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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: KRISTEN SCHIELE *BEYOND THE ROCKS* AT FREIGHT+VOLUME
IN THE VIDEO ROOM: ERICA MAGREY *TROUBADOUR***

OCT 27th — DEC 3rd, 2011, OPENING RECEPTION THURSDAY, OCTOBER 27, 6 - 8pm

"For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known."
[1 Corinthians 13:12]

On September 19th, 1966, opening a press conference in NYC, Dr. Timothy Leary famously advised America to "Turn On, Tune In, Drop Out" and thus sparked the beginning of the psychedelic era. Along the way lysergic acid was soon replaced by MDMA, commonly known as Ecstasy, and a new generation of ravers was born in the 80s and 90s to all-night dance, trance and the endless search for bliss. Predominantly in Europe (particularly Berlin), the rave culture fostered a unique spirit and energy, revived in recent years, which resonated with artists, musicians, writers and performers alike. Turntables morphed to laptops, and star DJs like Moby and DJ Spooky turned out to be equally at home in a gallery as they were on the dance floor (or arena); conversely visual artists such as Christian Marclay and Matthew Higgs doubled as consummate DJs.

This spirit of crossover and counterculture movement (albeit not the chemically-induced kind) is highly apparent in the work and passion of Kristen Schiele. Dividing her time between New York and Berlin, Schiele is a wonderfully agile and gifted collage artist and "sculptural painter" who weaves poetic tableaux from the fabric of pulp and rave culture. Indeed, "Through a glass darkly" is how she views nostalgia, mass-media culture, and the collective past; in her shadow boxes she frequently employs a layer of clear or colored Plexiglas in front of collaged and painted material to emphasize this effect. Some constructions are cut and assembled with holes and angles, serving as theatrical pop-up boxes, maquettes of a larger stage replete with human and animal marionette imagery. Other works are straight canvases, epic and magisterial in their beauty. The total effect is a medley of gorgeous opposites: punk and elegant, refined and dorky, brutal and playful, neon and subtle, classical and burlesque, high and low culture, old-world and new. Schiele welcomes and seduces the viewer to join her on this magical, mind-expanding journey.

Beyond the Rocks as the show title is a double- or perhaps triple-entendre. Referencing the 1922 silent film directed by Sam Wood, starring Rudolph Valentino and Gloria Swanson (considered a "lost film" for most of the twentieth century until it was discovered in 2003 by an eccentric Dutch collector), the title also suggests going beyond the "rocks" (hard times, booze), as well as literally a journey through a rocky northern landscape. Certainly, many of these works were made at Schiele's studio upstate, where she sequestered herself for months before the show, steeped in nature. Organic energy and sensation bristle within Schiele's work. Her raw dissection of 60's and 70's pop consumerism and kitsch culture from that era are evident in her tongue-in-cheek juxtapositions. Couples with picture-perfect hair are depicted locked in carnal embrace beside a Brylcreem ad or tropical travel brochure, and against silkscreened slogans like "FAT GIRLS' DIET" or "NEED MONEY". There are some interiors, small moments, video games, TV excerpts, details such as beer bottles, beach blankets, board games, scenes from movies, and other assorted media references. Schiele writes,

The work jumps off of reading autobiographies of Fassbinder, "Love is Colder than Death" style—which is anarchistic deconstructive perverse power and liberation and choice. But looking at our times now, the annihilation feels like us, the aggression is not masculine but beyond what a human can create or change. It is raw nature, destruction and a reality check. And that does not have a sex. It is out of control of a human. Love is a totality. It's dorky, it's small or mean. The Dark Comedy is so dark, its funny...

Part of Schiele's quest as an artist is towards what she describes as a "New Authority", not unlike the power base and icons inherent in rave culture, or dispossessed youth looking for a new god, a new hero. Disillusioned with the conventional political power structure, creative individuals are seeking an alternate leader and a new structure, a power in community and in small things, and Schiele's narrative is based upon this search.

"Like every great religion of the past we seek to find the divinity within and to express this revelation in a life of glorification and the worship of God. These ancient goals we define in the metaphor of the present—turn on, tune in, drop out."

Dr. Timothy Leary, 1966

Kristen Schiele was born in Texas and spent her childhood in Germany; she received her BFA from Indiana University, her MFA from the American University in Washington DC, and attended the Hochschule Der Kunste in Berlin. She has exhibited widely in the US and abroad, especially Berlin and Mexico City. She has attended numerous residencies including Fountainhead, UCross and The Provincetown Fine Arts Work Center. This is her first solo show at Freight+Volume.

In keeping with the concept of "Turn On, Tune In, Drop Out", the video presented this month showcases Erica Magrey, a young New York-based artist and musician whose work combines send-ups of lo-fi TV kids' and sci-fi shows like *Yo Gabba Gabba!* and *Star Trek*, with costumes akin to Burning Man Festivals and 70's alt-rock shows. In *Troubadour*, Magrey explores the ways in which fantasy shapes reality and identity; a sort of Carlos Casteneda pilgrimage in neon fluorescent color. Magrey writes,

Troubadour is a psychedelic journey of self-discovery through a virtual space of the imagination, a landscape of the mind—and of the unknown. [The] heroine Metalmags is a wandering minstrel, a lost soul, a glam rocker, a psychonaut, a superhero, a mime, a depressed 20-something—any and all apply. At first, she is without hope—stranded in an alien world, haunted by memories of another time and place. But with the aid of a self-help tape, her perspective and the course of her path are transformed. Troubadour's hand-crafted lo-fi sounds and visuals offer an intimate view of the emotional realms of consciousness and creativity. A meditation on soul-searching in an age of anxiety, Troubadour is on your side...

Erica Magrey received her MFA in Photography, Video and Related Media from SVA, has shown extensively in the US and Europe. In 2011 received an artist's residency with iaab/International Exchange and Studio Program in Basel, Switzerland.

Please join us for an artists' reception and refreshment on Thursday, October 27th from 6-8pm, open to the public and free of charge. For more information please contact Nick Lawrence at 212-691-7700 or nick@freightandvolume.com.