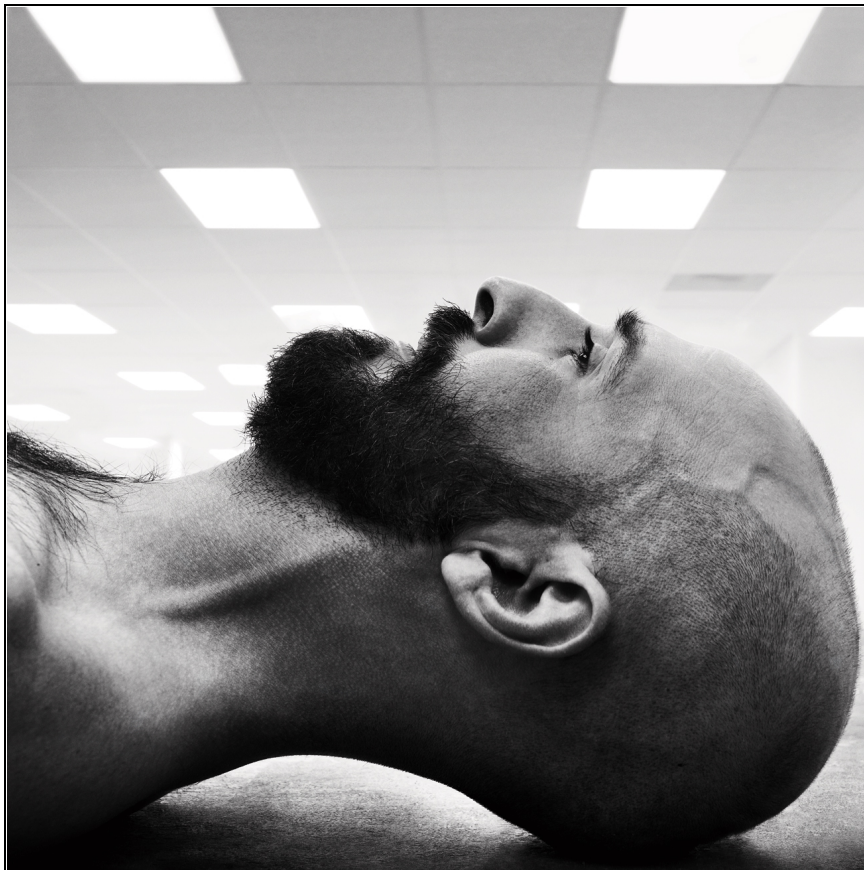


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Piero GOLIA

By CHRISTOPHER BOLLEN
Photography ROBBIE FIMMANO



Piero Golia, Mixed-media Artist, Professor, Businessman— It's hard to keep track of the various highly conceptual, devoutly serious, and sometimes utterly hilarious art projects that 36-year-old Piero Golia has going, but it's easy to know if he's in town. Earlier this year, the Naples-born artist erected a large white bulb on the roof of the West Hollywood Standard Hotel that is lit when Golia is in L.A. and darkened when he's not. That may seem a rather pompous gesture, but Golia is no quiet, solitary creator. Not only does he run his own graduate art school (the Mountain School of Art, which operates out of a bar in Chinatown that he started five years ago with artist Eric Wesley), but he has started his own corporate business (called New Atlantis Enterprises, with its office in the Pacific Design Center). "I'm a radical," he says ingenuously. And he's right. Golia formed New Atlantis Enterprises because he realized

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that if art is going to have a large impact in society, then the current operating budget and scale for it is too small. "It will take \$24 million to build a wall separating Los Angeles from Orange County," he says. "In the business world that is nothing. In art, forget it." When asked why he wants to build this wall, he says, "I think we need it. Walls keep people happy." Golia may be best known for compacting a 35-foot bus into an art booth in 2008, but he doesn't always work in three dimensions. At his office, he is currently displaying a piece that consists of ten years of his life in posters—a series of wall hangings from 2003 to 2010 (purposely not ten years) that document everything from grants he didn't win—"Boycott California Community Foundation"—to a recent snapshot of a taxi which ran into the front of his Hollywood Hills home. Another piece is a photographic diptych of two stacks of cash, each totaling one million dollars. "Thanks to a collector, I borrowed one million from a bank, got it delivered, took the picture, and returned it. Do you know it cost \$3,800 to take the money out that long?" By doubling the image, Golia made two million out of one. "People always think I'm joking," he says. "But I am a serious man."

Piero Golia at his New Atlantis Enterprises Office in the Pacific Design Center in West Hollywood, October 2010

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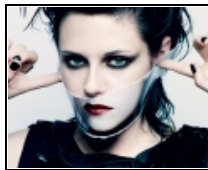
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