

DUST MEMORIES takes as its subject the residue of reality: that which seems to be a by-product of the real, but which is a vital layer of our dense and elastic reality. The exhibition features works that engage with dust, revealing its vast material and metaphorical significance. With EXTRA, the spring exhibition at the Swiss Institute - Contemporary Art, the idea of reality's elasticity was introduced to show that when stretched, the real becomes extremely dense and complex. EXTRA asked us to search for the limits of reality and pushed us to conclude with a meditation on its limitlessness. Accepting this assumption of the unbounded nature of reality, DUST MEMORIES asks that we look into the supposed empty corners of our world in order to see the profound complexity of what is constantly passing imperceptibly through every aspect of our lives. The intricacies of the real are exposed with the works of DUST MEMORIES made of and about the invisible, the dirty, and the mystical material of dust.

Emmanuel Latreille, curator of the Fonds Regional d'Art Contemporain in Montpellier, first presented an exhibition about his preoccupation with the concepts of dust, debris and residue in 1998 called Poussière, (FRAC Bourgogne). For our summer show this year, the SI has invited Latreille to present DUST MEMORIES, which features work about the possible realities created by dust. Enabling an extension of both ideas and geography, the Swiss Institute is happy to present DUST MEMORIES as a subtle counterpoint to the bombastic concepts of EXTRA. In addition to the fluidity DUST MEMORIES gives to the S's 2003 programming, dust has a particular resonance for our grimy New York City. Dust plays the medium for metamorphosis in New York City where millions come hoping to be touched by the grace of stardust and rescued from the inevitable debris of the city.

Bringing together both emerging and legendary artists including Mel Bochner, Piet Mondrian, Jonathan Monk, Robert Morris, Cornelia Parker and Lawrence Weiner, DUST MEMORIES will illuminate the density of the concept, medium and imagination of dust. The spaces where we first may see an insignificant or sullied deposit evolve into myriad worlds. Dust becomes a substance to illuminate further what was articulated with EXTRA: the real is infinitely layered, and by gliding through the almost imperceptible strata of reality, we discover the ultimate intricacies of our composite universe.

*I am more curious about the elements that, by being so widespread, are usually for that very reason shielded from view. The voices of dust, the soul of dust, these interest me a lot more than flowers, trees or horses because I take them to be stranger: dust is such a different being than the rest of us. -Jean Dubuffet*