

Yves Klein and Hysterical Marks of Authority

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*As I lay stretched upon the beach of Nice, I
began to feel hatred for birds which flew back
and forth across my blue sky, cloudless sky,
because they tried to bore holes in my greatest
and most beautiful work.¹*

*And always the loud angry crowd
Very angry and very loud
Law is We,
And always the soft idiot softly Me.²*

Klein's Prayer to the Void

In 1961 Klein anonymously deposited an ex-voto at the Convent of Santa Rita in Cascia, Italy. It was a devotion to aid his new commission for the Gelsenkirchen Opera House, Germany. The offering took the form of a small see-through plastic box containing five compartments: one filled with blue pigment, one with pink pigment, one with gold leaf, and the other two with the prayer text and three gold bars from his sale of the Void.³ This object is clearly animated by belief. The private prayer that Klein wrote asks for success in his new commission, protection from enemies, and the longevity of his art, "that I may live in my works and that they may become ever more beautiful."⁴ The ex-voto was not created as an artwork and was

found by chance in 1980.⁵ Alternatively, it can be seen as a work of art by Yves Klein, or a small fetish.⁶ It does reference his works and each compartment is given a title – “Blue,” “Pink” and “Gold” – as if referencing larger monotonies. The object can of course be both art and religion, depending on what discourse underpins the reading. If the work “functions” as a prayer, however, it cannot be an artwork; if it is an artwork it cannot be a prayer. In an inversion of the regular reading of Klein’s work as being merely art, and not “true” belief, I choose not to italicise the term *ex-voto*, to treat it as a socially embedded act of faith rather than another artwork. Klein’s work helps us look at how, even in modernity, irrational belief is an important factor in our society from art to the law.

This approach relies on a recent turn in visual studies to treat images and sculptural artefacts as social agents, that is, as if they had social and psychological personhood. The two major proponents of this concept are the anthropologist Alfred Gell and the visual theorist W J T Mitchell.⁷ The strategy does not rely on any preconceived notion of the definition of “art” or “artwork”. It allows us, among other things, to look past Eurocentric notions of the aesthetic object (for example an Indigenous eel trap) and to expand the scope of visual studies into images removed from “art” (for example, dolls, stamps or posters). The way people react to images approximates how we respond to people: some images we love, some seduce us, some command us and some are friends to us. Mitchell, in a provocative chapter, suggests categorizing images loosely based on Lacan’s triad of the symbolic, real and the imaginary that Mitchell sees in the idol, the fetish and the totem, respectively.⁸

Concurrent to this strain of scholarship is a growing interest within Critical Legal Studies in the commanding, authorial image of the law.⁹ Lacan also underpins this scholarship, where the law is equated with the Lacanian big Other, or the “god-like” figure of the symbolic order; the big Other is the symbolic order subjectivised. Borrowing from Althusser, the (psychological) subject becomes a social or legal subject only through their “interpellation” by the law and its symbolic order.¹⁰ For these writers too, what haunts the law and the authority of the symbolic order is a gap which can be summarized as the latent divine authority of medieval jurisprudence, the sovereign power. This criticism of positivist law has been a hallmark of post-structuralist jurisprudence, where sovereignty is seen as a way of masking or covering this lack in the law. Derrida has called this lack the mythic founding authority of the law; Walter Benjamin described it as founding violence; and Žižek, through a Lacanian lens, has called it the Symbolic Real.¹¹ This lack within the symbolic order also coincides with the inability of the symbolic order to fully account for the individual subject; as a correc-

tive to Althusser, there is always something in the subject (the Real) that resists interpellation. What is apparent in Klein's work is that he "encircles" the symbolic Real that founds our belief by continually playing with our rituals and fictions within the makeup of society's laws and orders; he hints at the unsymbolisable void by symbolising its frame. The art world's consummate showman mined the positivist order of the law for its theatrical fictions. This approach to play creates a visual analysis of the law's marks of authority and its structural underpinning. The power of the legal image is founded on belief. By exploring belief, Klein shows that the big Other is itself a phoney and that it is only by believing in the big Other that it exists at all.

The position from which Klein questions the law is that of the hysteric. In a Lacanian sense, the hysteric is a subject that has not been successfully interpellated. Hysterical questioning is critical of power ("Why have you done this? This is not just!"), but beneath it all is a provocation to the father figure to appear and to interpellate *more successfully*. Far from the Promethean discourse that usually surrounds Klein's egotistical stunts, he is instead calling out for the leader or sovereign to reassert itself. This is when our visual theory methodology returns: if the big Other "commands" through effigies, the hysterical subject also calls for the visual representations of the sovereign to show itself. The framing devices that Klein uses – contracts, stamps, Republican Guards, ambassadorial letters etc. – have been neglected as merely subsidiary to his practice. They supplement an important lack for Klein, however, which is the inconsistency of the big Other: a major theme in the artist's oeuvre. In his hysteria, Klein inadvertently reached out for images of the sovereign wherever he could find them. Like the *ex-voto*, he has produced facsimile icons of the law in order to call the sovereign to appear. Of course the sovereign never does appear and can only be noted as an absence. It is at this point of invisibility, dare I say the void, that the quality of play in Klein's work becomes so important. By focusing on the supplementary framing of Klein's art, the meaning is shown never to fully crystallise as a positivist truth.

In Klein there is no mere appropriation; the equivalence of simulacra is questioned and the opposition between "real" and the "official" is crucial. In an effort to bring art and life together, he demands that the "artwork" be truly authorised/recognised by officialdom. In his hysterical way he forces the sovereign to recognise him and "authorise" his art. He is forcing the sovereign to bless and to create effigies. Instead of merely asking the hysterical question, then – "Who am I for you? When will you grant me investiture?" – what Klein wants to know is, "What aesthetic form will this ritual take? Where is my effigy?"

Klein Framed by the Capitalist Spectacle

The paradoxical logic of Klein's work, half faithful, half clown, has troubled his critics. His theatrical framing, the *parerga*, is seen as fraudulent and duplicitous by some, but it is this uncertainty that is Klein's insight into the law. Klein represents a subject who reacts to the inconsistency within the symbolic order; in focusing on the void he shows that the big Other never did exist, that it always is a gap, a symbolic real. The general reception of Klein's clowning regards it cynically. Thierry De Duve and Buchloh see the project of Klein sardonically, from the point of view of his total capitulation to capital and spectacle.¹² Buchloh writes, "The very same strategies that had developed within modernism's project of enlightenment now serve the transformation of the bourgeois public sphere into the sphere of the corporate state, with its appropriate forms of distribution (total commodification) and cultural experience (the spectacle)."¹³ In other words, as the gap between high and low was breaking down, and as the nature of bourgeois culture was homogenising, Klein returned with a highly ritualistic, cult "transcendental negation." De Duve also sees Klein's work merely as a symptom of late capital.¹⁴ In the endnote to his article, de Duve is at his most positive:

Perhaps it took Klein's false devoutness and real economism to demonstrate that the judgment by which something is called art (or good art, or significant art) has no more – and no less – to do with values than it had to do with piety and devotion in the days when the field of aesthetics was congruent with the field of religion.¹⁵

On the whole though, de Duve sees Klein's constant paradoxes and contradictions as not only the tattle of a "mountebank" but also the illustration of the inconsistency of the "kettle argument."¹⁶ In line with Buchloh, de Duve views Klein's work as complicit with the ideology of late capital.

What is suggested by our reading of Lacan, however, is that fictions do indeed anchor society, so that there is no "truth" that lies behind them *per se*. It is not surprising, though, that a Marxist or Situationist viewpoint is scathing of Klein's stunts. Buchloh writes, for example:

The dubious distinction of having claimed a natural phenomenon (the blue chroma pigment, or of the sky) as private property, a brand name, and of legalizing this preposterous pretence by a signature or by quest for a patent, is Yves Klein's. The property claim and the administrative, legalistic approach are a measure both of his mania and of the misery to which the neo-avant-garde would advance in

postwar Paris (and by no means would he be the last in the decrepitude of his art).¹⁷

Pace Buchloh, it is this very sort of legal framing that is most interesting for Critical Legal Studies and worth exploring for a better understanding of the legal “image” in visual studies. Buchloh goes on to call Klein’s rituals “aristocratic antics” made to win over the bourgeoisie. The failure of Buchloh’s approach is that he can never reconcile the two sides of Klein’s production. He cannot see that instead of kowtowing to the establishment, Klein’s work shows the weakness at its core. The legalistic, administrative, arcane, and aristocratic qualities of Klein’s work indicate or pressure the Real at the heart of the symbolic order.

Buchloh negatively identifies the fact that Klein sees capitalism as an overarching power over art.¹⁸ By focusing his attention on the legal, structural framework surrounding the image, Klein is able to make a different kind of aesthetic discovery. It is a discovery not of transcendental absolutes of beauty and truth, nor some truth of a material dialectic. Yve-Alain Bois has positively characterised the play in Klein’s work and called for its reappraisal.¹⁹ Bois calls Klein’s strategy the “true-false dance,” and links Klein directly to clowning.²⁰

Nan Rosenthal lays stress on the circular logic that undermines his beliefs and sees redeeming qualities.²¹ In a later article, Rosenthal speculated on the possibility of publishing Klein’s complete writing, as “such a book would also eliminate the tendency of editors to honour one kind of Klein over another – usually the utopian over the dystopian – when this artist’s strength, and much of his interest for us today, lies in his consistent shuttling between the two.”²² This analysis is astute. The utopian notions of the void, the immaterial and the monochrome have been read in isolation from the stunts because the formal qualities of his works were received first in relation to Greenberg and the United States during the 1960s. Indeed it is his Duchampian stunts and his rebellion against society that feeds Klein’s popularity today. Increased interest in Klein led to a retrospective in 2006 at the Centre Pompidou in Paris and Museum Ludwig in Vienna. A major part of these exhibitions was the reconstruction of projects and “rituals” from Klein’s notes.²³ Bois concludes his essay and draws out the revolutionary aspect of Klein’s “rituals” (here still in a more economic rather than politico-legal sense):

For his stunts were populist means— a bit repugnant, yes, but he might not have had many others at his disposal – by which he was able to fight against the equally pompous but even more hollow spectacle of the high bourgeois culture of his time (more hollow be-

cause it was levelled out by the culture industry while pretending to ignore it) ...Herein lies Klein's relevance today: he shows us how to deflate the spectacle of the culture industry by staging an even greater hoax.²⁴

De Duve too looks at the society of the spectacle. He focuses in part on the ex-voto and draws the conclusion that it is wrong not to take Klein's "clownish theatre" seriously.²⁵ I argue that we should move beyond the Marxist reading of society, whilst borrowing the attention that Bois and de Duve pay to the logic of repeating, playing, and mimicking the trappings of socio-legal structures.

Clowning the Law

Klein's play is neither satiric nor parodic, but rather a free play connected to aesthetic pleasure. Derrida is useful in extending the too-limited ideas of viewing/reading into the realm of play. The response is limitless when the focus is changed to games and the subjects playing them. Derrida writes:

up until the event which I wish to mark out and define, structure-or rather the structurality of structure-although it has always been involved, has always been neutralized or reduced, and this by a process of giving it a center or referring it to a point of presence, a fixed origin. The function of this center was not only to orient, balance, and organize the structure-one cannot in fact conceive of an unorganized structure-but above all to make sure that the organizing principle of the structure would limit what we might call the freeplay of the structure. No doubt that by orienting and organizing the coherence of the system, the center of a structure permits the freeplay of its elements inside the total form. And even today the notion of a structure lacking any center represents the unthinkable itself.²⁶

Following this Derrida particularly looked at the use of repetition as a form of play through a reading of Mallarmé and Phillipe Sollers.²⁷ Is it for these strategies of repetition and play (especially from the point of his own subjecthood) that Klein is often seen as an early post-modernist? It is the notion of symbolic castration and the symbolic interpellation of the subject that illuminates Klein's work clearly. The viewpoint of critics has been honed too tightly to the strictures of the avant-garde and the questions Klein's work poses for abstraction. If we wish to take his stunts seriously, it quickly becomes clear that the majority centre on the insignia of symbolic power and authority. He stages events, performances, rituals, contracts and authorisations in order to come to terms with the inconsistency of cas-

tration. Not only does Klein perform castration rituals relevant to the symbolic order, insignia and authorisation, but also delves further into the inconsistency of the big Other at the point of sovereign authority.

This approach to play illuminates Klein's relationship to the law. After symbolic castration, and the interpellation of the subject by the law, the subject is offered two consolations. First, they are offered a place within the greater symbolic order. Second, the prohibitions of the law in the end create *jouissance* in the law's attempt to repress and prohibit *jouissance*; it is unable to completely evacuate it, and it is around this failure that our drives are centred (primarily in the erogenous zones). My reading highlights the role of images in Klein's use of play, his fraudulent activities (or should we even say crimes?), that identifies two outcomes related to symbolic castration. First they are clearly calling for recognition, they are spectacles for the big Other to act on the subject. Second, they represent the *jouissance*, which cannot be accounted for, the excess to the process of castration.

Hysteria and the Calling for Order

The primary logic of the hysteric is that of being for the big Other. The (incomplete, barred) subject is searching for the "father figure," the law, the symbolic order, so as to know what constitutes them. The father figure, as we have already stated above is also inconsistent, barred, and this leads to an endless search for more and new authorities. Klein represents this through his highly spectacular wedding, framed by the Knights of St Sebastian, of whose order he was a member; his obsessive interest in Rosicrucianism; judo; and the trappings of the law and pseudo-sciences. The double-sided nature of hysteria, that Klein embodies, is that the authority that the hysteric searches for is also the authority they wish to control and interrogate. This aspect of the hysteric is summed up by Renata Salecl in her essay "Crime as a mode of Subjectivization."²⁸ For Salecl, Lacan "tries to explain a criminal act in terms that do not dehumanise the criminal," that do not take the criminal outside the symbolic order. Of most interest to us here, is her analysis of the Denis Lortie case, as discussed in Pierre Legendre's *Le crime du corporal Lortie*. In 1984 Lortie, on his way to parliament with an intention of murdering members of government, killed three and injured eight people waiting in the corridor. As Legendre notes, the image of the father was conflated with the image of government; asked why he committed the crime, Lortie said, "The government of Quebec has my father's face". Legendre sees the Freudian myth of killing the primordial father as a way in which the subject can elide the authority of the law and the authority of the symbolic order. It also highlights the visual analysis that

could be made of this case. As quoted by Salecl, “Legendre points out that in Lortie’s case we must “analyse the murder of the Reference, the preposterous attempt ... to strike at the very source of laws, the principle they follow: the Law of laws.”²⁹ Following Legendre but expanding the analysis, Salecl concludes that, “The murder of the authority figure (the government of Quebec in Lortie’s case) could signify an act of separation. Though the son kills to avoid identifying with the terroristic father, through this murder, he also searches for the father ... What Lortie really demands is to be subjected to the law.”³⁰

The context of the hysteria in Klein’s case can be seen in a particularly politico-legal context. The situation in France at the time was legally an anomic state. The exhibition of the Void occurred within the power vacuum, or interregnum, or legal void, at Galerie Iris Clert, 28 April 1958. It was at this infamous show that Klein painted the interior of the gallery white and left it empty.³¹ There had recently been riots on the streets, protesting the Algerian conflict. Klein’s exhibition occurred between the resignation of President Felix Gaillard on April 15, 1958 and the establishment of General Charles de Gaulle’s Fifth Republic on June 1, 1958. In this year too, De Gaulle reconfigured the role of the President to allow for the dissolution of the national assembly, appointment of Prime Ministers and the ability to call the state of emergency; he was an “elective monarch.” It is within this setting, and as a framing of his show *Le Vide*, that Klein had asked to “cover” the Obelisk at the Place de la Concorde with a blue sheet. This was later changed to the blue light tested successfully by *Électricité de France*, although on the night of the exhibition the police did not grant final permission. Perhaps the intervention was seen to be too contentious within a state already in interregnum, since asking questions of the nature of democracy would have been too provocative.³² What Klein would have done was connect his own subjecthood to the Obelisk with his signature colour. From Klein’s drawings we discover that the light would have begun above the plinth, which would have also made the Obelisk appear to float. Klein almost would have been too successful in claiming a right over the Obelisk while there was a vacuum at the placeholder of French sovereignty. In a note Klein stated that the official government response for the cancellation was due to “the overly personal character of the manifestation and the publicity surrounding the gesture by radio and newspapers.”³³ However it also can be seen as a symptom of Klein’s searching for the big Other, here represented by the Obelisk, and of course the official government approval that he sought and in the end did not get.³⁴ Similarly, although superficially the inverse, this Obelisk performance/stunt was part of Klein’s “Blue Revo-

lution.” When the traditional big Other is not operative (God, the parent) the subject may invent other fantastical masters.

Extending the claim to sovereignty, Iris Clert was able to organise the use of two Republican Guards to stand guard at the same exhibition. The Republican Guards were the President’s own particular attachment, so in effect the Republican Guards not only policed the exhibition like normal officers but actually suggested the sovereign presence of the president. Klein describes the political import of these guards:

On either side of the entry, under the dais, on opening night will be placed Republican Guards in presidential costume (this is necessary for the official character I want to give to the exhibition and also because the true principle of the Republic, if it were applied, pleases me, even though I find it incomplete today).³⁵

His questioning of the “true principle of the Republic,” which he finds “incomplete,” links the work directly to the political shifts of the day. Recent scholarship has connected the success of Klein’s efforts to the acceptance of his work as a fresh art that pointed to a new France after Pétainism and Vichy had effectively hijacked the School of Paris to its own end.³⁶ In this way Pierre Restany, *nouveau réalisme* and Klein particularly were openly accepted by the establishment; Klein’s hysterical comments about the incomplete Republic followed the Fifth Republic’s song sheet.³⁷ The birth of a new abstraction was a ramification of this shift in Vichy.

The shift towards a new France, and its connection to hysteria, provided a context for fastening Klein’s abstraction to the art of his parents, who were both artists.³⁸ A psychological and biographical approach to Klein is mostly associated with the work of Thomas McEvilley. Among other failures, McEvilley sees Klein’s failed baccalaureate as a reason for his constant search for recognition in various fields. When Klein first submitted the orange monochrome, *Expression of the World of the Colour Orange Mineral* to his mother’s Salons des Réalités Nouvelles in Paris 1955, he was expecting to be rejected. When he was rejected, to very loud howls of protest from Klein, this became a final break from this group of French abstract painters and his mother’s art. Many writers have seen this work and its failed entry into competition as “parenticidal gesture.”³⁹ This was the first rupture, and in psychoanalytic theory a perfectly normal one, often called developmental hysteria. My point is that even here there is not a complete break. Right here in post-Vichy Paris the State and art were connected. The abstractions of Raymond were purposefully *art informel* and different to Vichy. Klein extends this distrust of tradition, as represented by the figurative paintings of his father and the “bourgeois” abstracts of his mother. He

still however seems to believe in France (the State) and art, as functioning symbolic orders; the hysterical subject is the quintessential believer.⁴⁰ From the point of view of art, Klein follows the normal avant-garde tradition of critique, while staying *within* the game. Klein desperately seeks an operative Statist order, in all the nooks and crannies where the law presents itself in images; like a truffle pig Klein moves from one image to another trying to find an adequately sized big Other. Klein is a hysterical effigy-finding machine. In the end, as we will see, it is the reactivation of these Statist images through play that stops these images reverting back to Vichy fascism.

Sovereignty and Marks of Authority

Klein directly uses the founding mystical authority of sovereignty itself on many occasions. There are many aspects of legal sovereignty in Klein's work. The chronology of Klein's artistic career tends to start with a gang of artists, Klein, Claude Pascal and Armand Fernandez (Arman), in 1946. In the absence of any other constraints, in the direct aftermath of the war, they decided to divide the world between them. Klein chose the sky and said of himself, "Once, in 1946, while still an adolescent, I was to sign my name on the other side of the sky during a fantastic 'realistico-imaginary' journey."⁴¹ Through his signature Klein became not only the "owner" but the sovereign ruler of the sky.⁴² The paintings themselves are connected to this originary and founding act:

This is why space gave me the right to be the "owner," or rather, the "co-owner," with others of course, but others who have nothing to do with humans. And space consented to manifest its presence in my paintings in order to constitute them as *notarized* acts of ownership, my documents, my proof, my diplomas as conquistador. I am not only the owner of Blue, as one might believe today, no, I am the owner of "COLOUR," for it is the terminology of the legal acts of space. Of course, my incommensurable property is not "only coloured," it simply "is": my paintings are there only as my visible deeds of property ... I realized that the paintings are but the "ashes" of my art. The authentic quality of the painting, its very "being," once created, is found beyond the visible, in pictorial sensibility in the raw material state.⁴³

So in this way Klein merely continues the tradition we have plotted previously, particularly in relation to Duchamp, where the artist conflates himself with the powers of the sovereign; the artistic genius as a godly creator. Klein confuses this set of terms though by appealing to the "real"

system of state and international law. The legal aspect of Klein's work has always been seen as a strange eccentricity and at worse a capitulation to the disciplinary society of capitalist democracy. In the context of sovereignty and semiotics of the legal image Klein's work should be revisited. The process of a floating, anomic outlaw subject seems to interest Klein. He shows that even the "Blue Revolution" needs its rules and contracts. He authorises that his friends continue his work under the *International Klein Bureau*, which becomes particularly useful after his death. He sees that his "Blue Revolution" also needs allies to work or at least the force of a founding sovereign violence.⁴⁴ The letter Klein writes to Eisenhower has often been cited as a mad prank but it has real implications for a philosophical discussion of insurrection, hysteria and sovereignty. Klein's letter asks for Eisenhower to place blue pigment in the next nuclear bombs so that the fallout has the aesthetic of Klein's void. It is a ludic force but at the same time maintains the connection to real sovereign freedom/power, the authority to push the red button and turn a city blue. According to his system [of the Blue Revolution] there would be:

Preservation and exaltation of the total freedom of the individual (the grain of pigment) joined together with others by a fixative medium that is no longer money – that actually welds like oil does with pigment in oil painting by altering its natural brilliance and its autonomous radiance, and by mummifying it – but a noncolored, stronger fixative medium: "quality."⁴⁵

Klein saw himself as a new sovereign leader bringing peace and prosperity to a new creative France:

Each individual in my system will be considered by me in the realization of my painting France like the grains of pigment that , completely free and not fixed in powder, have a brilliance and extraordinary radiance, and that, once fixed to the support, have less tone, are dead and dead, if the fixative medium has altered them. In order to fix the independent individualities of the great dynamic multitude to the surface of France, I want to make them discover that they are artists, everyone is an artist and creator, and a specialiser of sensibility without knowing it. I want each individual, whatever he does in France, to produce in a national, enthusiastic spirit, no longer for quantity but for quality. No more over production leading to unemployment or war, but quality superproduction.⁴⁶

But on the other hand the language of sovereign freedom that has had most attention was always mediated by marks of external authority. This

hysterical strategy was obviously understood by his wife, who in an interview conflates Klein's artistic precondition to a conflict with his parents and to the figure of President Eisenhower:

In his consciousness and understanding of art Yves was far ahead of his time. He was born into a painters' family. On top of this there was the fact that the conflict between his parents about figurative and abstract art pushed him at an early stage into an ability to bear conflict and led beyond the avant-garde problematic without losing the love and resilience of his own spiritual life.In his generation of artists, a global collaboration on earth could be seen for the first time as a conscious possibility. Thus he could hazard writing a letter to President Eisenhower of the United States in 1958, when he was still an unknown artist.

What this quote innocently discloses is Klein's self-importance in writing to the president, a pride his wife obviously shared. Of course Eisenhower never wrote back, but as Salecl points out often with hysterical (most commonly love) letters, the letter need not be received for it to work, because the letter is actually addressed to the big Other, here the symbolic president and not the real man.⁴⁷ What is usually left unmentioned by theorists is that this letter writing was obsessive. He wrote to other Presidents, the Pope and the newly formed International agencies based at the United Nations. For example, the artist suggested that there should be a (Klein) Blue Sea, as there was already, on Klein's logic, a Black and Red Sea. He sent this suggestion in a letter to the Secretary General of the International Geophysical Arm of the United Nations. He would "carbon copy" many figures on the same letter so that recipients would see the long list of people Klein had already sent the letter to. The sending was not hypothetical though and the replies were not forthcoming. It is my contention that this activity of letter writing be seen as a significant part of Klein's output. The letters were also well expressed in poetic prose, signed and well archived. This groping for symbolic father figures is entirely consistent with the other hysterical framing of Klein's work. In this case the letters are the best and most direct example of a calling for the father figure. In the constant repetition and "cc-ing" Klein parodies the act of letter sending. His strange and clownish demands, such as the aestheticising of the nuclear bomb, show his strategy of détourning official avenues of communication in the name of art. This belies Klein's wife's suggestion that the letters were sent in all earnestness. But this need not be a paradox. On the level of knowledge and reason they are irrational but the calling of the father figure is as real as any letter to Eisenhower. Eisenhower functions as an authority with

which to correspond regardless of what is sent to him. This is the earnestness in Klein's work, that the big Other, although perhaps fictional and ludic, may always be called upon, even without reply.

Klein Blue as Ludic Authority

In 1956 with help from a chemist, Klein was able to construct a binding medium that would keep the dry presence of the actual pigment, without an obvious oil or acrylic residue. For Klein lines and forms were too connected to the world and constricting to transcendence, individual particles of pigment expressed through their colour a "total freedom." What was the limit of this freedom? The most obvious example of Klein's appeal to the "real" law is in his oft cited patenting of his formula for International Klein Blue (or I.K.B.).⁴⁸ This eccentric move is separated out from the actual monochromes that were created with this colour, as a prank. However, if we remember the creation of such copyright and patenting laws in the nineteenth century, questions such as originality and authorship were directly related to the theoretical propositions of the aesthetic tradition. By the twentieth century the autonomy of art and the autonomy of law hid the connection between the Romantic logic underpinning both.⁴⁹ At the moment Kantian aesthetics allows for the separation of aesthetic judgment from other social and philosophical spheres the law tried to protect this autonomy; the paradox is obvious. In Klein's work this hidden gap, was revisited and highlighted. So where Sidra Sitch defines Klein's *The Void* as "where there are no names, rules, boundaries, or definitions—this was the obsession that guided the life and art of Yves Klein," this is clearly half the tale.⁵⁰ The Blue Stamp, used on envelopes for the invitation to Klein's Blue Monochrome Exhibition at Iris Clert in May 1957, is a beautifully simple exemplar of how he called for the authorities' mark to complete his work.⁵¹ Sitch describes the process:

In addition, a special blue postage stamp appeared in place of the sanctioned government issue. The stamp clearly pushed the limits of artistic liberty as well as the legal use of the postal communication system. By adeptly negotiating with the proper personnel at the post office (and encouraging them with extra payment), Klein had arranged for his facsimiles ("facsimile" postage perhaps, but "real" art) to function as valid stamps in the regular mail. He also made sure that the cancellation markings were placed directly over the stamps so that their "authenticity" would be indisputable.⁵²

What is wonderful about the symbolic investment in the “cancellation marking” is that, in a Kafkaesque travesty, it does not matter that the markings were bought. Klein’s small monochromes, supplemented by the markings, became a stamp sanctioned by the state. The monochrome in this way doesn’t merely push the limits of “artistic liberty” but actually becomes *not* art. Having been transformed into the symbolic register by the postal markings they become, from one view, an effigy of the authorial second body of French State law.⁵³

Sitch sees the matter from the opposing view in which the works are “real” art and fake stamps. From this viewpoint the stamp quickly returns to the Imaginary realm. Sitch continues, “they are also logos, instantaneous signs, advertisements,” and there is no analysis of the stamp in regard to their usage as stamps.⁵⁴ It is here that I would like to return to Mitchell’s reading of the visual in terms of his triad of icon, fetish and totem (based as it is on Lacan’s triad). Mitchell allows, as we have seen, that there can be a multiple reading of an object. On one level Sitch is correct; the work links directly back to the Monochrome paintings on display in 1957. But it is impossible to separate the framing devices, the parergon of this work, which is the authorising mark. Klein’s work shows the transformative power of the law’s text or mark in shifting an object’s register; here from a personal imaginary object to one at the behest of the big Other. Finally there is another move which occurs which is in the realm of trauma. The hysteric calls to the real big Other, and that is why Klein insists not on a fake mark of authenticity, as we saw in Duchamp and Ernst’s cheques and rulers, but the real mark. The mark is a supplement that fills a lack. It can be the lack of the hysteric who is not recognised fully by the symbolic order. For Lacan art is defined in its relation to the Thing: art is always organised around a central void that is the impossible-real Thing. Here the Thing is the Real of the symbolic. So that the art work functions within the gap between the Real and the symbolic – and here the Real is not the horror of the abject real but of the Sovereign real. Klein’s stamp marked properly by the State makes two sorts of sublimation. It sublimates Klein’s own lack of recognition and represents the State which is only ever brought into the social realm through these rituals of framing and legal theatre.

Law and Repression and the Return of *Jouissance*

The subject is created by its recognition through the law, without this recognition the subject has no place within the symbolic order. The utopian vision that avant-garde modernism envisions does not exist outside our legal structures. In this way it could be the mystical and clownish Klein that is the

realist. Both psychoanalysis and Foucault agree that the desire in the subject is created by its prohibition from the law. As pointed out by Salecl, the difference in Lacan and Foucault's approach is that, "the subject produced by the law does not simply have a desire ... he also has a desire not to have a desire; he denies his desire. Psychoanalysis includes negation in the process of the construction of the subject, and this is what Foucault leaves out."⁵⁵ This control of *jouissance* that even then sometimes shows itself and its connection to law is another concept that Klein's hysteria illuminates. We have already discussed Klein's calling for recognition as a one-way calling, but Klein suggests that this formation of the subject through the big Other and the big Other's formation through the subject is an ongoing and reciprocal process. *Jouissance* within the subject is directly connected to the symbolic castration of the subject.⁵⁶ Klein's oeuvre has many examples of this joyful repression.

A comparison with the rhetoric surrounding Pollock is interesting here. In relation to Pollock, Abstract Expression and *art informel*, Klein wrote, "I despise artists who empty themselves out onto their paintings, as is often the case today. How morbid!"⁵⁷ In Pollock it is all ejaculated *jouissance*; in the work of the American Abstract Expressionists it has long been argued that this is a work of unbridled ego. The painting becomes an arena for the artist to "act" in, for example, Pollock dances and trails paint in an expression of his "genius self." Michael Leja has described this return of the ego in painting as a response to the traumas of World War II, and more generally what Leja calls "the modern man discourse," which repressed the modern man through Fordism, as well as disciplinary society and other horrors. This work, for Leja, represses the real social traumas through the radical internalisation of art.⁵⁸ There is nothing in Greenberg's Formalist doctrines that reins in the freedom, or autonomy of the great genius artist. Klein on the other hand responds to the prohibition of the Superego within the work through supplementary rituals. Where Klein shows aspects of calling for the Superego to punish and control, in this case there is possibly a paranoia of self-punishment. Do we not see this fear of *jouissance* on a number of occasions? In regard to paint Klein is in absolute opposition to Pollock. Scared of the paint getting on him, Klein would direct the models, in the anthropometries, to lay the paint onto themselves.⁵⁹ So where Buchloh would see an "aristocratic" gesture in Klein's wearing of white-tie formal gloves to the Gallery International show, these gloves can also be seen as a defensive strategy of symbolic sublimation and not merely a strange and clownish affectation. Klein used the white gloves of the aristocrat as an emblem of the law, and do not the traffic police conduct traffic like Klein conducted the models, which protected him from the *jouissance* of bodily

contact with the paint?⁶⁰ Similarly the first event of the anthropometries was a dinner at Godet's apartment, and the sexuality of the intimate scene was too much for Klein. Sitch suggests, "the event took on an aura of folly and lascivious entertainment, much to Klein's displeasure...such a performance was an ideal addition to an evening of social pleasure."⁶¹ In response to the sexual element in this presentation of the work Klein reinvested the scene with ritual staging. It seems that this is one reason why the Gallery International event was staged so highly with an orchestra, black tie, white gloves, and a seated audience.⁶² Perhaps the most telling example of this response to trauma within his art through a capitulation to the control of the big Other is Klein's destruction of his blood paintings. A total limit case, that would be very difficult to dismiss as a cynical response, Klein destroyed the works he did in blood, in 1960, because of the unsettling effect that they had on him, and because of superstition.⁶³ Klein brings to formalist painting this aspect of the law. Contra to Buchloh and de Duve, Klein is not disengaged from the political and economic issues, but may in fact be incredibly astute at uncovering the power of the big Other's injunctions, as represented by law, through "clownish" rituals.

The Return of Klein's *Jouissance*

Klein's greatest achievement is the clownish theatre that, although connected to the legal order and other symbolic controls, highlights that the particular *jouissance* of the artist/subject can never be completely ordered. As Barthes sees *jouissance* in the readerly text, or the open text, Klein's work shows the open nature of the legal fiction. To return to our earlier image of the Republican Guards, what is rarely mentioned, and to my knowledge has never been theorised, is the fact that the Guards were also framed by another set of bodyguards. Dressed in black, the Republican Guards were guarded again by what seemed like professional bodyguards, however both men were in fact two of Klein's Judo friends. By creating another parergon, the Republican Guards are mocked in relation to this new framing. The Republican Guards symbolic import is diminished and co-opted as part of art; this dissolution can never be more than partial, however; the joke is two-fold. On the one hand the Republican Guard were guarding the Void, a void that talks to the void of the Sovereign but on the other hand is merely an empty room. The question of whether these symbolic fictions form a legal viewpoint is still correct. The question still arises as to the legal status of these guards. They are on one hand the real Republican Guards, however they are being used "fraudulently" and through bribery. They also recall the problem first posed in relation to the court

cases of Daumier and in the works of Courbet, which is: Can the sovereign's body merely be represented or is it always a presence? In other words, are the Republican Guards actually embodiments of *auctoritas* and the Republic or have they been consumed by Klein's art, and in the end returned to the Imaginary sphere of art? From the point of view of the reframing of the Republican Guards through another set of guards, the ongoing process of framing is referenced, and alludes to a constant reappraisal within art and the law of the connection between the *jouissance* of the subject and its sublimation through art/law.

Finally the example of the fire works is apt.⁶⁴ The fireman was there to douse the flame that emitted from Klein's phallic flamethrower, which directly burnt the cardboard. The fireman is a representative of the State, and is present to make sure that nothing dangerous happens (as insurance and to follow certain codes concerning the usage of flames). In broader terms the fireman is the big Other representative that keeps Klein's burning flames in check, in an act of symbolic castration. The final fillip to this scene is that the fireman was actually a friend of Klein's, merely "playing fireman."⁶⁵ Klein's reassertion of the ludic at the point of an assumption of legal authority is telling. Law itself is shown to be so close so as to be unfounded. The artist's *jouissance* and "freedom" is seen to be inherently linked to prohibition. It is certainly not a funny détourning because Klein's fake fireman at one point is perfectly earnest. It is dishonest, artificial and faked but aestheticised and controlled through the authority of Klein himself. The subject – be it Klein, the fireman/friend, or President Eisenhower himself – is played with, framed, repeated and reframed. The questioning of Klein is on the gap between the mask and the insignia, the shiny helmet of the fireman, and the inability of that insignia to fully account for the subject. The subject's inability to see themselves in their own mask produces the ongoing process of questioning that sums up the neuroses of the hysteric and of Klein's art. When Klein jumps off the building in *Leap into the Void*, 1960, it finds later a resonant note with Derrida's claim that justice is such a leap of faith into the unknown.⁶⁶ Justice must also try to account for the singular subject, the singular criminal to be judged, in a way that the ordered static law cannot. Klein's Void, especially framed by Klein's legal fictions, contracts and rituals, also points to this gap that can never be filled, between the subject and the symbolic order that tries to order it. All the clowning rituals of Klein embody this endless searching and limitless play.

NOTES

- ¹ Yves Klein, quoted in *Yves Klein: long live the immaterial*, ed Gilbert Perlein, Bruno Corà (New York: Delano Greenidge Editions, 2000) 212.
- ² W H Auden, "Law, say the gardeners, is the sun", [1939] (excerpt) *Selected Poems*, ed Edward Mendelson (London: Faber and Faber, 1979) 90.
- ³ This relates to a performance where Klein sold "the Void" for gold leaf, *Zones of Immaterial Pictorial Sensibility*, made between 1959-1962. In a second part of this "sale," if the buyer agreed to burn their certificate by throwing the gold back into the river the "natural order" was restored.
- ⁴ Yves Klein, "Prayer to Saint Rita", trans W G Ryan, in *Yves Klein* (Houston: Houston Institute for the Arts, Rice University and New York: The Arts Publisher, 1982) 257.
- ⁵ A conservator who was gilding a frame asked if the sisters had any gold leaf. One remembered a strange Perspex box with some in it. The conservator recognised the ex-voto immediately as Yves Klein's.
- ⁶ The object was recently shown in exhibition for the first time, at *Yves Klein. Corps, couleur, immatériel*, Paris, Centre Pompidou, 2006, date of access: 6 December 2010, <<http://www.centrepompidou.fr/education/ressources/ENS-Klein/ENS-klein.htm>> In this exhibition the work was seen as "both art and religion". The votive is still in the collection of Saint Rita, Cascia.
- ⁷ Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998); W J T Mitchell, *What Do Pictures Want?: the lives and loves of images* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).
- ⁸ W J T Mitchell, "Totemism, Fetishism, Idolatry", in *What Do Pictures Want?* 188-199.
- ⁹ For example see Pierre Legendre, *Law and the Unconscious*, ed Peter Goodrich, trans Alain Pottage (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1997); Pierre Legendre, "Introduction to the Theory of the Image: Narcissus and the Other in the Mirror", in *Law Critique* 8/1 (1997) 3-35; Costas Douzinas and Lynda Nead, eds *Law and the Image: The Authority of Art and the Aesthetics of Law* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999); Peter Goodrich, *Oedipus Lex: Psychoanalysis, History and Law* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).
- ¹⁰ Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation) (1969)", trans. Ben Brewster, in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971)
- ¹¹ Jacques Derrida, "Force of Law: The 'Mystical Foundation of Authority'" in *Deconstruction and the Possibility of Justice* ed Drucilla Cornell, Michel Rosenfeld and David Gray Carlson (London and New York: Routledge. 1992); Walter Benjamin, "Critique of Violence", in *Selected Writings* Volume 1, trans Edmund Jephcott, eds Marcus Bullock and Michael Jennings, (Cambridge: Harvard University

Press, 1999); Slavoj Žižek, *On Belief* (London: Routledge, 2001).

- ¹² Thierry De Duve, "Yves Klein, or The Dead Dealer", trans Rosalind Krauss, *October* 49, (1989) 73-90.
- ¹³ Benjamin Buchloh, "The Primary Colors for the Second Time: Paradigm Repetition of the Neo-Avant-Garde", *October* 38 (1986) 52. Buchloh sees that rather than integrating art into social practice Klein, oppositionally, relies on the spectacle "as the provider of a mythical semblance of radicality ... [and] the appearance of credibility" 51.
- ¹⁴ De Duve, "Yves Klein, or the Dead Dealer" 74.
- ¹⁵ De Duve, "Yves Klein, or the Dead Dealer" 90.
- ¹⁶ The kettle argument is not only circular but also an argument in which its parts also contradict one another. For example four defences to borrowing and breaking a kettle in order: the kettle was never borrowed, the kettle was cracked before being borrowed, when the kettle was returned the kettle was not cracked, and finally there never was a kettle.
- ¹⁷ Benjamin Buchloh, "Out of the Blue: Klein and Poses", *ArtForum* 33/10 (1995) 92-97.
- ¹⁸ Buchloh writes ("Out of the Blue", 1995): "Klein's vindictive certainty that the reality principle of capitalist patriarchal power will ultimately prevail against the liberatory potential of aesthetic practice and utopian thought aligns him historically on an axis that leads from Francis Picabia right down to later Andy. It seems that what generates Klein's lifelong infatuation with power (and inevitably also with its derelict visuality, kitsch) is the travesty of aesthetic aspiration itself".
- ¹⁹ Yve-Alain Bois, "Klein's Relevance Today", *October*, 119 (2007) 75-93.
- ²⁰ Bois, "Klein's Relevance Today" 86.
- ²¹ Nan Rosenthal, "Assisted Levitation: The Art of Yves Klein", in *Yves Klein 1928-1962: A Retrospective*, (Houston: Menil Foundation, 1982) 89-135.
- ²² Nan Rosenthal, "Comic relief—artist Yves Klein—Into the Blue", *ArtForum* 33, (1995) 97.
- ²³ See the approach also of Christopher Phillips, "All About Yves: A wide-ranging Yves Klein retrospective demonstrates the variety of the artist's paintings and sculptural objects, and attempts to re-create the ambience of Klein's gallery installations", *Art in America*, 83/ 5 (1995) 86-91.
- ²⁴ Bois, "Klein's Relevance Today" 93.
- ²⁵ Apart from De Duve see also Pierre Restany, "Yves Klein: The Ex-Voto for Saint Rita of Cascia", in *Yves Klein: 1928-1962 A Retrospective*. exh cat Houston, Chicago, New York, Paris. (Houston: Menil Foundation, 1982) 255-257.
- ²⁶ Jacques Derrida, "Structure, Sign and Play" in *Writing and Difference*, trans Alan Bass (University of Chicago: Chicago, 1978) 278-293, 278.
- ²⁷ Jacques Derrida, "The Double Séance", in *Dissemination*, trans Barbara Johnson, (University of Chicago: Chicago, 1981) 173-286.

- ²⁸ Renata Salecl, "Crime as a Mode of Subjectivization: Lacan and the Law", *Law and Critique* 1 (1993) 3-20.
- ²⁹ Translation by Renata Salecl from Pierre Legendre, *Le crime du corporal Lortie* (Paris: Fayard, 1989), 17, in Salecl, "Crime as a Mode of Subjectivization: Lacan and the Law" 8-9.
- ³⁰ Salecl, "Crime as a Mode of Subjectivization: Lacan and the Law", 11-12.
- ³¹ For an image of the exhibition *Le Vide* see: Guy Brett, "Landmark Exhibitions Issue," Tate Papers, Autumn, 2009: accessed, 6 December 2010, <<http://www.tate.org.uk/research/tateresearch/tatepapers/09autumn/brett.shtm>>.
- ³² As an interesting aside the Place de Concorde and the Luxor Obelisk have always been politicised. See Darcy Grimaldo Grigsby, *Extremities: Painting Empire in Post-Revolutionary France* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), where Grigsby suggests that objects from the Oriental campaigns, such as the Obelisk taken from the Luxor Temple in Egypt in 1831, were part of the *juste milieu*. The public monuments to French Glory suppress internal threats by focusing on nationalism above other political designations, such as republican or monarchical; see also Todd Porterfield, *The Allure of Empire: Art in the Service of French Imperialism 1798-1836* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998). Porterfield dedicates his first chapter to the Obelisk, which he sees as an exemplary monument to show the contestation of power, and the process of *juste milieu*, where the Obelisk became "a safe haven from the murderous Revolutionary dialectic," 41. National pride was not only engendered from victory in the Orient but even by the technical facility needed to transport and raise the Obelisk in Paris as celebrated on its plinth.
- ³³ In Nuit Banai, "From the Myth of Objecthood to the Order of Space: Yves Klein's Adventures in the Void", in *Yves Klein*, exh cat, (Frankfurt, Schirn Kunsthalle, 2004) 25.
- ³⁴ Of course Klein the hysteric was furious that he was refused approval. The piece was finally performed on 7 October 2006, as part of the Pompidou Centre Exhibition, image accessed: 6 December 2010; <http://www.lvmh.com/magazine/pg_mag_contenu.asp?int_id=417&archive=0&rubrique=ACTUALITE&srub=0&rub=1&str_theme_id=>.
- ³⁵ Yves Klein, "Preparation and Presentation of the Exhibition of April 28, 1958", Yves Klein and Gilbert Perlein, *Yves Klein: Long Live the Immaterial* (New York: Delano Greenidge Editions, 2000) 74.
- ³⁶ Michèle C. Cone, "Pierre Restany and the Nouveaux Réalistes" *Yale French Studies* 98 (2000) 50-65; Cone here also suggests the uncanny logic of the rebirth of both General de Gaulle and Duchamp during the fifties and sixties.
- ³⁷ See Michèle C Cone, *French Modernism: Perspectives on Art Before, During and After Vichy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), particularly "Abstract Art as a Veil" 81-100; Michèle C Cone, *Artists under Vichy: A Case of Prejudice and Persecution* (Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992).
- ³⁸ Fred Klein, a figurative painter, and Marie Raymond, whose abstracts during the

fifties were well received and influential on Yves Klein.

- ³⁹ Bois, "Klein's Relevance Today" 82; the reader will be reminded of the fact that Max Ernst, rebelled against his painter father. Marcel Duchamp too was rejected from an exhibition organised by his older brother.
- ⁴⁰ Paul Verhaeghe, "The Collapse of the Father", in *Sexuation*, ed Renata Salecl, (London: Duke University Press, 2000) 131-154, 136; I note in passing that Doubting (Saint) Thomas is also called Thomas the Believer.
- ⁴¹ Yves Klein, *The Chelsea Hotel Manifesto*, 1961, date of access: 6 December 2010, <<http://www.yvesklein.de/manifesto.html>>.
- ⁴² Pascal received the air, and Arman the rulership over the earth and its riches, including its rubbish.
- ⁴³ Yves Klein, "Overcoming the Problematic of Art", quoted in *Yves Klein: Long Live the Immaterial*, 71-72.
- ⁴⁴ Sidra Sitch, *Yves Klein*, (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz Publishers, 1995) 144; see also *Yves Klein 1928-1962: Selected writings*: "I want to take as the canvas for my next picture the entire surface of France. This picture will be called 'The Blue Revolution.' It isn't the fact of my taking power in France that interests me, but rather the possibility of creating a monochrome picture in my new manner", 42.
- ⁴⁵ Sitch, *Yves Klein* 145.
- ⁴⁶ Sitch, *Yves Klein* 145.
- ⁴⁷ See Renata Salecl, "Love Anxieties", *On Anxiety*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2004) 73-93 for a discussion of hysteria, love and the 'unsent' love letter. For an image of Klein's letter to President Eisenhower, see the Hirshorn Museum Collection, date of access: 6 December 2010, <<http://www.flickr.com/photos/hirshhorn/4586650175/>>
- ⁴⁸ The patent actually was for the particular type of see through acrylic binder used to maintain the sheen of the pigment. The I.K.B patent is dated 19 May, 1960. This date is significant in that by this time a number of other legalistic devices had already become part of Klein's work. See Carol Mancusi-Ungaro, "A Technical Note on I.K.B.", in *Yves Klein 1928-1962: A Retrospective*, 258-59.
- ⁴⁹ Here the Kantian notions of aesthetic autonomy, authorship and originality are seen as precursors to modern copyright laws, which culminates in the Berne Convention of 1868.
- ⁵⁰ Sitch, *Yves Klein* 13.
- ⁵¹ For an image of the invitation and stamp see the Yves Klein Archives, date of access: 6 December 2010, <http://www.yveskleinarchives.org/documents/bio_img/large/1957_clert_1.jpg>.
- ⁵² Sidra Sitch, "Blue, Blue, Blue" 91; also discussed in Pierre Restany, *Yves Klein*, (New York: Abrams, 1982), Restany writes "[Klein] reached an understanding with the postal authorities for the payment of a fee that allowed him to have an I.K.B stamp of his fabrication cancelled on a postcard" 42. Rosenthal in "Assisted Levitation: The Art of Yves Klein", in *Yves Klein* 1995: "According to Iris Clert, these

mailings were arranged by paying the normal required postage at the post office while simultaneously tipping the postal clerk to cancel the postcards or envelopes over or near Klein's stamps", 110.

⁵³ Like coins the stamp is the privileged place of the sovereign effigy. Even in the age of the European Union, the United Kingdom and other monarchies, place a silhouette effigy in their stamps bottom right corner.

⁵⁴ Sitch, *Yves Klein* 91.

⁵⁵ In Foucault the prohibitive law encourages speech surrounding the prohibition which creates a desire that may not have existed before. See Jacques Lacan, *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis* (London: Routledge, 1992): "In effect I would not have had the idea to covet it, if the Law hadn't said: 'Thou shalt not covet it.'" 83.

⁵⁶ It is in the text "The subversion of the subject and the dialectic of desire in the Freudian unconscious" that a structural account of *jouissance* is first given in connection with the subject's entry into the symbolic. See Jacques Lacan, "The subversion of the subject and the dialectic of desire in the Freudian unconscious" in *Écrits: A Selection* trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: W.W. Norton, [1960] 1977).

⁵⁷ Yves Klein, *Monochrome Adventure*, quoted in Bois, "The Relevance of Klein" 82.

⁵⁸ Is this repression not seen in the incredibly violent end to Mark Rothko and Jackson Pollock. The violence that they repressed in their work was displayed in self-destructive behaviour. There is present the same split between the Ego and the Superego.

⁵⁹ Jane Blocker, *What the Body Cost: Desire, History, and Performance* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2004) 93.

⁶⁰ The response to the "action" painting of Pollock can be seen in reverse through equating it with the bodily abject. For example, Andy Warhol with his piss paintings (1977-78), or the famous canned shit by Piero Manzoni (1961), respond to the lack of control on the *jouissance* of art through a capitulation to this excess. In Klein however, the excess is checked and controlled through a reestablishment for art of the Superego. For an image of Klein painting in white tie and gloves see the Yves Klein Archives, document 167, date of access: 6 December 2010, <http://www.yveskleinarchives.org/documents/bio_us.html>.

⁶¹ Sitch, *Yves Klein* 172-173.

⁶² See Timo Vuorikoski, "From Monochromes to Anthropometries", in *Yves Klein*, (Sydney: MCA Sydney, 1998) 163-190, 179.

⁶³ Sitch, *Yves Klein* 185.

⁶⁴ Pierre Restany, *Yves Klein: fire at the heart of the void*, trans Andrea Loselle (Journal of Contemporary Art, 1993)

⁶⁵ Sitch, *Yves Klein* 185.

⁶⁶ Leap into the Void, 1960, held at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York online, date of access: 6 December 2010, <<http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/1992.5112>>.