

MIGUEL ABREU GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Exhibition: Sam Lewitt, *Total Immersion Environment*

Dates: January 7 – February 27, 2011

Reception: Friday, January 7, 6 – 8 PM

Miguel Abreu Gallery is pleased to announce the opening on Friday, January 7th of *Total Immersion Environment*, Sam Lewitt's third solo exhibition at the gallery.

"For the past several years," Lewitt writes, "I have been stuttering around various conflicts that take hold between the alphabet and other imaging technologies. Stammering is one way in which language points up its materiality beyond the vagaries of self-representation." *Total Immersion Environment* tries to construct a constellation in which some material from the history of literacy – cast-offs from the plasticity of its norms – is made useful for reading into the thickening of several interfaces. There are three drastically different types cast in this situation.

The group of photographs collectively titled *Paper Citizens* came about by looking at the archaic matrix for letters and locking elements involved in letterpress type composition. This equipment was retrieved from a print shop that was exchanging its heavy metal for the light information of pixels in a bid to convert operations to what one employee described as an "Imaging Center." Each element, every letter, collected from this context of exchange was then photographed and composited into images that preserve the literary negative prescribed by a printer's flatbed grid. The traces of past use left on this equipment fill in for graphic detail.

The anonymous citations that build up in each *Paper Citizen* are selected from diffuse sources – descriptions of the physical properties of spatial relationships, of the acceleration of computation by quantum technologies, of automated intelligence systems. Taken together, these fragments indicate the existence of an absent binding text as much as they indicate the lack of a cohesive voice. The hope is that both structural order and graphic distinction can be offset against the frustrations of reading backwards.

A collection of *Test Subjects* consists of various objects with reflective surfaces – including a full-length mirror from Ikea, a strip of unexposed 35mm film, the rearview mirror of a commercial vehicle and a helicopter pilot's helmet – onto which several standard grades of a material called "Test Dust" has been affixed with photo-mount. This synthetic material is used to test the point of mechanical decomposition of technologies that must perform within extremely dusty environments, such as vacuum cleaners, tractors and aircraft engines. The typically nostalgic resonances of dust with the inevitability of decay and loss are deployed in this work as a heteronomous layer of material, which crosses the spheres of production, distribution and consumption.

Also included in the exhibition is [*The Prosumer's Discretion*](#), a folio of prints that have been soaked in the ink of a cephalopod, and which is available for viewing through the gallery's website.

For more information or for visuals, please contact the gallery:

36 Orchard Street (between Canal & Hester), New York, NY 10002
Telephone 212.995.1774 • Fax 646.688.2302 • post@miguelabreugallery.com

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

Subway: F to East Broadway; B, D to Grand Street; J, M, Z to Delancey / Essex Street