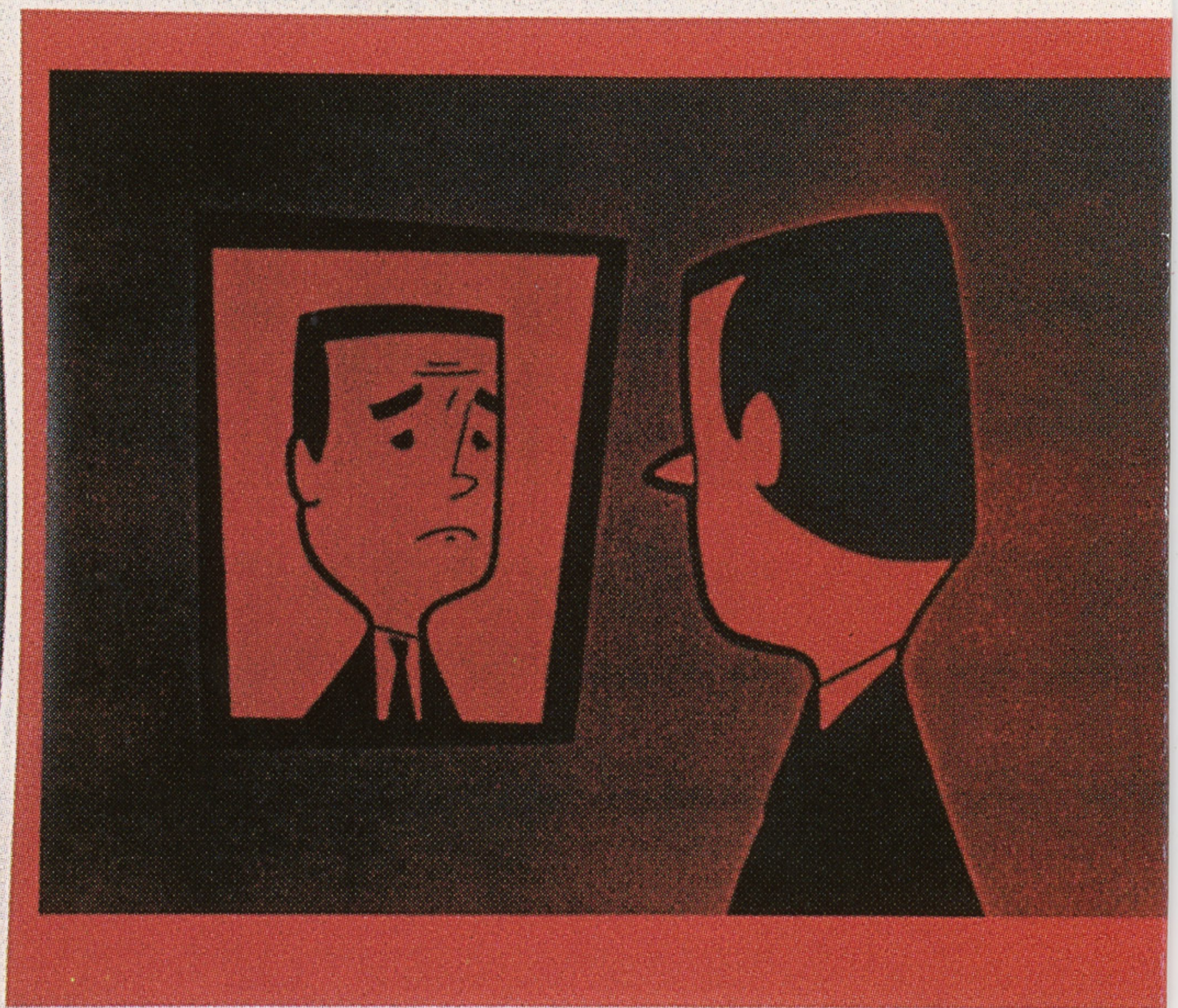
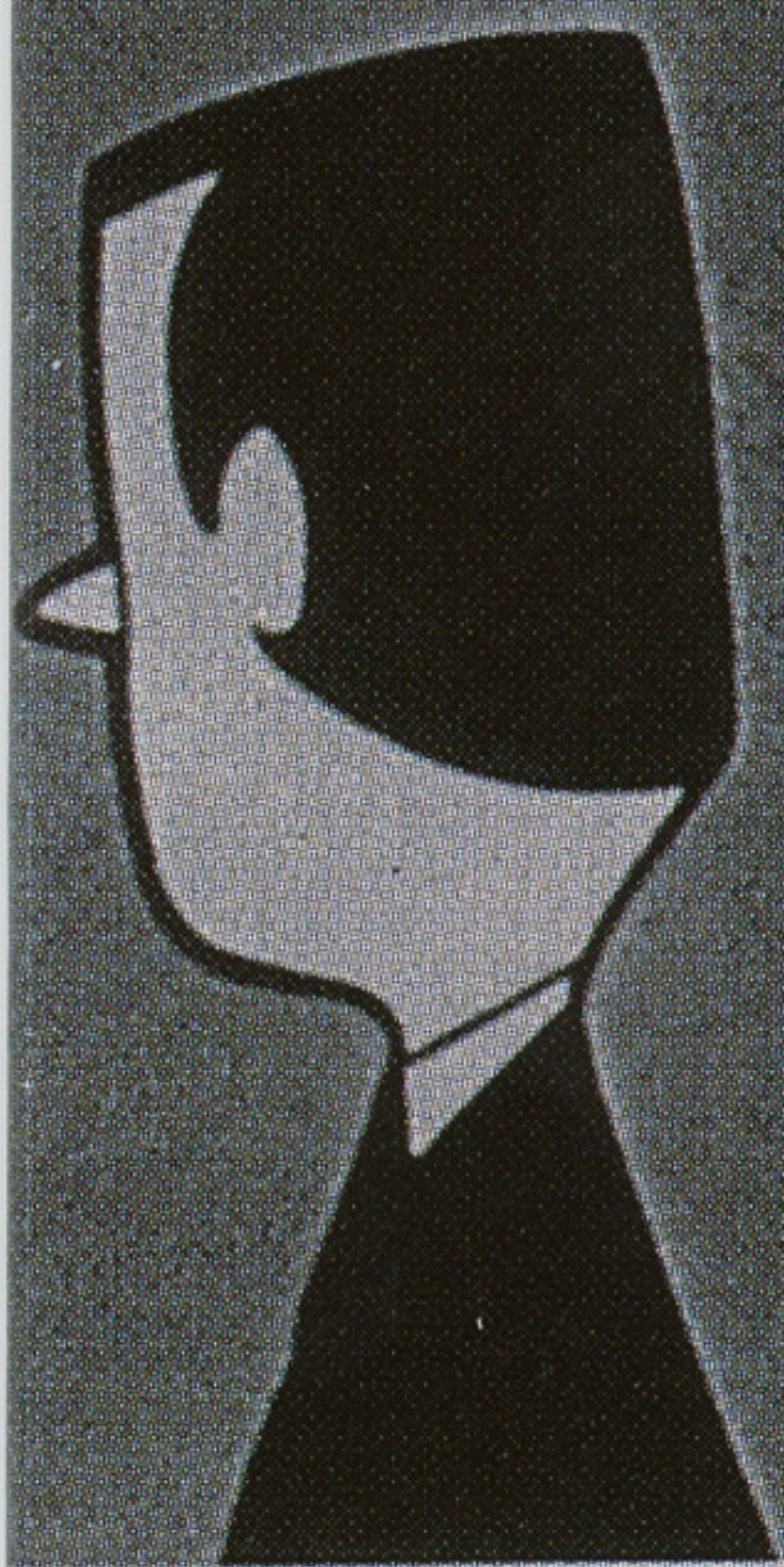


**SLAD**



curated by  
Mary Jones and Janice Krasnow



Jean Blackburn  
Jeanne Dunning  
Rochelle Feinstein  
Allen Ruppertsberg  
Jim Shaw  
Thomas Trosch  
Lisa Yuskavage

SLAD

February 13 - March 15, 1997

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APEX



ROCHELLE FEINSTEIN's "Someone Else's Past" and "Something For Everyone" examine the quirky path of meaning as it turns to become its opposite. Try as one might to hide it, the personal becomes impersonal and affection can be read as boorish demand when, for instance, the phrase "Love, Paul" turns the signature of a love letter's closing into a childish insistence for that particular emotion.

The viewer stumbles into seeing what isn't really there in JEANNE DUNNING's "Long Hole" where it's "now you don't see it, now you do." Here, the familiar becomes all too familiar and the image of a curled hand doesn't stand a chance



Jeanne Dunning *Long Hole* 1994-96  
cibachrome mounted on plexiglass 17.75" x 25.5"

against a more anal reading of the piece, which asserts itself almost against the conscious wishes of artist and viewer.

The appearance of uncontrolled images and unclaimed, exaggerated sex fantasies might also be central to the work of LISA YUSKAVAGE. "Helga" is a portrait-like rendition of a Wyeth-esque beauty who gets stuck with a questionable sexual subtext; the high-level technique can't help but paint a low-level conception. There are mixed messages in these images which seem to have overpowered the censor and made their presence felt.

JEAN BLACKBURN's piece is riddled with cross-purposes, as well. Obsessively drilled and poked into, what once had been a table with place



Lisa Yuskavage *Helga* 1993 oil on linen 30" x 26"

settings is transformed into something disturbingly different, the familiar literally deconstructed until its function, if any, is unknowable. The piece is like a conversation: intimate, rolling over in ambiguities, and filled with holes.

Finally, the possible meanings of chance and circumstance are somewhat happier in "Musical Comedy Medley #1" by THOMAS TROSCH, who offers up a series of uninhibited happy accidents and gladly found language from the poetry of Broadway musical comedy. It's Lorenz Hart, not Freud, who could be celebrated here. Then again, it was Hart who wrote: "If it hurts, that's love."



Jean Blackburn *Untitled* 1997 wooden table, placemat, ceramics and steel utensils 43" x 33" x 33"

At some point in each of these pieces, at some level, the artist willingly opens him or herself to allow a series of Slads, creating work that is only partially "controlled" by conscious process. This is different from the type of "slip" that sometimes occurs, when we place the banana peel on the floor while knowing full well we're in for a fall. The "faux Slad" actually serves as a defense against the surprise, uncertainty and possible humiliation of a real upset. Like a Slad, the work of art can disquiet and confuse the artist, before it is placed before the public, offered up to others for multiple interpretations.

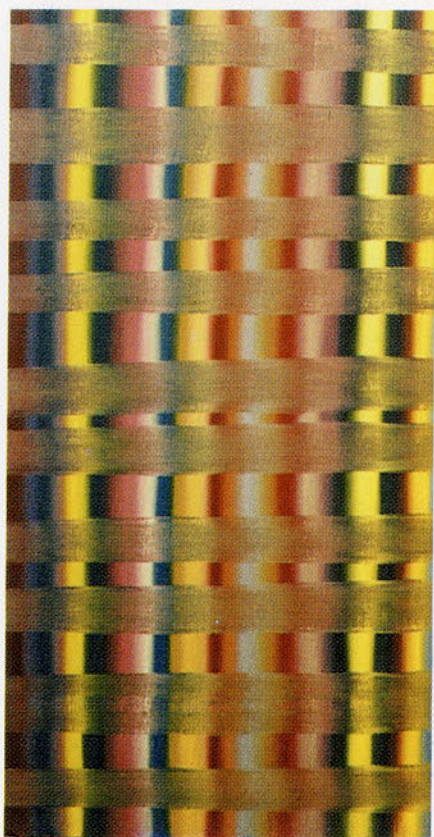


Thomas Trosch *Musical Comedy Medley #1* 1995 oil on linen 70" x 84"

And last: to stretch it further, condensed in the single event of the Slad are many themes of Modern and Postmodern thought: memory as fiction, conscious thinking as merely one mode of mind, the central place of the subjective, the blurred boundaries between "normal"/neurotic and serious/absurd, the insistence on meaning, the importance of the random and inessential...and, perhaps, the equivalent nature of mind and art.

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Jim Shaw Dream Object (Bob Flanagan stuck some pins into his back...) 1996 oil on board 48" x 28"

The piece by ALLEN RUPPERSBERG, "Brain," seems to examine consciousness in its rigid, Slad-defensive state, girdled in the impossible effort to bar any kind of unforeseen event. Consciousness here wants to propel itself back and forth in an obsessive bounce of its own projected visions, projection given a literal nod by the use of old projector screens. This effort to gain omnipotent control is doomed, however, which might be why the "mirror" images don't face one another.

In a way, JIM SHAW takes an opposite approach by using images drawn from dreams, when the conscious mind is off-guard. In his "Dream Objects," a credit card is scraped across a striped painting until the motion forms a blurred grid. This was a dream event which Shaw (then deeply in the red) re-enacted upon awakening. Maybe the process hints at the inexact boundaries of consciousness. And as Freud touched upon (and Breton went on about), there's the suggestion that dream life may be constant and coincident with waking life, another kind of reality which periodically breaks through.

**Jean Blackburn**

**Jeanne Dunning**

**Rochelle Feinstein**

**Allen Ruppersberg**

**Jim Shaw**

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**Apex Art C. P.**

291 Church Street

New York, New York 10013

212 431-5270 ph/fx

apexartcp@aol.com

cover: Allen Ruppersberg Brain 1996 silkscreen on two  
vintage folding movie screens dimensions variable

Thank you to Ross Klavan