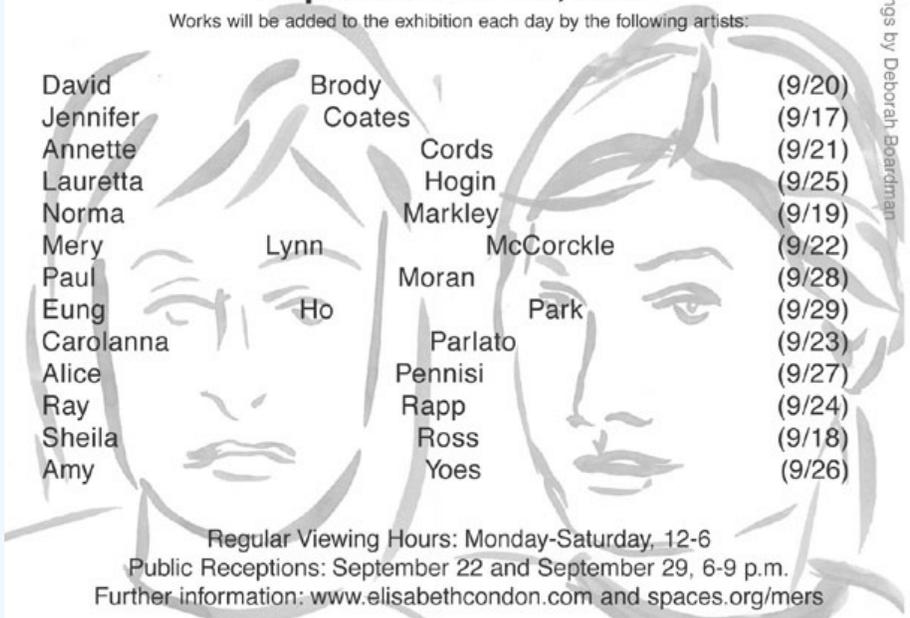


A COLLABORATIVE FUSION
PRESENTED BY
ELISABETH CONDON ∞ ADELHEID MERS

450 Broadway Gallery, NEW YORK, NY, 10013
September 17-29, 2001

Works will be added to the exhibition each day by the following artists:



David	Brody	(9/20)	
Jennifer	Coates	(9/17)	
Annette	Cords	(9/21)	
Lauretta	Hogin	(9/25)	
Norma	Markley	(9/19)	
Mery	Lynn	McCorckle	(9/22)
Paul	Moran	(9/28)	
Eung	Ho	Park	(9/29)
Carolanna	Parlato	(9/23)	
Alice	Pennisi	(9/27)	
Ray	Rapp	(9/24)	
Sheila	Ross	(9/18)	
Amy	Yoes	(9/26)	

drawings by Deborah Boardman

Regular Viewing Hours: Monday-Saturday, 12-6

Public Receptions: September 22 and September 29, 6-9 p.m.

Further information: www.elisabethcondon.com and spaces.org/mers

[ELISABETH CONDON](#)

[IMAGES](#)

FUSION: "... the act or procedure of liquefying or melting by the application of heat...the merging of different elements into a union...nuclei combine to form more massive nuclei with the simultaneous release of energy ... "

-American Heritage Dictionary

I agree that technology opens up new possibilities to us but I think that finally what we are dealing with is what we were always dealing with, namely, mind.

-John Cage

For thirteen days, from September 17-29, 2001, an experimental artistic collaboration will take place at 450 Broadway Gallery, New York. Thirteen visual artists have been invited to successively add artwork to an exhibition as to an emerging entity. The artists have agreed to act in response to what they will find at the gallery on the dates they are individually scheduled to have control of the space. The work will have passed through the hands of all participants (and artists they invite) before it reaches its final stage. The public is invited to attend during gallery hours as well as at two evening receptions.

This exhibition was organized by artists Elisabeth Condon (New York) and Adelheid Mers(Chicago), who previously have jointly as well as separately initiated similar projects in London, Chicago and New York. Structured to maximize prospects within the constraints of time and space available to it, this project gains its specific flavor from the particular artists who will join in it.

What initially promises to be a fun, playful event arose from the sincere desire to face the ongoing shift from the historically individualistic role of the artist to more recent and relational endeavors, a scattered debate evolved out of diverse premises that results in conflicting views held by various artists, curators, administrators, critics and audiences.

The fusion approaches reality as an ongoing joint creation through narrative. It mirrors complexity with collaboration. Issues of shared authorship, the ethics of cooperation, and the dissemination and incorporation of thought, so clearly embodied in digital media and so often explored in the context of those media, are explored in a decidedly low-tech manner. We contend what needs to be addressed is our understanding of those issues, which may be reflected in any medium.

The participating artists are: David Brody (9/20)
Jennifer Coates (9/17) Annette Cords (9/21)
Lauretta Hogin (9/25) Norma Markley (9/19)
Mery Lynn McCorkle (9/22) Paul Moran (9/28)
Eung Ho Park (9/29) Carolanna Parlato (9/23)
Alice Pennisi (9/27) Ray Rapp (9/24)
Sheila Ross (9/18) Amy Yoes (9/26)

These artists are free to invite others, who so far include John Corbin, Debra Jenks, Madeline Hatz, Wendy Hirschberg and Linda Nagaoka, Marilla Palmer, Marieken Cochius, Jeanne Tremel, Mary Magsamen and Suzan Batu, Woo Song Bong, Susan Breitsch, Rick Briggs, Frances Chapman, Philip Cheung, Byung Wang Cho, Peter Coe, Elise Engler, Lee Etheledge IV, Jane Fine, Julie Evans, Matt Freedman, Peter Gallo, Betsey Garand, Brenda Garand, Daniel Georges, Nancy Goldenberg, Yun Fei Ji, iL Lee, Ian Laughlin, Soo Im Lee, Robin Michals, Katherine Powers, Lance Richbourg, Carol Saft, Han Sam Son, Rumiko Tsuda, Tammy Wofsey, Rachel

Quotes from Participating Artists:

Annette Cords

What really appeals to me in this project is being asked to think and work outside of the usual parameters I set for myself. Working by myself in the studio on work that is the direct result of my thinking and doing, I am looking forward to having no idea what to expect and seeing myself react to that. I expect to bring similar aesthetic and conceptual questions to this project as I do to my work in the studio but, because the context is so different, I am interested to see whether these questions will lead to some very different results. I am also interested in taking part in an artwork that is the result of the successive and aggregated efforts of many. I like the idea that the total work will have passed through the hands of numerous artists before it reaches its final stage. At this point I don't have a specific idea of what I will do. There are some ideas and images that pass through my mind as I think of the project, but more than anything else I feel a sense of positive curiosity.

Norma Markley

Lord of the Flies by William Golding, filmed by Peter Brooks in 1961, came to mind when I thought about the concept of collaboration. It is an extreme example. For here is the exploration of the inherent defects of society and man. The emergence of his concealed, basic wildness is the theme. I feel the act of collaboration can have both positive and negative aspects and this is what I am interested in. Collaboration can be a test situation in a joint adventure, its aim to be turned on and go all out in a free and relentless expression with others while still exploring one's sense of individuality.

I have chosen 4 artists to collaborate with, within the larger collaboration project-- John Corbin, Madeline Hatz, Wendy Hirschberg and Debra Jenks. I chose them because of their sense of individuality and to test my ability to work with others. I have introduced the theme of games, influenced by the games seen at the Italian street fair, but will not persuade anyone to join in.

Wendy Hirschberg

When I have collaborated in the past, I have found myself taking on new challenges and going down a road I would not have necessarily chosen for myself. Immediately, I resist being directed. In my art life, I experience a strong desire to do exactly what I want to do, without the constraints of others' needs and desires. So, collaboration requires breaking a pattern set from childhood, when all this got started for me. I assume for many artists collaboration represents something like this--an invasion of privacy for some or interference on some level. And that tension interests me. Norma's idea about games at the Italian street fair also sounds intriguing - so we will all play (and resist) on September 19th.

Paul Moran

My enthusiasm for the Fusion Project is fueled by an interest in the unique affinities and parallels inevitably discovered in a collaborative effort.

I am intrigued by this proposal where the ultimate configuration of individual parts may not be fixed by one artist, but left open and determined by accumulation. In this format, it seems possible that the artist, like audiences generally, becomes simultaneously spectator and participant.

The limited-time nature of this interaction will also call for a spontaneous working method. And this condition, less self-conscious and controlled than one's own studio, is part of the Fusion Project's appeal.

Sheila Ross

As an artist who works primarily alone in a studio practice consisting mainly of sculpture, installation and works on paper, the idea of collaborating with other artists is an appealing challenge for several reasons. In my mind, two main tenets of this challenge are the notion of collaboration and the ephemerality. Foremost, it is an opportunity to enter into an exchange and dialogue with other artists, to respond to their efforts and have them respond to your work. This very direct and immediate response to each other's work is both collaborative and an intervention. I mean "intervention" in a proactive way, rather than having a negative connotation.

At the very least, it is interesting to see how others respond to or have a dialogue with your work in a very primal, direct way. Artists spend a lot of time looking and talking about other artist's work, but this project allows for the participants/collaborators to have a different kind of visceral, non verbal response to the work. Also, I have exhibited with some of the participants before, so it is yet another and different way to engage with their work.

The very nature of this collaboration is ephemeral. Each artist will have a day to work and transform the space over the course of two weeks. Each day the piece will be

transformed and changed, with chance and randomness coming into play. The work of the other artists dictates in part what your response might be. Another artist's effort might provide you with an opportunity to respond in a way that might not usually be considered or available to you. At the end of the exhibition, the work will be dismantled or destroyed, impossible to recreate even a semblance to the initial effort ever again. I think that it allows both great freedom to each participant yet also a heightened sense of responsibility to the efforts of the other participants.

Collaboration seems to have connotations of agreement, partnership and harmony. So, a question that might arise is how do you respond and engage with another participant's work and maintain this harmony or this agreement? What is the line between collaboration and intervention? I also explore ephemerality in my own work, mostly in the materials that I use, including masking tape, cardboard boxes, Styrofoam, "dollar store" items such as glitter, confetti, party favour toys etc. I use these materials in ways that are defined by and also defy their ephemerality. This collaboration allows me a chance to reexamine issues of ephemerality and permanence and in my work.

Madeline Hatz

i am nomadic, belonging nowhere and everywhere at the same time. This is often reflected in my texts. Below are a few samples. The nomad is an itinerant individual, staking only temporary territory or sharing territory. I see collaboration in this light. The word literally means working together. For this we might need to define an aim?

MIGRANTS

A caution tape border encircles a migrating studio: Here I am, we are, working away, making a mess of mortar crumbs. Working: painting and bricklaying as if temporarily at home here. Are we all nomadic neighbors, spreading out our rhizomatic mushroom roots?

Madeleine Hatz
May 9, 2001

Site 1: Present in Brokken Land

When I arrived in Leeuwarden in September, the City Hall Courtyard was a newly constructed place of minimalist design: yellow facade with red tiles, a square with grey gravel, and within this a second tilted square with white gravel. Here I staked out a territory, which was perpendicular to this place both literally and conceptually. Following the tilted line between white and grey, I erected ruined brick walls. The facade of the ruins has the same red tiles as the facade of the Stadskantoor (City Hall), but a filling of luminous blue mortar crumbs are oozing out of the double brick layers. The work was done in the first two weeks of September. I got a couple of containers full of used bricks, and a group of convicts as workers. The courtyard became my studio, an intense place. We worked, sweated, yelled, laughed. I ran from corner to corner of this huge stage, instructing and working. The scene was at all times watched from one or other of the hundreds of office windows: Young men in work clothes, Moroccan/Suriname/Friesan, many using tools and "working" for the first time in their lives. We were laying bricks, erecting walls which could not possibly amount to a house, a structure. A Situation had taken over the place. Now the convicts and I have left, but a passer by venturing into the courtyard will find a space: a place turned around.

Site 2: Lament in Brokken Land

"Be in the world like a stranger, a passer by." (Hadith 13th century) "The man who finds his homeland sweet is still a tender beginner: he to whom every soil is as his native one is already strong: but he is perfect to whom the entire world is exile." (Hugh of St Victor, 13th century)

These two quotes, the first by a Muslim, the second a Christian were translated into Friesan: "Wes yn'e de wrald als in frjemdling, in foarbygonger." (Hadith 12e eeuw) "De man dy't syn thuslan leavet, is noch in foech begjinningel, hy foar wa't eltse oarde is as wie it syn bertegrun, is al sterk; mar folmakke is hy dy't him oeral yn'e balling wit." (Hugh de St Victoire 12e eeuw)

I inscribed these words inside the Grote Kerk (The Great Church), directly on the wall, outlining the arch of an alcove. At the bottom of the alcove, on the stone floor, I placed a row of yellow brick rubble with blue mortar crumbs. A shallow space was thus defined, a sort of flat open chamber, with its own echo. This room was to shelter my painting, a pieta. It is a large oil on linen work, based on "The Lamentation", by the Italian baroque painter Ludovico Carracci. The painting is a sort of translation or interpretation, like playing from ancient notes, or translating an ancient text fragment. It is based on a picture, which in turn maybe served as a projection screen for Ludovico in the early 1500. Great themes in art history and religion become places to visit.

Outside, there are some small niches in the brick facade of the church. If you peek up into them, you see a "leak" from both Stadskantoor (City Hall) and Grote Kerk (Great Church): some luminous blue mortar crumbs. I am present in Brokken Land. Brokken* in Dutch means a piece. A piece is something whole, but it is also something broken off, something belonging, yet no longer belonging. A passerby? Belonging? Belangen? Gemeente....belangen?

October 4, 2000

The Dutch "belangen" has the same root as the English "belong." They both stem

from the German "Die belange." Brokken in Dutch is also a certain kind of big square cookie, the kind used for building the witch's cookie house in the Story of Hansel and Gretel.

more: florenceynchgalleries.com and public-interests.com/hatz

[Debra Jenks](#)

[Amy Yoes](#)

The great thing about collaboration, and about the Fusion project in particular, is the sense of suspense and excitement about what the other artists may do, and the challenge of reacting to what they produce. This way of working takes me out of my normal art making processes, and engenders a specific, wonderful flavor of freedom. The issue of authorship is refreshingly diminished. It's like going on a trip with new friends to an unknown destination, and knowing that, whatever happens, it will be a unique experience.