



When Humour Becomes Painful

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From Dada to Fluxus through *Sensation* to today, humor is at the heart of much of the most-beloved--and least comfortable--art out there. Humor's ambivalence, its ability to shift between the utopian and the destructive, and its refusal of absolute values, distinguish many of those twentieth century movements that continue to exert an influence. This catalogue of work from more than 30 artists, including Bruce Nauman and Jake & Dinos Chapman, parses humor's mechanisms in works that seduce us with a laugh and then stop us in our tracks with more painful or uncomfortable themes. Deconstructions of the male artist persona by Vito Acconci and Jurgen Klauke use wit to confront taboos head-on, which connects them with the more recent work of John Bock and Klara Liden. Among classic pieces included are Joseph Beuys's *Capri Batterie* and George Maciunas's *Flux Smile Machine*.

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