SOMETHING FROM NOTHING

EXPLORING THE JUNCTURE WHERE MATERIAL AND CONCEPT MEET
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mission statement

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Manifest enhances the role of art and design in society by cultivating and focusing the transformative power of creativity in the visual arts. Manifest benefits people in the global and local community, including professionals, students, and the public, by creating quality-centered experiences focused on contemporary visual arts and related activities in the context of creative exploration.

*Manifest Gallery* serves as a venue for the display and experience of insightful, thought-provoking art and design, and functions as a hub for creative research and innovation at all levels of artistic endeavor.

*Manifest Drawing Center* promotes, features, and explores drawing as a rich and culturally significant art form through the pursuit of scholarly activities.

*Manifest Press* documents the organization’s activities through well-designed publications and investigates and implements methods for making works of art and design in limited but accessible editions for public availability in collaboration with professionals and students.
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EXPLORING THE JUNCTURE WHERE MATERIAL AND CONCEPT MEET
JASON KENNEDY
JIM FIKE
WENDY DESCHENE
SARA PEDIGO
MARIUS LEHENE
BARB BONDY
SARAH HOLLIS
DINA SHERMAN
ALTHEA MURPHY–PRICE
“the idea becomes the machine that makes the art.”

sol lewitt

Coining the term “concept art” in 1961, Henry Flynt named the type of art that rejects the adept and aesthetic art object as the supreme god of art. During the mid to late twentieth century, the pendulum of critical favor swung toward performance, process, and idea based art, as a way to renounce the consumerism inherent in artistic practice based on making objects.

Today conceptual art has worked its way into our institutional framework, and it is no longer controversial to find the value of a work of art someplace other than in its material form. Twenty-six years after the first exhibit devoted specifically to conceptual art took place in New York, Something from Nothing continues the discussion about contemporary conceptual practices. This exhibit, comprised of nine artists (both students and professionals) from five different states, focuses specifically on the question of materiality.

These artists have responded to this question in a variety of ways. Transforming official documentation from the U.S. Patent Office into the vehicle for his abstract ideas, Jason Kennedy questions the materiality of a work of art and of his own human body simultaneously. In Jim Fike’s piece, material is placed next to representations of that same material much like some of Joseph Kosuth’s work. But rather than using this juxtaposition to discuss the nature of symbols as Kosuth does, Fike uses it as a metaphor for how the material (a
lizard) exists in nature. Fike follows the mimetic tradition in art with contemporary conceptual means. Wendy DesChene on the other hand uses contemporary conceptual material (a Jeff Koons sculpture), to question the relationship of materiality and value. DesChene has taken a mass-produced object whose value came from its brand identity, not its material and formal quality, and re-sculpted it, giving it uniqueness and shifting the value from its original location. Sarah Hollis overlaps the representational with the material in her paintings and drawings. Her support, the sketchbook, is not a physical book but a photograph of one, on which she draws and paints. Hollis doesn’t fill actual sketchbooks with her artistic impulse but virtual books, which become her ideal space that exists nowhere. Barb Bondy also references a virtual world by mimicking the labor and repetition of processing and storing data, which is normally the task of a computer not artist. Unlike a computer though, Bondy needs to make marks to “articulate or gain an understanding of complex ideas and problems,” and drawing becomes a material vessel for this conceptual task.

Like Bondy’s need to draw, I suspect we need material things in order to flesh out our ideas and concepts. So rather than making art that is an exercise of craft these artists have created forms through which their concepts may be demonstrated. They create aesthetic systems that determine the materiality of their art, the result being, as Victor Burgin writes, “objects formed are intentionally located partially in real exterior space and partly in psychological interior space.” Therefore, Something from Nothing is a collection of artworks that exist at the juncture where material and concept meet.
STORED CONSCIOUSNESS
A42-336F2/0X6A DENNIS MAXWELL GIBARIAN
PAT. NO. 10,062, 844, 721
2006
digital print
24" x 25" x 1"
CHAMELEON
THE WORLD’S GREATEST
THE LAST ACT OF

JIM FIKE
ATHENS, OHIO
assistant professor, ohio university

36” x 8” x 7”
injection print, plexiglass, light
2005
associate professor, auburn university
DOG
2005
bronze
12" x 8" x 10"
UNTITLED (BEACH)

2006
oil on empty wooden box
8" x 8" x 2"
clay on blue with airplane door

24" x 36" clay on plywood

2006

MARIUS LEHENE
FORT COLLINS, COLORADO
assistant professor, colorado state university

A.R slim
S I  (A N D)
2006
mixed media, plywood
24" x 52"
BARB BONDY
AUBURN, ALABAMA
assistant professor, auburn university
THOUGHT Experiment 1: Dissipation

2006

Graphite on paper

50" x 29"
Size variable
mixed media, installation
digital print
2006

SARAH HOLLIS
CINCINNATI, OHIO
graduate student, university of cincinnati

SKETCHBOOK DRAWINGS
just dress pretty
I don't worry! everything will work itself out in the end.
INGREDIENTS FOR LIFE.
SKETCHBOOK DRAWINGS
2006
digital print,
mixed media, installation
size variable
fifth-year undergraduate student, ohio state university

GIFT-WRAPPED CASKET

36"x 54"
gift wrap, casket, digital print

DINA SHERMAN
COLUMBUS, OHIO
2006
CHAIR GROWTH WITH BROKEN LADDER
(WORKING TITLE)

2006
chair, ladder, fabric, stuffing
size variable
ALTHEA MURPHY–PRICE
BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA
2006
assistant professor, indiana university

untitled (hair rug)

72" x 39"
synthetic hair clippings

PRICE

ALTHEA MURPHY

BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA
2006
assistant professor, indiana university

untitled (hair rug)

72" x 39"
synthetic hair clippings