



David Thorpe: *The Collaborator*, 2010, wood, oil paint and sound system, 84 by 93 ¼ by 43 inches; at Casey Kaplan.

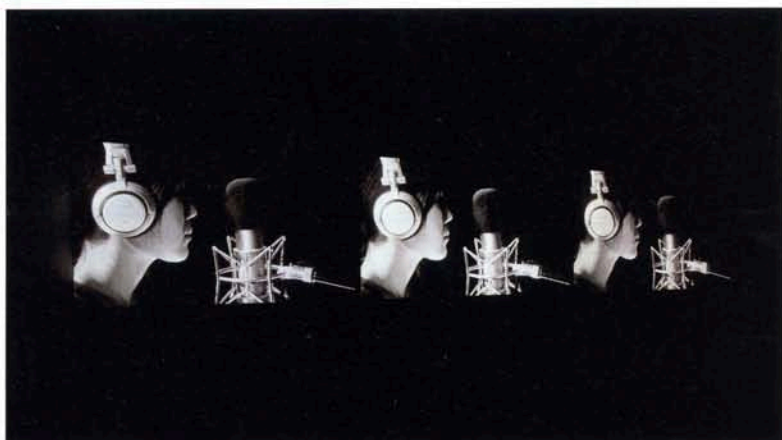
Thorpe initially gained recognition for two-dimensional cut-paper landscapes. Here, his work on paper consisted of a delicately painted five-part watercolor depicting bamboolike plants with elegant foliage. It could almost be a mock-up for scenic wallpaper, and, indeed, one wonders where the artist is heading. The recent, characteristically collaborative work at Kaplan represents a shift to more monumental formats and complex effects if not outright architectural ambitions. Based on the works in this fine show, I wouldn't be surprised if Thorpe were to go on to fashion a highly developed, all-encompassing *Gesamtkunstwerk*.

—Matthew Israel

ADAM PENDLETON THE KITCHEN

During the past five years, Adam Pendleton has repeatedly staged dialogues between the histories of the esthetic avant-garde and black politics. In his series "Black Dada" (2008-09), for example, Amiri Baraka's poem "Black Dada Nihilismus" became a point of departure for paintings that presented fragments of the text through conventions of Conceptual and Minimal art of the 1960s. In these works, and in the accompanying Black Dada manifesto, Pendleton associates figures such as Baraka and Malcolm X with Sol LeWitt and John Cage. Through such juxtapositions, he gives form to a complex exchange between art and racial politics, which the respective histories of these fields so often ignore.

Adam Pendleton: *BAND*, 2009, 3-channel digital video, approx. 12 ¼ minutes; at the Kitchen.



For his recent exhibition at the Kitchen, Pendleton showed a number of works from the series "Systems of Display" (2008-), in which he silkscreens archival photographs—depicting, for example, a celebration of Ghanaian independence, or the Fridericianum in Kassel during the 1955 Documenta—onto mirrors, and superimposes words from various texts, chosen more or less randomly, with letters omitted. The centerpiece of the show, however, was an ambitious three-channel video installation titled *BAND* (2009).

This approximately 12-minute work, projected on a row of screens in the Kitchen's back gallery, is a reinterpretation of Jean-Luc Godard's 1968 film *One Plus One* (later retitled *Sympathy for the Devil* after being edited by its producers). Bringing together experimental filmmaking and politics, Godard's work features long shots of the Rolling Stones rehearsing and recording "Sympathy for the Devil" interspersed with lengthy scenes portraying late-1960s radicals. Several of these show black revolutionaries in a junkyard (i.e., amid the wreckage of bourgeois society) reciting passages from authors such as Baraka and Eldridge Cleaver.

In realizing his response to *One Plus One*, Pendleton collaborated with the indie-rock group Deerhoof. After being shown Godard's film, Deerhoof wrote a song they called "I Did Crimes for You" that borrowed lines featured in the junkyard sequence. "This is a stick up / Smash the windows," the singer chants in the Deerhoof song, echoing Baraka's poem "Black People!" which is quoted

in *One Plus One*. Recalling Godard's use of the Rolling Stones, Pendleton filmed the band as they recorded the song for a new album. He then edited this footage to include a number of fragments from a 1971 documentary, titled *Teddy*, about a young member of the Black Panther Party in Los Angeles.

The resulting video follows the formal logic of Godard's film, but the scenario it presents is strikingly more ambiguous. As Deerhoof rehearses the confrontational rhetoric of the late 1960s, the voiceovers from *Teddy* reflect, quite thoughtfully, on both the prospects for change and the efficacy of violence. "If we pick up, you know, a .45, he gonna pick up a rifle," Teddy says of the police. "If we pick up a rifle, he gonna use a tank. I guess we're just gonna have to wait." These comments carry great poignancy today, but they also offer a sober-minded response to the revolutionary optimism in Godard's synthesis of avant-garde art and vanguard politics.

—Tom Williams

ANSELM KIEFER GAGOSIAN

Even by the standards of what we've come to expect of Gagosian's cavernous, ambition-boosting 24th Street Chelsea gallery, Anselm Kiefer's recent exhibition, his first in New York since 2002, was striking. Installed densely enough to overwhelm, it was dominated by 17 glass-and-steel vitrines, some nearly 20 feet high. Their surfaces hand-lettered with titles mostly referring to Biblical figures and events, they contained sculptures (all