

# ORANGE COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART



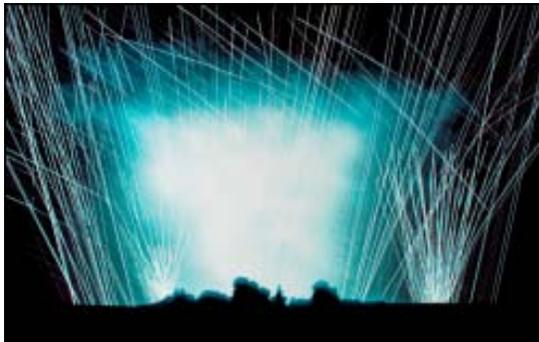
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## ***Jack Goldstein x 10,000*** On view June 24–September 9, 2012

"You wake up in the morning and look at yourself in the mirror and go, 'Who is that?' and 'What is that?' and 'What do you call it?' and 'What's my name?'" later in the interview, [Goldstein] concluded, "My name, it's the name of a name. It's not my name.... Imagine, if you look in the telephone book, there must be ten thousand Jack Goldsteins."

*Jack Goldstein in an interview with Chris Dercon (1985)*



**Untitled**, 1981, acrylic on canvas  
82 3/4 x 130 in. (210.2 x 330.2 cm)  
Collection of Joan and Fred Nicholas  
Photo: Brian Forrest

NEWPORT BEACH—The Orange County Museum of Art (OCMA) today announced final details for the upcoming exhibition ***Jack Goldstein x 10,000***.

Organized by OCMA and guest-curated by Philipp Kaiser, the exhibition is the first American retrospective of the Canadian-born artist Jack Goldstein (1945-2003), who spent most of his life in Southern California and became a central figure in the Pictures Generation of the 1970s, which grounded much of its art on the Postmodernist discourse of the

time. This extensive exhibition frames Goldstein a pivotal artist of his generation, and showcases his influential paintings and films, while also including many sound recordings, installations, and ephemera. Goldstein's work, considered critical to younger artists now looking back to the 70s and 80s, has been highly influential, and ***Jack Goldstein x 10,000*** provides audiences who may not be familiar with his work an in-depth understanding of its extraordinary breadth. ***Jack Goldstein x 10,000*** opens June 24 and remains on view through September 9, 2012.

"OCMA is delighted to organize this major retrospective, which extends our longstanding commitment to championing essential yet under-recognized artists," stated Director Dennis Szakacs. "Kaiser has produced an exhibition and publication that will be the definitive account of Goldstein for years to come."

The timing for this exhibition is critical for two reasons: first, the artist's cult status has grown significantly since his death in 2003, and the resulting mythology around his life has overtaken the radical contribution of his work; second, the gradual institutionalization of those artists associated with the Pictures Generation—which at its broadest includes Cindy Sherman, Robert Longo, Sherrrie Levine, and James Welling among others—has yet to clarify Goldstein's pivotal role. *Jack Goldstein x 10,000* addresses these concerns through a critical analysis and presentation of more than 50 works of art, along with rare documents that provide a context for the re-evaluation of this body of work.

According to exhibition Curator Kaiser, "Goldstein's retrospective is significant precisely because his work embodies in exemplary fashion a fundamental paradigm shift in American art during the late 1970s. Given Goldstein's legacy and his increasing relevance to younger artists, this retrospective of his work is essential to the larger re-evaluation of post-1960s American art."

Goldstein studied in the late 1960s at the Chouinard Art Institute and then at the newly founded California Institute of the Arts under John Baldessari, where in 1972 he became one of the first recipients of a Cal Arts MFA. While still a student, and later as Baldessari's teaching assistant, Goldstein met a group of slightly younger artists, including David Salle, Matt Mullican, Welling and Troy Brauntuch, with whom he would come to be closely associated. This generation, intrigued by the power and mechanisms of representation in mass culture and inspired by Baldessari's teaching methods, began to work outside the framework of traditional media, and in his early years Goldstein was as well-known for performances and sound pieces as for his visual art. His oeuvre quickly developed across an unusual breadth of forms that includes film, photography, and—after he settled in New York in 1974—highly seductive, large-scale photorealistic paintings of nocturnal atmospheric disturbances: lightning, fireworks, fighter jets, etc. Goldstein's importance as an artist remains entangled in arguments surrounding the overall significance of a generation-wide practice that took Postmodernist critique as an argument for its own legitimation. The exhibition underscores this dilemma, noting that Goldstein systematically eliminates every trace of his authorship, and this absence serves as a motif that runs through his entire body of work.

**Jack Goldstein x 10,000** brings together 21 films—nearly all he made and the largest number ever displayed—spanning the years 1971 to 1983. As art critic and theorist Douglas Crimp recalls in the exhibition catalog, his experience of them, "Certainly it took me time to understand them. They were quite unlike any other films I'd seen up to that point." Although short—from just over half a minute to about seven minutes—the films tend to literalize the passage of time, often by requiring viewers to watch a single image or fragment that repeats itself over and over; although for a limited set determined by the artist, whereas, one film—*Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer* from 1975—repeats endlessly.



*A Ballet Shoe*, 1975, 16mm film, color, silent; 19 sec.; Courtesy Galerie Daniel Buchholz, Berlin/Cologne and the Estate of Jack Goldstein

In *A Ballet Shoe* (1975), Goldstein depicts the foot of a dancer en pointe as the ribbon of her slipper is slowly untied by two anonymous hands. The dancer then slowly and smoothly descends from pointe. With little movement and only eight seconds, the image is more sculpture than film.

In this sequence of images, Crimp suggests, "a psychologized temporality is instituted: foreboding, premonition, suspicion, anxiety." As with much of his art, Goldstein creates the "there/not there" quality of his objects.

The image appears, instantly disappears, and the viewer is left only with the memory of it, deficient, subject to revision, open to doubt. A dove's flight from the picture in *White Dove* (1975), paper butterflies flutter briefly, then stop in *Some Butterflies* (1975); the tracing paper that covers and then slips off of the Van Gogh reproduction in *The Portrait of Père Tanguy* (1974).

In the mid 1970s, Goldstein began making vinyl records as artworks, basing them on found recordings of sound effects of the type usually associated with the commercial film industry. While the films were based on performed events of the utmost simplicity, and directly engaged with presence and theatricality, Goldstein's records, drawn entirely from commercial archives, represent a link to Hollywood and Madison Avenue, but in a medium typically still associated with punk and the remnants of a counterculture. Helping to establish his cult reputation prior to his move to New York (and painting), the records, with titles like *Lost Ocean Liner* and *Two Wrestling Cats*, remain among the most contentious parts of his output **Jack Goldstein x 10,000** includes a selection of 24 records with a listening station for visitors.



**Untitled**, 1984, acrylic on canvas  
72 x 72 in. (182.9 x 182.9 cm)  
Collection of the Orange County Museum of Art, museum purchase with funds provided through prior gift of Mrs. Ethel Rose

The largest portion of the exhibition is devoted to Goldstein's paintings, which are presented as extensions of his ongoing research into film language and syntax. A representative selection of 21 works on canvas—including OCMA's *Untitled* from 1984—demonstrate a thematic breadth and concentration, while retaining a distinct air of having been produced by a cipher (Goldstein generally employed moonlighting art students to do the actual painting).

Goldstein started making paintings in 1979, inspired in part by the critical backlash against painting that accompanied the dogma of post-modern outposts like the journal *October*, which had been instrumental in bringing attention to the Pictures generation. As with his films, the highly dramatic imagery in Goldstein's paintings derives exclusively from appropriated source, and they are painted with an airbrush, which lends them a photographic gloss. In their shiny impersonal surfaces, we witness not only the deliberate suppression of their's author's persona, but also the presumed futility of having him even generate new images. In these works, Goldstein frames himself not as a painter in the heroic, modernist mold; but as a producer, the same role he had adopted in making his films of the 1970s.

With his paintings, Goldstein achieved a level of art-world success and visibility that in retrospect seems to have undermined his ability to sustain an artistic vocation. As an early beneficiary of the contemporary art boom of the 1980s, Goldstein, whose art was based in part on underscoring the marginality of artistic practice, soon became one of its first casualties. By the late 1980s, struggling with depression and a drug dependency, Goldstein returned to California, where he spent most of the next decade out of sight. He was planning an exhibition of new works in Los Angeles at the time of his death in 2003.

Two immersive installations in the exhibition demonstrate the full range of Goldstein's practice. *Burning Window* (1977) is a standard panel window installed on the front exterior wall of an empty, enclosed room. The wall with the window is painted red. The panes of the window are red textured plexiglass. Behind the window are flickering electric



*Burning Window*, 1977, Mixed media installation  
Courtesy 1301PE, Los Angeles

candles that simulate the appearance of fire. The window functions as a “safe” yet fragile barrier in front of which the world appears as a stylized inferno. This spectacle, which may be experienced as simultaneously “real” and cinematic illusion, calls into question the fundamental stability of visual experience.

A second installation, *Sound Performance* (1979), takes place in an empty white room with a ceiling painted deep blue. A speaker is installed in each of the upper corners of the room: two play the sound of a train arriving and two play the sound of a plane passing. The sound images invoke strong associations with each form of travel—trains arrive into the present while planes soar into the future—and these two contradictory mental pictures dislocate the viewer’s sense of space, time, and motion: one is “coming” to rest at a destination and the other is “going” elsewhere; one is physically grounded and the other is soaring into disembodied space. The blue ceiling within the installation space is a visual anchor that spatially unifies the two sound images and a reference to the theatricality of the event.

One aspect of Goldstein's career that has received little recognition is his writings. He wrote aphorisms and short texts from the early 70s until his passing and was read texts by philosophers and writers backwards, from which he appropriated fragments for his own works. The exhibition includes Goldstein’s *Aphorisms*, and *Totems* produced between 1982 and 2002 as well as all 17 volumes of the artist's *Selected Writings*; works that have never been on public view until now. These will be displayed as large scale text directly on gallery walls, as framed type-written pages, and as books displayed in cases.

The exhibition includes a 240-page, fully illustrated catalog co-published with Prestel. Included are essays by Philipp Kaiser, Douglas Crimp, and Alexander Dumbadze, as well as a photo essay by James Welling. The catalog also includes a previously unpublished 2001 interview with Goldstein by artist Meg Cranston.

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**Jack Goldstein x 10,000** is organized by the Orange County Museum of Art with guest curator Philipp Kaiser.

This exhibition is made possible by a grant from The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc.

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The museum's 50th Anniversary Lead Sponsor: Cartier. *Cartier*

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## **ABOUT THE ORANGE COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART**

The Orange County Museum of Art is the premier modern and contemporary art museum in Southern California. The museum's program of dynamic solo exhibitions and landmark group shows links historical and contemporary art and ideas, bridges local and global perspectives, and embraces a diverse array of cultural activities and media. The museum is dedicated to engaging diverse audiences by providing creative commentary and illuminating dialogue on issues in our society through the arts.

## **MUSEUM INFORMATION**

Orange County Museum of Art in Newport Beach is located at 850 San Clemente Drive. Hours are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Wednesday through Sunday, with extended hours Thursdays from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Admission is \$12/adults; \$10/seniors and students; children under twelve and OCMA members are free; there is no charge for parking. OCMA is open free to the public every second Sunday of the month. All facilities are handicapped accessible. For more information call (949) 759-1122 or visit [www.ocma.net](http://www.ocma.net)