

ANTON KERN GALLERY ANNEX

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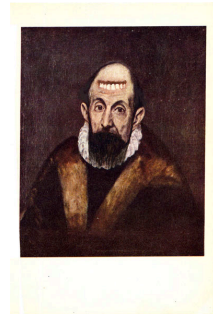
558 West 21st Street
New York, NY 10011

Attic

Curated by Erin Somerville

December 6 – 22, 2006

Opening Reception: December 13, 6 – 8 pm



Attic comprises a loose smattering of friends and allies; Brian Clifton, Kate Levant, Jeffrey P. Porterfield, Joshua Smith, Mike Smith and Ned Vena— a collection of artists who each work across a wide array of mediums. Installed a floor above John Bock's reconfiguring of his recent exhibition, *Mit schisslaveng* at a temporary annex, *Attic* takes advantage of the dilapidated space it is in to assemble an exhibition of six diverse and interesting young artists.

Brian Clifton, meanders his interest in the thick and heady subjects of science and mathematics headlong into a fantastic faith in the beautiful and sublime. In Clifton's book, *The Meaning Field*, published for this occasion, he uses an assemblage of research to substantiate his presentation of the space itself as a literal black hole. If one chooses to believe Clifton's proposition then the distortion in what he refers to as "an individual's given Meaning Field" presents limitless potential for the viewer – or an extreme optimism in the present.

A lived experience with an especially tactile, aesthetic physicality – Kate Levant's site-specific sculptures (often consisting of assembled found objects and constructed environments) bear the residue of the familiar, while bringing into proximity a muddled or obtuse encounter with the off-kilter. A strange place, a fading memory, a name on the tip of the tongue – Levant runs interference between the recognizable and the confused, an enticing, if daunting, tip-toeing between the two.

Salvaged or cheap wood reworked into a beaming wall-mounted sculpture or a painted toothy grin applied to a reproduction of an old master painting – Jeffrey P. Porterfield might be thought of as an eraser of stable definitions. Sullyng reproductions of historic artworks, or sullyng the history of his own work and keepsakes, Porterfield pushes origins and orientations into surreal humor and casual displacements through blobby paint, or haphazard screwdriving.

The distance between inspiration and the inspired is of concern to Joshua Smith, an artist whose paintings, photographs and found objects frequently look to popular symbols of good-ethics or evidently sentimental content as source material. It is with short supply of irony that Smith invites Shel Silverstein characters into his paintings, or points to overtly romantic artwork as a point of departure for his own. It is in striving to connect with the idyllic that he exposes the difficulty in doing so.

Mike Smith works in a variety of mediums for an effect that brings Freudian probing to compulsively aestheticized work. A canvas hidden behind a bush or an audience driven off-site for a day, interventions that frequently unsettle remain tethered to a faith in the poetic and revelatory underpinnings of art. Smith smears "art as experience" into art as experiment, subtly suggesting an attentiveness and sensitivity to one's surroundings, or meditation through confrontation.

"H – E – Double Hockey Sticks", is a beginner's stab at profanity, swearing you can get away with. Ned Vena's literalizing of this piece hints at a larger oeuvre of sculptures and paintings that possess exactly this sentiment. A delicate balance for Vena who dually creates geometric abstract paintings, that gleefully pull from Stella, nod toward Riley, and reference a current trend of retro-modern painting. Vena contributes to the aesthetic while short-circuiting its regressive qualities with the actualizing of one-liners or embarrassing punch lines in much of his sculptural and other flat work.

Both *Attic*, and John Bock's *8 1/2 x 11* will open on Wednesday, December 6 and run through Friday, December 22, 2006. The gallery is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 am – 6 pm. For further information and images, please contact Michael Clifton or Christoph Gerozissis at (t) 212.367.9663, (f) 212.367.8135 or email: info@antonkerngallery.com.

Upcoming exhibitions at Anton Kern Gallery, 532 West 20th: Mark Grotjahn (January 18 – February 28, 2007)

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