**ARTFORUM**

THE CONFORMISTS

ALEX KITNICK ON THE ART OF GENERAL IDEA

AT THE HEIGHT of the Reagan-era culture wars and the AIDS crisis—a moment that shaped today's battles over social values, over what is normal and what is not—General Idea decided to fit in. The group explored assimilation and transgression, convention and critique, biopolitics and style. They inserted their quixotic brand of activism, agitprop, marketing, and performance, virus-like, into the mainstream, with results that were anything but. On the occasion of the retrospective "Broken Time," which travels to the Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires this month, critic Alex Kitnick takes a new look at General Idea—and their reimagining of what art and life could be.
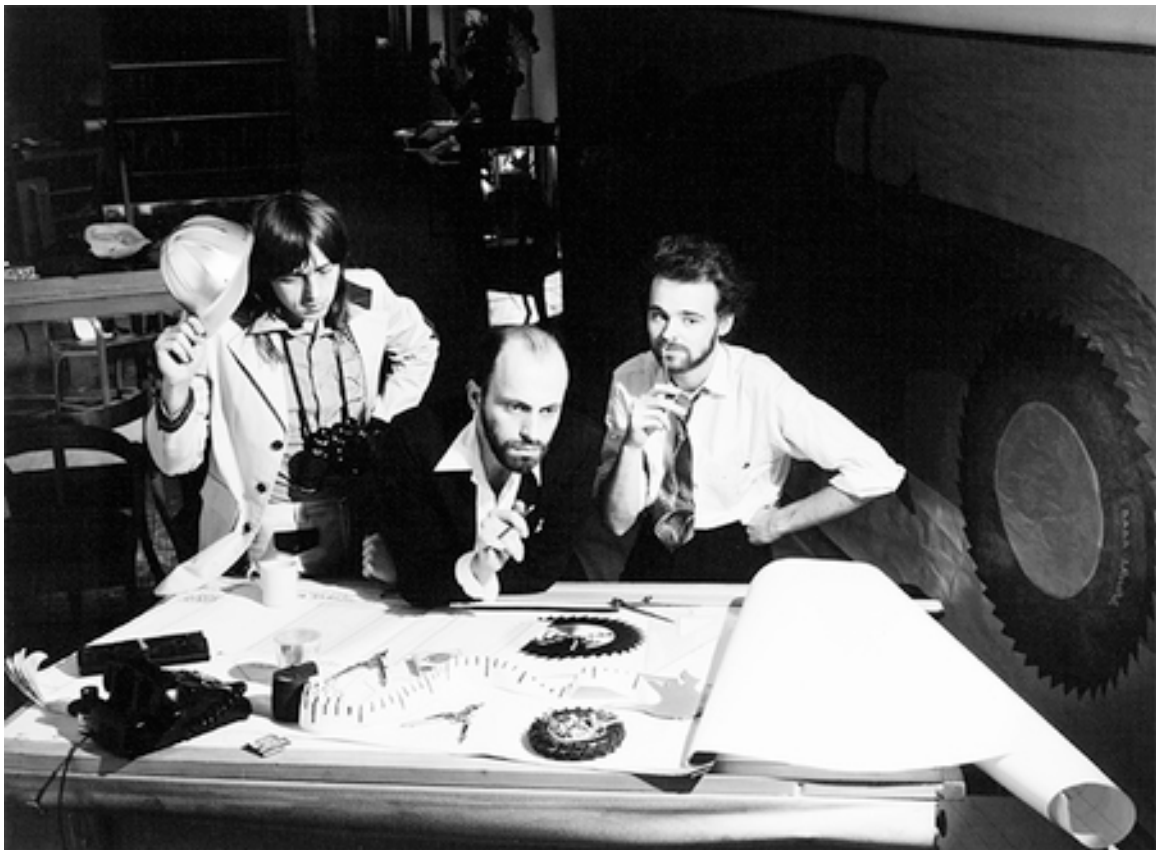
Rodney Werden, *Felix Partz, Jorge Zontal, and AA Bronson of General Idea Play the Part of the Architects of the 1984 Miss General Idea Pavilion***, 1974**, gelatin silver print, 15 5/8 × 19 3/4". From left: Felix Partz, Jorge Zontal, and AA Bronson.

Artists are "abnormal," but they get away with it by calling themselves artists.
—Jill Johnston, 1968

WHAT DID IT MEAN to be a "normal" artist in the late 1960s, after the twinned explosions of Conceptualism and Pop? Reflecting on their early careers, the partners in General Idea put it this way: "We wanted to be famous, glamorous and rich." They were obviously being tongue-in-cheek, yet their

words also offered a shrewd insight: Not only had the media image of the artist's lifestyle become part and parcel of artistic practice but, after Warhol, art now offered a path to a kind of mainstream success typically reserved for other quarters of culture. Founded in Toronto in 1969 by AA Bronson, Felix Partz, and Jorge Zontal, General Idea would go on to produce a series of elaborate projects that acted as supports for this collective persona, such as the sprawling, multipart Miss General Idea Pavilion, which included a boutique, a lounge, and a venue for pageants, and *FILE Megazine*, an alternative "lifestyle" quarterly, in addition to an assortment of other, more conventional undertakings, such as paintings and installations. Rarely content with discrete objects, General Idea—whose work is currently being revisited in the major traveling retrospective "Broken Tim"—wove baroque narratives through a wide variety of media, and in doing so gave Conceptual art a Pop dimension, redefining the relation between the seditious and the familiar, the critical and the common.

In 2003, Mike Kelley interviewed Bronson, the collective's lone surviving member, about the origins of its artistic practice. Kelley, whose work famously embraced the weirdest, most dysfunctional, and marginal spaces of culture, asked Bronson about General Idea's appearance and organization, in particular the "shift in the look of the people from a hippie aesthetic into something where you put on a front of normalcy." "I like the idea of a front of normalcy," Bronson responded. "At the beginning we took on alter egos, false names and identities that allowed us to function in the world in ways we felt we couldn't have. And then when we got to a certain stage in our career, the so-called alter egos had to appear as real beings, real normal beings that had careers and ambitions and value systems and what have you."[1] Indeed, though the guys in General Idea began as shaggy hippies, it wasn't too long before they were wearing suits. As Bronson makes clear, this shift to normalcy was General Idea's signature invention: It was their first move as well as their founding methodology, informing both their persona and their practice. But normalcy isn't natural; it's not who anyone "really" is. Rather, it's a condition one assumes. For General Idea, normalcy was a guise, a cover, a form of role-playing and drag, and while the normal often functions in the service of oppression and violence, using it as a "front" has its advantages. General Idea saw it as efficacious: Looking normal lets you get things done that you wouldn't otherwise be able to do.

General Idea, untitled, 1984, acrylic on canvas, 96 × 120". From the ten-part suite *Mondo Cane Kama Sutra*, 1984.

DOES THE IDEA of "normal" have a history in art? The kind of art we think about and study is typically celebrated for being advanced, cutting-edge, and avant-garde (or else eccentric, introverted, and extraordinary), but we might also imagine a counterhistory of "normal art"—an art that is not simply major or minor, complicit or subversive, but relentlessly focused on and invested in the conventional, if only to alter it in the end. In their canonical 1968 essay "The Dematerialization of Art," critics Lucy R. Lippard and John Chandler suggested that Conceptual art belonged to "the current trend back to 'normalcy'"; they cited as evidence "the provocative opening show of the East Village cooperative Lannis Museum of Normal Art," which "pays unobtrusive homage to the late Ad Reinhardt and to his insistence that only 'art-as-art' is normal for art."[2] Housed in an unassuming loft on West Twenty-Second Street, the museum touted official letterhead and an august board of trustees, among them Lippard, dealer Richard Bellamy, and curator Kasper König, while the first show contained works on paper by a cadre of Conceptualists, including Carl Andre, Mel Bochner, Hanne Darboven, and many others. Claiming Conceptual art as normal, and Reinhardt as one of its patron saints, is clearly a provocation. Reinhardt's lushly obdurate monochromes seem worlds away from the index cards, graphs, documents, and photographic materials of Conceptualism. But it also asks us to consider what is normal for art, as well as the thread running between these artists.

"Art is art. Everything else is everything else," Reinhardt wrote ten years before Lippard, in 1958. For Reinhardt, there was only one way forward: an abstract painting, purged and pure— "unphotographable."[3]His hyperrational black canvases, five feet square, with subtle gradations of pigment, served as a testament to what art could be. "Art's nature fixes a boundary that separates it from everything else," he wrote in 1964. "Anything cannot be art."[4]

Joseph Kosuth, unlike Reinhardt, was less invested in art as art (which is to say painting) than in what he called art as idea as idea. For him, the essence of art resided not in its material form but in its concept. At the same time, he saw that contemporary art now comprised a whole network of things in addition to paintings. It was a web of ideas and advertisements, systems and supports. And Conceptual art's medium was precisely this art system itself: "At its most strict and radical extreme the art I call conceptual is such because it is based on an inquiry into the nature of art," he wrote in 1970.[5]

Like Reinhardt's painting, then, Kosuth's Conceptualism is bounded: It doesn't bleed; it remains a closed system. (His contribution to Seth Siegelaub's 1968 *Xerox Book*, for example, stipulated the "specifications of paper used" and "specifications of ink and toner used," among other things.) Even when it moved outside the gallery context, into sites such as billboards and newspapers, it was still medium-specific to Conceptual art's new system. (In this way, Kosuth was distinct from peers such as Dan Graham, who saw the magazine page and the personal ad as ways of widening art's audience, albeit in a rather droll fashion.) Thus, while Conceptual art is traditionally celebrated for its radical break with all that art previously held dear (quality, originality, authorship, etc.), Kosuth's version of it retained what to him felt most essential—most *normal*—about art: the idea of art as hermetic, autonomous, sealed off from the culture at large. Art, for Kosuth as for Reinhardt, was about art. A black-and-white photographic work by Kosuth from 1967 gives the definition of a single word: "SELF," it begins, "*adj.* 1 Same; identical; obsolete except in the compound *selfsame*. 2 Pure; unmixed; applied especially to colors." It reads almost like a description of one of Reinhardt's paintings, but it also points to a new way of working. Kosuth's normative embrace of art's terms—his manufacture of work that could credibly call itself normal art—allowed him to radically redefine the limits of what art could be.

And this is precisely the point at which General Idea imagined normal art in other ways. Roughly a year after their incorporation, in a 1970 project called *Manipulating the Self*, the group asked people to send in photos of themselves with their arms wrapped around their heads and yanking on their faces, which they then gathered into a little book that was published by Coach House Press the following year. ("The head is separate; the hand is separate," they wrote in a witheringly dry tone. "Body and mind are separate.") The self was still front and center, but it now needed a social network for support. (Ray Johnson sent in a picture, as did Bronson's parents.) The book is self-reflexive—possibly even self-centered—but in a hilariously collective way. Whereas Reinhardt and Kosuth explored the conventions of a circumscribed art, General Idea opened up art practice—and, indeed, the self—to a radically expanded field, to the conventions of social and cultural norms.

Cover of FILE Megazine, April 1972.

IF GENERAL IDEA arrived on the scene at roughly the same time as Kosuth, they emerged out of a different context: Rightly or wrongly, the group were not included in Lippard's 1973 anthology *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972*, which became the definitive account of Conceptual art. Not unlike Fluxus's makeshift network, General Idea grew out of an adjacent system

of mail art and intermedia, of communes and collectives, and while their work, especially in its early years, shares a lot with Conceptual art (note their investment in the "idea" as well as their use of index cards, charts, postcards, graphs, etc.), they were more interested in using these tools to explore mass culture (or perhaps they wanted to see how art might operate within the wider culture). "General Idea emerged in the aftermath of the Paris riots, from the detritus of hippie communes, underground newspapers, radical education, Happenings, love-ins, Marshall McLuhan, and the International Situationists," Bronson said in 2003. He might also have noted the influence of William S. Burroughs, whose writing on the viral would serve as a cornerstone of General Idea's thought. What General Idea did with these influences is striking: They streamlined them into a new form. "We believed in a free economy, in the abolition of copyright, and in a grassroots horizontal structure that prefigured the Internet."[6]

Of course, concepts such as freedom of intellectual property, copying, and horizontality are Pop concepts too, and they would also go on to play a key role in appropriation art. But General Idea—a group that came out of a commune and ended up with a name like a corporation—were something else: Taking their cue less from Warhol's paintings than from his *Interview* magazine, they realized that wholly new formats were available to art. Fittingly, the idea of normal art the group put forward had less to do with what had been normal for art than with what was normal in the culture at large.

General Idea began with a "fake storefront in their storefront residence" in Toronto, and from there the group went on to work with other conventions and expectations.[7] They made printed matter (brochures, garment tags) for their pageants and handed out business cards featuring radiant bunches of palm trees. They were fond of "found formats." In 1972, the group began publishing *FILE*, which ran until 1989. The periodical's logo was a lot like *LIFE*'s, white capital sans-serif letters in a red rectangle, and General Idea played on this association if only to invert it—at least until the Time-Life Corporation sued them in 1976. (In a kind of double appropriation, *FILE*'s first cover featured a photograph of the Vancouver- and Berlin-based artist Vincent Trasov dressed up as his alter ego Mr. Peanut, which he modeled onthe character on the Planters package.) But if *FILE* teased *LIFE*, it also rhymed with the dominant themes of Conceptualism; its bureaucratic title speaks to what Benjamin H. D. Buchloh has called the "aesthetics of administration"—except that here the aesthetics were not of banal office files but of the most middlebrow popular culture, of celebrity spreads and human-interest stories—perhaps signaling the bureaucratization of culture in new forms and new genres. (General Idea's affiliation with the Vancouver-based Image Bank, a campy proto-stock-photography agency of which Trasov was a cofounder, suggests another engagement with the volatile mix of administration and aesthetics.)

"*FILE* could be placed in the newsstands and, because of its visual familiarity, it could pass through a general distribution system and be picked up by people who would not ordinarily be exposed to this type of work," Bronson said in a 1991 interview.[8] It looked kind of normal, in other words. It was a little magazine dressed up as a mass-market periodical, with editorials that read like manifestos, but with covers featuring Deborah Harry and Tina Turner, as well as Sherrie Levine and the General Idea boys themselves. It had pictures of glamorous parties that may or may not have happened, ads for restaurants and galleries, an annual directory of artists, and different sorts of titillating material (the

December 1973 issue, for example, was dedicated to the topic of "Mondo Nudo: Nude Egos in a Nude Era"). In 1973, Willoughby Sharp interviewed the group for *Avalanche*, the New York–based publication that covered post-Minimal and Conceptual art. "You're propagating fake mysteries, aren't you?" Sharp asked, trying to get to the heart of the project. "All over the place," Zontal answered.[9] But the fake quickly becomes real, and soon after, General Idea sought to propagate and pass in other ways as well. In 1974, they founded Art Metropole, an artist-run space and bookstore in Toronto, and in 1977 they introduced themselves to TV with the sitcom-length video *Pilot*. They wanted to embed themselves in the mass media, to push it and stretch it. Later, they sought to annex the traditional conventions of the art world as well.
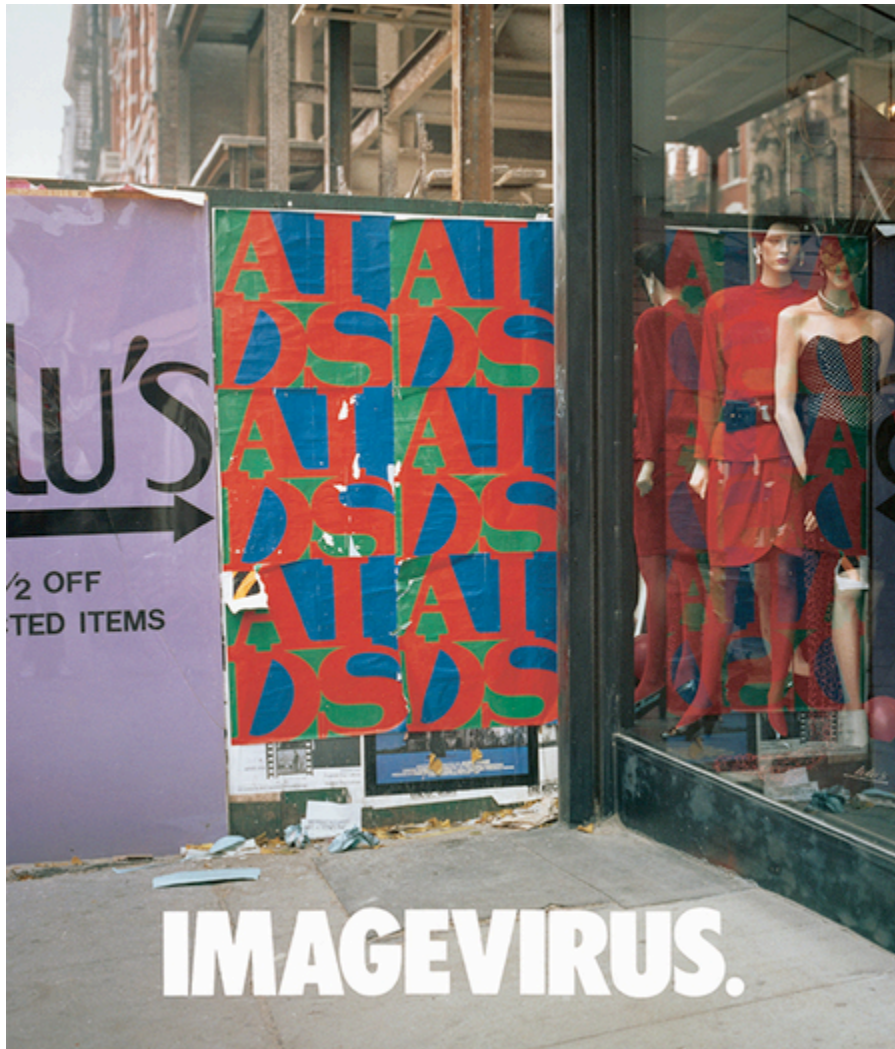
General Idea, *Imagevirus (Posters)*, **1989**, C-print, 29 7/8 × 19 7/8". From the series "Imagevirus," 1987–94.

IN THE FALL 1981 ISSUE of *FILE*, fifteen years after Lippard's prognosis of dematerialization, General Idea began speaking about what they called "the rematerialization of the art object." In the magazine's editorial, they discussed various nascent art-world trends, including "New Painting and Drawing, Nuova Immagine, New Image, New Wave, and already the Trans Avant Guardia." A lot of this new work was figurative—think Julian Schnabel, Sandro Chia, or the Neue Wilden—but General

Idea stressed that the most important shift was material. "Just after just about everyone just about believed that art objects had—*poof*—been stripped bare, cracked, dematerialized, what should start showing up in the studios, galleries, museums, magazines and collections but 'things,'" they wrote. What did it mean? "Some see this development as retrenchment. A retreat. Ripples in the tidal wave emanating from an increasingly neo-conservative world."[10] But *FILE* saw things from a different, somewhat agnostic, angle: Dematerialization, they reasoned, had been a utopian attempt to challenge art's commodity status, and while rematerialization returned to the conventions of art in a seemingly conservative manner, those tropes might nevertheless be put to use critically rather than celebrated cynically. If used correctly, they might serve as another version of normal art, an art that worked from the inside out, and it was in this editorial, which was as much diagnostic as it was prescriptive, that General Idea laid out the ground plans for much of their future work. "We inhabit the role of the artist as the living legend," they wrote in 1984. "We were conscious of the importance of berets and paintbrushes." "We can be expected to do what is expected." "We are obsessed with available form."[11]

Around this time, General Idea began fabricating a series of artifacts from the destroyed Miss General Idea Pavilion; they went on to make a number of series comprising paintings and prints, such as the ten-part suite *Mondo Cane Kama Sutra*, 1984, which shows three poodles (doppelgängers for the artists themselves) in all manner of sexual arrangement. (A related project ran in the November 1983 issue of *Artforum*.) But the project that perhaps best captures the trio's vision of "rematerialization" is "Imagevirus," 1987–94, which the group began after their move to New York. Starting with Robert Indiana's red, blue, and green *LOVE*, 1965—the *L*, *V*, and *E* standing up straight, the *O* tipped forty-five degrees to its side—General Idea swapped out the letters so that it read AIDS; like *FILE*, here was another four-letter word in the cast of a familiar logo.[12] (They would toy around with other logos, too, such as that of Mastercard, with its Venn-diagram-like intersecting circles, and the hard arrow of the Marlboro cigarette box.) First, General Idea made a painting (for the 1987 benefit show Art Against AIDS). Then, picking up on Pop's desire to reenter the common culture, the group began to reproduce the image in all sorts of formats, including subway ads, stamps, posters, and wallpaper, as well as clothing and jewelry, such as T-shirts and a ring.[13] The project was mimetic in its form of distribution: It's not that it looked like AIDS (what does AIDS look like, after all?), but rather that it spread as uncontrollably as the disease itself.

As it did so, the project conformed to a number of conventions, operating both in and outside the art world, and when it was inside, the group wanted it to fit the space to a tee. General Idea accomplished this by infecting iconic paintings with "Imagevirus": They dabbed Duchamp's *Pharmacie*, 1914, with blotches of red, blue, and green, and hung reproductions of Mondrian canvases atop "Imagevirus" wallpaper. Perhaps most significantly, the group produced a version of Reinhardt's black paintings (one of which they traded to Kosuth). "Yeah, we're doing our black on black Reinhardt series," Bronson told an interviewer. "With the same AIDS logo?" "Yes," Bronson said. "Specifically for gallery situations."[14] General Idea understood the power of painting, of keeping one foot in the art world. If one wanted to normalize, why not use art's most normal form? Paradoxically, General Idea had seemed to flout the idea of art as art as idea of Reinhardt/Kosuth, only to revisit their premises in new ways. As

artists, they couldn't only be in the streets. It was more interesting and more productive to bring art's many parts together into a system that wove together inside and out.

But what was "Imagevirus" trying to accomplish? Many critics and commentators have been startled by the work's opacity and ambiguity, its coldness; the artist Gregg Bordowitz, for example, has written powerfully on the difference between General Idea's art and the activist work being made at the time by collectives such as Gran Fury and fierce pussy.[15] Some critics also saw the work as taking part in a conservative backlash: In suggesting AIDS as the next step of *LOVE*, many thought it held the 1960s and its free-love ethos responsible for the devastation of HIV. Whereas many activist groups wanted to incite outrage or proclaim desire, General Idea wanted to normalize the virus. Explaining the group's intentions in 1991, Bronson said, "We want to make the word AIDS normal. . . . By keeping the word visible, it has a normalizing effect that will hopefully play a part in normalizing people's relationship to the disease—to make it something that can be dealt with as a disease rather than a set of moral or ethical issues."[16] While some, such as the critic Douglas Crimp, saw normalization as a damaging response to the crisis, turning it into just another affliction, Bronson imagined that normalization might move things into a realm where they might actually be addressed.[17] For him, normalizing is a productive process. It destigmatizes; it makes loaded topics approachable and allows people to deal with them. That's why General Idea used normal packages—like painting and posters—to normalize a hot topic, and one that affected them personally, indeed tragically: In 1994, both Partz and Zontal died of the disease.

Protest sign, Women's March on Washington, Washington, DC, January 21, 2017. Photo: Rocky Arroyo/ZUMA/Alamy.

GENERAL IDEA'S USE of the normal and normalization as potentially productive forms stands in stark contrast to its deployment in our present moment. Recently, with the rise of Donald Trump, the language of normalization has been everywhere in the media. "This is not normal" has become both hashtag and call to arms. The *New Yorker*'s David Remnick, to give but one of the most prominent examples, has spoken of the fact that many have already normalized Trump's victory; the media is the primary culprit here, but we ourselves may also be complicit—this is a kind of violence from both without and within. Adam Curtis uses a version of the term in his recent documentary *HyperNormalisation* (2016), in order to describe a new world order based on constructed appearances that are in deep tension with reality. Curtis's film explores a kind of enforced perception that leads people to think things are OK when everything has, in fact, gone awry. According to Curtis, this is a situation that has taken hold almost universally: Late capitalism has erected a world of appearances that staves off glimpses of reality.

Importantly, the idea of the normal has a long history with regard to theories of sexuality as well, where it also carries a negative connotation. Michel Foucault writes that the creation of "abnormal" behavior had the effect of streamlining and homogenizing sexuality tout court. "The norm's function is not to exclude and reject," Foucault wrote. "Rather, it is always linked to a positive technique of intervention and transformation, to a sort of normative project."[18] For Foucault, this regulative measure came about through a form of power that took shape between various institutions, such as psychiatry and the law, as well as the family and the wider medical establishment. The cumulative effect was a kind of web that spread across the population, bringing its behavior into line. More recently, the critic Michael Warner has argued that the "trouble with normal" is sexual shame and the resulting moralistic desire to control others' bodies.[19] Viewing the normal through such a lens, there is a tendency perhaps to prize the abnormal in the face of such draconian enforcements. But what does it mean to meet one abnormality with another?

It comes as no surprise that the self-portraits that General Idea made of themselves in later years—*Baby Makes 3*, 1984–89; *Nightschool*, 1989; and *Playing Doctor*, 1992—playfully struck the poses of precisely the normalizing institutions that Foucault describes. (In his talk with Bronson, Kelley revealed a particular fascination with these strange documents.) Indeed, the example of General Idea suggests that one must engage the normal and confront its realm of appearances, but that doing so might not mean simply speaking truth to power or holding up the abnormal as the real in the face of a constructed reality. Rather, one must play with normalcy itself—even suggesting "new normals." We "abandoned our hippie backgrounds of heterosexual idealism, abandoned any shred of belief that we could change the world by activism, by demonstration, by any of the methods we had tried in the 1960s," Bronson wrote in 1997.[20]Instead of "straight" activism and demonstration, General Idea did something queer. With *Imagevirus*, for example, they may have sought to destigmatize AIDS, but they did not do so in the sentimentalizing way a PSA might; rather, they accomplished this by making the disease's name as ubiquitous as a brand. General Idea were interested in "occupying contexts and emptying them of meaning, then filling them right back up again with new sensibilities, rarefied sexualities, battle stances disguised as dance steps, codified cocktails."[21] Their work became an exercise in how to look askance at the world when the story one was being told was all too different

from what was really going on. To normalize, for General Idea, did not simply mean to make something acceptable, but rather to accept representations as realities in order to make them work to different ends. Like *FILE*, they wanted to reconfigure *LIFE*. Perhaps the group's great contribution, in the end, was to show us how strange the normal could be.

"General Idea: Broken Time," curated by Augustín Pérez Rubio, debuted at Museo Jumex in Mexico City this past winter and travels to Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, Mar. 24–June 26.

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NOTES

1. Mike Kelley and AA Bronson, "Excerpts from a Conversation," in *General Idea: Editions 1967–1995*, ed. Barbara Fischer (Toronto: Blackwood Gallery, 2003), 283.
2. Lucy R. Lippard and John Chandler, "The Dematerialization of Art," in Lucy R. Lippard, *Changing: Essays in Art Criticism* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1971), 260. It's also worth noting that Lippard wrote the catalogue for Reinhardt's retrospective the year before: Lucy R. Lippard, *Ad Reinhardt: Paintings* (New York: Jewish Museum, 1966).
3. *Art-as-Art: The Selected Writings of Ad Reinhardt*, ed. Barbara Rose (New York: Viking Press, 1975), 83.
4. Ibid., 62.

5. Joseph Kosuth, "Introductory Note by the American Editor," in Lucy R. Lippard, *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972* (New York: Praeger, 1973), 148.
6. AA Bronson, "Copyright, Cash, and Crowd Control: Art and Economy in the Work of General Idea," in Fischer, *General Idea*, 24. In 1983, Bronson gave another origin story for GI, claiming that it emerged from "the late Sixties psychedelia of student revolution, fluorescent posters, underground newspapers and Marshall McLuhan, and inspired by Canada's first artist-run centre, the unbeatable, unforgettable, indescribable wonder that was Intermedia." AA Bronson, "The Humiliation of the Bureaucrat: Artist-Run Centres as Museums by Artists," in *Museums by Artists*, ed. AA Bronson and Peggy Gale (Toronto: Art Metropole, 1983), 30.
7. General Idea, "'How Our Mascots Love to Humiliate Us . . .': Revelations from the Doghouse," in *General Idea 1968–1984* (Eindhoven, Netherlands: Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum, 1984), 23.
8. Joshua Decter, "General Idea," *Journal of Contemporary Art* 4, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 1991): 50.
9. At this point Zontal was still going by Jorge Saia. See Willoughby Sharp, "The Gold-Diggers of '84: An Interview with General Idea," *Avalanche*, no. 7 (Winter–Spring 1973): 15.
10. "The Re-Materialization of the Art Object," *FILE Megazine* 5, no. 2 (Fall 1981): n.p. General Idea's "rematerialization" took place in a wider field of artistic practice, and it went by various other names. In his essay "The Art of Cynical Reason," the critic Hal Foster referred to a "conventionalist aesthetic" that spanned the work of several artists including Ashley Bickerton, Peter Halley, and Sherrie Levine, and which he found to have troubling implications. Engaged primarily with abstraction, Foster claimed these painters "reiterated it not in order to redeem it critically . . . but to compound it cynically" and that

as such "complex historical practices were reduced to static signs that then stood as if out of time." Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996), 100, 99.

11. General Idea, "How Our Mascots," 24–25.

12. Indiana originally created the image as a Christmas card for the Museum of Modern Art, New York. Only later did it become a sculpture, a painting, a print.

13. General Idea had featured Levine on the cover of *FILE*'s 1986 "Xmas" issue.

14. Decter, "General Idea," 59. They did a Ryman, too. According to Mark Cheetham, "GI first envisioned an AIDS version of white-on-white work by Robert Ryman, and 'around the time Jorge [Zontal] tested [HIV] positive' in 1989 or 1990, Bronson reports, they first thought of inscribing AIDS onto Reinhardt's signature black monochromes." Mark Cheetham, *Abstract Art Against Autonomy: Infection, Resistance, and Cure Since the 60s* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 110.

15. See Gregg Bordowitz, *General Idea: Imagevirus* (London: Afterall Books, 2010).

16. Decter, "General Idea," 58.

17. See Nancy Princenthal, "What's Love Got to Do with It: General Idea's AIDS Project," in *Public Art Issues: Public Art and AIDS*, ed. Robert Knafo (New York: Public Art Fund, 1992), 8–11.

18. Michel Foucault, *Abnormal: Lectures at the Collège de France 1974–1975*, ed. Valerio Marchetti and Antonella Salomoni, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Picador, 2003), 50.

19. Michael Warner, *The Trouble with Normal: Sex, Politics, and the Ethics of Queer Life* (New York: Free Press, 1999).

20. AA Bronson, "Myth as Parasite/Image as Virus: General Idea's Bookshelf, 1967–1975," in *The Search for the Spirit: General Idea 1968–1975*, ed. Fern Bayer, exh. cat. (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1997), 17–18.

21. General Idea, "How Our Mascots," 39.