DEPART

SINCERITY (THE POST-AMERICANS)
Curated by Devon Watson

March 19th - 20th, 2016
272 Seigel St, Brooklyn 11206

Opening reception: March 19th, 7pm - 10:30pm

DEP ART is pleased to announce the exhibition: SINCERITY (THE POST-AMERICANS), a group exhibition curated by our artist-in-resident Devon Watson, who takes the role of artist as curator. The exhibition features the works of Peter Kašpar, Jillian Mayer, Benjamin Lee Sperry, Quinn Tivey, and Devon Watson. SINCERITY (THE POST-AMERICANS) will be on view from March 19th through March 20th, 2016 at 272 Seigel. An opening reception will be held on Saturday, March 19, from 7-10:30 pm.

The fin-de-millennium broke before an incredulous world; a devastating wave of media and light, sweeping away the smoking industrial pipe-dreams of the 20th century. A sixth of a century has passed and the first generation of digital natives* still stand on the shore, awash in the digital sublime, overwhelmed with visuality and reverberation, their voices lost in the wind. Our current generation of artists is the first to address the symptoms of a Post-American identity crisis, which is itself symptomatic of what Guy Debord called “the glitter of spectacular distractions”— along with an unprecedented shift toward aphorism, and a celebration of surface and shine (a hopelessness disguised as excess). We can see our faces in so many mirrors, but would we fathom our souls if we came across them? The great empire of American-ness has broken, and her spectre sinks slowly off the shore, bleeding hubris, heroism, and fantasy. The image is made and makes itself again, it makes and remakes us, and together we fall into the great sea of ambiguity.

This is no graveyard, however. “The act of selfie-ing pushes an editorial awareness into the process of existing,” says Quinn Tivey. His series of large-scale 3-D lenticulars is called 0x25. He states, “I use a custom computer program to arbitrarily select selfies on Tumblr, then abstract each one. Each abstraction is numbered and titled with the same caption as its source (e.g., ‘pet my hair and tell me im pretty’ is the caption of someone’s selfie, and now the title of the black and white abstraction).” Tivey’s work simultaneously indict the image and absolves it of its responsibility to identify, to signify; like all of us, he demands answers from the images, knowing that they aren’t there, or that they simply resonate without message, like the clanging of so many bells.

Against Quinn’s absolution reverberates Benjamin Lee Sperry’s beset nostalgia; the artist destroys and rebuilds his memories, his personal photographs, eventually building a connected loop, which reflects the ceaseless reshuffling of glimpsed faces, faded siding on a house, or the eternal swing of car headlights on a dirt road. In Benjamin’s work we hear and feel the rhythm of an energetic searching — the meat that makes the soulful, vaguely painful, song of the living. The final installations are mammoth loops of vinyl that hold the assembled images, drawn from life, strung up from the ceiling on mechanistic apparatus, and worried by the scars of abstraction.

Devon Watson’s pieces are the stuff of the new atmosphere culture, disseminated through the holy orbs created by our cell phone, tablet, and laptop screens. Her experimental films and photographs are shown in picture planes created from defunct iPhones and ruined devices. Appearing here as artist-curator, she sought out artists who were willing to “interrogate the image.”

Jillian Mayer’s short films and experimental photographs challenge our ability to identify and dialogue with ourselves and one another in the height of the digital age; her piece You’ll Be Okay shows cloud writing spelling out the words, but even as we struggle to accept them, a gentle sweep of wind pulls them away, and they fade to an empty, cheerful blue. Her projected film shows on an endless loop, quietly asking for faith from a gathering of dubious eyes.
Peter Kašpar’s *Provenance 1.1*, is dirt, stones, and latex enamel on board, creating a mammoth pictorial sculpture that impractically, gloriously impersonates a photographic image. Uncanny and stark, it is at once the ghost of the countless small accidents that break the world into dirt, and the projection of that world personified as image itself. Kašpar’s sculptures activate the flattened, mediated perception of objects and situations that we amass from media, while still maintaining a real-world posture.

Peter Kašpar was once a graffiti artist in Slovakia’s capital, Bratislava; as well as a number one selling DJ and musician. He’s since established himself as a sculptor and image-maker with a diverse, object-oriented vocabulary, participating in residencies and exhibitions across Asia and in the United States.

Jillian Mayer’s video works and performances have been premiered at galleries and museums internationally such as MoMA, MoCA:NoMi, BAM, Bass Museum, the Contemporary Museum of Montreal with the Montreal Biennial (2014) and film festivals such as Sundance, SXSW, and the New York Film Festival. She was recently featured in *Art Papers*, *ArtNews* and *Art Forum* discussing identity, Internet and her artistic practices and influences. She is currently based in South Florida.

Benjamin Lee Sperry is an artist from rural Pennsylvania. He currently participates in the Visual and Critical Studies department at the School of Visual Arts. He received the Chairman’s Merit Award in 2014, and has shown with Dacia Gallery, Lambert Fine Arts, and The James Oliver Gallery. He chooses to experiment with a variety of mediums as well as written formats. He lives and works in Brooklyn.

Quinn Tivey is a New York based artist with a focus on studio practice and materials; he is constantly innovating new fabrication methods for his 3-D lenticulars, sculptures, and photo-related media. He has exhibited across the United States, and in 2014 published an experimental book *Homemade* which premiered at Printed Matter, and participated in the MoMA PS1 and the Geffen Contemporary book fairs.

Devon Watson was born in Youngstown, Ohio, an industrial city similar to other Midwestern towns like Detroit or Flint, Michigan, which suffered a massive economic collapse and loss of infrastructure in the last half of the 20th century. Her work considers the progression of society within the vacuum of fallen markets and ideologies. Most recently she participated in a residency at The Dept. of Signs and Symbols in Dumbo, Brooklyn. She is an emerging artist based in New York, and works in photo and film based visual media, as well as critical and creative writing.

DEP ART is multifunctional, at times taking on the role of exhibition, residency, studio, gallery, and meeting place. Its curatorial mission is to serve and nourish emerging artists, foster and support curatorial voices, to discourage the ordinary and to incite the unexpected. Focused on interaction and collaboration, the project allows for critical exposure for the artists and curators. Through this crossing of art and life, a constellation of people, ideas, backgrounds, aspirations and intentions form. DEP ART was co-founded and is directed by Elise Herget, Mitra Khorasheh, and Helene Remmel.

For more information, please contact info@dept-art.org or visit us at www.dep-art.org