PostPictures
Claudia Hart, Rollin Leonard, Sara Ludy, Shane Mecklenburger, Jonathan Monaghan, Katie Torn, Clement Valla

Dec 19, 2013 – Jan 25, 2014
bitforms gallery nyc

Reception: Thu, Dec 19, 6:00 – 8:30 PM
Gallery Hours: Tue – Sat, 11:00 AM – 6:00 PM

bitforms gallery is pleased to announce *PostPictures*, an exhibition that re-imagines Douglas Crimp's groundbreaking *Pictures* exhibition. Reflecting on Crimp's legacy, *PostPictures* includes seven artists from the United States who work with new media techniques and contemporary modes of image construction. The exhibit presents a range of artworks that generate 2D spaces of dream and phantasmagoria, while seamlessly synthesizing elements of pop-culture, surrealist thought, and pictorialism. The work responds to imagery found in daily life, and disrupts the systems of representation using pastiche and appropriation. As Crimp's 1977 essay for Artist's Space explains, "the realm of imagination has reappeared to displace the analytic and perceptual modes of our recent past". He cites a shift in representation that frees the photographic image from established modes of signification. For example, Jack Goldstein's use of pictures is described as Freudian and paralleling "the image retained in memory".

The *PostPictures* exhibition at bitforms gallery proposes a movement in the visual arts that is guided by everyday immersion in, and reliance on, the Internet for constructing illusions of reality. An expanded camera lens, one enabled by computational and networked practice, informs a complex new generation of artists. In their work, the immediate access to pictures can be felt in the way that narrative is implied and rendered. Just as the *Pictures* generation artists were responding to newspapers, magazines and television, a now-emergent group of artists are native to the realm of mobile devices and computers. The work created by artists with this mindset engages the representation of online and gaming environments, as well as previous forms of mass media.

The artworks featured isolate a tension between the real and virtual. Jonathan Monaghan's video "Mothership" appropriates characters and objects from science fiction, advertising, videogames and art history. Funny and colorful, Monaghan's work travels a space between Super Mario's Rainbow Road, the landscape of German romantic painting, and the Technodrome in Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. "Snow White" by Katie Torn presents a still life based on the female body, while recalling the form of Cubism and Futurism. This virtual sculpture plays with an atmospheric treatment of light, evoking 17th century painting of floral bouquets in Northern Europe. Shane Mecklenburger's interactive art game "Fortress of Solitude Tilted" disrupts the format of a first-person shooter videogame. Instead of presenting the familiar objectives found in commercial games, the artwork offers players the ability to create or destroy treasure. Using the diamond as a motif that represents value that is generated by controlled scarcity, the treasure expands and collapses at the player's own volition.

For some of the artists, the body and the idea of the post-human are central to their systems of representation. "Dark kNight" is Claudia Hart's response to Christopher Nolan's 2012 blockbuster film "The Dark Knight Rises", in which one of Hart's avatars attempts to break free from a simulated world behind the screen. In the animation, the avatar catapults herself against the screen in an attempt to escape the imprisonment of virtuality. In Rollin Leonard's "Belly Chain on a Donut Shaped Universe", a single image of the artist's torso is repeated continuously. Spiraling nine feet, the arrangement impossibly mutates his body, forging a narcissistic, yet delightful, torus surface. Leonard's "Crash Kiss" photography series algorithmically joins two faces in profile, suggesting romantic narrative in a way that is similar to Sherrie Levine's 1977 "Sons and Lovers" series, which debuted in Crimp's original *Pictures* exhibition.

In works by Sara Ludy and Clement Valla, the new media-enabled picture plane is characterized by floating viewpoints. Ludy's video montages observe the experience of light in modernist architecture. Evoking minimalism, these sites are handled coldly, and are void of people or recognizable signifiers. "Transom" is set in a Virginia shopping center; "Otha" explores a prefabricated house in the virtual world of Second Life, while "Niodara" features a residence in Glendale, California. Clement Valla's series "The Universal Texture" is based on images captured from the screen while traveling through the Google Earth interface. Valla's collection of geo-spatial imagery emphasizes edge conditions, the result of an automated process that fuses aerial photographs and cartographic data. As the source imagery is culled from different periods and vantage points, anomalies in wrapping the 3D projection model appear. Constraints of the algorithms are revealed, forging a hybrid-geography. Playfully questioning photographic representation, Valla's flat picture planes are returned to three-dimensional reality.

A fully illustrated exhibition guide will be available December 19 in the gallery and online at post-pictures.tumblr.com.

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BIOGRAPHIES

Claudia Hart (b. 1955, lives in Chicago) is an artist whose virtual representations integrate 3D imagery, photography, animation, sculpture and multi-channel installation. Her work is widely collected and often contains expressive and sensual female bodies meant to interject emotional subjectivity into what is typically the overly-determined Cartesian world of digital design. In May 2014 Hart will open her third solo exhibition at bitforms gallery. She is currently an Honorary Fellow at Eyebeam Center for Art and Technology, where she will premiere *The Alice's Walking* in March 2014 in collaboration with the Moving Image Art Fair, an opera-cum-fashion show created with the composer Edmund Campion, featuring her new collection of augmented reality wearables. www.claudiahart.com

Rollin Leonard (b. 1984, lives in Maine) creates art rooted in crude but systematic studio photography. His subject matter often incorporates the body, and is experienced, often online, as spliced fragments in looped animations and video. Recognized in October with an award from the Moving Image Art Fair, London, Leonard's past exhibitions also include The Photographer's Gallery, London; Family Business, New York; Postmasters Gallery, New York; Abrons Art Center, New York; Point Ephémère, Paris; the Fach & Asendorf Gallery, Stuttgart; The Front, New Orleans; Essential Existence Gallery, Leipzig; Transfer Gallery, Brooklyn; Museum of the Moving Image, New York; 53 Museum Guangzhou, China; and Bronx Art Space. www.rollinleonard.com

Sara Ludy (b. 1980, lives in Los Angeles and Vancouver) is an artist whose work explores confluence of the physical and virtual. Her practice incorporates photography, Second Life, animation and video. Past exhibitions of her work have included Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago; the New Museum, New York; Berkeley Art Museum, California; 319 Scholes, Brooklyn; Abrons Art Center, New York; Postmasters Gallery, New York; Klaus von Nichtssagend Gallery, New York; Interstate Projects, Brooklyn; Pacific Cinémathèque; Vancouver; the New Forms Festival, Vancouver; Museum of the Moving Image, New York; and Eyebeam Center for Art and Technology, New York. www.saraludy.com

Shane Mecklenburger (b. 1973, lives in Columbus, Ohio) creates work that explores systems of exchange and artificial value. It integrates video gaming, romance, conflict, simulation, sculpture and finance. Past exhibitions of his work have included the Dallas Museum of Art; Phoenix Art Museum, Arizona; Übersee-Musuem, Bremen, Germany; El Centro Cultural Paso Del Norte, Juarez, Mexico; The El Paso Museum of Art, Texas; School of the Art Institute Chicago; California College of Art, San Francisco,;Columbus Cultural Center, Ohio; R&D Gallery, Chicago; Denton Visual Arts Center, Texas and Hoxton Art Projects, London. Past residencies include the Studio for Electro-Instrumental Music, Amsterdam; U-Cross Foundation Wyoming; and I-Park, Connecticut and Stonehouse, California. Mecklenburger studied with Claudia Hart at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. www.shmeck.com

Jonathan Monaghan (b. 1986, lives in Washington D.C.) creates sculpture and animated video installations that challenge the boundaries between the real, the imagined, and virtual. Pulling from populist sources such as religious iconography, advertising, artifacts and videogames, he builds absurdist, yet compelling, 3D environments and objects. Past exhibitions and screenings of Monaghan's work have included the British Film Institute, London; the Hirshhorn Museum, Washington D.C.; Rotterdam International Film Festival, the Netherlands; Connor Contemporary, Washington D.C., Fe Gallery, Pittsburgh; Shanghai Duolun Museum of Modern Art, China; Vox Populi, Philadelphia; Contemporary Art Centre of Thessaloniki, Greece; the Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Art, Brooklyn; George Mason University, Fairfax; Curator's Office, Washington D.C; Market Gallery, Glasgow; Artisphere, Arlington; and the Queens Museum of Art, New York. www.jonmonaghan.com

Katie Torn (b. 1982, lives in New York) builds fantastical virtual totems using the detritus of consumerist culture. Assembling the color, texture and whimsy of early modernist painting, Torn crafts hyperreal fairytale spaces and experimental video works, often using the tools commonly employed in Hollywood films and commercials. Past exhibitions and screening of her work have included the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; the Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago; Postmasters gallery, New York; Union Docs, Brooklyn; Andrew Rafacz Gallery, Chicago; Eyebeam, New York; Santos Party House, New York; Interstate Projects, Brooklyn; the Susan D. Goodman Collection, New York; NYU Commons Gallery, New York; the Roots and Culture Contemporary Art Center, Chicago; A Gathering of the Tribes Gallery, New York; Tritriangle, Chicago; and Space 1026, Philadelphia. Torn studied with Claudia Hart at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and is currently a Fellow at Eyebeam Center for Art and Technology. www.katietorn.com

Clement Valla (b. 1979, lives in New York) creates work that reveals the usually hidden processes, mechanisms and biases embedded in everyday algorithmic systems. Working conceptually and collaboratively in projects such as *The Mechanical Turk Alphabets* and *Paintings from Wushipu*, his work explores global and dimensional exchange. Most recently in New York his work has exhibited in the "Paddles On!" auction at Phillips, organized by Lindsay Howard, and in the bitforms gallery Summer exhibition "Vanishing Point", curated by A.E. Benenson. Valla's work has also been shown at the Indianapoilis Museum of Art, Indiana; Antiguo Edificio de Tabacalera, Madrid; Museum of the Moving Image, New York; DAAP Galleries, University of Cincinatti; The Wassaic Project, New York; Tin Sheds Gallery at the University of Sydney, Australia; 319 Scholes, Brooklyn; Mulherin + Pollard, New York; and the Villa Terrace Decorative Arts Museum, Milwaukee. www.clementvalla.com

For images and more information, please visit:
http://www.bitforms.com
http://post-pictures.tumblr.com

Directions to bitforms gallery
Nearest subway is the C/E to 23rd St in Chelsea

bitforms gallery is devoted to mid-career, emerging and established artists who embrace new media and contemporary art practice.

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