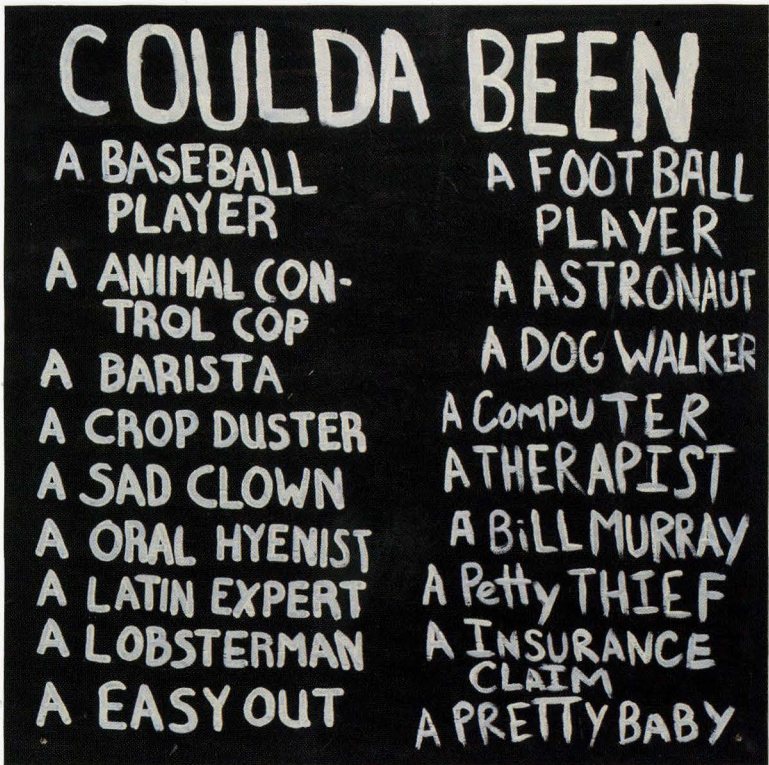


# CHURCH

by Sebura & Gartelmann

Clough-Hanson Gallery at Rhodes College  
4 September – 10 October 2015



part of THIS MUST BE THE PLACE a series of exhibitions and events exploring the connection between art and place

Both sculpture and environment, art and architecture, CHURCH, by Sebura & Gartelmann, is perhaps best understood as a place, a particular arrangement of space with specific characteristics, associations, and protocols. It's a place that is rooted in the artists' adolescence as suburban skateboarders and, as a result, a place that easily elicits action. The giant, fractured cube can be circumambulated like the Kaaba in Mecca or entered like a quaint chapel. You can skate its ramps, and you also really can't. The curves pull you in but the angles push you out. You can touch it, walk on it, and read it. You can also smell it; it is potent at its heart.

If you choose to take a contemplative turn you might scan the dozens of signs covering the outer walls. Painted on scrap wood in a sometimes wobbly hand, for the most part they extol hard living and anti-authoritarian stances (CASUAL ANARCHISTS), but the artists also let slip indications of their own idiosyncrasies and insecurities (CHUBBY1/2 BLIND LEFT HANDED). It isn't coincidental that they listened to a lot of Drake while they installed the work. The friction between bravado and vulnerability in the text epitomizes the wobbly in-betweenness of adolescence, and also the complicated relationship that two grown adults maintain with youth culture, and with nostalgia. In a complimentary way, the cut-and-sutured structure, which cribs formal cues from the skate parks and suburban construction sites of their youth as well as their current interest in vernacular architecture, literalizes the anxiety that is latent in the text. You can call yourself a skater, but the ramp might spit you out like a poser (do skaters still say *poser*?). You can pray at the altar inside, but God might just be old shoes. Sincere and absurd, contemplative and riotous, massive and sensitive, CHURCH is a chapel of adolescence, and a vessel for memory, a place to intermingle action and contemplation.

Joel Parsons | Director, Clough-Hanson Gallery