

Galerie

Chantal Crousel

Claire Fontaine

Claire Fontaine

Équivalences et Généralités

10 March – 21 April 2012

For her second exhibition at Galerie Chantal Crousel, Claire Fontaine will be present in both exhibition spaces. Through new works, she continues her reflection on the crisis of the author-function and the consequences of technical reproducibility in the age of digital technology.

In "Équivalences" presented at La Douane, Claire Fontaine's complete series of *Équivalents* (2007) will be exhibited. Eight sculptures take the form and the layout of the eight *Équivalents* presented by Carl Andre in 1966 at Tibor de Nagy Gallery in New York. Each of them is composed of 120 firebricks.

Claire Fontaine's *Équivalents* deliberately stand at the problematic crossroads of minimalism and conceptual art. Carl Andre's silent gesture to which they refer appears somewhat subtitled or obliterated by the introduction of textual and visual elements. In Claire Fontaine's work, the 120 bricks that compose each element are covered with 120 reproductions on archival paper of paperback 'Folio' book-covers. The 120 books were selected for the subjective and objective interest they have for Claire Fontaine, as well as for the potentiality of their titles to associate with each other and with the reproductions of artworks on their covers.

The *Équivalents*' origin is to be found in a first operation carried out on isolated bricks (*Brick-bats*, 2006), which underlined both the illegibility/inaccessibility of the book object and the literal possibility to transform it still into a weapon.

The *Équivalents*' vocation is not so much to insist on the petrification that the book has undergone, but rather to function as visual puzzles where the images of the Folio book-covers establish connections between each other and with the books' titles. The sculptures underline the new perception that the general public has of our culture's major texts once they have been rendered economically accessible while keeping perfectly intact the difficulty of their intellectual assimilation.

The video *The Assistants* is screened at La Douane. In the first part of the video poet Douglas Park reads a text by Giorgio Agamben entitled *The Assistants*, while in the second part he remains silent during an equivalent amount of time. In this second part, his face appears as a landscape crossed by different weathers. It reflects a nudity and a disarmament to the world that make explicit the fact that he himself is one of those creatures described in Agamben's essay: idle beings, imperfect and fairy, messengers of a truth that they do not understand themselves.

The concept of the assistant, as it emerges here as a watermark, is at the heart of Claire Fontaine's project. Not only are these creatures translators and foreigners, but they are obscure characters whose indecipherable help allows things to get done. In the messianic economy mentioned by Agamben, awkwardness, shame, undisclosable desires will be our pledges for salvation. Everything with which we painfully cohabit today will actually allow us to access greater closeness with ourselves in an aftertime, that we can imagine being the time of revolution.

Under the title "Généralités" Claire Fontaine chose to present a selection of new works in the main gallery space, including ten silkscreens on canvas entitled "*Équivalents joke paintings*." This group of silkscreened paintings is inspired by various documents referring to the scandal and the ensuing debate in the British press in the 1970s, sparked by Tate Modern's acquisition of Carl Andre's *Equivalent VIII*.

The debate that aroused from that minimalist sculpture is fascinating as it develops around issues and problematic that are still very contemporary: the question of the artistic and monetary value of the artwork at the heart of the economic crisis that struck England at that time. These perplexities, sometimes expressed in very violent and condensed ways by cartoons are the main subject matter of the silkscreen paintings presented by Claire Fontaine.

Untitled (Jungle Gym), a large black scaffold installed from floor to ceiling and throughout the gallery is the support for hanging the paintings. Its title comes from the urban practice of using these metallic structures for exercise. Its presence in the exhibition evokes the outside space and materializes an alleged fragility of the architectural structure of the gallery.

The sculpture *Untitled (2x2 vinyl foam)*, made from wrestling mats, explicitly refers to Carl Andre's floor pieces. It can be used by the visitor as a resting place, a wrestling mat or simply a different consistency zone on which to walk within the exhibition space.

The video *Situations* paraphrases a street fighting instructional DVD and invites the visitor to reproduce the same gestures. In a Brechtian device, the actors constantly interrupt themselves in order to comment on the movements that they are showing us; at the same time, through this explicitly pedagogical process, they make their gestures "reproducible" by anyone, as much by our friends, as by our potential enemies because they redistribute their knowledge indiscriminately. They realize thus Brecht's programme, which was to make gestures "quotable."

The actors are filmed in a white cube, in conditions of spatial and temporal abstraction.

PAST PRESENT FUTURE faithfully reproduces a neon sign from a New York clairvoyant's shop window. It refers here to the need for stability that is associated with any project, but it also raises the contradiction between the necessity of revolutionary ruptures and the need to maintain a strong link with the culture of the past.

The sculpture *Untitled (The Invisible Hand)* is a modified ready-made, created from an executive toy, a Newton's cradle, customized by Lehman Brothers. Small metal balls are suspended from a frame above a miniature tennis court, on which is inscribed the word "Networking," and they are kept in perpetual motion. This is both an ironic comment on the bankruptcy of this company, that has become the emblem of a crisis in which we are still plunged in - and a metaphor of Adam Smith's theory that explains how an invisible hand would regulate free markets.

Recession sculpture (EDF) is a French electricity meter with a device frequently used by people as a survival strategy to stop the rotating disk in order to minimize the consumption of electricity. A hairpin attached to a thin thread with a crystal pendulum allows the user to block the disk and thus stop the meter.

Untitled (Christies: Lehman Bros. Sale, Wed. 29.09.2010 at 12.00pm) are reproductions of some pages from the Christie's catalogue of the Lehman Brothers' sale of their collection. The auction took place after the company's bankruptcy. The reproductions chosen here feature paintings from the nineteenth and eighteenth centuries representing boats in storming seas.

Retrospectively, these images of dangerous travel and fleets in distress seem to be premonitory of the company's tragic destiny. This iconography reminds us of Broodthaers' *Bateau-Tableau*, which plunges us into the throes of a perilous journey where the sea is nothing but blue paint, and the wet and heavy wood of the boats is a totally dematerialized projection.

Finally, a rotating suspended mirror, *Untitled (Vanity)*, offers a changing view of the exhibition including the image of the viewer, the mirror being suspended at eye level.

Galerie
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Galerie



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Claire Fontaine

Généralités

2012

Exhibition view, Galerie Chantal Crousel Paris, France.
Vue d'exposition, Galerie Chantal Crousel Paris, France.



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Claire Fontaine

Généralités

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Claire Fontaine

Situations

2011

Single channel HD video, color, sound / vidéo HD, couleur, son
32min38

Edition 6 + 2 AP

CF12 2-3/6



Claire Fontaine

Untitled (The Invisible Hand)

2011

Wood, plastic, brass, metal, magnet, nylon threads and battery / Bois, plastique, laiton, metal, aimant, fil de nylon, batterie
18,5 x 23 x 16,5 cm

Edition 3 + 2AP

CF12 11-2/3



Claire Fontaine

PAST PRESENT FUTURE

2005

Neon

82 x 110 cm

Edition 5 + 2AP

CF12 12-3/5

Galerie
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PAST PRESENT FUTURE is a faithful reproduction of the neon signs found in the storefront windows of fortune-tellers and relates to an essential need for stability in cooperation.

PAST PRESENT FUTURE est une fidèle reproduction des néons visibles sur les devantures des diseuses de bonne aventure et fait le lien avec un besoin essentiel de stabilité dans toute collaboration.



1091
ROBERT DODD (1748-1815 LONDON)
A Royal Naval warship in two positions within a Squadron of the
Red caught in a gale
oil on canvas
32 1/2 x 37 in. (83.2 x 144.8 cm.)
£10,000-15,000 US\$16,000-23,000
€12,000-17,000

PROVENANCE
Thomas Agnew & Son, Ltd., London.
Elwes & Hanham, London.

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Claire Fontaine

Lot 1091 (Christie's : Lebman Bros. Sale, Wed. 29.09.2010 at 12.00pm)

2012

Digital print on archival paper, wooden frame / Impression numérique sur papier, cadre en bois
92 x 72,5 x 3,5 cm (framed / encadré)

Edition 5 + AP

CF12 29-1/5

Claire Fontaine

Lots 1093, 1094 & 1095 (Christie's : Lehman Bros. Sale, Wed. 29.09.2010 at 12.00)
2012

Digital print on archival paper, wooden frame / Impression numérique sur papier, cadre en bois
92 x 72,5 x 3,5 cm (framed / encadré)
Edition 5 + AP
CF12 30-1/5

1093
ATTRIBUTED TO THOMAS
BUTTERSWORTH, SEN. (ISLE OF WIGHT
1768-1842 LONDON)
A Royal Naval frigate running down the
Channel amidst small craft
oil on canvas
18½ x 24 in. (47 x 61 cm.)

£3,000-5,000

US\$4,600-7,500
€3,400-5,600



1094
JOHN THOMAS SERRES
(LONDON 1759-1825)
A squadron of the fleet weathering a heavy
gale, the sun breaking through the clouds
oil on panel
17½ x 29 in. (44.4 x 73.8 cm.)

£4,000-6,000

US\$6,100-9,000
€4,500-6,700



*1095
PETRUS JOHANNES SCHOTEL (DORDRECHT
1808-1865 DRESDEN)
A dismantled frigate wallowing in the gale
signed 'P.J. Schotel. fecit' (lower right)
oil on panel
12½ x 16½ in. (31.8 x 41.9 cm.)

£1,000-1,500

US\$1,600-2,300
€1,200-1,700





1096
THOMAS MITCHELL (LONDON 1735-1790)
Ships of the Fleet off the naval dockyard at Sheerness
oil on canvas
26 x 43 in. (66 x 109.3 cm.)

£8,000-12,000

US\$12,000-18,000
€9,000-13,000

44

Claire Fontaine

Lot 1096 (Christie's : Lehman Bros. Sale, Wed. 29.09.2010 at 12.00pm)

2012

Digital print on archival paper, wooden frame / Impression numérique sur papier, cadre en bois
92 x 72,5 x 3,5 cm (framed / encadré)

Edition 5 + AP

CF12 31-1/5



Claire Fontaine

Untitled (Art Restoration Dept.)

2012

Acrylic and silkscreen on canvas / Acrylique et sérigraphie sur toile

200 x 142 x 3 cm

CF12 18

Claire Fontaine
Untitled (Brick Bag)
2012

Acrylic and silkscreen on canvas / Acrylique et sérigraphie sur toile
200 x 142 x 3 cm
CF12 19





**"I've decided to knock it
down and sell the bricks
to the Tate Gallery."**

Claire Fontaine

Untitled (I've decided to knock it down...)

2012

Acrylic and silkscreen on canvas / Acrylique et sérigraphie sur toile

200 x 142 x 3 cm

CF12 22



Claire Fontaine

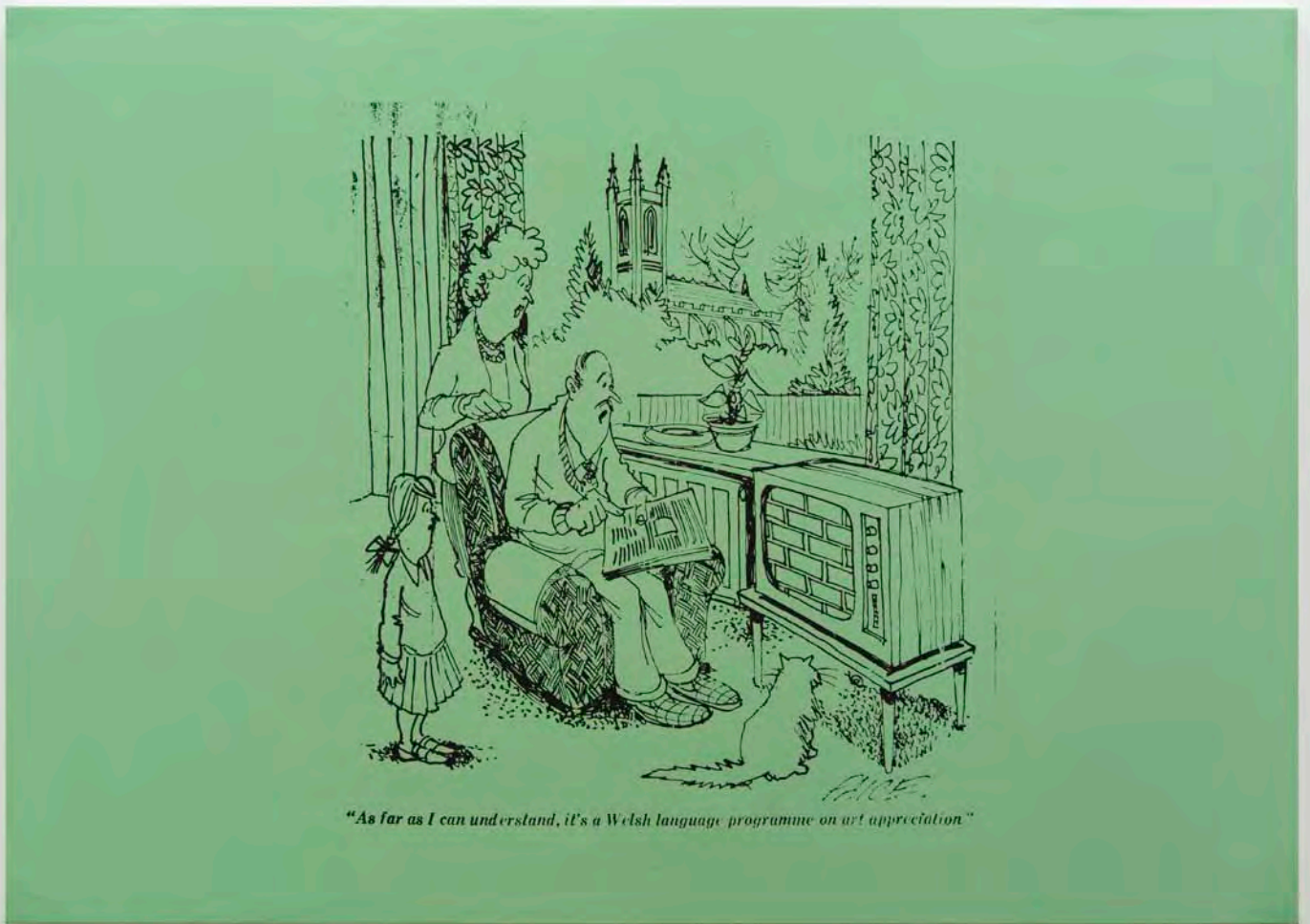
Untitled (Throwing bricks)

2012

Acrylic and silkscreen on canvas / Acrylique et sérigraphie sur toile

200 x 142 x 3 cm

CF12 24



Galerie
Chantal Crousel

Claire Fontaine

Untitled (...on art appreciation.)

2012

Acrylic and silkscreen on canvas / Acrylique et sérigraphie sur toile

200 x 142 x 3 cm

CF12 20

Galerie
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La Douane



Galerie
Chantal Crousel

Claire Fontaine

Equivalences

2012

Exhibition view, La Douane - Galerie Chantal Crousel Paris, France.

Vue d'exposition, La Douane - Galerie Chantal Crousel Paris, France.



Claire Fontaine
Untitled (What a load of rubbish)
 2012

Acrylic and silkscreen on canvas / Acrylique et sérigraphie sur toile
 200 x 142 x 3 cm
 CF12 25

Galerie
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Carl Andre's Bricks

by WILLIAM PACKER

The Bricks at the Tate have become, by now a major feature in our contemporary folk scene, indeed, an event was their enthronement in that little corner of the collective mind reserved for sacred numbers, that it is hard to credit that barely a year ago, indeed, that a few artists' critics and their associates had ever heard of them. Quite is the power of the Press when thrusting with righteous, if sometimes blind, insistence.

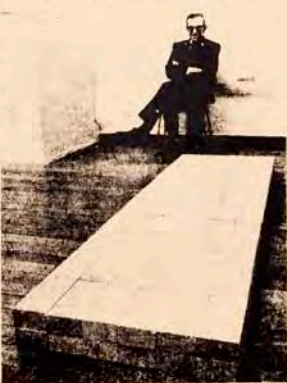
That particular controversy, though more dormant, is by no means a spent force, and is only too likely to erupt with a surprising and even unforeseen vehemence, should one ever be so rash as to declare oneself on the side of the angels. At one period it was enough simply to admit to being in some way professionally engaged with Modern Art (a dangerous admission at the best of times) to find the air suddenly full of ash and lava, vertical brick-bats raining down on one in heaps.

In such circumstances, a praiseworthy desire to turn up the collar and run for cover is understandable. But defence is not to be achieved by default, and there comes a point when the case must be met, even though it might be unheeded in the upper.

A year ago, our watch-dogs, excited by the discovery of a pub-house that had been made public in considerable detail many months before, were so minded to listen to anyone who might tempt their prejudice with information or informed opinion.

To its credit, the Tate made the attempt, and a system of specialist voices were raised in support, but a valiant, speaking was, but rather than he should skill employed and work done, cut short the argument, and the sculpture was withdrawn for repair.

Now, unrepentant, the Tate has built a small exhibition around the newly laundered Bricks, and the other works by Mr. Andre in its possession, which remains on view in Gallery 19 until the end of May. The intention is to establish in the public mind that the artist, far from being an isolated figure, an opportunist who fits arbitrarily from one clever and profitable idea to another, is in fact engaged soberly and steadily, over several years, with certain ideas and preoccupations.



Carl Andre's 'low sculpture'

This is far from saying that Andre himself, must be the definitive genius of the age, of paint or a block of wood. But before the Tate, on our behalf, there, even if the result is should consider acquiring his hideous, the visible evidence of his attempt to be a representative exponent of those ideal, conscious. The very thought accepted as such by his peers, for it is part of the Tate's mission to monitor such activity, and we hope for masterpieces, of course, but we must build up our collection on the good examples, with idea at all.

Art, however, has always been the idea of value, for many to some extent a celebration of itself, and it is hardly surprising that there should come a time, that 120 bricks presented to anyone might, but, have when the mechanics of Art, its enhanced that collection, and are vocabulary, its syntax, the whole scope of its grammar, should artist become subject to close examination. Such to a considerable degree, is the case of the modern movement, and the reductive right

technique, stripping the object down to its barest essentials, is an obvious one to pursue.

We should be surprised were it ignored, and, in fact, it is as old as pedicure, as the coast ancient pottery. In our own time that path has well-trodden, and the field an artist like Andre owes to such as Bramante, Malevich and Mondrian is clear. And this modest didactic show makes the point with great economy.

Andre's works apart, there is much else worth contemplating: a Frank Stella of 1960, in which the simple, insistent linear image at last describes the physical shape of the entire work. A typical, somewhat over-slowly Don Judd relief of 1972, a set of massive six-shelves, with regular hemispheres protruding. Four mirror cubes by Robert Morris, set in a square, rather lower than eye level, through which the floor extends itself into infinity, and what we see is not the floor but its reflection. And a grid painting by Agnes Martin, whose retrospective exhibition will soon end at the Hayward. A suite of etchings by Sol Le Witt takes the two diagonal, the vertical and horizontal lines, through all fifteen of their mutual permutations, and there is a large sculpture by him, two open modular cubes set together.

But the accident of history dictates that Andre should be the centre of attention. An early piece, his Last Ladder of 1959, an oversized timber post structure, but regularly carved, is the more interesting for being unfamiliar, to me at least, and it speaks of the Brancusi influence.

The other two works deal with the sense of balance, that emerges when contemplating a simple, flat, square, a metal tiles that put a 4x4 of mottled grey across the surface, or inviting us to compare it around the newly laundered

And there are the bricks, a whole being but use resulting in the choice, in their disposition, that 120 bricks presented to us, the one demonstration, the alternatives are implied in thought and why should he not expect something for the eye and

Claire Fontaine
Untitled (Carl Andre's Bricks)
2012

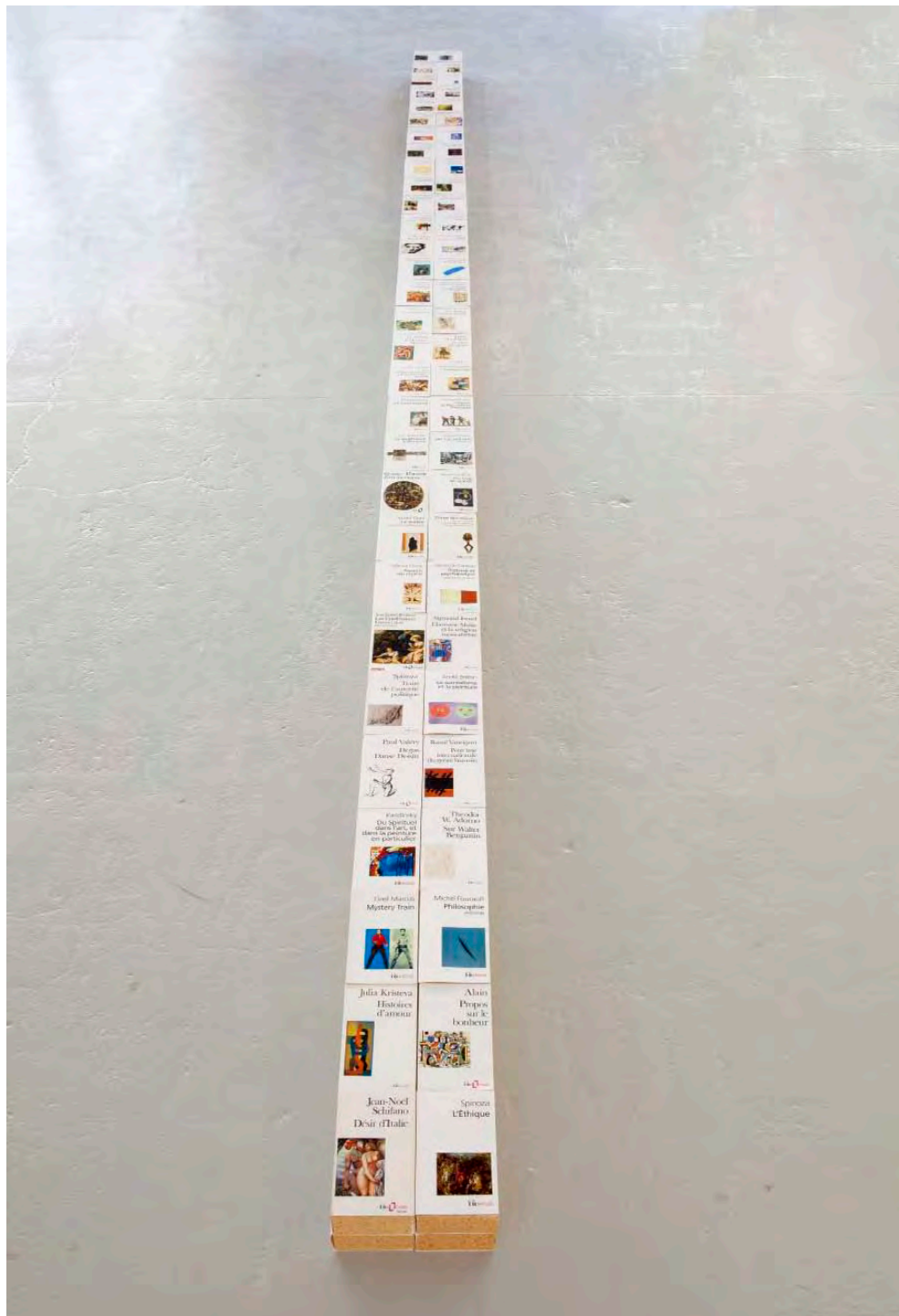
Acrylic and silkscreen on canvas / Acrylique et sérigraphie sur toile
200 x 142 x 3 cm
CF12 26

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Claire Fontaine
Equivalent I
2006

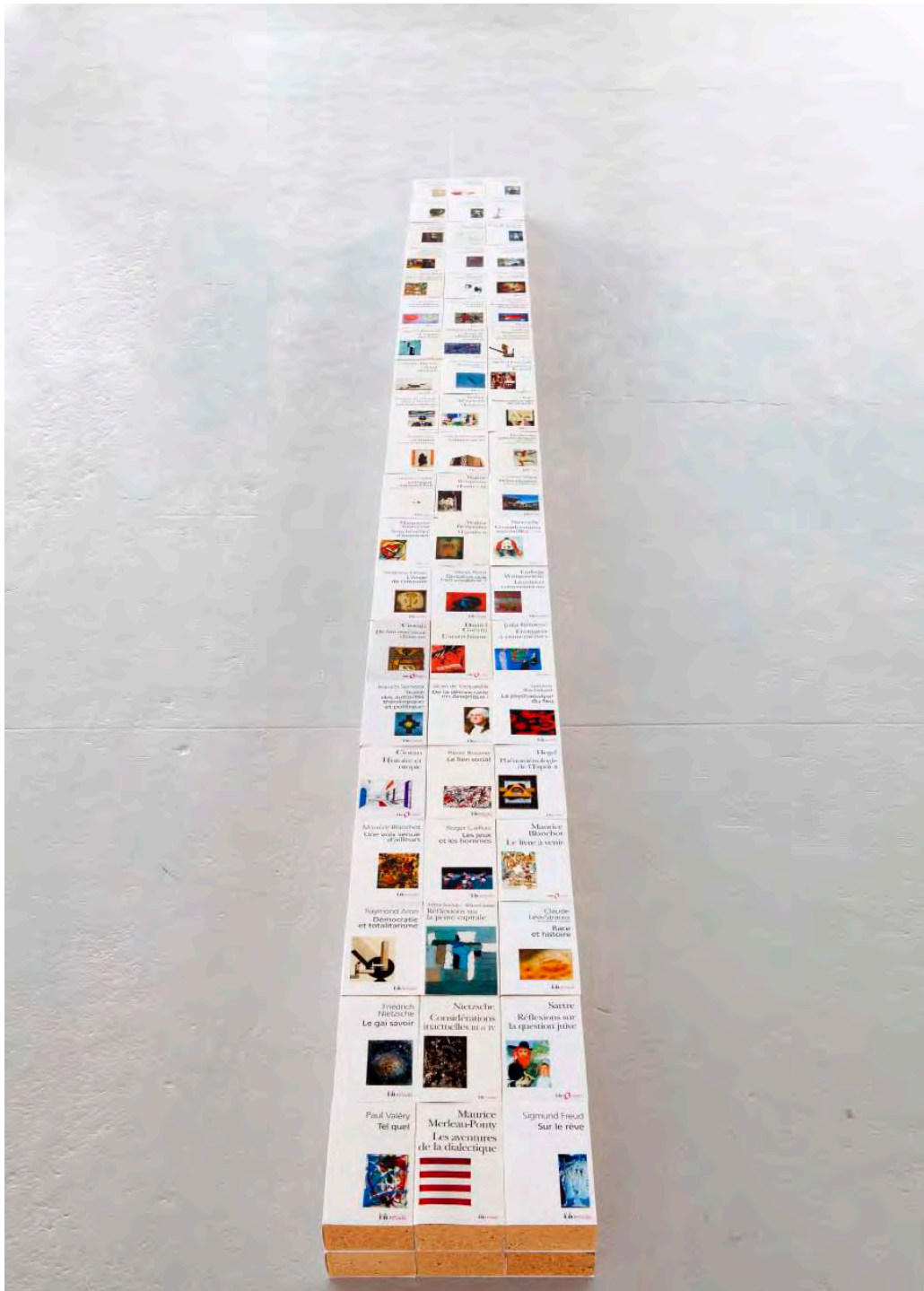
120 firebricks, folded photographic prints on archive paper / 120 briques réfractaires, impressions photographiques pliées sur papier archive
11,5 x 356,5 x 35,6 cm
Edition 1/1 + 1 AP



Galerie
Chantal Crousel

Claire Fontaine
Equivalent II
2006

120 firebricks, folded photographic prints on archive paper / 120 briques réfractaires, impressions photographiques pliées sur papier archive
11,5 x 225 x 53,5 cm
Edition 1/1 + 1 AP





Galerie
Chantal Crousel

Claire Fontaine
Equivalent III
2006

120 firebricks, folded photographic prints on archive paper / 120 briques réfractaires, impressions photographiques pliées sur papier archive
11,5 x 107,5 x 109,5 cm
Edition 1/1 + 1 AP

Claire Fontaine
Equivalent IV
2006

120 firebricks, folded photographic prints on archive paper / 120 briques réfractaires, impressions photographiques pliées sur papier archive
11,5 x 267,5 x 44 cm
Edition 1/1 + 1 AP





Claire Fontaine
Equivalent V
 2006

Galerie
 Chantal Crousel

120 firebricks, folded photographic prints on archive paper/ 120 briques réfractaires, impressions photographiques pliées sur papier archive
 11,5 x 131,5 x 89 cm
 Edition 1/1 + 1 AP



Claire Fontaine
Equivalent VII
2006

Galerie
Chantal Crousel

120 firebricks, folded photographic prints on archive paper / 120 briques réfractaires, impressions photographiques pliées sur papier archive
11,5 x 164 x 71,5 cm
Edition 1/1 + 1 AP

Claire Fontaine
Equivalent VIII
2006

120 firebricks, folded photographic prints on archive paper / 120 briques réfractaires, impressions photographiques pliées sur papier archive
11,5 x 178,5 x 66 cm
AP
CF08 11-AP I





Galerie
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Equivalences

2012

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Vue d'exposition, La Douane - Galerie Chantal Crousel Paris, France.



Galerie
Chantal Crousel

Claire Fontaine

The Assistants

2011

two-channel video, color, sound / vidéo à deux canaux, couleur, son

Edition of/de 6 + 2AP

38 min 45

CF12 1 2/6