

SURVEILLANCE

curated by Rachel D. Vancelette

Jeffrey Gibson
Angelo Plessas
Shin-II Kim
Tomory Dodge

Charles Harlan
Yasmine Chatila
Caitlin Maloney

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

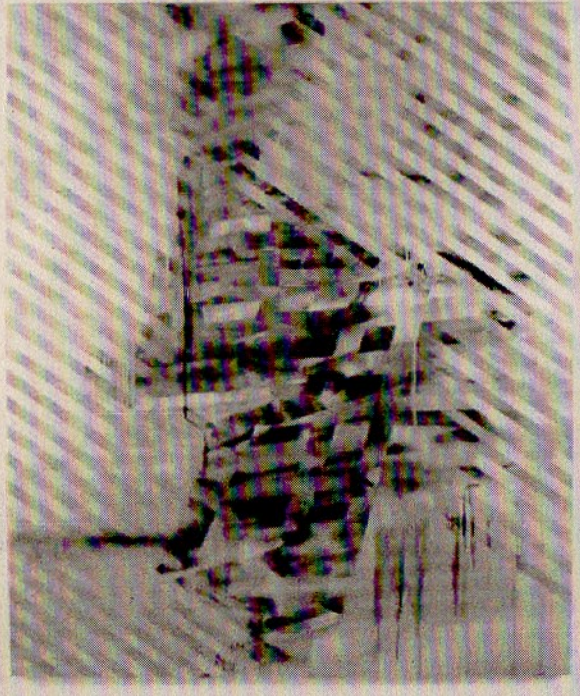
New York, NY: Affirmation Arts is pleased to announce *Surveillance*, a group show curated by Rachel D. Vancelette, featuring artists: Yasmine Chatila, Tomory Dodge, Jeffrey Gibson, Charles Harlan, Shin il Kim, Caitlin Maloney, and Angelo Plessas.

“Surveillance” is defined as “close or vigilant watch over someone or something,” and derives, by way of the French *veiller*, from the Latin term *vigilare*, meaning “to keep watch.” Artists have historically been the gatekeepers of society’s public accounts, and today they continue to mirror our daily lives. Whether it is through the Internet, virtual social networking, photography, painting, or multimedia-based technologies, artists are always interrupting and interpreting the reality of today’s information age.

Surveillance presents the diverse studio practices of seven artists who remind us all that they are indeed keeping watch over this explosive and public exchange of information. In recent years the continual bombardment of virtual information has radically transformed the world, and these artists are among those who are constantly redefining its boundaries and content. The necessity and proliferation of surveillance techniques have become a large part of our everyday lives. Whether or not our society at large is conscious of these invasions and observations, it is clear that this diverse group of artists is engaging and addressing these critical issues.

In an age where the excess of information has produced false, invasive, and voyeuristic avenues in both the private and public domain, these artists remind us of the daily observation, private moments, intimate encounters, and public cyberworld of virtual activities. Multiple conceptual vocabularies of art are coming full circle with the use of new technologies and materials. These artists are employing both traditional and nontraditional techniques, evoking a transformative intervention while providing a gateway for the viewer’s engagement.

Vicious Vitamins Special Edition



Courtesy of the artist

Jeffrey Gibson: *“objectifying beauty, people and objects was wrong and harmful, but I wanted to experience it”*

Could you explain the influences you have to create the utopian world you paint?

My original interest in envisioning a utopian world came from my time spent working in ethnographic collections at The Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago during my undergraduate studies at The Art Institute of Chicago. I was able to read the notes taken by anthropologists and archaeologists that were taken as they encountered the Native cultures of North America. Many of the descriptions of the cultures and collected objects created a utopian vision of tribal life from a Western perspective. Being Native myself, and having grown up having learned this utopian vision while also being aware of the tragic history of North American tribes, created a conflict for me. It made me want to depict an uninhabited and utopian world that was untouched by the political and social histories of real life. My liberal education had taught me that objectifying beauty, people and objects was wrong and harmful, but I wanted to experience it, via that series of paintings. It was an incredibly indulgent and escapist series to produce. I knew that the world would not remain utopian in future series of works.

Do you feel more influenced by your native-American roots or by the urban Western world you actually live in?

The balance shifts at different times and situations. I am in contact with the Native community here in New York and it is a large part of how I discuss my works (some series more than others). Being Native has allowed me to be aware of many references to Native American material culture that are not taught in school or part of standard art history. I have learned so much from other Native people and other tribal cultures. Many people assume that because I live in New York that I am cut-off from Indian communities but there are

large urban Indian communities in most major US cities. When I make work, I try to bring it all to the table and it can get pretty messy. The final works develop from a series of negotiations between seemingly disparate references. There is a big difference for me when I use oil paint vs. spray paint. One recognizes a more traditional use of paint as seen in Western art history and one recognizes a non-traditional use of paint as seen in protest, graffiti, and vandalism. These are very different statements. For me graffiti is not just about the city but I take a lot of inspiration from the graffiti at Alcatraz Island. This was a political resistance act by the American Indian Movement in 1969-1971. The graffiti is preserved today and this movement is incredibly important to me as a Native artist.

Do you think your work addresses the problems of the native-American community or is your work really something personal...?

This is a complicated question. I am excited that the Native community has been really supportive towards my work. I know that what I make does not look “Native”, and I have been driven by experimenting with this jamming of cultural references that I have grown up with (I also grew up in Germany, Korea, US, and completed grad school in London). I have let go of questioning whether what I do addresses the problems of any community. It became very stunting to feel responsible for any particular group. I am told that what I make is a positive thing for both my tribe and for contemporary Native artists but I don’t make work for that reason. Most recently I have been awarded the Eiteljorg Museum Fellowship for Contemporary Native Artists, in 2008-09. This is an incredibly prestigious award and I am honoured to have been chosen. Much of modern and contemporary Native art history is unwritten and is happening now. I am happy to take part in that.

Can you tell us about your current body of work that is in the exhibition? You have a painting named ‘Surveillance’, in this body of painting are you discussing the issues of our current time in terms of privacy issues?

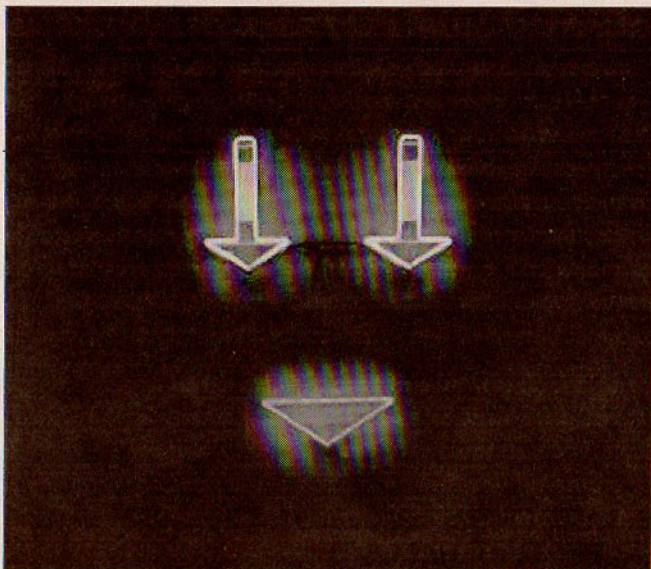
The series of work that is included in Surveillance began in 2007 and is ongoing. I use the languages of abstract expressionism, hard edge abstraction and graffiti to create fields that offer it all up at once so that each one acts as a counter filter to the others. My interest in abstract and expressionism came from researching the beginnings of modern painting by Native American artists during the 1940’s. This work tends to be extremely stylized and geometric. I thought it was interesting that abstract expressionism happened during the same period. Abstract expressionists were attempting to be in touch with their anima and their unconscious; whereas Native artists were working very consciously and during a time of relocation from Native communities to urban centres, this all happening during the beginning of the Cold War. The graffiti is a language of resistance (Alcatraz and taggers) and non-conformists, urban immediacy and reclamation, also anonymous statements. I wanted to combine these three languages and have them contrast and negotiate on the canvas. Keeping a limited palette allowed me to have marks disappear and reappear among the accumulation of marks. I chose silver as my neutral colour. The titles come about after the work is complete. Surveillance shows an accumulation of marks breaking through a pattern of silver on silver stripes. There is much more of a figure / ground relationship in this painting than the others. To me, it felt like this “figure” was pushing through a space and being watched. This space is fractured and claustrophobic and pushing through is a struggle. It is metaphoric of the oversaturated world we live in.

Can you explain a bit your technique for painting? You use spray paint which is an untraditional medium albeit very urban...

I start with washes of colour and usually establish a colour palette early on. I work on about 5-6 paintings at once and rotate through them during each painting session. The actual painting happens pretty quickly and I build the paintings in layers over the course of weeks. There are many paintings under the final painting but there is usually some of the very first layer peeking through in areas. I want the final paintings to give a sense of their construction. The initial layer will be edited using patches of spray paint, sometimes put on by taping areas out and sometimes just adding patches of color. I will go back and forth between layers of oil and spray until forms begin to appear. From that point I continue to edit and layer to allow for expressive marks to merge with sprayed marks and layers moving back and forth.

What does a NYC studio practice bring to your creative process? Would you ever consider going back to live in the mid-West?

The only time I lived in the mid-West was during my undergraduate study. I love being in New York because I can’t imagine anywhere else that would allow me to take part in so much. Everyone I know is involved in the arts and I love that aspect. It can be hard to live in New York because life can be overwhelming. It moves fast and apologizes for nothing. As much as that can be problematic, at this point, it also informs my work so much. I think about speed, overwhelming amounts of incoming information, extreme personalities and constant change while I make my work, and I think these things definitely describe my experience of New York. You can’t keep them out of the studio.



Courtesy of the artist

Angelo Plessas: "I am trying to subvert authoritarian surveillance with using the internet as my main medium for expression and research"

Regarding your work on the web, what does the web-domain address mean to you as an artist? Given that millions of people can visit and print your work on website, do you see the web domain address as the materialization of your drawing and programming work?

The web-domain address is the title of my pieces; this is where they exist too. When I register a .com title I immediately become the owner of a unique web domain. Although it can be reproduced and can be seen from every computer in the planet, it still belongs to me and exists in a unique location, so these works are unique. I find this intriguing and subversive. I always have to think a title depending on their domain availability. When these websites are sold to collectors I transfer the domain ownership to them. The certificate of authenticity I give of this work is a print out of this legal procedure with my signature. Then the collector is responsible for the maintenance of the site like paying hosting fees, etc, the same way that he had to pay storage for a painting or sculpture. So at the end you "treat" a website as any other piece of art.

Could you please explain what kind of work you have made on social networking web site and what it means?

The Angelo Foundation is a series of projects that I am having fun doing, like for example the impact of the internet in our culture. It is a project that mainly uses Facebook, as it's main communication tool to make events, art exhibitions, fund raisings, charities, protests etc. Every board of directors' member has its own profile. For example one of the Board members conceived a funny way to bring people to donate money. He conducted an auction on Ebay.com by selling Donation Certificates. These certificates are in edition of 20 signed by me, and they get you access and special benefits to events and functions of the foundation. Also you can frame it and hang it on your wall. The campaign on Facebook really worked because we sold some editions to different people we did not know and we used the money for different missions.

Is the Angelo Foundation a mockery of traditional signs of authority? Do you demonstrate here that the virtual could potentially not replace the real world but actually become reality and take over the world?

I always wanted to play with the idea of a foundation because they are always so serious and ceremonial. I looked at religious or political organizations but also artist's foundations. I admire the foundations the same way I admire many other hierarchical structures such as countries, kingdoms, royal families, parades, political parties. They are like kindergartens for grownups. The art world system is ruled by very hierarchical regulations too, though they usually pretend to be very casual and artistic and even alternative, when in fact they are as precise as a Swiss bank. The internet is totally the opposite from all these things. It is totally non-ritual, non-regal, non-precise and non bureaucratic. Everybody can become famous while at home in his/hers pyjamas. Everybody can create his own "kingdom" now with no hierarchies. I am very interested in this paradox and I want to present it, so yes my foundation maybe mocks the establishment, it can actually become the establishment and dominate the world!

Does the International Portrait Gallery project intend to demonstrate that security cameras will never see everything and that the artists will always find a solution to express themselves regardless of the environment?

Since I was a kid I was always finding things that look like faces around me. It was like playing Hide and Seek and being watched all the time. Later when I became an artist I decided that these little creatures were still very interesting and still had the same effect on me so I decided to capture them or even stage some of them. Nowadays we live in another kind of Hide and Seek, a less imaginative one. I am trying to subvert authoritarian surveillance with using the internet as my main medium for expression and research. Either in good or bad times the world is full of challenges for artists.

To which extent does your work relate to surveillance and public security measures?

Surveillance has a more meaningful approach in our connected -everyday reality. Regardless the imposed security measures, we as persons are becoming surveillance machines. When for example, we are looking persistently at somebody's Facebook profile to see what's their status or what new photos they uploaded. Our attitude is becoming more and more sneaky. We are also deliberately invading our own privacy. We almost live in front of a crowd, Google is watching us, and we basically have an audience and finding new ways to deal with this. Many of my works are inspired by this mind-set and have hidden messages of surveillance, to name few -apart from the International Portrait Gallery, the MeLookingAtYou.com , IWantToBeAMachine.com where intimacy, subtle presence and observation are really take a big part in their meaning.

Is the gallery space a way to materialize and monetize your work or is it really an important component of your work?

The gallery space for me is some kind of reward event, both socially and financially. It is also important place for the promotion and support of the work. But to be honest my work starts being exhibited the moment I launch it online so a gallery space is not an important component for exhibiting it. When I started doing websites I never imagined that they would be exhibited in gallery spaces. At the end it is really great meeting people real time and of course I love covering real spaces with the internet.

Shin il Kim: “one of the roles of artist is suggesting how we can interpret differently what makes us numb”

Your work is based on the attempt to stimulate the public attention in order to turn it into an active audience. How do you stimulate the participation of the public? Which technique or process do you use?

I believe that audiences become active when they engage their own imagination on message from what they see. I try to stimulate people's imagination by giving them less and ambiguous information but eye catching one so that they keep watching the piece and use their own energy to seek the origin of this little data. This data is usually derived from condensed one, for example TV commercial, during my working process. I expect that viewers become even more active when they find out the connection between the little one and the compressed one in my works.

You refer to Marshall McLuhan distinction between hot media and cool media, the former stressing one sense over the others, the latter stressing multiple senses and therefore requiring more involvement to the public. Films are categorized as hot media. Your work

presented in the show is a film, therefore a hot media. Could you please describe how you turn a hot media into a cool media?

My work presented here is based on a film, actually TV commercial. As you say it is a hot media-according to McLuhan TV was actually categorized as a cool media in the late 60's but I regard it as even the hottest one now due to its dominating force over our senses.

I alter the images of the hot media into pure colors of light in real time through projecting the images onto a white angled grid structure that I created to simplify and reduce information from them.

We often notice blinking light from neighbor's window at night and we know that a TV is on behind the window. Each cell of the grid structure works as a room with TV on and viewers see changes of the colors of light coming out of the each square cell like we see the color changes on the window at night.

I consider this colors of light as a cool media in terms of its simple information that stimulates our senses to fill up the missing one.

I also utilize very low frequency ambiguous sound, nearing the lowest frequency audible by the human hear of 30HZ, converted directly from the image of TV commercials to activate viewer's other sense.

Patrick Le Lay is the President of the first French channel. He once said that his job was to shape the brain of the public to make it available to advertisers; he then concluded by this terrible sentence: “what we sell to Coca-Cola, it's available time of human brain”. Does this inspire you and challenge your work?

I didn't know what he said before but a concept of this work definitely challenges to his idea of numbing the public.

We often face TV commercials and need it for our economy flow but I think that one of the roles of artist is suggesting how we can interpret differently what makes us numb and have more active state.

I believe that having an active self-motivated life is more meaningful than controlled life by someone or something.

You're Korean-born and studied and exhibited in Asia and in Europe or USA. How does this influence your idea of what is art and the materiality (or immateriality) of your art?

As I have travelled some countries for shows and artists in residency programs, I see various cultures and art scenes there. I tend to compare the differences and similarities of them in each country and to watch them in objective point of view. These experiences help me to see the current scene of art world better and make me think what we need in art more. I believe that we need more spiritual approach in art but practical one with communication with others-I call it 'Practical Spirituality'.

I suppose that many human activities are basically for communication with others. For me, the function of art is also eventually for communication through a visual language. Among the many ways of communication in art, I am more into the spiritual approach to communicate and exchange ideas with others.

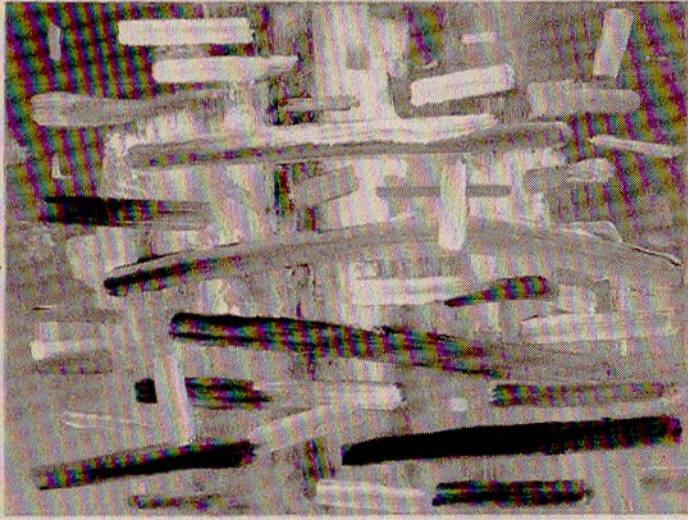
Since I am from Korea, I am familiar to Asian culture especially the notion of Buddhism, Seon-Buddhism in Korea. My understanding about the idea of 'void' and 'mid-path' helps me employing both materiality and immateriality in art and not to be afraid of the border in between them, if there is a border.

You have previously made films on the basis of your drawings. How does this process challenge the idea of materiality of art and immateriality of film over drawings?

I endeavoured to reduce materiality as much as I could when I was working on previous video pieces based on drawing. So, I drew lines on white paper using non-working pen to leave only impression on paper. There was no other material even no color pigment then paper itself and the pressed line becomes visible or not depending on the angle of light on the paper.

Film is also material in terms of a physical film roll itself until we see the projected images. For me the paper was like the film roll and I converted the image on the paper into video data, which is immaterial, in computer. Eventually my immaterial approach on making drawing came along with the immaterial aspect of video.

I was interested in working in between material and immaterial over drawing and video. However I wanted to go further toward immaterial condition by getting rid of the paper itself and Active Anaesthesia-the Full of Square presenting here was one of the results from my trial to use only the light itself, which is immateriality, without a concrete base (less base).



Courtesy CRG Gallery

Tomory Dodge: *"I still think of my paintings as pictures"*

Your paintings are considered landscapes to a degree, but mainly focus on the desert iconography. Could you tell us more about the landscape element to your painting process? The viewer engages in deep space in many of your works, can you tell us about this body of work in terms of your process and overall goal for the audiences' interpretation?

I think the desert has such a prominent place in much of my work for many reasons. Its inherent vastness and inhospitable conditions make for a certain apocalyptic aesthetic, which I've often drawn from. It also holds such an important place in the American psyche due to the history of Westward expansion. In this sense it can be seen as a remnant of the wilderness that is so central the idea of America. I also think much of my work, particularly some of the earlier work, was very interested in the idea of "wasteland" and notions of what can happen in a place that is essentially useless. It seemed a perfect place to explore painting in a way. I guess I often reference the desert to achieve a sense of place that is simultaneously a kind of "no-place".

Your works often depicts certain objects such as cactus and multiple varieties of vegetation that only live in the dry lands of the deserts. Do you feel that this imagery provide a certain kind of symbol or meaning of a kind of resistance?

I have to say I've never thought of depicting a cactus to symbolize a kind of resistance. It makes sense, but that's not my intention. I think I've used cacti to simply "locate" the image more often than not.

Deserts are motionless, immobile landscapes. Your paintings have on the contrary streams of vivid colours and enthusiast brush shapes. What should be understood from this contrast? Is it intentional? Can you please explain?

It is often intentional. Again, I think it goes back to the idea of the wasteland and what can occur there. It acts very much as a backdrop or stage in a sense. There are very practical reasons that the military uses the desert for all manner of detonations and that aerospace hobbyists use it as a place to launch model rockets to the edge of space. But I can't help wondering if there are other less practical reasons as well. Maybe such empty places invite action.

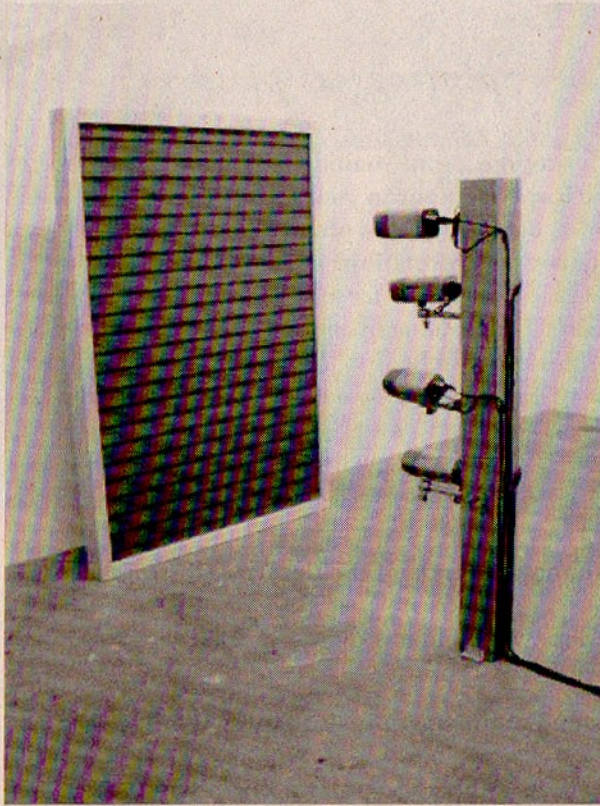
Although figurative, your paintings are at the edge of abstraction. However, I read that you'll probably never make pure abstract painting. Does being at the edge of abstraction however give you more freedom in the use you make of paint and brush?

I guess it depends on what one means by "pure" abstraction. In fact my work has become increasingly abstract in the last couple of years, to the point where it is often discussed as "abstract painting". I think it would be difficult to discuss the work I'm currently making in figurative terms, but the paintings are made like representational paintings. The mechanics of representational painting are very present. The marks and brushstrokes slip back and forth between formal, literal devices and representations of objects. However, in this work the potential objects are nameless ones. As "abstract" as these paintings are I still think of them as pictures to a degree, but I've also started to think that the abstract/ representational dichotomy is probably outdated, at least in terms of how it's usually interpreted. I do feel that there is a degree of freedom that comes with this way of working, but it also necessitates a kind of balancing act.

Could you describe your studio practice? Are you working on painting inside or outside the studio? Your work is described in writings as landscapes, how you feel your works are interrupted by viewer in an urban landscape such as LA and New York?

All my work is made in the studio. The landscapes in my work are essentially made up. They rarely refer to any actual place. They are intended to be seen more as a kind of "elsewhere" or "no-place". I don't think it really matters where the viewer is.

Charles Harlan: "Surveillance cameras have sinister connotations"



Courtesy of the artist

Your work contains many different medias including found objects such as mannequins and the use of multiple surveillance cameras. (Façade, Doll House) This process found in the work provides the viewer with the absence of the human presence in a very suspicious and allusive way. Is this the message that you want this body of work to provide viewer?

It is true that the human form is absent in much of my work, but rather than emptiness I think that the objects I work with actually create a presence instead. A floor fan's anthropomorphic qualities aside, here they have been invested with their own eerie sentience. I am not sure whether this is due to my implication in the equation as an artist or if these hacked appliances take on a life of their own. But the resulting artworks actively watch while being watched.

In the video of the mannequin installations, there are successions of empty landscapes or urban sceneries and then the film ends with the mannequin alone. Are you trying to dehumanize the human presence through the filter of security camera?

In fact, my intention with the "Mannequin" series is in part the *humanization* of this object. To remove it from its functional context (i.e. store-display, advertising, etc.) and drop it in an alien environment brings unexpected life to the mannequin. But it is important to first have an understanding of the project. In each of the four versions I chose a location that was isolated within an urban or suburban setting—the woods behind a subdivision, a condemned building, or a city street at night. I then placed a clothed mannequin within the landscape and left him there. As far as I know, they are all still standing where I left them. In the videos the successive shots represent a journey deeper into these isolated places—landscapes that, while desolate, also carry clear traces of human activity. As the viewer slips into a state of contemplation s/he is confronted with this avatar. I imagine a hiker, at first unsure of the figure's intentions. And as the mystery unfolds and this person comes to realize the true nature of the object in the distance, the mystery deepens and the art experience confounds. I think that the video documents a similar experience for the non-site viewer. I don't know if anyone has ever stumbled on these

mannequins in the woods, but I like to imagine an art that stimulates reflexes and instincts.

A number of your works use the idea of roofing elements, should it be doll houses, awnings, shingle pyramids, sometimes surrounded by video camera... Should they be seen as a protection to security camera or a symbol of possible violation of the private space by public surveillance?

They could be read this way. I think of the surveillance cameras more as utilitarian tools that I have taken out of context. They have sinister connotations, but when used abstractly they seem to be stripped of these associations in an odd way.

In your installations, you use a number of appliances that all function briefly and consecutively. What do they have in common to you? What do you demonstrate?

These appliances are like me in that we are all working within various social, cultural, and economic structures beyond our control. Fans or dryers have very specific and prescribed functions and their use-value is immanent in their form. Like them, I operate as a member of the same economy. But here I have created a glitch. I have caused these tools to malfunction and within that is the space for me to sense my own malfunction. By questioning the role that these appliances play I am posing the same question to myself.

In the meantime, fans, dryer and hoovers have in common that they blow air and have circular movement... Is that a direction we should take when looking at those works?

It's hard for me to say. I have chosen these objects for a variety of subtle reasons. The fact that a fan moves air adds a kinetic element, but it is an ethereal movement. We can see the fan move, but we cannot see what it produces—we can feel it. This adds to the sentient presence of these objects in that there is something unseen. And the circular movement is important because it implies repetition, like a riddle or a satire—the paradox of an absence implying presence. It makes me think of Bruce Nauman's spiral shaped neon sign, "The true artist helps the world by revealing mystic truths". Is this statement true, or a joke? Does he really believe this, and do I? The riddle keeps collapsing on itself and starting over. Again, an art experience that confounds.

You live in Brooklyn; how is the local art scene at the moment? Do you feel associated in some way to an artistic group that would have a similar influence or emerged from the same art schools...?

Many of my friends live in Brooklyn, and that is where we most often exhibit our work. But it is not centralized here. There is no neighborhood associated with "Brooklyn art". As a result, things are very spread out and decentralized. This has both positive and negative aspects. I do have a group of friends that I think about and talk with while working, both from art school and otherwise. Right now two new art spaces in Greenpoint come to mind, "Cleopatra's" and "Real Fine Arts", as interesting places to visit.



Courtesy Edelman Arts

Yasmine Chatila: *“there is a certain amount of tenderness or compassion for the people I observe”*

Could you tell us your working practice for looking for in apartments? Do you use different locations? Friends’ apartments and/or neighbors for instance. Have you taken any of the pictures from the street level?

I shot Stolen Moments from all over the city. Sometimes from roof tops, and other times from friends apartments, but never from street level, that would be too risky.

While waiting for someone to appear in the window, do you feel an intimacy between you and the people you photograph? Is there an affection for these subjects?

Yes there is always a certain amount of tenderness or compassion for the people I observe. I sometime think of it as intimacy with strangers. There are some characters I had a reasonable amount of worry for actually.

Would you do the same if your neighbours were celebrities?

I would probably leave the celebrities alone. They are over exposed already.

Your pictures point out the loneliness and isolation of urban living...Can you tell us about your studio practice in photographing these individuals and couples Do you tend to create a similar feeling for yourself while “hunting” and “searching”?

Each set up is different depending on the scene I am shooting. It usually takes a few days of surveillance to capture the scene I am looking for.

Would you do similar works anywhere else in the world or is too embedded into New-York life?

Stolen Moments is a fantasy about the inhabitants of a particular city, it could be done anywhere.

Can you explain a bit your film Stolen Moments? What is the idea behind? Is that a very different process than photography?

The videos are made of a sequence of film stills that are organized in chronological order, and dissolved into each other on an editing program. Each still is its own piece fully retouched and constructed. There has never been "film" involved, they are just photographs.



Courtesy of the artist

Caitlin Maloney: *“By pulling abstract images out of reality I hope to find a better understanding of what is real”*

Can you please tell us when, why and how you started working in photography?

When I was 14 I borrowed my first camera from school, ever since then I have constantly been searching for ways to create a two dimensional replica of every tactile, three dimensional form. This potential to capture and transform an alternate state of life is why I photograph.

Where does your interest for streets, pavement, peeling walls and close-up details derive from?

I am interested in exploring the silent conversations we have with an urban terrain by exposing the textures, colours and scenes that exist in the space we inhabit in a different light. By pulling abstract images out of reality I hope to find a better understanding of what is real and provide a greater awareness of the constant conversation that is held with the physical space we inhabit.

Although you photography deteriorated pavements and urban details, it ends up being quite colourful. Is that intentional?

I like to think everything in my work is intentional, but if I'm entirely conscious of those intentions while shooting I'm not sure. The streets are filled with bits and pieces of colour. For me the bright yellow of a discarded carton or the green of a spray paint are just as beautiful as the yellows and greens found in a field of sunflowers. The contrast against a backdrop of the greys and browns of urban terrain helps bring these colours to life.

Do you have interest in digital images? What technical evolution would you like to take in the future? Or maybe would you like to work another medium (painting, installation...)?

All of these images are shot and printed digitally. I could see myself reverting to shooting and processing film again in the future. Right now new technology is not so important to my work or the future of my work. I tend to take interest in space and environments and the interactions people and time have with them, I can see this interest evolving into installation work in the future. But right now I am focused on taking on the challenge of creating that environment in the confines of a piece of paper.

What is your art school training? Do you feel that influences your current practice? What is your current working studio practice?

While studying and practicing photography at NYU I was also focusing on urban culture studies. This dual focus is very prevalent in my current work. This work is shot along very long quiet walks through the empty streets of Red Hook where urban culture is very present and light conditions are almost perfect.

What are your thoughts about privacy issues for artists today? Copyright issues and the internet have influence many artists to promote their work online, I notice you do not currently have a website presence. Is this intentional? Do you consider yourself part of a movement of artists' or do you work privately in your studio practice?

I work privately in my studio practice. Although I do not have a website at the moment I am not against it, a website is something that is not entirely important to the process of creating new work but in no doubt a process of documenting and sharing the work done. This has not been a main focus but is soon to be explored.

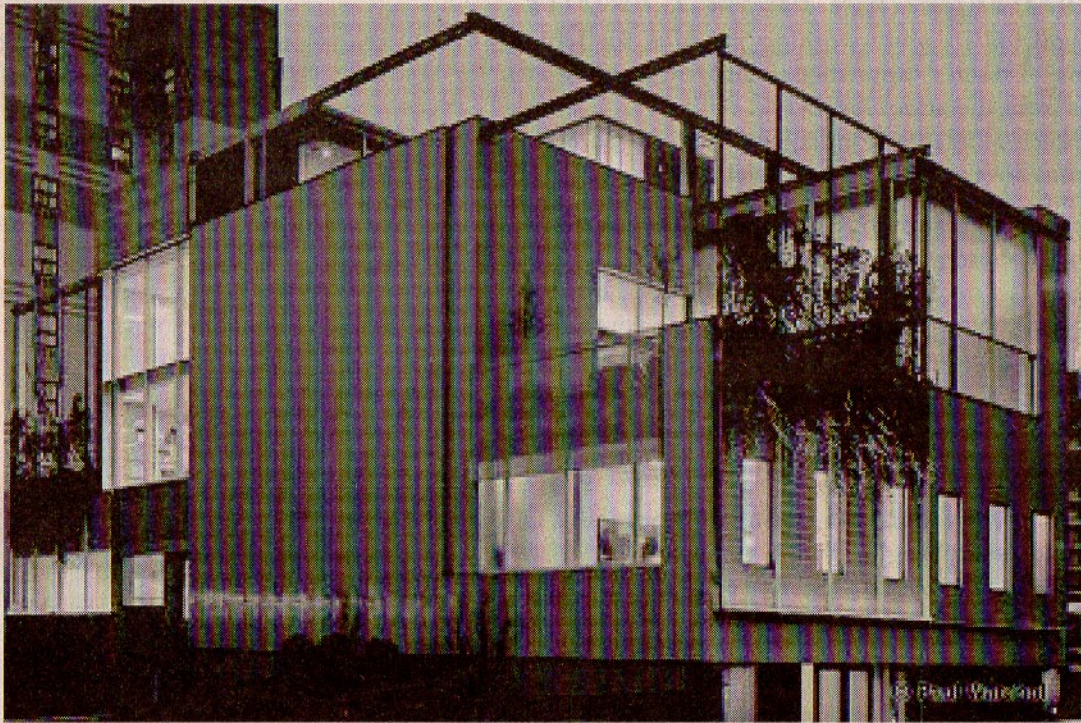


Photo © Paul Warhol

Interview with Marla Goldwasser, Director Affirmation Arts

Could you please present Affirmation Arts, the history of the space and current activity?

Affirmation Arts opened the summer of 2008. We are a new arts facility that houses a gallery space, offices, studios and a non-profit. The Affirmation Arts Fund begins operations later this year. Our main mission is to raise the status of art as a vocation in society through arts education.

Being a non-profit space, what are the specificities of Affirmation Arts compared to a commercial gallery? Does it mean more risk-taking, more one-man shop, not or limited financially driven management...?

Our gallery programming focuses on emerging NYC artists. As part of our mission, our exhibitions give artists the opportunity to show in a professional space. Our standards and expectations are high, which help provide positive experiences for artists. We view artists as professionals. The main difference between our gallery and commercial galleries is our mission to provide for the artists and the community.

In a recession that is seriously impacted the art market, do you think a space like you has more to offer than a commercial gallery?

The recession detrimentally impacts all markets. I think it has helped the arts by the way of bringing the market down to reality. Affirmation Arts does not have more to offer than commercial galleries, just something different. Many galleries are closing, thus limiting opportunities for artists to exhibit and the public to view work. We provide an optimistic environment.

What are your plans for the upcoming months? Curatorial program, artistic direction taken by Affirmation Arts....

Affirmation Arts will continue to grow and develop in 2009. We are building relationships with other non-profits. Next week, we are hosting a program and exhibition for youngARTS, a program of NFAA. Later this spring, Studio in a School will hold their annual exhibition in our space. Art education programs begin to develop this spring. Our gallery will carry on showing work by emerging artists. This summer, we will hold our annual open call for young curators. Providing additional professional opportunities for curators strengthen the art community. A contemporary photography exhibition is planned for the fall.

Can you please say a word about Surveillance, the exhibition curated by Rachel D Vancelette? I assume you are proud and exiting to offer your space to young emerging artists...

I am delighted to have Ms. Vancelette curate our fourth exhibition. Her intelligence and enthusiasm made her an apt choice. "Surveillance" provides a powerful start for our spring season. The artwork is strong and the show's premise is certainly timely.

Affirmation Arts, 523 West 37th Street NY, NY 10018

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For more information on the exhibition and artists, please contact Rachel D. Vancelette: r.vancelette@gmail.com

**SURVEILLANCE is a special edition of Vicious Vitamins. Interviews by Antoine Parmentier.
For more information, visit www.viciousvitamins.com or email viciousvitamins@yahoo.com.
The next edition of Vicious Vitamins will be released for the Basel art fairs in June 2009.**