

KATE WERBLE GALLERY

83 VANDAM STREET NEW YORK, NY 10013

Leads to Another: Nathan Azhderian, John Houck, Arthur Ou and Ryan Reggiani
June 9 – July 10, 2011
Opening Thursday, June 9 from 6 - 8 PM

Kate Werble Gallery presents *Leads to Another*, an exhibition exploring the role of “layering” within new work of four artists: Nathan Azhderian, John Houck, Arthur Ou, and Ryan Reggiani. Primarily a photographic term designating the combining of multiple images into one print, “layering” subtly distinguishes itself from collage or bricolage through the elimination of any perceptible gap, depth, or seam separating the constituent elements.

Nathan Azhderian’s *personal trainer* consists of a series of paintings made on top of screen-printed, used t-shirts stretched like a canvas. The images emblazoned on the shirts (American flag, Hawaiian print, promotional headshots of pop stars) come in and out of focus as they are subjected to a series of painterly additions and alterations by the artist. Because this process makes it difficult to distinguish the “original” from the “added” imagery, the meaning engrained in these graphics is distorted and becomes open to reinterpretation. The presentation of the paintings in a grid proposes a creative engagement with the parade of symbols that define the presentation of personal identity through the prescriptive forms of mass culture.

John Houck’s *Aggregates* attempt to create desire that resists a world consumed with highly repetitive things through a combination of physical intervention and reprinting. Using custom written software, Houck generates every possible combination for a given grid printed as a contact sheet on photographic paper. These contact sheets are creased and re-photographed several times. This process creates layered borders that reveal the construction of each piece and adds its own layer of information, breaking the rigid system of the grid. By physically creasing and re-photographing these repetitive contact sheets, Houck reconciles the digital ground of photography and shows us the failures and ruptures in today’s algorithmic basis of photography.

Arthur Ou’s series of four photographs printed on vinyl and adhered directly onto the gallery walls inhabit the liminal spaces offered by photography through a tradition of abstract, manipulated images. Creating lines using tape and bleach directly on the photographic negative of a seascape, Ou demonstrates the inextricability of various kinds of markings. These markings are not only aggregates layered on top of a negative, but they also bleed through, redefine, and coexist on one visual plane. Ou’s work questions visual categories of foreground and background.

Ryan Reggianni’s *Untitled (Art Fair Floor)* was made for the gallery’s NADA Art Fair Miami Beach booth in December but exists only now as a finished sculpture. Representing a physical layer for artwork to be placed on top of, *Untitled (Art Fair Floor)* acts as both an art object itself and a record of the framework imposed on the artist. When removed from the art fair setting, it draws attention to a specific set of parameters, in this case the actual floor space dimension that has been deemed adequate for art to be presented in. Reggiani works with basic materials such as wood, metal and concrete to make work that directly addresses the parameters of institutional space. His wooden layers can be seen as extending beyond a photographic application, transforming the top layer of surface into a sacred object that can be transported to any location.

For more information, please contact the gallery, (212) 352.9700 or info@katewerblegallery.com.

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