

DAVID ROBBINS

THE ICE CREAM SOCIAL



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AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ART AND ENTERTAINMENT

An American tradition, an "ice cream social" is an occasion for the members of a community to gather together to relax with friends and enjoy confectionery refreshments. David Robbins' "Ice Cream Social" does all this while adding a layer of something else. It started in 1993 when a Baskin-Robbins ice cream "parlor" was used for an exhibition of paintings based on the company's graphics. Over the following decade it expanded into live events, a TV pilot, and a feature movie script. These derivations, together with digital designs presented here along with a novella from 1998, map the full extent of this ironic utterance of a later over-praised "relationsl aesthetic."

In his famous 1986 work "Talent" (eighteen show biz-style "headshots" of the New York art scene), David Robbins equated artists such as Cindy Sherman, Jeff Koons, and Richard Prince with entertainers; the ICS deepens this investigation into the relationship between art and entertainment. These two projects, as well as David Robbins' practice in general, mark an important step in the critical genealogy of the entrance of the art system into the popular culture industry.

The book was published on the occasion of the artist's solo exhibition at the Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris. David Robbins (*1957) lives in Milwaukee (Wisconsin); his work has been recently presented at the Des Moines Art Center (Iowa), Feature in New York, and Cubitt in London.