

Arcangel, Pinard, Routson

Team Gallery, New York, USA

Team Gallery's mid-summer offering, 'Arcangel, Pinard, Routson', was as siloed a presentation as the show's title: Cory Arcangel, Guillaume Pinard and Jon Routson - three new media artists from the gallery's roster - on display together, separated by punctuation, without a conjunction to offer a through-line.

One of Arcangel's colour gradient c-type prints, *Photoshop CS: 84 by 66 inches, 300 DPI, RGB, square pixels, default gradient "spectrum", mousedown, y=8900 x=15,600, mouse up y=13,800 x=0* (2009), greeted gallery visitors with the presence of a colour-field painting and the look of a photocopier logo. The piece is at once as straightforward as the list of step-by-step instructions for its production that make up the work's cryptic title, and as complicated as a fluid spectrum composed of fixed pixels.

Next to it teetered Routson's *Book Club* (2009), a set of public address speakers mounted near the top of a two-metre wooden post held upright by a Christmas tree stand. Routson's voice oozed out of the speakers as he read from one of a handful of popular novels - these homemade audiobooks transformed the usually silent and almost always privately consumed experience of paperback fiction into public events. This is a road Routson has travelled before: his bootleg movies from the early 2000s - handheld camera recordings of movie theatre screenings shown in galleries - have a similar trajectory, but here the medium's passivity and the matter's legality are far less buzz-worthy.

Pinard's 15-minute Flash animation *Provisional End* (2006) skips with surreal logic

through a *Tom and Jerry*-style chase starring a stork and a fly. It would have been as comfortable on MTV's groundbreaking 1990s animation showcase *Liquid Television* as it was projected on the wall at Team Gallery in 2009; a vast difference between audiences and intentions that Pinard seems decidedly uninterested in exploring.

Another of Arcangel's c-type prints; Routson's *Spinners* (2009), a series of unsettling circular images (Sarah Palin, an iPod box, Dick Cheney, Terri Schiavo, a two-faced cat) projected and set to turn in place; and two more of Pinard's Flash animations - one short and to-the-point, the other a rambling narrative - filled the rest of the gallery's space relating to one another through little more than proximity.

In the video room, Arcangel's *Drei Klavierstücke, op. 11* (Three Piano Pieces, 2009) marked the end of a Tourette journey through the work of Team's new media artists, and it did so as conclusions often do: with a feeling of coherence that could be from content and context merely coming at the end, or a combination of the three. By editing YouTube clips of cats playing the piano into an arrangement of Arnold Schoenberg's seminal atonal work *Drei Klavierstücke, op. 11* (1909), Arcangel tied his practice, and with it the entire exhibition, to a kind of systematic exploration that uses new media as a tool. 'Digital work opens doors' it seemed to say, and with that statement, Pinard's audience-straddling videos, Routson's replayed recordings and Arcangel's pedagogic presentations were able to find some common ground, or at least a reason to be in the same room.

Graham T. Beck

'Arcangel, Pinard, Routson'
2009
Installation view

