

BODILESS ART

A THESIS  
SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF  
FINE ARTS  
AND THE INSTITUTE OF ECONOMICS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
OF BILKENT UNIVERSITY  
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF FINE ARTS

By  
Eser Selim  
May, 1999

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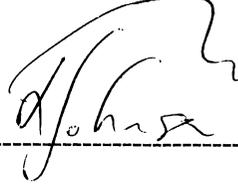
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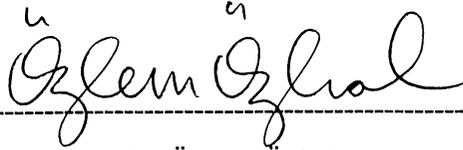
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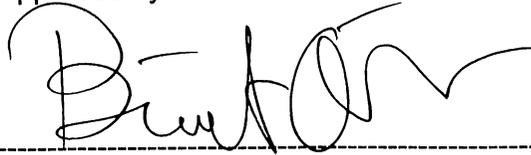
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Approved by the Institute of Fine Arts



Prof. Dr. Bülent Özgüç,  
Director of Institute of Fine Arts

## **ABSTRACT**

### **BODILESS ART**

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M.F.A. in Fine Arts

Supervisor: Dr. Lewis Johnson

May, 1999

This research is derived from the notion of body in recent art, which may be thought within a concept of *bodilessness*. The aim of the study is to evaluate the answer(s) to the question "How is this *bodilessness* possible, if it is?". During the study different genres of art will be discussed, examined and explored concerning both the researcher works and some contemporary artists' works, which deal with the ideas of the body. The works will be analyzed both in terms of their plastic language and by referring to psychoanalytic concepts in order to point to a way to show how the viewer/reader may experience this *bodilessness* as the consequence of these works.

Key Words: Body, Bodilessness, Body Transfer, Life, Death, Doll, Loss, Exchange, Puppet, Symbolic, Imaginary, Soft.

**ÖZET**  
**BEDENSİZLEŞEN SANAT**

Eser Selen  
Güzel Sanatlar Bölümü  
Yüksek Lisans  
Tez yöneticisi: Dr. Lewis Johnson  
Mayıs, 1999

Çağcıl sanattaki beden kullanımından yola çıkılarak *bedensizleşme* kavramını öne süren bu çalışmanın amacı *bedensizleşmenin* mümkün olup olamayacağını cevaplarını aramaktır. Çeşitli sanat janrlarını açıklayıp, araştırdıktan sonra çağcıl sanatta beden düşüncesi ile çalışmış olan veya halen çalışmakta olan sanatçıların ve araştırmacının kişisel işleri çerçevesinde izleyiciye/okuyucuya, *bedensizleşmeyi* deneyimlemesi için gereken ip uçları çalışma içerisinde gerek plastik dil gerekse psikanalitik kavramların ışığında verilecektir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Beden, Bedensizleşme, Beden Treansferi, Yaşam, Ölüm, Oyuncak, Alış-Veriş, Kukla, Sembolik, İmajiner, Kayıp, Yumuşak Objeler.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to thank Dr. Lewis Johnson for accepting my request and becoming my Principal Advisor and answering my everlasting questions and spending a large amount of his time on this study as well as for his constant help and support.

I also would like to thank Selim Birsal for showing me how to spread my wings all through the years that I studied under his instruction. Now I am trying to fly on my own.

I would like to thank my family, my friends Göksu Günay, Mert Temel, Başak Şenova and my cats (Tori, Sunny and Toro) for being with me all the time when I need them most.

I would also like to thank my dearest friend, Uğur Gülbaharlı for his valuable support by all means and keep me as one piece through out the long period of study.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	i
ÖZET.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	iv
LIST OF FIGURES.....	vi
<b>1. INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF THE BODY.....</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1. The Tendency Towards the ‘Declaration’ of the Body in Recent Art..	7
2.2. The Idea of ‘The Soft’.....	8
2.2.1. Claes Oldenburg.....	9
2.2.2. Oldenburg’s Soft Sculptures.....	10
2.2.3. ‘The Soft’ in Oldenburg.....	10
2.3. The Exchange Between Bodies: The Issue of clothing.....	11
2.4. Clothing As “Second Skin”: “LEFTOVERS”, 1997.....	13
2.4.1. Anzieu’s Concept of the “I-skin”.....	14
2.4.2. “LEFTOVERS”, 1997.....	14
2.5. Body-in-Parts, Body-in-Space: “PLACE”, 1997.....	16
2.5.1. Lacan’s Concept of the “Mirror Stage.....	18
2.5.2. “PLACE”, 1997.....	18
2.6. The Body Is Vulnerable... Especially To Death.....	20
2.6.1. Lacan’s Reconstruction on Freud’s Concept of “Death drive”.....	22
2.6.2. The Crowd Metaphor: “DOLMUŞ”, 1997.....	24
<b>3. AN EXPLORATION OF THE IDEA OF DOLLS.....</b>	<b>27</b>
3.1. Dolls: A Metaphor of Personal Identity.....	27
3.1.1. Body Transfer.....	27

3.1.2. The Play of Death: “Magnetic Doll” 1985.....	29
3.2. Soft As Pleasurable, .....	30
3.3. “Body transfer”: “ <b>NOT WITH YOURSELF, PLAY WITH ME</b> ”, 1998..	32
3.4. Mike Kelley’s Playthings.....	34
3.4.1. Kelley in the ‘The Soft’.....	34
3.4.2.What Is “Bodiless” in Kelley’s Art through ‘The Soft’?.....	36
<b>4. THE IDEA OF THE PUPPET.....</b>	<b>40</b>
4.1. The Phenomenon of The Puppet.....	40
4.1.1. Defining ‘The Puppet’.....	41
4.1.2. Perceiving ‘The Puppet’.....	45
4.2. The Sign System of ‘The Puppet’.....	47
4.3. The Ambiguous Contact: “ <b>HERE AND NOW</b> ”, 1998 .....	47
4.4. The Puppet As a Metaphor.....	50
4.5. The Empty Body: “ <b>IT WILL BE EASIER TO NAME MY</b> <b>CHILD</b> ”, 1997.....	51
<b>5. A Return to <i>Bodilessness</i>: “I HAD A DREAM LAST NIGHT”, 1999.....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>WORKS CITED.....</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>FIGURES.....</b>	<b>59</b>

## LIST OF FIGURES

- Figure 1.0.** Yves Klein, “**Making Anthropometries of the Blue Period**”, 1960  
**From:** Stich, Sidra. Yves Klein Cantz Verlag 1994, Stuttgart. Pp. 172-174
- Figure 1.1.** Chris Burden, “**White Light, White Heat**”, 1970.  
**From:** 1988 Chris Burden-A Twenty Year Survey, Newport harbor art Museum, Newport Beach Cal. Essayists: Donald Kuspit, Tom Marioni, David A. Ross, Howard Singerman. Pp. 73
- Figure 1.2.** Vito Acconci, “**SeedBed**”, 1972  
**From** Ibid. 16
- Figure 1.3.** Gilbert and George, “**The Living Sculpture**” 1970  
**From** Rattcliff, Carter. Robert Rasenblum, Gilbert and George, “The Singing Sculpture”, Thames and Hudson LTD, London, 1993. Pp. 13
- Figure 1.4.** Claes Oldenburg, “**Soft Harp**” (Ghost Version), 1992  
**From** 1995. Claes Oldenburg: An Anthology. Guggenheim Museum, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Found. N.Y. Pp. 240
- Figure 1.5** Claes Oldenburg, “**Soft Sax**” 1992  
**From** Ibid. 213
- Figure 1.6.** Claes Oldenburg, “**Sausage**”, 1957  
**From** Ibid. 16
- Figure 1.7.** Claes Oldenburg, “**Soft Switch**”, 1971 (Ghost Version)  
**From** Ibid. 202
- Figure 1.8.** Claes Oldenburg, “**Soft Switch**”, 1964  
**From** Ibid. 203

- Figure 1.9.** Eser Selen, "**LEFTOVERS**", 1997  
Used Clothing, Cotton Rope Seam  
Bilkent University, Ankara  
**Photograph by** Aydın Ramazanoğlu
- Figure: 2.0.** Eser Selen, "**LEFTOVERS**", 1997 (detail)  
Used Clothing, Cotton Rope Seam  
Bilkent University, Ankara  
**Photograph by** Aydın Ramazanoğlu
- Figure 2.1.** Eser Selen, "**LEFTOVERS**", 1997 (detail)  
Used Clothing, Cotton Rope Seam  
Bilkent University, Ankara  
**Photograph by** Aydın Ramazanoğlu
- Figure 2.2.** Eser Selen, "**PLACE**", 1997  
Elastic Fabric, Rope, Seam  
SANART "Art and Environment Symposium", 1997  
M.E.T.U. ANKARA  
**Photograph by** Müge Tekin
- Figure 2.3.** Eser Selen, "**PLACE**", 1997  
Elastic Fabric, Rope, Seam  
SANART "Art and Environment Symposium", 1997  
M.E.T.U. ANKARA  
**Photograph by** Müge Tekin
- Figure 2.4.** Eser Selen, "**DOLMUŞ**", 1997  
Elastic Fabric, Silicon, Cotton, Rope, Seam  
1997, Youth Action 3-CHAOS, Tuyap Exhibition Hall, Istanbul  
**Photograph by** Müge Tekin
- Figure 2.5.** Eser Selen, "**DOLMUŞ**", 1997  
Elastic Fabric, Silicon, Cotton, Rope, Seam  
1997, Youth Action 3-CHAOS, Tuyap Exhibition Hall, Istanbul  
**Photograph by** Müge Tekin
- Figure 2.6.** Eser Selen, "**DOLMUŞ**", 1997  
Elastic Fabric, Silicon, Cotton, Rope, Seam  
1997, Youth Action 3-CHAOS, Tuyap Exhibition Hall, Istanbul  
**Photograph by** Müge Tekin
- Figure 2.7.** Eser Selen, "**DOLMUŞ**", 1997  
Elastic Fabric, Silicon, Cotton, Rope, Seam  
1997, Youth Action 3-CHAOS, Tuyap Exhibition Hall, Istanbul  
**Photograph by** Müge Tekin

- Figure 2.8.** Vito Acconci, "**Magnetic Doll**" (Old Soldier's Home)  
**From** Carter, Curtis L. Dolls In Contemporary Art, A metaphor of the Personal Identity Marquette University, Wisconsin, 1993. Pp. 41
- Figure 2.9.** Gilbert and George, "**The Singing Sculpture**", 1991  
**From** Rattcliff, Carter. Robert Rasenblum, Gilbert and George, "The Singing Sculpture", Thames and Hudson LTD, London, 1993. Pp. 24
- Figure 3.0.** Gilbert and George, "**The Singing Sculpture**", 1991  
**From** Ibid. 21
- Figure 3.1.** Gilbert and George, "**The Singing Sculpture**", 1991  
**From** Ibid. 16
- Figure 3.2.** Gilbert and George, "**The Singing Sculpture**", 1991  
**From** Ibid. 14
- Figure 3.3.** Gilbert and George, "**The Singing Sculpture: 1991**"  
**From** Ibid. 28
- Figure 3.4.** Eser Selen, "**MISSING**", 1998  
 Plastic Doll's Shoes, Handkerchief  
 1998, Similarities/Differences  
 Bodrum Castle, French Tower, Bodrum  
**Photograph by** Eser Selen
- Figure 3.5.** Eser Selen, "**MISSING**", 1998  
 Plastic Doll's Shoes, Handkerchief  
 1998, Similarities/Differences  
 Bodrum Castle, French Tower, Bodrum  
**Photograph by** Eser Selen
- Figure 3.6.** Eser Selen, "**NOT WITH YOURSELF, PLAY WITH ME**", 1998  
 Stuffed and Sewn Used Clothing with Various Sizes  
 1998, Youth Action 4/ Tuyap Exhibition Hall, Istanbul  
**Photograph by** Eser Selen
- Figure 3.7.** Eser Selen, "**NOT WITH YOURSELF, PLAY WITH ME**", 1998  
 Stuffed and Sewn Used Clothing with Various Sizes  
 1998, Youth Action 4/ Tuyap Exhibition Hall, Istanbul

- Photograph by** Eser Selen
- Figure 3.8.** Eser Selen, **"NOT WITH YOURSELF, PLAY WITH ME"**, 1998  
Stuffed and Sewn Used Clothing with Various Sizes  
1998, Youth Action 4/ Tuyap Exhibition Hall, Istanbul
- Photograph by** Eser Selen
- Figure 3.9.** Eser Selen, **"NOT WITH YOURSELF, PLAY WITH ME"**, 1998  
Stuffed and Sewn Used Clothing with Various Sizes  
1998, Youth Action 4/ Tuyap Exhibition Hall, Istanbul
- Photograph by** Eser Selen
- Figure 4.0.** Mike Kelley, **"More Love Hours Than Can Ever Be repaid"**,  
1987
- From** Carter, Curtis L. Dolls In Contemporary Art, A metaphor of the  
Personal Identity Marquette University, Wisconsin, 1993.  
Pp. 87
- Figure 4.1.** Claes Oldenburg, **" Bathroom Objects"**, 1969
- From** 1995. Claes Oldenburg: An Anthology.  
Guggenheim Museum, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Found.  
N.Y. Pp. 203
- Figure 4.2.** Mike Kelley, **"Craft Morphology Flow Chart"**, 1991
- From** Sussman, Elisabeth. Mike Kelley Catholic Tastes  
Whitney Museum of American Art, 1993. Pp. 53
- Figure 4.3.** Mike Kelley, **"Craft Morphology Flow Chart"**, 1991
- From** Ibid. 57
- Figure 4.4.** Mike Kelley, **"Craft Morphology Flow Chart"**, 1991
- From** Ibid. 54
- Figure 4.5.** Mike Kelley, **"Nostalgic Depiction of the Innocence of  
Childhood"**, 1990 (detail)
- From** Sussman, Elisabeth. Mike Kelley Catholic Tastes  
Whitney Museum of American Art, 1993. Pp. 181

- Figure 4.6.** Mike Kelley, **"Nostalgic Depiction of the Innocence of Childhood"**, 1990 (detail)  
**From** Ibid. 180
- Figure 4.7.** Mike Kelley, **"Ahh Youth!"** 1991  
**From** Ibid. 179
- Figure 4.8.** Mike Kelley, **"Dialogue #1"**  
**From** Ibid. 85
- Figure 4.9.** Jana Sterbak, **"Flesh Dress for an Albino Anorectic"**, 1987  
**Form** Art Press/ 1996, Feb. 41
- Figure 5.0.** Jim Henson and Frank Oz manipulate Kermit and Miss Piggy while watching on TV monitors.  
**From** Cutler, Scott. Puppets and Popular Culture Cornell University Press, 1995, 235
- Figure 5.1.** Eser Selen, **"HERE AND NOW"**, 1998  
 50 Puppets with Ceramic Heads and Bodies from Plastic sacks  
 I. Youth Art in Ankara, 1998  
**Photograph by** Eser Selen
- Figure 5.2.** Eser Selen, **"HERE AND NOW"**, 1998  
 50 Puppets with Ceramic Heads and Bodies from Plastic sacks  
 I. Youth Art in Ankara, 1998  
**Photograph by** Eser Selen
- Figure 5.3.** Eser Selen, **"IT WILL BE EASIER TO NAME MY CHILD"**, 1997  
**Photograph by** Murat Gürzümar and Aydın Ramazanoğlu
- Figure 5.4.** Eser Selen, **"IT WILL BE EASIER TO NAME MY CHILD"**, 1997  
 I Istanbul Student Triennial, Domabahce Palace  
 Istanbul, 1997  
**Photograph by** Zeren Goktan

**Figure 5.5.** Eser Selen, "I HAD A DREAM LAST NIGHT", 1999  
**Drawing by** Eser Selen

## I. INTRODUCTION

This study argues that the usage of body in recent art may be thought within a concept of “bodilessness”, which is derived from the researchers’ and some contemporary artists works that is directly or indirectly related in terms of both theory and application. Concerning the works of the artists that are dealing with the ideas of the body, I will evaluate these works in terms of the movement between the “symbolic” and the “imaginary,” which seemed to be important to me in the construction of the bases of this research.

The term ‘body’ is the crucial point through out the thesis. Here the body is something, neither dead nor living. Where one can observe in the art works of contemporaries such as Mike Kelley, Jana Sterbak, Gilbert and George, Vito Acconci, Chris Burden, Claes Oldenburg and Orlan. Nevertheless one can easily observe a sense of loss in the works of these body artists that may be considered as *body loss*, where the body is abstracted from its own context and carried to another dimension to show a kind of play between life and death. The notion of *bodilessness* appears in the works of these artists with this play of life and death.

Body is a word which is open to interpretations and to intertextuality. ‘Body’ does not only mean the human body but (it also means): **Body (n):** 1.a) the main part of a plant or animal body especially as distinguished from limbs and head: **TRUNK** b) the main; central or principal part: as (1) the nave of a church (2) the bed or box of a vehicle on or in which the load is place (3): the enclosed or partly enclosed part of an automobile 2.a): the organized physical substance of an animal, a plant either

living or dead: as (1): the material part of nature of a human being (2): the dead organism: **CORPSE** b: a human being: **PERSON** 3(a): a mass of matter distinct from other masses <a~ of water> <a celestial> b: something that embodies or gives concrete reality to a thing; also: a sensible object in physical space s: **AGGREGATE, QUANTITY** <a~ of evidence 4 a: the part of a garment covering the body or trunk b: the main part of a literary or journalistic work: text 2b c: the sound box or pipe of a musical instrument 5: a group of persons or things: as a :fighting unit: **FORCE** b: a group of individuals organized for some purpose <a legislative ~> 6a: fullness and richness of flavor (as of wine) b: **VISCOSITY, CONSISTENCY**- used esp. of oils and grease c: compactness or firmness of texture d: fullness or resonance of a musical tone (Merriam-Webster's 1994, 128).

In Turkish language, the word '*beden*' means a human's, animal's or plant's body or at least it refers to something which is living. An interesting point for me is the body also refers to the "size of the body" in terms of clothing and personal adornment. There is a direct relevance with the word 'bodiless' = 'having no body' (Merriam-Webster's 1994, 128) in English with the Turkish word [*bedensiz*] "having no body" as long as the word body refers to the "size of the body".

The discussion point in this study is not whether a body exists or not. The study circulates on the loss of a body that was existing before and getting more abstract. In fact, one can easily experience 'bodilessness' = 'the state of having no body' in his/her body through each day, by aging and its results with the secondary event of the body 'sickness'. Aging is also a new presence of the body, which is the most

concrete and appropriate example for crystallizing the idea of bodilessness and the body loss that the bodies' face all through their life time from birth to death.

During the thesis, I will seek for the possible answer(s) for the question "How is this *bodilessness* possible if it is?". Meanwhile I will refer to my works in order to represent the way of visualization of the ideas in my works within plastic language. Besides, explaining the concept *bodilessness* in relation of the idea of 'the soft' by referring Claes Oldenburg's "soft sculptures", Mike Kelley's "soft objects and installations" including stuffed toys/dolls of childhood, Gilbert and George's "the living sculptures" and some other contemporaries who were in the art scene since the 1960's. At the same time, the substance of life/death including the experience of living enters in this study by, inspiring the imaginative plays, games, toys and tales of children including the dolls and the puppet.

I will also point out the issue of clothing in case of the work "**LEFTOVERS**", (1997) point out to the exchange between bodies. Where clothing functions as a "second skin" and a container, which stands for the body. In this context I will refer to Didier Anzieu's concept of the "Moi-Peau" ("I-skin" or "ego-skin") to mention how clothing is a matter of ego identity on the inside of the *body exchange*. Besides I will link Anzieu's concept of "Moi-Peau" with Lacan's concept of *mirror stage* where one can contribute the idea of his/her body in terms of tactile, through the image of others and as well as by touching or feeling his/her body, as an entity.

Meanwhile, the activity of the death drive Lacan's reconstruction on Freud's will be used in defining and analyzing the ideas through works and how the viewer may

experience the *bodilessness* as a consequence of my works. Here, the “death drive” operates on two levels: the *imaginary* and the *symbolic* level. I shall consider the comparative aspect between the death drive and the puppet, which works in the same method, through the imagination and metaphors. Yet the possibility of conceptualizing the possible experience of *bodilessness* will, by all means, send us through the notion of the ‘impossibility of body’ that was defined as “death drive” by Freud.

This study has another aim of suggesting that the puppet may be perceived to be an object, which is imagined to have life. Especially the idea of the puppet urged me to construct the basis of this research in which I will consider and discuss this issue of the puppet. If the puppet is not an actual living being as human beings, then what is a puppet? The puppet is a metaphor, what is a metaphor? It is a signifier that takes place of another signifier. The puppet is the signifier, which substitutes for another signifier that is the living being. And it can be described in accordance to humans such, puppets have mouths, human beings have also mouths. Puppets deliver speech, human beings are also deliver speech. What is more important is the puppets have opportunity-the ability to move or not and human beings have the ability to move or not. But this process of movement for puppet is tricky because of the puppets can only catch up the state of representing human beings with this idea of movement at which place the puppet's body filled with another body that is supposed to be the actual living being: *human*. A puppet can only have the opportunity to move, act or speak with this process that I shall call this as the *body transfer* which appears in between the puppet and his/her master.

A related idea conveys an inversion in that metaphorical sense, people are perceived by other people to have life while at the same time may be imagined to be objects. *Bodilessness*, may be understood as the awareness one's own, which seemed very important to me to point it out here. This inversion derives from the power of the puppet, to be "the metaphor of humanity" according to a paradox of the ontology. At that moment, the power of the puppet as a metaphor of humanity depends on this inversion, and on the ontological paradox that remains between the ontology of humanity and the ontology of puppet. Furthermore, it is a question of who or what, creates or controls. I shall return to the idea of *bodilessness* in terms of my experience both in art, which I think it is 'bodiless' and as a living being in accord to the work "**I HAD A DREAM LAST NIGHT**", 1999.

## 2. THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF THE BODY

During mid 1950's, the tradition of presenting subject and object was differentiated as it is in Yves Klein's works (Fig. 1.0). Klein declared his art works as "living sculpture" in which he took the body to extremes (see Celant 1995, 14). One of his performance "**Anthropometry**" (Fig. 1.0) 1960, which took place in *Galerie Internationale d'Art Contemporain*, Paris where he wore a tuxedo with tie (See Stich 1994, 174). He appeared and bowed to the small orchestra that began to emit the droning tone of his "**Monotone Symphony**" (See Stich 1994, 174). After a small while, three nude women arrived to the performance place with blue paint containers in their hands. They waited standing still until Klein gave the directions for them to paint themselves and soon the walls around and the pristine paper which were laid on the floor beforehand with their bodies (See Stich 1994, 174).

Klein's attitude confirms the subject, by using the body just as an object as the post Pollock period was characterized both by a feeling of the body as a thing and by a withdrawal of art from the cycle of action and rest. Klein stated about his "body painting" as,

"I very quickly perceived that it was the block of the body itself, that is to say the trunk and part of the thighs, that fascinated me. The hands, the arms, the head, the legs were of no importance. Only the body is alive, all-powerful, and non-thinking. The head, the arms, the hands are only intellectual articulations around the bulk of flesh that is the body!

The heart beats without thought or our part; the mind cannot stop it. Digestion works without our intervention, be it emotional or intellectual. We breathe without reflection.

True, the whole body is made of flesh, but the essential mass is the trunk and the thighs. It is there that we find the real universe, hidden by the universe of our limited perception." (Quoted in Stich 1994, 174)

The equivalents of this attitude in dance, music, theater and literature showed approaches to perceiving the body as a thing, came out in the work of Merce

Cunningham, John Cage, Jean Genet and Samuel Beckett. They sought to liberate gesture, sound and words from all functional dependence on the body (see Celant 1995, 14). In a certain sense the body has become art object, was indifferent to commands with its heaviness and passivity against all non-bodily, technical manipulation (see Celant 1995, 15).

### **2.1. The Tendency Towards the 'Declaration' of the Body In Recent Art**

The artists, who work with the idea of 'the body', such as Orlan, Jana Sterbak, Mike Kelly, Vito Acconci, Chris Burden and Gilbert and George have two main points in common. One of that is the tendency to confirm or declare 'the body' that which one can not get rid of by both exhibiting their own bodies or objects that are put, installed or exhibited as art works in accordance with the idea of 'the body'. This is categorically named as 'body art' and 'performance art', which can be considered as a new genre of art, came out with the changes in politics and the social environment that includes technologic changes, which remarkably effected art and the art world in general during 70(s) (see Schimmel 1988, 15).

During this period Chris Burden from America came out in to the art scene with his shockingly simple, unforgettable performance in which a man had himself shot and cut. Burden showed the exhausted art world out the extreme art that one could ever be seen at that period. Not only Burden but also Joseph Beuys, Jannis Kounellis, Richard Long from Europe and Vito Acconci, Joan Jonas, Teri Fox form America became the references for the history of performance art in between the years of 1971-1975. (See Schimmel 1988, 15)

Among these artists, Burden isolated himself from the very beginning who explored human psychology with his painful performances. He showed out the most minimal images to point out the core of his works with his body as in the performance **White Light, White Heat**, 1970 (Fig. 1.1). The performance took place in Roland Feldman Fine Arts Galley in New York where Burden placed a triangular shaped platform just 50 m. below the southeast corner of the ceiling. As he got on that particular platform that was placed in a way that no one was able to see Burden. He remained there with his ghostly presence 22 days without eating, seeing or talking to anybody and no body had seen Burden as well. He subjected himself and the viewer, empathetically to extreme conditions of physical and psychological exhaustion, both the body and the mind. (See Schimmel 1988, 15)

Vito Acconci's performance "**SeedBed**", 1972 (Fig. 1.2) can be compared to Burden's, which took place in Sonnabend Gallery. Acconci placed himself beneath a platform, which is sloped. Yet audience could not see the artist but was able to hear the artist's amplified voice talking about the "self" as he was masturbating.

Gilbert and George is another appropriate example for this issue who were in art scene for about 30 years and more with their shared bodies, for two as one (in terms of quantity), which called themselves as "living sculpture" (See Fig. 1.3 "**The Living Sculpture**"). The emptiness of their shared bodies is by all means without qualities and with no concept of any other life to look forward to. They are acting as if they are already dead.

In relation to the idea of the body in the works in which were explained above 'the body' may have been in a state, which is 'impossible' where the body is somewhere in-between by both being the subject and the object as it is claimed as an artwork. The awareness of one's own body declared both to the audience and the self by the artists as long as these two performances are considered. Acconci's performance exhibits to the audience the artist's most private psychology, about his body even the body is hidden. Meanwhile, Burden gave nothing to the audience but his absence as he hid his body. Their bodies were hidden to some place just to claim that they have one. Also Gilbert and George stress the point that, "the reality of being a living sculpture means the unremitting need for more art, more life and a new normality" (Jahn 1989, 75). Their art is indeed life, because in contradistinction to other artistic undertakings of our time it does not reflect the relationship between a lost image of humanity and the circumstances of today (Jahn 1989, 84-85). As they declared themselves to be two identical and interchangeable sculptures (Jahn 1989, 13). Another common point among these works is the sense of *bodilessness* as long as 'the bodilessness' is being aware of one's own body. But the body has been put in to a place that it is both constituted as object rather than a subject.

## **2.2. The Idea of 'The Soft' in Recent Art**

In recent art a large spectrum of materials fall under the heading of "the soft". These consist of both neutral materials including; earth, water, fabric, cotton, flesh and artificial materials including; foam, plastic, nylons, vinyl which are used by many artists such as Claes Oldenburg, Mike Kelly, Vito Acconci, Orlan, Gilbert and George, Jana Sterbak, Marina Abramovic, Christo, Louis Bourgeois, Magdalena

Abakanowicz. During the study I shall be referring to some of these artists works and my works, with in the idea of "the soft".

### **2.2.1. Claes Oldenburg**

Claes Oldenburg is one of the most influential American artist of recent times who came in to the art scene in the late 50(s) with his performances, soft sculptures and soft objects. His art based up on making the imitation of everyday objects . Once he described, "I am for an art of that imitates the human, that is comic, if necessary or violent or whatever is necessary" (Madoff 1995, 213). Claes Oldenburg's attitude toward art and art object has its roots in Futurism and Dada and rediscovery of Duchamp. There is a strong relevance between Oldenburg's art and the life in general. Oldenburg changed the basis of his work just like John Cage, Merce Cunningham, Jasper Johns, and Allan Kaprow after he became aware of Duchamp's work.

### **2.2.2. Claes Oldenburg's Soft Sculptures**

In Oldenburg's works like "**Soft Harp**" (Fig. 1.4), "**Soft Sax**" (Fig. 1.5), "**Sausage**" (fig. 1.6) the representation is a gesture of defunctionalization where the original identity of the main object -that has been represented as an art object- seems lost. The already manufactured things are turned in to soft art objects in Oldenburg's works. For me, what he visualized, as the works, are more powerful than the actual, real objects. It is not just because of the enlargement of these objects, which appeared larger than the life size, but they are the works that are flaccid, changed,

mutilated and still changeable moreover they are also soft. He used soft materials generally clothing materials in order to make something look very "soft".

### 2.2.3. 'The Soft' in Oldenburg

As Oldenburg's "soft object" has to do with softness and the idea of "the soft" where he used soft materials with the most of the objects that he made while, the subjects have been hard, such as the "**Soft Sax**" (Fig. 1.4), "**Soft Harp**" (Fig. 1.5), "**Soft Switch**" (See Figures. 1.7, 1.8) except some of his early works. An exceptional work of Oldenburg's early works "**Sausage**", 1957 (Fig. 1.6) made out of stuffed stocking, which showed the object as fleshy clothing. "**Sausage**" as a soft sculpture has become an excitable object with its sexual connotation. One can easily speak of the sexuality of the object at the first gaze as I did. The object turns out to be an subject that has a life of its own in Oldenburg's installation and sculptures with its connotations to the 'body' as it is in this work.

The work **Sausage**'s connotations are derived partly from the stocking that it is made of because the stocking is both an ornament for the body and a tool for seduction. Nonetheless, this soft sculpture refers to other body parts as well. More like the curvilinear parts of a woman's body. It also seems like the intestines. However, the realm of the impersonality shows soulless, bodiless, and sexless of the object, Claes Oldenburg describes his soft objects as "feeling objects" (See, Celant 1995, 13) which are presented as art. He stated:

Oldenburg seems to have seen clothing-the material he used in the works he sculpted- as comparable to the skin of the subject. For him, "there is no difference

between the garment and body, or even the experience of the skin with fabric between the exterior and interior, between the organic and inorganic" (Celant 1995, 7). The clothing of an object is the substitute for the skin of a subject in his art objects. He stated:

The cloth work is decidedly "sculptural" by which I mean it emphasizes masses, simple and articulated. It de-emphasizes color. What the period of "sculptural" painting has left is the fluidity of the surface, which in these works is real because they are sculpture: the unillusionsary, tangible realm. The dynamic element here is flaccidity, where in the paint it was the paint action and the sparkle of light...that is the tendency of a hard material actually to be soft, not look soft. (So it is a naive translation of painting)" (quoted in Celant 1995, 15. Oldenburg, 1963).

The work **Switch** (Figures. 1.7, 1.8) has also connotations (as it is in the work "**Sausage**" (Fig. 1.6)). These two switches resemble the breasts'. One can easily differentiated there is a sense of breasts is visible here by both the forms of the installation and the material, categorically vinyl, which seems like the skin that the object is purposefully made out of. One may thus observe a kind of idea of the aged body, (Fig. 1.8) which is yet to run out of its water where once it was full of (Fig. 1.7). Although the works still have the sense of the actual switches where one can still switch these buttons on and off. These switches suggest the sense of a loss of bodily identity as well as a loss of function in the process of they are exhibited to be art objects, which has lost their original identity and function as everyday objects.

Oldenburg decides to sample life and presents it. He did not create an image from nothingness but he used the already existing visual entities and represented it both as a pre-existent object and as a sense of touch, of both insubstantiality and substantiality of the surface. He said:

"Why should I even want to create "art" - that is the notion I've got to get rid of. Assuming that I wanted to create something, what would that thing be? Just a thing, an object. Art would not enter it. I make a changed object (living). An "artistic" appearance or content is derived from the objects reference not from the objects itself or me" (quoted in Celant 1995, 15. Oldenburg, 1961).

In Oldenburg's works, the viewer is faced with an inanimate thing, which turns out to be an animate object as it is surrounded with cloth which seems to function as a skin. One can ask a critical question of his work: where does this thing live? Perhaps, nowhere, because the state of the body is somewhere "in-between", neither living nor dead in Oldenburg's works. This rhythm between life and death is "the soft" in Oldenburg's art.

### **2.3. The Exchange between Bodies: The Issue of Clothing**

It may be useful to mention here that most of the works that I installed are in an intention of collecting. I am frequently moving and getting influenced from the objects that I have observed, found and sometimes lost. An event of losing my pullover made me notice the amount of exchanges between bodies such as air, liquid, light, heat, clothing and one of the most important is the exchange of ego. Something that was special to me, whoever found that piece of clothing, is using it today. Therefore, I exchanged that particular object with some 'body' else. Since that day, I have been collecting clothes and absorbing the memories of all others by sewing them one by one as if I am wearing them as it is in the work "LEFTOVERS" (Fig. 1.9). Nevertheless clothing in the sense of 'exchange' is profound. Especially used clothing, which have been worn and used by several bodies, also tell personal memories and have lived experience and carrying an intimacy for the body.

Clothes may be broadly defined as any body covering (see Khiser 1985, 6).. A related concept is personal adornment, which encompasses any form of bodily decoration or alteration (e.g. clothes, paint, make up) (Khiser 1985, 6). People of all known cultures have always adorned themselves, but not always with clothes. The term 'dress' often is used interchangeably with adornment (that is, to include clothes as well as other forms of adornment) (see Khiser 1985, 6). However the term dress connotes the process or act of covering the body with clothing and accessories that also reflects actual norms and values. Yet, it is one of the non-verbal communications like gestures, facial expressions, bodily stance or movement.

## **2.4. Clothing as “Second Skin”: LEFTOVERS, 1997**

### **2.4.1. Anzieu’s Concept of the “I” Skin**

Clothes have openings: they are like doors, which give access to the body (see Woodward 1991, 173). The clothes are like human beings that individually each one has its own lived experiences and history, together they may be imagined to have a collective destiny. A cloth is also so simple and so familiar. It is an object that is always waiting for someone, always ready to be used by anyone. On the other hand, clothes can be considered as shelters because they do what the body can not do.

Clothes may also function as a “second skin”: or extension of the bodily self that represents the nearest aspect of one's environment. Ince points out the issue of skin in her article, “Operations of Redress: Orlan, the Body and its Limits” as an

element of “dress code” in which it implies two important changes that represents an enlargement, which we conventionally understand by “dress” (see Ince 1988, 118).

“The first of these two is a change in the status of skin. This takes place through the destabilization of the binary oppositions that the semiotics of the dress leaves in place. The skin is the border limit between the “body inner and thee “body outer” (the visible body). It is the container on which distinction of inside and outside depends. The skin, it begins to become apparent, is the central to the underpinning of a metaphysical conception of the body. Whereas the skin has traditionally been conceived of as a “natural” layer or membrane, it becomes, when the body modifications practices are admitted as forms of dress, as “cultural” as jeans and polyester.

The second change, related to but perhaps outstripping the first, is a challenge to the metaphysical definition of the body, in which the acts as its container or its “envelope” (to borrow a figure from Luce Irigaray’s (1984) reading of phallogocentric philosophy). The involvement of the skin, as border site between clothes and the body, in the definition of dress troubles the delimitation of the body as the object to be dressed” (Ince 1998, 118). In the traditional metaphysical definition of the body, the skin acts, as its “container” or its “envelope”” (Ince 1998, 118).

But the boundary between the cloth and the skin is blurred as long as the friction between the cloth, which covers the body as an envelope, and the skin, is considered. French psychoanalyst Eugene Lemoine-Luccioni stated, “we prefer to consider the garment as an equivalent to a second skin, and skin as equivalent to a sort of undergarment” (Quoted in Ince 1998, 119. Lemoine-Luccioni 1983:98). Here, as Ince refers to Lemoine-Luccioni also refers to the psychoanalyst Didier Anzieu’s concept of the “Moi-Peau” (“I-skin” of “ego-skin”), “which affirms an accordance of the child’s developing ego in association with a “narcissistic envelope” (Quoted in Ince 1998, 119. Lemoine-Luccioni 1983:98). Anzieu stated:

“I employ the term I-skin to refer to a figuration used by the child’s ego during the early stages of its development to represent itself as an ego containing psychic contents, on the basis of its experience of the body’s surface” (Quoted in Ince, 119. Anzieu 1995:61).

That the cloth is so near to the skin that perceivers may find it difficult to distinguish clothes from the boundaries of a person's body. Most people, most of the time treats their clothes as their boundaries. It is not just because of clothes surround the body but also as Lemoine-Luccioni stressed on the relation body via cloth and skin that it is a matter of "ego identity" in her book that is partly roused from Orlan, who is a body artist that is working with in the issue of the possible and impossible relationships of the body via cloth and skin (see Ince 1998, 119). Orlan configured this relationship by wearing a "chasuble" on which her naked body printed in a life size scale in her Lisbon performance (see Ince 1998, 119). Orlan's work points out the contradiction, which is built in the intensely declaration of 'body art' (see Ince 1998, 116). This relation may explain the idea of body transfer, in the sense of clothing as an envelope, between bodies.

#### **2.4.2. "LEFT-OVERS", 1997**

The work "**LEFT-OVERS**," 1998 (Fig. 1.9.) is formed of an assemblage of hundreds of used clothing sewn one by one from their binding points which seem open together by cotton rope, as if they acquire the uneasiness of enduring architecture or a living organism made up of cells. Also there is something almost erotic about this linkage one on to the top of the other. The construction refers to this linkage, which as I installed them to the ceiling. The process of sewing, (Fig. 2.0.) which let the clothes to grasp each other from their binding points and give them the opportunity to exchange the lived experiences and transfer to one from another. Where together they form a continuous process of transfer in terms of the body as

long as the dependence between the body and the clothes is recognized.

These clothes that I have been collected and sewn have passed their expiration date. They have been displaced from their actual context. By making a work out of them, I have reconstructed their context also where these unwanted clothes are like parasites just like many other parasites around, which we ignore, or purposefully neglect. The parasites can also be considered as a threat for the main body. They are the mirror reflection of the self. They are what the self is not. They are the threat that hangs on top of us (Fig. 2.1.). However, they are already existed entities even in a healthy body (e.g. such like a garbage bin in a clean house). Parasites threaten the main body and their own existence until the main body dies because if the body dies they will also die. They show themselves when the system is weakened. By carrying this whole through the third dimension. I included this parasitic construction into life and let them to develop there. Because the ceiling is the most neglected part of the space. And the parasites begin to develop in untouchable, unseen, neglecting spaces. By this work I intend to represent the dialogue of the main body and the parasites with in the usage of the used clothes as the leftovers in a way, that these may be considered as a way of displacement of the ego in terms of "body transfer".

## **2.5. Body-in-Parts, Body-in-Space: "PLACE", 1997**

### **2.5.1. Lacan's Concept of the Mirror Stage**

Didier Anzieu's concept of the "Moi Peau" emphasized the significance of "the projection of bodily surfaces to the information of the ego seen in Freud's "bodily

ego" and in the Lacan's concept of the imaginary" (Ince 1998, 119). For me, this idea is related to Lacan's concept of *mirror stage*, that is "organized around a fundamental experience of identification in the course of which the child becomes master of his body" (Dor 1997, 95). "The child's primary identification with this image promotes the structuring of the "I" and puts end to that singular aspect of psychic experience" (Dor 1997, 95). Lacan calls this as "the fantasy of the fragmented body" (Dor 1997, 95). The function of the mirror dialectic is to neutralize the fragmenting dispersion in favor of the unity of one's own body (Dor 1997, 95).

The child's experience through the mirror stage is separated in to three fundamental periods, which gets along with the exploration of his/her body image as follows:

"At first, it is as if the child perceives the image of his body in the mirror as a real being, one that he tries to approach or take hold of. This phase of the experience, in other words, indicates as an initial confusion between self and other, confusion amply confirmed by the stereotyped relations he has with other children" (Dor 1997, 96).

This is the first of the three orders that come into view and acquainted by Lacan in his article on the "mirror stage" 1936 (See Boothby 1991, 18). This was Lacan's first and arguably most original and far-reaching innovation in psychoanalytic theory, which was to characterize the Freudian "ego" as a formation of the imaginary. (See Boothby 1991, 18).

"The second constitutes a decisive step in the process of identification. The child is surreptitiously led to discover that the other in the mirror is not a real being, but only an image. He no longer tries to grab hold of it, and, what is more, he now knows how to distinguish the image of the other from the reality of the other" (Dor 1997, 96).

This was the second order, which was announced in Lacan's paper on "The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis,". The notion of the symbolic is obliged to the linguistics of Ferdinand de Saussure and Roman

Jakobson, and to the structural anthropology of Claude Levi-Strauss (Boothby 1991, 18). Lacanian psychoanalysis becomes itself when "Lacan identified the Oedipus complex discovered by Freud with the formative movement in which the child molded and snared by the imaginary, accedes to a symbolic mode of functioning" (Boothby 1991, 18).

"The third period transforms the first two in to a dialectic, not only because the child becomes certain that the mirror reflection is an image, but above all because he inquires the conviction that this image is his own" (Dor 1997, 96).

The third order is the Lacanian "real". "Neither figured in the imaginary nor represented by the symbolic, the real is always still outstanding, the radically excluded, the wholly uncognized" (Boothby 1991, 19). Lacan stated "the real is impossible" (Boothby 1991, 19) but this real has little to do with the "reality". It is more related with the un-or-surreal. These three orders, *imaginary*, *symbolic* and *real*, which were distinct by Lacan, are the master key of the Lacan's work (Boothby 1991, 19).

Our sense of unity of other bodies is three-dimensional. As the body is one's only and its constant companion, through the body images we also construct out of our sense of bodies' as it is in Lacan's concept on "mirror stage". "The child is able to resemble, fragmented body in to a unified totality the representation of his own body" (see Dor 1997, 97) where he recognizes himself through the images of others.

"The body image is therefore a structuring factor in the formation of the subject's identity, since it is through this image that he achieves his primal identification. The entire process of this conquest of identity is grounded in the imaginary dimension, in that the child identifies himself through something virtual (the optical image) that is not himself but something through which he nonetheless recognizes himself" (Dor 1997, 97).

### 2.5.2. "PLACE", 1997

We imagine the body in space and thus in a place. It is also constituted by touch and commonly talk about how our bodies feel; I feel hot, or I feel sick and thereafter oneself may feel himself as an entity and as a whole. The performance "PLACE", 1997 (Fig. 2.2) subjects to the "birth ritual" to refer the infants developing sense of his/her body as a whole, which comes in great part from the touch of the mother (see Woodward 1991, 171). The work, which is made out of two white elastic fabrics which are stitched and sewn to each other with an ambiguous form before I get inside of it, has its reference from 'the body' and the representations of the body-in-space, and the body-in-parts. Here the body is also figured in terms of an inside and outside. The performance gets in to an ambiguous contact with the audience, where they can feel the psychological impact on the body as it is losing its bodily boundaries by sewing it self in that particular place until it gets totally irrevocable. One can observe a visible/invisible act (see Fig. 2.2.) of sewing gains its importance here with a rewinding direction of motion that narrows the space of the place by both the form and gesture of the body who sews itself in until the body can not move. Here, the body faces the illusory freedom in place thus in space once more because as George Perec<sup>1</sup> observed, "the space is always enclosed even it looks or feels as if it is completely open".

If one asks the average person about him/her bodily boundary, he/she will get a confused look. Although she/he knows that all structures have walls and developing limits, she/he has probably never applied this idea to his own body. Then one may

receive, "of course, there are boundaries to my body, the skin encloses my body and that skin marks the edge of me" (Fisher 1974, 20) and site of communication with others as well. The work "PLACE" (Fig. 2.3) emphasizing the debate of the gap, which is in-between 'outer' and 'inner' body while, the viewer may experienced the *bodilessness* as it is a matter of flaunting in between the body and its boundaries surrounds the body in space thus the body in place. For Anzieu, "the skin appears to function as a bodily container whose boundaries to function are not put in to question" (Ince 1998, 119). Here, Anzieu's the concept "Moi Peau" "implies a coincidence of the limits of the body and the limits of the ego" (Ince 1998, 119). As the skin, "the organ of sensibility," (Ince 1998, 119) imprisons the self in it, then one can be aware of his/her body by touching and grasping his/her as well as others body and feel him/herself as an entity, as a whole through this tactile relationship. In this sense clothing also may confound the process of developing a personal body image to some extent, especially when the clothes do not closely fit the shape of the body. This work also tends to represent the restriction of contact with others (audience) to dramatize possible relations and non-relations because "the ego can obtain the status of imaginary representation only through the other and in relation to the other" (Dor 1997, 159).

## **2.6. The Body Is Vulnerable, Especially to Death**

Parents and adults generally hide two things as a secret from their children or children they know. One is "the event of birth", a time of body existence, and the other is "the event of death", a time of body non-existence. The life itself is an "in-between state" in accord to birth and death. The body as an organism, which is

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<sup>1</sup>Art press, Feb. 1996, 41

actually alive but it is trapped in to an inter zone, between life and death. This in-between state turns the body out to a limited container that keeps death and birth in it at the same time. Whenever the body witnesses the death, it knows something about the vulnerability of body through death.

### **2.6.1. Lacan's Reconstructing on Freud's Concept of "Death Drive"**

In "Beyond the Pleasure Principle" Freud argued that: "The aim of life is death" (entropy) (Freud 1975, 46). In Freud's biological theory, the psychoanalytical organism seeks the status of satisfaction, defined as the absence of conflict, or pleasure. For Freud "in addition to the *life drives* there must exist a primordial drive toward death" (Boothby 1991, 3). Both Lacan and Freud was aware of the *causes* that motivates human behavior that is, "humans are driven by a death principle" (Ragland 1995, 85). This is Freud's death drive hypothesis and was followed by Lacan that is "the true goal of living is dying and that life-course of all organisms must be regarded as only a circuitous route to death" (Ragland 1995, 85). Freud also explained the "death drive" as seeking entropy or constancy basing on the idea that the pleasure principle dominates psychic processes (Ragland 1995, 99). Freud gave psychoanalysis its own version of the theory of entropy, under the influence of death. Freud argued that:

"The organism shall follow its path to death, and to ward off any possible ways of returning to inorganic existence other than those which are immanent in the organism itself" (1975, 47).

In which he may mean the organism is accepted to die its own way and the passage of our life is simply our way of choosing our progress toward death. Freud's theory on the "death drive" is "the darkest and most stubborn riddle posed

by the legacy of psychoanalysis," (Boothby 1991, 2) which was of central importance during Freud's last years of writing (Boothby 1991, 2) and until the end of his life (Ragland 1995, 85). Although Lacan followed Freud, his concept of "death drive" is not Freud's repetition on the "Beyond the Pleasure Principle" but at the same time he did not reject it totally (see Ragland 1995, 85).

Lacan redefined the death drive in terms of meaning in the 1950(s) by basing his thoughts on Hegel's phenomenological idea that the word kills the thing, he argued that a sense of oneness in perceptual imaginary experience is lost in human effort to re-present a thing (Ragland 1995, 85). He developed this theory in his reinterpretation of "Beyond the Pleasure Principle" in seminar II (Ragland 1995, 85). Lacan pointed out that the words imply the absence of the "thing" as a fullness or presence (Ragland 1995, 85). That is, although words seek to re-present the thing - in-itself, they can never be with what they seek to say or embody at the level of oneness, unity, correctness, saying it 'all'. (Ragland 1995, 85).

### **2.6.2.Crowd Metaphor-The Loss of the Self: "DOLMUŞ", 1997**

Lacan's hypothesis on the three orders, the *imaginary*, the *symbolic*, and the *real* has a traumatic element at its center, He called this element the remaining of loss that has taken as a positive factor: [S (∅)] (See Ragland 1995, 87). On that account it is loss that drives life, making of death drive a matter of clinging to known consistencies rather than encountering the unbearable real of loss *qua* anxiety (Ragland 1995, 87). The *object a* denotes any filler of this void. Therefore, human beings pursue objects that sustain fantasies, although attaining can object of

fantasy can never completely close the void (Ragland 1995, 87). In this context, Lacan disagreed Freud about the nature of the death drive that he stated "humans are not driven toward death as entropy, rather were driven by "death" in the form of excesses in Jouissance that is, we cling to fetish object (the object *a*) which we identify as our Good" (Ragland 1995, 88). Seen in this light, "death drive" may be a conceptualization of *bodilessness*, which was mediated by a fantasized body that which is apart from the imaginary dimension. To a body which can fulfill the loss within itself as an object.

"**DOLMUŞ**", 1997 (Fig. 2.4) installation that I performed over the opening of the exhibition YOUTH ART 3. The title of the exhibition was "CHAOS" that I choose this particular work to exhibit there. It is an installation in which I covered my body with the same fabric as an envelope and exhibiting my body as if it is a part of the work. The installation is made out of pink elastic fabric that was stuffed, stitched and sewn. The material of the installation, pink elastic fabric, was selected purposefully to recall the skin.

Here we are facing with a stuffed toy like body that was made out of the contours of several human bodies look like as crowd (see Fig. 2.5). As a whole, it looks like the crowd, that is representing the individual who rejects to be restricted towards the crowds and can not find any place in a bunch of bound and stowage bodies for the self. Here the self is dislocated as if it has an empty, organless, mindless body (see Fig. 2.4.). Meanwhile, the self turned itself in to a kind of object that which it linked to a group but on the other hand to an object, which is separated from a linking

group. The self here animates in two different yet related ways by both being a separator of the group and a part of the group. The word 'group' implies the crowds here where the self may realize that the freedom the body thinks she/he owns is nothing but an illusion, a false freedom or a fake, almost illusory.

Moreover, without having any choice to exist, we appear, then disappear. What freedom we have is reduced to a remembrance of that we are finite and ill fated just like our bodies. Lacan interpreted the Freudian "pleasure principle" as a paradoxical model of death in which the desire that human beings have to seek for freedom is countered by the attachment to the already known (Ragland 1995, 91). The self seeks a self much less asserts a self (Sypher 1962, 76). It is perhaps more than this: the self may want to get beyond the self, beyond personality, beyond dimension of time, space and bodily place or to what the self is not: to a body that is 'impossible'.

With this work, *bodilessness* may transpose its circuit through loss of the individuality. The distorted disorders that is caused by the crowds lay out in to the viewer's eyes nakedly which seems like bodiless and brainless organisms which the self completely losses its sense of body. The *bodilessness* is not the imaginary here, it is the symbolic, which symbolizes the loss of individuality towards the crowds and within itself that I may define it as the state of *bodilessness* (see Fig. 2.6).

### **3. AN EXPLORATION OF THE IDEA OF DOLLS**

#### **3.1. Dolls: A metaphor of Personal Identity**

Within the idea of “the soft” an increasing number of artists of the 1980’s since today used toys or toy scale in their works: Mike Kelley, Dennis Oppenheim Toni Oursler, Christian Boltanski and Annette Mesagger. These artists seem to have decided independently and with different motives, to use dolls, cartoons, miniatures to ask questions about representation, play around with scale, or answer more personal needs (See Carter 1993, 3).

Artists have chosen to use the metaphor of “personal identity” by exhibiting toy dolls and puppets. Baudelaire wrote, “the toy is the child’s earliest initiation to art, or rather for him it is the first concrete example of art, and when mature age comes, the perfected examples will not give his mind the same feelings of warmth, or the same enthusiasms, or the same sense of conviction” (quoted in Carter 1993, 3). According to artist Mike Kelley, “toys and dolls are the darker side of human memories inviting us to contemplate the lost memories of childhood” (quoted in Carter 1993, 20).

##### **3.1.1. Body Transfer**

The doll is an object, a physical entity, which its soulless, empty body waits for an experience of transferring to someone’s body to share and exchange. I may crystallize the idea of “body transfer” with in the light of this process of exchange between the child and its doll. In which we faced with something utterly unnatural -

namely, life in an inanimate, inorganic material which is fantasized, turned somehow to an organic and animate one in the metaphorical dimension by exchanging a "body" which is alive to another "body" which is not. Artist Vito Acconci describes the relation of a child to her /his doll as one of empowerment: "Giving a doll to a child with similar body parts but smaller in size offers the child a friend and a mirror image over which it can dominate" (Carter 1993, 9). The doll as an object is fulfilling a kind of loss here. It is an image, boundaries and a sense of loss, which the doll provides. The relationship of the doll and the child activates as an object, which is fulfilling the lost object that seems absent. The idea of body transfer can be exemplified with this relationship in which the doll acts as a substitute for the loss.

This sense of loss was widely observed and defined with in the second period of teaching by Lacan, where the operative functions in the word of object and thing is separation or loss (see Ragland 1995, 86). Losses give rise to the use of metaphor (substitution) which functions to displace (metonymy) e.g. displacement of the "ego" by the effect of loss. This might explain the *body transfer* in a distinctive way. In terms of a sense of loss "that the loss of "objects" with which is completed by the momentary sense of pleasurable oneness or the one offers" (Ragland 1995 86) e.g., a child's relationship with her/his doll, to be a warm bath, a soft seat where one thinks him/herself comfortable in it. Those "objects" that functions as substitute, which give pleasure in a first moment and offer the fixity of "death" in a second moment. Here, dolls are productions of a sense of identity, which is imperiled, with loss-because of the doll's separate identity.

### 3.1.2. The Play of Death: “Magnetic Doll”, 1985 by Vito Acconci

Children, especially most boys most of the time plays ‘the game of war’ and ‘fighting’ which ends with one sides’ victory and other sides’ death. The enemy acts as if it was dead when the other sides kill or shoot him. In addition, they are so keen on to act as if they are dead when they give the death postures during plays. They imitate being the dead -but they could also imitate, imitating, being dead as well in the act of playing one of their favorite games.

“**Magnetic Doll**” (Fig. 2.8) 1985 by Vito Acconci is a work that is related to the residue of death and how the body is vulnerable through death. This installation formed by the placement of a doll, whose naked body is covered with the artificial material, which has the metal pigments, on to a pink fabric. The selection of the color pink is both important and special. The color of pink may recall “the flesh”, where the doll’s naked body is installed on to a vivid surface of pink. The viewer will not miss that scene and what has been going on out there. The metal soldiers representing their genders, that are grounded over the Doll’s naked body, also represents its gender furthermore, the “Mother Nature”. Like, the real wars that continue to plaque humankind the battles of these toy soldiers remind us that the threat of war eventually carries the threat of death. But this specific work is a representation of a scene, which presents a child’s game as an artwork.

### 3.2. Soft as Pleasurable

Here, I would like to refer to 'the soft' once more on the point of 'soft as pleasurable' in the context of the sense of loss. The soft is something pleasurable because it is substituting with some occasions that is related with life I believe. 'The soft' is invulnerable on the contrary to the vulnerability of 'the body' through fantasy as it is in the Gilbert and George performance "**The Singing Sculpture**", 1991 (Fig. 2.9) in which they mounted on to a table with their "ill fitted" (Ratcliff 1993, 5) clothes and painted faces and hands. They executed automaton-like movements with a walking stick, a rubber glove and together they sang the words of the song as a cassette recorder repeatedly played "Underneath the Arches" (Flanagan's and Allan's depression era song about two down-at-heel drifters who 'dream our dreams away')(See Ratcliff 1993, 5). The table, which they mounted, serves as a pedestal for the whole work. As the music started, they start to act like robots that are programmed to sing that particular song (see Fig. 3.0). When the song is finished they 'exchange' the stick and glove (see Fig. 3.1) and one of them step off the table press play on the tape then gets back on the table (see Fig. 3.2). This is repeated where the audience spends hours to watch them until the performance ends (See Fig. 3.3). For me, the most important point in this performance is the role of the objects, which have been continuously exchanged between the two. The stick might symbolize the everlasting monotony and continuous stability where as the glove might have symbolizing the interchangeability, transferability and comparability (See Fig. 3.4) just like the artists. In this work Gilbert and George is identical and form a unity (see Wolf 1987, 13). They called themselves Gilbert and George. The rubber glove as a soft three-dimensional object makes no difference between its inside and

outside as one turns its inside to outside. In addition, it will keep the same form and same identity even if you stretch it, twist it or bend it. The glove stands for the emptiness in this work, which is also the symbol of the empty identity of Gilbert and George. With this work the empty presence of the artists remain as objects of art as they named this piece "**Singing Sculpture**" that they are not subjects anymore.

One can easily observe a similar sense of emptiness in Oldenburg's soft sculptures. As 'the soft' sculptures face the audience all of a sudden, their empty identities bring out different appeals of the objects that imply the relationship of the soft with the body through the symbolic dimension. But what more is soft is pleasurable because, you can not bring a body (a dead man) into life but you can bring 'soft objects' in to life within the boundaries of the imaginary dimension. Meanwhile, this may give an opportunity to think how the body is in 'reality' because they also show the fixity of death to audience's gaze through their being invulnerable with their soft appearances. They are suggesting a transfer that one may define it as the *body transfer* that this study partly derived from and it conceives through the sense of loss, also represents the *body transfer* as process of projection of *object a*. Lacan attempts to show why and how desire can never be fulfilled (see Samuels 1993, 110). These soft objects are in a way reminder of the lost objects as both Freud and Lacan stated as "the lost object stays lost which is the object of desire and it can only re-found as absent" (quoted in Samuels 1993, 110).

The work "**MISSING**", 1998 (Fig. 3.5) implies a similar kind of loss within the empty shoes of a doll, which takes us to a state of loss and recalls the absence. The shoes are the reflections of the one who wears it but this pair is concealed in itself that one

is not able to determine even the gender of the absent wearer. Once these shoes were belonged to a plastic doll, which implies the 'purity' and the 'opacity' of a baby (Fig. 3.6). A pair of empty shoes of a doll that are gently installed on to a handkerchief that is awaiting its owner, which is missing. No body knows to whom it belongs to, where it comes from and goes to (see Fig. 3.5).

### 3.3. Body Transfer: "NOT WITH YOURSELF, PLAY WITH ME", 1998

Whenever the body witnesses the death or a remainder of a death it is the time to experience ourselves as subjects of desire with in the field of language. This brings out the relationship between the body and the mind. Then the self starts to raise question about 'itself': Who I am? Alternatively, more important, what I do lack?

For Lacan "mind" is a metaphor for the orders that are built up from the start of life out of association trait sounds, smell, and images, objects that cause desire. Such concrete effects constitute *Jouissance* as a set of identifications in the three orders, yielding three different kinds of *Jouissance*: that of the biological organism (the real), that of the body (the imaginary), and that of the subject (the symbolic). At the juncture between the symbolic and the imaginary, *Jouissance* concerns the meaning that gives positive value to ones life ( $\Phi$ ). At the juncture between the real and the imaginary *Jouissance* concerns one's engagement with lack that Lacan calls castration ( $-\phi$ ). Moreover, at the intersection of the real and the symbolic one finds the Other *Jouissance* where the void dwells at the level of the physical organism itself [S ( $-\phi$ )]. (See Ragland 1995, 95).

The work **"NOT WITH YOURSELF, PLAY WITH ME"**, 1998 (Fig. 3.6) that is made out of stuffed and sewn used clothing with various sizes declares the sense of loss. The so called body parts which carry so called souls have separated from their bodies and started to lose their bodies as they are carried to another body where they have massed up there. Yet, they also became disassociated from their body. Here it is said that, not the existence of a body but a body that is yet to be lost.

These departed bodies seem to stuffed toys/dolls of childhood (Fig. 3.7). It will be helpful to think of the "weirdness" of these "weird" dolls. The "weird" part of the dolls is in a kind of state where they can not find a body to get in to or they can not fit in to the body in which they were found (See Fig. 3.8). Not to make a misinterpretation for these departed bodies, which seemed to be dolls of childhood but our childhood memories and habits help us to see them as living bodies. It is a fact that, these are non-living bodies and only they can find bodies by exchanging themselves with another living body. This work visualizes body transfer with these stuffed so called body parts. Here *bodilessness* is this transition process that body experiences from birth to death, in terms of the awareness of the losses that one can not find object fulfillment. Moreover, it combines this to a place that can not be charged by anything or anyone but a doll or a toy for a child (see Fig. 3.9).

### **3.4 Mike Kelley's Playthings**

#### **3.4.1 Kelley in 'The Soft'**

Within "the soft", Kelley is an important artist who has come on to the art scene with his soft sculptures, installations and performances. It is sufficient here to suggest

that the viewer is simultaneously entertained, perplexed and challenged by Kelley's works, which include our toys/ dolls of childhood. The idea of the body involves within a kind of exploration in Kelley's works, which are physical, and the body of desire and fantasy. His works may identify between irony and obstruction, also as absurdity with tragedy.

An important work of Kelley is titled as **“More Love Hours Than Can Ever Be Repaid”**, 1987 (Fig. 4.0.). This installation is made out of used and found stuffed dolls and toys that were sewn on to a crocheted then to a canvas with its colorful, all over random configuration. Here, Kelley may refer -in terms of composition- to the drip painting of Abstract Expressionism. What he visualized is turning the male existential energy of painting to more feminine alternative with the fetishistic objects of childhood. Almost in all of his work that one can not guess, the artists gender while one looks at his work. It will be useful here to mention that Kelley is both a homosexual and a feminist. This is Kelley's attitude towards his art, to ignore gender, which is clearly visible through most of his works especially in his 'soft' works as an artist.

Kelley's soft works, which consist of used stuffed dolls/ toys are generally placed on used blankets and afghans. This is an attitude which has got to do with the rejection of the pedestal and the formlessness of 1970's "scatter sculpture" (Sussman 1993, 31). This process in Kelley's works have seem to have qualifications in the soft sculpture of Claes Oldenburg where, everyday objects such as it is in the work **“The Switch”** (Fig. 1.8.) and **“Bathroom Objects”** (Fig. 4.1) were defunctionalized. Kelley's art generally focus on the boundaries of the body and what he produces is

some stuffed toys. With his handmade toys, he problematizes the lost relationship between adults and children by using the dolls/toys, which brings out a kind of exchange where the child can never fulfill its place in his /her lifetime.

For Kelley: "dolls are adult fabrications that begin with expressing an adult ideal. The child as a cuddly and sterile creature devoid of genitals, incapable of recalling the grown ups guilt over their own sexuality" (Sussman 1993, 165). Kelley's playthings collapse this nonfunctional idealization returning us to a childhood scene. Here the doll is "less a screen for a projected alter ego than a tactile object to be sucked, squeezed, humped, and drooled on" (ibid.) until it provides the substitute for the loss of.

In 1991, Kelley made another installation "**Craft Morphology Flow Chart**" (Fig. 4.3.) formed with found handmade stuffed animals and dolls. They were placed on the tables, which are ranked in a classroom order, as if they were in a morgue and waiting for autopsy (see Fig. 4.4.). He also photographed each of these "dead" toys (see Fig. 4.2.). Exhibited in an adult context where you are not supposed to touch anything, Kelley's playthings take on the aura of exhibits in an autopsy room. As if he is asking: "What could look more "dead" than a doll?" (Sussman 1993, 32).

The 'sexual scene' in the work, "**Nostalgic Depiction of the Innocence of Childhood**", 1990 (Fig. 4.5) is from Kelley's "Dirty Series". This work is formed of a photograph that Kelley performed with his woman partner. This particular photograph was both placed under the colored plastic inside the CD jewel case of

an American rock band, 'Sonic Youth's "Dirty" album's CD cover which was limited to fifty thousand copies in the U.S (because of tax reasons). It was hung in the gallery in Oregon (see Fig. 4.6). In that photograph, Kelley and the woman are acting as if they are stimulating themselves with the toy bears and other stuffed toy animals. The scene may look very unconventional in that, they are stimulating themselves with the toys rather than having sex with each other but it sounds more unconventional when we think some others had watched this scene instead because the couple can be seen in a position that normally we are not used to where the stuffed toys here function a different position. Here the toys are used for the objects of pleasure. Kelley claims, "this is the most innocent game that every child plays once in his/her life time" (quoted in Sussman 1993,182). This exhibition and the whole "Dirty" show, was the 'sold out' works of Kelley's. It is because of the corporation of Kelley and the rock band "Sonic Youth" and the photographs of Kelley's works, "**Ahh Youth**" (Fig. 4.7) and "**The Nostalgic Depiction of the Innocence of Childhood**" that is in the CD "Dirty". The CD traveled all around the United States of America and most people who bought the CD "Dirty" didn't realize that the images were and are part of a work of art.

#### **3.4.2. What is Bodiless in Kelley's Art through 'The Soft'**

One can easily observe the idea of "the soft" in Kelley's art. It is not just because of the fact that he uses blankets, toys and other soft materials as he produces his works. Kelley's works may be criticized within the idea of the soft in the light of his issues such as democracy, body, aging body, adolescence, theory, the deflowering of oneself and memory as he forms his installations (see Sussman 1993, 85). His

works allow the 'exchange' between audience and artwork he exhibited as it is in the work "**Dialogue #1**", 1991 (Fig. 4.8). This work is from Kelley's one of the well-known series, "The Dialogues Series" that he used stuffed toy animals. In this series Kelley both externalized and put the body as if it is the focal point, the core of the work. For me, "**Dialogue #1**" is the most important work of the whole series because this work refers to Kelley's understanding and handling of the issue about his art and art in general more what he is thinking about art, theory, and life. The work is composed of two-stuffed toy with similar color and size, which were placed side-by-side on a blanket by Kelley. The dialogue in this work was a tape recording of Kelley's speaking the both parts in a very cute, sometimes irritating, and exaggerated version of the voice animation like the cartoons on 'Nickelodeon TV'. Kelley reflects these two main characters of the show as very chatty and sometimes thoughtful. They sometimes act as if they are in love with each other and sometimes fall into an extremely funny and embarrassing situation as they are talking to each other.

If one thinks this work as a performance made up with the dialogue of two stuffed toys with each other, and consider the dialogue as the text of the performance, one can easily determine Kelley's issues and arguments about art are formed to be the text of the work. For me, this text, which Kelley wrote is a kind of declaration of his art through his ideas about theory and practice.

The text of the work "**Dialogue #1**", 1991 (Fig. 4.8):

- The best way to fuck something up is to give it a body.
- *A voice is killed when it is given a body. Whenever there is a body around, you see its faults.*

- Theory proves that.
- *The body of a famous critic came to our class the other day.*
- Now we don't believe his writings anymore.
- *It's writings become theatre.*
- And the presence of all that flesh made us think of all the things, the writings didn't speak of... of what was left out.
- *Authoritative voices must be disembodied to work.*
- A philosopher should have never been seen.
- *It is so sad- it makes you thinks of money, prostitution.*
- That's why we're writing a book.
- *So our voice keeps living, living by becoming an abstraction.*
- We are not self-serving. We service eachother.
- *We compose poems of love for eachother.*
- (Smooch smooch, coo coo)
- Some theorists like to assume a poetic stance, a pseudo-subjective manner.
- *To try to fool you in to believing they are not manipulators.*
- But we're truly poetic.
- *We incorrect everything set up a field, so there is no linger any differentiation.*
- Everything goes dead.
- *Like us.*
- The alignment of innocence-through-reduction fails.
- *Purity-through-reduction always fails.*
- A sad example of this is the child's stuffed animal.
- *Is a mode of innocence.*
- The major "reduction" in this model is the genitals...they have been, spayed, neutered; it grow fat and plush.
- *For example, the heads are much too large for the bodies.*
- Those are the proportions of a child... it means baby.
- *It is revealed that the model is not one of an animal, but of a baby.*
- Not a model of a children; it pictures the child in its perfect form, for adults.
- *And their most perfect form is their least threatening state: death*
- A doll is the statue of a dead baby (quoted in Sussmann 1993, 85. Kelley, 1991).

This text may be the narration of Kelley's art but what is more important to me here is the 'dialogue' of the two stuffed toys. They have been put in to a place of two living beings and are talking about Kelley's favorite issues on art, theory and life in general. What Kelley did is not a criticism of the art and theory. Here he put these two stuffed toys in order to constitute his art. Although he animated these stuffed toys with his voice, he is not the one who is speaking. Yet, he made them to speak as if they are living, thinking, suffering entities. These stuffed entities have spoken for Kelley where they have been animated through Kelley's body and mind. For me, Kelley explores the idea of *body transfer* by using the toys of childhood occasionally he put them in to a state of a dead body and in to a state of a living body.

## 4. THE IDEA OF THE PUPPET

### 4.1. The Phenomenon of the Puppet

This part of the study will not examine the technical practices on the puppet, such as means of construction and presentation. This study is more concerned with “the phenomenon of the puppet”. The issue here is the puppet itself and, what may be considered to be as “puppet”. Besides, concerning the binary model that paradoxically sees the flesh as inanimate (in contrast to the animating “breath” or “spirit” of life), which surrounds the puppet in a certain paradoxical purity –a freedom from the flesh that could be explored and explained by the concept of *bodilessness*.

Whereas Oldenburg’s soft sculpture is concerned with the same process. The viewer is faced with the animation of an object that is surrounded with cloth that suggests by the sense of the surface of the object as skin like. The movement in-between the animate and the inanimate allows the audience to situate an analogy with the idea of the body and the puppet (See Fig. 1.8). Whereas in Kelley’s installations this process shifts its route to the artist’s gaze as it is in the work “**Dialogue # 1**” (Fig. 4.8). Kelley as an artist animates the artwork through his body simply as a puppeteer. Yves Klein is another example, which has given the direction to the nude woman to paint the blank sheets of papers and walls in his performance “**Anthropometry**” (Fig. 1.0). Klein seemed to be in the act of a puppeteer here who was giving the instructions to move the nude bodies of women. Here he has put the body in a state of being an object, which functions as a tool, a paintbrush for

painting. Again in the work "Singing Sculpture", 1991, which Gilbert and George located their bodies to a state where Gilbert and George is both the puppet and the master who manipulates them.

#### **4.1.1. Defining 'The Puppet'**

The word "puppet" derives from "pupa", the feminine version of the classical Latin word for "little child," which also had the meaning "doll". Pupa thus seems to manifest at once a psychosexual expectation of gender behavior such as, little girls' playing with their dolls. The word also embodies a metonymic or pragmatic displacement of meaning between life and the image of life, between the living child and the material figure of the child transfigured for the purposes of play (see Shershow 1995, 68-69). The Latin "pupa" descends into its various English cognates through the Middle French word "poupe", which primarily meant "doll" that is basically a child's plaything, but also defined in seventeenth-century French dictionaries as "tette" or "mamelle" or, in one case, "bout de sein"<sup>2</sup>, which is the etymological progress from the baby to the breast seems also to reflect the infantile displacement described in the psychoanalytic idea of the part-object<sup>3</sup>. The infant, it is speculated, sometimes attributes to the breast the attributes of the mother and hence adapts the mere corporeal object as, in the border sense, his object in the sense of goal, aim an "object" of desire<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Quoted in Shershow 1995, 68-69. Godefroy, Frederic. *Dictionnaire de l'ancienne langue Francaise* (Paris, 1888), cites poupe as "bout de sein" [poupe] = [tip of the breast] citing the *Thresor des trois langues* (1967)

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in Shershow 1995, 68-69. Laplace and J.B. Pontalis, *The Language of Psycho-Analysis*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (New York: Norton, 1973), 301-302.

Feminine relations carry through to the word "puppet" as it descends into English through a series of French and English words including *poupard* ("chubby baby," a term of doll affection) and *poupette* ("little doll") (see Shershow 1995, 69). In certain modes of male discourse women can still be referred to as "baby," "doll," "baby doll" or even "doll baby" (Shershow 1995, 69).

This relation reminds me of Jana Sterbak's work titled as the "**Flesh Dress for an Albino Anorectic**", 1987 (fig. 4.9). Because this work has been taken for granted in terms of the context of current preoccupations with gender politics is that the men view of women as pieces of flesh or women generated fashion<sup>5</sup>. The work was sewn from fifty pounds of flank steak and hung in the gallery hall where over a period of weeks it dried from fresh meat to dry flesh. This work refer to social connotations in some aspects such as the smell which can be very unpleasant and it is also unacceptable in our society such as natural odorous of the body. Besides, there is a strong sense of one body clothing itself in another, which is meat and that meat is supposed to be the flesh. As far as one concern the feminist contexts in Jana Sterbak's art and works, this work connotes to an inescapable sense of women are seen to be pieces of meat in male gaze. Nevertheless there is one more thing to consider about "Flesh Dress" that is analogy between the idea of puppet and this work. This particular work here is the work and the idea that which fastens to each other in terms of puppet as an object, which is a child's plaything but at the same time reifying "the woman" as an object (or plaything) of male desire. The puppet as a body, is somewhere in-between the multiplicity of gender in an

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Art Press, Feb. 1996, 43

imagined pecking-order of objective being by possessing both a formless anatomy and an ontological unity that transcends sex. It is very similar to Yves Klein's performance "**Anthropometry**" in which he used three nude women as a part of his work, Sterbak also used a woman to wear and demonstrate this flesh dress as she was exhibiting this particular piece. And after the opening Sterbak hung this work on to a wooden female figure that generally tailors use as they are sewing a dress for somebody else. Here, the puppet is not the woman who was displayed the piece by Sterbak but the puppet is the "Flesh Dress" which one can get in to *body transfer* with. Nevertheless, anybody will hesitate to wear a dress, which was made out of fifty pounds of flank steak. Whichever the effect is negative or positive the idea of body transfer may work with both sides.

Mc Pharlin, defines the puppet as "a theatrical figure moved under human control" (Tills 1992, 17). The confusing point is that the etymology of the word, a puppet need not to be small, neither it should "represent a human being," (Tills 1992, 17) nor be "a child's doll or plaything,"(Ibid.) nor be moved "by means of strings or wires" (Ibid.). For me, a puppet needs not to be a theatrical figure or a role player in a theater play. To my concern, Bill Baird's definition is more convincing as he defines the puppet as "an inanimate figure made to move by human effort before an audience" (Tills 1992, 17) as long as *body transfer* is considered in which I believe there is, in-between the puppet, its master and the audience.

For Tills, to animate something means "in the root sense of the word, to give it the breath of life" (Tills 1992, 22). This brings out some difficulties in terms of meaning. Metaphorically this idea has direct relations with the idea of "puppet" but non-metaphorically it sounds illogical because "the puppet does not actually live" (Tills

1992, 22). Obraztsov has got a good remark on this issue of how a thing becomes animate that is not actually living:

“In reality, no inanimate object can be animated -not a brick, rag, toy (even if it is mechanical) or theatrical puppet- no matter how expertly it moves when manipulated by a puppeteer. Regardless of circumstances, the objects listed above remain objects lacking any biological features. However, in man’s hand any object –the same brick, rag, sole of a shoe, or a bottle –can fulfill the function of a living object in man’s associative fantasy. It can move, laugh, cry, or declare its love.” (Tills 1992, 23)

For Szilagyi, puppetry was the ideal integrated art, which provides a particular enjoyment for the spectator. Nevertheless, at the same time the puppet has such an elemental and powerful impact on an unsophisticated audience, mainly on the children. This may be true but whether the audience is sophisticated or not, this psychological impact is real and it derives from the imagination of the audience and the performer.

Some people are very familiar with the puppets from both through their childhood memories and the cultural and historical aspect of the ‘puppetry’ in general. Mostly, in each culture there are different types of puppet traditions. “Punch and Judy”, and more recent “The Muppet Show” are the archetypal examples for the hand puppetry through Western tradition. The Javanese puppetry is the best-known tradition that is known as the “shadow play” in Indo-cultural societies. In Turkish tradition, “Karagöz and Hacivat” are the best examples of Turkish puppet tradition. However, [kukla], (puppet) is a non-Turkish word in fact. The word “kukla” derives from Western tradition through Turkish. “Kukla” is one of the puppet’s names in Burr Tillstrom’s famous puppet play: “Kukla, Fran, and Ollie” (Tills 1992, 105). In Turkish puppet tradition, “Karagöz and Hacivat” are the most famous puppets and they are

conceived as "shadow plays" = [gölge oyunu], as it is in the Javanese shadow plays. Nevertheless, they are still remaining yet, conveying the same features by means of the "puppet" in Western tradition and the puppetry in general.

#### **4.1.2. Perceiving 'The Puppet'**

The audience perceives puppets as if they are living beings. In fact, we know that they are lifeless inanimate beings but they somehow integrated the life as animate beings. This illusion of life derives from both our fantasies and the puppets parasitic character, which obtains its life form a body that is supposed to be its master. Otakar Zich, who is a Czech semiotician, offers an analysis of the audience's response to the puppet that contains curious echoes of those arguments about puppets mystical appeal:

"The puppets may be perceived either as living people or as lifeless dolls. Since we can perceive them only one way at a time, we are faced with two possibilities:

a) We perceive the puppets as dolls and stress their inanimate character. It is the material they are made of that strikes us as something that we really perceive. In that case... we cannot take seriously their speech or their movements... hence; we find them comical and grotesque... We perceive them as figurines, but they demand we take them as people; and this invariably amuses us...

b) [Or]... we may conceive of the puppets as if they were living beings by emphasizing their life like expressions, their movements and speech, and taking them as real. Our awareness that the puppets are not alive recedes, and we get the feeling of something inexplicable, enigmatic, and astounding. In this case, the puppets seem to act mysteriously... Here we are faced with something utterly unnatural –namely, life in an inanimate, organic material" (quoted in Tills 1992, 54).

If we forget about the puppets being manipulated by hand and much of its movements that is prevented by a hand other than the puppet's, we are going to

face with the lack of “soul”. If there were no body to move the puppet, can we care about the soul of the puppet, as long as the puppet is perceived as an object and imagined to have life?

Obraztsov makes a remark in concerning his sketch with the figure of a baby in contact with this issue: “My right hand, on which I wear the puppet, lives apart from me with a rhythm and a character of its own... It conducts a silent dialogue with me, or ignoring me altogether, lives its independent life” (Tills 1992, 155).

The audience sees the hands of the puppeteer's hand as the master manipulates the puppet but it is more important here that the hand is perceived not only as a hand but also as a part of the puppet body. The master's hand has already departed and transferred to the body of the puppet. They share this particular hand together. It is not only perceived as a hand that is belonged to an actual living person, but also the body of the figure. This kind of gesture exemplifies the idea of the “body transfer” more visually, which is derived from the movement of the object (See Fig. 5.0).

The hand puppet is made up on two elements only, the human hand and a head or a costume which will also consists of both the head and the body. The body of the puppet is generally an empty costume as long as the master's hand enters inside of that costume and forms up the body and transfers it through “life”.

#### **4.2. The Sign System of 'The Puppet'**

A puppet is very capable of simulating life as it communicates with the audience. It will be useful to observe the nature of the puppet here. One can talk about three sign systems as long as this communication process is considered. These are also the signs of life and which have direct relations with the "presence of life" (Tills 1992,7). One of is the "sign system of speech" (Tills 1992,133), the other is the "sign system of design" (Ibid.) and the most important is the "sign system of movement" (Ibid.). Neither the "speech" nor the design" is that important as the "movement" of the puppet. Here the movement is the crucial detail because, all of the theoreticians, writers whom are working with the idea of puppetry define "the puppet" in terms of "movement", such as Baird, Mc Pharlin and also Obratzsov underlines the importance of movement in the idea of "puppet":

"The puppet is created to be mobile. Only when it moves does it become alive and only in the character of its movements does it acquire what we call behavior... Of course the text, assuming there is one, has enormous importance, but if the words a puppet speaks do not correspond with its gestures, they become divorced from the puppet and hang in the air" (Tills 1992, 133).

#### **4.3. The Ambiguous Contact: "HERE AND NOW", 1998**

The work "**HERE and NOW**", 1997 (Fig. 5.1.) suggests an ambiguous act of movement. Their bodily stances are as if they are resting or waiting to be charged by. They are like anybody in the street that is waiting for an experience of living somewhere and somehow. Humans are not like puppets in fact; puppets are like humans because they are the metaphor of humanity. I am aware of not being a

puppet (See Fig. 5.2.), which is hanging on the wall, made out of a clay head and a body from a plastic sack that is emptied, just like an used and thrown body where we can see everywhere and repress because we think that it is worthless. It is like anyother body, has its own color of its lived experience with its plastic appearance that looks very cheap.

Most people (most of the time) have shared feelings in common, doubt, anxiety shame, hopelessness, as well as moments of happiness, satisfaction, sorrow and pleasure. Whether the effect is positive or negative Lacan's concept of *Jouissance* is a state of being to which individuals hesitate between an absolute sense of being somebody-being "there" (Da-Sein)-or being nobody, being "gone" (Fort-Sein) (See Ragland 1995, 98). It also implies a loss of identity The title of this work is "Here and Now" mentions, no one can not experience the same feelings at several times. The audience may by all means get in to a contact with these puppets once in a while. (Fig. 5.1.) The bodilessness of these puppets is just like empty vessels that we can put our energies in through. Then the *bodilessness* refers to the experience of body. The empty beings of these puppets offer us the state of "body transition" with their static; action seems absent, which provides the audience the opportunity to think about how their bodies are. The repression is not the memory here, but the fantasy derived from it, here and now...

Here, these puppets also refer both to "object" and to "imagined living being", the producer of gestures or movements that manifest its illusory internal movements which can be charged with somebody's energy of life. The movement of the spectator gaze delivers its "empty" corporeality the lack of the inner movement,

which is the spectator, has carefully chosen gesture with in compassion, intended to suggest.

The ambiguities of the movement through this work propose the two needs for the body. The need to move, the active act of the body and the need to rest, the passive act of the body. The open form of the installation designates this. By the impression of the movement of the whole installation the spectator consigns the form through, the invisible void and binds it to the idea of the puppet. In the work "**PLACE**" (Fig. 2.3.), 1997 the viewer crosses with a similar kind of void as it is in the work "**HERE and NOW**" (Fig. 5.2.). The visible/invisible act of sewing (fig. 2.4.) of the performance "**PLACE**" and the moving body inside of the fabric recalls the state of the absent action. That which exchanges the audience with a suggestion, the opportunity to manipulate or being manipulated through mimesis just like a puppet which is simulating life around the enclosed space of the body. The spectator animates these objects through imagination. Thus, he/she meets the boundless freedom of the puppet at that particular place (here) and time (now). Within a static but implied action.

The work "**LEFT-OVERS**", 1997 (Fig. 2.0) implies the same idea of freedom. The body's approach to this work put the body into a position that the body normally does not perform. The head is up and walking underneath the round net form of the installation that is made out of used clothes. The work absorbs the "body" by limiting the space, sound, light, heat, smoke but the movement as well. The freedom of action as it is giving the opportunity to treat them as a puppet because, "you don't move it you let it move; that's the art" (Tills 1992, 162).

#### **4.4. The Puppet as a Metaphor**

The boundary between “object” and “life” is blurred as long as the double-vision is concerned if one thinks of the metaphorical dimension of the puppet that is related with humanity. This double vision of puppet is a kind of paradox that is provoked by being an “object” with “life”. These ideas can easily shift from the question of the puppet ontology through human ontology.

The puppet itself can be taken to be a metaphor of humanity, and the term “puppet” can be applied to particular people. This is the idea beneath the double vision of the puppet both as “object” and as “metaphor”. The idea of the puppet is absurd, abstract and ironical. Here is a character more or less related to life moved about by a human being that is the master. One should not miss the analogy between the puppet “dominated by man, and man dominated by forces greater than himself” (Tills 1992, 160).

The puppet allows its master to speak and act with a remarkable freedom. Actually the puppet is not an actual living being so that no one even its master can not be held responsible for its words and actions. Yet these actions and words are not directly consigned to the puppet artist and so either he or she seems to bear responsibility for them. The puppets generally talk about the social conventions and consequences. For some, they are the representatives who can not represent themselves around the masses and the rest of the world with its independent, associated and corporate identity and with its character in its “so called” life. Thus,

puppet lives apart, although it shares the body that actually lives. The puppets are being nothing than an object and cannot be constituted as having the 'living' responsibility. The puppet lives apart, although it shares the body that is actually living. Then *bodilessness* has shifted to the idea of the puppet purposefully. Both because of the body transfer between the puppet, its master and the audience produces a 'residue' for the body and the hollow state of being which refers to the idea as it is in Oldenburg's soft sculptures which remains as life in an inanimate thing. The puppet is a corporeal entity, somewhere in between life and death and lives nowhere.

#### **4.5. The Empty Body: "IT WILL BE EASIER TO NAME MY CHILD", 1997**

Anything, including the doll can be or used as a puppet. However, this does not mean that all puppets are dolls and conversely, nor that all dolls are puppets. The crucial point here is the puppet, which is a lifeless, dead substantiality somehow, turned in to life. The idea of "body transition" provides this process of animation. If one consider the perception along with the imagination, the puppet can rather be identified with the "object" along with the "life" that a body, which is a live, accommodates the puppet.

The work "**IT WILL BE EASIER TO NAME MY CHILD**", 1997 (Fig. 5.3.) is made up of an empty dress of a doll, with its empty shoes that are tied up with strings and bound to a cross, which symbolizes the "puppet". Nevertheless, this puppet is not in its body, it does not know if it is dead or alive. Its body does not serve itself as a refuge or a shelter, anymore. Its body is empty. Now it is just a shell, an envelope

containing nothing but, air inside. The implication is that of loss that the body has not always been vacant but was once full and can be refilled again. With the gestured provocation of the puppet, which was exhibited over the floor, we are facing with a puppet and its remarkable freedom that the human beings normally have not got. This work visualize the experience of *bodilessness* with an empty body of a puppet that is waiting for some one to 'shape up' its body (Fig. 5.4.).

Here the 'body transfer' is not only between the puppet and its master but also between the puppet and its audience in terms of both the work and the puppet. I would like to refer Miles Lee here: "the puppet is never fully alive until given additional stimulus through the imagination of the audience" (Tills 1992, 55). This implies the further suggestions that such imagination needs to be supplied by the audience.

## 5. A Return to *Bodilessness*: "I HAD A DREAM LAST NIGHT", 1999 (Fig. 5.5)

To be aware of my body.

I am aware of my body.

Am I?

Are you?

Are you aware of your body when you are sleeping, while in a deep dream? Or at least the time that you are yet to fall asleep? Here, I will refer to Freud once more, to his two discoveries, which he made in "The Interpretation of Dreams" (see Appignanesi 1979, 60). The first of the two, the solution to the meaning of dreams—generally that all dreams present the fulfillment of wishes (Appignanesi 1979, 60). And the second, as the functioning of dreams provides systematic evidence of the unconscious (Appignanesi 1979, 60). Freud assumed that all dreams are disguised (Welsh 1994, 19). A dream is therefore a disguised fulfillment of a (suppressed or repressed) wish (see Welsh 1994, 19). Dreams occur during sleep—when the conscious part of the personality is more relaxed and off-guard (Appignanesi 1979, 60). Wish fulfillment in dreams is mostly but not generally sexual. But this wish is often, concealed or deformed, that one might not realize a sexual wish had even appeared in the dream.

The dreams express the idea through symbols. It means that any object can appear in a dream and not necessarily have any sexual meaning in 'reality'. Such an object like an umbrella, sword or gun can symbolize Penis (Appignanesi 1979, 65). And also objects like, boxes, purses, and caves can symbolize the vagina (Ibid.). The

work **“I HAD A DREAM LAST NIGHT”, 1999** (Fig. 5.5), will be displayed in the final jury as a tributary work for the thesis, “Bodiless Art”. This work conveys a similar idea as the works, which are described in the text, but material-the imitation leather suggests a remembrance of the skin. And brings out the specific discriminations of the concepts that is related to the skin (see chapter 2). The work is formed with the stuffed, fragmented and sewn outer-contours of my body, which I had somebody to draw then, placed and sewn this forms on the imitation leather. The work designates the lost appearance of a body that is turned into fragmented shapes, which looks like body parts and as well as objects that were stuffed. Yet these designates to the objects that are explained above. Indeed they recall to the objects which are made to fill some kind of emptiness, e.g. Purse-money. As the ‘sound of flow of water’ is in corporation with the work is symbolizing a sense of loss of the body, as it is in a sleep no body knows what the body is dreaming of but the placement of water will contemplate the quality of the dreams.

Within this chapter, I will not make a judgment one way or the other if *bodilessness* is possible. I will just present bodilessness within the reach of the idea of *bodilessness* is something, which is being aware of ones own body as a consequence of both my own works and the artists’ works to whom I have considered. I have chosen the artists who have dealt or still dealing with the issue of ‘body’ such as Orlan.(see Ince 1998, 126)

Moreover in its entirety these body artists works are somewhat in relation to. Claes Oldenburg for instance, and his soft sculptures. They remind me of the tactile relationship between an object and the body, which I think is ‘soft’ and also an idea

of body, which seems impossible in “reality” but a body that has the possibility to find itself a place through imagination. Where a body that is abstracted from its own context and carried in to another which has a double explication. It is the body that has trapped to an inter zone that one might call it an in-between state which surrounded with or included in with the experience of living yet a body that also look dead or at least reminds us the fixity of death. I call this body a ‘living corpse’. I tried to point to an in-between state in Lacan’s reconstruction of Freud’s idea on “death drive” that allows me to exemplify the possibilities in criticizing, defining, and declaring my works that reflects my experience of living as an artist.

During the study I explained and explored the idea of doll that has been used by some artists as a metaphor of humanity. I exemplified this widely within the works of Mike Kelley and me. Apart from being the metaphor of personal identity the doll has also served in history as an object of awe and terror, where it is alienated from the individual and forbidding, as in certain ancient and tribal cultures. In modern times, the doll is often seen as an object of companionship and affection for many children and adults. Dolls are generally intimate friends of children as well as adults. I also explored the doll images because for children they serve as role models, often reflecting the cultural stereotypes, or alternatives to these stereotypes (See Carter 1993, 20). It is not because the theory says so, but rather because it reminds me of my childhood.

My focus necessarily became more diffused in the Chapter 4, as I go after the continuing appropriation of the puppet by a cosmopolitan twentieth century art. The puppet itself challenges me and I believe its audience as well, concerning what it

means to be an object and what it means to have life. It is becoming more interesting, that a body that accommodates a sense of object that is inanimate and the incorporation of life in its body, which brings out an in-between state, the state of a body that is neither living nor dead. This in-betweenness, the void in the puppet's body, urged me to title this dissertation as "Bodiless Art" .I established an analogy between the idea of the puppet and art. It's my point of view that art is something that is bodiless. Art is an experience that is waiting for involvement. Experiences that can only be provided by its audience just like a puppet.

There are several forms of art that have been referred to, discussed and exemplified such as the performances of Gilbert and George, Chris Burden, Vito Acconci and Orlan, the soft sculptures of Oldenburg and, the installations of Kelley and Acconci. Although these art works look as if they belong to different genres of art, they have got one main point in common that these art works which were brought about by several artists who are known as 'body artists" and are the iconic models that stand for the recent art. All of them may be seem to use 'the soft' pieces. More these pieces remind of the experience the *body transfer* with. In which I think art is something, which is bodiless, and through imagination one can get in to transfer with an artwork. This transfer operates in-between bodies that is a subject which is living and a body that is an object, which is not.

In which Oldenburg's offer me the state of living in-between as limited containers and remind the vulnerability of my body. Where Kelley's talk about a different kind of void. The lost childhood memories that which implies the losses in ones life that one faces with all through his/her life. Also Acconci and Burden's violent performances

indicate the aggression in me especially the times that I am not able to define or express myself with words. The last but not the least, Gilbert and George's impeccable "living sculpture" remind me of the monotony of life where we repeat ourselves each day as the day before, e.g. when we get up in the morning, but Gilbert and George suggests an opportunity, an opportunity to forget our bodies as it is in the example of forgetting the puppeteer's hand as he is manipulating the puppet (See Chapter 4). Then one may get beyond the "self" which appeared as 'the impossibility of the body' (See Chapter 2). Finally the "Bodiless Art" is something, which works with imaginary objects and imaginary subjects.

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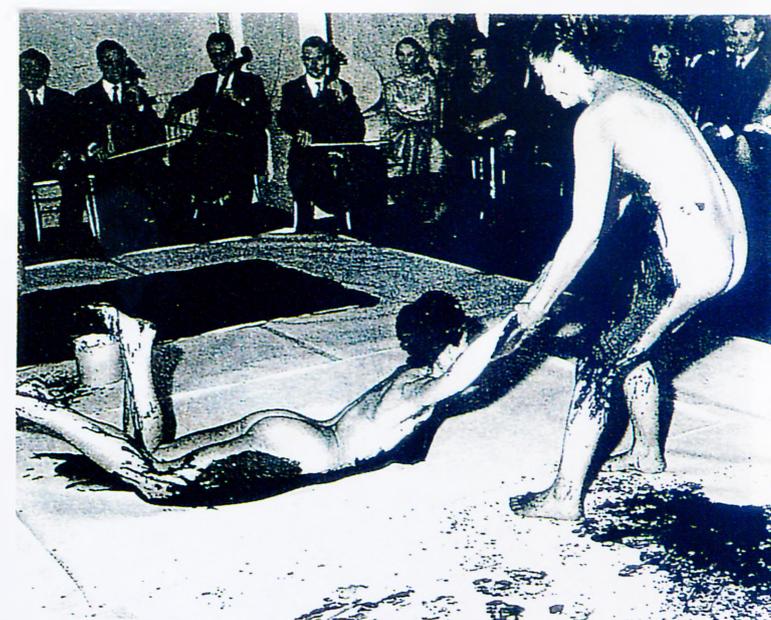
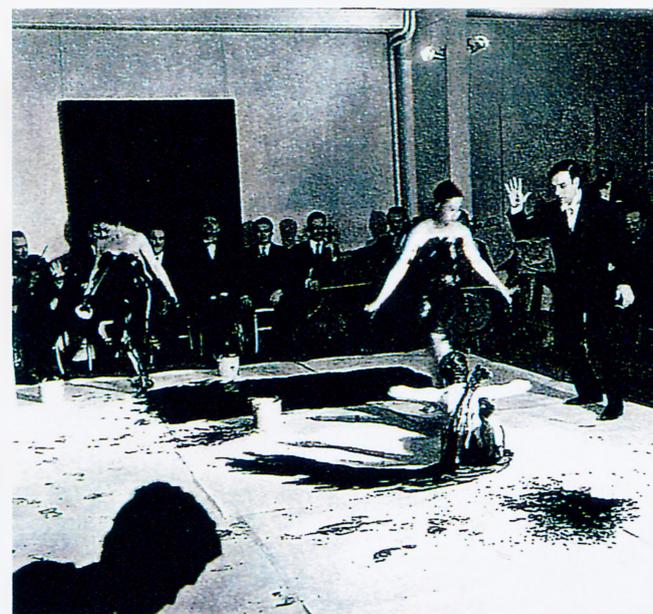
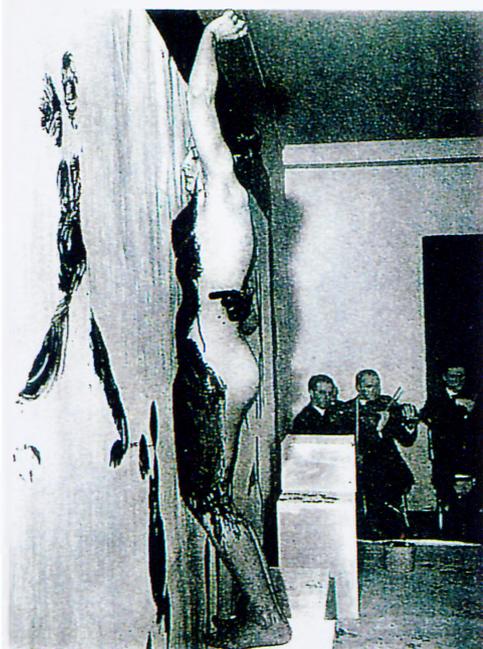
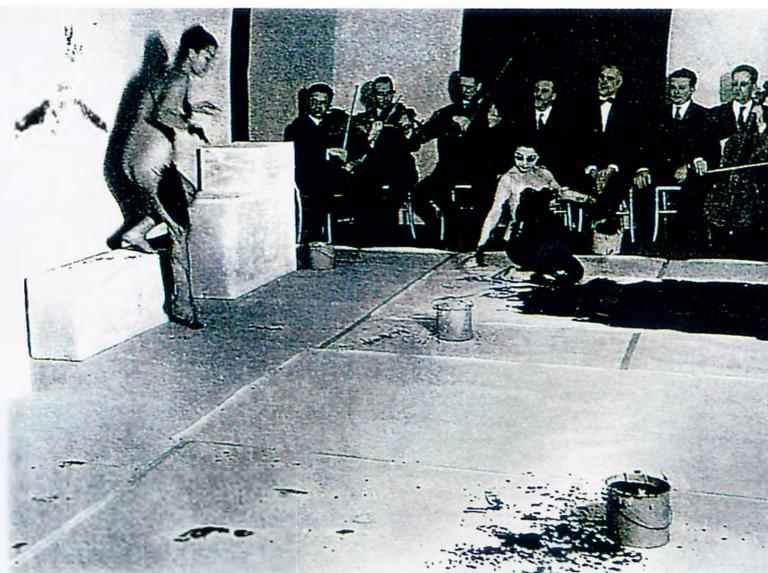


Figure 1.0. Yves Klein, "Making Anthropometries of the Blue Period", 1960

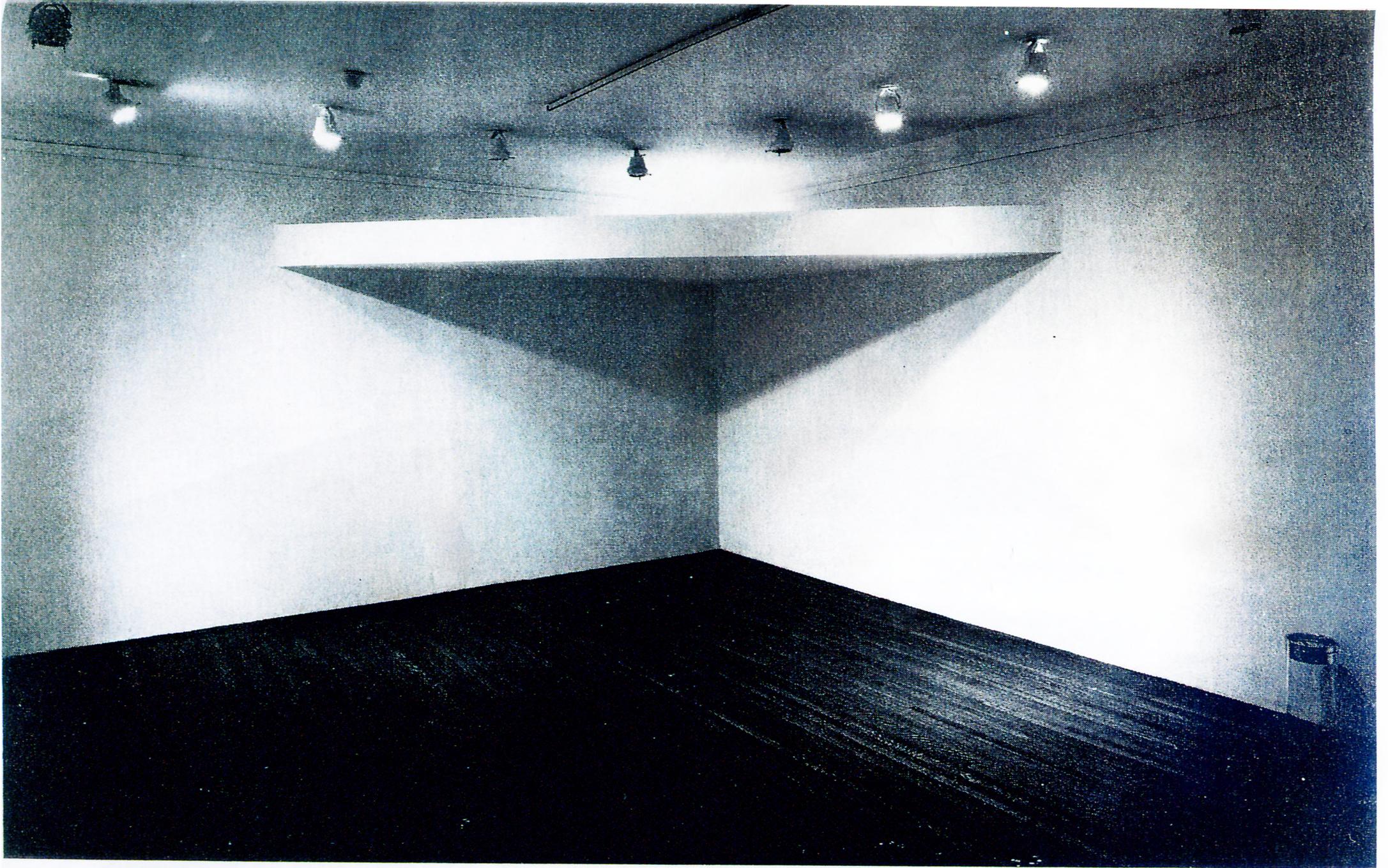


Figure 1.1.

Chris Burden, "White Light, White Heat", 1970.

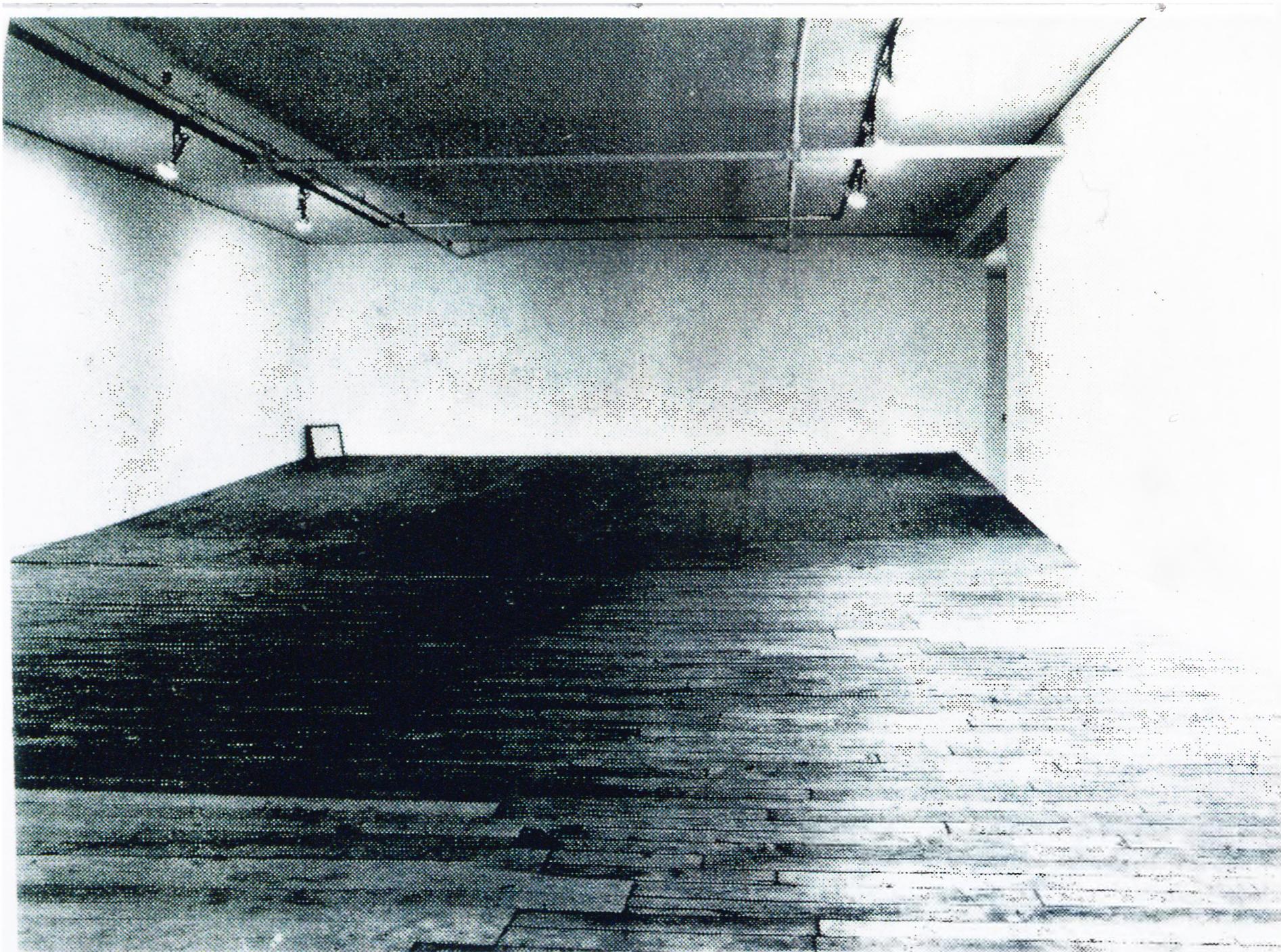


Figure 1.2.

Vito Acconci, "SeedBed", 1972



Figure 1.3.

Gilbert and George, "The Living Sculpture", 1970

1992. Claes Oldenburg, "Soft Harp", 1992. Cast in steel, aluminum, cloth, expanded polystyrene, and Dacron, painted with latex. 7 feet 11 inches x 2 feet 11 inches x 4 feet 02.31 inches. 1992. Collection of Claes Oldenburg, Contemporary Bragg, New York.



Figure 1.4. Claes Oldenburg, "Soft Harp", 1992

296. Soft Saxophone, Scale B, 1964  
Canvas, wood, clothesline, Down  
resin, painted with latex, 60 x 35 x  
36 inches (152.4 x 89 x 91.4 cm), The  
Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas  
City, Missouri. On long-term loan from  
Hall Family Foundation, 50-10924.



Figure 1.5

Claes Oldenburg, "Soft Sax", 1964



Figure 1.6.

Claes Oldenburg, "Sausage", 1957



Figure 1.7.

Claes Oldenburg, "Soft Switch", 1971 (Ghost Version)



Figure 1.8.

Claes Oldenburg, "Soft Switch", 1964



Figure 1.9.

Eser Selen, "LEFTOVERS", 1997



Figure: 2.0.

Eser Selen, "LEFTOVERS", 1997 (detail)



Figure 2.1.

Eser Selen, "LEFTOVERS", 1997 (detail)



Figure 2.2.

Eser Selen, "PLACE", 1997

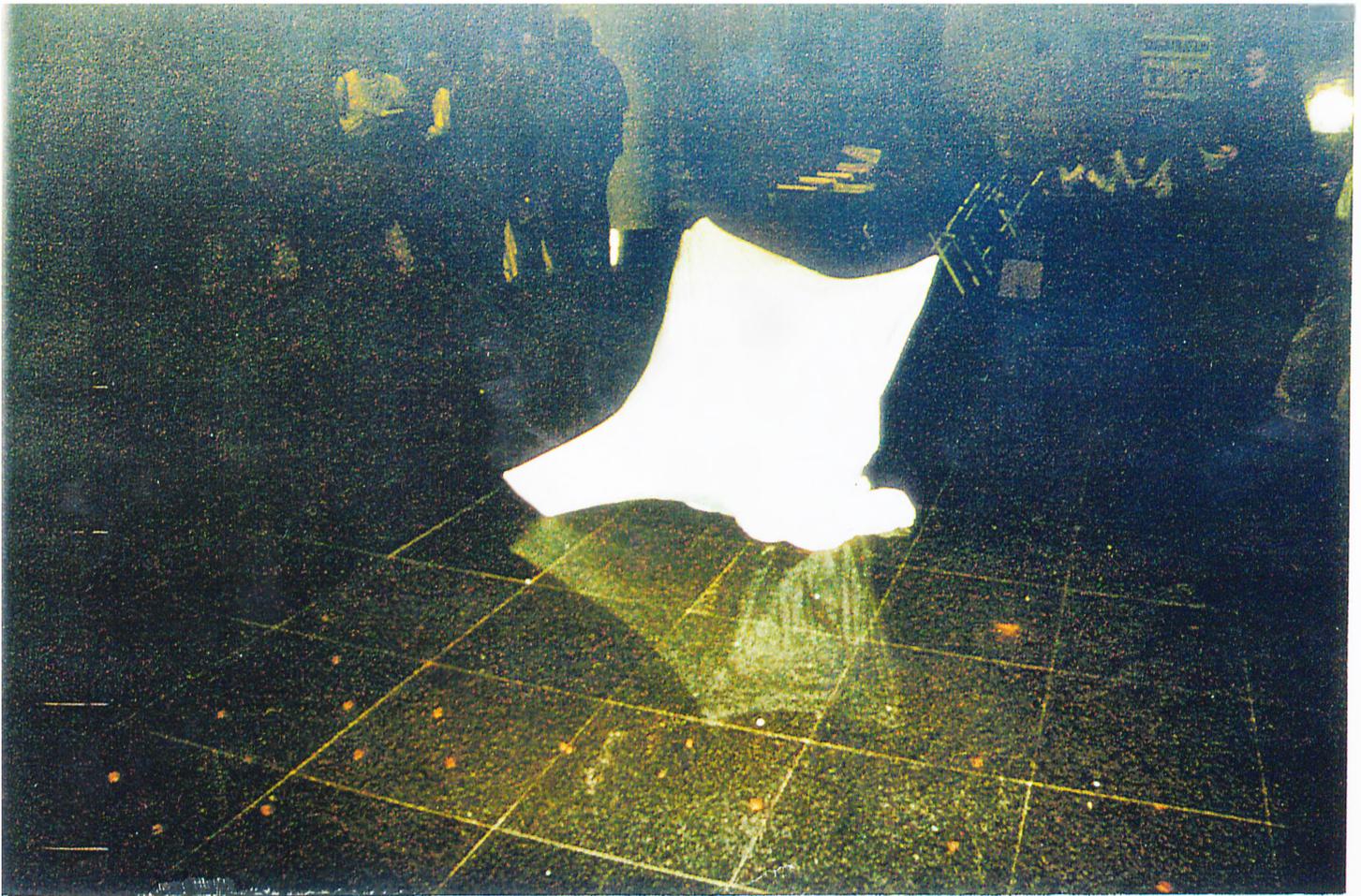


Figure 2.3.

Eser Selen, "PLACE", 1997



Figure 2.4.

Eser Selen, "DOLMUŞ", 1997.



Figure 2.5.

Eser Selen, "DOLMUŞ", 1997



Figure 2.6.

Eser Selen, "DOLMUŞ", 1997



Figure 2.7.

Eser Selen, "DOLMUŞ", 1997



Figure 2.8.

Vito Acconci, "Magnetic Doll" (Old Soldier's Home)



Figure 2.9.

Gilbert and George, "The Singing Sculpture", 1991

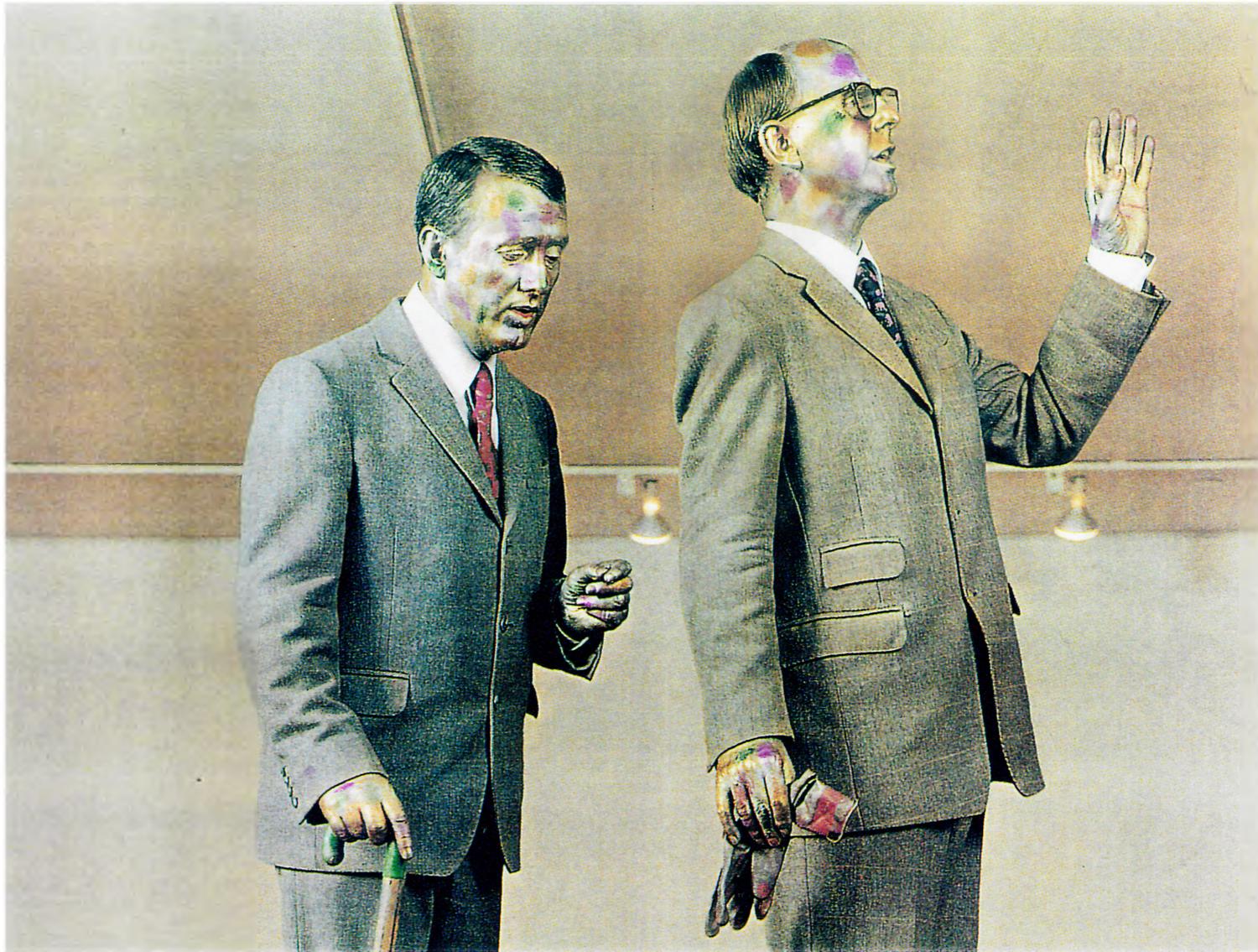


Figure 3.0.

Gilbert and George, "The Singing Sculpture", 1991



Figure 3.1. Gilbert and George, "The Singing Sculpture", 1991



GEORGE STEPS DOWN AND RESTARTS  
THE TAPE OF THE SONG,  
THEN RETURNS TO THE TABLE.  
HE AND GILBERT  
EXCHANGE STICK AND GLOVE  
AND BEGIN AGAIN.

Figure 3.2.

Gilbert and George, "The Singing Sculpture", 1991



Figure 3.3.

Gilbert and George, "The Singing Sculpture", 1991



Figure 3.4.

Eser Selen, "MISSING", 1998



Figure 3.5.

Eser Selen, "MISSING", 1998



Figure 3.6.

Eser Selen, "NOT WITH YOURSELF, PLAY WITH ME", 1998



Figure 3.7.

Eser Selen, "NOT WITH YOURSELF, PLAY WITH ME", 1998



Figure 3.8. Eser Selen, "NOT WITH YOURSELF, PLAY WITH ME", 1998



Figure 3.9.

Eser Selen, "NOT WITH YOURSELF, PLAY WITH ME", 1998

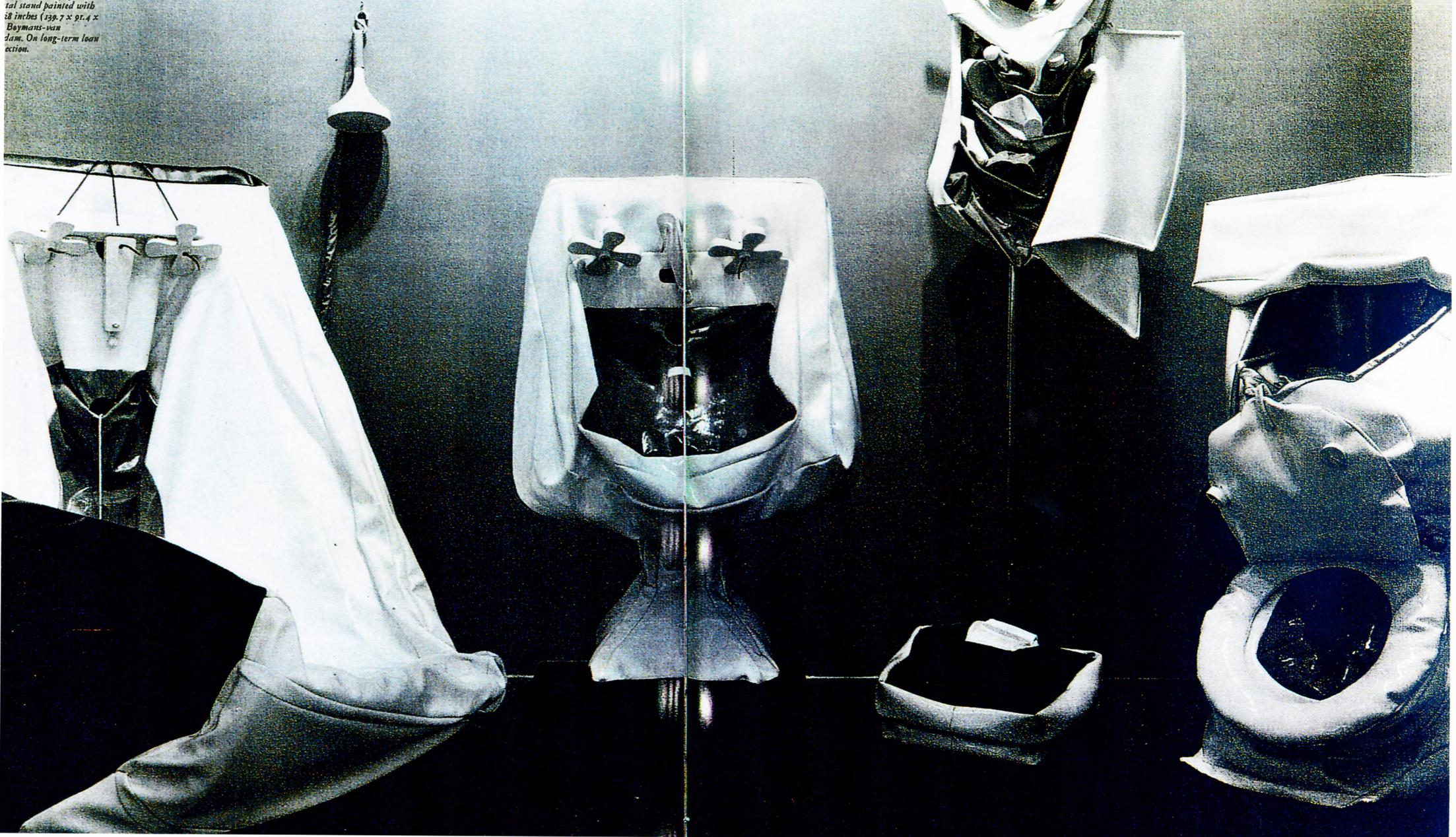


Figure 4.0. Mike Kelley, "More Love Hours Than Can Ever Be Repaid", 1987

Hard Model, 1965-66.  
mel. and felt pen on  
rod: 48 1/2 x 36 x  
91.5 x 74.5 cm). Museum  
1, Frankfurt.

rod, 1966. Vinyl filled  
rod stand painted with  
18 inches (39.7 x 91.4 x  
Baymans-van  
dam. On long-term loan  
action.

132. Bathroom objects installed at  
the Museum of Modern Art, New York.  
September 25-November 23, 1969.



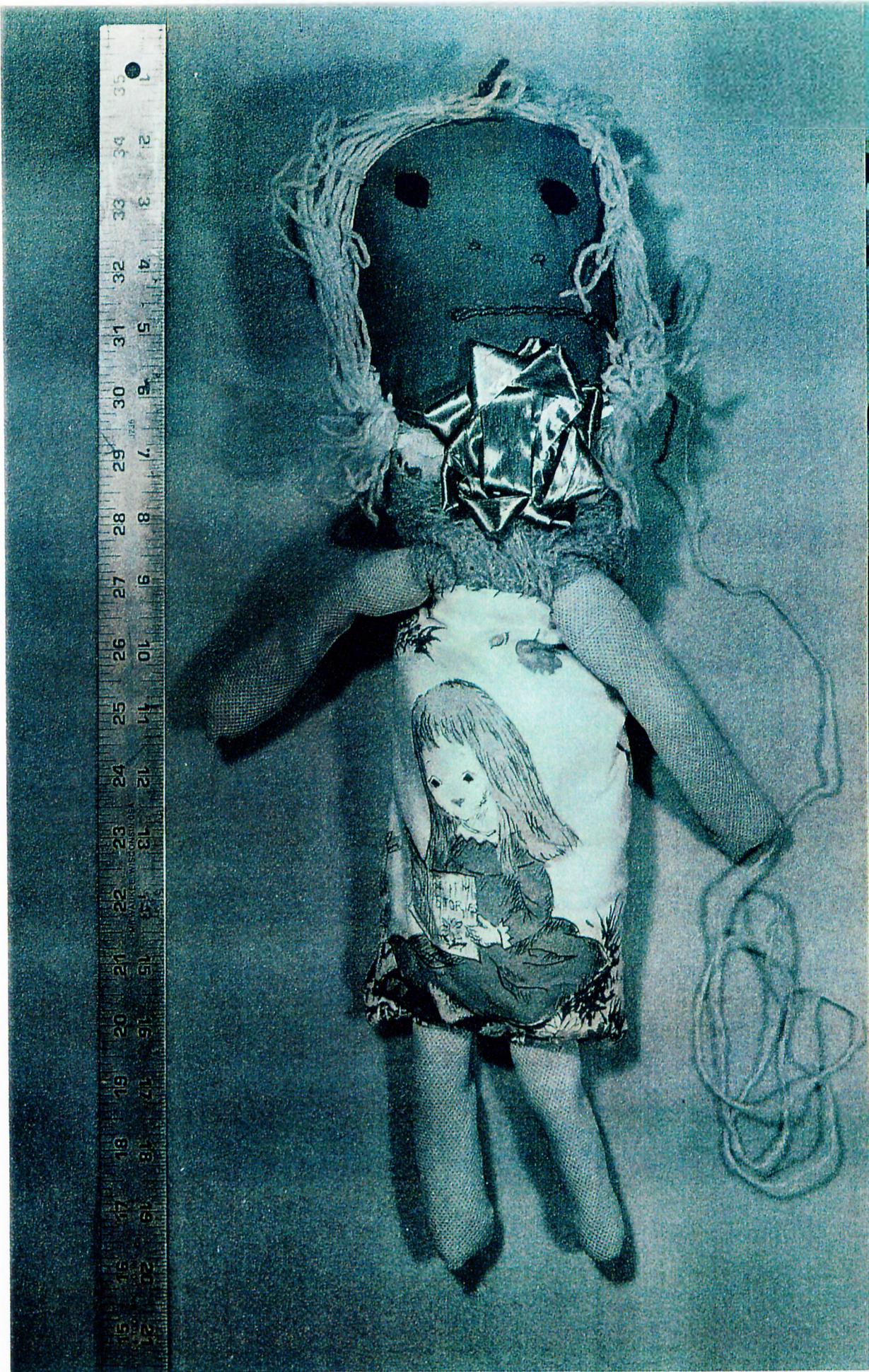


Figure 4.2.

Mike Kelley, "Craft Morphology Flow Chart", 1991 (detail)



Figure 4.3.

Mike Kelley, "Craft Morphology Flow Chart", 1991 (detail)



Figure 4.4. Mike Kelley, "Craft Morphology Flow Chart", 1991

see caption on page 56



Figure 4.5.

Mike Kelley, "Nostalgic Depiction of The Innocence of Childhood", 1990 (detail)



Figure 4.6.

Mike Kelley, "Nostalgic Depiction of The Innocence of Childhood", 1990 (detail)

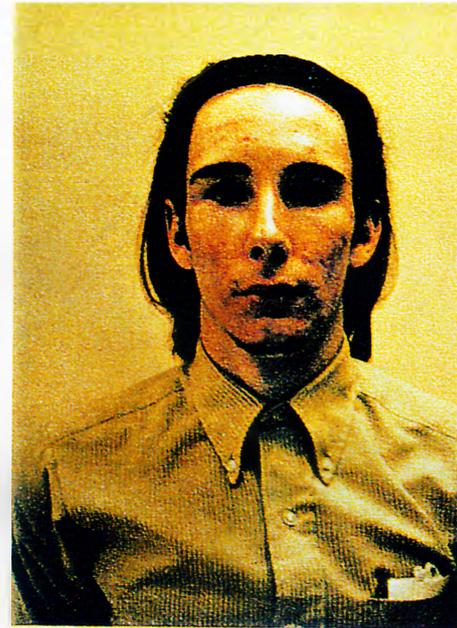


Figure 4.7. Mike Kelley, "Ahh Youth !", 1991

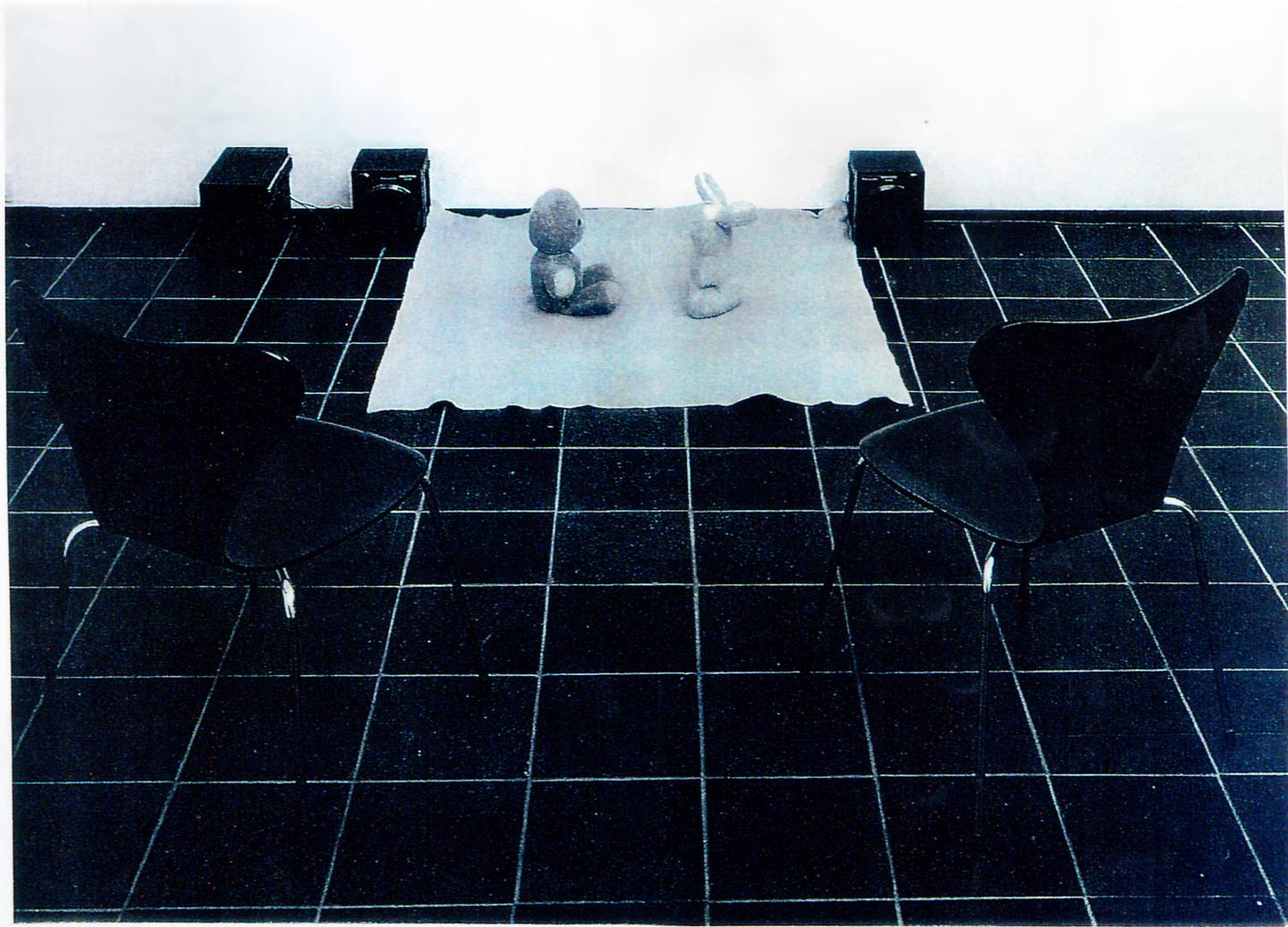


Figure 4.8.

Mike Kelley, "Dialogue #1", 1991

Vanitas –  
Flesh Dress for  
Albino Anorectic  
1987



Figure 4.9.

Jana Sterbak, "Flesh Dress for an Albino Anorectic", 1987



Figure 5.0. Jim Henson and Frank Oz manipulate Kermit and Miss Piggy while watching on TV monitors.



Figure 5.1.

Eser Selen, "HERE AND NOW", 1998



Figure 5.2.

Eser Selen, "HERE AND NOW", 1998

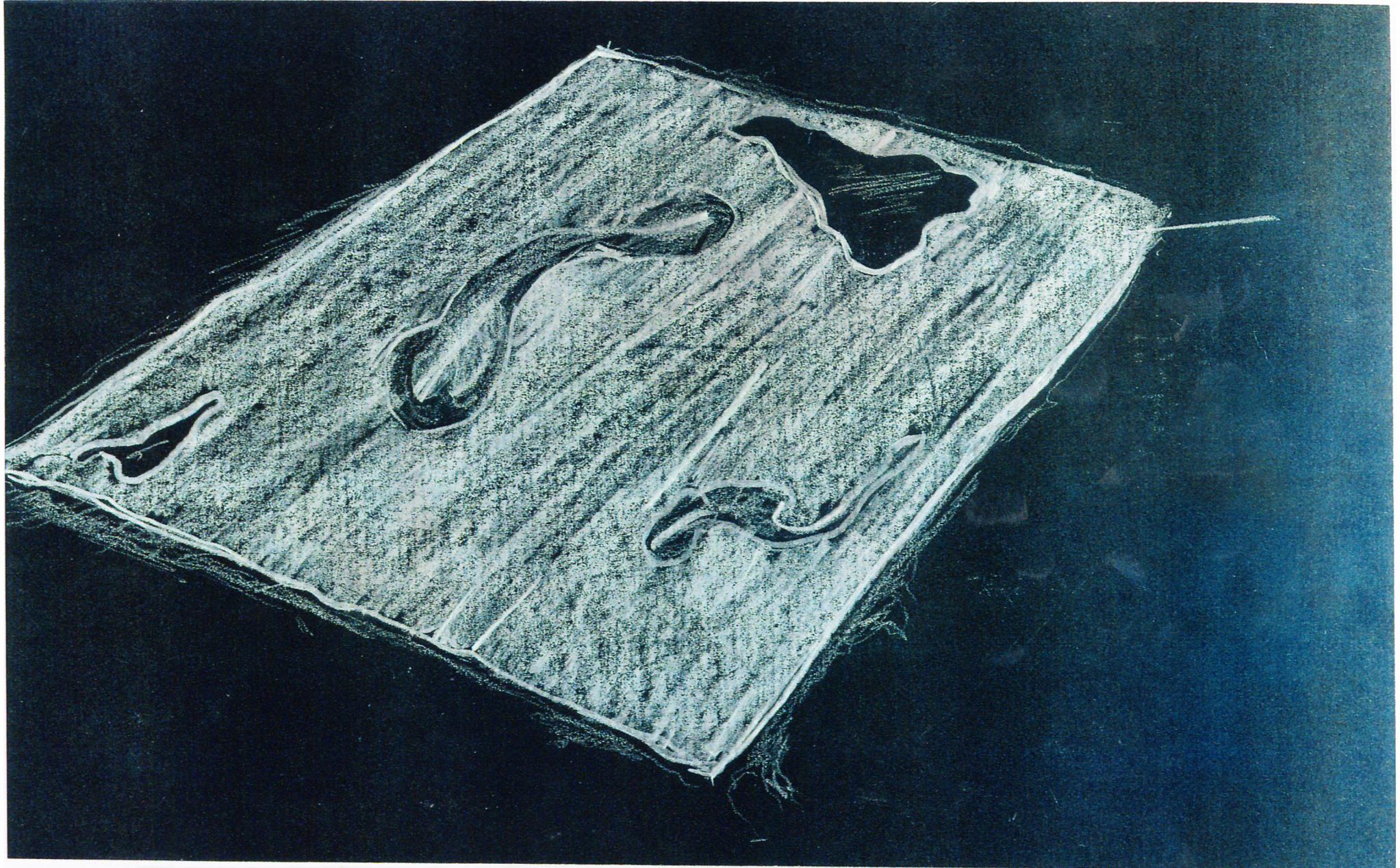


Figure 5.3. Eser Selen, "IT WILL BE EASIER TO NAME MY CHILD", 1997



Figure 5.4.

Eser Selen, "IT WILL BE EASIER TO NAME MY CHILD", 1997



**Figure 5.5.**

A Sketch for the Work Eser Selen, A Sketch for the Work  
"I HAD A DREAM LAST NIGHT", 1999

Imitation Leather, Silicon, Water, Sound, Seam