

# Mary Mary

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## Mathew Cerletty · Sean Kennedy · Mateo Tannatt

10 November 2012 - 19 January 2013

Mary Mary is pleased to present a three-person show with new works by Mathew Cerletty, Sean Kennedy and Mateo Tannatt. The show concentrates on the concerns of representation and reference within painting and object-making, and looks to work that draws attention to and plays with traditional notions and experiences of painting and image.

In each of the practices focused upon here, there is a playfulness and a broad and open approach to representation. Often imagery is formed from references drawn from strands of disparate elements, creating a web of ideas, images, and objects. These are collected from a kind of shared cultural memory or experience and allow the viewer moments of association and familiarity, whilst at the same time, challenging how we see and understand.

They each focus on content and the transformative qualities of painting and painterly concerns, presenting the familiar (found objects, walls, furniture) or practised (the portrait, trompe l'oeil, for example). There is an interest in how painting can be manipulated and pushed to its boundaries and limits, how a painting can exist as an object and become sculptural, and how objects can take on the qualities of painting, tone and colour. For both Cerletty and Kennedy, for example, there is also a highlighting of consumerism, whether it be collecting objects and bringing them into the pictorial realm or depicting lamps, coat hangers, domestic scenes etc.

Here **Sean Kennedy** presents a group of three works in which objects are placed on top of framed, clear acrylic glass panes that hang overhead, between ceiling and floor. On top of each is an arrangement of everyday objects ranging from cups to plants to shoes to phones etc; all of which are visible through the glass from underneath. Viewing them this way, they flatten, losing their object-ness and moving into pictorial realm. They become representations of themselves, making us forget for a second that the real physical object itself is still present.

Analogous to painting, scanning, photographing or photocopying, the creation and apprehension of these pieces involves a translation of material into visual information. Through this translation, the functionality of any individual element is in a sense superseded by its role within the so-called composition. Within the democratic space of the horizontal plane, the objects are leveled out and homogenized, existing as equal fragments of form, colour, texture, shape and light.

**Mathew Cerletty's** work draws attention to the everyday and the familiar. By expertly painting parts of walls, Ikea furniture, popular advertisements and home accessories to name a few, Cerletty reverses what we would normally ignore (the overlooked or banal) and in doing so, manipulates our understanding of and experience of these images. We are presented with the familiar in unfamiliar ways and invited to investigate images alongside a whole new body of reference, associations and visual signifiers. The works here focus specifically on the abstract side of Cerletty's practice, nodding to the decorative, mainstream cultural images and art historical references.

There is no common thread or theme that instantly is familiar to us when looking at his paintings but more that we are exposed to Cerletty's personal preference, the images that strike him, that he remembers and is drawn back to. These are focused on by Cerletty by the surprising depth that he finds in them and it is the personality that becomes evident through working with that image that guides Cerletty's choices and presentations.

We are not presented with an image of an architectural detail to think about its historical origin for example, but more because Cerletty wants us to experience the depth, atmosphere, texture and light that has excited him in selected it as his subject. With his nod to realism, hyper-realism and abstraction, Cerletty presents a body of work which highlights the transformative qualities of painting and at the same time, unhinges our expectations and pre-composed ideas of image consumption and production.

**Mateo Tannatt's** practice is varied and multi-faceted, straddling sculpture, painting, text, photography, video and performance. There is a layering of reference and narrative in which Tannatt creates fragmentary and associative works

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which interact with one another, creating new, divergent languages and stories. There is a great emphasis placed on objects and their ability to be transformative and offer numerable readings. Indeed Tannatt has a strong interest in props and scenery, with groups of works presented as if film-sets.

His selection of imagery and object, is at once self-referential and culturally referenced, often looking to the social space that sculpture can exist in, the personality of architecture and public space, as well as personal biographical narratives. Tannatt presents bodies of work as tableaux that overlap with one another, producing sculptures to define performance, text that feeds into paintings and paintings that illustrate performances. There is a continual and prolonged reference to the body, with 'characters' and narratives suggested as basic forms and isolated objects.

For this exhibition, Tannatt shows several new works including sculpture and photography, whose relationship is contingent upon their association and disassociation with the artist himself and the relationship of object to context. These works make specific and general reference to the site of the studio, playfully making allusions to the life and creative labour of the artist. Using the theory of Immaterial Labour as conceived by Maurizio Lazzarato as a means of investigating cultural production, Tannatt uses his studio as a field of inquiry and site of production. Making allusion to cinema and the history of sculpture, Tannatt seeks to engage with the abstraction of the symbolic and specificity of personal narrative, thereby inviting a moment of both separation and identification for the viewer.

Born in 1980, Mathew Cerletty lives and works in New York. Recent exhibitions include 'Susan,' Albus Greenspon, New York; 'Heads with Tails,' Harris Lieberman Gallery, New York (both 2011); 'A Post-Posteriori,' (curated by Perro Negros) New Jersey, Basel (2012) & 'Hotpoints,' Office Baroque, Antwerp (2010). Cerletty will curate and participate in 'The Stairs Turned Back into Stairs,' Albus Greenspon in New York in January 2013.

Living in Los Angeles, Sean Kennedy was born in 1983. Recent shows include 'Sean Kennedy/Chadwick Rantanen,' UNTITLED, New York; 'Thomas Duncan Gallery,' Los Angeles (both 2012)

Born in 1979, Mateo Tannatt lives and works in Los Angeles. Recent exhibitions include 'Instrumental Music,' Marc Foxx, Los Angeles; 'Idea is the Object,' D'Amelio Gallery, New York; 'When Attitudes Became Form Become Attitudes,' CCA Wattis, San Francisco; 'First Among Equals,' Institute of Contemporary Arts, Philadelphia (all 2012); 'All of This and Nothing,' Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2011).