



Elmyr de Hory

"Dedicated to everyone from whom I have learned."

Ayreen Anastas and Rene Gabri, Audrey Cottin, Chris Evans, Malak Helmy, Will Holder, Clifford Irving, Gabriel Lester, David Marcel Levine, Nicholas Matranga, John Menick, Morten Norbye Halvorsen, Michael Portnoy, Vivian Rehberg, Aaron Schuster, Benjamin Seror, Snowden Snowden, Adva Zakai and more.

Last seen in Paris, The Clifford Irving Show stays true to its founding principles: life-writing, truth-bending, stage-celebrating. An acclaimed theater director David Levine will present theatrical adaptations of Manhattan's Serenade and Neighbo's Wife - two brand new screenplays by Clifford Irving in a gallery that will act as a backdrop and a character of the play. Interspersed with acts by

* "Phantom Rosebuds", an autobiography of Clifford Irving, as well as "The Autobiography of Any One Being Including Every One Before", both designed by Dexter Sinister, will be available. Food and drink will be served. Please be on time! Booking is recommended, send an email to info@objectif-exhibitions.org

Objectif

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Objectif

Thank you for coming. I will try to keep the rant and rave tucked in and the available facts as lined up as possible. The first story I have to tell is not exactly true, but it isn't exactly false, either. It's a story about literature leaving the line and entering the plane, painting leaving the plane and entering space, sculpture stepping into the fourth dimension and finally proposing a 'completely new art form'. Call these forms a secession of tricksters who violate the boundaries to keep them alacritous and productive, who view the walls not as a fence but a perch. For nobody knows himself, if he is only himself and not also another one at the same time.

Objectif Exhibitions
Kleine Markt 7-9/26
Antwerp, 2000, Belgium
T: +32.3.2884977
E: info@objectif-exhibitions.org
W: www.objectif-exhibitions.org
Opening hours are Wednesday to Saturday from 2 to 6pm

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Pablo Font

Categories: Casual Exotic Handwritten

Font preview interface showing 'The Clifford Irving Show' in the Pablo Font.

The Clifford Irving Show

Saturday December 4, 2010: A full evening's event, from 6 to 11pm.

Curated by Raimundas Malasauskas



C, When and where were you writing this? I'm interested in knowing the period of time during which you made this text, the duration, the sites and locations in which you wrote. Was it made in one sitting, indoors, or did it piece together in transit?

A
It would probably be more interesting to hear what made you ask this question, because it is perceptive, but perceptive of what? I suppose the text is about a kind of movement or flow, between bodies, places, and times. But it would be unsuitable to say we wrote the text in libraries, coffee shops, bookstores, parks, public spaces, and sometimes our apartment. It wrote itself, and we merely arranged, cut, edited, selected, conducted, or choreographed in such spaces. Maybe this choreography is what you perceive as a kind of movement or transitional quality and not the actual locations in which they came together.

C, was there a logbook around its writing and physical movements. I am curious to learn of the events unfolding around you. What is the general mood and atmosphere? I imagine you wrote this last year in the midst of a meltdown – a full-fledged economic crisis. A good time to be embodying a master hoax?

A
I try to avoid any sentence that employs the word 'always', because always is a kind of impossibility and a lie. So I will just say often. Often, I find that there is a work beside the work, we could call it the *para-work*, which is as interesting, if not more interesting than the work itself. Sometimes, that work is the life beside the work. Hence, this *para-work* is impossible to contain, to write down, to record, to transcribe, to photograph, to document. And any attempt to record it, note it, is *imutile*, or futile, because even if we were to write this logbook, a *para-work* would emerge beside it, and immediately more interesting. It is the uncontainable aspects of an experience or a process, a life lived, versus the one written or contained. Maybe the text is in some respect responding to this. And possibly, the text is a kind of machine meant to animate, accelerate or open the space for this *para-work*.

B
This book wrote itself in a time when the biggest fiction of all, the fiction of capital, was being exposed. That fiction is still being told, but the 'experts' of this story simply showed their incompetence to hold the story together. Their expertise, their management of statistics, their science, their schools, their pragmatism, all undone by the delirium. This was one of the initial connections between Clifford Irving and the process we embarked on. You see, *F is for Fake* as well as the gesture of Irving, are tied to this question of competence, of questioning the figure of the expert. In an age of technocrats and economists who tell governors what to do, such a gesture, such a critique is a necessary one. Our question was what that gesture could mean today and what it could

become, if put into play, and engaged with the precise moment in which it came together.

A
Yes, ultimately, maybe we are ill equipped to tell the story of our lives and every autobiography is a kind of hoax.

B
The meaning we try to attribute to life, to locate an experience, and then this immanent aspect, which cannot be grasped or held, cannot belong to anyone. The book is a kind of confrontation between *the life* and *a life*.

C, There is a regularity in the reading time you lend to each character you speak through. It seems very egalitarian and democratic this balanced chance for each to have a voice. This is curious to me that while you inhabit different characters, you also do it within certain limits - with a certain regard for them how much time you occupy them. Or is it the reverse? Perhaps you are taking care of your self by defining a limit to how much others can occupy your thoughts in order to maintain your individual mind's integrity, if possible - is it possible? Or are these continuous switches and short occupations your mechanism for movement and transformation; is it that if you stayed with one person too long you'd risk being contained in them and their time-space forever? I noticed your visits with some characters recur and I wonder why they are given that privilege. Is it that you had a closer affinity to them, or that they allowed for a specifically comfortable kind of travel?

B
Each name hides a tribe, a multiplicity of forces and tremors. Some of these forces are more intense, some last longer, others are nearly imperceptible.

A
But yes, the hope was not to necessarily channel different voices or modes of writing, as much remain open to the ruptures or excesses of any attempt to give an account of oneself. And so each gap is as important as each movement, and those gaps are the most regular intervals. This is probably what Michel Foucault meant when he suggested that 'The trace of the writer is found only in the singularity of his absence.' Or as Agamben paraphrases, writing is 'not so much the expression of a subject as the opening of a space in which the writing subject does not cease to disappear.'

C, You make me think of chronotopes, they say "the image of a man is always intrinsically chronotopic". C, you make me think of corridors, halls and squares – they say that such thresholds are where events and crises occur to or around characters, where they experience a renewal, resurrection or epiphany – a decision that determines the life of man. C, they say that in the chronotopes of thresholds time is instantaneous, has no duration and falls out of the normal course of biographical time. C, it interests me that your text and the characters in it are always on a threshold – each paragraph of each character tips on the edge of a blank inter-

val. Is it because of this location on the structure of the page that they are in a constant state of transformation into someone else?

A
The best interviews or conversations become a kind of collaborative process of thinking and writing and losing the self.

B
Yes, it is said that each thing has its own duration, the tick, the dog, the rock, the universe. But what can we say of immanent processes?

C, It is interesting to me that while there is a collapsed time in the text – a past present, multiplicity of spaces in one, a consistent intersubjectivity- that still there is a particularity maintained in how each person speaks- the particular chronotopes within each anyone's manner of speaking is still recognizable. There are internal structures of each autobiography's writing that you leave traces of. Is that where the grand forgery is, in an ability to feign a certain tradition?

A
In any conversation or movement between individuals or particles, there are also instants of discord, dis-attraction, dis-junction.

B
'A' means to say that, maybe for us, if we can speak of the tribe, we discovered that the forgery, if we can speak of forgery, is an everyday type. You see, to forge has a double resonance. On the one hand, it could be to make or shape something and on the other, it could be to copy or deceive. Besides getting into a debate about the fact that it could mean something else altogether, if we would want it to.

A
Maybe with a life, we are simply always doing both, and the one is always in relation to the other. And particularly when we are writing or attempting to represent it, there is an intrinsic incapacity or incompetence, but also deception. But here the deception is neither intentional or unintentional, it is simply a part of this crazy assemblage of enunciations, including recollection, forgetting, fabrication, language, which we call auto-biography.

B
We are all forgers.

C, Do you think the structure and speed of your total text are conditional of what was in the ink, the air and the beads in the physical space around you at that time? In a sense I ask if you were being authored to write in a certain manner as opposed to choosing to construct this kind of collective non-authorship. So maybe the hoax was on you? Does this matter to you, C, does it shift power?

A
The written conversation can also confront this asynchronous moment, when it appears that a response precedes the question.

B
What "A" means to say is that deception was our medium.

C, *I'd like to know more about the layout structure and images.*

A
Sometimes the less you know, the more interesting and productive.

B
I disagree.

C, *In a context of such surplus of text, commentary, and reviews is there no value in footnotes and citations, for sourcing of an idea or thought, for giving a reader a possibility to trace a genealogy? Is there value more in designing these different voices and thoughts together? What kind of value is it? What is produced?*

B
Well, maybe it is the archeological you are invoking. The genealogical moment for me or her or him is the moment something dug up, is put into play, or put into relations, made contemporary.

A
But there was a question whether all of these separate voices needed names. And we tried to organize a meeting together, no one showed up. So we thought that the author and the title should be the same, as can be standard practice with autobiographies. And this title reflected not just any one but every one.

C, *I heard you say once that intellectuality and thought prevent the separation of naked life from its form. That is to say that gesture and action, or a word and its performance are kept in sync through the process of thought. I assume you are saying this in the context of thought as a mental faculty and the action as a physical faculty in physical space. But what if you do not have the luxury of moving or performing in physical space and are bound to being a textual character on a page, your gestures and actions limited to a textual realm, that it is the site of production and the site of being? How then would that statement you made apply?*

A
This question of gesture is central, but it does not necessarily oppose itself to action. It is distinguished from production or action in that it is a process in which something is put into play, or endured.

B
And if we could be said to perform in, through, with, language, one could equally say that language performs us, produces a subject. We give the name gesture to the sphere of life that is neither belonging to the writing subject nor to the one written down.

A
The intellectuality that B is speaking of is not one necessarily found in the academy, and it is definitively not the kind of thought which is instrumen-

talized toward the interests of capital, or the perpetual 3% growth, or figuring out how to reinvest the surplus toward greater profits, nor even toward how to write some thing to impress some one, to publish somewhere, to get some job. So this idea of intellectuality is antagonistic to these processes, in which means and ends are separated, and life is separated from life in every sphere. Thought thus acts as a unitary power here, but oddly enough, if he includes corporeal processes or habitual ways of life, within this thought, it is a very different conception or use of this word.

C, *At moments I think of the Autobiography of Everyone as part of the production of a Theban play in the sense that Theban plays were often made in tetralogies that began with the death of the main character and developed as a web-like narrative of events that unravel around and beyond that moment – think of how in the wake of Oedipus' death tales of Agamemnon, Antigone, Electra and so on sprang forth. This occurred to me recently when I had asked D how a trial for the kind of mass forgery committed in this text would function. D responded by saying that perhaps this could be considered in psycho-analytic terms, as an Oedipal offspring to a father who cheated. I started to think of this text as a little later in the production, that the Oedipal offspring was in the Clifford Irving shows and this as the stage for the characters that proliferate and come forth beyond the moment of the protagonist's death. What are your thoughts on the trial of a mass forgery, the Oedipal reaction to an inherited hoax and the characterization of your text as a Theban play?*

B
The problem with Freud and the psycho-analytic framework is that it does not know how to separate an anus from a delirium. It falls into a paranoid regime of signs which is incessantly looking for the meaning behind everything and not surprisingly always finding the same milieu or usual suspects, the family, the father, the mother, the phallus, castration, etc... It is not disconnected to the network composing the apparatus of the sexes, the apparatus of identity: a white wall, with a black hole, which is ascribed a name, and filled with various contents, fantasies, wishes, secrets, and covered up with a face. Irving is neither our father, nor the main figure in play in this text. Rather Irving is a name, a persona, who is part of a social field, and we return him, his gesture, his hoax, his autobiography there, in that field. So this book is not about a psycho-analytic chain of father-child-father-child-father-child, a chain of infinite regression or progression. It is a mutant or abstract line we are channeling.

A
Maybe it is the autobiography itself which could be said to be on trial, the life accounted for in the autobiography and the deceptions inherent in that process. But here, we hope to turn that inherent deception or incompetence in every one's favor.

B
Within this social field, you have this massive investment in the production of faces, names, biographies, which temporarily occupy the stage of his-

tory. That mediatized images today are mistaken for being this 'stage where history unfolds' is a subject for another conversation. Two anchors for us to consider: In the midst of the production of these names, personalities, and faces is an apparent faceless and nameless multitude (always aspiring for a name and a face?). And on the other, what accompanies all, named or unnamed, the immortal life and death anticipating everyone.

A
This absurd over-investment in the production of an identity, of a name, 'their loves', 'their traumas', 'their greed', 'their egos', 'their doubts', 'doom', 'heroic ascents' and 'tragic falls' ...

B
And what remains, what survives of this life, once the subject is no more, and the testimony we are left with, inadequate, incomplete, errant, forged, ...?

A
Maybe we can speak about desire. Desire as the constituent force of history, which comes from and returns to the outside, from the social, artificial and natural world and back. History as the result of a multiplicity of forces which collide with, escape from, alloy themselves to, attempt to recuperate, dance with, manipulate, shift, displace, overcome, betray, act and react to one another.

B
This is the absurdity with these figures and charts, – which also comprise the book – since today it is not clear which figures are the dominant paradigm of a force of history. The figure as the subject or the figure as financial charts, economic rules and laws, inflation and deflation, a capitalist economic historical determinism. Are we to reassert the subject in the face of these nameless and indeterminate game of numbers? Are we to regroup ourselves under molar identities of nation, religion, race, etc... ?

A
But in the book, both types of figures appear disrobed of any specific context or history, and are returned back, hopefully to an indeterminate field of forces from which they emerge. So maybe instead of saying we are left with a strange account of desire, we can also speak of the traces of gestures in which the writing subject, rather than becoming subjectivated by language, consistently creates a space in which to disappear or withdraw. And in putting her or himself into play, reveals the impossibility of being contained in this text. And it is only in this sense that the double meaning of forgery can come to light.

B
Each work, accompanied by a *para-work*, or what we could simply call *a life*, or a form of life.