2013

Untitled

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Artists
Arianna Carossa, Joseph Farbrook, Darren Jones, Maciej Markowicz, Chris Radtke, Joseph G. Sabatino, Travis LeRoy Southworth, Dmitry Strakovsky, and Eric Valosin

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All measurements are in inches, height by width.

All images contained in this catalogue are courtesy of the artists unless otherwise noted.

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Featuring:

Arianna Carossa
Joseph Farbrook
Darren Jones
Maciej Markowicz
Chris Radtke
Joseph Gerard Sabatino
Travis LeRoy Southworth
Dmitry (Dima) Strakovski
Eric Valosin

unCurated by:
Jeanne Brasile & Jennifer Graham-Macht
Untitled is itself a name -- one that negates all necessity to the act of naming. It does not identify the objects to be shown and provides no literal context. Thus, there are no preconceptions or misconceptions upon entering the gallery space. Instead, the audience is privileged with a glimpse of three areas of contention in the art world: gallery context, hierarchy of the knowledge base and fetish in materials. In relinquishing as much responsibility as possible from the curator, the questions raised in this exhibition may not be answerable. However, as questions have been posed by this exhibition, it is important to clarify those three motifs. First, the exhibition space has a long history. Whether the space is an objective white cube or the halls of a palace, it has context. Second, the knowledge base refers to decision making professionals in the field of art like curators or museum directors. They are long established roles with great responsibility to the transfer of knowledge from artist to audience. Finally, art can be a lot of things but it is especially considered by both the knowledge base and the viewer to be tangible and thus collectible.

To have a space dedicated to the display of art; to have a profession reconciling with art's aesthetic and intrinsic value; to have artists that make art, suggests that we already know the answer to the most difficult question we have to ask. What is art? At every turn, we are confronted by this question, and the longer it lingers, the more difficult it is to answer...and maybe, that is okay.
On the Art:

"Art is subjective and it’s like a hit song. You either get a hit song or you don’t." - Joseph Farbrook

"Art for me is not representation but intuition of something not explicit. For me it is the difference between tickling and discomfort." - Arianna Carossa

"I think that something that is formally beautiful certainly has a place, but I think it also has to say something worth listening to." - Eric Valosin

"The amount of time that goes into making an artwork, the amount of labor that the audience perceives, is not the point, it doesn’t define the quality of a piece. The core is, that I initiated this work, whatever form it takes, through a concept, an idea. It came through my experience, work, ability, education as an artist, and that is more important than how long it took to make." - Darren Jones

"I think the viewer is necessary in order to bring meaning to the piece. Otherwise it's just a dialogue between an artist and a wall. You can't have meaning without an audience that has some baggage and brings it to the work, inscribing meaning into it." - Eric Valosin

"If you don't want to lick it, I'm failing... I believe in materials and their associations. If you can't feel it, if you can't smell and taste its presence and you don't have the urge to lick it, I'm truly doing something wrong." - Joseph Gerard Sabatino

"Getting physically involved in order to produce the artwork was a by-product of my process, the hand of the artist; I grew weary of that laborious effort for what became a diminishing artistic return. Traditional artistic approaches were no longer a vehicle that expressed my ideas. I did not need to hold the brush or carve the piece. I realized, okay so paint doesn't do it and sculpture doesn't do it so it's the idea that is the most important thing." - Darren Jones

"The first question would be, why did I not use the real object? I did intentionally abandon the idea of including the real object from this body of work, significantly because I like the idea of providing a mystery about the origins of the plaster casts. This, of course, stimulates the way that people look at them. It takes all the literal aspects of the object away and then one can look at something that came from somewhere that is unknown." - Maciej Markowicz

"When people talk about 'nothing', I think they really mean nothing tactile is present but they are still aware of an essence. With that in mind, 'nothing' can be visual...as light is 'something' but at the same time 'nothing.'" - Chris Radtke

"You can't appreciate a straight line unless it's followed by a curve." - Joseph Gerard Sabatino

"A lot of my work has been about the reflection of the invisible within the everyday, the things we actually choose not to acknowledge - like the mundane or things we overlook, imperfections. I want to bring those to light. Most of my work comes from a Minimalist background but I still want to create a piece that is visually engaging." - Travis LeRoy Southworth
"Prior to coming to grad school I had done a series of white canvasses that had to undergo some process to earn their legitimacy as white." - Eric Valosin

"Nothing" is one of those terms like eternity or infinity. We can ponder the essential ideas, but we cannot comprehend their true essence. Humans have to put measurements on things. Our mind cannot understand pure vastness because we have to put a boundary or an edge on everything." - Chris Radtke

"I want each piece to have its life fully lived as it were. And for me, that means people experiencing it and having a reaction to it. That means the artwork coming back to me in a way, through other people's thoughts on it and feelings on it. And a piece being shown multiple times gives it new contexts." - Darren Jones

"I always call digital art ice sculptures because the technology is eventually going to disappear. The display will disappear. It is eventually going to break down. Nothing is going to last as long as a painting, and even that will eventually decay, crack up and become nothing. But technology will disappear as soon as the next update comes around." - Joseph Farbrook

"For me the artistic process often begins with the idea for an artwork and it finishes with the dissemination of that artwork. The artistic life of that one piece is completed by it being seen." - Darren Jones

"I want the visual that something was removed or existed. Timelessness and time passing has become the main element of the work." - Joseph Gerard Sabatino

"I tend to be very analytical, and process itself is very important to me. All spirituality is about process. It's always a building journey of some sort. I very much want the process of making to be a spiritual action that then hopefully gets translated to the process of viewing on some level." - Eric Valosin

"What is nothing? It's lack of something. It's no thing -- or the absence of something. So the notion of absence of something in regard to the plaster casts would be because we can feel that there's something that is not here. Everything starts from nothing. I'm thinking about the general idea of a curated exhibition and the artistic process. There is always a beginning of everything that ever happened." - Maciej Markowicz

On the Institution:

"When is there going to be a master curator (television) show?" - Maciej Markowicz

"I think the cultural canon is written by the victors; the collectors, directors, the dealers; by the people who are in a position to say "well this is my taste and it's not only my taste but it's correct and we're going to show this in the museum." They are not correct, they simply are in a position to convince the public that they are." - Darren Jones
"I think that there's this hierarchy that happens. You think about the curator as a creator of the show, as a dominant figure who makes the show happen, who makes all important decisions. By default you suspend your art to somebody else, his/her will and vision...you have to simply let it go, which is also a very exciting part of process." - Maciej Markowicz

"I am a cultural plumber. It is important to make initial connections but I try to stay out of the way when an interesting artist is given an interesting space and room to function." - Dima Strakovsky

"Whether you're an artist, an art assistant, or administrator, you're going to have disagreements. You're going to have discourse, varied opinions and beliefs tied with one's need to be heard. At times, you have to act as a chameleon, blending with the people you are working with while making your point relevant when that time comes." - Joseph Gerard Sabatino

"One thing that I think is really important to the artist is that the curator, just like the collector, completes the creative circle." - Chris Radtke

"The curator is very much more an artist than I think we give them credit for." - Eric Valosin

"Somebody said to me that if it's a solo exhibition, it belongs to the artist. If it's a group exhibition it belongs to the curator. I can subscribe to that idea. For me curating comes out of the same place as wanting to make an individual artwork (as an artist.) One has an idea and one wants to express it." - Darren Jones

"I always think the curator has a creative process as well. They design the show. They put a number of pieces together and try to create an experience for the person who comes into the gallery." - Joseph Farbrook

"There's a multi-layered interaction between the artists' work, the curator and the audience at the end." - Maciej Markowicz

"The figure of the curator has the function of a being a critical connection between the public and the art. The curator and the artist work together to build a project in common." - Arianna Carossa

"The relationship between artist and curator is obviously significant and important for various reasons. One goes with the other and you can't have one without the blessing of the other. Your strongest backers come from the words of your peers, not necessarily your own. I don't believe that there's a reason to expand on that certainty any further." - Joseph Gerard Sabatino

"It's always interesting and very confounding that someone else is doing something with work you did. Of course you have to somehow acknowledge that, but also you can learn and feel inspired by the way that people hang your work." - Maciej Markowicz
“In long conversations (I’ve had with curators) I learn about my own work and it often informs what I do next. The questions that are raised and the ways the work is viewed, whether I accept it or not, has informed me.” - Chris Radtke

“The only thing I feel strongly and quite negatively about is a form of heavy-handed curation where meaning is coaxed out of adjacencies of certain works. One can easily hang two pieces next to each other in such a way that the ensemble says something that the individual artists never intended.” - Dima Strakovsky

“I like the collaborative nature of the relationship between the curator and artist. There is no hierarchy. It is a relationship of confidence.” - Arianna Carossa

“All artists in some sense are narcissists. Because, how can you have the gaul to think, I have an idea and I’m going to expose it to people. I’m going to expect it to be in exhibitions. I want it to be written about, bought, placed in collections and I want people’s feedback on my idea. There’s immense self-importance in that.” - Darren Jones

“The didactic part, the investigation part of the experience becomes limited in a way. The less you know, the more you are interested to know about them I think.” - Maciej Marckowicz

“But I don’t think it’s easy to categorize good or bad art because you’re talking then about taste, and taste is everybody’s right across the board. Whether one is in the art world or one lives out in the middle of nowhere and has never been to an art museum, we are all endowed with a sense of aesthetic taste that cannot be judged as poor by someone else. Everyone fills their home with art; the prints, the paintings, the fabrics. Everything you choose – that is taste.” - Darren Jones

"My truth is not necessarily anybody else's truth. And who the heck cares about it anyway? That's the challenge postmodernism poses to religion. It's also what may help break through institutional limitations to a truer 'truth.'" - Eric Valosin

**On the Space:**

“When you come to a gallery, you come prepared to see art. It is a whole new way of viewing something than if you look on your computer screen and see email in one window, and Twitter and someone talking at you from behind, you’re not really going to want to look at the work and spend time with it. There is something about the white gallery space that prepares the viewer for the experience of looking at art, which is communal.” - Joseph Farbrook

“I want to create a collaborative relationship with the work around me and sometimes I want more of the visual space.....because I’m aware of that border. I like to have a nuanced relationship with other artists' work.” - Dima Strakovsky
"To work in a white cube gallery is to enter in a relationship more with the characteristics of the space. At the same time, to exhibit in a gallery where the exhibition has a theme is to enter into a relationship with something, not space, but the idea of the project and then it can mean almost the same thing." - Arianna Carossa

"The gallery is a very leveling environment and maybe there isn’t much for the artwork to play off of but four white walls, and that’s fine too because it contains artworks that aren’t site specific or don’t need a particular environment to activate them. Where the interaction between viewer and artwork is enough." - Darren Jones

"I’m definitely interested in making work that can function in highly contextualized spaces, but I think that context will inevitably bring something to the work outside of what it might say otherwise." - Eric Valosin

"They (the object and the gallery) have a huge effect on one another depending on the architecture of the space. Every different space is going to change things drastically. Depending on the artwork it might change those spaces as well."
- Travis LeRoy Southworth

"I like location. I like environment. I like history. Making artwork site-specifically offers a chance to take risks and challenge oneself, so that it can be a more expansive experience than merely shipping an artwork here and there that has nothing to do with the site." - Darren Jones

"This truth I think I’m creating has nothing to do with anything other than its context. It becomes an ambiguous source of truth or non-truth, whatever it may be." - Eric Valosin

"Because they are identifiable objects, they’re not something that is merely perceived or imagined. You can see it, you can identify with it in terms of real time and space." - Joseph Gerard Sabatino

"I like how the work actually shifts over the years or can change depending on the installation. So it depends a lot on who I’m working with. That is actually part of my practice. Also, for the exact reason of how I install works in different ways they often become new pieces." - Travis LeRoy Southworth

"It is interesting how much people seek guidance through the title. But if a painting is untitled it is accepted now. To title an entire exhibition ‘untitled’, well I think this is a very rich subject – or non subject - semantics, meaning, presence. It’s a very exciting idea to bring work together - or not - that speaks to absence more than presence." - Darren Jones
“I don’t think of the art object as something with function. It is a form, a set of lines, which together, form a human element.”
- Arianna Carossa

it’s not fair if you leave me installation dimensions variable 2012
“Flying in 2008 is about nothing, but virtual art exists in the ether so it is physically nothing. What you are seeing on the screen is what you are not supposed to be paying attention to.”

- Joseph Farbrook
"I realize that I have evolved away from the heavy materialism and physicality that was once ubiquitous in my practice. My work is becoming evermore ethereal, conceptual and less reliant on permanence, on the tangible. I am interested to see just how far this can go."

- Darren Jones

Interstellar Medium
vintage bottles, etched text
7" x 17" x 6"
2010 (2013)
“So I see particularly the sculptures as somehow a circle that happens because they signal the absence of the real object. They represent the absence of colors, original material and shape. Most importantly, I hope they stimulate one's vision and mind to see what is invisible, beyond white on white.”

- Maciej Markowicz

Plaster Cast of the Palette No.04 from series Accidental Accumulations (edition 3/2AP)
Cast plaster
11 1/2" x 17 3/4"
2011
“I don’t mind if the audience interacts with them within reason. They can be touched. They are not sacred. It’s fine for the viewer or the curator to interact with them and that interaction is part of what makes it interesting.”

- Chris Radtke
"My aesthetic is to transform a space, to honor that "space" and to make whatever artistic practice I'm using in that particular "space" stand out to its fullest capacity. Whether they are pieces on the wall, a drawing that hangs, a suspension from the ceiling or a form simply fixed to the ground, it has to have a conversation with the environment."

- Joseph Gerard Sabatino
“I am looking for the productive space within boredom. Can I make an artwork from that? So it’s essentially nothing in a way. These tiny little things -- and can I collect enough of them enough of them to make something?”

- Travis Leroy Southworth

Similar Seemingly Absurd Infinities
dust from 100 NASA training photos on inkjet paper
dimensions variable
2009
“We create these idyllic spaces like for example, a forest, which very much resonates with us culturally. It is a “virgin territory” that hasn’t been touched and there are all these romantic expectations of the place and very often this is a part of various sales pitches in our society.”

- Dima Strakovsky

As if a Forest...
performance/installation, custom hardware and software, human voice dimensions variable
2008
"The mystical ideas of negation and nothingness are really central to me. They inhabit that space at the intersection of spirituality and art that I've always been really interested in."

- Eric Valosin
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