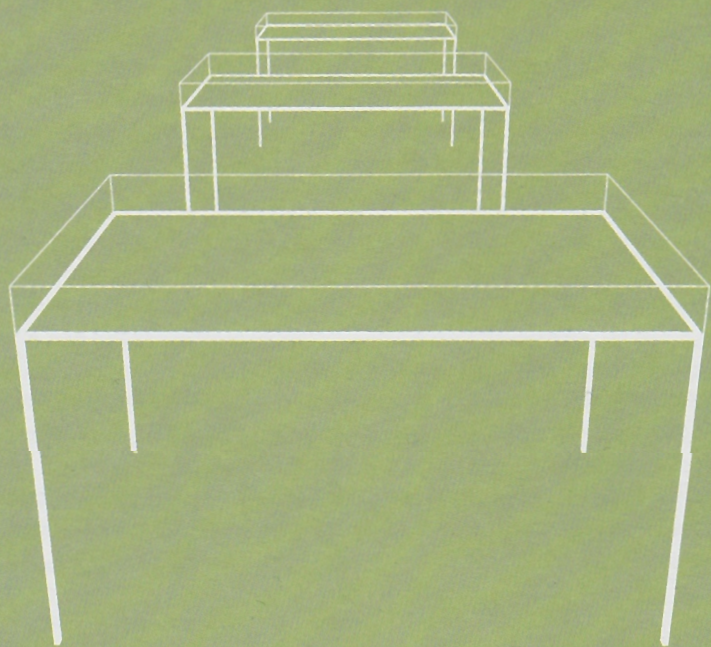




For Example (Butler, Clark Espinal, Gerken)

One of my earliest visits to MSVU Art Gallery was in March of 1983 to install my work for the exhibition *Appropriation/Expropriation*. This was a show of recent work by Halifax artists who shared the then current strategy of employing appropriated imagery. I remember it as a very politicized time; we were a serious bunch and when you "borrowed" imagery it was often to scathingly critique it. Twenty-six years later I am returning to MSVU Art Gallery to present a different take on work made with appropriated imagery. Each of the artists in this exhibition makes interventions into existing situations or alters objects, not to critique them but to make something new of them. What unites these three artists is just how simple their interventions are and how with the tiniest gestures they find ways to delight, intrigue and surprise us.

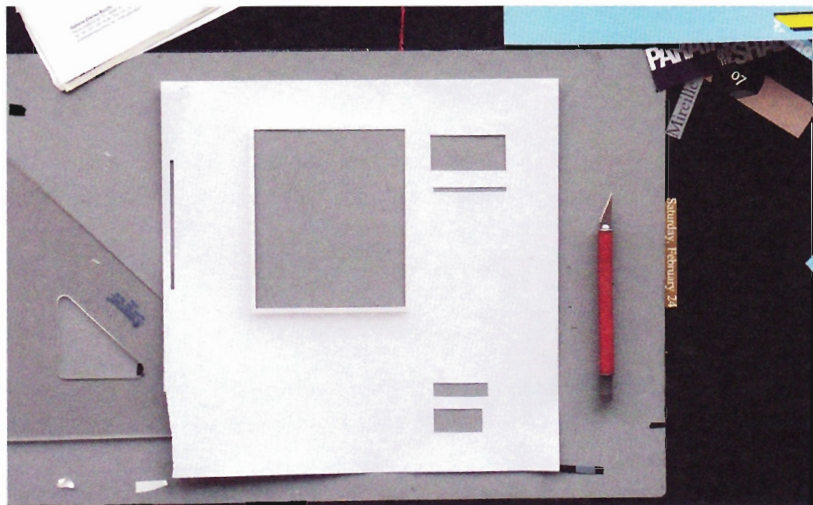
One of my favourite quotations is Albert Einstein's "Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler." The three *For Example* artists are consistent proponents of this maxim, but none takes it more to heart than Ingo Gerken. Gerken's photographs are deceptively simple and are often made by holding an object in space with one hand while photographing it with his other. By carefully planning and choosing his objects and situations, Gerken has created some of the most delightfully surprising images. Despite their resemblance to one-liner jokes, one cannot help but marvel at the artist's ingenuity and intelligence. For this exhibition Gerken is presenting each photograph along with the object that appears in that photograph. Not only does this tactic show the intervening object in its actual size, it also allows us a glimpse behind the magician's curtain. However there is no trick to such photographs — they are simply the products of an inventive, original mind.

Panya Clark Espinal's contribution to this exhibition is a series of books that she has altered with numerous pinpricks. These works are based on the eleventh lesson or 'gift' of Friedrich Froebel's teaching system. Froebel is credited as the inventor of Kindergarten. In the 1830s he developed an educational system for teaching children about art, design, mathematics

and natural history using a series of lessons and manipulations of building blocks and other materials. Clark Espinal was intrigued with the similarity between these learning systems and certain abstract and modernist imagery; she undertook a number of Froebel's lessons as a way of investigating this relationship. One result is this series of found books that she has manipulated in response to the 11th lesson, "Pricking". The pinpricks both deface and alter the pages, creating wondrously fascinating objects. While Clark Espinal originally undertook the lesson as an exercise, it is easy to see how seductive and transformative this simple act can be.

Paul Butler has created a beautiful new installation for this exhibition based solely on the act of removal, literally cutting out the texts from a series of twelve *Artforum* ads. This simple gesture reveals the architecture of each ad. His type-free pages remind me of the painted rectangles covering graffiti on the sides of buildings. This is the same principle that Butler employs when creating his works. He removes all the existing text by cutting a rectangle that is just slightly larger than the text block itself. In the process a drawing is revealed. The image that Butler provides for this brochure documents the making of one of his works. It is highly revealing because you see not only a finished piece but his tools for making the work (the cutting surface, knife and straight edge) and many of the excised words as well. It is a complex image that contradicts the simplicity of the final works themselves. In showing us his working process, he echoes Gerken's impulse to reveal a bit of the magic.

Micah Lexier



Paul Butler

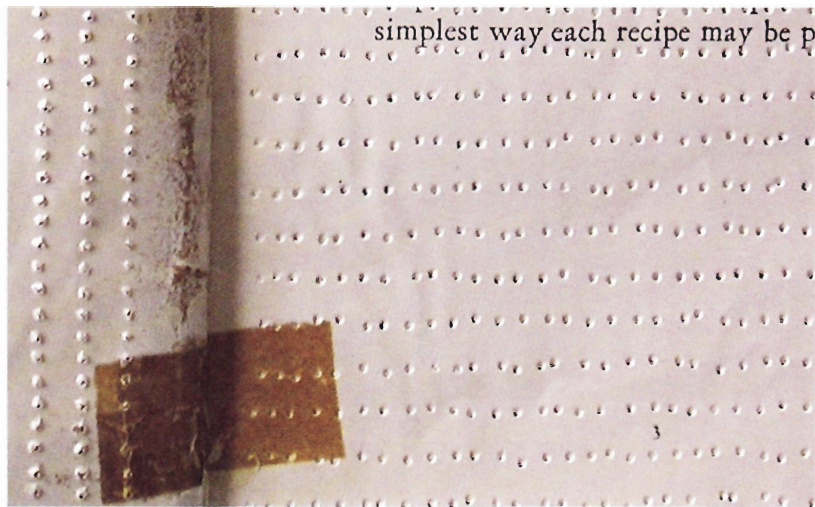
Interventions (vitrine installation) 2008 (detail of work in progress)

Twelve *Artforum* advertisements

each page: 26.7 x 26.7 cm

Courtesy of The Other Gallery

Paul Butler (b. 1973, lives and works in Winnipeg) is an artist, curator and dealer with an interest in multidisciplinary, social and alternative pedagogical practices. His practice includes hosting the Collage Party, a touring experimental studio established in 1997, and directing the operations of The Other Gallery, a nomadic commercial gallery focused on overlooked artists' practices established in 2001. In 2007, he founded the UpperTradingPost.com, a website that facilitates artist trading. In 2008, he led an experimental residency at the Banff Centre for the Arts titled *Reverse Pedagogy*. He has exhibited at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Justina M. Barnicke Gallery, Hart House, University of Toronto; White Columns, New York City; Creative Growth Art Centre, Oakland and Sparwasser HQ, Berlin. His curatorial projects have included the works by Matthew Higgs, Mitzi Pederson, DearRaindrop and Guy Maddin.



Panya Clark Espinal

Frigidaire 2006 (detail)

Perforated 1929 *Frigidaire* Recipes book

14 x 21 x 1 cm

Courtesy of the artist

Panya Clark Espinal was born in Toronto where she presently resides. She was awarded the Governor General's Medal upon graduating from the Ontario College of Art in 1988. Her practice as a multi-media installation artist has scrutinized and engaged in the mechanisms that drive the making of meaning in our culture. Her work has questioned issues of authenticity, appropriation, reproduction, collection, display and the museum. With Crystal Mowry, she recently led a multi-disciplinary collaborative project at Harbourfront Centre in Toronto entitled *The Terrarium Project*. Solo exhibitions include venues such as the Art Gallery of Ontario, the Southern Alberta Art Gallery, the Canadian Embassy in Tokyo, Oakville Galleries and the National Gallery of Canada. Panya Clark Espinal is represented by Christopher Cutts Gallery in Toronto.



Ingo Gerken

Park 2009 (detail)

Lightjet print

45 x 60 cm

Courtesy of Gitte Weise Galerie, Berlin

Ingo Gerken (b. 1971 in Lippetal, Germany) is an artist and curator based in Berlin. He studied Fine Art at Muthesius-Hochschule Kiel, Germany and Environmental Art at Glasgow School of Art, Scotland. He has received grants in Germany from Stiftung Kunstfonds, Kunststiftung NRW, and the Senate of Berlin and has traveled throughout Europe on scholarships. He has had solo exhibitions in Toronto, Milan, Saint Etienne, Basel and Berlin. Group exhibitions include Neuer Berliner Kunstverein, Künstlerhaus Bremen, Center for Contemporary Art in Warschau, Center for Visual Arts in Rotterdam and the National Center for Contemporary Art in Moscow. Through objects, installation and photography, Gerken creates ambiguous relations in pictorial space. Gerken is represented by Gitte Weise Galerie, Berlin and Galleria Pianissimo, Milano.

About the Series

In 2006 MSVU Art Gallery hosted *Micah Lexier: To Be Sorted*, an assortment of multiples and graphic ephemera from Micah Lexier's collection that was circulated by the Contemporary Art Gallery. The table-style vitrines built for this exhibition inspired my invitation to Micah to curate a series of micro-shows based on his extensive knowledge of international contemporary art. As a result of Micah's enthusiasm for the work of his peers, *For Example* has evolved into four successive installations involving twelve artists, of which this (Butler, Clark Espinal, Gerken) is the third.

Micah Lexier is a Winnipeg-born artist who graduated from NSCAD in 1984. He has lived in Halifax, Toronto and New York City and presently calls Toronto home. His many exhibitions and public commissions have led him to travel widely in Europe and North America. Incorporating a dizzying range of media, his reductive aesthetics blends early conceptual art strategies with formal elegance and personalized subject matter. In his role as guest curator, Micah deploys his well-defined sensibility and visual intelligence to build unexpected relationships between artists whose works would not otherwise be seen together. I am grateful to him and to each of the participating artists for their contribution to this cumulative cabinet of curiosities. As always, the financial support of the Canada Council for the Arts is acknowledged with thanks.

Ingrid Jenkner
Director/Curator, MSVU Art Gallery

msvu art gallery
Mount Saint Vincent University
Halifax, Nova Scotia
Canada B3M 2J6
Tel: 902.457.6160
www.msvuart.ca

© MSVU Art Gallery, the author
and the artists, 2009
Design: Docaitta 09
Graphic Illustration: Joshua Coulas
Photographs: Courtesy of the artists
Printing: Transcontinental



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des Arts
du Canada

MSVU Art Gallery

For Example Exhibition Series

Micah Lexier, Guest Curator

For Example is a series of four themed exhibitions presented in custom-built vitrines on the mezzanine level of MSVU Art Gallery. In keeping with the idea of the sample, each installation includes works by three artists in three separate, identical vitrines, highlighting the potential for individuality within a context of uniformity. *For Example* represents the first exposure in Halifax for many of these Canadian, American and European artists.

For Example (Moodie, Thib, Walker)

"All over" describes the edge-to-edge compositional paradigm exemplified in works by Kim Moodie (London, Ontario), Jeannie Thib (Toronto), and Joy Walker (Toronto). Each selection incorporates pattern, repetition or unified density.

For Example (Andrews, Goldman, Koenig)

"The Thing Before The Thing" inspired this selection of works by Stephen Andrews (Toronto), Charles Goldman (Brooklyn, NY), and Ingrid Koenig (Vancouver). From each artist the curator has solicited something that forms part of his or her working process or represents a stage of production preceding the final work.

For Example (Butler, Clark Espinal, Gerken)

14 February through 5 April 2009

These works by Paul Butler (Winnipeg), Panya Clark Espinal (Toronto), and Ingo Gerken (Berlin) are shaped by acts of intervention. The artists have altered existing objects or situations in simple ways, transforming their and our relationship to them.

For Example (Hirsch, MacCallum, Macdonald)

Seriality and sequence characterize these works by Antonia Hirsch (Vancouver), Euan Macdonald (Los Angeles), and Peter MacCallum (Toronto). The curator has selected examples in which multiple images or relationships between images have been employed.