

MIGUEL ABREU GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Exhibition: **SAM LEWITT**
 Patience ... Fortitude

Dates: **December 15, 2006 – January 29, 2007**

Reception: **Friday, December 15, 6:30 – 9 PM**

Miguel Abreu Gallery is pleased to present *Patience ... Fortitude*, the first one-person exhibition by Sam Lewitt.

Reporter: "What do the lions stand for in art and did you intend some symbolism?"

Edward Clark Potter: "I'm sure I don't know"

As if to promise something to come, revise by omission, or possibly mark an entryway, the exhibition title *Patience ... Fortitude* frames two interrelated works – *New/Collection/Display* & *A.D.* Both of these works stage themselves through artifacts chosen from the New York Public Library's main branch: an archival image depicting the Library's stacks of books contained below 42nd Street, and a statement, made by the sculptor of the lions that stand at the institution's main entryway, in which he asserts his lack of knowledge as to whether meaning adheres in his monuments.

The former, through which *New/Collection/Display* is realized, pictorially reveals a cross section of the library's stratified tiers of shelving: the near sum of print held upon the institution's opening. In *New/Collection/Display* this image is treated as a pictograph of sedimentation – a compressed deposit in itself, constituted by the hardened traces of manual and industrial labor, organized by their technological impression into a condensed image archive. This work materializes as something like an advertisement whose cipher is the public face of collection. The putative objects of display for this poster are the mimetically parsed procedures that constitute the archival image from which it is derived: a drawing, a photograph and a print. Here we have a historical detail as core sample, cracked along the fault-line of temporal compression and sealed into the spatial display of a vitrine.

A.D. embellishes this object-like relationship to productive forces so that it might appear from a different perspective. In this work we encounter the static presentation of a collection of fictitious dust jackets. As the designated promotional site for a condensed interior, the dust jacket materializes the threshold between the ephemerality of advertising and the durability of text: between fashion and the endurance of an archival inscription. In *A.D.* we only get as far as a designed impression. The space of the "blurb," typically constructed according to conventions of disclosure (and adequate concealment), becomes this collection's agent of oblique self-possession. The titles and descriptive texts of these protective covers seem confused as to what they are supposed to relate to potential interest. The impression given is that these objects lack the means of representation.

The absence of a client for these representatives seals them up to the laminate bond. Perhaps to aid in a memory of design's returning obsolescence, the vertical display of these forms recall architecture's archaic perceptual corollary of distracted reception; a habit of passing which binds advertising, ornament and decorum. Discerning this constellation's image is the job of the sleuth who is willing to read what might elude the unfolding of illustration, but is right there, scattered into barren graphics.

The nouns “patience” and “fortitude,” rather than states of stoic consciousness, name a character without any particular content. In this light, “A.D.” should have its mythological contents given over to a profane figure of skeptical openness: perhaps relating more to *A Detective’s* “what has happened?” than *Anno Domini*. The library’s necessary maintenance of its technological proficiency gives evidence to a collective project of waiting (in anticipation of new ways of archiving and disseminating old content). The maintenance of its edifice sustains the purported efficacy for representation *to* and *of* the present. It is this precarious relationship to time that sends this work circling around Edward Clark Potter’s failure to enunciate the meaning of his sculptures that remain at the entrance of the public library.

Sam Lewitt received a BFA from the School of Visual Arts and attended the Whitney Independent Study Program, New York. He is co-founder and co-editor of *Scorched Earth*, the twelve-issue magazine in which the question of drawing’s place in theory and practice is addressed in dialogue with artists, critics and historians. In early 2007, his work will be included in group shows at Sutton Lane, Paris, Galerie Christian Nagel, Cologne, and Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York.

For more information or for visuals, please contact the gallery at 212.995.1774 or info@miguelabreugallery.com.

Gallery hours: Wednesday – Sunday, 11:00 AM to 6:30 PM

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