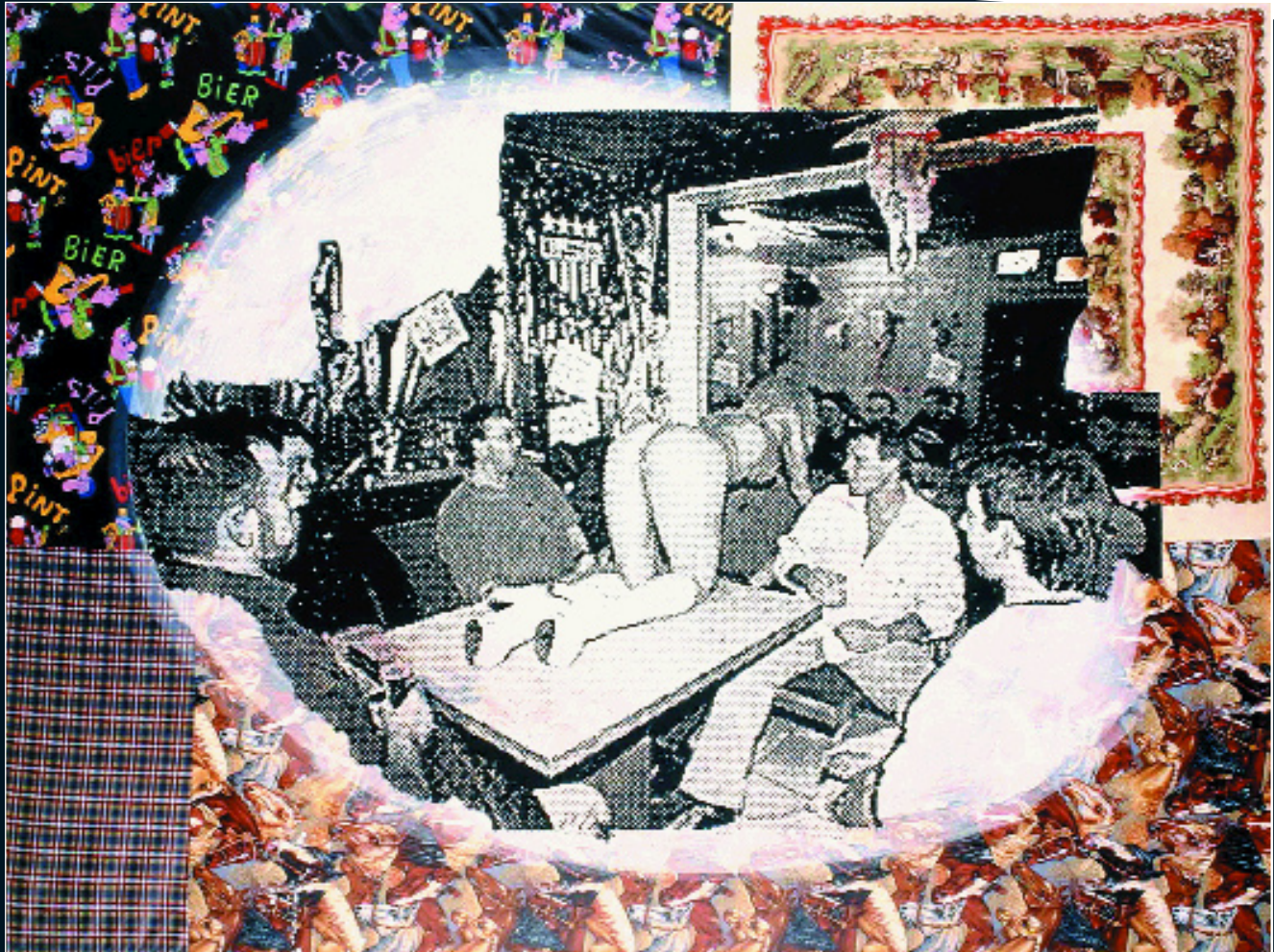


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COMEBACK

Spike from Degraasi; Tiga Meets Marc Almond from Soft Cell; Rock Star Movies; Bad Poetry; Rasputin's Sex Life; Really Good Mainstream Pop Stars; Culture in Review; Party Party Party!!!; Old Is the New New: The Has-Beens, The Lost Gems and the Renaissance of Cool.



ME AND MY BUDDIES WOULD VOTE FOR YOU, 2002
Courtesy Michael Werner, New York and Cologne © Sigmar Polke

STAY CRAZY: SIGMAR POLKE

It's safe to say that any artist would have to be part critic and part comedian to title a show *The History of Everything*; German painter Sigmar Polke has a long history of being both. With more than 40 years of art production under his belt, Polke often distorts and exaggerates mass-produced imagery to create works that parody politics, social conventions and established artistic and cultural values. It's all on view at the Tate Modern in London from October 2, 2003, to January 4, 2004.

In 1963, Polke, together with Konrad Fischer-Lueg and Gerhard Richter, launched capitalist realism in response to the pop art movement taking off in America. While Polke's work is often whimsi-

cal, its political dimension is critical of consumerism and charged with incendiary historical imagery. Where American pop painter Robert Rauschenberg used bedding as a canvas because he was a poor, drunken romantic who "just had to paint," Polke, in his *Lager (Camp)* series of immense multimedia paintings, used blankets and photographs of the electrified fence at Auschwitz to convey the physical world of a Holocaust prisoner with unwavering directness. *The History of Everything* includes recent series like *Printing Mistakes* and *American West*. In the latter series, with titles like *Do the World a Favor and Eat a Bullet*, Polke depicts warped images of Winchester-totin' Americans of old conquering frontiers of untold riches. Thank God *that's* all over.