

Seth Price

BEFORE AND AFTER WRITING

Zweigstelle Capitain V - C.A. S.A. Palazzo Degas, Napoli

March 23 – May 4, 2024

I often find myself wanting to get as far from the present as possible. Recently I've been obsessed with the extreme past. People of 20,000 years ago possessed creative and capable minds—the same as ours, apparently—and must have made countless works of art and culture, but because all of it dates from before the invention of writing, it's utterly lost. Why do I want to escape the present? Because of the feeling of dread that I'm living through the end of something. In response, I feel an urge rising, like a psychic undertow, to pare everything away. This sometimes sharpens into the desire to strip my world of everything known and familiar. Of course, that's exactly what seems to be happening these days, anyway, isn't it? This is the source of dread. It helps to remember that if we are standing at the end of something, we must be standing at the beginning of something else, and whatever that thing turns out to be, it is not yet written.

S.P.

The installation is organized around a hand-made accordion book that unfolds from its case into a range of peaks and valleys. The pages feature 360-degree photographs of natural scenes taken with a spherical camera. This kind of photograph, called an HDRI, is a technical tool used to lend 3D objects a realistic appearance.¹ Since 2015, Price has been making 3D objects for use in his artwork, and illuminating them with open-source HDRIs, including those in the exhibition. This is the first time he has showed the HDRIs themselves, which are not intended to be noticed; for one thing, projecting a spherical picture on to a plane creates distortions, like the ones seen here.

In an accompanying piece of writing, Price considers what human life might have been like some 20,000 years ago, prior to the invention of writing and everything else in our world. The text is printed on a series of rice-paper sheets embossed into the book, and also screen-printed on freestanding blocks of glass. On the walls is a series of paintings made by pouring loops and trails of raw gesso on a surface of rough, paper-like, wood fiber. Some of the more face-like improvisations were scanned into 3D software, which carefully filled these mask-like shapes with

¹ Commercial images of cars, bracelets, and phones appear to be actual photos of real things, but most are software creations that are convincing only thanks to HDRIs, which bathe these virtual objects in the light and shadow of the real world. Sometimes you can see an HDRI dimly reflected in a gleaming virtual surface, and know that a technician painstakingly took that photo.

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realistic-looking imagery of human muscle tissue. There are also two groups of framed works on paper that arose from Price's feelings during moments of historical change: a series of ten ink drawings from 2015, titled *Startup Era*, and pencil drawings made during the pandemic lockdown.

Text and images from the accordion book appear again in a separate, smaller publication, which is on view in an adjoining room. Here, visitors can also listen to music: a new vinyl release that Price composed contemporaneously with the exhibition works and intended as a soundtrack, a newly remastered box set of Price's older recordings, and playlists and records by local musicians.

Seth Price, born 1973 in Sheikh Jarrah, Palestine, lives and works in New York. Institutional solo exhibitions include Aspen Art Museum 2019, MoMA PSI, Long Island City 2018, The Wattis Institute, San Francisco, ICA, London, as well as a major survey exhibition at Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam and Museum Brandhorst, Munich, all 2017, Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna, 2009, Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne and Kunsthalle Zürich, both 2008, among others. Most recent group exhibitions include Museum Kunstpalast, Düsseldorf 2024, Castello di Rivoli, Rivoli 2023, De La Cruz Collection, Miami 2022 and 2020, Zweigstelle Capitain II, Rome 2022, Haus der Kunst, Munich 2020 and Museum of Modern Art, New York 2019.

Price participated at the Whitney Biennials 2002 and 2008, Venice Biennale 2011 and documenta 13 2012. His work is included in the collections of Kunsthaus Zürich, Museum of Modern Art, New York, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, Museum Brandhorst, Munich, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam and Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Serralves, Porto, MAMbo, Bologna, Sammlung Goetz Collection, Munich and others.

Program Zweigstelle Capitain V

Saturday, 23 March, 5-9 pm

Opening Event

Seth Price - Record Launch 6 pm

Alvin Curran - Concert 7.30 pm

Saturday, 20 April, 7.30 pm

Ralf Niemczyk - DJ-Set

Saturday, 27 April, 7.30 pm

Roope Eronen - Concert

Zweigstelle Capitain V

at C.A.S.A

Palazzo Degas

Calata Trinità Maggiore, 53

80134 Napoli, Italia

Opening hours

Wednesday - Saturday

11 am - 1 pm and 3 - 7 pm

and by appointment

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Kristi Cavataro

Zweigstelle Capitain V - C.A. S.A. Palazzo Degas, Napoli

March 23 – May 4, 2024

Galerie Gisela Capitain is pleased to announce its first solo exhibition with US artist Kristi Cavataro at Zweigstelle Capitain V, Palazzo Degas, Napoli.

In a fusion of craftsmanship and conceptual depth, Cavataro presents a group of sculptures that echo the legacy of Minimalism by denying any means of representation other than their own invented form. In a meticulous process of hand-plotting tiles of rolled sheet glass, wrapped in copper foil and soldered with tin and lead, Cavataro brings her idiosyncratic voluminous sculptures - piece by piece - into being. Her stained glass works exude an aura of synthetic alienation and artistic necessity, eschewing ornamental excess and expression in favour of hermetic precision.

Each sculpture is a singular, articulated shape, despite employing modular components.

A monochrome work in matte green glass with three branching tubes might suggest a defensive structure. Another work in mottled violet glass, installed on the wall, eventually resembles a kind of microbiological particle. The largest sculpture, in hues of blue and pink, evokes the vision of several intertwined Möbius-strips.

But while it is tempting to draw on comparable objects and shapes to describe the peculiarities of Cavataro's works, these descriptions only limit their complexity and conception. Her sculptures are defined by the compression and expansion of matter, as if a gravitational force were embedded in the works and emanating from their centre. Each piece poses a unique approach to form, space and colour and its interaction with light. Cavataro uses a wide range of coloured glasses of varying opacity, which block or allow the gaze to penetrate the interior of the sculptures.

The works' aesthetic is based on the use of simple primary forms, following a logical and precise execution. This body of work is constructed entirely from 16-sided polygons, which function as quasi modular components. Each basic shape of the polygon is combined in ever new ways, allowing Cavataro to create these rigid yet fluid bodies, with each sculpture claiming a particular design and presence. She draws a fine line between a 'high and low' resolution of possible forms, pushing her sculptures towards clarity and ascetic illusionism.

In this sense she draws on and challenges the trajectory and language of Minimal Art and Concept Art. Sculptors such as Charlotte Posenenske and her peers come to mind, whose practice was defined by simplicity and conceptual rigour, as they employed the modular system as a means of making art. Radicalism was an expression of consistency and methodology. The acknowledged artistic limitation coincided with the industrial production of many of their works, ultimately resulting in a devotion to methods of seriality and uniformity. Thus, the sublime object, seemingly untouched by human hand, naturally glorifies a sacrosanct appearance detesting the artist's personal gesture. Cavataro's work does not commit to such artistic absence and opposes any means of intangibility by bringing a new kind of abstract vocabulary back to the studio.

