

Rhizome
seven online
exhibitions

5/7

The Technical Image
April 30– May 7, 2020

Capitain Petzel
Berlin

Node 5/7 Technical Image

For the 5th node of the Rhizome series, Capitain Petzel presents works from a selection of artists in the gallery program, revolving around the Technical Image – a term adapted by contributing artist Walead Beshty for his exhibition and accompanying publication *Picture Industry: A Provisional History of the Technical Image, 1844–2018*. This project concerned itself with the exploration of the rich history of mechanically-reproduced imagery from the nineteenth century to the present.

The term Technical Image was originally coined in the early 1980s by the Czech-born philosopher Vilém Flusser, who defined it simply as “an image produced by apparatuses”. Understanding apparatuses as automatons of decision making and the execution of material and symbolic work — which ultimately arrange symbols and inscribe them in objects — Beshty uses the term Technical Image as a production approach and subsequent prism of analysis for his work as well as that of fellow artists. The term and its conceptual implications applies to the work of many artists in Capitain Petzel’s program including Barbara Bloom, Peter Piller, Seth Price, Kelley Walker and Christopher Williams.

Walead Beshty’s contribution incorporates the camera-less, negative-less photographic process pioneered by artists such as Laszlo Moholy-Nagy and Man Ray, who produced their works by placing objects on photosensitive paper before exposing it to light. By cutting a long piece of Fuji crystal photography paper from an industrial sized roll and attaching it to a magnetic wall in a darkroom, Beshty creates the curls visible in this work. He then places magnets on the paper, before exposing it to colored light. Once the paper has been exposed, he rotates it and removes or rearranges the magnets, before submitting it again to different hues of light. From each exposure, colors mix together to create these unpredictable results. This work reveals and makes crucial the very marks of its production.

Barbara Bloom presents a component of the series *Works for the Blind*. Each work from this series contains an excerpt from a text about seeing. The excerpt is used once in Braille typed over an image, and once the size of a postage stamp in five-point type printed white on black. Bloom’s pictures and texts speak of the difficulty of seeing things for what they are, but very few people will be able to make sense of both. Sighted people will see the image, but most will only be able to squint and guess at the minuscule text. The blind will be able to read the text (the plexiglass is cut away over the Braille so it can be touched), but unable to see the photograph. She makes use of the assistive technology to marvelously highlight the possibility that everyone can be blinded, becoming a true testament to the concept of the technical image.

Peter Piller’s *HOE 21* was featured in the artist’s latest show at Capitain Petzel, *Geduld*. Classifying all the works of this show in three moments, this particular one fell under that of the errant.

errants

signs are embedded in cultural contexts. if the link to these contexts is missing, the sign ceases to be unequivocal and so is able to produce not just one but many different evolutionary regressions, a return to things. sound speaks to us in a foreign language.

- Peter Piller, May, 2019

Since the beginning of his career in the early 2000s, **Seth Price** has produced a wide-ranging body of works which has continuously pushed the boundaries of contemporary visual culture. Making use of traditional art media as well as materials typical of industrial production, Price raises questions about authorship, identity, and our shifting relationship to images in an increasingly digital and globalized world. His contribution to this week’s Rhizome, *90s Style Teeth*, employs an array of techniques including printing, collage, paint and photography. The work features ambiguous objects constructed with 3D modelling software, and subsequently manipulated by way of chemicals, pigmented polymer fluids, and powdered earth.

Kelley Walker’s exploration of image culture in advertising of the 1970s and 1980s is the starting point of the work on view. Like many of his works, it is informed by his probing of how popular iconography is filtered by time, reinvented, and continually recycled through private and public contexts. Based on an advertisement for the legendary Pioneer PL-518 turntable, this large-scale screen print makes associations to the 1970s disco-scene in New York and is testament to Walker’s practice — driven by a kind of tireless auto-cannibalization of images, bearing striking parallels to how we consume media images and art.

It is perhaps **Christopher Williams’** contribution that adheres the most seamlessly to the theme of this node of the Rhizome. Operating through the medium of photography, Williams’ work is an investigation of the current condition of pictorial representation and production. Functioning as both conceptual art and institutional critique, Williams crafts historically and politically referential photographs that analyze aesthetic conventions and the contemporary context of image making.

Rhizome | Seven online exhibitions

April 2nd – May 14th

While Capitain Petzel remains open only by appointment until further notice, we are pleased to launch a series of online exhibitions inspired by the concept of Rhizome, originally a botanical term appropriated by the French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari.

'A rhizome is characterized by ceaselessly established connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power, and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences, and social struggles.'

-Excerpt from A Thousand Plateaus

Given the infinite connections between the artists in our gallery program, we are taking this notion of connectivity and ever-evolving narratives to bring to you 7 themed constellations — each week we will present 7 works by 7 artists in contribution to a wider, relevant discourse. The online shows will be launched via Mailchimp & Instagram.

Node 1/7 Text

Launching April 2nd

Node 2/7 Cal Arts

Launching April 9th

Node 3/7 The Domestic

Launching April 16th

Node 4/7 Works on Paper

Launching April 23rd

Node 5/7 The Technical Image

Launching April 30th

Node 6/7 Pictures Generation

Launching May 7th

Node 7/7 Moving Images

Launching May 14th

Feat. works by Yael Bartana, Walead Beshty, Karla Black, Ross Bleckner, Barbara Bloom, Andrea Bowers, Troy Brauntuch, Isabella Ducrot, Stefanie Heinze, Charline von Heyl, Sean Landers, Maria Lassnig, Robert Longo, Sarah Morris, Matt Mullican, Peter Piller, Tobias Pils, Seth Price, Stephen Prina, Pieter Schoolwerth, Amy Sillman, Monika Sosnowska & Christopher Williams.

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