

Volume

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For Immediate Release

Volume is pleased to present

reading:material

December 17, 2003 – January 10, 2004.

Opening reception: Friday, December 19, 2003 6-8 PM

Text or language-based works of art that ask to be read, but whose success as objects and images outweighs the necessity to do so are the subject of this seven-person show. **Artists include: Gerry Beegan, Joseph Grigely, Peter Hutchinson, Benjamin Jones, Jean Lowe, Larimer Richards, and Rob Wynne.** Also on view: Multiples and artist books by **Tatana Kellner** and drawings and artist books by **Ruth Laxson**.

Benjamin Jones's artist books are a continuation of the distinct visual language of his drawings (which he has shown extensively in the Southeast), and serve to document his daily struggles, travels, thoughts, and emotions. Using hand-written text as both commentary and a consistent visual element, Jones's books are highly inventive and resolved objects that exhibit an aggressive drawing style and autobiographical sensibility. This is the first showing of Jones's books.

Joseph Grigely, who has been deaf since the age of ten and unable to read lips, routinely asks people to write down what they are saying. From these exchanges, he makes "Conversations" – representations of dialogue to which the artist adds typewritten commentary to create the finished works. Grigely's text-based wall pieces and installations, while visual documents of specific events, explore a larger context of communication as a creative act in itself.

Jean Lowe's papier-maché antique furnishings, books, and panoramic acrylic paintings are often arranged into highly detailed, Rococo-style room installations. Books with titles such as "The Trouble with Nature" and "Modern Gerontology" reflect Lowe's interest in the adverse effects of our culture on the natural environment, animals and other species, and the land in general. On view will be *Magazine Rack* (1996-2000) and several of Lowe's papier-maché books.

Interested in typography and language as taxonomies and as ways of sorting objects, experiences, and narratives, **Gerry Beegan**'s works take the textual object such as books and magazines as its focus. In *Worcester, MA* (2001), Beegan transposed the text from the Second Annual New England Metal and Hardcore Festival, in the order listed, onto the spines of books on his bookshelf. Recreated in digital form and in three-dimensions, Beegan fixes the books in space, as textual reference to the objects in their original form.

Peter Hutchinson, internationally recognized as one of the innovators of narrative and conceptual art, creates photographic collages and constructions onto which he adds hand-written text and thumbnail drawings. Hutchinson juxtaposes the raw material of his artistic environment – his garden, memory, experience, botanical and literary knowledge – with a keen sense of text and image as proof of experience and the passage of time.

Rob Wynne works almost exclusively with words, phrases, and quotations, and is known for thoughtful, clever works that play with the notion of text as something that does not need to be understood in order to be powerful. Paradoxically, Wynne's works are airy, poetic constructions of carefully chosen and meaningful strings of words often borrowed from literature. Working in a range of media, Wynne's thread drawings, text-based artist books, and enigmatic sculptural editions are all part of an ongoing dialog about language.

Larimer Richards's videos combine projection and mixed media installation to cleverly investigate surface. In *Teleprompt* (1996), he projects an image of eyes onto river rocks that rest on top of a book, exploring the subject of reading. Interested in the idea of an object's identity measured by recognition (whether by surface reading or by its surroundings), Richards typically layers materials so that the projected image is somehow altered or illusionary, which fractures the viewer's perspective and plays with the idea of assumed and expected reality.

Also on view:

Tatana Kellner's large format, photo-based works and artist books are created around issues of remembrance and loss. Interested in extending the language of photography beyond the realm of documentation, Kellner experiments with printed images on alternative surfaces such as leaves, ceramic slabs, stones, fabric, and handmade paper. *Eye Witness* (1999) is a series of multiples made from emulsion on hardened paper that brings to mind issues of surveillance, eye movement as a metaphor for the passage of time, and the eye as a means of expression.

Artists' books have been at the center of **Ruth Laxson**'s work since 1980. Her drawings, for which she is equally known, are a direct result of the books (her sculptures and drawings started as an attempt to circumvent the weighty problem of binding – the bane of book making) providing another ground on which to play with words. Laxson strives to merge text and image until text actually becomes image, and her drawings and books are delicate explorations into the meaning of language itself.

For more information, please call Wendy White at 212-989-8700 or e-mail info@volumegallery.com. Volume is open Tuesday – Saturday 11-6 or by appointment.

