

BRIAN WOOD

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PERVERSE SCIENCE

February 12 - March 14, 1992

Lieberman & Saul Gallery

New York, New York

Essay by Ann Lauterbach

I. UNTITLED, 1991
18 x 12 in. — 46 x 30.5 cm
Ink and photograph on mylar





BW 91

BRIAN WOOD

The Gods of the earth and sea,
Sought thro' Nature to find this Tree
But their search was all in vain:
There grows one in the Human Brain

—*William Blake*

There are two ways of knowing things, knowing
them immediately or intuitively, and knowing
them conceptually or representatively.

—*William James*

CATEGORIES DEFY THEIR IMPERATIVES; edges are uneasy in new light: woodsmoke in air, smokey air, scent, cloud and, on the evening screen, video flames. *This* moves to the place of *that* as subjects come unbound from their syntax; names for things are dismantled from their objects like so many ribbons, wrappings, strewn on the floor of history. Into this attenuated breach come questions of authenticity, belief: what is real? what true? We are implored: *look again*.

Look at what? We are asked to reconsider the nature of a frame, that it might be arbitrary, fugitive, less than full because closed. Or, more positively, chosen: this riddle of fingers, that ancient vessel, this scrap of tree. Or something we cannot quite identify because it has been pulled up close into our perceptual field to be reconstrued, interpreted. The way an event, say, becomes a memory belonging to you, only yours. We know someone's body was present, braiding elsewhere with now. So the frame narrates space.

An event. An eventuality. What is evident.

Or to revise our notion of speed. Hand, eye. *The hand is quicker than the eye*, whispers the alchemist. Whose? Where? When? The camera's shameless blink, or the wrist, poised like a hummingbird above the blank page? Blur of foliage against some sky, the cast and flick of a brush on watery ground: stillness, motion, flatness, depth, opacity, luminosity: coordinates of perception test what is and what is not yet.

Delay throws a shadow across the instant, curiosity couples with patience: waiting to find out what will emerge from the emulsion's uncertain fluidity. Seeing as a form of touch, touch as a way of seeing. The gaze as an act of intimacy, projecting the body into space (there), taking it in as the body is extended into the sensual persuasion of drawing (here). The body's signature in the marvellous exposure of singular attention.

Coming to the place of doubt. We feel insecure, abandoned, too much relinquished to what is already (t)here. Fatigued with choices we seek coherence, but it will not suffice if it is merely in the service of known limits. Possibilities arise when one code (drawing) invades another (photography), rupturing expectations, thwarting our assumptions. What to risk, what cherish? Psyche awakes to embrace Eros, illuminating her tasks, revealing what has been accomplished, and proceeds to the next place, neither coerced nor anticipated. As certain logics might lead ineluctably to what we know but do not yet understand: send our instruments into the heavens to find out what the angels are wearing today.

The visual resembles and dissembles. Abstraction is a human enchantment, a language. And facts glide down like so many ashes, like wet snow falling from a branch into icy waters. So the real is pried loose at last, leaving the nude stain of meaning on the slippery rock. What mediates in this wash of incommensurates are forms that arise from particulars (seeing, touching) in trajectories of applied response. The interior erupts onto the exterior; recognitions blur and focus. Now I am inside it, not looking at it but at its entanglement. Inherently deferential, the image is fathomed as a *gesture toward*, as if magic were structure.

Ann Lauterbach
December, 1991

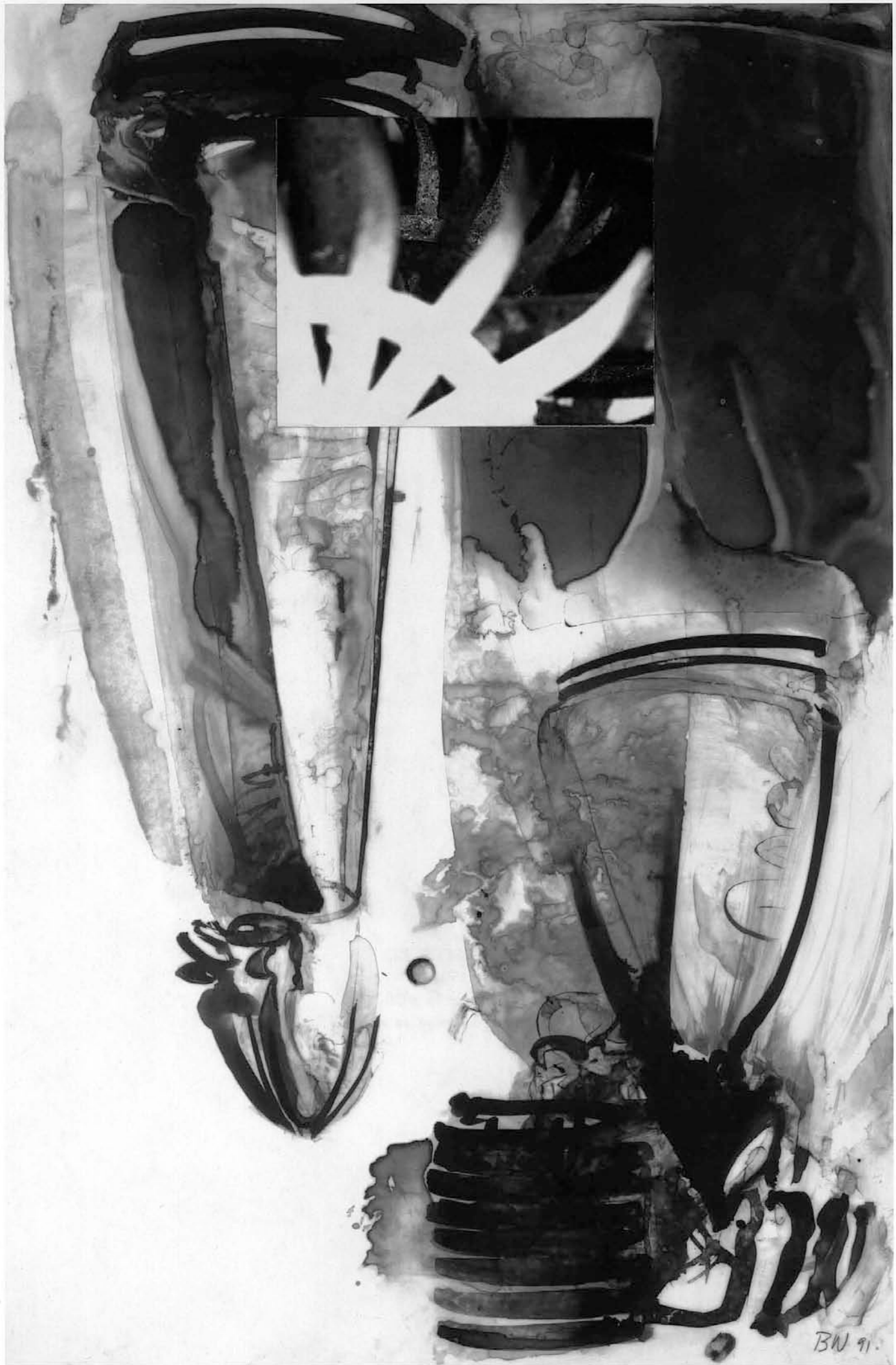


IV. UNTITLED

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V. UNTITLED

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VI. UNTITLED

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18 x 12 *in.* — 46 x 30.5 *cm*

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VII. UNTITLED

1991

18 x 12 in. — 46 x 30.5 cm

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Brian Wood lives and works in New York City.

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 1992 Lieberman & Saul Gallery, New York
1989 Lillian Mauer Contemporary Art,
Montreal
1988 Lieberman & Saul Gallery, New York
1987 McIntosh/Drysdale Gallery,
Washington, DC
1986 McIntosh/Drysdale Gallery,
Washington, DC
John A. Schweitzer Gallery,
Montreal
Evelyn Aimis Gallery, Toronto
1985 Marcuse Pfeifer Gallery, New York
Windsor Art Gallery, Windsor
1984 Nina Freudenheim Gallery, Buffalo
Concordia Art Gallery, Montreal
1981 Optica Gallery, Montreal
1980 Ydessa Gallery, Toronto
University of Alberta, Edmonton
Art Gallery of Hamilton, Hamilton
1979 Galerie Marielle Mailhot, Montreal
Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon
1975 Collective for Living Cinema,
New York
Film Forum, New York

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 1992 *Drawn in the Nineties*, Katonah Art
Museum, Katonah, NY
Beau, Canadian Museum of
Contemporary Photography, Ottawa
American Photography, Ecole des
Beaux Arts, Reims, France
Les Boites à Malice, StellaR Gallery,
Paris, France
Collectif Génération, Livre d'artiste
with G. Jassaud and C. Prigent,
Paris, France
1991 *Contemporary Landscape Photography
from the TMA Collection*, Tampa
Museum of Art, Tampa, FL
1990 *Ellis Island Project*, Ellis Island
Museum, New York, NY
1989 *The Photography of Invention:
American Pictures of the Eighties*,
Museum of American Art,

- Washington, DC;
Museum of Contemporary Art,
Chicago, IL; Walker Art Center,
Minneapolis, MN
Sequence (con)Sequence, Blum Art
Institute, Bard College, NY
1987 *Portraits*, Virginia Museum of Fine
Arts, Richmond, VA
Turino Fotografia 1987, Turino, Italy
Summer Exhibition, Lieberman &
Saul Gallery, New York, NY
Right Foot, San Francisco Airport,
San Francisco, CA
1986 *The Animal in Photography, 1843–
1985*, The Photographers' Gallery,
London, England
Taking Liberties, Buffalo, Albany, NY
Les Rencontres D'Arles, Arles, France
Artists Invite Artists, John A.
Schweitzer Gallery, Montreal
Interiors, Everson Museum,
Syracuse, NY
Postmarked New York, Southern
Alberta Art Gallery, Lethbridge
1985 *The Figure: An Interpretive Study*,
Tower Gallery, New York, NY
Beautiful Photographs, One Penn
Plaza, New York, NY
Narrativité/Performativité, Optica
Gallery, Montreal
Totems, John A. Schweitzer Gallery,
Montreal
The Sensuous Image, Cava Gallery,
Philadelphia, PA
1984 *Color Photographs: New Acquisitions*,
Museum of Modern Art, New York,
NY
Color in the Summer, Brooklyn
Museum, Brooklyn, NY
Allocations, 49th Parallel Gallery,
New York, NY
Contemporary Triptychs, Blum Art
Institute, Bard College, NY
1983 *Big Pictures by Contemporary
Photographers*, Museum of Modern
Art, New York, NY

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- ARCO Collection, Art Museum of South Texas, Corpus Christie, TX
Photographic Sequences, Art Gallery of Peterborough, Peterborough
- 1982 *Twentieth Century Photographs from the Collection of the Museum of Modern Art*, Seibu Museum, Tokyo, Japan; Honolulu Art Museum, Hawaii
 Delahunty Gallery, Dallas, TX
- 1978 *Frameworks*, Whitney Museum (Downtown), New York, NY

MUSEUM COLLECTIONS

Museum of Modern Art, New York
 Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
 Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn
 New York Public Library, New York
 Tampa Museum of Art, Tampa
 Art Gallery of Hamilton, Hamilton
 Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon
 Artbank, Ottawa
 Concordia Art Gallery, Montreal
 Museum of Fine Arts, Montreal
 Museum of Contemporary Art, Montreal
 Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography, Ottawa

GRANTS & SCHOLARSHIPS

- 1984 National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship Grant
 1980, 82 Arts Grant (Canada Council)
 1978, 79 Arts Grant (Canada Council)
 1975 Woodrow Wilson Fellowship

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- 1989 Ballerini, Julia. *Sequence (con)Sequence*, Aperture
 Smith, Joshua. *The Photography of Invention: American Pictures of the Eighties*, MIT
 Duncan, Ann. *The Montreal Gazette* 6/8/89
- 1987 Campbell, James. "The Art of Brian

- Wood," *Vie des Arts* 9/87
 Cruger, George. *Portraits*, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts
- 1986 Noble, Alexandra. *The Animal in Photography: 1843-1985*, The Photographers' Gallery, London, England
 Lewis, Jo Ann. *The Washington Post* 2/8/86
 Lepage, Jocelyne. *La Presse*, Montreal 4/26/86
 Daigneault, Gilles. *Le Devoir*, Montreal 5/3/86
- 1985 Grundberg, Andy. *The New York Times* 2/15/85
 DeBono, Norman. *The Saturday Windsor Star* 1/5/85
- 1984 Hunter, Sam. *The Museum of Modern Art, New York: The History and Collection*, Abrams
 Lifson, Ben. *Contemporary Triptychs*, Bard College
 Bannon, Anthony. *Buffalo News* 2/24/84
 Sabbath, Lawrence. *The Montreal Gazette* 10/27/84
 Daignault, Gilles. *Le Devoir*, Montreal 10/84
- 1983 Bailey, Jann. *Photographic Sequences*, Peterborough Art Gallery
 Connor, Tim. *Photo Resources*, New York 5/83, 6/83
- 1982 Szarkowski, John. *20th Century Photographs from the Museum of Modern Art*, MoMA, New York
- 1980 Grayson, Mary. "Study in Illusion and Reality", *Edmonton Journal* 2/8/80
 Dorsey, Candas. *Edmonton Interface* 3/80
- 1979 Poser, Steven. *Brian Wood: Photographic Works*, Mendel Art Gallery
 Lehman, Henry. *The Montreal Star*, 3/15/79
 Viau, René. *Le Devoir*, Montreal, 3/17/79

Ann Lauterbach is a poet who lives in New York, where she teaches at City College. Her books include *Before Recollection*, *Greeks* (a collaboration with Jan Groover and Bruce Boice) and *Clamor*. Long affiliated with the visual arts, she has written numerous responses to the work of individual artists.

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