Station Identification, takes its name from the practice of radio and television stations and networks identifying themselves on air. These recurring call signs are required to regulate the multitude of available signals, but moments of station identification are commonly co-opted and aestheticized for branding purposes well beyond legal requirements. For several generations, artists have been cognizant of the related problem of how to represent an awareness of one's public "self" in juxtaposition to one's art practice. To varying degrees artists have succeeded in describing how and why human beings relentlessly document our own existences, and why art is a useful tool in the documentation process. Specifically, some artists have chosen to invert the conditions of a society that would quickly reduce us all to categories or signs. These artists have revealed the stages and lenses through which we document our own histories and narrate our own stories. Through investigations into the construction of lifestyles, cultural identities, and the social fabrics that define us, certain artists have described how political and technological forces work to shape the iconography of the self. Station Identification will include painting, photography, video, and sound works that speak directly to the competing mechanics of self-awareness and social identification.

Establishing a public identity demands an awareness of, (not complicity with), the strategies of branding. Interestingly, base corporate models sound a lot like basic approaches to pursuing an art practice, with emphasis on developing distinctive style and an understanding of the overlap between intent and reception. Many artists have opted for reductive practices that intentionally avoid a great degree of formal or conceptual variation. More specifically, certain Pop, Conceptual and Post-Conceptual artists have strategized how to make the effects of a reductive or repetitive process function as the specific subject of a practice, of a different complexity than marketing agendas. This type of production can often appear clinical yet emotionally invested, methodical yet compulsive, distant yet uncomfortably close.

Though for different reasons and through different means, both Ann Craven and John Coplans have produced bodies of work that utilize a reductive and methodical aesthetic approach. Craven's endlessly reoccurring imagery would seem based in a totally logical methodology if not for certain indicators, such as her lush yet deadpan approach to paint handling and her banal yet strangely emotive choices of subject matter. Her stripe paintings are produced with leftover paint from the palettes of other paintings, and reoccur in her work like TV test patterns among other flickering blips of imagery. In 1984 artist, curator, and former Artforum editor Coplans began categorically documenting his body in a series of black-and-white photographs significantly enlarged from 4x5" Polaroids. These beautifully candid and sometimes humorous offerings defy the questionable value systems and cult of youth empowered in the 1980's within the industry of commercial photography and within the Art World.

One arrives at a public identity by means of social construction. Artists reflect their surrounding conditions with varying degrees of specific intent to do so. For Louise Lawler and Jesse Benson the narrative construct within the document is often the subject of investigation and representation, whether considering narratives of the injected type or the concealed. What history "remembers" is always a fabrication, generally built by he who squawks the loudest. Proximities within social institutions constantly and forcefully work to define our roles and classes, inside the Art World and out. Lawler famously illustrated these concepts with a sharply humorous tone in her 1972 work Birdcalls, in which she is recorded uttering canonical male artists' names in a parrot-like voice. Benson's Catalog Page Paintings work through a history paved by Lawler's attention to the "honesty" of the document and the ownership of imagery. The photorealistic oil paintings on panel are being offered as they are completed, a catalog for a group exhibition (curated by Benson) produced as a series of paintings. Each page is rendered twice the size of the designed but never produced document.

While Lawler and Benson work to expose the politically perverse nature of the document and the depicted subject, Daniel Handal operates with more subtle intent. In close but critical relationship to documentary photography as an ethnographic field of study, Handal's photographic works peer closely into the heart and soul of the depicted imagery, but seem to defend their subjects as much as interrogate them. His series Bird of Prey conjures surrealist scenes, biological illustration, and bird-watching voyeurism. The series features only images of owls, which belong to the order Strigiformes, birds that hunt at night. Among Lawler's work it may be unclear who's preying on whom, especially given the narrative associated with Birdcalls that the work was conceived by Lawler and a female friend who routinely made loud bird noises while walking through unsafe parts of New York at night in an attempt to convince would-be aggressors that the women were in fact too "crazy" to mess with. Handal's predators, while attempting to cling to their natural dignity, feel exposed and somewhat vulnerable to the gaze of the camera.

The most apparently distressed documentary subject in the exhibition is pictured in Michael Curran's video work Disclaimer. Relating to Benson, Handal, and Lawler's questioning of the motivations behind the document, and to the gestural restarts within exhibited works by Craven, Coplans, Roeder, and the Barrons, Curran's video is more overtly psychological in tone. As the performer is made to repeatedly deliver a disclaimer sentence she becomes more and more distraught. Viewers are left contemplating her state following the recording. "The characters and events portrayed in this videotape are entirely fictional. Any resemblance to persons known either living or dead is purely coincidental." With no proof of identity the subject's persona is constructed

through directive interaction with the artist behind the camera and reinforced by repetition.

Screen memory is a significant builder of fabricated histories. Living in Los Angeles offers a forever altered perception of reality that most happily indulge in, despite knowing that it's obviously staged. Mark Roeder proves in his ongoing series of twin black-and-white Antipaintings that strategies of myth construction can operate similarly on individual and collectives levels. Roeder's work consistently mines the mythologies associated with California, in this case through a sourced map of L.A.-area film locations available as stand-ins for far-off places. Myth construction applies both because someone wants to build it and because someone else wants to believe it. Diverting from the script and revealing the apparatus can cause a rupture, as illustrated in the exhibition by Jonathon Horowitz via Sinead O'Connor's famous ripping of an image of the Pope. Institutions construct mythologies for the purposes of Capital and to keep class identifications intact.

Works by electronic music icons Luis and Bebe Barron will contribute to the "soundtrack" of the exhibition. Married in 1947, the Barrons famously received a tape recorder as a wedding gift. They first used it to document their social surroundings, inspiring further technological investigations within their private sound studios. Among their pioneering sound achievements was the first ever entirely electronic film score (Forbidden Planet in 1956). The Barrons were hired by John Cage to engineer his first tape work Williams Mix, producing sounds that conjure an endless tuning in to and out of legible air space.