Having Been Described In Words
Works by: Sadie Benning, Gregg Bordowitz, Phil Collins, Bill Horrigan, William Jones, Chris Marker, Julia Scher and Garry Winogrand
January 22 to March 5, 2006
Organized by Jason Simon
Orchard Gallery
47 Orchard Street

On January 22, Orchard is pleased to present an exhibition of works by Sadie Benning, Gregg Bordowitz, Phil Collins, Bill Horrigan, William Jones, Chris Marker, Julia Scher and Gary Winogrand, organized by Jason Simon. The artists in the exhibition are known for their activity in film, video and photography, and here they present departures and returns to their commonality. Bill Horrigan, whose work of the last twenty years is sampled in the show with his writings about each of the artists, is the Director of Media Arts at the Wexner Center for the Arts, in Columbus, Ohio. The exhibition developed through examples of the ways both artists and curators depart from received notions of their work. That these departures intersect through Horrigan as a writer, curator and friend is thought of here as archaeology of artistic exchange. The result is a slice through twenty years of curatorial and critical activity.

For Orchard the opportunity is one of curating a curator, reverse-anthologizing, institutional sampling. Bill Horrigan is an exceptional candidate for the treatment. In his writings, artists and their work are the agents of Horrigan's cultural analyses. Never grinding an axe or slotting works into curatorial conceits, he proffers a commitment to artistic labor, its place within a history of ideas and the social moment of reception. The selected works do not correspond to the selections of Horrigan's writings available at the gallery as a packet, but map trajectories for each of the artists between their intersection with Horrigan and the project on view here. Gregg Bordowitz, known for his activism, writing and videos, shows a 2002 installation commissioned by the MCA Chicago entitled "Drive". Chris Marker, one of Cinema's most hailed and influential voices, is represented by the little known series of travel books he "directed" in the 1950's & '60's, Les Petite Planetes. William Jones, whose film "Massilon" was a signature presentation in the early days of the Wexner Center and whose recent work was surveyed at the Tate modern in London this year, presents portraits of LA's Latino fans devoted to Morrisey and The Smiths. Sadie Benning, poster child of the beloved Pixal Vision school of artist videos, presents paintings that offer a glimpse of her 2007 museum survey. Julia Scher, whose first museum installation was commissioned by the Wexner Center in the institution's inaugural year, has examples of a recent foray into sculpted marble. English video maker Phil Collins and Gary Winogrand remain true to their established mediums as the earliest and most recent subjects of Horrigan's writing collected here, Collins with his video "Ockey & Julie" and Winogrand with his 1964 photo "Utah".

Experimental media histories and their intersections with the art world have left a fragmented record and Horrigan is one of the few voices that has consistently made sense of it. That he has been able to support the works institutionally which he has vested critically is all the better. That he has done so without alignments with one tendency or another is even rarer. And that he makes no claims for his own position within that history is rarer still. How much of this is going to come through is hard for me to gage--I don't want to put forward claims that the show may be only able to hint at. So my idea is that this history of Bill's will be bound to the works in the show through the 'reverse anthology', the packet of texts. The works then become another kind of puzzle, because the artists are selected based on Bill's texts, but most of the works are selected in part because they are exceptions to the careers. So the relation between the works and the texts can only point to the possibility of these more elaborate relations. And here I see one of Orchard's rolls, to offer these combinations of exceptions.