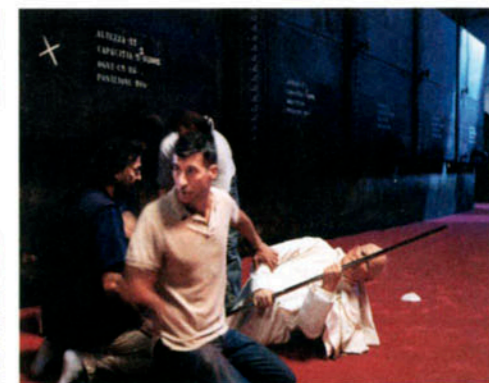




SHOW AND TELL MAKING ART OUT OF MAKING ART

"I learned how to take pictures by shooting artists," says photographer Jason Schmidt. For his forthcoming book, *Artists* (Edition 7L/Steidl), the former Columbia art-history student spent the past six years touring studios and biennials for the privilege of seeing contemporary art "when it's halfway done, almost there." The result transcends Pollock-paints-a-picture clichés; each photograph has its own peculiar aesthetic, from Paul McCarthy's being caught like a serial killer in a boat spattered with fake blood to prankster Maurizio Cattelan's installing his infamous sculpture of a fallen pope. "That was such a funny scene," Schmidt recalls. "It looks like an EMS situation: 'The pope is down!'" The photographer's work is captioned with commentary by the artists themselves, who often talk about the byplay between their work and his. Kehinde Wiley, whose portrait nearly inserts him into his own hip-hop-inflected ceiling fresco, says he found the picture perfectly reflective of his own high-low sensibility: "Much of my work tries to capture the grandeur of Venetian painting, while poking fun."

KAREN ROSENBERG



Clockwise from top left, Aida Ruilova at work in an East Hampton pool; Kehinde Wiley in his New York studio; Maurizio Cattelan and his faux pope at the Venice Biennale; Paul McCarthy on his boat in Altadena, California. In addition to the book, a show of Schmidt's work on artists will go up at Deitch Projects gallery in February.