

STEPHEN PRINA
“The Second Sentence of Everything I Read Is You”

November 9 – December 23, 2006
Opening reception: Thursday, November 9, 6-8 pm

Friedrich Petzel Gallery is pleased to announce a solo exhibition, the debut of a work, by Stephen Prina.

An approximation, not a mastery, of a taxonomy for contemporary art, *The Second Sentence of Everything I Read Is You: The Queen Mary, 1979-2006*, marks a return, of sorts, to the presentation of a sound component in the gallery site for Prina. Since 1982, he has produced work with sound, and sometimes music, for such locations, but not since 1995 has he included such an element in installation, having preferred the circulation of CDs and 16mm film. Now, in an attempt to confront the recent tendency toward the nondescript video installation which results in the misappropriation of public space – you know, paint the gallery black, lay industrial carpet, project the image floor-to-ceiling, place inadequate speakers in the upper reaches of the space, far from the discerning ears of spectators – this work takes over the gallery as the support for this work, making spatial overture part of the spectator sport. This is not a particularly novel idea in the arts in and of itself, but the historical amnesia experienced in this arena suggests a response could be helpful.

Conceived as a traveling spectacle – a mini-Broadway-musical-on-the-road or circus – the crates for the work remain in the exhibition space, transformed into padded benches, providing a modicum of comfort to the viewer. A nine- and an eight-track musical composition sound through an incomplete grid of speakers, complemented by a lone, spotlighted one. As if to resonate in sympathy, one lone image of The Queen Mary docked in Long Beach Harbor glows at a distance. Unpacked, the work then lays claim to the walls, floor, and interior space by use of varying strategies, "...aspiring to the condition of light industry..." indeed.

Stephen Prina divides his time between Los Angeles, California and Cambridge, Massachusetts where he is a professor at Harvard University. Surveys of his work include "It was the best he could do at the moment," 1992, Museum Boijmans-van Beuningen Rotterdam and "To the People of Frankfurt am Main: At Least Three Types of Inaccessibility," 2000, Frankfurter Kunstverein. One-person exhibitions have been mounted at Art Pace, San Antonio; DAAD Galerie, Berlin; Los Angeles Municipal Gallery; Musée d'art Moderne et Contemporain, Geneva; P.S.1 Museum, New York; The Power Plant, Toronto; The Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago; University Art Museum, University of California Santa Barbara, as well as in Cologne, Düsseldorf, London, Paris, Seoul, and Vienna. He has participated in Documenta IX, The Venice Biennale XLIV, 51st Carnegie International, and in exhibitions at Museum of Modern Art, New York, and Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. Concerts of his music have been staged in Athens, Beacon, Berlin, Boston, Dijon, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt, Helsinki, Los Angeles, New York, Osaka, Seoul, Tokyo, and Vienna. He is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Künstlerhaus Bethanien Philip Morris Kunstförderung, an Engelhard Foundation Fellowship, and National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships. Recordings of his music are available on Drag City, Chicago, and organ of corti, Los Angeles. A book featuring his work entitled "We Represent Ourselves to the World" has been published by UCLA Hammer Museum.

Prina performs pop songs about love, sex, and death, with David Grubbs as the special guest, at The Kitchen, Tuesday, November 28, 2006.

This will be Stephen Prina's fifth exhibition with Friedrich Petzel Gallery. The exhibition will open November 9, with a reception from 6-8 p.m. and will be on view through December 23. For further information, please contact the gallery at 212-680-9467 or info@petzel.com.