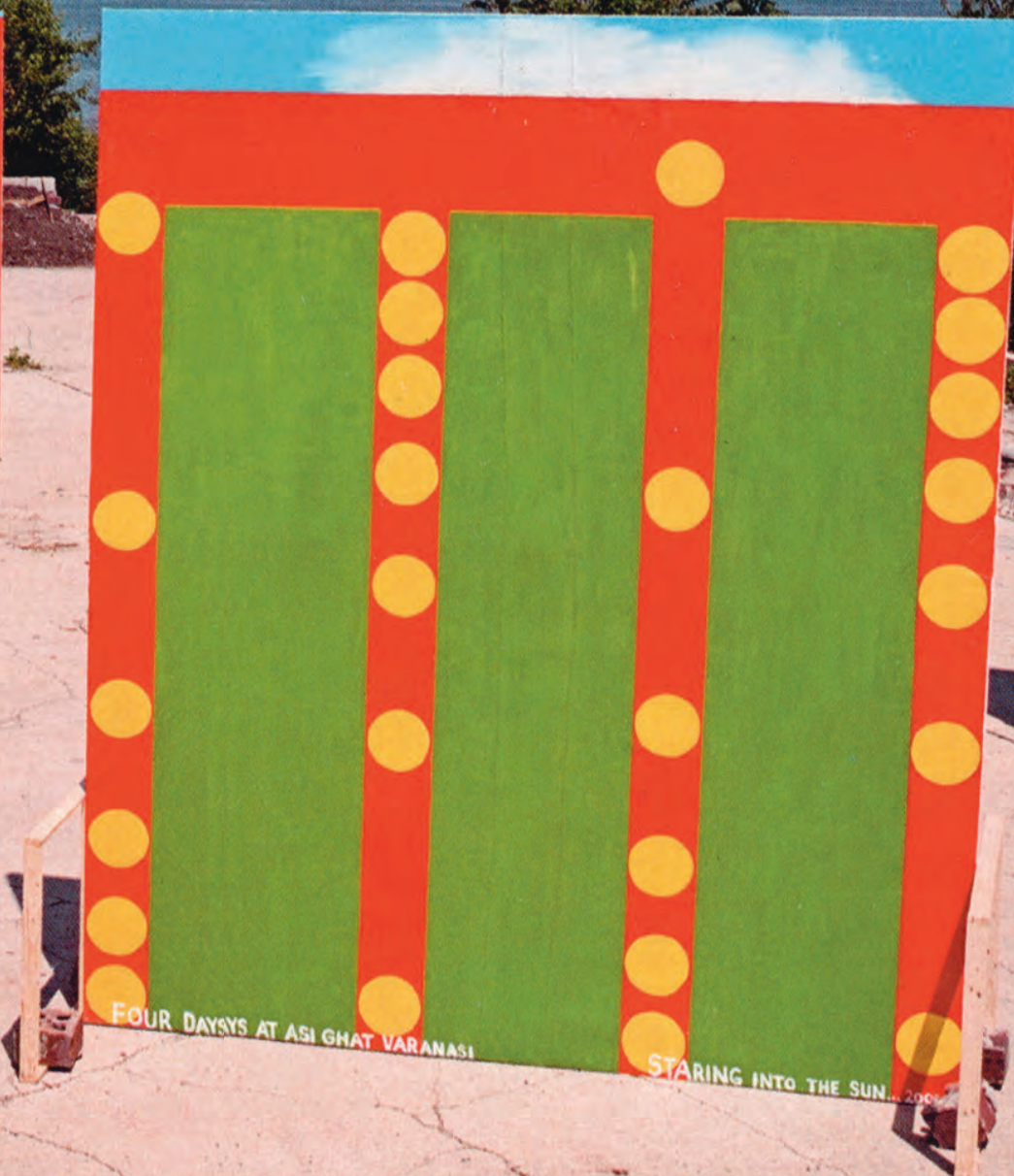
people forget about how tragic things were in the 1980s when AIDS appeared and we all lost a lot of friends. I was working as an art therapist and case worker with AIDS day treatment programs in 1990 and met an amazing and courageous world of people in Harlem, Red Hook and the Lower East Side. I was totally inspired by the work made by these "un-trained" men and women—it made art world paintings look formal and self-conscious in comparison. I was inspired to start using glitter (glitter and gold and silver paint were the most prized materials in Harlem) and other non-art materials and opened up my practice to a wide variety of images around then. The art world crashed in the early 1990s but the Brooklyn scene was growing. There was a lot of energy in Williamsburg with little galleries, music clubs, parties... You and I both did big shows in Williamsburg around 2000, I think. I felt a great sense of community then and still do—we were all starting to make our best work—it felt like as artists we were all getting crazier and younger every day. Williamsburg was a

Joyce Pensato (American, b.1941) is an artist born and raised in Brooklyn. She is represented by Petzel, New York; Lisson Gallery, London/Milan; Galerie Anne de Villepoix, Paris; and Corbett vs. Dempsey, Chicago. She will have a solo exhibition at Petzel Gallery, New York, in 2015.



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different place then—we were building our own community of painters dancers poets musicians etc. The *Brooklyn Rail* grew out of that—it became a platform for so many different writers because nobody was paid but everyone had a lot of freedom to write what they wanted. They published some strange diatribes of mine on painting that no normal art magazine would take, and they did lots of interviews with all kinds of people from the community—really cool stuff.

JP In the '90s I was going to Paris a lot, so I was not so connected to the Brooklyn art scene. But around the end of the decade I started to feel like I became part of the Williamsburg art community, especially when I showed at Flipside, an artist run gallery that was only open on weekends. I had a solo show with them in 1999 and loved the fantastic “just do it” energy. I was thrilled when Pierogi opened his space and I tried to support it. I have such respect for Joe Amrhein and what they are doing. My friend Alun Williams also opened a beautiful space in Williamsburg

called Parker's Box, where I had a one-person show entitled “This Must Be the Place” in 2006. And Mike Ballou ran a film club at his house that I loved. Anyone could come and show their films, some were great, some were not, but I felt a bond when I was there. In 2009, after thirty years of being in the ballroom, I had to leave. I found a studio a block away from the old one: a regular space with running water and heat. For my 2012 show at Petzel, “The Return of Batman,” I brought in all my stuff from the studio, including the floor and wall. For the exhibition at Lisson I did the same, creating an installation of all my toys, my inspiration, inside one room. I wanted to show who I am: this is me—take it or leave it. That's my world.

CM You know sometimes I think we were very lucky not to become famous when we were kids. We did have these great studios to make stuff and we had years to live and develop our worlds. By the time we showed in Williamsburg we were kicking ass—we had our shit together! ☺