

an orchestral soundtrack appropriate for a grand oratorical occasion, expounds for nineteen minutes about his own greatness. With ample pathos and wit, he examines the narcissism that is both a motivator and source of self-torture for many ambitious individuals. The other works by Landers in this show—all paintings from the past several years—are composed of words painted in ways that emulate thought. Two of these, from 2002, present steady streams of thought on the subject of sin, while a work from 2005 shows a new way of representing thinking, with some words looming forward and overtaking other thoughts that fade into the background. Landers's personal, revealing texts lure viewers into embarrassing complicity, exposing their uncomfortable willingness to be bystanders observing the rehashing of his ongoing obsessive saga.

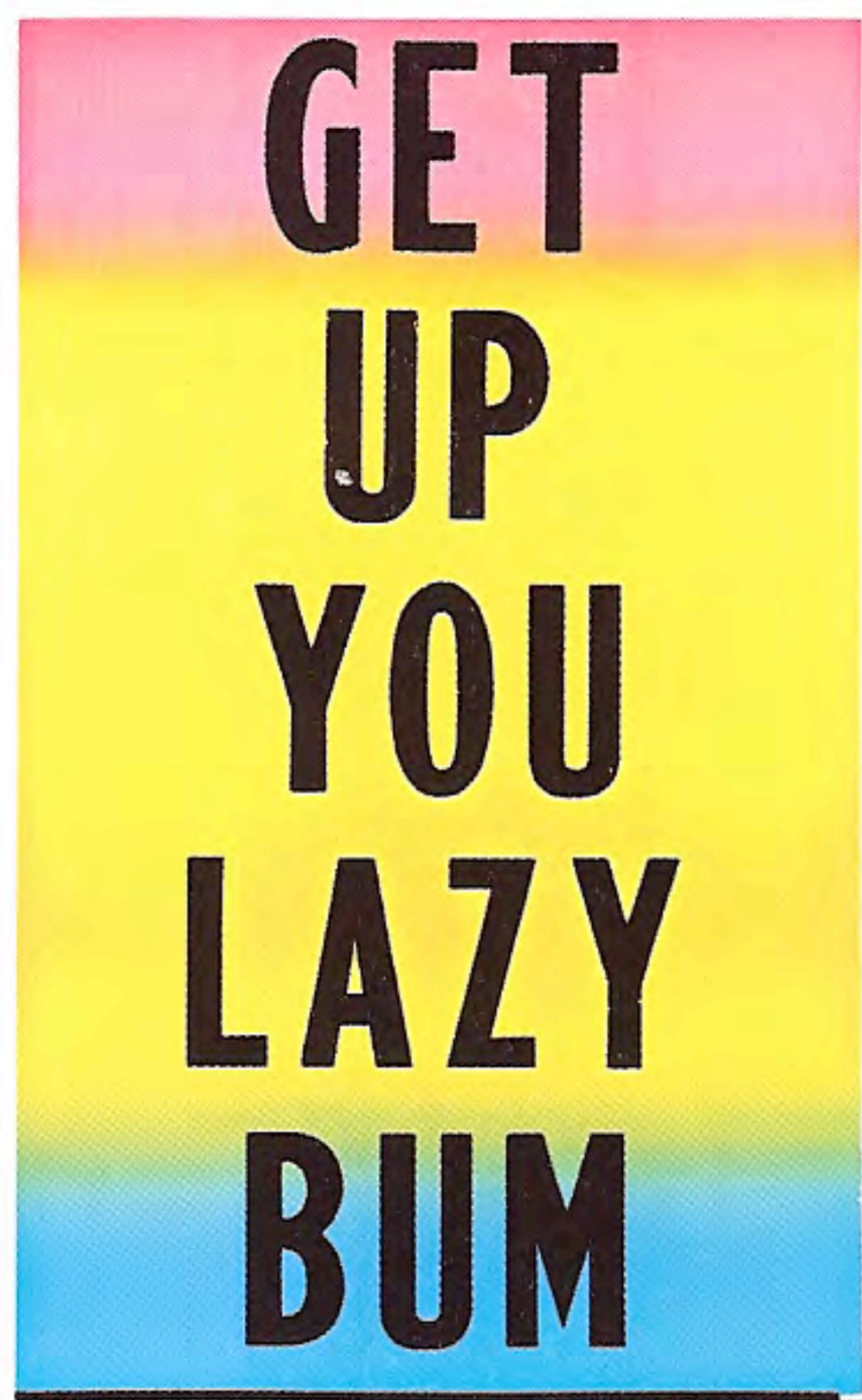
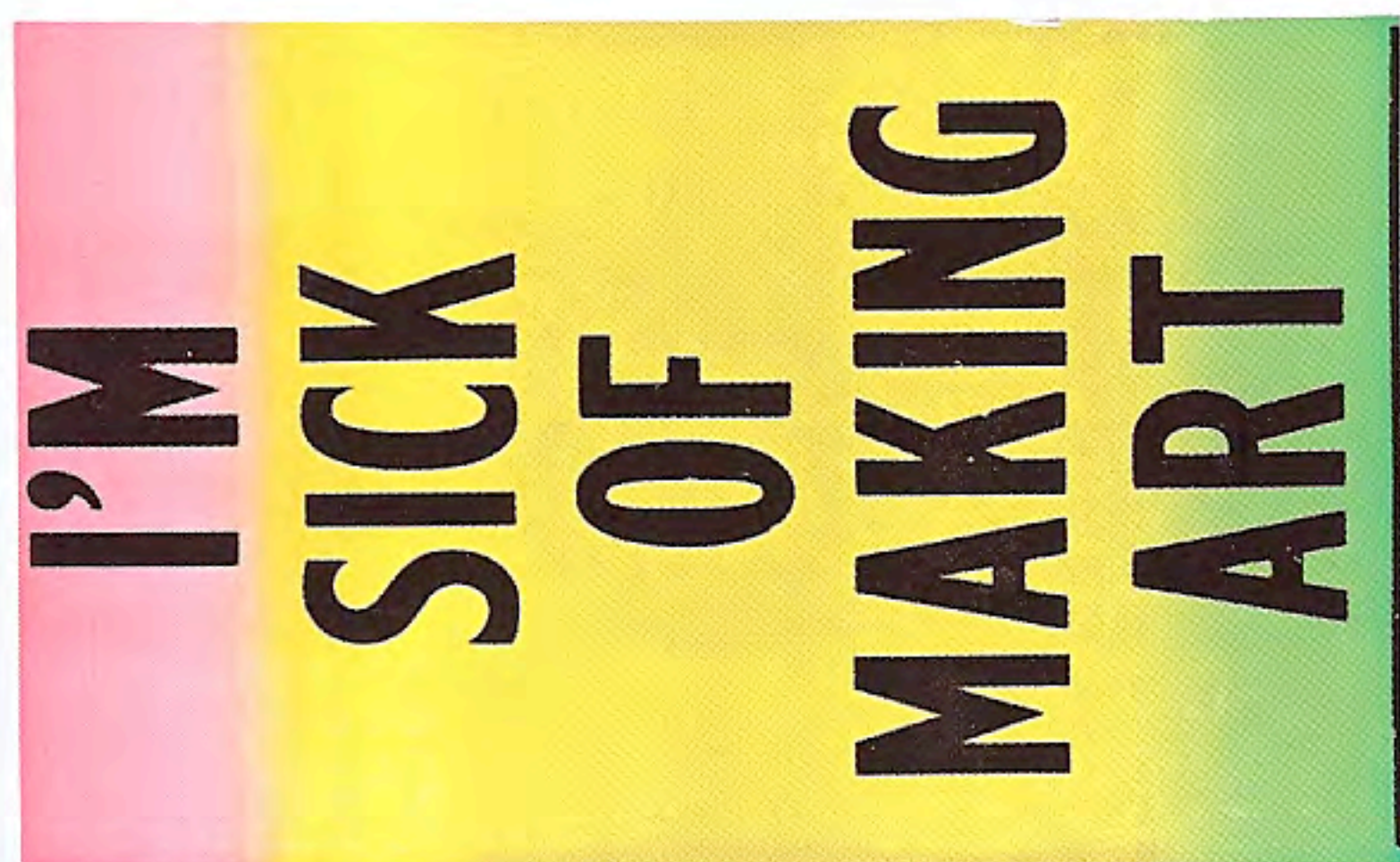
Cary Leibowitz (b. 1963), formerly known professionally as "Candyass," employs words throughout most of his work, but takes a different approach in exploring human vulnerability. As Rhonda Lieberman has written, "Like a force of nature, like a human dynamo of insecurity, Candyass taps into the abundant feelings of wretchedness and inadequacy brought about by daily interactions with the external world."²³ He experiments with brief texts that he applies on shaped canvases, prints, promotional buttons, and other rather unusual mediums, often making his works seem to be sentient beings that are either speaking directly to the viewer, or to one another (when they are juxtaposed in diptychs). His offset print piece titled *I'm sick of making art/ Get up you lazy bum (diptych)*, 2005, does just this, capturing with exquisite simplicity the plaguing sentiments of the work's title, the emotions it conveys veering back and forth like a dysfunctional seesaw. In the painting installation, *Untitled . . .*, 1990-91, one of his works selected for the exhibition, pie charts seem to document diverse emotional states; but there is little variation among them, with nearly all of the different segments of the charts saying the same thing: "Sad." Here, again, there is pathos mixed with formal play and humor. Leibowitz has said that making art is a kind of therapy for him, and that he never tries to separate his art from his neurosis.²⁴ It is tempting to see Leibowitz's work as directly biographical, an urge that is both affirmed

I have always assumed with my art that what is true for me is most likely true for everyone. Therefore, to lay it all out there as honestly as possible would be the most effective means of communication with a viewer. In the end, if what was being put out by me and ultimately consumed by an empathetic art audience was a neurotic product, then however it may describe me, it more importantly may also describe them.

SEAN LANDERS

I'm not quite sure if my ego gets in the way of my neurosis or my neurosis feeds my ego. Either way, it is my own fault and it isn't pretty . . . barf puke ha ha.

CARY LEIBOWITZ



Cary Leibowitz
*I'm sick of making art/Get up
you lazy bum (diptych), 2005*

Two offset prints

Left: 14 x 22 in. (35.3 x 55.8 cm);
right: 22 x 14 in. (55.8 x 35.5 cm)

Courtesy Alexander Gray Associates,
New York



Cary Leibowitz
Untitled
(Sad Pie Graph 1), (Sad Pie Graph 2),
(Sad Pie Graph 3), (Sad Pie Graph 4),
I Am a Miserable and Selfish Person,
I Plan My Death Every Day, 1990-91

Seven paintings, latex on wood
 Overall installation dimensions
 variable
 Courtesy Alexander Gray Associates,
 New York

and thwarted by the works themselves. As in the works of Landers, what is artificial and what is real cannot be determined at face value. It doesn't matter; what's crucial is how the message resonates with viewers.

Danica Phelps (b. 1971) has observed that artists are permitted to manifest different kinds of neurotic behavior, that it is a part of our cultural mythology.²⁵ In her works, the most personal as well as the most banal everyday activities are noted alongside careful transcriptions of her expenditures and earnings, often accompanied by pencil drawings. Phelps's system of record-keeping is obsessive in its thoroughness and accuracy, and in its unceasing attention to money. A very different sensibility emerges in her ethereal, stylized line drawings, which depict daily activities with lightness and grace. As viewers, we are invited to immerse ourselves in her world, and to compare how her life resembles or differs from our own. There is a voyeuristic, somewhat uncomfortable allure to reading someone else's diary, tracking what are usually undisclosed activities, having the opportunity to scrutinize her financial and emotional health. Two of Phelps's multipartite works are presented in *Slightly Unbalanced*, both of which allow the viewer to really get inside her head. *Summer 2002, 2002*, deals with an extremely intense time in her life, when she divorced her husband and came out as a lesbian. Documenting her anxiety in very physical terms, it invites both empathy and curiosity. *Artist Collector Curator Spy, 2001–02*, turns the tables on the usual relationship between the artist and the audience. It documents other artists' works that Phelps would have purchased during an eight-month period had she been able to afford to; but she had very little money, and thus imagined herself to be a collector or curator while visiting many galleries. In retrospect, Phelps recalls feeling unexpectedly vulnerable about making such choices public.²⁶ This tendency to expose herself, to offer information that may be fallible, personal, or incriminating, is something that viewers willingly respond to, perhaps because it enables them to explore, from a safe distance, their own private idiosyncracies and preferences.

Self-exposure may also be a part of the artistic practice of David Shrigley (b. 1968), but it is impossible to know for

Summer 2002 is about a very difficult time in my life. It captures the month that I came out as a lesbian, while I was married, having an affair with a woman. You can see this in very subtle ways. There is a drawing of me wearing a heart monitor because I was having heart palpitations; there's a drawing of me putting on deodorant, and other activities that contain my nervous behavior. There are also lists revealing everything that I did each day, down to the 15-minute interval. In these lists, you can see that something is going on, but it's not clear what.

DANICA PHELPS