

Harris Lieberman is pleased to present the U.S. solo debut of artist Lisa Oppenheim. Working predominantly in photography and film, Oppenheim investigates the ways pictures are archived, historicized, and remembered. Through the appropriation and systematic processing of culturally resonant images, she suggests alternative readings of visual culture from the very margins of legibility.

Three distinct but interrelated bodies of work occupy Harris Lieberman's front and back galleries. For *Art for the Public: Images from the Collection of the Port Authority* (2009), Oppenheim rephotographed images from the eponymous 1986 catalog of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey's collection of public art, much of which was formerly housed in the basement of the World Trade Center. While many of these works were at one time exhibited in the Financial District, JFK Airport and elsewhere, the works Oppenheim represented have been lost or destroyed since the catalog's publication, and only now exist, in its pages, as ghost-images. Meditating on the ghost as an "absent present," Oppenheim subjected each source to an analogous mode of development, superimposing a positive slide and negative of the same image, which should cancel one another out, but through slight misregistrations, yield trace remainders.

For *Yule Log WPIX* (2009), Oppenheim spliced together twenty-eight consecutive copies of film footage of the Yule Log, televised every Christmas on New York City station WPIX. The number of copies denotes the number of years of broadcast of the current incarnation of the log: first shown from 1970 to 1989, it was reintroduced in December 2001 by popular demand. Though the shot itself has not varied since 1970, Oppenheim rendered the passage of time visible by exploiting the "generational" nature of analog film – namely, that with every subsequent copy, her original print lost one generation of image quality. By the twenty-eighth iteration, when the white of the Christmas flame all but consumes the image, the film looks like its has caught fire and the subject "becomes the agent of its own destruction."

Situated in the back gallery, the double 16mm film projection *No Closer to the Source* (July 20, 1969) (2008) depicts Xeroxes of the earth and the moon, taken on the evening of the first moon landing, that Oppenheim sequentially rephotocopied at 101% and then animated. Attempting to produce a cinematic zoom into each surface, as a metaphor for historical inquiry, Oppenheim's deliberately imprecise method ends up all but obliterating the source images, and what appear at first as cosmic and geographic elements prove to be no more than bits of dust and detritus on the glass of the Xerox machine.

Lisa Oppenheim received her MFA from Bard College in 2001. Oppenheim's work has been

exhibited as part of the Liverpool Biennial (2006) and at Swiss Institute, New York; Grazer Kunstverein, Graz; and GSK Contemporary, London. This fall, Oppenheim will participate in exhibitions at Pump House Gallery, London, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. She will also have her first U.S. solo museum exhibition at the University of California Riverside/California Museum of Photography. e film looks like its has caught fire and the subject “becomes the agent of its own destruction.”

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