

Statler Waldorf Gallery

For Immediate Release

Exhibition: “Depthless”

Artists: Brian Cooper, Deanna Erdmann, Dawn Kasper, Jenn Kolmel, Florian Morlat, Aaron Spangler, Austin Thomas, Torbjorn Vejvi

Dates: January 29-February 28, 2010

Gallery Hours: Friday, January 29- Sunday, January 31, 12-6, and by appointment

Opening Reception: Friday, January 29, 7-10 pm

Statler Waldorf Gallery is pleased to present its inaugural exhibition entitled “Depthless”. The exhibition includes eight artists who use a wide spectrum of approaches to deal with issues of space and flatness in unexpected ways.

Brian Cooper’s paintings are painstakingly rendered depictions of imagined architectural environments. His use of multiple vanishing points combined with an emphasis on the flatness of his painted constructions paradoxically brings the logic of perspectival painting to its illogical extreme. With exquisitely rendered details of both the elements of construction and the simultaneous decay of his imaginary environments, he further confounds any sense of a coherent spatial landscape.

Deanna Erdmann uses her time while riding on the bus in Los Angeles to make drawings that are physical manifestation of space and motion. **Erdmann** allows the jolts and movements of the bus to dictate the motion of the pen, turning a trajectory through space into a flat, abstracted depiction of movement over time. By animating and projecting these drawings, the relationship between the flat map of abstracted space and the depth of inhabited space is made even more complex.

In her performances, **Dawn Kasper** inhabits and transforms every place she performs: a public street in Chinatown becomes a dumping ground for discarding personal possessions; a commercial gallery becomes a site for a religious, ritualized cleansing. At the opening reception for “Depthless”, **Kasper** and **Erdmann** will perform a live, improvisational musical score to **Erdmann’s** video, temporarily transforming a private bedroom into a live music venue.

“Forward Hand” by **Jenn Kolmel** ruptures both the flat space of the video screen as well as the invisible divisions that create social space. The video depicts people on the streets of LA nervously submitting to having their hair and face stroked by the overtly feminine hand that emerges from behind the camera. Sexualizing the space in front of the camera, the invisible filmmaker emerges from non-space behind the camera to physically engage with the subject. **Kolmel** inverts the standard relationship between the interviewer and interviewee, and breaks the norms of safe, respectable social space.

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Florian Morlat makes sculpture that is humbly but unequivocally present. His “Wig” series is made of pre-dyed canvas that is cut into improbable shapes and nailed directly to the wall, calling attention to its qualities as a raw material. The canvases then have sculptural objects attached to their surface, making the canvas stretch and wrinkle to the dictates of gravity, and further drawing attention to its materiality. As the surface falls forward into the space of the viewer, the canvas is animated in an almost humanistic way, as we become aware of every sagging and wrinkling detail that is created by gravity on the cloth object.

Austin Thomas’s varied performative actions and artworks may be broadly described as delineating and creating social space. Her practice has included “Perches” (hybrid sculptural/architectural objects around which events are created); an artist-run gallery in Bushwick; a traveling El Camino that provided a moving space for lectures about art; and many other public actions that have created spontaneous communities around art, discussion, and very often, cake. Her collages subtly incorporate this varied practice by cutting up the drawings made around or during these activities, and then recombining them with found materials. The surface of these drawings seem to recede and advance, creating a sense of a three dimensional environment within them, occasionally even emerging out of the wall into the actual space of the viewer.

Aaron Spangler is the rare, if not exceptional, contemporary artist working in the traditional medium of bas-relief wood carving: in itself a complex merging of 2-D conventions of representation with the materiality, mass, and dimensionality of sculpture. For this exhibition, the gallery is presenting a small wood carving in addition to several of Spangler’s drawings, which function as ideas for future sculptures as well as works unto themselves. The space of the drawing becomes a place where the dynamic between flatness and materiality is played out, as the drawing becomes a sign for the sculpture to come while remaining its own object.

The work of **Torbjorn Vejvi** is a hybrid of painting and sculpture that plays with conventions of both genres. His wall works use illusionistic details, sculptural objects, and the conventions of perspectival drawing to bring one’s attention to the space—imagined or real—behind and in front of the canvas. The sculpture included in “Depthless” imagines the space of a surreal still life and places it in a painted box that is open in the front and back, which is then set on an open metal pedestal. By placing the still life in an enclosed yet three dimensional space, the areas behind, around, and below the artwork are brought into the still life, and the space of the still life is merged with that of the viewer.

Statler Waldorf Gallery is a new, artist-run exhibition space located in a private residence in Echo Park, Los Angeles. For more information, please email: info@statlerwaldorfgallery.com.