

Jessica Silverman Gallery is pleased to present “Residuals,” a solo show of work by Sean Raspet. In this exhibition, Raspet utilizes metaphors of manufacturing, recycling and distillation. At once a perfumery gone rogue and a bijou chemical-processing plant, “Residuals” explores the mise-en-abyme abstraction that is endemic to culture, finance, and technology.

The show includes Micro-encapsulated Surface Coating*, an installation, which invites the viewer to scratch and sniff a custom-made emulsion. The work starts with a process in which the air of Jessica Silverman Gallery is analyzed using a “SUMMA canister.” The stainless steel vessel initially contains a vacuum and collects air from the surrounding environment over the course of a week. Raspet then sends the accumulated air to a lab to determine its molecular composition and then creates a liquid mixture that is a many thousand-fold condensation of the chemical signature of the gallery’s air. The artist then sends this liquid to be “micro-encapsulated” into a “scratch-and-sniff” emulsion that is spray coated on the gallery’s surfaces. The background smell of most interior environments often comes from their construction and cleaning materials. This chemical signature corresponds to the gallery’s ambient scent profile, a kind of condensed olfactory background noise.

Alongside the reconstituted “fragrance” are five clear industry standard containers that hold different versions of reconstituted crude oil. Mounted on the wall, these works, titled Hydrocarbon Reformulations, further explore the

material specificity of our environment. Three of the formulations have been reconstructed molecule by molecule with purified research grade chemicals while two all black compositions are made from off the-shelf products such as gasoline, asphalt, petroleum coke. Raspet is keen to underline how we are participants in a residual economy, which utilizes the remnants of previous biological epochs in the form of petroleum. The five mixtures of reconstituted crude oil have varying “resolutions” or levels of abstraction.

Other elements in the installation are four gas cylinders containing the primary gases that are present in the atmosphere - nitrogen, oxygen, argon and carbon dioxide. These purified (aka abstracted) products, which are generally used for welding, food packaging, and manufacturing, are released back into the gallery space in the same ratio of the background atmosphere itself. Hence, the air in the space is slowly being purified through a gradual release of a reconstituted synthetic atmosphere.

In a corner of the exhibition is a negative air machine, which will continually filter out stray odor compounds and reinstate the background chemical signature of the gallery. Periodically these odor

compounds will be extracted into a solvent mixture from the carbon filter of the machine. The extracted scent is then added to an odorless cleaning product formulation, designed by the artist. This formulation will be used to clean the scratch and sniff coating off the walls and return the gallery to its original state at the end of the exhibition.

“Residuals” is about intensification, condensation and dissolution. It sets up a system where tangible matter is neither lost or gained, but materials and abstraction continually re-circulate.

**Micro-encapsulated Surface Coating (Encapsulated Contents: Standard Recovery [GC/MS VOLATILES-WHOLE AIR: 37.784749 °; -122.414129 °])*

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