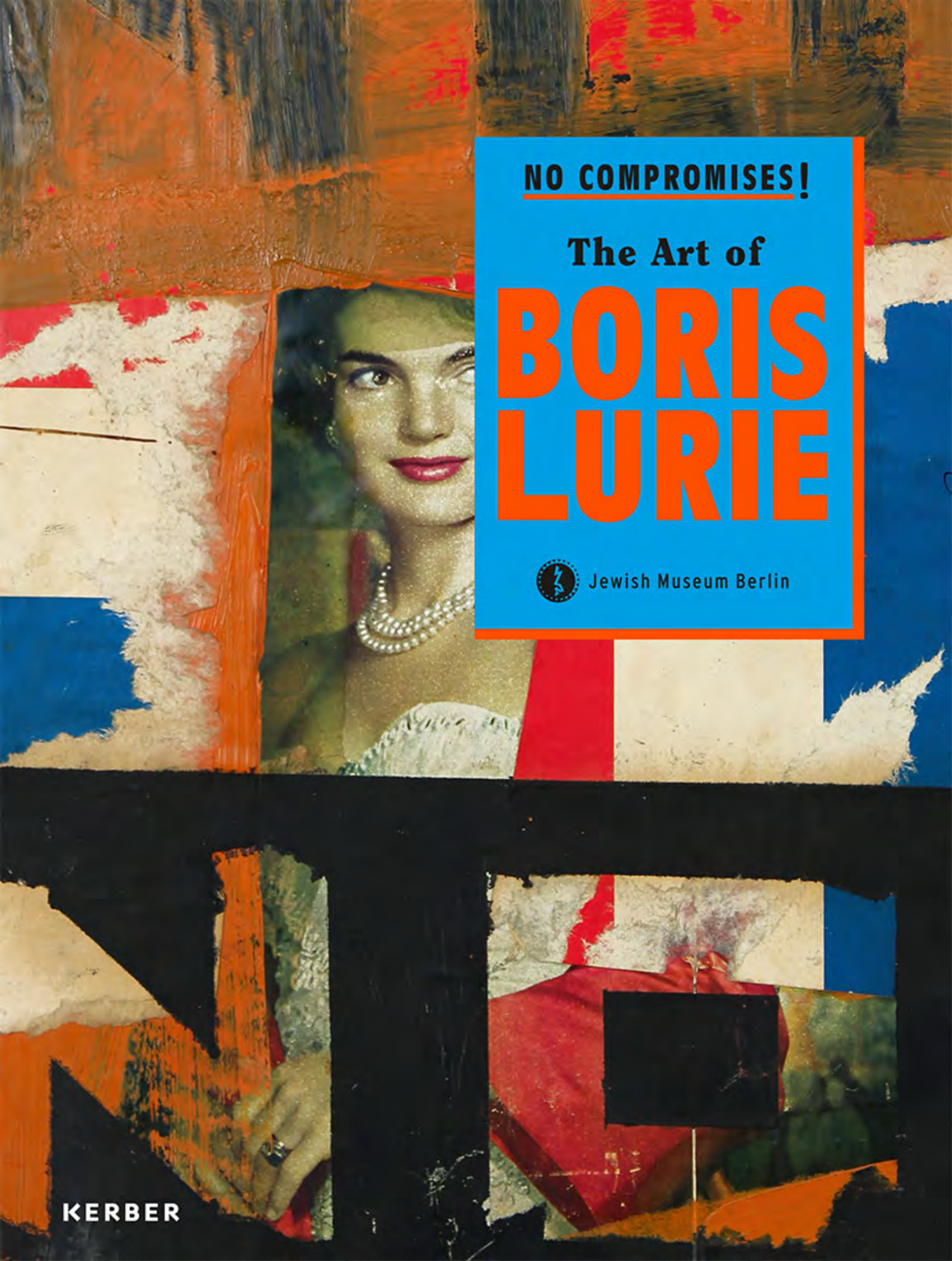


NO COMPROMISES!

The Art of

BORIS LURIE

Jewish Museum Berlin

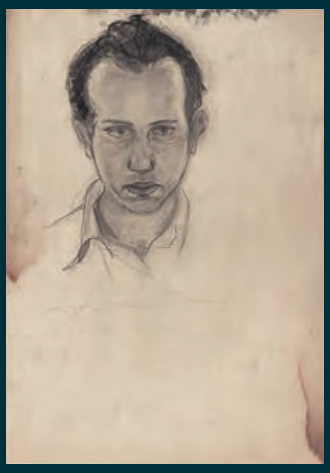
KERBER

NO COMPROMISES!

The Art of BORIS LURIE

***Portrait Of My Mother Before Shooting*, 1947**
Oil on canvas, 93 × 65 cm

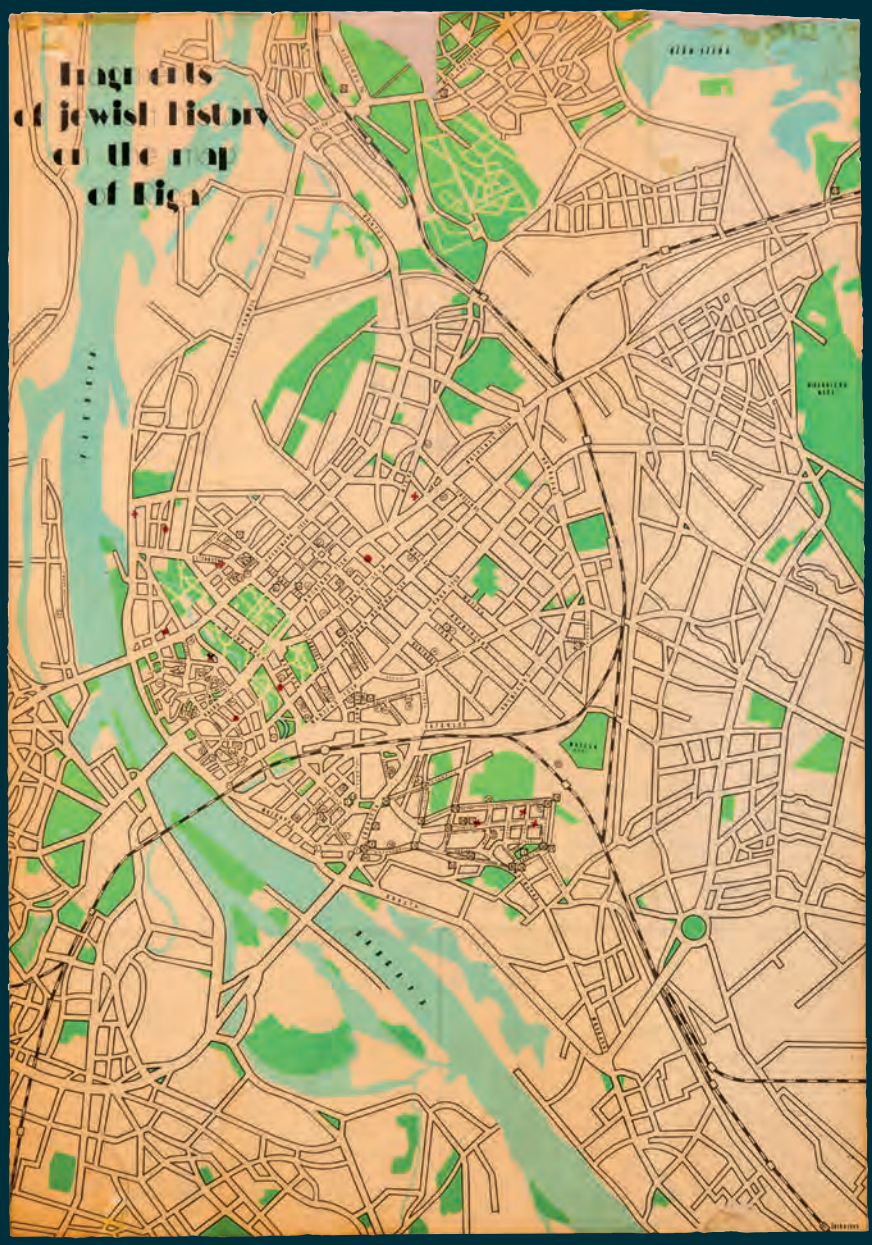
***Family*, 1945–49**
Oil on Masonite, 61 × 37 cm



***War Series 50*, 1946**
Pencil, colored Conté crayon and estompe on paper, 30 × 21 cm

***Untitled*, 1945–49**
Pastel and gouache on
paper, 66 × 40 cm

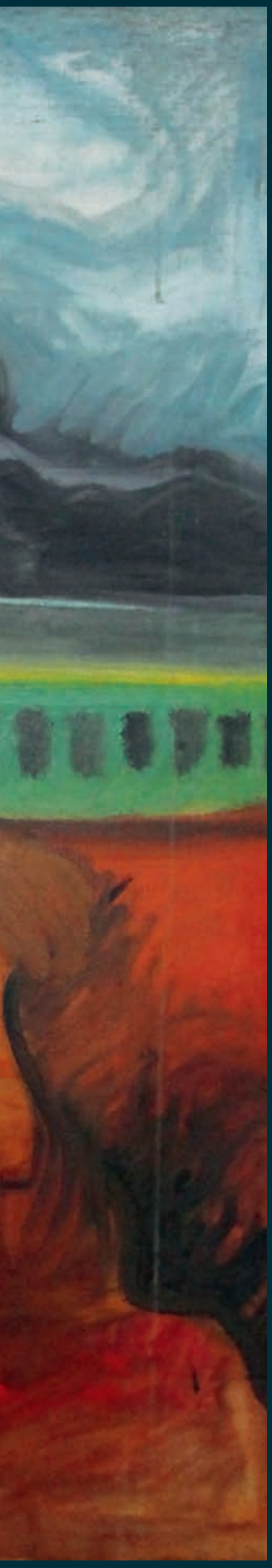
***Untitled*, 1949/50**
Oil on board, 51 × 38 cm



***Fragments Of Jewish History On The Map Of Riga*, undated**
Commercial map with magic marker, 81 × 56 cm

***Untitled*, 1948–52**
Collage: Oil on canvas
mounted on Masonite, 71 × 100 cm

***Back From Work—Prison Entrance*, 1946/47**
Oil on canvas mounted on Masonite, 45 × 64 cm



***Untitled,* undated**
Oil on canvas,
127 × 127 cm

***Untitled,* 1946–50**
Pastel and gouache
on paper, 47 × 62 cm

NIGHT, STUTTHOF

The day ends at six o'clock. Everything is calm, soft snoring wafting through the barracks and now and then a quiet sigh or someone talking to himself. And the rubber truncheon that got the crowd quiet, it too is lying idly in the corner of the better room, where the masters sleep, and the kapos and block elders eat dinner, sharing news with each other, while their servants have already retired.

The small nightlight above the entry door spreads a dim light, in which I can see people hastily running somewhere in their stocking feet and then returning. … the familiar picture of a calm night in which the prisoner wishes that it could please last forever … provided that he can sleep in the company of two or three comrades in the bunk, provided that he doesn't have to tear at the flesh under his jacket till it bleeds, provided.

Another day has come to an end and it makes no sense to think about what all has happened in the course of it: the same rushed, overhasty getting up like the previous day, the same slice of bread—if it didn't get even smaller—that was then stained with marmalade by another chieftain, then, when leaving the barracks, a bowl of "coffee" for three, and later the often futile search for the man with the bowl … searching for a quiet place … then escaping from another whip that inevitably has to cross your path somewhere. It seems to rain here perpetually, the mud soaks through your boots … and after standing at roll call for hours, you try as usual to break through the crowd to blend in with the cripples quartered in the block across the way, to slip away to calmer parts of the camp in order to evade work. If you are successful, you run past the large square in front of the main gate, where life is bustling. Work gangs are standing there, gangs of old and "better" prisoners, and you run quickly through their rows and run into a toilet and act as if you were occupied until the day dawns, until the work gangs leave the camp. The prisoners with barrack duty meanwhile come into the toilet to clean it and if you are lucky they won't force you out into the street … Then, noontime, when you always risk losing your bowl of soup if you didn't go to work. Once the bowl of soup is in your stomach you notice that the barracks are surrounded and there is no way out for you other than to go to work. And what work means … you know that from experience.

And now, after it has gotten quiet and everyone seems to be sleeping, I leave the wooden bunk, spread the blanket out on the ground in front of the window, and look out at the lighted fences and behind them a few lights coming from poorly blacked-out windows in the pompous SS building, and I slowly fall asleep. It is a wonderful feeling to know that there will be peace and quiet until four o'clock.

A whistle and screams wake me up: Some are still hesitating to get dressed, others are in their clothes in no time. I'm among the latter. "Everyone out," roars a voice in Polish. I am reasonable enough not to be among the first, but also not among the last. Outside it is cold and dry—a true miracle here—and work gangs stream out of all the barracks. First we are lined up in rows of five and go marching to loud commands. Then the voice stops, the ones in front of the gang are almost running, while the ones in the back are walking slowly. Other gangs merge with ours and when we get to our destination, we are one big crowd of spectators standing around a semi-lit spot at the center of the camp square … and we hardly understand what is going on. All the streets that lead to the square are overcrowded, people are clustered around the windows of the barracks to see something. Others, probably the majority, are not at all concerned about what is going on, they don't even look over to the brightly lit spot. We recognize almost all at once a scaffolding, a gallows. We can remember that it was already standing there the previous day; everyone knew that someone was going to be hanged … but we had all long since forgotten it … A relieved mumbling is now starting—which is to mean: this, … well, is it!—which is interrupted by a loud "Quiet!" We cannot hear what the man is saying, we just notice that he is speaking first in German and then Polish. And then a figure comes into view, a figure of a boy. Most turn around and face in the opposite direction. Others, who were already halfway wanting to turn back, turn around, stop walking and then wait after all. And I look right there where he is standing on the chair and it seems to me that he is calm and composed. No one talks and no one calls anything out to him. What has to happen happens and really, it is not much of a punishment. The camp elder, who is leading the ceremony, kicks the stool away and the boy falls and hangs. Then all the caps get taken off, first in front at the gallows and then the act continues toward the back like a wave. While the last ones are just taking off their caps, the ones in front already have theirs back on. He supposedly called out: "Long live the Red Army and the Soviet Union!" But I didn't hear it.

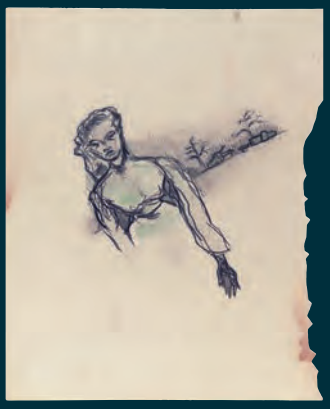
There are no gangs marching in file anymore as we return to the barracks. People are talking again, though perhaps a bit more quietly than before. And it seems to me—of course it is nonsense—as if I were the only one who thought even for a second about the boy, the metal worker from Russia who hit an SS man on the head with an installation wrench. Maybe I had those thoughts because I believed I would remain living. Maybe. An unknown hanging hero comrade: What did he think?

And then it is night again and later, morning. And also in Stutthof near Danzig it is light during the day and dark at night. But there it is always gray, bleak, and rainy—certainly now as well.

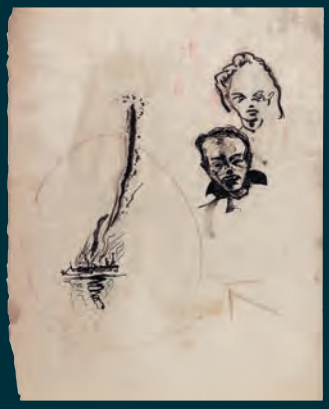
BORIS LURIE, 1947

***Untitled*, 1948–50**
Pastel and gouache
on paper, 58 × 43 cm

***Entrance*, 1940–55**
Oil on board, 103 × 76 cm

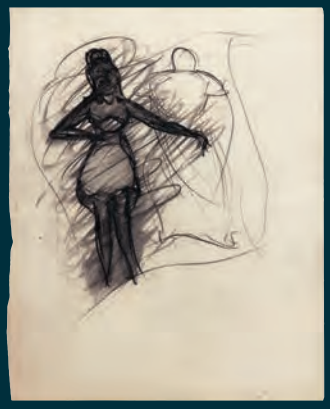


***War Series 107*, 1946**
Pencil and colored crayon on paper, 26×21 cm

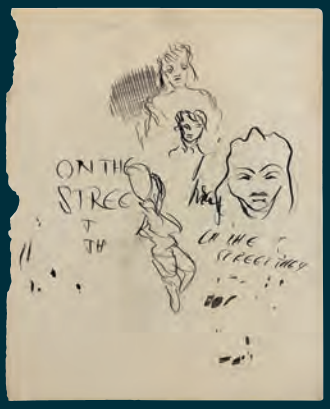


***War Series 104*, 1946**
Ink and colored crayon on paper, 26×21 cm

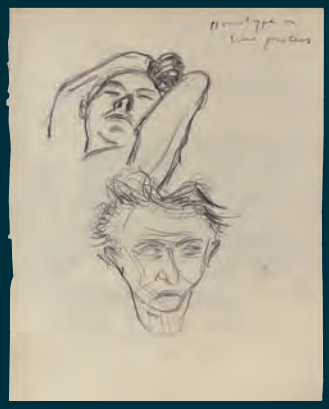
***War Series 92*, 1946**
Conté crayon and estompe on paper, 26×21 cm



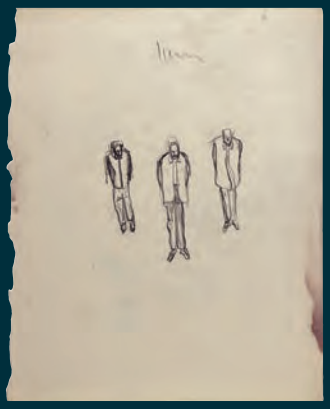
***War Series 91*, 1946**
Conté crayon and estompe on paper, 26×21 cm



***War Series 70 (On The Street)*, 1946**
Pen and ink on paper, 26×21 cm



***War Series 74 (Monotype On New Process)*, 1946**
Conté crayon and estompe on paper, 26×21 cm



***War Series 83 (12 Hours Central European Time)*, 1946**
Pencil on paper, 26×21 cm

***War Series 34*, 1946**
Pencil on paper, 26×21 cm

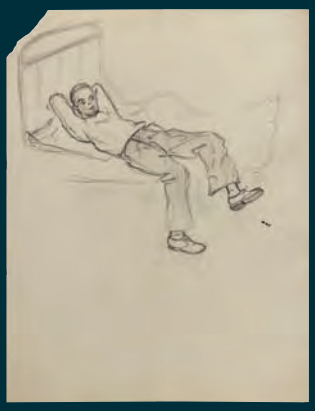
***War Series 64*, 1946**
Conté crayon and estompe on paper, 30×21 cm

***War Series 3*, 1946**
Pencil on paper, 30×21 cm

***War Series 105 (RK)*, 1946**
Pen, ink, and pencil on paper, 30×21 cm

***War Series 97*, 1946**
Charcoal and pencil on paper, 30×21 cm

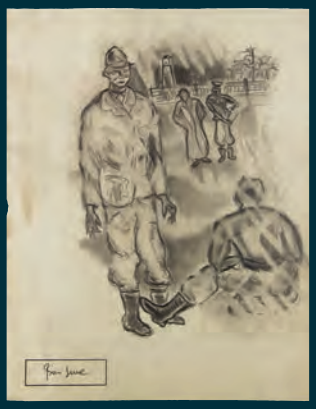
***War Series 85*, 1946**
Pencil and colored pencil on paper, 26 × 20 cm



***War Series 73*, 1946**
Pencil on paper, 26 × 20 cm

***War Series 75*, 1946**
Conté crayon and estompe on paper, 26 × 20 cm

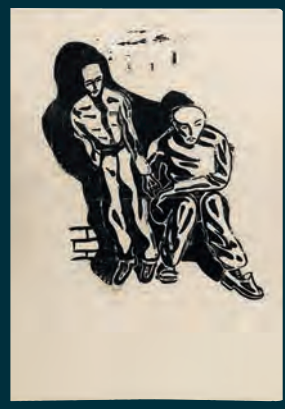
***War Series 82*, 1946**
Pencil on paper, 26 × 20 cm



***War Series 65*, 1946**
Graphite and estompe on paper, 26 × 20 cm

***War Series 67 (The Way Of Liberty?)*, 1946**
Ink and wash on paper, 26 × 20 cm

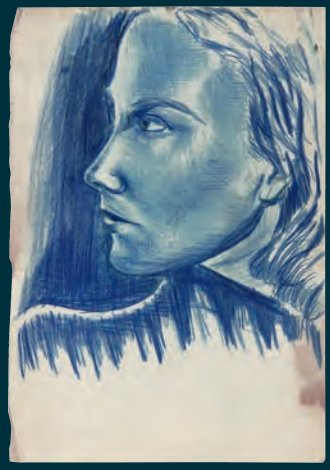
***War Series 68*, 1946**
Pen and ink on paper, 26 × 20 cm



***War Series 101*, 1946**
Ink and gouache paint on paper, 26 × 18 cm

***War Series 61*, 1946**
Conté crayon and estompe on paper, 30 × 21 cm

***War Series 51*, 1946**
Colored Conté crayon, colored crayon, and pencil on paper, 30 × 21 cm

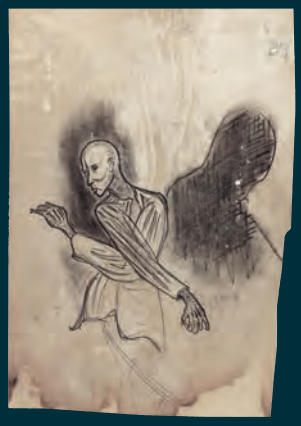


***War Series 56*, 1946**
Blue crayon on ruled paper, 30 × 21 cm

***War Series 53*, 1946**
Pencil, colored crayon, Conté crayon, and watercolor on paper, 30 × 21 cm

***War Series 36*, 1946**
Conté crayon and colored crayon on paper, 28×18 cm

***War Series 1*, 1946**
Pen and ink and watercolor paint on paper, 27×20 cm



***War Series 103*, 1946**
Conté crayon and estompe on paper, 27×19 cm

***War Series 5*, 1946**
Ink on paper, 25×21 cm

***War Series 100*, 1946**
Ink on watercolor board, 30×23 cm

***War Series 86*, 1946**
Ink on paper, 30×23 cm

***War Series 8*, 1946**
Pencil on paper, 30×22 cm

***War Series 32*, 1946**
Conté crayon on paper, 30×20 cm

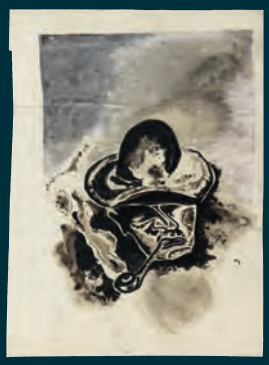
***War Series 52*, 1946**
Ink on paper, 33×20 cm

***War Series 35*, 1946**
Conté crayon and charcoal on paper, 30×21 cm

***War Series 49*, 1946**
Colored Conté and gouache on paper, 28×22 cm

***War Series 106*, 1946**
Ink and gouache paint on paper, 28×21 cm

***War Series 77,* 1946**
Ink and wash on cardboard,
24 × 19 cm



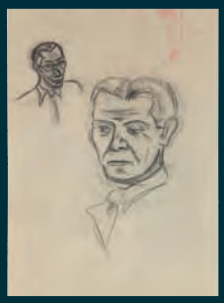
***War Series 20,* 1946**
Ink and lavis on paper,
23 × 17 cm

***War Series 30,* 1946**
Pencil and crayon on
paper, 22 × 15 cm

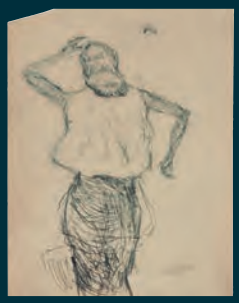
***War Series 16,* 1946**
Pencil, Conté crayon,
colored crayon and
gouache on paper,
21 × 15 cm

***War Series 22,* 1946**
Pencil on paper,
21 × 13 cm

***War Series 27,* 1946**
Pencil on paper,
19 × 13 cm

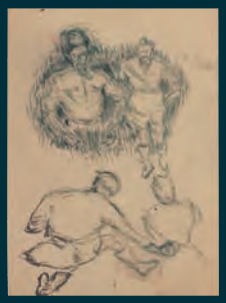


***War Series 11,* 1946**
Pencil on paper,
19 × 14 cm

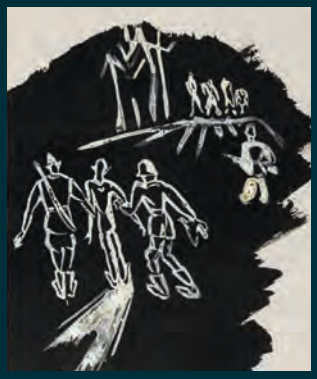


***War Series 14,* 1946**
Pencil and colored
crayon on paper,
19 × 15 cm

***War Series 29,* 1946**
Pencil on paper,
20 × 13 cm



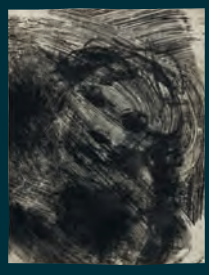
***War Series 43,* 1946**
Pencil and blue ink on
paper, 19 × 14 cm



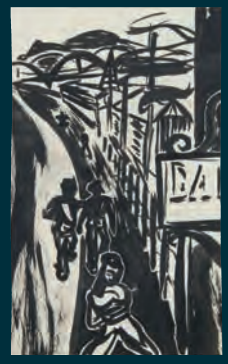
***War Series 33,* 1946**
Pen and ink and gouache paint
on paper, 24 × 20 cm

***War Series 12,* 1946**
Ink and gouache on paper,
22 × 17 cm

***War Series 25,* 1946**
Ink on paper, 13 × 13 cm



***War Series 71,* 1946**
Ink on paper mounted
on paper, 17 × 13 cm



***War Series 69,* 1946**
Ink on paper, 23 × 14 cm

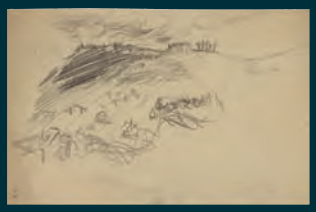
***War Series 26*, 1946**
Ink, Conté crayon and estompe on paper, 14×19 cm

***War Series 41*, 1946**
Ink and lavis on paper, 15×21 cm

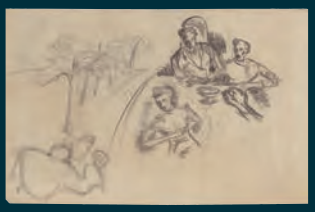
***War Series 42*, 1946**
Ink on paper, 15×21 cm

***War Series 10*, 1946**
Pen and ink and pencil on paper, 15×20 cm

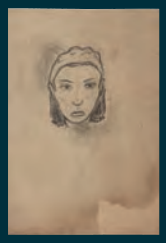
***War Series 40*, 1946**
Pen and ink on paper, 14×19 cm



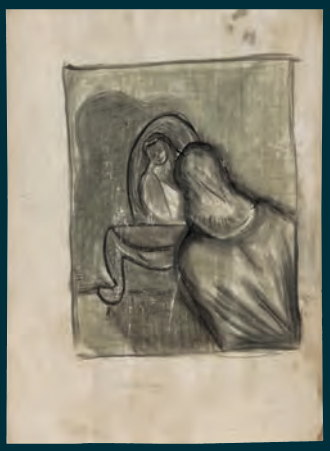
***War Series 21*, 1946**
Pencil on paper, 13×20 cm



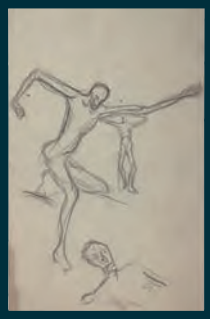
***War Series 44*, 1946**
Pencil on paper, 13×20 cm



***War Series 19*, 1946**
Pencil on paper, 15×10 cm



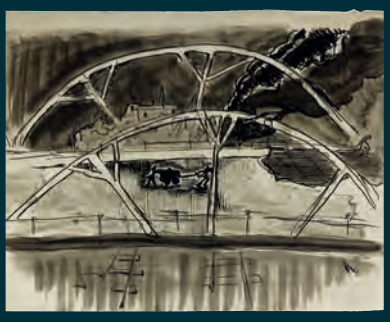
***War Series 48*, 1946**
Pencil and crayon on paper, 30×21 cm



***War Series 15*, 1946**
Pencil on paper, 20×13 cm

***War Series 17*, 1946**
Ink, watercolor, and gouache on paper, 20×13 cm

***War Series 2*, 1946**
Pen, ink, and pencil on paper, 21×20 cm



***War Series 4 (Aftermath)*, 1946**
Ink on paper, 20×25 cm

***War Series 66*, 1946**
Ink on paper, 18×25 cm

***War Series 58*, 1946**
Pen, ink, wash, and colored pencil on paper, 22×26 cm

***War Series 98*, 1946**
Charcoal and watercolor on paper, 21 × 30 cm

***War Series 94*, 1946**
Pencil on paper, 21 × 30 cm

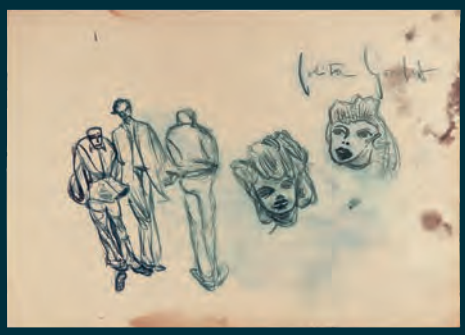
***War Series 62*, 1946**
Conté crayon and estompe on paper, 21 × 29 cm

***War Series 60*, 1946**
Pencil and Conté crayon on paper, 21 × 30 cm

***War Series 28*, 1946**
Ink and colored crayon on paper, 20 × 30 cm

***War Series 31*, 1946**
Conté crayon and estompe on paper, 20 × 29 cm

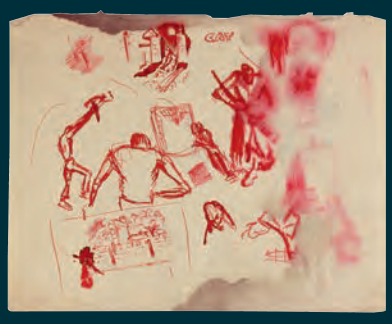
***War Series 9*, 1946**
Ink and colored crayon on paper, 20 × 28 cm



***War Series 96 (Lolita Jonefef)*, 1946**
Pen and ink on paper, 21 × 30 cm

***War Series 87*, 1946**
Conté and colored crayon and estompe on watercolor paper, 21 × 30 cm

***War Series 81 (Hillersleben)*, 1946**
Pencil on paper, 20 × 26 cm



***War Series 95*, 1946**
Red ink on paper, 20 × 25 cm

***War Series 54*, 1946**
Charcoal and colored crayon on paper, 20 × 33 cm

***Flatcar, Assemblage, 1945, by Adolf Hitler,* 1961**
Lynograph, 41 × 61 cm

***Lolita,* 1962**
Collage: Oil on paper mounted on board, 103 × 142 cm

LOLITA ?

***Saturation Painting (Buchenwald)*, 1959–64**
Collage: Photos and newspaper on canvas, 91×91 cm

***Railroad to America*, 1963**
Collage: Photos mounted on canvas,
37 × 54 cm

Here in New York, Friedl
it ain't like in the beech groves of the Buchenwalds.

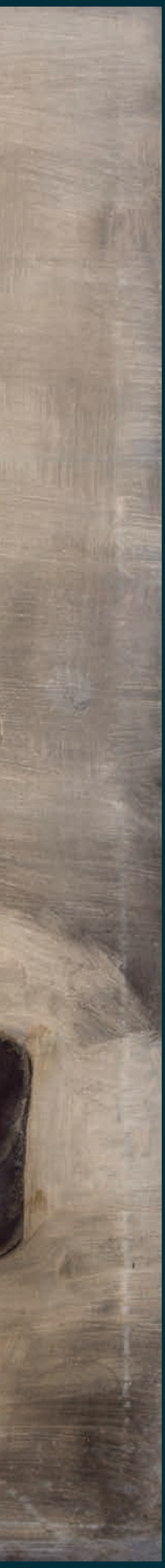
You go to the doctor and he looks you
over
to see if you're worth a c-note or a thou' to him
in concentration camp currency.

BORIS LURIE, 1955

***Dismembered Woman: The Stripper*, 1955**
Oil on canvas, 165 × 109 cm

***Untitled*, 1951**
Oil on Masonite, 77 × 92 cm

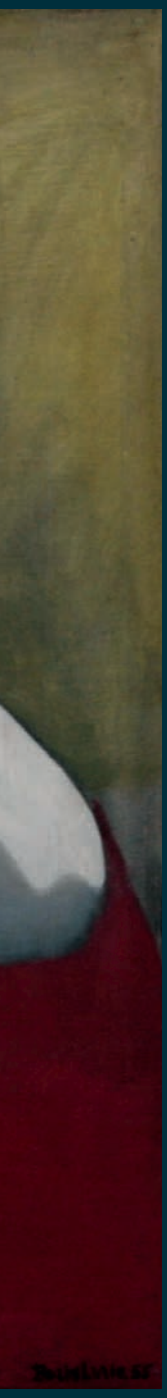
***Dismembered Stripper,* 1956**
Oil on canvas, 107 × 97 cm



***Dismembered Women: Giving Bread*, 1949**
Oil paint on cardboard, 36×51 cm

***Dismembered Woman*, 1959–65**
Oil on canvas, 145×135 cm

***Untitled,* 1955**
Oil on canvas, 89×114 cm



***Dismembered Woman: Apple Eater,* 1954**
Oil on canvas, 58×61 cm

***Untitled (Two Women)*, 1956**
Oil on Masonite, 116×92 cm

I'm half Russian serf
half kike aristocrat;
the Russian serf burps
and hides, confused,
his pot belly, his pimple-scarred cheeks,
his snow-white beard
in the crow's nest of black facial hair

that marks the aristocrat.

He smiles with pity
into the Christ-beard:
what happened
to *that* guy?

BORIS LURIE, DECEMBER 30, 1990

Germany!

lies buried in the flesh
close to
my heart
– the evacuated graves there are
– two ladies-fingers, red-nail polished

Thus my heart, beating
itself on the kitchen
chopping block,
will always reek of

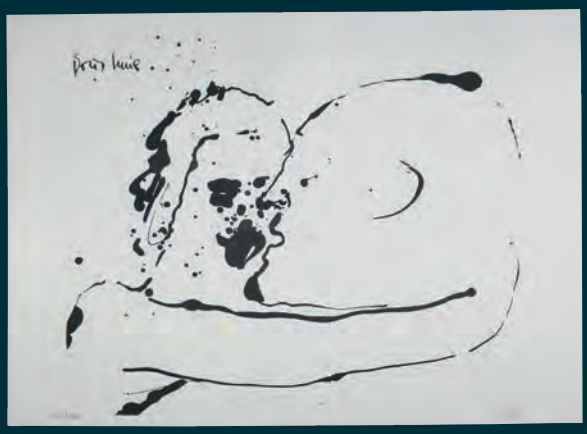
Deutschland

– it calls me to judgment before the cooks
– and into the pot pie.

BORIS LURIE, JANUARY 11, 1991

***Three Women*, 1955**
Collage: Oil on Masonite
mounted on canvas, 118×119 cm

***Dance Hall Series 12,* 1963–67**
Pen and ink on paper,
28 × 14 cm



***Dance Hall Portfolio 4–12,* 1961**
Signed lithographs, 27 × 38 cm

***Dance Hall Series 10,* 1963–67**
Pen and ink on paper, 38 × 51 cm

***Dance Hall Series 11,* 1963–67**
Pen and ink on paper,
32 × 19 cm

We are the artists who ran art
banished art
have no damn crush on art.
What follows won't be a pleasure.

Even the art that was right
was no pleasure.
If it hasn't lied it always cheated
itself and might
have enjoyed a papal dispensation to play with itself
gaze at and flush itself.

And the Moloch that every Tver should lust for
chews quietly
without anger –
never swallowing –
those who shat his art out.

BORIS LURIE, JULY 20, 1994

***Untitled*, 1955–60**
Oil on canvas,
127×97 cm

***Dance Hall Series 2*, 1953–57**
Pastel and gouache on paper,
55×76 cm

***Love Series: Bound On Red Background,* 1962**
Collage: Photo transfer and paint on canvas, 203 × 135 cm

***Love Series*, 1970–72**
Paint on black-and-white
photograph, 15 × 17 cm

***Love Series: Posed*, 1962**
Collage: Oil on canvas mounted
on cardboard, 41 × 27 cm

***Love Series: Bound And Gagged*, 1960–69**
Oil paint on unstretched canvas on cardboard, 58×39 cm

***Love Series: Bound With Stick*, 1962**
Collage: Oil on canvas,
200×90 cm

***Altered Photos (Cabot Lodge)*, 1963**
Collage: Oil on paper mounted on board, 74×60 cm

***Untitled*, 1963**
Collage: Oil on paper mounted on canvas, 74×61 cm

***Altered Photos (Cabot Lodge)*, 1963**
Collage: Oil on paper mounted on board, 74×61 cm

***Altered Photos (Cabot Lodge)*, 1963**
Collage: Oil on paper mounted on canvas, 74×60 cm

***Altered Photos (Cabot Lodge)*, 1963**
Collage: Oil on paper mounted on canvas, 74×61 cm

***# 10 Altered Photos (Cabot Lodge)*, 1963**
Collage: Oil on paper on unstretched canvas, 98×81 cm

***Altered Photo (Cabot Lodge)*, 1963**
Collage: Oil on paper mounted on board, 75×61 cm

***Untitled (Henry Cabot Lodge)*, 1963**
Silkscreen on paper, 72×56 cm

***Untitled*, 1960–69**
Assemblage: Cardboard box collage, 43 × 27 × 9 cm

***Immigrant's NO!box*, 1963**
Assemblage: Wooden trunk, oil with photos and paper, 61 × 102 × 64 cm

The Jew pays well
for sauerkraut à la Hitler.

Stuffs it with horseradish sauce

Corpse kadish sauce

into the you in: my love –
I take it you are a Jew?

BORIS LURIE, JUNE 15, 1996

Cold air
forces its way in
through these unplaned floorboard grooves.
Do you know
what – philosophically-speaking, you know –
what coldness is?

BORIS LURIE, AUGUST 3, 1997

The Paintor opens a box
of candies
with gelatin sugar suspending
a star-of-David-with-hammer-and-sickle
among starred swastikas.

BORIS LURIE, 1998

***Untitled*, 1982**
Assemblage: Corset with oil, chains, cement, 198×36 cm

***Untitled*, 1960/61**
Assemblage: Oil, paper plaster, and wire mesh, 41 × 36 cm

***Knife In Cement Star Of David*, 1970–79**
Knife and cement, 43 × 30 × 30 cm

***Untitled,* undated**
Assemblage: Cardboard, oil on fabric, 91 × 41 × 3 cm

***Suitcase*, 1964**
Assemblage: Oil and paper collage on leather suitcase, 38 × 58 × 18 cm

***NO, Love You (Immigrant's NO!suitcase #1)*, 1963**
Assemblage: Suitcase and oil with fabric and photos, 61 × 102 × 62 cm

***Cement Star Of David*, undated**
Cement, 51×55×20 cm

***Rope And Stars Of David (Five Stars of David)*, 1970**
Concrete and rope, 155×23×8 cm

***Altered Israeli Flags With Yellow Star Of David*, 1974**
Collage: Flags and fabric with oil mounted on foamboard,
102×76 cm

***Untitled*, 1970–79**
Assemblage: Oil on fabric,
118 × 62 cm

***Untitled*, 1959–64**
Assemblage: Oil and cement on canvas board, 41 × 50 cm

***Untitled*, 1960–69**
Assemblage: Found objects and oil on cardboard, 60 × 44 cm

***Untitled*, 1970–75**
Collage: Found objects on flat cardboard box, 76×76 cm

***Yellow Star NO!art Bag*, 1960–69**
Collage: Oil and paper on burlap, 93×69 cm

***Untitled*, 1963**
Collage: Oil and paper on canvas, 130 × 109 cm

***Salad*, 1962**
Collage: Oil and paper collage on canvas, 115×99 cm

The people are guilty of only one thing:
stupidity.

The newly enfranchised proletariat is guilty of only one thing:
it doesn't want to learn.

The upper classes are guilty of one thing – among many:
they're too clever.

The artists are guilty of only one thing:
making art.

The critics and intellectuals are only guilty of the fact
that they have experienced nothing.

The economists can be held liable for only one thing:
that they string threads through the cavities in our teeth.

Politicians can be absolved of only one crime:
that they want the people, the papas-mamas, on their side.

God and the Jews are guilty
of earning too much money in Auschwitz.

The freedom girls are guilty
of driving daggers into hidden man-parts.

The guild of patriarchs bear the guilt
for hiding themselves in mouse-holes.

The Soviets pulling the strings were guilty
in deed of achieving all too smashing a success.

The Democrats are ever guiltless:
they've never done anything but forget.

We all carry the inner guilt
smoking Coca-Cola in cloisters.

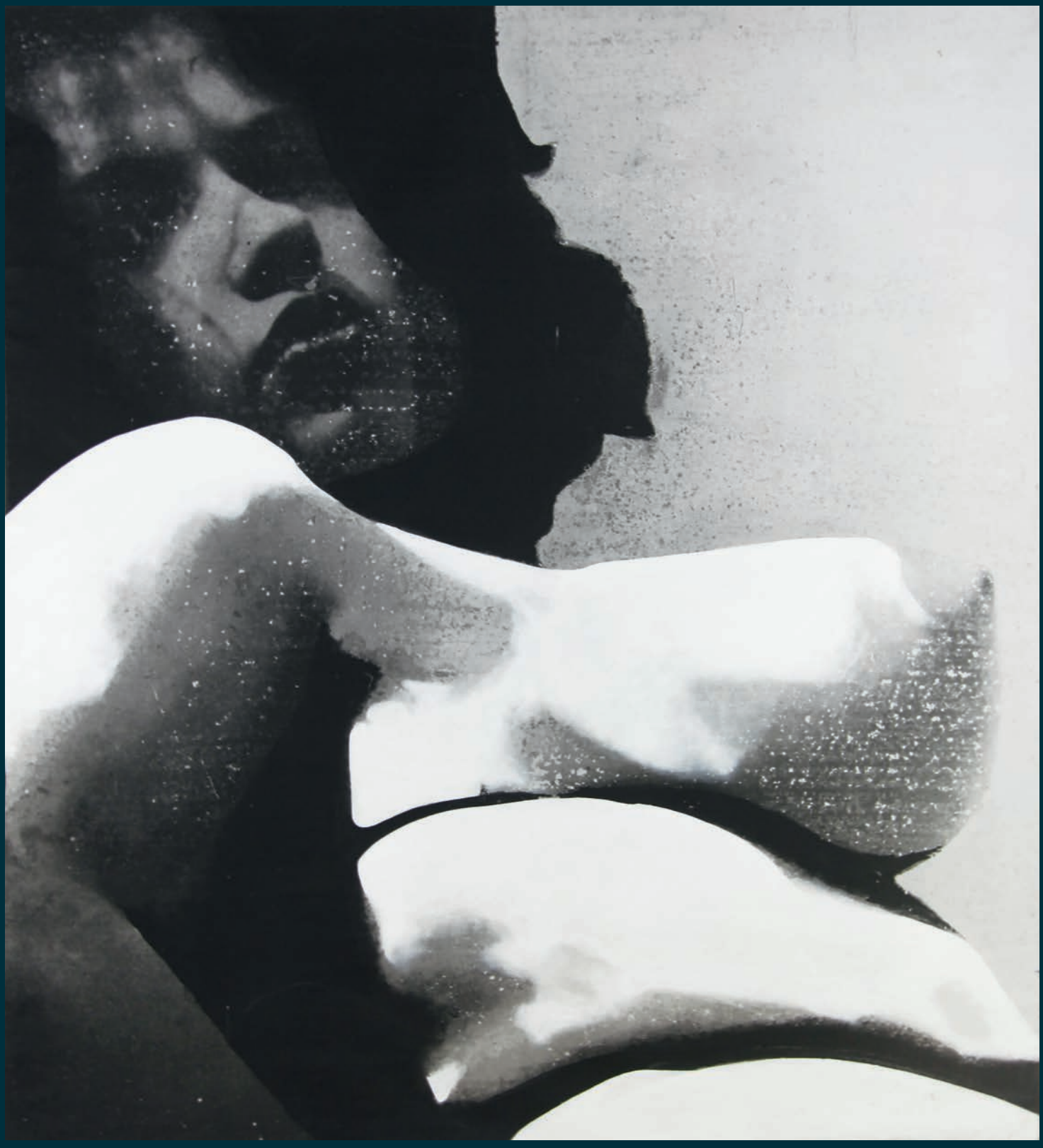
BORIS LURIE, SEPTEMBER 19, 1998

***More Insurance*, 1963**
Collage: Magazine pictures and paint
on cardboard, 41×51 cm

***Untitled,* undated**
Collage: Oil and pictures on canvas, 61 × 46 cm

***Deliberate Pinup Series,* 1975**
Collage: Oil and paper on cardboard, 81 × 43 cm

***Untitled*, 1961**
Collage: Magazine pictures, plastic, pictures on cardboard, 114×77 cm



***Untitled*, 1973–77**
Collage: Magazine pictures, oil on paper, 25 × 20 cm

***Untitled*, 1965**
Collage: Oil and photograph on paper, 28 × 22 cm

***Pin Up (Body)*, 1963**
Photo silkscreen and acrylic on canvas, 117 × 127 cm

***Altered Photo (Shame!),* 1963**
Collage: Oil and picture on canvas,
81×57 cm

***Untitled*, 1960–70**
Collage: Paper, oil on canvas,
99×91 cm

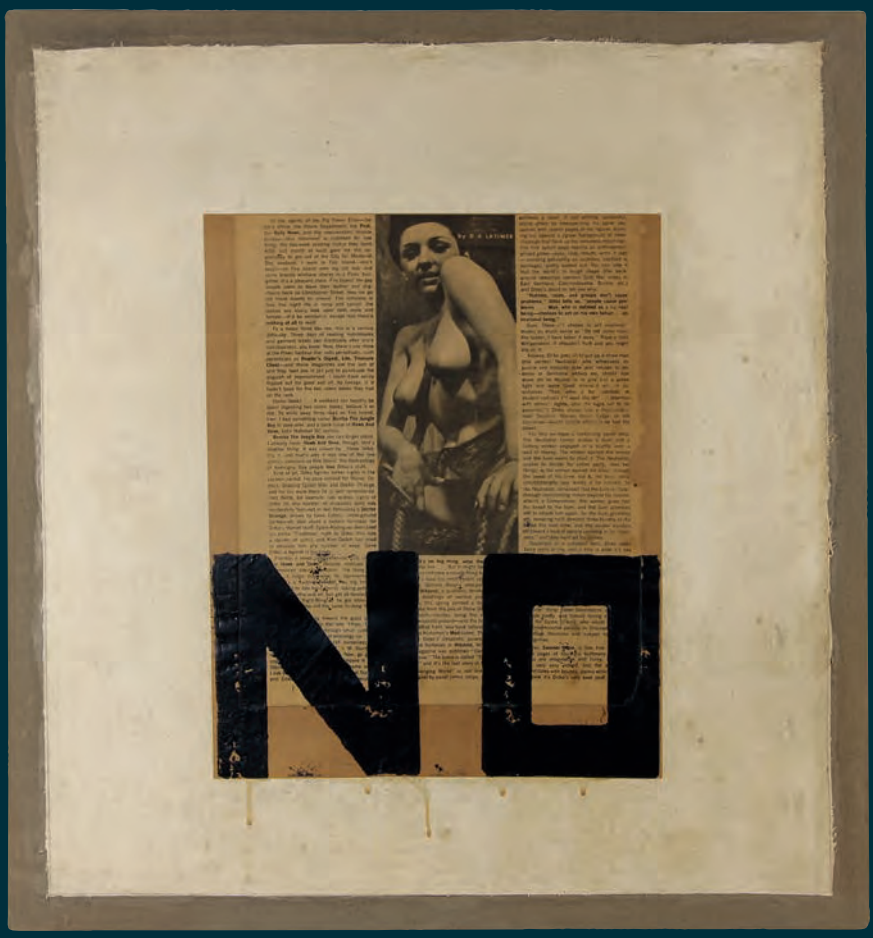
***Large Pinup #4*, 1960–70**
Collage: Magazine pictures on canvas, 229×236 cm


A PIP OF A PUPPET
JAMIE, YET!
THE TORSO TOSSER WHO BAFFLES THE CENSORS
A FISHERMAN'S DREAM
FOLLIES
Sweet As Candy
All Around the House
TWO KINDS
A HOSE IS A HOSE IS A...
STAG STORIES
A Queen of a King
EXOTIC IMPORTED ART FILMS
"COME FLY WITH ME"
TEN STAG MOVIE SUBJECTS
ONLY $1" EACH

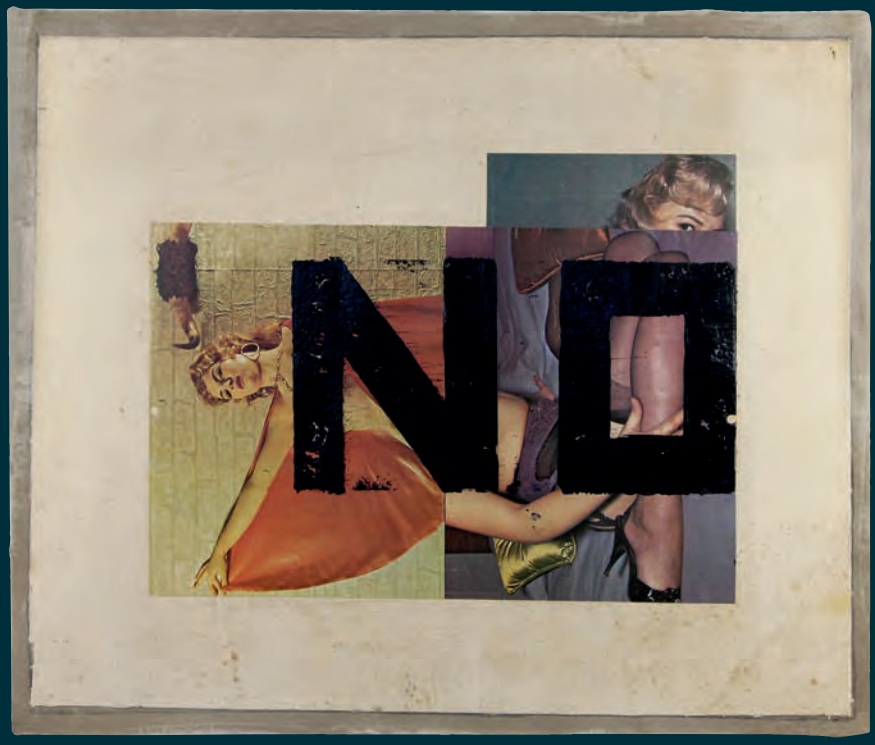
***Quench Your Thirst,* 1962**
Collage: Paper and paint mounted on canvas, 174 × 107 × 4 cm

***(Hand)*, 1962**
Collage: Oil and pictures on canvas, 91 × 76 cm

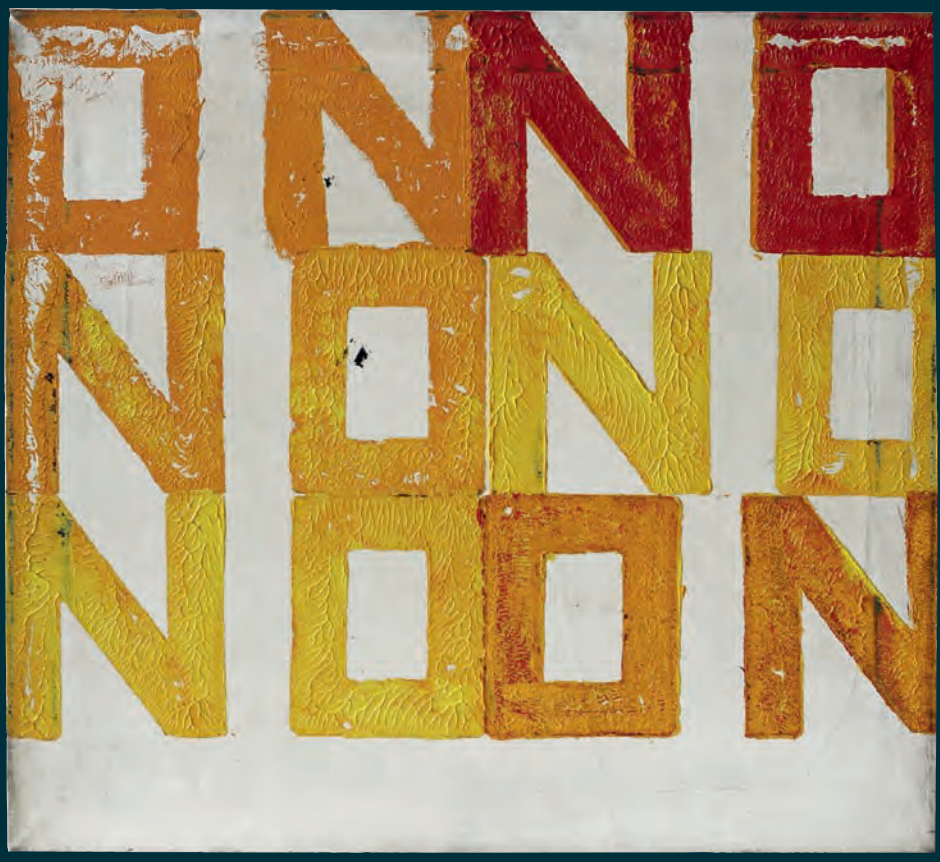
***Untitled*, 1965–75**
Oil on unstretched
canvas, 72 × 89 cm



***NO*, 1965–69**
Assemblage: Newspaper and oil on canvas, 61×55 cm



***NO*, 1965–69**
Assemblage: Pictures and oil on canvas, 48×57 cm



***Untitled,* undated**
Oil on canvas, 56×61 cm

***ONONONONONONON,* 1968–70**
Oil on unprimed canvas, 34×76 cm

***No (Red And Black)*, 1963**
Oil on canvas, 56×89 cm

#6 'NO' (With Split Head), 1963
Collage: Oil on paper mounted on canvas, 61×76 cm

***NO's*, 1962**
Collage: Oil on cut cardboard, 64×57 cm

A Nazi
who secretly slipped a slice
of bread – perishable – to a Ghetto Jew.
The SS Guard who turned a blind eye.
The little blond working girl in Magdeburg –
Fortress of maidenhood – who hid
bread with butter behind the sleeping grinding wheel
for the cute hungry-boy on the early shift.

Aha! The crooked old Latvian spinster
who one day – on Frostbite-Freedom Boulevard – dropped
a white bun on the park bench and
hobbled off.
(She'd brought it, really? just for me.)

They're all way more important than any
fat
man on a soap-box
spouting good words.

But I don't give a penny to the homeless (outcast).

BORIS LURIE, FEBRUARY 7, 1999

The old man says: "please."
The young man says: "gimme!"

The virgin still pretty
is in love with her knees.

The lady – a bit older
glows in good light.

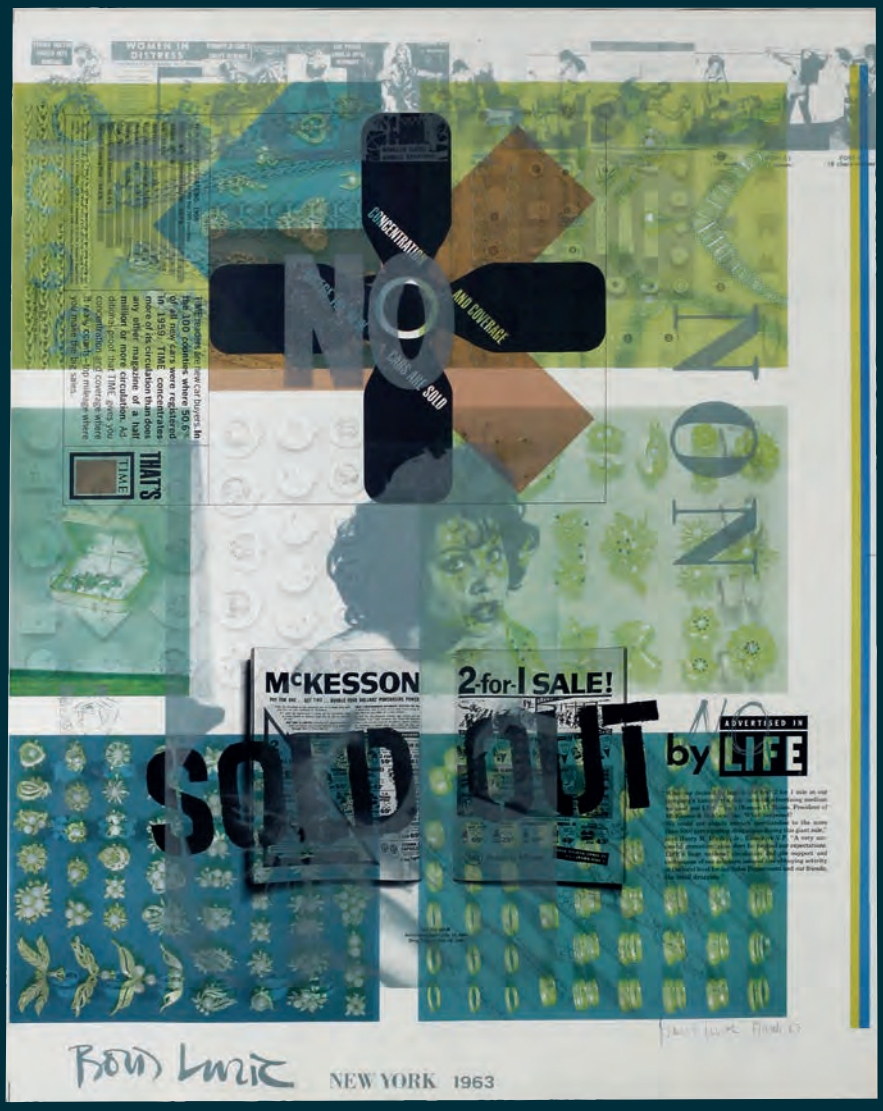
But if fresh beauty passes
it's good light good night.
Back to verse one.

BORIS LURIE, OCTOBER 14, 1999

***Tammie*, 1960–70**
Collage: Oil and paper on paper, 103×54 cm

***NO I Sprayed*, 1963**
Spray paint on
Masonite, 56×51 cm

***Untitled*, 1963**
Assemblage: Cardboard,
pictures, oil on canvas board,
62×46 cm



***Untitled (Sold Out)*, 1963**
Silkscreen on paper, 72×56 cm

***NO, With Torn Papers (TED)*, 1963**
Collage: Paper and paint on Masonite, 48×41 cm

***Untitled*, 1963**
Assemblage: Oil on printed paper mounted on canvas, 86×48 cm

***Hard Writings (Load)*, 1972**
Collage: Picture and tape on paper mounted on canvas, 60×88 cm

***Slave*, 1972**
Collage: Tape and tinted varnish on paper, 56×79 cm

***IN*, 1960–62**
Assemblage: Pictures and oil on canvas, 55 × 81 cm

***PLEASE*, 1965–69**
Collage: Pictures, tape, and charcoal on cardboard, 46 × 91 cm

***Anti-Pop Stencil*, 1964**
Collage: Oil and paper on unprimed canvas, 53 × 61 cm

***Piss*, 1973**
Collage: Paint, paper, and tape on canvas, 43 × 58 cm

***German Word "God"*, 1965–69**
Assemblage: Fabric on fabric,
86 × 90 cm

***Oswald,* 1963**
Collage: Magazine pictures,
oil on cardboard,
58×38 cm

***NO With Mrs. Kennedy,* 1964**
Collage: Oil and photo on
Masonite, 36×27 cm

***Adieu Amerique*, 1960**
Oil on canvas, 100 × 99 cm

***Untitled (AMERICAN)*, 1961**
Collage: Paint and paper mounted on plywood, 193 × 114 cm

***Untitled,* 1960–70**
Assemblage: Pictures, paint on box top, 36×28 cm

***Amerique Amer (Pleasure),* 1960/61**
Collage: Magazine and newspaper pictures on paper, 33×19 cm

***Adieu Amerique*, 1959/60**
Assemblage: Magazine pictures and canvas with oil paint on unstretched canvas, 130×95 cm

***Liberty or Lice,* 1959–60**
Collage: Oil on canvas, 166×212 cm


APRIL 18

The artist must paint.
The cow must graze.
And I, on the snow-covered grass
should feed my own ass
in a hell-raising grazing daze.

BORIS LURIE, APRIL 23, 2000

The deaf Goya
screams into my ear
– whispers:

It is forbidden to paint beautifully
It is musty and fusty to treasure
the slow inspiration
of pleasure.
You should enjoy
black crows
not roses.
Back to verse one.

BORIS LURIE, SEPTEMBER 30, 2000

***Adieu Amerique*, 1960**
Oil on canvas, 182 × 179 cm

***Untitled,* 1960–70**
Collage: Oil, photos, newspaper on unstretched canvas, 119×118 cm

***Lumumba…Is…Dead*, 1959–64**
Collage: Oil, pictures and paper on canvas, 182 × 197 cm


DECEMBER
IS DEAD

***Oh, Mama Liberté,* 1960/61**
Collage: Oil, pictures, and paper on canvas, 175 × 280 cm


ALL U. S. IS EVIL.
MONEY


3.MONDE
JEUNESSE
MORT AUX JUIFS
ISRAEL IMP
ISRAEL

***Mort Aux Juif! Israel Imperialiste*, 1970**
Enamal and oil on canvas,
229×323 cm

***A Jew Is Dead*, 1964**
Collage: Oil and paper on canvas, 180 × 312 cm


A JEW IS DEAD
A JEW IS DEAD
DEAD


NO
NOW

***Now, No More*, 1962**
Oil on canvas, 127 × 141 cm

***Ax Series #6,* 1970–79 (2003)**
Tree stump with ax, 71 × 38 × 28 cm

***Ax Series #3*, 1970–79 (2003)**
Tree stump with ax, 74 × 41 × 30 cm

***Untitled*, 1978–80**
Two machetes in concrete,
32 × 72 × 16 cm

***Knives In Cement*, 1970–79**
Two machetes in cement, 70 × 67 × 20 cm

***Knife In Cement*, 1974**
Machete and cement, 46 × 20 × 46 cm

***Untitled (Two Knives In Concrete)*, 1979/80**
Metal and wood in plaster and cloth, 30 × 46 × 72 cm

Dear Old Master Chagall!
The cradle-bodies from the Riga-shtetl!
slither through the purple pall
you drape as a mirror from the sheer face
of New York's sky-scrapers! The little bodies
give themselves away in your diamond-ink
and forgive each other for looking so lovely
in your pink bluish yellowish hues.
We paint them
as you do!
Just being dragged on a rope with hairy hooks.

BORIS LURIE, OCTOBER 15, 2000

My sympathy is with the mouse
But I feed the cat.

BORIS LURIE, JUNE 2, 2001

***Ax Series #1,* 1970–79 (2003)**
Tree stump with ax, 107 × 91 × 41 cm

***Untitled,* undated**
Assemblage: Found objects, paint, and pictures on cardboard box, 34 × 20 × 10 cm

***Untitled,* undated**
Assemblage: Wig and oil on canvas,
104 × 64 cm

***Clay Head, Squashed,* 1955**
Assemblage: Clay mounted on Masonite,
28×23 cm

NO COMPROMISES!

The Art of BORIS LURIE

CILLY KUGELMANN

“I would have loved to make pretty pictures …”

While most survivors of the National Socialists' mass extermination no longer felt comfortable in the world of those who had been spared and were therefore eager to forget the time in the ghettos and camps, Boris Lurie, who was born in Leningrad in 1924 and grew up in Riga, Latvia, never stopped processing his persecution and detention artistically and politically. The obsessive passion with which Boris Lurie hurled his views on art and politics at society and above all the art world reinforced his role as a social outsider.

While looking for a title for our retrospective, we looked in his texts and the texts of his friends and opponents for suitable ideas, for key words reflecting Lurie's struggle against a society that, in the first decades after the war, was not able or willing to comprehend what had befallen the victims of the Holocaust. We realized that the terms that he used have today been usurped by advertising and product campaigns and lead nowhere. The language of resistance from the middle of the last century has lost its punch and, to the ears of younger generations, sounds like text modules for a diffuse pathos of consternation. However, the language of Boris Lurie's art has lost nothing of its provocative power and aesthetic radicalism. Lurie's paintings, assemblages, sculptures, and texts still impressively testify today to the perplexing and fascinating power of an art that can only be classified with difficulty within the art-historical canon.

Works by artists who were born after the war and reflect the inconceivable and seemingly impossible mass murder organized by technocrats oftentimes transcend conventional boundaries of artistic forms of expression. By contrast, artists who processed their own personal experience aesthetically often remained closer to the events in their art or interpreted the empirical reality using symbolic stylistic elements. Contemporary witnesses such as Leo Haas and Bedřich Fritta left behind a body of artistic work about the hopeless living conditions in the Theresienstadt ghetto. After the end of the war, Samuel Bak, who began drawing at the age of nine in the Vilnius ghetto, recorded his experience of persecution in paintings that, in the manner of the Old Masters, symbolically paraphrase the world destroyed by the Holocaust. Felix Nussbaum created his visions of life-threatening persecution in a hiding place in Brussels, before being deported and then murdered at Auschwitz-Birkenau. Józef Szajna, the Polish set designer, author, painter, and graphic artist who survived Auschwitz and Buchenwald, built three-dimensional silhouettes that stand allegorically for the concentration camp prisoners who were reduced to numbers and whose individuality was destroyed before they were killed. Few artists who have taken up the theme of mass extermination long after the event itself have resorted to such drastic means as the Spanish action artist Santiago Sierra, who, in 2006, in what was identified as an art project, had the exhaust fumes of six cars piped into the Stommeln Synagogue in order to avoid trivializing representations of piles of corpses and creatures oppressed by hunger and humiliation.

Boris Lurie took another path. He became neither an empirical chronicler of the mass extermination, nor did he attempt, as others, to set an example against trivialization by means of bold actions. In this respect, he cannot be assessed as a "Holocaust artist," although his life and artistic work is shaped by the persecution by the National Socialists' death machine.

After a short phase of reminiscing in drawings on his four years in different concentration camps, he shifted his work to the interpretation of the collision of the world of survivors of the mass extermination and of a society that would not become interested in the conditions of survival until decades after the end of the war. In his search for a form of artistic expression that would do justice to this "clash of cultures," he tried and tested various conventional styles, all of which he then rejected. In the late fifties, he then established the NO!art movement, as distinct from Abstract Expressionism and Pop art, along with Stanley Fisher and Sam Goodman, two artist friends who had served in World War II as soldiers. In a small art gallery in what at the time was the inexpensive East Village of New York City, the artists' group addressed the themes that were on the agenda in the United States after McCarthyism: repression, puritanism, sexuality, and sexism, but also international political problems and their impact on an art world that gave outsiders no chance. Lurie's art became a weapon against everything that he perceived as disruptive and unsettling. This included criticism of the crimes in Europe as well as his experiences in the United States, where media coverage of the mass murder of European Jews was sandwiched between advertisements and gossip columns. In his assemblages, he addressed the puritanical ban on publically presented intimacy in works simultaneously displaying commercial eroticism and the pictorial transmission of the mass extermination as a link between sexuality, death, and historical ignorance. His works met with indignation and rejection by the art market, art critics, and collectors. This reaction reinforced his refusal to offer his works on an art market.

Lurie's use of symbols of the Nazi state and of the mass extermination—the swastika, the "yellow star"—of excrement, knives, and axes, should never only be understood as direct references to the Holocaust. They express a general refusal to come to terms with an imperfect world. Art, in Lurie's opinion, has to address contradictions and deficiencies. "I would have loved to make pretty pictures, but something always prevented me from doing so," he states in the documentary film *Shoah and Pin-Ups*. ◂ 01

In a letter to Boris Lurie, the artist Wolf Vostell, who died in 1998, writes of his supposition that, "every painter would have a difficult time obtaining recognition with 'evil,' enlightening, and dialectical image material…" And continues: "That's why you will have a hard time in the United States and will have a hard time in Berlin… I wish you a fitting place in the new collection

01
REINHILD DETTMER-FINKE
in collaboration with Matthias Reichelt, *SHOAH and PIN-UPS: The NO!Artist Boris Lurie,* a documentary, 88 min., Germany, 2006, 00.41-01:10 min.

'Zeitgenössische Kunst gegen das Vergessen' [Contemporary Art against Forgetting] at the Jewish Museum Berlin [author's note: at the time still a department of the Berlin Museum]. There your achievement, your outcry, your rebellion as painting would have extraordinary meaning!"[02]

This recommendation did not come to fruition, but, in 2009, the Jewish Museum Berlin did acquire one small work by Boris Lurie, which was inventoried under the title "*Entebee*, acrylic on canvas, 1977, New York," with the number 2009/187/0. And now the works of Boris Lurie are coming to the Jewish Museum Berlin for several months.

We thank the Boris Lurie Art Foundation, and in particular Gertrude Stein and Anthony Williams, Igor Satanovsky, Jessica Wallen, and Chris Shultz, for their commitment and the generous financial and organizational support for the exhibition, and Wolfgang Leidhold for the idea and mediation in order to show a retrospective with works by Boris Lurie at the Jewish Museum Berlin.

02
NEUE GESELLSCHAFT FÜR BILDENDE KUNST, ED.
NO!art Berlin: nGbK, 1995.

VOLKHARD KNIGGE

“Art really exists, no kidding.”

The first NO!art anthology appeared in 1988, published by the Edition Hundertmark. It was designed as an artist's book, and was compiled and edited by Boris Lurie and Seymour Krim.[01] I can recall almost physically the mixture of horror and fascination that overcame me when I first leafed through the book. Unlike the solemn pathos of dismay that was beginning to influence the remembrance of the Holocaust in the Federal Republic of Germany, the works and texts assembled here were like a slap in the face. Quite obviously, the works by Lurie in particular were based on his concrete experience of World War II and the National Socialist concentration and annihilation camps. Quite obviously, these experiences fiercely penetrated through the works. Quite obviously—and this was the disturbing thing—Lurie committed himself and his undivided artistic will to preserving these experiences in their raw state and rendering them in just this manner: in other words, without lending them added meaning and without creating the impression that such experiences could in any way be adequately historicized, symbolized, or mastered artistically. Those who wished to engage with NO!art were called on to examine National Socialism as history, albeit one that was overcome but incomplete and unsettled, and confront a world in which violence remained violence, cynicism cynicism, pain pain, filth filth, suffering suffering, and lies lies. There was no sublimation in this world, any more than a notion of love that was perhaps still conceivable beyond and unaffected by the marketing of (female) bodies and desire. Here, art was not synonymous with the beautiful, good, and true, but was intervention, a form of expression for what was actually ugly, evil, and oblique behind the beautiful semblance; it was civilization's garbage, destruction; was self-destruction with its own devices, and at the same time—and paradoxically—self-assertion. "We meant to show, draw attention to, underline the 'vulgarity' within us as much as the vulgarity around us, to accept such vulgarity, to absorb it, to become conscious of it, to exorcise it."[02] In short: "PIN-UPS, EXCREMENT, PROTEST, JEW ART"—as set out in the subtitle of the NO!art anthology.

Boris Lurie was born into an affluent Jewish merchant's family in Leningrad in 1924. After Lenin's death, the foreseeable end of New Economic Policy, and the rise of Stalinism, his family defected to Riga. Following the occupation of the Baltic countries, the Germans herded together the Jewish population of Riga into two ghettos. The family was separated. Lurie and his father had to perform forced labor in the "small ghetto," while his mother and sister were taken to the "big ghetto." Only a short time later, security police task forces and the SS security service began mass shootings in the surrounding forests. Lurie's mother and sister, as well as the love of his youth, were murdered and hastily buried in mass graves. He and his father survived, thanks to the latter's ingenuity—ultimately, however, by sheer chance, and Lurie always remained aware of this—the Lenta forced labor

01
BORIS LURIE/ SEYMOUR KRIM/ ARMIN HUNDERTMARK, EDS.
NO!Art. PIN-UPS, EXCREMENT, PROTEST, JEW ART,
Berlin/Cologne: Edition Hundertmark, 1988.

02
BORIS LURIE
"SHIT NO" (1970), in: ibid., p. 66.

camp and the Stutthof and Buchenwald concentration camps. In 1945, Lurie, prisoner number 95966, was liberated by American troops in a satellite camp of Buchenwald in Magdeburg. In 1946, he and his father emigrated to the United States. From then on, New York was the topographical and social center of his life. It was there that he produced his first pictures after the war: on the one hand, sketches not intended for the public in which he assured himself of the facts of his story of persecution, the reality of his memories: visual notations on the credibility of the incredible. On the other hand, he attempted to lend duration and expression to the experience of the concentration camp by employing the means of classic oil painting. *Back from Work—Prison Entrance*, 1946/47 | see image p. 7 features a stream of people reduced to their creatureliness, dissolving into distortion; in a deep black setting, they are drawn as if by flames through a camp gate, which is simultaneously the opening into a cremation furnace. In this picture the world has ceased to exist. Being engulfed by force is the only reality. *Entrance* | see image p.13 dates from the same period and is an epitaph. Two Muslims—*Muselmänner,* as such prisoners were known in the language of the camps—reduced to skeletons, any spark of life extinguished from them, gray in gray, keep sad and melancholy watch in front of the entrance to a room with a flaming cremation furnace. Their faces emaciated but spiritual, bones sharp beneath their skin, ribs like sticks standing out so clearly they can be counted, claw-like hands, buckets on their heads, clunky wooden shoes on their feet, shouldering broom-like fronds, they stand there on death watch like two grotesque angels. It is a real-historical allegory *and* a memory and acknowledgment of Soviet prisoners of war actually humiliated in this way, as Boris Lurie wrote to me in 2002.

No God, no teleology of history that guarantees a good ending despite everything; not men and devils but men and men: one group persecuted, and the other persecutors and murderers. Loneliness, absence, loss, and a death that does not point beyond itself because the mass murder based on racist biology, the Shoah, cannot be tied back into our reference systems of political, religious, or national martyrdom. Following this naked, sheer death, which would have been his own and was that of his mother, his sister, and his first love, Lurie's *Entrance* is an attempt at taking leave and acknowledgment without self-deception, and premature, that is, pre-established solace in the sense suggested above; without self-deception and premature solace—not for him, not for us, not for anyone.

It is only logical that after this—also in terms of manual skill—high-quality mobilization of the possibilities of the panel painting and oil painting, from nineteenth-century tone-in-tone painting to the Surrealism of the twentieth century, Lurie radicalized his means of expression. In 1947 he produced the work *List,* tantamount to a ready-made of the radically evil. In 1962 he

reprinted an enlarged photograph featuring an inmate after his liberation from the "small camp," which was set up in 1942, a zone of particular misery and death in the Buchenwald concentration camp. *Happening by Adolf Hitler* is the sarcastic, only superficially cynical title with which the artist Lurie "acknowledges" and at the same time unmasks his "colleague" Hitler, the failed but later so dreadfully successful aspiring artist in Vienna. Lurie now equates art that takes seriously the experience of barbarism nesting within culture with outcry and confrontation. From this point onward, he is no longer concerned with mobilizing all his efforts to transfer the recognized artistic means ennobled by tradition and custom to the horrifying subject of camp reality. To ennoble the dead in this way meant making their death beautiful, meant premature consolation. Quite on the contrary: now Lurie saw art as a prudent and deliberate reduction of traditional means as well as their entanglement with visual fragments, clippings from the storehouse of the mass-cultural representation of National Socialism and its crimes, mostly newspaper photos.

We would overlook Lurie's aesthetic intentions and the autonomous rules of artistic reflection if we sought to trace the radical change in Lurie's work outlined above to the experience of National Socialist camps alone, or even to understand it as an inevitable consequence of his traumatization linked to that experience. In the late forties, early fifties, Lurie could also have made a different choice with respect to his artistic future. Because beginning in 1947, he also began producing in part large-format, abstract works that are formally reminiscent of Fernand Léger, sometimes of Matisse as well. As the *New York Times* wrote in this context on May 15, 1952: "The current show of paintings at the Hotel Barbizon Plaza contains a wide variety of work, all by one artist, Boris Lurie. His style is totally abstract though tempered at moments with visual reminiscence, and he will jump from a small water-color of the slow stain variety to a huge canvas that must be 15 by 10 feet and is filled with capering geometrical shapes. Color is restricted to a small number of pure tones emphasizing their strong contrasts, and forms are everywhere decisive."

The photo accompanying the article shows twenty-eight-year-old Lurie in a smart jacket and intellectual pose in front of *Composition, 1952,* a "high point of interest." There would be no more to say about this image from 1952 if it did not show Lurie corresponding to the very role model that he decisively refused to follow in public only a short time later: that is, the modern, avant-garde, intellectual artist who knows so well how to combine individualism with social and commercial success. From Lurie's perspective, the names Jasper Johns or Jackson Pollock could be taken as emblematic of this type.

If one examines texts by Boris Lurie, both those that are autobiographical as well as texts in which he reflects on art and society, for evidence of what

made him reject the path that the photograph suggests, we find four answers: the meaninglessness inherent in consumer society; the economization of art in this social context; the symbiotic links between avant-garde artists, gallery owners, museums, and investment-oriented collectors as well as their impact on the public appreciation of "good art" and "good artists"; and finally, the amalgamation of Pop art and the American sense of importance and superiority in a political-national as well as a cultural respect. NO!art is the direct response to this art- and sociocritical diagnosis. It signifies an attempt to save art from art in what is at first glance the unaesthetic, the ugly, and the obscene, on the level of the material as well as of form and content. "Where is the grand artistic *act*? Not necessarily, hardly, rarely in so-called art. The 'art' hides itself outside." ◂ 03

For Lurie, this understanding of art as NO!art, which recognizably continues the romantic tradition, had tangible, practical consequences. Firstly, he refused—all his life—to abandon his works to the market. Instead of selling them, he made a living by speculating on the stock market. Art is art, money is money, stocks and shares are stocks and shares. Merging art and business is betrayal. Secondly, from the mid-fifties onwards, he understood artistic work more and more as a collective process of group creativity, as—in the dual sense of the word—the product of a network of like-minded artist friends who created NO!art using completely different means and thus produced an alternative world *in nuce* to objectionable facticity. NO!art is radically performative, people would say today. His intense collaboration with Stanley Fischer and Sam Goodman, with whom he founded the March Group in 1959, is exemplary of this. Thirdly, he hoped that art in a non-affirmative, non-commercial sense could perhaps be protected by those on the periphery, those who rejected the mainstream, self-confident outsiders, and others excluded from society. In this context Lurie spoke of the "Lumpenproletariat." But it would be reducing the significance of this term in Lurie's usage to see it as no more than a naïve legacy of the post-Marxist search for the revolutionary subject in society. When Lurie speaks of the "Lumpenproletariat" or the "lumpenproletarian" as the subject of art, this has at least two meanings, regardless of the term's somewhat sensational quality. In the first place, he means social and artistic milieus that are not prepared to settle for the role of the knave tolerated or even desired by the culture industry and do not confuse this role with the true avant-garde. "Hordes of aspirants come to the meccas of Soho and the Lower East Side. . . . Galleries blossom and wither en masse. The newborn artist likes to be seen, almost like a Pop star. Yet the guys and gals are sorely tortured. The cost of living is very high: one needs nearly $800 a month to rent a studio or an apartment in the Lower East Side, and then more for food and clothes, and for entertainment, of course. In the new cafés, a hamburger

03
Translated from **BORIS LURIE** "Anmerkungen zu Kunst und Leben," in: Neue Gesellschaft für bildende Kunst, ed. *NO!art*, Berlin: nGbK, 1995, p. 119–128, esp. 123.

and a Coke cost $5, and children from the suburbs are used to eating well. They not only come wearing the usual jeans and trendy poorboy fashion; they come complete with their cafés, boutiques, and galleries. The effeminate Beatles generation is not accustomed to the lumpen proletariat."[04] On the other hand, in line with his historical experience, the "Lumpenproletariat" stood for those doubly betrayed, for those who had been pulverized in the twentieth century's history of violence between Hitler and Stalin; for those who, like Lurie himself, could no longer feel at home in ideologies, regardless of whether they were of Eastern or Western provenance. All that was left was for them to be obstinate, for which a high price had to be paid, however, not least in the form of existential loneliness. "Painting comes out of a tin / of confectionery / into which has been melted a Star of David with hammer and sickle / beneath star-bound swastikas."[05]

04
Translated from ibid., p. 119.

The fourth feature of NO!art as an alternative concept lay in what the Jewish members of the NO!art network called "Jew Art"—not "Jewish art," for that term refers to an uninterrupted aesthetic tradition—which referred back to what had been experienced in Auschwitz. In Karl Jasper's words, Jew Art was based in the experience that the absolute termination of man's fundamental solidarity with men as human beings is possible: proven by National Socialist Germany's treatment of the German and European Jews, and proven as a continuing historical possibility beyond the concrete history of National Socialism.[06] This experience of an absolute lack of a sense of security and of exclusion from one's community of fellow men precludes any transcending interpretation, even where art struggles to lend expression to it. This experience could only be *shared* at best *in situ* and at the cost of one's own life. Correspondingly, "Jew Art" does not seek interpretation at all; it simply wants, needs to be borne. As I outlined at the beginning, its aim is not to endow meaning but confrontation and exposure. It does not seek sympathy but shock and subsequent involvement. At best, it is possible to specify the poles—with Boris Lurie—between which "Jew Art" oscillates: "Fears, where shall we / pour them / when mother bones are so splintered?" – "Tell me so quietly, / quietly beguiling / bird, / lifting, / I am your comrade."[07]

05
Translated from
BORIS LURIE
Geschriebigtes/Gedichtigtes: Zu der Ausstellung in der Gedenkstätte Weimar-Buchenwald, Volkhard Knigge, Eckhart Holzboog, Dietmar Kirves, eds., Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Verlag Eckhart Holzboog, 2003, p. 210.

06
See
KARL JASPERS
The Question of German Guilt, New York: Dial Press, 1947.

What makes a large share of "Jew Art" hardly bearable is the way that images of National Socialist atrocities intersect with the obscene, the pornographic. Pin-ups on heaps of bodies seem to be an added sin against the victims' dignity. In 2002, Elie Wiesel thus described Boris Lurie's works—in the run-up to the opening of the exhibition *Mirroring Evil* at the Jewish Museum in New York—as obscene, as a breach in fidelity: "To turn a tragedy unparalleled in history into a grotesque caricature is not only to rob it of its meaning, but also to turn it into a lie. I call this a betrayal."[08] However, if we reconsider this first impulsive, defensive reaction and take seriously the im-

07
BORIS LURIE
Geschriebigtes/Gedichtigtes, p. 119, 221.

08
ELIE WIESEL
"Holocaust Exhibit Betrays History," *Newsday*, 31 January 2002.

possibility of a transcending interpretation and the later endowment of meaning, it becomes clear that Lurie strikes the very core of mass-cultural and mass-media memory with these works. One need only leaf through a postwar illustrated journal or a contemporary magazine: representations of suffering and cruelty are easily reconcilable with those of sex; in their own way, both avail themselves of marketing and voyeurism. Curiosity and horror after the Shoah, curiosity and horror on the part of those not directly affected, are probably very difficult to distinguish from one another. But one may become aware of their connection by addressing their simultaneity. And one can attempt to work against the dulling of horror due to its progression through history, through the unremitting series of horrific images. This is Lurie's aim. But one probably also cuts him short if one understands works such as *Railroad to America,* 1963 | see image p. 23 or *Saturation Painting (Buchenwald)*, 1959–64 | see image p. 22 exclusively as a critique of reception. We shall no doubt have to tolerate the culturally skeptical idea—and Lurie would not be the first to put it into words—that desire can be achieved through both Eros and violence. We will probably have to tolerate the idea that in his very personal, abrasive way, Lurie is also lending expression to a longing for love. The melodic rhythms of his collages, especially his very large-format ones, testify to this through all the horror and obscenity on their surface. And there are—often overlooked—groups of works visibly based on longing and tenderness, like the *Ball Room Series,* for example. In Lurie's New York apartment, in which he lived as if in a dirty, poetic collage, he *always* hung a photograph of his massacred first love among all the clippings of horror and the marketed obscenities. In any case, outrage does not do justice to these works any more than their celebration as an anti-authoritarian liberation or as the explosion of superficial political correctness, for instance that of memorial culture. According to Lurie, the Star of David remains both a badge of honor and a weight around one's neck, and "Jew Art" is the expression of a historical experience that—unsatisfied—can never be appeased.

Ultimately, Boris Lurie's oeuvre also testifies to the hopes he was forced to abandon in light of his own experience and the course of history after 1945: the hope that the experience of National Socialist crimes and World War II, the experience of the camps and the countless millions of dead, may be capable of leading directly to catharsis in society; the hope that the facts about the Holocaust that came to light during the Eichmann trial beginning in 1961—as well as the simultaneous threat of a possible nuclear apocalypse due to the Cuba crisis—would finally prompt a fundamental change in policy and social circumstances; the hope for a liberal left-wing, although its sympathies with the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian cause, to which Lurie, like others driven to the periphery, felt strong ties,

often turned into anti-Semitism. In our last conversation he asked me to help him find a derelict but still usable palace or a castle, a NO!art castle close to the former concentration camp at Buchenwald. He wanted to set up a NO!art Foundation with the millions that he had actually made on the stock market but had never used for himself. The purpose of this foundation, his true magnum opus, would be to ensure independence for critical artists in the shadow of the camp and today's memorial site, and to throw sand in the works of the production of political and social counter-humanity. The former moated castle in Denstedt, run down during its use as an agricultural production cooperative in the German Democratic Republic, would have been a possibility. But a sudden illness put an end to the project.

TAL STERNGAST

Shock Treatment: Figures of Women in Boris Lurie's Work

In a film interview taken in 2007 in New York, at his crammed, messy desk, Boris Lurie points to a black-and-white photograph on the wall. The picture shows four naked women who are surrounded by a circle of armed soldiers watching, like spectators of a circus ring. The women's arms are folded to cover their exposed bodies. They are panicked, humiliated. It is winter. They are about to be shot.

The photo was taken in Libau outside Riga, Lurie says, by one of the Latvian officers who executed the mass murders of Latvian Jews in 1941. The officer liked to shoot photographs of naked women. His negatives were found. "Today," Lurie says in the interview, "one can see it in the photos from Abu Ghraib in Iraq, for example. It's an expression of society. The way the strong ones suppress the weak and the torturer gets a certain pleasure from it, a sexual pleasure."

Lurie doesn't distinguish here between torturing and photographing (seeing) torture. Indeed, much has been said about the dual usage of "shooting" as a verb that describes the act of killing and of photographing. Susan Sontag famously remarked that "To photograph people is to violate them [...] it turns people into objects that can be symbolically possessed. Just as a camera is a sublimation of the gun, to photograph someone is a subliminal murder."[01] However, amateur photographs from the Final Solution were an unprecedented phenomenon. Alongside the official photographic documentation (which was strictly monitored and included the destruction of negatives after printing) and despite the official prohibition, private photographing of shootings of civilians as well as other parts of the extermination were made all through the different stages of the genocide, against confidentiality order. Those amateur photographs threatened to undermine the "rational" "political" character of the murdering. Such photos served both as a detachment means and an instrument for increasing sadistic and voyeuristic lust. Moreover, the anonymity of the seen bodies lent itself to the photographer as a materialization of his own body-loathing, from which he might have wished to disburden himself.

The excessive, unuseful[02] violence within the complex of industrial mass murder—an outcome of the combination of racism and modern production procedures, as utilized for killing the European Jews—informs the work of Boris Lurie.

In his art, women's violated, expropriated bodies serve as a Lacanian object-a. They are its metonym (in so far as they replace or stand for things they are not) and its metaphor (as they share characteristics with what they stand for).[03] Images of women in his work present an object of unfulfilled desire and of contempt. Their bodies are consumable, sites of pleasure as well as of atrocities. They reveal power relations and the

01
SUSAN SONTAG
On Photography, New York: Rosetta Books, 2005, p.10.

02
Primo Levi coined this term in his descriptions of the irrational violence, towards the ones who were meant to be killed anyway. As examples he gives the endless parades as well as the prisoners' orchestra that was forced to accompany the slave laborers on their ways. Primo Levi understood these acts as an integral, essential part of the apparatus of mass murder. (See Primo Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved*, New York: Summit Books, 1986).

03
Lacan juxtaposed the metaphor/metonymy binary set with the binary set that Freud claimed to be the basic functions of the unconscious: repression and displacement. Metaphor, functioning through similarities and substitutions, coincides with repression, and metonymy, functioning through contiguity and difference, with the psychic trope of displacement. Sadeq Rahimi, *The Unconscious: Metaphor and Metonymy*: http://somatosphere.net/2009/04/unconscious-metaphor-and-metonomy.html (accessed 5 January 2016).

way power is erotically charged, as well as how nakedness destabilizes power. Finally, they are a mother, a sister or a lover, a corpse.

Boris Lurie was one of very few visual artists that were survivors of the Nazi concentration camps. The youngest of three children, he was 17 when the Germans occupied Riga (Latvia) in 1941, splitting his well-established Russian family apart. His mother, sister, and grandmother, as well as his boyhood lover, were murdered in one of the mass killings outside Riga, executed in pursuit of the Final Solution. He and his father then began an odyssey that lasted four years, surviving together through chance and resourcefulness three different concentration camps from Riga (Kaiserwald, Lenta) through Stutthof (near Gdansk) and finally a sub-camp of Buchenwald near Magdeburg, which was liberated in April 1945. Soon after the war ended, they both emigrated to New York, where Boris Lurie's older sister lived. His father gradually improved his financial position by dealing in real estate.

Soon after arriving in New York in 1946, Lurie started to produce a group of works titled *Dismembered Women* | **see images pp. 25–31**, of which the last painting dates from 1956. They are painted in profoundly different styles, but all show female figures whose bodies have undergone deformation–their skin seems like a membrane rendering organs inside out. These figures are isolated twice. They are framed once by the borders of the canvas, then again by geometric planes, recalling cartoons or advertisements.

Those early paintings correspond with various modern figurations of human bodies from Cubism through German Expressionism. Such modernist abstractions cannot be dissociated from the experience of modern war and the physical fragmentation of the body. Soldiers in the ditches during the World War I, for example, or Londoners taking shelter in the Underground tunnels during the bombings of World War II were formative experiences that found expression in Henry Moore's sculptural abstractions. Similarly, Giacometti's elongated frail sculptures of men stem from existentialist ideas of solitude and alienation, their uneven surfaces suggesting flesh that is being eaten away. Yet the configuration of bodies in the work of Lurie—who later abandoned painterly figuration altogether and turned to collages of found photographic images—arises not only from the mass destruction of two world wars. It is informed by the erosion of death itself in the context of Auschwitz—where instead of people dying, corpses were produced.

In *Dismembered Women* the figures have undergone a form of massive, general violence that has left their bodies dehumanized and disintegrated. Their organs are cut and scattered and function autonomously, like the amputated tail of a reptile still spasming after being truncated from the living body.

By the late 1950s, Lurie had abandoned painting (as painting) in favor of making pictures. From then on, he produced assemblages and collage-paintings, collating and manipulating images from a variety of mass-media sources. He began using photographic images of women from pin-ups and pornographic magazines. These came to form the basis of his most distinctive work.

Some of these works were first exhibited in 1960 in two solo shows in New York. In an introduction to one of the shows—*Les Lions* at the March Gallery on 10th Street in the Lower East Side—Lurie describes a kind of monstrous fertility produced by the ever multiplying girlies (girlie magazines featuring pictures of nude or scantily dressed women)[04] on his imaginary and real studio walls. It seems his sense of being overwhelmed leads to revelation: "How could I ever paint all of the girls in one painting? What was the use of painting? … I looked at them, I watched them. They watched me. They grew. I longed for that supreme imaginary moment when I would crown the queen of them all. But the girls increased and blossomed. … And then at last I had to act. … Onto the canvas they went. … At last I was getting rid of the uninvited inhabitants, the curse, the confusion of bodies, my beauties!"[05]

The text captured a decisive moment. Surrendering to an uncontrollable surplus of images in fact conceals or displaces a desire for one, singular woman, or at least for a clear hierarchy among the multiple women, something that was made impossible for him both personally as well as culturally. Indeed, two of the works included in this show, *Liberty or Lice* | **see image page 90/91** (1950–1960) and *Les Lions* (1959), show a non-hierarchic scattering of women among ads for high-heel shoes (that recall Andy Warhol's early shoe illustrations from the same time, part of his work as a commercial illustrator), lamps, and cars partly buried in paint. *Liberty or Lice* (ambiguously noted by Lurie as "referring to the inevitable choice between full liberty and concentration camp lice"[06]), while hinting at current political events, also employs an autobiographical vocabulary that amounts to an exposé for all of Lurie's works to come: a photograph of the fence surrounding the ghetto in Riga, a yellow Star of David at the bottom of the canvas, Lurie's sister's name Jeanne, written in black brush strokes, and the Hebrew word "Madua" (why), repeated several times. The canvas also features two dates that mark the picture's time frame: December 8th, the date he believed his family was murdered, and April 18th (1945), when the camp in Magdeburg was liberated.

The body of the American pin-up woman in Lurie's works was on the one hand whole, uninjured, erotic, fertile, and fresh; on the other it was being used and abused, objectified. With his use of pin-ups, Lurie began to draw lines of connection between the remnants of his destroyed past

04
In the late 1960s, Lurie interviewed de Kooning, with special attention to his *Women Series*, which had widely been viewed as an attack on the American woman. De Kooning insisted that his work was art and not social commentary. John Wronoski, „Boris Lurie: A Life in the Camps," in: Igor Satanovsky, ed. *KZ – KAMPF – KUNST. Boris Lurie: NO!Art.* New York: NO!Art Publishing 2014, p. 286.

05
BORIS LURIE
"Les Lions Show. Introduction," New York: Edition Hundertmark, 1960. In: Boris Lurie/Seymour Krim/Armin Hundertmark, eds. *NO!art. PIN-UPS, EXCREMENT, PROTEST, JEW-ART*, Berlin/Köln 1988, p. 21.

06
BORIS LURIE
cited after John Wronoski, in: *KZ-KAMPF-KUNST*, p. 148.

and his discouragement with the present to which both remnants and pin-ups seemed to belong. The women pasted onto his collages seem to be swinging their hips in tune with Adorno's definition of the paradox of modernist art, struggling "to have a history at all while under the spell of the eternal repetition of mass production."

According to Benjamin H. D. Buchloh,[07] it must have dawned on Lurie, as on other artists of the 1950s, that images and objects of consumer culture had irreversibly taken total control of visual representation and the public experience. Indeed, Lurie's work from the 1950s and '60s, his most productive period, featured objects and "themes" that many contemporary artists shared—including the one whose understanding of the complete mutual integration of mass culture and high art irreversibly changed the art world: Andy Warhol. One can spot down Warhol's iconographical tropes like the nuclear bomb and the electric chair, Marilyn Monroe, Liz Taylor and Jackie Kennedy, or J. F. Kennedy's assassination in Lurie's collages.

In the works of Warhol and the artists who would later be known as the first generation of Pop artists such as Richard Hamilton (in the UK) or Roy Lichtenstein, Lurie's contemporaneous, images of women serve as commodity fragments from the entertainment or advertisement image industry–as signs of a void that hides no promise of revelation or any other meaningful loss (in relation to and against the imperatives of the last incarnations of high modernism in Abstract Expressionism, for example). Lurie's girlies, however, were commodities that shed shadows shaped by the death of particular women. This might be one of the reasons for his exclusion from art history for several decades.

Living and working in Manhattan from the 1950's onwards, Lurie was active in extreme proximity to what would become the center of the postwar art world, yet he remained a complete outsider to it. "You will well imagine that my condition is synonymous with being blacklisted," he wrote in 1962 to Thomas B. Hess, long-time editor of *Art News*, who wrote a foreword to Lurie's and Sam Goodman's show at Arturo Schwarz's gallery in Milan that year.

In the early 1960s, together with Goodman and Stanley Fisher, Lurie formed an artists' collective eventually called "NO!art" to which Lurie remained devoted to the end of his life. Together, the group produced shows with titles like *Doom Show*, *Vulgar Show*, *Involvement Show*, or *Shit Show*. The group exhibited at the artists-run March Gallery on 10th Street and later at Gallery Gertrude Stein uptown. Other participants in the group over the years included Allan Kaprow, Yayoi Kusama, Jean-Jacques Lebel, Allan D'Arcangelo, Erró, and others. The group displayed a blend of neo-Marxism and Neo-Dada, aiming to unite artistic production and 'self

07
BENJAMIN H. D. BUCHLOH
Andy Warhol's One-Dimensional Art: 1956–1966, exh. cat., Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1989. As an example for the *zeitgeist* and an account of the images that Warhol later chose as figures of his iconographic program, Buchloh cites there a review published in *The Village Voice* in 1960 by Bill Manville of Lurie's show *Les Lions* at the March Gallery.

expression' with social involvement and to express rage against the 'hypocritical intelligentsia, capitalist culture manipulation and consumerism.'[08]

08
LURIE/KRIM/HUNDERTMARK
PIN-UPS, EXCREMENT, PROTEST, JEW ART, p. 13

One discrepancy of postwar American life that Lurie and his colleagues were never tired of exposing in their works involved the absurdly prudent rules regarding explicit representations of sexual activities and nudity in the American public sphere (Hollywood, television, Madison Avenue)—while explicit images of war atrocities during the Cold War were broadly available to every household. The members of NO!art shared these insights—and a sense of dissident freedom to confront them — with underground comic creators, exploitation filmmakers, comedians, and later pro-sex feminists[09] who praised certain pornographic imagery and sexual practices as feminist, liberating, subversive, and educating. They opposed feminists who viewed pornography as exploiting and objectifying women, and argued that antipornography discourse ignores women's sexual agency and supports neo-Victorian ideas that men want sex and women merely endure it. By that time, it had become a common conviction that the mechanisms of both rebellion and suppression were driven by and permeated with sex.

09
The newly attained sexual freedom in America raised concerns in the late 1970's regarding explicit violent and sexual imagery in the media. In the heated debates about pornography, "Pro-sex" feminists saw a subversive potentiality of pornography in rejecting sexual repression, self-oppression, and hypocrisy. See: Hans Maes, "Erotic Art," in: Edward N. Zalta, ed.: *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/erotic-art (accessed 25 November 25 2015).

Lolita | **see image p. 21**, a work from 1962, shows a ripped poster of the Stanley Kubrick film that had been released earlier that year. The face of Sue Lyon, the film's star, armed with heart-shaped sunglasses and sucking a red lollypop, has been rotated 90 degrees to rest on the base of the canvas. Her gaze is directed at a black-and-white photograph in the upper left-hand corner that shows a person crushed under the weight of a barrack's wall. An incident mentioned by Hannah Arendt in *Eichmann in Jerusalem* is often noted in relation to that work. While waiting for his verdict, Eichmann was given the novel *Lolita* for relaxation by his guards. Eichmann returned it a few days later, complaining that it was an unwholesome book ("Das ist aber ein sehr unerfreuliches Buch"—he told his guard). Whether Lurie was aware of the incident or not, it exposes, like his own work, the disjuncture that enables someone like Eichmann—but not him alone—to wax "good citizens" who are appalled by nudity and representations of explicit sex and at the same time to tolerate passively, collaborate in, or even execute a crime of an unprecedented nature and dimensions.

However, NO!art artists, most of whom were men, and Lurie himself were often accused of failing to challenge patriarchal structures themselves. Some critics point out that the artistic violence in their work, while directed at the society, was directed more immediately at the women depicted. Some have even concluded that Lurie's persistent focus on the violated female body undermined his progressive political aspirations and explains his exclusion from the avant-garde canon through the pres-

ent day.[10] However, what occurs in Lurie's female figurations, encloses much more the question whether Lurie—with those treated, ready-made images—also exposes his own fleshly vulnerability and degradation.[11]

It might be noteworthy to compare in this context Lurie's (muscular through and through) figuration of the female body with the impressing work of the Jewish polish sculptor Alina Szapocznikow (1926–1973), whose work has been recently reintroduced internationally, decades after her death. As a young woman she outlived the Pabianice and Łódz ghettos and Auschwitz, Bergen-Belsen, and Theresienstadt concentration camps. Her own body was the object of her poetic-surreal-pop-sculptures.

Her works show a female body that is subject to disease, suffering, and mutation (crucified) while being at the same time erotic, playful, and even humorous. By using industrial methods and materials she also related to fetishistic tropes of consumerism and their relation to the irreversible expropriation of the private, personal body from itself after the experience of the death camps. Both artists' oeuvres, each in a fundamentally different manner, respond to the two incarnations of mass culture: mass extermination and mass production.

Explicitness—in graphic representations of sexual activity just as in graphic documentations of the death camps—was a vehicle for Lurie, aimed to transgress taboos and create a shock. The shock, an outcome of the montage, could make the viewer see what might have been concealed by the documentary image itself as it was found it in the media. It was aimed to overcome the viewer's blindness and possibly go through what the theorist Slavoj Žižek has characterized as the deep "pre-symbolic enjoyment" which the Nazi fantasy activated and that rational critiques of Nazi fantasies of purity and omnipotence fail to take account of.[12]

Hence in his *Saturation Painting* (*Buchenwald*), 1959–64 | **see image p. 22**, explicit erotic photographs appear alongside a photograph of the liberation of Buchenwald taken from newspapers; The same can be seen in the many variations on the word "No" (e.g. *Memo to the U.S.*, 1963). In others, swastikas and David Shields mingle with close-ups of models who direct their gaze at the viewer. The canvases forming Lurie's later *Love Series* from 1962/63 (*Bound With Stick* | **see image p. 41**, *Blindfolded*, *Bound on Red Background* | **see image p. 38**) feature silkscreen prints of women in S&M positions: tied up, bound, or blindfolded.

Railroad to America | **see image p. 23** is made of two photographs mounted on a canvas. A vertical pin-up of a woman exposing her fleshy behind, her dark hair falling on white shoulders, is pasted in the center of a photograph of a wagon stacked with corpses of men, women, and children, all piled on top of each other, limbs stretched out in every direction. The

10
SIMON TAYLOR
"The Excremental Vision. NO!Art 1959-1964," in: Boris Lurie, *NO!*, New York: Boris Lurie Art Foundation, 2012, p. 43. (Exhibition catalogue, David David Gallery, Philadelphia).

11
In an introduction to his „Selected Pin-ups: 1947–1973" Boris Lurie wrote: „On an entirely different level, and do not be surprised!—the pin-ups constitute the contents of unaccounted mass-graves of executed Jewish women of World War II. Their physical sensuality, their feminine gigantism, their pure anger masquerading as ecstasy in their twitching orgiastic faces, is nothing but a cover-up then for sublime affirmation, of anti-death procreation, of pure though hysterical, death frightened, pre-execution protestation... The single figure embodies a multitude of possibilities, as if she represents all of the women who have been destroyed, even while embodying the destructive principle within herself." See John Wronoski in: *KZ-Kampf-Kunst*, p. 217.

12
„Ideology serves only its own purpose, […] it does not serve anything - which is precisely the Lacanian definition of jouissance." Slavoj Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology*, London / New York: Verso, 1989, p. 84; about Hitler: "people specifically identified themselves with what were hysterical outbursts of impotent rage–that is, they 'recognized' themselves in this hysterical acting out." Ibid. p. 106.

image of the woman is integrated into the pile of corpses; her unseen face is directed, parallel to the wagon, towards the edge of the wagon image and beyond it.

The documentary photos Lurie used in these works had been printed in American newspapers and magazines. They were mostly taken by journalists accompanying the liberating forces. Some early images from the death camps were famously published in the spring of 1945 in *Life* magazine (by David Scherman and George Rodger) and in *Vogue* (by Lee Miller). Those photographs depicting what American soldiers saw entering the camps—sprawling corpses, inmates weakened by disease and hunger—were printed side by side with recipes and fashion spreads. These were images that had circulated in the American media and represented for the general public what later was to become the symbolic imagery of "the Holocaust"—although the photographs were taken after the fact, the camps partly destroyed and the perpetrators already escaped from the scene.

In Lurie's work, too, these reused photos did not serve as testimonies of his experiences or as historical evidence. They constitute a visual index of history as mediated through mass media. Hence, the same image of the wagon of corpses is used several times in different configurations, its status as an icon being increased (in the popular sense). By adding nothing but a title to this photograph, Lurie in *Flatcar. Assemblage, 1945 by Adolf Hitler* | **see image p. 20** from 1961 stretches his own concept to its pithy perimeters, comparing the Final Solution to a work of art, a "Gesamtkunstwerk" or a "Soziale Plastik" (social sculpture) conducted by Hitler. In *Hard Writings (Load)* | **see image p. 80** from 1972, the photo is scaled down while giant letters made of purple stripes spelling "LOAD" are affixed on top of it. In this late, graphically neat series (other works feature the words "NO," "PAY," or "LICK"), image and language are applied as representation systems with a double life—both serve as containers of "meaning" that have been rendered instable and unreliable by history. It echoes the work of such contemporaneous conceptual artists as Joseph Kosuth, Lawrence Weiner, or Mel Bochner and the concrete poetry of the sixties and seventies, in which language was used as raw visual material.

However, it would be wrong to assess Lurie's work merely through its features of critique. Despite its straightforward appearances and at times propagandic qualities, the gravity of his oeuvre derives also from its performative traits. His works exceed their pictorial parameters. They too, can be seen as an accumulating, destroyed body that is subject to modern violence.[13] ▸

Looking back, it seems that the pin-ups and the images of the camps came into Lurie's work at the same time, as signs of similar syntaxes. Out

13
Lurie's involvement in business following the death of his father in 1964 could be understood as a facet of performance concerning his status as an artist. While outwardly living as a penniless artist, his investments when he died, were worth $80 million. Addressing his father, Lurie wrote: "My business involvements are an assertion of masculinity in a society that squashes the balls of the truest of artists. Had I not picked up that challenge when you died ... I would have been completely demolished." Cited after John Wronoski, in: *KZ-KAMPF-KUNST*.

of those repeated juxtapositions of bodies and corpses a Figure[14] was formed, an outcome of shock. This Figure pointed out the extremities of modern civilisation, while placing itself between the emerging spectacle—of media, fashion, entertainment and eventually art itself—and horror. It featured a body that after Auschwitz had been expropriated from itself as a private, personal site and became public.

14
In his book about Francis Bacon's work, Gilles Deleuze distinguishes between the figurative and the Figure ("figural"). While figurative work is illustrative, narrative, and signifying (it represents an object or narrates a story) the Figure is something like pure form. Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, London / New York: Continuum, 2003, p. 34.

GERTRUD KOCH

Boris Lurie's NO!art and the Canon

The canon defines a system of rules; it serves as a guiding principle, as a binding arrangement that can be accessed and reproduced. Canonical law, the law of the Roman Catholic Church, comprises the institution's set of rules. It exists in the form of a codex. The codex, on the other hand, is a medium of writing that at one point superseded the scroll and constituted the book page. The codex is a collection of loose sheets of paper that, compiled in bound form, can now easily be coordinated and compared with one another. The canon is disseminated through the medium of the codex and can now be interpreted by various readers. The codex therefore already assumes a function similar to that of a printed book: the canonical text itself is deprived of its uniqueness and now becomes an object that brings scattered and more or less decentralized readings and interpretation along with it. In music, the canon is based specifically on the temporal shifts with which one sound form is used after another, so that here, too, the canon in no way suborns mechanical repetition and copying, but rather is performed as variants, staggered in time, and generally also by various voices, instruments, et cetera. One might suspect that the canon was therefore never entirely what its conservative supporters and its critics consider it to be, since it has always also been a process based on variation and comparison. The canon is thus a tense form, and the subsequent question is whether it has remained essentially stable over time and preserved its form or whether it has changed in its duration and resulted in an altered canon. Good arguments can be found for both positions, but in the logical figure of the canon, both arguments nevertheless remain a set of rules that has to be implemented, and hence has a performative aspect that can lead to deviation as well as consolidation.

For this reason, it is also not surprising that what often stand at the beginning of changes to the canon are new paradigms in art that await coding, namely both on the part of artists as well as on the part of critics and the public. Radical opposition to the canon, in contrast, stands in a different model of time, not the model of the continuum moving *in* time and its quasi reformist, small, incremental changes that can ultimately be summarized in new practices of interpretation. No, the radical counter-position to the canon as a model for the development of a set of rules, judgments, et cetera, is the break, the radical beginning, the abrupt end. This model of time, which is based on the suspending of time, on the exposing of catastrophes, endeavors to interrupt the continuum, to break the various tunings and successive retunings of the canon. Its form is the manifesto, the pamphlet, media of rejection and repudiation, in short: the gesture of interruption.

Considered from a hermeneutic standpoint, there is no escape from the circles of reception, and the possibility for a canon to form also has a

good chance of asserting itself, even behind the backs of the actors—but the final word is not always the most interesting, apart from the fact that it must lead to a self-contradiction within the hermeneutic circle. What therefore exists is at least the gesture of the pamphlet, of interruption.

Historically, 1945 was such an interruption, and seen by many as a caesura—from Theodor W. Adorno to Gilles Deleuze, reflection on the rupture in history was central, even if with very different consequences. As a result of the events of World War II and the destruction with which it overran the world, Deleuze saw the matter-of-factness with which we see ourselves as belonging to the world as a break, as a rift that also thrust itself between the cinema and its audience. The cinema consequently assumed the space within which it once again became possible to tentatively divine this bond to the world. Adorno, in contrast, banished any thought of a resilient bond to the uncertain fate of a message in a bottle of art. Although this gesture of sealing art off did not remain isolated, no canon came to be derived from it, except in philosophy, where Adorno's aesthetics bear canonical traits. Art, on the other hand, can operate outside or beneath the canon, to which experts then attempt to relate it.

A Case of Negation

To the question of whether he could imagine writing a text for the catalogue of exhibition being planned on the work of Boris Lurie—a representative of the NO!art group—an expert on modern and contemporary art replied to me that he could not. It was not that he was not familiar with Lurie or would strictly reject his art, but his work unsettled him and left him at a loss, therefore possibly also without words. The NO!art movement, which arose at the end of the fifties and was present until into the seventies, alongside Fluxus and at a massive remove from the Warholian Pop empires, was distinguished by its radical negation. A catalogue text from 2011 states: "NO! The sheer pleasure of the word itself, so relatively rarely deployed in public discourse yet so continual in our everyday lives. No, no, no, no! The beauty of the word in all its formal aspects, its simplicity and elegance, those two letters that follow each other in the alphabet, those close-linked lexical neighbors, here isolated and underscored, standing alone in all their proud disdain, minimal kick. What other adjoining letters of the alphabet make up so resonant and strong, so essential, a word?" ◂ 01

Was Lurie's program of "NO!art after Auschwitz" therefore a success?

What would speak in favor of this is the fact that it is obviously difficult to establish links to an existing discourse on whose basis it would be pos-

01
ADRIAN DANNATT, "JUST SAY," in: John Wronoski et al., eds. *Boris Lurie NO!*, Boris Lurie Foundation at the Chelsea Art Museum, New York, 2011, p. 25.

sible to ascertain and discuss Lurie's bizarre oeuvre. Therefore, even before its qualities become identifiable, the oeuvre withdraws into the grand "NO!"

While manifestoes proclaiming the end of art enter into the cycle of merely defining art in another way and do not strive to do away with artistic practice in any way, here the radical negation is apparently taken at its word. But this is also only partially true, since Lurie and the NO!art artists continued to work within the space of art and insofar never left art. Nonetheless, their programmatic quality remains specifically the interruption of a canon, since attempts to canonize Lurie as "Auschwitz Art" also fail in that they do not engage with his works on a representative level, but rather create a kind of hidden object game in the curious mass of *objets trouvés* between little porno images and concentration camp symbols in which motifs, forms, and techniques reciprocally become paradoxes of themselves. In *Minima Moralia* Adorno describes the hollowing-out of the canon from the inside: "To be within tradition used to mean: to experience the work of art as something sanctioned, valid: to participate through it in all the reactions of those who had seen it previously. Once this falls away, the work is exposed in its nakedness and fallibility. The plot, from a ritual, becomes idiocy, the music, from a canon of significant figures flat and stale. It is really no longer so beautiful."[02] And with this Adorno meant the operetta *Die Fledermaus,* the seeing of which once denoted to boys the threshold of the canon of adults.

This is also how viewers experience Lurie's work, "[i]t is really no longer so beautiful" to see the collage techniques of the modern era combined with concentration camp and porno motifs; the Surrealist merging of violence and sexuality lacks the anarchistic innocence of the conspirators of connoisseurs, who knew how to read the symbols in the canon of the Freudian theory of culture. The irruption of other, banally direct pictorial worlds, of historical spheres of experience in Lurie's collages is an act of exposing, a scandal in art that is (truly) "no longer so beautiful."

Adorno only wanted to conceive of the abolition of the canon dialectically, when he wrote in *Aesthetic Theory:* "This involves a negative canon, a set of prohibitions against what the modern has disavowed in experience and technique; and such determinate negation is virtually the canon of what is to be done."[03]

The case of Lurie marks the beginning of a canon of art that no longer wants to be art, yet still is. After the seventies, when he did not exhibit for ten years, in 1988 this brings Lurie back into the contemporaneity of art movements that share the impetus to negate art without ceasing to continue making art. The crisis from which the radical negation follows has, however, now become a specific understanding of art that has be-

02
THEODOR W. ADORNO
"In nuce," in: id., *Minima Moralia: Reflections from Damaged Life*, trans. E. F. N. Jephcott, London/New York: Verso, 2005, p. 223.

03
THEODOR W. ADORNO
Aesthetic Theory, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor, London: Continuum, 1997, p. 46.

come immanently exhausted. It is therefore a crisis of aesthetics and to a lesser extent also a crisis of history. Lurie broke into this new canon of the present from two sides: from the immanent side of a negation of art as a canon and from the external side of the formation of a new canon that makes reference to historical and contemporary reality.

In his response to a critic who precociously endeavored to belittle the gesture of negation with which the NO!art group got itself noticed as a childish, rejectionist attitude toward the impositions of a world that called for constructive criticism and not the gimmicks of old and new avant-gardists, Lurie stressed the violent and crude nature of the caesuras, which he does not see as foreign to history in any way, but rather as embedded in it: "'So the NOs are not news!' the author states, citing the late Roman theater, which had violated social taboos, and 'the boulevardiers of Paris, who framed and applauded the Dada manifesto over half-a-century ago.' Pattern-breaking art has re-occurred since the caveman and will continue to reoccur—and it will continue to be 'news' on each reoccurrence, for the reoccurrences are rare indeed and always violent but never capricious!" ◂ 04

04
BORIS LURIE
"Violence without Caprice in No!art," *Leonardo* 7 (1974) p. 344.

The peculiar race between historical-real and artistic outbreaks of violence creates a resonance space in which art appears to be an additional voice commenting on the spread of the canon of real violence: not as a representation or imitation, but rather as an echo or scream, as a caricature-like shadow cast by real heaps of corpses. In NO!art, the surrealistic image of the female body as a twofold symbol adapted from the psychoanalysis-derived thesis of the convergence of Eros and the death drive is no longer able to become myth. "It is really no longer so beautiful" is followed not by the eroticizing of death but rather by the destruction of Eros: the splayed legs of the women's bodies on the black-and-white porno photos, the squeezed together breasts, the skull-like grimaces that confront viewers and fix them with dead eyes, coagulate into ciphers of bodies that no longer seem to promise anything. They have been sucked dry, and the sensuality shown seems to be a contortion, a deformation of desire that has become irreal. The obscene portions in Lurie's images are not frivolous or even capricious portents of eroticization, but rather the abandoning of it. Another NO! in the image that depletes the pornographic context from which they arise. It would nevertheless be wrong to contest the autonomy of this manifold NO! (addressed to National Socialism, to capitalism, et cetera). They are also dialectic NO!s, in the sense of Adorno's canon of the excluded. What is excluded is the body connected with the person sensorimotorically; the holistic unity of body and mind is severed. Lurie evokes this compulsive severing of the connection between language and "balls" that aspires to

the vital efforts of the sensual body in the curious prose poem "Geschwör an Heinrich Heine" as the path to the "Hirnestür," or "door to the mind": "My father, may he rest in peace, said to himself in thought, but in my presence, so that it would tickle my balls: 'S'ist alz a Cholem' (dream). He never committed this apathetic sin; he was, as he said: a 'major manufacturer.' He was wrong. What has-occurred-and-been, it never disappears. It lives forever, darling, at inaccessible heights or deep, in the 'Seelenschmiehl.' And always returns and knocks nicely on the door to the mind. And even if not directly in my case, then in the case of you-and-you and the case of putrid you-and-you-and-me. So much then for 'understanding,' not obscuring."[05]

The "Schlemihl" becomes the "Seelenschmiehl," whose soul still continues to be pursued even though the father declares everything to be a dream, in order to tickle his son's balls—but this also only exists in negation, in absence.[06] Rather than tickling his balls, there is constant knocking on the "Hirnestür" (instead of on the "Hintertür" (backdoor) of erotic euphemisms). Lurie breaks with the canon of the pornographic as well as with the canon of the eroticism of the Surrealists. The obscene poses of the women's bodies, the abject parts in the images are parts of that shadow world that can neither be accessed nor grasped. In this extreme of a negative world, art and concentration camp relate to each other in a peculiar way—although one might disagree in particular details about whether Lurie's work is of consistent quality, as one can and must do in the case of every oeuvre, however, with his program of a NO!art as Jew-Art, Lurie indisputably dedicated himself to a negative aesthetic that addresses the canon itself, that has been connected with it since Adorno's *Negative Dialectics*. In it, Adorno presents a culture—no less enigmatically and no less radically than in Lurie's images—in which Weimar and Buchenwald coexisted informally in that "Buchen/wäldchen" (little/beech tree forest) of which Lurie wrote: "The integration of physical death into culture should be rescinded in theory—not, however, for the sake of an ontologically pure being of Death, but for the sake of that which the stench of cadavers expresses and we are fooled by their transfiguration into 'remains.' A child, fond of an innkeeper named Adam, watched him club the rats pouring out of the holes in the courtyard; it was in his image that the child made its own image of the first man. That this has been forgotten, that we no longer know what we used to feel before the dogcatcher's van, is both the triumph of culture and its failure."[07] Since in culture, its lethal force is disowned like the ax in the house of the executioner: "It abhors stench, because it stinks; because, as Brecht put it in a magnificent line, its mansion is built of dogshit. Years after that line was written, Auschwitz irrefutably demonstrated that culture had

06
In the *Jewish Encyclopedia*, the figure of the Schlemihl is defined as follows: "Popular Yiddish term for an unfortunate person. . . . Many of the most popular anecdotes of the ghetto relate to the experiences of persons who, through no fault of their own, are pursued by misfortune to the end, and endure it without murmuring." Cyrus Adler/Joseph Jacobs, "Schlemihl," http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/13275-schlemihl (accessed 9 September 2015).

05
BORIS LURIE
"Geschwör an Heinrich Heine," in: *Geschriebigtes / Gedichtigtes: Zu der Ausstellung in der Gedenkstätte Weimar-Buchenwald*, Volkhard Knigge, Eckhart Holzboog, Dietmar Kirves, eds., Stuttgart/Bad Cannstatt: Eckhart Holzboog Verlag, 2003, p. 19.

07
THEODOR W. ADORNO
Negative Dialectics, trans. E. B. Ashton, New York: Routledge, 1979, p. 366.

failed."[08] And thus "[a]ll post-Auschwitz culture, including its urgent critique, is garbage."[09] And, in this "garbage," Adorno also includes criticism, and therefore his own work. A figure of radical negation that refers to itself. Much has been written about the paradox contained therein; and the ambivalence contained therein also applies in many ways to Lurie's work: art and garbage are mutually dependent.

08 Ibid.

09 Ibid., p. 367.

MIRJAM WENZEL

From Display to Lust: The Deconstruction of Photographs in Boris Lurie's Collages

"[I]f the photograph then becomes horrible, it is because it certifies, so to speak, that the corpse is alive, as *corpse:* it is the living image of a dead thing. For the photograph's immobility is somehow the result of a perverse confusion between two concepts: the Real and the Live: by attesting that the object has been real, the photograph surreptitiously induces belief that it is alive, because of that delusion which makes us attribute to Reality an absolute superior, somehow eternal value."

Roland Barthes[01]

On 4 April 1945, soldiers of the Third United States Army arrived at the Ohrdruf concentration camp near Gotha; it was a satellite camp of Buchenwald, which they liberated a few days later, on 11 April 1945. The main camp on the Ettersberg near Weimar, in which there were still around 21,000 prisoners at that time,[02] was the first concentration camp to be freed by one of the Western Allied forces without having been evacuated completely in advance. Directly after the discovery of Ohrdruf, US headquarters gave the order to immediately record every liberated concentration camp on film. Besides the photographers and cameramen who completed this task in the service of the Signal Corps, the request was also passed on to prominent photographers. Commissioned by *LIFE* magazine, Margaret Bourke-White arrived at Buchenwald on 13 April 1945. During the days that followed, she produced several of the photos that have remained iconic to the present day.[03] Among other things, these pictures by Bourke-White and other photographers showed the dead and decaying bodies left behind in the concentration camps by their former commanders and guards. The images of corpses were reproduced in a large number of American and British newspapers and magazines. They served both as evidence in the various legal cases of the immediate postwar period as well as instruments of enlightenment in the ensuing re-education measures for the German population.

Boris Lurie experienced the liberation in one of Buchenwald's satellite camps, the men's camp of the Polte Works in Magdeburg-Stattfeld. He initially captured his experiences and memories of internment in the camp in drawings and watercolors. Towards the end of the fifties, however, he changed his formal language. He began to produce collages using photographs of the liberated concentration camp Buchenwald. At the center of one of the first works in the series *Saturation Paint-*

The iconic image by Margaret Bourke-White first appeared on 26 December 1960 in *TIME magazine* under the title *Grim Greeting at Buchenwald.*

01
ROLAND BARTHES
Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography, trans. Richard Howard, New York: Hill and Wang, 1981, pp. 78f.

02
Immediately before this, from 7–10 April 1945, the camp-SS had forced around 28,000 people on death marches to the camps in Dachau and Flossenbürg or had deported them to Theresienstadt.

03
On this, see *LIFE* from 10 May 1945 and Margaret Bourke-White, *"Dear Fatherland Rest Quietly": A Report on the Collapse of Hitler's "Thousand Years,"* New York: Simon and Schuster, 1946, figs. 53–68; Dagmar Barnouw, *Ansichten von Deutschland (1945): Krieg und Gewalt in zeitgenössischer Fotografie,* Basel/Frankfurt am Main: Stroemfeld/Nexus, 1997, p. 163–201; and Norbert Frei, *1945: Ikonen eines Jahres,* Munich: Schirmer Mosel, 2015, p. 115–117.

ings is a picture taken by Margaret Bourke-White at Buchenwald featuring a group of survivors standing behind a barbwire fence. It became known under the title *The Living Dead of Buchenwald*.

In Lurie's collage *Saturation Painting (Buchenwald)* | see image p. 22, the iconic image of the male survivors is not rendered as a reproduction of the photo but as part of a newspaper article by British historian Hugh Trevor-Roper that was published at the time judgment was expected in the Eichmann trial—under the headline "Eichmann Is Not Unique"—in the 17 September 1961 issue of the *New York Times.* Neither this heading nor the name of the newspaper is recognizable in Lurie's collage, but the caption under the photograph by Bourke-White certainly is, which takes up the question being widely discussed at the time: "Can it happen again?" Inasmuch as the survivor stages this photo not as a portrait of other survivors but as part of a newspaper contribution to a contemporary debate, he underlines its iconic significance in the context of the emerging media reception of the Holocaust. Lurie's collage frames the photograph with other media images, namely of half-naked, offensively posing pin-up girls. The background is a canvas worked over with rough, flesh-colored brushstrokes and scraps of pigment. The color and texture of the canvas as well as the pin-up girls accentuate the aspect of vital, indeed, flesh and blood existence that Roland Barthes identifies as the central feature of photography.

Both the erotically staged, half-naked women and the survivors pose in front of the camera and seek the viewer's gaze. "At the same time, the emaciated male camp inmates, standing in the semi-darkness behind the barbwire, seem to gape at the woman—symbolic of sex, warmth, and prosperity—as she exhibits herself, but they are too exhausted for stimulation," Inga Schwede writes about the reciprocal gazes that Lurie stages between the survivors and the pin-up girls framing them. Given the men who are looking at the viewer and the posing women, according to Schwede he or she "automatically [becomes] a twofold voyeur." ◂ 04

The viewer's and photographer's voyeuristic relationship with the subject of the image is also examined in three other collages by the artist that center around a photograph from the liberated Buchenwald concentration camp: the image of an open flatcar piled with corpses. This picture played a key role in the re-education of the German population: immediately after the end of World War II, commissioned by the commander of the Allied forces the American War Information Office published the brochure *KZ—Bildbericht aus fünf Konzentrationslagern* (KZ—Illustrated Report from Five Concentration Camps), which was distributed in huge numbers. According to Cornelia Brink, this brochure represented one of the first re-education measures and was "intended for those Germans who could not be led through the camps." 05 ▸ The first illustration in the brochure underscores

04
INGA SCHWEDE
in a flyer for the series of events *soir critique*. Translated from *NO!art—Kunst nach Auschwitz?* produced by the Academy of Visual Arts Leipzig, 2002.

First illustration in the brochure *KZ—Bildbericht aus fünf Konzentrationslagern*, May 1945. The picture was taken by an unknown photographer on 16 April 1945.

Photograph by Margaret Bourke-White

this demonstrative purpose. It shows a group of American soldiers who, hands on hips, are standing opposite another group of people depicted from the rear. The truck with the dead bodies lying on top of each other is visible in the upper half of the image. The caption describes the photo with the following words: "On a tour through the Buchenwald concentration camp, citizens of Weimar look at one of the wagons piled high with corpses."

Margaret Bourke-White captured the same situation from the opposite vantage point. In her picture we see an American soldier pointing to the trailer of corpses, while a group of civilians behind him appears to be listening to what he says. Whereas the image by the unknown photographer captures the situation in the courtyard as a confrontation between the German population and the American Army, Bourke-White's photo creates a visual link between the light-colored bodies of the naked corpses at one side and the darkly clothed observers at the other. It becomes clear how carefully the photographer prepared this and other images of the liberated concentration camp in a snapshot taken by Colonel Parke Yingst that features Bourke-White kneeling to measure the *in situ* light conditions. Here, the trailer of bodies itself plays more of a secondary role; its primary function is to mark the place where the photoshoot is taking place.

In retrospect, Bourke-White described this situation in the courtyard in front of the crematorium in Buchenwald as follows: "There was an air of unreality about that April day in Weimar, a feeling to which I found myself stubbornly clinging. I kept telling myself that I would believe the indescribably

05
Translated from **CORNELIA BRINK** *Ikonen der Vernichtung: Öffentlicher Gebrauch von Fotografien aus nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslagern nach 1945*, Berlin: Oldenbourg Akademieverlag, 1989, p. 63.

The snapshot by Colonel Parke Yingst shows Margaret Bourke-White preparing to take a photograph of the heaped up corpses on an open trailer in Buchenwald.

horrible sight in the courtyard before me only when I had a chance to look at my own photographs. Using the camera was almost a relief; it interposed a slight barrier between myself and the white horror in front of me."[06▸] The extent to which this "barrier," indeed, this distance to what she could see that she created when taking photographs influenced the images themselves is demonstrated in particular by her close-ups of the corpses on the flatcar. According to her estate, Bourke-White captured this motif several times on film.

06
BOURKE-WHITE
"Dear Fatherland", 1946, p. 73.

As Dagmar Barnouw writes, Margaret Bourke-White was well known not only for her technical brilliance, "her lightning-fast shots and her enormous expenditure of film," but also for "the compelling staging of her photographs."[◂07] Taken by the photographer from an impressive perspective and in ideal light conditions, in this photo to the naked dead bodies lying one on top of the other do not seem anything like decaying corpses, but instead take on a sculptural character.

07
Translated from
BARNOUW
Ansichten von Deutschland, 1997, p. 175.

Close-up photograph by Margaret Bourke-White of the naked corpses in the yard of the crematorium at Buchenwald concentration camp.

Boris Lurie plainly rejected this type of art photography of dead bodies. His collages *Flatcar. Assemblage, 1945, by Adolf Hitler* (1961) | see image p. 20, *Railroad to America* (1963) | see image p. 23 and *Hard Writings (Load)* (1972) | see image p. 80 raise the question of what exactly happened at Buchenwald as a showplace and the emotions with which photographers and spectators on site and at home regarded the flatcar with its stacked-up corpses. His first work, the offset print *Flatcar. Assemblage, 1945, by Adolf Hitler,* reproduces the image of this flatcar. It does not show the sculptural staging by Bourke-White, but a shot taken by an unknown photographer that was falsely attributed to the famous photographer for many years. The slightly yellowing patina of the offset print suggests that the original may also have been a newspaper image.

In her essay "'NO!art' and the Aesthetics of Doom," Estera Milman empha-

sizes that *Flatcar. Assemblage, 1945, by Adolf Hitler* should be understood as a direct reply to the Conceptual Art of the modern era, or, more specifically, as a "corrected ready-made,"[08] and refers in particular to the title of the work. By choosing this title, Lurie not only places his offset print in the context of the much-acclaimed exhibition *The Art of Assemblage* presented at the Museum of Modern Art in New York that same year, but also professes the picture showing the flatcar of corpses to be an artwork by Adolf Hitler. The radically negative concept of art Lurie expresses in the title of his collage sets the offset print against the painting, the ready-made against the photographic staging, the harsh concept against the stagy description, artist Adolf Hitler's production of corpses against the staging of the corpse by photographer Bourke-White. Unlike *Saturation Painting (Buchenwald)*, *Flatcar. Assemblage, 1945, by Adolf Hitler* not only undertakes an intervention contra to the media distribution and reception of an iconic photograph of the liberated concentration camp. The offset print also anticipates the famous words spoken by Hannah Arendt in a television interview with Günter Gaus in 1964: "The fabrication of corpses … should not have happened. Something happened there to which we cannot reconcile ourselves."[09] Lurie's work refers these words both to what the photograph shows as well as to the image itself. In his ready-made he lends it the status of a negative image that has been etched into collective memory.

While *Flatcar. Assemblage, 1945, by Adolf Hitler* expresses a radically negative art concept primarily in and with its title, Lurie sets his intervention inside the image itself in the work *Railroad to America* from 1963. A woman undressing, her bottom half exposed, is displayed at the center of the photo of the flatcar with corpses. Once again, the picture and the pin-up girl are reproduced as newspaper prints; their patina seems to be coordinated with the canvas in the background. In the upper part of the work there are four reddish elements: serial and regular in shape yet hand-drawn, they extend into the picture frame as if to provide a reminder of the artist's hand. Beatrice Howell describes the composition of the collage as follows: "The contrast is startling. Not only between canvas and photographs, the artist's mark and the camera's mechanical eye, but also the grotesque shifts between the emaciated bodies, and the enveloping invitation of the woman's flesh… Any beauty of the corpses, however 'tragic,' is refused by the gratuitous bare flesh above."[10]

Unlike the direct exchange of eye contact with viewers in the collage *Saturation Painting (Buchenwald), Railroad to America* leaves them to their own devices, so to speak. The railroad in the work's title refers to the deportation trains but also indicates that the viewer's gaze is drawn inevitably towards the pin-up girl at the center of the image and transformed into lust at the display of what is being presented to the viewer—to some extent

08
ESTERA MILMAN, "'NO!art' and the Aesthetics of Doom," Evanston: Mary & Leigh Block Museum of Art, 2001, p. 17.

09
See
HANNAH ARENDT
Ich will verstehen: Selbstauskünfte zu Leben und Werk, ed. Ursula Ludz, Munich: Piper Taschenbuch, 2005, pp. 61ff.

10
BEATRICE HOWELL
"Ethics and Aesthetics: Boris Lurie's *Railroad Collage* and Representing the Holocaust," pp. 23ff., text.no-art.info/en/howell_ma-ethics.html (accessed 6 January 2016).

through a keyhole. In *Railroad to America,* the "slight barrier" that Bourke-White believed she was erecting between herself and the "white horror" by pressing the shutter release is exposed as voyeurism and turned against not only the famous photographer and the unknown photographer, but also against the reproduction and viewing of the images of the corpses in the liberated concentration camps. Silke Wenk describes the deconstruction of the photographs showing piles of corpses in *Railroad to America* as follows: "In her obvious purpose, the pin-up girl confronts the viewer with a pornographic gaze at the photos of the murdered, throws it back, and can therefore interrupt the desire to 'fathom' things through viewing them." ◂ 11

The extent to which Lurie's deconstruction applied not only to voyeurism but also to the force of the photographic eye, which transforms the corpse into an object, is indicated by the third collage, *Hard Writings (Load)* from 1972, which reproduces the same photo. The word "Load" and its full spectrum of meaning (literally as a burden, cargo, freight, and also figuratively as in loading a gun, putting a film into a camera) are staged here in red capital letters across the reproduced photograph. At the same time, the fourth letter is shifted to one side and opens the curtain, so to speak, to reveal a view of the heaped-up corpses.

The three collages as well as the *Saturation Paintings* by Boris Lurie deconstruct photographs that were made in and of the liberated concentration camps, but also the history of their impact in the media. Thus they prepare the way for those reflections on the Holocaust in contemporary art in which priority is no longer given to the historical event itself but to its communication via the media.

In the sixties, the reception of the Holocaust was decisively influenced by the publication in 1960 of the illustrated documentary account of the Shoah entitled *Der gelbe Stern* (The Yellow Star) by Gerhard Schoenberner and by legal cases against the National Socialist perpetrators, in particular by the trial of Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem (1960/61) and the Auschwitz trial in Frankfurt am Main (1963–65). This is also expressed in the contemporary art of that period.

Lurie's friend Wolf Vostell, for example, developed a large-format work in 1964 that reproduced an article by Bernd Naumann in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* written about the Auschwitz trial in Frankfurt. The title of the work, *Wir waren so eine Art Museumsstück* (We were a kind of museum piece) is taken from the heading of this article and cites the statement of a survivor made in the courtroom. The work combines the report of the trial with famous photographs of other events in postwar history (for example, 17 June 1953, the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961, or the assassination of John F. Kennedy in 1963) and makes the reproduced images and texts disappear behind black, white, and yellow areas of paint and red splashes of color.

11
SILKE WENK
"Rhetoriken der Profanisierung: Rahmung des Blicks auf die NS-Verbrechen," in: Insa Eschebach et al., eds. *Gedächtnis und Geschlecht: Deutungsmuster in Darstellungen des nationalsozialistischen Genozids,* Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 2002, p. 279.

Wolf Vostell, *Wir waren so eine Art Museumsstück,* 1964, silkscreen print and paint on canvas, 120 x 450 cm

Wir waren so eine Art Museumsstück and another work produced in 1964, *Eine Autofahrt Köln-Frankfurt auf überfüllter Autobahn kostet mehr Nerven als eine Woche lang angestrengt arbeiten* (A drive from Cologne to Frankfurt on the packed *autobahn* is more nerve-racking than a week of laborious work), include the reception of the Holocaust in a broader reflection on the media presentation of political events. The two silkscreen prints sprayed with paint set the memory of Auschwitz alongside contemporary events and thus draw the viewer's attention to the fact that media reporting reduces singular historical events to one level.

In contrast to Vostell's media-critical approach, only a little later the *Atlas* project by Gerhard Richter closely examined the iconography of the photos from the liberated camps themselves. The "photos from books" that Richer assembled on sheets 15 to 18 stem from the influential book, above all in visual terms, *Der gelbe Stern*. Sheets 19 and 20, however, document the artist's own attempts to approach the iconic photographs—be it in his distinct blurred-looking painting technique, be it through diagonal cutting or subsequent coloration.

The fact that Gerhard Richter definitely considered exhibiting these photos alongside pornographic images from magazines is indicated by the subsequent sheets 21 to 23. The artist himself later spoke about this unrealized exhibition,[12] but he did not comment on the conceptual affinity between the *Atlas* project and Boris Lurie's collages. Kathrin Hoffmann-Curtius interprets this affinity as an echo of the beginning mass-media reception of the Holocaust: "Richter['s] … selection of photographs of the genocide of the Jews and the subsequent pornographic images open up comparison to extremely obscene attacks on the female body, a composition that primarily criticizes the voyeurism of the viewers. The concept that was not actually realized in the gallery but is shown in the *Atlas* thus documents a period about which Ruth Klüger said: 'And there was also something of pornographic lust attached to that period's interest in the Holocaust, which was not yet called by that name.'"[13]

The media reception of the events in Europe between 1933 and 1945

12
Cf.
GERHARD RICHTER
"MOMA-Interview mit Robert Storr 2002," in: id., *Text 1961 bis 2007: Schriften, Interviews, Briefe,* Dietmar Elger/ Hans Ulrich Obrist ed., Cologne: Verlag der Buchhandung Walter König, 2008, p. 416.

13
KATHRIN HOFFMANN-CURTIUS
Bilder zum Judenmord: Eine kommentierte Sichtung der Malerei und Zeichenkunst in Deutschland von 1945 bis zum Auschwitz-Prozess, Marburg: Jonas Verlag, 2014, 250. The quotation by Ruth Klüger is taken from the book *Von hoher und niedriger Literatur,* Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 1996, p. 35.

Gerhard Richter, *Atlas* (photographs from books, sheet 20), 1967, three black-and-white details, colored, 66.7 x 51.7 cm

that commenced towards the end of the fifties not only influenced those iconic images that remain part of cultural memory to the present day. It also determined the manner in which the Holocaust was addressed and reflected in contemporary art. Informed by the rules of legal practice, terms such as "facticity", "evidence," and "witness", there emerged a certain knowledge of the systematic murder of Europe's Jews, its leading medium being photography. The assumed objectivity of this knowledge is counteracted by what Roland Barthes describes as the "horrible" in the photos of the dead: the fantasies that these trigger in their viewers. It is artistic works in particular, such as those by Lurie and Richter, that succeed in reflecting and simultaneously disavowing just these fantasies and the associated emotions.

MATTHIAS REICHELT

"We have more or less said that we shit on everything"[01] Boris Lurie and NO!art

01
MATTHIAS REICHELT, video interview with Boris Lurie, April 2002, DVD III, 9:40 min. I also conducted short conversations with Gertrude Stein and Clayton Patterson. This material on eight sixty-minute MiniDVs (transferred to DVD) led to the idea for *SHOAH and PIN-UPS: The NO!-Artist Boris Lurie*, a documentary film by Reinhold Dettmer-Finke in collaboration with Matthias Reichelt, 88 min., Dolby Surround, defi-filmproduktion (Germany 2006).

"The origins of NO!art sprout from the Jewish experience, struck root in the world's largest Jewish community in New York, a product of armies, concentration camps, Lumpenproletariat artists. Its targets are the hypocritical intelligentsia, capitalist culture manipulation, consumerism, American and other Molochs. Their aim: total unabashed self-expression in art leading to social involvement."[02]

Boris Lurie was a cofounder and strong proponent of the NO!art movement, into which new artists continued to be incorporated. This text takes up various aspects of NO!art between 1959 and 1964/65, a phase that Lurie himself defined as "collective."[03] On the NO!art website that Dietmar Kirves initiated in Berlin in 2000 with Lurie's support, NO!art is represented by diverse and disparate young artistic positions, as was already the case with the earlier March Group. The sole common denominator is a more or less critical view of the art establishment, politics, and society. Since the author above all considers Lurie's personal experiences as a survivor of the Holocaust as a driving and style-forming stimulus in the development of NO!art in the late fifties and early sixties, he limits himself to the time period defined by Lurie as a "collective phase."[04]

Writing about radical artists' movements and activities that were successfully ignored by the contemporary art world and the press well-disposed to it has always had the character of digging through a mountain of legends and myths banked up by the artists themselves and their sincere admirers. The distance of time offers the opportunity for a more realistic representation.

Even if NO!art achieved recognition and a modest reception among individual cultural historians in the United States, it ultimately fell between the cracks of an art market that was concentrating at the time on Abstract Expressionism, Neo-Dada, Fluxus, and in particular Pop art.

NO!art brought together various artistic directions, but was distinguished by a political stance that rejected the art establishment, the art market, museum policy, as well as the American Cold War policy, militarism, colonialism, and imperialism. This critique was manifest not only in works or art, but also in the powerfully eloquent statements made by individual artists.[05] This sealed the fate of NO!art. At the time of Boris Lurie's death, it was actually not possible to see the essential artists of the NO!art movement in a single major museum in the United States. It was Estera Milman who organized the two most important American exhibitions in which works by Boris Lurie were presented: for the University of Iowa in 1999, and at the Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art at Northwestern University in Chicago in 2001.

The first half of the twentieth century spawned murderous catastrophes on an inconceivable scale, followed by a division of the world that resulted in new armed conflicts. Motivated by these disquieting phenomena, artistic

02
BORIS LURIE/SEYMOR KRIM/ARMIN HUNDERTMARK (EDS.)
NO!Art. PIN-UPS, EXCREMENT, PROTEST, JEW ART, Berlin/Cologne: Edition Hundertmark, 1988, p. 13.

03
ESTERA MILMAN
NO!art and the Aesthetics of Doom. Boris Lurie & Estera Milman: One-on-One, 148 min., (United States 2000), time code 00:36:03, milman-interarts.com/oneononefull.html (accessed 16 August 2015).

04
http://www.no-art.info

05
Texts by Lurie, Goodman, Aronovici, et al., in: Lurie/Krim/Hundertmark, NO!art, 1988.

movements emerged here and there in the metropolises in the United States—mainly New York City and San Francisco—that directly and passionately positioned themselves in literature, music, and fine art with respect to a reality riddled with political conflicts. What bebop and free jazz brought with them in terms of innovations for music, and the prose and poetry of the Beat generation for literature, was discharged in visual art in a demonstrative rejection of figurative painting in favor of a rendering of true emotions, as they were expressed, for instance, in the Action Painting of Jackson Pollock. In terms of form, truly different art formats were subsumed under the term "Abstract Expressionism" and relatively quickly began their triumphal march through the museums of New York as a style perceived as being originally American.

The Beginnings

Boris Lurie was already painting, drawing, and occasionally providing graphic designs for a Soviet publishing house as a schoolboy in Riga.

After arriving in New York City, to which he immigrated along with his father after the end of the war, Lurie recorded his experiences from Riga, the ghetto, and the various concentration camps in drawings and paintings. He later called these works "illustrative art," and thus, according to his reading of art history, not classifiable as real art.[06]

Lurie was the only NO!art artist who had survived several Nazi concentration camps. His one sister, Assia, escaped persecution by the Germans and Latvians in Italy. Their mother, Shaina, other sister Jeanna, their maternal grandmother, and Ljuba Treskunova, Boris Lurie's first great love, were murdered in 1941 during the so-called Big Action in the woods at Rumbula.[07]

The time in the concentration camps, the fear of not being able to escape death, and the loss of people he loved stayed with Lurie and shaped his artistic work throughout his life. Repeatedly addressing these events was an existential need for him. For Lurie, the traumatic experience of losing nearly the entire female part of the family as well as his great love had a formative influence on his obsessive preoccupation with sexuality and the female body. This applies above all in the case of his *Dismembered Women,* which he painted in the fifties.

The March Gallery

In the mid-fifties, Lurie settled in the then rundown neighborhood of the Lower East Side, where there were a great deal of smaller cooperative galleries. One of them was the March Gallery on 10th Street, nearly at the corner of Third Avenue, which was located in a cellar that was accessible from the outside. At the time, it was considered one of New York's best and most vibrant cooperative galleries.[08] Roughly thirty artists counted among its

06
DETTMER-FINKE, REICHELT
SHOAH and PIN-UPS, starting at time code 00:24:40.

07
In the Letbartskii woods in the Rumbula Forest around ten kilometers south of Riga, 26,500 Jews from the ghetto as well as 1,000 "Reich Jews" who had just arrived by train were massacred and buried in mass graves. Andrej Angrick/Peter Klein, *Die "Endlösung" in Riga: Ausbeutung und Vernichtung 1941–1944*, Darmstadt: WBG, 2006, in particular Chapter 5: "Das grosse Morden: Die Vernichtung des Ghettos der lettischen Juden," pp. 136–84.

08
ARTnews 57, no. 10, February 1959, p. 50.

members, including the well-known Elaine de Kooning. Boris Lurie and his friend Rocco Armento were members from the outset. While most of the cooperative galleries dedicated themselves to Abstract Expressionism, artists of various styles came together at the March Gallery. Works by artists who were already well known, such as Franz Kline or Willem de Kooning, were also presented in group exhibitions, which meant that this venue also attracted attention from the art public.[09] When the March Gallery was closed, Lurie and his Canadian artist friend Sam Goodman took over the space and from then on called themselves the March Group.[10] The artist Stanley Fisher joined them a short time later. Goodman himself was an Abstract Expressionist, but under the influence of Boris Lurie's multimedia tableaus of collaged pin-ups, newspaper headlines, and painting he changed his style and produced sculptures and installations made of *objets trouvés* and scrap metal.[11] Goodman had worked in a film department of the Canadian Army, where he had seen documentary material about the atrocities committed by the German fascists. Lurie received copies of photos from him[12] and was emboldened "to confront the matter of his past, and of its relevance, head-on."[13]

09
Video interview by Matthias Reichelt with Boris Lurie, DVD II, time code 00:49:58.

10
MILMAN
2000, time code 00:37:20.

11
Ibid., time code 00:07:15.

12
Ibid., time code 00:12:30. Later, in the seventies, Charly Rehwinkel and his encyclopedic knowledge were extremely helpful to Lurie in with his engagement with the National Socialists and the Holocaust. See also Dettmer-Fink, Reichelt, *SHOAH and PIN-UPS*, time code 00:07:36.

13
See
JOHN WRONOSKI
"Boris Lurie: A Life in the Camps," in: Igor Satanovsky, ed. *KZ—KAMPF—KUNST. Boris Lurie: NO!art*, New York/Cologne: NO!art Publishing, 2014, p. 139. In any case, Goodman was not in Europe during the war, nor was he a war photographer, as Wronoski claims. Harriet Wood, Goodman's companion at the time, confirmed this in an email dated 25 August 2015.

NO!

Lurie made NO an integral part of various works as early as the beginning of the sixties, and dealt with the motif of fragmented women's bodies during the fifties. NO! appeared for the first time in an announcement for an exhibition at the Gertrude Stein Gallery in 1963. According to Lurie, the fact that the group later operated under the name NO!art goes back to a cartoon that the painter Alfred Leslie supposedly produced for *ARTnews* in which the March Gallery was depicted as a place for artists who hurl their defiant NO back at the state of the world.[14] Alfred Leslie himself has no memory of this particular cartoon. His work was destroyed in a large fire in 1966. The cartoon is not included in the *New York Story 1962–66*,[15] nor can it be found in *ARTnews*. Lurie's memory here seems to deceive. In a different cartoon by Alfred Leslie, however, in the left corner, Boris Lurie's name is featured directly next to the license plate of a convertible, NO-1965, with a newlywed couple representing the Hudson River Art and Pop art movements | **see image p. 158**. The sheet stands under the motto "OK-1964" and makes reference to Lurie's negative view of the success of Pop art.[16]

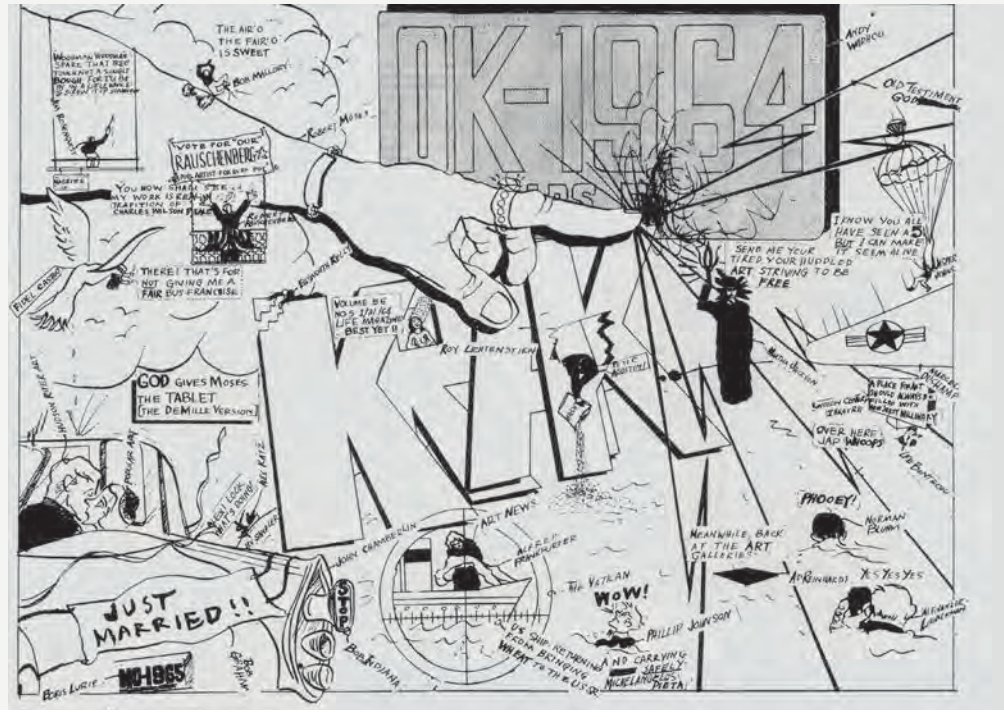
Sam Goodman, Boris Lurie, and Stanley Fisher were the founders of the March Group/NO!art in late 1959, early 1960. Numerous artists participated in several programmatic exhibitions, including Rocco Armento, Isser Aronovici, Enrico Baj, Herb Brown, Allan D'Arcangelo, Erró, Dorothy Gillespie, Esther Gilman, Allan Kaprow, Yayoi Kusama, Jean-Jacques Lebel, Suzanne Long (Har-

14
MILMAN
2000, time code 00:35:35.

15
http://www.alfredleslie.com/books/index.html?newyork_story (accessed 11 August 2015). The motif is also not among the cartoons from the *New York Story* reproduced in *Artforum* 2, no. 3, September 1963, pp. 28f.

16
The drawing was published in *The New York Arts Calendar,* ed. by Harvey Matusow. Matusow's estate is part of the library of the University of Sussex und the cartoon in question, according to the library, can be found in: *The New York Arts Calendar*, Vol. 1 No. 5, on the fourth page.

riet Wood), Michelle Stuart, and Aldo Tambellini. NO!art's exhibitions pointedly addressed repression, war, genocide, imperialism, and consumerism, and the cellar space of the March Gallery was turned into walk-in installations that ran contrary to the dignified atmosphere of the white cube. Like



the March Gallery before it, NO!art was also not committed to any particular style. It encompassed Armento's nudes influenced by classical sculpture as well as the paintings by D'Arcangelo with their Pop art orientation, or the comic- and agitprop-like paintings by the Icelandic artist Erró, Stuart's feminist-oriented sculptural works, the paintings and sculptures of Long, and Kusama's installations with accumulations of penis-like objects.[17]

The most important exhibitions of the new March Group era included *Les Lions* (1960), a solo-show of Boris Lurie's work, and *Vulgar Show* (1960), featuring works by Goodman, John Fischer, Lurie, and Stanley Fisher; these were followed that same year by the largest group exhibition, *Involvement Show,* with works by twenty-six artists. *Doom Show* was the title of the exhibition in 1961 with works by Stanley Fisher, Goodman, Lurie, and Lebel; Lurie organized another *Doom Show* in Milan and Rome in 1962 with his own works and works by Goodman. The first group exhibition at the Gertrude Stein Gallery took place in 1963 with *NO!Show*, with eleven artists participating. In 1964 the Gertrude Stein Gallery mounted a solo exhibition of the series of posters that Boris Lurie had overprinted with NO as well as solo presentations of the artists Erró and Brown.

17
Later, Allan Kaprow and Yayoi Kusama would or could no longer remember participating, and the latter has even eliminated the NO! exhibitions from her CV.

The end of the collective phase of NO!art was sealed with the *NO!Sculpture Show,* a solo exhibition of works by Goodman. Distributed around the space were multiple unshapely brown piles made of plaster and papier-mâché, representing excrement in monstrous dimensions. An angry farewell to the art world, which—in keeping with the market—was busy organizing the triumphal march of Pop art.

Sam Goodman saw this exhibition as "my final gesture after thirty years in the art world. This is what I think of it."[18] ▸ The fact that the insurance agent and art collector Leon Kraushaar nevertheless wanted to purchase the piles of stylized "shit" is the irony of the story. Goodman thwarted the sale with the words "I shit on you too." ◂ [19]

NO!art still receives relatively little attention, since it was marginalized for a long time due to its trash aesthetic combined with direct political critique. This applies above all to the works of Boris Lurie and Sam Goodman, who also remembered the European Jews murdered in the name of the German fascism in their works and presented this memory within a larger political context.

Despite a certain skepticism regarding NO!art at its beginnings, the art critic Irving Sandler comes to a notable verdict in his memoir of 2003: "In retrospect, however, NO!art was ahead of its time. It anticipated later perverse and abject art that reflected our miserable twentieth century, and particularly the Vietnam War era."[20] ▸

When his father died in 1964, Boris Lurie looked after his estate and began to speculate successfully on the stock exchange. He later resumed making art again, and also began to write prose and poetry. Although Lurie had absolutely no feeling for luxury and lived surrounded by furniture gathered from the streets, he amassed great wealth without losing his interest in the revolutionary international left. He put this lived contradiction in a nutshell with self-ironic realism: "My sympathy is with the mouse, but I feed the cat."

This statement can still be read in the stairway of the Haus am Kleistpark in Berlin as a tribute to Boris Lurie.[21] ▸

18
LURIE/KRIM/HUNDERTMARK
NO!art, 1988, p. 15.

19
MILMAN
2000, time code 01:05:35.

20
IRVING SANDLER
A Sweeper-Up After Artists: A Memoir, London: Thames and Hudson, 2004, p. 273–74.

21
This statement was installed in May 2004 in the staircase of the Haus am Kleistpark in Berlin-Schöneberg within the scope of the exhibition by Naomi Tereza Salmon: *optimistic | disease | facility. Boris Lurie: New York—Buchenwald.*

EIKO GRIMBERG

A Failed Portrait

I

Boris had pledged to smoke less, and therefore placed the pack on a small cupboard next to the bathroom door. For each cigarette, he had to stand up and go around the table into the dark hallway to the bathroom. These brief, compulsory breaks structure our conversation. We speak German.

A few days after arriving in New York in 2004, I called Boris Lurie and made an appointment to meet him at his home on the Upper East Side somewhere in the sixties later in the evening. He greets me as if we have known each other for a long time. Friends have told him about our events connected with NO!art in Leipzig; the program booklet is lying on the table.

He serves tea in large plastic cups. We sit across from each other, he in his reading chair next to the television set and the brand new DVD player, given to him by a filmmaker friend, and me on the narrow couch between tall stacks of newspapers. I have a view of the kitchen at the other end of the quite long and sparsely lit ground-floor apartment, and in front of it to the right, the desk of his secretary, who comes by to organize things with him a couple of times a month. Above it on the wall, newspaper images and family photos.

> *"But I managed, I bet you I'm the only one; I managed to bring a whole pack of photographs through all the ghettos and concentration camps . . . I don't even understand now how I managed to do it, I was lucky, I wasn't searched or whatever."*[01]

In between them: a portrait of Josef Stalin.

> *"But, if it weren't for Stalin, I wouldn't be alive today! And, yet, communist neophytes keep on badmouthing him!"*[02]

One poster announces a NO!art show, another advertises an exhibition by Wolf Vostell in Gera in 1993 with the avant-garde formula "Leben = Kunst = Leben" (Life = Art = Life).

The state of Boris Lurie's apartment has been described many times. The person who lives here does not like separating himself from things, preferring to leave them to mature on tables and walls with the aid of planned coincidence. Part of his oeuvre was created in just this way.

> *"I've been sticking photographs with articles cut out of newspapers and journals on the walls of my workroom for years, so that I don't forget the present, which becomes the past. The clippings yellow, fall down; I then tape them up on the wall again. It creates collages that age with time . . . ."*[03]

01
BORIS LURIE
in: *optimistic | disease | facility: Boris Lurie, New York—Buchenwald*, a documentary by Naomi Tereza Salmon (Germany 2003), time code 00:08:51.

02
BORIS LURIE
"Anmerkungen zu Kunst, Leben und Politik," in: Neue Gesellschaft für bildende Kunst, ed. *NO!art: Kunstbewegung in New York 1959–64*, Berlin: nGbK, 1995, p. 127.

03
Ibid., p. 126.


LEBEN=KUNST=LEBEN
NO!art
WOLF V
Kunstgaleri
7. 11. 93 –
ROTATE STOCK
STORE IN A COOL DRY PLACE

Although Boris rarely leaves his apartment, he is quite well informed. He is very knowledgeable about the New York gallery scene, which has shown little if any interest in him. When I tell him about the Mark Rothko exhibition *A Painter's Progress, The Year 1949* at the Pace Wildenstein Gallery in Midtown, which made a deep impression on me, he responds with anecdotes about gallerists' business methods. Color Field painting is not his thing. I think the idea that Abstract Expressionism, with its implicit ban on the figurative, might have been intended as a response to the horrors of the war and of the present was completely alien to Lurie.

> *"Back then, the art scene was only interested in aesthetics and not political subjects. We were too subjective and too political, as well."*[04]

04
BORIS LURIE
in: *SHOAH and PIN-UPS—The NO!-Artist Boris Lurie*, a documentary by Reinhild Dettmer-Finke in collaboration with Matthias Reichelt (Germany 2006), time code 00:47:38.

In one episode of the television series *Mad Men,* the employees of the Sterling Cooper advertising agency sneak into their boss's office to look at the artwork he has just acquired. They discuss whether the red bands of color mean anything, and, if so, what. In view of the increase in value, with his decision to buy a Mark Rothko painting Bert Cooper is completely correct, but truly up-to-date he was not. In 1962, the year in which the episode is set, Abstract Expressionism's heyday was already over. I am amused by the idea that Cooper might also have chosen Lurie's *Lolita* | see image p. 21.

With their practice of Social Realism, the artists of the March Group—Sam Goodman, Stanley Fisher, and Boris Lurie—pushed the re-objectification of art and therefore acted unintentionally, but also unnoticed, as a link between Abstract Expressionism and Pop art, whose good-natured optimism they rejected as being too affirmative.

> *"We were competitors of Pop art. And Pop art was a powerful organization. American, chauvinist. The Pop artists actually thought America was really great, and a can of soup is wonderful, and a supermarket is wonderful. We took a critical attitude. That was the opposite."*[05]

05
Ibid., time code 00:50:55.

But it was particularly their excitement about the present time that prompted the Pop artists to also be cutting edge with respect to formal aesthetics, hence making their NO!art colleagues' recourse to the collage and assemblage techniques of the interwar period seem somewhat traditional.

> *"I call it, of course we attempted to do something new . . . . Let's say it's a combination of extreme self-expressionism and social political ideas with an influence of DADA also. But it was mainly Expressionist."*[06]

06
BORIS LURIE
in: Estera Milman, *NO!art and the Aesthetics of Doom*. Boris Lurie, Estera Milman, One-on-One, part II (New York 2000/11), time code 00:16:14.

Whereas the principle of maximum contrast as in the case of the work *Lolita*, however, becomes a kind of visual polemic that continues to apply half a century later. This principle can also be found in Lurie's late texts.

> *"3. August 1997 UNBEDINGT Nach Peter Weiss's Auschwitz-Lesen, muss ich Ice-Cream essen."*[07]

07
"WITHOUT FAIL / After reading Peter Weiss's Auschwitz, / I must eat ice-cream." Boris Lurie in: *Geschriebigtes / Gedichtigtes: Zu der Ausstellung in der Gedenkstätte Weimar-Buchenwald*, Volkhard Knigge, Eckhart Holzboog, Dietmar Kirves eds., *1947–2001*, Stuttgart/ Bad Canstatt, 2003, p. 179.

II

In the late nineties, a slender envelope of printed matter with "NO!" stenciled on it in red fell into my hands: a collective concoction from the surroundings of the art academy in Karlsruhe. The very first picture already made the position clear: a urine stain on the outside wall of the academy building, then a copy of a backside, cut-up sneakers. A pin-up collage with "NO" printed over it is positioned alongside the child's drawing of a horse, above which it is possible to read "Mein Plan" (My Plan) in clumsy lettering. A late greeting to New York, with the dedication: "boris lurie, sam goodman, stanley fisher, gertrude stein usw. no!"

With *soir critique* at the Academy of Visual Arts Leipzig in 2001, Inga Schwede, Till Gathmann, and I initiated an event series that—as we wrote in the first invitation—endeavors to foster unease and to turn to society and its art in critical reflection. Following a kickoff event about Guy Debord's critique of the spectacle for the summer term 2002, we organized talks on the history and reception of the NO!art movement (in retrospect it comes as a surprise that the contemporaneity of Situationist International and No!art did not grab our attention). None of us had seen the 1995 neue Gesellschaft für bildende Kunst exhibition at the Haus am Kleistpark and the rooms on Oranienstrasse in Berlin, but we were familiar with the superb catalogue, which makes what was missed quite clear.

Matthias Reichelt was part of the group organizing the exhibition. We met him at Dietmar Kirves's apartment in the Graefe neighborhood of Berlin. Kirves is responsible for the no-art.info website and sees himself as both a chronicler of the movement and an activist. And thus the question is also raised: is NO!art the practice of a small group—which was naturally a child of its time—that has come to an end and was limited to a particular period? Or is it still a lively movement in whose name artists time and again work, exhibit, and publish, and which forges a path through history that, starting from the cooperative gallery on 10th Street on the Lower East Side, branches out into the present, similar to the underlying line of Dada to the Situationist International to punk that Greil Marcus draws in his book *Lipstick Traces*?

What interested us was NO!art in New York between 1959 and 1965, perhaps the first artistic movement to directly address the Shoah. In this we

saw not only the reason for the lack of economic success, but also for the delayed and reluctant incorporation within art history. For the announcement poster we used a photograph by Michael Ruetz: Beate Klarsfeld slapping the former NSDAP member and then federal chancellor, Kurt Georg Kiesinger, at the CDU party congress in November 1968; the image caption referred to Klarsfeld's action as "Kunst nach Auschwitz" (Art after Auschwitz).

> *"How should one assess the 'action art' of the nameless woman in the convoy of the 'Grosse Aktion' [Big Action] in Riga, who, while being forced down Moskauer Strasse to the small forest of Rumbula, was inspired to write a note at some point during the kilometers-long march and also managed as well as to throw the piece of paper on which she had written 'Rächt uns!' [Avenge us!] onto the street without the Latvian police noticing? For this, she might have been killed like my grandmother, while still on the road, before the final destination at Rumbula. How can this action be compared with the works of the famous New York "action" artist H.F., also Jewish, whose mile-high and artistically anemic smears can be digested in museums? These are only a few examples: where is the great artistic feat? Not necessarily, barely, rarely in so-called art. Art is hidden outside."*[08] ▸

08
BORIS LURIE
in: nGbK, *NO!art*, p. 123.

While we were at work planning our events, in the spring of 2002 the exhibition *Mirroring Evil: Nazi Imagery/Recent Art* opened at the Jewish Museum in New York. Two examples that caused a scandal were Zbigniew Libera's *LEGO Concentration Camp Set* and Alan Schechner's *It's the Real Thing—Self-Portrait at Buchenwald.*

> *"Some prisoners in Buchenwald lying on their cots and in front of it is this artist, young fellow, a younger fellow, who's holding a Coca Cola can. They found that so insulting and horrible. I don't see anything insulting in it, absolutely nothing."*[09] ▸

09
BORIS LURIE
in: *optimistic | disease | facility* 00:46:20

It was at the latest with this exhibition that the issue shifted: art *after* became art *about* and *with* Auschwitz—the genre of Holocaust Art, as it were, had been established.

III

Prior to my stay in New York in 2004, my plan had been to shoot a filmic portrait on Boris Lurie and NO!art. In the meantime, however, Naomi Tereza Salmon's film essay *optimistic | disease | facility. Boris Lurie: New York—Buchenwald* had been released, and Reinhild Dettmer-Finke and Matthias Re-

ichelt's documentary film, to be released two years later, was already in the pipeline. Between them, there did not seem to me to be any more space for a project that did not want to run the risk of repeating what had already been shown and said. I discarded the idea and reflected on photography and the fact that frozen still images are superior to moving images—which is nonsense, of course.

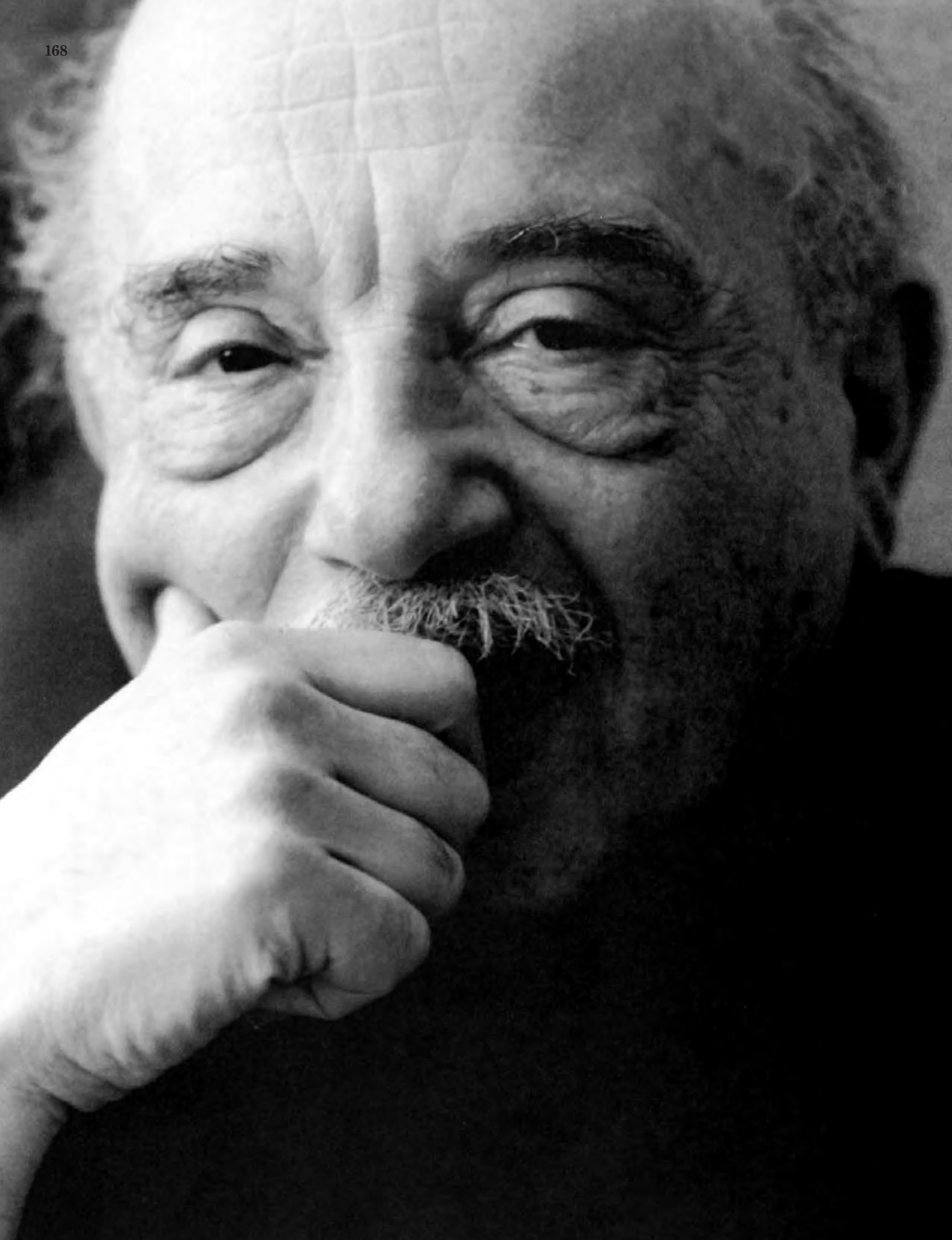
When we met again a few weeks later, Boris was agitated. He had just watched *The Grey Zone,* a star-studded feature film about the *Sonderkommando* at Birkenau and the armed uprising. I was not familiar with the film, but nevertheless cautiously voiced the objection that the spectacular cast of the extermination camp in feature-film format might be problematic. For Lurie, that was a totally irrelevant question. He urged me to take the DVD home and to tell him what I thought of it the next time we met. To me it seemed as if for him the film was a window through which he was looking directly at the *Sonderkommandos* at Auschwitz. He knew that they had existed, of course, but for him the question "What would I have done?" once again raised itself with a force and an urgency that had nothing in common with the calm, almost laid-back way in which he spoke about National Socialism and his experiences in the camps. The question was directed at him, me, and everyone else, regardless of whether bystander, survivor, or descendants of the perpetrator generation.

> *"I constantly see them on television, always late at night when all righteous working people are already asleep. At least twice a week, I would say. I never tire of it. I know the Führer so well that it seems to me as if he is a close relative of mine. I have good reason to hate him; I already hated him before I got to know him so well on TV. Now, the urge that I once felt to slowly slit him open has long since been forgotten. And I watch him as if I never knew him, with great interest, as if I've never had anything to do with him. He isn't a stranger to me; as seems to me now, he's an uncle with some apparently unusual character traits. The fact that he killed my mother is something I simply can't understand. It's all rooted in the abundance of information. The details of it all suppress feeling. It's much more effective to let everything float in silence, surrounded by mystery. Overexposure kills reality. And that also applies to the Holocaust."* [10]

10
BORIS LURIE
in: nGbK, *NO!art*, p. 125.

I asked Boris if I could take his picture. What I had in mind was a portrait of the artist as a citizen of New York City. Perhaps because I was so impressed by him and the city, and thought to myself that it was only possible to meet people like Boris Lurie here. I was living on 12th Street in the

East Village. I would really have liked to take a picture of him there, near his studio, outside in daylight. Meeting during the day, more precisely before nine in the evening, was, however, not something he would agree to. I ended up photographing him in his kitchen. In one photo, one can see that Boris is wearing two watches on his wrist. It is not possible to make out whether they show different times.



Biography

18 JULY 1924 · Born in Leningrad, the youngest of three children of the Jewish couple Ilja and Schaina Lurje.

1925 · Moves to Riga and attends the German high school there.

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 1941 · Thirty thousand Jewish residents of Riga are forced to live in a ghetto.

8 DECEMBER 1941 · Boris Lurie's mother, Schaina, and his sister, Jeanna, are murdered in the massacre of Rumbula. His childhood sweetheart, Ljuba, and his grandmother are also among the dead.

1941–45 · Imprisoned in the Lenta labor camp and the Salaspils, Stutthof and Buchenwald concentration camps.

11 APRIL 1945 · Liberated from Magdeburg-Polte, a Buchenwald satellite camp where prisoners are forced to produce ammunition for Polte OHG.

1945 · Works as a translator for the US Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC).

1946 · Emigrates to the United States, arriving in New York with his father, Ilja, on 18 June.

1954/55 · Lives and works in Paris.

1958–61 · Takes part in various exhibitions at the March Gallery, an artists' cooperative on 10th Street in New York. In 1959 Lurie founds the NO!art movement together with Sam Goodman and Stanley Fisher.

1964 · Death of his father, Ilja Lurje, a successful businessman. Boris Lurie's inheritance includes a house near Central Park.

1979/1980 · Various exhibitions in Germany, Italy and Israel.

1988 · Publication of the NO!art anthology *PIN-UPS, EXCREMENT, PROTEST, JEW-ART*.

1990s · Works on his memoirs, which have never been published, as well as on the novel *House of Anita*, which appeared in 2010.

2003 · Publication of his poetry collection *Boris Lurie: Geschriebigtes/Gedichtigtes* for the exhibition held at the Buchenwald memorial site near Weimar in 1999.

7 JANUARY 2008 · Boris Lurie dies in New York.

2010 · Establishment of the Boris Lurie Art Foundation, dedicated to preserving Lurie's artistic legacy.

Exhibitions

Selection

2015 · Unorthodox, The Jewish Museum, New York
· Boris Lurie. NO!art, Galerie Odile Ouizeman, Paris

2014 · KZ – KAMPF – KUNST. Boris Lurie: NO!art, NS-Dokumentationszentrum der Stadt Köln
· Boris Lurie, El Museo Vostell, Malpartida

2013 · NO!art: The Three Prophets, The BOX, Los Angeles

2012 · Boris Lurie NO!, David David Gallery, Philadelphia

2011 · NO!art of Boris Lurie, Zverev Zentrum für Zeitgenössische Kunst, Moscow
· NO! The Art of Boris Lurie, Chelsea Art Museum, New York

2010 · Boris Lurie NO!art, Westwood Gallery, New York

2004 · optimistic-disease-facility, Boris Lurie: New York–Buchenwald, Haus am Kleistpark, Berlin

2002 · NO!art and The Aesthetics of Doom, Iowa Museum of Art

1999 · Leben–Terror–Geist, Gedenkstätte Weimar-Buchenwald

1995 · NO!art, neue Gesellschaft für bildende Kunst, Berlin
· Boris Lurie und NO!art, Haus am Kleistpark, Berlin
· Dance Hall Series, Endart Galerie, Berlin

1988 · Feel Paintings, Galerie und Edition Hundertmark, Cologne

1974 · Boris Lurie, Inge Baecker Galerie, Bochum
· NO!art Bags, Galerie und Edition Hundertmark, Cologne
· Boris Lurie & Wolf Vostell, Galerie Rewelsky, Cologne
· NO!art with Boris Lurie, Sam Goodman & Marcel Janco, Ein-Hod-Museum, Ein-Hod, Israel

1973 · NO!art-Paintings seit 1959, Galerie René Block, Berlin
· Boris Lurie, Galleria Giancarlo Bocchi, Milan

1970 · Art & Politics, Kunstverein Karlsruhe

1963 · NO!show, Gallery Gertrude Stein, New York

1962 · Sam Goodman & Boris Lurie, Galleria Arturo Schwarz, Milan
· Doom Show, Galleria La Salita, Rome

1961 · Pinup Multiplications, D'Arcy Galleries, New York
· Involvement Show, March Gallery, New York
· Doom Show, March Gallery, New York

1960 · Dance Hall Series, D'Arcy Galleries, New York
· Adieu Amerique, Roland de Aenlle Gallery, New York
· Les Lions, March Gallery, New York
Tenth Street New York Cooperative, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
· Vulgar Show, March Gallery, New York; Joe Marino's Atelier, New York

1951 · Dismembered Figures, Barbizon Plaza Galleries, New York
· Several Exhibitions in the Coop-galleries in 10th Street, New York

1950 · Boris Lurie, Creative Gallery, New York

EXHIBITED WORKS

Thank you to everyone who loaned us exhibits—especially the Boris Lurie Art Foundation, New York—a private Collector, New York, and the Tel Aviv Museum of Art.

***(Hand),* 1962**
Collage: Oil and pictures on canvas, 91 x 76 cm
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***# 6 'NO' (With Split Head),* 1963**
Collage: Oil on paper mounted on canvas, 61 x 76 cm
p. 74

***# 10 Altered Photos (Cabot Lodge),* 1963**
Collage: Oil and paper on unstretched canvas, 98 x 81 cm
p. 43

***A Jew Is Dead,* 1964**
Collage: Oil and paper on canvas, 180 x 312 cm
pp. 102/103

***Adieu Amerique,* 1960**
Oil on canvas, 182 x 179 cm
Tel Aviv Museum of Art Collection, Gift of Vera and Arturo Schwarz, Milano
p. 93

***Adieu Amerique,* 1959/60**
Assemblage: Magazine pictures and canvas with oil on unstretched canvas, 130 x 95 cm
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***Adieu Amerique,* 1960**
Oil on canvas, 100 x 99 cm
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***Altered Israeli Flags With Yellow Star Of David,* 1974**
Collage: Flags and fabric with oil mounted on foamboard, 102 x 76 cm
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***Altered Photo (Cabot Lodge),* 1963**
Collage: Oil on paper mounted on canvas, 75 x 61 cm
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***Altered Photos (Cabot Lodge),* 1963**
Collage: Oil on paper mounted on canvas, 74 x 61 cm
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***Altered Photos (Cabot Lodge),* 1963**
Collage: Oil on paper mounted on board, 74 x 60 cm
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***Altered Photos (Cabot Lodge),* 1963**
Collage: Oil and paper mounted on canvas, 74 x 61 cm
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***Altered Photos (Cabot Lodge),* 1963**
Collage: Oil on paper mounted on canvas, 74 x 60 cm
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***Altered Photos (Cabot Lodge),* 1963**
Collage: Oil on paper mounted on canvas, 74 x 61cm
(not in catalogue)

***Amerique Amer (Pleasure),* 1960/61**
Collage: Magazine and newspaper pictures on paper, 33 x 19 cm
p. 88

***Altered Photo (Shame!),* 1963**
Collage: Oil and picture on canvas, 81 x 57 cm
p. 64

***Anti-Pop Stencil,* 1964**
Collage: Oil and paper on unprimed canvas, 53 x 61 cm
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***Ax Series #1,* 1970–79 (2003)**
Tree stump with ax, 107 x 91 x 41 cm
p. 110

***Ax Series #3,* 1970–79 (2003)**
Tree stump with ax, 74 x 41 x 30 cm
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***Ax Series #4,* 1970–79 (2003)**
Tree stump with ax, 86 x 48 cm
(not in catalogue)

***Ax Series #5,* 1970–79 (2003)**
Tree stump with ax, 64 x 47 cm
(not in catalogue)

***Ax Series #6,* 1970–79 (2003)**
Tree stump with ax, 71 x 38 x 28 cm
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***Ax Series #7,* 1970–79 (2003)**
Tree stump with ax, 61 x 41 cm
(not in catalogue)

***Ax Series #8,* 1970–79 (2003)**
Tree stump with ax, 72 x 43 cm
(not in catalogue)

***Back From Work-Prison Entrance,* 1946/47**
Oil on canvas mounted on Masonite, 45 x 64 cm
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***Cement Star Of David,* undated**
Cement, 51 x 55 x 20 cm
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***Clay Head, Squashed,* 1955**
Assemblage: Clay mounted on Masonite, 28 x 23 cm
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***Dance Hall Portfolio 4–12,* 1961**
Signed lithographs, 27 x 38 cm
p. 35

***Dance Hall Series 2,* 1953–57**
Pastel and gouache on paper, 55 x 76 cm
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***Dance Hall Series 10,* 1963–67**
Pen and ink on paper, 38 x 51 cm
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***Dance Hall Series 11,* 1963–67**
Pen and ink on paper, 32 x 19 cm
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***Dance Hall Series 12,* 1963–67**
Pen and ink on paper, 28 x 14 cm
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***Deliberate Pinup Series,* 1975**
Collage: Oil and paper on cardboard, 81 x 43 cm
p. 60

***Dismembered Stripper,* 1956**
Oil on canvas, 107 x 97 cm
p. 27

***Dismembered Woman,* 1959–65**
Oil on canvas, 145 x 135 cm
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***Dismembered Woman: Apple Eater,* 1954**
Oil on canvas, 58 x 61 cm
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***Dismembered Women: Giving Bread,* 1949**
Oil on cardboard, 36 x 51 cm
p. 29

***Dismembered Woman: The Stripper,* 1955**
Oil on canvas, 165 x 109 cm
p. 25

***Entrance,* 1940–55**
Oil on board, 103 x 76 cm
p. 13

***Family,* 1945–49**
Oil on Masonite, 61 x 37 cm
p. 3

***Flatcar. Assemblage, 1945, by Adolf Hitler,* 1961**
Lynograph, 41 x 61 cm
p. 20

***Fragments Of Jewish History On The Map Of Riga,* undated**
Commercial map with magic marker, 81 x 56 cm
p. 5

***German Word "God,"* 1965–69**
Assemblage: Fabric on fabric, 86 x 90 cm
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***Hard Writings (Load),* 1972**
Collage: Picture and tape on paper mounted on canvas, 60 x 88 cm
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***Immigrant's NO!box,* 1963**
Assemblage: Wooden trunk, oil paint with photos and paper, 61 x 102 x 64 cm
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***IN,* 1960–62**
Assemblage: Pictures and oil paint on canvas, 55 x 81 cm
p. 81

***Knife In Cement,* 1974**
Machete and cement, 46 x 20 x 46 cm
p. 108

***Knife In Cement Star Of David,* 1970–79**
Knife and cement, 43 x 30 x 30 cm
p. 47

***Knives In Cement*, 1970–79**
Two machetes in cement,
70 x 67 x 20 cm
p. 108

***Large Pinup #4*, 1960–70**
Collage: Magazine pictures on canvas,
229 x 236 cm
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***Liberty Or Lice*, 1959/60**
Collage: Oil paint on canvas,
166 x 212 cm
Tel Aviv Museum of Art Collection, Gift of Vera and Arturo Schwarz, Milano
pp. 90/91

***Lolita*, 1962**
Collage: Oil paint on paper mounted on board, 103 x 142 cm
p. 21

***Love Series*, 1970–72**
Paint on black-and-white photograph,
15 x 17 cm
p. 39

***Love Series: Bound And Gagged*, 1960–69**
Oil on unstretched canvas on cardboard, 58 x 39 cm
p. 40

***Love Series: Bound On Red Background*, 1962**
Collage: Photo transfer and paint on canvas, 203 x 135 cm
p. 38

***Love Series: Bound With Stick*, 1962**
Collage: Oil on canvas,
200 x 90 cm
p. 41 (only in catalogue)

***Love Series: Posed*, 1962**
Collage: Oil on canvas mounted on cardboard, 41 x 27 cm
p. 39

***Lumumba…Is…Dead*, 1959–64**
Collage: Oil, pictures, and paper on canvas, 182 x 197 cm
pp. 96/97

***More Insurance*, 1963**
Collage: Magazine pictures and paint on cardboard, 41 x 51 cm
p. 59

***Mort Aux Juif! Israel Imperialiste*, 1970**
Enamal and oil on canvas,
229 x 323 cm
pp. 100/101

***NO*, 1965–69**
Assemblage: Pictures and oil on canvas, 48 x 57 cm
p. 71

***NO*, 1965–69**
Assemblage: Newspaper and oil on canvas, 61 x 55 cm
p. 71

***No (Red and Black)*, 1963**
Oil on canvas, 56 x 89 cm
p. 73

***NO I Sprayed*, 1963**
Spray paint on Masonite, 56 x 51 cm
p. 77

***NO, Love You (Immigrant's NO!suitcase #1)*, 1963**
Assemblage: Suitcase and oil with fabric and photos, 61 x 102 x 62 cm
p. 49

***NO With Mrs. Kennedy*, 1964**
Collage: Oil and photo on Masonite, 36 x 27 cm
p. 85

***No With Pinup And Flowers*, 1962**
Collage: Oil and photo on Masonite, 80 x 80cm
(not in catalogue)

***NO, With Torn Papers (TED)*, 1963**
Collage: Paper and paint on Masonite, 48 x 41 cm
p. 78

***NO's*, 1962**
Collage: Oil on cut cardboard,
64 x 57 cm
p. 74

***Now, No More*, 1962**
Oil on canvas, 127 x 141 cm
p. 104/105

***Oh, Mama Liberté*, 1960/61**
Collage: Oil, pictures, and paper on canvas, 175 x 280 cm
p. 98/99

***ONONONONONONON*, 1968–70**
Oil on unprimed canvas,
34 x 76 cm
p. 72

***Oswald*, 1963**
Collage: Magazine pictures, oil on cardboard, 58 x 38 cm
p. 84

***Pin Up (Body)*, 1963**
Photo silkscreen and acrylic on canvas, 117 x 127 cm
p. 62

***Piss*, 1973**
Collage: Paint, paper, and tape on canvas, 43 x 58 cm
p. 82

***PLEASE*, 1965–69**
Collage: Pictures, tape and charcoal on cardboard, 46 x 91 cm
p. 81

***Portrait Of My Mother Before Shooting*, 1947**
Oil on canvas, 93 x 65 cm
p. 2

***Quench Your Thirst*, 1962**
Collage: Paper and paint mounted on canvas, 174 x 107 x 4 cm
p. 68

***Railroad to America*, 1963**
Collage: Photos mounted on canvas, 37 x 54 cm
p. 23

***Rope And Stars Of David (Five Stars of David)*, 1970**
Concrete and rope, 155 x 23 x 8 cm
p. 50

***Salad*, 1962**
Collage: Oil and paper collage on canvas, 115 x 99 cm
p. 57

***Saturation Painting (Buchenwald)*, 1959–64**
Collage: Photos and newspaper on canvas, 91 x 91 cm
p. 22

***Slave*, 1972**
Collage: Tape and tinted varnish on paper, 56 x 79 cm
p. 80

***Suitcase*, 1964**
Assemblage: Oil and paper collage on leather suitcase, 38 x 58 x 18 cm
p. 49

***Tammie*, 1960–70**
Collage: Oil and paper on paper,
103 x 54 cm
p. 76

***Three Women*, 1955**
Collage: Oil on Masonite
mounted on canvas, 118 x 119 cm
p. 34

***Untitled*, 1940–52**
Oil on canvas, 57 x 40 cm
(not in catalogue)

***Untitled*, 1945–49**
Pastel and gouache on paper,
66 x 40 cm
p. 4

***Untitled*, 1946–50**
Pastel and gouache on paper,
47 x 62 cm
p. 9

***Untitled*, 1948–50**
Pastel and gouache on paper,
58 x 43 cm
p. 12

***Untitled*, 1948–52**
Collage: Oil on canvas mounted on masonite, 71 x 100 cm
p. 6

***Untitled*, 1949/50**
Oil on board, 51 x 38 cm
p. 4

***Untitled*, 1951**
Oil on Masonite, 77 x 92 cm
p. 26

***Untitled*, 1955**
Oil on canvas, 89 x 114 cm
p. 30/31

***Untitled*, 1955–60**
Oil on canvas, 127 x 97 cm
p. 37

***Untitled*, 1959–64**
Assemblage: Oil and concrete on canvas board, 41 x 50 cm
p. 53

***Untitled*, 1960/61**
Assemblage: Oil, paper plaster, and wire mesh, 41 x 36 cm
p. 47

***Untitled*, 1960–69**
Assemblage: Found objects and oil on cardboard, 60 x 44 cm
p. 53

***Untitled*, 1960–69**
Assemblage: Cardboard box collage,
43 x 27 x 9 cm
p. 44

***Untitled*, 1960–70**
Collage: Paper, oil on canvas,
99 x 91 cm
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***Untitled,* 1960–70**
Oil on canvas,
91 x 84 cm
(not in catalogue)

***Untitled,* 1960–70**
Collage: Oil, photos, newspaper on unstretched canvas, 119 x 118 cm
p. 94/95

***Untitled,* 1960–70**
Assemblage: Pictures, paint on box top, 36 x 28 cm
p. 88

***Untitled,* 1960–70**
Oil on canvas, 91 x 84 cm
(not in catalogue)

***Untitled,* 1961**
Collage: Magazine pictures, plastic, pictures on cardboard, 114 x 77 cm
p. 61

***Untitled,* 1963**
Assemblage: Oil on printed paper mounted on canvas, 86 x 48 cm
p. 79

***Untitled,* 1963**
Collage: Oil and paper on canvas, 130 x 109 cm
p. 56

***Untitled,* 1963**
Assemblage: Cardboard, pictures, oil on canvas board, 62 x 46 cm
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***Untitled,* 1963**
Collage: Oil on paper mounted on canvas, 74 x 61 cm
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***Untitled,* 1965**
Collage: Oil and photography on paper, 28 x 22 cm
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***Untitled,* 1965–75**
Oil on unstretched canvas,
72 x 89 cm
p. 70

***Untitled,* 1970–75**
Collage: Found objects on flat cardboard box, 76 x 76 cm
p. 54

***Untitled,* 1970–79**
Assemblage: Oil on fabric,
118 x 62 cm
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***Untitled,* 1973–77**
Collage: Magazine pictures, oil on paper, 25 x 20 cm
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***Untitled,* 1978–80**
Two machetes in concrete,
32 x 72 x 16 cm
p. 108

***Untitled,* 1982**
Assemblage: Corset with oil, chains, cement, 198 x 36 cm
p. 46

***Untitled,* undated**
Oil on canvas, 127 x 127 cm
p. 8/9

***Untitled,* undated**
Assemblage: Cardboard, oil on fabric, 91 x 41 x 3 cm
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***Untitled,* undated**
Collage: Oil and pictures on canvas, 61 x 46 cm
p. 60

***Untitled,* undated**
Oil on canvas, 56 x 61 cm
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***Untitled,* undated**
Assemblage: Found objects, paint and pictures on cardboard box, 34 x 20 x 10 cm
p. 110

***Untitled,* undated**
Assemblage: Wig and oil on canvas, 104 x 64 cm
p. 111

***Untitled (AMERICAN),* 1961**
Collage: Paint and paper mounted on plywood, 193 x 114 cm
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***Untitled (Henry Cabot Lodge),* 1963**
Silkscreen on paper, 72 x 56 cm
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***Untitled (Sold Out),* 1963**
Silkscreen on paper, 72 x 56 cm
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***Untitled (Two Knives In Concrete),* 1979/80**
Metal and wood in plaster and fabric, 30 x 46 x 72 cm
p. 108

***Untitled (Two Women),* 1956**
Oil on Masonite, 116 x 92 cm
p. 32

***War Series 1,* 1946**
Pen and ink and watercolor on paper, 27 x 20 cm
p. 16

***War Series 2,* 1946**
Pen, ink, and pencil on paper, 21 x 20 cm
p. 18

***War Series 3,* 1946**
Pencil on paper, 30 x 21 cm
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***War Series 4 (Aftermath),* 1946**
Ink on paper, 20 x 25 cm
p. 18

***War Series 5,* 1946**
Ink on paper, 25 x 21 cm
p. 16

***War Series 7,* 1946**
Ink on paper, 34 x 20 cm
(not in catalogue)

***War Series 8,* 1946**
Pencil on paper, 30 x 22 cm
p. 16

***War Series 9,* 1946**
Ink and colored crayon on paper, 20 x 28 cm
p. 19

***War Series 10,* 1946**
Pen and ink and pencil on paper, 15 x 20 cm
p. 18

***War Series 11,* 1946**
Pencil on paper, 19 x 14 cm
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***War Series 12,* 1946**
Ink and gouache on paper, 22 x 17 cm
p. 17

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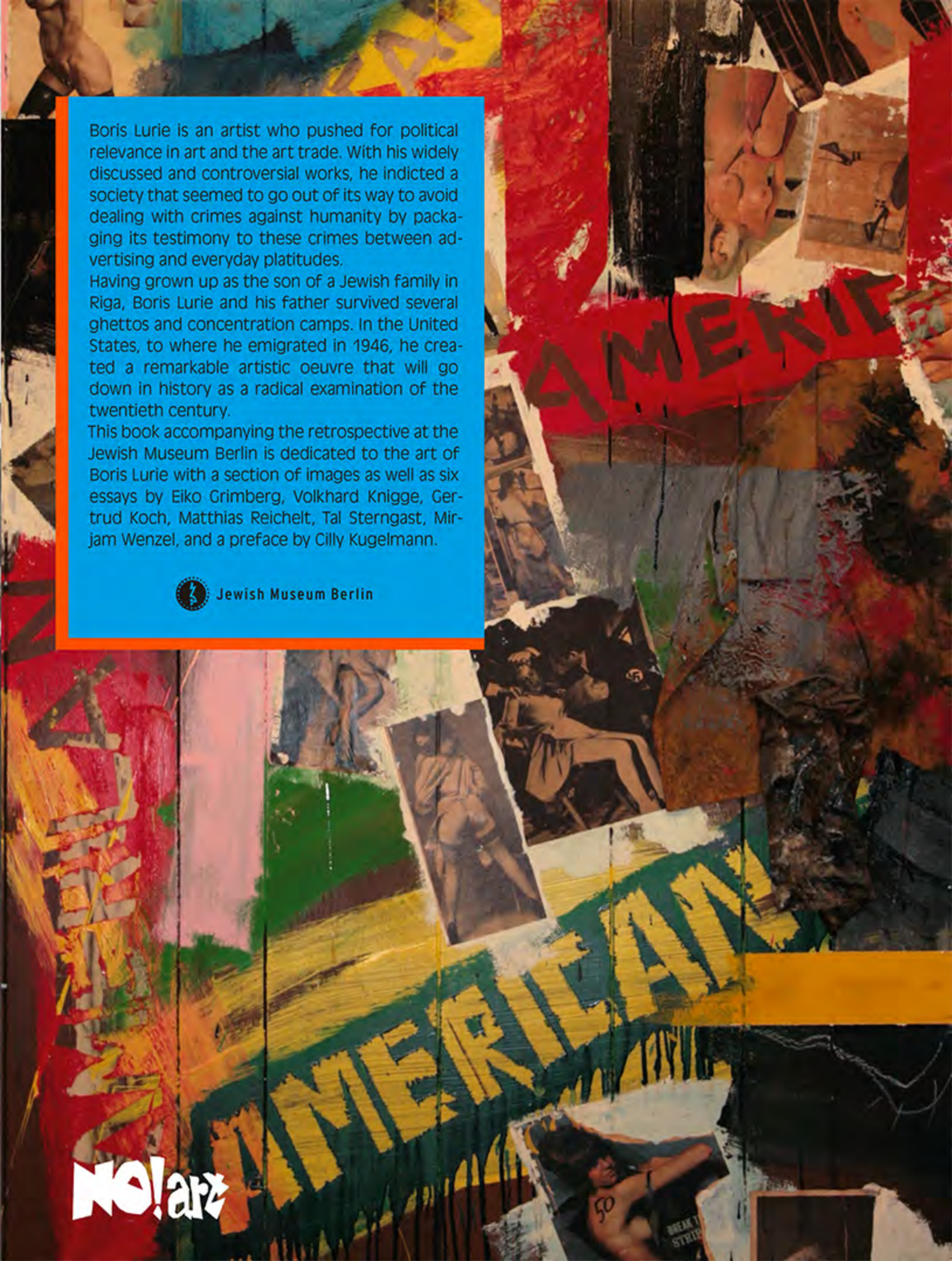

Boris Lurie is an artist who pushed for political relevance in art and the art trade. With his widely discussed and controversial works, he indicted a society that seemed to go out of its way to avoid dealing with crimes against humanity by packaging its testimony to these crimes between advertising and everyday platitudes.

Having grown up as the son of a Jewish family in Riga, Boris Lurie and his father survived several ghettos and concentration camps. In the United States, to where he emigrated in 1946, he created a remarkable artistic oeuvre that will go down in history as a radical examination of the twentieth century.

This book accompanying the retrospective at the Jewish Museum Berlin is dedicated to the art of Boris Lurie with a section of images as well as six essays by Eiko Grimberg, Volkhard Knigge, Gertrud Koch, Matthias Reichelt, Tal Sterngast, Mirjam Wenzel, and a preface by Cilly Kugelmann.

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