

**PRESS RELEASE****Media contact:****Andrea Schwan, Andrea Schwan Inc.****+ 1 212 924 1033, andrea@andreaschwan.com**HAUSER & WIRTH NEW YORK TO OPEN WITH **ALLAN KAPROW YARD****FEATURING REINVENTIONS BY****WILLIAM POPE.L****JOSIAH McELHENY****SHARON HAYES****September 23 – October 24, 2009****Opening: Wednesday, September 23, 6 – 8 pm**

New York, NY... By the late 1950s, American painter Allan Kaprow — formally trained in the era of Abstract Expressionism — began to view the action of Action Painting as far more important than painting itself. With the 1959 work *18 Happenings in 6 parts*, a series of seemingly random but carefully choreographed activities executed with such friends as composer John Cage and artist Robert Rauschenberg, he embarked upon a career of intellectually rigorous site-specific, impermanent works that defied commoditization and ultimately



Allan Kaprow installing 'Yard' in New York City, 1961

gave birth to performance and installation art. The inventor of Happenings and Environments, Kaprow joyously incorporated improvisation and public participation within and beyond the traditional museum and gallery context. "Life is much more interesting than art," he wrote. "The line between art and life should be kept as fluid, and perhaps indistinct, as possible."

Fifty years later and in celebration of the opening of its first American gallery, Hauser & Wirth will present Allan Kaprow's seminal Environment *Yard*, an enduringly influential work — a veritable mountain of black rubber auto tires and tarpaper-wrapped forms through which visitors jumped and crawled — first made by the artist in 1961 and radically reinterpreted in other locations ten times before his death in 2006. Opening to the public on September 23, 2009, the exhibition 'Allan Kaprow YARD' will present a dramatic, sprawling reinvention of *Yard* by prominent performance artist and interventionist William Pope.L at the site of the work's original creation: the Manhattan townhouse at 32 East 69th Street, then home to the legendary Martha Jackson Gallery and soon the address of the new Hauser & Wirth New York gallery.

On view through October 24, 2009 'Allan Kaprow YARD' also includes noted artists Josiah McElheny and Sharon Hayes, each of whom will create unique reinventions of *Yard* at public sites in Queens and downtown Manhattan, respectively, making the exhibition a larger and increasingly public New York City Happening in the true spirit of Allan Kaprow.

'Allan Kaprow YARD' has been organized by Helen Molesworth, Houghton Curator of Contemporary Art at the Harvard Art Museums, working in close collaboration with the Estate of Allan Kaprow. The exhibition will also include a special downloadable podcast by Dr. Judith Rodenbeck, chair of the Division of Visual Culture at Sarah Lawrence College.

Dr. Rodenbeck, an art historian whose work concentrates on intermedia and time-based practices of the 1960s, will create a radio show-like program of lively interviews with friends and colleagues of Allan Kaprow, as well as younger artists whose work is indebted to him.

At Hauser & Wirth New York, the exhibition will be accompanied by an installation of archival material related to Allan Kaprow and *Yard*, selected by Barry Rosen, advisor to the Estate of Allan Kaprow.

### EXHIBITION DETAILS

All of Allan Kaprow's *Environments* and *Happenings* were conceived so that they could also be realized by other people at other times and in different locations via, as he stated, "reinvention, not reenactment." Addressing the ephemeral and aesthetically mutable nature of his work, Kaprow wrote, "If a work is of value it will stimulate the creation of related works later on, thus the tradition will stay alive this way."

Guided by this philosophy, curator Helen Molesworth has identified William Pope.L, Josiah McElheny, and Sharon Hayes as three artists whose points of view equip them uniquely to follow Kaprow's meticulously worded and deceptively simple set of master instructions for all future presentation of his work: "Look at the documentation. Reinvent the pieces."

"Kaprow's *Environments* and *Happenings* are like musical scores or great plays that will now and forever be conducted and played by others," Molesworth explains. "For 'Allan Kaprow YARD', we wanted to commission artists who would be sensitive to the complicated issues involved in reinventing another artist's work. Each of the three participants has an unmistakable individual voice and strong identity, but each is also a generous and open-minded thinker."



'Yard' in Pasadena, 1967



'Yard, Situations Environments Spaces', 1961

Titled 'YARD (To Harrow),' William Pope.L's reinvention of *Yard* will be constructed within the walls of Hauser & Wirth New York on the Upper East Side, building upon the literal and symbolic blackness of the original 1961 work's defining rubber tires and tarpaper forms. "What struck me in looking at the first version of *Yard* was Kaprow's playful impetus," Pope.L explains. "His invitation for people to touch the tires, move them around, climb into them was an end in itself, art for art's sake, essentially upbeat. I'm looking at the more harrowing side of the work, the unsaid, unmentioned and less decipherable aspects that are embedded within it but felt. The black rubber, for example, and its industrial legacy, its smell, its density, its effect upon the eco-system, and the associations these things provoke, all resonate in the world we know today. I'm interested in what materials call up from life."

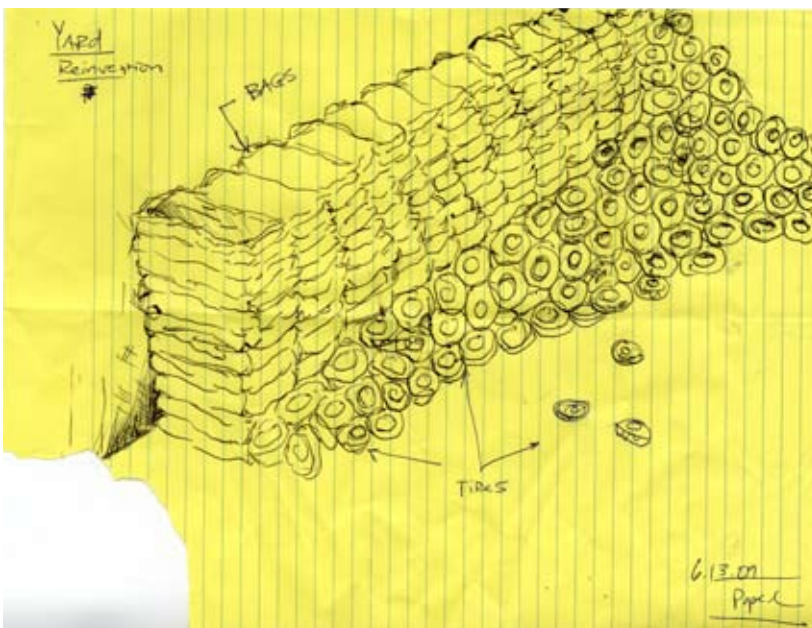
Filling the entire first floor of the gallery, Pope.L's reinvention of *Yard* will comprise an enveloping interactive landscape of more than 1,200 tires rising, falling and rising again; gleaming, stacked body bags; mirrors and continually shifting light effects; closed circuit video and a soundscape composed of lapping waves, distant train whistles, and a voice evoking the cadences of Barack Obama, reading a poetic and politically-inflected text that re-contextualizes Kaprow's own instructions to "rearrange the tires." Regarding his reinvention, Pope.L said: "For Kaprow, with *Yard* in 1961 the notion of moving the tires was the end in itself. Visitors moved the tires and didn't ask why. Today people will ask why and I'm interested in answering that question with my version. I'm interested here in a sense of loss and art as a means of representing loss within the social fabric — within the layers of our lived lives — and the loss that comes out of lack."

William Pope.L went to Rutgers, where Allan Kaprow taught. He is an inheritor of the late artist's lineage, known for a highly original blend of installation, instigation and performance. He is represented by Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York.



New York-based artist Sharon Hayes works in performance, video and installation, creating situations that expose dramatic frictions between collective and individual activities and expose the infinitesimal gap between public and private realms. She is particularly interested in the role of language and how it invites people to rethink their roles in the collective experience.

For Allan Kaprow *YARD*, Hayes will present her reinvention – titled '*YARD (Sign)*' – in the New York Marble Cemetery at 41 ½ Second Avenue on the Lower East Side, where she will fill the historic site with hand-painted signs –some small, some quite large. Hayes has been influenced in this piece by the various written statements Kaprow produced over the years for his own different reinventions of '*Yard*,' as well as the poster he made in 1961 his first version of the project, a large ink drawing of a classic yard sale sign. At the same time, Hayes' work at the Marble Cemetery will evoke the American archetype of the suburban yard, a private domain that is nevertheless often filled with public signs, notably for political campaigns and real estate sales. Sharon Hayes is represented by Tanya Leighton Gallery, Berlin.



Sketches by William Pope.L for 'Yard Reinvention: To Harrow' at Hauser & Wirth New York

Titled 'YARD (Junk Yard) 1961/2009,' Josiah McElheny's reinvention will be a massive photo projection at the Queens Museum of Art in Flushing, where it will be on view from 23 September through 4 October. His panoramic, 90 by 30 foot aerial photograph will depict a unique site in New York: the so-called "Iron Triangle" in Queens that is also known as Willet's Point, a seven-block area consisting primarily of junkyards, wrecking yards, tire graveyards, and auto repair workshops, a zone of pollution and recycling currently the focal point for controversy and dispute about urban planning. McElheny's giant image will be assembled from multiple photographs shot in a surveillance-like manner from a helicopter; the work will be displayed on a large wall that encloses the Queens Museum's famous "Panorama," a scale model of all five boroughs of New York City. Within the picture, visitors will see this isolated section of the city that abuts the new Mets baseball stadium, as well as Flushing Meadows Corona Park where the Queens Museum is located, in a different context, a new way. Like an ephemeral installation work, the "Iron Triangle" will soon disappear to make way for a contested city-run redevelopment project, becoming history shaped by memory. Josiah McElheny is represented by Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York.

Summarizing her approach to 'Allan Kaprow YARD', Molesworth commented: "Allan Kaprow's legacy is enormous and is seen across the territory of artmaking today, from the predominance of installation art and performance, to the idea that the artist is a person who is given the permission to be questioning and playful. And that essential part of art's role in the world — to extend those qualities of playfulness, questioning, and curiosity into the larger social fabric of our daily lives — was Kaprow's discovery and achievement."

#### **ABOUT HAUSER & WIRTH**

Hauser & Wirth is a global enterprise, founded in Zürich in 1992 by Iwan and Manuela Wirth and Ursula Hauser. Since 1996 the gallery has been located in the former Löwenbrau brewery building, along with other contemporary art galleries, the Kunsthalle Zürich, and the Migros Museum.

In 2003, Hauser & Wirth opened Hauser & Wirth London on Piccadilly in an historic building designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens, adding a new and energetic dimension to London's growing importance as an international art center. In 2006, Hauser & Wirth at Colnaghi was created on London's Old Bond Street.

Hauser & Wirth New York is open to the public Tuesday through Saturday, 10 am until 6 pm. The general public can find additional information about the gallery, its exhibitions and programs online at [www.hauserwirth.com](http://www.hauserwirth.com)

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YARD, 1990

FULL IMAGE COURTESY CREDITS:

Yard, 1961

Allan Kaprow papers, ca. 1940 - 1997

Photo: Ken Heyman. Courtesy Research Library, The Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, California (980063) © Ken Heyman-Woodfin Camp

Allan Kaprow with participants in Yard, 1967

Presented for the exhibition 'Allan Kaprow' at the Pasadena Art Museum, Pasadena, California

Photo: © Julian Wasser

Research Library, The Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, California (980063)

Yard, 'Situations Environments Spaces', 1961

Ink on paper

34.3 x 26.7 cm / 13 1/2 x 10 1/2 in

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Sketch by William Pope.L for 'Yard Reinvention: To Harrow' at Hauser & Wirth New York, 2009

Ink on Paper

© William Pope.L

Courtesy Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York

Sketch by William Pope.L for 'Yard Reinvention: To Harrow' at Hauser & Wirth New York, 2009

Ink on Paper

© William Pope.L

Courtesy Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York

Yard, 1990

Lithograph

100 x 70 cm / 39 3/8 x 27 1/2 in

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