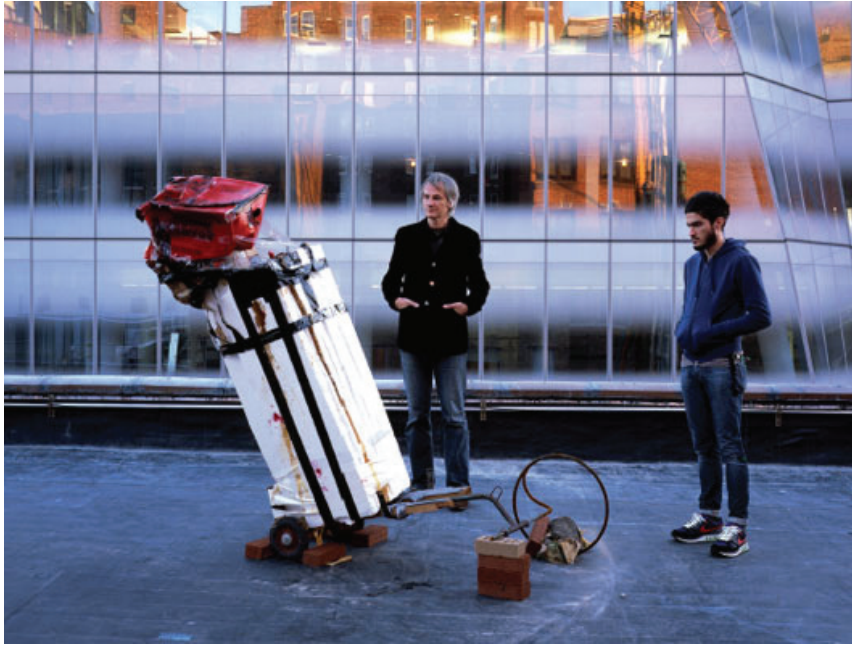


Flash Art

NEW YORK TALES

Andrea Bellini

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JOHN BOCK, 8 1/2 x 11 - mit Schisslaveng, 2006. Installation and film. Courtesy Anton Kern Gallery, New York, and Klosterfelde, Berlin. Photo: Thomas Mueller.

NEW SPACES

This past November, the doors of the Hessel Museum of Art were opened at Bard College, the prestigious contemporary art school, about an hour drive from New York. The Center for Curatorial Studies, founded more than ten years ago by a grant from Marieluise Hessel, has now been provided with an exhibition space that will display part of the American art patron's collection. The museum, along with ten new galleries, is an expansion of the already existing Center for Curatorial Studies, a structure without any particular architectural qualities, designed by Jim Goettsch. Hessel began her contemporary art collection in the early '60s, falling in love with various movements like Pop art, Arte Povera, and Pattern Painting; she continued collecting until the early '90s. The collection currently consists of 1,700 works by such notable artists as Carl Andre, Janine Antoni, Vanessa Beecroft, Alighiero Boetti, Louise Bourgeois, Francesco Clemente, Dan Flavin, Nan Goldin, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Mona Hatoum, Robert Mapplethorpe, Paul McCarthy, Pipilotti Rist, Cindy Sherman, Kiki Smith and Rosemarie Trockel. The day of the inauguration, some pessimists maintained that the Hessel Museum was too difficult to reach from Manhattan and thus was destined to become a sort of cathedral in the desert, one that would attract few followers. But in reality, the question of turnout could prove a false problem; the Hessel Museum of Art is not an exhibition space in the classic sense, but one born in an educational context, meant to become an integral part of a pedagogical plan and an attempt at intellectual stimulation. Along with the ten new galleries, the Hessel collection should furnish visiting curators and Bard students with all of the necessary instruments to develop an experimental approach to the curatorial activity galleries. This task will be taken on by a promising new generation, as well as by professional curators, seeking to drag the exhausted New York contemporary art public into new panoramas. We will have to wait and see.