

Dennis Balk
Bernadette Corporation
ChanSchatz
Stephen Hendee
Gareth James
Daniel Pflumm

Curated by
Tim Griffin & Bennett Simpson

September 9 - October 9, 1999

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Cover: Before Sprint was **Jean-Luc Godard**
Still from *two or three things I know about her...* 1966

Special thanks to golf buddies
Mike Smith and Mayo Thompson

The Production of Production

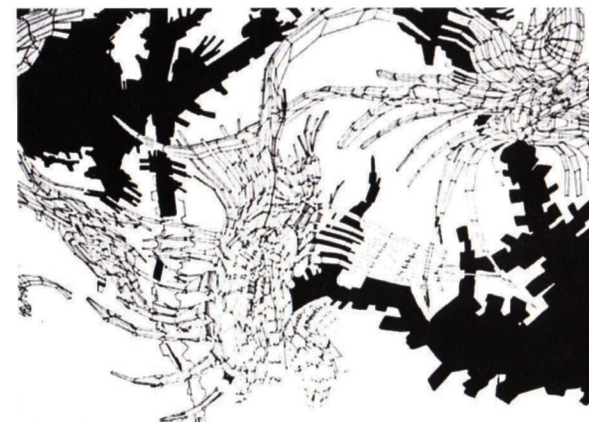
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Perhaps it is a link enabling us...

apex



Stephen Hendee *deployed immortal patterns A+B (detail)* 1999
ink on mat-board 40" x 30"

What are the New Topics?

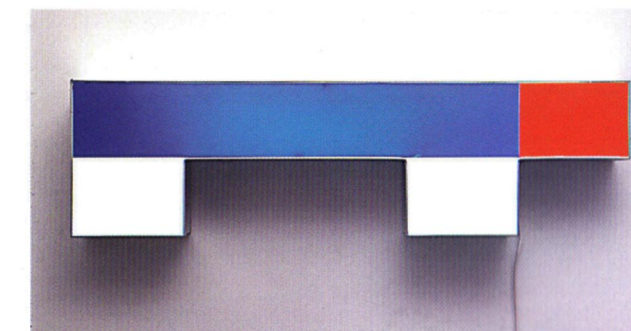
Optics Management. Iconoclasm. Niche Maintenance. Data Sculpting. Blip Forecasting. Trend Dissipation. Smiles and Handshakes. Spectral Analysis. Despecified Media. The Long Now. Comparative Syntax. Context Crunching. Tidal Markets. Subjunctive Dependency. Demographic Interpolation. Database Sociability. Price Fixing. Counterfeiting. Handwriting Analysis. Temporal Factoring. Max Factor. Loose Screws. Middle Men. Parallel Content. Shop Talk. Portable Studios. Quantum Computing. Style Points. Executive Decisions. Emotional Arbitrage. Jet Lag. Compact Mirrors. Design Rhetoric. Waste and Sewage. Scenario Planning. Narrative Emissions. Shelf Life vs. Afterlife. Counter-indication. Dead Brands. Black Holes. Holons. Multi-Platforming. Network as Non-Space. Beta Testing. The Global Business Network. Idea Patterning. Perceptual Sub-Contracting. Vacant Lots. Virtual Ethics. Regles du Jeu. Logo Vacuums. Cul de sacs. Machine Language. Faith Popcorn. Two-Way Streets.

What is The Production of Production?

- The incorporation of options. An evolving, volatile, multi-directional set.
- Osmotic practice (get to know your skin).
- Objects and images articulating the networks that

produce them, acting as de-privileged "nodes" for spatial configurations and formal links among media, material, data, finances and sponsorships, communities, perceptual mechanisms, operative systems, and ideas.

d) It is not loud or silent. It is not still, but it might be. There are dynamics hanging in wires. There are people on Second Avenue on a Saturday night in late summer. Values in possession of values. We are making something mean anything: a coffee cup means a single man dresses in blue. A magazine for famous girls. Names for names. The video is of deer eating blackberries by a lake. A writer and her editor communicate via e-mail. They say they need more time—there is more information than they thought. It is not beginning, or it is not the end. *The Production of Production* happens in unregistered time. What is historicization to The Long Now? What is this? A mirror reflects a dark hallway. He is going for a glass of water late at night. He has a meeting tomorrow morning with his distributor, a breakfast meeting. They have to talk about his visibility. Over-discrimination has evolved into malnourishment. His distributor wants an upgrade: Hilfiger is suing Bluefly, after all. His distributor is worried this will look bad for everybody. What we need is a total repatterning. We need to water the hedge. The tunnels leading up to the office could use a new paint job. We might install benches in the lobby (benches with phones). The user interface should be less pandering (these were his words).



Daniel Pflumm *Untitled* 1998 lightbox 12" x 42" x 6"

Is the Network Only a Metaphor?

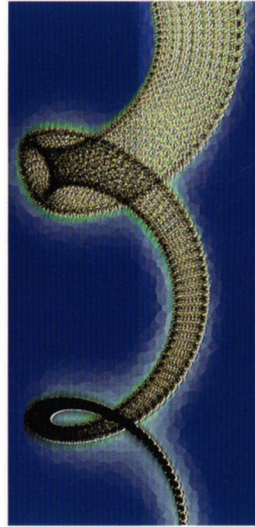
No, and it's becoming less so all the time. Where the metaphorical begins and where the literal ends is an ever more pregnant question. Consider the work of Stephen Hende, who has in the past created computational *Merzbauen*: total interior structures generated from military scenario equations processed by a quantum machine. His latest drawings are inspired by the mathematical results, yet also find visual parallels in aerial photographs of suburban subdivisions. He has called them sketches for speculative data-architecture. In an era saturated with new metaphors of space—the Web, the Net, chat rooms, ATM vestibules and rest stops—Hende's art takes shape in liminality. Like the Mannerists before him, or de Chirico, Hende responds to the visual stress placed on perspective by the technological innovations of his time.

New technology implies new perspective implies new space. Gareth James finds his on location. His two-headed paper camera—half CCTV, half 35mm Hollywood—situates the contemporary picture in-between the surveillance frames of the closed circuit and the desire-laden, branded image-space of cinema. James suggests that the two kinds of production are essentially no different from one another, as they both rely on property relations and hyper-administered space. James' camera operates, on a discursive level, like a particle accelerator. It collides contexts: the star system is recast with famous security guards. James flaunts the incongruities and blended dogmas of

video and film like a true iconoclast: what kind of image would a two-headed camera make? Who is filming the filming?



Gareth James preparatory sketch for two-headed paper camera 1999 ink on paper



Dennis Balk
DataAccumulation Print-Outs
(detail) 1998

trick is to access it. Balk's partially wrapped array-objects (are they sculptures?) are components of his *Photo-Magnetic Receiver*, a device that may or may not allow a test subject to "see" on this photo-magnetic spectrum. Dropped out of their initial contextual fabrics, the arrays become mere stage props for Balk's unique brand of analytical theater, while remaining aesthetic objects in their own right. When does art become a hoax? When do we believe in its power to move us beyond limit conditions? What is the viewer's role? Balks' practice is one of testing, and as such literalizes the metaphorical.

Why Are Practices More Important Than Products?

Products are illustrative; practices are activating, programmable. As contemporary art practices become more open-ended and diversified, as medium-specificity gives way to context or information management, the products that artists make will grow more malleable and more visibly attuned to their making: real-time self-historization. The idea of the product is changing. Information sells itself. A recent Sprint ad campaign positioned a coffee cup on an otherwise

If Networks Aren't Metaphorical, What Are They?

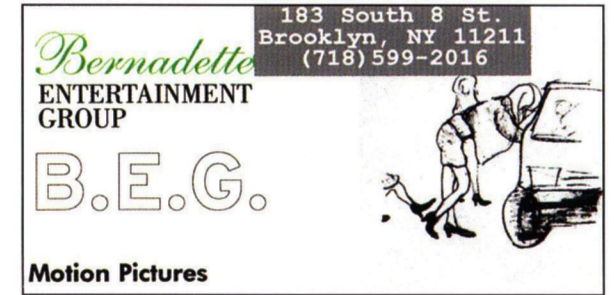
Unfolding practices constantly performing and restaging their limits. Practices generate incidents generate practices. In his *Data-Accumulation Print-Outs*, Dennis Balk uses images produced in photo-luminescence tests of metals. Science is trap door to the non-visual: applied high-end instrumentation (is technology a magic wand?) excavates bandwidths typically off-limits to human perception. The prints push the idea that something remains hidden on the other side of vision—the

empty page of the *New York Times*. "You see coffee," the caption read. "We see data." The idea that "ceci n'est pas une pipe" has made the journey from artistic/philosophic conundrum to marketplace and back. As systems are increasingly objectified our best producers will be enamored with volume, movement, distribution, outlets, translation, spontaneous capitalization, and reflective scale.

German artist Daniel Pflumm is one of the new entrepreneurs. His practice extends from running the Berlin nightclub Elektro to producing techno CDs with Kotai + Mo to pirating logos for his line of T-shirts to the more traditional art endeavors of video and object making. In his lightboxes, Pflumm sloughs off the differentiating aspects of corporate signage (this one is from Baulssen cookies), leaving only the insistent ghost of production, a kind of marketing gestalt. Pflumm's minimalism is mediated by the repetitive flicks of channel surfing: Donald Judd at the CNN news desk.

And then there's ChanSchatz, whose practice/identity is that of the multi-tasking digital Factory. Not artist as machine, pace Warhol, but practice as intergrated system. For over a decade, ChanSchatz has been compiling and processing an information archive influenced as much by corporate business models and R&D matrices as by art. Aesthetics

ChanSchatz Series Lineage Drawing SLD.0004 1998
lightbox 50" x 62" x 3 1/2"



Bernadette Corporation Bernadette Entertainment Group (B/E/G)
business card 1999

as advanced data management. Their *Series Lineage Drawing* light-box functions as a genealogy of the diffuse outlets their practice has taken: archive of formal information (patterns, shapes, colors, evolutions of the same), textiles (ties and scarves "branded" with the signature ChanSchatz emblems), performance events, and corporate partnerships: products forever eclipsed by their production.

Cashing in or Selling Out?

Consider the paradox of Russian poet Vladimir Mayakovsky today: both futurist/constructivist and ad man. "Practice crunches categories." You've never had more options and the stakes have never been higher. For *The Production of Production*, Bernadette Corporation presents the Bernadette Entertainment Group (B/E/G), a casual culture venture with interests in underground cinema, fugitive fashion, and magazine publishing. B/E/G proposes a hypothetical non-space for products outside their markets. Let's meet there for drinks. What would an underground cinema look like on Prince Street? In the heart of Chinatown? On Wall Street? What would it show? Who would come? What would they wear? Their various projects may change with time and place, but one aspect remains the same: the interactive environment around art changes what art is, and what it can be.

Tim Griffin & Bennett Simpson
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