

:: GRANT WAHLQUIST GALLERY

#1 (Tad Beck, Diana Cherbuliez, Jordan Kantor, Karen Lederer, Joe Mama-Nitzberg, Nyeema Morgan, Amir Zaki)

5/26/17 – 7/1/2017

Grant Wahlquist Gallery is very pleased to announce its first exhibition, a group show that will run from May 26 through July 1, 2017.

Nyeema Morgan's (New York, NY) *Like It Is: Prelude (T.M.)* is an installation featuring a redacted version of the introduction to the biography of Thelonious Monk, its grid fractured by an image of Trayvon Martin's body. The installation is exemplary of Morgan's commitment to confronting the contradictions inherent in the construction and distribution of knowledge and information. Joe Mama-Nitzberg (Catskill, NY) also uses cultural artifacts to create striking juxtapositions or modifications that upend our expectations. *Untitled (A Boy's Own Story)*, a digital collage printed on fabric, conjoins the cover photographs for different editions of the titular novel by Edmund White (the initial model's family sued White after they discovered their son had posed for the photograph). *Art in our Time*, part of a larger body of photographs that digitally remove the subjects of portraits by Carl Van Vechten (in this instance, Marianne Moore), enacts a different sort of erasure.

Like Morgan, in his "Blind Spots," Tad Beck (Vinalhaven, ME) employs the grid as field for a test of comprehension and recognition. Beck photographs unfamiliar tools, prints and trims the images, and re-photographs them using black spray paint and dodging tools. Gaps in the viewer's (and Beck's) knowledge create literal and figurative voids that generate their own ambiguous force. In "Carvings," Amir Zaki (Los Angeles, CA) also presents objects of ambiguous scale and purpose. Zaki constructs apparently carved wooden forms using 3D modeling software, their precise shape determined by a method of chance within the software. As with his "Rocks," one of which is also on view, Zaki's "Carvings" subtly challenge photography's transparency by presenting images whose beauty allures the viewer yet whose strangeness obstructs full comprehension. In Diana Cherbuliez's (Vinalhaven, ME) *Try*, three interlocking Mobius strip ladders are carved from a single chunk of applewood, a variation of a traditional woodcarving challenge; the carving sits in a mirrored three-sided box inserted in its plywood pedestal. *Try* expands the resonances of its components formally—the mirrored box multiplies the carving and incorporates viewers and the gallery itself by reflection—and inferentially, attempting to capture the many connotations of its polyvalent title.

Jordan Kantor (San Francisco, CA) presents a new, site-specific installation of a suite of dark, monochromatic paintings that utilize paint sludge, the usually-discarded pigment sediment that gathers at the bottom of a vessel containing mineral spirits used to clean paint brushes. Installed over commercial wallpaper printed with a harlequin motif (its geometry recurs at intervals in Kantor's practice), the installation continues Kantor's engagement with the legacy of modernist painting and painting's materiality. Karen Lederer (New York, NY) also often incorporates motifs from modernist painting, either implicitly (*e.g.*, Matisse's fish bowls) or directly. Lederer's prints and drawings—she often combines the two—place these motifs and images in contemporary contexts, joyfully depicting the pleasures and challenges of making art in our time.

The gallery is located at 30 City Center, Portland, Maine. Gallery hours are Wednesday through Sunday, 11 am to 6 pm, and by appointment. For more information, call 207.245.5732 or email info@grantwahlquist.com.