

## Material Matter

curated by Kat Griefen

September 8 – October 8, 2007

Opening Reception:

Saturday, September 8, 6-9pm

Alice Adams	Nancy Manter
Susan Bonfils	Rossana Martinez
Sharon Brant	Creighton Michael
James O. Clark	Ray Oglesby
Matthew Deleget	John Phillips
Rob van Erve	Lucio Pozzi
Gail Gregg	Leo Rabkin
Lynne Harlow	James Seawright
Phillis Ideal	Edward Shalala
Marthe Keller	Clover Vail
Stephen Maine	Don Voisine

Videos by Megan Biddle, Margarida Garcia and Sabrina Gschwandtner.

*This exhibition is made possible through the generous support of The Golden Rule Foundation.*



**Folly No. 1**  
**Performance by Rob List**  
**Friday & Saturday,**  
**September 14th & 15th, 7:30PM**

**A Shiny Night for Sleep: An Evening of Abstract Video Art**

**Saturday, September 22nd, 7:30pm**

Co-curated by Kat Griefen and Meredith Drum with work by Megan Biddle, Thomas Dexter, Margarida Garcia, Sabrina Gschwandtner, Zach Layton, Lucio Pozzi and LoVid.

**Material Matter: The Currency of Abstraction**  
**Sunday, October 7th, 3pm**

Panel discussion with Lynne Harlow, Stephen Maine, Rossana Martinez and TBA. Moderated by Kat Griefen.

## Sideshow

319 Bedford Ave. Williamsburg, Brooklyn 11211  
fax/tel 718 486 8180 hours 12 to 6, Fri. thru Mon.  
sideshowgallery@aol.com www.sideshowgallery.com

L train to Bedford Avenue stop.  
Located on Bedford Ave. between S. 2nd and S. 3rd.

319 Bedford Avenue  
Williamsburg, Brooklyn, NY 11211

# Sideshow

# material matter

AMERICAN ABSTRACT ARTISTS

Curated by  
KAT GRIEFEN

## Material Matter

Since 1936 American Abstract Artists has continued its commitment to what Stephen Westfall cites as a "tolerance of diversity" or a non-party line approach. The artists in Material Matter reaffirm this openness to difference, both in form and theory. Here, the organization's legacy is manifested in the artists' use of unlikely materials or use of traditional materials in unlikely ways. With their expansion into new spatial and theoretical planes the selection of works in Material Matter stretch, glow, expand, duplicate and even seemingly breathe.

Akin to Eve Hesse's prescient "Hang Up" of 1966, Leo Rabkin's "Ribbon with Two Points" takes the rectangular frame and playfully flaunts its conventions. Using the artist's signature method of flocking, Rabkin's work both threatens and seduces, like a red figment of The Brothers Grimm's creation. Marthe Keller expands on the painterly brush stroke through the layering and duplication of lines. By adding delicately sewn stitches over the process-associated packing tape and by stiffening run-away strands of canvas, "Stuttering Hand" and "Stiffy" beautifully freeze almost comic

moments of the artist's touch. Rob van Erve's resin and fabric sculptures are the things of fantasy and flight. The lace of ladies collars, the trails of gowns and their balloon-like sleeves inspire his work. James O. Clark's



**James O. Clark**

three-tiered installation consists of a humidifier, laser light and miniature pool of self-sustaining bubbles complete with skirts from which a gentle yet spooky glow is emitted. Clark combines elements that appear to reference the whimsical time of childhood and somehow also the ever-present protective parent.

Equally as compelling in the realm of abstract are those artists who employ more conventional materials and configurations but turn them on their heads. Rossana Martinez's medium is color. By applying spray paint or acrylic directly on the wall while clad in the same shade of orange, Martinez breaks down the distinction between painter and painting. Similarly, Edward Shalala reverses the typical elements of a wall-hung work: blue and orange radiate through the canvas from the



**Marthe Keller**



**Rossana Martinez**

diptych's verso. Nancy Manter's black and white photographs are made grainy both by the nature of the medium itself and the camera angle in relation to the pavement she captures. Drawings made up of actual skid marks, road markings and hand drawn lines layer on an additional dimension – both optical and literal.

Material Matter also addresses the flawed yet common assumption that abstract art avoids political or social commentary. "Bad to Worse to Truly Terrible" speaks to this notion. The components of Matthew Deleget's piece – gently curved circular canvases – suggest black holes, bullet holes or something else slightly sinister. In itself, each work holds a multiplicity of meanings. Some challenge an aspect of American culture that privileges the answer over the question. Some choose the means over the ends, some, becoming over being. Each work is literally or figuratively open ended, subscribing only to its internal logic and suggesting one important aspect of abstraction's currency – its potential to counter-balance the dogmatic.

Kat Griefen  
2007



**Leo Rabkin**