

EXACT IMAGINATION CHECKLIST

- 1 N55**
Art & Reality, 1996
 site-specific installation of manifesto
 cut vinyl text
 15 x 28 feet
 Courtesy of the artists
- 2 LOUISE LAWLER**
Board of Directors, 1988/1989
 black and white photograph with printed mat
 16 x 22 ¼ inches
 28 x 32 ¼ inches (mat)
 Courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures, New York

Conditions of Sale, 1988/1990
 black and white photograph with printed mat
 16 x 22 ¼ inches (image)
 28 x 32 ¼ inches (mat)
 Courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures, New York

Big, 2002/2003
 cibachrome
 52 ¾ x 46 ½ inches
 Courtesy of Dominique Lévy and Dorothy Berwin
- 3 GAYLEN GERBER WITH BANK, ANDREA FRASER, DAVID IRELAND, CHRISTIAN JANKOWSKI, LOUISE LAWLER, N55, DAVID ORDING AND RED76**
Backdrop/Exact Imagination, 2008*
 latex on canvas, various media
 dimensions variable
 Courtesy of the artist
- 4 ANDREA FRASER**
A Visit to the Sistine Chapel, 2005
 DVD
 12 minutes
 Courtesy of the artist and Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York
- 5 BANK**
The Bank Fax-Bak Service series

Metro Pictures, NY, 1999
Friedrich Petzel, NY, 1999
The approach, UK, 1998 (fax-back to *Fax-Bak*)
Feigen Contemporary, NY, 1999
Duncan Cargill, UK, 1998
CRG, NY, 1999
Stephen Friedman, UK, 1998
Laurent Delaye, UK, 1998
Paula Cooper, NY, 1999
AC Project Room, NY, 1999
Feigen Contemporary, NY, April 1999 (fax-back to *Fax-Bak*)
Sadie Coles, UK, 1998
Greene Naftali, NY, 1999
Gagosian, NY, 1999
Feigen Contemporary, NY, June 1999 (fax-back to *Fax-Bak*)
Casey Kaplan, NY, 1999
Alexander & Bonin, NY, 1999
The Showroom, UK, 1998
Paula Cooper, NY, 1999 (fax-back to *Fax-Bak*)
 ink on paper

Voicemail messages to Fax-Baks
Cristenrose Gallery, NY, 1998
Feigen Contemporary, NY, 1998
 answerphone message transferred to CD
 Courtesy of BANK archive, London
- 6 DAVID ORDING**
After, 2005–2007
 oil on canvas
 84 x 120 inches

You Can't Touch That (after Courbet), 2005
 oil on canvas
 30 x 24 inches

After (40 Plates from Degas), 2004
 oil on canvas
 34 x 38 inches
 Courtesy of Bernard Toale Gallery, Boston

- 7 CHRISTIAN JANKOWSKI**
Flock, 2002
 DVD
 10 minutes
 Courtesy of the artist, Maccarone, Inc., New York, and Klosterfelde, Berlin
- 8 DAVID IRELAND**
Y.K.'s object, 2001
 Fixall with pigment
 6 ½ x 2 ¾ x 2 inches


Untitled (capillary work), 1988
 capillary action work with bassinet, wire and fabric dye
 40 x 27 x 22 inches
 Courtesy of Christopher Grimes Gallery, Los Angeles
- 9 RED76**
 fliers from the series *Free Art History*, 2008
 ink on paper
 community-wide distribution

Franklin's VDC Copy Center, 2008
 1124 North High, Columbus, Ohio
 Courtesy of the artists

* Gerber's *Backdrops* are not dates themselves but carry the date of the artwork installed in relation to it.

Exact Imagination is curated by James Voorhies, Director of Exhibitions of Canzani Center Gallery, and organized by Columbus College of Art & Design.

The exhibition is on view from February 13 to April 5, 2008 at Canzani Center Gallery on CCAD campus.

 Columbus College of Art & Design

Canzani Center Gallery
 60 Cleveland Ave. at E. Gay St.
 Columbus, Ohio 43215

614.222.3270
 www.ccad.edu



The Ohio Arts Council helped fund this program with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, educational excellence and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans.

Exact Imagination

February 13 – April 5, 2008

STOP.

Before reading this gallery guide you are invited to view the art in *Exact Imagination* on your own terms without reading anything by the institution.

This exhibition explores the many factors that affect your perceptual reception of art—how art makes you feel, what you take away from it, and what resources you draw upon to relate to it. Playing an assertive role in this transaction, the institution of art employs a number of instruments such as labels, audio guides, press releases, catalogues, advertising, sponsorship, announcements, gift shops, opening receptions and academia to shape knowledge and form a negotiation with art.

Exact Imagination investigates the ways these institutional devices and other socio-cultural influences leverage viewer reactions to art, either by inspiring an internal aesthetic response to art (as does any exhibition or work of art) or by requiring literal participation in social exchanges. The artists and art collectives featured in the exhibition examine with criticism and humor the institutionalization of art, exhibition-making, artistic resistance, and a wide range of other influences that affect how people get access to, view, reflect upon, and bring forth an imaginative response to art.

Part artist statement, part sweeping philosophy on art and life, the Danish collective **N55's** ^① “Art and Reality” draws attention to authorship, signifying the artist or collective as the primary origin of artistic subject. “Art and Reality” is installed in vinyl lettering on a 16-x-28-foot wall in the exhibition site. This installation is an exaggerated and alternative kind of introductory wall text that traditionally confronts visitors at exhibition entrances. Forgoing the typical model of that exhibition-making component, *Exact Imagination* pushes aside the institution’s voice in text and gives import of place to the artist in lieu of it. N55 produces art and situations for everyday life. Their writings, designs, public events, collaborations, services, and objects merge art and life in utopist, democratic, and utilitarian models that seek to raise questions about contemporary living conditions, geography, and revised considerations of place.

LOUISE LAWLER ^② examines the relationships not only between viewer and art object but among collectors, dealers, institutions, artists, and gallery staff that form power structures in a complex matrix of art-world assemblages. In her photographs *Board of Directors* (1988/1989) and *Conditions of Sale* (1988/1990) a constellation of collaborators are at work. Both photographs were taken during a preview at Christie’s auction house. Labels with identifying information of collector, artist, title, date, and confirmation of signature assure potential buyers that it is the real thing. In *Big* (2002/2003) Lawler captured a brief moment during an installation of works in an art fair booth at Art Basel Miami Beach. Maurizio Cattelan’s oversized sculpture of Picasso, just unpacked, not yet assembled, lies horizontal, decapitated. Behind this Dadaist-looking crime scene is a photograph by Thomas Struth of museum visitors viewing classical works of art, other kinds of headless sculptures from other points in art history. Lawler sets up a multilayered visual experience into which the viewer looks onto other viewers of other artworks in another kind of art-viewing setting: the museum, a very different environment from the glitzy, commercially driven art fairs. As in the Christie’s pictures, Lawler photographs a quiet moment before the storm of commerce ensues.

GAYLEN GERBER’S ^③ *Backdrop* paintings ask visitors to participate in the fulfillment of his works of art, whether they realize it or not. *Backdrops* are large-scale paintings on canvas, monochromatic, and situation-specific. These discreet works of art replicate exact dimensions of an existing gallery wall. The theoretical basis of a *Backdrop* investigates the structural and material conditions of a gallery space—the spatial container—and how they affect the presentation and reception of art. Due to the obvious reliance on a physical wall in a gallery for exhibiting art, a *Backdrop* can visually dominate an installation. Gerber collaborates with other artists in the execution of his painting by exhibiting their art on or in front of his. For *Exact Imagination* a 16-x-50-foot gray *Backdrop* influences the way in which we experience every artwork in this exhibition, but paradoxically

it deflects specific authorship or attention in the very nature of its adoption of the ubiquitous service role.

ANDREA FRASER’S ^④ video *A Visit to the Sistine Chapel* (2005) chronicles her visit to the Vatican Museum in Rome. The soundtrack is the museum’s audio guide with Baroque music playing in the background and a voice guiding her through the museum’s galleries to the finale: the Sistine Chapel. The voice on the audio guide instructs Fraser to be pious and contemplative, encouraging an emotionally moving response to art, religion, and architecture on a level quite impossible to achieve amidst the surrounding throngs of mass tourism and culture marketing. While informative and entertaining, institutional didactic materials like audio guides and wall texts can homogenize a cultural experience by drawing attention to the same ideas and images deemed most valuable by curators and scholars. Supplying information on authorship and ownership institutional didactics influence ways of appreciation by determining culture value and by discouraging individual feeling or response (indeed this exhibition you are viewing and this text you are reading are complicit in that model).

Operating counter to the commercial exhibition system, the London-based collective **BANK** ^⑤ organized shows like *COCAINE ORGASM* (1995), *FUCK OFF* (1996), and *DOG-U-MENTAL VIII!!!* (1996). Dadaist, ironic, sometimes vitriolic, but always filled with energy and vitality, BANK’s exhibitions and tabloid publications—with headlines like *Crap!*, *London is Over*, *Exactly How Much Do You Want?*, and *Turner Prize Beauty Pageant*—challenged exclusionary conditions of the field of contemporary art.

The exhibition *PRESS RELEASE* (1999) gathered together work from the project *The BANK Fax-Bak Service*. For it the members of BANK graded gallery press releases that included editing, correcting grammar, commenting on layout and design, offering opinionating reviews of the documents, and faxing the marked-up versions back to galleries of origin. A vague notion of self-parody combined with dead-on critique of alienating culture-speak make the *Fax-Bak* works hilariously successful, certainly dumbfounding and aggravating galleries on the receiving end. In fact, fax-backs and voicemail messages in response to *Fax-Baks* can attest to it.

For *After* (2005–07) **DAVID ORDING** ^⑥ selected and copied with uncanny technical skill a range of recognizable full-views and details of Old Master paintings from the Renaissance to Realism. He has intentionally replicated with precision the deficiencies and nuances inherent in print, postcard, and online media reproductions that viewers use often to experience art. While this approach reinforces the evident notion that reproductions are no substitute for the real thing, Ording draws attention to the subjugated histories of art devised, written, and disseminated by scholars and critics—analyzing what is included as much as what is omitted.

You Can’t Touch That (after Courbet) (2005) is a painting of a digital photograph of the artist’s hand surreptitiously touching a self-portrait painting by Courbet in the collection of the Fogg Art Museum in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Alluding to conditions of museum security—guards, stanchions, glass, motion alarms—under which visitors experience works of art, the painting also evokes Courbet’s rebellious acts against the art-world establishment, foreshadowing those Dadaist, anti-establishment exhibitions and publications of BANK.

In the video *Flock* **CHRISTIAN JANKOWSKI** ^⑦ considers the relationship between the artist, the gallery, and the visitor. In the video twelve viewers of an exhibition preview experience a very unique form of participation: a magician systematically turns each and every one of them into sheep before they enter the gallery—en masse. Once inside, the sheep wander past works of art, taking cursory looks here and there. *Flock* is an observation of the social dynamics of the contemporary art world in which constituents sometimes place greater onus on the entertainment than the works of art. The gallery-going visitors return eventually to their human forms, and the adventure becomes a circuitous experience. We are privy to that illusion, witnesses to a temporary collapse—a jolt or an aggravation—of social order in an otherwise austere, refined gallery system. The common scene of an opening reception is suddenly coated with refreshing new meaning.

Dadaist satire, irony, unpredictable tactics, and unconventional materials serve to characterize the art of **DAVID IRELAND** ^⑧. He charges exhibition sites with quizzical references and situations for visitors to ponder and decipher. *Y.K.’s object* (2001) is a small blue blob of Fixall about six inches long by three inches wide. It is installed in a corner of the gallery. Ireland appropriates the ultramarine blue commonly associated with Yves Klein. The visitor’s expectations are disrupted or aggravated by Ireland’s use of the color linked intricately to a prominent figure in art history but here mixing it into a completely indecipherable, even questionable work of art.

Untitled (capillary work) (1988), made of a white enameled basin filled with a golden-yellow liquid, white napkin, and wire, is a sculpture constructed of ready-made elements—objects recycled, combined, and arranged to bring on new life and meaning. It engages with the visitor’s familiarity with these common objects by re-presenting them in an arrangement in relation to other works of art in the exhibition. The continually changing quality of the capillary work—liquid rising, evaporating, basin drying—inserts a disturbance in the exhibition site similar to *Y.K.’s object*. But, in this case, the capillary work causes a heightened perceptual awareness of the ever-shifting environmental conditions of a gallery.

RED76 ^⑨ uses social exchange, community-based projects, fliers, posters, publications, the Internet, e-mail and blogs that bring participants into workshops, events, conversations, and actions to

fuel an artistic practice that stimulates political and cultural change. The collective sometimes draws on models of resistance in art and political histories to influence a dialogical artistic practice that is very much rooted in the present. Red76’s contribution to *Exact Imagination* is two-fold. In the exhibition site are fliers and a video from the project *Free Art History*. The premise of this project is simple but effective. Seeking to make information about art history more readily accessible to the public, the collective photocopied handmade fliers about key figures and movements in art and political history with a particular focus on artistic resistance. Copies of these fliers and others were disseminated throughout Columbus, Ohio, at laundromats, grocery stores, cafés, gyms, bank lobbies, coffee shops, and on street posts.

One of the histories in the *Free Art History* series is the copy policy of the offices of the Vietnam Day Committee in Berkeley, California, in the mid 1960s. The VDC held an open copy policy, meaning that along with posters and internal memoranda the group needed to make, the public was encouraged to come and use the VDC’s mimeograph machine to make fliers—for protests, used bikes for sale, roommates wanted, whatever. Free beer was available at the office too. The only catch: before leaving, each flier was stamped with a VDC logo. The copy center evolved into a center for community in which people gathered to discuss a range of political and social issues of the day.

Red76’s *Franklin’s VDC Copy Center* at 1124 North High Street revisits the radical activities of Berkeley’s VDC as a means to raise awareness and generate visibility of political, social, and cultural organizations working today in Columbus and beyond. Groups like Columbus Food Not Bombs, FreeGeek Columbus, Iraq Veterans Against the War, MAP Furniture Bank, Third Hand Bicycle Co-op, Spore-Print Infoshop, and Van Gallery are some of the organizations represented on a rotating basis in the copy center. Each organization may use the copier for their purposes. During the run of the exhibition, the public may also use the copy center free of charge, but all photocopies produced are given a stamp promoting the group that occupies the space at that given time. The high visibility of this urban space provides significant public exposure for these organizations.

The copy center is a site for conversations, gatherings, workshops, lectures, and film screenings pertaining to each organization involved with the project during the course of *Exact Imagination*, giving Red76 creative freedom and removal from the institution of art as much as possible to produce a new physical terrain and social space. As a means of opening up debate around contemporary cultural issues, Red76 created this temporary place for public research outside of academic and institutional frameworks, drawing on America’s radical social past and reinvigorating it for current public discourse.

Visit *Franklin’s VDC Copy Center* at 1124 North High Street and check Red76.com or the exhibitions site at CCAD.edu for a schedule of activities.