

Life®

# **Banks Violette**

## **no title/(matter and time)**

### **CWR Billboard 31/8/2025 through 01/11/2025**

In American light beers there is the spirit of the Eucharist. Proven by focus groups to be interchangeable and fungible vessels of diluted swill, each competing variety claims a particular tranche of the folkish spirit: Bud is heraldic of a scabrous self-determination; Corona of a more epicurean, tropical hedonism; Coors of the alpinist or the sportsman; and Miller of a reverence and respect for one's forebears and their many species of pollyanna humility and justified regret. Like wine and wafers, light beer—and its respective metanarrative—is both a memorial to erstwhile national pleasures and—if enjoyed socially—a participation in its revenant presence: a gasping appeal for a mere morsel of the splendor promised to each native-born citizen. Concocted for the purpose of abuse, its ritualistic value is undeniable, whether this rite invokes ecstatic violence among a group or merely inward-pointed, lonely sublimation in the antisocial drinker. Unlike its more stout siblings, the light beer's only promise is oblivion, and without the encumbrances of caloric value and flavor. This is, obviously, a men's catechism, like so many of America's convocations of wanton joy: for the fairer and more vulnerable of us, the light beer portends injury, insult, and ruin. Gonzalez-Torres' billboard, which this work vaguely resembles, is a single sentence: It's Only a Matter of Time—or, in the far more ghoulish fette fraktur Germanic version, Es ist nur eine Frage der Zeir. Possibly the most frequently watered-down of our era's great artists—I've witnessed galleries omit AIDS from press releases entirely—the phrase could be—and certainly was—dissolved into smarmy poetics by so many onlookers. Why not? Isn't art the cool balm we need to slather on the overheated discourse of life? Can't conceptualism be washed down easily like a cold beer? Unfortunately, like so much of that artist's work, it's the eschatology, stupid—like poetry, one of those words I choke on when I speak it. For those who have been mercilly spared the dry morsels of philosophy, we're referring to the end of the world, where we're shaken off of the sphere and sorted into salvation or sulfur. Or, in less occult circles, the term allows for discussions of the end of history—or, convenient in this context, the end of America. A billboard artwork in Stratford posing as an advert for a terrible American brand may invite prayers for the expiration of this golem so regrettably conjured by the realm just a couple of centuries ago. It's looking likely.

**text: Todd Von Ammon**

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CLASSWAROOM project space launched in January 2020 in response to the mutilation of arts funding in the UK resulting in the palpable depletion of wider support for artists. Ecologies within artistic networks have been fragmented and impeded as a result. CLASSWAROOM works closely with artists at pivotal points within their practise, to develop new work in ambitious, rigorous and unfettered ways. Most are unrepresented and without meaningful support from formal institutions, or have not been able to make work for periods of time due to financial or other constraints. Projects are often accompanied with a publication and editioned work (100% of sales go to artists). Artists also develop talks, presentations and events that aim to expand discourses and tangential ideas explored within the work.

CWR refurbished a dilapidated billboard near the former Olympic village in Stratford, London E15 in early 2025. Discarded and unused for nearly 20 years the board was left for dead by the area's wider regeneration project. It seemed an important endeavour at this time when maintaining an art practise is subject to (now) near-zero financial support, whilst under increasing ideological, existential attack, to organise a programme of new work made for the site by 8 international artists.

**CWR Billboard location: London E15 2HX (corner of Carpenters Road and Rowse Close, next to the bridge). @\_classwaroom\_ for projects and past/upcoming CWR Billboard artists.**

