



# YU

SELECTIONS FROM THE PCVA ARCHIVE EXHIBITION, PROGRAMS TO REVISIT  
AND HONOR THE LEGACY OF THE PORTLAND CENTER FOR THE VISUAL ARTS,  
CONSIDER THE HISTORY OF CONTEMPORARY ART IN PORTLAND

YU ALSO TO OPEN ITS LIBRARY AND CELEBRATE ITS FIRST  
PUBLICATION, *VENEER MAGAZINE 08/18*

Through 2012, YU will present a series of preview projects that will introduce and track the development of the institution and its ideas, values, and interests related to the presentation and practice of contemporary art. The series will be comprised of exhibitions, programs, events, and publications organized around concepts that will guide its artistic development, while exploring the spaces in, and development of, its historic Yale Union Laundry Building.

The first project considers history, archive, documentation, and publication related to YU, its building, the Portland area, and to the expression and presentation of ideas by contemporary artists. *Selections from the PCVA Archive* looks into a vibrant and important moment in the history of contemporary art in Portland, providing historical context for YU and inspiring a forward-looking vision for a world-class contemporary art center in the city. The exhibition is presented in the space that is to become YU's library, the first iteration of which will open in conjunction with the exhibition in an adjacent room. At the opening reception for the exhibition and library on May 6, YU will celebrate its first publication, *Veneer Magazine 08/18*, highlighting the way in which the written word and, broadly, two-and-three dimensional documentation in collected form (a book, a library) are important extensions of the dialogue related to the ideas and issues raised by the initiatives at YU, while being initiatives in their own right.

## YU LIBRARY

The obligation of YU is to engage in a rigorous and critical dialogue with contemporary art and its presentation. Though it will eventually be located in a larger space adjacent to the upper level galleries, the first iteration of the library is consciously unassuming, housed in the smallest room at YU with a footprint of less than 100 square feet, with one window, high ceilings, wood floors, and brick walls.

The overseeing librarian will have specific knowledge of the books in the library and a customized cataloging system will allow for the assignment of multiple classes to an object, enabling them to be ordered in various

ways, rather than in a pre-determined, taxonomic order. The library will be open for use during operating hours of the exhibition or by appointment with the goal of providing an intimate and focused environment for research, education, and pleasure.

Assuming that the library at YU will grow and house many titles on a broad array of subjects in time, our goal now is to form a cogent selection of books indicative of the interests of the institution that will be foundational to the creation of YU. These books represent the intelligence of the institution, providing a point of departure for the conversations surrounding YU and its development. The titles will be a modest manifestation of the complex impulses around the acts of acquisition and

collection. YU encourages heavy use, deep reading, and repeated looking.

The YU library is made possible by the support of YU Founding Members and patrons of books—individuals and fellow institutions who have directly supported book purchases from the library's bibliography.

## VENEER MAGAZINE 08/18

*Veneer Magazine (Ve)* risks classification between technical journal, printed pdf, artist project, performance, and paper swatch book. *Ve* asks prescient questions about what it means to truly make a contemporary publication, the channels of content creation and solicitation, and the relationship between form, content, and distribution. These are not books. Rather, they are confusing objects that often refuse interface, but happen to have spines.

*Veneer Magazine 08/18* is YU's first publication. Each of the 18 planned issues of *Ve* is a unique edition limited to 300 copies. Seven previous issues have been exquisitely published by MPH. This eighth issue represents a publisher arc between MPH and YU. A subscription to *Ve* includes all 18 books in the edition as well as many other pieces of ephemera produced only for subscribers.

The publishing arm of YU aims to facilitate unique and experimental printed works. YU publications will aim to move beyond documentation to context, ideas, and issues as printed object. The existence of the print shop in the basement of YU is a testament to this calling, where artists are invited to create unique works directly in the context of the machines that make the multiples. *Veneer Magazine 08/18* includes a transcript of a 12-page speech delivered by former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher that was typeset by hand in Baskerville 11pt and letter press printed at YU.

*Veneer* is a publishing project of artist Aaron Flint Jamison and previous editions have included work by Adrian Piper, Sturtevant, and George Kuchar, among others.

*Veneer Magazine 08/18* is made possible by the support of MPH and YU's Founding Members. Special thanks go to Emily Johnson, Print Master, and Azure Akamay, Editor.

## SELECTIONS FROM THE PCVA ARCHIVE

On view May 7 through summer 2011, *Selections from the PCVA Archive* will be the first-ever exhibition of archival documentation of key works by artists such as Trisha Brown, Robert Rauschenberg, John Cage, Chuck Close, Ed Ruscha, Lynda Benglis, Sol LeWitt, and Daniel Buren, that were presented by the Portland Center for the Visual Arts (PCVA) during its nearly two decades at the center of contemporary art in Portland. The exhibition will showcase ephemera such as artist sketches and letters, installation images, and press coverage, generously lent by the Portland Art Museum's Crumpacker Family Library, which has housed the archive since 1988. Film and video works shown at PCVA screen weekly with the first film Richard Serra's *Railroad Turnbridge, 1976*, filmed at the St. Johns Railroad Bridge in Portland.

Founded in 1971 by artists Jay Backstrand, Mel Katz, and Michele Russo, the goals of the PCVA were to exhibit the best contemporary art being made in the United States, increase awareness of contemporary art in the area, and bring the artists themselves to Portland to be a part of the process and engage in dialogue with the community. The PCVA quickly developed a reputation among artists as an organization that supported and encouraged the creative process and free expression of ideas. As a result, many of the top contemporary artists in the country worked with the Center, the vast majority of whom came to Portland to make or install their work in the exhibition space at 117 NW Fifth Avenue, to give lectures in conjunction with exhibitions, or to attend openings. It had a particularly remarkable period of activity under director Mary Beebe, during her tenure from 1972 to 1981. During that time, in addition to some of the artists listed above, PCVA organized the exhibition or performance of works by Michael Asher, Allan Kaprow, John Baldessari, Vito Acconci, William Wegman, Joan

Jonas, Dan Flavin, Robert Smithson, Terry Riley, Eleanor Antin, Phil Niblock, Nam Jun Paik, Robert Irwin, Meredith Monk, and Bruce Nauman, along with numerous Portland and Northwest artists. Artists left lasting imprints on Portland's cultural landscape including Trisha Brown being credited with founding the Dance Department at Reed College, and Michelle Stuart's Stone Alignments/Solstice Cairns, a site-specific work in the east Columbia Gorge (possibly extant). PCVA is widely regarded as having been one of the most innovative and seminal art centers in the United States, elevating Portland's artistic consciousness and marking out a place for the city in the contemporary art world.

*Selections from the PCVA Archive* is made possible by the support of YU's esteemed Founding Members. YU thanks the Portland Art Museum for generously lending objects to the exhibition from the Portland Center for the Visual Arts Archive at the Crumpacker Family Library. Special thanks to Debra Royer, Library Director, and

Bruce Guenther, Chief Curator, for their time and assistance. This thanks also goes to researcher and writer Lisa Radon, and researcher Hope Svenson for their meticulous work in the archive. Great thanks to other lenders to the exhibition: Joe Erceg, PCVA graphic designer; Paul Sutinen, former art critic at the Willamette Week; Seth Tane, cameraman for *Railroad Turnbridge*, 1976; William Hoppe, PCVA artist and curator; Randal Davis, audio technician for PCVA; Michael Stirling, musician; and Brian Foulkes and Fernanda D'Agostino for objects to add to the archive. We also thank Stephanie Snyder, Curator, Cooley Gallery, Reed College.

YU honors PCVA artist co-founders Jay Backstrand, Mel Katz, Michele Russo (1909–2004), and Director Mary Beebe for their contribution to Portland's cultural legacy.

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YU WISHES TO THANK THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE WHO HELPED MAKE THIS FIRST  
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