Display, Tableaux, Object-Scene
Everything is machines, machines connected to other machines.

It’s not the object but its display. Displays confer objects with meanings. In this work I want to put on display as an object of art, as an object-scene. I want to display - display - see it as a tableaux, a wreckage, a crime site in the midst of an investigation.
Our bodies, cities and spaces, and all things in them, are increasingly entangled and tethered to ambient sensors, RFID tags, QR codes, algorithmic routines, iterative databases, machine and natural language processors, where each and every thing, every atom, every universe, becomes locatable and addressable, an increasingly vast network of communication, tracking, monitoring and surveillance swarms about us. What is the image of this swarm, this new networked body, the image of everything on the planet, inventoried, every rock in the grand canyon, every snow crystal, every coral plant, every microbe, every traffic light and the face of every person crossing every traffic light on the planet. It will not be long before the smart phone in our hands will be in our heads and the interface to all things, even the motility of things, will occur, by simply thinking, a new augmented and amplified thinking, a human machine thinking.

If the age of reason ushered in the idea of the discrete and inviolable, of things clearly delineated, of neat borders and empires, of things here, and things there, of me, c’est moi, me, the individual, an insoluble person, entire to myself, the age of all-things-networked disperses this once whole and discrete thing, this individual, this will, striving, flow, desire, production, into so many machines.
Our common notion of machines, is first that they are asubjective and unnatural; that they are distinct from human subjects and from nature. But this is precisely what we find under attack by philosophers Deleuze and Guattari in a Thousand Plateaus. That is, that the human, the machinic, and the natural are all one. The self and the non-self, outside and inside, no longer have any meaning whatsoever. There is no original point that starts the production process; all production and machines are a result of other productions, other machines. Being is not a fixed thing but a continually modulating process.

That’s the image and sense of Shoot Robot, that all things bleed into each other, contaminate each other, desire each other, simultaneously in love and dismembered by each other, both materially and narratively, informationally and materially. If in Making Sense, I wanted to present the tactility of things, in the guise and shape of art, works as discrete, here the sensorium splices into the body, plastic collides with metal with mannequins, and quarantined blood samples, diseased servers with diseased servants, things are ripped, tubed and taped, all things imbricated into each other.
In 1984, Donna Haraway wrote *A Cyborg Manifesto*. In it, the concept of the cyborg is put forward as a rejection of rigid boundaries, notably those separating “human” from “animal” and “human” from “machine”. Haraway writes the unified human subject of identity has shifted to the hybridized posthuman of technoscience, from “representation” to “simulation,” “bourgeois novel” to “science fiction,” “reproduction” to “replication,” and “white capitalist patriarchy” to “informatics of domination.” All of this seems entirely prescient.

Coincidently at the same time of Haraway’s manifesto neoliberalism’s project begins to really kick in with Thatcher and Reagan and brings us today to the complete dismantling of the west’s social liberal dream of a new society, with the last gasp of American exceptionalism ending in failed unilaterals wars of colonialism and with Silicon Valley’s libertarianism the complete disintegration of the American social fabric. As the American psyche is tethered to its own individually curated hallucinatory feed of altered and augmented reality lacing conspiracy theories with fake facts the planet is ready to belch up its ungrateful parasite, the human and last best conquistador, the ugly American.
In such a condition, the neat and discrete work of art, a prize for an elite’s consumption, another bauble to most likely be stored in a warehouse, or end up in storage paid by the artist, such conditions become another obscene display of a complete failure to understand the contemporary condition. While the house is on fire we still wish to grab all we can and get out, but get out where. So shoot, shoot the robot, shoot the kids, someone, shot me, shoot, shoot, shoot. Like Elmer Fudd, in *Rabbit Fire* we straight face declare ourselves vegetarians shooting for sport only. As we strut on, full of greed and vanity, ever desiring attention under the spotlight of social media, the search light of day gives view to the wreckage left behind. And it’s not neat and it’s not discrete, but a network of detritus, the gasping glory holes of the phantasms of an eschatological dream become nightmare. Hence the sprawl of this show.
Tragedy, Comedy Objects and Situations

Tableaux, Crime Scene, Altar

Pathos. What kind?

Tragedy as a form, a form that changes over time. Can there be tragedy outside depiction?

Ensemble

set up drum piece
mannequin ensembles
crime scene pictures
notes, objects, images
quarantine
possession
occupation
seeing through a meshed off area
poisoned earth
infectious material
sensing
wet colorful crash dripping with intravenous
a body spliced into the scene
Tableaux

meshing

is there an orthinologist, stuffing birds
what is the narrative of the crime scene
the objectscene
miseenscene
lists of those executed here (mount joy)
species made extinct by human activities
a liquidation
what is this, that is ‘i’
serious and comic, metaphysical and farcical,
realistic and fantastic, often in a single scene.

Disappearance Absence Erasure

A worldwide catastrophe is underway among an extraordinary group of birds.

The disappearance of shore birds (godwits).
What is lost in their absence!
Altar

The altar, made for sacrifice, indeed the equipment for sacrifice, of either something vegetable or animal, becomes at the same time or soon enough the shrine and in the modern era of art, the altar becomes the pedestal, the vitrine, the floor. The altar in a grander sense becomes the temple, the pedestal, vitrine and frame, the gallery and museum.

In both, the sacred and profane, there is a desire to commune with supernatural powers, a desire to discover the pleasure of being beyond self, the will of gods, gods being us in our greater and augmented sense.

Surreal, Illogical, Conflictless and Plotless

Whereas traditional theatre attempts to create a photographic representation of life as we see it, the Theatre of the Absurd aims to create a ritual-like, mythological, archetypal, allegorical vision, closely related to the world of dreams.

Ionesco defined the absurdist everyman as cut off from his religious, metaphysical, and transcendental roots ... lost; all his actions become senseless, absurd, useless.

The Theatre of the Absurd, in a sense, attempts to reestablish man’s communion with the universe.

One of the most salient aspects of absurd drama is its distrust of language as a means of communication. Language, it seems to say, has become nothing but a vehicle for conventionalized, stereotyped, meaningless exchanges.
If I was an artist and I was in the studio, then whatever I was doing in the studio must be art. At this point art became more of an activity and less of a product. Bruce Nauman

I realized that my own way was in impoverishment, in lack of knowledge and in taking away, in subtracting rather than in adding. Samuel Beckett

tragic, ironic, mundane, black, farce
Huma Bhabha, Cathy Wilkes
dissected, dismembered
pathos, stripped down aesthetic
materials and display, assemblages of the tactile
disintegration, destruction, wearing away
poverty, failure, exile, loss
worn out, exhausted
the detritus of bodies or fragments of dead organisms
late capital information and biopolitical systems
more a forensic looking
an episteme of visual culture that can figure a poetics
of beings amongst beings (Self Portrait as a Fountain)
putting on art itself as a discipline, an art of visual
presentation,
of staging the material.

I love that other pic b/c it looks like the weirdest crime scene — odd copulating bodies strung about,
loose threads, legs lying on the floor, cords going from here to there but who knows why or how —
to strangle things? to power dildos? or something stranger? The whole scene is deliciously odd with
hints of the macabre and erotic. Daniel Coffeen

Shoot Robot

The object and the object seen. The object as a shrine, an altar, the altar, a setting.
A clear plastic corrugate vitrine, a perfect cube, sits slightly off the floor. There is something
inside. Something evidentiary it seems. The small skeleton of a shorebird, some feathers.
Three other clear plastic corrugate vitrines, identical in size, inside one some surgical tools,
barbed wire, a RFID tag, small shards of shattered glass of an orange light bulb, a light fixture
on a red rope with its socket of jagged glass. another with a pelican.
The four vitrines are neatly placed, separated at an even distance of two feet and behind each vitrine hanging from the rafter, varied crinoline red, crimson, pink, taffeta sewn fabrics. Each vitrine a kind of altar. A display.

There is something here that seems both ritualistic and evidentiary, a reliquary of sorts.

In the next room, there are a series of figures, 6 mannequin torsos, partial and reconfigured, dressed in various industrial sheen red judo gear, hospital wear, plastics, iconic columns, rubber hoses, silks, small megaphone (somewhere between Cathy Wilkes, Richard Tuttle, Paul Mccarthy and Camille Heinrot). almost comic, absurd, obscene, ridiculous, a social body as a kind of machine. A machine, a human social post industrial network melange of something of a human machine toy organism and its wreckage (after the life raft).

In the next room a giant search light pans left and right, up and down, intermittent glitchy light emits and sparks. Headphone sets on the walls or QR code for phone, audio. Glitch accident neurolinguistic memes seem to be in synch with the search light. In a giant silver walled mirrored, blackboard, red lipstick writing, says Shoot Robot.