

Henry Flynt's *Esthetics of Eeriness* (1992) consists of 68 formatted declarations that seem to aim at something pithy but miss. (They are cracked.) The installation invites the visitor to sit and contemplate them. Flynt assumes that the texts elicit images synesthetically, allowing the plaques to be called paintings with words. Dwelling on them takes the viewer into a derailed headspace. So the piece is vicarious mental derailment offered as an esthetic experience.

At about the time that Flynt (re)turned to the art world in 1987, he began to have vivid visions in the drowsiness between sleep and waking—what textbooks call hypnopompic hallucinations. Some were images, and he drew them in a journal. He got more than one work from these images; one that was completed and has been shown repeatedly is *Morning Vision 24 VII 88* (1988).

Other apparitions were verbal. Flynt discovered that he could not wait until he was up and about to record them: the derailed turns of phrase were zero-redundancy. He had to arise and write them immediately not to lose them.

In 1992, Flynt went through his collection of phrases and narrowed it down to 68. To show the balance of the 68 simultaneously without technical enhancement would need a large hall and large letters. The present show offers a rotating selection of twelve.

This show is first exhibition of the piece, but the signature text appeared on an invitation card sent from UCSD when Flynt did a series of events in California in January 2007.

The exhibition also features a newly realized concept artwork, *Hanger*.

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Hans-Jürgen Hafner has called Flynt a well-kept secret. He has been a player in the cultural milieu for fifty-five years, starting with a performance of a musical composition of his under official auspices in 1959. He originated concept art in 1961, but has seen it claimed by others, sometimes very prominently, and also confounded with the later Conceptual Art. The original concept art works were deceptively diminutive, and esoteric, and it is not surprising that most of the interest concept art attracted went to the label and not the pieces. Flynt's first presentation in a gallery was at George Maciunas' AG Gallery in New York, July 1961.

Flynt was recruited to participate in a series of Conceptual exhibitions in 1985-87, and he opted to (re)turn to art at that time. He began to do much more ponderable concept art, including a custom-

built room first exhibited (incompletely) at the 1990 Venice Biennale. In the same year, Flynt and Hennix appeared as a concept art team at *Art Meets Science and Spirituality in a Changing Economy*.

Around the time that Emily Harvey became Flynt's dealer, Flynt extended his activities to modern art and fantasy—beginning by upscaling images he had designed on stationary c. 1960. (He had showed some of the latter on a table, along with scores, at his Sunday appearance at Yoko Ono's loft in 1961.) Other pieces were entirely new in the late 1980s and 1990s. Work of C.C. Hennix, Marian Zazeela, and Robert Irwin had a major part in motivating Flynt.

Notable because it is contrary to the stereotype of Flynt: he assembled 57 photos he had taken of SAMO© graffiti (the first, collective phase). He realized them via artist-supervised C-printing and ordered them as a progression.

Flynt has made five short abstract films which he considers extrapolations of painting.

In recent years, Flynt has had retrospectives at the Kunstverein-Düsseldorf (2012) and at ZKM (2013). He figured prominently in  $\pm 1961$  at Reina Sofia (2013).

The most frequently reproduced photo of Flynt, for whatever reason, is of him giving an anti-art lecture at Walter De Maria's loft in February 1963. Invariably, those who reprint the photo do not ask Flynt what argument he was making in that very long lecture. There is now a possibility that a written proxy for the lecture will be published as a book.

Flynt has a presence in music and sound installations. He has about twenty-five published musical albums. He and C.C. Hennix gave a sound installation "concert" at the Kitchen in New York in 1979. The installation was recreated at ZKM last year in a far more substantial way, and then at Issue Project Room in Brooklyn later last year.

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