



BLAU INTERNATIONAL
Art Magazine

EUR 15 UK£ 14 CAD 24
CHF 21 US\$ 18

No. 5

BLAU

INTERNATIONAL

“I want to be in the room with him”

Jonathan Anderson on Florian Krewer

MATTHEW BARNEY
Emerging from the woods,
the artist speaks

JOAN SEMMEL
My body, my choice:
a life spent in the nude

MUGHAL MASTERY
Glenn Lowry recalls
his pre-modern epiphany

DAVID HAMMONS
The fabled phantom explained
by those in the know

PARTLY JOKING

by HARMONY KORINE

Great art can hit you like a flash, or with the power of a freight train. Harmony Korine on Red Grooms's not so serious subway



Left:
RED GROOMS, subway
(detail of the installation
Ruckus Manhattan), 1976

Below:
HARMONY KORINE
photographed by
LUKAS GANSTERER

To be honest, the very first piece of art that blew me away was a giant penis. One day, in Nashville, I arrived at school and a classmate had spray-painted a dick on the wall outside. The trees all around had been toilet-papered too. Of course, all the kids were cracking up, and the grown-ups were pissed. The kid who did it was called Tracey. He was a little older than me, probably around 16. Back then, teachers were still allowed to beat their students, and at our school Tracey held the record for most-beaten pupil. I thought, "Wow, art can be really powerful!"

But if it comes down to a "real" work of art, it's Red Grooms's subway. At the time, he was a pretty well-known artist in Nashville, and he recreated a subway car, complete with these caricatures of passengers. The piece was out in some park, and as a kid I would just duck in and walk around. It felt like the whole thing was about to roll off with you inside! I still remember exactly the way that blew my



mind—I must have been 11 or 12 at the time. If I remember correctly, he originally constructed that piece in New York City.

It was the first time that I encountered this kind of gigantomania—because his subway car was larger than life. I also liked that it was very funny! Up until that point, I'd always thought art had to be difficult and depressing. I thought art was Jackson Pollock. Red Grooms's work, on the other hand, felt almost like a movie, or like a slapstick comedy. The passengers' faces alone!

They looked so weird and silly, like something you'd usually only see at a funfair. I remembered the piece because it was fun, immersive, and multidimensional. It really was the first work of art that took my breath away. These days it's famous and held in a museum collection.

Later, I followed Grooms a little—he was part of the New York art scene and exhibited in big galleries. I think most people thought his art was too jokey, but I always thought he was totally underrated.

