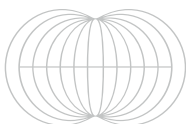


F I T Z P A T R I C K

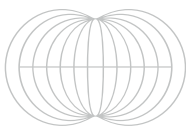
PRESS: COOPER JACOBY

- OR4 MACHINA, November 2024
- Autre magazine, September 2024
- After 8 Books, June 2024
- The Art Newspaper, June 2024
- Mousse, June 2024
- ARTnews, October 2023
- ArtForum, May 2022, review by Alex Kitnick
- ArtReview, April 2022, review by Athanasios Argianas
- Les Inrockuptibles, November 2018, review by Ingrid Luquet-Gad
- Numéro, November 2018, review by Alexis Thibault
- Cura, 2018, review by Annue Godfrey Larmon
- Mousse Magazine, April, 2017, review by Thomas Duncan
- Cultured Mag, 2017, interview by Maxwell Williams
- Frieze, October 2016
- AQNB**, March 2016
- Flash art, March/April 2016, review by William Kherbek
- Artforum, January 2016, review by Arielle Bier
- Modern painters, April 2015, Review by Francesca Sonara



F I T Z P A T R I C K

ODIOUS ROT OR4 MACHINA, NOVEMBER 2024
COOPER JACOBY



COOPERJACOBY.COM

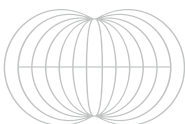
COOPER

Cooper Jacoby (born 1989, Princeton, NJ) lives and works in Miami and Paris. Recent solo exhibitions include 'The Living Substrate', Fitzpatrick Gallery, Paris (2024); 'Mirror Runs Mouth', High Art, Arles, France (2022); 'Sun is bile', The Intermission, Athens, Greece (2022)...

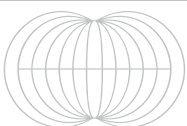
JACOBY

090

FITZPATRICK.GALLERY



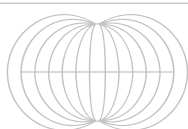
Stressor, 2019
Copper-plated steel, stainless steel, powdercoated stainless
steel, powdercoated aluminum, urethane, motor and driver.
16.93 x 22.44 x 4.2 in.





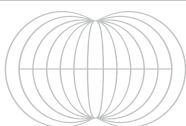
Silo, 2019

Polyester resin, fiberglass, silicone, glass,
epoxy resin, stainless steel, aluminum, acrylic.
66 x 66 x 12 in.





Silo, 2019
Polyester resin, fiberglass, silicone, glass,
epoxy resin, stainless steel, aluminum, acrylic.
66 x 66 x 12 in.



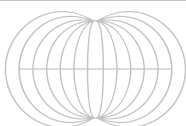
...‘Stragglers’, Central Fine, Miami Beach (2019), ‘Susceptibles’, High Art, Paris, France (2018) and ‘Disgorgers’, Swiss Institute at the LUMA Foundation, Zurich (2017). His work has been included in group exhibitions including ‘Antefutur’, CAPC Musée d’art Contemporain de Bordeaux (2023); ‘Lifes’, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2022); ‘Foncteur d’oubli’, FRAC Ile-de-France, Le Plateau, Paris (2019) and ‘Swiss Institute On-Site’, Swiss Institute, New York (2019).

Stressors

Using the alarms typically found in schools and factories to signal shifts between activities, ‘Stressors’ renders these bells mute. Instead of ringing periodically to divide labor from rest or normalcy from emergency, the limp hammers of these alarms struggle to strike bells that have been chemically corroded. In the high-visibility colors of safety gear, the alarms induce an uncanny dissonance between visual warning and its inability to be perceived.

Recent medical studies have postulated that environmental stressors can accelerate biological aging and genetically encode these responses. The silent prod of the hammers in ‘Stressors’ enact the slow conditioning and internalizing of our affective states to ambient tempos of security and productivity, operating at the edge of the senses.

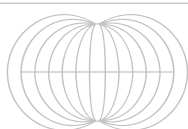
WORDS COOPER JACOBY





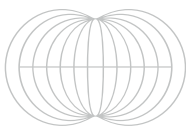
Silo, 2019
Polyester resin, fiberglass, silicone, glass,
epoxy resin, stainless steel, aluminum, acrylic.
66 x 66 x 12 in.

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST, FITZPATRICK GALLERY AND CENTRAL FINE, MIAMI BEACH



F I T Z P A T R I C K

AUTRE MAGAZINE, SEPTEMBER 2024
COOPER JACOBY, INTERVIEW BY PAIGE SILVERIA



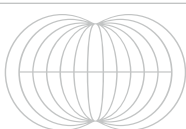
Interview.....Paige Silveria

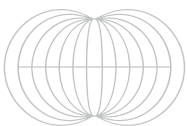
Photography.....Jesper D. Lund

Cooper



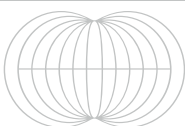
Jacoby







(Previous page) Cooper Jacoby, *Estate (May 30th, 2017)*, 2024. Polyamide, polarized polycarbonate, camera, screen, speaker, electronics, acrylic, clear coat. Screen: magnetic field viewing film, dead hard drive magnets, leather, painted steel, acrylic, aluminum, polystyrene board, 200 × 152 × 90 cm, 78 3/4 × 59 7/8 × 35 3/8 in. Courtesy of the artist, Fitzpatrick Gallery. (This page) Cooper Jacoby, *Estate (January 14, 2019)*, 2024. Polyamide, polarized polycarbonate, camera, screen, speaker, electronics, acrylic, clear coat, pan arm, 29 × 29 × 27 cm, 11 3/8 × 11 3/8 × 10 5/8 in. Courtesy of the artist, Fitzpatrick Gallery



Cooper Jacoby's wall-mounted sculptures that mimic the built environment of our urban world appear innocuous, even banal, at first inspection: a bench, lockers, apartment call boxes. But the materials he uses, like human teeth, and the conceptual frameworks, like life after death in the digital ether, ask complex questions about contemporary existence.

Paige Silveria How long have you been in Paris?

Cooper Jacoby I've had this residency at Cité internationale des arts since September 2023, and I have done all the work here since then.

PS Where are you from originally?

CJ I normally live in Miami. I've been there the past five years. I grew up between New York and Boston. I also lived in LA for ten years—I just wanted to escape the winter and have space and not be miserable. All the stereotypes about LA are actually about Miami: the self-invention, the money, the plastic surgery, the gift.

PS For sure. But they also apply to LA.

CJ Miami is an interesting place to work. There's the fair, obviously, and lots of collectors, but there's not a strong art school or art infrastructure. So, a lot of the artists I know are just kind of random seeds who got blown there. You just land where you land. And there's obviously a huge Caribbean and Latin American community. Miami's equally a Latin American city as it is an American city. It's a little bit of a lonely art existence, but can be good too because you're not constantly socializing or running around.

PS And sometimes you don't necessarily want to be influenced by other artists? There's an advantage to this situation as well.

CJ Yeah, definitely. There's not this feedback loop between artists and people who are being reactive and feel super competitive. There's none of that. It's kind of weird because, for an American city, it has tons of art funding, as it's trying to brand itself as an art capital. But what it incentivizes is really bad

provincial art about sea level rise, alligators, and communism. It only rewards branding yourself as a Miami artist. It's like encouraging artists from New York to make art about rats and taxi cabs and pizza.

PS What was it like working elsewhere for you?

CJ Having worked so long in Los Angeles, where there are so many resources from the film and tech industry, you can source anything. You can find a person to do any job. You make things and develop this amazing network of strange people that have kind of woven in and out of the industrial, entertainment, and art worlds. In Miami, it's a hospitality city, so you do it yourself. And I think that's been good, actually.

PS Why's that?

CJ I used to work with more people and had more of a sourcing mindset; having to do it all yourself, it just gets weirder. The work becomes a mixture of necessity and not so much a consumer mindset of, "I'm shopping to find this and that," rather than just asking, "What can I make in this room?" Because a lot of my work is programming and electronics, it made me learn more of that myself.

PS Can you give me a little bit of background on your family and how they have influenced you?

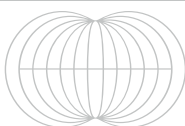
CJ One reason why I got into using AI in my work is because my grandfather was a linguist. He studied how language is used, and he worked on the first encyclopedic text set in the '60s. This work was important for computer science and what's known as computational linguistics; it's the first large language data set that was digitized. His colleague—a Czechoslovakian guy named Henry Kučera—went on to invent the predecessor to spell-check, which is essentially early AI word prediction. He originally wanted to call it SpellCzech. So, I always had this history of cybernetics and language looming in the background. Later, when I started working with large language models myself, I really understood how a data set is made and how tweaking it creates vastly different results.

PS Can you explain that a bit more? How did you incorporate this into your summer show, *The Living Substrate*, at Fitzpatrick Gallery in Paris?

CJ It really came out of another project, a series of works called *How do I survive?* I started working with an AI program at the end of 2019—GPT-2—which is the pre-runner to Chat GPT. At the time, it was this very cutting-edge thing: a large language model that could produce text that was sometimes indistinguishable from what it was trained on. It's also important because it's the last open-source model where you get to really play with the parameters. You can determine how it learns something and how to train it, whereas ChatGPT now is a product with all these defaults that you can't change or tweak. Even though GPT-2 is less advanced than models now, you actually have far more control on what it's trained on and how it's tuned; it has its own unique tones, a bit like how people use drum machines from the '80s today because of their embedded sounds. So, I started playing around with it and thinking a lot about how to make a data set.

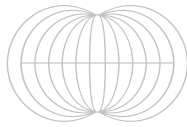
PS And this is where the semi-creepy sculptures come in.

CJ At the center of this show are these sculptures, each equipped with a camera, looking around the room. It associates what it sees with an AI model of a different dead, creative person and associates those objects—chairs, people, books—to the memories of that person. Then, they speak using a voice model that's based on friends of mine, living creatives. So, it's essentially this dead AI model speaking through an automated living model; creating a weird merging of the two. When people talk about the ways we're interacting with AI, in reality

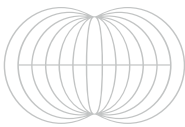




Cooper Jacoby, *How do I survive? (an ultimatum to sink under)*, 2021. AI-scripted thermostat, thermochromic pigment, epoxy resin, acrylic, polyimide heaters, powder-coated aluminum, electronics, 134.6 x 63.5 x 6.3 cm, 53 x 25 x 2 1/2 in. Courtesy of the artist, Fitzpatrick Gallery



Cooper Jacoby, *How Do I Survive? (the warm denominator)*, 2022 (detail), AI-scripted thermostat, thermochromic pigment, epoxy resin, acrylic, powder-coated aluminum, polyimide heaters, and stainless steel, 55 x 157 x 9 cm / 21 5/8 x 61 3/4 x 3 1/2 in. Courtesy of the artist, Fitzpatrick Gallery



Cooper Jacoby, *Mutual Life (37.1 years)*, 2024. Polished stainless steel, human baby teeth, electronics, wax, mdf, polyamide, acrylic, clear coat, 35 × 35 × 14 cm, 13 3/4 × 13 3/4 × 5 1/2 in. Courtesy of the artist, Fitzpatrick Gallery



it's just made out of the traces of millions and millions of dead and living people. So, this work is a thought experiment: what if you took one person out of this mess of data and just got their random opinions and experiences as a sort of ghost that inhabits this object?

PS What was the process of collecting this data from the deceased?

CJ The AI model is based on the social media of a series of anonymous, dead creatives—musicians, writers, influencers, chefs, social justice figures—from 2007 to 2016. I would search different obituary websites to look for creative types and see if they had a robust social media profile or one that at least showed varied, original interests. It got more interesting as I looked further back in time because earlier social media is more confessional and a little random, less performative, and more stream of consciousness.

PS So scary that these apps own all of the content you've ever shared on them.

CJ I was thinking a lot about that: what are the ethics or boundaries? What does it mean if you die, then get your life and all its messy residue scraped and turned into a model without your consent? The work is called *Estates*, and I was trying to create this link between physical property and intellectual or creative property. It's not just that AI and these companies want the things that you make; they want all traces of your life. Your life is the intellectual property that it's hungry for.

PS Where do the teeth attached to the sculptures come in?

CJ I spent a lot of time going to the Musée de Cluny, the medieval museum in Paris, and got really interested in the history of ivory. It has been used since ancient times but its consumption really exploded during early colonial periods. It was valued because of its ornamental and functional features. One of the first things they'd carve out of the tusks were compasses, which became navigational tools to find more animals to take from. I thought this long history of bodily extraction and instrumentalization made sense to incorporate into the sculptures. The whole show is kind of a snout-to-tail approach to the animal: there's leather, stomachs, bone, and teeth. These

leftover teeth in the sculptures are obvious reminders of death and language, but more specifically, they came out of the research I was doing on life insurance, which is one form of people's lives becoming stocks. I grew up in Boston, which is home to the large American life insurance companies, and today these companies are focused on figuring out when you're going to die in order to precisely time the ways in which you're held as an asset. They've become very interested in knowing your biological age as opposed to your chronological age, and now there are all of these pseudo-scientific DNA tests for this. So, each of the sculptures is kind of a portrait of a different person's biological time using one of these tests. The teeth mark each individual's biological clock, acting as the minutes and hour hands.

PS Where do the teeth come from?

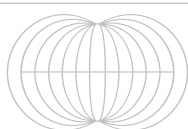
CJ Some are actually my teeth that my mom had saved. My baby teeth didn't fall out and I had to have them all pulled. I put them under my pillow and got a sort of lump sum for them from the "Tooth Fairy." I remember, even at the time, thinking, *This is so perverse: they take something out of my body and I get paid for it?* Definitely my first memorable form of monetary exchange.

PS The idea of the Tooth Fairy is pretty bizarre. I wonder where the tradition comes from.

CJ Teeth are weird because it's the one bone in your body that's exposed. They're, of course, associated with money because, for instance, how crooked one's teeth are is usually a marker of class. The perfectly straight, white teeth or veneers, are a display of wealth. In the last couple years, there's been a huge push for art to act as some artifact of your life, your story. Your life becomes a total brand, a resource to be converted, and art becomes a souvenir. There's obviously ways to complicate or negate this, which artists have done successfully, but overall, there's a dimension to this capturing of people's bodies and stories that I find unsettling. So, I decided for these works that I'd literally give a piece of myself, an actual souvenir. I have a finite amount of these teeth and I'm going to put them on offer. If I'm going to use dead people and animal bodies as instruments and materials, then I thought I should become an instrument myself.

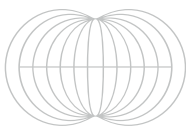
PS One last question pertaining to the theme of this issue, which concerns itself with what it means to be a citizen in the 21st century. With climate change, emergent technologies, artificial intelligence, and the digital afterlife, what is your definition of a citizen in the world we live in now and in the future?

CJ Being a citizen historically meant someone who owned property and thus was given rights, which of course excluded the majority of people until the 20th century. If we're stuck with the nation-state model and digital platforms as guarantors of property and rights—physical, financial, and otherwise—I think at least when it comes to the digital, we "citizens" should get better at collectively organizing to decide how our lives are used as forms of intellectual property within these enterprises that constantly privatize us. This means choosing what our collective intelligence should be put towards, rather than trying to ask for a few more rights or tokens of privacy. I think our aggregated intelligence and data can go towards much more durable and complex purposes that are more structured around need, rather than just rehashing the past, or whatever dopamine-hacking clickbait and deepfake slop the platform/prosumer model incentivizes at the moment. ▲



F I T Z P A T R I C K

AFTER 8 BOOKS, JUNE 2024
COOPER JACOBY TALKS WITH INGRID LUQUET-GAD



AFTER 8 BOOKS

BOOKSTORE, PUBLISHING, **EVENTS**, CONTACT, AND MORE

“Better... better get a bucket.”

Cooper Jacoby talks with Ingrid Luquet-Gad about the I of AI

29 June 2024 06:00PM

This Saturday, we are inviting you to a new After 8 Books publication: Cooper Jacoby's *How do I Survive?* The launch is happening at 6 PM, at Fitzpatrick Gallery, where Cooper's show, *The Living Substrate*, is currently on display.

The artist will be in conversation with art critic Ingrid Luquet-Gad, who contributed an essay to the book.

👉 Fitzpatrick Gallery is at 123 rue de Turenne, in the 3rd arrondissement.

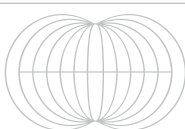
★ *How do I survive? was written with machines over the course of a year. I say ‘with,’ not ‘by,’ since the text was generated using a series of customized AI models trained on collections of fiction that I have arranged and tuned by trial and error. These large language models are embodied in twelve artworks. Each work has a thermostat that reads the room’s temperature and humidity. Each asks itself: How do I survive? Changes in the surrounding heat and moisture shape their responses. This book gathers bodies of text that were produced by the works as they asked themselves this question over and over again.*

—C.J.



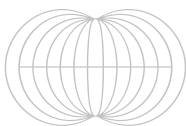
★ Designed by N. Weltyk, *How do I Survive?* articulates images of the works with the text; it concludes with an essay by Ingrid Luquet-Gad, that discusses how programmes such as large language models challenge preconceptions of subjectivity and the self. It is published by After 8 Books, in collaboration with High Art and Fitzpatrick Gallery.

★ More info about the book [here](#).



F I T Z P A T R I C K

THE ART NEWSPAPER, JUNE 2024
COOPER JACOBY, *THE LIVING SUSBSTRATE*
BY PATRICK JAVALT



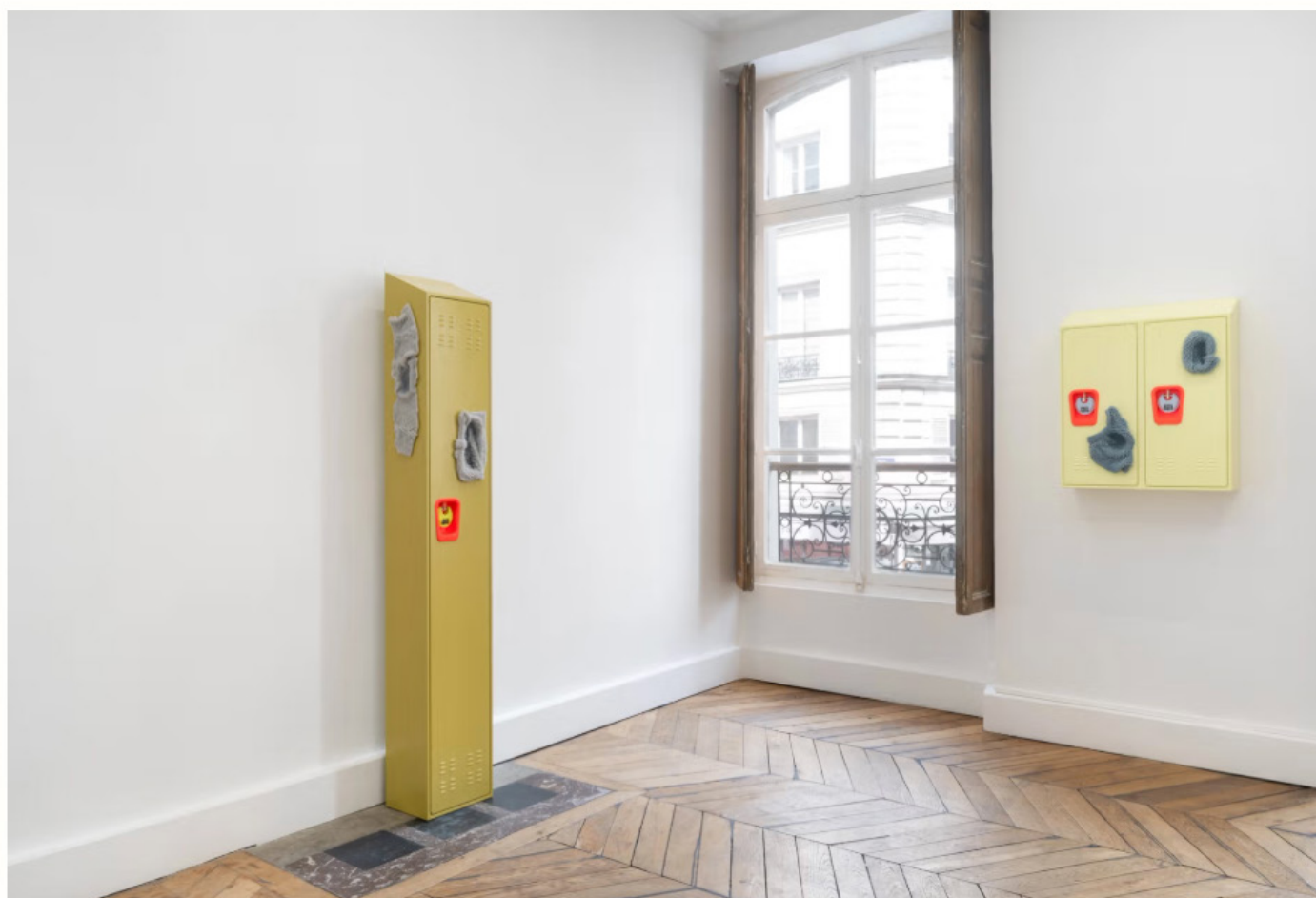


THE ART NEWSPAPER

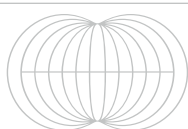
L'actualité des galeries
Actualité

Patrick Javault

14 juin 2024



Cooper Jacoby : The Living Substrate



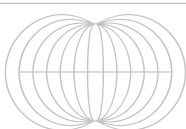
Cooper Jacoby construit des œuvres qui se transforment, évoluent et mettent en évidence les systèmes régulant les relations humaines et la mécanique sociale. Il utilise volontiers des capteurs et des thermostats. Cette fois, il a eu recours à l'I.A. [intelligence artificielle] pour fabriquer des discours ou des sortes de poèmes à contrainte que récitent des voix mécaniques. La première sculpture à s'adresser à nous ressemble à un paravent à trois volets doté d'un haut-parleur d'interphone et d'une caméra dôme. Elle nous tient sous son regard et débite un monologue fait de *chatbots* arrangés. C'est le Hal 9000 de Kubrick ressuscité et nous assommant d'histoires à dormir debout.

En montant à l'étage, nous trouvons une série d'*Estates*, conçues sur un principe voisin. Il s'agit cette fois d'armoires métalliques de vestiaires dans différents formats, également équipées de fausses caméras dômes et de haut-parleurs. Ces armoires sont percées sur le devant et sur les côtés d'orifices dont les parois débordantes imitent la texture des tripes. Certaines ont des cadenas numériques qui tournent et se bloquent sur des combinaisons chiffrées en rapport, suppose-t-on, avec les messages diffusés.

Pour ajouter à la complexité, Cooper Jacoby a conçu trois horloges dont le cadran est un miroir convexe et les aiguilles deux dents humaines. Le mouvement de chacune correspond au vieillissement accéléré ou ralenti de trois individus vivants dont le vieillissement biologique est en décalage avec le temps calendaire.

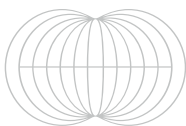
Cette combinaison de sophistication technicienne et d'invention plastique est d'une inquiétante séduction.

Du 5 juin au 20 juillet 2024, [Fitzpatrick Gallery](#), 123, rue de Turenne, 75003 Paris



F I T Z P A T R I C K

MOUSSE, JUNE 2024
COOPER JACOBY, *THE LIVING SUBSTRATE* AT FITZPATRICK GALLERY,
PARIS



MOUSSE

Cooper Jacoby “The Living Substrate” at Fitzpatrick Gallery, Paris

26.06.2024

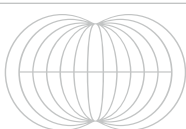
READING TIME 5'



NEXT

Sophisticated artificial intelligences will routinely tell you, when asked, that human intelligence is superior because it is located in a body. Well, they *would* say that. Still, it's a nice thought to have, if it is, indeed, a thought. What type of advantage is it to have a body? To be at the mercy of hungers and hormones? To need sleep? To become irrational or emotional? To be finite, of course. To age and to die. But as AI reaches the outer limits of its own possible knowledge, it comes up against both corporeal knowledge and the evidence of human spirit that lives in art. AI needs bodies to produce more human content, otherwise it will begin to be trained on itself and spiral into its own model collapse. It also needs that difficult to quantify thing: the *geist*, the ghost found in the corners of our culture such as art and faith.

At present, an AI can only know a sculpture through the images, data, and language produced by humans. Humans, on the other hand, can know sculpture through the mouth. The mouth is where human infants first investigate the object world, and early comprehension of objects—texture, weight, durability, and volume—is oral. Though a human adult can assess an object with their eyes, and sometimes by touch where permitted, the vestiges of all this knowledge, the roots of it all, live in the mouth.



A form of human speech that has lost its mouth, lost its body, emanates from Cooper Jacoby's sculptural series *Estates* (2024), deep-fried building intercoms that resemble old pieces of bone. The voices call out from inside a property to which we may be permitted access, while spherical surveillance cameras, like mirrored eyes, pan around, searching for identifiable bodies to address. The voices are based on the social media posts of a number of dead individuals from creative industries which Jacoby fed to GPT-2, an already-outdated language processing AI, which synthesizes the particularities of their posts to try and regenerate new phrases. These are voices without bodies, creatives without creativity, who call out at us from the undead internet. In this growing limbo, online debris made by the deceased now functions as free intellectual property to be scraped up and digested, a fertilizer for machine learning.

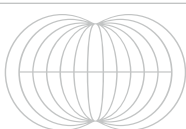
A crisis of interiority is inevitable when AI so closely mimics human speech, and when algorithms are programmed to guide our minds down selected pathways. The alphabet combination locks that keep the sculptural series *Ruminators* closed are automated to produce a language mimicking online engagement chatbots. These bots weaponize affect in a variety of ways – flirtatious, poor-me, kinky, sulky, angry – to provoke responses and hold human attention. “Pat my ass tell me it is ok,” says one of them, sweetly, before continuing “my mind is muck.” With texts that are wholly constructed from the combinations of nine letters, they are also machines for concrete poetry. Cast cow stomachs, with the unnervingly frilly flesh otherwise known as tripe, are also embedded into the exterior of the lockers. These physical metaphors for garbage and nonsense churn away in accompaniment, like the back end of a machine, digesting and processing the information that users leak away as they interact with engagement bait.

Teeth jump around clockfaces in a final group of works that link the subjectivity of time with the biological age of three living individuals. Some of us are ageing faster than others, including Jacoby, who, according to an epigenetic DNA test, has a biological age that is fractionally older than his calendar age. Part of a growing field of bodily datafication that includes pedometers and sleep monitors, these chronometric measures make bodies vulnerable to health and life insurance companies who can price human lives and widen existing inequities. The speed of each of these clocks with teeth ‘hands’ is accelerated or slowed to match the biological age of a person, so that a minute or an hour is shorter for those who are ageing faster than their bodies. Stress, lifestyle, genetics, and other environmental conditions make our bodies more vulnerable to time.

During our early oral explorations of the world teeth emerge: the mouth's own tiny sculptures, quasi-alive. They have nerves and a blood supply, and without these they die. They also require the dull art of maintenance, and they cost a good deal of money to maintain in most of the world. Children put their teeth, those first little losses, under their pillows and hope for hard cash in exchange. Lesson learned. To me, teeth are one of the ultimate human subjects, existing at the threshold of almost everything: touch, finances, maintenance, mortality, corporeality, nerves, language, violence, food. And the teeth know the difference between what is alive and what is dead.

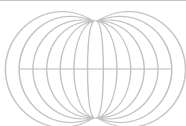
—Laura McLean-Ferris

at Fitzpatrick Gallery, Paris
until July 20, 2024



F I T Z P A T R I C K

ARTNEWS, OCTOBER 2023
THE BEST BOOTHS AT THE SECOND EDITION OF ART BASEL'S PARIS
FROM SUBVERSIVE INSTALLATIONS TO A DECKED-OUT CAR
BY MAXIMILIANO DURON



The Best Booths at the Second Edition of Art Basel's Paris+, From Subversive Installations to a Decked-Out Car



BY MAXIMILIANO DURÓN

October 18, 2023 1:14pm

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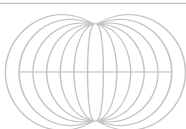
Cooper Jacoby at Fitzpatrick Gallery



Work by Cooper Jacoby.

Photo : Maximiliano Durón/ARTnews

An equally unsettling and intriguing artwork comes in the form of a wall-hung sculpture by Cooper Jacoby. Produced for Paris+, it features a chartreuse locker into which the artist has implanted a sponge-like blob meant to mimic tripe. Also included is an automated orange lock that every so often readjusts itself to spell different four-letter words (or just random combinations of letters). While I was standing in the booth, the combination went from TELL to SELL.

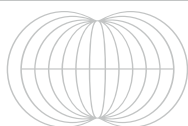


F I T Z P A T R I C K

ARTFORUM, MAY 2022

GROUP THINK

REVIEW BY ALEX KITNICK ON “LIFES” AT HAMMER MUSEUM

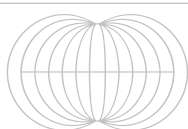


PRINT MAY 2022

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GROUP THINK

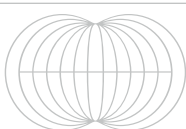
Alex Kitnick on “Lifes”



THE GESAMTKUNSTWERK is one of modernism's most telling inventions. Built from dance, music, theater, and poetry, it sought to stanch the crisis of modernity with a multisensory experience: If life was breaking up—split between public and private, work and leisure—the “total work of art” promised to bind disciplines and audience together to create something like community. Beginning in 1876 under the patronage of King Ludwig II of Bavaria, Richard Wagner launched a festival to stage his epic operas in Bayreuth, Germany, inspiring a devoted, at times fascistic, cult as well as fierce critics (Adorno once described him as “a revolutionary who conciliates the despised members of the middle class by recounting heroic deeds now past”). If Wagner's work was archaic and artificial, the composer also thought of it as a “drama of the future,” so it's interesting to consider the *Gesamtkunstwerk* again today, 150 years later, when life's components are ever more linked and animated by a web of ostensibly smart devices. This is the question at the heart of Aram Moshayedi's “Lifes,” at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, and while the exhibition may be largely symptomatic, it leads us to places from which we might begin to think the present.

The scene of “Lifes” feels less like a gallery than a stage, if not a fun house or a discotheque. The space is cavernous and vast—there are no partitions or dividing walls—and the floor has been carpeted so as to highlight the presence of the viewer's body in the space, alongside the artworks. Entering the exhibition, one steps not into a white cube but a managed environment, the space is more timed than timeless. It has been suffused with a purplish glow and outfitted with projectors and speakers (a handout tells you of various diversions taking place minute to minute), and one imagines a massive hard drive somewhere controlling the lighting, the projection of the videos, and the playing of the soundtracks that produce the ever-changing—and seemingly very expensive—mise-en-scène. Many different types of professionals pumped life into this project, including musicians (Pauline Oliveros), actors (Aubrey Plaza), artists (Rosemarie Trockel), choreographers (Andros Zins-Browne), critics (Greg Tate), dramaturges (Adam Linder), and poet-painter-pianists (Wayne Koestenbaum), but what is striking, and somewhat surprising, is that most of these figures work in rather traditional, or at least discrete, media. It is the curator who created this multimedia *collab*. (The old critical bogeyman *spectacle* feels too dated a word.)

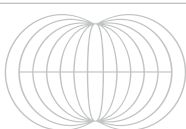
One of the things that first intrigued me about “Lifes”—in addition to the show's



advertisements, their receding gridded plane reminiscent of Superstudio's Endless Monument—is that its various contributors share equal footing on the lengthy artist list, which suggests an exhibition much larger than what one actually encounters in the gallery. This horizontality challenges established hierarchies—between artist and critic as much as between artist and Hollywood actor—but it also makes equivalences between things that might actually be dissimilar; moreover, while pointing to a collective project, it invites fascination with personalities and proper names at the expense of what used to be called *the work*. In this sense, “Lifes” is not unlike a party-guest list for which Moshayedi served as host. He is an *Austellungsmacher*, or “exhibition maker,” in the tradition of Harald Szeemann (who himself made a major exhibition about the *Gesamtkunstwerk* in 1983) and Nicolas Bourriaud (whose 1996 exhibition “Traffic,” which launched Relational Aesthetics, is an important precedent here given its conception of the exhibition as an event, or aggregate, made of both seen and unseen forces). This meister style is no longer fashionable today, and so it feels rare and exciting—amid a field of dutiful and responsible exhibitions—to find a curator who is trying to think about contemporary life with contemporary art and vice versa. Kudos, too, to the institution willing to take a risk.

The artist is a processed good, a leftover, passing through the system.

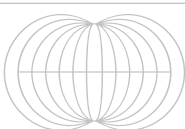
Despite the feeling of unity that pervades the space, certain works stand out: The biggest is Morag Keil's *The Vomit Vortex*, a pneumatic tube system that curves through the galleries and every now and then sends a canister of fake artist vomit surging through the exhibition. It is a silly and somewhat sophomoric work (*Double Dare* at the museum), but I mean this as high praise—being droll might be the only way to be serious these days. The large clear tube enters corners and penetrates walls, hinting at an infrastructure behind, and attached to, the institution's managed surface. Surrounding each aperture is a large adhesive image of the supposed insides of the museum, and while some look like fleshy wounds and old-fashioned brick, others offer glimpses of proximate attractions, such as the museum café. It's telling that the reveal itself is an illusion. The work calls to mind Robert Smithson's 1972 injunction to artists to investigate “the apparatus the artist is threaded through,” but some fifty years later *threaded* doesn't suffice to describe the relationship. *Processed* and *pulverized*? *Chewed*, *digested*, and *spit out*? The artist is no longer capable of dexterously negotiating the art world in all its complexity. She's a processed good, a leftover, passing through the system.



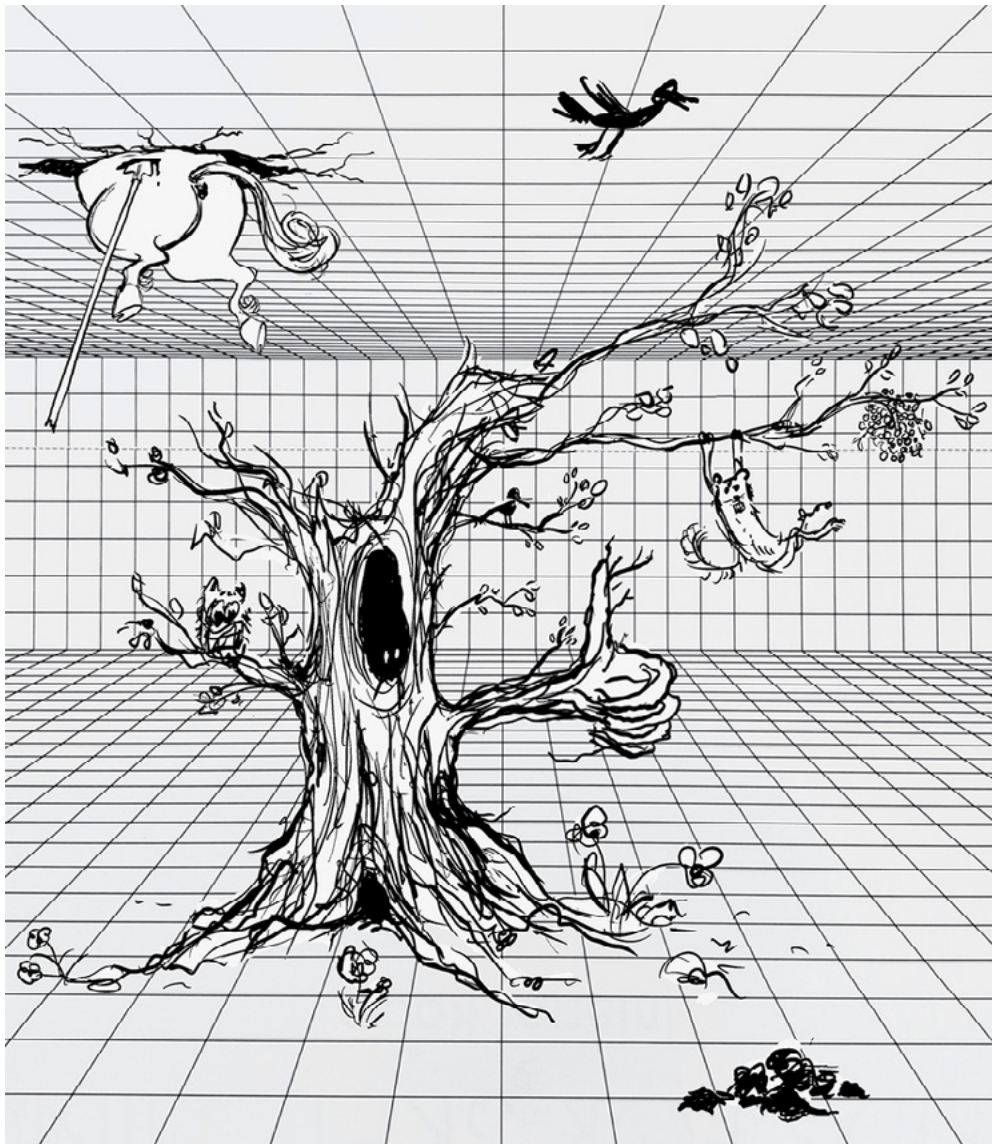


Nina Beier and Bob Kil, *All Fours*, 2022. Performance view, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, 2022. Photo: Gabriel Noguez.

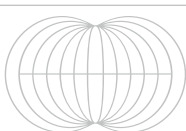
What I've described thus far, of course, is just one part of "Lifes," really just a part of a part. The exhibition also includes a polyurethane log (Piero Gilardi); nine marble lions occasionally mounted by dancers (Nina Beier and Bob Kil); a neo-Constructivist monument to interspecies intermingling (Fahim Amir and Elke Auer); and multiple works about Pimu, aka Santa Catalina Island (Rindon Johnson, Kite, and L. Frank). There's also the catalogue, copies of which are tossed here and there across the gallery floor. More like a manual or reader, the volume contains no images of artworks but lots of conversations among artists as well as a beautiful text on color by philosopher Amir; incisive analyses by Tate and the scholar Shannon Jackson; and rather stoned-looking marginalia by Olivia Mole. From February to May, the exhibition also hosted a series of performances, talks, screenings, collaborations, and concerts—it was a festival networked across time and space (and it is perhaps worth mentioning here the glaring *f* in "Lifes," which seems to point to the soldering of the physical and virtual, suggesting the ways in which not only a *second life* has become real, but a third, a fourth, and a fifth life as well). This is typical of a contemporary mode of exhibition making that gathers so many moving parts that no one person can ever really grasp it. In a way, it's impossible to review such projects for there is always something in excess,



some beyond that cannot be seen, but if this abundance threatens the critical function (I'll live), it also turns away from public (which is to say *discussable*) life toward that which is private and affective (toward a coterie, perhaps). Obliquity is held up as a value here. The catalogue's epigraph, setting the tone for the show, is a quote from the artist Charles Gaines, who is represented in the exhibition by a sculpture featuring a chained boulder periodically dropped onto panes of glass: "The art work, total art work, involves many aspects of myself, not just one, and they all want to participate in the work. But when the work is done they all disappear, claiming ignorance of the whole affair, and documenting alibis." The idea seems to be that while an artist's life goes into the making of an artwork, their labor (and its affects) is obscured once the work is finished and sent off, but this is no big claim, really: Contemporary art no longer requires the death of the author so much as it turns them into an intriguing specter.



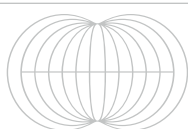
Olivia Mole, *The Lowlifes*, 2021, digital image, dimensions variable.



What struck me, though, is how the exhibition—despite its intentions—works in the opposite direction. It is not the lives or identities of the artists that are interesting, though the social web they form, charted by a network diagram on the exhibition’s opening wall, is seemingly meant to compel us. Rather, it is *our* lives, the viewer’s life (or perhaps simply our heat and energy, as suggested by Cooper Jacoby’s thermochromic benches-*cum*-thermostats), that the exhibition wants. “Lifes” is not simply something to visit, but, per Smithson, an apparatus to join—and, as such, it’s most incisive as an allegory of the contemporary art world writ large. Rather than resist the interconnectedness of contemporary art—let alone contemporary life—the exhibition intensifies it, choreographs and aestheticizes it, makes it beautiful. And so we are put in a funny position. We can go with the flow, feel the atmosphere, and learn all the references—or we can push back, turn away, avoid being sucked in completely. There is pleasure in “Lifes,” but there is also pleasure in wanting more—or less.

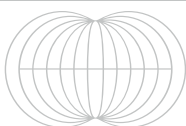
“Lifes” is on view at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, through May 8.

Alex Kitnick teaches art history at Bard College in Annandale-on-Hudson, New York.



F I T Z P A T R I C K

ART REVIEW, APRIL 2022
COOPER JACOPY, *SUN IS BILE*, THE INTERMISSION X FITZPATRICK GALLERY
REVIEW BY ATHANASIOS ARGIANAS



In the refurbished 1920s premises of The Intermission in Piraeus, the port city in Greater Athens whose harbour has been used continuously since antiquity, American artist Cooper Jacoby summons a local practice that has been dormant here since the early days of Roman Christians. Like a contemporary Pythia, the Delphic oracle who inhaled bay-leaf vapour while voicing riddles envisioning the future, a set of four wall-mounted panels literally heat up and cool down, augmented with digital displays that emit lines of drunken poetry. 'Mirror Is Engine, Sun Is Bile,' reads one. Epoxy-encapsulated with reflective surfaces, approximately the height of a full-length body mirror, each is fitted with an AI-modified thermostat that also generates text on its display in real time.

Reminiscent of the musings of horoscope columns, these are writings that we are ourselves scripted to project onto, mirroring our own

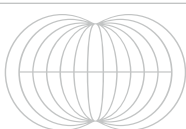
biases, fears, hopes. As the temperature changes, meanwhile, the chromogenic-paint hue mutates within a saturated autumn palette, coppers to greens to blues, in expression of temperamental affect. And as the sentient surfaces become aware of their own temperature fluctuations – a circle within circles, a closed system not unlike climate itself – the very meaning of consciousness is brought to the foreground, as is a history of existential cyclical allegory stretching from Narcissus to Hans Haacke's *Condensation Cube* (1963–68), a sealed Perspex box with a changing opacity, depending on its surrounding temperature. Pointedly, amid a context of unpredictable heating and predicting, the title of this series asks *How will I survive?* (2022).

A metre above our heads, as if both observing and illuminating us, four pastel-coloured simulacra of streetlamps protrude from the walls. In the glass of each, diffusing a blurred

beam of coloured light, are what look like fungal growths, abstractions or, wait, abjections. These are clear-silicone cast animal intestines and organs, like miniature islands in a puddle of backlighting. Harking back to haruspicy, divination by reading animals' entrails, a practice dating to Ancient Rome, this flickering iridescence is of a down-sampled projection of video behind the silicone 'prism', which diffuses it further, tinting the pulsing organ shapes, like enlarged microscope imagery in an animist flurry of ancient activity. In a time of dense futurology, conspiracies and technological fetishism, it's salutary to be reminded that humans have always looked for answers beyond their own logic – whether through discursive technology or irrational divination. We did it then and, as we tragically avoid facing the magnitude of our environment's cascading crisis, we do it now. *Athanasios Argianas*

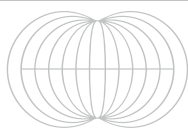


Apopheniatic (infancy), 2021, polyurethane enamel, steel, fibreglass, silicone, LED array,
165 × 92 × 34 cm. Courtesy the artist and Fitzpatrick Gallery, Paris



F I T Z P A T R I C K

LES INROCKUPTIBLES, NOVEMBER 2018
“L’ENTRE-DEUX”
REVIEW BY INGRID LUQUET-GAD



Cooper Jacoby, *Pacifier*, 2018. Courtesy de l'artiste et High Art © Diane Arques

**C'est là, dans les limbes
de ces zones de gris,
que surgissent
les nouveaux sentiments
de la vie moderne**

L'entre-deux

Avec ses étranges objets du quotidien,
COOPER JACOBY donne la mesure de l'écart
entre protection et paranoïa.

AUPARAVANT, LES CANARIS ÉTAIENT UTILISÉS PAR LES MINEURS

de charbon pour détecter les fuites de gaz toxique. Plus sensibles que les humains, l'interruption de leur chant indiquait qu'un seuil critique de gaz dans l'air avait été atteint. Nous continuons à nous entourer de toutes sortes de canaris mécaniques, ces gadgets domestiques qui rassurent autant qu'ils alimentent une obsession sécuritaire grandissante. L'exposition de Cooper Jacoby à la galerie High Art est truffée de ces gadgets. De grandes structures en forme de matelas sont rembourrées de fibres d'acier et de cuivre censées bloquer le passage des ondes électromagnétiques.

Plus loin, un bras mécanique vient frapper un mécanisme en silicone avec la régularité d'une horloge, tout en n'indiquant rien d'autre que son propre bon fonctionnement. Ailleurs, des masques humanoïdes, dont la forme provient des premiers babyphones, diffusent dans l'espace une fréquence continue : un sifflement de canari enregistré, simulacre mécanique de sécurité qui ne protège plus de rien et continuerait à retentir quand bien même tout le monde aurait déjà été asphyxié.

Lors de chacune de ses expositions, l'Américain Cooper Jacoby, 29 ans, se penche sur les états d'entre-deux. C'est là, dans les limbes de ces zones de

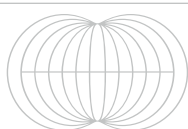
gris, que surgissent les nouveaux sentiments de la vie moderne, ceux que nous éprouvons confusément sans encore parvenir à les diagnostiquer clairement. En 2015, pour *Deposit*, son dernier solo à la galerie High Art, il s'intéressait aux systèmes de communication défaillants et réalisait une série de boîtes postales imprimées de radiographies.

A la Fondation Luma Westbau à Zurich, l'hiver dernier, il insérait des têtes de gargouilles grimaçantes au sein d'appareils électroménagers et transformait alors en organismes gloutons une panoplie de climatiseurs, composteurs et autres radiateurs. Avec *Susceptibles*, l'entre-deux s'applique au conflit entre la mesure mécanique et le ressenti intime, entre la protection et la paranoïa.

Contrairement à la plupart des artistes, Cooper Jacoby ne cherche pas à breveter un vocabulaire visuel qui lui serait propre. La forme s'adapte à l'état psychologique, à l'obsession ou au sentiment qu'il cherche à éveiller. Pour cela, il modifie des gadgets domestiques ou des objets de design par un tuning souvent étrange, parfois mélancolique. Il n'empêche : à la galerie High Art, les formes présentées par le jeune artiste ne ressemblent à rien que l'on aurait déjà vu. Elles nous placent au cœur d'un environnement où tout fonctionne sans que l'on sache pourquoi, où tout semble familier sans l'être vraiment. Les signaux d'alerte, nous ne savons plus les lire. Plutôt que de craindre que les machines prennent le contrôle, le véritable danger réside dans la perte de l'instinct humain, que nous avons délégué à des mécanismes aussi infernaux qu'absurdes.

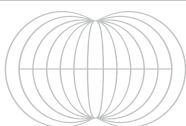
Ingrid Luquet-Gad

Cooper Jacoby – Susceptibles jusqu'au 24 novembre, galerie High Art, Paris IX^e



F I T Z P A T R I C K

NUMÉRO MAGAZINE, ART & DESIGN, NOVEMBER 2018
“COULEURS CANDIDES POUR ŒUVRES MALADES À LA GALERIE HIGH ART”
REVIEW BY ALEXIS THIBAUT



Cooper Jacoby : couleurs candides pour œuvres malades à la galerie High Art

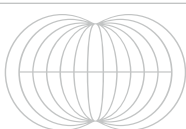
ART & DESIGN

L'artiste Cooper Jacoby expose à la galerie High Art (Paris IX) jusqu'au 24 novembre prochain. L'Américain explore le concept d'usure et se penche sur la fragilité des corps, nécrosés par des germes imperceptibles.

Par **Alexis Thibault**



Vue de l'exposition "Susceptibles" de Cooper Jacoby, galerie High Art, Paris, 2018



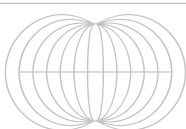
Méfiez-vous des couleurs candides et attrayantes, elles peuvent parfois cacher des œuvres délicieusement anxiogènes. L'exemple est éclatant avec celles de Susceptibles, le nouveau solo show de l'artiste Cooper Jacoby présenté jusqu'au 24 novembre. À 30 ans, cet Américain énigmatique né à Princeton (New Jersey) a exposé à Berlin et Paris en 2015 et 2017 – dans la même galerie High Art – ou à Los Angeles, où il réside et travaille, à la galerie d'art contemporain Freedman Fitzpatrick.

Sur le sol d'une première salle, des sortes de mini bunkers bleu ciel en PVC portent les traces d'étranges fractures, dont les points de suture laissent entrevoir une chair en résine privée de carapace. Plus loin, deux dispositifs de "sonneries murales" – l'une jaune, l'autre orange. Mais en leur centre, le marteau minuscule destiné à déclencher la sonnerie frappe une demi-sphère... en silicone. Tel un sein flageolant, elle se déforme légèrement à chaque coup, réduite à émettre indéfiniment un misérable "tic-tac" inefficace. Dans une autre salle, les œuvres accrochées aux murs évoquent cette fois-ci des matelas. Eux aussi semblent atteints d'une mystérieuse infection, comme progressivement nécrosés par ces sonneries qui ne sonnent jamais (dont le motif figure en leur centre, telle l'empreinte d'une balle)... à partir de cette blessure, des sphères de couleur prolifèrent comme les symptômes d'une contagion. En face de ces matelas fourrés à la paille d'aluminium, des microphones de propagande, jaunis par le temps, hors d'atteinte et hors d'usage, crachent péniblement des messages incompréhensibles, tels les appels à l'aide d'un opérateur radio en détresse sur un champ de bataille.

L'Américain élabore ses mécanismes à Düsseldorf, ville d'Allemagne bombardée par les forces alliées dès 1940 et détruite à moitié à l'issue de la Seconde Guerre mondiale. L'artiste explore les notions d'érosion, de dégradation et d'affaiblissement progressif. Son point de départ : les guerres d'usure, ces conflits visant "à amener l'ennemi au point d'effondrement par l'épuisement de ses ressources – corporelles, matérielles ou financières, et laissent alors "la chair à vif, privée de sa peau qui, bien que perméable, est protectrice", comme l'indique le descriptif de l'exposition. L'usure, le temps qui passe, les corps à découvert... c'est de cela qu'il serait donc question chez l'artiste. À l'image de ses microphones tout droit sortis de la cour de promenade d'une prison. Les sonneries ne sonnent pas, les matelas sont éventrés et fixés au mur et les haut-parleurs diffusent des messages inaudibles. Avec leurs couleurs pop, les œuvres supposent l'euphorie mais seule leur toxicité semble surgir et illuminer un corps décharné, torturé par les cliquetis du temps qui défile inexorablement.

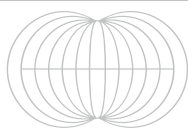
Le titre, Susceptibles, met sur la voie : des œuvres susceptibles – fragiles face à l'attaque – d'être ou de ne pas être, des œuvres en mesure d'être tout ce qu'elle ne sont "plastiquement" pas. Des œuvres qui font écho au corps humain et au corps social subissant les assauts permanents des nouvelles technologies, des systèmes économiques ou politiques. Tantôt reliques intemporelles, tantôt artefacts représentant le corps humain, elles sont susceptibles de "présenter", de "recevoir" et de "subir". Finalement, Cooper Jacoby produit un discours dramatique avec ses sculptures fiévreuses. L'érosion continue de ces structures figure avant tout notre propre décrépitude et l'anxiété qui gouverne notre monde contemporain. La nécrose des matelas, la course à la vie, les messages inaudibles et les blocs disloqués sont les hôtes de maladies autonomes, de virus modernes, de pathologies invisibles, imperceptibles mais bien présentes.

Susceptibles de Cooper Jacoby, jusqu'au 24 novembre à la galerie High Art, 1, rue Fromentin, Paris IXe.



F I T Z P A T R I C K

CURA, ART & DESIGN, 2018
REVIEW BY ANNIE GODFREY LARMON



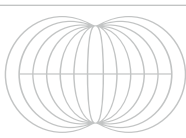
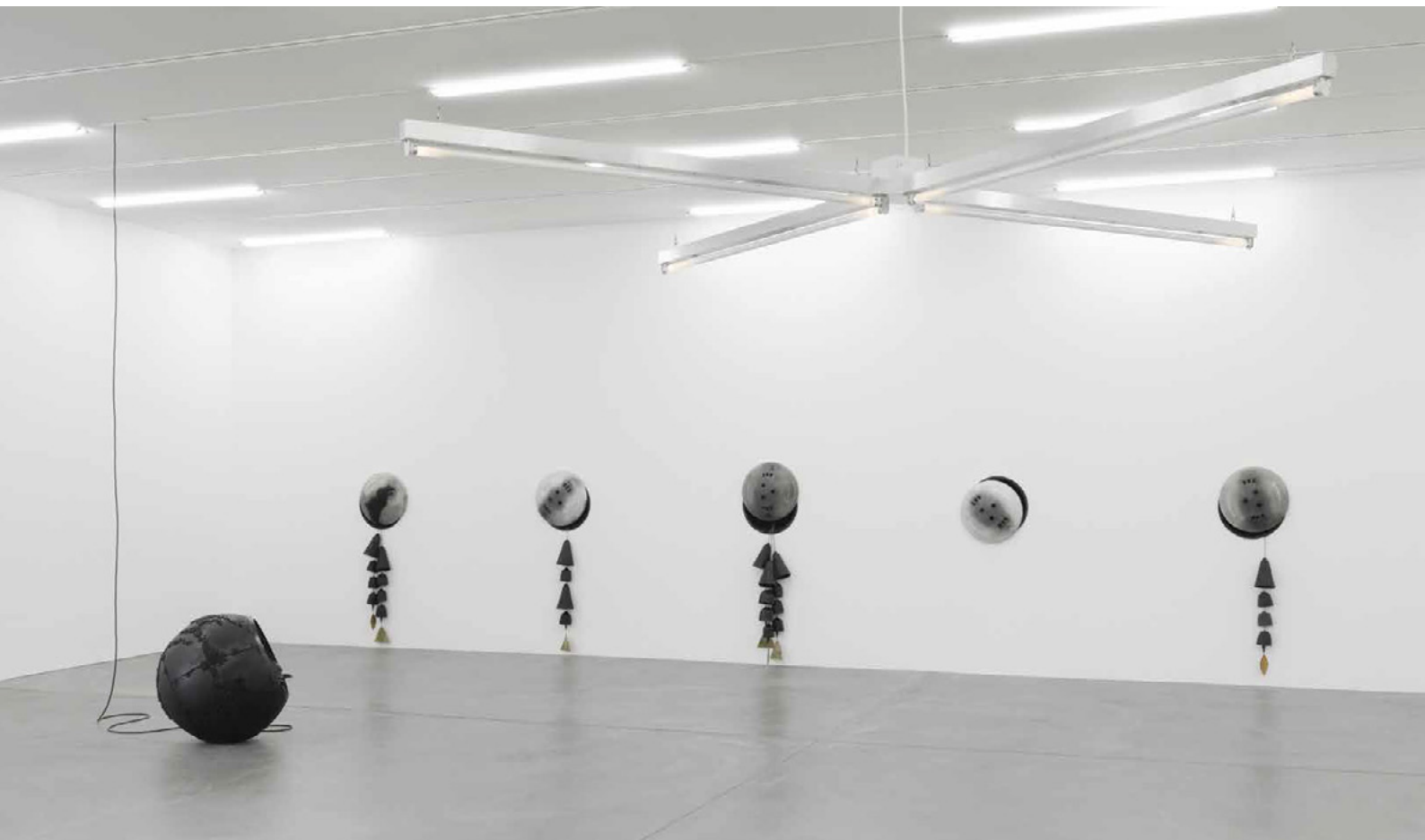
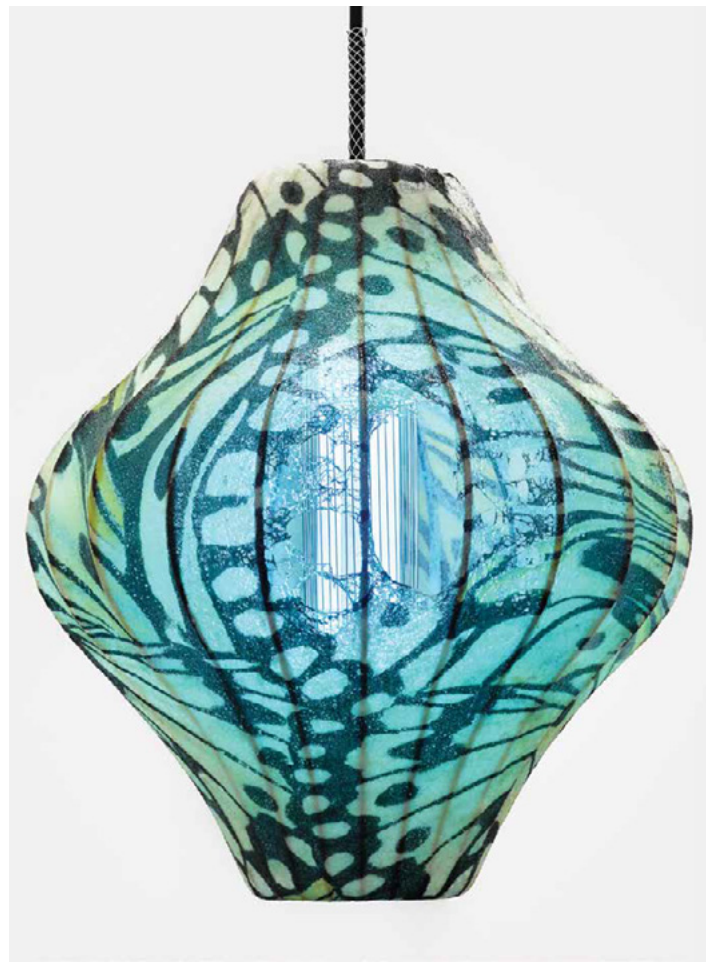
To decry Gothic architecture, Raphael cited, in the early 16th Century, its “imitation of uncut trees, of which the branches make, when bent and tied down, sharp pointed two-centered arches...the pointed arch has none of the grace of the perfect circle; nature herself uses no other form than the latter.” The Gothic arch’s demerit, it would seem, was that it mimicked another human-wrought form, rather than the purer one of the Italian painter’s Grecian ideal. It’s always been the human project, to beat nature at her game—and the dialectical project of others to demonstrate the dead ends of this pursuit.

The lot of Cooper Jacoby’s work has a Raphaelite Gothic aspect. That is, it finds interest in the failings and recuperations of morphological expressions; in the way in which a form gains, loses, or feigns value in its variations and as it circulates and is materially transferred. In sculpture and installation, he distills into inscrutably menacing objects clever narratives of absorption, adhesion, condensation, corrosion, and drift. But for all their reference to messiness and failure, Jacoby’s works are neat, sleek. We might think of them as anexact—as pure representations of impurities.

Jacoby often begins with a design object; either from the modernist canon or from the para-communities that have rejected that canon. Take *BAIT* (2017), a series that casts George Nelson’s airy pendant-shaped cocoon lamps as noxious beacons. Jacoby extracts from the iconic mid-century design the various forms and industries that made Nelson’s conception of it possible and foils them with reference to the darker valences of those very precursors. On steel armatures, Jacoby applied the same Cocoon silk-like plastic used by Nelson, and printed onto each lamp the patterns of moth wings. These patterns are drawn from moths which

are not poisonous, but borrow the colorations and textures of poisonous species in a lambent act of biomimicry. Contained in each shade is a custom-designed ultraviolet bug zapper, which appears to the human eye as a neon blue light but communicates more ecstatic things to other species. Cocoon, a water-proof, impenetrable vinyl coating, was engineered by the military after WWII to protect its arsenal and was conceived after the textile-like structure of its namesake. It was designed as a protectant, but for the pernicious purposes of the military. There’s a not-subtle resonance with this incongruity here, which accumulates as so many fried insects on the grills of Jacoby’s cool blue bulbs, installed inside the safe-haven façade of impersonator moth camouflage.

Winged-things don’t fare any better in the 2016-2017 series *HIVE*. In 2011, Philips Design created a prototype for a “Microbial Home,” a balanced ecosystem in which all waste would be converted into viable resources. This home, which was ultimately untenable because of scale, included a glass urban beehive that allowed inhabitants to support the endangered bee population and to source their own local honey. Jacoby drew from these failed “utopic” designs, inverting the amber drop-shaped glass domes of the original hives and placing within them fabricated plastic honeycombs installed with scrap catalytic converters, whose design uses the honeycomb structure to trap exhaust. But here, the carbon monoxide-trapping coating of the converters corrodes and leaks, producing exhaust rather than absorbing it. These hives make a literal point about such products created using biomimicry—they draw from nature only to exhaust it. And they make a more reflexive point about the specific instance of biomimicry this work takes up: air pollution is, of course, in part to blame for the collapse of the bee population.





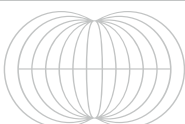
Other works dig deeper into the socio-economic elements of sustainability: in 2016, the artist noticed that poorer neighborhoods in his native LA were inexplicably flooding due to a backed up hydrological system. To make the problem conspicuous, Jacoby cast a series of gutters in such rain-dry neighborhoods in fiberglass and somber graphite. At the base of each cast is a resin "puddle," in which rests a fragment of a white vinyl approximation of the acupuncture meridian system—a diagnostic network theory of the body that seeks to optimize circulation. At Mathew gallery in Berlin, Jacoby mounted the exhibition *Stagnants*, in which four of these gutters together made up the body's entire meridian system. Pulled apart and displayed autonomously at the gallery, the gutters point to infrastructure failure, connecting the urban ecosystem to that of a broken body.

There's something of the Gothic in this impulse to "make explicit," too. Gothic architecture made aesthetic the surfacing of its inner-scaffolding. Several of Jacoby's projects likewise surface, through inversions of function or structure, otherwise invisible systems. For his most recent exhibition, *Disgorgers*, at LUMA Westbau in Zurich, Jacoby sought to "throw the homeostatic, climatic operations of the building into relief," homing the viewer into the mechanisms and energies that support their experience in space. To do this, he installed a series of appliance-cum-sculptures in two galleries that alternated between stasis and crisis. Emphasizing how slight the distance can be between these two modes, his objects retold the often-precious designs of alternative communities who aim to reconceptualize mainstream technologies for ecofriendly infrastructures. In the first gallery, sculptures that wed the components and cast elements of a contemporary composter ball with replicas of Arcosanti bronze bells played tedious telephone hold music. In the second space, a water heater, an assisted ready-made Shaker stove, and a radiator inspired by those produced for the Taos Earthships (passive, upcycled solar houses) are activated by a diesel generator when a black out is triggered by a programmed system. The effect was of schizophrenic suspense muted to suit the institutional calm of the gallery's white walls, their idealism shot through with paranoia.

In *Disgorgers*, the gaping, hyperbolic gullets of gargoyles were everywhere, tearing holes into each of the appliances. These grotesqueries—meant to spew water and waste away from buildings—have proven across history to be contradictory icons, first protectors from evil spirits and then symbols of terror. Aptly, Jacoby sourced his mouths from the facades of bank buildings in New York City. One such mouth is centered on the work *Disgorger (Radiator)* (2017), a sealed window box that, built into the window of the gallery, houses the exhibition's generator. The machine's exhaust fumes form a patina around the gargoyle's mouth—the only clue that, from the safety of the aseptic gallery, we are (perhaps unwittingly) confronted with a hotbox of carbon monoxide.

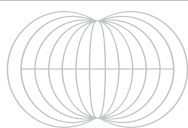
In many of Jacoby's exhibitions, you'll find works from the 2015 *EOL* series, comprising lights whose fixtures were modified to overheat expired fluorescent bulbs, resulting in an incessant dim flicker that casts an uncertain glow across his projects, like Dan Flavin gone noir. The artist calls this a "purgatorial stutter." These sculptures bring to mind a line from Anne Carson: "When the equilibrium of a self-regulating system is reminded of the slow death in which it is suspended, the motor may falter." Or, like this: when a body tries to square just exactly how it knows how to breathe, breathing suddenly becomes labored, fearful. It seems we are ever unreconciled about the directions new technologies will take us—closer to or further away from the intentions and designs of nature. But, as Jacoby's work often reminds us, to falter, to hiccup or spasm, is to be reminded that nature self-engineers to solve her own problems.

Heatsink, 2017. Freedman Fitzpatrick, Los Angeles. Courtesy: the artist and Freedman Fitzpatrick (opposite page).
Disgorgers, installation view, 2017 presented by Swiss Institute at LUMA Westbau, Zurich. Courtesy: Swiss Institute and LUMA Westbau (pp. 228-229) Ball (Mocker), 2017. Freedman Fitzpatrick, Los Angeles. Courtesy: the artist and Freedman Fitzpatrick (p. 227).



F I T Z P A T R I C K

MOUSSE MAGAZINE, APRIL 2017
“REVALUE, REANIMATE, AND RECIRCULATE”
REVIEW BY THOMAS DUNCAN





1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Stagnants Mathew Gallery, Berlin (2016)

Courtesy of the artist and Mathew Gallery, Berlin/New York

CONVERSATIONS

Revalue, Reanimate, And Recirculate: Cooper Jacoby

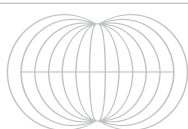
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Cooper Jacoby interviewed by Thomas Duncan

THOMAS DUNCAN: Though your work finds form in a wide variety of ways and continues to evolve, the notion of circulation is evident throughout. More specifically, you allude to systems of circulation and their potential for disruption or blockage: from acupuncture flow charts to drainage systems to bee pollination to the postal system.

COOPER JACOBY: You could say that choke points and clogs are where systems cease to be ambient. The fatigue between input and output, or the waste that escapes its joints, can contour the exchanges, scripts, connections, and scale of apparatuses that typically recede beneath attention. To detect leaks in engine systems—such as a car's A/C system—manufacturers will inject a liquid dye into the part and then watch for this penetrant to bleed through all the hairline cracks, condense around the pinhole perforations, and pool in blocked valves. I try to approach other systems, other black boxes, in a way like this, looking for the traces of where they strain, what they leak, where they drain.

TD: Your work is dedicated to material as much as it is to concept. Do you set out to find new materials to explore, or do they come to you through your research?



CJ: Most of my focus in materials comes laterally, in non-sequitur ways. It gets redirected by applications, bizarre sub-industries, or histories totally askew of what initially guided my interest. Deliberately or not, a lot of attention is spent tracing how materials categorized as “waste” orbit through after-markets that revalue, reanimate, and recirculate them back as inputs. In following these streams from liquidation back to exchange, a sort of narrative streak becomes intelligible. One material that I’ve incorporated and tracked like this is Fordite—it’s essentially industrial waste made ornamental and wearable. It’s the sedimentary aggregate of layers of excess paint that would encrust on auto assembly lines and equipment when parts were sprayed by hand. After this process became automated and residue-free, many of the people who saved this material (mostly sub-contracted industrial janitors) auctioned it on e-commerce sites, where it’s then shaped into jewelry. Given the rarity of this pseudo-mineral, the speculative price for a limited resource has surged. It finds its way back upstream.

TD: Upcycled.

CJ: Sure. Where an upcycling, cottage industry polishes foul slag into a collector’s item, converting shit into gold.

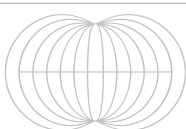
TD: Further to that notion of materials, do they always harbor particular significations or are they materials that just speak to you? Like the potential toxicity of lead, for example, that you employed in your solo show, *Deposit*, at High Art in Paris.

CJ: I don’t typically think in those distinctions, but hopefully these two registers—reference and materiality—remain inextricably knotted in the work rather than easily parsed. Materials can be employed as relics, dramatized as raw evidence, somehow more immediate than representation. Or they can be retailed by their technique, like a trade fair demo, where it’s all about an evaporating novelty of, “Look what we can cut, look what we can print!” Often these treatments present objects that are far less potent than their actual counterparts, desaturated by being filtered through art. In the work you mentioned, lead isn’t exemplary as much as it is contradictory. Its total impenetrability against vision, its use as a barrier to the toxic light of radiation, is set against images of total porosity, the deep machinic gaze of X-rays encased within the damaged mailboxes. Consider how its surface slowly leaches a carcinogenic oxide, yet it’s a preventive, medical cladding. In this way, lead upends the polar terms of a “benign” or “toxic” material. These categories for diagnosing the material become even murkier, given the fact that what appears to be the “animate” subject—the living tissue in the dead hardware of the mailboxes—is in fact X-rays of an autopsied mummy.

TD: You mean that the imagery that appeared in those works, of the bones, was actually an x-ray of a mummy?

CJ: Yes. So the figure becomes invested with a sort of vitality as an image, yet it is un-exhumable, fully entombed. When learning that early X-ray technologies were calibrated on plundered mummy bodies, which could essentially be scorched in experiments without impunity, I began to consider how biological life could undergo a sort of reanimating phase change, from historically dead to visibly alive, from tissue to image, and the slippery idea of what’s the “living” substrate here.

TD: I find this relationship between the biological and the man-made a particularly engaging aspect of your work. Can you talk a bit about your more recent work, which is modeled on urban beehives? There’s an intriguing combination of sustainability and control in those works, one that will potentially be further explored and complicated in your upcoming solo show here in L.A.



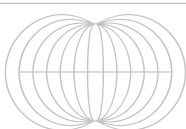
CJ: Those works stem from an urban beehive prototype that the company Phillips designed as part of a “microbial home,” a luxury domestic ecosystem where the functions of the home are supported by appliances that run on symbiotic “natural processes.” In the original beehives, bees ostensibly fly into a biomorphic glass dome, wherein the apartment inhabitants can watch and eventually harvest the honey that the colony produces. Taking the shape of the optimized honeycomb membrane, I’ve remolded this cavity with scrap materials that have undergone transformations or several states, akin to how pollen is imported, digested, and regurgitated into the architecture of the hive. What’s harvested here is not honey but aluminum. The work composites the hive together as an exquisite corpse of this single material: bonding recycled aluminum foam, casts of hives in impure aluminum, and hexagonal heat sinks. Hopefully, the closed-loop bubble and design fantasy of the Phillips prototype gets somewhat contaminated by substituting the regurgitation of one resource with another.

TD: The systems you explore in your work are ubiquitous (the body, postal networks, doors, electricity). In essence, they offer a nonexclusive entry point into an intellectualized output—anyone seeing your work will already be aware of these systems, even if only superficially, but your work upends them, inverting or subverting them for its own purposes. Specifically, I’m thinking about the disruption of the electrical system in your past show at Kunsthalle Baden-Baden and *Deposit* at High Art, as well as the flooring context in *Stagnants* at Mathew.

CJ: The world’s hardware tends to obscure the many frictions that are internal to it. Exerting pressure on these interfaces is a way to raise the vein, so to say, on these sheathed, repeated processes. With both of the works you cited, the space’s infrastructure is stressed into visibility by rerouting different forms of circulation within them. In the case of the lights, it’s altering the input of current to the light fixtures so that the waste mercury calcified at the ends of expired fluorescent bulbs is overheated, glowing again like candles. In the case of the grating, it was approaching the exhibition as a sort of sieve over which people traverse, filtering human traffic as a passing material. Both induce a purgatorial state—either a stuttering between function and failure, or a precarious levitation where one is neither quite fully within nor outside.

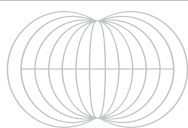
TD: Moreover, you work from series to series and do not resuscitate bodies of work; you have a discrete working method, which results in a cohesive yet impermanent output. Is this because each exhibition calls for its own conditions that need not be replicated once staged? And further to that, do you feel the steel grate flooring in *Stagnants* that we were just talking about—which also appeared in your Frieze NY solo presentation—are two parts of the same output?

CJ: I wouldn’t say that I periodize my work with a sharp cut or approach it through the exhibition form alone, but restlessly shed and shift parts of work before they congeal into a modular template. Maybe because much of my focus is oriented towards how certain materials are digested, I often cannibalize my own bodies of work. Both the mailbox and gutter works are structured around how a diagram of a single anatomical figure—the acupuncture meridian system—extends through infrastructures that process remote inflows and outflows. To your other question, the floor that was originally in the *Stagnants* show was first used to compress an already small, open-sided space into an image, appearing continuous with its outside since the grating extended from the window to the back. When I found out that the foundations of most art fairs are built from the same type of grated steel platforms, I wanted to double this substructure back onto itself, making the suspension of the fair redundant and nude. By total happenstance, the substrate of the works on the wall—a high-performance paper honeycomb used as a filler in vehicles—uncannily resembled the cheap honeycomb cardboard cores of the fair walls.



F I T Z P A T R I C K

CURA, ART & DESIGN, 2018
REVIEW BY ANNIE GODFREY LARMON



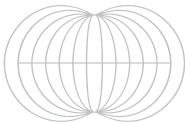
YOUNG ARTISTS 2017

COOPER JACOBY: YOUNG ARTISTS 2017

MAXWELL WILLIAMS

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF VESPA

Twitter Facebook Email



Cooper Jacoby works with the architecture around him, creating what looks like, at first, crisp metalworks and valuable material objects. But soon everything starts to feel a bit marred, which is just fine, because Jacoby's work embraces the damage, often of his native L.A. He is currently on a residency in Miami where he'll be researching at the National Corrosion Laboratory, which studies how materials degrade.

How do you know a work you've made is good? Probably because it continues to make me uncomfortable and never feels fully resolved. It always has this part that I can't easily explain, and it doesn't wrap up neatly.

What teacher did you learn the most from in school? A professor and artist Kenji Fujita.

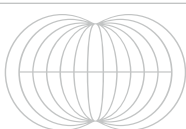
How do you find inspiration? It's a murky process. Some things are immediate—they'll just pop up and instantly gain some traction—and then others sediment over time, so that you didn't even realize you were interested in them.



COOPER JACOBY'S INSTALLATION AT
MATHÉW IN BERLIN.

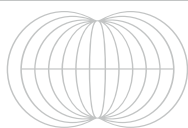
If you could trade with anyone, who would it be? I don't know anyone living, but it would be the best deal if I could trade with Hanne Darboven, because it's hundreds of individual framed photos, and I feel like you wouldn't need any other work after that.

Do you live with your own work? No, I don't. I like to be able to turn off from it.



F I T Z P A T R I C K

FRIEZE, OCTOBER 2016
"PORTFOLIO : COOPER JACOBY"



Influences /



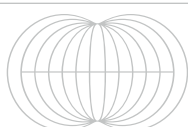
BY COOPER JACOBY
07 OCT 2016

Portfolio: Cooper Jacoby

Corrupt pennies, Parisian sewers: as his Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden show draws to a close, the LA-based artist shares some significant images



Courtesy: the artist



Strike Error Penny, 1982

Minting is one of the most safeguarded forms of intellectual property, so of course it's satisfying to see it implode once and awhile. A single mint press can manufacture hundreds of coins every minute, but every so often a micro-vibration or speed change will create a misregistration between the die and blank, resulting in an error like the tiny decapitation pictured above. (The bad joke here is that *capital* derives etymologically from Latin's *caput* – 'head'). As is suggested here by the physical slippage between face and support, the penny has mutated through a long series of abstractions – copper-plated zinc replacing the original copper-alloys, currency uncoupling from a fixed material reserve, high-frequency trading algorithmically shrinking the unit of exchange below 1 down to infinitesimally small fractions and fast data.

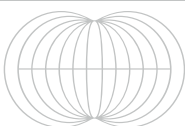
What I find so absurd about these coins is how a whole speculative market has congealed around something unfit for circulation, with their value increasing relative to how mangled their automated production spit them out. I assume there's a latent, industrial nostalgia backing many of the bidding collectors, but these pennies nonetheless seem like good specimens of a material friction, a tooling trace of a medium that continually tries to better disappear and diffuse itself.



Photograph: Cooper Jacoby

Sheila Klein, *Vermonica*, 1993

Fifteen years before Chris Burden unfortunately copy-pasted this in front of LACMA and created the city's most ubiquitous wedding photo opp, *Vermonica* – an oasis of various streetlights – emerged in a strip-mall parking lot a few miles to the east at the junction of Santa Monica Boulevard and Vermont Avenue. I always catch it in my periphery like a glitch, an unedited cut that reveals the inventory of props in the back of the shot, and assumed it was the dead stock from the nearby Department of Water and Power facility. To some disappointment, I later learned that this typological cluster is actually a public artwork by an artist named Sheila Klein, yet there is no sign or plaque in place to identify it. This was somewhat redeemed when I found out that it's titled *Vermonica* (a compression of the intersection's street names), which rings like the script name of some obscure supporting character, lurking silently in the scene.



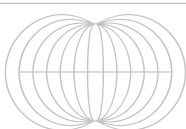


Cynthia Goodman,
*Digital Visions –
Computers and
Art*, 1987, p. 41

Nicholas Negroponte with the MIT Architecture Machine Group, *SEEK*, 1969-1970

Growing up near MIT, having absorbed endless accounts of pneumatic sheep robots and intelligent slime, I was somewhat shocked when I came across *Seek* recently in Felicity D. Scott's excellent study *Outlaw Territories*, as it was a project I was unfamiliar with. Shown in the famous 'Software' (1970) exhibition at the Jewish Museum, this early experiment in smart environments presented a micro-world of 500 two-inch blocks populated with a group of Mongolian desert gerbils. A computer-guided robotic arm would detect the displaced blocks and constantly rearrange them according to the rodents' patterns of movement, attempting to probabilistically engineer the habitat to their preferences.

The whole cybernetic system ran horribly amok, as the inhabitants confused the sensors, the robotic arm broke down and the gerbils got sick. It was remade in 2009 by Lutz Dammbeck, then turned into a short film in which you can observe the gerbils wisely skirting the perimeter of the block-towers, occasionally gnawing at them but mostly avoiding the traumatic restructuring of their 'intelligent' world.

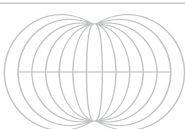




Photograph: Cooper
Jacoby

Musee des égouts de Paris

A history of the city from within its bowels, staged as total immersion edutainment/infrastructural sublime. The lengthy narrative of Paris's tandem growth with its sewer system is suspended on steel grating above an active channel of runoff, which is fascinating if you can put up with the smell. Hovering between past and putrid present, my favourite section discusses the 'hydrological ouroboros' and all of the agricultural uses of urban waste. It details a sort of prosumer circulation involving a stream called the 'Foul Burn', which fertilized outlying fields that yielded unprecedentedly large vegetables which then returned to city markets to start the whole cycle again.





Dennis Oppenheim, *Removal - Transplant New York Stock Exchange*, 1968, digital image.
 Courtesy: © Dennis Oppenheim, Digital Image © The Museum of Modern Art/SCALA / Art Resource, NY

Dennis Oppenheim, *Removal - Transplant New York Stock Exchange*, 1968

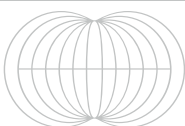
Before Oppenheim began to stage gory exchanges of bio-matter – such as peeling off a fingernail in a floorboard and ‘swapping’ it for a splinter, or cupping a biting mosquito on the arm and then designating it an ‘aerial displacement’ of blood in *Material Interchange for Joe Stranard* (1970) – he experimented with exchanges of information. For *Removal - Transplant New York Stock Exchange* (1968), four tons of transaction paper tickets that were left on the trading floor of the New York Stock Exchange were (supposedly) hauled to a roof uptown where they were left to blow in the wind.

It’s too easy to over-editorialize this work or treat it as a polemic, but I almost fault the documentation of this, as it teases us by withholding the details of the actual event. The weaponized map of Manhattan, the cryptic geological proposal and the photos of the two stagnant masses of paper almost add up to some cinematic montage of world financial markets cycloning around the city, but these bites of description stop short of cohering. If this schlep to Park Ave. South even took place, I imagine that it was on an airless day, with nothing to stir that pile of bureaucracy back to life.

Lead image: Software, Information Technology: its new meaning for art, 1970, scan of catalogue cover

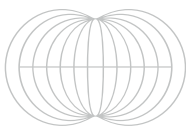
COOPER JACOBY

Cooper Jacoby (b.1989, Princeton) is an artist based in Los Angeles, USA. Recently, he has had solo exhibitions at Mathew, Berlin, and High Art, Paris, and has been included in group shows at KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin; Neuer Aachener Kunstverein, Aachen; Freedman Fitzpatrick, Los Angeles; and White Flag Projects, St. Louis. His solo exhibition 'Matte Wetter' at 45cbm Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden, Baden, is on view until 9 October.



F I T Z P A T R I C K

AQNB**, MARCH 2016
“COOPER JACOBY @ MATHEW GALLERY BERLIN REVIEWED”





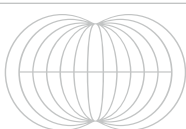
G
Cooper
Jacoby,
'Stagnants
(Spasm
Vessel')
(2016). Install
view.
Courtesy
Mathew
Gallery,
Berlin.

Cooper Jacoby @ Mathew Gallery Berlin reviewed

RUDY, 1 March 2016
Reviews

Be calm. Breathe deeply. Do not fret. Energy continues to flow through your body; blood traversing the highways of your major arteries before turning off into the side streets of arterioles and cul-de-sac capillaries –and all below the surface of your consciousness! If you are feeling unwell let us simply take a walk along your ley lines... cruise the meridians... discern and relieve the blockage to your chi.

'Are you functioning harmoniously?' asks Cooper Jacoby in his solo show *Stagnants*, running at Berlin's Mathew Galerie from January 29 to March 19. In sympathy with the show's content perhaps, the gallery is tucked away on Schaperstrasse in Berlin's West End, beside a main thoroughfare moving traffic quickly across the city. Upon entering the space you immediately step upwards onto an augmented steel grate flooring, the height of which is *just* above comfortable stepping distance (certainly for short people like myself). Hence you are acutely aware of the importance of your position and begin to consider what else may lie beneath your feet.



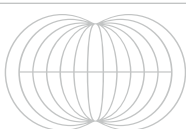
The minimal, but striking, installation elevates a selection of elegant fiberglass sewer openings from the otherwise unnoticed periphery. The wall mounted sculptures 'Spasm Vessel', 'Floating Cleft', 'Veering Passage' and 'Brain Hollow' are cast from underground outlets in the Los Angeles sewage system and finished with graphite and epoxy resin. Predominantly black and dark charcoal in colour, the drains slowly trickle water (high gloss resin) into a stagnant pool in the gutter, entombing cut white vinyl maps of the main arteries embedded along the bowl. The maps are charming and reminiscent of circuit diagrams, suggesting a complex network underfoot, and add an important narrative element to the works.



Cooper
Jacoby,
Stagnants
(2016).
Installation
view.
Courtesy
Mathew
Gallery,
Berlin.

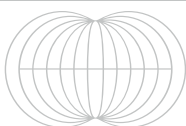
At the back of the room Bianca Heuser, gallery director, explains that the piece 'Assay (Clamped Stream)' is made from shards of Fordite; a layered enamel paint by-product of the auto factory production line. Due to the now automated process, these hardened scraps are a finite resource. Clipped together with metal in the clear shape of an arm and chest, the Fordite chips mark out acupuncture points, mirroring the diagrams of the larger sculptures. The layered paint chips resemble rings of a felled tree, or markings in semi precious stones and are often cut and polished in the same way. We have always placed value (monetary, mythological, metaphysical) on such objects –a slice of agate, a quartz point –and as mankind modifies her environment, a new type of 'resource' is created inviting a new spiritual currency to be applied.

In this anthropomorphic projection onto a vital urban circulatory system, Jacoby appears to be on a mystical quest to find the inner, breathing spirit of LA. By applying methods of TCM to our deep (in the ground) exterior processes, is the artist asking us to consider our own internal equilibrium? **



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FLASH ART, MARCH/APRIL 2016
 "COOPER JACOBY"
 REVIEW BY WILLIAM KHERBEK



Peter Buggenhout

Konrad Fischer / Berlin

The title of Peter Buggenhout's second solo exhibition at Konrad Fischer Galerie, in Berlin, "Für Alle und Keinen" (For All and None), addresses the existence and identity of its receiver as a problem. With respect to the works on view, the problem is reintroduced as that of identification in general. Buggenhout's works — indeterminately shaped sculptures made of waste, dust, animal hair, intestines and unidentifiable materials — avoid positive signification. They reject the notion of persistence and completeness, and are fundamentally associated with ruins.

The current exhibition consists of three new sculptures, each of which is the vertex of the other two. It starts with *Mont Ventoux #16* (2015), a paraphernalia-like sculptural object placed inside a glass case on a white pedestal in front of the gallery's entrance. A condensation of a cow-stomach and debris, the work simulates aspects of ritualistic voodoo fetish and ethnographic display, combining the possessed with the museal.

The second vertex is *The Blind Leading the Blind #68* (2015), a recent example of Buggenhout's signature dust sculptures: a large, contourless stack of wreckage concealed under a coat of dust, rendering the properties of its elements illegible. In it things not only lose their code or cease to exist, but can no longer be remembered for what they were. Incorporating the viewer into an experience of indistinguishability and entropy, it avows our subordination to nature, to death; to dust.

On Hold #3 (2015), the exhibition's third vertex, is a corner installation, a low wall relief assembling wood, metal, plastic and textile fragments, held together by intertwined layers of foam and nylon. In comparison to the dust sculpture, it suggests composition and structure. Yet a closer look reveals its contradictory, transgressive dynamics, wherein the same things seem to move simultaneously to the left and to the right, upward and downward, erecting and falling, expanding and consolidating at the same time.

by Ory Dessau

Cooper Jacoby

Mathew / Berlin

Our feet, as Oscar Wilde observed, may be eternally treading the ontological gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars. Some of us, however, as Cooper Jacoby's solo exhibition "Stagnants" at Mathew Gallery demonstrates, are looking at the gutter. Here Jacoby presents four casts of sewer drains from around Los Angeles and a sculpture consisting of paint and CPU connector pins. The works are linked by their titles to the practice of acupuncture (e.g. *Brain Hollow*, *Veering Passage*, *Spasm Vessel*, all 2016) and to the dynamics of flow and stasis upon which it focuses.

The casts establish a potent dialogue between the absent concrete and metal shapes from which they were formed and the fiberglass, epoxy resin and vinyl of which they are composed. Eerie pools of immobile liquid just at the edges of the open drains and grates add another level of formal friction that provides a welcome reminder that material representation still has uses in an age of digital aesthetics. The woeful state of these urban pressure points validates their literalism; signifiers of urban decay often exist in art as backdrops for a kind of vapid sloganeering, but coming face to face with the shattered concrete of some street corner of LA in the setting of a West Berlin gallery bluntly physicalizes the distance between the rhetoric of inclusion and the reality of institutionalized priorities and privilege.

This immediacy is perhaps complicated by the rather labored sketching of acupuncture-based diagrams into the basins of the sculptures; also the decision to create an elevated, steel grate platform to which the viewer must ascend in order to see the show may overdo the exhibition's "urbanized" metaphors (it's also not very disability-friendly). Nevertheless, if Jacoby's works demonstrate nothing else, they are a reminder that there are just as many stories flowing by in the gutter as there are among the stars. We ignore them at our peril.

by William Kherbek

Claudia Comte

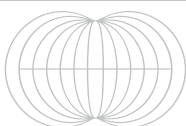
BolteLang / Zurich

A large, traditional five-line musical staff bisects the walls. Black-and-white tondos of varying sizes hang on and around it. There are many. The floor is filled with a series of wooden sculptures, *Giant Bone 1–9* (2015), that resemble a union between plant stands and Sol LeWitt's modular structures. They are formed from combinations of stacked and abutted cubes, some open, with the lines of the musical staff engraved in their charred surfaces as a spatial echo. But beyond an elementary glance, these works have no connection to the Minimalist situations they seemingly suggest. Claudia Comte has set up a mathematical referent with the musical staff, but why at this size? It's arbitrary; it neither reflects the truth of where it was taken from, nor does it achieve a distorted scale that might affect a human dimension. At knee height, the sculptures reside in a strange limbo between the urban and suburban domestic. With each is a carved and smoothed femur-like piece of wood, leaning against or lying upon or within the cubes. There isn't any real reason for them beyond a base fetish for wood in the artist's practice. As objects, they can't compete with nature. Driftwood is inimitable.

The series of "Turn Slip" paintings (2015) are late ZombEx. Black paint is applied to a brush the width of the radius of the tondo and then spun around the canvas, losing paint as it goes. With their dragged concentric circles they expand the musical reference to vinyl records and, in a clever act of brand building, the growth rings of trees. It's the later that could be used as an excuse for their proliferation and variation of sizes, ranging from small saplings to large old-growth paintings.

The show plods these two series back and forth like a child with cymbals. In tackling the visuals of the acoustic, Comte forgets harmony and expression. For what is music without poetry but something to break a silence that's better left unfilled.

by Mitchell Anderson



From top, clockwise:

Claudia Comte

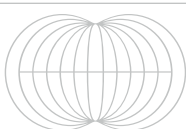
*"Sonic Geometry",
installation view at
BolteLang, Zurich (2015)
Courtesy of the Artist
and BolteLang, Zurich
Photography by
Alexander Hana*

Cooper Jacoby

*"Stagnants", installation
view at Mathew Gallery,
Berlin (2016)
Courtesy of the Artist and
Mathew Gallery, Berlin*

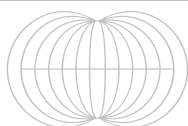
Peter Buggenhout

*"Für Alle und Keinen",
installation view at Konrad
Fischer, Berlin (2015)
Courtesy of the Artist and
Konrad Fischer, Berlin*



F I T Z P A T R I C K

ARTFORUM, JANUARY 2016
"COOPER JACOBY AT MATHEW GALLERY, BERLIN"
REVIEW BY ARIELLE BIER



ARTFORUM

Cooper Jacoby

MATHEW | BERLIN

Schaperstrasse 12

January 29, 2016–March 19, 2016

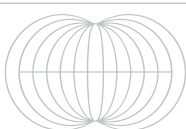
Raising the floor of the gallery with a platform of industrial steel grates—the kind avoided on urban streets for fear of falling into seedy underground tunnels—Cooper Jacoby sets his viewers up for a disorienting and portentous encounter with his sculpture series “Stagnants” (all works 2016). Four fiberglass sculptures cast from sections of decaying roadside curbs in Los Angeles—including gutters and drains—hang at waist height, one on each of the three walls with the fourth supported by poles in the window. A gothic depravity looms over the sooty matte black curbs, pooling into the reflective black resin-covered ledges of the gutters. Along the gutters’ shiny surfaces, numbered points and zigzagging pathways of acupuncture meridian lines are drawn in white, projecting routes of energy flow in the human body onto access points for the arteries of a metropolitan sewer system.



View of “Cooper Jacoby: Stagnants,” 2016.

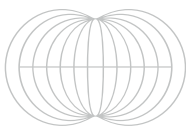
With these works, Cooper combines characteristics of the human body with elements of urban architecture while summoning the black metal-derived aesthetic of Banks Violette and alluding to concepts from Valie Export’s photo series “Körperkonfigurationen” (Body Configurations), 1972–76. Although Cooper’s sculptures may represent ubiquitous curbs that could be found in any city, naming their site of origin in the press release, along with the human maleficence insinuated by the work, brings to mind the darkly disturbing curb stomp scene from the film *American History X* (1998), where orifices meet concrete and the circle of life and death comes to a painfully alarming halt.

— Arielle Bier



F I T Z P A T R I C K

MODERN PAINTERS, APRIL 2015
“BARE CODE SCAN”
REVIEW BY FRANCESCA SONARA



SAN FRANCISCO

“Bare Code Scan”

Fused space // January 22–March 14

USING THE X-RAY as its point of departure, “Bare Code Scan” chronicles the evolution of the optical experience through technological advancement and cultural awareness. Dazzling and challenging, the exhibition may best be understood as an allegory of the old axiom: The eye sees what the mind knows.

The show opens with Barbara Hammer’s film *Sanctus*, 1990, effectively prompting viewers to consider the science of looking. Animating radiographs originally shot by Dr. James Sibley Watson, *Sanctus* follows a skeleton as it moves, drinks, and shaves. Captivating and eerie, the film exposes how technology has both deepened our understanding of the body and distanced us from it: We know that we are bones beneath skin, but we do not necessarily recognize ourselves in that image.

Cooper Jacoby’s sleek *Optimal Clot* and *Toxic Variable*, both 2015, insist on close inspection. Protruding from vinyl reproductions of X-rays sourced from their inventor, Wilhelm Röntgen, steel door handles are interrupted by clear cubes of suspended canola oil or ferrofluid, a liquid that magnetizes in the presence of a magnetic field. In conversation with X-rays, the fluid signifies the limitations of optic awareness, establish-

ing a gateway between what we see and what we cannot immediately discern.

Photographs by Lucie Stahl consider the threshold of the zoo and its partitions that enclose animals. A turtle presses its soft underbelly against glass in *Close Encounters*, while in *East of Eden* (both works 2014), a gorilla sits in a corner covering its face with its arms, expressing the emotional trait of either modesty or avoidance. Printed on aluminum, Stahl’s photographs reflect the viewers, welcoming their presence into the work and highlighting a voyeuristic gaze.

Sam Lewitt’s *Flexible Control* (*No Touch Through Me Lineament*), 2013, directs focus back onto technology’s mediation of the retinal. Etched to resemble a microchip’s circuitry, the oversize copper panel magnifies the minuscule element responsible for operating devices like smartphones and computers that command our visual attention. In this sense, Lewitt’s piece is a progression from Hammer’s and Jacoby’s ponderings: While the X-ray represents advances in our understanding of the human body, the computer chip illustrates society’s ascendant belief in technological innovation.

Challenging the mind to conceive that which the eye cannot perceive, “Bare Code Scan” ultimately reminds us that



even as technology breaks down impediments to visual cognizance, it erects new hurdles. —Francesca Sonara

