Jacob Kassay

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CORNELIA

Jacob Kassay at Hallwalls Center for Contemporary Art

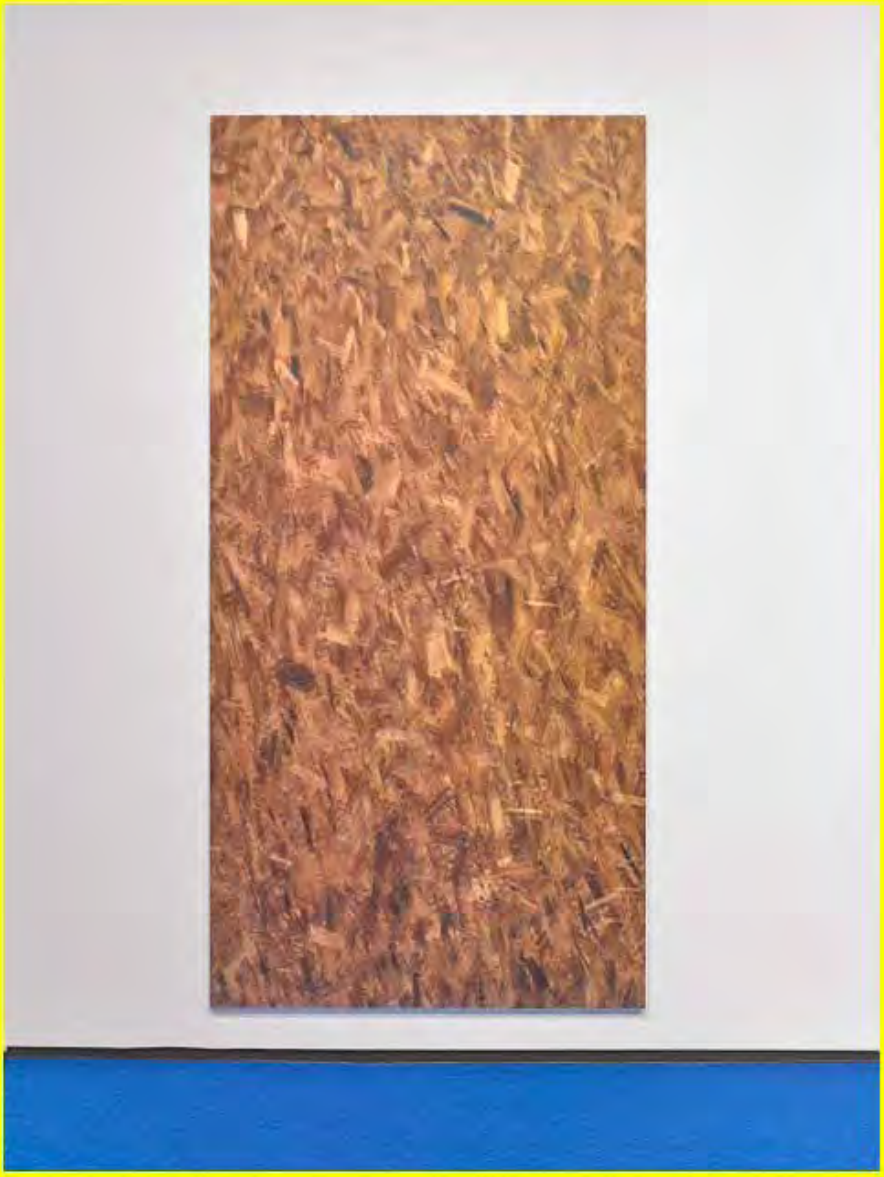
November 9, 2019 – December 20, 2019

by Axel Bishop

Jacob Kassay, *Footage*, 2019. Installation view: Hallwalls Contemporary Art Center, 2019. Photograph: Natalie Dienno

A good magician never reveals the secret to a trick. A masterful demon shows us what is behind the illusion yet coaxes the eye to the wrong cup nonetheless. The late Ricky Jay—trickster, card sharp, and historian of magic—would narrate his own legerdemain, telling us what we are seeing while defying our perception. Jay recounts the history of the trick (the very trick and trickery itself) while his act is in play, and the informative yet distracting patter that is the tactical deception of sleight-of-hand artistry goes to work on us. Jay jumps time, moves faster than the viewer can see, doubles back, slows down, chews on the elasticity of non-linear time, stretches his sequence out again, arriving repeatedly at the same result. The observer's constrained frontal view is framed and predetermined; the viewer understands that what is known has become destabilized by what can be seen. This sort of "card artistry" is entertaining on its face, dangerous in its implications. Jay's verbose manner, for him a technology of artifice, is an homage to historic illusionist showmen and an accomplice to his motives: the images he transmits in his narrative are a furtive veil to cover his hands as they sneak around the muted, felt-top table in plain sight. This is a tactic that magicians refer to as "misdirection." What purpose is served?

Axel Bishop, «Jacob Kasay at Hallwalls Center for Contemporary Art», in Corneliamag.com, 2020



Jacob Kassay, *Footage*, 2019. Installation view: Hallwalls Contemporary Art Center, 2019.

Photograph: Natalie Dienno

In Jacob Kassay's recent Hallwalls Contemporary Arts Center exhibition *Footage*, oriented strand board (OSB) panels are arrayed above a sea of blue carpeting, which dampens the sound of walking around the space and heightens the sense of being out of place. Kassay manages to sustain this effect, even as we get oriented to the installation. The carpeting absorbs the light, evening out the space as it sets off a contrast to the yellowy panels. The machinations of *Footage* hinge on the use of a crude material typically used as underlayment in roofing and other construction applications. While not visible in the finished interior, such material is essential to defining three-dimensional space. This seems significant when considering how the space of the image refuses to settle in one place in this installation: the artist has utilized the space of the gallery as a way to navigate us through slightly modified repetitions. One first encounters the panel on the wall and then again freestanding to reveal its back: now here, now there. But this is not a sculpture in the traditional sense of a many-sided, dynamic object: behind the OSB panel is a stanchion, merely the infrastructure that serves to prop up the front of this work, the *screen*.

"Footage," of course, also refers to sequential motion captured by film or video. Kassay's sculptures—slightly enlarged and off-register images of the OSB printed onto itself—have the contradictory effect of standing as fixed objects in space while eluding being held in place by just perceptible degrees of difference. These are not so much composites of images as they are collusions between image and material. The photographic image and its referent are nearly reunited in order to reveal the distance between the two.

Here, then, are objects that come equipped with their own propaganda, persuading viewers to believe even as we cannot quite reconcile this with what we are seeing. Or rather, this installation is not a series of objects but really one object told again and again. A card repeatedly pulled from behind our ear. Sometimes in varying scale (with constrained proportions) or varying presentation (wall or freestanding), the OSB panel reintroduces itself, persuading us to be in the material world and "within" its representations at once, much like Renato Bertelli's *Continuous Profile (Head of Mussolini)* (1933), simultaneously an icon, a machine, a vectorized image, a static object about motion, a picture never at rest. Replicated and endorsed by Italian Fascists, the circumferentially constant image of Mussolini appears everywhere and supplants reality by its effect. It is a magic trick that contrives bronze as a time-based medium, the volumetric subject as perpetual image. Kassay's manipulation of engineered wood and image is an appropriate strategy for considering our current moment in history. The tyranny of the space created here results from the recurring blurred and therefore destabilizing image. Perception is shaken in a manner that influences the audience to be both aware of and susceptible to the illusion. The photograph and its subject hide one another. Which is the predatory figure and which is the ground that serves as its camouflage? To promote the exhibition, Kassay created a poster that also advances the concepts of *Footage* and how we might approach the work. The poster contains a double image of a leopard stalking its prey. The cat's hide blends into the golden field in which it discreetly moves. This image acts as a rubric, relating the visual to the thematic.

Jacob Kassay, *Footage*, 2019. Installation view: Hallwalls Contemporary Art Center, 2019. Photograph: Natalie Dienno

To this point there is another curious inclusion to the show: Andy Warhol's Polaroid photograph of O.J. Simpson, which breaks ranks with the aforementioned recurring imagery and insinuates a possible application of the artist's critique beyond the cool minimalism of the boards. Polaroid as a medium is associated with immediacy in its photographic processing, yet ironically the image here is clearly of another time both in material and representation. The portrait of O.J. arrests a moment of ambition and praise, but can only be undermined by what we have come to know in the interval since its "capture." It is a picture of two coexisting truths. Years after the image was made, viewers were entranced by the urgent banality of O.J.'s low-speed car chase and the equally heightened monotony of the ensuing trial as cultural event. Both chapters were excessively mediated experiences connecting and distancing us from the elusive certainties of the subject, our prey. The outcome of the trial and the stark oppositions of black and white, innocence and guilt provoked polarizing viewpoints, whereas the compiled facts were unpacked as a complex gradient.

In 1967 Dutch artist Jan Dibbets made the first of his *Perspective Corrections*, minimal trapezoidal shapes that collapse into squares when flattened in the documented image. The "corrections" explored and undermined the phenomenon of mapping depth in two dimensions, describing three-dimensional space on a flat plane by exploiting the limitations of photography as a surrogate for the human eye. Dibbets's "corrected" dimensional spaces are activated by the way in which they were compressed with representation. The works of Kassay's *Footage* operate on our eyes in a similar manner. After the subsiding stimulation of effects, the experience may be a suggestion for how to begin to interrogate the combined real/virtual environments that we increasingly navigate: our cultural landscape of obfuscation, where a plurality of perspectives can be bent into a prism of multiple non-truths, of existential incidents and their sharp but degrading representations. Perhaps Kassay's raw footage has captured a new *Perspective Correction* of tangible forms and the dazzling shadows that they throw.

Axel Bishop is a poet based in St. John's Newfoundland. Bishop often writes on Contemporary Art, Architecture and Film, and is currently working on a biography of Bern Porter.

Hallwalls Center for Contemporary Art
341 Delaware Ave
Buffalo, NY 14202

hallwalls.org

Contemporary Art Daily

“Mechanisms” at Wattis

Artists: Zarouhie Abdalian, Terry Atkinson, Lutz Bacher, Eva Barto, Neïl Beloufa, Patricia L. Boyd, Jay DeFeo, Trisha Donnelly, Harun Farocki, Richard Hamilton, Aaron Flint Jamison, Jacob Kassay, Garry Neill Kennedy, Louise Lawler, Park McArthur, Jean-Luc Moulène, Pope.L, Charlotte Posenenske, Cameron Rowland, Danh Vo

Venue: Wattis, San Francisco

Exhibition Title: Mechanisms

Curated by: Anthony Huberman with Leila Grothe

Date: October 12, 2017 – February 24, 2018

Images courtesy of Wattis, San Francisco

«"Mechanisms" at Wattis», in contemporaryartdaily.com, 4 février 2018

À NICE, L'ART PREND CHAIR AU 109

Par Gilles Renault (à Nice)
— 28 juillet 2017 à 18:36

«Un lieu de mort, aujourd'hui affecté à la création.» Enoncé par Jean-Jacques Aillagon, le symbole est d'autant plus fort qu'il s'ancre à Nice où, à l'occasion du programme estival «Ecole(s) de Nice», la ville communique sur un espace dont le nom n'était connu que localement : le 109. A lire et interpréter, bien sûr, phonétiquement. Sur un site de 17 000 m2, se dressaient jadis les abattoirs frigorifiques, avec une grande halle carrelée de 2 000 m2 qui s'étend sur une centaine de mètres. Un temps promis à la destruction, après dix ans d'inactivité, le bâtiment doit en partie son salut à l'architecte star Jean Nouvel qui, de passage sur la Riviera, suggère aux élus qu'il y aurait sans doute mieux à faire de ce patrimoine industriel associé aux quartiers est, assez populaires et défavorisés. Mandatée par le maire (LR) de la ville, Christian Estrosi, la comédienne Sophie Duez planche sur le projet et, en 2009, s'y installe la Station, *«seul collectif artistique digne de ce nom à Nice, qui a résisté malgré l'inertie des pouvoirs publics»*, selon une observatrice avisée. C'est du reste son chef de file, Cédric Teisseire, qui devient le directeur artistique du lieu pluridisciplinaire, pensé comme *«un projet urbain innovant à dominante culturelle et artistique»*. En 2016, après des travaux, 29 plasticiens s'y installent et, cet été, le 109 accueille l'exposition «The Surface of the East Coast, from Nice to New York» *(photo ci-dessous)*, qui entend *«faire dialoguer des générations et géographies différentes»*, à travers des œuvres de Claude Viallat, Bernard Pagès, Mark Barrow, Joe Bradley ou Erik Lindman.

Gilles Renault (à Nice)

Gilles Renault, « A Nice, l'Art Prend Chair au 108 », in liberation.fr, 28 juillet 2017

Libération (3)

29-30 juillet 2017

À NICE, L'ART PREND CHAIR AU 109

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Gilles Renault, « A Nice, l'Art Prend Chair au 108 », Liberation, 29 juillet 2017

PAR VINCENT DELAURY

PEUT-ON FAIRE DES DÉCOUVERTES À LA FIAC ?

Si la Fiac n est pas le lieu où voir des nouveautés, il est pourtant possible de faire des découvertes, à condition de prendre le temps.

"J'ai toujours été marquée par cette phrase de Manet "Il faut être de son temps" », raconte Jennifer Flay, qui ajoute « La Fiac montre l'art du XXe siècle mais aussi celui du XXIe, c'est important de se projeter vers l'avenir. » Compte tenu des enjeux commerciaux, la foire mise d'abord sur les valeurs sûres et les artistes consacrés. Par ailleurs, de par son ADN, la foire ne peut rivaliser, dans la promotion des artistes émergents, avec les manifestations et institutions existant déjà en France (les biennales, les Frac, les centres d'art, ...) qui peuvent se targuer, bien davantage que la Fiac, d'être des têtes chercheuses.

PRENDRE LE TEMPS

En ce qui concerne la promotion d'une création prospective mondiale, la Fiac a donc encore du travail. On ne compte pas assez en son sein d'artistes nés dans les années 1980 et après. Pour autant, elle n'a pas à rougir. Elle a certes perdu OFFicielle, sa foire bis dédiée à l'émergence, toutefois elle s'appuie cette année sur deux plateformes potentiellement défricheuses de talents nouveaux. D'une part, les Galeries supérieures du Grand Palais convoquent une quarantaine de galeries d'art pointues servant souvent de tremplins à des plasticiens prometteurs, tels que Canada, Labor, Triple V et Valentin à raison, Thomas Bernard (Cortex Athleticol note « Il est encore possible de faire des découvertes à la Fiac, notamment à son étage supérieur, dès lors que l'on prend le temps. » D'autre part, le secteur Lafayette, porté par le groupe Galeries Lafayette qui soutient financièrement les exposants aventureux, réunit une dizaine d'enseignes internationales (Arcade, Experimen-

1_ Francesc Ruiz, *Cutter press sign*, 2016. Courtesy Galerie Florence Loewy, Paris.

2_ Justin Adian, *Almostthere*, 2015, huile et émail sur toile marouflée sur mousse, 215,9 x 68,58 x 7,62 cm. © Justin Adian. Courtesy Almine Rech Gallery.

3_ Sergio Verastegui, *Amuleto III*, 2016, tissu, toile, carton, bronze. Courtesy Galerie Thomas Bernard/Cortex Athletico, Paris.

4_ Jacob Kassay, *Sans titre*, 2016, acrylique miniscible et encre sur toile, 38,3 x 25,5 x 3 cm. Courtesy Art Concept, Paris. © Photo : Claire Dorn

Justin Adian
(Galerie Almine Rech)

Sergio Verastegui
(Galerie Thomas Bernard – Cortex Athletico)

Jacob Kassay
(Galerie Art:Concept)

ter, Grey Noise. .) annonçant des solo shows de jeunes pousses décloisonnant les champs disciplinaires.

UN ART EN RHIZOME

Ainsi en est-il de la galerie Torri qui, en présentant le jeune Hoël Dureł, né en 1988 à Nantes, propose sur son stand une plongée transversale (peintures, sculptures, films, vidéos) invitant à pénétrer une sorte de plateau de tournage poursuivant son projet à tiroirs *UC-98 RGB* (2016) se référant aux câbles de fibre optique qui tapissent les fonds sous-marins et qui permettent d'accéder à Internet cette entreprise multimédia, en collaboration avec le chorégraphe Nicolas Paul, se prolonge par une performance réalisée dans le cadre de « Parades for Fiac ».

Toujours dans cette volonté de pratiquer le *sample* en brassant les références pour faire sortir l'art de son landerneau – c'est un geste récurrent chez les jeunes –, il ne faudra pas manquer d'être attentif à la proposition ironique du Barcelonais Francesc Ruiz, né en 1971, qui transforme le stand de Florence Loewy en un kiosque déclinant de multiples couvertures détournées de magazines afin de faire l'état des lieux d'un pays et de sa communication de masse.

NOS COUPS DE CŒUR

JUSTIN ADIAN (2)

Né en 1976 à Fort Worth (Texas), cet Américain crée des objets colorés abstraits, qu'il passe des heures à composer et recomposer. Entre la peinture, la sculpture et la céramique – l'artiste veille scrupuleusement à l'accrochage –, chaque pièce, recouverte de quatre à sept couches de peinture, attire, car elle multiplie les renvois populaires et savants : certains n'y voient que des bonbons pendant que d'autres y décèlent un clin d'œil aux formes molles de Robert Morris. Jouant avec le regardeur et l'espace d'exposition, ces productions hybrides ont indéniablement une formidable présence. Prix entre 11 000 et 46 000 dollars. **V. DE.**

SERGIO VERASTEGUI (3)

Lauréat en 2013 du prix Show-Room Art-O-Rama suivi du prix Jeune Création-Synnev, le Péruvien Sergio Verastegui, né en 1981 à Lima, présente des pièces fragmentaires constituées de matériaux pauvres qui brodent des connexions subtiles entre texte et paysage, l'idée étant de dialoguer avec le spectateur autour des « restes » auxquels il accorde une deuxième vie : ce plasticien archéologue « reconstruit à partir de la destruction » afin de rappeler la poésie du local, notamment la forêt d'Amazonie et une langue vernaculaire disparue (okáina), face à l'uniformisation de la société de consommation. Les prix vont de 4 000 à 5 000 euros. **V. DE.**

JACOB KASSAY (4)

S'étant fait connaître en France en 2013 par des monochromes argentés à la surface métallique, Jacob Kassay, né en 1984 à Lewiston (New York), fait partie de cette génération de jeunes plasticiens américains qui, en développant une réflexion sur les moyens picturaux traditionnels, rappelle la « peinture en question » de Supports/Surfaces, la nouveauté ici, particulièrement avec ses nouvelles abstractions nées d'un processus complexe additionnant peinture au pistolet, photographie, sérigraphie et autres, étant que le jeune créateur revisite les propositions françaises des années 1960 en utilisant le matériel actuel, notamment l'outil numérique. Prix compris entre 8 000 et 12 000 euros. **V. DE.**


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Vincent Delaury, «Peut-on faire des découvertes à la FIAC ?», in L'Oeil, n. 694, octobre 2016, pp. 56-57

FRIEZE.COM

REVIEW · 12 APR 2016

From Minimalism into Algorithm

The Kitchen, New York, USA

BY SAM KORMAN

'From Minimalism into Algorithm' is a formal gallery exhibition accompanied by a programme of performances, unfolding in three phases over the course of the winter and spring. The show focuses on repetition and serialization, tracing their development from minimalist dance, sculpture and painting of the 1960s to their appearance in contemporary artistic practices. The exhibition's iterative nature makes it nearly impossible to see in full. And although this necessarily limits the scope of a review (I write this during Phase II), such a curatorial framework elicits anticipation at every turn, while requiring us to work a bit harder to balance its material facts and productive contradictions. The Kitchen's gallery – a white cube set within a scrappier black box – lends the show a welcome sense of artifice. It stages the rules of exhibition-making, emphasizing the basic materials of a show (walls, time and viewership). Phase I included many alumni of The Kitchen's long-running programme, with videos by Lucinda Childs and Laurie Spiegel providing the scores. In a black and white video documenting *Work in Progress with Philip Glass* (1978), Childs rehearses at The Kitchen's former SoHo location. Her mesmerizing motions, by turns balletic and improvisational, fall in and out of synch with Glass's music. For Spiegel's *Living Painting* (1977–79), the artist developed her own software program at IBM's famous Bell Labs. Displayed on a box monitor, the Video and Music Program for Interactive Realtime Exploration (humorously abbreviated to 'VAMPIRE') generates a composition in constant flux. Pixel by pixel, a radiant spectrum of colour erupts, blurs, bulges, drips and traces a slow-moving phantasmagoria set to a moody synth soundtrack.

Historically, minimalism used repetition to challenge notions of linear time and rational space. Repetition is also an essential quality of statistical algorithms that map and predict human behaviour. Childs and Spiegel employ serial repetition to experiment with the structure of choreography and digital technologies; 'From Minimalism into Algorithm' stages these works as rehearsals, in which bodies and paintings take on new meanings within continually evolving sets of interpretive matrices. Other works engage with this idea directly: Vera Molnar's *Lettres De Ma Mère* (Letters from my Mother, 1981–90), for example, uses early algorithms to reproduce her aging mother's handwriting. Paul Sietsema's painting *Figure Ground Study (Fashion and Arts)* (2015) supplants the artist's subjective mark with painstaking, computer precision. Technology recoups or obfuscates something human for Molnar and Sietsema, underscoring the viewer's slippery relationship to the artworks, given the shifting material, temporal and situational contingencies of the exhibition. With its processual iterations, the show avoids assuming a single critical position. In Phase I, a corner of the gallery featured works that all contain grids: Charles Gaines's *Shadows IX, Set 4* (1980), which deconstructs a pair of photographs into silhouetted graph-paper notations; Jacob Kassay's *Untitled* (2015), a bare, poplar canvas stretcher cut to the shape of a canvas remnant from another, absent work; and Zoe Leonard's *Untitled* (2015), a series of black and white contact prints depicting the shifting patterns of a flock of birds. Each work translates a set of information through a minimalist grid. It is an inspired and unexpected trio, but it may not bear the most felicity to each artist's individual practice. Curatorially, the exhibition stages the historical shift from 1970s minimalism to the present through simultaneities and resonances that feel sometimes fateful and sometimes unnatural (the latter perhaps appropriate given the tragicomic fallibility of algorithms). 'From Minimalism into Algorithm' embraces these contradictions to illustrate the stakes of tactical repetition.

The performance programme reflects the influence of language in our societal shift from minimalist methodologies to algorithmic thinking. Complex linguistic systems underlie the late Robert Ashley's libretto *Quicksand* (2016), choreographed by Steve Paxton, and *For Claude Shannon* (2016), Liz Santoro and Pierre Godard's tribute to Shannon, the grandfather of information theory. With deadpan musical mutations of American speech or dancers following mathematically derived scores, these performances characterize language as a data-processing system in constant flux. In Phases I and II of the exhibition, Mary Lucier's *Color Phantoms with Automatic Writing* (2015), a mis en scène of Ashley's personal belongings with a video of a distorted landscape hung over his chaise lounge, is a potent eulogy to the composer's language-play: the ghostly sound of the composer's voice plays emanates from the monitor, disembodied and indecipherable.

When 'From Minimalism into Algorithm' clicked to Phase II, things shifted. Kassay's stretcher moved across the room, replaced by a multi-coloured John McCracken monolith, *Untitled* (1974); Andrea Crespo's interactive meditation on the neurological spectrum of identity, *polymist: echolalic transponder* (2015), took the place of Agnieszka Kurant's glittery termite mounds *A.A.I 1–4* (all 2014); and Richard Serra and Carlotta Schoolman's video diatribe, *Television Delivers People* (1973), moved from the gallery to the elevator. 'From Minimalism into Algorithm' merges minimalism's insistence on individual presence with the artificial intelligence of our enveloping, plugged-in, networked society. It is tempting to read the exhibition like a predictive algorithm, honing its formula through new content over time. But the curators resist this automatic characterization, even at the risk of making the works somewhat interchangeable. The show certainly requires a generous commitment on the part of the audience to see it through – and for the artists to see their work change in unpredictable ways. Within its algorithmic framework, the exhibition stages viewership as a form of labour for our technological age.

Sam Korman, «From Minimalism into Algorithm», in Frieze.com, 12 avril 2016

Jacob Kassay, vue d'installation
***Untitled (disambiguation)*, *The Kitchen*, 2013.**

JACOB KASSAY × SUPPORTS/SURFACES

Propos recueillis par
Marie Maertens

COMME CERTAINS AUTRES PLASTICIENS AMÉRICAINS DE SA GÉNÉRATION, **JACOB KASSAY** (NÉ EN 1984) A DÉVELOPPÉ UNE RÉFLEXION AUTOUR DE LA TOILE, DU SUPPORT ET DU CHÂSSIS, RAPPELANT CELLE DU GROUPE SUPPORTS/SURFACES À LA FIN DES ANNÉES 1960. L'OCCASION DE S'INTERROGER SUR SES AFFINITÉS AVEC CE MOUVEMENT FRANÇAIS, ET SUR SES PROPRES INVESTIGATIONS SUR LE CORPS MÊME DE LA PEINTURE.

Jacob Kassay, *Eternal Neither*, acrylique sur toile, 2013.

À VOIR

Love Story – The Anne & Wolfgang Titze Collection, Palais d'Hiver et 21er Haus/ Le Belvédère, Vienne, 15 juin-5 octobre, comissaires : Mario Codognato, Luise Ziaja et Severin Dünser.

Jacob Kassay est représenté par les galeries 303 (New York), et Art Concept (Paris).

"J'ai, au départ, approché la peinture à travers la reproduction de toiles dans des ouvrages. Mon travail vient de là et a rassemblé d'autres expériences..."

L'OFFICIEL ART :

Le groupe Supports/Surfaces a été actif seulement quelques années, mais en 1969, pour une exposition au musée du Havre intitulée "La peinture en question", Claude Viallat, Daniel Dezeuze, Patrick Saytour, Vincent Bioulès, Noël Dolla et Jean-Pierre Pincemin déclarent *"L'objet de la peinture, c'est la peinture elle-même et les tableaux exposés ne se rapportent qu'à eux-mêmes. Ils ne font pas appel à un ailleurs... et n'offrent point d'échappatoire..."* Qu'en pensez-vous ?

JACOB KASSAY : Il est impossible pour une toile de ne référer qu'à elle-même et je dirais que c'est davantage de l'ordre de la déclaration ou d'une fausse promesse... Une peinture est toujours dépendante de sa relation aux autres choses. Elle n'existe pas dans un vide, sans objets et certainement pas sans un discours qui l'entoure. Si vous regardez la trajectoire de Supports/Surfaces, vous pouvez observer que les propos ou écrits ont d'ailleurs parfois remplacé la production d'œuvres, et il serait vain de dire qu'une peinture peut générer de l'intérêt sans assumer sa paternité ou de multiples données sociales ou financières. Un geste radical ne peut être maintenu dans la pratique de la peinture, dont je me demande comment les limites peuvent être atteintes... D'autant plus dans un monde de l'art aujourd'hui plus étendu et professionnalisé qu'il ne l'était à l'époque de Supports/Surfaces, ces déclarations d'autonomie ne sont plus viables, mais elles peuvent nous rappeler certaines valeurs.

Ces artistes s'inscrivaient de manière plus globale dans une réflexion partagée par ceux de l'art minimal ou l'Arte Povera, rejetant une certaine tradition de la peinture, comme d'un marché de l'art naissant d'ailleurs...

Si l'on regarde Supports/Surfaces aujourd'hui, en refusant une certaine tradition de la peinture, une autre a finalement été créée avec ses propres problèmes. Leur programme a stagné car il annulait l'objet sur lequel ils avaient au départ focalisé leurs discussions. Si vous cessez de faire de la peinture et n'en parlez que de manière catégorique c'est comme une mort annoncée, à l'exemple de ce que l'on a vu dans diverses trajectoires de la "dématérialisation" de l'art. Leur mythologie de l'autonomie de la peinture et de l'autoréférence était précaire dès le départ et, honnêtement, la raison pour laquelle nous parlons encore de ce mouvement aujourd'hui est en partie due au fait qu'il est de plus en plus présent sur le marché de l'art.

Un autre point important pour ce mouvement était de considérer à la même échelle les matériaux, les gestes nécessaires à la réalisation de l'œuvre et la pièce finale. Une déhiérarchisation que l'on retrouve dans votre travail, non ?

Oui et c'est finalement le point commun que je peux partager avec ce groupe. J'aime penser que la peinture n'est pas uniquement un assemblage d'éléments matériels, mais un ensemble vital et inextricable.

C'est ce qui vous emmène à dire aussi que vous ne maîtrisez pas la trajectoire d'une peinture et que, dès l'instant où elle est exposée, elle devient indépendante. Pensez-vous la même chose de la sculpture ?

Il ne me semble pas que le médium fasse une quelconque différence, à l'exception de matériaux qui sont plus durables que d'autres. Mais indépendamment de la forme que cela prend, l'œuvre sera toujours sujette à des contingences imprévues par rapport à nos attentes d'artistes.

Pour vous qui êtes Américain, cette réflexion sur la toile et le châssis peut-elle être également reliée aux travaux de Frank Stella, par exemple ?

Il est vrai que très tôt, dans mon intérêt pour la peinture, Frank Stella s'est imposé comme une référence assez naturelle. Il était aussi Américain, célèbre et l'une de ses peintures, *Jane*, faisait partie de la collection du Albright Knox Museum, à Buffalo, où j'ai grandi. Ce qui m'a attiré dans ses œuvres était la manière très particulière dont leurs surfaces semblaient repousser le regardeur. Stella employait un geste semi mécanique, prédéterminé pour diriger l'énergie picturale uniquement dans la forme de l'objet, plutôt qu'en direction et à l'intention du spectateur.

Vous-même mettez en avant une production qui se veut mécanique, notamment dans les *Silver Paintings*, que vous ne réalisez pas et pour lesquelles vous revendiquez une certaine distance et une lecture immédiate. Pensez-vous que c'est aussi lié à vos études de photographie ?

Si ces œuvres ont un quelconque lien avec le médium photographique, c'est davantage dans la manière dont j'ai au départ approché la peinture, à travers la reproduction de toiles dans des ouvrages. Mon travail vient de là et a rassemblé d'autres expériences comme celle de percevoir une peinture en tant qu'objet accroché dans une pièce, situé dans un environnement actif, ou encore de la voir à plat, reproduite sur une page apparaissant comme une surface immobile. Mais là encore, les *Silver Paintings* deviennent de plus en plus indépendantes.

Les membres de Supports/Surfaces avaient souhaité à l'époque dépoussiérer les accrochages trop classiques... Comment décidez-vous de la forme des châssis de vos *Shaped Canvas*, qui se déploient ensuite avec une grande liberté sur les murs ?

Ces œuvres sont réalisées à partir de reliquats de toiles qui émanent de la fabrication d'autres peintures. A ces morceaux de tissu non utilisés, un support est ajouté qui suit les contours de la chute de tissu en question. Ces matériaux viennent de l'activité de l'atelier, de tests que je réalise, voire d'échecs ou de choses qui ont été laissés par d'autres personnes dans leurs ateliers et que j'ai récupérés. Ils m'offrent un potentiel de formes infini, comme un programme ouvert qui serait façonné par l'ensemble de ces différents formats et usages que l'on en fait.

Marie Maertens, «Jacob Kassay - Supports / Surfaces», in L'Officiel Art, n°10, juillet-août 2014, pp.200-203

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MASSIMILIANO GIONI

JACOB KASSAY

T.J. WILCOX

RONI HORN

TIM ROLLINS AND K.O.S

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

END OF THE LINE

BIG SPRING

VAMOS A COLOMBIA

HIGHLIGHTS FROM DOCLISBOA

WOMEN OF THE YEAR IN MUSIC

POEMS FOR ROBERT MOTHERWELL

JACOB KASSAY with Alex Bacon

Over the past few months, Jacob Kassay and Alex Bacon have been having an extended discussion about the delicate balance Kassay's work strikes between attention to aesthetic form and the conceptual rigor that motivates it. In New York, Kassay has a solo show at the 303 Gallery, and two of his paintings are featured in *Correspondences: Ad Reinhardt at 100*. Concurrently, he also has a show at Off Vendome in Düsseldorf.

Alex Bacon (Rail): What were the first paintings that you made? Were they the silver paintings?

Portrait of the artist. Pencil on paper by Phong Bui.

Jacob Kassay: Yeah, those were the first paintings I ever made. I got interested in Piero Manzoni's achromes. There was a fiberglass one on view at MoMA at the time. It was the first one I had seen and, curious about the term "achrome," I consulted Wikipedia, which was in its infancy then, and it said "something that resists properties of absorbing color." I tried to think of other ways to resist—as Manzoni's achromes do—any sort of fixed or applied quality and so I wanted to make something which reflected its surroundings back onto the space in which it was exhibited.

Rail: How did you think you could accomplish this sort of opposition within the language of painting?

Kassay: The paintings may defer responsibility to the rest of the room. There is a formal relationship that they have within themselves, like having the qualities of a worked surface, but this also extends to incorporate anything that is absorbed by the surface—color, light, etc. But more than a reflection, these paintings act as lenses that "color" what gets caught on their surfaces. Within the painting's limits you recognize portions of something that might belong to one's environment.

Rail: For me, this means that your paintings actively pose the question—what does it mean to be represented? In a way they're suspended between representation and abstraction, as what gets caught in their surfaces is quite literally re-presented. This kind of aesthetic activity is suspended somewhere between the "real" world that is reflected, and the particular aesthetic world a painting inhabits as an always somewhat separate and autonomous thing.

Kassay: There's something to be experienced in the actual space in which the work is installed, and then in the surface of the work itself. I found the way that the paintings collapsed these two experiences into one another compelling. I have a pretty severe case of astigmatism and this inability to recognize where the borders between one object and another are drawn has always conditioned what I see. With the paintings, this blurring reminds you that there are other things that are informing the work which are atmospheric. The surface of the work moves into attention and recedes from it, always oscillating. It often reminds me of the autofocus of a digital camera, which doesn't know what to do with a silver painting's surface when I'm trying to document the work. It goes in and out, unable to separate the painting's present surroundings from the object itself.

Rail: It seems that you haven't yet exhausted the way the silver paintings interact with these ideas, right?

Kassay: I haven't. I'll continue as long as there are new ways that they can present themselves in different spaces, in different modes. Sometimes they seem most appropriate in high volume, using their apparent similarity as one note over and over again. In this configuration, the overall effect is like that of a marbleized tone in the room. Are you familiar with the piece "In C" (1964), by Terry Riley? It's the same note over and over again, but there are these phantom harmonies that come through by that repetition and the sounds start to undulate according to the shape of the room. In other cases, a room may only require two or three paintings.

Rail: Your formal concerns appear to have an equally strong conceptual analogue. This is something that aligns you with a figure such as Ad Reinhardt, who rigorously conceived of his work along both lines.

Installation view, Off Vendome, 2013. Image courtesy 303 Gallery, New York. Photo: John Berens.

Kassay: Reinhardt was an inveterate thinker, about his own work at least, and that's something I tried to absorb into my own practice from a very early point. In the first round of paintings I made as a student, I felt that I was dealing with an object that was similar to those black paintings. With Reinhardt, we're not talking about a solely retinal experience; we're talking about something that is also an absolutist schema on what a painting should be, which posits how it should function and how it should be understood.

Rail: Right. I think that's what links you and Reinhardt together—that sense in which the paintings are never fully optical; they're never fully material. In that sense they have all these different lives; they function in these different ways; they're never fully translatable as one thing. Given your concern with the phenomenology of the work, how does this inform your approach to the materials of painting?

Kassay: Well, initially I was making paintings after recognizing that acrylic paint is a plastic which could be coated with a catalyst for electroplating. Paint is just one material available in the construction of a surface. I never approached painting from the point of view that I needed to work on a surface for any certain amount of time. I usually work on a surface for a very little amount of time and every other part of the process of constructing the painting is equal. I like the idea that in the paintings I'm making right now it takes the same amount of time for the stretcher, as it does for the stretching, as it does for the priming, the final surface, the photographing of it, etc. It's like using-all-the-parts-of-the-buffalo.

Rail: If every one of these aspects is truly equivalent for you, do you feel that it is important that all aspects of this trajectory—from the building of the stretcher to putting it on the gallery wall—are clear to the viewer when they're in front of the work?

Kassay: No. Because the viewer is never at the end point of a work but more of a node in its movement, I don't believe that the painting has to present a totalization of all the processes that preceded it. When the parts are taken in isolation, there are certainly points that are more privileged or active in the sum of the work, but the painting never remains complete. Even in storage, the work is never fully inert.

Rail: Could you expand on that?

Kassay: Well, with the installation at the Kitchen (*Untitled (disambiguation)*), I put work throughout the building in places where paintings rarely rest—such as in the video archive, or in the lobby—to emphasize their presentation as an almost momentary, contingent stage. The paintings were made so that they could be moved easily around the space and remain variable to the activity of the environment.

Rail: So in a way is it potentially hubris on the part of the artist to imagine that they know everything about the life of the work? Can a work ever account for all the ways in which networks of production, distribution, and reception enmesh it?

Kassay: Whether it's possible or not is a question that will remain forever debatable as those contexts change. Either way, it's mostly an issue of how rather than if. When you introduce a painting into any kind of network, its trajectory will never align to your expectations. It's going to have this entropic course from one point to another, as an object as well as information, which cannot be plotted. Since the work is always subject to all sorts of unforeseen mediations, you have to ease your expectations of how that course will develop.

Installation view, *EXPO 1: New York*, MoMA PS1, 2013. Image courtesy 303 Gallery, New York. Photo: John Berens.

Rail: Nonetheless, it seems that what you stake out as an important role for the artist today is to try to acknowledge the multiple lives lived by a painting. The artist should not try to predict the work's future and, in a way, he or she needs to release the work from a certain set of determinations for it to move from one place to the next—from the storeroom to the gallery, to the photographer's studio, etc. But at the same time the artist's task is to create the kind of work that can operate at a consistently rigorous level throughout these various stages of its "life," right? From the way it interacts with the photographer's camera, or the architecture of the space in which it is hung, for example. Given that they deal with where paintings begin and end, these considerations seem relevant to your most recent body of work. With these works, you take pieces of canvas leftover from the process of making other paintings, and then stretch them on supports shaped to fit the exact contours of each remnant of fabric.

Kassay: Yes, the idea was to give these peripheral scraps some kind of literal support so that they can be acknowledged as equal to the more traditionally "finished" painting whose canvas they were ripped from.

Rail: Is the stretcher the most important part of those paintings for you, then? Rather than the fabric? Even though the fabric is what originally inspired the painting because it dictated the shape of the work.

Kassay: Yeah. The shaped stretchers that were originally made to fit each of these discards are now being repeated but stretched with new canvas and painted. Now, I'm using the irregular stretchers not as supports for specific artifacts of fabric, but as templates with an undetermined number of possible iterations. Using the stretchers in this way parallels the standardized format of a rectangular support in painting, while providing an alternative to it. The bones remain the same, but the skin changes.

Rail: How is it that you began to paint and title these?

Kassay: Once I recognized that there was a limited sum of materials to use for these paintings, I worked out several ways of extending or expanding what I had already developed. Now, I'm very attuned to these basic activities that one begins a painting with, such as cutting fabric. Instead of approaching a roll of canvas as a set of separate, intentional units, I argue with myself over the vanity of that entire operation. When you separate a material, why is one side better than the other? Why is one used and one wasted, why make such projections? After a few years of making stretchers for these remnants, I've catalogued all their shapes so that they can be remade. While making supports directly for the scraps ejected a certain amount of intention from painting, I wanted to find a way in which similar rote procedures could be applied to other gestures of these supposedly incidental objects and see what these diminishing returns would be. Instead of gesture, what's at work is selection—the titles and surfaces act as an auto-fill that can be repeated ad nauseam.

Rail: This mode of seriality makes me think that throughout your work—from the silver paintings up to the recent irregularly shaped work—there is an interest in the formal and conceptual potential of a specific idea repeated in a potentially infinite and expandable sequence. You set the sequence to remain open rather than closed. The framework for old Minimalist or Conceptual art typically conceived of the system as closed, each serial iteration adding up to a principal statement, and in order to achieve this, all works ideally need to be present with one another. An example would be Sol LeWitt's permutations of a cube. However, with your work, each individual piece can expand or contract the horizon of the series, rendering its development less directional and more complex.

"Group Leader," acrylic on canvas, 2013. Image courtesy 303 Gallery, New York. Photo: John Berens.

Kassay: When I learned about how artists like LeWitt would ambitiously pursue a closed system to a point of exhaustion, the most important part seemed to be the ways in which these orders were designed to deny their own inevitable contingencies and vulnerabilities. So when I see a damaged, unfinished cube, its failure to illustrate itself as an element of an ideal system in turn allows it to become untethered from the narrow designs from which it was conceived. Perhaps then a degree of autonomy is returned to the object. A system is only as interesting as its contradictions and there's a great deal of personal satisfaction that can come when forms like these escape calculation.

Rail: What is the relationship between the show at 303 and the earlier one at the Kitchen? Many elements from the earlier show reappear, but take on different forms in the current one.

Kassay: The show at the Kitchen was used as a pivot point towards this new painted and titled work, outlining its structure. In a more literal sense, there was a wall that was built in the Kitchen to create a corridor and for the 303 show, it was used as a partition for a hall in the gallery. I wanted to see how parts of an exhibition could live past their temporary display. In that same show at the Kitchen, there were things which were also not announced as work but made with the same considerations as the wall and the paintings. There were benches in the room, made to resemble Bertoia benches, but I think they passed off well enough that no one recognized they were facsimiles and no one brought it up. These parts of the show were not intended as some sort of smug footnote or camouflaged strategy—I was interested in how attention would diffuse itself differently over these details and what elapsed recognitions do to one's experience. Steve Martin used to refer to these types of built in ricochets as "refrigerator moments." He would set up jokes that would fail on stage but linger long enough to bubble up again once the audience member opened his or her refrigerator at home—having had all the time in between to then recognize that the performance had already nested itself in their thoughts.

Rail: How do you arrive at the particular titles for these works? There seems to be something of an attempt to find neutral, non-associative titles, but by venturing into phrasing and possibly personal references, their meaning and intention become somewhat less stable. What kind of relation do you want them to have to the works on whose sides they are inscribed? Are they a key to anything in the work, merely a form of identification of one work versus another (as Ryman, for example, claims for his titles)? Or are they meant to be appreciated for their own sake—alongside, but not inherent to the works?

Kassay: By writing them on and scaling them to the edges of the paintings, the titles are presented around the object rather than from behind. Typically, a painting's surface conceals the work's information like a closed folder. All the details that identify, author, locate, value, and describe the painting—such as its materials and dimensions—are hidden by its wrapper. So, by putting the titles on the side, I wanted to move the paintings out of the domain of the image—a flat, scaleless surface—into a more planar space where the edge has as much content as the face of the paintings. The titles can't help but be personal, but actually they are more related to the way in which the surfaces of the paintings are painted with an arbitrary hue—a selection of features which could go on any number of paintings but happen to be on this one. The titles are there to make you look around the work and foreground their purpose as being purely indexical and mnemonic, as you suggest. The paintings begin from scraps and so it made sense to pair this with language which is fragmentary and torn far from its context.

Rail: Given this issue of coherence, are you interested in having any sort of continuity from one work to the next? Do you, for example, hope that each of your exhibitions will be considered as internally consistent, but ultimately very different from one another? Or is it important that in whatever the diversity of objects you might produce, there's a clear recognition of their relation and timeline?

Installation view, *(Untitled (disambiguation))*, The Kitchen, 2013. Image courtesy Jeffrey Sturges.

Kassay: That's something I can't predict. I have my short-term focuses with the work—most go unrecognized, which is fine. Things like "signature" and strategy are speculations developed by others, sometimes very quickly or over

Rail: What concern, if any, do you have for the future or longevity of your work in a material sense? Are you involved with, or even interested in, how the work will hold up over time? Whether that is the silver tarnishing, or the unmarked linen staining, or any other conservation issues. What role do you see for yourself in the future of your work as it circulates in the world?

Then by Necessity, acrylic on canvas, 2013. Image courtesy 303 Gallery, New York. Photo: John Beren.

Kassay: I don't care what happens to the work. If I ever wanted to display work that looked brand new, I would make it brand new.

«Jacob Kassay with Alex Bacon», in Brooklyn Rail, dec 2013 / janv 2014, pp.13-15 + couv

PARIS

L'apparition des images

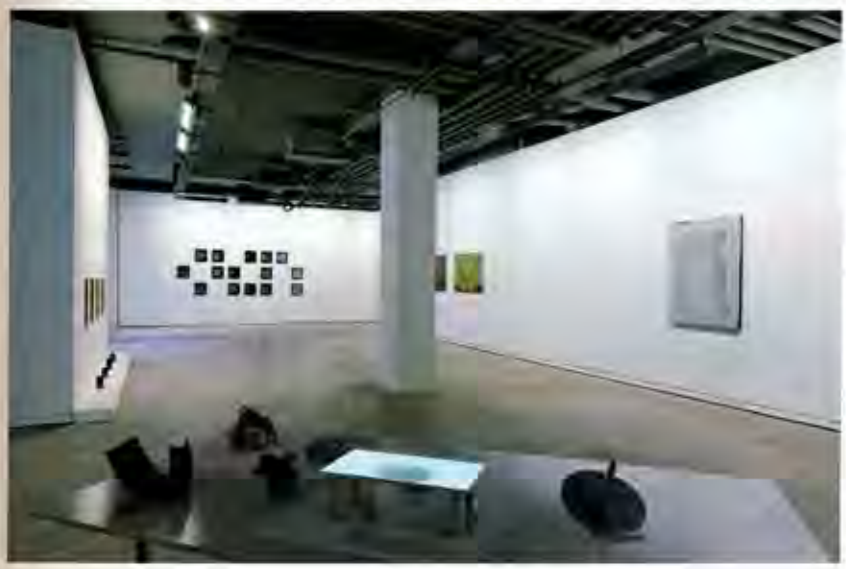
Fondation d'entreprise Ricard / 29 janvier - 9 mars 2013

Face à l'actuelle prolifération des images, la survie de la technique argentique est mise en cause. De nombreux artistes questionnent son processus, ses matériaux et ses possibilités plastiques. Audrey Illouz a rassemblé onze propositions ouvrant une réflexion sur les moyens de fixation ou de mise en mouvement d'une image (couleur, lumière et matériau) en s'appropriant des protocoles photographiques (filtrer, révéler, fixer, projeter). Une volonté collective qui s'inscrit à rebours de l'ère numérique. Les artistes reviennent sur l'histoire de la technique et réactivent librement des procédés photomécaniques pionniers comme le sténopé, la photogravure, le photogramme et l'héliogravure. Au fil de l'exposition, un dialogue à la fois technique et conceptuel s'instaure entre les œuvres. L'altération accidentelle, l'imprévisibilité des matériaux et la part expérimentale interviennent dans plusieurs pièces. Le développement de pellicules involontairement voilées par Meris Angioletti a généré une réflexion autour de la peinture (fresques de Clusone, province de Bergame), de l'érosion, à la fois de la peinture murale et du négatif. Lorsqu'il arrive au Japon, Eric Baudelaire se voit dans l'impossibilité de produire des images sans tomber dans le cliché exotique, il produit alors la série *Anabasis X-Rayegrams*. En passant les portiques de sécurité des aéroports, ses films sont marqués par les rayons X. Il se remet au caractère incontrôlable de l'accident pour en exploiter ses qualités picturales. Les dissonances temporelles jouent également un rôle de choix. À l'ère de l'image immédiate, Juliana Borinski passe 600 heures à insoler une diapositive afin que l'image projetée surgisse sur une plaque de cuivre ; Dominique Blais réactive quatre sténopés enregistrant les traces lumineuses de bougies ; Sébastien Rémy procède à des allers-retours temporels, d'Internet à l'héliogravure en passant par un transcodage de l'image en son, il puise dans l'histoire et l'actualité de la photographie. En creux se pose la question de la fixation et du mouvement des images. La *Table Sensible* de Blanca Casa Brullet conjugue ombre et lumière au profit d'une œuvre mouvante. Jonglant entre peinture et photographie, Jacob Kassay recourt à un procédé industriel, l'électro-galvanisation, pour fixer les particules d'argent sur ses toiles. L'effet de miroir obtenu répond à l'opacité de la toile de Joseph Dadoune, qui, elle, est entièrement recouverte d'une épaisse couche de goudron (matière que Nicéphore Niepce utilisait en son temps). Après avoir plongé des feuilles de papier dans une solution de graphite liquide, Diogo Pimentão procède à une fixation des particules par évaporation. L'alchimie entre la gestuelle de l'artiste et les paramètres du phénomène technique engendre le dessin. À partir de protocoles spécifiques à la photographie, les artistes formulent différentes translations techniques et créent des passages entre la photographie, la peinture, le dessin, la gravure, le cinéma et la sculpture.

Julie Crenn

With today's proliferation of images the survival of silver-based photography is in doubt. Many artists are interrogating the process, the materials it uses and its artistic possibilities. Audrey Illouz has brought together work by 11 artists in a show that explores the means by which images are fixed or made to move (color, light and materials) by using photographic protocols (filtering, developing, fixing, projection). The common desire manifested in this show is decidedly unusual in our digital era. These artists revisit the history of the medium and freely reactivate early photomechanical procedures such as pinhole cameras, photogravure and heliograms. Through the course of the exhibition the works enters into a conversation with each other on both the technical and conceptual levels. Accidental alterations, the unpredictability of the materials and the experimental dimension intervened in the making of many of these pieces. When Meris Angioletti found that her photos had become foggy during development, she used this to reflect on painting (the Clusone frescos in the province of Bergamo) and erosion, both of the wall painting and the photographic negative. When Éric Baudelaire went to Japan and found it impossible to take pictures that were not infused with exotic clichés, he made the series called *Anabasis X-Rayegrams*. When taken through airport security portals, his films were marked by exposure to X-rays. He makes use of the uncontrollable nature of accidents to explore their pictorial qualities. He also privileges temporal dissonance. In this era of the immediate image Juliana Borinski spent 600 hours exposing a slide to light so that the projected image would emerge on a sheet of copper. Dominique Blais revisited pinhole cameras, using four of them to record candlelight. Sébastien Rémy's work is about the past and present of photography. He makes pieces going back and forth in time from the Net to the transcription of images into sound and heliogravure, implicitly interrogating the freezing and movement of images. *La Table Sensible* by Blanca Casa Brullet counterposes shadow and light to produce photos that seem to move. Working in a medium somewhere in between painting and photography, Jacob Kassay uses an industrial process, electro-galvanization, to attach silver particles to his canvases. The resulting mirror effect goes well with the opacity of the painting by Joseph Dadoune, a canvas basically covered with a thick layer of tar (a material Nicéphore Niepce used back in the day). Diogo Pimentão dips sheets of paper into a liquid graphite solution and lets evaporation make the particles stick. The alchemy between the way he moves the paper around in the liquid and the parameters of the chemical process gives rise to drawings. These artists use protocols specific to photography to produce different technical translations of the image and open passageways between photography, painting, drawing, engraving, film and sculpture.

Julie Crenn
Translation, L-S Torgoff



Vue de l'exposition / Exhibition view « L'apparition des images », 2013 © Fondation d'entreprise Ricard / A. Mole

Julie Crenn, «L'apparition des images», in Art press, n°399, avril 2013, p.33

JACOB KASSAY, DE L'AUTRE CÔTÉ DU MIROIR

Pour sa seconde exposition à la galerie Art: Concept, le jeune artiste new-yorkais Jacob Kassay présente une série de quatre diptyques monochromes argentés, réalisés grâce à un procédé industriel et chimique d'électro-galvanisation (les prix se situent entre 15 000 € et 70 000 €). L'interaction avec le spectateur et avec l'environnement, notamment les effets de lumière et la variation des reflets

Vue de l'exposition Jacob Kassay : *Untitled*, 2011, acrylique et dépôt d'argent sur toile, 122 x 122 cm chaque (©GALERIE ART: CONCEPT, PARIS).

opaques, est recherchée par l'artiste pour modifier les perceptions et aboutir ainsi à une sorte de plongée dans une dimension immatérielle. Artiste pluridisciplinaire adepte de peinture et de vidéo, Jacob Kassay (né en 1984 à Lewinston, État de New York) propose ici une expérience unique de l'œuvre, tout à la fois intérieure et extérieure, conceptuelle et cependant étroitement liée à l'environnement dans lequel sont installées ces pièces. **V. DE M.**

« JACOB KASSAY », galerie Art: Concept, 13, rue des Arquebusiers, 75003 Paris, 01 53 60 90 30, du 23 février au 6 avril. + d'infos : http://bit.ly/7131kassay

Valérie de Maulmin, «Jacob Kassay, de l'autre côté du miroir», in Connaissance des Arts, mars 2013, n°713, p.108

Works by Jacob Kassay, Olivier Mosset and Lawrence Weiner in conversation at Andrea Rosen Gallery

NEW YORK, NY.- Andrea Rosen Gallery announced a highly unique exhibition that joins in conversation works by Jacob Kassay, Olivier Mosset and Lawrence Weiner. Presented at their new Gallery 2 location, which is dedicated to content-driven, experimental and historical exhibitions, this project is the outcome of a rare gathering and communication between these three artists.

Crafting significant dialogues and unexpected relationships between historical artists and those of a younger generation is a defining aspect of Andrea Rosen's Gallery 2 program, which seeks to broaden our basis of visual reference and education. The focal point of the exhibition is a shared installation comprising a single yellow wall painting by Olivier Mosset upon which a new painting by Jacob Kassay—the irregular shape of which is defined by the repurposing of canvas scraps from other projects---and Lawrence Weiner's A 36" X 36" removal to the lathing or support wall of plaster or wallboard from a wall (1968), from the collection of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, are hung.

On one hand, the installation may be considered as a formalist exercise -- a three-layer relief that, when viewed from afar, appears to be a flattened image. On the other, the combination of the works, in relation to each other and within the gallery setting, inspires new revelations about those works and the relationship between the artists. "A yellow wall is a yellow wall, but I like that it is questioned by its situation (the gallery) and the works of other artists whom I respect," remarks Mosset. The exchange between these three artists not only addresses conceptual abstraction and the significance of space; presence and absence; it develops new affiliations between works that reference the hand, material and process.

Additional paintings by Jacob Kassay and Olivier Mosset are included in the exhibition.

Jacob Kassay was born in 1984 Lewiston, NY. He received his BFA from State University of New York at Buffalo and now lives and works Los Angeles. A solo exhibition of new works by the artist is on view through February 16, 2013 at The Kitchen, New York. Other recent solo shows include Art: Concept, Paris; Protocinema, Istanbul; and The Power Station, Dallas (catalogue).

Olivier Mosset was born in 1944 in Bern, Switzerland. He lives and works in Tucson, Arizona and New York, New York. He was a founding member of the BMPT group in Paris in the 1960s, along with Daniel Buren, Michel Parmentier, and Niele Toroni. Mosset has participated in exhibitions spanning the Fifth Biennial of Paris at the Museum of Modern Art in Paris in 1967 to the Whitney Biennial in 2008.

Lawrence Weiner was born in 1942 in the Bronx, New York and lives and works in New York and Amsterdam. He is one of the central figures in the formation of conceptual art in the 1960s and has exhibited at the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art (2008); Whitney Museum of American Art (2007); Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg (2000); the Museum Ludwig, Cologne (1995); the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (1994); the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden (1990); and the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. (1990). He has participated in Documenta V (1972), VI (1977), and VII (1982), as well as the 2005 Venice Biennale, and the Biennale Sao Paolo in 2006. Among his many honors are National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships (1976 and 1983), a Guggenheim Fellowship (1994), Wolfgang Hahn Prize (1995), and a Skowhegan Medal for Painting/Conceptual Art (1999).

«Works by Jacob Kassay, Olivier Mosset & Lawrence Weiner in conversation at Andrea Rosen», in Art Daily, 15 février 2013

FRANCE - PARIS
ART: CONCEPT

Jacob Kassay
February 23 - April 6

How many thoughts and ideas can be contained in what seems to present itself to the viewer as a simple monochrome surface? For at least several years now, Jacob Kassay has been a market phenomenon, and though this has definitely contributed to his standing, it has also come to overshadow his silent and yet powerful work, which is based on sophisticated theoretical and critical speculation about the pictoral surface, the object, and how it is perceived within a given space.
Produced using a semi-serial electrochemical plating process, Kassay's paintings are silvery, polished, mirror-like canvases, constantly shifting and changing surfaces that offer themselves to our gaze in a delicate game of interaction, both with the viewer's own reflection and that of the surrounding space – and "time" – and working through dynamics that resemble those of sound, in which a simple inflection can change the tone of a note, and as a result, its meaning. For his first solo show at art: concept, the young American artist will be presenting a new series of monochrome works that continue along the line of investigation that characterizes his work, while reflecting on other themes important to the artist, such as the impossibility of reproducing anything without simultaneously losing information, and the problems inherent in any process of transfer, as in any attempt to arrive at a fixed interpretation of the work.

galerieartconcept.com

« Jacob Kassay», in Mousse, n°37, février-mars 2013, p.247

GalleristNY

'Jacob Kassay: Untitled (Disambiguation)' at the Kitchen

By Will Heinrich 1/15 4:10pm

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Using large scraps of white, off-white, burlap-colored and pale industrial green linen left over from previous projects, some of them dating back to grad school (which, of course, wasn't that long ago), Jacob Kassay has constructed a series of scrupulously odd-shaped monochromes, all untitled, that have the elegant simplicity and the delicately affected sheen of humility of a Japanese tea ceremony. None of the lines are too straight, and most of the shapes —though not the lunar white sliver hung on a black wall, or the best piece, a squat, notched green hut—are clearly but not ostentatiously negative, the kind of sticky long bars and borders left when you cut rectangles out of larger rectangles. Standing in the buzz of the fluorescent lights and numbering the canvases' few imperfections—the dark bits of fuzz, the hanging white threads, the single black eyelash—you can imagine a complementary positive of effort, some long process of attempting, failing, winnowing and editing necessary to get to this kind of meditative, purely nonobjective blankness. A few examples of Mr. Kassay's earlier work, large canvases coated with layer after layer of gesso and then electroplated with silver to make warmly foggy mirrors that reflect the viewer back to herself, but not so clearly as to be emptily conceptual, seem to bear this out. But under examination, the pieces look more and more recessively reactive, the products not of good choices triumphantly discovered, but of bad choices pre-emptively denied.
(Through Feb. 16, 2013)

Will Heinrich, «Jacob Kassay : Untitled (disambiguation) at the Kitchen», in Gallerist NY, 15 janvier 2013

Jacob Kassay, Xanax (diptyque | diptych), 2011
photo | Mark Blower, permission de | courtesy of Art: Concept, Paris & ICA, London

l'imaginaire public s'est trouvée accaparée par la révolution numérique, et on pourrait avancer l'idée que l'art numérique a été le seul véhicule (une fois admise notre condition postmoderne) capable de produire quelque chose de neuf – techniquement parlant, à tout le moins. En plus de la représentation fidèle que rend la photo par l'intermédiaire de la lentille, l'art numérique ajoutait à la trousse d'outils expressifs du photographe le mouvement et l'interactivité, ainsi que le laissait prévoir l'ère positiviste annoncée par les Modernes.

L'effondrement du mur de Berlin a favorisé le ralliement des institutions technocrates qui ont ravivé le projet des Lumières pour nous faire croire que le monde progressait constamment. La technologie instaurait le règne de l'ordinateur, en en faisant le dénominateur commun de toutes les pratiques créatives et organisationnelles. Par le biais de l'énergie propre, de la fabrication bon marché et de l'agriculture durable, la technologie promettait de résoudre tous les problèmes de la planète. Mais le réveil brutal du 11 septembre a fait voler en éclats nos derniers idéaux de progrès pour cristalliser la vision d'un monde où les conflits sont endémiques et les positions extrémistes, méprisées, qu'elles soient d'un côté ou de l'autre de l'échiquier. On observe le même phénomène

its range of expressive tools, along with the positivist agenda originally promised by the Moderns.

Helped by the fall of the Berlin wall, technocratic institutions rallied to revive the enlightenment project and make us believe the world was becoming incrementally better. Technology instigated the computer as the common denominator for all creative and organizational practices. In the form of clean energy, cheap manufacturing, and sustainable agriculture, technology promised to solve all the world's problems. But the rude awakening of 9/11 shattered the last of our ideals about progress and left behind a worldview of ongoing conflict, and with it a disdain for extremist positions on any side of the exchequer. Similarly, in the creative world, pushing ideas to their ultimate logical conclusion was frowned upon. Thus, the failure of technology to carry a unifying narrative was self-fulfilling, because in accordance with Moore's law,[2] technological art could not fence in its own specificity for periods of longer than eighteen months.

In its pursuit of optimizing digital images, Photoshop actually weakened photography's documentary status by making pictures infinitely

2. Which states that every eighteen months, computers become twice as powerful and half as expensive.

Flash Art

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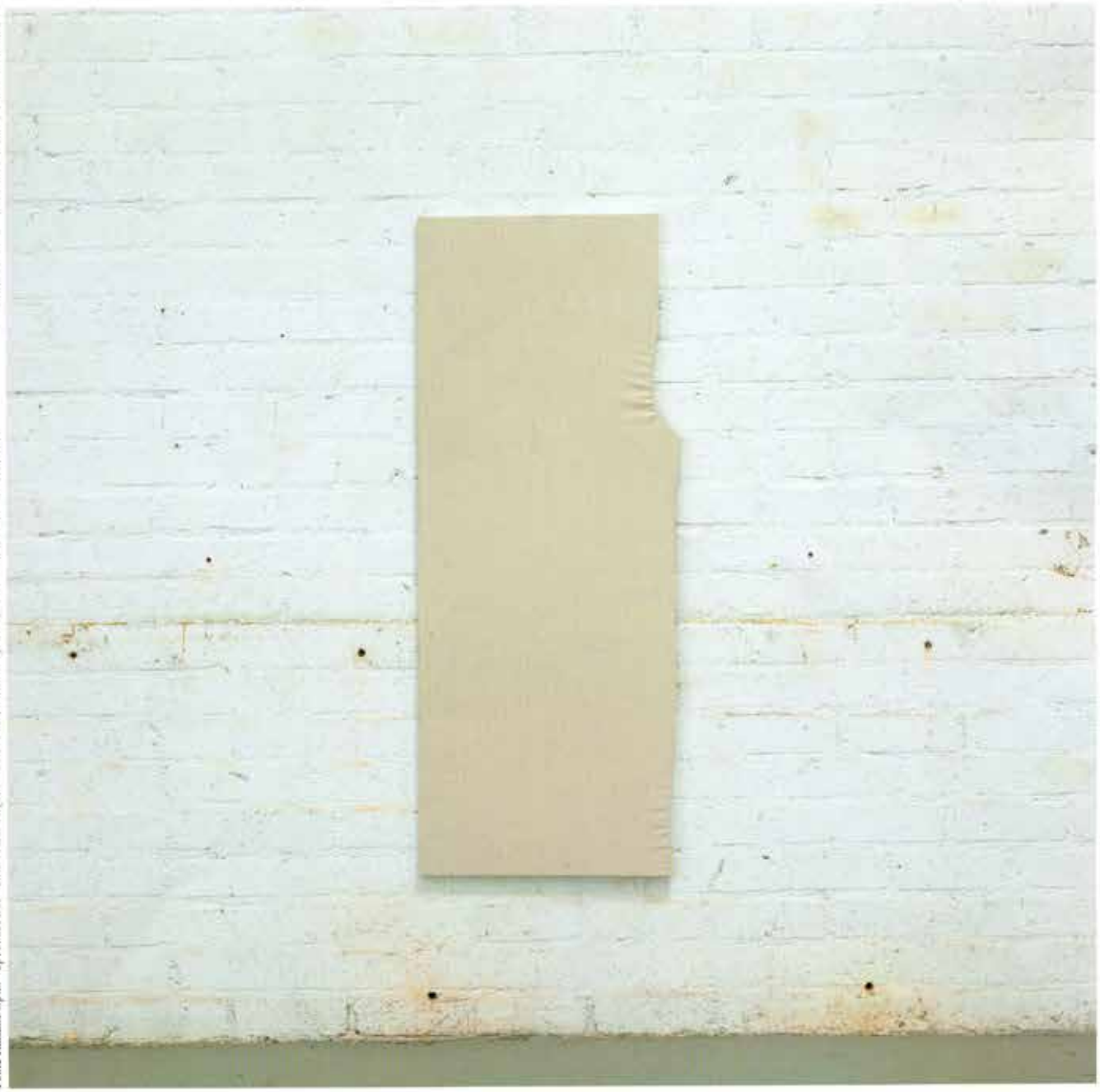

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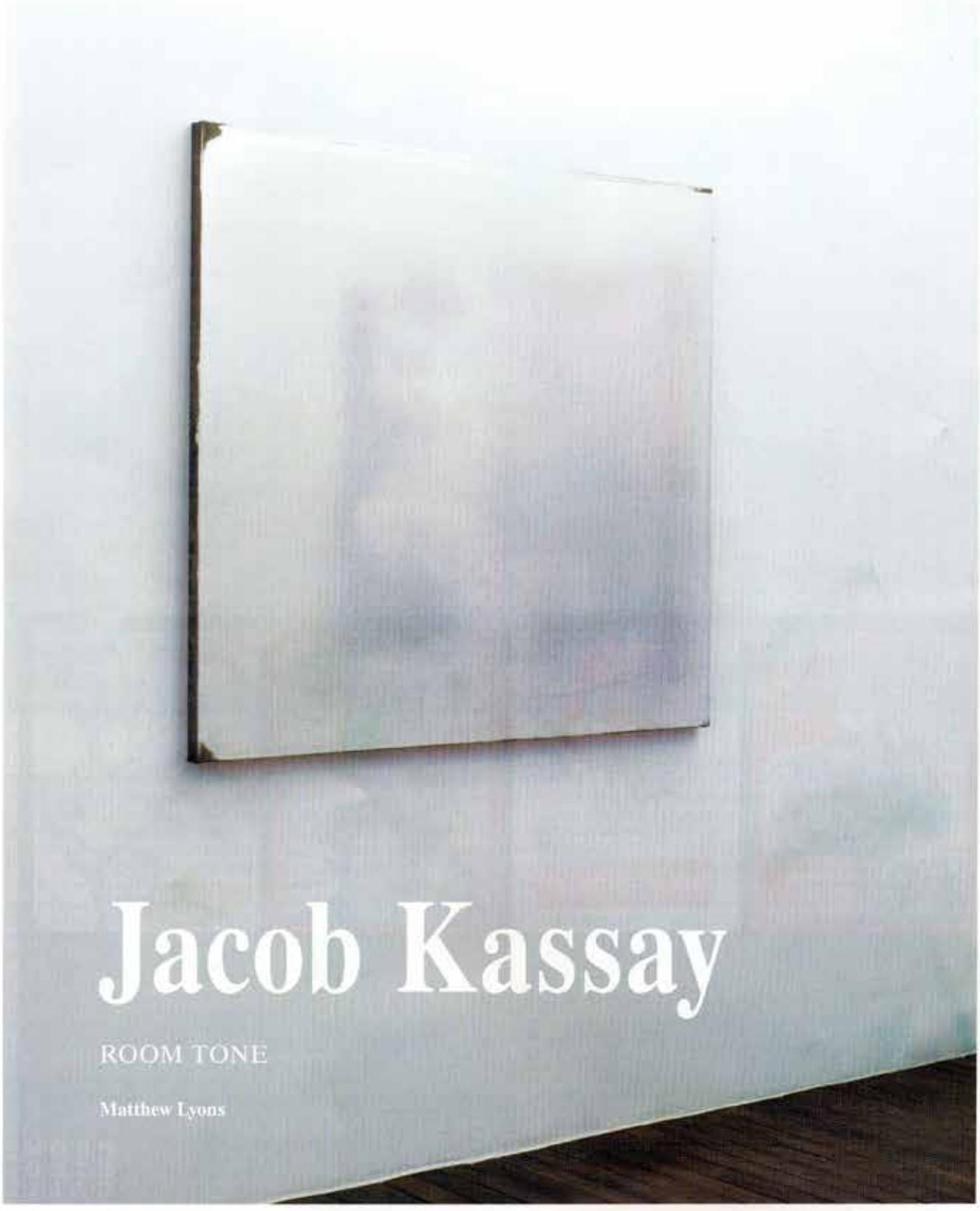
JACOB KASSAY



Jacob Kassay

ROOM TONE

Matthew Lyons

MATTHEW LYONS: *I thought we could start by talking about the art scene up in Buffalo where you're from and went to school, which also has connections to the history of The Kitchen and people like Steina and Woody Vasulka, Tony Conrad, Cindy Sherman and Robert Longo.*
JK: I had to go to the Castellani Art Museum in Niagara Falls when I was 15 to write on a piece of artwork for an English class, and I chose to write on one of Robert Longo's "Men in the Cities" (1969) pictures. I didn't know what it was, who he was, but it was an arresting image, and I got encouragement from how that piece turned out so I started focusing on art and ended up going to college for it. In one of my classes, the students were allowed to make up their own project, and we decided to make an arts space. It was called Kitchen Distribution and it lasted for about two years. This was in the days of MySpace, so we could track bands that were coming from Pennsylvania to Canada. We'd say, "Come to Buffalo and you can make $150-200, whatever the door is going to be, and get a free place to stay," and that was appealing to most bands that we approached.

ML: *What were some the bands that played there?*
JK: The Flying Luttenbachers. Japanther came through a couple of times, once with "This Bike Is a Pipe Bomb" — that was a good show. Yip-Yip, from Orlando. Tony Conrad played there once. Who else? Pit Er Pat, Hologram, from Brooklyn — they were great. Thanksgiving (Adrian Orange). Burning Star Core.

ML: *How did you come up with the name of the place?*
JK: It was the name on the side of the building. It was a distributor of kitchen appliances. I worked for the guy that ran the building as a shop rat for his woodworking and we became good friends. It's funny to go back to the same building all the time, to be reminded of all these things.

ML: *What art were you making while you were so involved with booking these music shows? Is this around the same time when the ideas for the silver paintings started?*
JK: Yes. The room where I made my first paintings is still there. It was important that I was just being active. We had a good scene going. But I still had to go to school and make work, and I was interested in becoming a painter. So I just decided to start making paintings in a way that I felt was responsible to all the things that I was paying attention to that had informed my understanding of painting up to that time.

ML: *Including music? Or sound and vibration?*
JK: Yes, ambience... If you're thinking about not just music but everyone that's making a space alive, then you have to consider a lot of things outside of an object itself. I was considering everyone that helped me come to arrive at the end point, the painting. So, one friend was building the stretchers, and at the same time I had to ask around to find out how to paint. This taught me more about a network of developing ideas through conversation. So that's how early work came about as a physical thing, and the ideas that were supporting them were somewhat similar. I figured that if I wanted a surface of a work to reflect any of those ideas, it should literally reflect the space. I wanted to make the thing so that it would point to other things in its own atmosphere and treat the air around it like a physically noticeable, viscous material that you would have to engage with in order to experience the work as a part of a whole.

ML: *The very large, muslin curtain at The Power Station in Dallas will do this?*
JK: I expect it will act as a membrane that will allow one to notice passing air. All of the windows in the exhibition space will be left open.

JACOB KASSAY, Installation view at Art : Concept, Paris, 2010. Opposite: Untitled (detail), 2011 (diptych). Acrylic and silver lacquer on canvas. 122 x 122 cm. Courtesy Art : Concept, Paris. Photo: Fabrice Bousset.

ML: *Recently your works seem very much connected to the architecture, everything that's involved with the structure and surrounding environment, not just the wall. Was that there from the beginning?*
JK: I feel that I am always practicing towards something that's outside of the production of a piece of work. Usually left with all this stuff to edit down, and the only way to do that is to look at a space and find out what you have to apply to it to make a space feel right. When you have a certain amount of noise in an area, it takes work, push and pull, to bring it into harmony, and that's all I'm trying to do with the amount of work brought to a space.

ML: *That makes me think of this concept used in sound art called "room tone," which is a real auditory property.*
JK: Every room has a tone; you can harmonize with a room's tone. It is nice knowing something can be done.

ML: *Do you think about your paintings as "time-based," as having duration?*
JK: Paintings age as objects, not just as an image or a surface. I try to be insistent on focusing on or at least suggesting that you spend a long amount of time with the object. Maybe that'll give you time to think about other things, such as why you even find yourself in that space to pay attention. I can't tell when things start or stop, everything has a thick, blurry line. I took painting as a given, something that looked natural to its environment, because I grew up going to museums that had paintings in them. I chose to practice in something that seemed like it was already supposed to be there. I didn't want to have a whole lot of say in the image; I just wanted the painting to exist as a thing itself so that I'd have freedom to move it around space and suggest things outside of the object.

ML: *An artist once asked me how being at The Kitchen and seeing a great deal of dance and performance has informed how I now look at what gets called "visual art." I feel it has changed the way I stand in front of an immobile work of art. I look at things not just with my eye; my experience has become as much corporeal as ocular. That seems to resonate with my experience of your work.*
JK: This is an interesting idea. While watching you're using "mirror neurons," which aid your understanding of what's going on in front of you. You get a familiar feeling out of just watching something that's moving. And so, when you try to apply those principles to something that's not apparently moving, it slows down perhaps.

ML: *There is a way in which working in a highly site-responsive method is a choreographic process, right?*
JK: Yes. Everything has its place. Showing up to a place with more than you need is usually a good idea. You can find an appropriate place for things to function and pairing down is the

action. Once you have picked the amount of work you don't have to worry about the density of the room changing. It feels as if I am performing maintenance rather than creating anything. Also, the work has been far removed from its origin so that it takes a personal remove to rearrange it and make the show happen.

ML: *What do you think of terms of like "reductive" or "minimal" art? Do they make sense to you?*
JK: I try to make things that seem natural to their environment — that's why I chose painting anyway. Trying to follow a lineage of thought is annoying. My interest was in why I was going to the space in the first place, and why these reactions were holding my interest. Self-examination? Cognitive dissonance? I don't know.

ML: *Your exhibition at The Power Station also includes an outdoor installation. Has working outdoors changed how you are composing and underscoring space in the exhibition?*

JK: The work outdoors may be nice. I live out West now and I leave my door open. When you come to California you should stop by. Anyway, the seating area outside in Dallas — that is, depressions laid into the ground — is meant to function as a humbling area for quiet thought among others. It is a slight homage to the experiences I had at Artpark in Lewiston when I was young and unaware of the multiplicity of values that a functioning object can hold and give.

ML: *So is that a shift for you? Taking the triangulation between a single viewer, the object and the space, and now foregrounding the experience of the work as a group experience?*
JK: This is a difficult progression for me. I have relied on one-to-one relationships up until this point. I am beginning to feel comfortable enough now to trust a group. Much of relying on primary experiences is relying on word of mouth. The piece made for sitting is simply a platform for idea building. ■

Matthew Lyons is Curator at The Kitchen, New York.

Jacob Kassay was born 1984 in Lewiston, New York. He lives and works in Los Angeles.

Selected solo shows: 2012: Xavier Hufkens, Brussels; The Power Station, Dallas (US). 2011: ICA, London; L&M Arts, Los Angeles. 2010: Art : Concept, Paris; Sorry We're Closed Gallery, Brussels; Collezione Maramotti, Reggio Emilia (IT). 2009: Eleven Rivington, New York.
Selected group shows: 2011: "The Indiscipline of Painting: International Abstraction from the 1960s to Now," Tate St. Ives (UK); "Four Rooms," CCA Ujadowski Castle, Warsaw; Prague Biennale. 2010: Gwangju Biennale.

JACOB KASSAY, Untitled, 2010. Silver lacquer on canvas, 25 x 25 cm. Installation view at ICA, London. Courtesy Art : Concept, Paris; Eleven Rivington, New York; Xavier Hufkens, Brussels. Photo: Mark Blower.

Matthew Lyons, «Jacob Kassay, Room Tone», in Flash Art, #284, mai – juin 2012, cover and pp.58–61

Jacob Kassay

L&M ARTS

Mounted by a gallery better known for its specialization in works by blue-chip artists than for its fledgling LA-based contemporary program, Jacob Kassay's first solo West Coast show seemed something of an anomaly. But L&M Arts' interest in this young painter is no mystery: Regardless of their merit, Kassay's silvery-reflective monochromes made a splash at auction last fall. Anticipating the cynics, the staff penned a press release that was quick to distance Kassay's older output from the new work he made for this show. Calling attention to the differences in surface treatment, it announced that his most recent paintings would feature a "surprising yet deliberate lack of reflection."

If Kassay had demonstrated the savoir faire needed to glide through this awkward impasse, it would certainly have marked him as an artist to watch. Given the opportune colliding of arbitrary prices and precious metals (those mythic stores of supposedly intrinsic value), Kassay might have taken a tip from Yves Klein (whose estate is also represented by L&M) and attempted both to recuperate the monochrome's sublime presence and to critically undermine its fictive claim to autonomy in one gesture. To be fair, as this young artist publicly sorts through his own still-forming intentions, he has yet to clearly articulate how (or even whether) he intends his work to dialectically engage these contradictory impulses.

View of "Jacob Kassay," 2011.

However, on this occasion, rather than taking hold of the conditions of production, distribution, and reception at work in shaping—if not foreclosing—his practice, Kassay choreographed a precious investigation into Color Field and "Minimal" painting around a ballet barre, (installed at one end of the gallery), behind which, stapled to bare wall studs, he had mounted a silver-coated sheet of rag paper made using his signature technique. There were also six pairs of monochrome panels of varied thickness (in combinations of pink, white, and oxidized silver) hung in rows unusually low on the opposing walls that flanked this central installation. As one approached each diptych, the components of each pair visually merged onto a single plane—a neat trick but hardly the kind of formal innovation characteristic of Robert Ryman, Ellsworth Kelly, or any of the other art-historical greats to whom those who've bought into the hype have ventured to link Kassay's practice.

But if, on the one hand, this work had little to say in terms of form or its own materiality, neither did it venture to engage the discursive context of its display. At the end of one row of diptychs hung a partially concave, shaped canvas that had been arranged next to a work that, in turn, had been bisected by a graphite arc drawn directly onto the wall. This mildly site-specific installation may have perceptually activated the immediate viewing space, but it provoked no consideration of the venue's particular symbolics—namely, that this was a newly opened West Coast branch of a major New York gallery, and that exhibiting here would likely play a pivotal role in directing the trajectory of the artist's practice. For comparison, one need only look to the pithy business-as-usual intervention that David Hammons recently made in L&M's New York location.

Offered a chair at the high rollers' table, Kassay could have made only one compelling move—a wager with the potential to break the bank. Of note: His Paris dealer, Art: Concept, has already offered public assurances that the artist is not about to meet the market's demand for more of the same. In fact, had Kassay overperformed (or overproduced) this summer, he might have presented a distance from these overdetermining forces or even productively embraced them. . . . It appears, however, he's chosen to ignore them altogether.

—*Ben Carlson*

Ben Carlson, «Jacob Kassay - L&M arts», in Artforum, November 2011, p280

Art

Edited by Osman Ward

Jacob Kassay, 'Untitled' installation at Art Basel, 2011 and another 'Untitled' acrylic and silver dipcoat painting from 2010 (below)

The price of silver

American young gun Jacob Kassay's shiny paintings are more likely to line a collector's walls than those of the ICA. **Gabriel Coxhead** finds that all that glisters is not gold

Walking around Jacob Kassay's exhibition at the ICA, it's hard to shake the sense of there being an elephant in the room. The gallery bumf talks about the New York-based painter's 'dialogue with the traditions of the monochrome and colour-field painting' and, certainly, his work is all about formalist concerns to do with surface and objecthood – electroplating his canvasses with a thin layer of metal to produce a beautiful, iridescent, slightly singed effect, one that captures the viewer's own shimmering reflection.

Yet this description feels like an evasion of what's surely the most salient fact about Kassay, and the reason why he's such a prominent name at the moment: the utterly astonishing prices his works fetch at auction. Sotheby's recently sold a similar so-called 'silver painting' (actually 'Untitled') for £145,250 – and while that's some way off the insane prices at the very top of the art market, it's still pretty unbelievable for a 27 year-old without any solo museum shows to his name. More than anything, it's the sheer rapidity of his rise which has been garnering column inches in the States – works estimated at $8,000 suddenly selling for more than ten times that last autumn, then prices tripling again some months later to $290,500. Inevitably, there have been suggestions of market manipulation by interested dealers – yet it's undeniable that a veritable, one-person bubble now exists, along with all the attendant anxieties over the likelihood of it bursting, and how this would affect Kassay's market in the long term.

The ICA, of course, can hardly be criticised for not addressing such market issues: it's not a commercial space, but a public institution. Even so, avoiding all mention of it feels slightly disingenuous. It's surely no coincidence that Kassay's show opened during the week of the Frieze Art Fair, when the world's biggest collectors were in town, and when the ICA could expect the highest return on their accompanying limited-edition artist's prints (all 15 were sold at £2,600 each).

As for Kassay himself, it's hard not to feel a little sorry for him – as sorry as one can be, that is, given that his primary prices have presumably also skyrocketed. But for an artist to receive so much attention early on in their career can end up being, in the long run, quite debilitating. At the very least, it must get frustrating – this constant focus on the commercial aspect of his art, over and above its actual meaning. And yet, what's interesting about the ICA show is how these two aspects appear implicitly, intrinsically linked – as if the very form of his works is intended to deflect attention away from his commercial success. Most obviously, none of the works here are single, commodifiable objects – rather, they're all installations. Even his quartet of 'silver paintings' are incorporated within a continuous structure, mounted on a semi-opaque wall opposite a trio of muslin-covered windows – the idea being that the paintings reflect changes in daylight, as a kind of comment on the conditions of their own exhibition.

And there's a similar notion in the upstairs galleries, where the various components all interrelate. There are canvases whose concave or convex edges echo each other, geometric lines on the wall that lead the eye through to similarly bisected paintings as well as monochromes which are all painted the same creamy colour as the walls themselves. Everything seems designed to focus attention on the objective here-and-now of the viewing space, to make visitors forget about any extraneous context.

All of this is hardly new territory for art, of course, and much of Kassay's work seems like a rehash of, in particular, various minimalist tropes from the '60s – throwing together Robert Mangold, some Robert Ryman, perhaps a bit of Robert Morris. In that sense, Kassay is at the forefront of a formalist revival that's been bubbling away for a few years now among younger artists – presumably as a kind of reaction against the bombastic, media-saturated excesses of recent artistic generations. There's a greater sense of playfulness, though, with Kassay – his upstairs installation, especially, coming across almost like a kind of cerebral game, a puzzle to be solved, with precisely the sort of easy, distanced humour that's only really possible with a nostalgic look backwards.

As for his 'silver paintings', it's not difficult to work out, despite the ICA's attempts to shift focus, why they might be such a hit with collectors. Simultaneously cutting-edge and reassuringly familiar, they evince a simple, contemplative, purist sensibility. And during what are ostensibly more economically downbeat times, such relatively pious fare offers an alternative for collectors sick of gorging themselves on slick, high-concept pieces – in which case, the paintings can perhaps be seen as akin to an expensive course of colonic irrigation, a way of purifying the system. At the same time, though, more than any other work being made by Kassay's peers, they manage to tap into the most basic, most elemental motives for collecting: their shimmering aurus, their sense of burnished luxury acting as a reflection – quite literally, in this case – of the collector's own status.

> **The paintings are like an expensive colonic irrigation, a purifying of the system**

Jacob Kassay is at the ICA **until Nov 13** (see Major spaces).
www.timeout.com/art

Gabriel Coxhead, «The price of silver», in Timeout, october 27 – november 2, 2011

JACOB KASSAY

BY ALEX GARTENFELD

Jacob Kassay: Untitled, 2011, acrylic and silver deposit on canvas, 8 parts, each 47½ inches square. Courtesy Art:Concept, Paris, and Xavier Hufkens, Brussels.

TWENTY-SEVEN-YEAR-OLD Jacob Kassay finds himself an unwitting fire-starter due to the success of a single body of work—acrylic and silver paintings that famously commanded a wait list when they debuted in a 2009 solo show at New York's Eleven Rivington, and more famously climbed to nearly $300,000 at auction this spring. Given still-current boom-time art world protocols, whereby the market creates value and institutions, including publications, confirm it, Kassay's paintings are ripe for investigation. This month, his first museum show opens at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London. The press release promises "the opportunity to critically appraise the work," resonating with the words of Kassay's Belgian dealer, Xavier Hufkens: "I imagine a lot of people know his work for the wrong reasons." The challenge is for his many mixed-medium projects to create value that truly exceeds the aura of the market.

CURRENTLY ON VIEW

A solo show at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, Oct. 12-Nov. 13.

Analysis of Kassay's paintings and their appeal has taken two tacks. The first suggests that the silver itself creates value. The artist applies acrylic and silver to primed canvases; a chemist runs a current through them, activating reactions that create reflective fields, while the porous areas oxidize into a rusty matte. If the "luxury" explanation sounds improbable, it's partly because the silver is tarnished in the process. And while Kassay puns on Yves Klein's "gold" and "fire" paintings, in which process and image combine as divine fetish, Kassay's objects beg less reverence. At Eleven Rivington, he stacked silver canvases on the floor, a laugh about the presumed finish of their surfaces.

A second explanation is that the mirrorlike paintings appeal to viewers' vanity. But their textured surfaces reflect only a spectral presence. To approach Kassay's paintings is to experience deflection, an uneasy abstraction of the body.

Kassay, who lives in Brooklyn and earned a BFA from the State University of New York at Buffalo in 2005, works systematically to diminish his authorial mark. Previously he conceded a loose brushstroke, creating pools of reflective wet paint, but he makes fewer marks now, and the effect is allover non-composition—a rough ground and silver specks. Formal decisions are separated from expressive gesture. He builds stretchers in varying sizes and prepares his own canvases, then selects from among them almost arbitrarily for monochromes or the silvers.

On the ground floor at the ICA, Kassay will remove an interior wall to reveal windows facing Buckingham Palace, and cover the panes with muslin to create a semi-luminescent screen. Kassay's scrims, like Irwin's, convey a feeling of openness and use luminescence and atmospherics to encourage circumnavigation. In his Art Unlimited project at Art Basel 2011, the artist installed an ascending muslin ceiling over his paintings, an expanded version of a separate body of work that he creates by enclosing reflective, silver-plated sheets in wood boxes, the open end covered with jute. These sculptures sit on the floor, sending out unreliable reflections that look like hazy paintings on the wall and the floor—displacing interest onto everything but the works themselves. ○

Alex Gartenfeld, «Jacob Kassay», in Art in America, october 2011

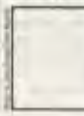
INTERNATIONAL EDITION
THE ART NEWSPAPER

In the frame

■ Who knew that their dealer **Larry Gagosian** had a soft spot for pooches? His current squeeze Sisila Montoque reveals all about her love affair with Larry in the *New York* magazine with revelatory details about the dogs owned by the couple. So which breed does the dealer like: Great Danes, pitbull terriers or Rottweilers perhaps? Shala, who is working with art *patronne* Dasha Zhukova on a new magazine called *Garage*, throws light on life in their Hamptons retreat: "I love the dogs we have out there, these **two big poodles** that we got after Larry's old dogs, a present from Richard Serra, passed away," she says.

■ If all goes to plan, the **Moscow Biennale** (22 September-30 October) will present to the world a new arrival: a baby called **Duda**. The outlandish project is down to the Swiss artist duo **Com&Com** who paid a Russian couple $10,000 to name their offspring after the abstract art movement. The biennale Duda baba is the second child to become part of the wider project, entitled **Gugasdada**, which aims "to create a global network of children called Duda", the first being six-year-old **Duda Kin Osarimen Izvebige** from Zurich. For the broody among you, the search for willing parents will move to New York in 2012. All the Dudas will be invited to meet at Zürich's Cabaret Voltaire in 2016 to celebrate 100 years of Dadaism.

■ Emerging artist and auction favourite **Jacob Kassay**, who has a major show at the ICA in London this autumn (12 October-13 November), has teamed up with the high-profile US composer **Rhys Chatham** to produce a limited-edition record released this month. "Inspired by Jacob's cool work, I made a 20-minute tape piece especially for his show at the Paris gallery Art concept last year," said Chatham who also performed at the exhibition opening. The result? "Jacob was inspired by the live performance and also the piece I made for him, and wanted to put it out as a record. I agreed, and we decided to make it a collaboration in the sense that I did the music and he made the work for the cover [below left]," added the musician. Groovy.



■ The prize for the most eye-catching press release of the week goes to **Scope Art Fair** which recently sent out an apocalyptic statement declaring: "Signs of poor economic conditions and civil unrest, Scope London postpones show until 2012 Olympics." Scope director, Mollie White, explains: "The current climate of social unrest, and poor economic conditions, did not create the sure environment to relaunch this year's edition of the fair." But as went to press, Scope's website was still trumpeting that "after a two-year hiatus watching the world markets settle, Scope London 2011 confidently returns to London's dynamic East End arts and media quarter"

■ **Michael Jackson** was known as an avid collector—of memorabilia, music, art—but who knew the King of Pop was a gifted visual artist as well? It turns out the musician was a talented draughtsman. Ten works by Jackson (his sister La Toya, below, stands next to the star's drawing of Mickey Mouse) were donated to the Los Angeles Children's Hospital last month by a friend of the late singer, **Brett Livingstone-Strong**. Michael's art now fills a Santa Monica hangar, where Livingstone-Strong revealed the collection to *LA Weekly* (he also plans to show the work at LA's City Hall). Jackson's favourite subject matters ranged from baroque chairs, including one emblazoned with the face of his beloved chimp, **Bubbles**, to historical figures, such as a portrait of George Washington.

■ Another surprising collection comes courtesy of Christie's New York, which on 11 October is selling a collection of guitars owned by actor **Richard Gere**. The star is also a self-taught musician (that scene in "Pretty Woman" with the piano was all him), though he has kept his "passion for America vintage guitars... under wraps until now", according to the auction house. He's not only amassed instruments chosen for their playability and craftsmanship, among them examples by C.F. Martin, Gibson, and Fender, but he's also collected guitars once owned by **Albert King** and **Peter Tosh**. "[Guitars] have been my true friends through the best and worst of times," said Gere. All the proceeds will go to support humanitarian causes.

■ It was a sad day for Upper East Siders when it was announced that the restaurant and bar, **Elaine's**, once a favourite haunt of luminaries including **Woody Allen**, **Kurt Vonnegut**, **Norman Mailer** and **Jackie Onassis**, was closing after nearly 50 years of service. Regular diners can find some solace this month when memorabilia from the eatery goes up for sale at Doyle New York on 20 September. The auction is set to include barware, furniture and art, including two Andy Warhol prints and books signed by Richard Avedon and Truman Capote. Just make sure you order yours "to go".

■ As we went to press, a video of actor **Ryan Gosling** stepping in to break up an art-related scuffle on the streets of New York went viral. The movie hunk (or somebody very like him) is seen separating two men fighting over a work of art in the East Village. One of the girls shooting the film excitedly exclaims: "It's that guy from 'The Notebook'!" The muscled, tank-top-wearing Good Samaritan obviously felt that art is worth risking life and limb for. ■

«In the frame», in The Artnewspaper, september 2011

ARTFORUM

Jacob Kassay, Robert Morris, and Virginia Overton

MITCHELL-INNES & NASH
534 West 26th Street
December 16–January 29

Three American artists from different generations strike a similar (if muted) chord in this exhibition, which brings together two wall-bound felt sculptures from the mid-1970s by Robert Morris (b. 1931) with several 2010 works by Virginia Overton (b. 1971) and by Jacob Kassay (b. 1984). The show suggests that the younger crew is well versed in Morris's seminal essays from the 1960s on post-Minimalism, but that they identify with this history to rework it, performing a "temporal drag," to borrow an idea from Elizabeth Freeman, by bluntly pulling the past into the present, thus underlining how time might not always move seamlessly ahead—and, more important, how it can be punctured.

View of "Jacob Kassay, Robert Morris, Virginia Overton," 2010. Foreground: Virginia Overton, *Untitled (Triangle)*, 2010. Background, from left: Robert Morris, *Untitled (White Felt)*, 1976–2008; Virginia Overton, *Untitled*, 2010; Robert Morris, *Untitled*, 1976.

Behind the massive, site-specific wooden triangle that Overton has lodged between two of the gallery's large pillars, her plank covered in globs of white sheetrock mud appears to be the love child of Richard Serra's props and Lynda Benglis's pours. Continuing the in joke, a few of Overton's Dan Flavin–esque fluorescent tubes are installed high up on two walls, hugging the corner. These striking works, which similarly appeared in her New York debut last spring at Dispatch, are affectionately (and fanatically) wrapped in images of Overton's own curly golden locks.

Kassay's paintings also tender notions of the artist's self, via methods that reveal his process, but his best pieces play with elements of chance. While a few shaped monochromes evoke Robert Ryman and Ellsworth Kelly, the murky surface of one small canvas encrusted with silver deposits subtly shifts with the natural changes of light in the gallery. The senior artist, whose pivotal thoughts likewise slowly emerge here, will celebrate a birthday a few days after the show concludes. Happy eightieth, Robert Morris!

— Lauren O'Neill-Butler

Lauren O'Neill-Buttler, «Jacob Kassay, Robert Morris and Virginia Overton» in ARTFORUM.com, January 2011

Moi en émoi par Nicolas Trembley

Les tableaux-miroirs du jeune Américain Jacob Kassay suscitent l'engouement du marché new-yorkais, pas uniquement par effet boule de neige, mais également pour le reflet qu'ils renvoient au collectionneur.

"*Miroir, gentil miroir, dis-moi, dans le royaume, quelle est de toutes la plus belle ?*" se demandait la reine dans *Blanche-Neige*. "*Tableau, gentil tableau, dis-moi, dans l'art contemporain, qui est de tous le plus beau ?*" peuvent désormais se demander les collectionneurs dans une fable où l'artiste devient le Prince charmant d'un joli conte de fées : celui de la réussite. Depuis sa première exposition personnelle l'année dernière à New York, les *Untitled* tableaux-miroirs du jeune Jacob Kassay, né en 1984 à Buffalo, affolent les collectionneurs. La raison ? Il y en a sans doute plusieurs, dont les méandres s'étendent de la psychanalyse lacanienne jusqu'au plaisir narcissique d'être les premiers à "miser" sur la *hype* new-yorkaise du moment. Mais parions sur le fait que la véritable raison tient sûrement à la magie que procure la lumière qui se reflète dans ces tableaux lorsqu'on les "éprouve". Car, dans la peinture abstraite, la lumière et ses variations, qui se font couleurs au cœur même de la matière, ont finalement toujours été ce qui a consacré les grands artistes, de Rothko à Ryman, en passant par Soulages.

Pour chaque tableau, Kassay utilise la même technique : il enduit d'abord grossièrement ses toiles de gesso (un apprêt) avec une truelle, un peu à la façon dont Manzoni pratiquait avec l'argile. Une fois secs, les tableaux sont plongés avec leurs châssis dans un bain de nitrate d'argent, selon un procédé d'électrolyse classique similaire à celui utilisé pour la fabrication des miroirs. Ils sont ensuite vernis pour empêcher leur oxydation. Ce sont donc, au bout du compte, des peintures plaquées argent, des bijoux...

Jacob Kassay est représenté à Paris par la Galerie Art Concept, 13, rue des Arquebusiers, Paris IIIe. www.galerieartconcept.com

Jacob Kassay
Untitled (2010). Acrylique et argent sur toile, 122 x 91,5 cm. Collection privée.

Photo : Fabrice Gousset, Courtesy Art Concept, Paris.

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This page – All works Untitled, 2009. Installation views at Eleven Rivington, New York.
Courtesy: Eleven Rivington, New York.

FIELDS OF LIGHT

BY ANTHONY HUBERMAN

Jacob Kassay's field of action is the monochromatic neutrality imparted by the absence of figures and interaction between colours, inspiring technical experimentation that shows an affinity with the development of photography; in the quest to achieve an emotional effect, he creates unpainted paintings that are animated by the reverberation of the space we view them in. To this young American artist, chemistry is a tool for developing his conceptual practice, for leaving a mark on the canvas, for capturing the nuances of an environment.

I think most of us know the story about the white paintings. It was 1951, and Robert Rauschenberg made a series of monochrome white canvases. When he saw them, John Cage famously described them as "airports for the lights, shadows and particles", noting how it was precisely their blankness that made them so full of content. The paintings convinced Cage to premiere *4'33"* in 1952, a musical score that consisted of 4 minutes and 33 seconds of silence and allowed the random sounds of the concert hall audience – or those coming from the street outside – to make up the entirety of the piece.

But my own favorite story about a white painting, dust, and light happened when I first visited the basement of P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, in 1998. Climbing down the stairs into the abandoned boiler room of what used to be a public school building, I found myself below ground, far away from any natural light, surrounded by the musty smell of still air. Walking past the rusted old boiler, I entered a small room where the coal was once stored. It had a dirt floor and crumbling stone walls. The low ceiling was also made of un-

even stone, except for two small square skylights. Looking up through the thick cubes of sandblasted glass and seeing the fleeting shadows of feet walking by, I realized that I was not standing under the museum's building anymore, but underneath the sidewalk. These skylights had not been cleaned in months, maybe years. The afternoon light shone through its layers of dirt, dust, cobwebs, and created dim spots of natural light on two opposing walls in the room. Hanging there, quietly, were two small squares, equal in size to the windows themselves: acrylic-on-aluminum white paintings by Robert Ryman, from 1964. Flickering to life with each bit of passing sunlight and shadow, the monochrome paintings took on an ethereal – almost spiritual – presence. I felt like I had stumbled into an underground cathedral, where monochrome paintings were lit from above.

Just 25 years old, New York-based artist Jacob Kassay pursues the lineage of paintings as places for light and shadow. With their shimmering silver surfaces, his canvases transform blankness into aura and emptiness into reflection. These paintings have no color, no paint, and no image, but as ob-

Exhibition view, Art : Concept, Paris, 2010. Courtesy Art : Concept, Paris, and Eleven Rivington, New York.

jects in space, they take on all the lights, shadows, colors, and images of their surroundings. These are paintings about the experience of being in a room with a painting.

In fact, Kassay's training is in photography, but the entire photographic process, of course, is about capturing lights and shadows. With the click of a shutter, the camera projects light onto its film, and the subsequent chemical process fixes the image into place. Familiar with the chemical reactions involved, Kassay considered putting a painting through the photographic development process of being dipped, bathed, and fixed. Working with an electroplater in Pennsylvania, the artist began plating a series of primed canvases. A process commonly used to create shiny silver surfaces for jewelry or silverware, electroplating involves using electrical current to fix a layer of metallic material onto an object. By painting a canvas with a thin layer of acrylic primer – making the surface of the fabric impermeable and able to hold the metallic deposit – and dipping it into a silver-electroplating tank, it emerges with a reflective silver surface. The chemical process singes any parts of the canvas that are left unprimed and exposed to the chemical solution, creating burn marks around the edges of the silver paintings.

Kassay likes to install his paintings in groups, preferably in corners, and the slightly varying textures, colors, reflections, and burns within each work create a silent symphony of differences. Like the minimalism of Terry Riley – one of the artist's favorite composers – when paintings are shown together they contain the ebb-and-flow of repetitions that don't quite repeat. In fact, music is a useful way to describe Kassay's work: while John Cage uses a prepared piano, submitting it to a rigorous system of chance-based operations, Kassay uses a prepared canvas. Though the late composer couldn't exactly predict what any of his compositions would sound like, he knew his instruments well enough to know what types of manipulations might generate the most compelling music. In a similar way, if Kassay has chosen to enter the crowded and delicate world of abstract painting, he does so by paying little attention to painterly "talent" and placing little emphasis on his own hand. Instead, he makes his works by remaining faithful to a simple process, clear constraints, and a rigorous conceptual system. Having no control over how the chemical process will determine the formal qualities of his works, he is always surprised by what he sees after his canvases are plated. Still, as he prepares them for plating, he applies the primer in such a way as to create areas of different smoothness, roughness, and density, which inserts a certain amount of deliberate composition into his largely chance-based system. Kassay's priming is inevitably imperfect, and any uneven brushstrokes will eventually lead to lines, streaks, and textures, once the surface has been electroplated silver. While he paints with an informed sense of foresight, he can't know what the painting will ultimately look like. Like all good photographers, he knows that what happens in the darkroom is just as important as taking the picture.

Kassay's first solo exhibition in New York took place at Eleven Rivington in February 2009, and the artist was especially drawn to the gallery's large windows and to the short winter days. The windows let in plenty of natural light to sweep over the silver surface of the canvases, turning them blue, white, or yellow, depending on the sky, the snow, or the taxicabs driving by. With the sun setting early in the evening, while the gallery was still open, visitors could see the works in the full range of possible sunlights. They might be industrially produced metal paintings, but they couldn't be more closely tied to nature.

Like all good artists, Kassay creates a complicity between opposites and inserts paradox into the fabric of knowledge: he makes colorless pieces about color; he makes opaque surfaces about reflection; he makes metal paintings about light; he makes fixed images about movement; he uses chemical means to reach spiritual results; and he animates the techniques of painting and photography by disobeying both. Inserting a round peg into a square hole, Kassay's work tests the productive tension that comes from asking painting to co-exist with photography. What emerges in his silver abstractions is the somewhat ghostly presence of an elsewhere: a place of lights and shadows that reaches beyond the limits of either medium to include the room, the people, and the other paintings, artworks, or furniture nearby. Kassay's mirror-like silver surfaces perform a graceful bait-and-switch: while they're clearly seductive, they also divert the eye and blur its focus. As face-to-face experiences, these works become reflections of the act of looking itself.

I heard that Robert Ryman called up P.S.1 one day and asked for his two paintings back. I hope the museum will soon ask Jacob Kassay to lend two of his.

BY ANTHONY HUBERMAN

Il monocromo, la neutralità data dall'assenza di figure e dell'interazione fra i colori, sono per Jacob Kassay il campo d'azione e il propellente per una sperimentazione tecnica che tradisce un'affinità allo sviluppo fotografico, votata alla ricerca di un risultato emozionale, alla creazione di quadri non dipinti, che si animano del riverbero dello spazio in cui ci troviamo a guardarli. La chimica è per il giovane artista americano lo strumento per sviluppare la sua pratica concettuale, per imprimere la tela, per catturare le suggestioni ambientali.

Tutti conosciamo la storia dei dipinti bianchi. Nel 1951, Robert Rauschenberg dipinse una serie di monocromi bianchi. John Cage, dopo averli visti, li descrisse come "aeroporti di luci, ombre e particelle", osservando che era proprio la loro vacuità a renderli così densi di significato. Un anno dopo, quei dipinti spinsero Cage a presentare al pubblico *4'33"*, un brano musicale costituito da 4 minuti e 33 secondi di silenzio, dove i rumori accidentali della sala da concerto – o quelli provenienti dall'esterno – contribuivano al risultato sonoro.

La mia esperienza più memorabile di dipinti bianchi, polvere e luce risale alla prima volta che visitai i sotterranei del P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, nel 1998. Scesi le scale e mi ritrovai nella vecchia sala caldaie di quello che un tempo era stato un edificio scolastico. Ero sottoterra, isolato dalla luce naturale, immerso in un odore stantio, di aria viziata. Oltrepassata la vecchia caldaia arrugginita, entrai nello stanzino dove un tempo veniva ammassato il carbone. Aveva il pavimento sporco e i muri in pietra fatiscenti. Anche il basso soffitto era di pietra irregolare, a parte due piccoli lucernari quadrati. Attraverso gli spessi riquadri di vetro satinato, vidi le ombre delle suole dei passanti, e mi accorsi che non mi trovavo più nello scantinato dell'edificio, ma sotto il marciapiede. Quei lucernari avevano l'aria di non essere stati puliti da mesi, forse anni. Il sole pomeridiano filtrava tra gli strati di polvere, sporcizia e ragnatele, creando pallide chiazze di luce naturale su due pareti opposte del locale, dove erano appesi due piccoli quadri della stessa dimensione delle finestre: i quadrati bianchi, acrilico su alluminio di Robert Ryman (1964). Animati dalla fuggevole alternanza di luce e ombra, i monocromi sembravano acquistare una presenza eterea, quasi spirituale. Mi parve di essere capitato in una cattedrale sotterranea, con i monocromi illuminati dal cielo.

A soli venticinque anni, l'artista Jacob Kassay, che vive e lavora a New York, porta avanti la tradizione delle tele come spazi di luci e ombre. Con le loro superfici argentee e scintillanti, i suoi dipinti trasformano il vuoto in emanazione, in riverbero. Sono quadri privi di colore, pittura, immagine, ma come oggetti nello spazio assorbono qualsiasi luce, ombra, colore o immagine nelle vicinanze. Questi quadri parlano dell'esperienza di stare in una stanza insieme a un dipinto.

Non è un caso che Kassay abbia studiato fotografia. Il processo fotografico consiste proprio nel catturare luci e ombre: quando l'otturatore scatta, la macchina proietta la luce sulla pellicola, e l'immagine verrà in seguito fissata dal processo di sviluppo. Grazie alla sua familiarità con le reazioni chimiche coinvolte nel processo, Kassay ha avuto l'idea di sottoporre i quadri a un procedimento simile allo sviluppo fotografico, in cui la tela viene trattata e poi immersa in una particolare soluzione. Supportato da un laboratorio galvanotecnico della Pennsylvania, l'artista ha iniziato a rivestire di metallo una serie di tele trattate. Il processo della galvanoplastica, in genere usato in gioielleria o argenteria per ottenere superfici lucide e cromate, comporta l'uso della corrente elettrica per fissare su un oggetto un rivestimento metallico. Prima si applica sulla tela uno strato sottile di primer acrilico, al fine di rendere la superficie impermeabile e capace di accogliere il rivestimento, poi la si immerge nel bagno elettrolitico, ottenendo una superficie argentata e riflettente. Il processo chimico ustiona le parti della tela non protette dal primer e rimaste esposte alla soluzione metallica, creando segni di bruciature lungo i margini del quadro.

A Kassay piace installare i suoi quadri a gruppi, preferibilmente negli angoli di una stanza, in modo che le sottili varianti di superficie, colori, riflessi e bruciature compongano una muta sinfonia di differenze. Come nel minimalismo di Terry Riley, uno dei compositori più amati dall'artista, i quadri accostati producono un flusso e riflusso di ripetizioni che in realtà non si ripetono mai. La musica è un buon termine di confronto per descrivere il lavoro di Kassay: come John Cage usava un piano preparato, sottoponendolo a un rigoroso sistema di operazioni aleatorie, Kassay si serve di tele preparate. Pur non potendo prevedere nei dettagli la resa finale dei brani, il compositore conosceva a fondo i suoi strumenti, tanto da sapere quali manipolazioni fossero capaci di generare la musica più convincente. Allo stesso modo, Kassay ha fatto il suo ingresso nel mondo fragile e ondazionato della pittura astratta, ma scegliendo di non porre l'enfasi sul "talento" pittorico o la gestualità autoriale. Realizza i suoi lavori rispettando un processo semplice, vincoli precisi e un rigido sistema concettuale. Non potendo governare il modo in cui il processo chimico determinerà le caratteristiche formali dei lavori, rimane ogni volta sorpreso dal risultato finale. Tuttavia, nel momento in cui prepara le tele per il bagno galvanico, stende il primer in modo da creare zone più o meno lisce, ruvide o dense, introducendo così una certa misura di composizione volontaria in un sistema in gran parte aleatorio. La preparazione delle tele è inevitabilmente imperfetta, e ogni minima irregolarità nelle pennellate produrrà graffi, striature e altri segni una volta che la superficie sarà stata placcata. Anche se la conoscenza del mezzo gli garantisce un margine di previsione, l'artista non può conoscere in anticipo il risultato finale. Come tutti i bravi fotografi, sa che quanto accade nella camera oscura è altrettanto importante del momento dello scatto.

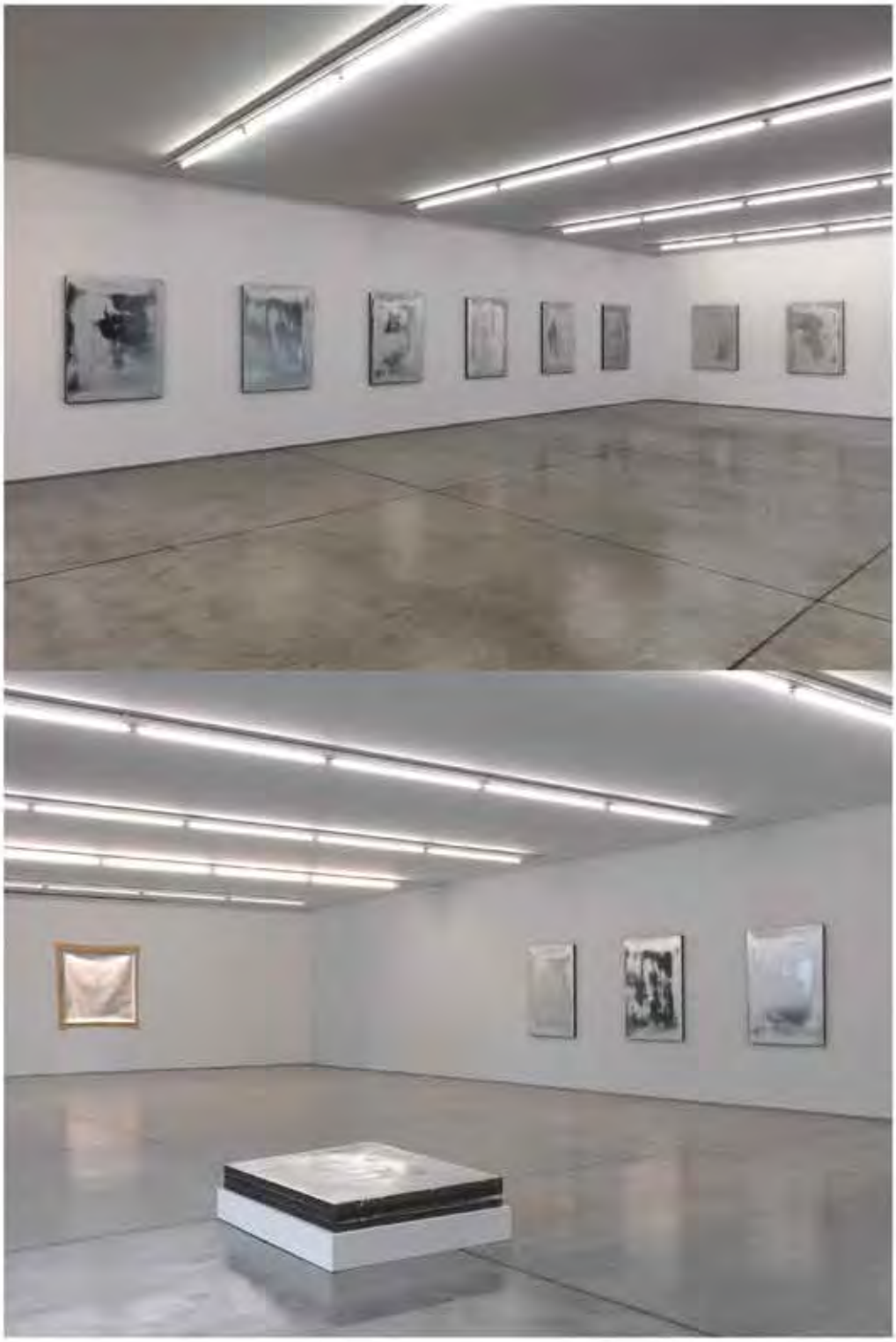
La prima personale di Kassay a New York si è svolta alla Eleven Rivington, nel febbraio del 2009. L'artista è rimasto affascinato dalle ampie finestre della galleria, spalancate sulle brevi giornate invernali. I vetri lasciavano entrare fiotti di luce naturale, che sfioravano le superfici argentate delle tele, sfumandole di azzurro, bianco o giallo, a seconda del cielo, della neve, o del passaggio di un taxi. Dato che il sole tramontava presto, durante l'orario d'apertura della mostra, i visitatori avevano la possibilità di osservare i lavori in tutte le possibili varianti d'illuminazione. I dipinti, nonostante la loro produzione meccanica, non potevano essere più strettamente legati alla natura.

Come tutti i buoni artisti, Kassay stabilisce una complicità tra gli opposti e introduce paradossi nella materia della conoscenza: crea lavori incolori che parlano del colore, superfici opache che parlano del riflesso, dipinti metallici attorno alla luce, immagini fisse attorno al movimento; usa mezzi chimici per ottenere risultati spirituali, e anima le tecniche della pittura e della fotografia trasgredendole entrambe. Come se inserisse una vite rotonda in un buco quadrato, il lavoro di Kassay testa la tensione produttiva che nasce quando si chiede alla pittura di convivere con la fotografia. Quel che emerge dalle sue astrazioni argentate è la spettrale presenza di un altrove: un luogo di luci e ombre che trascende i limiti dei due mezzi, per coinvolgere la stanza, le persone, e qualsiasi altro quadro, lavoro o arredo nelle vicinanze. Le superfici riflettenti di Kassay producono un gradevole inganno: calamitano lo sguardo, ma lo distraggono e lo confondono, ponendosi come riflesso dell'atto del guardare stesso.

Mi hanno detto che Robert Ryman ha chiamato il P.S.1 chiedendo la restituzione dei suoi dipinti. Mi piacerebbe che il museo chiedesse a Jacob Kassay di

Opposite – The artist installing his works at Collezione Maramotti, Reggio Emilia, May 2010. Courtesy: Collezione Maramotti, Reggio Emilia.

This page – Untitled, installation view at Collezione Maramotti, Reggio Emilia. Courtesy: Collezione Maramotti, Reggio Emilia. Photo: Dario Lasagni.



Anthony Huberman, «Fields of Light» in Mousse, issue 24, Summer 2010, pp.72-75

Paris – Jacob Kassay at art:concept

May 6~2010

Jacob Kassay's first exhibition in Europe, at art:concept, in Paris, will present a series of abstract paintings with silver metallic surfaces. The works of this young American artist create a space-continuum in which blurred and opaque reflections convey illusions of depth. Beyond the impact created by the light that alters any painting's surface, we find that the importance granted to the space between the spectator and the inherent flatness of the canvas turns into a rebounding reference to the immaterial, conceptual side of painting. His field of action is the monochromatic neutrality imparted by the absence of figures and interaction between colours; in the quest to achieve an emotional effect, he creates unpainted paintings that are animated by the reverberation of the space we view them in.

«Paris – Jacob Kassay at Art: Concept», in moussemagazine.it, May 6, 2010

collezionemaramotti

PRESS RELEASE

Jacob Kassay
Untitled

23 May – 3 October 2010

The project for Collezione Maramotti comprises ten new pieces, some of which are mounted on the wall, while others are lying on the floor.
The canvasses have the look of reflecting panels which convey the ghost-like presence of the underlying paint while absorbing and rendering the external surrounding space of the piece. The canvasses on the floor, as sculptural elements, are conceived as rejects, surging to the value of possibility/potential.
Kassay's work is based on a minimalist *praxis* where the industrial process for the production of the art-piece subtracts the quality value of the artefact to replace it with the value of objectuality, turning it into something of interchangeable quality.
The conceptual elements of monochrome, the objectification of paint pigments, the reflection of colour, movement and form, become central in the artist's research, and are codified and translated into a new metaphysics of the painted surface, in a new form of abstraction, strongly lyrical, where the reference to photography appears evident.
The pieces are conceived starting from the priming of the canvas with wide expanses of an acrylic base to make the surface water-proof, and the subsequent application of a silver finish coat which, through a chemical process similar to the industrial process of an electroplating bath, crystallises the accidental components of the painting on canvas, thus creating

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irregularities on the mirror-like surface. The electroplating process also produces singeing and burning on the uncoated elements along the edges of the canvas, and the appearance of unevenly burnished and oxidized areas on the metal-like surface which are out Kassay's control.
Kassay, who has a photographic background, has transposed many of these techniques in his painting practice. The chemical process of mirror plating on the canvasses is comparable to the old photographic process using a suspension of silver salts in gelatin: both techniques produce a transmutation where the light becomes the central element for the sensitization of the base and for the perception of the work.

With this exhibition Collezione Maramotti continues its activity taking place in the space dedicated to specific projects, which houses art pieces made specifically by guest artists. The pieces become then part of the permanent Collection in order to merge together acquisition practices for the expansion of the collection with the practice of public viewing.
Pattern room, as this dedicated space is called, was at one time – when the building was a manufacturing plant - the place where models and prototypes were designed. Therefore the dimension of project designing and experimentation merge together as the true vocation of this space, in a continuum between past and present.

Private view: 22 May 2010 h 6.00 pm in the presence of the artist.

The exhibition, with free admittance, may be visited from 23 May to 3 October 2010 in the opening hours of the permanent collection.
Thursday and Friday 2.30 – 6.30 pm
Saturday and Sunday 9.30 am-12.30 and 3.00-6.00 pm
Closed: from 1 to 25 August

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OK, I apologize for that trio of annoying critical mash-ups, but this lazy style of description illustrates the show's conundrum: Where Pollock declared, "I am nature" to embody his expansive inspirations, this exhibition exists in the realm that critic Robert Hughes aptly termed "Culture as Nature." Think of Stuart Davis's paintings of signboards and Sherrie Levine's ongoing appropriation of other artists' works.

Besides, except for those brilliant muralists who, some 30 millennia ago, depicted now-extinct beasts on cave walls, anyone who has ever picked up a brush has had to "negotiate" the history of painting. Yet few of the artists here look further back than the 1950s. For instance, Richard Aldrich's smudgy panels recall Philip Guston's patches of paint, though with none of that master's delicate chromatic tuning or compositional solidity. (Guston, for his part, counted the classical rigor of Piero's 15th-century frescoes among his greatest inspirations.) Nate Lowman's The Rejects features stencils of malformed fruit with such labels as "Pointed ends" or "Exaggerated curvature." The rather laborious wit in this 2009 canvas trails a catalog of Warhols, including 1961's Before and After nose-job painting, the banana adorning the Velvet Underground's first album, and the underwear bulge beneath zippered jeans on the Stones' Sticky Fingers cover.

On the other hand, Wade Guyton's large ink-jet-printed sheets of linen demonstrate that he's one of the few artists since Warhol to fully appreciate the serendipitous beauty that arises from mistakes in mechanical reproduction, those fascinating flaws that resonate with our own. And even though Agnes Martin's hand-wrought grids haunt his overlapping stripes, misaligned edges, and spotty printing defects, Guyton summons a gorgeous ghost from the machine.

Similarly, Jacob Kassay doesn't let conceptual stratagems get in the way of the startling aesthetic pleasure he wrings from "silver deposit" mixed with mossy brown acrylic on rough canvas. I don't know what price silver fetches on the commodities market these days—no doubt Damien Hirst could tell us—but Kassay's buckled ground battles the viewer's vague reflection in the precious metal, a rare melding of the materials' intrinsic worth with aesthetic value. And Polly Apfelbaum's stained rolls of fabric arrayed across the gallery's floor provide the physical tug that great painting has always exerted on the viewer's body, from Masaccio's Brancacci chapel right up to Bill Jensen's recent abstraction of St. Sebastian. Apfelbaum's Bones (2000) is the oldest work in the show and emanates a worn wisdom; the ribs of color striating each of these thick rolls of synthetic velvet hint at an even more luminous procession, if only they could be unfurled.

Just as I was concluding that the aesthetic chops of some artists had trumped the show's conceptual conceits, I was snagged by Kelley Walker's small canvas, 4870 Series. The size of a notebook page, I'd barely noticed it, but when I leaned in to study the almost blank white ground, my eyes registered tiny Benday dots. What I'd thought was a spare painting was actually a "four-color process silkscreen on canvas" and the unassuming image suddenly became a sly koan—a mechanical print scarcely discernible from the wall it hung upon. Depending on your mind's bent, such an image might conjure Magritte's picture of a pipe, which is, of course, not a pipe, or Malevich's white on white Supremacist painting, or ruminations on the visual prevarications of our Photoshopped age.

Not enough to look at, but plenty to think about.

'Besides, With, Against, and Yet: Abstraction and the Ready-Made Gesture'
The Kitchen
512 West 19th Street, 212-255-5793
Through January 16, 2010

R.C. Baker, «Let's Renegotiate! 'Abstraction and the Ready-Made Gesture' at the Kitchen» in The Village Voice, December 1, 2009

ARTslanT

Ali Baba-like Treasure Trove at PSM
By Ana Finel Honigman
Art Review: CAVE PAINTING
PSM Gallery, June 3 – July 18, 2009

With "Cave Paintings" at the PSM gallery, Bob Nickas has arranged a taster for "Painting Abstraction," his survey book on the subject that will be published with Phaidon in September. Nickas cherry-picked a vastly varied selection of artists for the show after months of studio visits in New York, Los Angeles, London, Paris and Berlin. What the contributors all share is the ability to raise constructive questions about the nature of painting and to push and play with technique while also providing wondrous examples of painting's possibilities.

Nikas titled his twenty-seven-artist-show "Cave Paintings" as a reference to the origins of pictorial representation, language, and painting itself. The show did not seek to present a strict curatorial thesis. But the underlining premise was that if abstraction does function as a key starting point for the contemporary art world's vast array of practices and approaches that function as a departure from the strict rules of representation, then the work produced by the show's artists demonstrates how sophisticated the genre has become.

Most of the artists on view play with the genre's conventions and assumptions about its history and constraints. A few, such as Jules de Balincourt, Kelley Walker and Verne Dawson include completely recognizable figures and non-abstract forms. Tony Just's small neon yellow canvas with the words "Fuck you all" written too large to be read in their entirety becomes an abstraction because Nickas hung it upside down - letting the soft brushstokes of the black against the yellow take precedence over the words' meaning and the image's backstory. Others, such as John Armleder and Katharina Grosse, present three-dimensional works that can only loosely be considered "paintings." But all twenty-seven have developed sharp and compelling tactics of attracting attention to the inherent qualities of their media and adding beauty, interest and value to the media they selected.

The interplay of these media and techniques adds strength and cohesiveness to the wide range of work Nickas has brought to the show. Clement Greenberg has criticized viewers who were too invested in the "stories" of works and less interested in simply seeing the works without a context. Here, however, knowing the specific techniques of many of the artists in "Cave Painting" adds depth and worth to their individual creations.

(next page)

Cologne-based Bernd Ribbeck's 2009 Untitled work with marker, acrylic and ball point pen is a luminous little painting of a multi-coloured geometric form. Its lovely light elements were created by removing portions with an eraser. By contrast, the New York-born twenty-five-year-old artist Jacob Kassay's three stunning silver canvases, all 2009, are rich with captivating texture and complex variations in colour within the monochrome silver. And the astonishing visual pleasure of those works is greatly enhanced by the information that the arresting appearance of Kassay's paintings is the product not of paint, but of silver deposits on dark canvases. Having begun his artistic career as a photographer, Kassay now applies the same techniques used to develop film for his canvases. He dips canvases of different sizes in the chemicals to "develop" them, creating beautiful silver surfaces that resemble antique mirrors. The results also cleverly engage with the assumption taught in many art history classes that Abstraction stems from Impressionism, which

evolved as a reaction to thepressure placed on representational painting by the advent of photography. In that respect, Kassay's canvases are a snappy bridge between painting and photography.

Jutta Koether's "Cine-tract" (2007) uses similarly industrial materials to create captivating slick and textured surfaces. She combines smoky patches of black acrylic paint with silver push pins used as fasteners in antique leather furniture and then covers her canvas with liquid glass. Underneath the slick, tactilely attractive surface, are faintly written, poetic sentences such as "I am where every woman wants to be," penned by Koether in a fine feminine hand that counter-balances the tough associations of her materials. From a critical feminist vantage point, Koether's canvas can be read as juxtaposing her personal diary-like thoughts with materials associated with old-fashioned offices where women were not allowed to develop their potential. In less message-laden pieces, Monika Baer's pair of gentle but beautiful peach and pink "Spiderweb paintings" (both 2009) play with the conventions of the canvas itself, by exposing the stretcher on one side where the German artist has cut-out spiderweb forms.

In a group where most of the work tests the boundaries of materials, De Balincourt's cheeky take on the show's title initially appears out of step with rest of the work because it is exclusively representational. The Paris-born and Brooklyn-based artist's paint-on-wood image of tourists looking around a pink cave is a good-natured poke at how domesticated abstraction has become and perhaps also at the futility of Nickas, or any curator, endeavouring a survey of contemporary practice in any area. However, after engaging the other works in Cave Paintings, the wood's fine grain under de Balincourt's pink paint captivated me more than the theme, and thereby became a object lesson in how the whole show sheds light into an Ali Baba-like treasure trove of new approaches to abstraction.

Ana Finel Honigman

The New Yorker, Goings On About Town, 3/16/09

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

JACOB KASSAY

Art this conspicuously clever is rarely so beautiful. The twenty-four-year-old New Yorker amalgamates photography and monochrome painting—with a tip of the squeegee to Gerhard Richter—by putting his paintings through chemical paces that mirror the silver-gelatin process. After layering his identically sized canvases with acrylic, Kassay sends them out to be professionally coated in reflective silver. The results, with their charred edges (the chemicals burn unprimed fabric) and mottled gleam, call to mind the deliquescent surfaces of Albert Pinkham Ryder as readily as the conceptual canniness of R.H. Quaytman. Kassay's paintings have a dusky, irresistible elegance, like the far sides of so many moons. Through March 29. (Eleven Rivington, 212-982-1930.)

-Andrea Scott

Andrea Scott, «Goings On About Town, Galleries - Downtown, Jacob Kassay», in The New Yorker, March 16, 2009

Time Out New York

Art

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Art review

Jacob Kassay

Eleven Rivington, through Mar 29

Installation view
Photograph: Courtesy of Eleven Rivington, New York

In his promising debut, Jacob Kassay paints canvases in broad horizontal strokes of color before electroplating them in silver. The result: Specular works that are hung on the walls or, in one instance, stacked on a low pedestal like oversized ingots to create a strange hybrid of monochrome painting and metallic sculpture.

The plating process scorches unpainted canvas, so the edges of these works are often blackened. In a few cases, burn marks extend onto the shiny faces of the panels, fading into golden, tarnish-like smears. Here and there, hints of the original color show through, and some of the pieces have strands of unraveled canvas flopping across the front, their sinuous curves fossilized under paint and silver. Yet the artist downplays surface incident, and the works appear nearly interchangeable: A set of rough mirrors that imperfectly reflect their surroundings, registering color and movement, if not the actual appearance of things.

The way that these thin silver surfaces delicately capture the traces of whatever stands before them evokes photography, with its light-sensitive emulsions of metal salts. But film photography as a technology has now been surpassed by digital—just as photography itself once usurped the province of painting—making Kassay's metal coatings feel like bronzed baby shoes, elegies to an unrecoverable past. Simultaneously paintings made into memorials, sculptures that refer to photography, and abstractions that speak of the changing regimes of representation, Kassay's works, while beautiful, are also melancholic, philosophical objects.—*Joseph R. Wolin*

More Art reviews >>

Joseph R.Wolin, «Jacob Kassay», in Time Out, New York, issue 703, March 2009