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Pippa Garner is a multi-faceted artist. Born in the suburbs of Chicago in 1942 as Philip Garner, the American artist and author evades easy categorisations. Her¹ uncompromising approach to life and art-making allows her to dive into the worlds of illustration, publishing, television, and art without ever subscribing to their rules.

Garner's graduation presentation at the prestigious ArtCenter automotive design program in California announced her future practice, even as her *Kar-Mann* (*Half Human Half Car*)—a half car/ half human prototype—led to her dismissal from the straight-laced commercial institution. A few years later, in 1974, the artist modified the chassis of a 1959 Chevrolet Biscayne, creating a vehicle that seemingly drove in the wrong direction:

The Backwards Car. The most emblematic photo of the project was taken by Jeff Cohen for *Esquire* magazine and shows the car crossing the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco. The project testifies to the artist's critical fascination with cars: she hijacks the most fetishized object in American society, and later will stop using them to denounce the ecological impact of capitalism. One can also see a budding refusal of categories including those related to gender. As early as *Kar-Mann*, Pippa Garner questioned categories: the smooth, pale nude that made up the back of this hybrid car could be considered a cisgender² woman—if her penis and scrotum were not carefully sculpted. In 1995, for her last work involving a car, the artist applied for the personalized number plate spelling SX CHNGE. The request was turned down by the Department of Motor Vehicles, which only later green-lighted the plate HE 2 SHE. Denouncing the oil industry and its wars, suburban alienation and waste, Pippa Garner declared in the 1990s that she preferred to self-propel. Since then, she has stopped driving and has used pedal-powered vehicles instead.

To circulate her ideas and images, Pippa Garner deploys all possible channels, without preference for target or context. The success of her books has led her to appear on talk shows, notably in 1982 on the *Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson*, where she wore her famous half-suit. This occurrence of self-staging uses television as a promotional space for her inventions.

Pippa Garner humorously denounces prejudices of all kind—especially those related to class and gender. 'I'd be more beautiful but I ran out of money' reads one of her first

'slogan t-shirts'. In the following years, she produces and wears hundreds of t-shirts; tapping into a system familiar to brands, her body became a billboard for her cultural and autobiographical slogans. 'Not only did companies get free advertising with slogan T-shirts' she says, 'they actually ended up being paid by consumers who wanted to advertise on the company's behalf'.

Garner immerses us in a world in which queer³ helps reflecting the climate crisis: a break with binary thinking, a love of cycling, creating from capitalist debris... In this sense, her transition is one manifestation of her experimental attitude, her wry sense of humor and her deep connection to the transient nature of material life.

1. Throughout this text, we use the pronoun 'she' to refer to Pippa Garner, as this is the pronoun she currently identifies with. However, it would be equally accurate and respectful of her gender identity to alternate between he/she and she/he, depending on the specific time of her life.

2. Cisgender: This category includes people who consider that their sex assigned at birth is identical to their current gender.

3. LGBTQ+. The 'Q' in this acronym stands for Queer. Originally signifying 'odd', 'misfit', the word was commonly thrown at those whose gender blurs the lines. Through a clever reclamation of its stigma, the word became a standard for many in the LGBTQ+ community. It illustrates the pride of those for whom society is not tailored and who—breaking from its mold—prefer to live with their heads held high. It is the word chosen by some to point a finger

to the patriarchal world's oppression. It signifies a choice to politicize one's sexuality, to build a collective, to question relationships rooted in domination and the dictates of gender.



Pippa Garner, *Bumper Sticker: Earth – Love It or Lose It*, 1971, courtesy of the artist and STARS Gallery

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The bulk of Garner's oeuvre—the hundreds of sculptures, design objects and garments she made between the late 1960s and early 2010s—have not been archived, nor collected by institutions. What remains are mostly photographs, staged and taken by the artist herself. Her decision to keep a documentation rather than the works themselves shifts the focus towards images rather than objects, echoing how social networks stage our relation to reality.

It was through photography that Garner first gained public recognition—albeit in an ambiguous and commercial form. After being expelled from ArtCenter, Garner stayed in Los Angeles, working for a toy design company. In her spare time, she rode her bike around the sprawling city and took photographs.

The street scenes rarely include people. She also makes provocative and humorous images, ranging from bumper stickers to trash bins with the word 'JOY' scrawled on them. A colleague suggested she bring her photographs to *West*, a magazine known for its progressive art profile. The photographs were immediately published, the first of many collaborations with magazines ranging from *Esquire*, *Rolling Stone*, *Vogue*, *Playboy*, *Car & Driver* to *Arts & Architecture*... Deliberately blurring boundaries by inserting her images into advertising spaces, Pippa Garner infuses them with satirical reflections on consumerism. This interplay between art and advertising has been at times misunderstood—with some labeling her practice as commercial, in opposition to 'art'. 'There was such a line of demarcation' Garner explains, 'between anything commercial and fine arts.' Her main goal was not recognition by art institutions, but the dissemination of her ideas to a wide segment of society: 'It became an obsession,' she recalls 'to put things in print and get thousands and thousands of people to see it.'

As traces of Garner's inventions, her photographs reflect the absurdity of waste, overproduction and overconsumption while making a parody of innovation and invention, the drivers of ultra-capitalist society. In this process, everyday objects are reconfigured: an ashtray mixed with a car headlight becomes—depending on the angle at which one views it—vaginal or phallic. Even today, these seductive images, suggesting attractive textures with their incongruous and funny assemblages, continue to challenge our own prejudices.



Pippa Garner, *Un(tit)led (Joy Joy Joy)*, 1978, courtesy of the artist and STARS Gallery

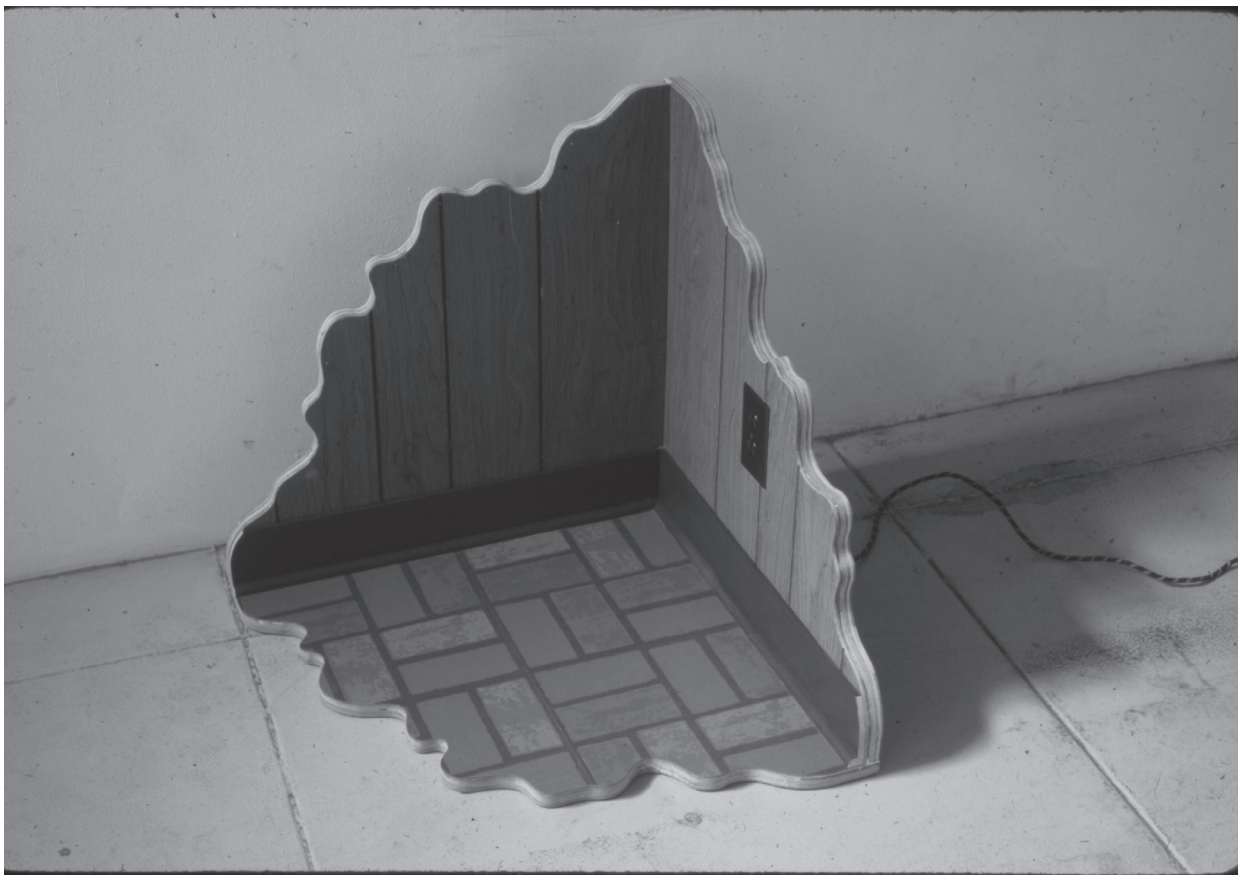


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Pippa Garner's work is affected by the gaze directed at gender non-conforming bodies; she reminds us that curiosity and voyeurism are never far apart. Garner plays with the ambivalent attraction generated by these bodies' 'otherness', notably through the staging of her television appearances, her choice of clothing, or the self-portraits presented here which simultaneously reveal and conceal her. For example, she constructs *Observation Booth* for a viewer to sit unseen while scrutinizing bodies at the beach: a widely shared practice that we only rarely confess to. Corners—those spaces often used to hide irregularities—were the subject of several of her lost sculptures. Creation here is intimately linked to destruction and disappearance, also since Pippa Garner destroys or gives away most of her works, keeping mostly photographic traces.

Pippa Garner's acts of self-staging, her works, and her whole way of being constitute an artistic practice that reflects the fragility of life. The clothes on the wall—made at a time when she aimed to trouble her own masculinity by overplaying it—materialize her approach to life as a transitory moment. Here, too, she explores ambivalence by creating perplexity-inducing devices: clothes that render gender uncertain, that cut through the stereotypes of fashion, of what 'suits' a body.

The artist's use of her own body (and her irreverence towards it) runs counter to certain feminist and transfeminist discourses which consider the body as an individual's sacred site. Garner takes the American materialism in which her practice is steeped to the extreme; she views the body as just another commodity, as something that can be freely embellished and reconfigured. It is in this spirit, with a fierce sense of humor that she playfully customizes everyday objects, pointing out aberrations in public space, or documenting her chance encounters with fortuitous compositions, recalling that art can erupt from any element in our surroundings.



Pippa Garner, *Un(tit)led (Room Corner)*, 1986-88, courtesy of the artist and STARS Gallery



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As her awareness of the artistic dimension of her practices increases, Pippa Garner starts to pursue projects that do not limit themselves to a single form of expression. These projects touch on means of transportation; they document her immediate environment. At times, she makes meditative and abstract images, such as her photographs of motor oil stains or seaweed on the beach: suspended moments amidst the buzz and frenzy of consumer culture.

Even if she never formally studied art, her close contacts with conceptual artists on the West Coast have indirectly influenced her approach¹. With her singular flair, she blends their fascination for the immaterial and the world of ideas with popular creative pursuits such as interior decoration, gardening or the rush for innovation promoted by consumer society. This unlikely combination gives rise to numerous drawings and sketches depicting inventions, often veering on the absurd.

Following their publication in lifestyle magazines, these images were compiled in books between 1982 and 1987 that met with popular acclaim.

Another domain she has appropriated is fashion: she seizes upon it to better confront the binary codes that it conveys and reinforces. Playing with the conventions of clothing, she cuts geometric patterns out of suit jackets, slides the collar of a shirt to prevent the tie from falling over the buttonhole, or—in an almost Duchampian gesture—places model-sized tie-collars over calves. The street and the magazine are here again Pippa's preferred spaces for the circulation of her pieces, as well as for the images that result from them. By hijacking the codes that enshrine these accessories' use, she questions the codes of gender itself. Starting with the exteriority of clothing, this quest will slip under their envelope a few years later. This reorientation will take the form of a sex reassignment operation² (and, later, of clothing-like tattoos covering certain parts of her body). This fundamental experience, in equal parts cultural and personal, was triggered by curiosity, intuition and desire; it was carried out with the uncertainty and risk intrinsic to medical skills at the time. Only later did she start referring to this process as a work of art.



1. In the 1970s and early 1980s, Pippa Garner's entourage expanded to include West Coast artists such as Ed Ruscha, Chris Burden and the radical art and design collective *Ant Farm*.

2. Garner identifies with the word 'transgender', but prefers the term 'androgyny' to the more contemporary 'non-binary'.



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Adelhyd van Bender, *folder #216, # 128 and #40*, 1999 – 2014
Mixed media on paper in plastic sleeves
Courtesy Delmes & Zander, Köln

Born as Harald Friedrich Bender in Baden-Württemberg, Adelhyd van Bender (1950–2014) lived and worked in Berlin. After his parents' separation when he was 15, he was placed in a juvenile home where he trained to become an electrician. In 1968 he moved to Berlin where he worked as an electrician for two years, before returning to school to obtain his A-levels. In October 1974 he was admitted to the AdK (Berlin Academy of Arts). Two years later, he was expelled from the university, evicted from his flat and decided to go to England in search of his aristocratic roots. This episode led him to rename himself Adelhyd van Bender.

From then on, he devoted himself entirely to his artistic activity (paintings on wood or cardboard using tar, oil paint and solvents). In 1987, a fire in his flat destroyed much of his work. This dramatic

experience radically transformed his view of the world and his artistic style. From that point onwards, he feels invested with a mission—'a chore' in his words—dictated by a higher authority. Adelhyd van Bender believed he had a womb containing an 'atomic secret formula'. Over the years, he produces collages of geometric shapes, colour fields, graphics, scientific formulas, which he photocopies and reworks. He relentlessly attempts to break down the world into mathematical or chemical formulas, summoning logical and coherent superstructures located at the crossroads of science, religion and philosophy. The cube, associated with the Kaaba (the black, cubic building at the centre of Mecca) recurs regularly in his work, as do planetary constellations, rockets and torpedoes. In 1999, as his flat was in danger of collapsing under the weight of his work, he bequeathed a large part of his oeuvre to the Prinzhorn Collection in Heidelberg.

The voluminous project—450,000 pages in total—testifies to Adelhyd van Bender's effort to condense an inner ebullition into an administrative form. The accumulation of notes and data in binders does not, however, result in information (or even meaning) in the classical sense. Instead, it depicts an existential doubt borne from ecological anguish: can we rationally deal with the catastrophe looming over our future?



Apartment of Adelhyd van Bender. Photo: Joshua Hoffman

The exhibitions of Adelhyd van Bender, Marine Frœliger and Claire Pentecost are curated by Fanny Gonella, director of the 49 Nord 6 Est – Frac Lorraine, in cooperation with Sophie Potelon, head of programs. The exhibition Pippa Garner is co-curated by the New York based author Fiona Alison Duncan, Maurin Dietrich, Director of the Kunstverein Munich, and Fanny Gonella. First shown at Kunstverein Munich in 2022, it is the artist's first European solo exhibition. Her work is simultaneously on view at the Kunsthalle Zürich from February 4 to May 14, 2023.

The team of the Frac Lorraine:

Emeline Aubertin, Lise Augustin, Clara Brandt, Margot Delalande, Léo Desforges, Lucie Didion, Fanny Gonella, Hélène Griffault, Marine Hardy, Justine Jean, Abel Larat, Joëlle Lehen, Lucie Lesault, Célia Muller, Sophie Potelon, Botagoz Serikbaeva, Claire Valageas

Assisted by: Camille Barbisch, Penelope Roux, Mina Howson

Exhibition installation: Irfann Montanavelli, Thibault Schneider, Ghislain Philibert

French translations of the works and documents: Mona Varichon, Philippe Farah (film)

Cleaning company: ESP (Mr and Mrs Fehr)

The texts about the artists and the artworks were written by Fanny Gonella and Sophie Potelon, with contributions by Chloé Barle, Emilie Blanc and Claire Valageas (Pentecost).

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Media Partner: France 3 Lorraine

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Marine Frøeliger (*1987, Strasbourg, lives and works around Vassivière Island) is an artist, curator and mediator—a singular profile invited to occupy the Degrés Est space at the suggestion of Fanny Gonella, director of Frac Lorraine.

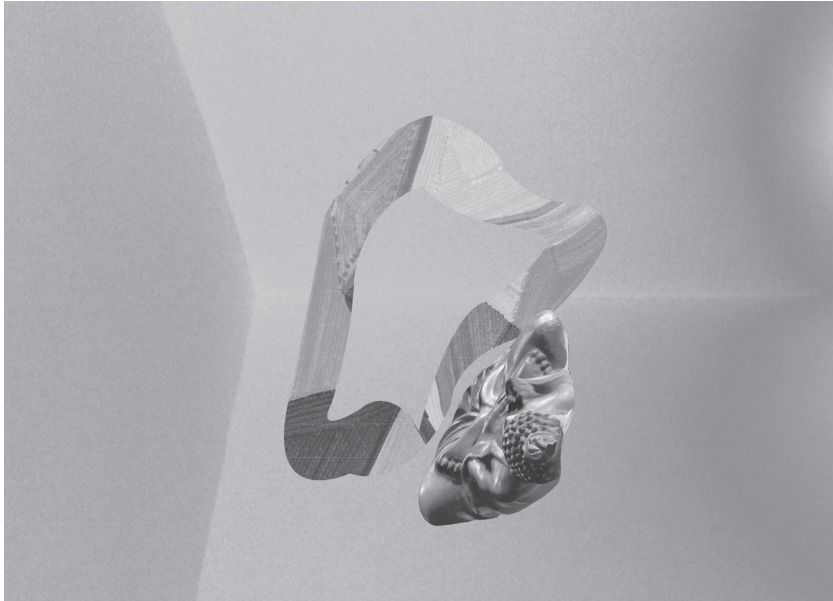
In the wake of her exhibition at the Octave Cowbell gallery in Metz in 2022, the artist invites us here to a paradoxical meditative experiment. Drawing on her experience as a mediator, she invites visitors to take the time to 'inhabit' the space of Degrés Est. Let's take off our shoes, get comfortable on the mats and take our time. How much time do we really have? Enough to wait for a volcano to erupt? To remain patient while it sleeps? The artist likes to refer to such long stretches of time to evoke her practice, which oscillates between observation, production and transmission.

With *Ourobouros*, a project begun in 2012, Marine Frøeliger draws from her own collection (composed of photographs, embroidery, drawings, photocopies, screen captures, sound works, sculptures, etc.) to propose new assemblages—including meditation mats placed on the floor. Certain images recur again and again, remodelled and reconfigured at each passage, just like the ever-repeating cycles of nature. The 'Oroboros'—a symbol depicting a snake biting its own tail—has become the title of this 'living archive'. Each exhibition is the occasion for a new *in situ* display; the one on show here is named *Embracing the Spectrum*. The artist invites us to take part in the assembly of the diverse elements throughout the space and to move them around. In other words: to settle in.

Lying on the meditation mats, we vibrate to the frequencies of the sound work *Laterretrrrremble (Theearthrrrrrumbles)*, composed by the artist from recordings of domestic sounds and synthesisers. The sound is hypnotic, haunting: we can hear the earth rumbling, the friction of tectonic plates. These liberated energies (belonging to the earth, to the body...) are at the centre of the artist's reflections. Raised by a mother involved in alternative medicine, the artist has developed a practice that is often in dialogue with practices of care. She takes up their forms (mats, meditation blocks, sound, colours...) while simultaneously wishing to 'embrace'—rather than obscure—complex political realities. She tries to create a balance between harmony and disharmony; her meditation mats are juxtaposed with glitches¹, yoga mantras² become eery, even unpleasant at times, colours are infused with 'noise.'

Marine Frøeliger rethinks the prisms through which we perceive the world. Originating in science, art or esoteric practices, these prisms are nothing else than palliatives for living in physical and digital worlds that have become untenable.

On the occasion of the exhibition, a postcard vinyl with an excerpt from *Laterretremble* was produced.



Marine Frøeliger, *Follow me, i'm a snake*, 2022. Felt-pen drawing, photogrammetry, photography, digital collage.
Courtesy of the artist

1. 'Glitch' refers to a digital sound or visual distorted by a digital accident. On screen, this often results in unstructured pixels, abnormal colours or photographic aberrations.

2. In yoga practice, mantras are positive phrases taken from sacred Hindu and Tibetan texts. They are repetitions of a sound (such as the best known mantra 'Om').

