

Exhibition Checklist

Terry Allen

Rage, 1996
Etching with collaged fabric
Courtesy Moody Gallery, TX

John Baldessari

I will not make any more boring art, 1998
Silk dye
Courtesy Cirrus Gallery, CA

Xenobia Bailey

Sister Paradise Combustible Bag of Funk, 1999
Mojo Crown, 1999
Mandala, 2001
Crocheted wool
Courtesy Stephan Stux Gallery, NY

Andrew Bush

Globewoman, 2000
Epson Pigmented Ink on Somerset Paper
Courtesy Julie Saul Gallery, NY

Seong Chun

Automatic (141), 2000
Text on crocheted paper, thread and rubber
Courtesy Caren Golden Fine Art, NY

Leslie Dill

Thinker #3, 1997
Charcoal thread on photofabric
Courtesy George Adams Gallery, NY

Lee Etheredge IV

Peak, 2001
Totem, 2000
Typewriter ink on Japanese paper
Courtesy Pierogi Gallery, NY

Vernon Fisher

Shock, Disbelief, 1999
Acrylic on canvas
Courtesy of Charles Cowles Gallery, NY

Bo Joseph

Solve et Coagula, 2000
Ink jet prints on 19th C. encyclopedia pages
rebound with calf silk vellum and gold foil

Bo Joseph

Nothing is Written, 2002
Mixed media on paper mounted to canvas
Courtesy of the Artist, NY

Gina Kleinhelter

Judith, 2001
Penelope at her Loom, 2001
Wool tapestry, linen warp
Courtesy of the Artist, KY

Aric Obrosey

Wonder Wander Doily, 1994
Cut paper
Courtesy McKenzie Fine Art, NY

Rona Pondick

Pillow, 1997
Fiberglass and paint
Courtesy Sonnabend Gallery; Private Collection, NY

David Schorr

Taxi Tamil (group study), 2001
Silverpoint, egg tempera & gouache on Thai silk
Courtesy Mary Ryan Gallery, NY

Devorah Sperber

Red Bandana 3, 2001
Map tacks on clear vinyl
Courtesy McKenzie Fine Art, NY

May Stevens

Journey 1 Morning, 2001
Hand-painted lithograph
Courtesy Mary Ryan Gallery, NY

Richard Thatcher

Superman, (from the philosophers series), 1989
Patinated copper and aluminum
Courtesy Margaret Thatcher Projects, NY

Dudley Zopp

Wave, 2000
Dancer, 2001
Acrylic, graphite and watercolor on paper
Courtesy of the Artist, ME

June 17 – August 22, 2002

Text / Textile

Words and Weaving in Contemporary Art

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Guest Curator: Mario M. Muller

Deutsche Bank Lobby Gallery

31 West 52nd Street

New York, NY 10019

Deutsche Bank



Text / Textile

Text/Textile examines the parallel inspirations of the written word and the use of woven materials in contemporary art. The 23 works on display, which incorporate language/typography or methods/motifs of textiles, demonstrate an immense evocative range. Whispers and shouts, wit and solemnity, exuberance and coyness are all in evidence. The array of media harnessed by the 17 artists reflects not only a profound process-oriented curiosity but also the diversity of the contemporary art landscape as we enter the 21st century.

Text

An artist who introduces language into art, engages a weaving of verbal and visual meaning. This layered experiential approach to process and product often creates an art of rich narrative possibilities. For those artists who draw inspiration from woven materials as varied as 16th century Muslim prayer rugs or the gossamer theatrics of scrim, a similar engagement of the beholder's eye lies in wait. At once familiar and simultaneously veiled, these artists create an art that gradually reveals complexities and insights to kindle both sides of the brain.

It has long been the gift of writers to conjure images and emotions through the use of language. Visual artists have always been deeply affected by the power of the spoken and written word. In the early part of the 1900's, these separate disciplines began a courtship. Once relegated to the private harvest of an artist's notebook, the scribbled notes in the margin of a sketch, indications of visual and verbal thought process, soon seeped into fully realized works of art.

One of the pre-eminent examples of the use of language in visual art is Rene Magritte's stunning 1929 oil on canvas, *The Treachery of Images*.

While the use of the phrase "Ceci n'est pas une pipe" coupled with the meticulously rendered painting of a floating pipe was not Magritte's first nor only use of language, it has become emblematic of the strange and haunting marriage of text and image. The disassociative impact of surrealism's visual investigation gave license to this marriage and the effect has been an enduring one.

When language enters the pictorial plane, it bears the double impact of the text's content and its graphic invention. The shape of the letter 'M' carries the viewer's eye on a roller coaster ride up, down and up again, much like a Franz Kline brush-stroke can carry you on a retinal journey. It is also worth noting that when image and language coexist, a viewer is consciously either reading the text or scanning the image. It is difficult to imagine that both could be achieved simultaneously, yet unconsciously they happen concurrently. It is within this pendulum swing, between linguistic and imagistic synaptic firings, that a mode of aesthetic reverie is created: in essence, the meeting of the left and right sides of the brain.

For several of the exhibiting artists, poetry is their linguistic muse. With the words of others they create an in-absentia collaboration. Alliterative lines from Emily Dickenson dancing like reflective highlights on the water's surface can contribute an aural element to visual experience. For others, inspiration comes in the form of pop culture or art historical dialogue. Regardless of content (or even the lack thereof), the use of writing expands the parameters of our visual expectations.

Textile

Contemporary artists have often questioned the expectations of process. In this spirit several artists today are looking toward more traditional (craft-oriented) mediums as a vehicle for contemporary

visual communication. Their choice of arduously hand crafted mediums can be seen as a rebuff of mechanically reproduced images lacking any visible artist's touch. While there are several artists who have harnessed computer controlled looms and fabrication techniques, the artists chosen for this exhibition have an abiding reverence for epiphany-inducing labor.

Contemporary fascination with textiles does not end with an engagement in painstaking techniques however. For several artists, textile aesthetic investigations are catalyzed by the patterns, colors and iconography of masterworks of foreign lands and ancient times. Their point of creative departure originates from crafts, which were once seen as the decorative arts. Taking an image of what most would recognize as a grandmother's hand-made doily and executing it in large-scale hand-cut paper is both a jarring and witty enterprise. This recontextualization is a hallmark of postmodern artistic and intellectual practice.

At once meditative in process and reflective of a significant temporal dedication, artists who choose to wield the brush, typewriter, loom or crochet needle revel in the inherent and unique qualities that these mediums can produce. As is so often the case in ambitious contemporary art, they also push the mediums far beyond the conventional assumptions of yesteryear.

—Mario M. Muller, May 2002

Mr. Muller is an artist, writer and independent curator

Cover: Lee Etheredge IV, *Peak* (detail)