

YVES KLEIN'S *ANTHROPOMETRIES*:
FILLING THE "VOID" IN AMERICAN SCHOLARSHIP

A Thesis Presented to
The Faculty of the Department
of Art History
University of Houston

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

By
Georganne Fronimos Boardman

May, 2017

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ABSTRACT:

American art historical literature on Yves Klein's *Anthropometries* has focused on the artist as art subject with an emphasis on performance of process rather than on the actual paintings as art objects. In doing so scholars put forth a narrative of the artist that promotes a constructed hagiographic myth of Klein as divinely inspired. This thesis examines the missing analysis of the role his female assistants had in the paintings' creation as well as the role photography played in Klein's ability to shape his artistic legacy. The continued alienation of his female assistants from painting and process neutralizes any female-centric sexual interpretation and ultimately furthers a single narrative of Klein as a spiritually inspired performer that can only be rectified through objective analysis outside of the Klein mythos.

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INTRODUCTION:

The mid-century Parisian artist, Yves Klein, is known for his sculptures and paintings, namely his ultramarine blue monochrome paintings, and for his performative works. He leapt off of a building, threw gold into the Seine River, released one thousand and one blue balloons from a gallery, and emptied an entire gallery of its art. Unlike his monochromes or his anti-art object performance *Le Vide*, 1957, Klein's *Anthropometries* defy neat categorization, both as performance and as painting. They also happen to be works of art that Klein claims to have had very little physical contact with. They were paintings by naked women printing their paint-smearred bodies onto paper, canvas and fabric. The resulting imprints show truncated ultramarine blue torsos, breasts and thighs.

Using only monochrome ultramarine blue with changing effects, Klein's lively composition dances around major focal points in his painting, *People Begin to Fly* 1961, in a rhythmic, musical fashion. (Fig. 1) Not all the women's outlines are contained within the confines of the canvas. Many arms and legs spill over the sides, avoiding the impending drop over the canvased edge. As a suspended flying woman begins her descent, a visual domino effect tumbles lyrically down the canvas, guiding the audience from the top left down, around and out of the painting.

Although visually reminiscent of chalk outlines or floral cyanotype sun prints, Yves Klein's figures in *People Begin to Fly* are anything but static - rather balletic bursts of energy that flutter over and beyond the edges of the canvas, inviting the eyes of the viewer to join in their play. In this painting a white painted canvas serves as the backdrop for eight outlined female figures. The figures start from the top left corner of the work and move in an arc down and across the canvas, ending in the top right corner and

leaving the center top open. A flying figure in the top left falls from the sky as her companions below leap and dash out of the way, encouraging the viewer's eye to frolic simultaneously together with them throughout the piece. These springing figures explore the various positions of the human body, from fetal position to the start of a summersault. All outlined figures, except one, profiled center figure, include ultramarine blue body prints; creating a pause point that gives balance to the bouncy energy around her focal point. Most important are the painted breasts, thighs, and stomachs, within the outlines give a voluptuous depth to the flat graphic quality of the images. This added volume breathes sensuality and flirtatious life into otherwise hallow figures.

The *Anthropometrie* paintings generally consist of paper, canvas and fabric with ultramarine blue imprinted female forms. Some paintings like *People Begin to Fly* show the female bodies sprayed over with blue paint. Others, especially the *Anthropometrie Shrouds* completed later in the series, contain gold and pink paint color in addition to the blue. Klein began painting them as a result of experimenting with using a woman's body to smear a canvas entirely with ultramarine blue paint to create a monochrome painted canvas.¹ Using the body as a tool for painting gave way to a new kind of painting depicting sections of the female body. This new series entitled *Anthropometries*, were painted with the bodies of nude women, including his wife Rotraut, her friends and other women employed by Klein. While most were created in Klein's private studio, he is most infamously known for performing the painting of some of these *Anthropometries* for a live audience at the Galerie Internationale d'Art Contemporain in Paris on March 9, 1960.

¹ Pierre Restany, *Yves Klein*, New York: H. N. Abrams, 1982, 87.

At 10 pm on the evening of March 9, 1960 Klein and three assistants painted three *Anthropometries* for 40 minutes, broken into 20 minutes of sound in the form of Klein's composition, *Monotone Symphony*, followed by 20 minutes of silence, followed by question and answers. A film from the performance shows Klein starting a small orchestra on their 20 minutes of playing a sustained single note before three beautiful, young, fully nude women walk onto the white-tarped "stage," each carrying a paint bucket filled with ultramarine blue paint.² The female assistants use their hands to smear the blue paint onto their breasts, stomachs, pubic areas and the fronts of their thighs. They then split into independent actions where two walk to a large white canvas hung like a backdrop on the wall, complete with pedestals of different heights to give the women steps to stand and press their bodies in central locations on the canvas. A third female assistant focuses her attention on painting on a sheet on the tarped floor. Outfitted with goggles the third assistant uses the entire front of her body and her backside to paint a monochrome by slipping, sliding and rolling through blue paint. Klein weaves and steps around the women as he gestures to them like an orchestra conductor. The women seem fully invested in their actions, barely looking up, operating autonomously. The two women who started the performance at the hung wall canvas transition to two more sheets on the floor. They assist each other as one pulls the other across the canvas in an arc shape, leaving behind a painted swoosh followed by another frontal imprint. The

² Yves Klein. *Anthropométrie de l'époque bleue (2'26")*, March 9, 1960. Galerie International d'Art Contemporain, 253 Rue Saint Honoré, Paris, France. "Archives: Movies," *Yves Klein Archives*.
http://www.yveskleinarchives.org/documents/films_us.html

assistants finally take their paint buckets and exit the “stage” in a line. The film cuts to Klein standing in front of his audience. (Fig. 2-8)

A dozen or more photos show Klein standing over his assistants and choreographing their movements and actions. Photos from the question and answer portion of the performance show Klein animated, slyly smiling while fielding questions from the audience. The film and photographs commissioned by Klein for his debut event help to experience and interpret the performance decades after its live enactment. While some photos of the artist working with his assistants in his private studio do exist, the photos of the debut performance and the studio *Anthropometries* run together and read as a continued narrative. When American scholars refer to series they tend to lump the March 9, 1960 performance in with the many completed paintings that preceded and followed the performance but not all *Anthropometries* were created for an audience.

It is paramount to keep photos of Klein in process, private painting or public performance alike, in context as propaganda coordinated by the artist himself rather than true documentation. Klein was known to commission a team of photographers to capture his artistic events, endeavors and painting processes in studio controlling how his process would be interpreted.³ The photos that remain after his death are less objective documentation and more of a carefully curated myth selected by Klein himself or with the help of his widow Rotraut or his friend Pierre Restany. The proliferation of photographic documentation blurs the lines of art medium when discussing the *Anthropometries* and as a result many art historians view these paintings as physical relics of performance.

³ Nan Rosenthal, “Assisted Levitation: The Art of Yves Klein,” In *Yves Klein, 1928-1962: A Retrospective*, Houston: Institute for the Arts, Rice University, 1982, 124.

Putting performance and painting aside for the moment, the female assistants in Klein's performance and their lasting imprints make equally lasting impressions. The women in the film are strikingly beautiful with shapely, young, fit bodies. One cannot help but admire their attractiveness. Their corresponding painted imprints are enticing, reminding the viewer of flesh pressed against another body in a sensual embrace. The female assistants give their bodies, willingly to the canvas.

Despite the sensuality of *People Begin to Fly* and the corroborating film footage of Klein's sexy assistants very little attention had been paid to the women who were responsible for the physical completion of the paintings. So much of the writing on the works reiterated Klein's interest in spiritual philosophy. When most scholars discussed the paintings Klein was the sole author and his religious inspiration was the lens through which all interpretation was filtered. This disconnect between visual analysis and scholarship has created a constructed Kleinian language used to interpret, analyze and describe his works. There is a sizeable void in American scholarship on Yves Klein's *Anthropometrie* painting series that shows tacit acceptance of a narrative, shaped by Klein and the people closest to him, of a spiritual genius performance artist that shifted the subject of the paintings from the art objects themselves onto the artist overlooking sensual visual clues inherent in the paintings while diminishing the roles his female assistants played in creating the art.

CHAPTER 1:

"As I continued to paint monochromes, I almost automatically reached the immaterial, which made me understand that I was a clearly a product of Western civilization, a true Christian who rightly believes in the "resurrection of bodies, in the resurrection of the flesh." ⁴

Klein's self-described fascination with painting the female forms found in his *Anthropometrie* series can be found in his essay for the 1960 ZERO art magazine entitled, "Truth Becomes Reality." Included in his essay, which reads as an art manifesto meets narcissistic tirade, complete with grandiose proclamations of enlightenment, are claims of how he arrived at his female body printed canvases. Klein's dependence on his readers' approval constitutes a narcissism rooted in the concern of how he and his spiritual and artistic legacy would appear to others. The essay, along with Klein's theories on art, "Monochrome Adventure: The Monochrome Epic," is one of the most quoted and referenced of Klein's writings for scholarship on the *Anthropometries* because he discusses the paintings and their process of creation directly. His use of hyperbolic language, sometimes written in all capital letters for emphasis, and exaggerated narrative provide a seemingly ostensible account of the artist's process.⁵ Later historians take his writings as an honest, truthful, and coherent catalogue of his motivations and reasoning. But however earnest Klein may have been, the narrative is laden with contradictions that demand deeper investigation before accepting it as reality.⁶

⁴ Yves Klein, translated and with an introduction by Klaus Ottmann, *Overcoming the Problematics of Art: The Writings of Yves Klein*, "Truth Becomes Reality," Putnam, Conn: Spring Publications, 2007, 183.

⁵ Ibid, 188. Kaira Marie Cabañas, "Afterword," *The Myth of Nouveau Réalisme: Art and the Performative in Postwar France*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013, 157.

⁶ Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, "Formalism and Historicity," *New Realisms, 1957-1962: Object Strategies between Readymade and Spectacle*, Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, 2010, 88-89.

Promoting a spiritual version of self was one of Klein's most important tasks. He wanted his audience to accept him as a spiritual being, a modern messiah for a new age of art. His rhetoric repeated allusions to reaching or approaching a divine state of being, a spiritual enlightenment similar to the Buddhist notion of nirvana and the Hindu belief in moksha where one becomes self-realized, and a form of spiritual emancipation.⁷ Klein built his religio-spiritual art manifesto through which he builds a framework for all of his artistic endeavors on eastern religious and Rosicrucian philosophy. Rosicrucianism, the secretive, seventeenth century European cultural movement was based on syncretic and occultist beliefs that the order possessed higher truths about humankind, the universe and other spiritual dimensions. The Danish-American Christian occultist Max Heindel and his book *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* published in 1909 particularly influenced Klein.⁸ Heindel believed that man was undergoing an evolutionary process from earthly material matter into spirit in space beyond. Similar to the ideas of nirvana or moksha, Heindel's proposed evolution of man can be seen in Klein's metaphysical theories that describe moving from material matter to a realm of immateriality.

When describing his journey towards spiritual enlightenment he refers to it as his 'monochrome adventure' or his search for the 'void,' hoping to reach a state of what he calls 'immateriality.' Klein was quick to emphasize a euphoric, confident, spiritual superiority even claiming to "automatically reached the immaterial," as if he achieved so

⁷ Olivier Berggruen, "The Dissolution of the Ritual into the Void," In *Yves Klein*, Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz, 2004, 112-113. Thierry De Duve, and Rosalind Krauss, "Yves Klein, or The Dead Dealer," *October* 49, 1989, 74.

⁸ Thomas McEvelley, "Yves Klein and Rosicrucianism," In *Yves Klein, 1928-1962: A Retrospective*, Houston: Institute for the Arts, Rice University, 1982, 239.

effortlessly through divine intervention.⁹ He equally portrayed a stressed sense of self, exhausted, overwhelmed and drained.¹⁰ His simultaneous pull from eastern and western philosophy based his belief structures on both Christianity and Buddhism as he made pilgrimages to pray to saints while presenting himself as a judo master, bouncing back and forth between states of attainment and anguish.¹¹

*“These results continue to astonish me just the same. With or without technique, it is always good to conquer! This was my slogan in competing for the judo championships in Japan! I was taught in judo to achieve technical perfection in order to be able to deride it; to be constantly in a position to display it to all my adversaries, and thus although they know it all, to conquer all the same.”*¹²

To promote belief in his metaphysical prowess Klein referred to an artist’s studio as a temple, associating it with a place of holy worship where miracles and communion with the divine take place. He claimed that by performing his *Anthropometries* for an audience he was demystifying his process, allowing people to see behind his curtain with the hope that they could attest to his powers.¹³ His concern over how his new series would be received resulted in a need for defense in order to ‘conquer’ those who were not taken under his spell. He relates his desire for winning the respect of the upper echelons of the art world to competing in judo, a comparison that positioned him as a disciplined champion who had mastered his practice. For Klein, judo signaled his virtue and dedication to mastery.

⁹ Yves Klein, translated and with an introduction by Klaus Ottmann, *Overcoming the Problematics of Art: The Writings of Yves Klein*, “Truth Becomes Reality,” Putnam, Conn: Spring Publications, 2007, 183.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, 181.

¹¹ Thomas McEvelley, and Yves Klein. *Yves the Provocateur: Yves Klein and Twentieth Century Art*, N.Y.: McPherson & Co., 2010, 231.

¹² Yves Klein, translated and with an introduction by Klaus Ottmann, *Overcoming the Problematics of Art: The Writings of Yves Klein*, “Truth Becomes Reality,” Putnam, Conn: Spring Publications, 2007, 185.

¹³ *Ibid*, 185.

“Painting is no longer for me a function of the eye. My works are only the ashes of my art.” I doggedly turned my canvases into monochromes, then all-powerful blue emerged and reigns still as it will always. It is then that I began to doubt myself; I invited models into the studio, not to paint them as models but to be in their company. I was spending too much time in the studio alone; I did not wish to remain by myself in that marvelous blue void. Here the reader will smile, no doubt. ”¹⁴

In need of companionship in his studio, Klein explained that he turned to models. His stated loneliness was alleviated by the presence of young, pretty female models, who, Klein claimed, kept him from delving too far into his own metaphysical obsessions. He stressed that these women were not with him to paint and he continues throughout his writing to refer to them as models.¹⁵ Attempting to neutralize anything that implied any other relationship besides that of artist and muse, Klein sets the stage for his models to function as emotional breathing spaces for him. Along with shaping his own mystical mythology, Klein makes clear that the female bodies that surrounded him during this time were necessary for his spiritual and psychological well-being because he had reached enlightenment that was so awe filled that it overwhelmed him.

Having had rejected brushes as too excessively psychological already earlier, I painted with rollers, in order to remain anonymous and at a “distance” between the canvas and myself during the execution, at least intellectually...Now, what a miracle, the brush returned, but this time it is alive: it was the flesh itself that applied the color to the canvas, under my direction, with a perfect precision, allowing me to remain constantly at an exact distance “x” from my canvas and thus continue to dominate my creation during the entire execution. ”¹⁶

Having claimed to arrive at a place of “excessively spiritual regions of artistic creation,” Klein further invited now nude models, specifically attractive, young, nude women, to keep him company while he worked.¹⁷ He makes it very clear that it was their presence that was important to him, that being in their company held an emotional charge

¹⁴ Ibid, 181.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid, 183.

¹⁷ Ibid, 181.

that he found uplifting in his most intense artistic moments. Yet occasionally he slips in his writing and notes that their nudity, their “flesh” was still appealing on a more primal level as he concedes that he did find himself looking at them in a sexually charged way. For the master of judo, transcending the tawdry desires of mortals, he sounds like a heterosexual man who likes to look at naked women.

“...In order not to retreat by shutting myself inside the excessively spiritual regions of artistic creation, using the plain common sense that the presence of flesh in the studio would benefit my incarnate condition, I consequently engaged nude models. The shape of the human body, its lines, its colors of between life and death are no interest to me; it is the emotional atmosphere that I value. The flesh...!!!! All the same from time to time I did look at the models...”¹⁸

The ‘models,’ which he never intended on painting, began painting for him, using their bodies as tools unlike the traditional role of a ‘model.’ Even after these women started painting Klein continued to refer to them as ‘models’ or as ‘living brushes.’ His adoption of the word ‘model’ to describe the women has lasted over half a century of scholarship that refers to his process of using women’s bodies to paint canvas. The term is deeply problematic because the women functioned as assistants and even as actors for his debut performance, albeit nude female ones. Continual reference to them as ‘models’ disregards the physical roles they played in the painting process of Klein’s work. ‘Model’ as defined by the Oxford English Dictionary in definition, “11. a. A person or (less commonly) a thing serving as an object to be copied or depicted by an artist, sculpture, etc.; a person employed to pose for this purpose.” The female assistants directed by Klein did not serve as objects, were not copied by him nor did they pose. They used their own bodies to print onto canvases. The term ‘model’ therefore is not applicable but rather should be replaced by ‘female assistant.’

¹⁸ Ibid, 182.

"It is at this time that I noticed "the marks of the body" at each session. They disappeared immediately, and I worked on them secretly, always in absolute collaboration with the models, in order to share the responsibilities in case of a spiritual bankruptcy.

The models and I practiced a perfect and irreproachable scientific telekinesis and it is thus that I presented "The Anthropometries of the Blue Period," first privately at Robert Godet's in Paris, in the spring of 1958, and then again, in a much more perfected form, on March 9, 1960 at the Galerie Internationale d'Art Contemporain."¹⁹

Klein wants the reader to believe in his divinity by emphasizing his performance and process of creating the *Anthropometries* as otherworldly and superhuman. His claim in using a 'perfect' telekinesis with his female assistants refutes his claim of total collaboration with them. Claiming telekinesis as a process gives Klein complete authority over creation as sole author. He wanted it believed that he controlled their every step, every movement and thus it was actually he who painted through a remote means. One might infer that the collaboration with the female assistants was important to him only in that it spread the burden to them, avoiding "spiritual bankruptcy," in case the process turned out to be a sham.²⁰

"Whatever one may think of this, all of this is pretty bad taste and, indeed, it is my intention. I shout it out very loudly: "KITSCH, THE CORNY, BAD TASTE." This is a new notion in ART. While we're at it, let's forget ART altogether!

Great beauty is not truly truthful if it contains, intelligently mixed in, "AUTHENTIC BAD TASTE" of "EXASPERATING AND UTTERLY CONSCIOUS ARTIFICIALITY" with just a dash of "DISHONESTY."

One must be like FIRE in NATURE; to understand how to be both gentle and cruel, to know how to CONTRADICT oneself. Then, and only then, does one really belong to the family of UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLES OF ENLIGHTENMENT."²¹

¹⁹ Ibid, 185.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid, 188.

By embracing contradiction, by tackling it head-on, Klein essentially co-opts it into his spiritual worldview. He stated that by embodying contradictions one is truly enlightened. Any genius attributed to him should bear this quote in mind where he has set himself up as a saint of painting while using rhetoric that allows him to dodge criticism over his inconsistencies.²² He called himself out before anyone else could, closing the gap that would have been left open for future attacks on his sincerity. His defense of his incongruous language showed a lack of confidence in his theories as if he knew he must prepare to defend his art in battle.

After Klein's untimely death by heart attack at the age of 34 on June 6, 1962, Pierre Restany, French art critic, organizer of the modern Parisian art movement Les Nouveau Réalistes, and friend/publicist to Klein, continued to use Klein's religio-spiritual language. Restany's 1982 book, *Yves Klein*, is composed of personal memories and photos that break Klein's career down into its separate eras. The book serves as a posthumous platform for Klein's voice to be heard. Restany weaves Klein's own writings into his personal remembrances on Klein's career to flesh out a narrative of the seven years Klein spent as a working artist. It is with Restany, and because of this book and the illustrative language in it, that the postmodern hagiography of Klein, the spiritual artist, in American scholarship begins.

In order to gain audience/reader buy-in for Klein's artistic divinity, Restany purposefully used wording that evoked religion and spirituality. He began by referring to

²² Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, "From Yves Klein's *Le Vide* to Arman's *Le Plein*," *Neo-Avantgarde and Culture Industry: Essays on European and American Art from 1955 to 1975*, Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2000, 264. Klein had also previously claimed to have invented monochrome painting years after Kazimir Malevich's 1915 *Black Square* in addition to claiming that he had created a color of blue that as Buchloh stated, already existed naturally.

the paper used in the paintings as “virgin white,” and in doing so implied that the paintings possessed a purity that allowed them to function as part of a religious experience.²³ In discussing the process Klein came to create the *Anthropometries*, Restany used phrases like “method of impregnation” and “breath of cosmic energy” to associate Klein as an omnipotent, God-like force conceiving artwork while remaining at a supernatural distance.²⁴ His use of the word ‘impregnation’ further suggests that Klein, whom he believes to be in possession of a higher spiritual existence, has a mystical relationship with his female assistants and artwork similar to the relationship between God, the Virgin Mary and Jesus Christ.²⁵

Restany never explicitly compared Klein to Jesus but he did refer to him the way one might discuss a saint or other divinely inspired person. He said that Klein “felt the sacred fear that the sense of the divine instilled in him.”²⁶ It was because of that fear that Klein claimed that he sought the company of nude models in his studio, and reiterated by Restany, that the artist was overwhelmed with dealing with the transition from blue monochrome to immateriality. Restany wanted to portray Klein as someone who was so overcome with religious inspiration, that he was made weak by it, stating that, “He began to doubt, not himself or the spiritual heights to which his vision carried him, but his resistance and physical integrity during the journey.”²⁷ This detail is meant to develop empathy for Klein. It also lays the groundwork for the myth that Klein was so overwrought with emotion towards the end of his career, during the period of his

²³ Pierre Restany, *Yves Klein*, New York: H. N. Abrams, 1982, 87.

²⁴ *Ibid*, 88.

²⁵ *Ibid*.

²⁶ *Ibid*, 90.

²⁷ *Ibid*.

Anthropometrie work, that his death was a serendipitous end of the cycle, by achieving the final stage of nirvana-like ‘immateriality’ that he sought.²⁸

While shaping Klein’s legacy, Restany also worked to solidify his own credentials as a guiding force in the creation of the art. According to Restany, the pivotal role he played in shaping the public perception of the painting series included giving the works their iconic name, the *Anthropometries*, as well as producing the debut event. After visiting Klein at his studio on February 23, 1960 a couple weeks before the artist would debut his *Anthropometries* performance, Restany claimed to have exclaimed, “anthropometries of the blue period” from which the painting series derives its name.²⁹ The critic even signed the first ever imprint *ANT 85*, along with all who witnessed it—a truly collaborative moment (Klein, Restany, Rotraut, Jacqueline, and Udo Kultermann) along with the writing, “Seen, A new way of modeling” in German.³⁰ (Fig. 9)

Restany acted as a pseudo-Godfather to the *Anthropometries*, christening them after their initial creation by taking on the task of promoting their religious reception and interpretation, and acting as a stand-in to ensure the art world respected Klein’s intent.³¹ He also framed the debut performance in extraordinary language by calling it “The Great Action Spectacle of March 9, 1960,” rather than just his debut performance.³² Restany’s

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid, 88.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ágnes Berecz, “Close Encounters: On Pierre Restany and Nouveau Réalisme,” *New Realisms, 1957-1962: Object Strategies between Readymade and Spectacle*, Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, 2010, 54-55. Kaira Marie Cabañas, “Introduction,” *The Myth of Nouveau Réalisme: Art and the Performative in Postwar France*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013, 8-9.

³² Pierre Restany, *Yves Klein*, New York: H. N. Abrams, 1982, 109.

title emphasized both performance and theatricality inviting others to use ‘spectacle’ as a way to describe the event in the future.

As for the performance itself, Restany again discusses Klein in religious terms that associated the artist with the divine. He stated, “the whole spectacle, directed to perfection by its *deus ex machina*...” a statement that implies an intervening into the art world, as if a God takes action to make an unexpected dramatic change.³³ He further stated that the debut performance was a ”paroxysm of creativity, combined with a cosmogenic expansion of vision” reinforcing the idea that the audience was witnessing a spontaneous act of divine intervention.³⁴ Klein wanted his audience that night to feel as though they were witness to a sacred ritual. Klein purposefully reinforced this through careful curation of the evening.³⁵

Klein’s performance did not end with the completion of the paintings. A discussion took place after the forty-minute performance that Restany claimed was “in order to give Yves time to recover physically....” but photographs and transcript from the discussion depict Klein smirking and smiling cheekily, playfully bantering away with the guests.³⁶ Still, Restany was unwavering in his belief in Klein’s sincerity, “I explained that to the audience that what they had witnessed was the development of a personal rite opening out of a general mythology of energy, its appropriation and impregnation.”³⁷

Integral to Restany’s construct of the pseudo-religious Klein narrative, were his attempts to diffuse any connection to eroticism or sexuality exhibited in process or in the

³³ Ibid, 110.

³⁴ Ibid, 89.

³⁵ Ibid, 120.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

paintings. Some of the ultramarine blue and multi-colored *Anthropometries* paintings were created by having a female assistant straddle a piece of fabric supported by a cylindrical bolster. (Fig. 10) The woman would sit, straddle and imprint her body including her most sexual parts, making very intimate blue markings on the white canvas. As a result, these paintings clearly imprint the female assistants' inner thighs, buttocks, pubic hair and labia. He makes no reference to the fact that they depict the most private female parts rather he obfuscated any sexual association with distraction or misdirection, instead calling them 'butterfly-flowers' an innocuous description that helped maintain Klein's distance from sexual association and conjure up alternative imagery.³⁸ By categorizing some of the paintings as having "butterfly-flower" shapes he shifted focus away from the overt depiction of genitalia towards antiseptic associations subverting then replacing the mental images a viewer may have. These vaginal *Anthropometries* resemble the symmetrical inkblots of Rorschach tests but Restany used them to opposite ends by describing them with language that would force visual association for the viewer. (Fig. 11-12)

Restany went one step further in his manipulation to distance Klein's work from the sexual giving the vaginal *Anthropometries* the sub-category of '*Suaire*' or '*Shroud*' in English.³⁹ While most *Anthropometries* are painted on paper, Restany refers to those on cloth, silk or canvas as '*Suaire*' (or *Shrouds*), pulling from Klein's quote where he stated,

*"With this rather technical demonstration I wanted to, above all, tear away the veil from the temple of the studio...The shreds of this torn veil of the temple of the studio provides me with miraculous shrouds. All is useful to me."*⁴⁰

³⁸ Ibid, 126.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Yves Klein, translated and with an introduction by Klaus Ottmann, *Overcoming the Problematics of Art: The Writings of Yves Klein*, "Truth Becomes Reality," Putnam, Conn: Spring Publications, 2007, 185.

By characterizing the canvas as a shroud, Restany implies that the paintings are transformed into holy relics that provide testament to a miracle, that the act of the female assistants printing their bodies onto the canvases represented some sort of a death. The resulting imprints, in the contexts of the ‘*Suair*’ show the flesh resurrected, transposed into a metaphysical state. For Restany, the canvases serve as tangible witness of liminality, a state of transition between ritual phases. These *Anthropometries Shrouds* are intended to convey a spiritual miracle. His rhetoric on Klein attempted alchemic conversions of Klein’s *Anthropometries*, turning painting into shrouds, vaginas into ‘butterfly-flowers,’ performance into rite and artist into messiah.

Restany curiously explained that Klein needed money in the summer of 1959 to complete various projects and that showing at Galerie Iris Clert wasn’t bringing in enough money so he had to look elsewhere.⁴¹ Restany introduced Klein to Comte d’Arquian, director of the Galerie Internationale d’Art Contemporain and they conceived of the debut performance together.⁴² Restany said that Klein felt that he was finally able to show in a “serious” gallery. It sounds as though, according to Restany’s account, that after breaking with Iris Clert and securing the show at the Galerie Internationale d’Art Contemporain, Klein was forced to put on a grand show in order to secure larger commissions to bring in more money and to catch the attention of the art elites of modern Paris. The debut performance in 1960 has to be taken in this specific context and does not translate onto the processes that created the other 197 or more *Anthropometrie* paintings,

⁴¹ Pierre Restany, *Yves Klein*, New York: H. N. Abrams, 1982, 109.

⁴² *Ibid.*

painted in his private studio, when the stakes were not as high. They did not have to rely on choreography and improvisational showmanship, spectacle and show.

Restany used his close association and friendship to Klein in order to contextualize Klein's writings so that they read as historical record rather than creative writing. It must be acknowledged that it is Restany's language that framed the reception of these paintings; he maintained the public relations for the paintings long after Klein's death.⁴³ His interpretation of Klein's writing in "Truth Becomes Reality" is where Klein the artist becomes Klein the myth, the messiah. Restany's 1982 book transforms Restany into the long lasting spokesperson for Klein, providing the world with his and Rotraut's version of Klein, the Klein that they wanted remembered. The artist's early death at the height of his career grants Klein a certain amount of immortalization. He died in what Restany would believe was mid-crescendo and historians tend to mythologize him with reverence, almost as if casting doubt on a dead man's words would somehow prove profane.

Pierre Restany was not alone in promoting Klein's art historical myth. For the 1982 retrospective at Rice University, the art critic and Rice faculty professor, Thomas McEvelley, assisted him. The show, *Yves Klein: 1928-1962 A Retrospective*, at the Institute for the Arts at Rice University in Houston and its accompanying exhibition catalog provided a platform for new American scholarship on Klein. Both Restany and McEvelley contributed texts for the catalog. Restany wrote an introduction entitled, "Who is Yves Klein" and "Yves Klein: The Ex-Voto for Saint Rita of Cascia," a short essay in

⁴³ Ágnes Berecz, "Close Encounters: On Pierre Restany and Nouveau Réalisme," *New Realisms, 1957-1962: Object Strategies between Readymade and Spectacle*, Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, 2010, 60-61.

which Restany gives testament to Klein's devotion to the worship of the saint. McEvilley wrote two essays, "Conquistador of the Void" and "Yves Klein and Rosicrucianism." The show marked twenty years since Klein's passing and served as an important re-introduction of Klein to the American art world. The companion catalog came to anchor interpretations on Klein, with lasting effects on American art historians thirty five years later.

McEvilley became involved in the 1982 exhibition after agreeing to work with Dominique de Menil, art collector, philanthropist and then founder of the Menil Foundation.⁴⁴ De Menil and McEvilley together conceived the idea for the exhibition in 1977.⁴⁵ The organization, collaboration with hosting institutions and curation was spearheaded by de Menil while McEvilley wrote the exhibition catalog and included the writings from Pierre Restany, Nan Rosenthal among others. Thomas Evilley spent years researching Klein, making frequent trips to Paris to meet with Restany, Klein's widow Rotraut, and many of his friends.⁴⁶ By the time the retrospective opened McEvilley had become very much an intimate member of Klein's coterie. His writings are based on his close proximity or envelopment into Klein's world, and he writes from an emic, insider perspective rather than an objective etic one. Besides his non-objective stance, McEvilley used Klein as a sort of case study in his two essays for the catalog, "Yves Klein: Conquistador of the Void," and "Yves Klein and Rosicrucianism" that both reflected his interest in philology, the study of language in written historical sources, his doctoral

⁴⁴ Thomas McEvilley, and Yves Klein. *Yves the Provocateur: Yves Klein and Twentieth Century Art*, N.Y.: McPherson & Co., 2010, 231.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid, 10-11.

degree subject.⁴⁷ McEvelley's two essays can be seen as unique integrations of his personal interest in historical texts, mapping Klein's biography to his journal writings and reading Max Heindel's *Cosmo-Conception* as being superimposed over his art theories.⁴⁸

Klein's mythology owes a great debt to McEvelley in his first essay for the exhibition catalog, "Conquistador of the Void." In it McEvelley describes Klein's aptness for constructing his own mythology even stating that by doing so he was willing it to happen in a concrete way.⁴⁹ McEvelley acts as a conduit for the artist's mythical intentions. His essay used Klein's biography to build a narrative of Klein as a leader who possessed a holy essence from early childhood until his death. Part one of the essay is specifically telling because McEvelley used an analogy of a game twice. First he quoted Pierre Restany as having said, "He didn't paint to paint, but to reveal his truth...To grasp it, one has to...enter his game."⁵⁰ He then compares Klein's mythology to a game where the momentum is so great one is sucked into playing.⁵¹ For McEvelley Klein the man created Klein the myth and vice versa, becoming indistinguishable. His comparison to a game is intriguing because it suggests that McEvelley is conscious of the pull Klein's personality has on him. Quoting Restany is akin to an awareness that he himself chose to "enter his game."

⁴⁷ Holland Cotter, "Thomas McEvelley, Critic and Defender of Non-Western Art, Dies at 73," *The New York Times*, March 30, 2013.
<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/31/arts/thomas-mcevelley-critic-and-scholar-of-non-western-art-dies-at-73.html>

⁴⁸ McEvelley, Thomas, "Yves Klein and Rosicrucianism," In *Yves Klein, 1928-1962: A Retrospective*, Houston: Institute for the Arts, Rice University, 1982, 239.

⁴⁹ Thomas McEvelley, "Conquistador of the Void," In *Yves Klein, 1928-1962: A Retrospective*, Houston: Institute for the Arts, Rice University, 1982, 21.

⁵⁰ Thomas McEvelley, and Yves Klein. *Yves the Provocateur: Yves Klein and Twentieth-Century Art*, N. Y.: McPherson & Co., 2010, 66.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, 68.

The spiritual and the philosophical, specifically Klein's interest in Rosicrucianism, is McEvelley's main theme in the essay, "Yves Klein and Rosicrucianism." Rosicrucian theory, according to McEvelley, stressed that, "Life is pure spirit, equated with apparently empty space; Form, on the other hand, is bound spirit, and equates with physical matter."⁵² Klein, McEvelley stated, understood these beliefs as a changing of time, where the period of Form gave way to the new era of Life, liberated from bounded form and solid matter humans would transition to a metaphysical and physical weightlessness.⁵³ Thus Klein's art was a reflection of his desire to break from the cycle.

McEvelley believed that Klein's early curiosity in Rosicrucianism and liminal spatial theories served as inspirational models for his artistic theory. However, analyzing the theoretical aspects of Klein's process and product, they both seem to miss an obvious point of evaluation: Klein's *Anthropometries*, principally the work *People Begin to Fly*, 1961, exhibit lighthearted playful sensuality, seeping with sexual energy, not clouded by deep abstract philosophical weight. Anthropometries themselves are spirited in their subject and obvious symbolism, female form and sexuality. In addition to the lack of recognition of playfulness, missing from much of the literature is discourse on the erotic nature of the Anthropometries.

The adherence to Klein's myth and the aversions to associations of sexuality illustrate that the writings of Restany and McEvelley in 1982 represent biased art historical analysis that was essentially done in the service of a friend, completed in a very

⁵² Thomas McEvelley, "Yves Klein and Rosicrucianism." In *Yves Klein, 1928-1962: A Retrospective*. Houston: Institute for the Arts, Rice University, 1982, 239.

⁵³ Ibid.

non-objective way. The 1982 exhibition on Klein was the first major retrospective since the 1967 retrospective at the Jewish Museum in New York.⁵⁴ It was hosted in major cities, Houston, Chicago and New York, which meant that it set the foundation for how the American art audience would come to know and interpret Klein's work.⁵⁵ The two men acted as caretakers of Klein's legacy, carrying the mantle of 'immateriality' forward for future art generations. Their writings must be understood in this context. Subsequent art historians who have taken the words of these men as truth on Klein ignored their personal biases. Propagating myths over variance of interpretation limits the potential richness of discussion of the *Anthropometries*.

Nan Rosenthal, National Gallery of Art modern art curator, contributed to the *Yves Klein: 1928-1962 A Retrospective* catalog, writing the essay entitled, "Assisted Levitation: The Art of Yves Klein," which provided a chronological and biographical context for understanding Klein's ability to drift between the contradictions of sincerity and disingenuity over his brief seven years of artistic production.⁵⁶ She cited Klein as an important post-WWII European artist who posed a good test case of art produced contemporary to, but outside of the New York School. For Rosenthal, Klein's contradictions placed him somewhere between two opposite poles of art theory, between Kazimir Malevich and Marcel Duchamp, "a range which shuttles between the profoundly idealistic and the cynical or misanthropic, or it could be described as a range from the utopian to the conspicuously fraudulent (conspicuous in the sense that tricks are not

⁵⁴ Dominique de Menil, "About Yves Klein...About the Exhibition," In *Yves Klein, 1928-1962: A Retrospective*, Houston: Institute for the Arts, Rice University, 1982, 8.

⁵⁵ Thomas McEvelley, and Yves Klein. *Yves the Provocateur: Yves Klein and Twentieth-Century Art*, N. Y.: McPherson & Co., 2010, 12.

⁵⁶ Nan Rosenthal, "Assisted Levitation: The Art of Yves Klein," In *Yves Klein, 1928-1962: A Retrospective*, Houston: Institute for the Arts, Rice University, 1982, 91.

concealed but left instead of left for the observer to notice).”⁵⁷ What is striking about her essay is the tone. She writes with less sympathy for Klein than McEvelley, laying out the artist’s history as well as the controversial nature of his work that causes divides in criticism. She says that it is difficult to discern if he was an art prophet too far ahead of his time yet gone too soon, or perhaps a conjurer cunningly tricking the art world through arrogant spectacle.⁵⁸ Rosenthal sees this issue as one that makes him and his work contentious yet alluring.

Of the three main contributors to the *Yves Klein: 1928-1962 A Retrospective* catalog, it took the work of a woman, modern art curator Nan Rosenthal to offer the first analysis of Klein and his *Anthropometrie* works that acknowledged the sensuality in the female imprints. Most important in Rosenthal’s essay, that is most pertinent to this thesis, is the fact that she is one of the few art historians who analyzed Klein’s *Anthropometrie* paintings as singular works of art. She discusses key elements of the paintings and directly discusses the female assistants and their imprints. While highlighting the paintings as art objects outside of Klein the man and myth, Rosenthal conceded that the paintings are inherently tied to how they were created and that their process is indeed a part of their visual interpretation.⁵⁹ It is difficult to completely separate painting from the fact that it is an imprint of a naked woman but it is Rosenthal’s calling of attention to these facts that begins the conversation on Klein, his female assistants and their infamous body prints.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 125.

CHAPTER 2:

Nan Rosenthal provided a departure from the spirituality that Restany and McEvilley's interpretations provided for Klein's *Anthropometries*. Where she discussed Klein as the man behind the curtain, many subsequent American art historians continue to grant Klein the power of cloaked art wizard. Rosenthal's essay was written in the early 1980s in the time between second and third wave feminism showing glimpses of feminist critique. Rosenthal's "Assisted Levitation: The Art of Yves Klein" remains one of the most cited sources for American scholarship on Klein in the last thirty years. As a result, her direct analysis of his *Anthropometries* set into motion future feminist oriented analyses of Klein.

In her essay, Rosenthal is aware of the implications of Klein's use of naked female bodies even stating that Klein's painting process for the *Anthropometries* was "misanthropic or, more precisely, misogynistic means were employed."⁶⁰ Her claim is that Klein caused his female assistants, "acute discomfort," due to the paint being smeared on their bodies yet her only evidence for such abuse is that the women had to bathe after printing their bodies.⁶¹ Rosenthal is quick to backtrack saying that her goal is not to call Klein out for "antifeminist" practices but she clearly opened the door for subsequent scholars. She further states that Klein's audience functioned as voyeurs "who get a kick out of watching naked women make fools of themselves in public."⁶² Rosenthal felt that Klein's *Anthropometries* subjected the female assistants to

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

unnecessary exploitation but her statement shows projections of judgment that frame the women as victims when they willingly worked for Klein.

Academic scholarship on Klein turned in the 1990s from an emphasis on the spiritual nature of his work to discourse on the sexual themes of Klein's performative creation of his *Anthropometries*. This shift is due in no small part to the third wave of feminism in the late eighties and early nineties. Academics like philosopher and gender theorist Judith Butler began to shift the feminist conversation towards gender roles and gendered stereotypes that she believes to be socially and culturally constructed.⁶³ After Nan Rosenthal and the 1982 retrospective, art historian Amelia Jones is one of the first to expand on Klein outside of the mystical narrative he constructed for himself that had been perpetuated with the help of Pierre Restany and Thomas McEvelley. Jones' 1994 *Art History* article, "Dis/Playing the Phallus: Male Artists Perform their Masculinities," takes Klein scholarship in a new direction, viewing his March 9th, 1960 performance of the *Anthropometries* as a gendered act of masculine performativity.⁶⁴

In Jones' article she compares several male performance artists- Yves Klein, Robert Morris, Vito Acconci and Chris Burden - looking specifically at the use of their bodies in art performance. As previously mentioned, Jones' article marks a turning point in the discourse surrounding the sexual, even erotic nature of Klein's *Anthropometrie* work. Rather than addressing the use and representation of the female bodies used in the

⁶³ Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory," *Theatre Journal* 40, No. 4, 1988, 521.

⁶⁴ Amelia Jones, "Dis/Playing the Phallus: Male Artists Perform their Masculinities," In *Art History*, Vol. 17, No. 4, December 1994, Oxford and Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1994, 563-564.

paintings, Jones focuses on Klein's masculinity and performance.⁶⁵ She targets Klein's performative process, not the sexual female representations/imprints left on the *Anthropometrie* works. Whereas previously Restany and McEvelley had focused on Klein's writings and theories on art and Rosenthal looked at the entire body of works as a whole, Jones isolated Klein's infamous debut and other unnamed public performances of the *Anthropometries*. This choice on Jones' part pushes Klein's *Anthropometries* into the realm of performance, opening new channels of discourse but closing the door on substantive visual analysis of the paintings. Not including thorough visual analysis of these imprints erases the women's contribution to the work, further allowing Klein to assume sole authorship. The painted ultramarine blue markings left on white canvas serve as indices made by the female painting performers and should act as timestamps of the work that was done by the female performers.

American art historical scholarship since 1982 had focused on Klein's writings and art theories as spiritual inspired by his interests in eastern religious theory, intense Judo practice and Rosicrucian study. Even though aspects of Klein's *Anthropometrie* paintings and artistic process can be seen as highly sexual in nature, Restany and McEvelley had argued that his religious beliefs led to the highly controlled ritualistic performances that created them. Klein saw himself as a martial arts master, completely in tune with and in control of his art.⁶⁶ His *Anthropometries* thus reflect a shamanistic or priest like control over his female assistants, what he referred to as "living brushes," and even over his captivated audience.

⁶⁵ Ibid, 562.

⁶⁶ Yves Klein, translated and with an introduction by Klaus Ottmann, *Overcoming the Problematics of Art: The Writings of Yves Klein*, "Truth Becomes Reality," Putnam, Conn: Spring Publications, 2007, 185.

Amelia Jones compared Klein with artists who directly showed control or manipulation over their physical bodies/genitalia. Klein used, in her terms, a “veiled” phallus turned outward to gesture to other beings, as an extension of his masculine power and authority.⁶⁷ The phallus, according to Jones, is implied in Klein’s work, imagined and interpreted and thus “veiled,” while other artists Jones discusses -- Morris, Burden and Acconci -- are much more overt and direct with theirs. Klein specifically used the female body instead of his own for his debut performance, carefully evading physical contact with the canvas, medium or participant. For Jones, Klein used his performance to assert aggressive male authority or his symbolic “phallus.”⁶⁸ His insistence that he maintained a purity and distance from the female assistants bodies argued against gendered interpretations of his work, legitimizing his artistic detachment intellectually, in a way that attempted to neutralize sexual critique.

Klein’s choice to veil his own body is at the center of Jones’ critical analysis. Her use of the term “veiled phallus” insinuates an assault on the female assistants minds. It proposes that his control over the artistic process was akin to penetrating their minds without their having an ability to control it, suggesting they lacked conscious decision-making ability. Throughout the article’s section on Klein, Jones takes issue with his decision to “veil” his body while his female assistants remain naked as he actively chooses to keep his body out of direct contact with his tools, the women or the medium, the paint. Veiling the phallus increases masculine power according to Jones’ argument.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Amelia Jones, “Dis/Playing the Phallus: Male Artists Perform their Masculinities,” In *Art History*, Vol. 17, No. 4, December 1994, Oxford and Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1994, 564.

⁶⁸ Ibid, 562.

⁶⁹ Ibid, 563.

What she hinted at here is that Klein is placing himself within an art historical context of male master painter. Jones cites a statement made by Klein as proof of his authorship over his creation:

*The living brushes are under the constant direction of my commands...Personally I would never attempt to smear paint over my own body and become a living brush; on the contrary, I would rather put on my tuxedo and wear white gloves. I would not even think of dirtying my hands with paint. Detached and distant, the work of art must complete itself before my eyes and under my command. Thus, as soon as the work is realized, I stand there, present at the ceremony, spotless, calm, relaxed, worthy of it, and ready to receive it as it is born into the tangible world...*⁷⁰

Female bodies are of the utmost importance to Klein's process of creating his *Anthropometries* yet here he seemed to take responsibility and credit for his works in a way that denies and denigrates the female involvement in the artistic creation. Klein's use of language, particularly of the term "born" for example, suggested remote impregnation. Klein's control over the process is symbolic of his virility and masculine power that remotely guides and controls the growth and birth of an artwork. The "work" is anthropomorphized; it is born as a living thing in the eyes of Klein. Jones is critical of his refusal to grant any authorial credit to the women involved; they were just mediums through which his divine authority could work.⁷¹ His language in the quote evokes and directly references pregnancy and birth without crediting a woman's role but rather granting a nascent agency to an inanimate object, a painting.

Absent from Jones' analysis of Klein's work is a discussion around the metaphorical birth of the *Anthropometries*. What is not recognized is the real problem of

⁷⁰ Ibid, 561.

⁷¹ Ibid, 562. Klein does refer to his work with the women as "collaborations" in his essay "Truth Becomes Reality." Klein stated, "The work completed itself in front of me, with the absolute collaboration of the models..." Yves Klein, translated and with an introduction by Klaus Ottmann, *Overcoming the Problematics of Art: The Writings of Yves Klein*, "Truth Becomes Reality," Putnam, Conn: Spring Publications, 2007, 183.

representation inherent in Klein's *Anthropometries*. Jones misses an opportunity to address Klein's blatant theft of one of the most intrinsic female properties: the ability to create and give birth. A close reading of Klein's quote provided by Jones shows that Klein seizes the practice of artistic genesis. In doing so, he diminishes the unique role a woman plays in creation, a role she has been historically associated with. Instead Klein "births" the paintings remotely, creator of process and idea but not weighed down by the physical method of painting.⁷²

Klein's repulsion from the dirtiness of the process implies that the female assistants too are dirty. As the women sacrifice their bodies to a messy, physical process, Klein takes refuge in a distant command, free from the rigors and mess involved in creation. His suggestion of sole authorship of the nascent artwork disregards the role of the women he so heavily relies on. The quote shows that the only collaboration Klein suggests acknowledging is the collaboration with a higher power or with the painting itself. Kept pure like some sort of male Madonna figure, Klein remotely aids the painting in its inception using his female assistants as conduits through which the paintings are completed. Klein's disinterest in sharing authorship diminishes the agency of the women who produced the work by implying that they did so under his control.⁷³ While Jones is critical of Klein refusing to share authorship, her focus on Klein's masculine control contributes to the overshadowing of the agency of the female assistants. Upon the paintings' completion Klein remarks that he then accepts the work ceremoniously, "spotless, calm, relaxed, worthy of it, and ready to receive it as it is born into the tangible

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

world...’’⁷⁴ He is essentially juxtaposing himself with the role of a woman in labor and assuming a biological process reserved for women.

Jones believes that by “veiling” his body he inserts himself within the patriarchal art historical narrative that has exploited the nude female form for centuries. However, by distancing himself to such an extreme degree, to only paint by proxy, he subverts the heroic nature of the action painters whose bodies were so integral to their process, a process that he claimed to despise. His distance or lack of or his lack of interaction with the painting during the 1960 debut performance is what is equally alluring and deviant.⁷⁵ She finds herself pulled into Klein’s vortex, drawn to the bravado of the artist and in turn, playing his game. For Jones, is Klein’s performance that is most subversive, upending the traditional relationship an artist, especially a painter, has to his work. Klein distanced himself from any tactile engagement with the female assistants, the paint and the paper; instead he acted as detached, omnipotent creator overseeing a process carried out by proxy bodies. While Jones objects to his full authorship over the paintings arguing in favor of collaboration, she continues by commenting on Klein’s ironic subversion of the hero action painter.⁷⁶ For her, Klein’s detachment from painting only further increased his phallic power and mastery. His sole authority and detachment is ironic in that he subverts the traditional role a painter has to his work while continuing to maintain his control and power.

Klein contradicts his detached artist version of himself with works like “People Begin to Fly” where he sprayed paint over female bodies creating outlines, a direct

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid, 563.

⁷⁶ Ibid, 562.

connection of the artist with application of paint to the *Anthropometries*. Photographs commissioned by Klein of his work in the studio also show that he was intimately involved with the creation of the *Anthropometries* through touch. (Fig. 13-17) Klein is seen in these photos hands on with his female assistants, positioning their bodies as he wants them, smearing paint with his hands onto their bodies, as well as spraying paint over their bodies to create the negative imprints. These photos destabilize Klein's claim of detached purity, his 'clean' hands and perhaps even a clean mind are called into question. The existence of these photos shows that the distance he insisted on can only be isolated to his grand debut performance. Generalizing all of the *Anthropometries* together with the debut performance conflates a highly choreographed and curated performance with the less dramatized in-studio private art production. More attention needs to be paid to visual analysis of individual *Anthropometrie* paintings without continually referencing back to the March 9, 1960 debut performance as their processes differed greatly as evident in studio photos of Klein at work with his female assistants.

Jones' analysis of Klein, especially her attention to his gendered performance, shows the influence gender theorist Judith Butler had with her landmark 1988 essay for *Theatre Journal* entitled, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory." Butler attested that gender as we understand it is malleable, constructed through an individual's performative acts or what she terms as 'stylized repetition of acts.'⁷⁷ These acts are reactions to the exterior social world, not all reflecting a person's internal gendered self therefore creating a constructed gendered

⁷⁷ Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory," *Theatre Journal* 40, No. 4, 1988, 519.

identity that is performed like an actor to an audience.⁷⁸ Butler takes inspiration from Simone de Beauvoir's, "one is not born, but, rather, *becomes* a woman."⁷⁹ This phrase by de Beauvoir laid the groundwork for Butler's theory of performative acts and gender constitution. Butler believed gender is something shaped through performative acts for a social audience for a specific time. This gendered self may also change as a person's relationship to time and place changes.⁸⁰ Applying Butler's theory to Klein would show that he was trying to bolster his masculinity by dressing and acting in a masculine way. Rather than performing machismo, Klein may have been displaying deep insecurities that ultimately undermine the bravado elaborated on by Amelia Jones.

For his March 9th, 1960 debut performance, Klein did make a concerted effort to style himself as a well-groomed man, complete with white tie, gloves and medallion from the Order of the Archers of St. Sebastian. During the performance Klein orchestrated and choreographed the movements of his female assistants through measured hand gestures, keeping the highest form of composure.⁸¹ His choice in costume, white tie, a sartorial choice reserved for gentlemen, clean white gloves emphasizing his clean hands and thus detachment as artist from physical creation of art object, and a medallion specifically from a fraternal order that set him apart as an honorable member of an exclusive group. Klein used his outward appearance at the performance less as a means of convincing his audience of his masculinity and more of virtue signaling his purity and power but most

⁷⁸ Ibid, 520.

⁷⁹ Ibid, 519.

⁸⁰ Ibid, 520.

⁸¹ Yves Klein. *Anthropométrie de l'époque bleue (2'26")*, March 9, 1960. Galerie International d'Art Contemporain, 253 Rue Saint Honoré, Paris, France. "Archives: Movies," *Yves Klein Archives*.
http://www.yveskleinarchives.org/documents/films_us.html

important his devotion to his art.⁸² Klein's appearance showed an acceptance on his part of a belief that he was artistic nobility, a sort of artistic noblesse oblige, where Klein was tasked with the responsibility of leading modern French art into a new era and even spiritual realm.

Klein's inclusion of the Order of the Archers of St. Sebastian medallion may have indicated his readiness for martyrdom in the name of art. St. Sebastian was purported to have miraculously survived being shot full of arrows.⁸³ Klein invited critics and peers alike, (including artist George Mathieu who took issue with the similarity Klein's *Anthropometries* had to his own performative painted art), to a discussion after his debut performance.⁸⁴ Perhaps St. Sebastian served as a symbol that criticism, like arrows would not kill him or his ideas. Wearing the medallion and the costume of a wealthy gentleman enabled Klein to posture himself as an elite member of the fine arts who was impenetrable from attacks on his art and ideas.

Klein used costume as a means of signaling in a performative way but he was not using his own body in the same way Burden and Acconci used their bodies as analyzed by Jones. The latter two artists use their bodies as medium, tool and concept transforming their bodies into total art objects.⁸⁵ While Klein used his body to project a symbolic idea and used it to gesture to his female assistants, asserting that Klein engaged in 'body art'

⁸² Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, "Formalism and Historicity," *New Realisms, 1957-1962: Object Strategies between Readymade and Spectacle*, Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, 2010, 91.

⁸³ Richard A. Kaye, "'Determined Raptures': St. Sebastian and the Victorian Discourse of Decadence." *Victorian Literature and Culture*, Vol. 27, No. 1, 1999, 270.

⁸⁴ Pierre Restany, *Yves Klein*, New York: H. N. Abrams, 1982, 120.

⁸⁵ Amelia Jones, "Dis/Playing the Phallus: Male Artists Perform their Masculinities," In *Art History*, Vol. 17, No. 4, December 1994, Oxford and Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1994, 564, 568.

as suggested by Amelia Jones would redefine what constitutes as art for Klein's work. It would then mean that Klein's 'art' began and ended with him. In actuality the *Anthropometries* also encompassed the female assistants and the printed paintings their bodies created. Labeling Klein's debut performance of his *Anthropometries* as 'body art' as posited by Jones would be yet another way in which the female assistants lose visibility as valuable contributors to Klein's art.

Jones builds on Rosenthal's interpretation of exploitation by stating that Klein abused the female bodies more obviously and sensationally than performances done by Robert Morris, *Waterman Switch* (1965) and *Site* (1965), because Klein veils his body while exploiting the naked female form.⁸⁶ It is the veiling of the male form hiding behind the naked female form that Jones is critical of, not necessarily Klein's use of the female body as art tool. Contrary to Jones, Klein's choice in keeping the women nude from the beginning of the performance should validate his decision to have nude figures painting because there was no striptease or disrobing that could be misconstrued as part of the performance. His control over the bodies she quickly mentions as abusive but fails to give explanation as to why and how his abuse persists.⁸⁷ In his 1982 book, even Restany stressed that Klein had found a new painting medium that did not cause his assistants discomfort when trying to remove the paint, creating a special formula that was not too sticky or greasy which "could be used without discomfort or danger."⁸⁸ She quotes Klein discussing his aversion to "dirtying my hands with paint" not drawing attention to the fact that he was de facto okay with women "dirtying" themselves. Nor does she address

⁸⁶ Ibid, 560.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Pierre Restany, *Yves Klein*, New York: H. N. Abrams, 1982, 87.

Klein's calculated reasoning for choosing bodies at all. If abuses really did occur as Jones suggested there should be a record of such or interviews corroborating this as truth. In fact there are no stories of abuse instead the assistants speak fondly of their participation.⁸⁹

Few writings have given much if any attention to the female assistants, who they were and how they felt about working with Klein. Besides Rotraut Uecker there seems to have been a number of other women involved in the painting process. Jacqueline, Helena, Elena have all been referred to in scholarship and their names have been used to title some of Klein's paintings. Elena Polumba-Mosca is one model that has been interviewed and has spoken out against negative discourse on Klein's use of women's bodies. Polumba-Mosca was interviewed for the exhibition catalog *Yves Klein* in an excerpt titled, "When Someone Asks Me..." in 2004. Polumba-Mosca recalled the experience, saying that she, "had an intense happy experience of reality..." and that, creating *Anthropometries* was somehow a ritual."⁹⁰ Other than Klein's widow Rotraut, Elena Polumba-Mosca seems to speak on behalf of all of the women. The other women's stories have yet to be heard but in the meantime scholarship on Klein would benefit from a more thorough investigation into how the women who created these paintings with their bodies truly felt about a painting process that used their nude bodies.⁹¹

⁸⁹ Elena Palumbo-Mosca, "When Someone Asks Me...", In *Yves Klein*. Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz, 2004, 118.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Jill Carrick, "Phallic Victories? Nouveau Réaliste Performance," *Nouveau Réalisme, 1960s France, and the Neo-Avant-Garde: Topographies of Chance and Return*, Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2010, 119-120.

Despite her criticism of Klein's authorship and language regarding the use of his female assistants, Jones too seems to ignore the treatment of women and the feminine in the *Anthropometries*. She largely omits a discussion of the female body only focusing on the implied phallic power possessed by Klein through his performative gestures. Her main grievance is what she terms Klein's "veiled phallus" but it is difficult to imagine an unveiled phallus would offend her less. This preoccupation with Klein's phallus and its implied power takes potential analysis away from the female assistants roles in the works.⁹² Jones sees the female bodies as phallic extensions of Klein, objectified as tools under his control. Her critique does not validate the free will and agency possessed by these women. In missing the issue of agency Jones, like Klein, infantilizes the decision-making abilities of adult women reducing their contributions to coerced actions of victims. She discussed the female bodies but neglects discussion on them as women, supporting Klein's view of them as 'models,' objects, tools not legitimizing them as sentient beings. In truth, Klein's female assistants were paid; choosing to participate willingly and even recalled positive even transformative experiences working with Klein.⁹³

Jones relies on interpretation of Klein's debut performance as a means of justifying her accusations of abuse towards his female assistants however she may have found stronger examples of the treatment of female bodies found in visual analysis evident in the *Anthropometries*. Klein's spray paint technique in *People Begin to Fly*

⁹² Jill Carrick, "Phallic Victories? Nouveau Réaliste Performance," *Nouveau Réalisme, 1960s France, and the Neo-Avant-Garde: Topographies of Chance and Return*, Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2010, 119-120.

⁹³ Elena Palumbo-Mosca, "When Someone Asks Me..." In *Yves Klein. Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz*, 2004, 118.

created negative forms that deleted his female assistants forms. It is as though he erased them from the canvas leaving ghostly, hallow spaces where women's bodies once stood. The more classic, purely imprinted female bodies seen in the majority of his *Anthropometries* like *ANT 85*, 1960 that depicts truncated forms missing the lower limb extremities and heads. (Fig. 9) Klein's focus was always on what he considered the "trunk."⁹⁴

"...I very quickly perceived that it was the block of the human body, which is to say, the trunk and a part of the thighs that fascinated me. The hands, the arms, the head, the legs were of no importance. Only the body is alive, all powerful, and it does not think. The head, the arms, the hands are intellectual articulations around the flesh, which is the body!"⁹⁵

His fascination with the "trunk and a part of the thighs" underscores the sensuality the paintings emit as the imprints show sexualized, not "intellectual" parts of the flesh. The parts of the female body Klein is concerned with fall into two categories, sexual or maternal, showing an underlying interest in the erotic and prenatal functions of the female body. His paintings represent lover or mother explicitly omitting what he considered "intellectual articulations around the flesh."

In comparison, the Surrealist photographer, Raoul Ubac, manipulated images of the female form with far greater visual implications of abuse and violence than Klein did with his *Anthropometries*. Ubac's solarized photograph series entitled *Penthésilée* inspired by the Amazonian queen Penthesilea and specifically his *Sans Titre*, "Penthésilée," 1938, show a variety of sections of bodies, some male but mostly female.

⁹⁴ Yves Klein, translated and with an introduction by Klaus Ottmann, *Overcoming the Problematics of Art: The Writings of Yves Klein*, "Truth Becomes Reality," Putnam, Conn: Spring Publications, 2007, 182. Jill Carrick, "Phallic Victories? Nouveau Réaliste Performance," *Nouveau Réalisme, 1960s France, and the Neo-Avant-Garde: Topographies of Chance and Return*, Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2010, 120.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

(Fig.18) The female forms in Ubac's black and white photographs are spliced and sliced, parts tuned and displaced making form difficult to visually piece back together. His treatment of the photographs, the solarization, gives a burning effect. What the viewer is left with is a visual heap of body parts, fleshy curves push and pull from the background into the foreground and delicate arms extend up and down, in and out. His figures seem to want to escape the burning pool they are seemingly drowning in or the fire and smoke that they writhe in and out of only enhanced by the monotone gray scale.

Klein's *Anthropometries* possess less of a degree of violent feelings or imagery. The paintings depict full, fleshy imprints of bodies unlike the amputated limbs and cross-sections of Ubac's nude forms. Klein's use of ultramarine blue imbues a certain calm that comes along with cool color tones but captivates the viewer with the a bright contrast against white canvas. His female assistants' imprints are more or less still in natural anatomical positions. Ubac's nudes seem to fade into nothingness without a hold on reality, fleeting, and ethereal bodies without the substance of the *Anthropometries*. The nature of imprints is that they reflect the touch of real flesh onto canvas. Ubac's photographs of bodies are more separated from the grounding reality of the female assistants who posed for them due to Ubac's extent of photographic overlay, overexposure and cutting of the images. Ubac's manipulation of the photograph creates a distance from the original subject and finished product. This disconnect from being or body presented in Ubac's photograph helps strengthen the feeling of estrangement, violation, and violence.

Even though his expressed intent was to separate himself from the art, medium and canvas, Klein chose sexualized *female* bodies for his March 9, 1960 debut

performance, not male ones, which differs from the other artists Jones highlights, with the exception of Robert Morris. The female assistants are young, outwardly healthy, beautiful woman with voluptuous figures and the paintings highlight female bodies parts that are associated with stimulating arousal and sexual desire. If Klein was ambivalent about his female assistants then why use women at all, and better yet, why young, attractive, voluptuous women? It seemed like his choice of female assistants was not arbitrary but highly calculated. Their imprints are essentially female, full breasts, bellies and thighs that leave indexes highly charged with sensuality and femininity. Jones, as a feminist art historian, chose to focus instead on masculinity in his body language and performance from the photographs that documented his process. While her contribution to readings of Klein's *Anthropometries* opened doors to discuss Klein in a new, sexualized way, her feminist analysis is curiously incomplete and lacks an analysis of the *Anthropometries* as painted objects.

Equally interesting is that in her own way Jones succumbs to the allure of Klein's *Anthropometrie* performances, which she readily admits.⁹⁶ Her willingness to bow to Klein's seductiveness calls into question the strength of her feminist argument. Jones choice to focus her criticism on deconstructing and critiquing his performative masculinity and in doing so enhances the phallic power that is problematic for her. In addition, she took his stated intentions as gospel, not questioning his motives for curating a particular narrative. While Jones accomplished the task of turning away from mysticism her perspective remained male centered with its focus on Klein's performativity.

⁹⁶ Amelia Jones, "Dis/Playing the Phallus: Male Artists Perform their Masculinities," In *Art History*, Vol. 17, No. 4, December 1994, Oxford and Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1994, 563.

Writing after Jones' 1994 analysis on Klein's *Anthropometries*, other art historians, including Sidra Stich and Nicole Root have all approached the Klein's *Anthropometries* with varied interests in their sexual nature. Only a year after Jones in 1995, American art historian Sidra Stich curated a European show on Klein, entitled *Yves Klein*. In addition she wrote an extensive accompanying exhibition catalog on Klein's life and work. For the catalog she devotes an entire section to Klein's *Anthropometries* fully describing all events that led to their inception and their large and varied body of work. As a whole, Stich's passage on the *Anthropometries* reads as a chronology interspersed with quotes from Klein's 1960 *ZERO* essay "Truth Becomes Reality." One paragraph stands out where she describes *Anthropometries* such as *L'exil d'Ischia*, 1961 and *Sans Titre (ANT 100)*, 1960 that contain male imprints, possible of Klein's own body. (Fig. 19-20) She contends that Klein used his body and that of some of his male friends to attempt to create body prints that were vaguely male, straddling the line of ambiguously gendered.⁹⁷ This assertion by Stich is no small claim as it contradicts Klein's writings about his 'distance' from the work as well as the abuses perceived by Jones and Rosenthal. A contradiction of this magnitude casts doubt on all of Klein's rhetoric.

In her 2004 essay, "Precious Bodily Fluids," for the exhibition catalog *Yves Klein*, Nicole Root explores Klein's embrace of the abject, in the *Anthropometries* specifically, his obsession with bodily fluids as represented by his ultramarine blue paint. The abject Root refers to comes directly out of feminist theorist Julia Kristeva's definition of the abject defined in her 1982 book, *Powers of Horrors: An Essay on Abjection*, in which Kristeva describes the abject, "It is thus not a lack of cleanliness of health that causes

⁹⁷ Sidra Stich, and Yves Klein, "Anthropometry Painting," In *Yves Klein*. Ostfildern: Cantz, 1994, 177.

abjection but what disturbs identity, system, order. What does not respect borders, positions, rules. The in-between, the ambiguous, the composite.”⁹⁸ For Root, Klein’s use of paint on the female assistants’ bodies substitutes a sort of bodily fluid that exemplifies Klein’s interested revulsion in the abject, something that bridges the gap between the corporeal and spiritual. Klein’s ultramarine blue paint printed off of female bodies and genitalia imprints itself leaving the viewer unsure of the origin or type of fluid it is to be associated with. This uncertainty and aversion to the indefinable is what constitutes abjection for the paint simulating bodily fluids in the *Anthropometries*. Klein obsessively circles back to bodily fluids but admonishes them, keeping himself clean for performance.⁹⁹ As mentioned previously, photographic evidence shows that he did get dirty in the privacy of his studio while not on view for an audience as part of a “ritual” perhaps proving how the ritual was more spectacle than true belief. Christian and Rosicrucian theories helped shape Klein’s beliefs and in dealing with bodily fluids, these theories rationalized the abject as something having to do with the spiritual realm.¹⁰⁰ Root outlined Klein’s ability to shift meaning between religion and sexuality by framing them around his search to attain total liberation from artistic process or what he referred to as the ‘Void.’

Spiritual transcendence aside, Root set forth an examination of the graphic, sexual imagery in Klein’s *Anthropometries* that is most pertinent here. A series of paintings in

⁹⁸ Julia Kristeva and Leon S. Roudiez, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1982, 4.

⁹⁹ Yves Klein, translated and with an introduction by Klaus Ottmann, *Overcoming the Problematics of Art: The Writings of Yves Klein*, “Truth Becomes Reality,” Putnam, Conn: Spring Publications, 2007, 183.

¹⁰⁰ Root, Nicole. “Precious Bodily Fluids.” In *Yves Klein*. Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz, 2004, 142.

his *Anthropometrie* collection are more visually explicit than the other full body markings. These paintings are imprints, referred to by Restany as 'Suaires' or 'Shrouds' featuring women's genitals, buttocks, thighs, stomachs and sometimes breast areas. The paintings like *Untitled (ANT 120)*, do in fact resemble butterflies where the woman's thighs shape the elongated forewings, the buttocks creates the lower lobe shaped hind wings and the labia, pubic region paints the small area of the butterfly's abdomen. (Fig. 21) Taking a quick glance at one of these *Anthropometries* one might say that they indeed look like butterflies without knowing that they are made with the most private parts on a woman's body. Restany's attempt to divert sexual innuendo by employing the words butterfly and flower to describe these paintings, resulting in ironic associations to sex and the female body with feminine implications. Butterflies and flowers open to reveal beauty inside their closed petals/wings, possibly an allusion to a woman opening herself up sexually. Both terms evoke beautiful but ephemeral ornaments, delicate objects rather than substantive fully actualized beings. The resulting terminology that was adopted by Restany becomes a stereotypical reduction of a woman's sexuality using illustrative description as diversion that denies the women the opportunity to be subject not object.

Root makes important visual associations to vaginal imagery by comparing these straddled vaginal paintings like Klein's *Untitled (ANT 120)*, 1960 to the work of Gustave Courbet with his *L'Origine du Monde*, 1866 and similarly that of Hans Bellmer, *Untitled*, 1946 exposing their erotic nature. All three paintings' compositions focus on naked spread legged women lying down. Klein's *Untitled (ANT 120)* and similar paintings are *Anthropometries* but at their most basic they are vaginal imprints dripping with paint,

bringing forth allusions to seminal fluid and menstrual blood as pointed out by Root.¹⁰¹ She even states that Pierre Restany admitted that one *Anthropometrie* female assistant recalled having “orgasmic sensations” while imprinting an *Anthropometrie* painting. It is the comparison made by Root that truly highlights the imagery masked by the term “butterfly-flower” by showing how explicitly sexual the paintings really are.

Root’s contributions illustrate the shift in scholarship after Jones. Her essay focuses less on Klein the performer of masculinity and phallic power that was so pervasive in Jones’ article, focusing on feminist concerns over gender construction and patriarchal influence, instead Root offers a more in-depth analysis on the visual and rhetorical connections of Klein’s work and words. She exposes Klein as a chameleon who was able to use religion to his benefit while creating erotic artwork.

Klein’s stated interest was how the fluidity inherent in paint as medium directly corresponded to his interest in bodily fluids, a medium that represented his search to shed his body for a higher spiritual realm.¹⁰² Of issue here is Root’s ability to call Klein out for his blatant erotic imagery. Her framing of Klein’s depiction of the abject, of the excess bodily fluids that the ultramarine blue paint relies on associations to menstrual blood, ejaculate and sweat but she neglects the option of vaginal fluid as a possibility. This discrepancy in interpretation denies the female bodies depicted in the *Anthropometries* sexuality outside of an oppressed narrative. Root comes close to liberating the vaginal *Anthropometrie* imprints from male-centered eroticism or from the association of the vagina to menstrual blood but she misses the mark and is unable to grant the paintings a female oriented sexual reading.

¹⁰¹ Ibid, 144.

¹⁰² Ibid.

The photos of Klein and his female assistants can be juxtaposed with those of female artists like Shigeko Kubota and Carolee Schneemann whose documentary photos of their performances show the women assertively engaged in using their own bodies as part of the total art process. In the cases of Kubota's *Vagina Painting*, 1965, and Schneemann's *Interior Scroll*, 1975, the two women are shown using their vaginas as active tools and mediums for their performance art. (Fig. 22-23) Unlike the scholarship on Klein's *Anthropometrie* assistants, Kubota and Schneemann are seen as being in control of their own sexual agency, projecting their gender and eroticism onto their art under their own terms. This discrepancy between overt female agencies with vaginas vs. the passive vaginal imagery in Klein's is not discussed in the same way, posing an art historical double standard.

American scholars like Jones, Stich and Root have examined Klein and his *Anthropometries* through in-process photos of the artist and his female assistants painting in his private studio. It has been stated and reiterated by Rosenthal, Jones and Stich that Klein used photography to document his process and performance sometimes even pre-choreographed for dramatic effect. Photography and film played an important role for Klein's work as it allowed him to frame the context of the process of his paintings for future interpretation. As previously seen by Jones in her article on Klein's masculinity, photos and film present a dichotomy regarding the role female assistants. The photographs are two-sided; on one hand they allow scholars to contextualize the paintings' process in a way that forces more analysis onto Klein, diminishing the female assistant role. Yet without photographs the women would be completely disconnected

from the history of the paintings. The photos show the best examples of the female assistants in the process of creation.

CHAPTER 3:

Klein's *Anthropometrie* paintings seen through black and white photography and film, – painted through the use of female models' bodies in a highly choreographed show of spectacle – encompassed both painting and performance. Klein could be called a painter. Both his mother and father were painters and Klein himself was drawn to it.¹⁰³ Some of his most famous works lie within the realm of two-dimensional painting, namely his *Monochromes* and *Anthropometries*. Yet, historically Klein has been pegged by academics as a performance artist even in the context of works like the *Anthropometries*, paintings that have been read for Klein's process rather than his artistic product.

When discussing Klein's *Anthropometrie* work, art historians isolate his debut performance, *Anthropometries de l'époque bleue* performed on March 9th, 1960 at the Galerie Internationale d'Art Contemporain Art in Paris as the seminal moment in the two years of *Anthropometrie* production worthy of critique. Dubbing the debut performance "The Great Action Spectacle of March 9, 1960," Pierre Restany cemented the night as a 'spectacle,' traditionally defined as, "A specially prepared or arranged display of a more or less public nature (esp. one on a large scale), forming an impressive or interesting show or entertainment for those viewing it."¹⁰⁴ Scholars have followed suit by isolating the debut performance as the case study for the *Anthropometries*. This performance is *the* performance that the majority of scholars have turned to for analysis on the *Anthropometries*. While Klein created around 200 *Anthropometrie* paintings, the majority

¹⁰³ Thomas McEvelley, and Yves Klein, "Conquistador of the Void," *Yves the Provocateur: Yves Klein and Twentieth-Century Art*. Kingston, N.Y.: McPherson & Co, 2010, 69.

¹⁰⁴ "spectacle, n.1". OED Online. March 2017. Oxford University Press.
<http://www.oed.com.ezproxy.lib.uh.edu/view/Entry/186057?rskey=KaNy9W&result=1&isAdvanced=false>

of analysis and interpretation has focused on one night that night yielded three paintings.¹⁰⁵ This night's performance is the model for discourse on what is actually a sizable collection of paintings made within a two-year window of production. Photographs and a 2'26" film taken of the event, commissioned by Klein, provide the context for understanding a series of paintings as performance.

Writing four years after her 1994 article "Dis/Playing the Phallus: Male Artists Perform their Masculinities" in *Art History*, Amelia Jones expands on her analysis of Klein performing his masculinity through his *Anthropometries* performances focusing on Klein as subject in his debut performance. From her 1998 book, *Body Art/Performing the Subject*, in the chapter entitled, "The 'Pollockian Performative' and the Revision of the Modernist Subject," Jones explores performance using Pollock's innovative performative painting as her metric. Jones believed Pollock set the stage, paving the way for Klein's unique artistic persona to straddle both modernist and postmodernist worlds of performance and artistic production.¹⁰⁶ Klein himself never cites Pollock explicitly in his writings but did make a couple ambiguous references to action painting and abstract expressionism, which have been read to juxtapose him to Pollock.¹⁰⁷

Using what she coins as the "Pollockian performative," Pollock's painting technique, as documented by Hans Namuth in his 1951 film, *Pollock Painting*, provided the platform for Jones to outline the change in subject defined by the performance of

¹⁰⁵ Pierre Restany, *Yves Klein*, New York: H. N. Abrams, 1982, 122.

¹⁰⁶ Amelia Jones "The 'Pollockian Performative' and the Revision of the Modernist Subject," *Body Art/Performing the Subject*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998, 86.

¹⁰⁷ Yves Klein, Klaus Ottmann, and Yves Klein, "The Monochrome Adventure: The Monochrome Epic," *Overcoming the Problematics of Art: The Writings of Yves Klein*. Putnam, Conn: Spring Publications, 2007, 147, 149.

painting by the artist. Jones uses the phrase to isolate a shift in thinking rather than referring to the specific artist, Pollock, and his specialized painting technique.¹⁰⁸ Jones compares Klein to Pollock, *the* modernist painter of the mid twentieth century, by fully adopting postmodernist feminist theory.

For many paintings in the art historical record there is little or no documentation of process', all that remains is the end result of painting. Jones examines how Jackson Pollock's drip paintings and Harold Rosenberg's essay "The American Action Painters," ushered in a new era in art theory where paintings could be seen as end results of performative actions. This new interpretation of action painting shifted from a painting as *the* object to artist as performer or subject.¹⁰⁹ This move in art historical discourse, to consider painting (as a process of artistic creation), as performance, not just as a finished artwork, shifts the emphasis onto the artist as a performative part of the artwork itself. The artist and his or her ideas or concepts become the art rather than the object. The artist no longer exists to facilitate creation of art but they represent the art through his or her presence and physical being. The art object becomes tied to the artist as an extension of artistic self and ideology.¹¹⁰

Klein's paintings have struggled for intellectual real estate, becoming secondary to their process of creation or to the artist's many statements on art. The conflict of these art objects is at the heart of their inherent postmodernist transition to performance over painting. Instead their critiques embraced a postmodern investigation into Klein's

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, 53.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, 65.

¹¹⁰ Ibid, 59.

concepts and ideas on his *Anthropometries* and as a performer acting out an artistic process in a theatrical way.

Art historian, AnnMarie Perl focused on his debut performance and the idea of performance spectacle that was newly emerging in post-war modern art, in her 2015 essay for MIT's journal *Threshold*, entitled, "Succes de 'Scandale' and Biblical Scandal: Yves Klein's Debut performance of Anthropometries in 1960." Perl synthesizes previous scholars' emphases on Klein's spiritual with his embrace of theatricality making both process and ritual one with performance. Although she does adopt the same view as Jones of Klein as masculine, virile showman, acting out his male artistic power over his female assistants. Nor does her exploration of 'spectacle' in Klein's debut performance acknowledge the agency of the women or address the paintings as separate works. Like Jones, her interest in Klein lies in the artist's theatricality that emphasizes his performance and not the finished paintings. She departs from Jones where she reintegrates the spiritual elements of the performance previously analyzed by Restany and McEvilley.

Klein's sensationalism and use of scandal, directing three young naked women around a gallery at a time when nudity was illegal outside of an artist's studio, like that of his famous March 9, 1960 *Anthropometrie* performance, have haunted critics and scholars who seek a deeper understanding of Klein as an artist.¹¹¹ Perl contends that it is Klein's skillful manipulation of audience and dramatization of sacred religious rite-cum-art performance that warranted true scandal in two parts, what she terms "succes de

¹¹¹ AnnMarie Perl, "'Succés de 'Scandale' and Biblical Scandal: Yves Klein's Debut Performance of the Anthropometries in 1960," In *Thresholds 43: Scandalous*, Ed. Nathan Friedman and Ann Lui, Cambridge: SA+P Press, MIT School of Architecture + Planning, 2015, 366.

scandale” and “biblical scandal.” She states that there has been skepticism about Klein’s proclamations and intentions in regards to his beliefs about his art. Perl is critical of scholars who rationalize some of the most sensational aspects of Klein’s performance and subsequent legend by passing them off as constructs of Pierre Restany or by the director of the gallery where the performance was given.¹¹² She warns that in doing so Klein is stripped of credit owed to him in shaping his artistic legacy.

The first type of scandal employed by Klein falls along more traditionally viewed contexts of the term, the second relies on what Perl deems “biblical scandal,” scandal in the Old Testament sense. This second part of Perl’s investigation into Klein’s binary scandalous performance is rooted in his performance’s ability to shift his audience, made of critics and art patrons, away from the traditional notions of art object (painting) and instead lead them to revere him as subject and the performance as art object.¹¹³ Like Jones before her, Perl is most transfixed by this shift in subjectivity from object to artist. Perl likens this switch to leading believers (art patrons and critics) astray away from the sacred (art object), a gesture for her that surmounts to scandal in the biblical sense.¹¹⁴ It is the conversion of art parishioner being led away from object worship, or idolatry, to what Perl sees as a deeper more meaningful embrace of the idea, or the conceptual, that registers as scandal in the biblical form.

She interprets Klein’s *Anthropometrie de l’époque bleue* as both entertainment performance and ritual performance, the secular and spiritual, both of which embody similar characteristics of pomp and circumstance that lead the parishioner, patron or

¹¹² Ibid, 18.

¹¹³ Ibid, 17.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

public to experience a similar form of metaphysical attainment through a spectacular event. Klein, according to Perl, still embodied a spiritual shaman, scandalizing his audience through the act of turning art making into ritual and erotic bodies into sacred beings. Perl's synthesis of spiritual, sexually provocative and artistic performative behavior weaves together layers of previous observations on Klein anew in ways that helps support and understand all aspects of the performance. While her approach to his performance differs from previous scholars she remains invested in the same mythos proscribed by Restany and McEvelley.

Without photographs of film of Klein and his female assistants creating the *Anthropometries* or the debut performance, scholars would only have the paintings themselves to deconstruct along with firsthand accounts and interviews from the female painting performers, from audience members or from press following the event. Photography and film enable us to interpret Klein through different lenses, literally and figuratively, giving subsequent scholars and critics some means by which to interpret the process and performance of creating his paintings. However, Klein's process is most easily accessed through the black and white photographs and black and white film taken during his infamous March 9, 1960 performance and photographs from subsequent private studio and apartment performances. Their use of the photos and films reify them as art objects thus cementing the shift in emphasis from painting as artwork to performance.

These black and white photographs and film show Klein's *Anthropometries* in process as they were created, highlighting Klein in action, orchestrating and choreographing his female assistants, speaking directly to performance and process rather

than product. The paintings themselves serve as the tactile vestiges of the act of painting and performance as the flesh of the female assistants touched them. Because of the ample photographs from the March 9, 1960 performance and some from before and after, there is a tension between painting and performance that is difficult to reconcile in the *Anthropometries*. Paintings may be the products of actions, but they are also fixed final goods that stand alone, able to be analyzed outside of the contexts in which they were created. Performances are ephemeral, theatrical events performed within the constraints of a specific time and place. There is a start and a stop to performance, only extended through documentation, which allow the performance to be replayed or analyzed at a later time.

In her article entitled, ““Presence” in Absentia: Experiencing Performance as Documentation,” for *Art Journal’s* special 1997 issue on performance at the end of the twentieth century, Amelia Jones argues against the belief that first hand experiences in relation to performances and body art should be valued over interpretations gained from documentary photo, video and from reading and listening to oral statements and interviews of the art performing artist and from people who did experience the performance first-hand. Jones starts the article acknowledging the fact that for many seminal performances during the coming of age of performance as an art form in the 1960s and 1970s she was a child. She has therefore spent a majority of her career accessing these performances secondhand.

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Paintings, especially those like Klein's *Anthropometries*, which result from a process that has been interpreted as performative, do not depict or portray the performance but are rather consequences of performative actions that create visual markings. As with the *Anthropometries*, paintings may be the products of a performance's movements with paint onto canvas but they are inherently different objects than photographs or film in their representation of something completely new, not exact representations or copies. Thus these paintings must be treated as separate art objects from the photographs or film that captures performance.

That is not to say that traditional paintings do not contain elements of performance. Paintings may contain evidence of the artist's bodily actions (via brushstrokes, paint drips, handprints/body prints, and smears) that continue the illusion of movement within the confines of a two-dimensional space, resulting in dynamic interplay between object and audience. These paintings that are products of intimate encounters

with nude bodies and canvas, take on new performative qualities once they engage an active viewer. Paintings are always tied to the artist's hand in a way that other mediums like photography and film lack. The latter mediums are reproducible in their original form removing the specific touch of hand that privileges authorship in paintings.

The confusion of categorization presented by the *Anthropometrie* paintings traces its roots to the treatment of photographs as art objects. Rosalind Krauss argued in her 1985 exhibition catalog essay, "Photography in the Service of Surrealism" for the surrealist photography exhibition, *L'Amour Fou: Photography and Surrealism*, that photographs are indeed representative objects as they are physical traces left by objects in real space, "parallel to that of fingerprints or footprints or the rings of water that cold glasses leave on tables."¹¹⁵ Photographs, she states, are indices of reality, tying the photograph to the worldly object or being that it represents. She further argues that photographs are more tied to reality than painting or sculpture that she believes physically resemble acting as "icons."¹¹⁶

Klein's *Anthropometries* introduce a conundrum, as they are actual imprints of real beings not representations of them. These paintings are unique because their tactile qualities that make them indices connect them back to the female assistants rather than to the hands of the artist as a traditional painting or sculpture would. Photographs of Klein directing his female assistants create a different impression from the photographs defended by Krauss for Surrealism. While Krauss looks at photos that are intended to be fine art photography, the photos used in analysis on Klein's *Anthropometries* document

¹¹⁵ Rosalind E. Krauss, "Photography in the Service of Surrealism," *L'Amour Fou: Photography & Surrealism*, Washington, D.C.: Corcoran Gallery of Art, 1985, 31.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

the process of art in the making, placing them within the realm of documentation. To complicate matters more, these photographs do not just show Klein and his female assistants painting, they show Klein directing the women in highly stylized and choreographed ways, performing for a large audience. The photos become records of performance making photography what Krauss describes as, “a kind of deposit of the real.”¹¹⁷

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American scholars have focused much of their analysis on the photos and film depicting Klein and his female assistants. In doing so they implicitly value the photographs and film of his performance as more worthy of interpretation than the paintings themselves. American scholarship on Klein’s *Anthropometries* has chosen this interpretive approach, focusing on Klein as performer and subject and the *Anthropometries* as performances rather than painted objects. Visual analysis of the paintings themselves is shockingly scarce. *Anthropometries* the paintings are discussed as

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

either pseudo-religious performances or machismo spectacle. Missing from the discourse over the last 55 years since their creation in 1960, is special attention paid to the paintings as individual art objects. Without accompanying photographic or didactic information to provide context when displayed in museums or in gallery settings, the *Anthropometries* are two-dimensional paintings without reference to their performative creation. Inclusion of photographs or film footage would shift the paintings into the performance category.

Displaying the paintings outside of their performative narrative without photographs, films or background information on the painting's' creation, leads to interpretations that ultimately diminish the importance of the role of the female assistants and the use of their bodies. A closer look at the paintings as art objects reveal the markings of curvaceous, supple, female bodies that denote sensuality outside the context of the artist. Interpreting the debut performance ultimately makes turns attention to the production and not the product with a focus on Klein as the artist. An examination of the photographs reveal, carefully curated staged compositions that fall more into fine art photography than documentation. Klein's *Anthropometries* paintings, when displayed as art objects, demand reexamination in scholarship through visual analysis separate from the process that created them to avoid simultaneously occupying three categories of art (painting, performance and photography) without clear distinction between mediums. It is important to acknowledge that not all of the *Anthropometries* were created as performances where an audience or photographers were present. Just because the process went undocumented does not mean that the role the female assistant played in their creation is any less important.

Jessica Santone and Christian Berger address the issue of art object dominated by documentation in their 2016 article, “Documentation As Art Practice in the 1960s.” They argue that as conceptual and performance art increased, it was the documentation of these events that became the tangible art. They state that, “process frequently supplanting finished product,” blurring the lines of artwork and documentation.¹¹⁸ They theorize that the ultimate push against traditional art methods was to shift the focus from object to documentation of performance or creation around said object.¹¹⁹ Klein may have been further distancing himself from the *Anthropometrie* paintings (objects) through his use of showmanship and spectacular events in an attempt to shift importance away from art objects as commodities, the ultimate subversion of the American modernists whose paintings became sacred relics.¹²⁰ Klein is tied closer to his *Anthropometries* through his use of photographic documentation. As posited by Berger and Santone, documents like photographs allow the artist to insert the subjective self through a means that the artists may have believed would have been more difficult to historicize at a later date.¹²¹ As seen through the writings of Restany, McEvelley, Jones, and Perl, Klein *is* the subject of the *Anthropometries* because of the photographs and film he had produced.

Berger and Santone emphasize the recent embrace of documentary media constituting art itself as a shift in how scholarship views past performance, especially performance in the 1960s. Scholars treat Klein’s in-process photographs and film as his art media making the performances of his *Anthropometries* the focus. Photos and film

¹¹⁸ Christian Berger and Jessica Santone, “Documentation as Art Practice in the 1960s,” *Visual Resources*, 32:3-4 (2016), 202.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 204.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 203.

that document Klein's work have almost become sacred objects, fetishized by scholars as images of mystical power that are somehow closer to Klein's 'immateriality.'

Andria Hickey saw the irony of how Klein the man of 'immateriality' had himself caught, trapped on material photographs, never really allowing him to disappear in the large collection of amassed images of Klein in his archives.¹²² She writes in her essay, "Man, Myth, and Magic: Yves Klein and Photography," for the 2010 exhibition *Yves Klein: With the Void, Full Powers*, about Klein's use of photography and how it shaped his mythical persona. Hickey believes Klein embodies the "artist genius" in his ability to manipulate poses for photographs, building his mythology both seriously and mockingly.¹²³ But it could be argued that his obsession for documentation by paid photographers was rooted in insecurity about the longevity of his art or his philosophies. Klein as portrayed by Hickey is obsessed with his photographic legacy amassing more than four thousand photographs that chart his life story.¹²⁴ She highlights the fact that because Klein was having so much of his process and works photographed; discrepancies between the artist's "actual and ideal" are easy to see.¹²⁵ Rather than seeing this issue as a weakness that destabilizes Klein's constructed mythos, Hickey believes that the transparency helps to see all the threads weaving together his art and thought processes.¹²⁶

¹²² Andria Hickey, "Man, Myth, and Magic: Yves Klein and Photography," *Yves Klein: With the Void, Full Powers*, Washington D. C.: Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden/ Walker Art Center, 2010, 289.

¹²³ Ibid, 296.

¹²⁴ Ibid, 289. Julia Robinson, "Before Attitudes Became Form: New Realisms: 1957-1962," *New Realisms, 1957-1962: Object Strategies between Readymade and Spectacle*, Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, 2010, 26-27.

¹²⁵ Ibid, 308.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

Klein's March 9, 1960 debut performance was closed to the public and media.¹²⁷

The audience was admitted only by invitation. Klein paid for the photographers and filmmakers.¹²⁸ All images that are circulated from the performance should not be misunderstood as documentary; they are carefully curated to tell a narrative according to Klein. The artist and his performances present spectacle, elaborate uses of show, in its traditional definition. But Klein's use of photography to capture his process throughout his life and career have become fetishized and consumed by the art historians in a way that aligns Klein with another definition of spectacle.¹²⁹

"The images detached from every aspect of life merge into a common stream in which the unity of that life can no longer be recovered. *Fragmented* views of reality regroup themselves into a new unity as a *separate pseudoworld* that can only be looked at. The specialization of images of the world evolves into a world of autonomized images where even the deceivers are deceived. The spectacle is a concrete inversion of life, an autonomous movement of the nonliving."¹³⁰

In his 1967 book, *Society of the Spectacle*, Guy Debord defines 'spectacle' around Marxist definitions of commodity fetishism where an abundance of images or copies of images supplant reality.¹³¹ Art historians view Klein from a historical distance, through his many photographic and filmed representations that close the gap between audience and ephemeral event. The vast amounts of pre-selected images for Klein's *Anthropometries* performance have created their own truth in historical record reinforced by the historians who have taken the story as their own.

¹²⁷ Ibid, 307.

¹²⁸ Ibid, 308.

¹²⁹ Kaira Marie Cabañas, *The Myth of Nouveau Réalisme: Art and the Performative in Postwar France*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013, 133-134.

¹³⁰ Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, Detroit: Black & Red, 1983, #1-2.

¹³¹ Ágnes Berecz, "Close Encounters: On Pierre Restany and Nouveau Réalisme," *New Realisms, 1957-1962: Object Strategies between Readymade and Spectacle*, Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, 2010, 58-59.

“The spectacle cannot be understood as a mere visual excess produced by mass-media technologies. It is a worldview that has actually been materialized, a view of the world that has become objective.”¹³²

Klein’s proliferation of photographs and film tailored to fit his idealized version of himself to manipulate and influence his audience may constitute more propaganda than documentation. ‘Documentation’ implies some form of objective reality, whereas Klein’s photos have been carefully curated by the artist himself, representing subjective truth. The images of the debut must be understood as an attempt by the artist to influence legacy through spectacle.

¹³² Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, Detroit: Black & Red, 1983, #5.

CONCLUSION:

Yves Klein's series of paintings, the *Anthropometries*, pose unique challenges to art critics and historians. They have been discussed as performance or paintings, as religious relics or spectacle props, and as masculine or masterful. American art historical literature on Yves Klein's *Anthropometries* has focused on the artist as art subject with an emphasis on performance of process rather than on the actual paintings as art objects. In doing so scholars put forth a narrative of Klein that promotes a constructed hagiographic myth of Klein as divinely inspired artist that places him on a righteous pedestal. Missing from the literature is analysis of the roles his female assistance had in the paintings' creation. Outside of a feminist viewpoint that interprets the women in victimized roles, there has been little analysis of the female imprints or female assistants as sensual, autonomous beings. Sole focus on Klein as mystical artistic intermediary or as a masculinist of overpowering control denies the female assistants the agency they chose when they participated in his art. The alienation of female assistants from painting and process neutralizes any sexual interpretation and ultimately furthers a single narrative of Klein as a spiritual inspired performer that can only be rectified through objective analysis outside of the Klein mythos.

The divide between viewer reception of Klein's *Anthropometries* faces two futures going forward: academic critique that places Yves Klein in the realm of performance artist, especially at a time when performance as an art historical discipline is gaining popularity, or where Klein's tangible oeuvre as seen in museums portrays him as painter and sculpture.

A museum such as the Menil Collection in Houston, Texas displays its *Anthropometrie* true to its core mission of inspiring intimate viewing experiences that are led by the viewer themselves without accompanying informational texts provided by the museum.¹³³ This strategy promotes personal interpretation outside of academic research but it leaves the viewer reliant solely on their visual and emotional instincts without context. The museum contextualizes their painting, Klein's 1961, *People Begin to Fly*. The Menil Collection is open about the message the museum portrays but because of the lack of didactic material leaves museumgoers with only their personal visual analysis and no understanding of the process that went into making an *Anthropometrie*. The Menil Collection has chosen to focus on *People Begin to Fly* as a painting with no reference back to Klein's performance and his process involving the female assistants. This strategy could work to keep the women's representations foremost at the subject of the work but gives no background on process that would highlight the female assistants contribution.

The legacy of Klein's *Anthropometries* does not just lie with museum curators and art historians but also with art educators who help shape the future of Klein scholarship for a new generation of artists and art historians. They too must decide if the works are paintings or performance, relics of religious inspiration or props of ephemera from spectacle. One of the most cited resources for modern art education, *Art Since 1900: Modernism, Antimodernism and Postmodernism*, places Klein within the neo-avant-garde performers of 1960s Paris focusing on Klein's *Monochromes* and his infamous work of

¹³³ The Menil Collection, "Vision Statement," <https://www.menil.org/about/history>

Le Vide in 1957.¹³⁴ The text, Andria Hickey, places Klein as an artist who well understood spectacle culture, using it to his advantage to promote his spiritual agenda.¹³⁵ The text makes no mention of his *Anthropometries* but makes a point to use Klein's terminology like "immaterial pictorial sensibility" and remember him as an artist whose art acted as conduit for his personal spiritual agenda.¹³⁶

Many American scholars on Klein write essays completed for exhibitions of Klein's artwork, shows that could not be completed without the assistance and support of The Yves Klein Archives, namely without his widow Rotraut Klein-Moquay and her husband Daniel Moquay. Such an alliance underscores the importance Rotraut plays in Klein's legacy. She is the caretaker of his legacy, dedicated to preserving her late husband's artistic and philosophical missions. The problem lies in the passive censorship apparent in many writings on Klein that have direct ties to Klein's archives and estates. In many instances scholars come close to challenge Klein's intentions or sincerity but hold themselves back choosing reverence that falls in line with the spiritual narrative arc that was initiated by Klein, carried by Restany and protected by Rotraut. Only time will tell if at last scholars will introduce more skepticism into the Klein hagiography.

¹³⁴ Hal Foster, Rosalind E. Krauss, Yves-Alain Bois, B. H. D. Buchloh, and David Joselit, "1960a," *Art Since 1900: Modernism, Antimodernism and Postmodernism*, New York: Thames & Hudson, Second Ed., Vol. 2, 2011, 472-475.

¹³⁵ *Ibid*, 477.

¹³⁶ *Ibid*.

IMAGES:

Fig. 1



Klein, Yves. *People Begin to Fly*. 1961. The Menil Collection, Houston, TX.
<https://www.menil.org/collection/objects/5855-people-begin-to-fly>.

Fig. 2



Anthropométries d'époque bleue. Galerie Internationale d'Art Contemporain, Paris.
March 9, 1960. Unprovenanced digital image.

Fig. 3



Anthropométries d'époque bleue. Galerie Internationale d'Art Contemporain, Paris.
March 9, 1960. Unprovenanced digital image.

Fig. 4



Anthropométries d'époque bleue. Galerie Internationale d'Art Contemporain, Paris.
March 9, 1960. Unprovenanced digital image.

Fig. 5



Anthropométries d'époque bleue. Galerie Internationale d'Art Contemporain, Paris.
March 9, 1960. Unprovenanced digital image.

Fig. 6



Anthropométries d'époque bleue. Galerie Internationale d'Art Contemporain, Paris.
March 9, 1960. Unprovenanced digital image.

Fig. 7



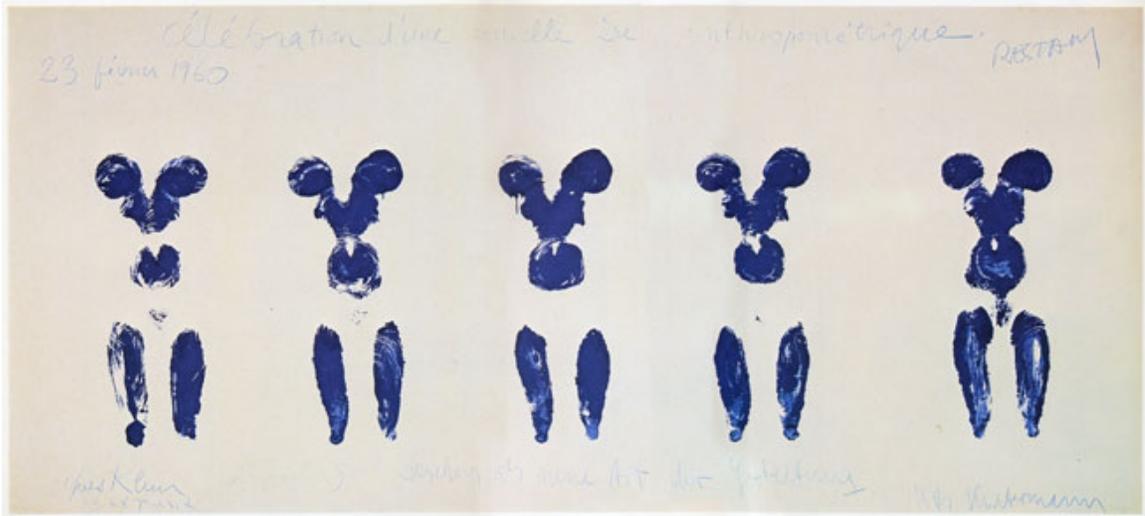
Anthropométries d'époque bleue. Galerie Internationale d'Art Contemporain, Paris.
March 9, 1960. Unprovenanced digital image.

Fig. 8



Anthropométries d'époque bleue. Galerie Internationale d'Art Contemporain, Paris.
March 9, 1960. Unprovenanced digital image.

Fig. 9



ANT 85, 1960. Unprovenanced digital image.

Fig. 10



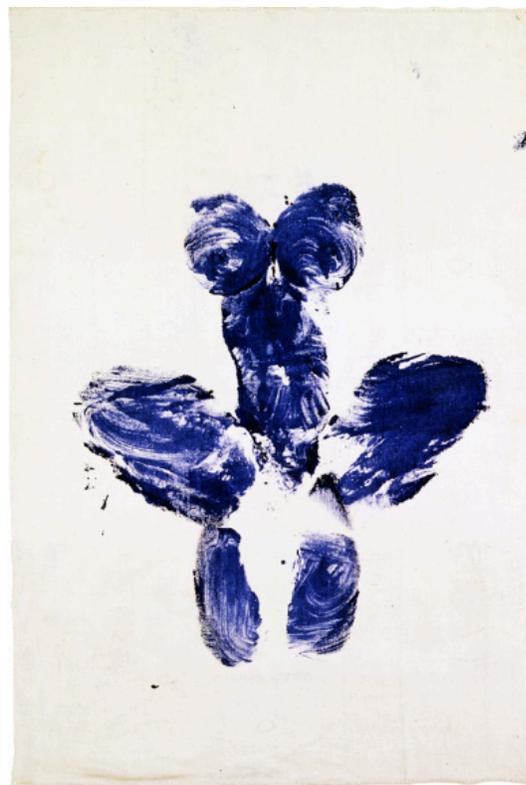
Working with a female assistant making a “*Shroud Anthropometry*” February 17, 1960.
Unprovenanced digital image.

Fig. 11



Anthropométrie suaire sans titre (ANT SU 4), 1960. Unprovenanced digital image.

Fig. 12



Anthropométrie suaire sans titre (ANT SU 13), ca. 1960. Unprovenanced digital image.

Fig. 13



L: Helping his assistant, R: Klein caught with paint on his hands. Unprovenanced digital image.

Fig. 14



Klein dragging female assistant across paper. Unprovenanced digital image.

Fig. 15



Klein applying paint to female assistants body. Unprovenanced digital image.

Fig. 16



Klein holding female assistant in place and spraying paint to create negative imprint.
Unprovenanced digital image.

Fig. 17



Klein with paint on hand standing in front of what looks to be an *Anthropometrie*.
Unprovenanced digital image.

Fig. 18



Raoul Ubac. *Sans titre, Penthesilée*. 1938. Unprovenanced digital image.

Fig. 19



L'exil d'Ischia (ANT 122), 1960. Unprovenanced digital image.

Fig. 20



Sans titre (ANT 100), 1960. Unprovenanced digital image.

Fig. 21



Sans titre (ANT 120), 1960. Unprovenanced digital image.

Fig. 22



Shigeko Kubota. *Vagina Painting*, 1965. Unprovenanced digital image.

Fig. 23



Carolee Schneemann, *Interior Scroll*, 1975. Unprovenanced digital image.

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