

Cement Bricks as a form of curatorial gesture, in which the artist functions as 'service provider to the processes of change'. But cleverly, he also effects a neat reflection of the exhibition when he states that, 'This curatorial action [of Bas Jan Ader ...] is towards the opening of a space for asking questions about the role and nature of art in relation to the targeting of vulnerable moments in human situations'.

Ultimately, this exhibition acts as a kind of conduit or filter through which ideas may pass, providing opportunities for Ader and Coley's works to speak both independently and as a whole, unified by a curatorial gambit devised by Wade. As Schultz closes in her essay, 'The challenge seems to be to enable a meaningful dialogue between them that, in turn, contributes to material for the future'. ■

John Tozer is an artist, writer and lectures at Goldsmiths College London.

■ **Grazia Toderi / Ugo Rondinone**

Fa projects London September 19 to November 3

The new fa projects gallery is close, yes, to Tate Modern, as proudly cited on its 'how-to-find-us map'. But it is even closer to its uncited, less classy tourist-friendly neighbour, Shakespeare's Globe Theatre on the very next tiny street. The whole area, however, is dominated by a giant riverside construction site: a colossus of real estate ambitions at once sponging off and stomping on the nearby Globe. The old brick building where fa projects itself has set up shop greets you with still more site-worthiness: 'On this site was built the Davies amphitheatre, 1662-82, the last bear-baiting ring ... From the mid sixteenth-century there were the bear gardens, a bear-baiting ring visited by Queen Elizabeth I ... ' Bear-baiting; Queen Elizabeth I; Shakespearean theme parks; property development and a new contemporary art district all right here? 'HELL, YES!', answers Ugo Rondinone with one of his giant, colourful neon signs, arching over the gallery entrance. Hell yes, this is the place.

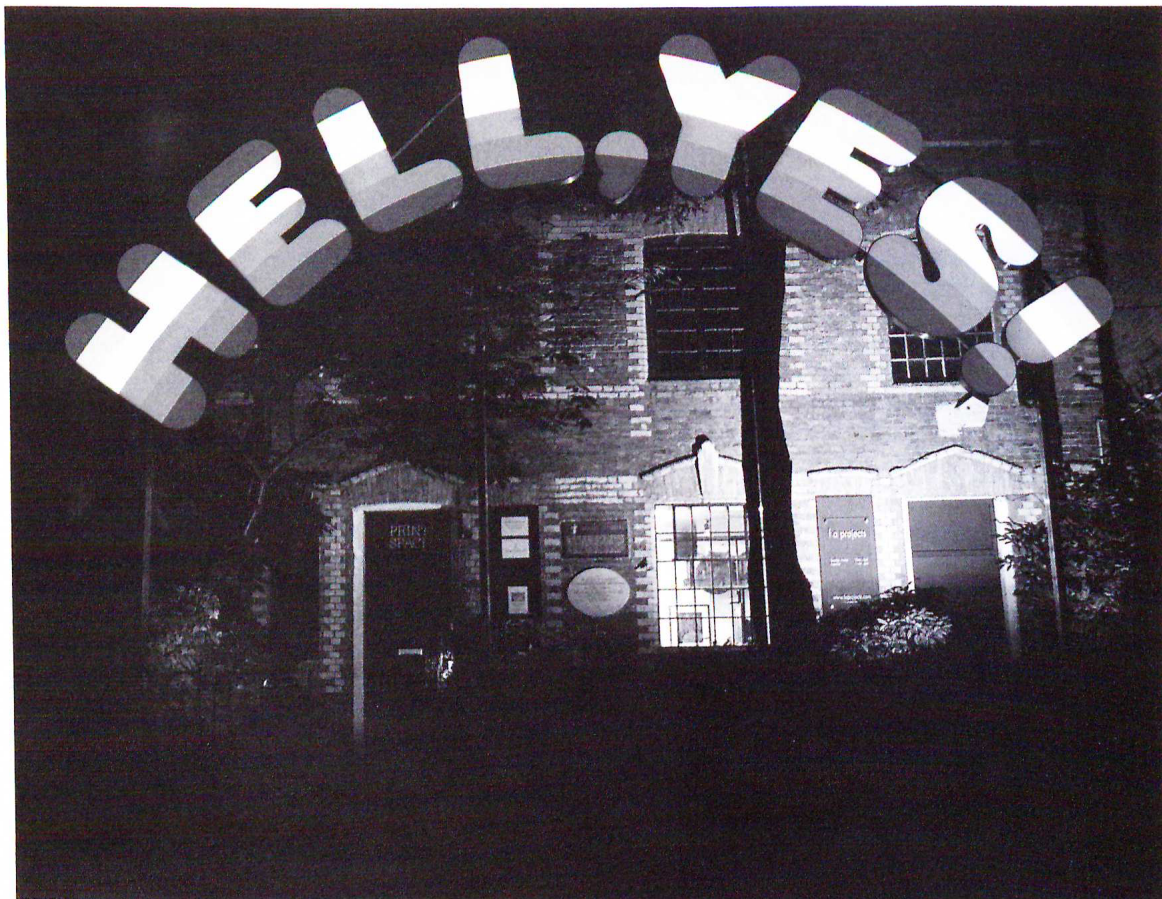
Location, location, location, seems the theme uniting these two youngish Europeans, Rondinone from Switzerland born 1964, and Italian video artist Grazia Toderi born the year before. In Rondinone's varied art he has often marked selected urban non-sites with rainbow-style, acrylic signs. 'DOGDAYS ARE OVER', reads one. 'LOVE INVENTS US', said another. Such reassuring messages are portentous enough to make their unexplained placement in the city seem meaningful. They are like 'beacons of hope and encouragement' (Jan Avgikos), like strategically sited lighthouses guiding our existential way as we drift down the street, trying not to slam against the rocks or sink, so to speak. On this occasion Rondinone's circus-style arch reads like a kind of sideshow entrance; Toderi is the main attraction in the big top inside.

Place and non-place cross in this strange, resettled London neighbourhood, all old and all new at the same time, and this same displaced sense of nowhere-but-here has always been at the centre of Toderi's work. Her videos are set in such uninhabitable places as outer space, as in *Born in '63*, seen at the ICA's 1997 'Made in Italy' exhibition, in which a doll set on a pin spun inexplicably before the Apollo moonlanding. Or in air space, with her strangely illuminated, aerial photographs taken over London, on view in the windows of the late, lamented Lux Centre earlier this year. Or hovering above a crowded football stadium as in *Take-Off*, the work that won her and fellow Italian artists the Leone d'Oro prize at the 1999 Venice Biennale. Other unfamiliar spaces she explores are underwater as in *Soup of Eternity and Unexpected Light*, 1995, in which the artist cavorts in some kind of tank, or moonscapes, craters, airfields, and now an empty theatre stage. In her new video at fa projects, *Random*, 2001, the starlit night sky in her earlier works has been replaced by a sprinkling of flashbulbs in the darkened tiers of a 19th-century theatre, looking like the murky yet neatly arranged circles in Dante's hell. Like her earlier nighttime stadium and space scenes, the darkness flickers with unearthly lights, sporadic illuminations which suggest that there is some unseen form of life pulsating out there. Whether friendly or unfriendly, we never discover.

Toderi explains that she is interested in spaces 'where falling doesn't exist'. What kind of falling is she trying to



Grazia Toderi
Random 2001
Video still



Ugo Rondinone
HELL, YES! 2001

escape, exactly? Hers are all spaces not meant to be occupied by ordinary mortals but only, say, by a god presiding over San Siro, or an opera diva standing centre stage, or a ghostly astronaut drifting into outer space. You always wonder whether her spaces are real or constructed, computer models or some kind of miniature. The loss of scale in Toderi's landscapes remind you that pictures of the infinitesimally small and the infinitely large, the astronomical and the submicroscopic, all start to look alike, cancelling each other out in their depressing interchangeability. In the silence of her works one feels like Major Tom, stranded in space, hopeless and quietly emotional. In fact the strongest sensation from Toderi's art is one of utter loneliness, an immense and deliberate distance from everyone and everything out there. In bear-baiting, apparently, a single bear was pitted against a pack of dogs, and bets were taken as to how many dogs would die before the bear was killed. Toderi's works are never so violent, but the isolation of being alone and outnumbered before a crowd so far away, vast and faceless, unexpectedly locates Toderi's non-places in this very place, landing with surprising precision from a very distant planet. ■

Gilda Williams is a writer and commissioning editor for contemporary art at Phaidon Press.

■ Spencer Tunick

Deptford X London September 22 to October 7

In the 1950s Harold Rosenberg famously coined the term 'action painting' to describe the way artists were using painting as 'an arena in which to act – rather than as a space in which to reproduce, re-design, analyze, or "express" an object, actual or imagined'. Allan Kaprow extended Rosenberg's idea and devised the Happening, which substituted the event itself for the representation of it, and it is this area, what Kaprow called the 'blurring between art and life', that an artist like Spencer Tunick occupies.

Tunick is now fairly notorious for the photo shoots he organises where hundreds of people take off their clothes and lie down in the middle of a street or park or field. The largest group to date is 2,200 in Montreal last May. Tunick organised a shoot in London in September, and 400 people arrived one chilly morning at the plaza next to the Cutty Sark in Greenwich and participated in three shoots. A short video of the event, a collaboration between Tunick and filmmaker Andrew Einhorn, was shown at Deptford Town Hall a week later, as part of the Deptford X festival.

The images Tunick produces from these events are

Patterns 24/11/01 3/2/02 **SPACE X**
Samta Benyahia & Zineb Sedira
 Exeter Cathedral, the Institute of Arab & Islamic Studies, Spacex Gallery & other sites

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