

JOSEPH GRIGELY
MATRIX 140

DECEMBER 26, 1999 - APRIL 9, 2000

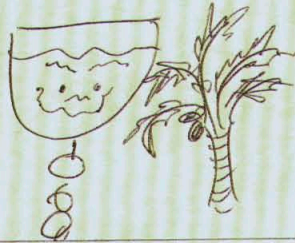
WADSWORTH ATHENEUM
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

tonight - would
you like to eat
at Annabel's with
us. Garin will
cook?

wine
+
fruit
+
mint
+
mint
+
mint

Whew - weee!

this is a DRY
martini



Eric will join us a
little later

So I'll look and

I'm having Sangria
a pitcher is 3 glasses.

She said "is this good?"
You looked at her legs
and said "Yeah!"

The response was
GREAT.

I got sick.

I'm on tranquilizers
now.

I look tired?

My ~~nerves~~ nerves have
become so bad.

This
my
- Ab

I'm
drun
beca

s is
daughter
igail.

Slow, quietish ~~and~~
guitar song
no real rhythm.

Love the naked dude
She said "time to rock n roll"

added drums

its like they keep
warming up to rock
out + then they never
do.

not a drop of
Wim Weathers' too.

Love the new

could be better

you will miss that you

a litty
& raw.

use for can't

ROASTED
PEPPERS

LETTUCE

TOMATO

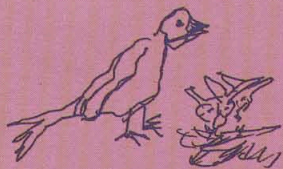
BALSAMIC

VINEGAR

DESSERT?

So - in the movie
I saw - the
victim is an
asshole of a
cab driver.

I am such a ~~petite~~ petite
thing



What's the sign
walk to the
sign for pr
hooker?
you think it
off
not from the
sex

She asked
"Are those
your flowers?"

Voluptuous
lady holding
a big orange.

now
dy

fo
me

for sign?
sea?
etty?
courses
?
+ kind of
AC
Wet'n n

"he's obsessed
with a chick"
obsessed
I mean.

But I
don't get to
talk much
when we're
walking.

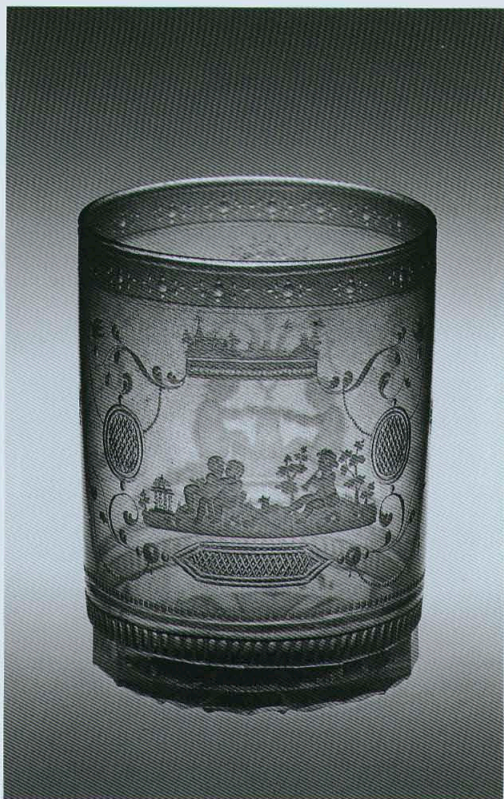
XX
ow

TEXT AND CONTEXT: THE ART OF JOSEPH GRIGELY

NICHOLAS BAUME, EMILY HALL TREMAINE CURATOR OF CONTEMPORARY ART

Words are the stuff of Joseph Grigely's art. In this respect, he shares his subject matter with many conceptual artists of the late 1960s and 1970s who began to work with the structures of language. In general terms, their investigations sought to reveal or to produce linguistic operations, exploring the ways that meaning is generated through language as a relational system.

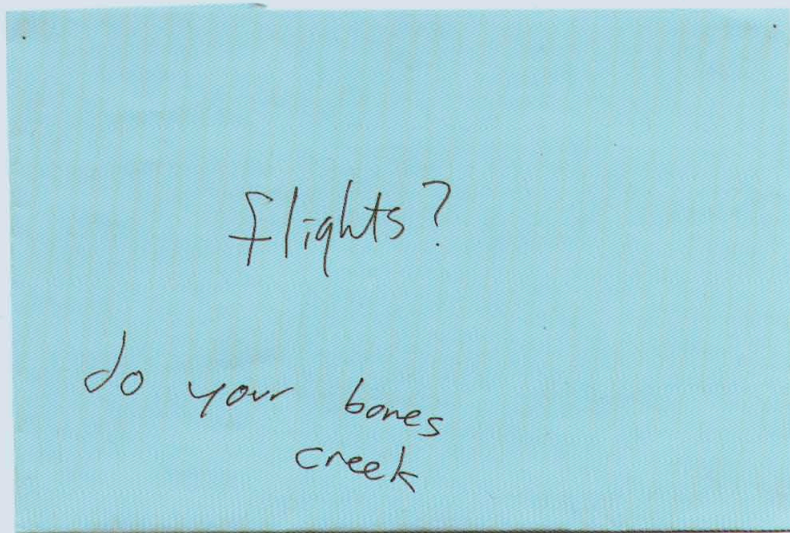
In contrast, Grigely's art is not about formal, objective structures or systematic elaborations of language. It is decidedly subjective in its origins and its themes. Joseph Grigely is profoundly deaf. His conversations with those of us who do not know sign language need to be written down. The material residues of these conversations—so many notes and scraps of paper—are selectively redeployed by the artist as the constitutive elements of his art. Thus the work emerges from everyday life or, more precisely, from *his* everyday life, grounding it in a particular experience of interpersonal communication. It is, in fact, that most ubiquitous form of verbal communication—the conversation—that provides Joseph Grigely with the starting point for his work.



In discussion of the
“Many of us know what a c
ferent ways, each of the wo
sound is to the creation of
world of difference betwee
informality of a conversat
“talk on paper” becomes
rather than more strictly c
eccentricities of individua
marks and graphic elemen
begin to recognize in the l
its ancient source. Above a
reveling in the poetry of th

Blending a conceptua
ly belongs to a generation o
the genesis of their art. Thi
himself. Rather, its foundat
invites participation from a
ly consist of a selection of n
a grid and accompanied by
versations occurred. The ar
sents only the documents g
becomes not the artist's own
communication in general.

It may seem paradox
“Conversing” and yet has pre



exhibition, the artist has posed the following question: "Conversation sounds like—but what does it look like?" In dif-
 ferences in this installation reveals how important the sight of
 meaning and the process of interpretation. We recognize a
 in the formality of conventional written language and the
 on that has been written down. What Grigely has called
 a visually engaging form, expressive of personal speech
 modified public language. We become alert to the quirks and
 of handwriting, to the expressive potential of diacritical
 marks, and to the humor of fragmentary speech. We may even
 question the letters of the alphabet itself the figuration that is, after all,
 still, Grigely's *Conversation Pieces* set language free to play,
 in the quotidian.

With a classical heritage with a highly subjective approach, Grigely firm-
 ly believes that artists who find in the experience of their own subjectivity
 is not to imply that Joseph Grigely's art is primarily about
 his own experience opens up to a methodology that
 is shared by a number of other people. The *Conversation Pieces* typical-
 ly consist of notes, hand written on assorted pieces of paper, presented in
 a storyline—a brief outline of the situation in which the con-
 versationist's own voice "disappears" from the final piece, which pre-
 sented by his partners in conversation. Thus the theme
 is not the experience of communication, but our shared experience of

It is notable that the artist has titled his exhibition "The Pleasure of
 Conversation Presented to Us, in the Classical Museum Manner, with a Selection



of silent, static objects. Grigely's museology is, in fact, anything but conventional. He has brought together a historically and typologically diverse range of objects from the permanent collections of the Wadsworth Atheneum and has presented them in combination with his own *Conversation Pieces*.

Presented in loose thematic groupings, the Atheneum objects and Grigely *Conversations* might appear to be the yin and yang of visual representation. The objects were selected following several visits to the Wadsworth Atheneum galleries and to the basement storage rooms of paintings, sculptures and decorative arts. Each item selected bears witness to some kind of aural exchange. We know, for example, that in John Kensett's 1869 painting *Coast Scene with Figures (Beverly Shore)*, that there are two figures walking along the beach. We cannot hear their conversation, but we see that it is taking place. Similarly, we cannot hear the tidal rush of the wave about to wash ashore, but recognize the sound of the ocean as a key component of the *mise-en-scène* of this picture.

The visual representation of the aural has been termed by musicol-

ogist Richard Leppert the "sonoric landscape."¹ Grigely thinks selected as representing a sonoric landscape: hearing nothing, somehow being produced. Observing Kensett's figures on the nothing of the text of their conversation while knowing every- ical context. The reverse is true of Grigely's *Conversation P* given text without visual illustration of context. Or, to put emphasis, we are presented with a text whose context is limited ers of imagination. Anonymous, fragmentary, individual and *Conversation Pieces* are documents from everyday life that h order to become something else.

One pair of images selected by Grigely does not represent a sonoric landscape, although they do depict a specific nonverbal communication. Willson Peale's portraits of Laurent and Eliza Clerc, Eliza married to the letter "E", referring to her daughter Elizabeth seated on her left. Both are both an important figure for Grigely and a key figure in the history of education. The Clerc left his native France to settle in Hartford in 1816, where he founded the first educational institution of its type, the American School for the Deaf.

Joseph Grigely's art makes a compelling case for the pleasure of listening (and who among us is not guilty of overlooking the most familiar objects when it reveals to us that such pleasure is available through our visual sense. Indeed it is arguably an absence of hearing that enriches our perception of the sight of sound. And this, Joseph Grigely's art is an extraordinarily rich site for the interpretation of human expression.



1. Richard Leppert, *The Sight of Sound: Music, Representation, and the History of the Ear* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), pp.15-41.



of each object he has
we see that sound is
beach we can know
thing about its phys-
pieces, where we are
it with a different
ed only by our pow-
materialized—these
ave been set free in

sent a sonoric land-
nication. In Charles
akes the sign for the
ap. Laurent Clerc is
history of Hartford.
e he helped to found
ol for the Deaf.
easure of conversing
ar of pleasures?) and
isual as well as our
ables the most acute
as shown us, is an
ession.

ry of the Body (Berkeley:



SELECTED ONE-PERSON EXHIBITIONS

- 1994 "Conversations with the Hearing," White Columns, New York.
1995 "Figures of Speech," AC Project Room, New York
1996 "The Pleasure of Conversing," Anthony d'Offay Gallery, London
"Migrateurs," Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris
"Portraits," AC Project Room, New York
"Conversations and Portraits," FRAC-Limousin, Limoges, France
"Ordinary Conversations," MIT List Center for the Visual Arts, Cambridge, Mass.
1997 "Little Piglet," Galerie Air de Paris, Paris
"Does It Give Away the Story?" Galerie Arndt & Partner, Berlin
"Conversations," Revolution Gallery, Detroit
1998 "Barbican Conversations," The Barbican Centre, London
"Conversations and Portraits," Douglas Hyde Gallery, Trinity College, Dublin
"I am such a petite thing," Galerie Francesca Pia, Bern
"Pretty Paper," Center for Contemporary Art, Kitakyushu, Japan
Masataka Hayakawa Gallery, Tokyo
1999 "Fireside Talk," Galerie Air de Paris, Paris
"Publications and Publication Projects, 1994-1999," Cranbrook Museum of Art

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS (*=catalogue)

- 1995 "La Belle et la Bête: Art contemporain américain," Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris*
"TransCulture," XLVI Venice Biennale, Venice*
"Action Station," Santa Monica Museum of Art, Santa Monica
1996 "Semikolon," Portikus, Frankfurt*
"The Power of Suggestion: Narrative and Notation in Contemporary Drawing,"
Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles*
"de Rode Poort," Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst, Ghent, Belgium*
"NowHere," Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebaek, Denmark*
"Manifesta 1," Centrum Beeldende Kunst, Rotterdam*
1997 "Angel, Angel," Kunsthalle, Vienna*
"Blueprint," De Appel, Amsterdam*
"Transit: Oeuvres du Fonds national d'art contemporain," École nationale supérieure des
Beaux-Arts, Paris*
1998 "Voiceover: Sound and Vision in Recent Art," National Touring Exhibition organized by the
Hayward Gallery, London*
"The Tree-Trimming Party," Matthew Marks Gallery, New York
Sydney Biennale, Sydney*
Printemps de Cahors, Cahors*
"An Unrestricted View of the Mediterranean," Kunsthau, Zürich*
"Play Mode," University of California at Irvine*
1999 "And . . . And . . . And . . . And" Het Consortium, Amsterdam
"Events," Côté Rue—Galerie Yvon Lambert, Paris
"La Ville, le Jardin, la Mémoire," Académie de France à Rome*
"The Time of Our Lives," New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York*
"Babel," Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, England*
"True Stories: Fiona Banner, Sophie Calle, Joseph Grigely," Barbara Gross Gallery, Munich
"Laboratorium," Antwerp*

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS AND PUBLICATION PROJECTS BY JOSEPH GRIGELY

- Deaf & Dumb: A Tale. New York: White Columns, 1994.
Figures of Speech. New York: AC Project Room, 1995.
Textuality: Art, Theory, and Textual Criticism. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan Press, 1995.
"Seven Questions," in Der Standard (Austria), March 8 & 11, 1996.
Migrateurs. Paris: Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, 1996.
Kitchen Conversations. Frankfurt am Main: Portikus, 1996.
General Catalogue N° 39: Ordinary Conversations. Cambridge, Ma.: MIT List Visual Arts Center, 1996.
The Pleasure of Conversing. London: Anthony d'Offay Gallery, 1996. French edition, Le Plaisir de la
Conversation, translated by Yves Abrioux. Limoges: FRAC-Limousin, 1996.
Recovering Lost Fictions: Caravaggio's "Musicians". Cambridge, Ma.: MIT List Visual Arts Center, 1997.
Point d'ironie (Paris), No. 1, June 1997.
Otherthings, Otherhow. Vienna: Kunsthalle Wien, 1997.
"Postcards to Sophie Calle," Michigan Quarterly Review 37.2 (Spring 1998): 206-233; excerpts originally
published in Parkett, 36 (June 1993), 88-101.
Portraits. Dublin: The Douglas Hyde Gallery, Trinity College, 1998.
Barbican Conversations. London: The Barbican Centre and the Public Art Development Trust, 1998.
Conversation Pieces. Kitakyushu: Center for Contemporary Art and Korinsha Press, 1998.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY ABOUT JOSEPH GRIGELY

- Holland Cotter, "Joseph Grigely and Lee Gordon," The New York Times (March 25, 1994): C26.
Raphael Rubinstein, "Joseph Grigely at White Columns," Art in America (December 1994): 102.

Michel Nuridsany, "La belle et la bête américaines," Le Figaro (17 Octobre 1995): 27.

Kate Bush, "Small Talk," Erieze (March-April 1996): 64-5.

David Greene, "Aural Report," The Village Voice (June 18, 1996), 82.

Brigitte Ollier, "Joseph Grigely, le discours manuel," Libération (Paris) 4/6 Mai 1996: 26.

Raphael Rubinstein, "Visual Voices," Art in America (April 1996): 94-101, 133.

Aaron Williamson, "Joseph Grigely," Art Monthly (May 1996): 35-36.

Michael Archer, "Joseph Grigely," Artforum (October 1998): 136.

Laurence Cabidoche, "Histories sans parole," les Inrockuptibles (France), No. 153 (27 Mai 1998): 66.

Dan Cameron, "Joseph Grigely," Cream: Contemporary Art in Culture. London: Phaidon, 1998: 156-59.

Cathy Haynes, "Joseph Grigely," London: Public Art Development Trust, 1998.

Maria Scott, "Joseph Grigely: Conversations and Portraits," Circa: Irish and International Contemporary Visual Culture, 84 (Summer 1998).

Dorothea Strauss, "Joseph Grigely in der Galerie Francesca Pia," Kunst-Bulletin (April 1998): 35.

Aaron Williamson, "Writing Art," Art Monthly (October 1999).

SELECTED WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE WADSWORTH ATHENEUM

Pair of Vases, Bohemian, c. 1860-1890, transparent red and colorless non-lead glass; blown enameled and gilded, 18 15/16 x 8 1/2 inches each Bequest of Elizabeth Hart Jarvis Colt

J.J. Kaendler, Family Group, German: Meissen, c. 1740-1745, porcelain, height: 7 1/8 inches
Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan

John F. Kensett, Coast Scene with Figures (Beverly Shore), 1869, oil on canvas, 36 x 60 inches
The Ella Gallup Sumner and Mary Catlin Sumner Collection

Tumbler, France or Bohemia, c. 1800-1810, colorless non-lead glass (crizzled); blown, cut, and engraved, 4 x 3 1/8 inches Gift of Samuel P. Avery

Sadler or Zachariah Barnes, Black and Red Tiles, c. 1760, pottery, 4 x 4 inches
Gift of Dr. Horace S. Fuller

Canaletto, View of Venice: Piazza and Piazzetta San Marco, c. 1730-1741, oil on canvas, 26 x 40 inches
The Ella Gallup Sumner and Mary Catlin Sumner Collection Fund

After Watteau, Le Danse Paysannes, 18th c., oil on panel, 9 1/8 x 6 inches
The Ella Gallup Sumner and Mary Catlin Sumner Collection Fund

Charles Willson Peale, Laurent Clerc, 1822, oil on canvas, 25 x 21 inches
On loan from the American School for the Deaf, Hartford

Charles Willson Peale, Eliza Boardman Clerc, 1822, oil on canvas, 25 x 21 inches
On loan from the American School for the Deaf, Hartford

Agnes Martin, On a Clear Day, 1972, silkscreens on paper, 12 x 12 inches each
On loan from the LeWitt Collection.

Gerhard Richter, Untitled, 1972, oil on canvas, 18 x 18 1/8 inches
On loan from the LeWitt Collection.

SELECTED WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION BY JOSEPH GRIGELY

Untitled Conversations (stories), 1988, ink/pencil on paper Courtesy Masataka Hayakawa Gallery, Tokyo
Untitled Conversations (music), 1996 Private collection

Untitled Conversation (sex), 1995 Courtesy Matthew Marks Gallery, New York

Fireside Talk, 1999, fabricated fiberglass mantelpiece and polyurethane frames with inscribed conversations
Courtesy Galerie Air de Paris, Paris

Untitled Conversation (meals in restaurants), 1998 Courtesy of the artist

Untitled Conversations (the twists and turns some conversations take), 1998

Courtesy Matthew Marks Gallery, New York

Untitled Conversations (fragments of conversations), 1999 Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Air de Paris, Paris

Untitled Conversation (I am such a petite thing), 1998 Courtesy Francesca Pia, Bern

MATRIX LECTURE

6pm, Thursday, January 6, 2000

Joseph Grigely delivers an informal lecture on his work in The Hartford Courant Room.

GALLERY TALKS

12 noon, Tuesday, January 18, 2000

"Joseph Grigely: Text and Context," Nicholas Baume, Emily Hall Tremaine Curator of Contemporary Art

12 noon, Thursday, March 7, 2000

"Joseph Grigely: The Pleasure of Conversing," Judy Kim, Assistant Curator of Contemporary Art

MATRIX 140 IS SUPPORTED BY THE LANNAN FOUNDATION.

Delta Air Lines is the preferred airline of the Wadsworth Atheneum.

The Hilton Hartford is the preferred hotel of the Wadsworth Atheneum.

Design: vBureau.com in collaboration with Joseph Grigely

The artist wishes to thank: James Rondeau, Nicholas Baume, Ben Kinmont, Andrea Miller-Keller, Mickey and Janice Cartin, and Amy Vogel