

About Like So: The Influence of Painting

November 22, 2014 - February 22, 2015

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FOREWARD BY THE CURATOR

About Like So: The Influence of Painting is a group exhibition that explores how the histories, forms, materials and other qualities associated with painting inform conceptual art practices today. Curated by Terri C Smith, the exhibition aims, in part, to challenge expectations of painting, which are often attached to historic movements, decorative qualities or romantic notions of the artist in his or her studio. *About Like So* features works

that use paint in unorthodox ways or bypass the medium all together to reveal how the “language of painting” can invade, obstruct and enhance other art forms. This exhibition asks, “In an era where painting no longer has the art historical primacy it once did, what can it contribute to the dominant art practices of today – art that is often not medium specific and is rooted in the theory-driven practices of conceptual art?”

The works include sculptures, videos, photographs, sound installations, and digital prints. Loose and disjointed narratives involving the histories and materiality of painting are found in several videos: Ragnheiour Gestsdottir’s video *As If We Existed*, portrays the fictitious melodrama of a figurative painter working in Venice; Tameka Norris’s *Purple Painting* incorporates makeup and food in a provocative video that, with few words, touches on issues surrounding race, gender and the pressures of an art historical canon; in Alex Hubbard’s video *Hit Wave II*, a magician gives instructions for tricks, but the sounds and activities surrounding him allude to action painting with Hubbard in the background wearing a paint suit and creating gestural marks with spray paint.

Sculptures by Brad Tucker, Dave Hardy, and Taylor Davis also show painting’s influence. In one of Tucker’s box sculptures, *Potholder*, he incorporates a homemade-style woven potholder that mimics

mid-century, shaped abstract painting while crossed bars in the box's back reference hanging devices (hooks, wires, D-rings) usually hidden by the museum wall. In his sculptures, Dave Hardy uses pigment, cement-infused foam, glass, metal and other materials, combining them so it seems as though abstract wall works have sprung into three dimensions in the form of sophisticatedly constructed sculptures that intentionally appear unwieldy or precarious. Taylor Davis's *TBOX No. 1* sculpture is a small double-stacked construction of birch plywood that sits directly on the floor and appears to have blue painters tape marking it with lines and arrows. In reality, the "tape" is painted on, creating an optical illusion that conjures trompe l'oeil painting.

Several works speak to painting through audio components. An installation by Australian artist Michael Graeve considers abstract painting via painted blocks of color and tonal audio overlays. Thinking about his sound work as an audio parallel to the painterly practice of translating information from the world onto a surface in the studio, Augustus Thompson's installation combines sounds from the studio, outside noises and constructed harmonies into what the artist considers a "sound painting." The collaborative sound and painting performance by K.R.H. Sonderborg, Wolfgang Hannen, Günter Christmann and Paul Lovens *in actu music & painting*, created in 1993 and produced by Institute

for Music and Acoustics of the Center for Art and Media, ZKM Karlsruhe, Germany, is the earliest work in the exhibition. It melds action painting with performed experimental music, providing a foundation for thinking about the many ways painting combines with other media in *About Like So*.

A handful of artists in the exhibition reference particular art historical figures or classic painting genres. In Paul Branca's *Untitled, for Rodchenko*, he combines monochrome paintings in the style of Alexander Rodchenko with tote bags and tags. Sophy Naess's gestural soap pieces began with a prompt to respond to abstract expressionist Hans Hoffman's work. Composed of body friendly materials, scents, and pigments, these pieces address the fraught painting subject known as *the bather*. In their version of TV painter Bob Ross's show *The Joy of Painting*, Peter Nowogrodzki and Max Kotelchuck's YouTube video follows Ross's instructions to make a landscape painting using a computer program rather than paint and brush. Polly Apfelbaum's abstract fabric sculpture, *Split Station Stop*, hangs from the ceiling and was inspired by her stay in Rome with its abundance of Catholic-themed artworks, specifically the Stations of the Cross. In Tim Davis's *Permanent Collection* series he takes photographs of classic paintings ranging from still lifes to religious, using the light of the camera's flash to obscure bits of the composition and/or bring surface qualities,

such as brush strokes and crackling, of the physical object to light.

Computer generated works by Seth Price, Paul Theriault, and Siebren Versteeg incorporate canned digital effects, flat bed scanners, and Google image search respectively. With Seth Price's *Digital Video Effects: "Spills,"* the artist layers digitally imposed black "spills" that ebb and flow over artist Joan Jonas's video featuring a conversation on the commercialization of art between art dealer Joseph Helman and conceptual artists Robert Smithson and Richard Serra. Paul Theriault paints directly onto scanner beds and then scans the composition, allowing for the occasional burst of scanner light to peak through the "painting." Siebren Versteeg enters his algorithm paintings (abstract paintings produced using code) into the computer and prompts a Google image search to find a "concrete" image, which is hung just to the right. Rather than taking a realistic image and abstracting it, the computer conjures representational images based on an abstract composition, turning the usual dynamic between the representational and the abstract upside down.

Paintings are also included in the exhibition, but the artists use strategies that challenge our expectations of painting's forms or the artist's role as author. In Leslie Wayne's *Paint/Rag* series, the artist plays with perception and a linguistic

idea that's embedded in the title (paint - *slash* - rag) by removing the layered paint off of one support and draping it over another, making it appear as if it were hung on a hook like a piece of fabric or an ordinary rag. John Knuth's abstract paintings resemble the splattered layers of a Jackson Pollock painting, but are the result of Knuth relinquishing authorship to a business of flies that excrete the paint he feeds them onto paper. Obscuring elements of a book with paint to reconfigure artist books, Marley Freeman inserts abstraction that, much like an analogue companion for Price's video, obscures and highlights texts and images in these artist books, in part, as a commentary on painting's decorative associations and the influence of modernism on the medium.

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Checklist

Polly Apfelbaum

Split Station Stop, 2014

Fabric, string bead, safety pin

Courtesy of Clifton Benevento

Paul Branca

Untitled, for Rodchenko, 2013

Oil on canvas, tote bags

Courtesy of the artist

Taylor Davis

TBOX No. 1, 2012

Oil paint, birch plywood

Courtesy of a private collection

Tim Davis

Christ Carrying the Cross, 2003

C-print

Courtesy of the artist

Tim Davis

Basket of Fruit, 2003

C-print

Courtesy of the artist

Tim Davis

Magnolia, 2003

C-print

Courtesy of the artist

Checklist

Marley Freeman

Constantin Brancusi, 2014

Acrylic on found postcard book

Courtesy of the artist

Marley Freeman

Degas Dancers- Methuen Little Library of Art, 2006

Acrylic, watercolor, ink on found book

Courtesy of the artist

Marley Freeman

Rona Pondick, 2014

Acrylic on found book

Courtesy of the artist

Ragnheiour Gestsdottir

As If We Existed, 2010

Video with sound

Running Time 30 minutes

Courtesy of the artist

Michael Graeve

Subsequent Moments Simultaneously, Audibly,
2011

4-channel sound composition, 8:00 minutes

Courtesy of the artist

Checklist

Dave Hardy

Sandbag, 2014

Cement, polyurethane foam, tint, aluminum,
pencil, glue stick, stainless steel

Courtesy of the artist and Regina Rex

Dave Hardy

untitled, 2013

Cement, polyurethane foam, tint, glass, tape,
paint

Courtesy of the artist and Regina Rex

Alex Hubbard

Hit Wave II, 2013

Video with sound

Running Time 6:02 minutes

Courtesy of the artist and Electronic Arts
Intermix

John Knuth

Transformation Foresight, 2014

Acrylic/flyspeck on canvas

Courtesy of Andrew Rafacz Gallery, Chicago
and Brand New Gallery, Milan

Sophy Naess

Burial at Sea, 2014

Charcoal, clear and shea butter glycerine,
bergamot, jasmine, grapefruit oils

Courtesy of the artist

Checklist

Sophy Naess

Georgia Dirt 1, 2014

Georgia roadside dirt, Savannah Spanish moss, Kentucky tobacco flowers, cosmetic pigments, oils of Calamus, Benzoin, Myrtle, Peppermint, Rosemary, Jasmine, Eucalyptus, Rose, Lilac, Lily; garnet “soaprock” from Luray Caverns giftshop, glycerin, shea butter, embedded linen cloth; marble and steel pipe base, hose

Courtesy of the artist

Sophy Naess

Lunatic, 2014

Block Island seaweed including Irish Moss & tiny muscles; crab leg, dried fish and shrimp, ground beech charcoal, cosmetic pigments, oils of Amyris, Lavender, Eucalyptus, Fennel, glycerin, shea butter, embedded plexiglass, cleat

Courtesy of the artist

Sophy Naess

There is No Soundness In My Flesh, 2014

Georgia dirt, cosmetic pigments, charcoal, unidentified flower, lilac and lily oil, glycerin, shea butter, embedded plexiglass, cleat

Courtesy of the artist

Checklist

Peter Nowogrodzki and Max Kotelchuck

The Joy of Painting, 2008

Video with sound

Running Time: 5:46

Courtesy of the artists

Tameka Norris

Purple Painting, 2011

Video with sound

Running time: 3:30

Courtesy of the artist and Lombard Freid Gallery, NY

Sonderborg, Wolfgang Hannen, Günter Christmann
and Paul Lovens

In actu - Music & Painting, 1993

A production of the Institute for Music and
Acoustics of the Center for Art and Media, ZKM
Karlsruhe, Germany.

Courtesy of the artists

Seth Price

Digital Video Effects: "Spills," 2004

Video with sound

Running time: 12 minutes

Courtesy of Petzel Gallery

Checklist

Paul Theriault

Tabula rasa, 2014

LED Monitor, Easel

Courtesy of the artist

Paul Theriault

Too expensive or impossible to build or visit, 2014

Inkjet prints on vinyl

Location: back patio

Augustus Thompson

Binaural Composition, 2014

Sound Audio Installation in Franklin Street Works'
café

Courtesy of the artist

Augustus Thompson

Movie Credit (River Phoenix, Shoegaze), 2014

Ultrachrome and Acrylic ink on canvas

Courtesy of the artist

Brad Tucker

Potholder, 2013

Acrylic, enamel, wood, fabric

Courtesy of the artist

Checklist

Brad Tucker

X by Z, 2013

Acrylic, enamel, wood, fabric

Courtesy of the artist

Leslie Wayne

Paint/Rag #13, 2012

Oil on panel

Courtesy of the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery

Leslie Wayne

Paint/Rag #34, 2014

Oil on panel

Courtesy of the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery

Leslie Wayne

Paint/Rag #49 (Kuba), 2014

Oil and acrylic on panel

Courtesy of the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery

Siebren Versteeg

_like_4300x5900_00130, 2014

Algorithmically generated image printed on canvas, Google similarity image search result printed to canvas

Courtesy of the artist

Checklist

Siebren Versteeg

_like_4300x5900_00097, 2014

Algorithmically generated image printed on canvas, Google similarity image search result printed to canvas

Courtesy of the artist

Polly Apfelbaum has been showing consistently in New York and abroad since her first one-person show in New York in 1986. A major mid-career survey of her work opened in 2003 at the Institute for Contemporary Art in Philadelphia. The show traveled through 2004, and a catalogue surveying fifteen years of her work was published by the ICA Philadelphia. Apfelbaum has held recent solo exhibitions at: Clifton Benevento, New York, NY (2014); Burlington Arts Center, Burlington, VT (2014); Mumbai Art Room, Mumbai, India (2013); D'Amelio Gallery, New York, (2012); Hansel und Gretel Picture Garden, New York, (2012). Her work is in the collections of The Museum of Modern of Art, New York; The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York, and The Los Angeles County Museum of Art, among others.

Paul Branca is an artist living and working in New York. A 2009 graduate of Bard College, he has exhibited both nationally and internationally. A discussion with Jesi Khadivi regarding his practice will be published in the next issue of *Fillip*. He is often found walking along the Farmington River carrying a tote bag full of heavy books searching for answers.

Taylor Davis has exhibited at: The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, The Tang Museum, Dodge Gallery, Office Baroque Gallery, Worcester Art Museum, White Columns, Samson Projects, Exit Art, and Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston.

Davis was included in the 2004 Whitney Biennial. Grants and awards include Radcliffe Fellowship (2010-2011) and Anonymous Was a Woman (2009). Diploma of Fine Arts, School of the Museum of Fine Arts; BS of Ed., Tufts University; M.F.A., Milton Avery Graduate School of the Arts at Bard College.

Tim Davis is an artist, writer, and musician living in Tivoli, NY, and teaching photography at Bard College. His latest exhibitions include TRANSIT BYZANTIUM, a multi-channel video installation at Transformer Station in Cleveland, and QUINTO QUARTO, a video, photography and sculptural installation at MACRO in Rome. His work is in the collections of the Guggenheim Museum, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Whitney Museum, the Hirshhorn Museum, and Walker Art Center, among others.

Marley Freeman (b. 1981, Massachusetts) lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. She received an MFA in painting from Bard College, 2011, and a BFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, 2008. Her work was recently shown in House Arrest at Franklin Street Works, CT; Reading Boyishly at THIS IS THE PLACE, NY; Significant Ordinaries, The University Art Museum, California State University, CA.

Ragnheiour Gestsdóttir lives in Reykjavík where she was born in 1975. Her education includes an MFA from Bard College (2012) and an MA in

Visual Anthropology from Goldsmiths College (2001). A visual artist and independent filmmaker, Gestsdóttir, works mainly with film, video and installations. Focusing on ideas of knowledge, language and perception, her artwork playfully explores systems and power structures in our culture.

Michael Graeve is a visual and sound artist based in Melbourne Australia. He has exhibited at: Kunstmuseum Ahlen (Ahlen, Germany), Sonambiente (Berlin, Germany), Gigantic Art Space (New York, New York), National Gallery of Victoria (Melbourne, Australia), and Museum of Contemporary Art (Sydney, Australia). Completed degrees include: Master of Fine Art (MFA Studio, School of the Art Institute of Chicago 2007), Masters in Arts (MA Media Arts, RMIT University Melbourne 2004), Bachelor of Arts (BA Media Arts, RMIT University Melbourne 1999) and Bachelor of Arts (BA Honors Fine Art Painting, RMIT Melbourne 1995).

Dave Hardy received a BA from Brown University, an MFA from the Yale School of Art and studied at The Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. Selected group exhibitions include: Make It Now at the Sculpture Center, Unbalance at Jack Shainman, and Greater New York 2005 at PS1/MOMA. He has had solo exhibitions at Regina Rex and Churner and Churner in New York and at Southern Exposure in San Francisco, CA. This November he will have a solo exhibition in Berlin

at Wentrup. Hardy is a 2011 fellow in Crafts/ Sculpture from the New York Foundation for the Arts. He lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

Alex Hubbard was born in 1975 in Toledo, Oregon. He received his BFA from the Pacific Northwest College of Art and participated in the Whitney Independent Study Program. One-person exhibitions of his work have been presented at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Midway Contemporary Art Center, Minneapolis; and in New York at Maccarone Gallery, The Kitchen, Team Gallery, and Reena Spaulings Fine Art. His work has been featured in numerous group exhibitions, including the 2010 Whitney Biennial; Greater New York, MoMA PS1; Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), Miami; Institute of Contemporary Art; Palais de Tokyo; Sutton Lane Gallery in London.

John Knuth (American, b. 1978) lives and works in Los Angeles, California. He received an MFA from USC and a BFA from the University of Minnesota. He has exhibited at venues such as: 5 Car Garage (Los Angeles, CA), Speed Art Museum (Louisville, KY), Marie Kirkegaard Gallery (Copenhagen, DE), and Human Recourses (Los Angeles, CA). He has shown his work internationally in Sweden, Germany, Denmark, Iceland and Mexico. He has shown nationally at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, Locust Projects in Miami, Another Year in LA, Stephen Cohen Gallery, Andrew Rafacz

Gallery in Chicago, Southern Exposure in San Francisco and the Minneapolis Institute of Art.

Max Kotelchuck drives a Honda. He plays in the band, Future Of What, and works at the website, Genius.

Sophy Naess is an artist based in New York. Her work has been shown in New York at Chapter, Essex Flowers, Lori Bookstein Gallery, Soloway, the Goethe Institut Library, the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, Recess, The Bruce High Quality Foundation, Sue Scott Gallery, Printed Matter, and numerous project spaces. Naess received her MFA at Mason Gross School and her BFA from Cooper Union.

Tameka Norris received her undergraduate degree at the University of California, Los Angeles before graduating with an MFA from Yale University School of Art in 2012. Norris has exhibited most recently at Lombard Freid Gallery. She has also participated in numerous group exhibitions including Radical Presence: Black Performance in Contemporary Art at The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York; Radical Presence, Contemporary Art Museum, Houston; Gifted and Talented, Third Streaming Gallery, New York; Prospect.2 Biennial, New Orleans; QueerSexing, Human Resources, Los Angeles; Prospect.1.5 Biennial, Good Children Gallery, New Orleans.

Peter Nowogrodzki is an editor at Fence. His writing has been published in Triple Canopy, The Believer, HTML Giant, Full-Stop, Rhizome, and elsewhere.

Seth Price was born in East Jerusalem in 1973. He has had solo exhibitions at MAMbo - Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna, Italy; Kunsthalle Zürich, Switzerland; Modern Art Oxford, Oxford, England (with Kelley Walker); Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York; Art Gallery of Ontario, Canada; Galleria Emi Fontana, Milan, Italy (with Michael Smith); Artists Space, New York; Year, New York (with Mai-Thu Perret); and Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York. Group exhibitions include the New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York; Altermodern, the fourth Tate Triennial at Tate Britain, UK; Greater New York at P.S.1 Center for Contemporary Art, New York; Kunsthalle Basel; the 2002 and 2008 Whitney Biennials; and Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, among others.

Paul Theriault lives and works in New Haven Connecticut, close to his birthplace of Milford Connecticut in 1972. His practice lies primarily within the idiom of abstraction but produced through the medium of computers and digital technology. Theriault has been exploring the possibilities of new media within the context of artistic production for the past two decades. From 1992-2002, he lived in Chicago, Illinois, where he

studied orchestral technique of the contra bass and worked primarily in digital video and sound based art. Theriault has exhibited work regularly in the United States as well as had his video work screened overseas.

Brad Tucker graduated from the University of North Texas, Denton in 1991 and received an MFA from the Milton Avery Graduate School of the Arts, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York in 2009. From 1999-2001 he was a Core Artist-in-Residence at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Glassell School of Art. He has had many solo and group exhibitions and performances throughout the United States as well as Italy and Spain. He is in numerous public collections including the Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, Texas; Museum of Fine Arts Houston, Houston, Texas; Altoid's Curiously Strong Collection; Minute Maid Corporation, Houston, Texas; New Museum, New York, New York.

Augustus Thompson lives and works in Los Angeles and New York. His work, which includes painting, print, installation, sound design and sculpture, has been exhibited most recently at the Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens, Deurle, Belgium (2014); White Cube, London (2014); Fondazione Museo Pino Pascali, Polignano, Italy (2014); Night Gallery, Los Angeles (2014); Still House Group, New York (2014); Steve Turner Contemporary, Los Angeles (2013) and in several San Francisco galleries where he began his career.

Siebrren Versteeg holds a Masters of Fine Arts from University of Illinois at Chicago and a Bachelors of Fine Arts from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. He was a participant of the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture and has exhibited most recently at The Museum of Contemporary Art (Chicago), Offen Aug AEG (Nürnberg, Germany), Locust Projects (Miami), and Outpost (Ridgewood, NY). Selected solo exhibitions include: Rhona Hoffman (Chicago) and the Art Institute of Boston (Boston). His work is held in collections that include the Ulrich Museum of Art, the Marguilies Collection, the RISD Museum, the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, the Hirshhorn Museum, the Yale Art Gallery, and the Guggenheim Museum.

Leslie Wayne was born in Germany in 1953, and grew up in California. She currently lives and works in New York. Wayne studied painting at the University of California, Santa Barbara from 1971 to 1973, and she received a BFA in sculpture at The Parsons School of Design. She is the recent recipient of a Joan Mitchell Foundation artists grant and has received awards from the Pollock-Krasner Foundation, the Adolph and Esther Gottlieb Foundation, among others. Her works are a part of numerous public collections including the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, Fondation Cartier pour d'art Contemporain, Paris, France, and the Neuberger Museum of Art, Purchase, New York. Jack Shainman Gallery has represented Wayne since 1993.

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