

Press Release

For Kelley Walker, each exhibition is an occasion to give a new turn to the complex system he gradually weaves between the various contemporary ways in which the real is consumed in the space of art and media, as well as between the works themselves. For Catherine Bastide, he organized a tense choreography where criticism and seduction open the possibility of reappropriating the capacity of action, if not a hypothetical reality.

In the back of the gallery, the ultimate stage of Black Star Press: three versions of an image of a riot where a black man and a white police officer fight. The image, reversed and screen printed in Coke-Cola red (whose logo is on bottom of the image), is stained with chocolate traces as an expression of feigned violence. These three large paintings form the visual and conceptual background of the exhibition.

Around them gravitate a set of small screen prints of a brick wall realized with an old technique which accentuates the color variations. These elements give the appearance of a pure and simple appropriation whereas they are the fruit of a complex manual work. They punctuate the space; visual borders and formal openings, they oscillate between painting, photography and drawing.

A disco ball in chocolate hangs from the ceiling. In contrast to the screen printed bricks, it gives, with its innumerable facets, the impression of technical prowess, whereas it is simply the print of a mass manufactured ball. It turns, opaque and sensual, object without glory of a party which would have turned bad. Between these elements, two collages are presented on light boxes. They associate images of archives dedicated to the history of Apple and images related to the reception and the consumption of Kelley Walker's work: a photograph of a Black Star Press painting in a Miami collector's immaculate living room or an image from the Saatchi collection website which recently exploited an image – sold on a CD-ROM by the artist for 10 dollars – through a shamefully enlarged printing exhibited in a show of the recent acquisitions of the collection.

Critical self-portraits, these associations witness to the importance of computers as a tool for creativity, but above all as an instrument to subvert the concept of authorship and artwork, especially the commercialized one, as a unique and rare object.

At the entrance of the exhibition, visitors are invited to help themselves with posters created from an advertisement of the airline company Braniff for which Andy Warhol and the boxer Sonny Liston pose next to each other. The image is ornamented with stars and shapes of vivid colors, which are superimposed on the original image. Finally, to conclude without finishing, an enlarged photograph is stuck directly onto the wall. It represents Yves Klein burning one of his works (actually not really a work at all) next to a fireman (in reality a gasman disguised for the occasion). The image is marked with traces of a dog's paws drawn with a computer mouse. A confirmation that the inversion of values and the corruption of any concept of authenticity are in the heart of the system Kelley Walker sets up in order to escape the neutralization which lies in wait for the artist's gesture, like any other event.

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