

Gallery Klosterfelde is pleased to present *La Plage (Plastic Bones)* , a site-specific installation by Dan Peterman.

„If one member does not fit perfectly the adverse effect will multiply. If, however, every part fits well, the precarious construction will enjoy an astonishing resilience. Life is tight in modular systems“. (Lothar Ledderose, *Ten Thousand Things: Module and Mass Production in Chinese Art* . Princeton University Press 2000)

Plastic bones are the basic elements of this exhibition. Each one is similar to the next, but subtly varied in form and color. Each one is palm-sized, smooth, and rounded over; resonating with the hand-feel of tools, toys, and technology. These plastic units are cut from reprocessed post-consumer plastic, and with close examination reveal the randomness by which this material was collected, granulated, melted, extruded and machined into new composite form. They fit to each other like small paving stones.

This network of plastic bones is a unified material system; granules of matter that through particular forces of time and motion have arrived—like a beach—at an optimized form and pattern of alignment. They never find exactly the same configuration twice. Also like a beach, this installation invites play. As the ordered placement of bones in this ends, a space for play and exploration opens up. A point of engagement for kids and others not overly invested in codes of polite contemplation but inclined toward other levels of engagement. "Sous les pavés, la plage" the brilliant slogan of the Situationists from 60's Paris. The beach—that adventurous play space—was (and remains) accessible to those looking beyond the systematic and seemingly secure surface of things.

The bones are simultaneously a modular building system, a toy, and a stockpile of petrochemical molecules that weave into a fabric as limitless as the appetite of our consumer culture. The bits of plastic, compiled here are traces of our endless desire for new commercial offerings: shapes, colors, surfaces and functions. They are the same plastic bits that wash up on all the world's beaches and that slowly churn and accumulate in ocean gyres the size of small countries. They are a super abundant waste product that moves expansively beyond its place in tight modular systems, far beyond what Roland Barthes could have observed when he wrote about it in the 1950's. Nevertheless he succinctly captured its mobile, transformative essence:

"More than a substance" says Barthes, "plastic is the very idea of its infinite transformation; as its everyday name indicates, it is ubiquity made visible. And it is this, in fact, which makes it a miraculous substance: a miracle is always a sudden transformation of nature. Plastic remains

impregnated throughout with this wonder: it is less a thing than the trace of a movement." (Roland Barthes, *Mythologies* , Editions du Seuil, Paris 1957, translation: Jonathan Cape, Hill and Wang, NY 1972)

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