

Art Spiegelman
Born Stockholm, Sweden, 1948

Maus Haus, 2006
32 sketches, ink on tracing paper
Courtesy of the artist

Maus Haus, 2006
3 final art for panels, ink on board
Courtesy of the artist

Ace Hole: Midget Detective, 1973–74
8 pages, ink on board
Courtesy of the artist

The Malpractice Suite, 1976
2 pages, ink on board laminated
Courtesy of the artist

On first impression, Art Spiegelman seems the odd artist out in this exhibition about art and commerce, or the intertwined histories and habits of department store and museum. Spiegelman's chosen context is the underground, willfully counterculture, assiduously anti-commercial realm of the comics, leavened by stylistic gleanings from such high artists as Picasso. Like others identified with this medium, such as his hero, R. Crumb, Spiegelman sings the song of himself, in his case, as a first-generation American and son of Holocaust survivors.

The work Spiegelman exhibits here—drafts for material compiled in *Breakdowns: Portrait of the Artist as a Young %@&*!*, his recently released reprise of an earlier, 1978 "large-format" memoir, and copies of the book itself—is evidence of an artist in earnest to express his own felt response to the traumatic experiences that mark his history and the forces that conspire to thwart his efforts to overcome them. This would appear to be in contrast to the art by Barbara Kruger, William Pope.L, Rachel Mason, William Klein, and Jacques Louis Vidal and Meredith James in "What You Wish For." For each of these artists, the ways in which cultural, social, economic, and political forces convert persons into personae, or character into caricature, is key. "What You Wish For" suggests that this is also the dynamic of the modern department store as well as the contemporary art gallery: the myth-making most active in a commercial, secular culture depends on the creation of idealized types. The fact that the department store, museum, and gallery are all nineteenth-century European institutions is something I first learned from the scholarship of Patricia Mainardi, who now teaches here at the Graduate Center, and whose current work on cartoon as drawing includes discussion of Spiegelman.

In the end, the conversion which Spiegelman's display suggests—from the expressive ephemera of his myriad drafts into the elegantly produced publication actually for sale in the gallery—is the exhibition's most graphic demonstration of the cultural conversion we so often take for granted.

4
November 15–30
Lucien Castaing-Taylor, with
Lisa Barbash and Ernst
Karel, Sheep Rushes,
2000–2008

5
December 11–January 4, 2009
Daniel Joseph Martinez,
the west bank is missing,
! am not dead, am i, 2008

6
January 17–31
Thomas Torres Cordova,
Everybody Loves the
Sunshine, 2008; I wish you
could color correct my
films for the rest of my
life, 2008

7
October 2–February 28, 2009
Barbara Kruger, Untitled,
2008 (window installations)

*Rachel Mason, My Cabinet,
continues through November 6

1
October 2–November 30
& February 11–28, 2009
Yunhee Min, For Instance,
2008

2
October 8–22
"What You Wish For"

Barbara Kruger, Justice,
1997
Rachel Mason, My Cabinet,
2004–ongoing*
William Pope.L, One
Substance, Eight
Supports, One Situation,
2008; BIN (Version 2),
2008
Art Spiegelman,
Breakdowns, 2008
Meredith James and
Jacques Louis Vidal,
True Stories, 2008
William Klein, In and Out
of Fashion, 1998

3
October 29–November 6
Linda Pollack, Habas
Lounge, 2008

People "What You Wish For" Art Spiegelman, "Weekly" Breakdowns, 2008

People "Weekly"

is the opening exhibition of the newly endowed Amie and Tony James Gallery. It features six projects and an exhibition-within-the-exhibition conceived in response to the building's location, architecture, history, and status as an active center of advanced education, performance, and public discussion.

"What You Wish For"

is the second installation of **People "Weekly,"** a conventional group show within the extended "group show in time." It is a meditation on the intertwined histories and often uncannily comparable practices of the department store and the gallery or museum. The featured works call attention to the ways in which fashion and art each contribute to our aggrandized images of ourselves and our heroes. William Pope.L's colored shelves displaying ephemeral cones of flour, and Jacques Vidal's and Meredith James's shelves of inscrutable stuffs set out for delectation were inspirational. They suggested the idea that the shelf as a vehicle for the setting off of objects we value has particular importance in a secular culture, especially a culture as dedicated to acquisition as ours.

Exhibition
October 2, 2008–February 28, 2009

Hours
Tuesday–Friday, 12–8 PM
Saturday–Sunday, 12–6 PM

Exhibition Reception
October 16, 2008
Elebash Recital Hall lobby, 5–7 PM

Performance
October 16, 2008
"Songs of My Cabinet"
by Rachel Mason
The Amie and Tony James Gallery,
6 PM

Design, Jeff Ramsey
Photo credit: Pantheon Publishers,
New York

All exhibitions and events are free
and open to the public

To receive further exhibition
announcements, please email
jamesgallery@gc.cuny.edu



The Amie and Tony James Gallery
Linda Norden, Director
The Graduate Center
The City University of New York
365 Fifth Avenue (at 34th Street)
New York, N.Y. 10016–4309
T. 212–817–7138
jamesgallery@gc.cuny.edu

The Amie and Tony James Gallery
October 8–22, 2008

