FRANCES STARK (American, b. 1943)

STRUCTURES THAT FIT MY OPENING
AND OTHER PARTS CONSIDERED IN RELATION TO THEIR WHOLE, 2006
PowerPoint, 30:00 minutes
Courtesy the artist and Gavin Brown’s enterprise, New York

Los Angeles-based artist Frances Stark is known for her erudite and acute examination of literary and art history. Working in painting, collage, video, and performance, she creates highly intertextual and often self-referential artworks. STRUCTURES THAT FIT MY OPENING… brings PowerPoint into the realm of a deeply intimate and meditative presentation that combines personal letters, images of the artist’s daily life, and pensive reflections. Stark uses these visual and verbal cues in her search for “a better understanding of what kind of ‘liberation’—as a woman, artist, teacher, mother, ex-wife—am I really after.” She extends her analysis to a range of female figures, from Angela Rémancie in Jean-Luc Godard’s 1961 film A Woman Is a Woman to Gustave Flaubert’s Emma Bovary, to reveal the essentializing tropes male artists often use to depict female characters.

Interspersed throughout these epistolary, poetic, and portraiture.

Andrew Norman Wilson (American, b. 1983) in collaboration with Nick Bastis (American, b. 1985)

Group Therapy, 2014
Raw steel, iron fittings, 3-D printed hardware, crutch tips, melted PVC patio chaise lounges, and lamp, 108 × 44 inches. High-definition video, color, sound, 4:20 minutes. Courtesy the artists

New York-based artist Andrew Norman Wilson uses a variety of media to examine the myriad ways our experiences are filtered by technology and corporate culture. His Uncertainty Seminars series is the product of months of studying guided meditation, mindfulness, and the Power-Point presentation. He invites the audience to work through a period of considerable change in his life. Featuring objects and diagrams made in collaboration with Brussels-based artist Nick Bastis, Uncertainty Seminars questions the corporate fixation on everyday life and how therapy and medicine can also be wielded as a form of control. Group Therapy is a component of the larger project that focuses on emotional interdependence and coping mechanisms. The installation juxtaposes melted white lawn chairs—in a pithy reinterpretation of the analyst’s traditional couch—with scenes from a reenactment of the famous La Borde Clinic in France’s Loire Valley. Wilson’s version transports the clinic, known for its experimental psychoanalysis and nonhierarchical structure, to a sunny California puppy farm, where he connects two stories related to Sigmund Freud—one involving his pet Chow Chow who provided emotional support to the doctor and his patients, and the other regarding his patient nicknamed the “Wolf Man,” whose dreams of wolves helped inform Freud’s theories of psychosexual development—in a darkly comic investigation of therapy culture.

Based Program

Related Program

Artist Panel: Occupational Therapy
Saturday, May 2, 11:00 am

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Where does inspiration come from? How do artists cope with pervasive skepticism and doubt? Can one acknowledge and celebrate artistic forebears while also finding one’s own voice? In our media-saturated climate, where artists find themselves subject to both increased visibility and constant scrutiny, some of the most incisive and poignant answers to these questions are often found in works of art themselves.

Occupational Therapy expresses and addresses a variety of psychological conditions, both real and imagined, made manifest by artistic practice. The exhibition features artwork by twenty renowned artists: John Baldessari, Martin Brief, Tammy Rae Carland, Rochelle Feinstein, Karl Holmqvist, Christian Jankowski, Martin Kippenberger, Yayoi Kusama, Maria Lassnig, Lee Lozano, Deb Sokolow, Buzz Spector, Frances Stark, William Wegman, and Andrew Norman Wilson and Nick Bastis.

Sincere, cynical, and humorous in equal measure, the works on view engage the complexities and challenges of being an artist. Featured artists inhabit a variety of roles, from therapist, director, and narrator to patient, actor, and subject. Debunking the notion of the artist as enlightened genius, the exhibition aims to humanize the creative process. Several artists, including Lee Lozano, Deb Sokolow, and Frances Stark, assume a diaristic tone, employing text in the form of manifestos, doodles, and journals to give voice to personal insecurities and frustrations. They question art’s perceived ability to affect change. Some, like Pedro Reyes, also propose new paradigms for transformation. Other artists—Martin Brief, Rochelle Feinstein, Martin Kippenberger, and William Powhida—address what they consider to be the art world’s insincerity, preoccupation with celebrity, and obsession with the market. While many works function diagnostically by indexing the various issues artists face, others—by Christian Jankowski and William Wegman, for example—offer tongue-in-cheek prescriptions for staying off conditions such as anxiety or artist’s block. Whether aspiring to wellness or imparting words of wisdom, Occupational Therapy crystallizes art therapy’s directive to simulate one’s affiliations through the act of making art.

Occupational Therapy

contemporaryartmuseumstl.org

This exhibition is generously supported by David Zwirner Gallery, New York; Goethe-Institut, Chicago; German Culture Center at the University of Missouri–St. Louis; On Stellar Rays, New York; and Silverman Gallery, San Francisco. The策展人和艺术家对音频导览的感谢，Sonabend Gallery, New York; Tyler Fine Arts, St. Louis; and Maddie Brooker, Erin Mahony, Henry Osman, and Madeline Vermeulen, curatorial interns.

Occupational Therapy is organized for the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis by Kelly Shindler, Associate Curator.

Audio Tour

Download the CAM app at camstl.org/app or ask for an iPad at the front desk to hear directly from the curator and artists on the tour.
that interrogate how global media to produce thoughtful and reflective works challenging its innate and exclusive hierarchy.

By featuring every name in the majority of the magazine: paid advertisements and production. His project also underlines what is perhaps formations. Primarily working in text, the artist mines the art world elite, including theorists, critics, artists, lists of 2,500 to 4,500 names demarcate and codify magazine. Laboriously rendered in block letters, these of a square, approximately the same size as an issue between Fall 2007 and Summer 2008. Each work consists is part of a series of ten drawings produced and rearticulates language in singular and abstract poses, as though he were awaiting divine intervention. photo of the artist's hands arranged in a variety of prayer-like poses, as though he were awaiting divine intervention.

**Ink on paper, 30 × 22 inches. Courtesy Electronic Arts Intermix.**

**Deb Sokolow**

(American, b. 1974)

Deb Sokolow is a Chicago-based artist known for her comics, graphic novels, and architectural schematics. In her original drawings with “tangents” drawn directly on comic and anxiety-filled narratives hand drawn. In the original text, Broodthaers’s life is summed up in an impossibly concise timeline. Spector, however, literally beveled sculpture, hung on the wall as a concealed relief. In the same way, Broodthaers’s life story is depicted in “tangents” drawn on the walls of his studio, story of the artist’s influence on his actual work of art itself. At CAM, Sokolow has augmented the yarns she spins. Ultimately, these stories become the protagonist—You tell people you’re working really hard on things and untrustworthy. She stalks the man in room 501 and you think that the graphic designer in 504 is a serial killer. Sokolow’s narrator is paranoid and untrustworthy. However, the veracity of these observations is always undermined, for Sokolow’s narrator is paranoid and untrustworthy. In the same way, Sokolow’s narrator is paranoid and untrustworthy. In the same way, Sokolow’s narrator is paranoid and untrustworthy. In the same way, Sokolow’s narrator is paranoid and untrustworthy. In the same way, Sokolow’s narrator is paranoid and untrustworthy. In the same way, Sokolow’s narrator is paranoid and untrustworthy. In the same way, Sokolow’s narrator is paranoid and untrustworthy. In the same way, Sokolow’s narrator is paranoid and untrustworthy. In the same way, Sokolow’s narrator is paranoid and untrustworthy.
William Powhida (American, b. 1976)

Spiral Bound I, 2014
Spiral Bound IV, 2014
Spiral Bound V, 2014
Spiral Bound VII, 2014
Aluminum, paper, acrylic, and colored pencil
dimensions variable
Courtesy the artist and
Postmasters Gallery, New York

Possible Meanings, 2012
Graphite and colored pencil on clayboard
9 × 15 × 2 inches
Collection of Marline Nathan Meyerson, Santa Fe

Some Cynical Advice to Artists, 2012
Graphite, colored pencil, and watercolor on paper
15 × 20 inches
Collection of Stephanie and Tim Inggrassia, Brooklyn

Accomplishments, 2010
Graphite, colored pencil, and watercolor on paper
19 × 15 × 2 inches
Courtesy Adam Baumgold Gallery, New York

Why Be an Artist?, 2015
Acrylic and paper mounted on aluminum
27 × 33 inches
Courtesy the artist

William Powhida uses painting, drawing, and sculpture to advance a seemingly endless critique of the production, reception, and economy of art-making today. Referencing infographics, how-to guides, and instructional lists, the drawings on view here offer a colorful and playful commentary on artistic success. Possible Meanings functions as a tongue-in-cheek guide on how to “make it,” crafting humorous interpretations of outwardly innocuous feedback. For example, Powhida translates “What have you been working on?” to “Your career is in the toilet, loser.” In Some Cynical Advice to Artists, he sardonically explains how to achieve fame by repeating the phrase “Love Your Work” across six canvases. Feinstein layers black-and-white text bubbles on top of large green, yellow, and white color fields; the backgrounds function as green screens upon which anxiety and insincerity, rather than special effects, can be projected. Painted in a comic book style, they have a sense of levity, yet the insistent repetition of “Love Your Work” comments on the complexities of artistic production and reception. Ultimately, Feinstein transforms an empty platitude about art— as well as the humor and discomfort it engenders—into the work of art itself.

Rochelle Feinstein (American, b. 1947)

Love Vibe, 1999–2014
Oil on canvas, 6 panels, 74 × 74 inches each
Courtesy the artist and On Stellar Rays, New York

New York-based artist Rochelle Feinstein is known for her varied, painterly practice that comprises wry ruminations on abstraction, figurative works, and verbal punch lines. Love Vibe consists of a single large painting that repeats the phrase “Love Your Work” across six canvases. Feinstein layers black-and-white text bubbles on top of large green, yellow, and white color fields; the backgrounds function as green screens upon which anxiety and insincerity, rather than special effects, can be projected. Painted in a comic book style, they have a sense of levity, yet the insistent repetition of “Love Your Work” comments on the complexities of artistic production and critical reception. Ultimately, Feinstein transforms an empty platitude about art—as well as the humor and discomfort it engenders—into the work of art itself.

Karl Holmqvist (Swedish, b. 1964)

A is for A=R=A=K=A=W=A, 2012
Single channel video, black and white, sound
46:57 minutes
Courtesy the artist and Galerie Neu, Berlin

Karl Holmqvist uses a wide array of media in his practice, from sculpture and video to poetry. A is for A=R=A=K=A=W=A features the artist speaking over a string of black-and-white text. Holmqvist employs his characteristic drone to pronounce a stream of words that slowly builds in tension. In effect, as he himself quips, “The artist is present / sculpting with sound,” referencing the title of Marina Abramovic’s 2010 retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art. Holmqvist engages a variety of references, from the musical group Animal Collective to the artist Chris Krauss and Karl Marx’s Communist Manifesto (1848). The artist commands the viewer and by extension, himself, to “EXIT THE WORD PRISON” and “ENTER THE WORLD”; writing becomes something separate from, and mutually exclusive to, real life experience. In a clear nod to Concrete and Dadaist poetry, Holmqvist manipulates language as he repeats phrases, changes letters, and plays with phonetic similarities. Through these careful arrangements, he divorces each word or letter from its meaning, reflecting a certain existential angst and effectively creating a composition whose unraveling message hinges on the absurd.
Berlin-based artist Christian Jankowski charts an investigative journey through the worlds of contemporary art, mass media, and pop culture. In Das Gesunde Werden (Becoming Healthy), he spent ten days at the exclusive health center and spent his days there. His project, in which he continues to explore the potential of the art world to promote well-being and the search for a meaningful life. In an effort to repair the wear and tear on our bodies and minds, he offers a variety of strategies, from “brain walking” and yoga to “sensual walking.”

Jankowski’s project is not an “art therapy program” in the traditional sense, but an exploration of the potential of art to promote well-being and the search for a meaningful life. In an effort to repair the wear and tear on our bodies and minds, he offers a variety of strategies, from “brain walking” and yoga to “sensual walking.”

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