

Rio

4 June - 17 July 2015

Office Baroque

RIO

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Opening: Thursday 4 June at 18:00

Curated by Louis-Philippe Van Eeckhoutte

Matthew Brannon, Sascha Braunig, Mathew Cerletty, Barb Choit, Peter Halley, Marc Hundley, Nicholas Krushenick, Jonathan Lasker, Elad Lassry, Megan Marrin, Przemek Pyszczyk, Michael Rey, Peter Shire

Rio brings together artists of different generations whose work pays reverence towards the pop aesthetics of the 1980's. The era's limited palette of bright colors, dynamic compositions, and strong graphic qualities allowed artists to tackle formal issues with the playful visual language of stardom and comic books, while contemporary artists cite these formal systems to express a subjective reality. The exhibition takes its title from the second studio album by rock band Duran Duran whose distinctive cover by Patrick Nagel is a classic example of 1980's graphic design.

The 1980s began with a emergence of stark design icons, from Patrick Nagel and the severe women he created for Duran Duran album covers, to the Memphis group and Peter Shire with their furniture that incorporated art deco and a broad palette of clashing colors. There was a shared sensibility among artists who embraced the visual language of the decade. Bold brushstrokes, lively cartoonish squiggles and bright colors marked Jonathan Lasker's paintings while the use of industrial materials as Day-Glo and Roll-a-Text with recurrent patterns of circuits and cells formed Peter Halley's signature style. Their work, together with that of pop abstraction's father Nicholas Krushenick is now seen as a nostalgic mirroring of pop culture of the early 1980's.

In addition to a sense of nostalgia to a partly imagined past, different elements of the 1980's aesthetic have been an inspiration to a younger generation of artists. These elements are the graphic design in the paintings of Matthew Brannon that reflects upon the themes of the autobiographical narrative and the destabilization of language, in Barb Choit's rephotographed faded Nagel posters and in Marc Hundley's silkscreens with texts culled from the era's music that catalogue his personal experiences; the stylized exotic of the 1980's in the hypnotic vibrant paintings of Sascha Braunig and Mathew Cerletty; the glamour of the era in Elad Lassry's faux-commercial photography and Megan Marrin's leather objects that bring glamour back to the domestic; the postmodern architectural language in Przemek Pyszczyk's deconstructions of building structures and Michael Rey's wall-based retro-futuristic plasticine objects.

*"Rio, to me, was shorthand
for the truly foreign,
the exotic,
a cornucopia of earthly delights,
a party that would never stop."*

John Taylor – bass guitarist Duran Duran

MATTHEW BRANNON (1971, St. Maries, USA) lives and works in New York, USA. Selected exhibitions include: David Kordansky, Los Angeles (2013); Aspen Art Museum, Aspen (2013) and Portikus, Frankfurt (2012).

SASCHA BRAUNIG (1983, Qualicum Beach, USA) lives and works in Portland, USA. Selected exhibitions include: Foxy Production, New York (2015); New Museum, New York (2015) and Albus Greespon, New York (2013).

MATHEW CERLETTY (1980, Milwaukee, USA) lives and works in New York. Selected exhibitions include: Anton Kern, New York (2015); Blum and Poe, Los Angeles (2013) and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2013).

BARB CHOIT (1977, Vancouver, Canada) lives and works in Vancouver, Canada. Selected exhibitions include: Rawson Projects, New York (2015); Marlborough Broome Street, New York (2014) and Rachel Uffner Gallery, New York (2012)

PETER HALLEY (1953, New York, USA) lives and works in New York. Selected exhibitions include: Mary Boone Gallery, New York (2013); Jablonka Maruani Mercier, Brussels (2012) and Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (1992).

MARC HUNDLEY (1971, Toronto, Canada) lives and works in New York, USA. Selected exhibitions include: Team Gallery, New York (2015); White Columns, New York (2013) and Herald Street, London (2012).

NICHOLAS KRUSHENICK (1929, New York, USA - 1999, New York, USA) lived and worked in New York, USA. Selected exhibitions include: Tang Teaching Museum, (2015); Garth Greenan Gallery, New York (2014), Mitchell Alguas Gallery, New York (2001), and Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (1968).

JONATHAN LASKER (1948, Jersey City, USA) lives and works in New York, USA. Selected exhibitions include Musée d'Art Moderne, Saint-Etienne (2015); Jablonka Maruani Mercier, Brussels (2010) and Reina Sofia, Madrid (2003).

ELAD LASSRY (1977, Tel Aviv, Israel) lives and works in Los Angeles, USA. Selected exhibitions include: David Kordansky Gallery, Los Angeles (2015); Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam (2014) and Contemporary Art Museum, St. Louis (2010).

MEGAN MARRIN (1982, St. Louis, USA) lives and works in New York, USA. Selected exhibitions include: 576 Morgan Avenue Apartment 3L, New York (2015); Wiels, Brussels (2014) and Bortolami, New York (2012).

PRZEMEK PYSZCZEK (1985, Bialystok, Poland) lives and works in Berlin, Germany. Selected exhibitions include: Peres Projects, Berlin (2015); Berthold Pott, Cologne (2015) and Belenius/Nordenhake, Stockholm (2015).

MICHAEL REY (1979, Sarasota, USA) lives and works in Los Angeles, USA. Selected exhibitions include: Zero, Milan (2015); White Flag Projects, St. Louis (2015) and Cherry and Martin, Los Angeles (2015).

PETER SHIRE (1947, Los Angeles, USA) lives and works in Los Angeles, USA. Selected exhibitions include: Santa Monica Museum of Art, Santa Monica (2013) and Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles (2006).