ROBERT MORRIS
BANNERS & CURSES

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ESSAY BY PEPE KARMEL

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Plate 1
Robert Morris
BILGEPUMP/MUMBLEFUCK/BANKERS, 2017
Fiberglass and epoxy resin
38 x 77 x 4 inches

Plate 2
Robert Morris
PSYCHOPATH/RATFUCKING/SPECIALOPS, 2017
Fiberglass and epoxy resin
39 x 76 x 4 inches

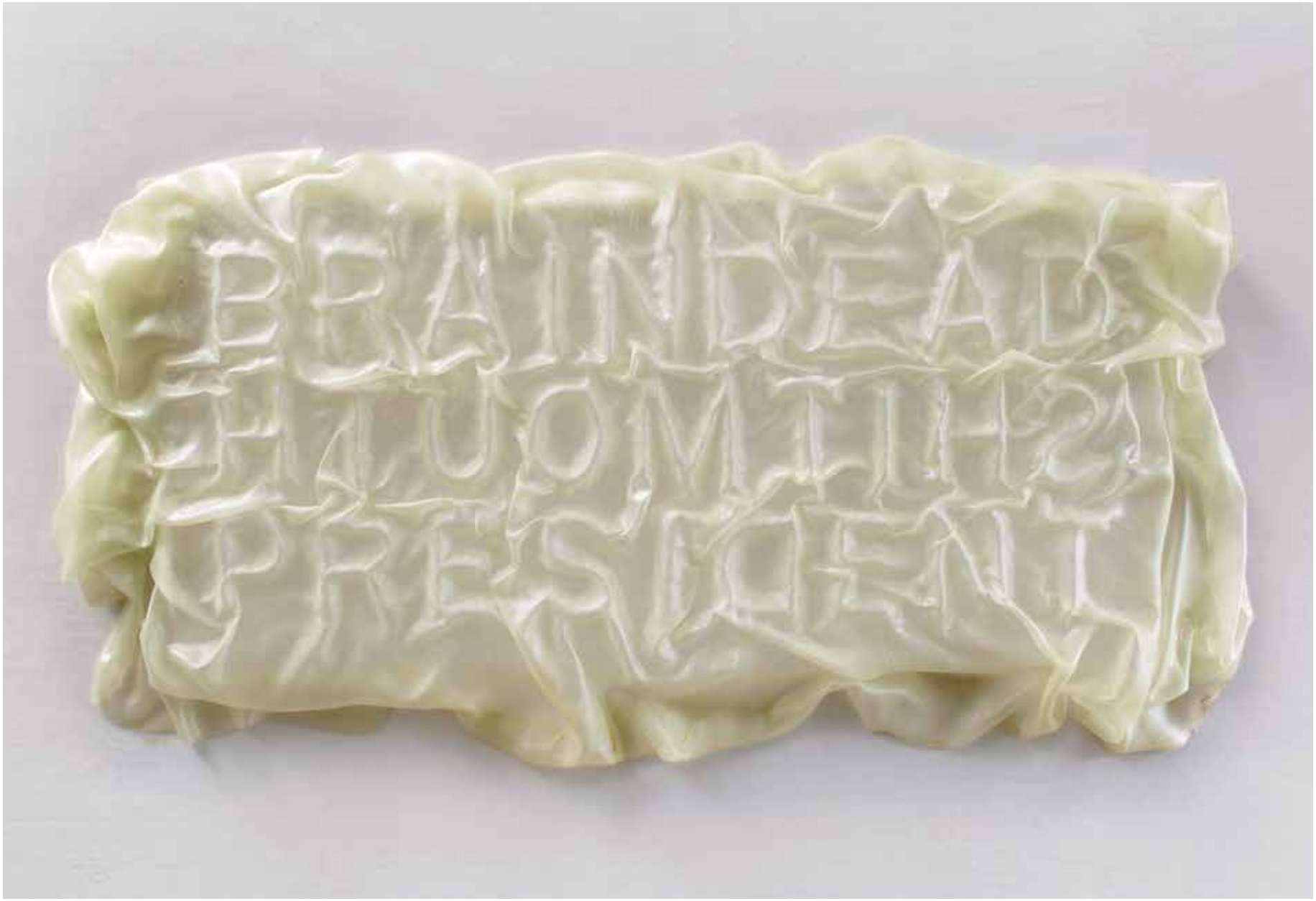

Plate 3
Robert Morris
BRAINDEAD/SHITMOUTH/PRESIDENT, 2017
Fiberglass and epoxy resin
36 x 71 x 4 inches

Plate 4
Robert Morris
MONEYSUCK/BLABFUCK/SENATORS, 2017
Fiberglass and epoxy resin
38 x 66 x 4 inches

Plate 5
Robert Morris
AMERICAN/BIGDICK/MILITARY, 2017
Fiberglass and epoxy resin
38 x 62 x 4 inches

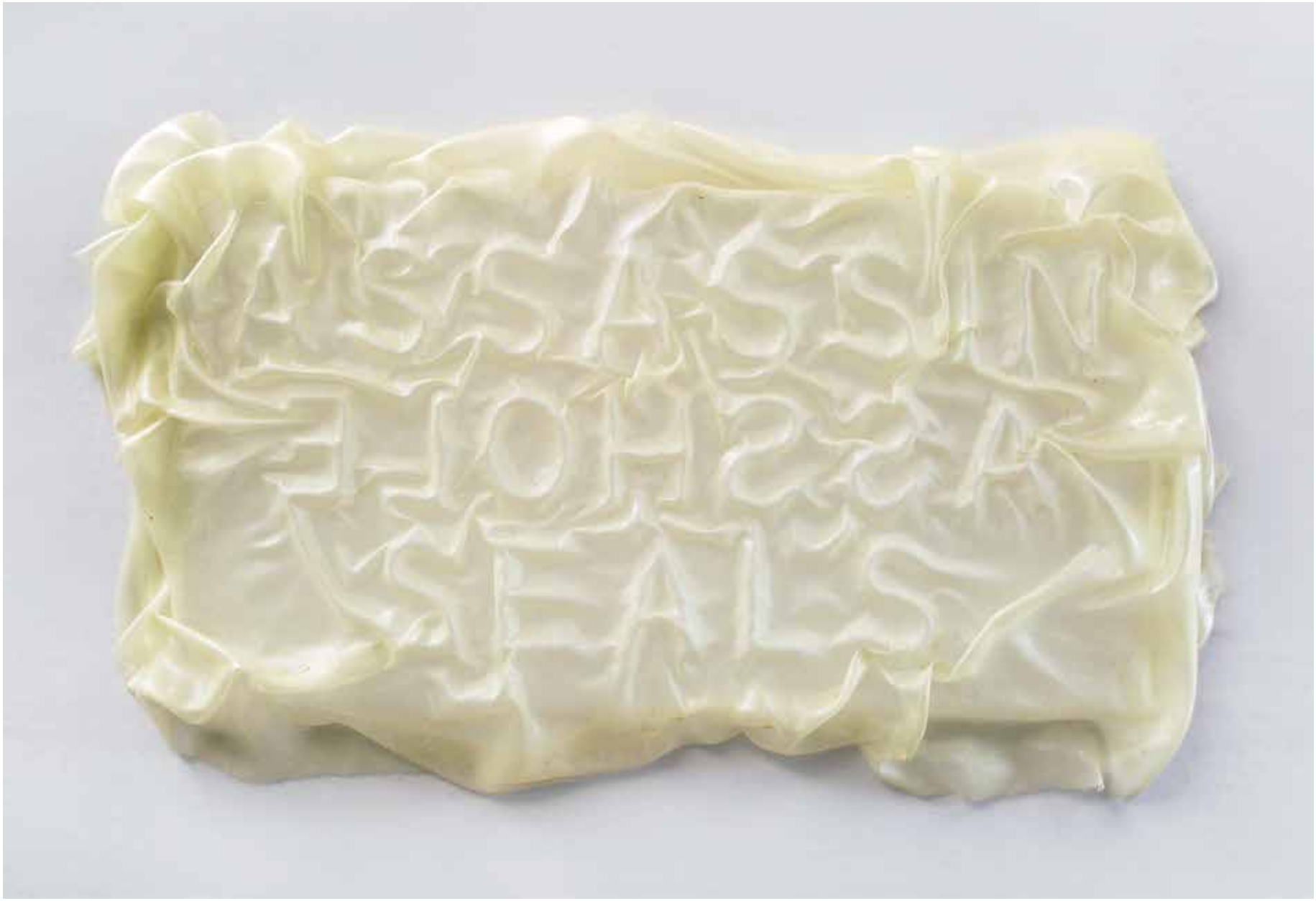

Plate 6
Robert Morris
ASSASSIN/ASSHOLE/SEALS, 2017
Fiberglass and epoxy resin
36 x 62 x 4 inches

Plate 7
Robert Morris
HALFWIT/DIPSHIT/LEADER, 2017
Fiberglass and epoxy resin
35 x 53 x 4 inches

Plate 8
Robert Morris
RACIST/MOTHER/FUCKER, 2017
Fiberglass and epoxy resin
36 x 49 x 4 inches

SLEEP OF REASON: New Work by Robert Morris

Pepe Karmel

On May 4, 1970, at Kent State University, the Ohio National Guard shot into a crowd of students peacefully protesting the war in Vietnam. Four students were killed, another nine wounded. The shooting galvanized antiwar sentiment in the United States. On May 18, members of the New York art world met to discuss what they could do. After electing artists Robert Morris and Poppy Johnson to chair the meeting, they voted to hold a one-day strike closing down the city's major museums. On Friday, May 22, Morris headed up a group of demonstrators occupying the steps of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and carrying signs that announced "Art Strike Against Racism War Repression."

The previous month, the Whitney Museum had opened a Morris exhibition comprising gigantic arrangements of concrete blocks, wooden timbers, and steel plates. The installation, carried out by Morris and a team of construction workers, was a public performance in its own right. In the wake of the Kent State shootings, however, Morris rejected art world business-as-usual. Anticipating the broader Art Strike, he shut down his own exhibition two weeks before its planned ending date. Meanwhile, he drew a series of ironic "War Memorials" commemorating the noxious byproducts of modern technology: bomb craters, chlorine gas, and atomic waste.[1]

Morris' new *Banners* combine the monumentality of his Whitney installations with the allegory of his "War Memorials." Faced with a president who punishes the poor, promotes racism, badmouths immigrants, trashes the environment, alienates democrats, and befriends dictators, Morris borrows the imagery of Francisco Goya's etchings to express the terror and frustration of our time. In *Nothing Like the Old Dances* [opposite], he reproduces the "Big Booby" (*Bobalicón*) from Goya's late series the *Disparates,* redrawing the figure's hair to resemble the stringy cloud of Donald Trump's comb-over, and coloring the entire image orange to match the color of his hair. Where Goya's Big Booby holds a pair of castanets, Morris' giant idiot dangles a pair of hand grenades. Childish, careless, and seemingly unstoppable, he dances a clumsy jig in the spotlight.

Robert Morris
Nothing Like the Old Dances, 2018 (Detail)
UV print on synthetic canvas, metal brackets, wire, clips
84 x 126 x 16 inches

Concurrently with the *Banners*, Morris has created a series of *Curses* imbedded in reliefs made from fiberglass cloth impregnated with resin. The words running back and forth, boustrophedon-style, hurl imprecations at the occupant of the Oval Office and at the violence and corruption of the U.S. government as a whole:

BRAINDEAD
HTUOMTIHS
PRESIDENT

The shimmering translucency and the lyrical folds of the reliefs [Plates 1-8] belie the violence of the words semi-concealed within them. Impelling the viewer simultaneously toward rage and transcendence, they generate a kind of mental static: the hiss, pop, and crackle of severe cognitive dissonance.

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While the inscriptions are the most salient aspect of the *Curses*, the power of the works is the result of both their format and their materials.

The *Curses* are reliefs. At first glance, this is a surprising choice. In his 1966 "Notes on Sculpture"—a foundational text of Minimalism—Morris wrote:

> The relief has always been accepted as a viable mode. However, it cannot be accepted today as legitimate. The autonomous and literal nature of sculpture demands that it have its own, equally literal space—not a space shared with painting.

However, this attack on the legitimacy of relief is a tactical argument in favor of "unitary forms"—simple geometric constructions of gray-painted plywood—intended to maximize the tactile quality of sculpture.[2] In fact, concurrent with these unitary forms, Morris created an important series of "Neo-Dada" objects, many of which were reliefs [Figure 1]. As in the reliefs of Donatello or Desiderio da Settignano, bosses and depressions intensify the presence of the image.

The fiberglass of the *Curses* looks back to Morris' first experiments with that material in the 1960s, and, beyond that, to his childhood in Kansas City in the 1930s and '40s.

Figure 1
Robert Morris
Litanies, 1963
Lead over wood with steel key ring, keys, and brass lock
12 x 7 1/8 x 2 1/2 inches
The Museum of Modern Art;
Gift of Philip Johnson; 517.1970

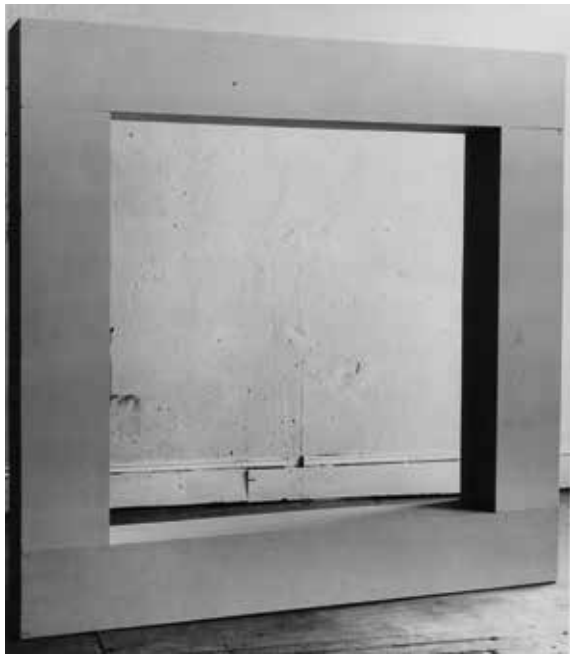

Figure 2
Robert Morris
Untitled, 1962
Painted plywood
84 x 84 x 12 inches
Photo Castelli Gallery

Figure 3
Robert Morris
Untitled, 1968
Translucent fiberglass
72 x 96 x 18 ½ inches
Photo Castelli Gallery

To judge by the artist's references to his childhood, his early years were shaped by the contrast between his father, who worked in the brutal livestock business, and his mother, who encouraged his nascent interest in art. When he was eight, she sent him to take art classes at the Nelson Gallery (now the Nelson-Atkins Museum). Morris made drawings after Egyptian reliefs. He also recalls being deeply impressed by a late *Mont Sainte-Victoire* by Cézanne; by Goya's etchings of the *Disasters of War*, displayed on the balcony of the museum's glassed-in courtyard; and by the Song landscape paintings in the museum's exceptional collection of Asian art. The shimmering silk scrolls lingered in his memory, inspiring the use of linen in his recent series of *MOLTINGSEXOSKELETONSSHROUDS* and of fiberglass in the new *Curses*.[3]

In fact, Morris' use of fiberglass dates back to 1967-68, when he began employing it to remake some of his geometric plywood constructions in what he thought of as more permanent form (Figures 2 & 3). He was particularly attracted to the translucency of fiberglass, in contrast to the matte opacity

of the painted plywood pieces. Indeed, there is something ghost-like about the fiberglass versions of these constructions, as if they were Platonic solids belonging to a higher realm of being.[4]

A similar process of transformation lies behind the new *Curses*. Each begins as a plain wooden box, on which Morris draws the words of the inscription, the first line moving conventionally from left to right; the second moving backward from right to left, boustrophedon-style (like an ox plowing a field); the third again from left to right. To create the sculptural lettering, he uses a mechanical extruder to squeeze a clay-like material through a die with a triangular cut-out, like an industrial version of a baker's pastry tube. The strands, cut into sections, are placed atop the drawn lettering. Where classical inscriptions consist of triangular channels chiseled into stone, Morris' lettering consists of triangular protrusions. The sculptural reversal enacts the parallel semantic inversion: where classical inscriptions are meant to honor, Morris' inscriptions are meant to defame.

However, the creation of the sculpted lettering is merely an intermediate step. Morris then covers the inscription with fiberglass cloth, pressing the fabric down into the spaces between the raised letters, but only incompletely, so that it simultaneously reveals and obscures their outlines. Like the backward lettering in the middle row, the billows and folds of the fabric make the inscriptions more difficult to read. "I want to slow you down," he explains.

Morris then applies resin to the fiberglass, which hardens into a rigid, self-supporting shell. Finally, the box and the sculpted lettering are removed, leaving only a translucent carapace, with light flowing through and around it. In the finished works, the billowing fabric around the edges becomes particularly prominent, recalling the sculptural folds of the table linen in Cézanne's still-lifes.

It comes as a shock, then, to decipher the curses frozen into the shimmering fabric. Some of them, like *BRAINDEAD/SHITMOUTH/PRESIDENT*, allude to the current occupant of the Oval Office. Others take on the bankers and politicians who corrupted the American government well before the present administration. A third group assails the delusion that military action, overt or covert, provides an adequate substitute for a reasonable foreign policy. (Morris' experience of military idiocy goes back to his service in Korea in the early 1950s.)[5]

■

Figure 4
Theo Eshetu
Atlas Fractured, 2017
Installation view at Documenta 14 (Kassel)
Courtesy of the artist and Axis Gallery, New York

Like the *Curses,* the *Banners* embody a series of contradictions. They are based on Goya etchings which you could hold in your hand, but the borrowed and recombined images have become murals seven feet high and over ten feet wide. They utilize a pictorial language from two hundred years ago, but they describe the parlous state of the world today.

The large size of the *Banners* links them to Morris' long-standing engagement with the effects of scale. His early neo-Dada objects were typically small. His first Minimal constructions, intended to evoke a sense of physical interaction, approximated the dimensions of the human body. Around 1967, he began to work at a larger scale, creating installations that functioned as virtual or actual environments. His abstract felt reliefs of the late 1960s and early 1970s were generally at least six feet high, and often exceeded ten feet in width. His Hydrocal reliefs of the 1980s began at the scale of paintings but quickly assumed architectural dimensions, like charnel houses laid open for inspection. In 2010, he executed a series of figurative drawings, "1934 and Before," on aluminum panels eight feet high and twelve or sixteen feet wide.

If the *Banners* are not quite as large as this, their presentation—suspended from metal brackets so that they hang away from the wall—implies a public mode of address. At first glance, they resemble the exhibition banners that museums hang from their facades, or the brightly colored advertisements that festoon lampposts on the Upper East Side and Chelsea, announcing shows at museums and galleries. Other artists have also transgressed the boundaries between private and public and between art and marketing: Sam Gilliam by draping his giant canvases from the facades of museum, Felix Gonzalez-Torres by renting billboards to display his photographs and texts, Theo Eshetu by using as a screen an enormous banner depicting masks from five continents, which had previously adorned the façade of the ethnographic museum in Berlin. Onto this he projected images of real faces that were, in turn, overlayed with projected images of masks and sculptural busts. [Figure 4]. What sets apart Morris'

Banners is the way that the original scale of Goya's etchings remains embedded in the enlarged images. The shading, indicated by wavering parallel lines laid down in overlapping patches, continues to feel hand-made. But an etching is meant to be examined by one viewer at a time, from a distance of a few inches; the intimacy of the medium feels strangely violated by an enlargement making the image visible to a crowd of viewers.

Morris' first memories of Goya go back to his childhood visits to the Nelson Gallery, and the Spaniard's brooding imagery has been a frequent reference in his work since the late 1980s, when two suites of oversized etchings, "Continuities" and "Conundrums," quoted figures and animals from the Goya's "black paintings" of 1820-24. The wraith-like figures of Morris' *MOLTINGSEXOSKELETONSSHROUDS* (2015) and *Boustrophedons* (2017) were inspired in large part by an album of Goya's late drawings exhibited at the Courtauld Gallery in 2015. When two or more of the *Banners* are exhibited together, they become a phantasmagoric environment like the installations in Morris' 2015 and 2017 exhibitions. The viewer feels as if he or she has stepped into an alternate universe, simultaneously enchanting and terrifying.

The fantastical imagery of the *Banners* also sets them apart from the use of borrowed images in conventional postmodernism. Morris' engagement with Goya brings him closer to an artist like Kara Walker, who revives and transforms 19th-century racial stereotypes, than to artists like Barbara Kruger or Richard Prince, who draw their source material from the "image world" of the present. Indeed, Morris' repurposing of Goya's imagery has important antecedents in the decades around 1800, when artists similarly engaged in a process of quotation and recombination. In that early era of "mass media," a printmaker like Thomas Rowlandson might borrow an admiring French portrait of Napoleon and transform it into a "travesty" denouncing the Emperor's crimes, much as Morris denounces the current administration.[6]

For the *Banners*, Morris decided to bypass the *Disasters of War*, Goya's best-known series of prints, and to draw his imagery instead from two other series, the *Caprichos* and the *Disparates*.

Figure 5
Goya (Francisco de Goya y Lucientes)
Plate 43 from 'Los Caprichos': The sleep of reason produces monsters, 1799
Etching, aquatint, drypoint, and burin
Plate: 8 7/16 x 5 15/16 inches
Sheet: 11 5/8 x 8 1/4 inches
The Metropolitan Museum of Art;
Gift of M. Knoedler & Co., 1918; 18.64(43)

Figure 6
Goya (Francisco de Goya y Lucientes)
Plate 80 from 'Los Caprichos': It is time, 1799
Etching, burnished aquatint, drypoint, and burin
Plate: 8 7/16 x 5 15/16 inches
Sheet: 11 5/8 x 8 1/4 inches
The Metropolitan Museum of Art;
Gift of M. Knoedler & Co., 1918; 18.64(80)

Despite their light-hearted title, the *Caprichos* (*Fancies*) are among the most desperate and ferocious images in the history of Western art. They were created in 1797-98, after the collapse of Goya's intense emotional (and possibly sexual) relationship with the Duchess of Alba, the greatest Spanish beauty of the time. The first thirty-six etchings of the series satirize lechery and cupidity, male and female. After that, Goya shifts to a more general denunciation of the folly and cruelty of the human condition. In the most famous plate of the series, *The sleep of reason produces monsters,* a man slumbers at his desk while a flock of owls (Spanish symbols of stupidity) take to the air behind him [Figure 5]. Published in 1799 in an edition of 300, the *Caprichos* found fewer than thirty buyers.

The history of the *Disparates* is more obscure. Most of the etchings were done sometime in the years 1816-27 but not published until 1864, long after Goya's death. Another group, executed in 1815-17, just after Napoleon's defeat in the Battle of Waterloo, was only published in 1877. Most of the titles of the individual prints include the word *disparate*, meaning "folly," but the series is often referred to in English as the *Proverbs*. Here, Goya returns to the theme of the second half of the *Caprichos*, but with a new emphasis on cruelty and violence, inspired by the brutality of the French invasion and occupation of Spain.

Rather than reworking complete plates from the *Caprichos* and the *Disparates*, Morris creates new compositions from multiple etchings (sometimes as many as four or five), occasionally adding details from his own earlier work. Each new composition has also been furnished with a descriptive title in the manner of Goya, expressing Morris' melancholy view of the contemporary world.

The main protagonists of the *Banners* are a pair of howling, gesticulating figures from the last plate of the *Caprichos*, *It is time (Ya es hora)* [Figure 6]. Goya's own commentary explains that the image marks the end of the long nightmare embodied in the etchings: "Then, when dawn

threatens, each one goes on his way, Witches, Hobgoblins, apparitions, and phantoms. It is a good thing that these creatures do not allow themselves to be seen except by night and when it is dark!"[7] If Goya's caption describes the figures as hobgoblins, the men's cowls and robes identify them as monks: pious frauds expressing feigned outrage.

Extracted from Goya's etching, the two figures reappear throughout the *Banners* series. Like Vladimir and Estragon in *Waiting for Godot*, they laugh, bicker, and cower, helpless in the face of a world without reason or order. In *Get Used to It* [Plate 14], Morris takes the figure group from "Time to be off" and makes it more symmetrical by flipping the foreground figure so that his gesturing arm extends in the opposite direction from the raised arms of his partner. The hobgoblin monks now seem to be reacting to the specters that flank them at left and right: on one side, a giant dog

Figure 7
Robert Morris
He Never Tires of Telling Us, 2018 (Detail)
UV print on synthetic canvas, metal brackets, wire, clips
84 x 126 x 16 inches

Figure 8
Goya (Francisco de Goya y Lucientes)
Plate 52 from 'Los Caprichos': What a tailor can do!, 1799
Etching, burnished aquatint, drypoint, and burin
Plate: 8 3/8 x 5 15/16 inches
Sheet: 11 5/8 x 8 1/4 inches
The Metropolitan Museum of Art;
Gift of M. Knoedler & Co., 1918; 18.64(52)

devouring a woman; on the other, the heads of two ancient men that Goya describes as sucking the life from babies.[8]

In *Nothing Like the Old Dances* [Plate 9], the hobgoblin monks confront the Donald Trump figure based on Goya's "Big Booby" from the *Disparates*. Their feigned horror is belied by the severed head in a bucket at their feet, testimony to their own misdeeds. The banner's title reminds the viewer that the violence and stupidity of the current administration find ample antecedent in the reigns of previous presidents.[9] Another Trump figure appears in *The Noise is Deafening* [Plate 14]; modeled on one of Goya's goblins, he clutches a missile instead of a wine cup.[10]

In *He Never Tires of Telling Us* [Figure 7], the monks, now dressed in camouflage fabric, are pushed to opposite ends of the composition, one holding aloft a submachine gun, the other shadowed by an owl from "The Sleep of Reason." The body of the standing figure just left of center belongs to one of the more benign characters in the *Caprichos*--an old drunkard, unbuttoning his pants--but he has been given a vicious head from a group of monsters trimming their nails. A seated half-man, half-satyr holds a calculator, toting up the profits of war; appropriately enough, his upper body comes from Goya's etching "There is plenty to suck." His "desk" consists of a 1965 sculpture by Morris himself, retrospectively acknowledging an affinity between Minimalism and the military-industrial complex.[11]

Other *Banners* explore the fearful mass psychology that has brought nationalist, right-wing governments to power in the United States and across Europe. *They Never Raise Their Voices* [Plate 9] centers on a hooded figure with raised arms, which proves on closer inspection to be a tree trunk and branches dressed up like a scarecrow. In Goya's original print, *What a tailor can do!*, the scarecrow is a Tartuffe-like preacher, compelling the devotion of a crowd of kneeling women [Figure 8]. In Morris' version, the women are replaced by a motley crowd of monsters, not victims

but collaborators. Emphasizing the scarecrow character of the preacher, Morris reminds viewers how right-wing governments justify their attacks on civil liberties by inventing threats requiring "strong measures" of defense.[12]

They Call It Truth [Plate 13] combines figures from two of the *Disparates*. The giant hooded figure at left comes from *Folly of Fear,* where a mob of terrified French soldiers has fallen to the ground, while one runs away, flailing his sword in self-defense [Figure 9]. The shrouded, mysterious figure at right is another scarecrow, with wooden legs and a stick extended like a sword. In this image of a *Well-Known Folly* (alternative title: "What a Warrior!"), a crowd of citizens shrinks back with a strange mixture of fear and admiration, reacting to the scarecrow as if it were its shadow, which outlines the image of a soldier with a raised blade [Figure 10]. Morris brings the hooded figure face to face with the military scarecrow, exchanging pompous gestures and empty threats in a manner all too familiar from the pages of the daily paper. The dust storm rising in the distance comes from a 2010 drawing by Morris himself.[13]

Figure 9
Goya (Francisco de Goya y Lucientes)
Plate 2 from 'Los Disparates': Folly of Fear, ca. 1816-23
Etching, burnishing, aquatint, and drypoint
Plate: 9 5/8 x 13 13/16 inches
Sheet: 12 5/8 x 18 7/8 inches
The Metropolitan Museum of Art;
Gift of Mrs. Henry J. Bernheim, 1936; 36.20(2)

Figure 10
Goya (Francisco de Goya y Lucientes)
Plate A from 'Los Disparates': Well-Known Folly, ca. 1816-23
Etching and burnished aquatint
Plate: 9 5/8 x 13 3/4 inches
Sheet: 10 13/16 x 14 15/16 inches
The Metropolitan Museum of Art;
Rogers Fund, 1922; 22.63.146

Figure 11
Goya (Francisco de Goya y Lucientes)
Plate 17 from 'Los Disparates': Loyalty, ca. 1816-23
Etching and burnished aquatint
Plate: 9 5/8 x 13 3/4 inches
Sheet: 13 1/16 x 18 9/16 inches
The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Gift of Mrs. Henry J. Bernheim, 1936; 36.20(17)

How Often Does He Think of It? [Plate 11] centers on the figure of "Loyalty" from the *Disparates*. In Goya's etching, the seated, porcine figure has closed his eyes and clasped his hands in prayer, trying to ignore the taunts of the men at left and right [Figure 11]. Morris revises the setting, eliminating most of the background figures and giving the men at right new faces taken from other prints. The left side of the image is now occupied by the swarm of bats from *The sleep of reason produces monsters* [Figure 5]. Beneath his clasped hands, the seated figure clutches the head of a man with padlocks on his ears, a character whom Goya describes as "he who hears nothing, knows nothing and does nothing." Morris seems to invite the viewer to imagine the feelings of someone who voted for Trump in good faith, believing that he would in fact "drain the swamp" of Washington corruption and act on behalf of the American working class. Confronted with the blatant self-dealing and massive tax cuts for the rich that have taken place since the election, the good-faith voter closes his eyes and ears and lifts his hands in prayer, trying not to think about the contradiction between promise and performance. Putting reason to sleep has set free a flock of monsters.

Two final *Banners*, jointly titled *Dust Gets in Your Eyes* [Plates 15 & 16], draw not on Goya but on the films of Stanley Kubrick and on Morris' own earlier work. Morris combines a closing scene from *Dr. Strangelove*, where the mad scientist played by Peter Sellers greets the nuclear holocaust with a Nazi salute, with an early scene from *2001*, where the appearance of a mysterious black monolith teaches early humans to use bones as weapons. The humans drive another tribe away from their watering hole and then throw their bones triumphantly into the air. In the most famous "match cut" in film history, a spinning bone becomes a satellite turning in space, marking man's progress from the first tool to advanced technology. Morris' juxtaposition of the two Kubrick films underscores the sardonic point that man's "advanced" technology is no less murderous than his "primitive" tools. The background, taken from Morris' 2010 drawings of a *1934 Mid-West Dust Storm*, provides a reminder that carelessness can be as destructive as intentional aggression. The dust storms of the 1930s were caused by aggressive deep ploughing, turning topsoil to dust across a hundred million acres of the Mid-West. The U.S. withdrawal from the Paris Accords on climate change threatens much of the country—and the world—with a similar experience of desertification.

Morris' *Banners* evoke nightmares, but they are not counsels of despair. They are reminders that we need to wake up and change direction. ■

Endnotes

1. Acute analyses of both Morris' Whitney installations and his participation in the Artists Strike movement can be found in Maurice Berger, *Labyrinths: Robert Morris, Minimalism, and the 1960s* (New York: Harper & Row, 1989), Ch. 4, "The Iron Triangle: Challenging the Institution," pp. 107-120, and in Julia Bryan-Wilson, "Hard-Hats and Art Strikes: Robert Morris in 1970," *The Art Bulletin*, vol. 89, no. 2, June 2007, pp. 333-359.
2. Robert Morris, "Notes on Sculpture," *Artforum*, February 1966, reprinted in Gregory Battock, ed., *Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 19678), p. 224, 228.
3. Interview with Robert Morris, Gardiner, NY, May 29, 2018
4. On Morris' first use of fiberglass, in 1967-68, see Pepe Karmel, "Robert Morris: Formal Disclosures [interview]," *Art in America*, June 1995, p. 94.
5. On Morris' military service in Korea, see "Formal Disclosures," p. 92.
6. For an example of Thomas Rowlandson's reworking of existing imagery, see his 1813 print, *Napoleon le Grande: Polar Star*, derived from a portrait by Laurent Dabos. An image available online at: http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=1654947&partId=1. (More information, but no image, can be found at: https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/788144.) On the "image world" esthetic of the 1980s, see Marvin Heiferman, *Image World: Art and Media Culture* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1989).
7. For the titles of and commentaries on individual prints, I have consulted primarily the superb editions of *Los Caprichos* and the *Proverbs* edited by Philip Hofer (both New York: Dover, 1969). However, I have sometimes taken titles and other information from the online catalogue entries for the edition of the *Caprichos* in the collection of the Smith College Museum of Art and the edition of the *Disparates* in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.
8. The dog devouring the woman appears in *Disparates*, pl, 10, "The kidnapping horse." The two old men at right are from *Caprichos*, pl. 45, "There is plenty to suck," where Goya's commentary reads: "Those who reach eighty suck little children; those under eighteen suck grown-ups. It seems that man is born and lives to have the substance sucked out of him."
9. The *Bobalicón* ("Big Booby" or "Simpleton") comes from the *Disparates*, pl. 4. As noted above, in Goya's image he holds a pair of castanets, which Morris has replaced with hand grenades. Two monstrous heads appear at either side; Morris suppresses them in *Nothing like the Old Dances*, but one of them reappears in *How Often Does He Think of It?* [Plate 11]. At the left of *Bobalicón*, a vicious-looking man pushes a woman toward the giant "booby," apparently as a kind of sexual offering. Here as throughout the *Banners* series, Morris has suppressed the sexual themes of the *Caprichos* and *Disparates*.
10. The central figure in *The Noise is Deafening* [plate 14] comes from the *Caprichos*, pl. 49, "Little Goblins." The open-mouthed figure at lower right, from the *Caprichos*, pl. 45, also appears in *He Never Tires of Telling Us* [plate 15]. The grieving head at lower left comes from *Disparates*, pl. 7, "Disordered Folly." The shadowy hooded figure at top left and right is from *Caprichos*, pl. 79, "No one saw us."
11. In addition to the monks from pl. 80 of the *Caprichos*, *He Never Tires of Telling Us* includes figures or parts of figures from plates 18, 45, 51, and 56. It also includes Morris' 1965 sculpture, *Battered Cubes*.
12. The scarecrow figure in *They Never Raise Their Voices* comes from the *Caprichos*, pl. 52, "Fine Feathers Make Fine Birds." The animal head at lower left is from pl. 45, "Correction." The man-bat just above is from pl. 51, "They pare their nails." (Its head also appears in *He Never Tires of Telling Us*.) At right, the human head at right with long, sheep-like ears is from pl. 67, "Wait to be anointed." The two figures and the cat below are from pl. 48, "Soplones" (a stage prompter), but they are the audience in that print, not the speaker. The atmospheric background comes from a drawing in Morris' 2010 series *1934 and Before*, which figures more visibly in the diptych *Dust Gets in Your Eyes* [plates 16 and 17].
13. Beyond the figures from *Disparates*, pls. 2 and 19, "Folly of Fear" and "Well-Known Folly [What a Warrior!]," discussed in the main text, *They Call It Truth* includes at left a grieving head from the *Disparates*, pl. 7, "Disordered Folly." The dust storm cloud in the background does not appear in the printed catalogue *1934 and Before* (New York: Castelli Gallery, 2010), but Morris, in his interview of May 29, 2018, confirmed that it is from the same series of mural-scale drawings.

Plate 9
Robert Morris
Nothing Like the Old Dances, 2018
UV print on synthetic canvas, metal brackets, wire, clips
84 x 126 x 16 inches

Plate 10
Robert Morris
The Noise is Deafening, 2018
UV print on synthetic canvas, metal brackets, wire, clips
84 x 126 x 16 inches

Plate 11
Robert Morris
How Often Does He Think of It?, 2018
UV print on synthetic canvas, metal brackets, wire, clips
84 x 126 x 16 inches

Plate 12
Robert Morris
They Never Raise Their Voices, 2018
UV print on synthetic canvas, metal brackets, wire, clips
84 x 126 x 16 inches

Plate 13
Robert Morris
They Call It Truth, 2018
UV print on synthetic canvas, metal brackets, wire, clips
84 x 126 x 16 inches

Plate 14
Robert Morris
Get Used to It, 2018
UV print on synthetic canvas, metal brackets, wire, clips
84 x 126 x 16 inches

Plates 15 & 16
Robert Morris
Dust Gets in Your Eyes, 2018
UV print on synthetic canvas, metal brackets, wire, clips
Two panels, each 84 x 126 x 16 inches

NOTE:

The dates and checklist for the exhibition *Robert Morris: Banners and Curses* differ from those included in this catalogue.
The correct dates are: October 30, 2018 – January 25, 2019

The following works, featured in the catalogue, are not included in the exhibition:

Nothing Like the Old Dances, 2018
They Call It Truth, 2018
The Noise is Deafening, 2018

These works have been replaced by:

Gluttony/Pain, 2018
Greed/Metrics, 2018
Sloth/Chance, 2018
BIGBOYSGRABPUSSY, 2018
GENERALDICKEADNEEDSTROOPS, 2018
PSYCHOPATHMUMBLEFUCKIMBECILES, 2018

In these new works, Morris extends the spirit of Goya's *Caprichos* and *Disparates* into a personal phantasmagoria, combining sublime landscape, art history, patriotic propaganda, Krazy Kat, and photographs ripped from the news into a savage commentary on the state of the union. Diagnosis: not good.
– Pepe Karmel

This catalogue is published on the occasion of the exhibition *Robert Morris: Banners & Curses*
Castelli Gallery, 24 W 40, NY, October 15, 2018 – January 25, 2019.

Photo credits
Robert Morris artworks: photography by Gregory Carideo

Design by HHA design
Printed in Canada