

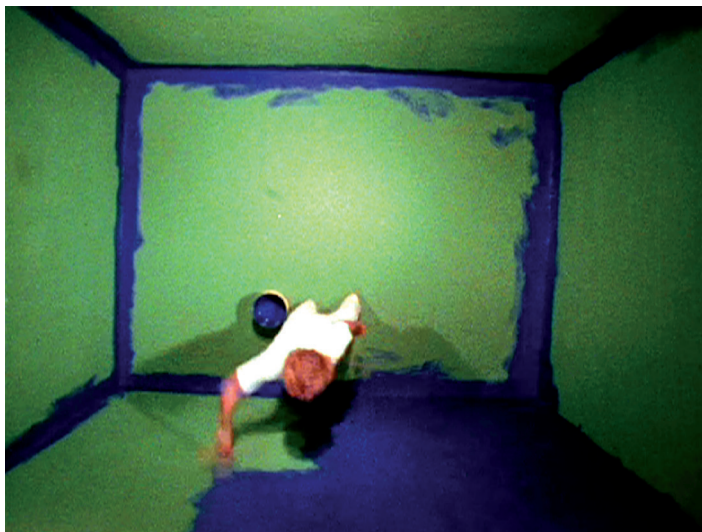


EN

**JOHN
BALDESSARI**

**PARABLES,
FABLES,
AND
OTHER
TALL TALES**





Six Colorful Inside Jobs
1977
16mm color film, silent, 32:53 min
Estate of John Baldessari



Introduction

Around 1965, John Baldessari wrote in his journal, “Make up art fables. Be a good teacher like Jesus.” At the time, he was living in National City, California. By the mid-60s, Baldessari had already started moving away from traditional, representational paintings of allegorical themes and towards increasingly cerebral forms of artmaking. Like many of his contemporaries working in New York City and Europe, he was in search of a unique means of storytelling. However, while many of his peers were engaged in the production of more purely analytical, reductive, pseudo-scientific, or minimalistic formats, Baldessari remained true to his painterly roots.

Always working with pictorial structures, occasionally merging text with images, he crafted distinctive narratives that harked back to his earlier formalistic paintings, while taking his work in new directions. Using the new tools of conceptual art – including the appropriation of found texts, images excerpted from movie stills, news, and publicity photographs –

he crafted a wholly original paradigm of artistic practice.

As Baldessari noted in 2011 about his work:

People used to think I was anti-painting. I wasn't. I've just always thought that art should be more than painting. My goal has always been to attack conventions of seeing. The work is about seeing the world askew. Remember that old Charles Addams cartoon, where all you see are people sitting in a theater audience and everyone has a horrified expression on their face, except for one guy who's grinning and laughing? I often think that guy is me.¹

Baldessari's original works, produced in short groupings, require very little, if any, interpretive introduction; by his intent, they are open to the audience to consider without curatorial intervention. For this reason, as curators of this exhibition, we have chosen to present his works with a minimum of interpretation, except for a handful of carefully chosen quotations from Baldessari for this exhibition guide.



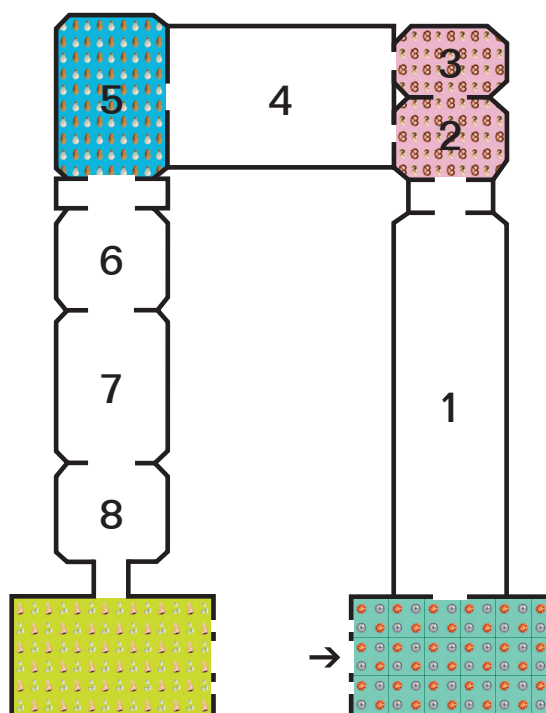


Introduction

This exhibition, *John Baldessari: Parables, Fables, and Other Tall Tales*, examines an array of Baldessari's works made between 1966 and 2017. Its approach is immersive, not linear or chronological but entirely experiential. The exhibition is not intended to be exhaustive but represents the most relevant moments in Baldessari's

career. It was conceived, as the title suggests, in tune with Baldessari's spirit: he was, above all, a storyteller. Both in his art, and in person, he looked at telling stories as a means of conveying experiences, knowledge, and relaying information to his students and friends.

Room Plan





Biography

John Baldessari (1931–2020) was born in National City, California, very close to the Mexican border. He attended San Diego State College, where he received a Bachelor of Arts in 1953, and a Master of Arts in Painting in 1957. Between 1957 and 1959 he did postgraduate work at the University of California, Otis Art Institute and Chouinard Art Institute.

Initially trained as a painter, Baldessari began to link and investigate the relation between image and words in the 1960s, examining and defying our perception of art. His works incorporated pop-culture images found in posters and photographs, adding words and conversational fragments to create dialogues between those elements, mostly engaging the viewer and playing with his expectations. This unique methodology challenging art history and its convention made him a pioneer of Conceptual Art.

His practice ranged from painting, installation and photography to prints, books, video and performance was inspired by various sources such as advertising, film culture. He also strongly influenced generations of artists (Mike Kelley, David Salle and Rita McBride among others) – an influence on the West Coast art scene amplified by his long parallel career as a teacher.

Baldessari was a recipient of the Americans for the Arts Lifetime Achievement Award and the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement awarded by the Venice Biennale. In 2010, he was the subject of a retrospective “John Baldessari: Pure Beauty” which included more than 150 works made between 1962 and 2010. The artist passed away at the age of 88 on January 2, 2020, at his home in the Venice neighbourhood of Los Angeles. Baldessari's works are held in the collections of most major international museums.





Room 1

CLEMENT GREENBERG

ESTHETIC JUDGMENTS ARE GIVEN AND CONTAINED
IN THE IMMEDIATE EXPERIENCE OF ART.
THEY COINCIDE WITH IT; THEY ARE NOT ARRIVED AT
AFTERWARDS THROUGH REFLECTION OR THOUGHT.
ESTHETIC JUDGMENTS ARE ALSO INVOLUNTARY;
YOU CAN NO MORE CHOOSE WHETHER OR NOT
TO LIKE A WORK OF ART THAN YOU CAN CHOOSE
TO HAVE SUGAR TASTE SWEET OR LEMONS SOUR.
(WHETHER OR NOT ESTHETIC JUDGMENTS ARE
HONESTLY REPORTED IS ANOTHER MATTER.)

Clement Greenberg
1966–1968
Acrylic on canvas
Craig Robins Collection, Miami





Clement Greenberg 1966–1968

In the mid-1960s, Baldessari came to the conclusion that there was little new left to be made in figurative painting that artists hadn't already done for hundreds of years. He also felt he was perhaps ten, if not twenty, years too late to be an abstract painter. What had been accomplished by Jackson Pollock, Franz Kline, and other action painters was sufficient, and everything proposed in similar formats by younger artists would be redundant, if not "dead-end" art.

After turning away from traditional painting formats, Baldessari began a series of paintings using appropriated texts, which were painted by a commercial sign painter he hired. "The sign painter was instructed not to attempt to make attractive artful lettering, but to letter the information in the most simple way."²

Many of these text paintings described the process of making, instructions for aspiring artists, or how to be critical in judging the quality of works of art.

The text in *Clement Greenberg* is verbatim from the opening paragraph from the seminal

American art critic Clement Greenberg's landmark essay, "Complaints of an Art Critic": 'You cannot legitimately want or hope for anything from art except quality,' published in the October 1967 issue of *Artforum* magazine. About this series of works, Baldessari said:

I had abandoned painting because I thought there was something else out there. It wasn't a notion unique to me. A lot of artists in the world were feeling the kind of malaise that Abstract Expressionism was running out of steam. [...] I was always interested in language. I thought, why not? If a painting, by the normal definition of the term, is paint on canvas, why can't it be painted words on canvas?... I said, "Well, the way art is understood right now, it's painting or sculpture. If we talk about painting, what constitutes a painting? Paint on canvas – that's all it has to be. Those are the signals, and from that you can do anything." I don't think I would have ever done it if I had people looking over my shoulder, saying, "Oh no, you can't do that. That's not a painting."³





Room 1



Throwing Three Balls in the Air to Get a Straight Line (Best of Thirty-Six Attempts)
1973
Offset lithograph in twelve parts
Craig Robins Collection, Miami





Throwing Three Balls in the Air to Get a Straight Line (Best of Thirty-Six Attempts) 1973

By 1970, Baldessari turned to photography as his primary tool in making his artworks. While there was over a century-long tradition of the craft of the medium – centered on making beautifully composed and meticulously produced photographic prints – he used cameras to capture “visual data less as pleasing artistically than as documentation, as in a store catalogue or police photograph.”⁴

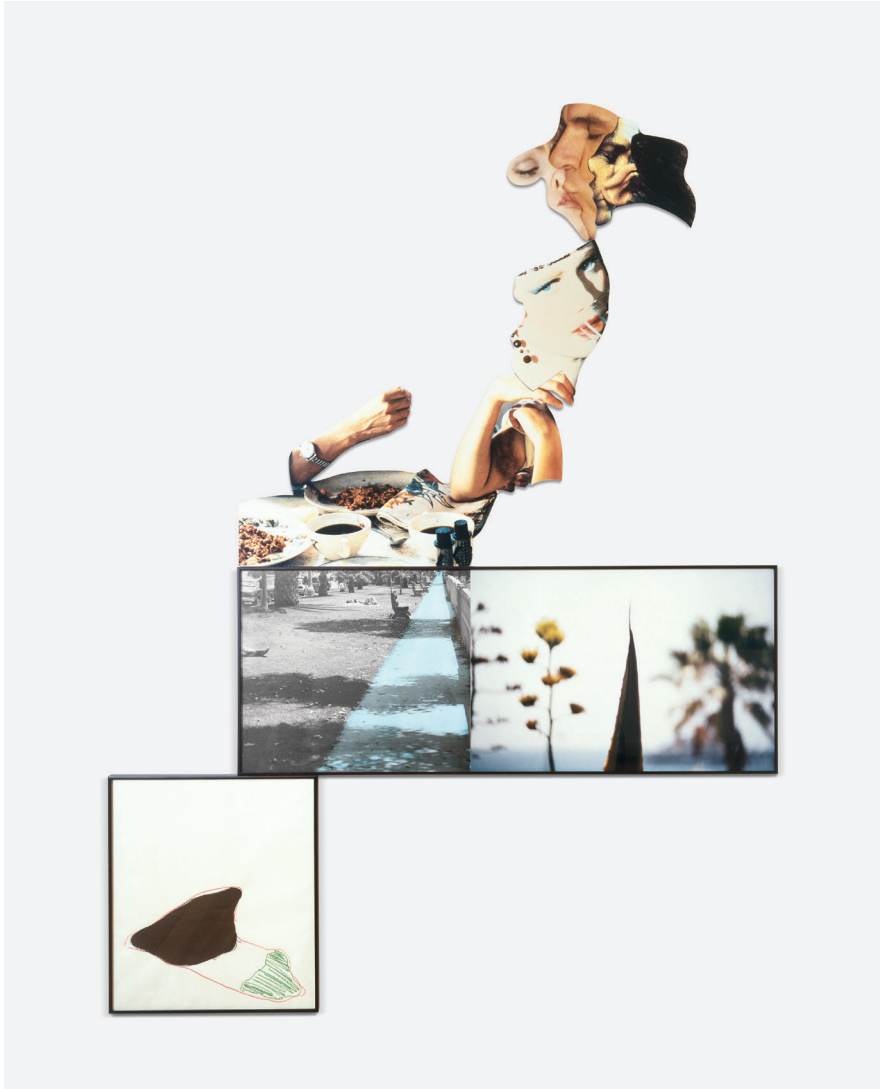
Throwing Three Balls in the Air to Get a Straight Line (Best of Thirty-Six Attempts) is from a series of works in which Baldessari photographed balls being thrown in the air to form geometric shapes,

such as squares, equilateral triangles, and straight lines, set against sunny Southern Californian palm trees and ample blue sky. In each series, thirty-six attempts were made, using a single roll of thirty-six exposure film, from which he would then choose “the most successful shots in one roll of film used.”⁵

Choosing – making choices about frequently arbitrary systems of organization and the framing of images, considering “what to leave in and what to take out” – became a key instrument used by Baldessari in making his art moving forward.



Room 1



Two Kisses: Drinking/Eating/Chaotic Situation/Sidewalk/Cactus
1992

One black-and-white photograph with oil tint;
five colour photographs (cutout photos mounted on Masonite);
acrylic paint and crayon on paper
Dörthe Greiner, Collection Schmidt-Drenhaus





Two Kisses: Drinking / Eating / Chaotic Situation / Sidewalk / Cactus 1992

Since 1987 (and in the early 1990's in particular), Baldessari began experimenting with the shapes of his work beyond the orthogonal, square or rectangular shapes of traditional frames. This work uses one black and white photograph with oil tint, five color photographs (cut out and mounted in Masonite), acrylic paint and crayon on paper.

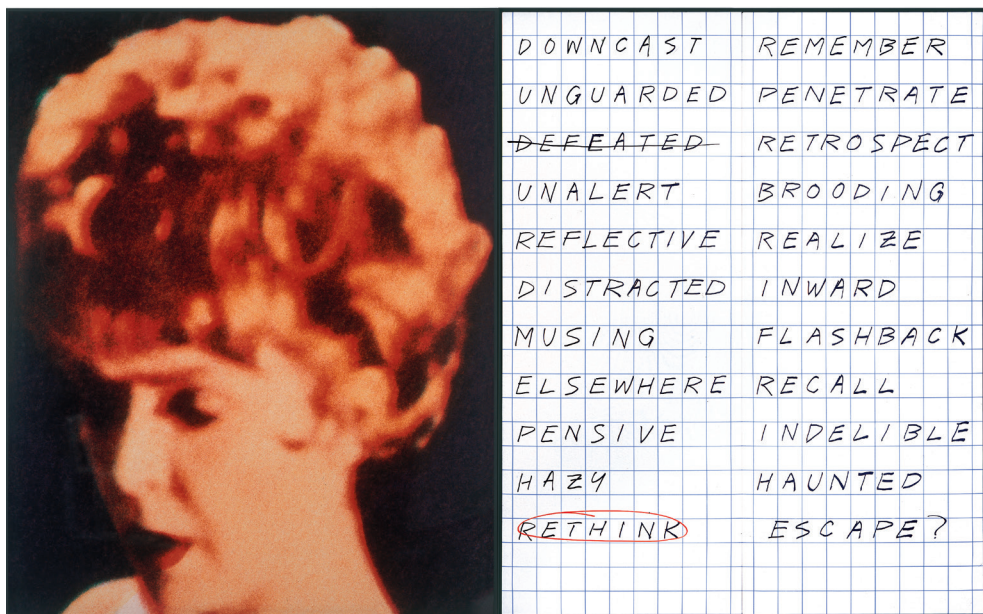
Perhaps it is the tyranny of the frame. By playing these games, I can prevent the frame from closing in, from dominating. I select and I crop and have all these details of works as a result, icons are made manageable and less

important works become better. A democratization. Like Elvis in the army. Yet each cropped element is a work of art for me and each lovable (as in a litter of little dogs).

The next job is to assemble these diverse parts into a new whole, to build them like words in a sentence or a phrase. They are like words that jump out at me from a page, be it in a page of a dictionary or a novel, do some works defy gravity – levitate before my eyes? Fey or jejune, for example. That an essay could be written about each gives proof of dormant power.⁶



Room 3



Prima Facie (Fourth State): Rethink and Et Cetera

2005

Digital photographic print mounted on foam PVC board;
paint marker and ink-jet print on canvas

Private collection





Prima Facie (Fourth State): Rethink and Et Cetera 2005

Throughout 2005, Baldessari produced five different “states” of a series that, once again, combines images and words. *Prima Facie* pairs portraits – faces of people in different expressions – with one, two, or multiple terms that attempt to interpret the expression of the person portrayed.

In each work, color also plays a leading role in complicating the subject matter: the way we interpret and judge emotions and people “at first glance,” the expression that gives the series its title. In English, the expression also has a legal meaning that refers to “abundance of evidence.”

Baldessari exhibited each “states” of this series in a different city around the world (Los Angeles, Zurich, Madrid, Brussels, and London), with all the series brought together for the first time in an

exhibition at Museum Dhont-Dhaenens in Deurle in 2006. *Prima Facie* is one of Baldessari’s series most closely associated with Belgium, where it is well represented in various private collections.

What I was trying to do was find equivalents – one word that would have the same weight as the photograph. But knowing that, one, I’m using actors and actresses, and what they do is fake emotion, and then trying to figure out if I saw a person with that face that I might think they were angry or suspicious or unpleasant or whatever, but I could be entirely wrong. Who knows? That’s why I call it Prima Facie – first sight; that’s how we jump to conclusions... The image size and text size are equal. I’ve always had this idea that a word and an image are interchangeable.⁷





Room 4



Ear Sofa; and Nose Sconces with Flowers
2009

Polyurethane rubber-covered memory foam, rigid polyurethane, synthetic flowers
Estate of John Baldessari; Courtesy Sprüth Magers





Ear Sofa; and Nose Sconces with Flowers 2009

These originated as an element within Baldessari's installation work *BRICK BLDG, LG WINDOWS W/XLENT VIEWS, PARTIALLY FURNISHED, RENOWNED ARCHITECT*, at Museum Haus Lange, in Krefeld, Germany, in 2009, which was originally a private home designed by Mies van der Rohe. The title of the show was a play on how the building would be characterized in a typical Los Angeles real estate listing.

For his installation in Krefeld, Baldessari covered the building's walls and windows with brick-stone wallpaper, installed large photographs of Southern California landscapes, Van der Rohe-like chairs, an ink-jet print of an eyebrow, and his *Ear Sofa; and Nose Sconces with Flowers* as a light-hearted rebuke of van der Rohe's rigid architecture. Later, in the same year, he reconceptualized these elements as a performative installation for Sprüth Magers' London gallery storefront window with a live model and a poodle within an Art Deco stage setting.

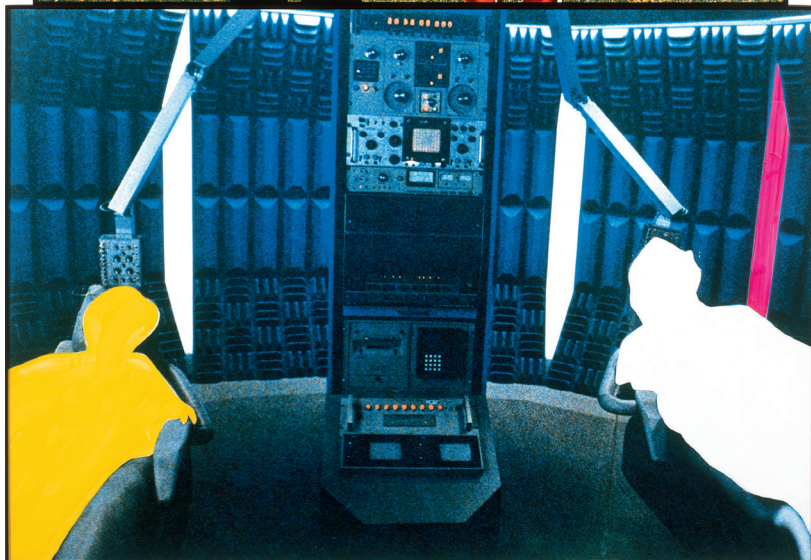
"Noses & Ears, Etc." had its inception when I was a painter in

the mid-50s. I was immersed in thinking about totality (what is a whole and what is a part?). Painting sections of the human body was a part of that investigation – ears and noses especially. Eyes and lips were done in past art because they seemed whole and didn't seem to suffer much by being isolated (cf. Odilon Redon, Man Ray). The nose was more a subject of literature (Pinocchio, Cyrano, Gogol, Tristram Shandy, etc.). Not much out there about the ear in isolation. To represent people only by an ear and/or nose became for me another way of reducing human identity to a minimum. Faces become clichés like anything else, so viewing people only by ears and/or nose might enable the viewer to see afresh. Formally the works continue my fascination with color, the relation of photography to painting, and viewing the picture plane on three levels rather than the conventional single plane. Perhaps these works can be seen as not painting, photography, or sculpture but a melding of all three.⁸





Room 5



Two Figures and Two Figures (In Different Environments)
1990
Two colour photographs with acrylic paint and vinyl paint
Courtesy Galerie Greta Meert





Two Figures and Two Figures (In Different Environments) 1990

An extensive body of work by Baldessari across different periods includes figures covered in flat colors that “nullify” the content of the figure, reducing them to a pure silhouette. The use of colored dots to cover characters’ faces is also a “signature” technique used by the artist in different works and series. By combining two images depicting couples of characters, covering the figures in the lower image and the faces in the upper image, Baldessari manages to create a work whose protagonist is the background, enigmatic and anodyne at the same time. In his works, Baldessari combined various techniques and materials (photographs, collage, painting, drawings, etc.) into multiple compositions.

... I started out as a painter ... about 15 or 20 years of that. [...] ... I had equated art primarily with painting, not so much sculpture... and I began to get a little bit restless with the equation, thinking

there were things out there that I wanted to do, that didn't comfortably fit into painting. So, for a variety of reasons, that being only one of them, I stopped and began picking up other means.

[...] Sort of fundamental to my work is the collision, let's say, colliding, of various images. In that sense, I consider myself – it's a corny word – a poet. If you use the idea of a poet being a person who can use language well and precisely ... as Flaubert would say, “Writing is putting the right word after the right word”, [then] colliding images, for me it is that too. If you put two images together that are too similar, it gets to be too sloppy a connection, too obvious, or two images together that are too dissimilar, then the rightness breaks, where it's about to break, and you push that as far as you can ... Then the old sort of minimalist discovery that the more you take away, the more charged the imagery gets ...⁹





Room 5



Bluebird

1988

Six black-and-white photographs with oil tint and vinyl paint
Courtesy Vanhaerents Art Collection, Brussels (Belgium)





Bluebird 1988

By the mid-1970s, Baldessari mostly stopped using a camera to create new images himself and started using photographs he purchased from vendors in Hollywood selling movie stills, newspaper images, and publicity photographs. Over many years, he compiled files of these images. He would combine them, resizing, cropping, and adding color tints and dots to them, to make works such as *Bluebird*.

Below are the current categories in my files of movie stills, which form a large part of the raw material from which I draw to do my work. I hope the categories (which are continually shifting according to my needs and interests) will provide some clues to what animates the work I do.

attack, animal, animal/man ... chaos/order, city, cooking, chairs, curves, cheering, celebrity, consumerism, curiosity, crucifixion, crowds ... dwarf, death, disgrace,

danger, discipline, disaster ... freeway, fire, foreground, falling ... good/evil, goodbye, giant, gate, guns, guns (aggression) ... male/female, message, mutilation, movement, masks (monsters) ... race, relief, reason ... snakes, shadows, ships, smoke, sports, signal, search ... teeth, thought, triangle ... upside down, unconscious ... vision, victim, vulnerable ... walls, water, wound, watching, winning, women ...

A bargain always must be struck between what is available in movie stills and the concerns I have at the moment – I don't order the stills; I must choose from the menu. Also, one will read from this a rather hopeless desire to make words and images interchangeable – yet it is that futility that engrosses me. Lastly, I think one will notice the words falling into their own categories, two of those being formal concerns and content.¹⁰





Room 6



Tetrad Series: All Getting On Together

1999

Ink-jet on canvas; acrylic and enamel paint on canvas, in four parts

Collection Herbert Foundation, Ghent





Tetrad Series: All Getting On Together 1999

In the late 1990's, Baldessari explored combinatorial relationships of different categories of images. The Tetrad Series are regular combinations of four categories, with equal square partitions in which we find: a word, a found image, an image taken by the artist and a detail of a work by Goya. This continued the artist's interest in Goya's imagery and the combination of images and words that

construct associations of meaning which remain open to interpretation.

The Tetrad series is a new body of work that essentially is four ways of representing thought. Three employ imagery: from film / video, from art (specifically reproductions of work by Spanish artist Francisco Goya) and from life (objects). The fourth element employs text from Portuguese writer Fernando Pessoa.¹¹





Room 7



Two Figures and Two Figures (Masked) with Blue Shape
1990
Two colour photographs with acrylic and vinyl paint
Collection Herbert Foundation, Ghent





Two Figures and Two Figures (Masked) with Blue Shape 1990

This work is from a large series produced by Baldessari in 1990, where he removed critical narrative figures from photographs from his color image files, and merged images with similar themes from different sources. For it, he took a still, potentially from a comedy, and combined it with a scene from what may have been a hostage drama, removing the central figure to create an ambiguous tension between the characters.

... I wanted the immediacy of a kiosk poster and the type of imagery that would be easily read and/or dramatic in impact. All of the imagery is derived from movie and advertising photographs. Mostly I use only a small portion of the original photograph. How I crop the image is as important as

the initial selection of the image. The intended effect of these works is that they be paradoxical. That while life goes on (sometimes banal, sometimes dramatic) there is always something else going on that we cannot quite understand or identify – get a grasp on. A sense of false security or the calm before the storm ... The possibility of evil. The deferring of desire. The brooding enigma of good and bad.

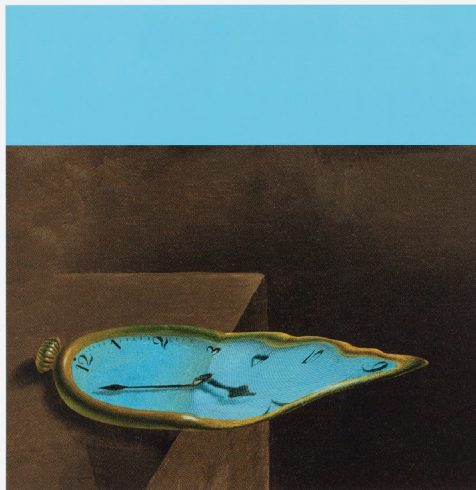
There are color signals as well: red = danger, blue = hope, and the subversion of those ideas.

Altogether these works should be information that is both banal and attractive, yet blocked, frustrated, and diverted into new channels. And then a repetition of that process. Now you have it, now you don't.¹²





Room 8



DUCHAMP

Double Vision: Duchamp
2011
Ink-jet print and enamel paint on canvas
Craig Robins Collection, Miami





Double Vision: Duchamp 2011

In the 2000s, Baldessari returned more consistently to combining images and text.. Like his purely photographic works, where he mixed unrelated images together to form new narratives, these new works fused pictures and words that at first glance are oppositional or wholly disparate. Yet, like the pairings found in *Ingres and Other Parables* (1972), succinct, illogical yet logical unions can be perceived in the works.

In doing my art I tend to work in series rather than piecemeal. I have an idea and then I pursue it work after work. There is no pre-established number. I quit when I can't proceed without repeating myself. It's an investigation that is pursued until I can't go further. I see each work as a stepping-stone along an unknown path....

The basic idea of this series is to slow down the spectator's response to art. Quite often it is

simply brand identification. Such as "That's a Warhol" or "That's a Picasso." I try to provoke doubt. I do this by providing misleading information. I've said I consider a word and an image equal. I have continued that idea in this series by printing the name of one artist but not the other, and by pairing movie or song titles with images.

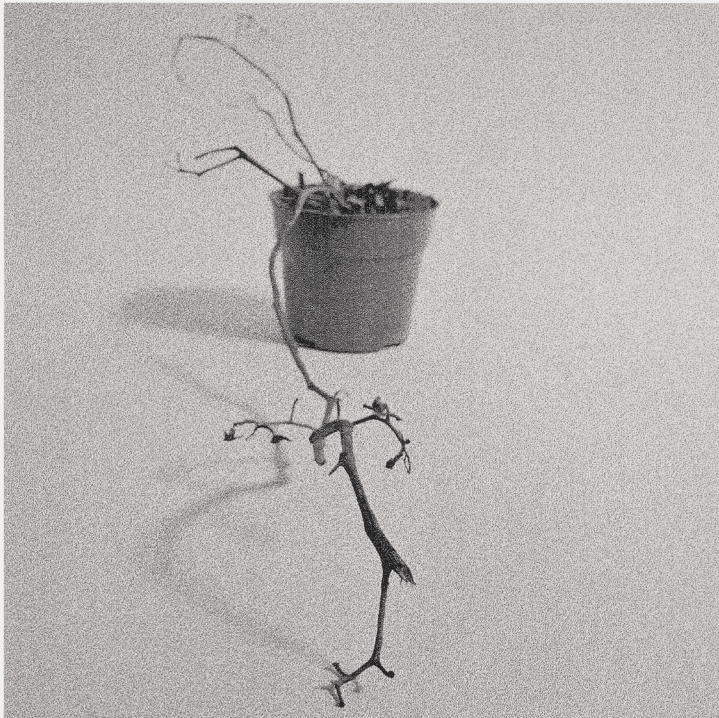
In all of the work I employ the device of doubling:

- 1. Merging two artists together to create a third artist [Double Bill].*
 - 2. Merging the name of one artist with the imagery of another artist [Double Vision].*
 - 3. Merging an image of art with a movie title (film noir) [Double Feature].*
 - 4. Merging an image of art with a popular song title [Double Play].*
- The end goal is to get people to really think about how art creates meaning.¹³*





Room 8



THAT ALWAYS HAPPENS

Goya Series: That Always Happens
1997
Ink-jet and enamel paint on canvas
Craig Robins Collection, Miami





Goya Series: That Always Happens 1997

In 1997, Baldessari produced a series of 26 works generically titled the Goya Series. All works measuring 190.5 × 152.4 cm were executed as inkjet prints with enamel paint on canvas. They explicitly materialize Baldessari's fascination with the work of the Spanish 18th-Century painter Francisco de Goya. Throughout his career, Baldessari conceived the titles of his works as a source of higher complexity, especially in those including images and words.

Sometimes humorous, sometimes disturbing, titles often describe the content of the work, while others describe how the work functions conceptually, somewhere between a riddle and a statement of intent.

In this new work I use the titles, or I invent Goyaesque titles and pair them with photographs I have taken. When the combination works best, neither photo nor title is prioritized, they are equally important and there is a moment of synthesis and equilibrium.¹⁴





Notes

- 1 *More Than You Wanted to Know About John Baldessari. Vol. 2*, edited and introduced by Meg Cranston, and Hans Ulrich Obrist. Zurich/Dijon, Switzerland/France: JRP-Ringier & Les Presses du Réel, 2013, p. 221.
- 2 *More Than You Wanted to Know About John Baldessari. Vol. 1*, edited and introduced by Meg Cranston, and Hans Ulrich Obrist. Zurich/Dijon, Switzerland/France: JRP-Ringier & Les Presses du Réel, 2013, p. 55.
- 3 John Baldessari By David Salle, Interview Magazine, October 9, 2013, <https://www.interviewmagazine.com/art/john-baldessari>
- 4 *More Than You Wanted To Know About John Baldessari. Vol. 1*, edited and introduced by Meg Cranston, and Hans Ulrich Obrist. Zurich/Dijon, Switzerland/France: JRP-Ringier/Les Presses du Réel, 2013, p. 55.
- 5 *John Baldessari Catalogue Raisonné, Volume One: 1956–1974*, edited by Patrick Pardo, and Robert Dean. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012, p. 378
- 6 *John Baldessari Catalogue Raisonné, Volume Four: 1994–2004*, edited by Patrick Pardo, and Robert Dean. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017, p. 410.
- 7 Baldessari quoted by Micol Hebron, Foreword to interview with John Baldessari by Moira Roth, 1973, Xtra Contemporary Art Quarterly, vol.8, issue 2, http://www.x-traonline.org/vol8_2/interview_jb.htm, viewed 17 April 2006.
- 8 *John Baldessari Catalogue Raisonné, Volume Five: 2005–2010*, edited by Patrick Pardo, and Robert Dean. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018, p. 410
- 9 *More Than You Wanted to Know About John Baldessari. Vol. 2*, edited and introduced by Meg Cranston, and Hans Ulrich Obrist. JRP-Ringier & Les Presses du Réel, Zurich/Dijon, 2013, pp. 172–173
- 10 *More Than You Wanted to Know About John Baldessari. Vol. 2*, edited and introduced by Meg Cranston, and Hans Ulrich Obrist. JRP-Ringier & Les Presses du Réel, Zurich/Dijon, 2013, pp. 116–119
- 11 *John Baldessari Catalogue Raisonné, Volume Four: 1994–2004*, edited by Patrick Pardo, and Robert Dean. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017, p. 406.
- 12 *More Than You Wanted to Know About John Baldessari. Vol. 2*, JRP-Ringier & Les Presses du Réel, Zurich/Dijon, 2013, pp. 147
- 13 *John Baldessari Catalogue Raisonné, Volume Six: 2011–2019*, edited by Patrick Pardo, and Robert Dean. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2020, p. 410
- 14 *More Than You Wanted to Know About John Baldessari. Vol. 2*, JRP-Ringier & Les Presses du Réel, Zurich/Dijon, 2013, pp. 175





Arms and Legs (Specif. Elbows & Knees), Etc. (Part One): Arm and Leg (With Column)
2007
Ink-jet prints and acrylic paint on three layers of foam PVC board
(with custom-cut raised and incised elements)
Würth Collection, Künzelsau





More activities around John Baldessari

JOHN BALDESSARI'S FAVOURITES – FOUR FILMS OVER THREE DAYS ON THE ROOFTOP

19 Sept. '25, 19:00

Le Mépris (Jean-Luc Godard),
introduced by the three curators

20 Sept. '25, 19:00

El Topo (Alejandro Jodorowsky)

21 Sept. '25, 14:00

The Gang's All Here (Busby Berkeley)

21 Sept. '25, 19:00

Johnny Guitar (Nicholas Ray)

BOZAR ALL OVER THE P(A)LACE 25 SEPT. '25

Step into Baldessari's playful world at Bozar's first Nocturne of the season. Composer-producer Christian Löffler sets the mood with live electronics and archival vocals, re-activating *John Baldessari Sings Sol LeWitt*. In the Rotunda, Danish artist Esben Weile Kjær's dancers blur ritual, '90s pop and club culture or slip into The 23 cinema for a more intimate finale with Baldessari-inspired shorts.

DIRK VAN BASTELAERE MEETS JOHN BALDESSARI – 19 NOV. '25, 19:30

Belgian poet Dirk van Bastelaere in conversation with Christophe Van Gerrewey (editor-in-chief of *De Witte Raaf*). Van Bastelaere will present a new poetry collection inspired by Baldessari, published by het balanseer and Bozar, in a trilingual edition, designed by Joris Kritis. During the same evening *De Witte Raaf* will present a special issue on Baldessari.

BOOK YOUR TOUR!

On our website, you'll find all the information you need to reserve a group visit. Also take a look at our offers for children, schools, or individual tours.

For more information and tickets: [Bozar.be](https://www.bozar.be)

Lenders

Coleção Armando e Armando Cabral, Col· MACBA Collection, MACBA Foundation, Herbert Foundation, Collections Michael Ballack, Craig Robins Collection, Robin Craig and Jackie Soffer Collection, Deichtorhallen Hamburg/Falckenberg Collection, Dörthe Greiner – Collection Schmidt-Drenhaus, Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI), Emanuel Hoffmann-Stichtung, Estate of John Baldessari,

FLR – Fundação Leal Rios, Fundación Telefónica, Galerie Greta Meert, Galerie Gisella Capitain, IVAM, Instituto Valenciano de Art Moderno, Marian Goodman Collection, Ringier Collection, Sprüth Magers, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, The ING BELGIUM COLLECTION, Vanhaerents Art Collection, Würth Collection, and all lenders who wish to remain anonymous.





John Baldessari.

Parables, Fables, and Other Tall Tales

Bozar – Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels
19 Sept.'25–1 Feb. '26

Curators

Rita McBride, Bartomeu Mari and David Platzker
in collaboration with Zoë Gray and Alberta
Sessa (Bozar)

Scenography

OFFICE Kersten Geers David Van Severen

Graphic Design

Joris Kritis assisted by Emil Kowalczyk

Bozar Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels

Director of Exhibitions Zoë Gray

Curatorial Project Coordinator Alberta Sessa

assisted by Oriana Lemmens

Exhibition Board Ann Flas, Evelyne Hinqué,

Anne Judong

Assistant to the Director of Exhibitions Axelle Ancion

Technical Head of Production Frédéric Oulieu

assisted by Damien Pairon

Marketing & Communication Julie Boone

Press Samir Al-Haddad

WILD (Words, Images, Live, Digital) Evelyne Hinqué,

Tom Van de Voorde, Juliette Duret,

David Slotema, Paul Briottet

Audience Engagement Laurence Ejzyn, Judith Hellers

Visitors' Experience Alexia Mangelinckx

Institutional Relations Magdalena Van den Broeck

Liskova, Brecht Wille Van de Veire

Partnerships & Philanthropy Elke Kristoffersen,

Barbara Deprez, Hélène Fraipont

*With the dedicated contribution of all
Bozar teams, technicians, guides and hosts.*

VISITOR'S GUIDE

Texts

Bartomeu Mari and David Platzker

Graphic design

Joris Kritis assisted by Emil Kowalczyk

Coordination

Alberta Sessa, Oriana Lemmens

Translations

Hilde Pauwels ^(NL), Isabelle Grynberg ^(FR)

Editing

Alberta Sessa, Vera Kotaji ^(FR), Guillaume

De Grieve, Oriana Lemmens ^(NL), Zoë Gray ^(EN)

Images

© Courtesy Estate of John Baldessari © 2025;

Courtesy John Baldessari Family Foundation;

Sprüth Magers.

Film stills

© Courtesy Estate of John Baldessari © 2025;

Courtesy John Baldessari Family Foundation;

Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI); Sprüth Magers.

E.R.

Christophe Slagmuylder, rue Ravenstein-
straat 23, 1000 Brussels

Acknowledgments

Bozar warmly thanks the curators, Craig
Robins Collection, The John Baldessari Family
Foundation, The Estate of John Baldessari,
Sprüth Magers, Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI),
all the lenders, scenographers, subsidising
authorities, and the numerous individuals who
assisted us in realising this project, whom we
cannot name here.

Partners

The John Baldessari Family Foundation,
the Estate of John Baldessari & Sprüth Magers,
Craig Robins Collection, Miami

Support

Vlaamse Overheid, uhoda, Sprüth Magers,
Maharam



Vlaanderen
verleendend werkt



Sprüth Magers

Structural partners





**19 Sep. '25–
1 Feb. '26**

Bozar

