Orchard
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Orchard was founded in 2005 by:
Rhea Anastas, Moyra Davey, Andrea Fraser, Nicolás Guagnini, Gareth James, Christian Philipp Müller, Jeff Preiss, R. H. Quaytman, Karin Schneider, Jason Simon, Bennett Simpson, and John Yancy, Jr.

PART ONE began May 11 with Andrea Fraser's performance over seven days of *May I Help You?*, 1991/2005, in the context of an exhibition-in-process including works by Luis Camnitzer, Moyra Davey, Gareth James, Nicolás Guagnini, Louise Lawler, Allan McCollum, John Miller, Christian Philipp Müller, Jeff Preiss, R. H. Quaytman, Martha Rosler, Daniela Rossell, Jason Simon, and Lawrence Weiner. Performances were held during gallery hours May 11–15, 18, 19. The exhibition remained on view May 20–22, May 25–29.

PART TWO, June 3–June 26, introduces historical and new works by Dan Graham, Nicolás Guagnini, Jeff Preiss, R. H. Quaytman, and Karin Schneider to the inaugural exhibition at Orchard.

PARTS ONE and TWO organized by Rhea Anastas, Andrea Fraser, and Rebecca Quaytman.

PART THREE organized by Jason Simon will open June 29.

PART ONE

May I Help You? was first performed at American Fine Arts, Co., New York, in January–February 1991 in the context of an exhibition produced in cooperation with Allan McCollum. In its original incarnation, *May I Help You?* paired an installation of 100 of McCollum's *Plaster Surrogates*, 1982, with actors (Ledlie Borgerhoff, Kevin Duffy, and Randolph Miles) who appeared to work as gallery staff during gallery hours for the duration of the show. Their job was to perform a fifteen-minute monologue for everyone who entered the gallery to view the exhibition. Written and directed by Fraser, the monologue engages formations of taste and social class and was developed from sources including de Coppet and Jones' *The Art Dealers* (1984); interviews with dealers, collectors, and artists; and the case studies the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu presented in *Distinctions: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (1984). A video, directed by

Fraser with camera work by Merrill Aldigheri and performances by Borgerhoff, was also produced to document the event. In November 1991 *May I Help You?* was performed again, this time by Fraser herself, at the Cologne Art Fair in the booth of Galerie Christian Nagel in the context of a presentation of works by gallery artists.

Engaging aspects of the installation of McCollum's *Plaster Surrogates* at AFA as well as the commercial display at the Cologne Art Fair, the 2005 version of *May I Help You?* realized at Orchard develops on the history of the piece. Once again staged in the context of a group exhibition, a *Collection of Five Plaster Surrogates*, 1982/1992, is dispersed throughout an installation that also includes historical works by Luis Camnitzer, *This is a Mirror You Are a Written Sentence*, 1966-68, John Miller, *Yoke*, 1986, Martha Rosler, *House Beautiful, Bringing the War Home (Giacometti)*, 1967-72, and Lawrence Weiner, *A 36"x 36" Removal to the Lathing or Support Wall of Plaster or Wallboard from a Wall*, 1968. In addition, works made after 1991, mostly by Orchard artist-members, were also chosen as dialogic partners for Fraser's performance: Moyra Davey's *Untitled (Glad)*, 1999, Nicolás Guagnini's *Till death do us part*, 2005, Gareth James's *Urinal* and *Fountain*, 1999, Louise Lawler's *The Princess, Now the Queen*, 2005, Christian Philipp Müller's *Mother and Daughter (after IKEA),* 1998, and *Newstand (National #1)*, 1995, R.H. Quaytman, two paintings from *Chapter 6, Orchard*, 2005, Daniela Rossell's *Untitled (Ricas y Famosas) "Medusa,"* 1999, and Jason Simon's *Ebay #284-214*, 1999.

The modernist-type display and domestic scale recall gallery exhibitions of the late eighties and early nineties. The quality of the *Plaster Surrogates* as signs for paintings work together with the anti-pictorial strategies of pieces by Weiner, Camnitzer, Quaytman, and James. At the same time, as "surrogate" collectables, they link these strategies to the reflections on collecting, taste, and domestic accumulation found in works by Rosler, Lawler, Miller, Müller, Davey, Simon, and Rossell. Connecting with the themes and tropes of *May I Help You?,* this diverse selection of works find an unlikely coherence in Fraser's monologue.

In the context of Orchard's inaugural exhibition, revisiting *May I Help You?*, now fourteen years old, introduces one type of relationship Orchard's program will attempt to draw upon: the connection between prior moments of critique and politicization in the art world and its contemporary conditions. While Fraser updated the text of *May I Help You?* only slightly for 2005, the immediate and confrontational experience of a live one-on-one performance brings this now historical work very much back into the present. While the conventions of the institutions of art tend towards the separation of artists and their practices based upon greater or lesser degrees of financial and cultural capital, Orchard is committed to the maintenance of a transgenerational social and exhibition space.

A new film by Andrea Fraser and Jeff Preiss of *May I Help You?*, 1991/2005, and the accompanying exhibition, is forthcoming.