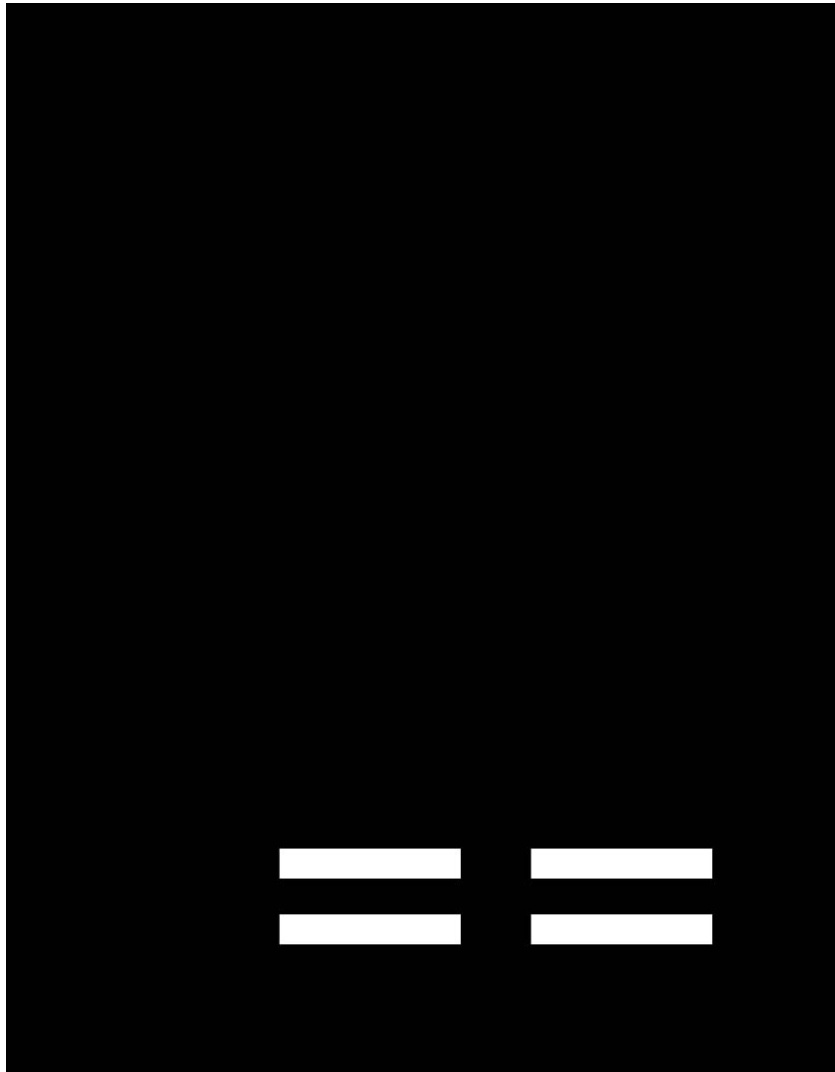




michèle didier

= =

Matt Keegan



= =

Matt Keegan

mfc-michèle didier a le plaisir de vous convier à la présentation en avant première de sa dernière production, l'oeuvre intitulée = = de l'artiste new-yorkais Matt Keegan. = = rassemble des essais, des interviews entre artistes ainsi que des multiples, tous réalisés spécialement à cette occasion.

= = n'est en aucun cas à considérer comme le catalogue de l'exposition du même nom. C'est un projet à part entière, conçu en amont de celle-ci. Prenant le contrepied de la tradition, Matt Keegan a imaginé l'exposition à partir de la publication et non l'inverse.

La première proposition d'exposition de Matt Keegan issue de cette publication se tiendra donc du 12 mai au 30 juin à la galerie mfc-michèle didier, tandis que les propositions suivantes sont d'ores-et-déjà prévues à New York en juin et à Los Angeles en septembre.

L'exposition à la galerie mfc-michèle didier sera donc l'opportunité de présenter une oeuvre de chacun des artistes internationaux qui se trouvent au coeur de la publication de = = Liz Deschenes, Nikolas Gambaroff, James Richards, Kay Rosen et Erika Vogt.

En outre, seront également exposées des oeuvres des artistes qui ont contribué à la publication: Ajay Kurian & Sreshta Rit Premnath, Caleb Considine & Caitlin MacBride, Josh Tonsfeldt & Uri Aran, Alex Kwartler & Michele Abeles, Paul Lee & Jacob Robichaux.

Le titre singulier de la publication fait référence à l'écriture html, le double signe égal étant utilisé pour apposer des variables équivalentes. Les multiples prononciations attachées à ce symbole annoncent la pluralité des formes éditoriales que revêtira le projet et notamment sa version numérisée à venir.

==

Edition

L'édition est composée d'un livre de 108 pages mesurant 29,3 x 22,8 cm.

Les dix textes critiques sur les cinq artistes sont de Sarah Charlesworth et Carter Mull pour Liz Deschenes, Chris Kraus et Nora Schultz pour Nikolas Gambaroff, Ed Atkins et Steve Reinke pour James Richards, Alejandro Cesarco et Cary Leibowitz pour Kay Rosen, Math Bass et John Miller pour Erika Vogt.

Les interviews sont de Ajay Kurian & Sreshta Rit Premnath, Caleb Considine & Caitlin MacBride, Josh Tonsfeldt & Uri Aran, Alex Kwartler & Michele Abeles, Paul Lee & Jacob Robichaux.

Cette édition contient également cinq multiples de Liz Deschenes, Nikolas Gambaroff, James Richards, Kay Rosen et Erika Vogt.

L'édition contenant le livre et les cinq multiples est limitée en 150 exemplaires numérotés + 50 E.A. Elle est produite et publiée en 2012 par mfc - michèle didier.

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Textes critiques

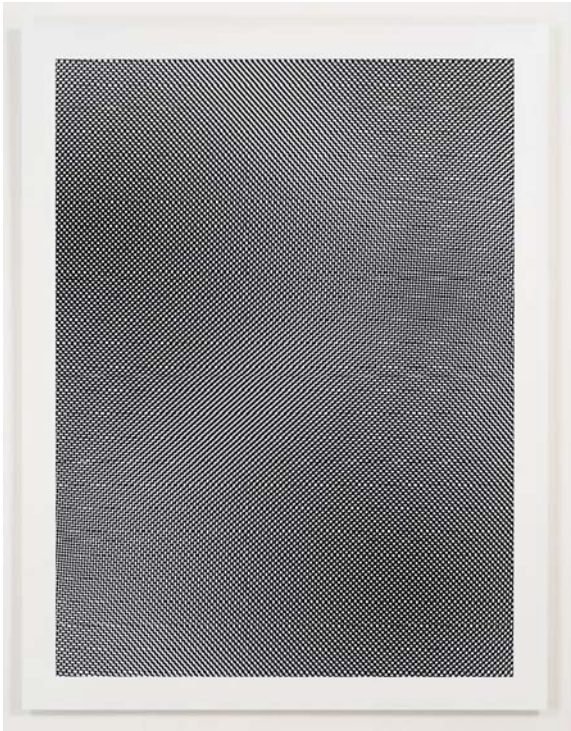
Sarah Charlesworth et Carter Mull pour Liz Deschenes

Chris Kraus et Nora Schultz pour Nikolas Gambaroff

Ed Atkins et Steve Reinke pour James Richards

Alejandro Cesarco et Cary Leibowitz pour Kay Rosen

Math Bass et John Miller pour Erika Vogt



Carter Mull pour Liz Deschenes, = =, Matt Keegan, 2012

The Silver Monochromes of Liz Deschenes

Carter Mull

In 1999 Bill Gates wrote, "As I was preparing my speech for our first CEO summit in the spring of 1997, I was pondering how the digital age will fundamentally alter business. I wanted to go beyond a speech of dazzling technology advances and address the questions that business leaders wrestle with all the time. . . . If the 1980s were about quality and the 1990s were about reengineering, then the 2000s will be about velocity. About how quickly the nature of business will change. About how quickly business itself will be transcended. About how information access will alter the lifestyle of consumers and their expectations of business. Quality improvements and business process improvements will occur far faster. When the increase in velocity of business is great enough, the very nature of business changes. . . . People have lived for so long without information at their fingertips that they don't realize what they're missing. One of the goals in my speech to the CEOs was to raise their expectations. I wanted them to be appalled by how little they got in the way of actionable information from their current IT investments. I wanted CEOs to demand a flow of information that would give them quick, tangible knowledge about what was really happening with their customers."¹



His voice is filled with triumph and critique. It's as though he saw the decade ahead with crystal clarity and, like a writer of speculative fiction, was able to actualize his vision into reality through his eminence as a broadcaster of thought to a very empowered class. Not only has digitization given us the conveniences of e-mail as well as the luxury of tracking a UPS delivery—it has also given us the incessant gurgling of the cell phone, that little Tamagotchi ever in need of a tap or stroke. Digitization has made speed count more than ever. For Gates, velocity is the actualization of a dream—a kind of utopian fulfillment of a much larger intellectual and industrial project. After all, he's on top. His industrial production has implications that are greater than simply cultural. His work has literally

changed space and time for subjects of the first, second, and third worlds. As a subject of global capitalism working in an engaged, albeit destabilized, space, I also shudder at the ring of this present quote.

Unfortunately, the increased velocity in the world and the further sense of precariousness we feel creates some rough patches. Such speed creates pathologies that are both minor and build over time, closing our ability to think clearly. Ironically, the space of art—institutional, activist, or commercial—provides a sense of refrain—either critical, performative, or affirmative—from our daily grid. Yet it is rare that art-objects open up a space of philosophical questioning that addresses the pressing conditions of our time, as predicated by Gates's delivery to his fellow producers. Clock time is an institutional



Pictures and Early Words

This is the third of four early journals written in 1970 (*The Fast*); in 1971 (*Country Girl*); in 1972 (*Pictures and Early Words*); in 1973 (*Big Words*). These journals depict the development of the clairvoyance from feeling and seeing auras, to seeing pictures, and finally the slow development of seeing words which first appeared singly, then later in short phrases. The culmination of this seeing of words resulted in the *Clairvoyant Journal*, written in 1974 and published by Angel Hair Books, now known as United Artists Books, in 1978, and in *many* books that followed.

The first word I saw was in August, 1972. It was:

The word W

R

O

N

G seen diagonally on my pant leg.

This book begins in September, 1972.

*Hannah Weiner
Silent Teacher*

Semaphore

For Nikolas Gambaroff

Among my old notebooks I find one labeled "CAPITAL - notebook #2." It's a notebook I kept during my first year in New York, which was most likely 1976, though I've lied about dates for so long in an effort to keep my age-or rather my "generational identity"-ambiguous. I don't really remember. The poet Fanny Howe remarked, as she gets older, the illusion she's happiest to shed is the importance of being accepted by members of her generation. Who, I asked Fanny, did she consider her generation? The poet John Wieners sprang to mind. In his magnificence, his dispossessed Boston Brahmin's stately clairvoyance, I've always considered him to be her closest peer. No, Fanny said. He was several years older. And then she named several names-New York names, names of poets whose work seems to me of no more than contextual interest.

I was born in New York in the mid-1950s and have never once felt an affinity with what could be described as "my generation." Too young to participate in the events of the '60s, too old to convincingly mimic the ontological amnesia of those growing up two decades later.

Chris Kraus pour Nikolas Gambaroff, =, Matt Keegan, 2012



James Richards
Steve Reinke

Maybe it's good to start a project with low expectations. Or, if not low, exactly, vague. The people at Light Industry in New York were putting together a packed slate of events as their contribution to the alternative art fair No Soul for Sale. They asked Jim and I if we would hastily assemble an exquisite corpse compilation from our respective stores of audio-visual material. I didn't really know Jim then, not really. We had met when he was a participant in Lu's associate program in London and I was doing an exhibition there. But we didn't really hang out at all or even talk, despite the efforts of Mike Speltzinger and Ben Cook, who both told me I should pay attention to James' work. And if I didn't really pay attention to it then, it was only because the opportunity did not present itself. I was sent back home to America with a DVD

Image taken
by James Richards
at the Experimental TV Centre,
2010

Steve Reinke pour James Richards, = =, Matt Keegan, 2012

KAY KAY KAY KAY KAY KAY KAY

KAY ROSEN

by Cary Leibowitz



Dear reader, if you do not know Kay Rosen's work, please stop reading right now and look it up. Google her. Go to kayrosen.com. Examine it for a few days, then come back. Lots of pressure to write about Kay's work. Smart grown-ups like it, and smart children like it, too. But I still feel like I am Don Rickles at a Dean Martin roast. You know they roasted Truman Capote. **||**

Before I ever met Kay Rosen I liked her work.

I didn't really try to imagine what she looked like, but I think I was picturing a Jewish Helen Hunt living in Brooklyn Heights or maybe Carroll Gardens or Park Slope.

The first time I actually met her was in a hotel in Washington, D.C. She was playing Scrabble with Elliot Spitzer and they were having some intimate double-vowel thing going on at the bar.

He wasn't governor yet, and she hadn't had her "retrospective" in LA yet, but then again we were all young and open to new ideas.

(That's the roast part.)

It WAS in a hotel in D.C. and I WAS imagining a Jewish Helen Hunt, but she was with some other artists. We were all in a group show together.

We were introduced, and I was immediately fascinated by her very southern, very exotic accent.

She is from Corpus Christi, Texas, y'all.

I never looked at (read) her work with a southern accent—it was a revelation.

Cary Leibowitz pour Kay Rosen, = =, Matt Keegan, 2012

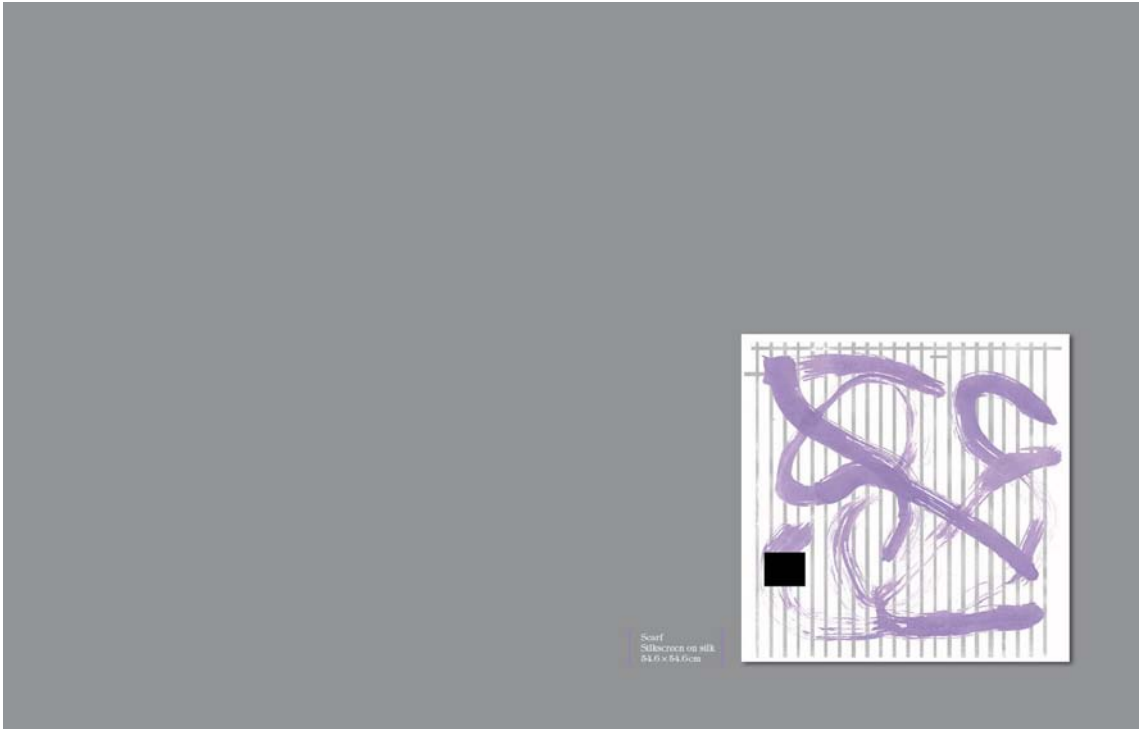


Math Bass pour Erika Vogt, = =, Matt Keegan, 2012

= =

Interviews

Michele Abeles & Alex Kwartler
Uri Aran & Josh Tonsfeldt
Caleb Considine & Caitlin MacBride
Ajay Kurian & Sreshta Rit Premnath
Paul Lee & Jacob Robichaux



Michele Abeles & Alex Kwartler, = =, Matt Keegan, 2012



Uri Aran & Josh Tonsfeldt, = =, Matt Keegan, 2012



devices and their development by groups, specifically by teens who aren't given much verbal agency. Historically, Japanese kids' responses to Disney cartoons lead to the development of manga, and for them it became a new mode of communication that was specific to their own culture and their place in it. It's an interesting reflection of Deleuze and Guattari's concept of minor literature and deterritorialization, or the

process of an under-represented group co-opting the language of their oppressor and altering it for their own purposes, which then becomes a source of power. To use a minor language is to take a major language, displace it, then replace it. Instead of confronting something with opposition, you subvert it from within. For children this can be a safer and more advantageous mode of

exercising yourself. What's interesting about anime and manga is that they have become a sort of universal language among youth. What was once a specifically Japanese style is now super popular in Western cultures. I get a huge kick out of a Web site called delectable, a place where kids and teens share their latest achievements in manga drawings. Some the repeated, perfected styles and characters deteriorate the

individuality of the drawings, but what they lack in originality brings them closer to a new alphabet or series of symbols that string together a form of communication. It also further breaks down divisions of origin such as nationality, race, class, and gender, and it reflects the globalization of current youth identity. I'm also interested in the popularity of this style as related to Julia Kristeva's concept of adolescence, or more specifically, the "adolescent novel"; how the concept of adolescence is a "crisis structure" because it represents the open borders "between differences of sex and identity of reality and fantasy, of act and discourse." Our media tends to represent teens as being a threat because they're still developing, and that transient identity poses a threat to the norm. Their identity hangs in an undecided and fluid place that engenders more possibilities than the established and commodified system has to offer. Kristeva thinks that they cross between these borders so easily because they "easily mirror the free flow . . . of our mass-media society." Young

people are finding modes of communication that suit the media they've grown up with and therefore manage to be both easily exchanged and still threatening, confusing, in their singularity and juvenile nature.

I find the communication systems of overlooked or underrepresented pockets of society provocative in their ability to survive and thrive despite having little validity in mainstream or more established eyes. The desire to exchange information is

inherently human, yet having real communication has always been one of the hardest things to attain. **CC** You mentioned that working on paintings for other people as a job roughly corresponded to your move away from the kind of brushwork and conventional applications of paint that show your "hand." It's clearly not a sharp split. Your earlier paintings employed spray applications, stencils, and references to graphic or decorative mark-making, which already puts your indexical touch at a remove. But that shift toward mark-making and the inclusion of directly appropriated texts happened while you were being paid to make work for others using traditional paint application. This could be an entry point into the poetics of your process.

CM Well, early on I did use some found images, but I avoid the spray paint, the mark-making techniques, and using more specific found images came after I'd begun working as an artist's assistant. I had worked as one before, but I did not actually make the artist's work. When I started painting as a job—spending forty hours a week making someone else's work—that was when I started searching for new ways to paint. In some ways it was a relief because I'd been searching for a way to get out of my comfort zone and pursue other interpretations of painting. But on some levels it was also a bit frightening. At work I was painting super tight images that weren't allowed to have

visible brushstrokes, and that tendency began to infiltrate my own work. I guess it's an occupational hazard of the artist assistant. At one point I took a month off from the job to go to a residency and I found myself fighting with my own hand. I'd spent over a thousand hours in this other style and I had to find a way to separate myself from it. It's interesting to watch your own hand become commodified. It's been talked about quite a bit, the factory setup and market demand that so many artists

operate within. Yet for me, participating on that level as an assistant is what sparked the move away from the idea of a true image or a true mark that comes from a privileged, individual artist. Much of the work I'm doing now is a layering or interweaving of readymades. Both the mark-making technique—using paint in water—and the use of found images remove the indexical touch and much of the brain-to-hand decision making. Yet images continue to exist, and painting continues to exist, and I

suppose I'm interested in exploring both of those while acknowledging the current state of art production. **CC** That makes me think of the way that abstraction operates in your paintings; it's somewhere between incident and motif. The element of incident is fairly obvious—these are chance operations. But I say motif because the way they act as a support for graphic imagery makes them seem like either craft or commercially-produced patterning—the



Caleb Considine & Caitlin MacBride, = =, Matt Keegan, 2012

REALITY AND TRANSLATION



R: I feel like when we talk about notions of reality and translation, we can't get around their separation because of the very language we are using. It's written into our language. So perhaps our understanding is really and there's no other reality, but our language makes it difficult to articulate that.

A: Yes, it really does seem like a false problem. When we realize that other animals are capable of seeing the world in a different way—that birds can see a whole range of colors that we don't, say—it means that facets of reality exist that are as real as ours. And in knowing how other beings experience the world, we are able to understand not only the contingency of our own experiences but also the truth of all these particular experiences.

R: And the importance of acknowledging our inability to have every experience or perceive everything at once.

A: Why is that the Holy Grail? To experience everything all at once?

R: There's a great Borges story called "The Aleph." In which a guy finds a point in space in his basement and realizes that if he looks through it, he sees everything in the universe at once. It's just overwhelming. The thing that was difficult for me to understand was how he knew that he was seeing everything. How could you ever know that you are seeing everything, because when you see things that you have never seen before you don't necessarily perceive them as things at all. They might just be perceived as noise.

A: That's another linguistic deficiency, I think. We are able to point to everything, but that doesn't mean we understand.

R: We can say "the world," for instance, and understand it as a concept, although we only experience one point in the world at any moment, one climate, one person's being...

A: In a way it's about being OK with the infinite regress of all objects all the time, even the fractal existence of the grass that we were talking about. There's so much information layered in one blade of grass: there's the cellular level, the molecular, the atomic, the subatomic. You keep going down, and we don't precisely know when it ends.

R: Zizek has this ridiculous factum idea. In a video game, when you get too close to an object or a part of the architecture that has not been fully rendered, you encounter a weird pixelation or fragmentation. In the same way that video game reality wasn't constructed fully, he proposes that our reality is only constructed to a certain resolution. So when we get too close, a new reality has to be produced in order to satisfy our looking. If you get too close, an atom is produced, if you get closer, an electron and a proton are produced...

A: It's an awesome idea, but it seems so fucking self-centered...

R: It's a throwback in a way the idea that the production of reality depends on our intentions.

A: It's funny that he's involved in any kind of ethical philosophy because that idea seems so radically unethical.

ETHICS AND BUREAUCRACY

R: Well, in terms of infinite regress, ethics is an important issue. On the one hand, it's true that we experience the world in different levels and in a fractured way, so it's already impossible to fully understand the world, our relations, and the existence of other things. At the same time there are other beings in the world, and we must have relationships with them. The question of ethics is complicated because even the most basic ethical statement cannot be grounded readily in logic.

A: In the extremely willing you have layers and layers of bureaucracy. One what ends up happening is that the program of bureaucracy is to strategize and poorly devised that the people who run it do not realize the simplicity of their program. If they did they would be able to make it more complex and take on more iterations. They simply end up following protocol like "here are these forms, fill them out." And sure, there must be some protocol, but you're not a fucking machine. What they are doing ultimately does not make any sense, but because of strange bureaucratic accountability, the program stays in place.

In the same way, if we were to produce any form of ethics on a larger social scale, you need a bureaucracy and you need it to be really complex.

R: Well, there's the law.

A: Yes, I guess the ability of pushing up against the law and speaking for those who can't speak for themselves are all ways in which we change the program. For me, I can't see any other way besides writing a program that will always be too simple.

R: By the time anything becomes law, it is distributed out to fit all kinds of agendas. There are humanist moral ethics. "This is what I think is right and if you disagree, I will kill you." And there are democratic ethics, which do not always result in what we wish but seem to be the best thing we've come up with. There there are moral ethics, as you were saying. There's the original law of the institution, the school or the land or whatever—if you need help and you need a particular individual in one of these institutions, someone who knows you, you might ask, "Listen, can you just do this? You know me. Let's just get this done." Or a moral ethical case, there are a number of possibilities. If nothing helps, I think it's because of karma.

A: It's also hard to implement these kinds of intelligent changes in a systematic way, right? How do you consistently and persistently account for these moral actions when there are major things to deal with that are actually more important than your transgressive moments? It's hard to reconcile because we would need to function at a higher level to do all these things, and then do them even better. Maybe we will. At least that's what Ray Kurzweil says.

R: Where's that?

A: He's the one who's been talking about the event of singularity when humans will merge with technologies that they have been creating. He believes that at some point our technologies will be what keeps us alive about indefinitely. That there will be nano-bots crawling through our veins that will repair us and also gradually change our intelligence and memory and all of those things. The processing power of a computer has grown about a billion times. He thinks our own human processing power will increase a billion times. And then what?

R: Then we'll be flying through channels a billion times faster. We'll be doing dumb things even more efficiently. [Laughs]

A: [Laughs] for the accelerated mind.

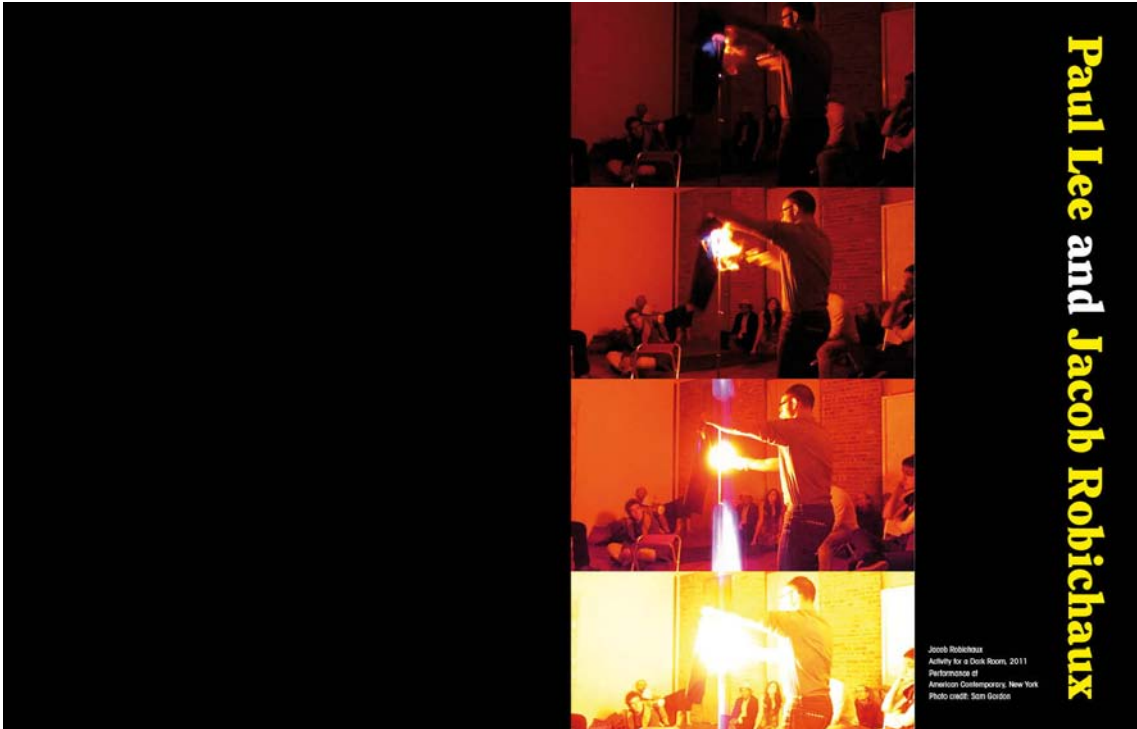
R: [Laughs] for the accelerated mind.

A: [Laughs] for the accelerated mind.

R: We'll have to think of new visual structures, too. Dogs can see more than just second than we can. Before TV went digital, dogs didn't have any interest in television because they could see that wasn't moving. They only saw their space in frames so they were like, "Some dog!" but they'd watch digital TV. Oh no.

[Bird droppings land on Ajay's knee. We get distracted trying to find paper napkins, and the conversation ends.]

Ajay Kurian & Sreshta Rit Premnath, = =, Matt Keegan, 2012



Paul Lee & Jacob Robichaux, = =, Matt Keegan, 2012

= =

Multiples

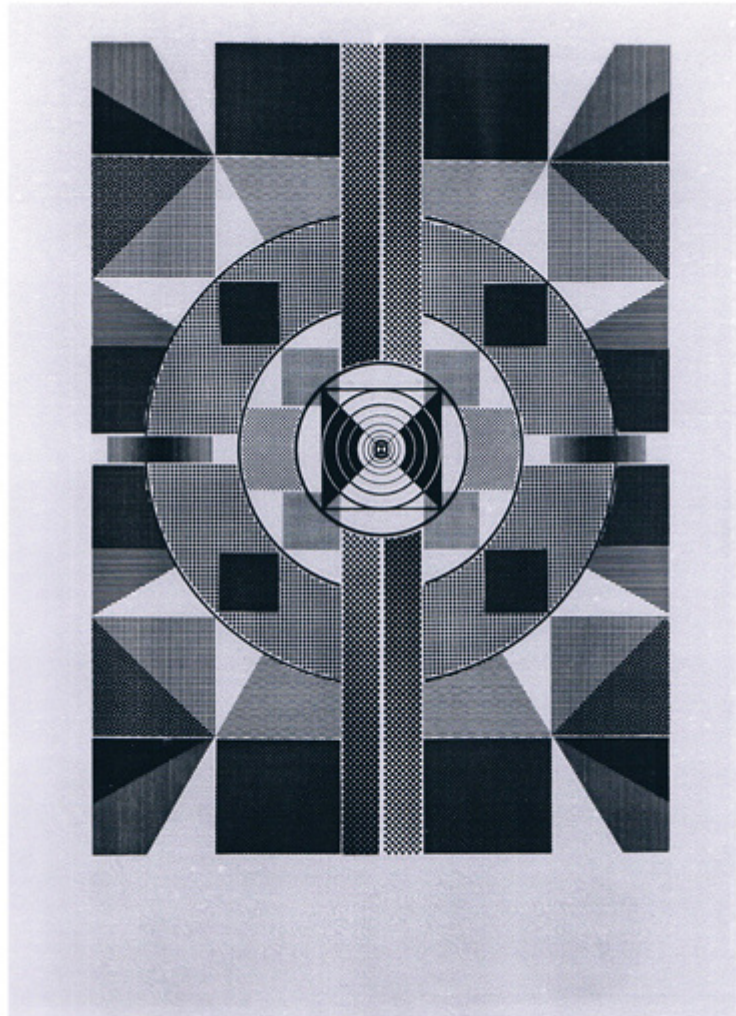
Liz Deschenes

Nikolas Gambaroff

James Richards

Kay Rosen

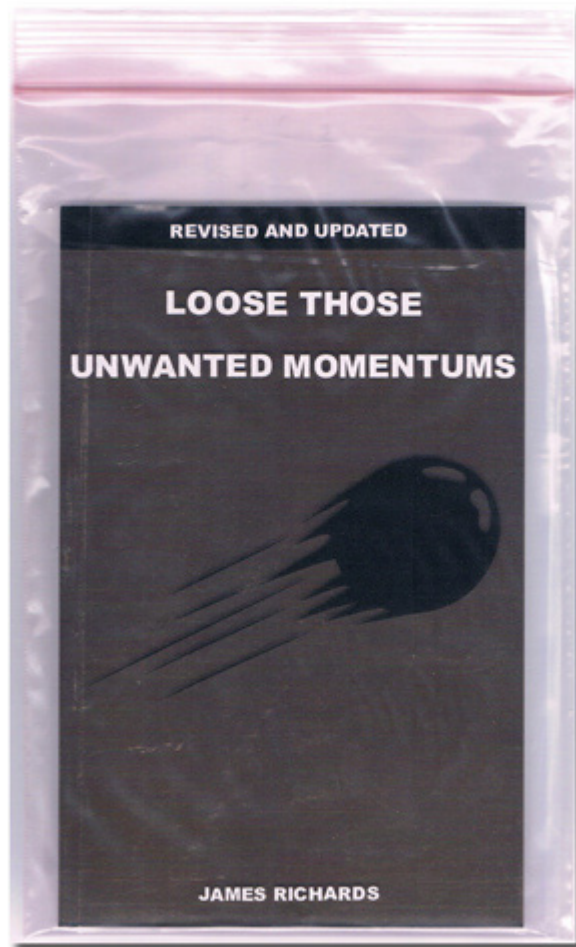
Erika Vogt



Liz Deschenes, sans titre, rhodoïd imprimé, 21,6 x 28 cm



Nikolas Gambaroff, sans titre, Lino imprimé, 22,2 x 29,9 cm



James Richards, sans titre, plaque d'aluminium imprimée dans un sac en plastique rose, dimensions de la plaque: 12,7 x 19,7 cm, dimensions du sac en plastique: 15 x 25,4 cm



Erika Vogt, sans titre, impression jet d'encre sur poster mat, 12,6 x 10,1 cm



Kay Rosen, sans titre, techniques mixtes: carton, plastique et photographie, 18,9 x 11,4 cm

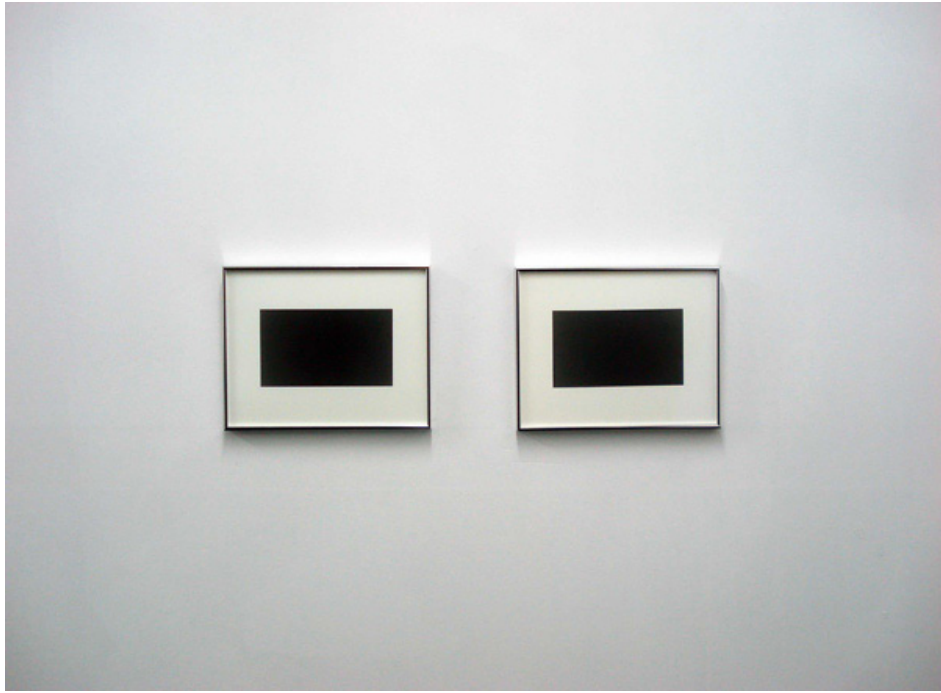
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L'exposition

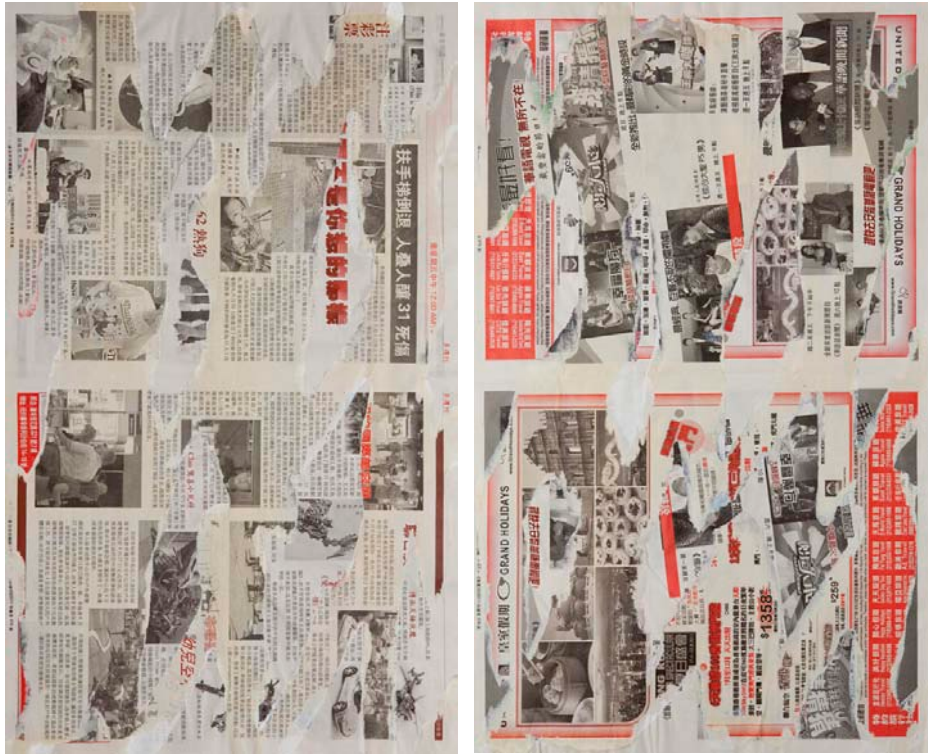
La galerie mfc - michèle didier présente la première exposition de = = de Matt Keegan.

Sont présentés les travaux des artistes suivants:

Liz Deschenes
Nikolas Gambaroff
James Richards
Kay Rosen
Erika Vogt



Liz Deschenes, *Etude pour Noir & Blanc #1 et #2*, b/w photogrammes monochromes



Nikolas Gambaroff, sans titre, 2011, 2 cadres: peinture acrylique papier journal imprimé, 50,4 x 30,4 cm (non encadré), 62,5 x 42,6 x 4 cm (encadré)



James Richards & Steve Reinke, *Disambiguation*, projection vidéo

The Man Who Would
Be King
The Man Who Would
Be B.B. King
The Man Who Would
Be Queen Bee
The Man Who Would
Be Aunt Bea
The Man Who Would
Be Bea Arthur
The Man Who Would
Be King Arthur
The Man Who Would
Be Art King

Kay Rosen, *The man*, vinyl mat noir, 1/3



Erika Vogt, sans titre, dessin, 31 x 24,8 cm

Sont également présentés les travaux des contributeurs suivants:

Michele Abeles & Alex Kwartler

Uri Aran & Josh Tonsfeldt

Caleb Considine & Caitlin MacBride

Ajay Kurian & Sreshta Rit Premnath

Paul Lee & Jacob Robichaux



michèle didier



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