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### Pinot Gallizio's *Cavern*: Re-Excavating Postwar Paris

Sophie Cras

On May 13, 1959, the Italian painter Giuseppe “Pinot” Gallizio premiered in Paris with an exhibition titled *Une caverne de l’anti-matière* (A Cavern of Antimatter), at Galerie René Drouin, rue Visconti ([Figure 4.1](#)).

Figure 4.1. René Drouin inside *A Cavern of Antimatter*, May 1959. Courtesy of Archivio Gallizio, Galleria Martano, Turin.

In May 1958, Yves Klein had famously inaugurated his *Void* exhibition at galerie Iris Clert, rue des Beaux Arts. One year and a two-minute walk separated the two events, which were decidedly thought of together by contemporary observers.<sup>1</sup> While there was nothing to be seen but the freshly repainted empty white walls of the gallery in Klein’s exhibition, quantities of paint saturated the space of Gallizio’s *Cavern*: 145 meters of canvas—according to the invitation card—entirely covered the walls, ceiling, floor and window of the gallery. Both artists had chosen a deliberately ambiguous and even antithetic title. While Yves Klein’s *La Spécialisation de la sensibilité à l’état matière première en sensibilité picturale stabilisée* (the full title of the *Void* exhibition) suggested the presence of raw material (*matière première*) to an unsuspecting reader, Gallizio’s *anti-matière* evoked the absence of matter rather than the invasion of thick and smelly dark paint.

In 1959 Gallizio was a member of the Situationist International (SI), a left-wing revolutionary group of writers, artists and activists founded in 1957.<sup>2</sup> His exhibition at René Drouin was conceived as a *coup* against the Parisian art world—among them Yves Klein and his supporters, considered “enemies” of the SI—and required months of careful preparation by Guy Debord, the leader of the movement, as well as Michèle Bernstein and Asger Jorn, two

influential members of the group.<sup>3</sup> Until then, Gallizio, who worked in his rather secluded town of Alba, in Piedmont, Italy, had exhibited in Turin (May 1958), Milan (July 1958) and Munich (April 1959). The show at Drouin was the first opportunity for this self-taught artist to make his debut in what was then still considered the capital of European avant-garde: Paris.

In recent years, Gallizio's *Cavern* has received much attention by scholars.<sup>4</sup> This reflects a growing interest in twentieth-century leftist artists' groups, and an effort to rethink Debord's contribution from a more open and collective perspective.<sup>5</sup> Authors have often analyzed Gallizio's Parisian exhibition as the practical application of the theoretical principles elaborated by the SI, such as "unitary urbanism," "*détournement*," or "*dérive*."<sup>6</sup> The *Cavern* has been described as a multisensory environment that effectively subverted the gallery space and sabotaged it from the inside. These contributions have played a key role in rehabilitating this previously understudied artist, and shedding light on his original contribution to the movement. They do not satisfactorily explain, however, why the *Cavern* was the death knell of Gallizio's collaboration with the SI. A year later, on May 31, 1960, he was abruptly banished from the group; his laudatory monograph, published by the SI in July 1960, came out, as a note explained, "on the occasion of his exclusion from the Situationist International."<sup>7</sup> To understand what went wrong with the *Cavern*, we need to build a more accurate historical recollection of the event, outside of the legend conveyed by the SI itself, as better access to archival evidences now allows. We also need to recover the context of the Paris art worlds in the late 1950s, toward which Debord and his friends were devising their own positioning.

### **From industrial painting to the construction of an ambiance**

At the end of the 1950s, Gallizio's exhibition at Drouin was one of the major projects of the SI in the field of culture. In January 1958, Debord called it a "possibility of utmost importance"<sup>8</sup> and

warned his friend: “It is needless to remind you to what extent we are all counting on you, and how decisive your role is in this enterprise, in which our Situationist friends as well as Drouin himself are taking uncommon risks.”<sup>9</sup> The first objective was to confront the Parisian gallery-goers with Gallizio’s revolutionary “Industrial Painting.” This was the name he gave to his long strips of canvas (or popolit)—as long as 74 meters—covered with abstract motives, expressive brushstrokes of thick paint and drippings of color and resins.<sup>10</sup> In Gallizio’s previous shows, Industrial Painting appeared in the form of long rolls of canvas, partly unrolled on tables, walls or stairs, and was sold “by the meter” by Gallizio himself on the day of the opening.<sup>11</sup>

Industrial Painting was meant to suggest an assimilation between the painter and the factory worker. The mode of production in Gallizio’s studio space (called the “SI Laboratory”) involved collective work on long tables, evoking an assembly line. The mode of selling mimicked that of standard, mass-produced products for immediate consumption. As Nicola Pezolet has made clear, however, Industrial Painting in fact constituted handmade, one-of-a-kind pieces:

The extremely long rolls, despite the intentionally ambiguous word industrial, were hastily produced using elementary, mostly handheld tools ... For instance, in almost all of the known photographs of the laboratory, Gallizio and the other artists are seen holding traditional studio implements such as brushes and trowels.<sup>12</sup>

Claiming a direct association with the industrial and scientific world was, Pezolet argues, not only a way to pose as members of the proletarian working class, but also an attempt to supersede Surrealism, which they accused of failing to embrace new technologies. While Breton’s “automatic writing” was only metaphorically addressing the machine age, he writes, “Debord decided to use [Gallizio] to propel in Paris a view of the SI as significantly more invested in

machinist technology than surrealism.”<sup>13</sup> Industrial Painting therefore had to fulfill the contradictory objectives of making use of the most up-to-date means of production while not giving way to functionalist processes; producing on an “industrial scale” while preserving unicity and spontaneity; being “applicable” to revolutionary purposes without being useful to the capitalist leisure industry.

Their large size apart, the paintings shown in Paris did not seek any visual assimilation with industry ([Figure 4.2](#)).

Figure 4.2. Giuseppe Gallizio, *Caverne de l’anti-matière* (detail of the back wall), 1958–1959, mixed techniques on canvas (oil, plastic resins, solvents, pigments, wire), 210 x 368cm, private collection. Courtesy of Archivio Gallizio, Galleria Martano, Turin.

The format was not that of the long and rather narrow rolls of canvas of Gallizio’s earlier exhibits, which allowed a somewhat linear application of paint and repetitive motives (in particular through the use of monotypes) and appeared ready to be sold “by the meter.” Instead, the large canvas adopted the more dignified format of wall paintings. They were covered in heavy impastos of paint and resins, dominantly black and brown, but contrasted with white, yellow, red and blue. Wide shapes, almost animal-like, emerged from the ample expressive brushstrokes and animated surfaces of color, in what was reminiscent of a dark, enigmatic cave painting (like many artists of his generation, Gallizio was fascinated by prehistoric times and himself an amateur archeologist in the early 1950s).<sup>14</sup> Indeed, Gallizio’s *Cavern* was meant to fulfill a different role in the SI’s programmatic agenda than his previous exhibitions. In Paris, Industrial Painting was to find its true “application”: it was sized and arranged to cover all walls of the gallery space, creating, so the invitation card stated, an “attempt at the construction of an *ambiance*” (“Essai de construction d’une *ambiance*”). This pointed to some of the central concepts devised by the SI at the time: the “construction of situations” and, at a larger scale, “unitary urbanism.” Unitary urbanism is defined by the journal *Internationale situationniste* as

“the theory of the combined use of arts and techniques as means contributing to the construction of a unified milieu in dynamic relation with experiments in behavior.”<sup>15</sup> It implied that, on the one hand, each individual art form had to merge into a larger combination at the service of a multisensory environment; and on the other hand that art had to renounce any esthetic aspiration and ultimately disappear into “experiments of behavior” capable of transforming everyday life.

As such, the project was ambitious. The visitor would penetrate into a disorienting labyrinth entirely covered in “145 meters” of canvas painted in dark, gestural abstraction. As Laurent Jeanpierre recollected it, the project also involved “mobile lightning in several colors, including infrared and ultraviolet lamps,” as well as “spectral sounds that varied greatly in intensity and range according to the spectators’ comings and goings in the premises.” “A composite smell circulated too, while a brazier burning aromatic essences outside on the sidewalk was to announce the entrance of the gallery.” Finally, the environment was inhabited by “a young woman wearing a dress tailored from a piece of Industrial Painting” walking around at her whim.<sup>16</sup> This description, based on the numerous projects elaborated by Debord, Gallizio and other friends of the SI during the year and a half which separated the first plans of an exhibition at Drouin and the actual event,<sup>17</sup> does not reflect what actually occurred in May 1959. The first pitfall of our understanding of the *Cavern* lies in the quantity of painting used. The “145 meters” reported by most historians—which can be traced to the invitation card of the show—implies immense rolls of painting covering expanses of walls. Now this appears quite absurd, having in mind the extreme narrowness of the galerie Drouin rue Visconti. The floor map ([Figure 4.3](#)) that Debord sent to Gallizio in the beginning of 1958 to help him prepare his canvas is telling: it shows a single, tiny room of 10 by 3.3 meters, including a staircase.<sup>18</sup>

Figure 4.3. Map of the galerie Drouin sent to Gallizio by Debord in 1958. Archivio

Gallizio, Galleria Martano, Turin, file: “Documenti—Mostre—Eventi (1956–1964).”

Visitors of the *Cavern* in 1959 were not duped: “145 meters of paint, Drouin says; it seems a bit excessive to me” the art critic George Limbour wrote in his review for *Les Lettres nouvelles*.<sup>19</sup> Gallizio’s archives contain a number of lists giving the precise measures of the canvas used in the installation: two pieces of 1.8 by 10.5 meters for the ceiling and floor; two pieces of 2.1 by 3.7 meters for the front and back walls; and for the lateral walls, one section of 2.1 by 10 meters, and two smaller sections of 2.1 by 5 and by 8 meters (to cover the staircase). Five pieces of fabric, also covered with Industrial Painting, were produced as curtains for the gallery window (and to make the model’s dress). A quick addition reveals Debord’s trick: rolls of Industrial Painting in the *Cavern* are not 145 meters long but 145 meters square.<sup>20</sup>

This is no insignificant difference: considering that the galerie Drouin was covered in rolls of painting 145 meters *long* (the length of canvas being Gallizio’s usual standard of measure when he sold “by the meter”) commentators have overestimated the size of the exhibition space. They have taken it for a fact that spectators could “come and go” in a labyrinthine space, wander about and get lost. Such a representation suggests the *Cavern* as a possible staging of the Situationist “*dérive*,” and therefore as “an example of unitary urbanism,” as Frances Stacey has argued.<sup>21</sup> She writes:

Gallizio successfully applies and extends, within the interior space of the gallery, the principle of a Situationist urban *dérive*, a type of collective, aleatory drifting through a cityscape in order to solicit unfamiliar, nonhabituated responses. The cavern dweller is encouraged to lose his or her way in the murky environment, to get disorientated, tactics that promote a desire to discover a new self, where established patterns of behavior are undone.<sup>22</sup>

While the idea of evocating a virtual labyrinthine space thanks to mobile lights, mirrors and other reflective surfaces was indeed evoked by Gallizio in a letter six months prior to the exhibition, it was likely never realized—no photograph or mention of it remains.<sup>23</sup> In any case the exiguity of the galerie Drouin excludes the possibility that a “cavern dweller” could “lose his or her way” or even “get disorientated.”

### **Odors, sounds, and space in Gallizio’s *Cavern***

What I have argued with regard to the visual environment of the *Cavern* (its size and lighting) applies to a certain extent to its sound and smell: again, Debord and Gallizio’s plans were far more ambitious than what they would eventually accomplish. The earliest discussions of the *Cavern* project already involved a musical environment.<sup>24</sup> A first plan, which involved soliciting a composition from the avant-garde musician Walter Omo, who had been one of the founding members of the SI, failed due to the latter’s exclusion from the group in January 1958.<sup>25</sup> Gallizio then opted for a theremin, an electronic musical instrument which emitted different ranges of sounds according to the distance between a moving body and its antenna. The artist used one during his Turin exhibition of May 1958, hidden behind a roll of Industrial Painting.<sup>26</sup> The theremin might not have proved a satisfactory solution; in any case, it was jazz music that accompanied his Munich exhibition the following year.<sup>27</sup> As for the Paris exhibition, no suitable solution seemed to have been found: in March 1959 Debord categorically refused Gallizio’s suggestion that they could collaborate with Pierre Schaeffer for music, and concluded that he was “thoroughly opposed to any ambient sound at galerie Drouin,” considering that it would only “add to the confusion” about what a Situationist *ambiance* was supposed to mean.<sup>28</sup> Gallizio agreed to give up the musical element, admitting that it was only a “marginal question.”<sup>29</sup> Considering this correspondence—and contrary to what most historians presuppose—it is very



unlikely that any musical environment accompanied the *Cavern*. No review of the time mentions music. These exchanges also suggest that Gallizio and Debord had divergent priorities. While the painter tried to reconcile his unbridled imagination with the imperious practical constraints he faced, Debord was mostly preoccupied with strategic choices about the kind of positioning the exhibition would make in the artistic and intellectual context of 1959 Paris.

Likewise, one can seriously question the presence of any sophisticated smells in the exhibition space. Again, a project to conceive “new perfumes” to add an olfactory dimension to the *ambiance* of the *Cavern* was in fact discussed by Gallizio and Debord.<sup>30</sup> But when Gallizio sent his friend a proposal for a perfume of his composition—a mixture of a selection of luxury brand perfumes—Debord’s answer was, again, quite unresponsive: “We shouldn’t trouble ourselves with the creation of a perfume in a bottle.”<sup>31</sup> Instead, he suggested burning essences in a brazier inside and outside the gallery—a solution favored by Gallizio for his Turin exhibition in May 1958.<sup>32</sup> Was it also the solution at Drouin’s? Again, no review of the time mentions a conspicuous odor. It is true that, as Karine Bouchard and Erika Wicky have argued, critics rarely mention odors when they report on artworks,<sup>33</sup> but in this case, it seems quite improbable that anything could be burnt inside what Georges Limbour described as an “overheated shack, likely to set on fire any moment (smoking forbidden).”<sup>34</sup> Thus the heavy smell of fresh paint and resins might well have been the only “olfactory *ambiance*” of the cavern.

### **Dealing with the dealer**

As Debord himself noted:

About the Antimondo [the alternative title for Gallizio’s *Cavern*] at Drouin’s, we must speak about the construction of an *ambiance*, and not yet a situation (1° because the work deals only with the setting, 2° most importantly: because this setting is built inside an art

gallery, that is to say a space where we can orchestrate a shocking scandal, but which is fundamentally hostile and unfavorable to us).<sup>35</sup>

While his first comment consciously addresses the *Cavern*'s inability to be more than a "setting" (less ambitious as most writers contend as discussed above), his second and most important observation relates to the exhibition's inner contradiction: its pretention to reject the art institutions while partaking in them.<sup>36</sup> To work out this contradiction, authors have argued that Gallizio's *Cavern* was aimed to attack the art institutions from the inside. The exhibition would thus have been conceived almost without the gallerist René Drouin's knowing, and to his great displeasure, as Nicola Pezolet argues:

Debord and Bernstein pushed the owner (whom they considered an "enemy") to allow them to "détourn" the gallery and convert it into a synesthetic environment ... Drouin reluctantly accepted this proposal, which Debord clearly intended as a criticism of the dominant mode of art exhibition of the time.<sup>37</sup>

Debord and his friends' correspondence, however, demonstrate that Drouin was not only fully aware, but also actively and resolutely involved in the preparation of the exhibition. The gallerist required the most "astonishing" and "shocking" of Gallizio's paintings, proving that he was courting scandal rather than reluctant to accept it.<sup>38</sup> It was even Drouin himself who first suggested the idea that the whole gallery should be entirely covered in painting.<sup>39</sup> This appetite for "taking uncommon risks," in Debord's words (cited above) was consistent with the dealer's attitude throughout his earlier career. At the end of the 1950s when, as discussed below, he was going through difficult times, he might have been especially inclined to some publicity.

The art historian Frances Stacey considers the *Cavern* as an attempted subversion of the exhibition space, and of the art gallery as an institution. She writes:

The rigid geometric entry of the gallery was canceled out (or *détourned*) by the cavern's sagging canvas structure and the windows to the outside world were covered over, helping to conceal, and thereby transform, this street-level location into a metaphorically low and subterranean space ... By constructing this hole into the modernist white cube, Gallizio opens a space in which the subject expands rather than is contained. In a sense he unplugs modernist architecture and by so doing reveals a hole or gap in the subject—a gap between the subject and the modernist system.<sup>40</sup>

Stacey contends that, by disrupting the modernist architecture of the gallery, Gallizio's *Cavern* would jeopardize the ideology of the “white cube” such as Brian O’Doherty has described it.<sup>41</sup> However, as historian Julie Verlaine has shown, the “white cube” esthetics—refined white walls, cubic rooms and the demise of all ornamentation in favor of diffuse daylight coming down from the ceiling—was in fact not adopted by Parisian gallerists until the second half of the 1960s. The kind of “modernist” space that Stacey pictures is decidedly not that of the galerie René Drouin rue Visconti. Debord's floor map, as well as the photographs he took for Gallizio ([Figure 4.4](#)) suffice to make this clear. Shadowed, irregularly shaped with a low ceiling and dark upholstered walls, the gallery is far from being the “rigid geometric” space described by Stacey.

Figure 4.4. Outside view of galerie Drouin, Fall 1958. Photographs taken in preparation for *A Cavern of Antimatter* and sent to Gallizio by Debord. Archivio Gallizio, Galleria Martano, Turin, file: Gallizio's Dario-Registro.

Likewise, when commentators of the *Cavern* describe a “fashionable gallery on Rue Visconti in the neighborhood of Saint-Germain-des-Prés,” they convey an inaccurate image of what was then the galerie Drouin.<sup>42</sup> Admittedly, Drouin's name could evoke the glorious past of his spacious and luxurious gallery on place Vendôme where he exhibited Wols, Jean Fautrier or

Jean Dubuffet between 1943 and 1951. However, following a seizure for unpaid debts in March 1951, the dealer had to leave the premises and moved into 5 rue Visconti in November 1953. Reflecting his change of fortune, his new address lacked the elegance of the previous one: “How sad,” Geneviève Bonnefoi recalled, “to find him in the minuscule gallery of rue Visconti, after the splendor of place Vendôme!”<sup>43</sup> Located on the street level in a narrow street—chosen for this precise reason by Christo and Jeanne-Claude for their *Iron Curtain* in 1962—the little room, which Leo Castelli named “a cubbyhole,” caught almost no daylight.<sup>44</sup> Furthermore, the evocation of the neighborhood of Saint-Germain-des-Prés should not have us forget that the rue Visconti was then located in a dilapidated, decrepit area. In the early 1960s, a report of the Historical Monuments department even recommended the demolition of the 5 rue Visconti—and the adjacent buildings, numbers 7, 11, 13 and 15 of the same street—judging that “dwelling in the most shameful manner” they constituted “the most insalubrious section of the block.”<sup>45</sup>

Small, dark and humid, the galerie Drouin rue Visconti was definitely not a fancy modernist white cube that the *Cavern* would jeopardize from the inside. In a sense, it was already potentially a “cavern”—or a “cave” (“*une antre*”) in the recollection of Hubert Damisch<sup>46</sup>—and Gallizio, in full agreement with Drouin, intensified this identity more than he subverted it.

### **Paris art worlds in the late 1950s**

That Gallizio’s *Cavern* was not as spectacular, sophisticated or critical of its host institution as historians would have it should not come as a disappointment, or diminish our interest in its significance. Rather than reading the exhibition as an illustration of the SI’s theoretical objectives, and as institutional critique *avant la lettre*, we should consider it in its own historical terms. In its dialogue with Gallizio, it was Debord himself who derailed most efforts to make the exhibition at Drouin a more refined and complex environment. For all his desire to attract

attention on the Paris art scene, he consistently refused to be associated with what could be perceived as a fashionable or stylish—such as a collaboration with Pierre Schaeffer, for instance.

At the end of the 1950s, transforming the gallery space into an encompassing multisensory environment, including sounds, odors and “performances,” was threatening to become an avant-garde *must*.<sup>47</sup> Already in 1938, this was the format chosen for the Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme, at the Galerie Beaux-Arts. It included a central space designed by Marcel Duchamp, whose ceiling was obstructed by 1,200 coal sacks in suspension (according to the exhibition catalogue, which visibly anticipated the SI’s inclination for inflated numbers). The feeble lightning, the carpet of leaves covering the floor and the pond with water lilies created the atmosphere of “an immense vaulted grotto,” in the writer Marcel Jean’s terms.<sup>48</sup> While a smell of coffee perfumed the space, a phonograph released sounds of hysterical laughs. At the instigation of Salvador Dalí, an actress named Héléne Vanel performed in the space on the opening night.<sup>49</sup>

Such experiments were reactivated within the context of the 1950s Surrealist group, which, far from being relegated to the interwar past, was an indispensable point of reference for the artistic scene of the period.<sup>50</sup> The surrealist exhibition *EROS* at galerie Cordier in 1959 was a lavish socialite event, whose magnificent inclusive thematic rooms, conceived by Pierre Faucheux and Marcel Duchamp, involving smells, sounds, and animated elements of décor, were photographed by William Klein for *Vogue* magazine.<sup>51</sup> It was such glamor that the young and still unknown Yves Klein was aiming for, from the modest premises of the small Iris Clert gallery. He humorously devised his own pomp and circumstance, requesting the presence of Republican guards to keep the entrance and distributing blue cocktails on the opening.<sup>52</sup>

On this Parisian scene of the late 1950s, exhilarated by an unprecedented art market boom and beguiled by the sweet illusion to still stand as the unquestioned art capital of the

world, divided between an established avant-garde and ambitious newcomers, the Situationists were trying to occupy a different position. They intensified their attacks against what they saw as an absorption of Surrealism by capitalist forces—the symptom of its “bitter victory”—and showed no more mercy toward the young generation perceived as careerist and reactionary.<sup>53</sup> Purposely, they did not chose a young, aspiring and industrious gallerist like Iris Clert, but rather a merchant who had accompanied the Surrealists’ ascension (Drouin had held an exhibition of Surrealist objects as early as 1939).<sup>54</sup> The SI did not try to cheat a fashionable dealer, and to play a trick on him to punish him for making a fortune by selling avant-garde art. They concluded a provisional alliance with a respected but ruined merchant, whose art gallery had gone bankrupt and was now eking out a living in a narrow room.

Likewise, the SI’s hopes to make a scandalous *coup* in the Parisian art world did not go so far as to betray their principles of authentic simplicity, economy of means and deliberate amateurishness. It is therefore unsurprising that critics would call Gallizio’s painting “bloody or tarry daub, hasty, viscous and trickling” or dismiss it as a realization “whose style offers no distinctive feature worth mentioning.”<sup>55</sup> Despite all of Debord’s wishes to turn Gallizio’s exhibition into a theoretical demonstration, theory yielded before the poor, simple beauty of a decrepit Parisian street, evocative of an urban space still full of promises and the possibility of insurrection. “Right now the rue Visconti is gorgeous,” Debord wrote to Gallizio in January 1959, “with one end shut off by a construction scaffolding that we can cover up in posters and random objects.”<sup>56</sup>

One year after the *Cavern*, Gallizio was officially excluded from the SI. Debord may very well have been irritated by his friend’s growing success among the art world he hoped to fight—the *Cavern* was bought by the wealthy collector Marinotti, and won the respect of the art critic

Pierre Restany, the curator Willem Sandberg, and the painter Georges Mathieu.<sup>57</sup> But, rather than considering this exclusion as a sign of the failure of the *Cavern*, we might see it as the logical, ultimate step of a process already in action during the preparation of the exhibition, which led to the drastic reduction of its ambitions. Debord was progressively renouncing to compete with the Paris art worlds on their own ground, and maneuvering a way out.

<sup>1</sup>See, for instance, Georges Boudaille, “Caverne de l’anti-matière,” *Cimaise*, June–July 1959, 49.

<sup>2</sup>The literature on the SI is vast and has been largely enriched in the past decades. For an introduction to the movement in English see Tom Mc Donough’s *The Beautiful Language of My Century; Reinventing the Language of Contestation in Postwar France, 1954–1968* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2007) as well as his edition of sources in translation: *Guy Debord and the Situationist International: Texts and Documents* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2002). See also: Fabien Danesi, *Le Mythe brisé de l’internationale situationniste. L’aventure d’une avant-garde au cœur de la culture de masse (1945–2008)* (Dijon: Les Presses du Réel, 2008) and Roberto Ohrt, *Phantom Avantgarde: eine Geschichte der Situationistischen Internationale und der modernen Kunst* (Hamburg: Nautilus, 1997). The most comprehensive account of the “Italian section” of the SI (Gallizio) can be found in Mirella Bandini’s important book: *L’esthétique, le politique de Cobra à l’internationale Situationniste* (Marseille: Sulliver and via Valeriano, 1998).

<sup>3</sup>See the numerous letters on the subject in Guy Debord, *Correspondance*, Vol.1, *Juin 1957—août 1960*, ed. Alice Debord and Patrick Mosconi (Paris: Fayard, 1999). Jorn was well connected and respected in the European painting world (he had been a member of the Cobra group (1948–1951)). He was instrumental in initially convincing Drouin to make an exhibition with Gallizio, as Debord acknowledges in his first letter mentioning the project (Letter from Debord to Gallizio, November 23 [1957], 37). Afterwards, between 1957 and 1959, Debord and Berstein seem to have acted as the main intermediaries between Drouin in Paris, and Gallizio in Italy, although a few letters testify to direct exchanges between them. See: Giorgina Bertolino, Francesca Comisso, Maria Teresa Roberto (Ed.), *Pinot Gallizio Il Laboratorio Della Scrittura, The Laboratory of Writing* (Milan: Charta, 2005), 59–63.

<sup>4</sup>In particular: Frances Stacey, “The Caves of Gallizio and Hirschhorn: Excavations of the Present,” *October* 116 (Spring 2006): 87–100; Laurent Jeanpierre, “Pinot-Gallizio et la Caverne de l’antimatière, dans l’antichambre de l’anti-monde,” *Palais 2* (Spring 2007): 4–13; Nicola Pezolet, “The Cavern of Antimatter: Guiseppe ‘Pinot’ Gallizio and

the Technological Imaginary of the Early Situationist International,” *Grey Room* 38 (Winter 2010): 62–89. The remaining canvases constituting the *Cavern*—reconstituted as such thanks to the efforts of Liliana Martano—belong to a private collection, but are deposited at Centro per l’arte contemporanea Luigi Pecci, Prato. The curtains and the pieces covering the floor and the ceiling are missing. Cf. Maria Teresa Roberto, dir., *Pinot Gallizio, Catalogo generale delle opere 1953–1964* (Milan: Mazzotta, 2001), 133.

<sup>5</sup>See, among others, Jacopo Galimberti, *Individuals against Individualism. Art Collectives in Western Europe (1956–1969)* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2017). and Laurence Le Bras and Emmanuel Guy, dir., *Lire Debord* (Montreuil: L’Echappée, 2016).

<sup>6</sup>On this subject, see Emmanuel Guy’s contribution in this volume.

<sup>7</sup>*Pinot Gallizio* (Paris: Internationale Situationniste, 1960), n.p.

<sup>8</sup>Letter from Debord to Gallizio [January 8, 1958], Debord, *Correspondance*, 49.

<sup>9</sup>Letter from Debord to Gallizio, January 30, 1958, Debord, *Correspondance*, 57.

<sup>10</sup>See: Roberto, *Pinot Gallizio, Catalogo generale*.

<sup>11</sup>See: Selima Niggel, *Pinot Gallizio: Malerei am laufenden Meter. München 1959 und die europäische Avantgarde* (Hambourg: Nautilus, 2007).

<sup>12</sup>Pezolet, “The Cavern of Antimatter,” 68.

<sup>13</sup>Pezolet, “The Cavern of Antimatter,” 76. See also: Maurice Fréchuret, *La Machine à peindre* (Paris: Jacqueline Chambon, 1994), 35–39, 115–136.

<sup>14</sup>See Gallizio’s “Le recenti scoperte neolitiche di Alba Pompeia,” *Rivista Alba Pompeia* (October 1953) and other publications in Fondo Gallizio, Galleria Civica d’Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Turin, section XIV. For a discussion of the cultural resonance of prehistoric discoveries in the twentieth century, see: Maria Stavrinaki and Rémi Labrusse, dir., *Modernités préhistoriques*, special issue of *Les Cahiers du Musée national d’art moderne* 126 (Winter 2013–2014).

<sup>15</sup>“Définitions,” *Internationale Situationniste* 1 (June 1958): 13.

<sup>16</sup>Jeanpierre, “Pinot-Gallizio et la Caverne de l’antimatière,” 7.

<sup>17</sup>The exhibition was initially planned for spring 1958, then postponed to the fall of 1958, then to the beginning of 1959, then to April and finally to May 1959. These successive delays had diverse causes: the Algiers putsch of May 13 and the following political crisis that led de Gaulle to power, Debord’s deferment in sending the



necessary documents to Gallizio, Gallizio's own lateness in the preparation of the paintings, and finally Drouin's money trouble which seemed to have prevented him from paying custom duties at their arrival in France. See Debord, *Correspondance*, 74, 92, 164, 182, 188, 216.

<sup>18</sup>In a letter to Gallizio dated January 30, 1958, Debord wrote: "I will shortly measure up the room and draw a floor map," Debord, *Correspondance*, 57. The premises—5 rue Visconti—are now occupied by the galerie Yann Ferrand. The space has been enlarged by dismantling the stairs and appending a neighboring corridor and an extra room.

<sup>19</sup>Georges Limbour, "Soleils, clowns, dragons et sages," *Les Lettres nouvelles*, 27 May 1959, 32.

<sup>20</sup>The total surface covered in "Industrial Painting," including the curtains, sums up to 146 square meters. Typescript entitled "Distinta delle tele," Archivio Gallizio, Galleria Martano, Turin, file: "Documenti—Mostre—Eventi (1956–1964)."

<sup>21</sup>Stacey, "The Caves of Gallizio and Hirschhorn," 88.

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, 89.

<sup>23</sup>Letter from Gallizio to Drouin, December 8, 1958, Fondo Gallizio, Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Turin, file X: "1958." The SI's interest in labyrinthine spaces is evident in their 1960 exhibition project at Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, eventually unrealized. See: Bandini, *L'esthétique, le politique*, 151 and following.

<sup>24</sup>Music is already mentioned in a letter from Debord to Gallizio, January 30, 1958, Debord, *Correspondance*, 58.

<sup>25</sup>Letter from Debord to Gallizio, February 10, 1958, Debord, *Correspondance*, 61–62.

<sup>26</sup>"Vende quadri dipinti su chilometri di tela," *Gazzetta del Popolo*, May 31, 1958, page missing, press clipping in Gallizio's *Dario-Registro*, Archivio Gallizio, Galleria Martano, Turin.

<sup>27</sup>Wolfgang Petzet, "Die Produktion hängt meterweise im Treppenhaus," *Munchner Zeitung*, date and page missing, and "Situationisten per meter," *Haagse Post*, May 2, 1959, 13, press clippings in Gallizio's *Dario-Registro*, Archivio Gallizio, Galleria Martano, Turin.

<sup>28</sup>Letter from Debord to Gallizio [March 1959], Debord, *Correspondance*, 205.

<sup>29</sup>Letter from Gallizio to Debord, March 11 [1959], Fondo Gallizio, Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Turin, file XI: "1959."

<sup>30</sup>Letter from Debord to Gallizio, January 30, 1958, Debord, *Correspondance*, 57.

<sup>31</sup>Letter from Debord to Gallizio, February 10, 1958, Debord, *Correspondance*, 62. Gallizio's idea was later echoed by Bertrand Lavier. For a 1997 exhibition, he spread a mix of Chanel's N°5 and Guerlain's Shalimar. See: Deny Riout, "Art et Olfaction. Des évocations visuelles à une présence réelle," *Les Cahiers du Musée national d'art moderne* 116 (Summer 2011): 84–109.

<sup>32</sup>Enzo Di Calda, "Abiti d'autori," *Marie Claire*, Italian edition, September 8, 1958, page missing, press clipping in Gallizio's *Dario-Registro*, Archivio Gallizio, Galleria Martano, Turin.

<sup>33</sup>Karine Bouchard, Erika Wicky, "Description et olfaction de l'art contemporain: les mutations de la critique d'art," *Marges*, special edition 1 (Summer 2014): 82.

<sup>34</sup>Limbour, "Soleils, clowns, dragons et sages," 32.

<sup>35</sup>Letter from Debord to Gallizio, Augusta and Melanotte [Giorgio Gallizio], [February 17, 1959], Debord, *Correspondance*, 191. The final name of the exhibition was not quite set yet, and Debord employed "Antimondo" to refer to *A Cavern of Antimatter*.

<sup>36</sup>Such a contradiction was inherent to all exhibitions of "Industrial Painting." Michèle Berstein and Gallizio repeated on several occasions that Industrial Painting should be sold outside, in markets, shops and public spaces rather than galleries (Cf., among other: *Elogio di Pinot-Gallizio, Prima mostra di pittura industriale*, exh. cat. (Turin: galleria Notizie, Associazione Arti Figurative, 1958), n.p). This argument is taken as a fact by most historians. However, while Gallizio's work was shown in four galleries and one museum in two years (between 1958 and 1960), it was shown in a public place only once: for a fortnight in October 1958 a few meters of Industrial Painting were hung in the bar La Méthode, then operated by Debord and Berstein. At this occasion, Debord himself confirmed that it was the first time Industrial Painting had been shown outside an art institution. Cf. Letters from Debord to Gallizio, September 27; October 10, 14 and 29, 1958, Debord, *Correspondance*, 142, 148, 150 and 153.

<sup>37</sup>Pezolet, "The Cavern of Antimatter," 79.

<sup>38</sup>Letter from Debord to Gallizio [January 8, 1958], Debord, *Correspondance*, 49–50.

<sup>39</sup>Letter from Debord to Augusta Rivabella-Gallizio, September 11, 1958, Debord, *Correspondance*, 136.

<sup>40</sup>Stacey, "The Caves of Gallizio and Hirschhorn," 88–89, 93.

<sup>41</sup>Brian O'Doherty, *Inside the White Cube, The Ideology of the Gallery Space* (1976) (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

<sup>42</sup>Pezolet, “The Cavern of Antimatter,” 78.

<sup>43</sup>Geneviève Bonnefoi, “5, rue Visconti,” in *Galeriste et éditeur d’art visionnaire, Le Spectateur des Arts, 1932–1962*, exh. cat., ed. René Drouin (Les Sables d’Olonnes : Cahiers de l’Abbaye Sainte-Croix, 2001), 151.

<sup>44</sup>Leo Castelli, quoted in Ann Hindry, ed., *Claude Berri rencontre Leo Castelli* (Paris: Renn, 1990), 18.

<sup>45</sup>Report signed by Maurice Berry, Chief Architect of the Monuments Historiques, 29. Médiathèque de l’Architecture et du Patrimoine, Fonds Maurice Berry, 95/35/14. I am grateful to Baptiste Essevez-Roulet (responsible for the website [www.ruevisconti.com](http://www.ruevisconti.com)) for providing me with this archival document.

<sup>46</sup>Hubert Damisch, “Salut l’artiste,” in René Drouin, 162.

<sup>47</sup>Some of its legacy is discussed by Fabrice Flahutez in *Nouveau Monde et Nouveau Mythe: mutations du surréalisme de l’exil américain à l’Ecart absolu* (Dijon: Les presses du réel, 2007), and in his introduction to *Le lettrisme historique était une avant-garde* (Dijon: Les presses du réel, 2011).

<sup>48</sup>Quoted in Uwe M. Schneede, “Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme, Paris 1938,” in *L’art de l’exposition. Une documentation sur trente expositions exemplaires du XXe siècle* (Paris: éd. du Regard, 1998), 181.

<sup>49</sup>See a full account in Schneede, “Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme, Paris 1938,” 173–188.

<sup>50</sup>See for instance Fabrice Flahutez, *Nouveau Monde et Nouveau Mythe: mutations du surréalisme de l’exil américain à l’« Ecart absolu »* (Dijon: Les presses du réel, 2007), and Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel, *Les avant-gardes artistiques (1945–1968): Une histoire transnationale* (Paris: Gallimard, forthcoming).

<sup>51</sup>Claire Boustani, “VIII<sup>e</sup> Exposition internationale du Surréalisme (Eros), 1959–1960,” in *Dictionnaire de l’objet surréaliste*, dir. Didier Ottinger (Paris: Gallimard and Centre Pompidou, 2013), 112.

<sup>52</sup>Yves Klein, “Préparation et présentation de l’exposition du 28 avril 1958 chez Iris Clert, 3 rue des Beaux-Arts à Paris,” in *Le dépassement de la problématique de l’art et autres écrits*, ed. Marie-Anne Sichère and Didier Semin (Paris: Ecole nationale supérieure des beaux-arts, 2003), 84–95.

<sup>53</sup>“Amère victoire du surréalisme,” *Internationale Situationniste*, 1 (June 1958): 3–4. “L’absence et ses habilleurs,” *Internationale Situationniste*, 2 (December 1958): 7. On the perception of Yves Klein as a careerist, see Michèle Bernstein’s declaration to Yan Ciret, quoted in: Yan Ciret, “Yves Klein, une icône du dépassement de l’art,” in *Figures de la négation. Avant-gardes du dépassement de l’art* (Paris and Saint-Etienne: Paris Musées and Musée d’art Moderne de Saint Etienne Métropole, 2004), 115.

<sup>54</sup>Maurice Imbert, “René Drouin: Un Itinéraire,” in *Galeriste et éditeur d’art visionnaire, Le Spectateur des Arts, 1932–1962*, ed. René Drouin (Les Sables d’Olonne: Musée de l’Abbaye Sainte-Croix, 2001), 171–172.

<sup>55</sup>Pierre Restany, “Caverne de l’anti-matière,” *Cimaise*, June–July 1959, 49; Boudaille, “Caverne de l’anti-matière,” 49.

<sup>56</sup>Letter from Debord to Gallizio, January 22, 1959, Debord, *Correspondance*, 182.

<sup>57</sup>See: Gallizio’s *Dario-Registro*, and typescript entitled “Distinta delle tele,” Archivio Gallizio, Galleria Martano, Turin.