

# MARY BOONE GALLERY

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## VIEW THIRTEEN: PRACTICAL F/X

On 6 September 2007, at its Fifth Avenue location, the Mary Boone Gallery will open VIEW THIRTEEN: PRACTICAL F/X, an exhibition curated by Kevin Zucker with work by eight young Artists: HILARY BERSETH, TIM DAVIS, MARC HANDELMAN, DANIEL LEFCOURT, MEGAN MC LARNEY, CARTER MULL, MARIAH ROBERTSON, and HEATHER ROWE. The opening reception will be held from 5-7 PM, with a presentation by Mariah Robertson at 6 PM.

In theatrical terminology, a practical effect is an effect produced on set, in real time, without the aid of elaborate technology. Often the goal is not to simulate reality but to allude to it as economically as possible. The audience is asked to fill in the gaps between this simplification and the real-world experience to which it refers. When a phone rings on a stage, an inert prop (the disconnected telephone) is activated by a sound (the ringing) that comes from speakers that are obviously situated offstage. The alchemy that allows this overt contrivance to effectively drive the narrative action happens somewhere between the speakers, the phone itself, and the minds of the individual audience members. These kinds of effects differ from those usually found in contemporary film and television in that the audience's suspension of disbelief is an active, conscious, participatory choice, rather than a seamlessly scripted response that relies on the mechanics of the effect being hidden, invisible, or impossible to figure out.

The work in this show proposes a similar contract with the viewer. Your suspension of disbelief is requested rather than being manufactured without your knowledge. Antiquated technologies are brought back into service, natural processes are tinkered with, big budget "F/X" are pulled apart and reconstituted to expose their artifice.

Hilary Berseth's "Programmed Hives" use the natural building process of bees

to generate sculptural forms. Berseth uses a number of strategies for organizing the way bees build: seeding the hive with a foreign geometry, compressing the available space to generate a particular form, or adding an impediment to the structure the bees would ordinarily create. Berseth's interventions in the bee colonies act as "programs" that instigate a set of forms between the organic and the artificial. Berseth also contributes two graphite drawings to the show, "Tetrahedrons Instanced to the Stars of the Milky Way (3 stages)" and "Two Anomalous Objects", that depict digitally-rendered models of information originating from number or data sets. The labor-intensive process of drawing gives the pieces a physical presence in tension with the abstract mathematical nature of their subject matter.

Tim Davis's photographic work "The Horrorists" juxtaposes two images: a detail of Christ's wounds from a di Ribera painting resembles a smiling mouth, reminding us of the theological relationship between ecstasy and suffering, while a portrait of the artist wearing a grim expression on a rollercoaster (in contrast with the gleeful screams of his fellow riders) eloquently describes the way in which fear is packaged as a consumer product.

Marc Handelman's "Painting for the End of Northrop Grumman" takes a fragment of text from the aerospace/defense contractor's logo as a readymade, then heightens the intended effects of scale, speed and drama to the point where those qualities teeter on the brink of absurdity. Handelman underscores the role of abstraction in the construction of the corporate identity, simultaneously foregrounding and corrupting the spectacular façade that would ordinarily serve to obscure the reality of what the company deals in.

Daniel Lefcourt's work plays with the instability of meaning. In his multi-part inkjet print on board, this instability is both literally depicted and aesthetically enacted. The piece features images of collapsing architecture and billowing clouds of smoke. These images, however, are not the stuff of Hollywood movies, nor are they dispatches from the "war on terror". Instead, they are a collection of found images from the recent demolition of the Kodak photographic paper processing plant, a symbol of the shift from the solidity of analog technology to the mutability of the digital.

Megan Mc Larney's photographs and videos of the natural world are construct-

ed by combining numerous smaller images into a single large composite. This process allows her both to shoot with a small camera and to render her subjects in greater detail than would otherwise be possible. The resulting images are apparently documentary, ambient and made in real time, while in fact they are compressed and collaged from different moments and perspectives.

Carter Mull's "Ground" is a floor sculpture composed of 1800 uniquely painted photographs, taken sequentially during the process of the artist's destroying an institutional drop ceiling. The photographs, made from "office jet" prints and a reflective film whose color properties shift as the viewer changes position, are scattered across the floor of the gallery, collapsing the linearity of the sequence. Mull's "Construction", a small black-and-white contact print made onto silver metallic paper, builds a composition out of the simple doubling and reorientation of two images, one a landscape, the other a diagram of plant growth.

Mariah Robertson's three photographs are made using traditional amateur effects filters. The action of the filter on the lens, the particular way it abstracts the quotidian subject matter, is immediately obvious to the viewer. Simultaneously lush and barren, psychedelic and hungover, the photographs are essentially portraits of the hobbyist-grade techniques employed in their making. Robertson will also give a presentation at the show's opening on "Neuroplasticity and the Perception of Time and Space".

Inspired by the monumental buttresses of Amiens Cathedral, Heather Rowe's "Three Flying Buttresses for a Wall" are simplified and scaled down to a personalized height and contain intentional structural defects. Thin, delicate pieces of glass tenuously hold the pieces together, subverting the original structural function of the architectural elements.

For all the formal complexity in these artists' work, transparency is valued above verisimilitude, fact above fantasy. Materials and images undergo straightforward (if not always simple) transformations that make the familiar abstract and strange. These artists seek to generate "messy" effects that raise questions and leave lingering ambiguities, aiming not to convince, but to engage.

The exhibition, at 745 Fifth Avenue, will continue through 27 October 2007. Please contact the Gallery if we can be of further assistance, or visit the Gallery's website: [www.maryboonegallery.com](http://www.maryboonegallery.com).

Ron Warren

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