



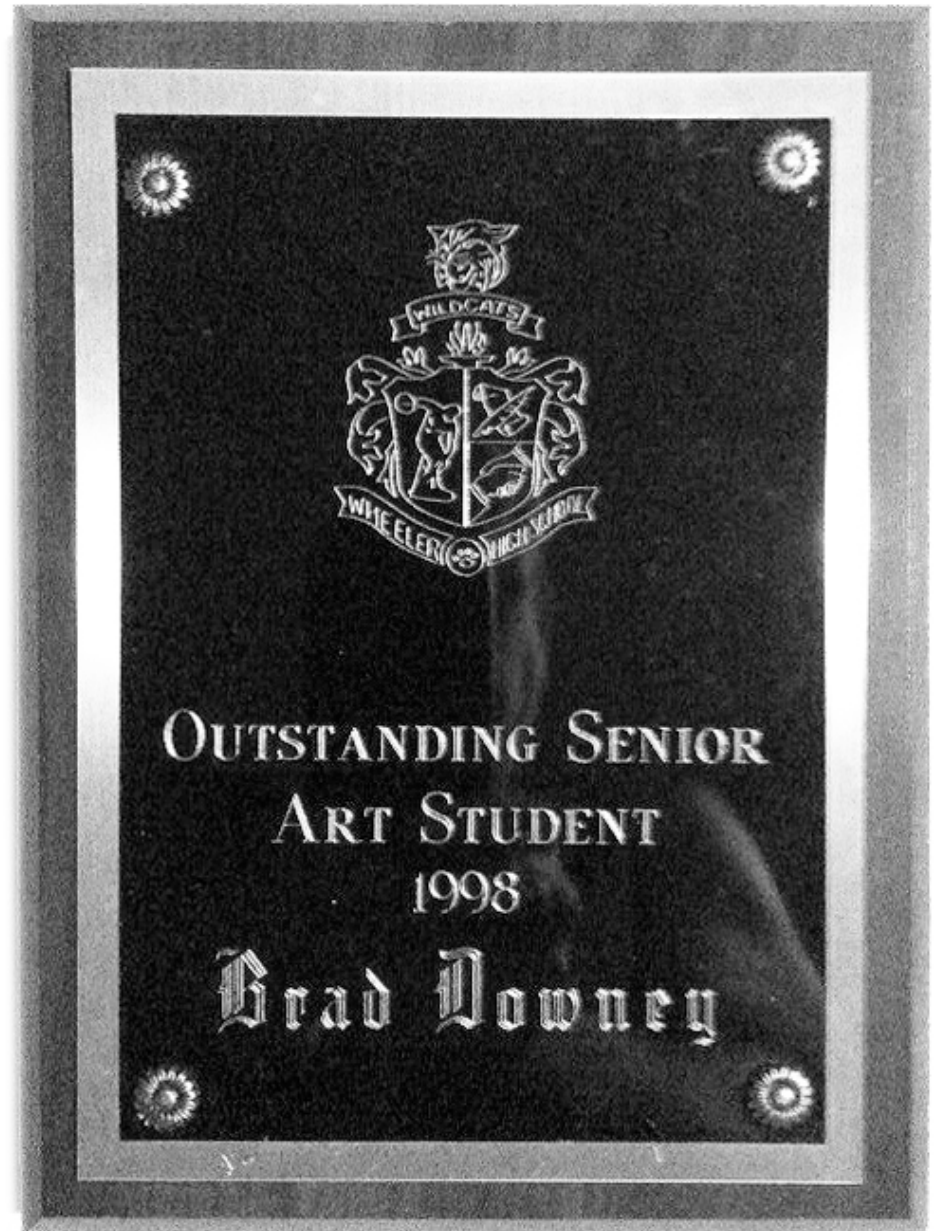
brad downey the vanity project

onestar press



BRAD DOWNEY

The Vanity Project



WHEELER HIGH SCHOOL,
OUTSTANDING SENIOR ART STUDENT,
1998,
engraving mounted on wood,
21 x 29,7 cm

MONIKA VYKOUKAL

STEALTH AND ANONYMITY

“We should never romanticise illegality, nor give any special respect to legality.”¹

THE ELEVATOR WAS NOT WORKING AGAIN, so I took the staircase up to the fifth, or was it the seventh floor, of the former warehouse in East London where some friends now have a rather fancy place, if you think of artists in post-industrial lofts like that. Near the ceiling halfway up, somewhere on my way, in black marker pen, in quite big, bold letters, someone had written ‘Brad Downey was here.’ So Brad’s been here sometime in the past. ‘How nice,’ I thought. I wonder if he’s met my mates at all.

When I told M and M, who lived there, they said they had never even noticed the scribble, one of many and varied inscriptions all around the building. I’ve always been a big wall-reader and city walking curious character, and the more I got interested the more I started to look at the world around me that way, I guess. You just got to check out the walls left and right when you’re on the subway, or walking down the street or anywhere really. Post boxes and the backs of traffic signs tend to be quite good too. Standing on the building-long balcony later in the evening, having a smoke overlooking the water tower, with the high-rises of the City behind it, I am thinking that the connection of the writing on the wall and Brad, a person I had a beer with in Berlin just a few weeks ago, is actually quite tenuous. Really, it is not exactly a signature, frankly anyone could have written this. I could have, if I wanted to. I never really had the impulse to leave a trace like that. I am more attracted to fantasies of disappearing and a new identity, and being invisible, anonymous in the mass of people here or there, or elsewhere.

This kind of writing on walls is the graffiti that is at the basis of the more specific categories and practices that become most commonly associated with the seemingly stagnant debates of ‘Art or Crime.’ The basic written inscription on the wall is both old and fleeting, almost unnoticed and still ubiquitous. In the specific, basic form of this text ‘I was here,’ it also conveys, maybe nothing more than that, the fundamental basic content of writing, and more generally of leaving a trace. Anonymity is a protection, and a secret. The everyone and no-one. But writing is not so much anonymous, maybe, more a pseudonym, or even the ‘magic trick’ of the proper name, that is both empty and an attempt to uniquely define. Most currently defined graffiti is a name in the writing, aimed to be unique. Or, on a less recognised and more mundane scale, a name left as a marker, by tourists and travellers: ‘... was here.’ Leaving a name behind is a self-eternalisation in the spirit of grander monuments, a literal retracing of steps, for those following after, strangers or not. In the writing, the identity of the author is by necessity disassociated from a definite identity of the author beyond the written trace of the passage. This seems all rather insignificant and banal, perhaps, or like a rather basic and dire exercise in simplified ideas of reading and writing, and identity...

In the sense of making the past movements of that particular person visible, readable, of marking the spot, and of commemorating presence, leaving a message for those who come after, this is a minimal autobiography in space. Yet, at the same time, it becomes submerged in the competing, manifold traces and inscriptions, and is not only one in a series by maybe the same writer, but firmly within the conventions of not only writing, but also writing graffiti. The identity of the inscription is thus not specific, perhaps, as much as generic, and ultimately, despite its conveying of one particular name, anonymous. Somehow like when you answer the phone, and the other person just goes ‘Hi, it’s me.’ Maybe. This tension of conventions – writing – and distinction of individual expression, just about seems to culminate, and might be one of the motivations in the development of graffiti writing as in tagging, wild-style, spray-can, not so young youth culture, not necessarily hip-hop subculture, maybe street art. The explosion of people seeking individual recognition through their inscriptions leading to a need for distinction, and competition for visibility in the global city. In this sense, the moment, our moment now, is important for any closer reading of what is going on here, even in the ‘Brad Downey was here,’ that I can now only imagine in my memory. One small incident.

The story I can tell myself here, is that of a somewhat imaginary past, where graffiti was less common, or less noticeable, it is hard to tell from my incomplete knowledge, when something could emerge and appear as a new phenomenon, maybe not because it was actually the first time in fact, but because it was a time when it could be seen as significant.

Thus, the myth of Josef Kyselak², who is said to have made a bet with some friends in the early 1800s that he would be known throughout the Austro-Hungarian Empire within the next three years. He went on to leave the inscription 'Kyselak was here!' wherever he went, including in rather inaccessible locations, and became, indeed, famous for this activity. This romantic myth has regained popularity now, which is significant. As graffiti writing becomes more of a considered field of enquiry, a set of activities and knowledge and media, this story can become meaningful, gaining importance beyond the anecdote of eccentricity it once was, to become something that could even be called a foundational myth.

The emergence of graffiti as a field of study, beyond the archaeological, as well as, it seems increasing activity – but then visibility and record, and what can be seen and what is deemed significant are really interconnected – appears in a context of an (artistic) move towards 'everyday life', in the street, the city, documenting, analyzing and celebrating its elements, as well as aiming for the impossible unity of art with the wider world³. And it appears in relation to the emergence of graffiti as a 'problem' and subsequently as a 'crime,' a framework that is so pervasive and encompassing as to appear a self-evident, normative truth, just part of how the world works. Yet, trying to find specific records of graffiti as crime, and frequent writing on graffiti in general, both seem to have emerged, consolidated and become codified since the 60s and 70s – starting from a little cursory research into literature on and media coverage of graffiti⁴. Cities, such as New York at the time, saw a wave of conflicts (which are shifting but substantially ongoing) around gentrification, with demolition, forced movement of poor populations, and the clearance of city spaces⁵. Just as much as a contest over space, this emerged as a contest over control of activities in those spaces, and of the image of the city and its visual landscape. This contest over space, both physically and as a realm of discourse, becomes visible both in graffiti writing with explicit political content and activism in the streets, as well as in forms of dissent that are not explicitly articulated in political terms, but also go against the emerging dominant paradigm of proper urban living (such as begging, busking, and indeed, graffiti and fly-posting that do not convey explicit political messages).

This construction of graffiti as a contested site, also created a parallel discourse which validates it as gestures of protest and resistance, as political acts of 'anyone', 'anywhere', of an invisible, anonymous mass of refusal. Writing today, this, over the framework of the Kyselak fairytale, is the field of inscription.

Anonymity is significant in so far as it allows for the public expression of views that would otherwise expose the individual to repression, and for evading punishment for certain activities. Criminal activity needs anonymity to work, really. Yet with graffiti, the action of writing, which is also the disclosure of one particular identity, and the criminal act co-

incide. For the writing to be a success the recorded action remains invisible in its moment, and can only emerge for the reader afterwards, as a record of the infraction. The disjunction between the actual writer and their trace is thus – and it would probably go without saying – necessary for the very possibilities of presence and duration of the remainder, for the action to fulfill its aim. The writing on the wall then appears, by stealth, a trick, a game. And, with increasing surveillance apparatuses and other mechanisms of control and repression, the ability to leave a sign, unnoticed, becomes more and more of an almost magical achievement. One that may live in tale tales, even more than the trace.

With explicit and enforced illegality, every incidence of graffiti has become the record of a transgression, the damage of property. Graffiti coincides with crime in relation to property. But what is the damage, the destruction? Why is a wall on which a tag or piece has been painted 'uglier' than a wall without these images? This is, as Ferrell argues, fundamentally an issue of ownership and control⁶. It is the appearance of non-authorised spontaneous messages with no clear function, as well as the disregard of property (be it public or private) appear as the – maybe all too obvious – issues. Often described in terms of 'marking territory' (which can be part of the equation of graffiti with wider criminal activity⁷), the repeated signature in a variety of locations, claims space, and intervenes with tangible with the properties of someone else (whether the state, a big corporation, or an individual owner). The terror in this, I would argue, is at least partially that of revealing the fragility of ownership claims as a way of gaining safety in the world. For, while private property and individual entrepreneurship are the dominant ideological assumptions of the world we tend to inhabit, instances, such as the pervasive and even innocuous graffiti scribbles, by their appearance question this belief system. Our ownership of things emerges as a fragile, social convention (which in this case can be protected and reinforced by the prosecution of graffiti as crime), rather than a natural relationship to objects and places we inhabit. Or, to be more blunt, if asked the standard anti-graffiti question 'So, how would you feel if this was your wall?', I guess if I had a wall I might be pissed of, but then I think the reason is because I have realised I have absolutely no control over 'my' wall, not because I might have to repaint. Here, the writer connects to the mythical character of the trickster, who 'disturb(s) the established categories of truth and property and, by doing so, open(s) the road to possible new worlds,' in a practice that 'embodies things that are actually but cannot be openly declared⁸'.

Of course, there is a certain notoriety to be gained as prolific, anonymous stealth artist, trickster, rule breaker. This is already the case with Kyselak, although his was, perhaps significantly neither a 'crime', nor was his identity hidden at all. Writing in the typus of Kyselak in this instance situates Brad's writing, and I think self-consciously, in the field of ubiquitous 'retro' or 'folk' styles, as set against the sophisticated forms

of contemporary street art. Labelled as street art, both by some of its authors, reflecting their ambitions and self-identification, and as an emerging category of study, discourses, and material production in the global art sector⁹, writing has seen a partially emergency as an economically productive field, arguably not so much despite as because of its illegality.

Graffiti has also emerged as a contributor to city branding in urban centres such as New York or Berlin, where it contributes to identity and an image of authenticity. Thus, sociologist Gregory Snyder finds in a study of the relationship of crime and writing in New York that ‘the ubiquity of graffiti tags in Manhattan neighbourhoods like Soho, (in which there were zero homicides in 2006) do not provide a context for crime but rather is actually good for business. Graffiti writers transform everyday space into “cool” space, and thus this act of criminal mischief gives consumers the impression that their forays into downtown super-hip boutiques are not only consumption experiences in which goods are purchased, but also a marker of identity¹⁰,’ where, in particular, ‘the thrill of the crime becomes a central selling point in a profit oriented cultural industry¹¹. The commercial success of street art in a variety of forms does not lead to change of criminalisation of writing at large. Thus, a recent law in Brazil, while ‘legalising’ graffiti, – however sought to enshrine in law a distinction between tagging as bad, and therefore criminal, and colourful murals as proper, good, newly allowed ‘graffiti,’ which ‘will be recognised as “artistic expression” that seeks to enhance public or private property, as long as it’s done with the consent of the property owner’.¹² Today, the writing on the walls as illegal activity, also functions, like other activities in urban space, as a new potential for profit in the development of both punitive and preventative measures against graffiti writing. More widely it is mobilised in constructions of discourses of security, safety, and normality where “the ‘criminal’ then, is at the same time a preventive and a deterrent, and so serves – if unwittingly – a stabilising and controlling function of the ruling moral ideas and economic power relations.”¹³ Under the circumstances of the present, it is hard to think of writing time which is not connected to illegality, control of space and private property in this way. It is equally impossible, at least for me, here, to imagine the first person to write, either at all, or more specifically this kind of sign.

But really, this is a text about the small incident, the writing of the ‘I was here’, that has to some extent gone to far [or not far enough]. This might be an adequate description of the situation, of the framework of the writing, yet, I cannot move to pass judgement, to conclude with a claim to the significance and importance of that writing, and thus, in effect, legitimise my own text, here. I was here too, you know. Yet, on the other hand. Imagine there was no writing on the walls, apart from the market-driven language of advertising, and the repressive injunctions of government: a minimal kind of importance this, perhaps, yet

it really is something, no? I mean, what do you want? Why don’t you go and write something more meaningful, more political, more poetic? Why don’t you write something that is not just about you, your name, and not even a pseudonym? Still, it could be anybody, right, right? But who else would really want to write your name in stairwells in London and Berlin and all those other places you travel to? It is an anonymity that it is not derived from namelessness in the obvious sense – what kind of anonymity is it? Who sees this, notices this, really? This becomes significant because of the documentation. The documentation you hold here, gives it some kind of validation. Even as art. The book is your own compact, handy, portable institutional space. And now, with this nifty essay at hand you can loop in and circumscribe and catch whatever scribbles you may see. Nice one, eh! You will not know if you look at just graffiti, or at something of value, at something real in the world, something real and authentic and rebellious or something that is about all this and as such reflexive, but in relation to its own instituting it becomes trapped in all those trite contradictions once again. And probably because my writing cannot carry a meaningful justification, a real juicy reading. Sorry. I’m sure this is a nice book and now there is this insane text about writing, too complicated and too chatty, and trying to be too clever (and now it’s getting self-deprecating too), so I guess you could go over it, or rip it out, or write your own bit, but we don’t really do that with little high art limited edition books. They’re not meant to be in the place of ‘_____ was here’.

*Can you really write your ‘self’?

Can you really own the world?

NOTES

1 Toni Prug, Notes from Talk: Hacking Ideologies: The spectre of free information is haunting capitalism, but what's in it for us?, given at 'Disclosures', 31th March 2008, Common Room of Middlesex Street Estate, London E1 [unpublished circulated script by the author]; Prug is referring to Georg Lukács text 'Legality and Illegality' from 1920, available on <http://www.marxists.org/archive/lukacs/works/history/ch06.htm> [August 2009].

2 See Mike Mitchell, About Josef Kyselak, 2004, <http://homepages.phoncoop.coop/mjmitchell/Kyselak/kyselak.html> [August 2009]; http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_Kyselak [August 2009]

3 See e.g. Denys Riout, Le graffiti, la rue et le musee, pg. 191-204, in: *Pesthetique de la rue. Colloque d'Amiens, L'Harmattan, Paris 1998*, edited by Françoise Coblence, Sylvie Couderc et Boris Eizykman

4 I looked e.g. at the coverage of the term 'graffiti' in the New York Times archive, which is available online and covers the period since the 1850s; for a more substantial study of the emergence of graffiti as crime in the US-context see especially: Joe Austin. *Taking the Train: How Graffiti Became an Urban Crisis in New York City* (Popular Cultures, Everyday Lives), Columbia University Press, New York 2001.

5 For a recent analysis of urban gentrification as a global phenomenon see e.g. Mike Davis and Daniel Bertrand Monk [eds], *Evil Paradises. Dreamworlds of Neoliberalism*, Palgrave, The New Press, New York 2007; and for a case study of gentrification in Denver that focuses on the consequences for graffiti writing, see Jeff Ferrell, *Crimes of Style: Urban Graffiti and the Politics of Criminality*, Northeastern University Press, Boston 1997.

6 Jeff Ferrell, *Crimes of Style: Urban Graffiti and the Politics of Criminality*, Northeastern University Press, Boston 1997, p. 180

7 See e.g. Susan A. Phillips. *Wallbanging: Graffiti and Gangs in LA*. Chicago University Press, Chicago 1999

8 Lewis Hyde, *Trickster makes this world. How disruptive imagination creates culture*. Canongate Books, Edinburgh 2008, p.13 and p.11

9 Which both this book and this author obviously also belong to.

10 Gregory Snyder. *Crime Space vs. Cool Space: Graffiti, Broken Windows and the Branding of Consumer Experience*. conference paper presented at: 'On the Edge: Transgression and the Dangerous Other', John Jay College, New York 2007, available at http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p_mla_apa_research_citation/2/0/0/1/8/p200187_index.html [August 2009]

11 Michael Zinganel, *We are building security! Crime does pay!*, www.learningfrom.com/zinganel [August 2009]

12 Public Ad Campaign, "Graffiti" to be legalized in Brazil?, Sunday, March 22, 2009, <http://www.publicadcampaign.com/2009/03/graffiti-to-be-legalized-in-brazil.html> [August 2009]

13 Michael Zinganel, *We are building security! Crime does pay!*, www.learningfrom.com/zinganel [August 2009]



THOMAS BRATZKE,
WHERE IS BRAD?,
 2009,
 black and white photograph,
 13,75 x 20,39 cm



BOXI,
BRAD DOWNEY WAS HERE — BUFF,
 2008,
 spray paint on canvas,
 270 x 190 cm



EVAN ROTH (GRAFFITI RESEARCH LAB),

GRAFFITI ANALYSIS 3.0, brad-04.jpg,

2009,

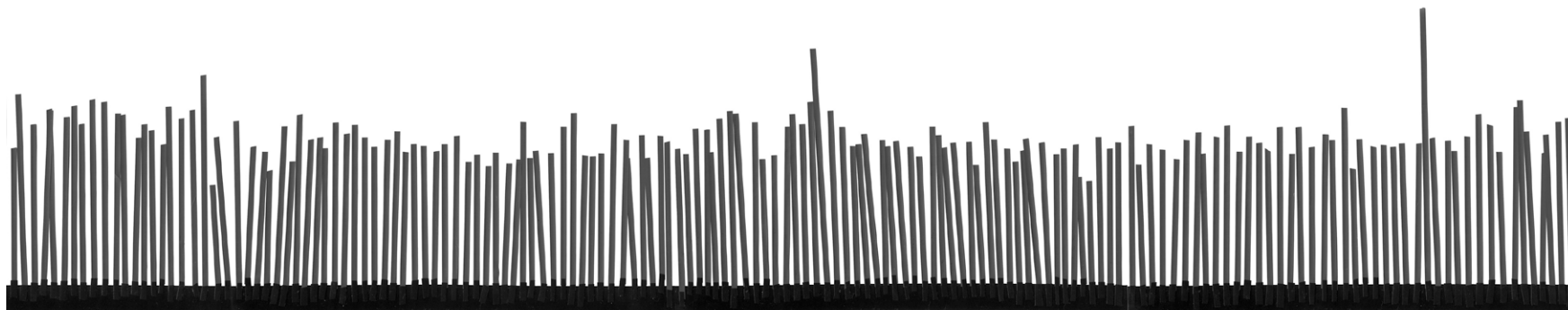
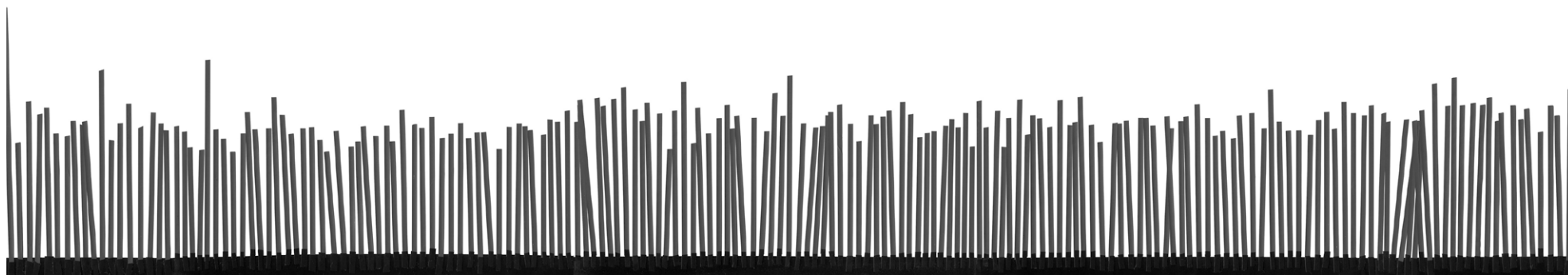
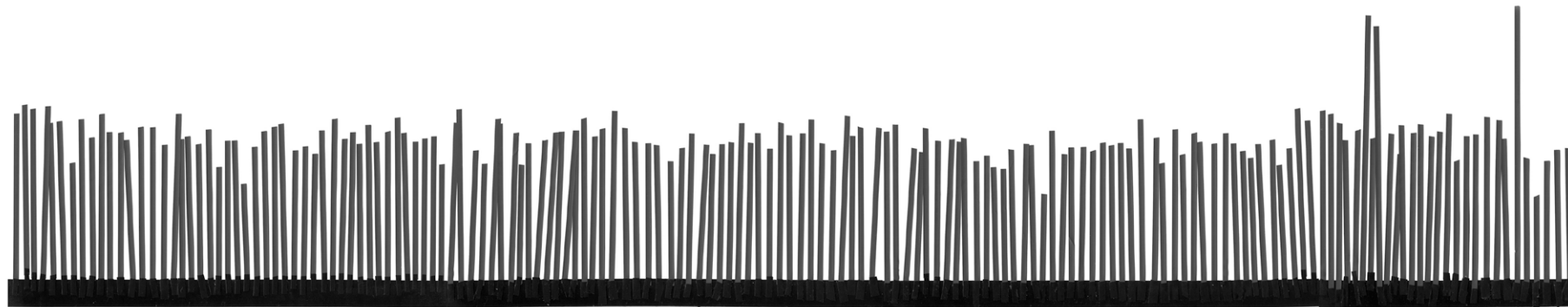
marker on paper, masking tape, torch, digital software,
13,75 x 20,39 cm

MARK JENKINS,

BRAD HUNG,

2010,

tape, cling wrap, bike and street sign,
dimensions variable



JAN LEGUAY,

HERE I AM,

2010,

magnetic tape on paper,

21 x 326,7 cm

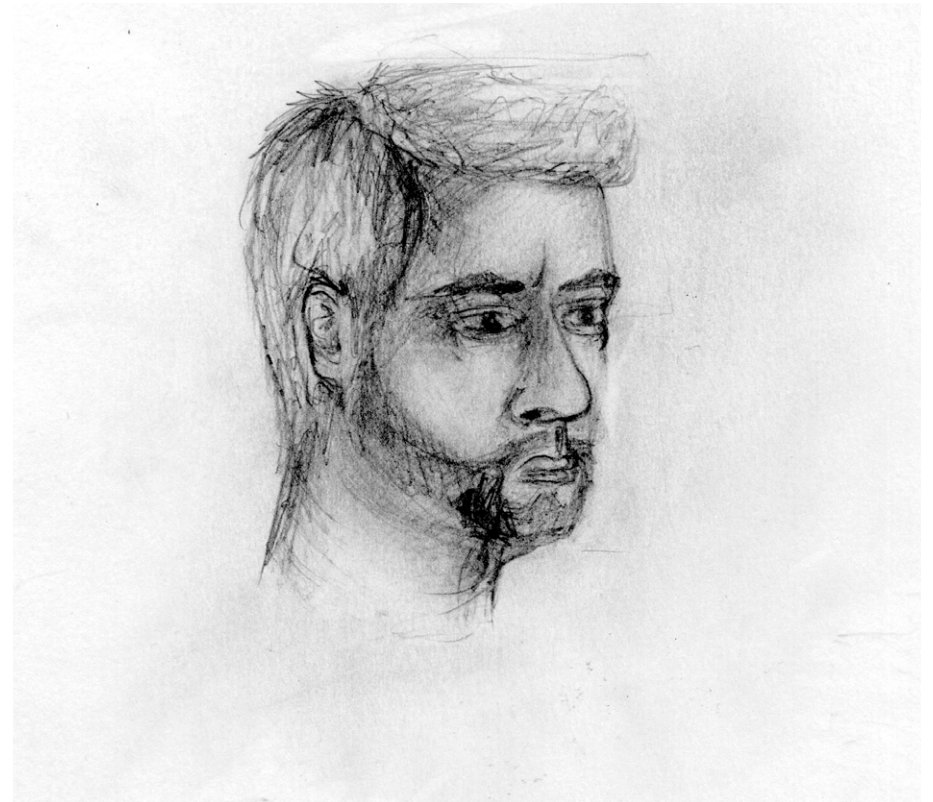
“500 magnetic strips recorded during a walk from one place to another. Each three seconds Brad said aloud ‘I am here’.”



ALISON MOFFETT,

*"IN MY FIRST ATTEMPT, YOU ENDED UP LOOKING QUITE A LOT LIKE COMMANDER
RIKER. SO, INSTEAD, I STUCK WITH WHAT I KNOW."*

pencil on paper,
2009
21 x 29,7 cm



LISA TROPPIA,

BRADLEY,

2007,
pencil on paper,
21 x 29,7 cm



SERGE SEIDLITZ,

PORTRAIT OF BRAD FOR BRAD,
2009,
pen on carbon copy paper,
15 x 10 cm



FEFE TALAVERA,

PORTRAIT OF BRAD,
2010,
pencil on paper,
19 x 15 cm



YARA EL-SHERBINI,

ANSWER: GUERRILLA TACTICS

2009,
digital collage,
2 x 2 cm

NUG,
BRAD DOWNEY,

2008,
pen on paper,
4 x 2,28 cm



NICHOLAS BROWN,

BRAD DOWNEY IN ENGLAND,

2008,

pen on paper,
21cm x 29,7

ALEX SMITH,

ELEMENTAL – A PORTRAIT OF BRAD DOWNEY,

2009,

laserprint on paper,

14,0 x 22,5 cm

Edition limited to 250

Media drips from his hands as he walks the dividing avenues of the metropolis. Bright, curled and excited, his smile is elastic. When he reveals the gap between his teeth he is amused, generous. He will listen without irony. But when he laughs his eyes alight in amusement. Here you can detect the child await beneath the countenance—a child so powerful as to sing through the American wasteland to the prize stirring within the city walls.

The intellect is inborn, though the eyes speak of spanning designs. In the daylight they are burnished, alert. His easy stare communicates more than his voice, though it does not betray the everlasting vision:

Each street corner is a potential study in colors. Each object belonging to the public works might be revised to belong to the passersby. Muscles in his fingers remember holding the rusted screws of street signs. His palms have smoothed over spray paint on sheer glass. His shoes have treaded in the oil-slickened recesses of the metropolis. All this he commands in the dark.

Still, he is familiar and kind in the daylight, promising nothing but his face, his company. But mischief still slumbers behind the eyes. This is the artist at rest.



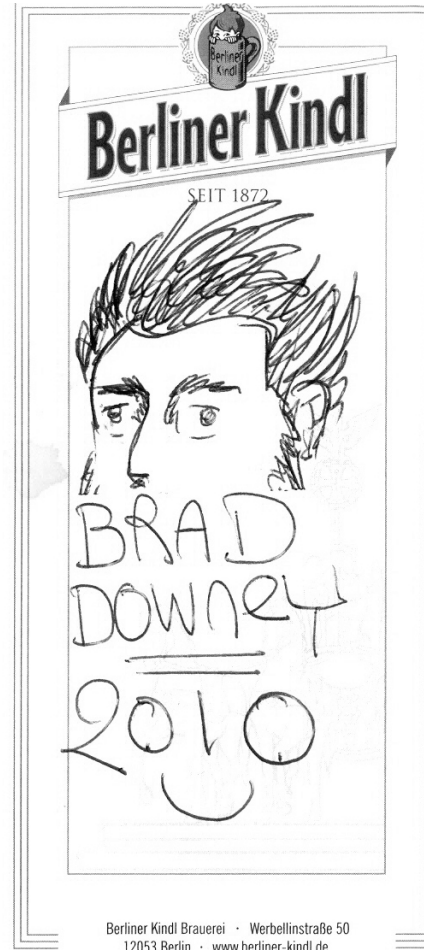
HORFE,

BRAD DOWNEY THROW-UP,

2010,

pen on paper,

14,8 x 21 cm



Berliner Kindl Brauerei · Werbellinstraße 50
12053 Berlin · www.berliner-kindl.de



Berliner Kindl Brauerei · Werbellinstraße 50
12053 Berlin · www.berliner-kindl.de

FLYING FORTRESS & HONET,

BRAD DOWNEY WAZ HERE,

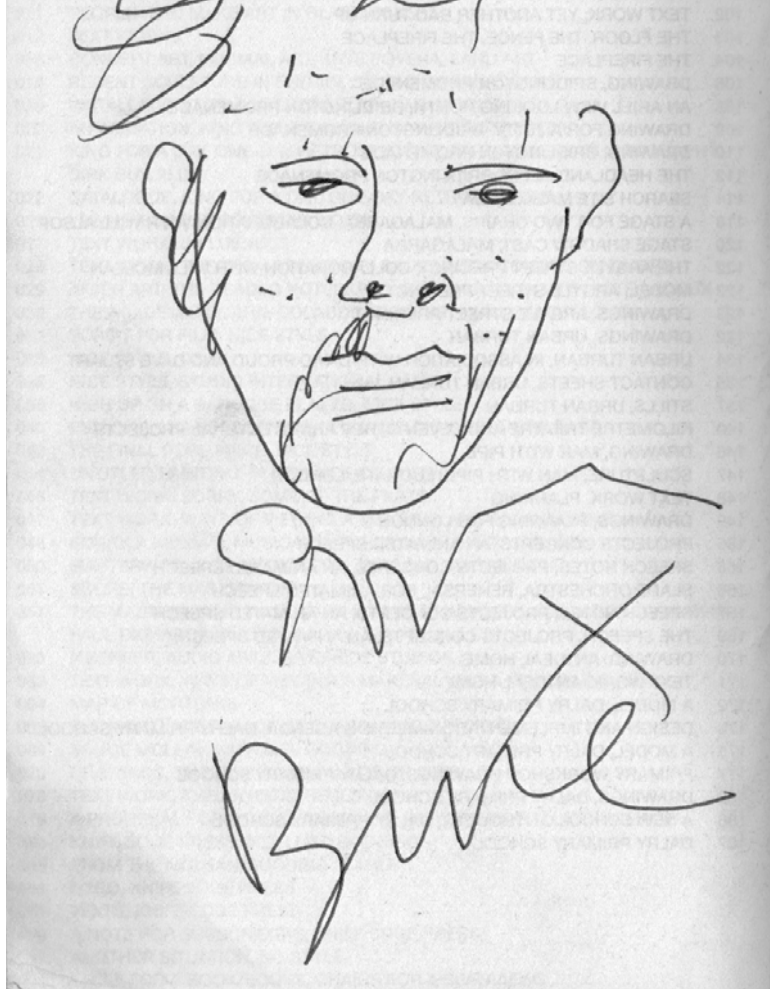
2010,

pen on paper,

14 x 15 cm or 7 x 15 cm each

192

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WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO DONALD SMITH AND LIZZY MCLEAN
COPYRIGHT © BRUCE MCLEAN 2006
DESIGN BY BOYCE



BRUCE MCLEAN,

FRECKLES,
2010,
pen on receipt,
20 x 13 cm

M O R R I S O N



| TABLE NO. | COVERS | INITIALS | TIME |
|-----------|--------|----------|------|
| | | | |

24821/Nov 06
For Brad

| TABLE NO. | COVERS | INITIALS | TIME |
|-----------|--------|--------------------|------|
| | | <i>Peter Blake</i> | |

24821/Nov 06

SIR PETER BLAKE,

PORTRAIT OF BRAD FOR BRAD,
2009,
pen on carbon copy paper,
15 x 10 cm



CHRIS CORNISH,

BRAD IN 3D WITH A LINE SHADER,
2009,
digital print,
29,7 x 21 cm

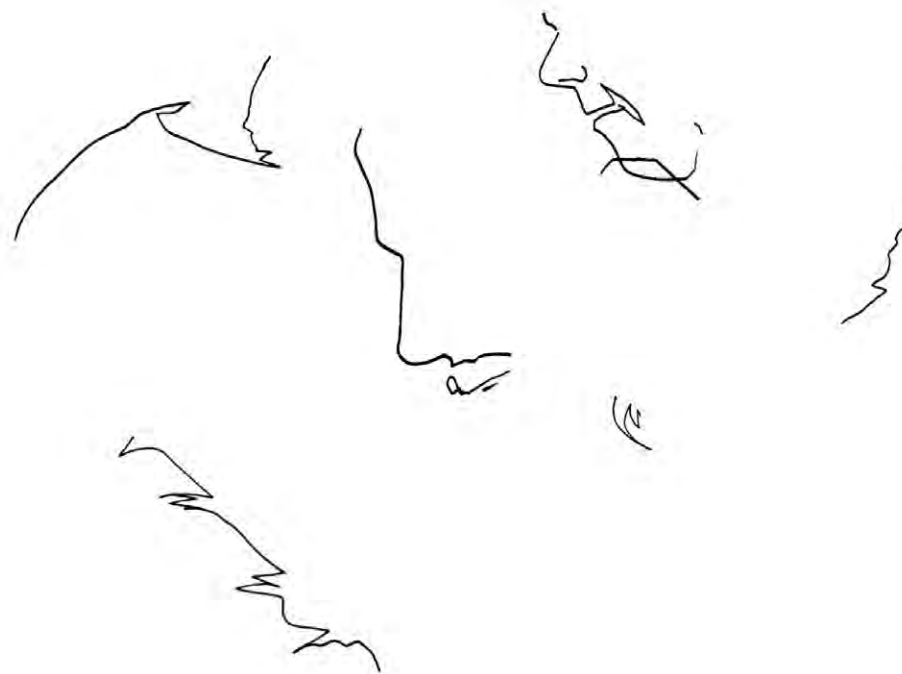


UNKNOWN,

(photographed by **JESUS**),
BE BRAD,
First sighted 2009,
sticker on glass,
16 x 5.5 cm



BRAD D. ALONE
FLAVIE



MR. IX,
BRAD D. ALONE,
2009,
marker,
100 x100 cm

DAVE THE CHIMP,
BRAD PLAYING WITH FLAVIE'S CAT,
2008,
pen on paper,
21 x 29,7 cm

BRAD

IS

BAD

AKAY & KID PELE,

BRAD IS BAD,
2008,
pen on cardboard,
21 x 29,7 cm



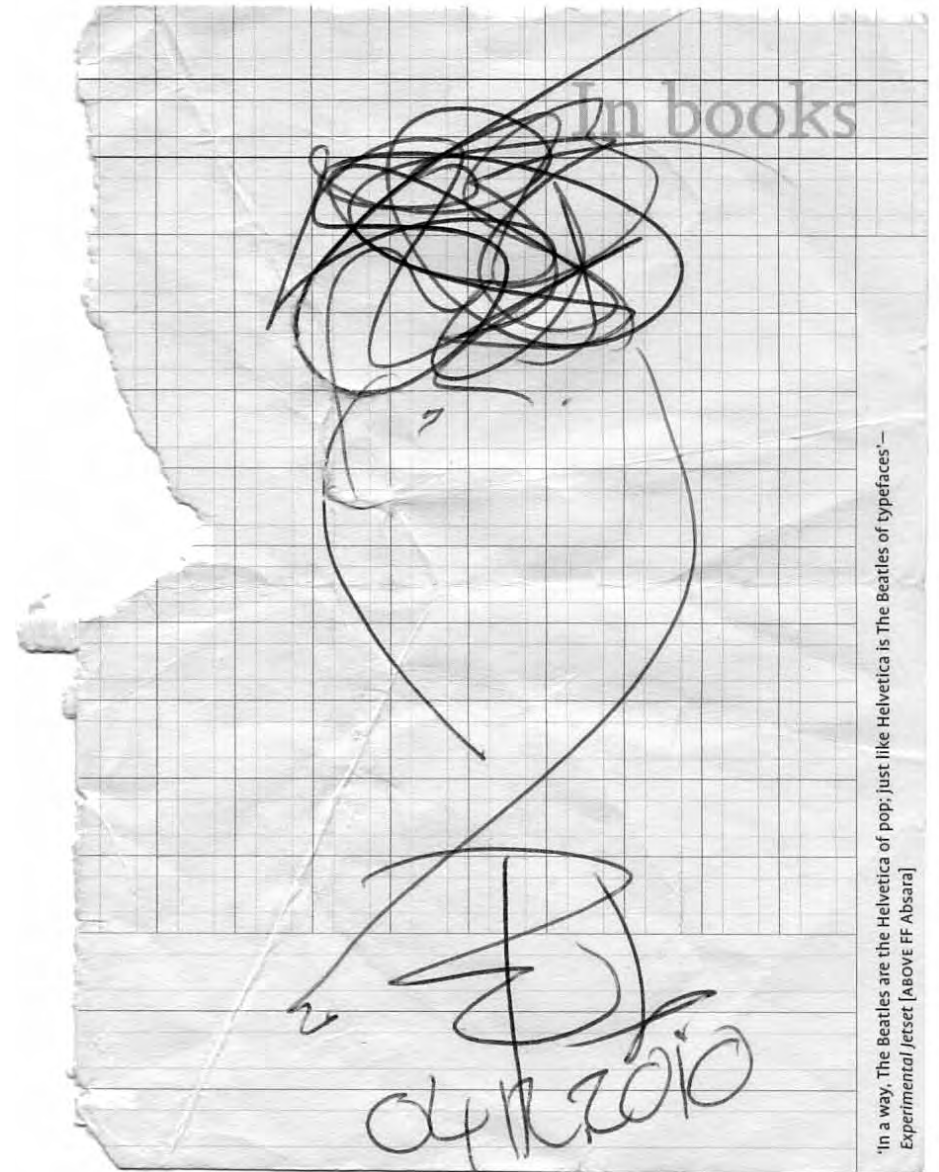
ERIC ELMS,

BRAD,
2005,
airbrush on wood,
45 x 60 cm



KNOW HOPE,

<3 BRAD,
2010,
pen on paper,
20 x 27 cm



ROBERT GREENWOOD, (SNØHETTA),

EXPERIMENTAL JETSET IN BOOKS,

2010,
pen on paper,
?

'In a way, The Beatles are the Helvetica of pop: just like Helvetica is The Beatles of typefaces'—
Experimental Jetset [ABOVE FF Absara]



STUDIO CROMIE

NAUGHTY BOYS,
2011,
marker on trash bin,
40 x 40 cm each



*Brad Downey n'est pas dans cette
photo mais Sage francis oui*



*Sage francis...on dirait Brad
mais en plus lourd*



Sosie ?

JULIEN FARGETTON

SAGE FRANCIS = PIGGY BRAD,
2010,
digital collage,
10,3 x 14,5 cm each



STINE TRANEKJÆR

BRAD BREAD,
2008,
yeast, wheat, flour, water,
60 x 40 cm



***BANKSY,**

KEEP IT REAL,
unknown,
spraypaint, oilstick on wall,
198 x 96 cm



JOHN CUNNINGHAM,

“BRAD 100”,
2011,
acrylic on newspaper,
120 x 120 cm each



ASBESTOS,

FROM THAT BAR IN AMSTERDAM, 2009,
paint and collage on found wood,
variable dimensions



DANNY PAULETE,

RASTA/RASTA,

1998/1998,

pen on tracing paper/carved cardboard,
29,7 x 42 cm each





O'CLOCK

UGLY LIKE YOU,

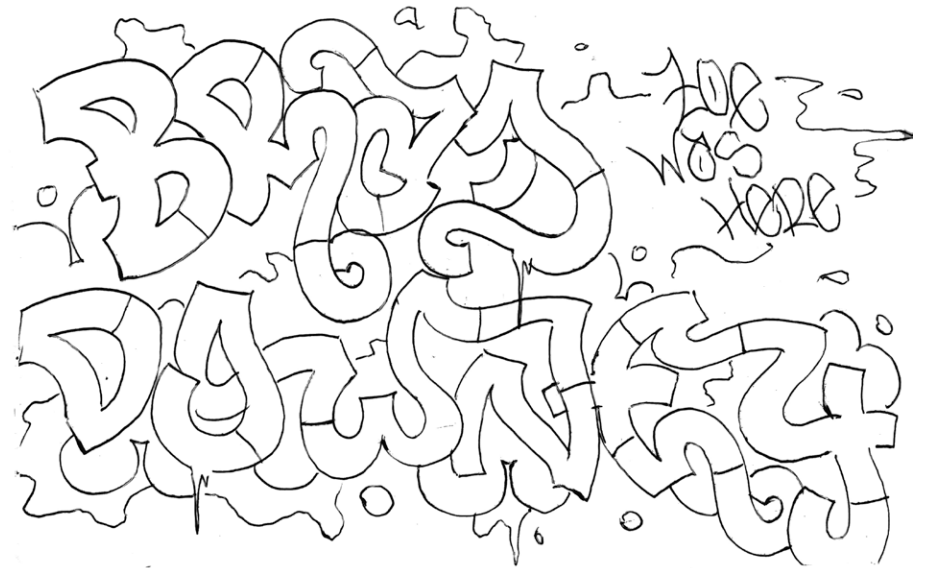
2010,

marker on paper,

42,0 x 14,8 cm each



MARE 139,
BRAD BURNER,
2009,
pencil on paper,
21 x 29,7 cm



SOE, TFZ,
SOE WAS HERE,
2009,
pen on paper,
21 x 13 cm

JENNIFER THATCHER,

BRAD DOWNEY,

2009,

laserprint on paper,

14,0 x 22,5 cm

Before I met Brad Downey, I didn't know any street artists. Coming from the more domestic side of the art world, I had a romantic notion of the street artist as a shadowy creature of the night, maybe even – if I let my imagination wander – masked like the anarchic vigilante RORSCHACH in *Watchmen*. But Brad seemed like a wholesome young man, a sensitive type with quaint, American manners. He made his works in broad daylight, sometimes wearing a fluoro-bright workman's jacket – the very definition of high visibility – pinched from a short-lived construction job. Brad understood that the mundane business of street management is often wilfully ignored by the passing public – even, paradoxically, when it is conducted at full volume. No-one questions Brad as he cheerfully installs his alternative road signs or tinkers with existing ones because, in an era of increasing privatisation and out-sourcing, no-one knows who is employed by whom.

Before I met Brad, I don't remember giving much thought to the term 'street furniture' – all those bollards, streetlamps, CCTV cameras and road signs that clutter and animate our streets, offering directions, watching us, protecting us, and telling us what to do and not do. The idea that these elements might be classed as furniture opened up a less utilitarian potential: they could be re-arranged, re-upholstered, recycled. Streets, like houses, could be made more interesting, intimate or decorative. Our cities are full of decommissioned street furniture, left functionless and waiting for councils to remove them. Cities like London or New York seemed to openly invite artists like Brad to play a kind of secret, urban chess game with all this unwanted stuff.

Brad also offered a humorous perspective on tagging, which, until then, I'd visualised being carried out with the gravitas and adrenaline-fuelled urgency of an undercover mission. (Taggers risking their lives for an elusive site or extreme-tagging as part of a gang-initiation ritual.) Brad, on the other hand, seemed to be happy operating alone or collaborating with a friend. And his tag – the carefully traced capitals of his name – was so simplistic, it might have been sprayed by a boy of 10. It was astounding enough that he used his real name, more so that he spelled it correctly. I'm not sure why, but whenever I see the tag, it seems weirdly more provocative and more catchy than all those around it. Of course, others might just say he can't do all that complicated bubble writing. Or hasn't come up with a witty symbol like a cat or a toaster.

Given that he practically signs his own WANTED notice, Brad clearly doesn't take his status as an outlaw very seriously. Nevertheless, he has the look of a serial nomad. Brad belongs to a new global gang of street artists, travelling to visit fellow artists' works around the world's cities, introducing themselves via blogs and websites – and now that street art has become fashionable, via talks and conferences in arts institutions like the one I work in. I'm not sure where Brad is living now. Last time I saw him it was Berlin, but then he always has a trio of cities lined up as possible next moves, like a travel agent's version of a fruit machine.

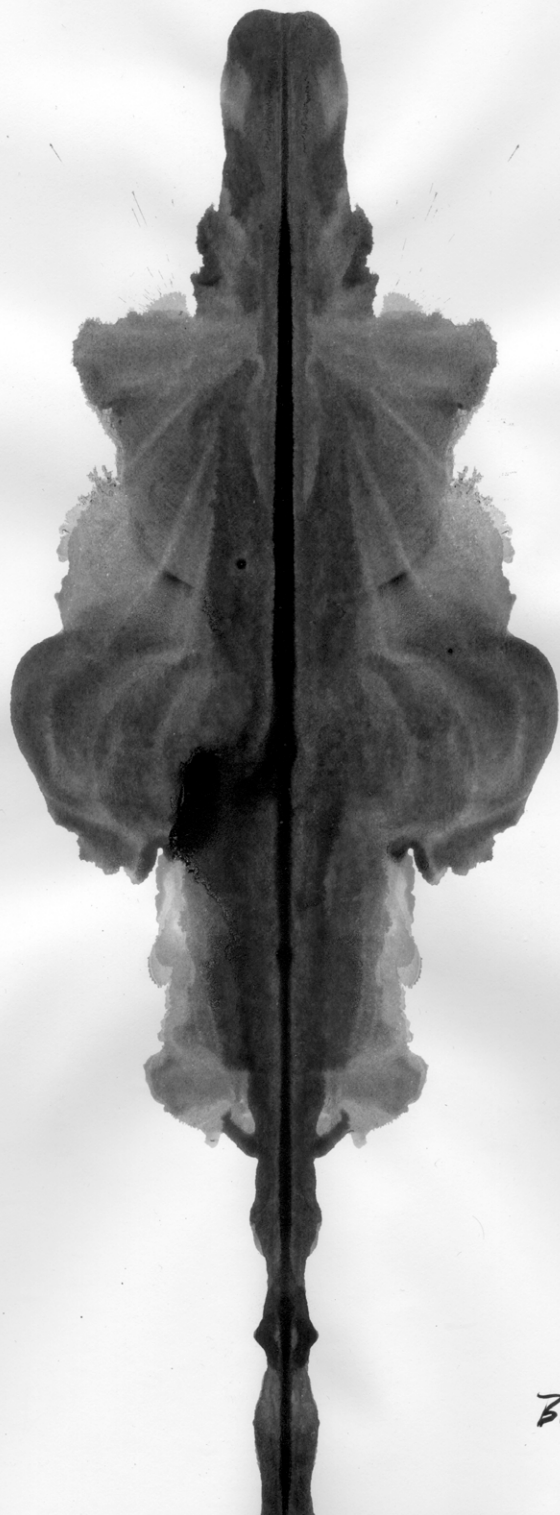
*"I made 13 Rorschach-inkblot-portraits.
When they were finished I called Brad Downey for his favorite
number from 1 to 13. Brad had chosen the 13."*

DANIEL MAN,

*MADE WITH FULL CONSCIOUSNESS ABOUT BRAD DOWNEY,
2009,
ink on paper,
21 x 29,7 cm each*



BRAD DOWNEY P#13



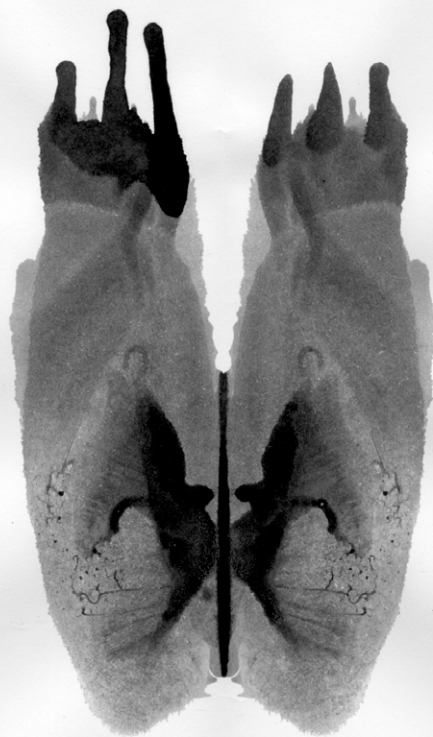
BRAD DOWNEY P# 1



BRAD DOWNEY P# 2



BRAD DOWNEY P# 3



BRAD DOWNEY P# 4



BRAD DOWNEY P#5



BRAD DOWNEY P#6



BRAD DOWNEY P# 7



BRAD DOWNEY P# 8



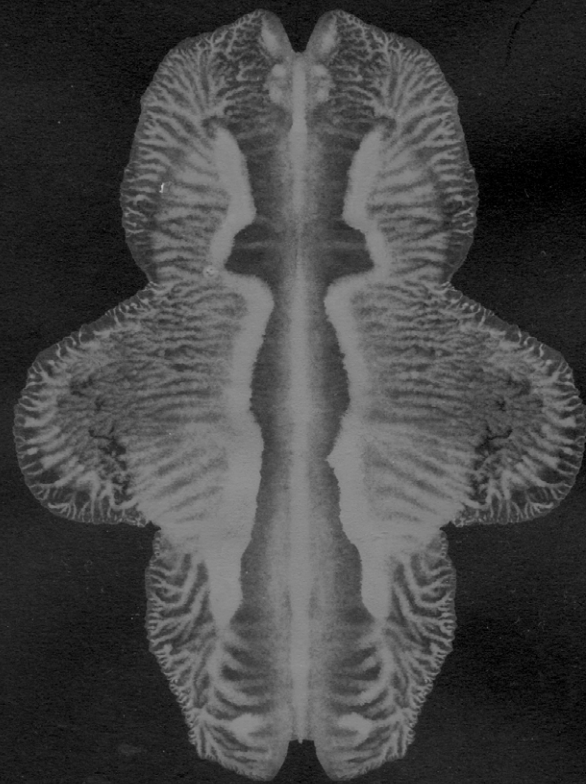
BRAD DOWNEY PH 9



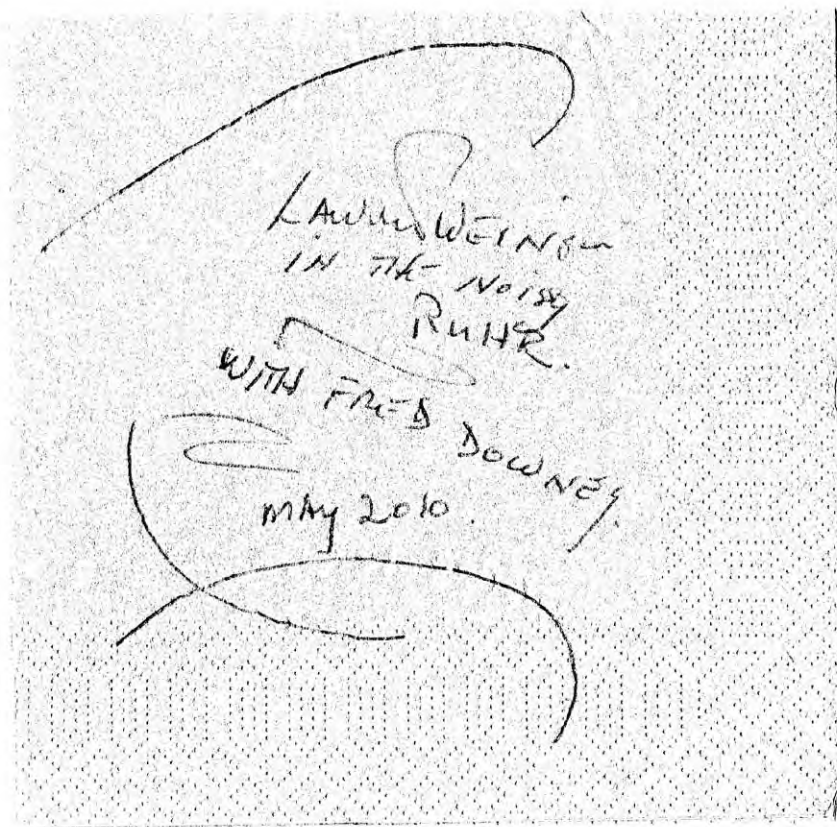
BRAD DOWNEY PH 10



BRAD DOWNEY P# 11



BRAD DOWNEY P# 12



LAWRENCE WEINER,

IN THE NOISY RUHR (RUHE) WITH FRED (BRAD) DOWNEY,
2010,
pen on napkin,
17 x 17 cm



STEVEN L. BESHEAR

GOVERNOR

To All To Whom These Presents Shall Come, Greeting: Know Ye, That

Honorable Brad Downey

Is Commissioned A

KENTUCKY COLONEL

I hereby confer this honor with all the rights, privileges and responsibilities thereunto appertaining.



In testimony whereof, I have caused these letters to be made patent, and the seal of the Commonwealth to be hereunto affixed. Done at Frankfort, the 22nd day of April in the year of our Lord two thousand and eight and in the 28th year of the Commonwealth.

Steven L. Beshear

By the Governor, Steven L. Beshear

Toby

Bill Farmer

State Representative, 85th District

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY,

KENTUCKY COLONEL,

2008,

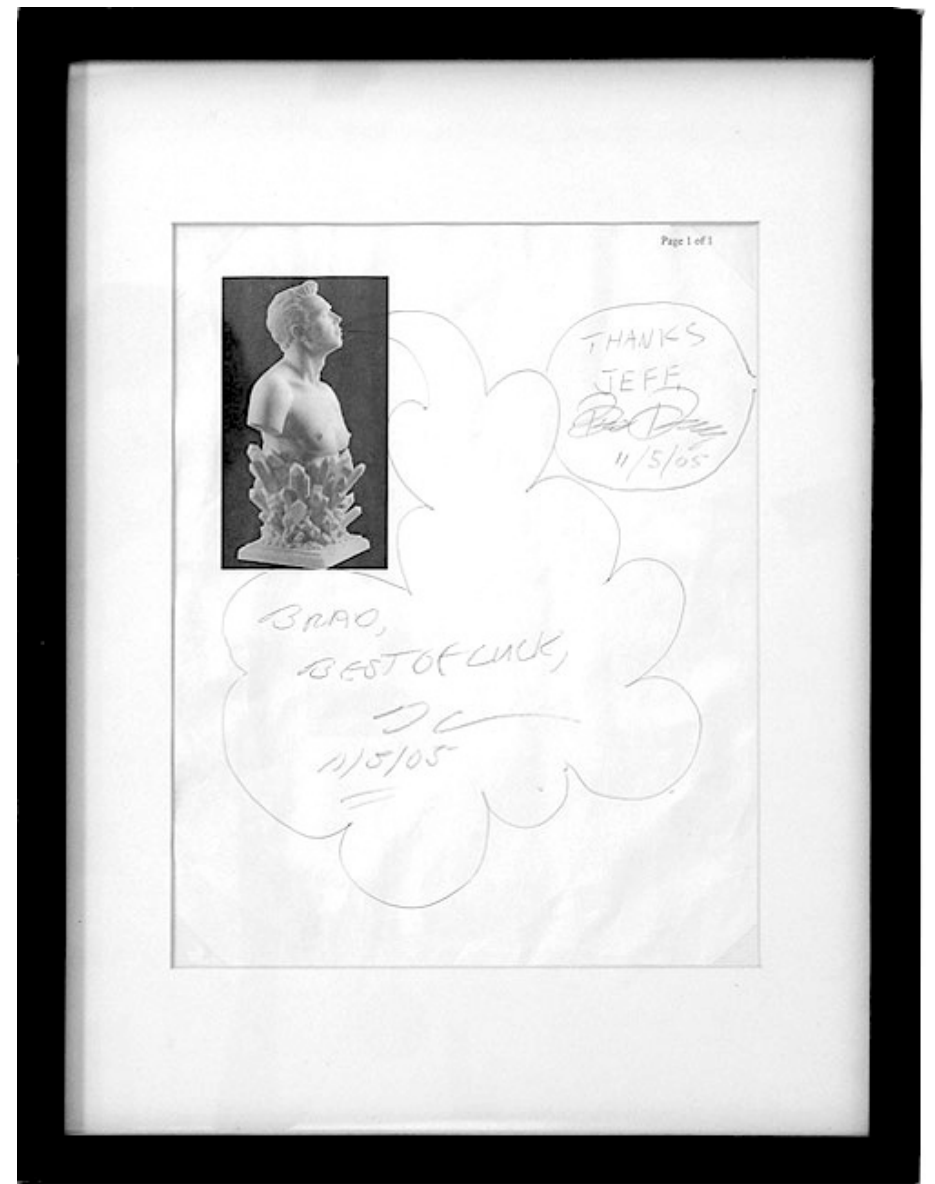
official documentation,

32,7 x 45 cm



CHARLIE AHEARN,

BRAD DOWNEY FRAU,
2005,
pencil on printout,
21 x 29,7 cm



JEFF KOONS,

BRAD BEST OF LUCK,
2005,
pencil on printout,
21 x 29,7 cm



TERRY VREEBURG,

Vacuüm Ljm,
2009,
pencil and pen on paper,
21 x 29,7 cm



HUSH,

LITTLE ANGELS 'BRAD',
2009,
mixed media on canvas,
19,2 x 28 cm

YO YO YO



Brad Downey
Bobini's
Berlino 2009
Luglio
una sera
in Peterburgerstrasse 93



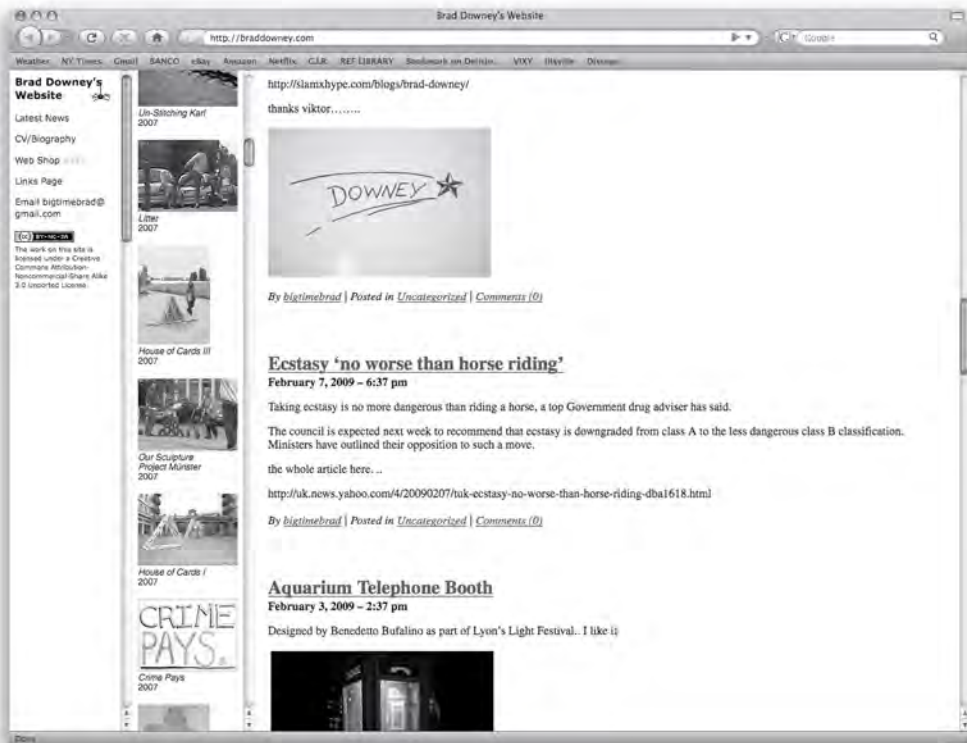
L.R. 7/8/09

STEFANO PEDRINI,

BERLINO YO YO YO,
2009,
pencil on paper,
21 x 29,7 cm

LEON REID IV A.K.A. DARIUS JONES,

BRAD,
2009,
pencil on paper,
21 x 29,7 cm



BILL HAYDEN,
BRAD DOWNEY,
 2008,
 screenshot,
 1800 x 1500 px



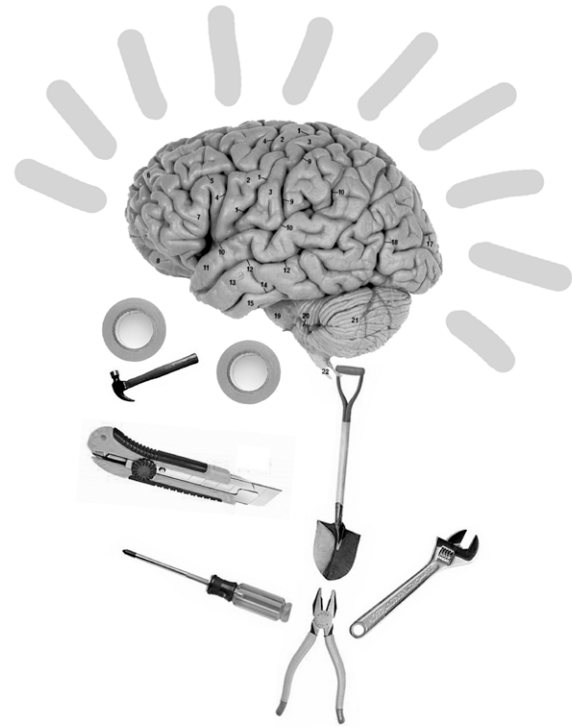
ARIEL SCHLESINGER,
THE CREATION OF A PORTRAIT,
 2009,
 screenshot,
 729 x 566 px



AFRO-BRAD

DANIEL DANGER,

AFRO-BRAD
2009,
pen on paper,
10 x 8 cm



NAKED
DOWNEY

STEFANO PEDRINI,

NAKED DOWNEY,
2009,
digital collage,
2480 x 3508 px



THOMAS SORGAARD,

DECADENT REDNECK,
2006,
colour photograph,
35 x 24,6 cm



KEVIN KEMTER,

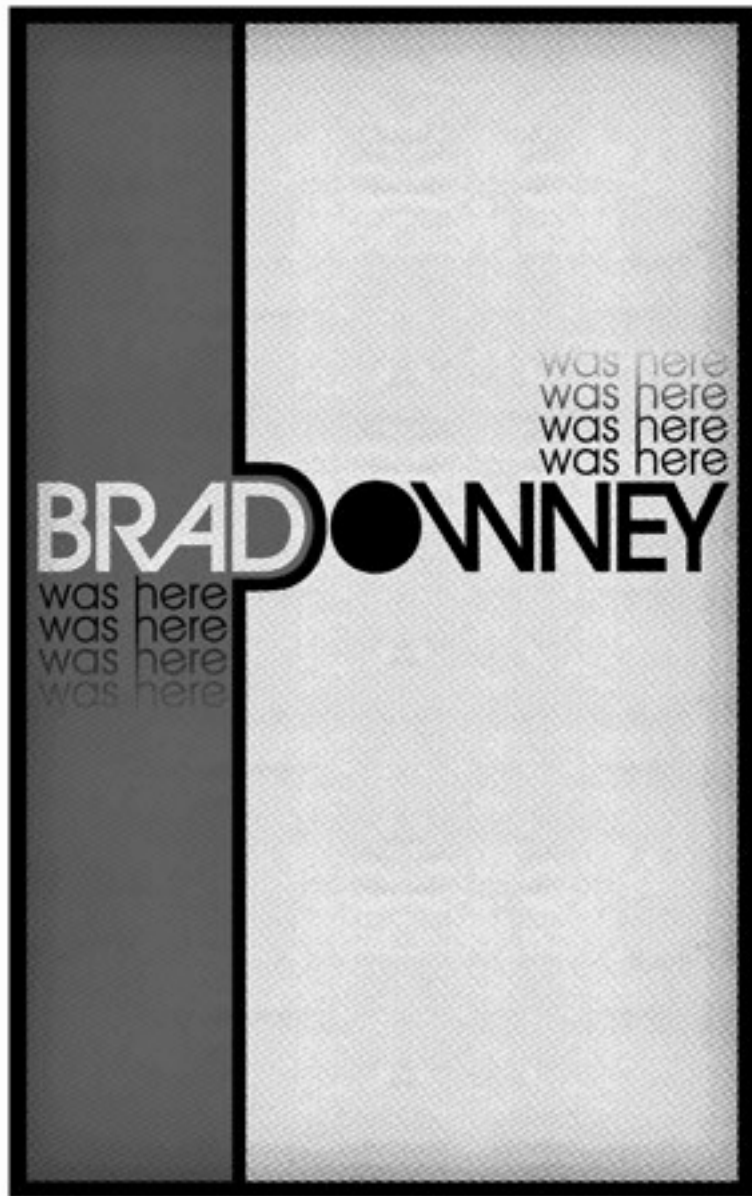
HIER DEIN POTRAIT,
2010,
colour photograph,
13,3 x 8,71 cm



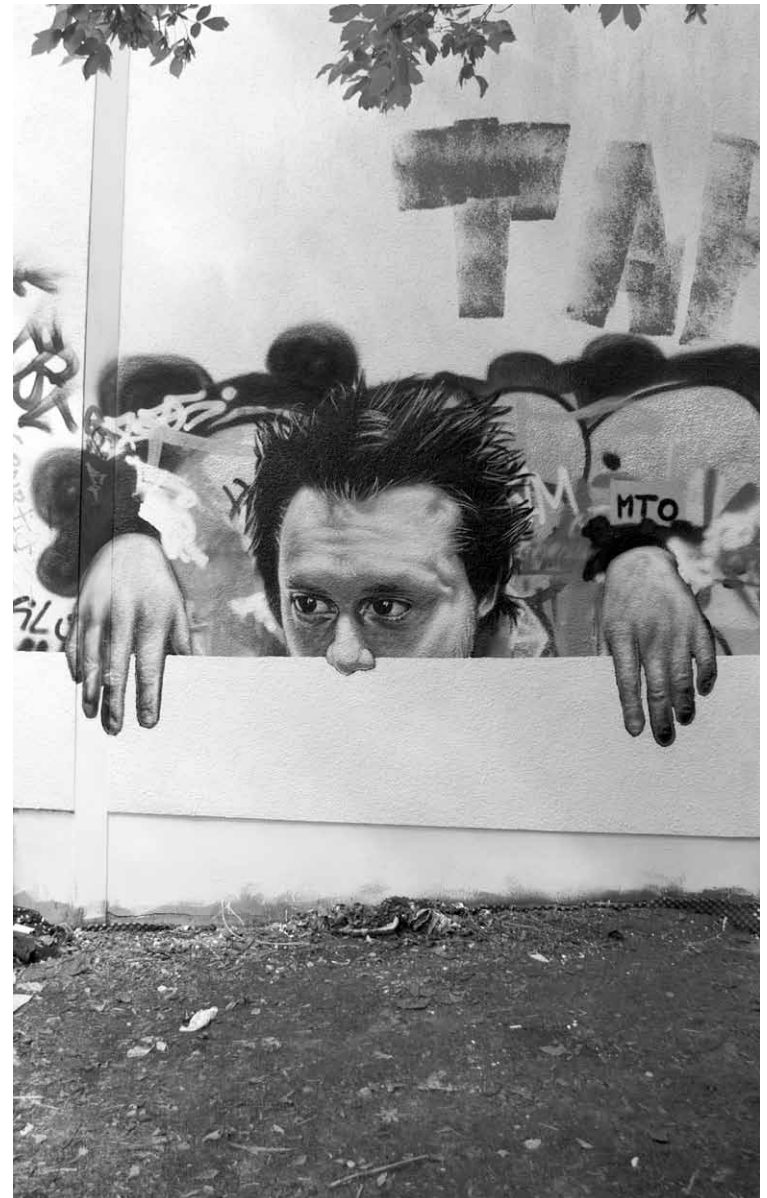
DANIEL DANGER,
GEORGE LUCAS DOWNEY,
2009,
pen on paper,
15 x 10 cm



VIKTOR VAUTHIER,
AN HONEST THIEF,
2009,
colour photograph,
18,9 x 28,2 cm



ZACHARY STOUT,
BRAD DOWNEY WAS HERE,
 2008,
 graphic,
 536 x 800 px



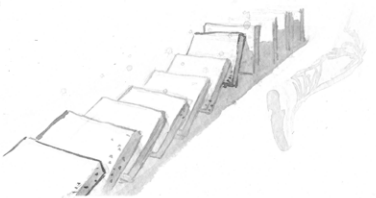
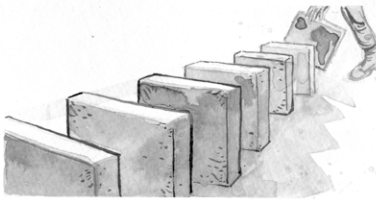
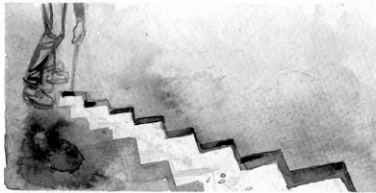
MTO
 (contains traces of **BRAD DOWNEY**),
BERLIN STREET-FIGHTERS GRAFFITI CONTENT,
 2011,
 sparypaint and enamel paint on wall,
 210 x 250 cm



RUSKIG,
SILVER FACE,
 2009,
 spraypaint on wall,
 190 x 160 cm




SWOON,
DARIUS AND DOWNEY,
 2005,
 paper,
 200 x 150 cm



RONALD WIMBERLY,

BRAD IN ACTION,

2009,
ink on paper,
29,7 x 42 cm


Staatsanwaltschaft Münster

Staatsanwaltschaft Münster, 48135 Münster

Herrn
Bradley Downey
10 Astibl Hemes Köstentake
Talosstr. 9
4. Etage
10997 Berlin Friedrichshain -
Kreuzberg

48135 Münster
Postfach: 59 21
Telefon:
(0251) 494 - 1
Durchwahl:
(0251) 494 - 406
Telefax:
(0251) 494 - 555
Geschäfts - Nr.:
62 Js 9450/07 A
(- Bitte bei allen Schreiben angeben -)
Datum: 12.10.2007

Betr.:
Ermittlungsverfahren
gegen Sie
Tatvorwurf:
Gemeinschädliche Sachbeschädigung

Sehr geehrter Herr Downey,

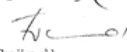
das Ermittlungsverfahren habe ich gemäß § 153 Absatz 1 der Strafprozeßordnung eingestellt.


Im Wiederholungsfall können Sie nicht mit einer erneuten Einstellung rechnen.

Die sichergestellten Tatwerkzeuge und das zerbrochene Skateboard werden vernichtet.
Die Sonyvideokassette wird Ihnen zurückgesandt.

Hochachtungsvoll

Mietze
Amtsanwältin

Beglaubigt

(Frönd)
Justizhauptsekretärin



Hausadresse / Lieferanschrift / Nachbriefkasten: Gerichtsstraße 6, 48149 Münster
Sprechzeiten: 8.30 - 12.30 Uhr (Mo - Fr), 14.00 - 15.00 Uhr (Mo)
Verkehrsbindung: Buslinien 11, 12, 13 (Hbf Bussteige B1, C1) bis Haltestelle Landgericht
Bankverbindung: Gerichtskasse Münster, Deutsche Bundesbank Filiale Dortmund (BLZ: 440 000 00) Konto-Nr.: 400 015 10,
BIC: MARKDEF1440, IBAN: DE10 4400 0000 0040 0015 10

MIETZE & FRÖND,
PROPERTY DAMAGE

(GEMEINSCHAFTLICHE SACHBESCHÄDIGUNG),

2007,
official documentation,
21 x 29,7 cm

Ich liege im Gras und habe das Gesicht fest gegen den Boden gedrückt. Dort, wo wir immer schaukeln, ist nur noch vertrocknete, aufgebrochene Erde übrig, aber hier ist noch ein Rest weiches, grünes, langes Gras, und es ist kühl, während auf der anderen Seite die Sonne auf meine Wange brennt. Ich spüre meine Sommersprossen wachsen, wie Ameisen werden sie immer mehr, aber dort, wo meine ersten Schamhaare wachsen, dort werden sie nicht sein, und ich weiß, dass nach diesem Sommer alles anders sein wird und ich ein Mädchen haben werde, und während ich so an Schamhaare und Mädchen denke und das lange Gras, diese einzelnen Büscheln, ansehe, kriege ich eine Erektion und deswegen drücke ich mich noch fester gegen die Erde. Von der Ferne höre ich Stimmen und sie rufen meinen Namen, aber ich kann mich nicht rühren, nicht, weil ich mich verstecken will, sondern weil ich mich nicht bewegen kann wenn die Sonne so auf mich runter brennt und weil ich hier so liegen bleiben will, für immer.

Aber die Stimme kommt näher und jetzt setzt sich meine kleine Schwester vor mich ins Gras und sie sagt, Brad, alle warten, und ich rühre mich nicht und stelle mich tot, und durch die geschlossenen Augen schimmert die Sonne rötlich. Und schon streckt sie ihre kleinen rundlichen Finger aus und versucht, sie mir in die Nase zu stecken. Jetzt fahre ich hoch, packe sie und schlinge meine Füße um sie und kneife sie mit den Zehen, ich hab da so einen Trick drauf, und sie versucht zu entkommen, aber ich lasse sie nicht los, und dann schafft sie es, sich los zu reißen und ins Haus zu laufen, also schnappe ich mir mein Skateboard und zische ab, aber ich will nicht in den Keller zu einem Kumpel fahren und was rauchen, also fahre ich einfach die Straße entlang, es ist niemand unterwegs, der Asphalt ist weich, das merke ich, und ich mag es so, einfach geradeaus, weiter und weiter, und ich denke mir, dass ich morgen schon ganz woanders sein werde, aber dass die Straßen wahrscheinlich genauso aussehen werden

dort, und ich weiß nicht warum, aber irgendwas muss da auf dem Boden gelegen haben, auf alle Fälle sehe ich noch den grauen Beton auf mich zukommen, und schon spür ich den kurzen Schmerz, als sich ein paar Kieselsteine in meine Handflächen bohren.

Und als ich hochschaue steht sie vor mir, und ich sehe zuerst ihre braunen Zehen in den Gummisandalen, sie sind mit leichten grauen Staub bedeckt und das sie am Knie eine Narbe hat. Und dann hat sie noch braune Haare, die an den Seiten nicht in den Zopf passen und wegstehen und sie trägt keinen BH unter dem Shirt, aber sie braucht auch noch keinen, sag ich mal. Ich hab sie schon oft gesehen in der Schule, aber nie mit ihr gesprochen, ich muss den Sommer echt mal an meiner Taktik bei Mädchen feilen, wenn ich das noch nicht erwähnt habe. Und jetzt also steht sie vor mir.

-Alles okay?

-Yeah, klar.

-Du fährst heut?

-Ja.

-Muss schön sein.

-Hm.

Wir sehen uns zum ersten Mal richtig nah an und dann dreht sie sich um und geht zurück zu ihrer Veranda und setzt sich auf den Boden und kickt Kieselsteine von sich, und ich überlege, ob ich sagen soll, dass es wirklich wehtut und ob ich ein Wasser haben kann und ob sie wohl eine Tinktur in ihrem Schrank haben, um die Wunde an der Hand zu reinigen und ob sie mir dann ihr Zimmer zeigen will und ich sehe, ob sie Poster von New Kids on the Block an der Wand hat, damit ich sie dann nicht mehr mag und es leichter ist und ob ich ihr dann zeigen soll, dass ich jetzt Schamhaare habe seit Sommeranfang, aber dann denke ich mir wozu und steige wieder auf mein Skateboard und fahre zurück, und jetzt weiß ich was ich tun werde, also gehe ich noch in den Garten und reiße ein Büschel Gras aus und tu es in die Folie von einem Kaugummipapier und rolle es zu einer festen Kugel zusammen und dann gehe ich rein.

Und da stehen sie alle schon, Pa und Ma und meine Schwestern und jeder hat schon seine Sache in das Loch in der Wand gesteckt, nur ich nicht, ich sehe eine kleine Puppe und eine Zigarrenkiste und eine mexikanische Ansteckblume und ein Notizheft, und jetzt bin wohl ich dran, also stecke ich das zusammengeknüllte Gras in der Folie hinein. Meine kleine Schwester heult auf und beschwert sich, es muss etwas wichtiges für einen sein und ich bin wieder der Einzige und tue nur ein zerknülltes Kaugummipapier rein, aber Pa hat jetzt keine Lust auf Streit und er beginnt, das Loch wieder zu zumachen mit Spachtelmasse, und er sagt, so bleibt irgendwas, auch wenn man es nicht sehen kann, und dann stehen wir herum und da höre ich schon Umzugswagen vorfahren.



K
30. MAI 2009

KATHARINA KULENKAMPFF,

BRAD EATING,
2009,
pen on paper,
16 x 21.5 cm



BARNABY HOSKING,

BRAD GUITAR MURPHY,
2009,
pencil on paper,
21 x 13 cm



EVAN ROTH, (GRAFFITI RESEARCH LAB),

BRAD DOWNEY WAS HERE,

2009,
digital print,
50,3 x 65 cm



BRIAN ROSS,

MAY GOD HAVE MERCY UPON HIS SOUL,

2009,
marker on paper,
21 x 29,7 cm



TOD SEELIE,
SQUINT,
2001,
colour photograph,
21,2 x 14,9 cm



ED ZIPCO,
SHAKE FACE NUMBER TWO,
2006,
colour photograph,
123,6 x 82,4 cm

PETER REILING,

PORTRAIT TO BRAD DOWNEY,

2009,

laserprint on paper,

14,0 x 22,5 cm

Boooooooooom!!!!
Raid the streets
Aching for meaning
Dialectical truths

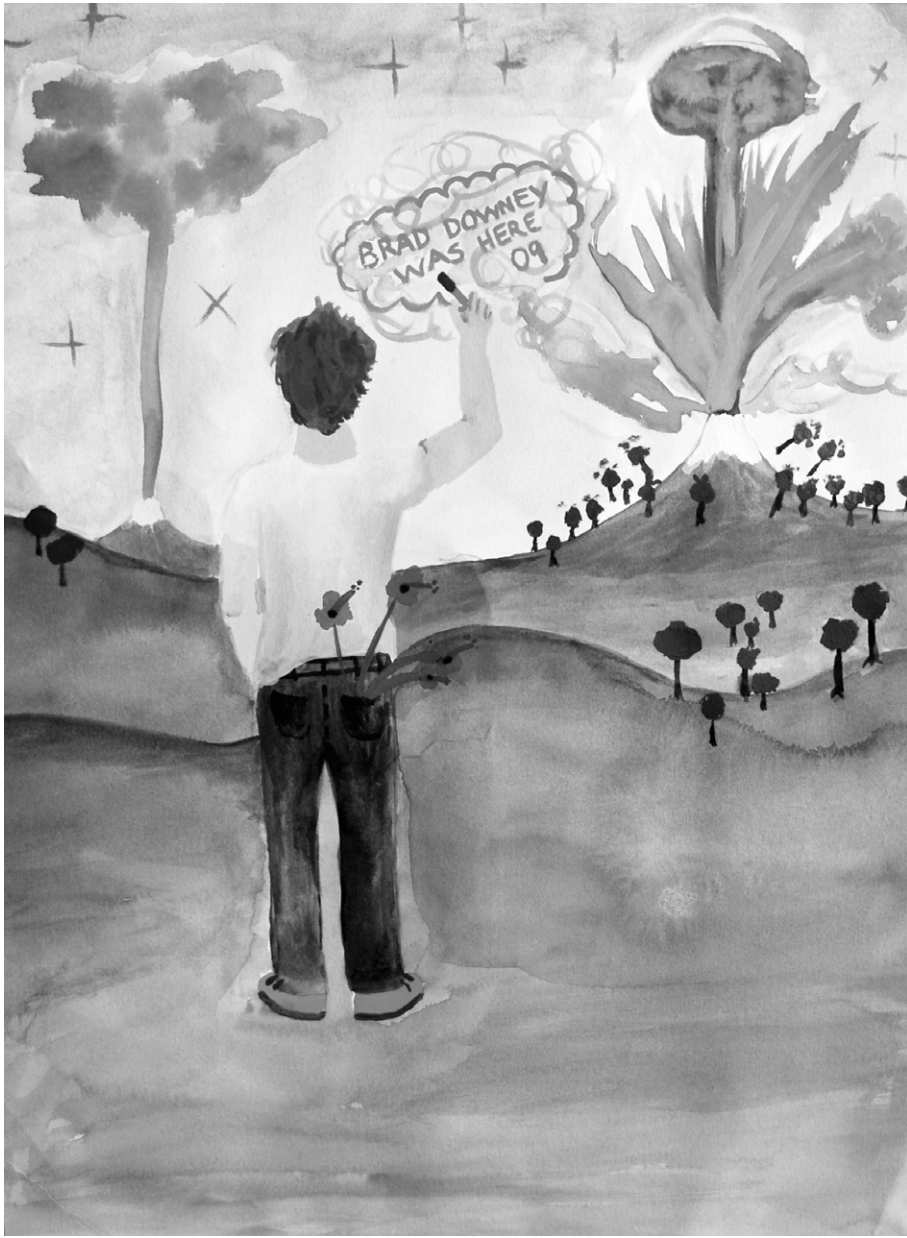
Divvy the bricks
Oppose the site
Where you at
Now Nigger? Still
Eatin
Y'awa sheeit?

Bend the streets
Raise the gutters. Play me that
Axiomatic beat; curve a
Dry tongue stutter

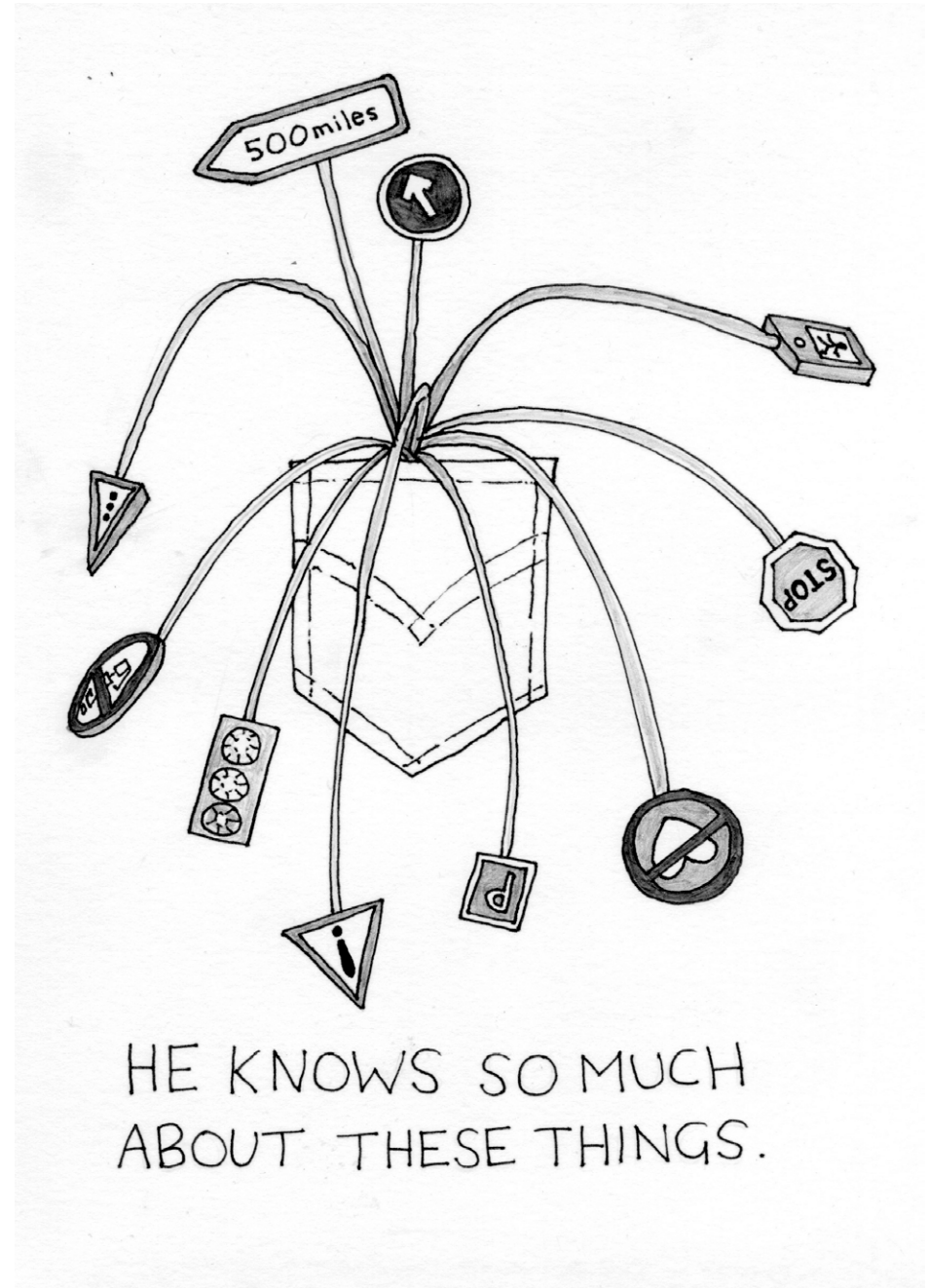
Dig me a hole
Open it up
Wit y'awa shoe; show me a sign that's
New. Ha!
Everybody in da house say
Yo!!!!

Bring all the crews
Ranting nobodys' news
Aid and abet
Don't do no downtime

Down in dem alleys
Over dem heads
When
Night
Envelopes the sun
You aint seen no Downey now; have ya boy?



LISA TROPPIA,
I NEED TO STOP, 2009,
 watercolour on paper,
 28 x 38 cm



JO MUIR,
THE BOY WITH THE FLOWERS IN HIS BACK POCKET,
 2009,
 pen and pencil on paper,
 15 x 21 cm



RAYMOND PETTIBON,

I NEED TO STOP,
2010,
pen on paper,
18,8 x 23 cm



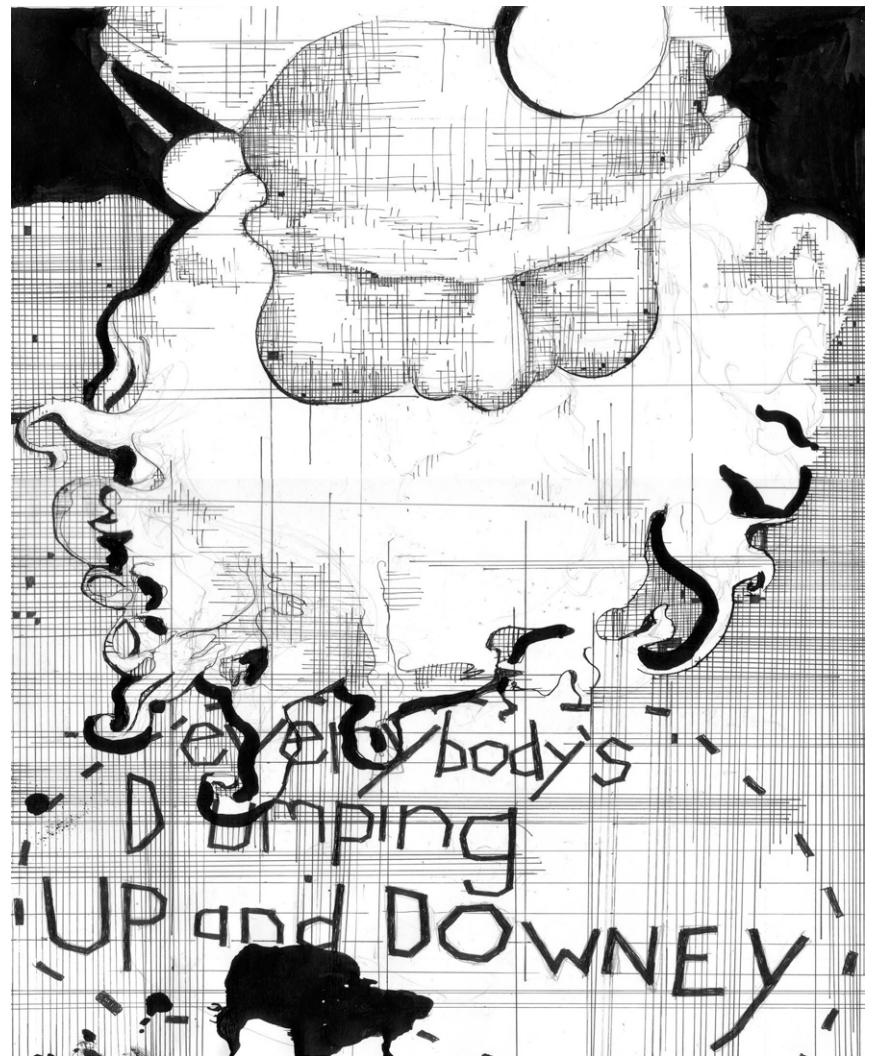
POLINA SOLOVEICHIK,

BRAD,
2010,
pen on paper,
18 x 24 cm



COLLEEN ROCHETTE

FASTER THAN A CHEETAH (HOT FOR SPOTS),
2009,
pen and ink on paper
27,3 x 44,4 cm



TAHU DEANS,

SANTA BRAD IN MIAMI,
2009,
ink on paper,
29,7 x 42 cm



MATT MURPHY,
I'M SEEING DOUBLE,
2008,
watercolour on paper,
29.5 x 38 cm

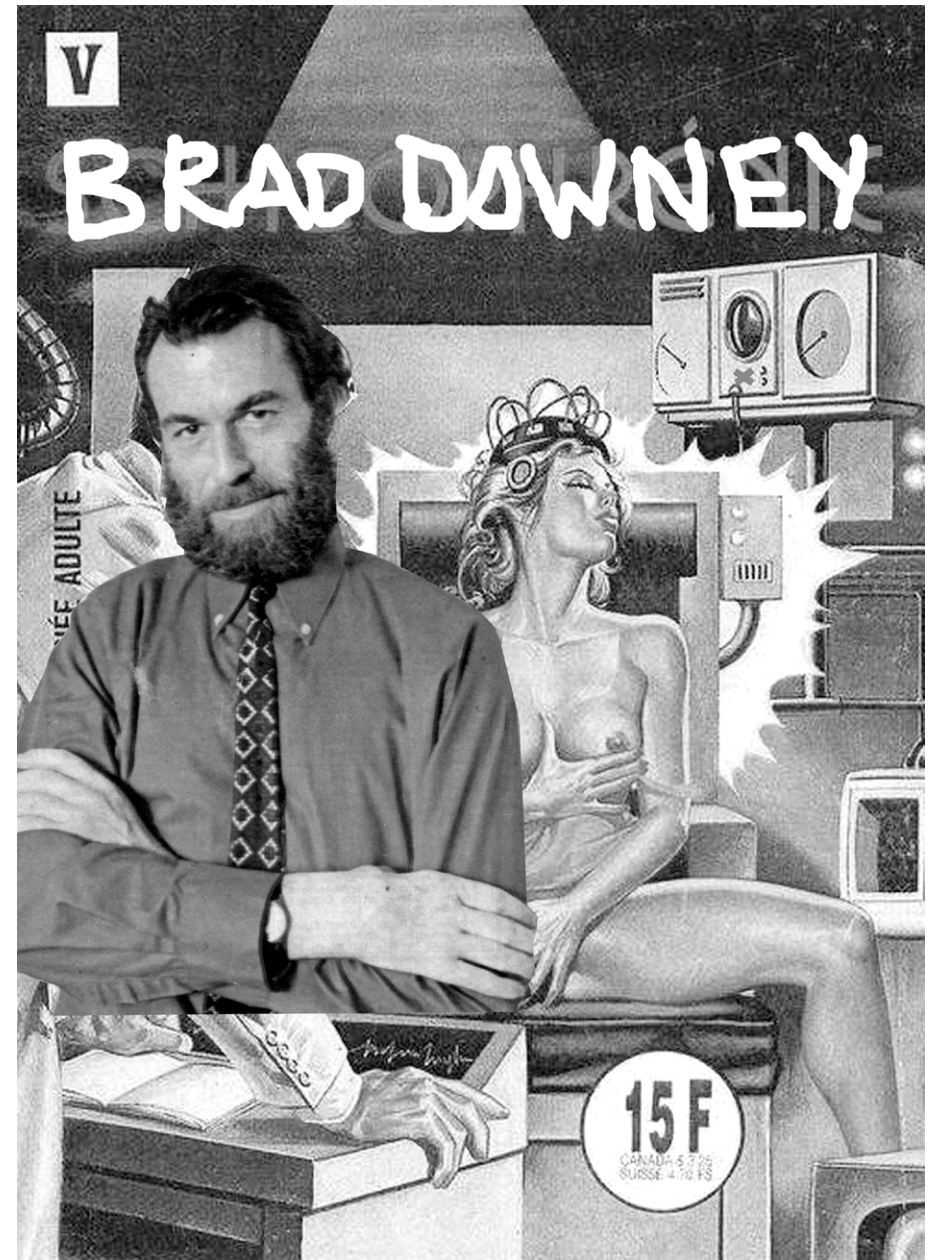


ERIK TIDEMANN,
MOOSE FACE,
2004,
colour photograph,
17 x 22,6 cm



CHRISTIAN NILSEN,

BERLIN BRAD,
2010,
colour photograph,
19 x 27,5 cm



OX,

A KIND OF PORTRAIT,
2010,
collage,
19 x 27,5 cm



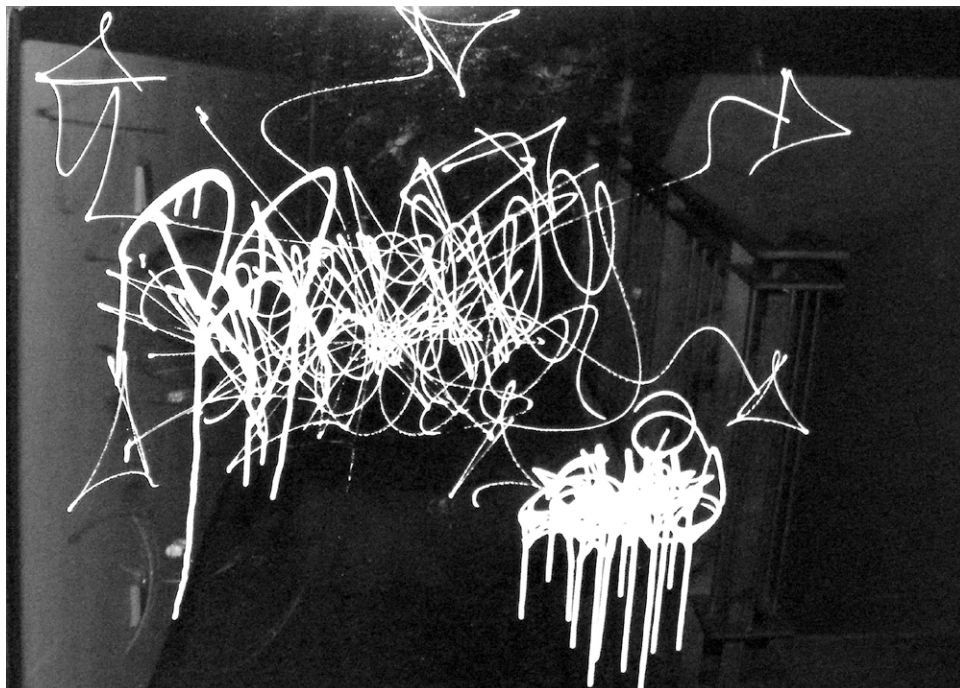
IMAGINE THAT LOOKS
LIKE BRAD
DOWNEY

JACQUES FLORET MAYBE,

MAYBE,
2011,
pen on paper,
16 x 22 cm

THE LONDON POLICE,

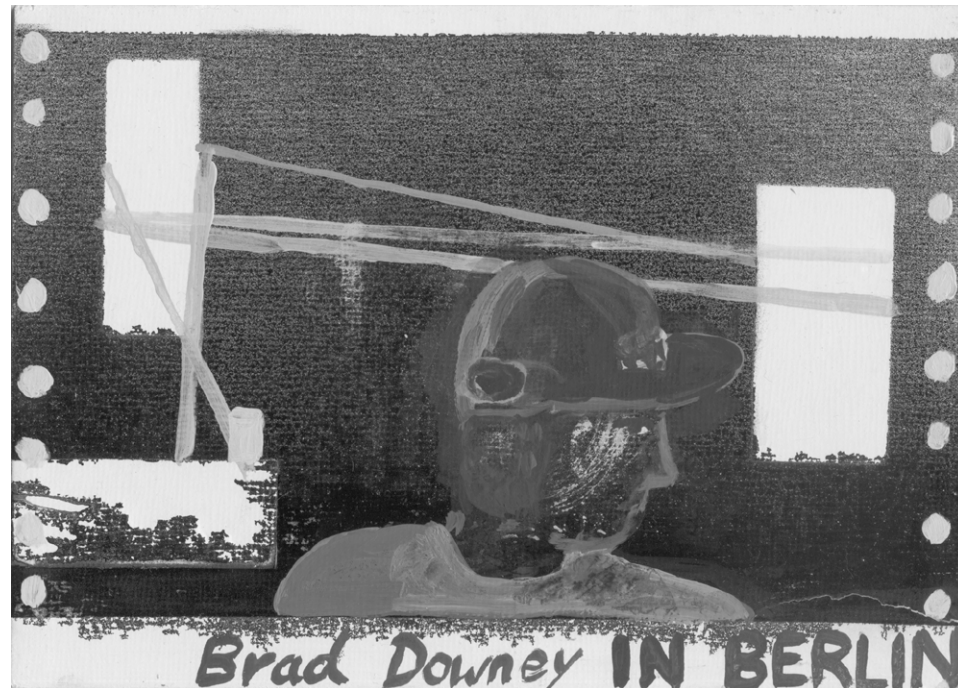
IMAGINE,
2009,
pen on carbon copy paper,
15 x 10 cm



AKIM,

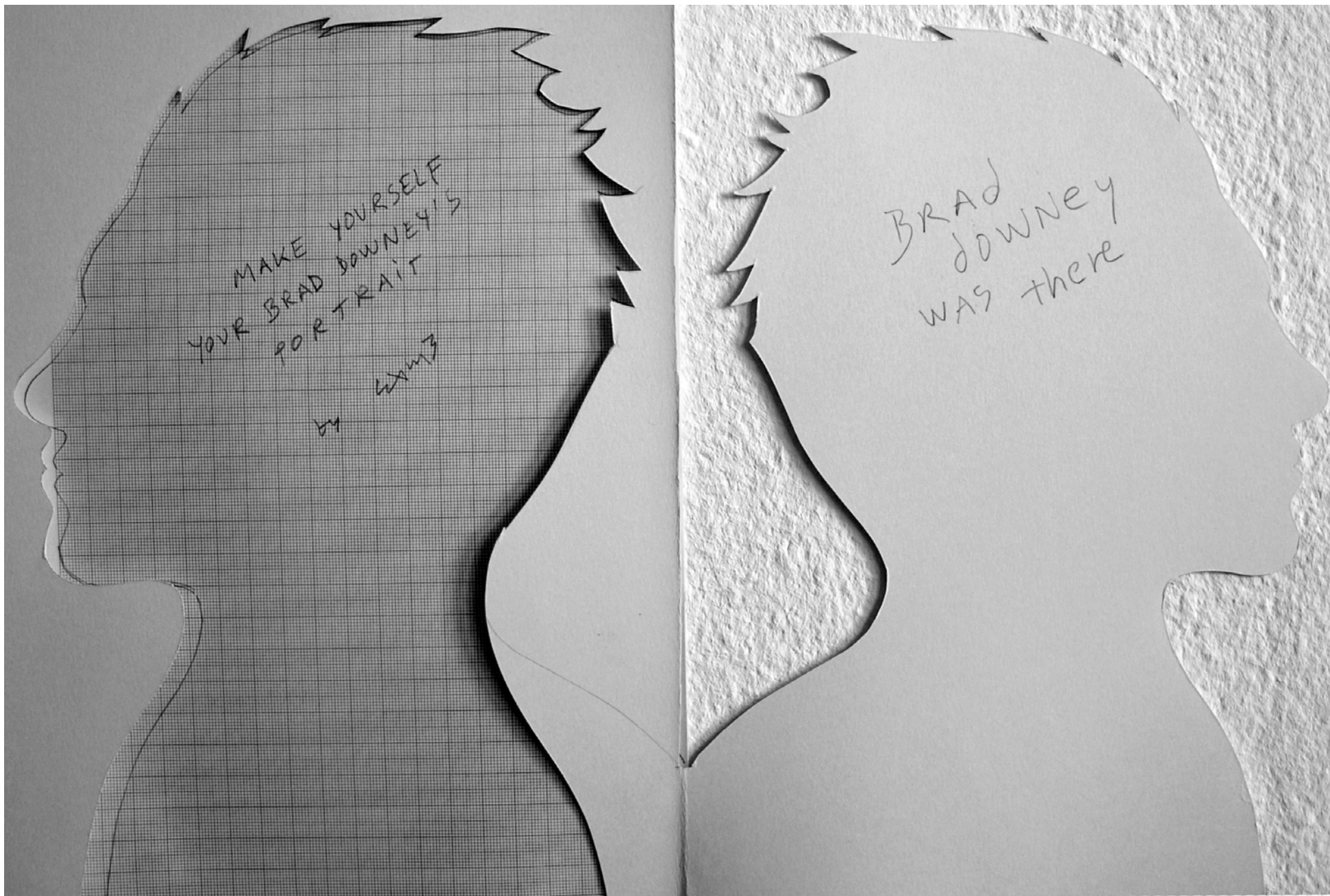
BRAD DOWNEY

2009,
krink on door-window,
90 x 105 cm



PHOEBE UNWIN,

BRAD DOWNEY IN BERLIN, 2009,
oil on canvas board,
18 x 13cm



SAM 3,

MAKE YOUR OWN BRAD DOWNEY,

2009,

pencil on graph paper and cardboard,

41cm x 32cm



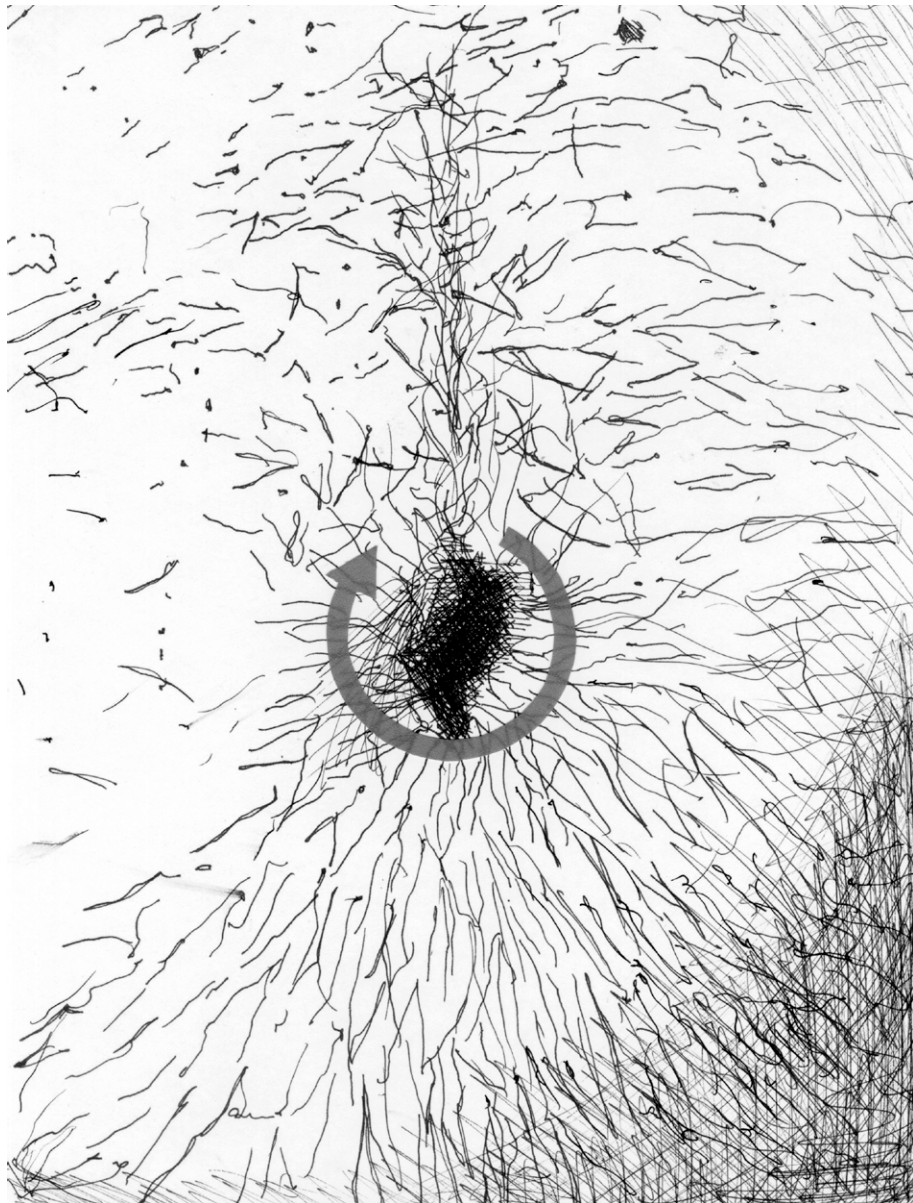
ALEXANDRE FARTO A.K.A. VHILS

PORTRAIT OF BRAD DOWNEY,
2011,
wall, acrylic,
516 x 272 cm



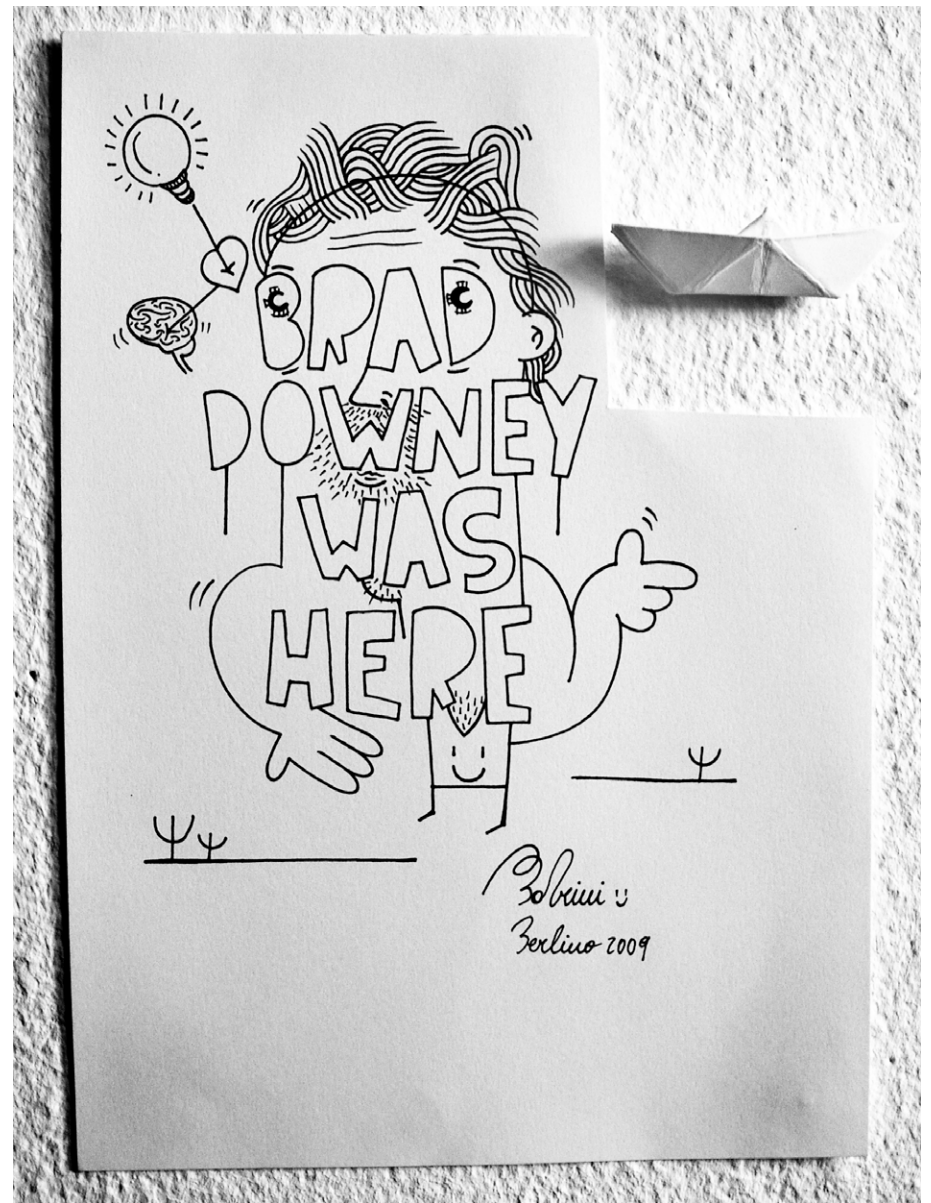
BEN WOLF

DEPRESSED,
2009,
acrylic, charcoal on vellum,
21cm x 35 cm



THE WA,

THE CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE OR LACTOSE TROUBLE,
2009,
pen and vinyl on paper,
21cm x 29,7



STEFANO PEDRINI,

BRAD'S ARK,
2009,
pen on paper and origami,
21 x 29,7 cm



CHUCK TEAL,
TIMBERLANDS,
1997,
ink on paper,
45,72 x 60,96 cm



ATHIER,
IT'S NOT ADAM,
2011,
marker on napkin,
25 x 30 cm



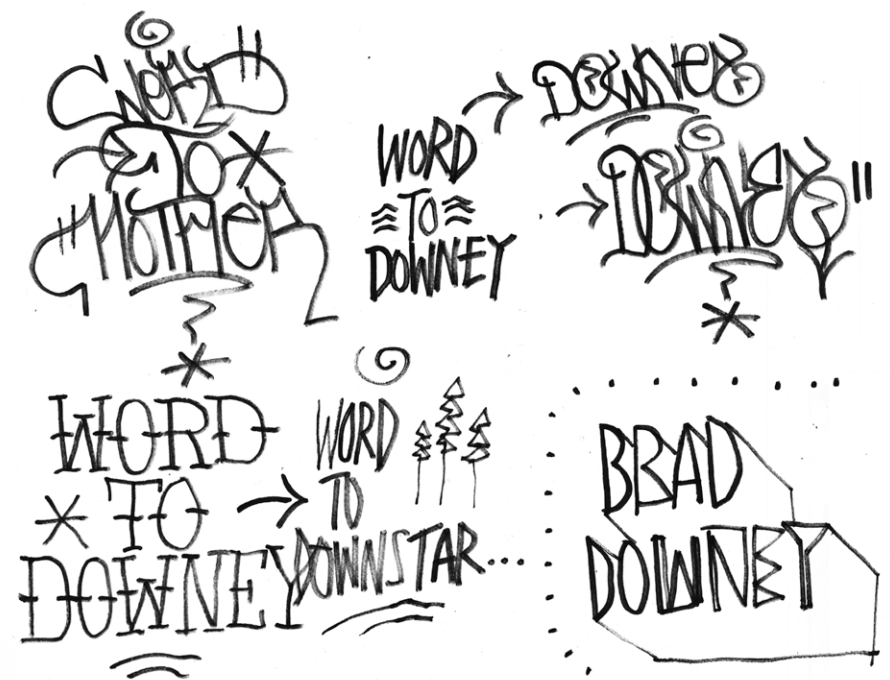
CHRISTIAN EISENBERGER,

BRAD,
2010,
pantyhose teddybear, tape, 5 dollars, pen on paper,
white wine in photograph
dimensions variable



CHRISTIAN EISENBERGER,

BRAD,
2010,
marker on paper in photograph,
dimensions variable



SWOON,

BRAD READING HEMINGWAY,

2004,

pen on paper,

14.5 x 10 cm

WORD TO MOTHER,

WORD TO DOWNNEY,

2009,

marker on paper,

21 x 29,7 cm



[No Subject]

Sunday, May 31, 2009 5:16 AM

From: "m pichler" <pichler13@yahoo.com>
To: "brad downey" <bigtimebrad@gmail.com>

THIS IS A PORTRAIT OF BRAD DOWNEY IF I SAY SO



brad downey <bigtimebrad@gmail.com>

(no subject)

m pichler <pichler13@yahoo.com>
To: bigtimebrad@gmail.com

Thu, Feb 18, 2010 at 10:42 PM

THIS IS A PORTRAIT OF BRAD DOWNEY IF IT SAYS SO

MICALIS PICHLER,
PORTRAITS OF BRAD DOWNEY,
2009 / 2010
email correspondences, virtual prints,
21 x 29,7 cm each



JULIA TINGULSTAD,

VOLCANO,
2006,
digital colour photograph,
2592 x 1944 px



CHRISTOPH SCHLINGENSIEFEL,

SKY WRITING,
2010,
marker on colour photograph,
15 x 10,5 cm



CHAOS,
BRAD DOWNEY,
 2008,
 pen on paper,
 32 x 48 cm



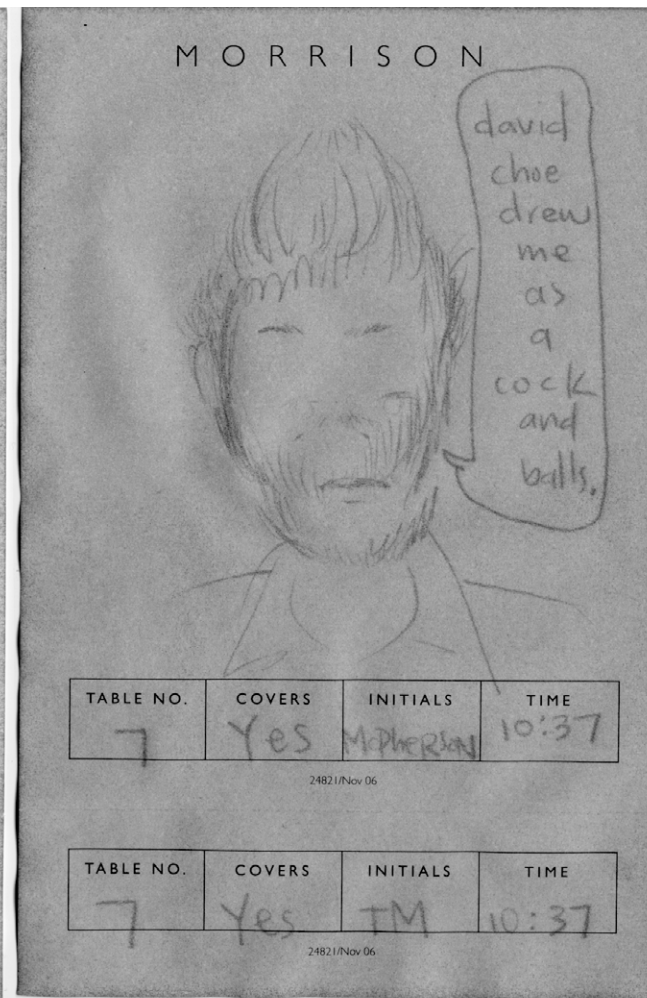
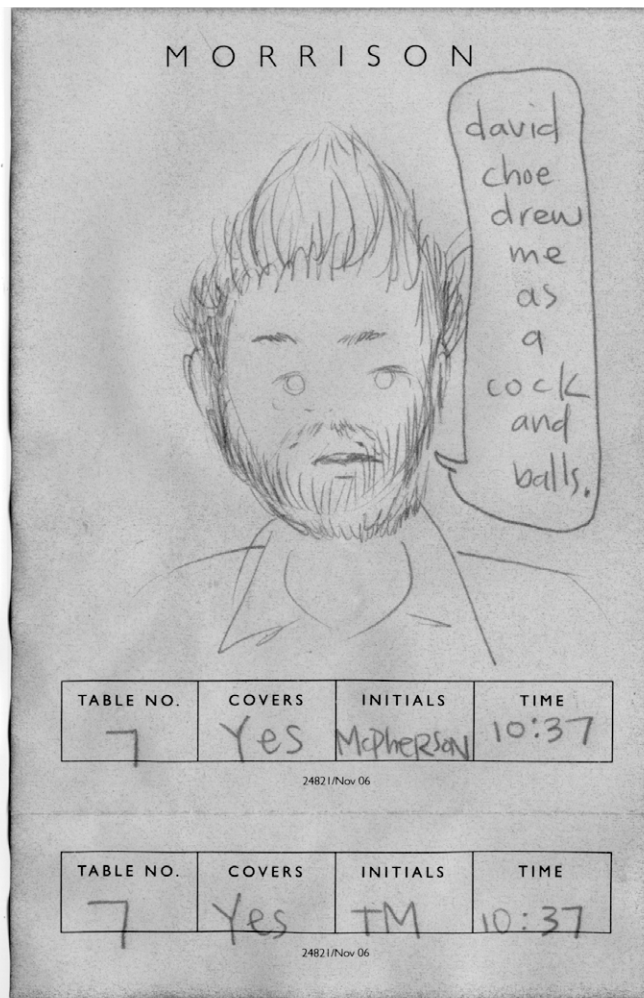
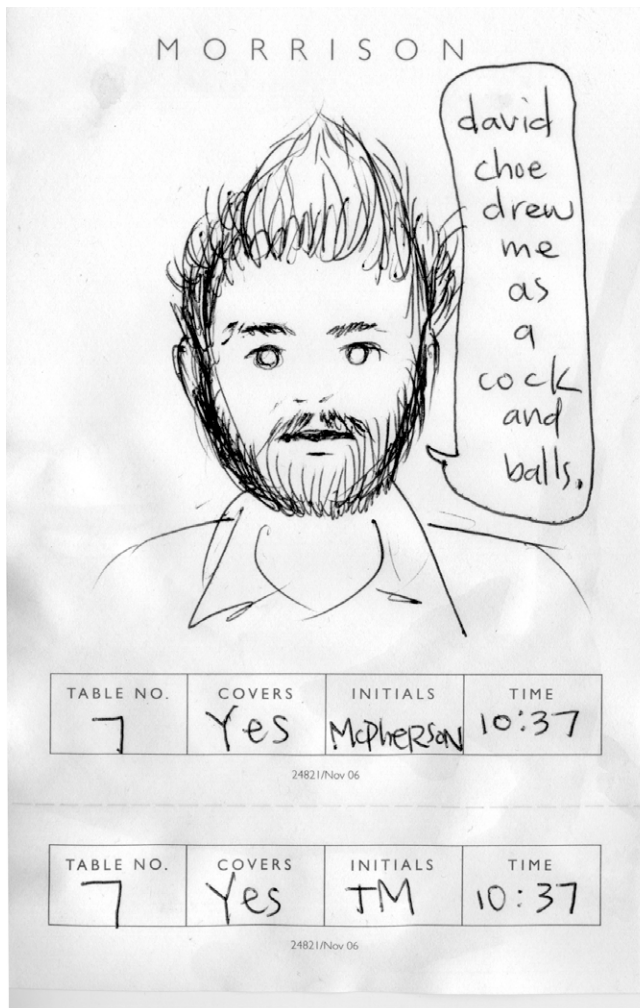
CHRISTIAN EISENBERGER,
BRAD,
 2010,
 One dollar bill, price tag plastic, invitation card
 22 X 14,5 cm



LOUISE DRUBIGNY,
BRAD DOWNEY'S UNIFORM,
2008,
pen on paper,
21 x 29,7 cm



LISA TROPPIA,
BRADLEY,
2008,
pencil on paper,
21 x 29,7 cm



TARA MCPHERSON,

"DAVID CHOE DREW ME AS A COCK AND BALLS",

2009,

pen on carbon copy paper,
15 x 10 cm each



DAVID CHOE & BRAD DOWNEY

CHOE WUZ HERE,

2010, 2007

grease-marker and sticker on Brad Downey sculpture,
variable dimensions

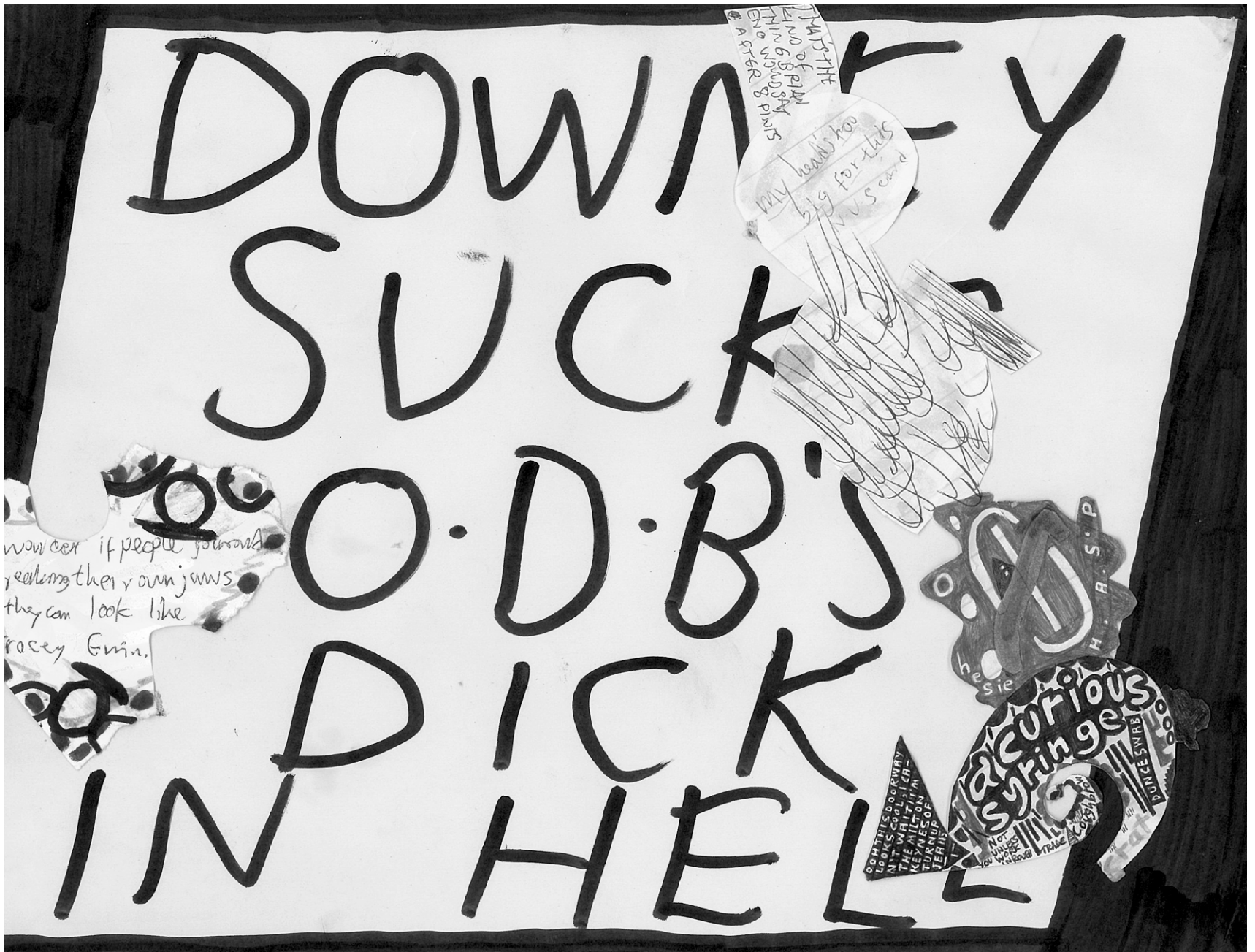


DAVID CHOE

DICKHEAD,

2009,

marker on graph paper,
21 x 29,7 cm



STEVEN LOWERY,
*DOWNY SUCKS OL'DIRTY
BASTARD'S DICK IN HELL,*
2005,
collage on paper,
21 x 29,7 cm



R.W.O. STONE,
BRADY AS QUERELLE,
(THE VANITY PROJECT ENDS HERE),
2009,
waterco lour on paper,
11 x 15 cm,



ERIK TIDEMANN,

BRAD SUMMONING BEELZEBUB,
2009,
oil on canvas,
33 x 42 cm

VINCENT MAIGLER,

DYING ON THE SHITTER IS THE NEW BLACK,
2009,
digital photo collage,
21 x 29,7 cm

REGISTER

Charlie Ahearn, pg. 72
Akay, pg. 38
Akim, pg. 114
Asbestos, pg. 47
Athier, pg. 123
*Banksy, pg. 45
Sir. Peter Blake, pg. 33
Boxi, pg. 15
Thomas Bratzke, pg. 14
Stefan Bresinski (book),
Nicholas Brown, pg. 28
CHAOS, pg. 132
Dave The Chimp, pg. 37
David Choe, pg. 138-139
Commonwealth of Kentucky, pg. 71
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Tahu Deans, pg. 107
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Robert Greenwood, pg. 41
Know Hope, pg. 44
Bill Hayden, pg. 78
Logan Hicks, pg. 22
Honet, pg. 31

Horfe, pg. 30
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additional undocumented contributions
lost by Brad
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