

Delete/How to Make a Perfect Ghost¹

Curated by Michael Clifton

March 2 – April 1, 2006

Subtract, obscure, dismantle – through various acts of deletion, artists Mark Grotjahn, Wade Guyton, Sergej Jensen, Gedi Sibony and Katja Strunz simultaneously negate and honor the former existence of objects, images and ideas. With formal properties that bear occasional surface resemblance to Constructivism and modernist mark-making, these artists peel back the layers of art history and derail our associative connections to the past.



Corrosive materials such as bleach and dye act as paint surrogates on the surface of Sergej Jensen's subtractive paintings. In a related body of work, Jensen uses transference to create phantom canvases by pressing blank surfaces against freshly painted pictures.

The dismantlement of a found object - as witnessed in the tangle of Katja Strunz's suspended metal constellations or in one of Gedi Sibony's partially eviscerated doors – liberates the collective memory inscribed upon it while summoning new associations. In Wade Guyton's book page printer drawings, the inscription of a cipher, usually a "U", "X" or geometric band of ink, partially obscures the original image underneath. The action fetishizes the historical documentation and presentation of art while the result conjures an indeterminacy of time and place.

Through surface abrasion and signature incision, Mark Grojahn's *Butterfly* abstractions disrupt the tradition of purity sought by modernist abstraction. A striated primitive face, which appears boldly in Grotjahn's cardboard *Face* paintings and obliquely in the *Butterfly/Face* hybrids, remains present though completely buried beneath the Butterfly's geometric rays. The juncture between *Face* and *Butterfly* illustrates abstraction's drive to disembody and its capacity to alternately hide and reveal.

Deletion is an act of creation. Paring away at something calls forth its limitations and strengths; it reminds us that you can never really delete anything because it will prove itself to you again in new ways. Construction of the perfect ghost is at hand in the gestures of these artists.

Distance contracts even as it is expanding and every movement away brings you back closer to the beginning, closer to me. I let you disappear only so that I can have you new once more, and I forget you for the unfathomable pleasure of remembering once our circles cross again.¹

Artists Mark Grotjahn, Sergej Jensen and Gedi Sibony will participate in the forthcoming 2006 Whitney Biennial. Wade Guyton, Sergej Jensen and Katja Strunz participated in the exhibition *Formalismus* at Hamburg Kunstverein in 2005; both Guyton and Strunz will have New York solo shows at Friedrich Petzel (February 23 – March 25) and Gavin Brown Enterprise (February 18 – March 18) respectively.

Alessandro Pessoli "Fuga Verde" runs concurrently with this exhibition at **Anton Kern Gallery**. Both open on Thursday, March 2 and will run through Saturday, April 1, 2006. The gallery is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 am - 6 pm. For further information and images, please contact Christoph Gerozissis or Michael Clifton at (t) 212.367.9663, (f) 212.367.8135 or email: info@antonkerngallery.com.

Upcoming exhibition: Saul Fletcher (April 6 - May 6)

¹ Text and exhibition title 'Delete/How to Make a Perfect Ghost' excerpted from short texts by Alissa Bennett for 'In Absence of the Figure' in the forthcoming ISSUE magazine.