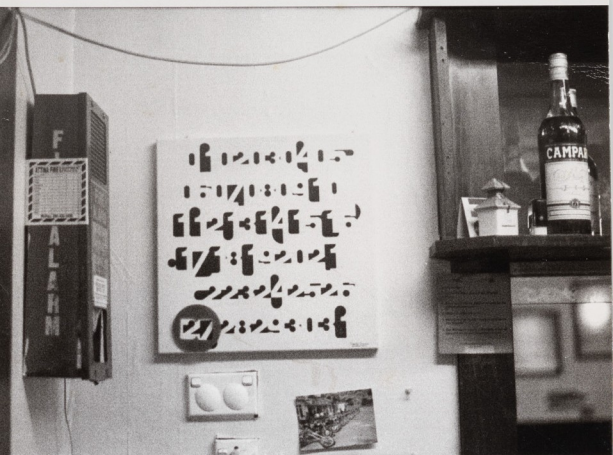


DANIEL MALONE
 TAKE ME TO YOUR DEALER
 SUE CROCKFORD GALLERY
 23 NOVEMBER - 11 DECEMBER 2004



SELL OUT!

I've never had a studio practice. Maybe I could just never get my head around putting more stuff into the world. Instead I've always worked very specifically towards a show, with much of the conceptual impetus for the work coming from the context of the show; social, political, historical etc. On the other hand I've nearly always lived in a studio environment, collecting around me the detritus of everyday, particularly urban, life.

Some twelve years ago when I first traveled overseas I found myself carting around a backpack stuffed full of ephemera from the trip, not just the usual things; souvenir napkins, guides or maps, but more the ordinary everyday things, packaging, bus tickets, supermarket bags. The more everyday it was the more extraordinary it struck me as, familiar but alien.

I had some vague idea that when I returned I would use these things to produce work; collages and assemblages, works on paper. Instead the experience of travel led my practice towards languages that define difference and cultures of identity, through far more transient and ephemeral mediums, including performance, video, and installation.

The concerns of much of this work were quite de rigor for art institutions for a while, and I even saw possibilities for such a context driven and ephemeral practice to be sustained the way it appeared to be in other places in the world. Perhaps I just thought this way because I didn't have a dealer, but I don't think so. When people said to me, "Of course you don't have a dealer, you don't make salable work" I used to reply, "Of course I don't make salable work, I don't have a dealer" I never had a problem with the idea of making work for dealer galleries but I did think they were bound by constraints that made them less engaging for what I wanted to do. I even started an artist-run space with a collective of other like minded artists, to overcome what we saw as the constraints of the market on the type of work one was able to produce (incidentally most of them had dealers as well).

Now I'm not about to make a case for some 'free market' quality of the of the dealer gallery system making it a more liberal milieu to work in, but I'm increasingly surprised to find my vain expectations of support directed here more than elsewhere. On the other hand I wonder if maybe that's not just because the Institutions I once looked towards seem more conservative than ever. I'm not really talking about the work that's getting shown, more the relationship between the artist and these institutions. Specifically the role of the artist as the primary producer of art. Time was when the institution responded to this production, certainly not without prejudice, but in defining some value of the work it engaged in that production. It's a small shift, but now it seems to me the institutions themselves are the primary producers, the curators and directors who have the practice, artists are raw materials. Perhaps the fiasco over et al's choice for Venice to reveals the kind of climate that might encourage such a prescriptive approach, from the top down. I've had my biggest year yet and the last thing I want to appear is ungrateful, because I'm not, but things like Biennales perfectly embody a mode of production where you are material and worker, spent by the end with, your only currency the possibility you might be invited to do it all again. So if anyone asks, I'm selling out.

Image Daniel Malone Toke Pub 2004 black and white photograph