

REVIEWS

Jason Kraus

ALGUS GREENSPON

Titled "Finished Objects," Jason Kraus's recent exhibition certainly had a degree of polish, in that the show also incorporated mass-produced artifacts that are "finished" insofar as they have already been manufactured, bought, sold, and sometimes used—but these sculptural groupings are hardly an end point. Rather, they represent just the most recent stage in a system of acquisition, combination, and presentation that extends back to previous bodies of work and seems unlikely to stop with this one. The show's five pieces, all from 2014, were assemblages of consumer goods encased in shelving units tailored to fit their precise dimensions; the objects themselves have their origins in two of the artist's earlier projects: his 2013 exhibition "Concrete Form" at Redling Fine Art in Los Angeles, and a never-exhibited student experiment.

In "Concrete Form," five pairs of pedestals were exhibited along with instructions regarding what they should be used to display. Each set of directions specified one "categorical item"—a newspaper, say, or a spray-paint can—and an object of the installer's choosing. These things formed one element of "Finished Objects"; the other was a collection of books solicited by Kraus from graduate-school friends, who made their selections based on the volumes' perceived connection with the artist's practice. Binding these disparate groups together via the physical structure of display furniture, Kraus asks us to consider potential formal and conceptual links between the works' gathered parts.



Jason Kraus, *Untitled Object 1*, 2014, KoskiDecor, toy helicopter, binoculars, books, 18 x 28 x 9 1/4".

So, what connections might be said to exist between the toy helicopter, pair of binoculars, and copies of the books *Odd Bits: How to Cook the Rest of the Animal* and *Please Kill Me* in *Untitled Object 1*, for example? There's certainly an edge of violence to the set, with its allusions to hunting and the military, as well as a technological cast. The hooves-and-eyes recipe book might be intended to suggest an all-inclusive approach to artmaking, and Legs McNeil's oral history of punk an accompanying rebellious unconcern with established rules of creativity. As in its neighboring works, however, these associations are softened by the tastefully muted coloring of the "KoskiDecor Finnish birch plywood" boxes into which the bits and bobs in question fit so neatly.

A further question is whether one should try to make distinctions of any kind between one of these works and another. Is *Untitled Object 2*, with its folding wooden chair, spray-paint can, and copies of *Larousse Gastronomique* and *The Greatest Game Ever Played*, more or less successful than *Untitled Object 3*, which juxtaposes a mug emblazoned with the word CALIFORNIA with copies of *Catch-22*, the cookbook from Chicago restaurant Alinea, and the *Los Angeles Times*? Where do any of these arrangements lie on the axis from meaningful to arbitrary? Or, far more likely, does the point of Kraus's project lie not in the specifics of the selections at all, but in what the artist's process might have to say about the nature of choice and the assignment of function and value? Here is an artist, after all, for whom objects function more often as teasing clues or traces than ends in themselves—his 2012 installation *Dinner Repeated*, for example, showcased (again via some solidly built cabinetry) the (washed) dishes used in a series of communal meals. "Finished Objects" is a similarly unassuming project, and a point on the same graph.

—Michael Wilson

DAILYSERVING

AN INTERNATIONAL PUBLICATION FOR CONTEMPORARY ART

San Francisco

September 13, 2012 Written by Amelia Sechman

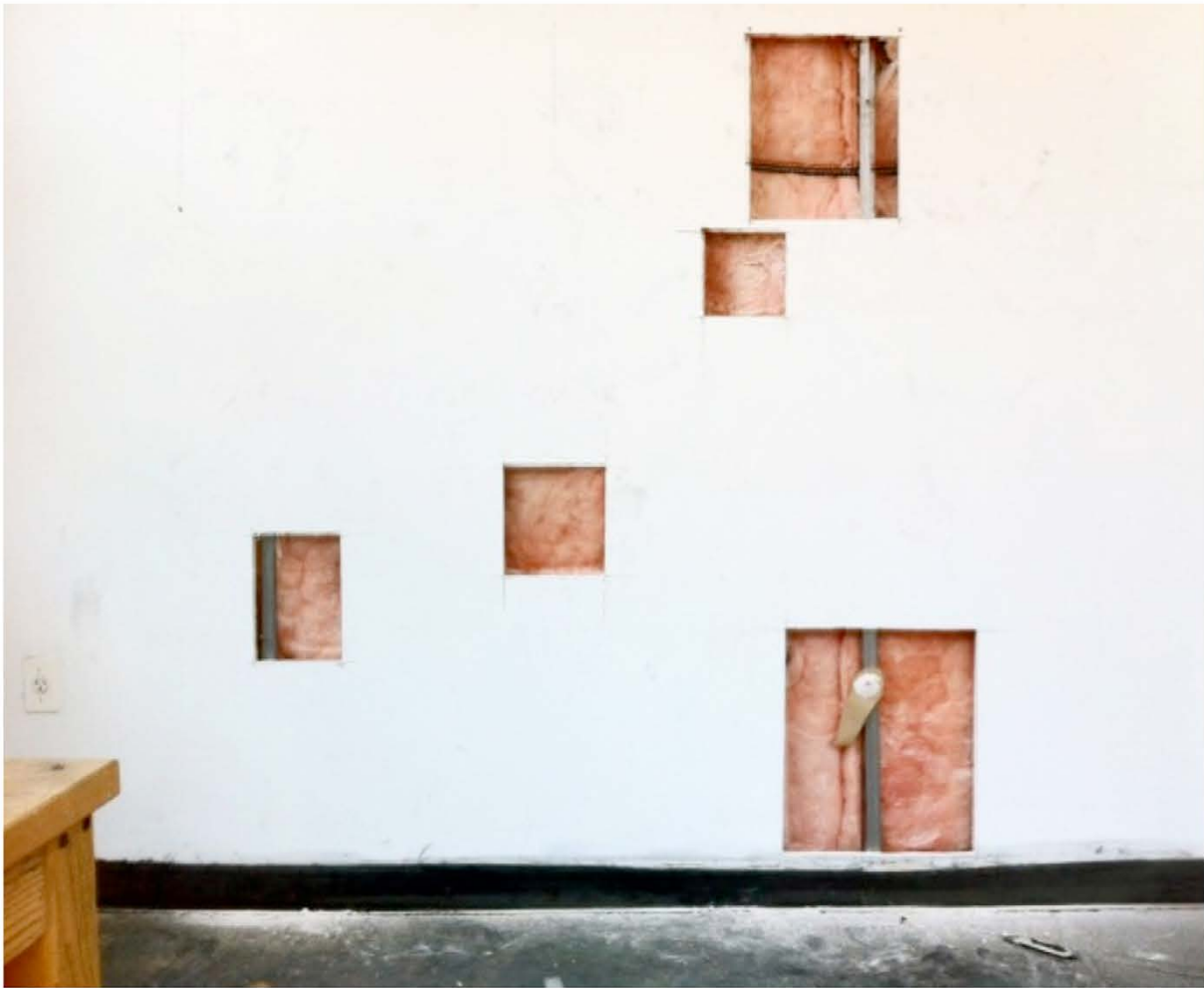
Nope.



Nope.

One of my favorite occurrences in the Art world is when an artist acknowledges the viewers' expectations, and actively denies them. In a time seemingly ruled by art with the highest sensational value, I can't help but root for the heroic and/or obstinate people unabashedly making minimalist conceptual art that allows for none of the easily digestible catharses one might hope for. This is not to say that the work is underdeveloped or shallow; I think a closed door holds as much if not more mystery, potential narrative and freedom to expand upon than an open door through which we can clearly see everything. It is the same "closed door" potential that completely saturates *Edits*, the current exhibition of Jason Kraus's work at Silverman Gallery.

Inside the gallery, the installation is seductively minimal and almost entirely monochromatic. Extracted pieces of Kraus's studio walls hang mounted in frames, the dry-wall marked with the charcoal smudges and traces of the artist's process. A large-format, b&w photograph titled *An Empty Space* documents the void created by hundreds of drawings made on Kraus's studio wall, where the charcoal that escaped the paper's surface marks off the edges of the absent pieces of paper. The Serra-esque drawing board leaning in a corner reinforces the trompe l'oeil effect of *An Empty Space*; the two objects acting as the signifier and signified of something that is much more abstract than the expected tangibility of a sign, such as a chair.



The real star of the show, however, is the pairing of two wooden crates locked with combination locks, and a framed envelope that Kraus mailed to Jessica Silverman, the gallery owner. Completely unassuming, the crates (probably) hold all the drawings that we see the traces of in the surrounding works. The corresponding envelope contains the combination that opens the locks on the crates. This is a simple enough concept: there is a lock, and there is a combination that opens the lock. The punch-line is that the two pieces may never be acquired by the same person, ensuring that the drawings will never be revealed. Now, I have to admit that the inner-brat in me *loves* this restriction. As I see it, basically Kraus is saying, “Oh, you wanted to *see* the art we’re talking about? Too bad.” Of course, the work absolutely should not be pigeon-holed in the sort of school-yard teasing with which I indulgently associate it. The dialog between the works in the show also heavily references the performative act of making art, emphasizing that the process can hold just as much importance as the final product.

Edits is not a show for anyone looking for an easy entry point or sensational reward from the viewing experience. It is not obvious, and demands that viewers release their typically tight grasp on what part of the art-making process we think should be presented. It is also not overly pretentious; the work does not pretend to be something that it’s not. Instead, Kraus expands the aura of the show through omission, and shows the viewer, “This is what I want you to think about.”

Edits is on view at Silverman Gallery from 7 September–20 October, 2012.



Kramer, Kaitlyn. "Making a Sculpture out of a Dinner Party." GRAPHITE. (May 26, 2012).

GRAPHITE

INTERDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL OF THE ARTS

MAKING A SCULPTURE OUT OF A DINNER PARTY

On March 12, 2012, New York based artist Jason Kraus prepared a four course, sous vide style meal for twelve friends and fellow artists in a temporarily constructed kitchen at Redling Fine Art. He performed an identical act the next night, the meal, location, and company unaltered. And then again, the next night.

For seven consecutive nights, the same twelve people met in the same gallery to ingest the same meal. At the end of each night Kraus would clean up after his guests, washing their dishes and disassembling the tables that they dined upon, creating a container to hold their cutlery and table settings. At the end of the seventh night, on March 18, seven cabinets were all that remained of the dinners, and Dinner Repeated was complete.

According to the artist, the work is somewhat autonomous from the event at hand, for he was more interested in the objects that the dinners produced than the meals themselves. Above all, he just wanted to make a sculpture out of a dinner party.



Jason Kraus, Dinner Repeated, 2012

These seven resulting sculptures are comprised, generally, of six rows of two place settings each. The plates and glasses are as generic as they come; their white porcelain and thin glass so predictable that they could easily be mistaken as a product of Ikea. However, the apparent monotony of these constructions is fractured (quite literally) by occasional broken stemware, lipstick stained napkins, and plates mysteriously absent from the shelves. These unique characteristics of the sculptures, fabricated by the diners' participation alone, are the only factors keeping them from resembling a restaurant showroom display. Each sculpture begs for close inspection, and the subtle details spark a curiosity and perhaps even an envy for inclusion in these meals. (I'm still wondering why diner #11 missed his/her meal on one of the nights.)



Dinner Repeated is difficult to view with an objective eye. Kraus's constructions and the events that produced them belong under the guise of relational aesthetics, specifically the work of fellow New York artist Rickrit Tiravanija. His Untitled 1992 (Free)sculpture/performance at the 303 Gallery in SoHo, where he cooked Thai food in a makeshift kitchen for the gallery visitors free of charge, is an undeniable reference in Kraus's work. However, rather than opening up the experience to the public as relational art tends to do, Dinner Repeated ultimately exists in the private space of its making.

While Kraus encourages us to insert our own narrative into what could be considered as any given dinner party, the experience seems too far removed through the aesthetic detailing and clean cutlery. Human presence is implied, though it is clear that this presence not our own and could never really be. Something is held from us in the private space that, try as we might to inhabit, seems solely contained in the glass and porcelain fragments from those seven unattainable nights.

Jason Kraus's Dinner Repeated was shown at Redling Fine Art from March 13 to May 12.

A book compiled of comment/note cards left from the participants each night will be released soon.

-Kaitlyn Kramer

AROUND THE GALLERIES

Much irony to chew on

BY HOLLY MYERS

The premise of Jason Kraus' second solo show at Redling Fine Art, appropriately titled "Dinner Repeated," is an exercise in compulsive reiteration. On each of the first seven nights of the exhibition, the New York-based artist served a nearly identical meal: the same four-course menu to the same 12 people, on a plywood table of like design with matching dishes, glasses and flatware.

After each meal, he dismantled the table and used the wood to build a free-standing shelving unit, then cleaned all the dishes and stacked them neatly inside. At the end of the week, the installation was complete: seven apparently uniform cabinets, most stocked with 12 identical place settings, spaced around the floor of the gallery.

The concept of residue has had a lot of currency in recent years: work generated from the marks or stains made by the unfolding of a performance or event. (Note Cai Guo-Qiang's recent firework paintings at MOCA.) In a curious twist on this trope, Kraus has done the opposite: made every attempt to erase the imprint of the events, emphasizing the generic nature of his mass-produced materials.

Look closely, however, and poignant vestiges emerge: There are wine stains visible here and there on the plywood; several of the dishes and glasses are missing, presumably broken over the course of an evening. One cabinet is missing an entire place setting. These faint traces of human activity create a kind of energetic echo, as in an imper-



Jason Kraus

JASON KRAUS' "Untitled (Contained Explosions @#3)," 2010, fireworks, glass and wood, is included in his "Dinner Repeated" solo show at Redling Fine Art.

fectly cleaned motel room or at a table in a restaurant that's just turned over.

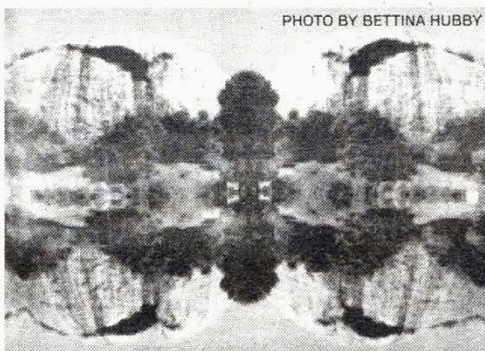
The only direct documentation of the seven-day performance is contained in a box all but hidden away in the gallery's office: handwritten notes from the unnamed dinner guests that will be released in book form at the end of the show.

Sloppy, often stained, laced with evidence of intoxication, and fragmentary almost to incoherence, the notes provide little reportage but testify to the vigor of human society, its capacity to animate ritual, transform repetition into evolution and development, and personalize the blank slate of consumer culture.

Only its 12 participants can speak to the effect of the performance. (I was not among them.) The effect of the confidently understated exhibition, however, is to hold an intriguing number of conceptual dichotomies in balance: presence and absence, stain and erasure, ritual and spontaneity, the generic and the personal, public and private, documentation and experience. The cool, clean demeanor of the installation doesn't cancel out the messiness of the performance so much as fix it in a faintly ironic state of con-

trast, illuminating the tension between life and the forms we pour it into.

Redling Fine Art, 6757 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles, (323) 230-7415, through May 12. Closed Sunday and Monday. redlingfineart.com



Bettina Hubby's photo of Eagle Rock made into a Rorschach image

FIVE ARTSY THINGS TO DO THIS WEEK, INCLUDING THE CHRISTENING OF A CADILLAC

Everything's social this week — jokes with friends spur a pop-up shop, a four-course meal becomes an exhibition and a group of artists tries to figure out why time can terrify.

5. Dinner-party graveyard

In late March, Jason Kraus invited 12 people to dinner. Everyone had to commit to come seven nights in a row and eat the exact same four-course meal. Each night, Kraus set a new, specially constructed wood table with identical but different china, glasses and silverware. After the final dinner, he cut up the tables and turned them into cabinets. All seven tables-turned-cabinets now hold the stained napkins and cleaned plates, cups and utensils. They're on view in “Dinner Repeated” at Redling Fine Art. It's like a shrine to a party you missed. All you can do is spot the anomalies — the red wine stains on one shelf, the lipstick marks — and guess at what happened. *6757 Santa Monica Blvd.; through May 12. (323) 230-7415, redlingfineart.com.*

4. Cadillac christening

“The squares don't know who the heck she is,” says the bio of performer Ann Magnuson, who took Samuel L. Jackson's on-screen virginity (he'd never done it in front of cameras) and once was president of the Ladies Auxiliary of the Lower East Side. She's also a longtime friend of outlandish graffiti artist Kenny Scharf. When Scharf's solo show at Honor Fraser opens this weekend, Magnuson will christen a Cadillac Scharf customized with a performance she calls “Finism.” That's apparently “fin” as in “the end,” but also “fin”

as in “tail fin” — so both apocalyptic and extravagant. *2622 S. La Cienega Blvd.; Sat., April 14, 6 p.m. (310) 837-0191, honorfraser.com.*

3. Anxiety art

Curator John Knuth covered the walls of “The Paranoia of Time,” the show he organized at Carter & Citizen in Culver City, with thermal survival blankets. That sounds rugged, but the blankets are gold and glistening, so the room looks almost flamboyant. In the gold-walled gallery, there are inside jokes (like Heather Cantrell's image of artist John Baldessari as “Father Time”), adolescent experiments (Cody Hudson changing the “Fair” in “Vanity Fair” to “Fuck”), narratives about unrealized suicide and meteors on a table. Altogether the work, supposedly about the anxiety time causes, is actually anxiety-inducing, which must mean it hit its mark. *2648 La Cienega Ave.; through April 28. (213) 359-2504, carterandcitizen.com.*

2. Accidentally dazzling

Photographer Robert Adams is a moralist and a cynic with a soft spot for sheer beauty. His current LACMA retrospective starts with Adams' iconic photographs of Colorado in the 1960s, probably still his best work. They show tract homes and trailers and ranch-style churches against the stark, glorious Western landscape. They're frustrated with how manmade structures invade nature, but they also can't help reveling in how desert sunlight casts shadows on shingles and glows aggressively through living-room windows. *5905 Wilshire Blvd.; through June 3. (323) 857-6000, lacma.org.*

1. Eagles and rocks in Eagle Rock

Forty-eight years ago, when they talked about how funny it would be if Eagle Rock had a Rock and Eagle shop, guitarist and comedy writer Mason Williams and artist Ed Ruscha probably weren't that serious about opening one. But years later they told Bettina Hubby, a friend, artist and go-getter, about the idea. She bought up 350 objects, commissioned artists and stocked a shop in Eagle Rock with a kitschy, crafty, comic collection of eagles, rocks or things related to the two (there are David & Goliath figurines and a bald eagle wig). “I was the instigator, she's the perpetrator,” said Williams of Hubby when the shop officially opened on April Fools' Day. The Rock and Eagle shop will stay in business until it runs out of merchandise. *4765 Eagle Rock Blvd., Eagle Rock; Wed.-Sat., 11 a.m.-6 p.m. hubbyco.com. —Catherine Wagley*

Forbes, Alexander. "Art in 3D." Artslant. (August, 2011).

ARTslant Berlin

The Slant

Art in 3D

by Alexander Forbes

Sculpture is three-dimensional artwork created by shaping or combining hard materials ...

Group Exhibition

Johann König

Dessauer Strabe 6-7, 10963 Berlin, Germany

July 16, 2011 - August 28, 2011

Ah, the summer group show. The irreverent member of the gallery calendar, it can run the gamut from an inspiring outlook on emerging talent to an over-intellectualized love child of gallerists and part-time curators alike. Often, it's a little of both. Yet, somehow I still look forward to these unwieldy offerings each year, figuring, at the very least, I'll come out with some status quo of the young and unsigned and the older and under-shown. Usually it works out. So, when I was sifting through the list of Berlin's offerings for the season, ranging from peep shows to relational drawing (Rirkrit Tiravanija with a sketch pad—probably not), I was intrigued by the utter simplicity of Johann König's offering: *Sculpture is three-dimensional artwork created by shaping or combining hard materials - typically stone such as marble - or metal, glass, or wood. Softer materials ("plastic") can also be used, such as clay, textiles, plastics, polymers and softer metals.* Interesting, I thought, do a group show around art's most variable discipline simply by pointing out its point-blank variability.

All conceptual curation aside, the exhibition is, in fact, probably the best of the summer's offerings that I've seen. Somehow, through not trying, at least in outward appearance, König has managed to create a compellingly cohesive exhibition. None of the works, save perhaps Phyllida Barlow's imposing lattice-like wall, detracts from the others, a feat for a sculpture show not benefiting from a cavernous, Chelsea gallery space. Of the sixteen works on view, four stood out in particular, somewhat surprisingly the most minimally intrusive of any in the exhibition....



Untitled (Contained Explosions #3), 2010, Jason Kraus' contribution to the exhibition yields no immediate explanation for its glass cubes frosted appearance and blown-out side. A closer look through the void reveals the spent remnants of a firework. The piece is equal parts comical and disturbing. On one hand it resembles the handy-work of a teenage boy left to his own devices for a bit too long, and on the other it encapsulates the violent power of explosives on a micro level. I found this documentarian liminality made the piece particularly compelling.

...There isn't a real dud in the entirety of the exhibition. They've tamed the group show into an undeniably mature, refined beast. Refreshing, yes, but, don't get me wrong; peep shows are fun too.

~Alexander Forbes, a writer living in Berlin.

(Images: **Jason Kraus**, *Untitled (Contained Explosions #3)*, 2010, fireworks, glass, wood, 31,8 x 35,56 x 35,6 cm 12 1/2 x 14 x 14 in; Courtesy of Johann König, Berlin)

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Sculpture. The rebirth of the author

Until August 27th, Gallery Johan Koenig brings together 16 international artists for a focused show on contemporary sculpture.

[Art](#) / Angelique Campens

Author Angelique Campens	Sections Art	Network
Published 25 August 2011	Keywords Agathe Fleury , Andy Coolquitt , Darren Bader , Eduardo Basualdo , Jan de Cock , Jason Kraus , Jessica Stockholder , Johannes Wald , Justin Matherly , Kasia Fudakowski , Lili Reynaud-Dewar , Martha Friedman , Martin Soto Climent , Michael Beutler , Michel François , Phyllida Barlow , Sculpture	Like on Facebook Share on Twitter
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"A few of the more general aspects may persist, such as the work's being like an object or being specific, but other characteristics are bound to develop. Since its range is so wide, three-dimensional work will probably divide into a number of forms. At any rate, it will be larger than painting and much larger than sculpture, which, compared to painting, is fairly particular, much nearer to what is usually called a form, having a certain kind of form. Because the nature of three dimensions isn't set, given beforehand, something credible can be made, almost anything."
– Donald Judd

Though written in the 60s, Donald Judd's seminal essay, "Specific Object" still reads like a comment on contemporary practice. The summer exhibition at Gallery Johan Koenig brings together 16 international "emerging and emerged" artists from outside the gallery's regular roster for a focused show on contemporary sculpture. With few exceptions, most of the works have been made in the last few years.

The long title of the show functions as a sort of guided definition to the exhibition: "Sculpture is three-dimensional artwork created by shaping or combining hard materials - typically stone such as marble - or metal, glass, or wood. Softer materials can also be used, such as clay, textiles, plastics, polymers and softer metals." The exhibition looks anew at the contemporary state of 3-dimensional work.

It shows that a lot of work has in common the return to the use of handicraft, do-it-yourself and authorship. These tendencies have now been going on for some years and are perhaps reaching their apogee. The 3-dimensional works move away from the machine-like, industrially produced and outsourced objects with sleek finishing. The interest in handicraft and crafts is omnipresent in society today, going back to the know-how of professions, instilling resistance to mass production and mass choice, and doing away with excess consumer choice. Furthermore, they exhibit a low-consumption, eco-friendly lifestyle. Finally, and most important, they bring the focus back to a recognition of authorship.



Sculpture is three-dimensional artwork created by shaping or combining hard materials..., 16 Jul – 27 Aug 2011, Gallery Johan Koenig, Berlin. Exhibition view. Photo Hans-Georg Gaul.

The show represents a mix of objects—some of which reference functional or existing objects and some of which are completely detached from any reference to daily use. For example the work by Kasia Fudakowski (*1985) is authored in relation to a focus on the duality of organic and abstract monumental shapes. In the entrance is a monumental phallic-shaped sculpture: a stacking of gigantic pink globules, the top of which is suffused with black paint. The view to the main space is partly obstructed by a monumental curved installation, leading onto a black triangular base by the British artist Phyllida Barlow (*1944). Since the sixties she has constructed large sculptures out of available materials based on situations from the everyday environment, which, taken out of context, result in alienated objects.

In the main room the sculptures are precisely divided in space - almost like meticulous acupuncture points. There is a painterly

wall assemblage by Jessica Stockholder (*1959).
Sandwichkasten, 2003 hanged curved cardboard in a metal structure by the German artist Michael Beutler (*1976) who often uses building materials and adapts them with simple methods to create architectural sculptures.



Sculpture is three-dimensional artwork created by shaping or combining hard materials..., 16 Jul – 27 Aug 2011, Gallery Johan Koenig, Berlin. Exhibition view. Photo Hans-Georg Gaul.

Other examples include:
Model 8, 2006: a plaster piece by the Belgian artist Michel François (*1956) derives from his series of sculptural 'models' that are created by choosing different quotidian objects covered

with plaster. *Hoper II*, 2011: an anthropomorphic shape covered with black painted aluminum. It is by the Argentinean artist Eduardo Basualdo (*1977). The artist arranges light, kinetic objects, and sculptural elements to create poetic settings. *Tempio di Apollo*, 2010 a work by the Belgian artist Jan De Cock (*1976), is a pedestal for a camera. The pedestal is composed of a collage of modular sculptures like columns, fountains, temples, timpani and photographs of crumbling modern buildings. This creates a link between the modernist architecture and the structure of its ancient model.

A firework inside of a fabricated glass box is shown by New York based artist Jason Kraus (*1983). In the corner of a forgotten wall we see *1/2 a 2-fer*, 2010 a colored bar with a light bulb on top by the New York based artist Andy Coolquitt (*1964). His abstract, linear sculptures are made of broom handles, plastic straws and other found objects, sometimes wired to light bulb. His work converts serial objects to his own idiom.

The works in the exhibition each investigate in their own way the etymology of sculpture and its relation to both the object and the contemporary situation. *Angelique Campens* Until August 27th, 2011

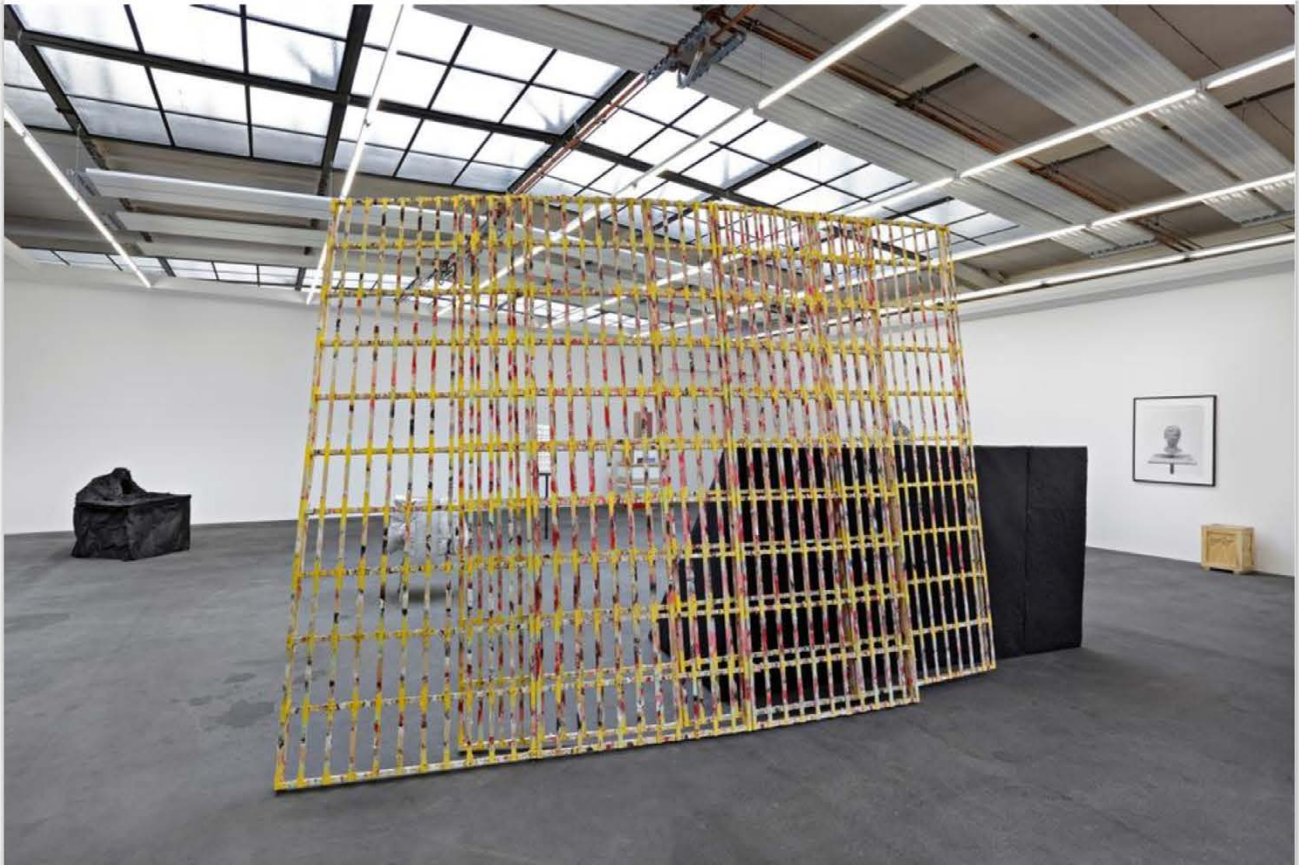
Sculpture is three-dimensional artwork created by shaping or combining hard materials...

[Gallery Johan Koenig](#)

Dessauer Straße 6-7, Berlin

Artists: Darren Bader / Eduardo Basualdo / Phyllida Barlow / Michael Beutler / Andy Coolquitt / Jan de Cock / Agathe Fleury / Michel François / Martha Friedman / Kasia Fudakowski / Jason Kraus / Justin Matherly / Lili Reynaud-Dewar / Martin Soto Climent / Jessica Stockholder / Johannes Wald

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Sculpture is three-dimensional artwork created by shaping or combining hard materials..., 16 Jul – 27 Aug 2011, Gallery Johan Koenig, Berlin.
Exhibition view. Photo Hans-Georg Gaul.

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**Sculpture is three-dimensional artwork created by shaping
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JASON KRAUS: Moments of Suspended Disbelief

BY CARLA ACEVEDO-YATES



All images are courtesy of Redling Fine Art, Los Angeles.

Jason Kraus, *Primary Explosions (Black Cake 1)*, 2007, Light jet print, 48" x 32", Edition of 5 + 2AP.

OPPOSITE PAGE:
Untitled (Contained Explosions #2), 2009, Fireworks, glass, wood, 48" x 35" x 24."

Jason Kraus (1983, New York) is a promising young artist who recently graduated from the California Institute of the Arts. Since then, he has shown his work in solo and group exhibitions in Los Angeles and New York, and he recently collaborated with Martin Kersels in a one-night performance at the Whitney Museum titled *Jason Martin wants to be a DJ*. Demonstrating an interdisciplinary approach, Kraus' artistic practice is often the result of a private performance, where the final object produced proposes narratives meant for the viewer to construe. The experience of viewing his work invokes instances of what the artist defines as suspended disbelief, where he keeps the viewer thinking about whether what he sees is found or fabricated. But with so much talk lately of the hyperreal and the simulated in our visual landscape, does it really even matter anymore?

EXPLOSION OF THE HYPERREAL

Since the publication in 1981 of *Simulacra and Simulation*, Jean Baudrillard's seminal work on postmodern culture, consciousness of the hyperreal has exploded upon us. In it, he states that "simulation is no longer that of a territory, a referential being, or a substance. It is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal" (1). For Baudrillard, art objects are considered important artifacts in a system of signs, where the duplication of reality through them is defined as a simulacrum. Today, we are increasingly witnessing the relevance of Baudrillard's work, not only through the guise of politics and the social realm, but also in contemporary artistic production, proven by the existence of a museum dedicated to the hyperreal; a clear indication of the recent over-saturation of his ideas on artistic practice. But more than merely offering tangible representations of simulacra, Jason Kraus' work presents viewers with a timely conundrum, one that engages them

to reconsider the work as either fake or real, while leaving viewers in a place where either one is possible.

THE PRIVATE PERFORMATIVE

In many ways, Kraus can be considered a process-based artist in the sense that the final object produced is not the main focus of the work. The artist is concerned with the action it entails, art as a ritual and performance. However, nothing here is left to improvisation. Every action taken as part of a private performance is calculated to produce an experience and a very specific reaction; the creation of a space in the viewer's mind where a range of potentialities coexist.

In the *Primary Explosions* (2007) photographs, we are confronted with the remnants of a private performance, where the artist exploded a number of cakes in a closed room. The series is comprised of color photographs and a drop cloth that was draped around the room where the alleged explosions took place. In this work, each object marks a specific time during the performance; an attempt by the artist to freeze time, creating a narrative that subdues the object created. And although the photographs show the residues of these explosions, they are also digitally manipulated, forcing the viewer to reconsider what specific elements of the work are real and which ones are fabricated. Similarly, in the *Contained Explosions* (2009-2010) series what we see as viewers is actually the aftermath of an explosion inside a plexiglass box along with the materials used to make it. The work does entail a scientific approach, the experiment on a small scale of a large scale phenomenon, but we are not sure as viewers if any of these explosions really took place. With this work, we can clearly see the play on oppositions between seeing and not seeing that lay the foundation for the doubt created between what is real and what is not.





LEFT:

3 Tanks, 2009. Motorcycle gas tank, plastic, cement and rebar. Dimensions variable (20" x 11" x 9" each)

BOTTOM:

Making a Mold, 2009, closed-circuit video, silicone, pump, dimensions variable.

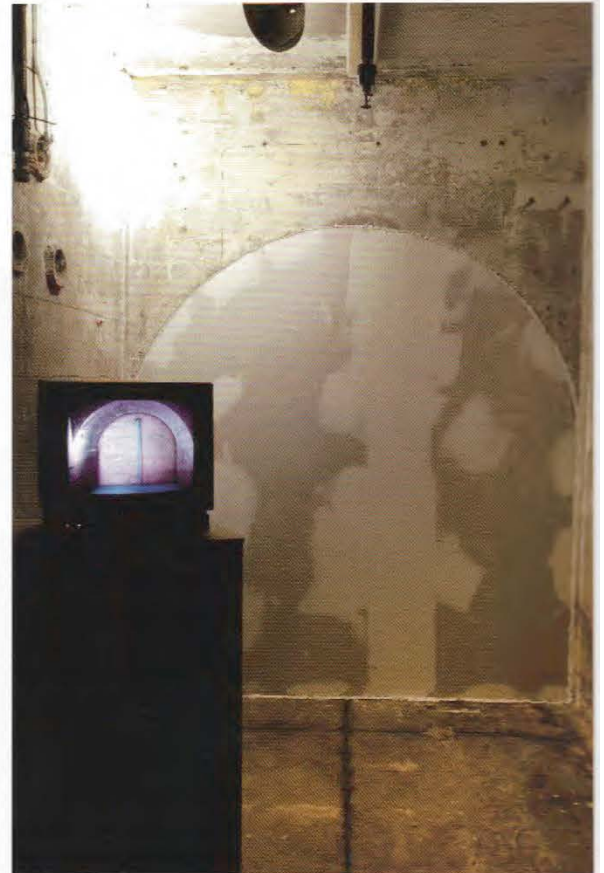
Side B and Other Rarities (2007) and *Warping Box* (2007) display both sides of the dilemma: the real action-consequence and its reproduction. *Side B and Other Rarities* is a series of 40 macro photographs of records from the personal collection of the artist that were destroyed in a fire. These objects are evidently transformed by an uncontrolled force, but what is interesting is the fact that Kraus reproduces this accident in a controlled environment. In *Warping Box*, a contained plexiglass box made of Lexam, Kraus deliberately provokes the distortion of a record with a heater. Subject to these conditions, the record is slowly transformed, mimicking the malleability of spacetime. But then again, since this process is almost imperceptible, we cannot really tell if it is actually happening or if the record was previously warped.

MEASURING THE REAL AGAINST ITSELF

How can we measure what's real when it has been duplicated and simulated? In the simulacrum, the real no longer represents or refers to an external model. In *3 Tanks* (2009), a motorcycle gas tank is exhibited alongside its cement and plastic "copy". If we consider Baudrillard's claim that the simulated world consists of a constant reproduction of the model without any original reference, then the casting process becomes itself a copy of this simulacra; "the hallucinatory resemblance of the real to itself" (23). In addition to this, the tanks are bent and mutilated, making us wonder if they have been taken from the scene of an accident or if they have been wrecked deliberately.

We can also observe both sides of this real/fake duality in *Making a Mold* (2009), Kraus' proposal for the New York SculptureCenter's *In Practice* series to cast the museum in silicone. The proposal marks off two sections of the museum's downstairs galleries, where on one end the viewer encounters an industrial pump apparently filling up the space with silicone, while the other end reveals a computer generated animation showing the process of the gallery being filled. Here again, the artist plays with notions of the real and itself; on one side an actual working pump, and on the other a simulated action.

So, is what we see real or fake? "It doesn't matter as long as you are willing to believe either one," (Kraus 2010) the artist states. "I am interested in leaving the spectator in a place where they have that option;



situating things in a non-defined space." What seems central to Kraus' practice is those moments of suspended disbelief, where our perception swings like a pendulum between one possibility and the other. ■

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ARTFORUM

"Please Stay Out, We're Open"

REDLING FINE ART

990 North Hill Street, entrance on Bernard, 2nd floor),
July 1, 2008–September 6, 2008

Group shows litter the landscape during sluggish summers. They last for months while collectors and often even dealers are out of town, and allow artists to play without too much pressure. This year, at Redling Fine Art, the summer heat has more than slowed things down—it has made the gallery shut its doors. With no air conditioner strong enough to cool the high-ceilinged space, the staff has checked out. But the show goes on, and at a dizzying pace. Twelve artists—both on and off the gallery's regular roster—will present work that can be seen only from outside the glass front doors in exhibitions technically "open" twenty-four hours a day. Each has approximately five days to do whatever he or she wants in the gallery. For the first session, Morgan Fisher pointed two televisions away from the doors; their spectral light, postspiritual white noise straight out of a DeLillo novel, cast flickering shadows on the wall. The second installment pitted Martin Kersels and Jason Kraus against a host of musical instruments, and it was clear from the resultant videos just how difficult it is to actually destroy an electric guitar. The raucous clamor made it sound like a noise band warming up for a funeral dirge, while the blurry (but unmistakable) figures stand in a California yard, attempting to slowly smash the life out of their unfortunate quarry.

Other installments of the show include Walead Beshty (July 15–19), Drew Heitzler (July 22–26), Stuart Bailey and Frances Stark (July 29–August 2), Jeff Kopp (August 5–9), Mario Correa (August 12–16), Valerie Schultz (August 19–23), Margaret Honda (August 26–30), and Barb Choit (presenting her Division Museum of Ceramics and Glassware September 2–6). Though conceits for group shows can often seem silly or haphazard, when reality takes a hand in shaping the context, the formal simplicity and limitations can, as they do here, drive innovation, experimentation, and play.



Morgan Fisher, *Two Televisions, None of the Pleasure of Television, but None of the Guilt*, 2008, two televisions, infinite duration.

— Andrew Berardini