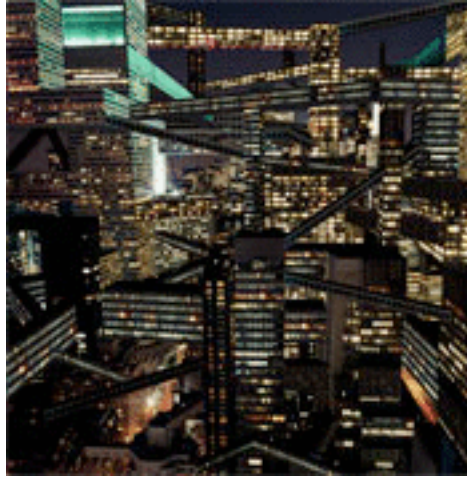


RHIZOME AT THE NEW MUSEUM

July 7, 2008



Rhizome News: Futures Exchange

Science fiction provides the thesis for “The Future as Disruption,” the latest show at The Kitchen in New York, but not the kind of escapist space-opera kid stuff of embossed-cover paperbacks and Lucasfilm productions. Rather, the authors explicitly referenced here could be found in the New York Review of Books or a college syllabus: George Orwell, Samuel Delaney, J. G. Ballard, and Philip K. Dick. Notably, all these sci-fi titans are known for linguistic (or indeed meta-linguistic) dexterity, undermining the normal use of language so as to propel the reader if not forward in time than sideways in reality; likewise, this isn’t a show so much about tomorrows as speculative todays. In homage, many of the works in the exhibit refer heavily to text: Sean Dack’s Future Songs, a book of musical arrangements for predictions penned by Dick in 1981 (one: “The Soviet Union will test a propulsion drive that moves a starship at the velocity of light; a pilot ship will set out for Proxima Centaurus soon to [be] followed by an American ship.”), Adam Pendleton’s flat duochrome paintings reproducing excerpts from Delaney’s 1975 novel Dhalgren and phrases written by artist Liam Gillick, Olalekan B. Jeyifous and Matty Vaz’s Adverspeak, a set of pseudo-corporate diagrams, flowcharts and maps that could have been lifted off the set of Idiocracy, Mungo Thomson self-explanatory audio work “Bloody Hell: An Oral History of the Making of Blade Runner,” by Dave

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Gardetta, Los Angeles Magazine, February 2007, Read by a Cast of Computer Voices, and, most startlingly, Julieta Aranda's A Machine of Perpetual Possibility, a Perspex cube containing the dust of pulverized science fiction novels, occasionally whirled by spurts of an air jet. Aranda's accompanying photographs of book-dust resemble alien environments, another theme here, also seen in Mungo Thomson's cunningly narrative Einstein #1, a comic book of found images from other comics, shorn of words and people, Ann Lislegaard's Ballard-inspired digital photomontages, and Jonah Freeman's impossible skyscraper-lattice cityscapes. A more subdued thread connecting some of the works is Afrofuturism, signaled by Simone Leigh's Uhura, in which the Star Trek character stutters between two moments, her hand on a switchboard, waiting to communicate.

--Ed Halter