

Rachel Harrison

If I Did It

February 23 – March 31, 2007

“The acts of the mind, wherein it exerts its power over its simple ideas, are chiefly these three: (1) Combining several simple ideas into one compound one; and thus all *complex* ideas are made. (2) The second is bringing two ideas, whether simple or complex, together, and setting them by one another, so as to take a view of them at once, without uniting them into one; by which way it gets all its *ideas of relations*. (3) The third is separating them from all other ideas that...”

-JOHN LOCKE, Essay Concerning Human Understanding.

“When Alexander saw the breadth of his domain, he wept for there were no more worlds to conquer.”

-unattributed quote on ALEXANDER THE GREAT

It's not by chance that whenever we see the conspirators, either singly or in various combinations, we always see a television set flickering somewhere in the vicinity. What ideas they do possess have arrived predigested, second- or third-hand, and have more to do with fashion than with intellect. These people are mutations, distant spinoffs of the members of the notorious Bader-Meinhof gang. They are people for whom political commitment is a matter of secret passwords, disguises and assumed names. One especially stunning sequence is layered in sound, like a *pousse-café* meant to be heard rather than seen. As the conspirators meet to plan their next fruitless caper, we hear, simultaneously, two separate conversations, someone's reading a book, a song being played on a guitar and sung, and the voice of a man on the television screen. As one sound is no more or less important than another, an assignment to rob a bank or blow up a public building is accepted with no more thought of its importance than a request to go out for cigarettes.

-on RAINER WERNER FASSBINDER, from "Fassbinder on Terrorism: Terrible Toy"

“I was chosen by his Highness to go in that fleet to aid in making discovery: and we set out from the port of Cadiz on the 10th day of May 1497, and took our route through the great gulf of the Ocean-sea: in which voyage we were eighteen months (engaged): and discovered much continental land and innumerable islands, and great part of them inhabited: whereas there is no mention made by the ancient writers of them.”

-AMERIGO VESPUCCI, letter to Pier Soderini, Gonfalonier of Florence

Fats Domino nearly perished in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. The legendary lifelong resident of the Lower Ninth Ward in New Orleans stayed in his house and had to be lifted out by a Coast Guard helicopter. Domino was touched by the outpouring of concern for him. It was a horrifying experience for him and other victims of the storm. But, the signer says, I'm still alive and kickin' and I'm sorry for them that didn't make it, but we're gonna make it... we're making it”.

-FATS DOMINO, from the article “Alive and Kickin' After Katrina”

“America is dumb, it's like a dumb puppy that has big teeth that can bite and hurt you, aggressive,”

-JOHNNY DEPP

“Travel is usually thought of as a displacement in space. This is an inadequate conception. A journey occurs simultaneously in space, in time and in the social hierarchy. Each impression can be defined only by being jointly related to these three axes, and since space is itself three-dimensional, five axes are necessary if we are to have an adequate representation of any journey.”

-CLAUDE LEVI-STRAUSS

"Now, the last time I heard some liberal talk about "ten years" it was 1988, Ted Danson. We had ten years to save the oceans; we were all going to pay the consequences, which would result in our death. Now Al Gore says we've got ten years. Ten years left to save the planet from a scorching. Okay, we're going to start counting. This is January 27th, 2006. We will begin to count, ladies and gentlemen. This is just... You have to love these people—from afar, and from a purely observational point of view."

-Rush Limbaugh on AL GORE

Arnold Palmer, golf's biggest and most successful star at the dawn of the television age in the late 1950s, may be the only golfer who can grasp the kind of external pressure Woods is receiving from fans and media these days. They want Woods to play more PGA Tour events, revive lagging television ratings and generally push the sport to greater heights. It was no different in Palmer's heyday.

-TIGER WOODS, from "Palmer's Past Repeats Itself: Arnie's Career Similar to Tiger's"

For her fifth solo show at Greene Naftali, Rachel Harrison presents nine new sculptures, all named after famous men, and a new series of fifty-seven photographs entitled "Voyage of the Beagle." The series takes its name from Charles Darwin's published research leading to "The Origin of the Species" and began with the artist photographing ancient Corsican sculptures dating from 3,000 BC.

Harrison continues her radical practice of constructing sculptures and installations that thoroughly overload themselves with both formal and cultural references. The problem Harrison suggests is not that sculpture and art is unattached to the real world, but that there are more possibilities for circulating references than we can handle.