

Tales From The Downslope



COMMERCE

New Work

Edition 2

Clayton Campbell



FLOWER MEDITATION #1

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Commerce

No one should drive a hard bargain with an artist.

Ludwig Van Beethoven

When nations grow old, the arts grow cold and commerce settles on every tree.

William Blake

It is the interest of the commercial world that wealth should be found everywhere.

Edmund Burke

You'd be surprised how much it costs to look this cheap.

Dolly Parton



BINGING (GOLD DUSTED TRASH BAGS IN FRONT OF TRUMP TOWERS,, 2016

In our time, the curse is monetary illiteracy, just as inability to read plain print was the curse of earlier centuries.

Ezra Pound

Wealth, in even the most improbable cases, manages to convey the aspect of intelligence.

John Kenneth Galbraith

Many think, and I myself am one of them, that capitalism is scarcely at the beginning of its story.

Benito Mussolini

After the collapse of socialism, capitalism remained without a rival. This unusual situation unleashed its greedy and - above all - its suicidal power. The belief is now that everything - and everyone - is fair game.

Günter Grass



Junk is the ideal product... the ultimate merchandise. No sales talk necessary. The client will crawl through a sewer and beg to buy.

William S. Burroughs

I'm not opposed to commerce, even though I'm an artist.

Tracey Emin

It is terrifying to think of what a commodity art has become.

Audrey Flack

There's been million-seller books and million-seller CDs. But there hasn't been, until now, million-seller art.

Thomas Kinkade

Not just in commerce but in the world of ideas too our age is putting on a veritable clearance sale.

Soren Kierkegaard

Where wealth and freedom reign, contentment fails, / And honour sinks where commerce long prevails.

Oliver Goldsmith

Love gives itself; it is not bought.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Tales From the Downslope, Edition Two

There have been some changes in this second edition. Less text, lots of pictures, and installments of *The % War* novella are now planned to be issued in their entirety in a later edition. *Tales From the Downslope, Edition Two* has the theme of *Commerce* that more or less guided my selections. It is best viewed as an e-book or PDF, with full page spreads of the photos displayed without the interruption of a crease in the middle, which a printed publication has. So please enjoy viewing on your desktop computer, the best platform to see my work.

The different series of photographs include *Selling For Survival*, which were taken in a burst one afternoon at the Association of Performing Arts Professionals trade fair at the Hilton Hotel in New York a number of years ago. It's being seen here for the first time.

IKEA Parables are photo-montage fictions of a future when the Creative Economy has taken on new and unexpected meanings. I like to call these works Story-Boards. The device of combining a fictional visual scenario with an equally fictional text comes from my love of social commentary artists like William Hogarth, Francisco Goya, and Honore Daumier. They often captioned their narrative, serial engravings and prints, distributed in magazines to the popular public, with a reflection of their times.

Santa Monica Suite was shot on my iPhone during an early morning walk on the Santa Monica Beach, and *Long Suffering Art Fair* are straight ahead photographs of the forlorn last hours of local LA art fairs when the dealers and artists are looking at the emptying halls and the inventory left on the walls.

Most of these works refer in some way to the difficulty posed by the mix of art and commerce as I have experienced or seen it experienced by my friends and colleagues. There is some implied critique of the systems that have tried to support or manage creative persons in a market capitalist culture. It is what it was, and now it is changing quite suddenly. I have real concerns for the economic disruption currently underway in the arts.

Edition Two was put together as I "shelter-in-place" during the COVID 19 pandemic, observing how the parallel economic crash is impacting not only all of society but artists and the arts. *Commerce* seems to be an appropriate theme. Yet all of these works were made prior to the pandemic, and I've been feeling for some years based on what I've been reading and studying that a paradigm shift was long overdue. Some event would challenge our assumptions about contemporary art and access. I heard a statement the other day, that "the future as we expected it has been cancelled, or at least postponed." Nothing feels distant from the threat of this pandemic, the first in the social media age. There is a global narrative collapse occurring, and people en masse are abandoning attempts to reach narrative consensus, we are losing the plot.

Tales From the Downslope, Edition Two is probably about losing the plot, something we have to experience first and acknowledge as necessary to form new stories. I feel or at least hope that in the next editions I will be sharing some different narratives. Until then, be well, be safe, and wash your hands.

Clayton Campbell
Philadelphia April 2020

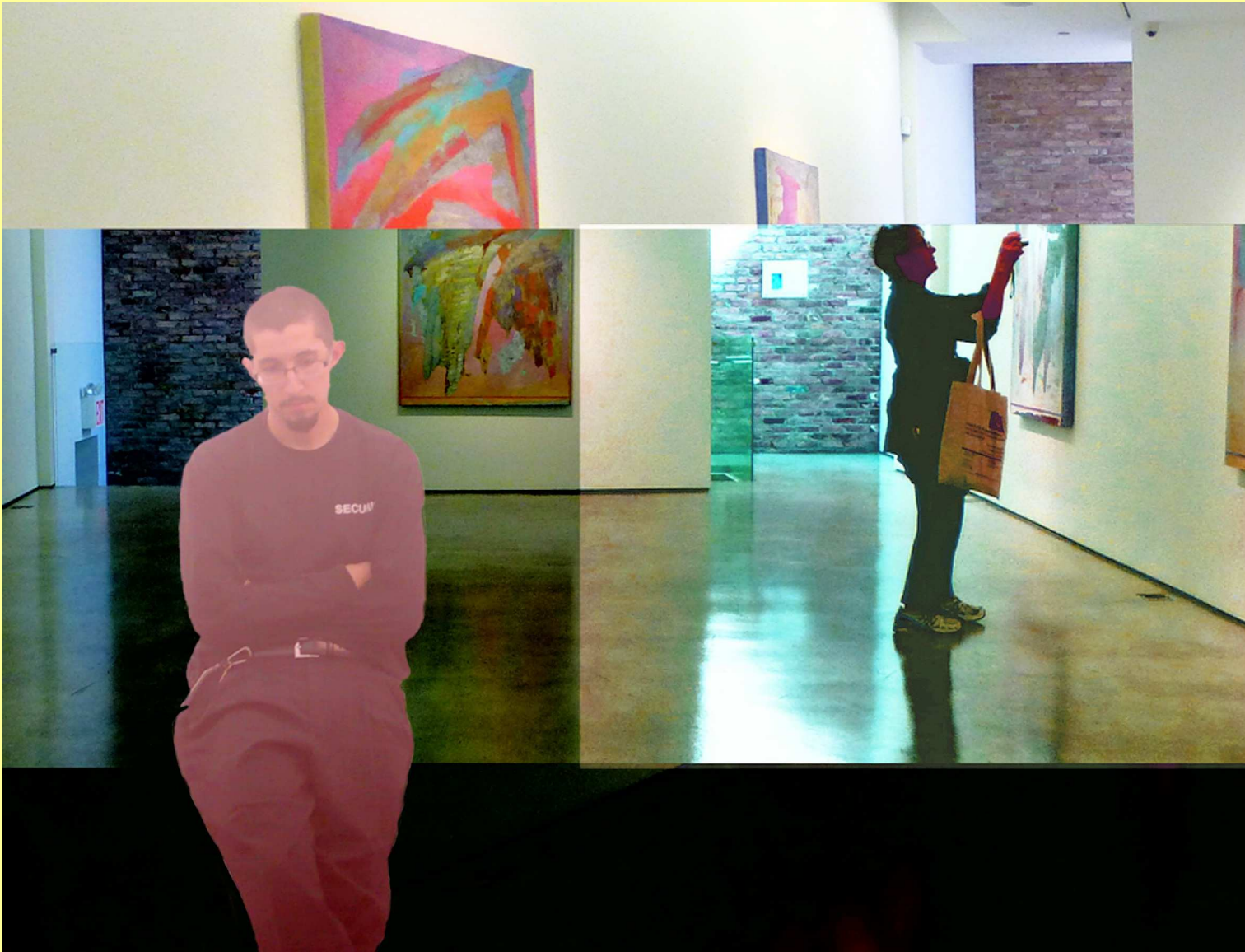
The superior man understands what is right; the inferior man understands what will sell.
Confucious



*SANTA MONICA BEACH, 2019- REMAINS OF SEABIRDS KILLED BY INGESTING PLASTIC PELLETS FROM THE TOXIC YET
HIGHLY PERVASIVE AND INSANELY LUCRATIVE PETROCHEMICAL ECONOMY*







SELLING FOR



OR SURVIVAL































Arts from Taiwan
Peking Opera Theatre

















BENISE SPANISH
GUITAR & WORLD
DANCE TROUPE

903



10 YEARS & 15 COUNTRIES

WINNING EMMY AWARD

'One Hot Night'
- Indy list

'Amazing and seductive'
- Honolulu Pulse

'Grace & Elegance'
- Hawaii Star

BENISE

STRINGS OF PASSION

The Latin Reverendance
- LA TIMES

WORLD MUSIC & DANCE
BENISE.CO

On the table: A red Coca-Cola bottle, a small poster of Benise, and a brochure.







mental theater"



The New York Times

"It is strikingly beautiful."

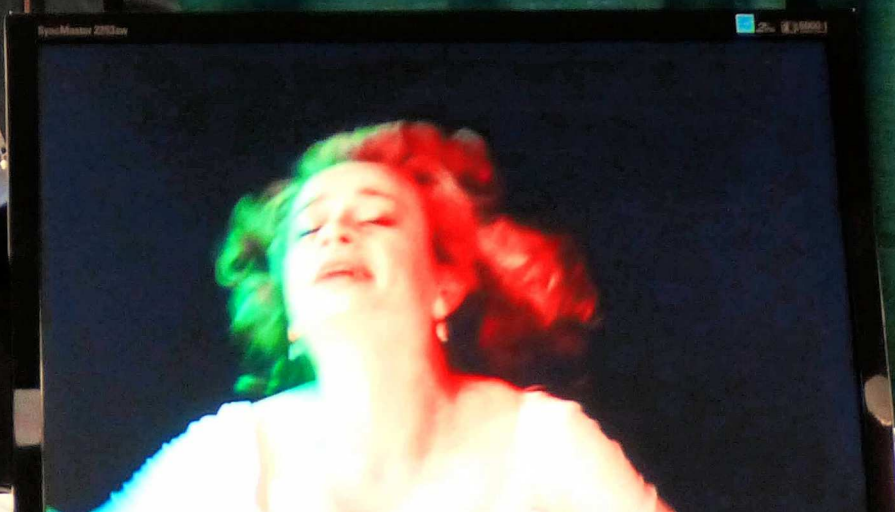
"Under a billowed cloud of Marie Antoinette hair, Ms. Milo's Nanner is charming and funny... has a balletic grace."

"...excellent sound design"

THE Arts

The New York Times

A Sibling Rivalry That Played Out Over Keyboards





audience Wright Holmes

SOLO ARTIST
THEATER
COMPANY

25





Lining Up for the Pop Up Poets, Bright and Smiley, and Lap Dancing for Seniors

TIONS





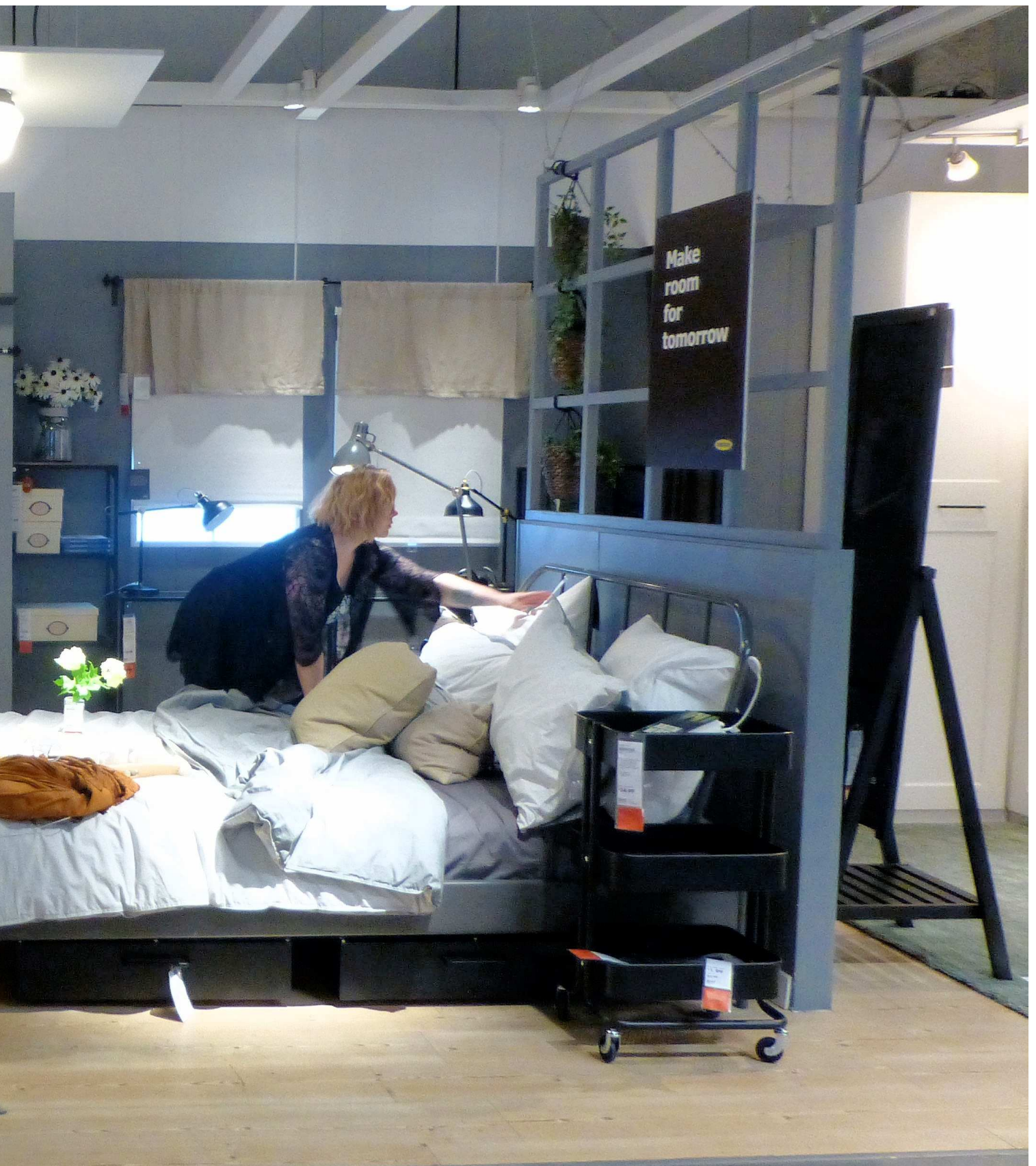
They were billed as Bright and Smiley, the Mindfulness Twins, who began appearing on the IKEA circuit in early 2021. Known for their afternoon senior citizen crowd. But they also drew a following of pronoun neutral young persons; anyone in fact whose identity was bound up in the space to inhabit through them. There are few if any recordings of Bright and Smiley speaking, little is known of their past. They were living for an indeterminate time with their mother, perfecting mindfulness techniques while their neighbors built up a thriving community of misfits and iconoclasts Bright and Smiley called home.



their long meditation trances that included levitating without throwing shadows, they liked to host Dharma Sitzings with the early being neutralized by age, hence growing invisibility or by Youth and choice. Their followers all sought a momentarily quiet if unique e discovered hovering mid air in a small encampment around Quartzite, California over by the Arizona border. We do know they'd methamphetamine business in the warren of old Air Stream trailers and cast off Star Wagons from movie lots in the community of



In 2026, the newly elected Socialist Third Party President signed into law the extended National Cottage Industry Act. This effectively increased income between lower, middle and upper income wage earners, the 20% national unemployment after the pandemic of 2021, and turned these initiatives in 2028. IKEA became a favorite site for pop ups and economic experiments of all kinds during the Cottage Market Capitalism, IKEA had become a community commons and ironically, they never had done better business. Profits rose 150%.



any individual to set up at will a pop up business in an established retail operation. Due to the expanding gross inequity of the stock market scandals of 2024, this was a popular law with the poor and new left until the conservative Supreme Courts over the Industry years. Before the President was unelected in 2030 in a landslide rejection of Socialism in favor of a return to old school. Afterwards, it trended downwards for some time.



Ever the innovator, IKEA worked with California State Health Care Professionals to respond to new AARP recommendations that 1 of lap dancing 3 or more times weekly experienced a 50% drop in annual visits to Emergency Rooms, a 25% increase in cognitive department as new senior male customers flocked in to access the Lap Dancing Wellness Program. They especially purchased new unemployed ranks of single mothers ages 18-35, hovering near 50% in California. Developing strong brand loyalty became a goal for day care. With the disappearance of government funded Day Care programs, IKEA encouraged lap-dancing mothers to bring their worker retention that benefited IKEA enormously in terms of repeat customers and customer loyalty. It also extended the life and hap



ap dancing for Senior's provided extensive Wellness benefits. Three in five men over the age of 75 who participated in 15 minutes awareness, and a 33% drop in their SED Prostate Count. In another "win-win" scenario for IKEA, retail sales soared in the bedding mattresses for their invigorated libidos. Ever socially conscious, IKEA added many new job hires to its work force from the large r IKEA with these contract employees as the ideal lap dancers. To attract them, they added the bonus of an unofficial form of child children to work where they were given hot meals and could play in the showrooms while their mothers worked. It instilled strong piness of untold numbers of male seniors who loved the children's presence.



Animal rights activists became a powerful political force and were able to banish all leash laws by 2027. Every living species was deemed that they really weren't meant to be, now roamed anywhere unmolested. This caused health and sanitation issues when they defecated at the retail industry, which occurred when China stopped buying U.S garbage during the Trump trade wars, trash and recycling collectors had joined the ranks of unemployed trash collectors. By putting these men back to work it boosted the ailing economy, kept the stores sanitized, and people leave IKEA with clean shoes.



declared equal in the New Sensibility sweeping the national consciousness. What had been formerly known as pets, including some that
t will, especially inside of stores, including IKEA. As a proactive response IKEA recognized that with the collapse of the recycling
d been thrown out of work. Again, ever the innovator, IKEA hired a new work force of professional “Uber Pooper Scoopers” from
ized, while animal based diseases didn’t spread and become disabling pandemics. Shoppers felt safe, secure and knew that they would



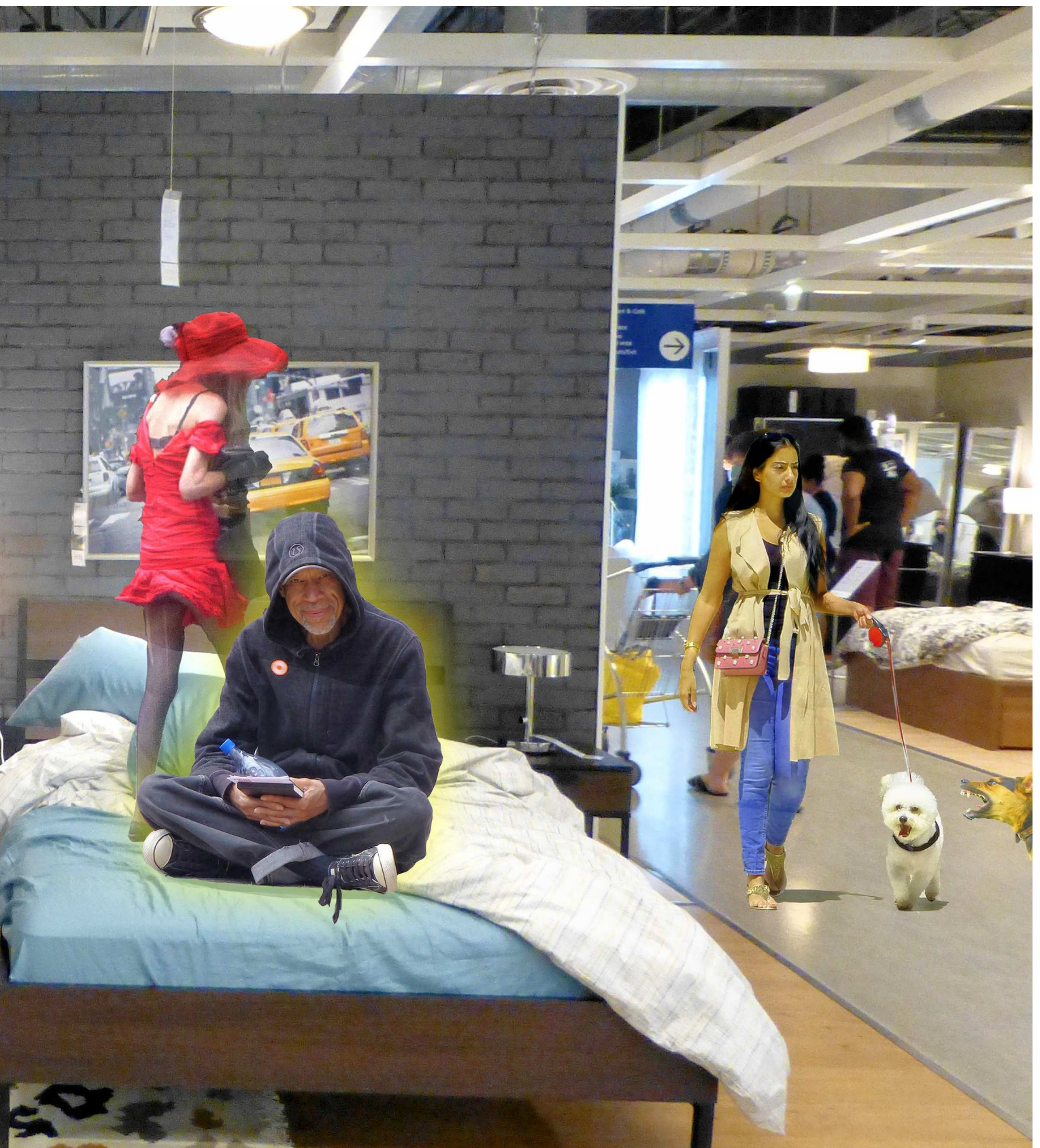
In the era of the Great Displacements, vast numbers of people lost their homes due to cyclical pandemics and unrelenting urban development. Homelessness became part of the Human Flow ever uncertain about basic shelter. However, this seeming catastrophe did lead to occasional opportunities. In 1972, the Los Angeles-based furniture giant IKEA ordered all department stores to offer their showrooms as temporary affordable housing. Ever responsive, IKEA jumped on board, and a local celebrity renowned among Los Angelino's for his healing powers. He thus managed to live in the showroom for over six years. The store manager admitted the continuing "colorful presence" of the tribal shaman boosted retail sales. The Shaman however, when questioned seemed to be just meeting people and eating in the cafeteria and was looking forward to healing the many sick of mind persons who streamed through the store.



elopment. It was a world-wide phenomena as capital concentrated in the hands of the upper 5% who could pay for safe housing. The ally creative solutions. One memorable instance was when the Governor of California declared a State of Housing Emergency and and sponsored displaced tribal elders from the Sudan and Central African Republic. As pictured here, this tribal Shaman became a s. The IKEA Program was decried by some as a blatant racist tourist attraction instead of finding real housing, while IKEA cynically d perplexed and replied that he only slept on the floor, as was his custom at home, and meant no offense. During the day he enjoyed his domicile. "They never stop coming" he was fond of saying.

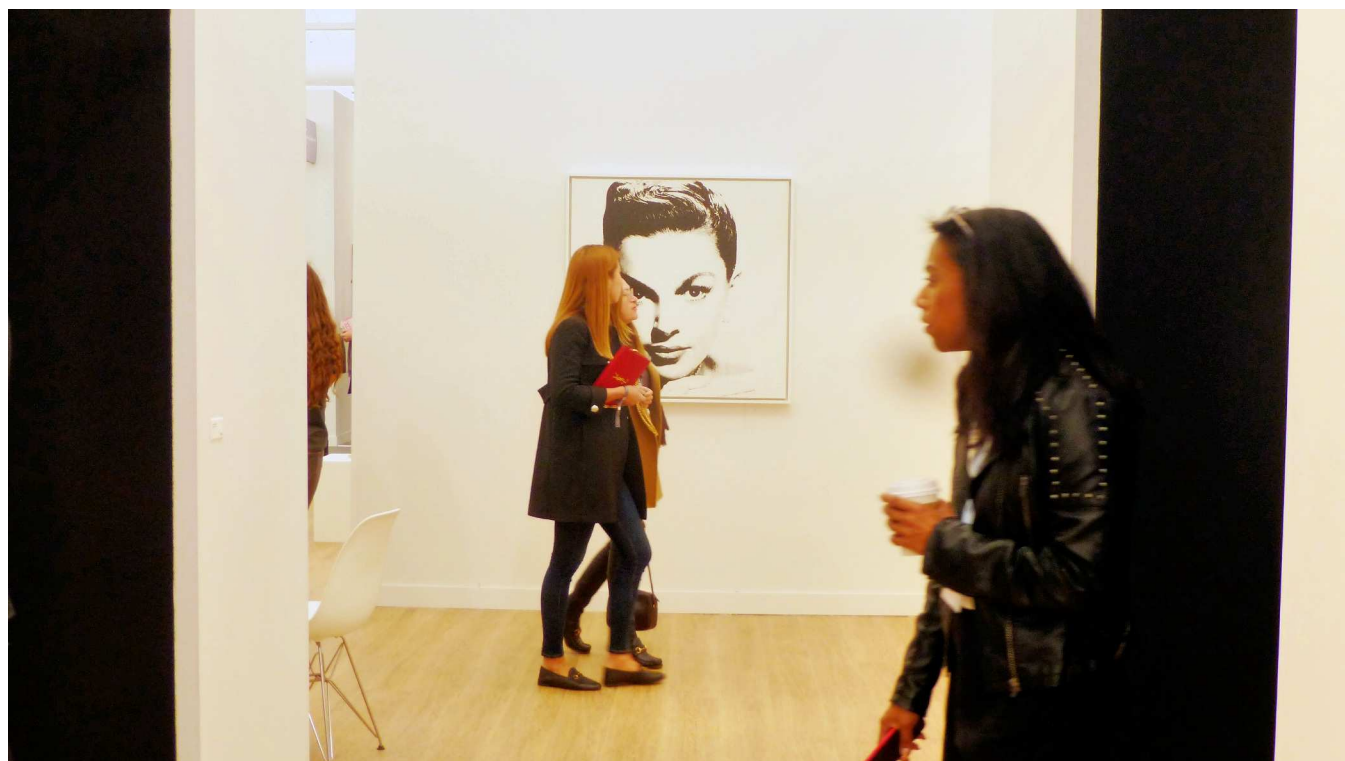
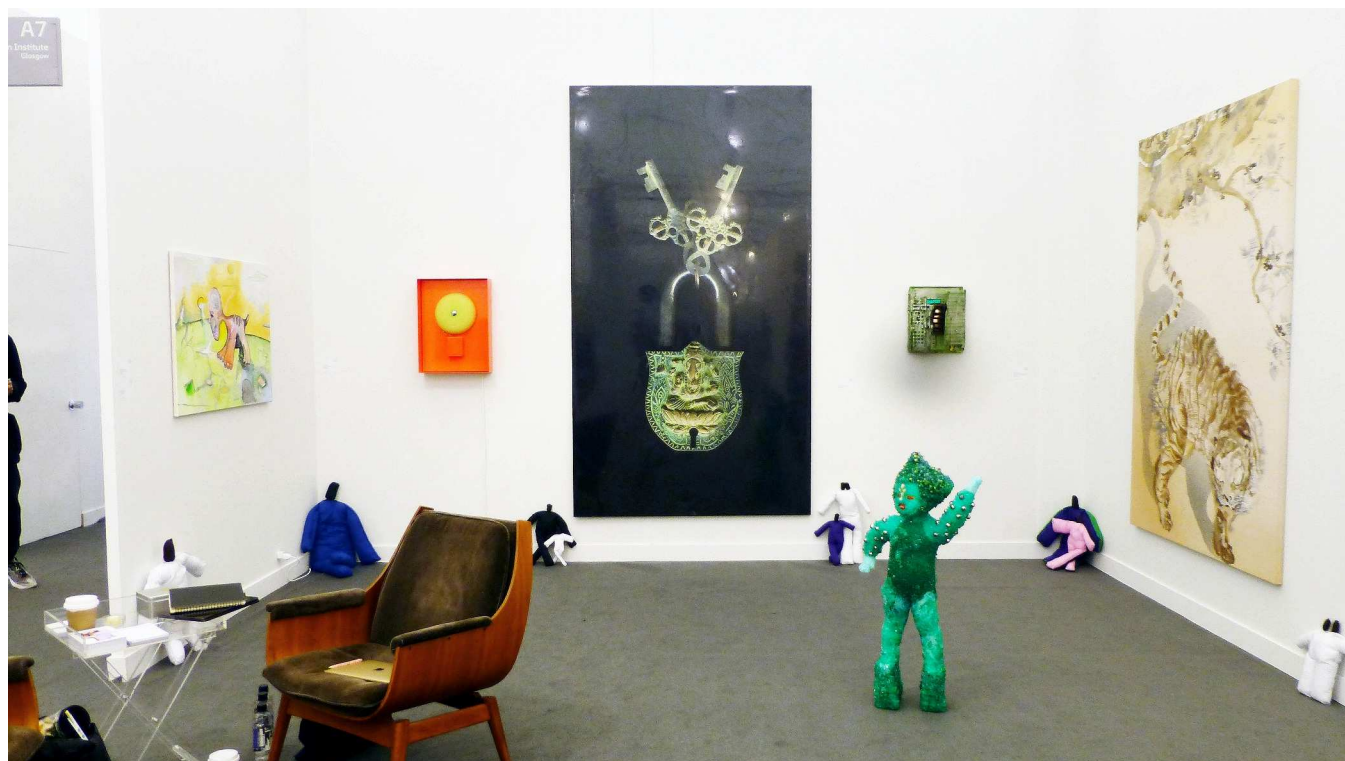


Rather than pursue repairing a broken non-profit philanthropic system that had little immediate remedy, IKEA came up with a unique "pops" music in the afternoon in department stores and malls. In this spirit, IKEA decided that performance, spoken word, and theater were part of their mission. The *Poets Program*. Artists would live "in residence," sleeping overnight in the showrooms, and during business hours spontaneously receive fees for the artists priming the economic pump; the artists presence would provide unique entertainment; the public would receive community; and it was a marketing coup for IKEA as a supporter of the arts that would also increase customer traffic to their stores. Poets themselves. The content of their work became too controversial and caused problems of censorship and charges of pornography.



ue private-public sector partnership in a time of economic crisis. There had been a tradition in the U.S. of hiring piano players to play
ter artists would be part of a unique residency program with their many stores throughout the United States and Europe in a *Pop-Up*
te and perform their original works. The value of this program would be beneficial on numerous levels. IKEA would contribute the
ve exposure to cultural offerings; educational value was provided for diverse audiences; many new jobs are offered for the creative
It was a win-win solution for everyone while it lasted. What no one took into account was the underlying transgressive nature of the
y. Eventually, IKEA was forced to shut the program down.

THE LAST HOURS, ON THE LAST DAY OF THE LONG SUFFERING LOCAL ART FAIR



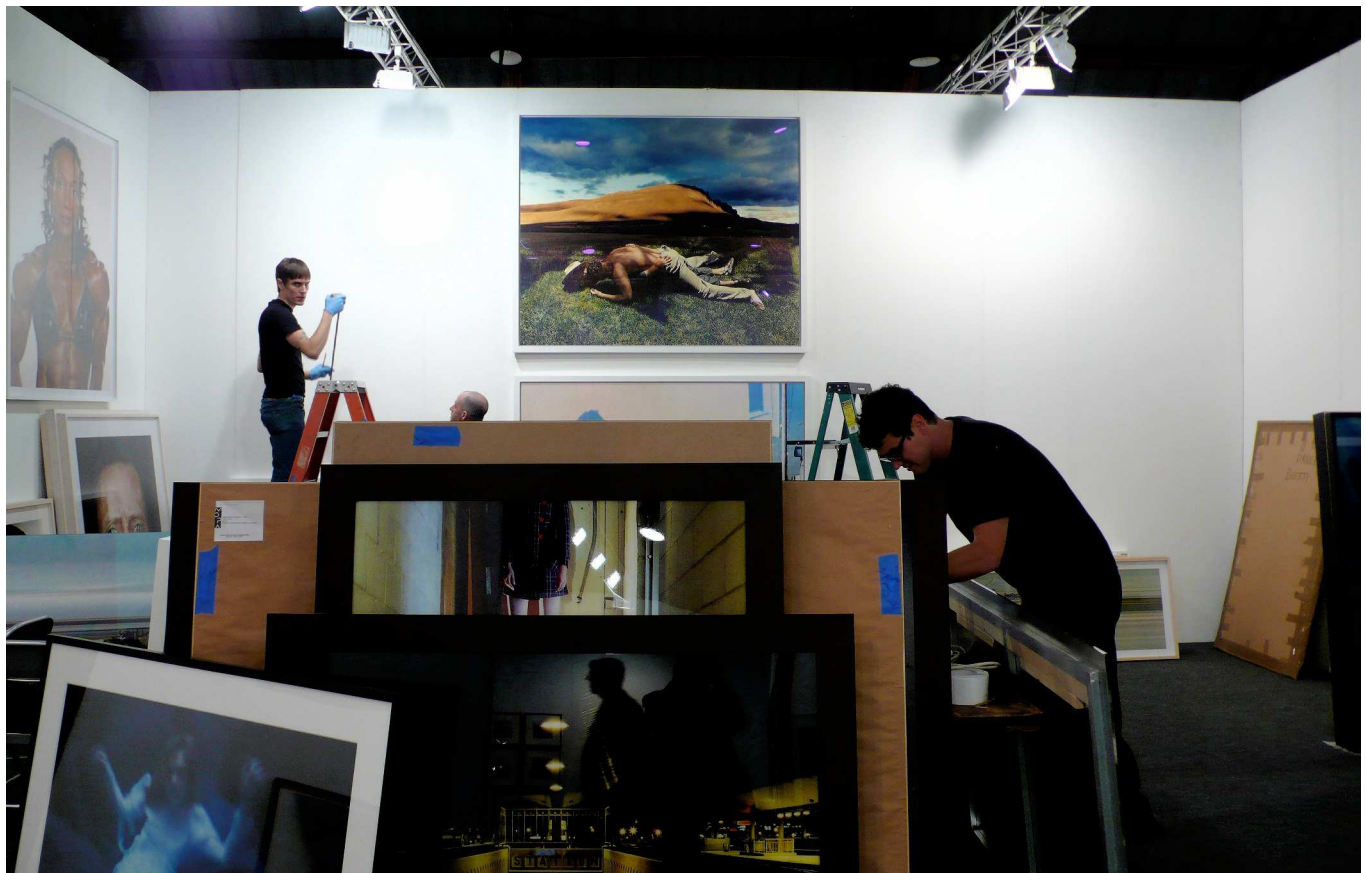














FLOWER MEDITATION #2

