

the quiet in the land

**public programs**

The Shaker Museum and Store are open to visitors Monday through Saturday 10am to 4:30pm from Memorial Day to Columbus Day. Guided tours recounting the history of the Shakers are available.

Saturday afternoon lectures on the project *The Quiet in the Land*, the artists and their history will be given by project organizer France Morin on June 15 and 29, July 13 and 27 and August 10 and 24. All lectures are free and begin at 3:00pm at the Shaker Museum Admissions Building.

To drive to Sabbathday Lake Shaker Museum, take Exit 11 from the Maine Turnpike onto Route 26. Shaker Village is eight miles north of Gray and eight miles south of Auburn.

**acknowledgments**

*The Quiet in the Land* would not have been possible without the cooperation, interest and enthusiasm of the Sabbathday Lake Shakers and the participating artists. This project was organized in collaboration with the Museum of American Folk Art in New York, in particular, Gerard C. Wertkin, Director. The organizers gratefully acknowledge the assistance of

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and individual contributors.

An important catalyst for this project as well as the source of its title is the life of acclaimed pianist Glenn Gould and *The Quiet in the Land*, the third element of his radio-documentary, *The Solitude Trilogy*.

designed by Sagmeister Inc. edited by Tim Yohn.

EVERYDAY LIFE, CONTEMPORARY ART and THE SHAKERS

sabbathday lake, maine

June-September 1996

the shaker community at  
sabbathday lake:

Sisters Frances A. Carr,  
Marie Burgess, June Carpenter,  
Minnie Greene, and Ruth Nutter  
and Brothers Arnold Hadd,  
Wayne Smith, and Alistair Bate

and artists:

Janine Antoni, Domenico de Clario,  
Adam Fuss, Mona Hatoum,  
Sam Samore, Jana Sterbak,  
Kazumi Tanaka, Wolfgang  
Tillmans, Nari Ward, and  
Chen Zhen.

conceived and organized by  
France Morin



the artists in residence:

**JANINE ANTONI** was born in Freeport, Bahamas in 1964. She currently lives and works in New York as a sculptor, installation artist and performance artist. Recent one-person exhibitions have been at the Wadsworth Atheneum, Connecticut; the Center for Contemporary Arts, Glasgow, which traveled to the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, and Anthony d'Offay Gallery, London. She has participated in recent group exhibitions at the Saatchi Gallery, London; The Dakis Joannou Collection-Deste Foundation for Contemporary Art, Athens; the Fundacio Antoni Tapies, Barcelona; the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid; and the Aperto section of the Venice Biennial. In September 1996 she will produce a collaborative work with Marcel Odenbach and Nari Ward at the Harlem Firehouse, New York.

**DOMENICO DE CLARIO** was born in Trieste, Italy in 1947. He has lived and worked in Australia since 1956 as a painter, installation artist, and performance artist. De Clario's most recent one-person exhibitions were at the National Gallery of Victoria, Australia, and Thread Waxing Space, New York. He has also published several volumes of poetry, among them *Reading to the Monkey*. The CD of his recent New York piano performance, *From the Opaque*, was released in 1996. Upcoming projects include a collaborative work with composer Liza Lim and five other musicians which will take place in abandoned buildings in Australia, a retrospective at Monash University Gallery in Melbourne in 1997, and exhibitions and performances in India and Germany.

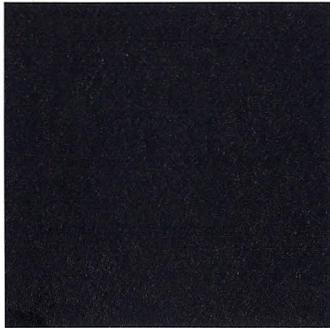
**ADAM FUSS** was born in 1961 in London. He lived in England and Australia and moved to New York in 1982 where he now lives and works as a photographer. His recent one-person exhibitions have taken place at Robert Miller Gallery, New York; Galerie Ghislaine Hussenot, Paris; Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago; and the National Gallery of Victoria, Australia. Recent group exhibitions have taken place at the Baltimore Museum of Art, the Denver Art Museum, and the Laura Carpenter Gallery, Santa Fe. His work is included in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, all in New York, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, among others.

**MONA HATOUM** was born in Beirut, Lebanon, in 1952 and has worked in England since 1975 as a performance, video, and installation artist. She has had recent one-person exhibitions at the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; CRG Gallery, New York; Galerie René Blouin, Montreal; and Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris. She has participated in group exhibitions at the Hirshhorn Museum of Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; The Tate Gallery, London; the Istanbul Biennial, Istanbul; the Venice Biennial; the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid; and the Museum of Modern Art, New York. Her upcoming one-person exhibition organized by the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago will travel to The New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York (1997), and the Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia (1998).

**SAM SAMORE** is a writer, photographer and installation artist who lives and works in Europe and the U.S. He has had recent one-person exhibitions at DAAD Gallery, Berlin; Galerie Anne de Villepoix, Paris; Thomas Nordanstad Gallery, New York; Kunstverein Elsterpark, Leipzig; De Appel, Amsterdam, and the Kunsthalle, Zurich. He has been part of recent group exhibitions at the capcMusée d'art contemporain de Bordeaux, France; Kunstlerhaus, Hamburg; the Venice Biennial; The Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, and the Kröller-Müller Museum, Holland. Samore's publication *the tangled web of erotic savage cunning* was published by De Appel, Holland (1994) and his book *Allegories of Beauty (Incomplete)* will be published by DAAD, Berlin in 1996.

all featured photography *Untitled*, 1995 by WOLFGANG TILLMANS





This summer at Sabbathday Lake Shaker Village in Maine an unusual project is taking place involving the Shakers and contemporary art. The combination may be surprising, but that in part is the intention. *The Quiet in the Land: everyday life, contemporary art and the Shakers* is a unique collaboration between the world's only active Shaker community and ten contemporary artists from Australia, Canada, the Caribbean, China, Europe, Japan, the Middle East, and the U.S.

During the summer, three or four artists are living and working with the Shaker community each month. They not only experience Shaker culture, which celebrates the aesthetics of everyday life, but also draw on that experience to create works of art. Each day in the village, the artists work on their individual projects with the exception of a few hours when they join with the Shakers for work and worship. Organizer and curator France Morin is giving a series of lectures to visitors on the artists, their history and their projects at Shaker Village. Visitors will experience not only recent developments in art but also the relevance of the Shakers' lifestyle to contemporary society. In the six months following their residencies at Shaker Village, the artists will complete their art projects as well as daily journals they have kept during their stay. The art works will be documented in a book to follow the project.

*The Quiet in the Land* questions the assumption that art and life are mutually exclusive and, in so doing, examines changing notions of gender, work, spirituality, and art. It takes as its point of departure and inspiration the Shakers, people who for over two centuries have stood apart, but not retreated from, dominant cultural practice, and who have lived and worked from an alternative social paradigm at the foundation of which is a belief in the spiritual value of the activities of daily life. The artists in the project are also interested in the actions that make up daily life. In their evocative works they encourage viewers to rethink traditional concepts of art as well as the practices of looking at art.

The participating artists are involved in, and involve us as viewers in, a process of "re-looking". What we are relooking at in their work may not always be a traditional art object but rather an occurrence, a memory, a trace, a melody, a whisper. The materials used often seem unfamiliar because of their intense familiarity as artifacts of daily life. Viewers are asked not to simply look but to look again, to participate, to follow the meandering threads of fleeting, transitory thoughts wherever they may lead. And yet, these works are very real in the sense that they involve the viewer by utilizing some already-familiar practice, habit, or object. They make us think about the process by which the familiar becomes strange, is read alternatively, understood differently.

The artists' projects may be very different from each other and range from a music recording, sculpture, or series of photographs to activities such as gardening, sewing, or cooking, to name a handful of possibilities. Several of Sabbathday Lake's eighteen buildings as well as the grounds, gardens, and orchards are at the artists' disposal as working places. The resident artists, curator, and on-site coordinator are living in the 1816 Trustees' Office building for the duration of the project. The community of Shakers live in the adjacent brick Dwellinghouse built in 1883. At the request of the community, the artists join in Shaker activities a few hours each day. The summer is a busy time at Sabbathday Lake and the help of the volunteers to garden, farm or work in the prosperous herb industry is most welcome. The artists share their meals with the Shakers and attend the daily morning service as well as the service of worship on Sunday, celebrated at the Meeting House, a fine example of Shaker architecture dating from 1794.

Originating in England in the latter part of the 18th century as one of several autonomous religious groups seeking to achieve a more personal Christianity, the United Society of Believers expressed its spirituality in a variety of

spontaneous physical ways, including trances, speaking in tongues and inspirational dancing, activities which led outside critics to dub them the Shaking Quakers, or "Shakers."

At some time prior to 1772, the Shakers were joined by Ann Lee, a Manchester textile worker,

who led the group to America after a period of persecution and imprisonment in England. Ann Lee and eight followers arrived in New York City on August 6, 1774, shortly before the American Revolution. In the late 1770s they established their first community in what was Watervliet, New York, eight miles northwest of Albany. The first group was "gathered into order" as a fully organized community in 1787 in New Lebanon, New York. The members devoted themselves to lives of celibacy, common ownership of property and pacifism. Covenanted members relinquished all personal property, as well as the right to receive wages for their services. From the earliest days of the society, Shaker women participated actively in governance. The Shakers accepted black members and were opposed to slavery. The Society was at its height around 1840, when more than five thousand believers lived in nineteen communal villages from New England to Ohio and Kentucky.

The outlook and aspirations of the Shakers are spiritual rather than social or material. Historically however, the reality of making a living necessitated the production of objects with which to go about the business of daily life. The objects produced reflected Shaker religious ideology and

the aspiration to perfection so acutely that they became known outside the Society for their simplicity, utility, and durability. In keeping with their belief in the primacy of spirit over matter, and strict rules against decoration and adornment, the Shakers' journals and writings make minimal reference to their material output other than in quantitative terms. Yet the intricacy, undeniable perfection, and beauty of the work that was so vigorously and extensively indulged in betray to the contemporary viewer an unspoken concern with the material that seemingly belies Shaker teachings. One cannot forget, however, that religion was the catalyst for the labor that went into the finished product. Two popular sayings attributed to Mother Ann Lee, as she is known, are "Hands to work and hearts to God" and "Do all your work as if you had a thousand years to live, and as if you knew you must die tomorrow." All activities—cleaning, sewing, carpentry, cooking—as well as the products of these activities, are viewed as offerings to God, their simple beauty a daily affirmation of the Shakers' strong spirituality.

Shaker attitudes toward gender and sexuality were long a principal focus of interest—and criticism—by outsiders. Historically, the rejection of the roles of wife and mother and the granting of more or less equal roles to women in the governance of the Society were at odds with mainstream notions of a woman's "place" codified in the so-called "cult of domesticity" which arose in the late 18th century and evolved throughout the 19th. Reflecting their fundamental belief in the dual nature of God—as both mother and father, with masculine and feminine aspects—the Shakers rejected marriage and the nuclear family and practiced celibacy. Interestingly enough, each community of Shakers saw itself as a single family, and the members addressed one another as Father, Mother, Brother, and Sister.

Ultimately, given the demise of the cult of domesticity, the sexual revolution of the 1960s, the crisis of the nuclear family, and the failure to develop feasible alternatives, the Shakers can be said to have withstood and outlasted their mainstream critics. The deemphasis on prescribed gender roles and identities is an essential part of the enduring model of harmony and spiritual well-being that is the Shaker legacy.

The artists' reflections on these and other issues are recorded in journals that they keep during their residency. Photographs, sketches, drawings, and writings will reflect the different experiences of each artist's activities, daily life, and thinking while at Shaker Village. Journal keeping has long been a tradition of the United Society of Believers as individual members recorded the manifold activities that constituted their everyday existence. Another Shaker tradition playing a part in the project is the weekly union meeting for conversation. Discontinued at the end of the nineteenth century, the meeting originally functioned as an opportunity for the two sexes to gather for singing and general conversation. Echoing this tradition, one night a week the artists, curator, and Shakers have a lively, issue-oriented discussion touching on all aspects of the project as well as subjects like domesticity, spirituality, feminism, work, religion, and art.

In the spirit of the project, the book *The Quiet in the Land* will not represent the conventional image of the Shakers as an extinct culture but as a living community while simultaneously presenting the work of contemporary artists. The book will include a history of the project, the daily diaries of each artist and the curator, and edited transcripts of the conversations as well as photographs by Wolfgang Tillmans, taken both before and during the residency period. A symposium at Sabbathday Lake will be organized on the occasion of the publication of the book. It will focus on the topics covered in the weekly conversations, opening the discussions to a broader public and providing the opportunity for an exchange of ideas. Concurrently the artists' projects will be exhibited along with a selection of Shaker objects chosen by the artists and on loan from The Shaker Museum and Library in Old Chatham, New York, and the Hancock Shaker Village in Pittsfield, Massachusetts.

Rather than subject these Shaker activities and objects to a process of romantic historicization or aestheticization *The Quiet in the Land* re-examines the artifacts of daily life in terms of purpose and utility, the labor that goes into them and is engendered by them, and the influences that they exert upon their users. In so doing contemporary notions of art as separate from the everyday life of the common person and as a privileged activity of the artist are challenged. The tired old question of "is it art or craft?" is sidestepped and a more productive inquiry—one echoed in contemporary artistic practices—is brought to the forefront: how is the activity of art related to the experience of life?

As people are forced to devise strategies of survival with which to combat political chaos, physical disease, and ideological confusion, in a world often appearing to lack in order, community, purpose and hope, the chords that the artifacts and lifestyle of the Shakers strike in our consumerist society deserve to be examined. *The Quiet in the Land* undertakes such an examination by bridging two disparate cultures—that of the United Society of Believers and the contemporary art world. Through recontextualizing Shaker culture alongside the work of artists who question the distinction imposed between art and everyday life, the project seeks to demystify the objects and practices which that distinction serves to commodify and explores the complex relationship between the experience of art and artistic practice. *The Quiet in the Land* provides an opportunity to develop, assess, and create not only new methodologies of art making, presentation, and viewing but also new ways to think about, appreciate, and interpret the world and hence ourselves.



**JANA STERBAK** was born in Prague in 1955 and moved to Canada in 1968. A video and installation artist, she lives and works in Paris and Montreal. Sterbak has had recent one-person exhibitions at the Musée d'Art Moderne Saint-Etienne, France; Fundacio Antoni Tàpies, Barcelona; the Serpentine Gallery, London, and the Museum of Modern Art, New York. She has participated in group exhibitions at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston; the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; the Kwangju Biennial, Korea; The Tate Gallery, London, and the Setagaya Museum, Tokyo. A one-person exhibition is also being organized by the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago for the fall of 1997.

**KAZUMI TANAKA** was born in Osaka, Japan, in 1962. She has lived and worked in New York since 1986 as a sculptor and installation artist. She studied at the Osaka University of Arts and the New York Studio School, and was a fellow at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Maine in 1990. Her recent one-person exhibitions include The New Museum of Contemporary Art, and Kent Gallery, New York.

**WOLFGANG TILLMANS** was born in 1968 in Remscheid, Germany, and has lived in Hamburg, New York, and London where he currently resides and works with photography. Tillmans has had recent one-person exhibitions at Daniel Buchholz, Cologne; Interim Art, London; Portikus, Frankfurt; Kunsthalle, Zurich, and Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York. Recent group exhibitions have taken place at the Kunstverein, Frankfurt; the capcMusée d'art contemporain de Bordeaux, France; Fondation Cartier, Paris; Castello di Rivoli, Turin; The Dakis Joannou Collection-Deste Foundation for Contemporary Art, Athens; the Serpentine Gallery, London, and P.S.1 Museum, New York. His photographs are published frequently in magazines, and his book *Wolfgang Tillmans* was published in 1995 by Taschen in Germany.

**NARI WARD** was born in Kingston, Jamaica, in 1963. He has lived and worked in New York since 1976 as a sculptor and installation artist. He has had recent one-person exhibitions at Deitch Projects, New York; Le Magasin-Centre d'Art Contemporain, Grenoble, France; the Harlem Firehouse, New York, and The New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York. Recent group exhibitions have taken place at The Dakis Joannou Collection-Deste Foundation for Contemporary Art, Athens; the Palais des Nations Unies, Geneva; Biennial of the Whitney Museum of Art, New York; the Kröller-Müller Museum, Holland, and the Aperto section of the Venice Biennial. He also works collaboratively with choreographer Bill T. Jones and will create a project with Janine Antoni and Marcel Odenbach at the Harlem Firehouse, New York, in September 1996.

**CHEN ZHEN** was born in Shanghai in 1955. He is an installation artist who has lived and worked in Paris since 1986. Zhen has had recent one-person exhibitions at the Centre International d'Art Contemporain, Montreal; the Musée Léon Dierx, La Réunion, France; Deitch Projects, New York; Galerie Ghislaine Hussenot, Paris; Galerie Jean Bernier, Athens, and The New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York. He has participated in group exhibitions at the Biennial of the Shanghai Art Museum; The Museum of Modern Art, Saitama, Japan; the Israel Museum, Jerusalem; the Palais des Nations Unies, Geneva; the Kröller-Müller Museum, Holland; the Pori Art Museum, Finland, and Witte de With, Holland.

France Morin, the organizer and curator of *The Quiet in the Land*, is an internationally-known independent curator and art historian based in New York who has been active in the art world for the past twenty years. From 1989 to 1994 she was Senior Curator at The New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York where she organized many exhibitions and publications.

Gerard C. Wertkin, advisor to the project, is Director of the Museum of American Folk Art, New York. He has organized exhibitions on Shaker culture and is the author of a number of books and articles on the Shakers, including *The Four Seasons of Shaker Life: An Intimate Portrait of the Community at Sabbathday Lake, Maine*.

Antoine Guerrero, on-site coordinator, has most recently worked at the American Center, Paris and at the Clocktower Gallery-Institute for Contemporary Art, P.S. 1 Museum, New York.

Sandra Gillespie, project coordinator, is an art historian who has taught at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design and University of British Columbia and coordinated exhibitions at Nicole Klagsbrun Gallery, New York.