

# DAN PERJOVSCHI ON THE MEDIA

portrait LEIGH JOHNSON



**THE MEDIA AND THE WAY IT REPRESENTS POLITICS AND CURRENT EVENTS IS OF GREAT INTEREST TO ME.** At the time of writing this I am working on a wall drawing at MoMA, New York. It's a very interesting season in the US. A woman and a black man both have serious chances of being the next President. It is also the anniversary of the Columbine High School shooting, and as if to mark the occasion, there has been another school massacre, at Virginia Tech.

Topics as big as this dominate everything in the mainstream media, and it splits the nation along gun-control and right-to-bear-arms lines. The media tries to be very dry, very correct, but this time they have panicked, releasing the image of the killer and his final statement, and making him an instant hero, an action that has itself come under scrutiny.

I come from Romania, and in 1989 we had a revolution that was televised. When the dictator was executed, the new guys in power wanted to release a tape of the event. It had to be censored, though, because it was pretty graphic, and because the new guys didn't want to reveal the identity of the committee that had put the dictator on trial. What we were given was an image that was completely cut and edited. There was a big discussion about whether to just put the information out, or to try and control the content.

The result was pretty bizarre, and people hated it. In my work I have decided to go for the naked truth.

I don't blame the media itself. I also work with a journal (*Revista 22*) in Bucharest, and I see how a subject becomes a story, and how that story is edited, designed and then printed. Fascinating.

My drawings have to function in public space (the media), where there are many rules, and where expression has more obvious limitations than in the artworld. But this is precisely what interests me: how to go outside the frame while staying in the frame. Having that kind of training makes it relatively easy to take over a wall in a museum, or even an entire museum.

**DAN PERJOVSCHI** IS AN ARTIST LIVING IN ROMANIA. HIS SITE-SPECIFIC WORK *WHAT HAPPENED TO US?* IS ON DISPLAY AT MOMA, NEW YORK, UNTIL 27 AUGUST