Out of Place

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April 7 – June 7, 2005

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Situated in the lobby of a Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill (SOM) skyscraper along Sixth Avenue in midtown Manhattan, the location of the UBS gallery presents an unusual opportunity to examine contemporary issues of the urban environment. Echoing the midtown grid in its plan, the gallery, partitioned into ten bays, (five on the north side of the building and five on the south) is bracketed by the lobby concourse on the interior and a wood screen in front of a glass curtain wall on the exterior. Functioning as semi-discrete spaces from which one's awareness of the urban fabric is not far removed, and existing between the interior "promenade" of the lobby concourse and the exterior plaza, the exhibitions are experienced both as display in the lobby and as objects of contemplation by the art viewer within the gallery space proper.
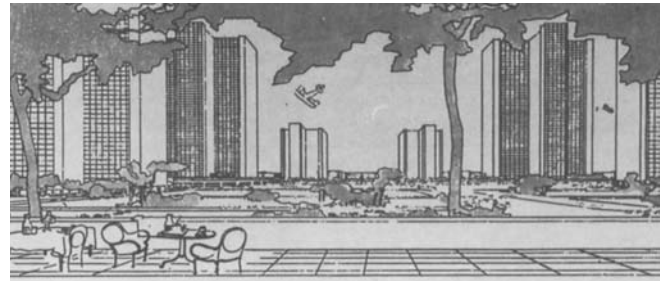
Every aspect of human life pullulates through their (the streets) length... a sea of lusts and faces. It is better than the theatre, better than what we read in novels.... The street wears us out. And when all is said and done, we have to admit it disgusts us.[1]
Le Corbusier

The "triumph" of rationalism

The skyscrapers that march up along Sixth Avenue represent the "triumph" of rationalist thought and its influence on architecture. Beginning in Europe between the wars, the cool aesthetic of the International Style that eventually became synonymous with American corporate influence in the 1950s and 1960s has its origins in the utopian ideas of Le Corbusier, in particular his 1925 plan for Radiant City, a sparkling vertical metropolis that joined the wonders of new technology (automobiles, steel and glass buildings) with leisure spaces made up of parks and gardens. Corbusier's plan envisioned a series of high-rise buildings on a "green" or natural grid connected by "motorways" to other parts of the city. Although the architect's later work investigated more organic solutions to urban planning, the strict functionalism combined with an almost cult-like investment in technology proved irresistible to post-war city planners who saw in the modern era the possibility of making a "clean break" with the past. Le Corbusier's Radiant City would have required the razing of central Paris, and though in fact never built, the genie was out of the bottle as "urban renewal" became a euphemism for cataclysmic transformations in post-war cities where neighborhoods were deemed "blighted" by modern urbanists, wishing to obliterate the chaos of urban experience in favor of a formal harmony promised by futuristic utopias.

Sixth Avenue's outward transformation to an urban canyon, at the height of confidence in modernism's powers of organization and control, was accompanied by an internal logic of corporate ideology that manifested itself in new theories of worker efficiency, illustrated by the office's overall grid plan that left nothing to chance. According to the architect Robert Stern's *New York 1960*, the offices of the Eero Saarinen—designed CBS building, built in 1965 and located diagonally across the street from the UBS building at 51 West Fifty-second Street, were a

Le Corbusier, drawing of the "Contemporary City for Three Million Inhabitants," 1922. © 1997 ADAGP, Paris, and DACS London.

formally controlled environment: "Employees were not permitted to decorate their desks with personal items or even to display personal photographs, 'unless' as Dorsfman [the CBS director of design] joked 'it was an Avedon portrait'. CBS was a company known to be finicky about details...."[2]

Privately owned public space

Mimicking sidewalks along the streets outside, the UBS lobby concourse is one of many thoroughfares throughout midtown that pedestrians may use to navigate in, around or below the skyscrapers that dominate this area of the city. These interior "streets," some of which, like those under Rockefeller Center, offer amenities such as food and gift shopping for local employees and tourists, have their origins in the Parisian arcades, which first appeared in the 1820's, when the industrial revolution made possible the opulent iron and glass buildings that housed the seemingly limitless commodities available through new technologies of production. Walter Benjamin's *Passagen-Werk* project, an intensive examination of the arcades phenomenon, likened their highly stimulating environments to "dream worlds," destabilized settings where pedestrians lose themselves in the seductive display of an endless variety of consumer goods. Appearing at a time in Paris when technological changes took place that intensified the power of advertising through the development of electronic signs and film, these iron and glass predecessors to urban shopping malls could be seen as a more hermetic version of the ways in which the city itself would be transformed.

Public atrium on 5th Avenue: pedestrian "clear path" mandated by zoning laws obstructed by commercial goods and retail kiosks appropriating the space.

As more and more urban space was adopted for retail activity in the modern city, the question of what constitutes public space developed an ambiguity that remains unresolved in the contemporary urban environment. The 2000 book *Privately Owned Public Space, the New York City Experience*[3], studied 503 arcades, plazas, pocket parks, etc..., which were largely created by the 1961 New York City zoning laws that offered developers the right to increase the square footage of their buildings in exchange for creating open space for public use. Inspired by the manner in which both Mies van de Rohe and Philip Johnson's Seagram's building and SOM's Lever House created more open space by setting their buildings back from the street, city planners hoped that the new zoning combined with advances of building technologies allowing maximum use of the footprint by going "straight up" would encourage building types that would ensure the Corbusian ideals of "light and air" within the city center. While in principle these laws represented an effort to safeguard the public realm by preventing urban congestion through overbuilding, with no stipulation as to the type of open space offered for public use or any realistic means of monitoring how spaces functioned, in practice the long-term interests of the public were placed in private hands. The new laws allowed for massive skyscrapers rising in some cases indiscriminately out of barren plazas that, although intended for public use, are often quietly enlisted for commercial purposes.

Describing the "through block galleria" directly behind the UBS building in *Privately Owned Public Space,* the authors write: "The vaulted skylight covering much of the three-story-high narrow corridor brings to mind aspects of light and airy nineteenth century shopping arcades" which, although primarily a stylistic point, alludes to "privately owned, publicly traversed passages"[4] of Benjamin's era. The remainder of the commentary reveals an ambiguity concerning distinctions of public and private or what the authors refer to as "café creep": "As a 'through the block galleria,' the space is designed to serve both circulation and destination goals. Thus 14 tables and 56 movable chairs are required to be dedicated to unfettered use by the public. At a recent site visit, however, private restaurants had taken possession of some, if not all, of the tables and chairs. No record of city approval for this use has been found."[5]

Sidewalks
In her 1961 book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*[6], published the year of the new zoning laws that ushered in profound changes to the urban landscape of New York, Jane Jacobs offered an aggressively anti-"professional" and decidedly populist response to the sweeping technocratic approaches that threatened to undermine the extremely intricate and subtle exchanges that make up the social fabric on a typical city block. In an effort to emphasize the significance of the street as a place where a limitless array of social interactions takes place, Jacobs cites her own Greenwich Village block as an example, articulating in great detail the complex interactions and support mechanisms among neighborhood residents, businesses and visitors which evolve outside of any over-arching governmental or commercial influence.
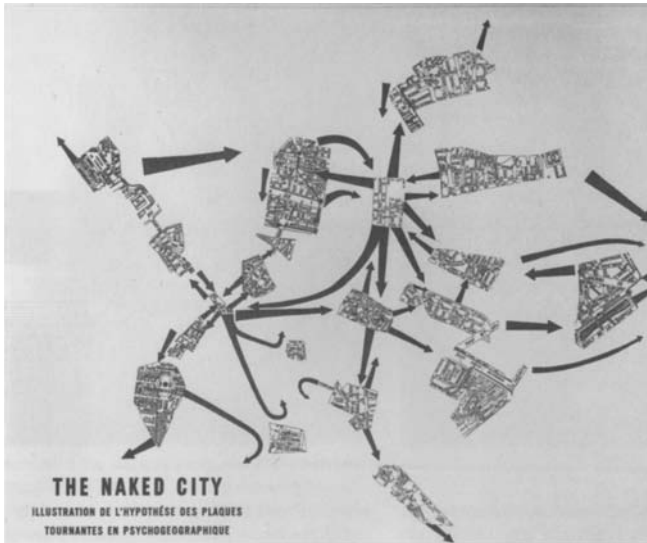
For Jacobs, what was clearly missing from the Radiant City plan were sidewalks where pedestrians, interacting in combinations of predictability and surprise, who play a significant role in the life of the city, a role that is lost somewhere between the monolithic towers and the green plots they were situated on. Unfortunately, the significance of this intricate "street culture" has often been an anathema to urban planners who wish to make their mark with grand visions for the city's future, particularly because its almost unquantifiable nature eludes (or interrupts) the profit-oriented paradigm that influences development.

With the present means of long-distance mass communication, sprawling isolation has proved an even more effective method of keeping a population under control.[7]

Lewis Mumford, *The City in History*

The "Drift"
Like the 19th century streamlining of the Parisian city plan by Baron Haussmann, which created wide boulevards connected by central hubs intended, in part, for ease of police and milita-movement to respond to social unrest in workers' districts, post-war technological advances put to use by an increasingly sophisticated centralized bureaucracy represented an unprecedented consolidation of power within a democratic state, threatening to severely curtail the average citizen's freedom of movement and influence on the democratic process. Reacting to

Psychographic map by Guy Debord with Asger Jorn, *The Naked City*, 1957, screenprint. Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie, The Hague.

attempts by modern urbanists to eliminate the pedestrian street, felt to be at the core of Paris's liveliness, a group of intellectuals known as the Situationist International confronted the rationalist agenda with a set of strategies that were both politically radical and obscure, eventually proving widely influential among those skeptical of the "advances" promised by modernism's utopian vision.

The Situationists understood that the built environment, and in particular the street, were the most concrete indicators of the state of a society's democracy. Turning to a ubiquitous illustration of the organization of urban space, they appropriated city maps of Paris, altering them according to the principles of what they referred to as "psycho-geography." Basing these maps on their articulated wanderings through the city streets in an activity known as "drift" (*derives*), they cut and pasted the city plan into new configurations, freely altering its functional logic to metaphorically challenge the principles of the dutiful movement of its residents to and from their habitual destinations. The drift entailed a process that was anti-functional but not without purpose, which was to sensitize the city dweller to aspects of urban space that were often overlooked or ignored as a result of what they saw as unimaginative responses to one's environment due to an excessive emphasis on pure rationality. Uncovering the psychologically charged memories and histories that exist in layered form on urban streets, the drift formed a kind of archeology of the city's psyche, which was threatened by new traumas associated with the obliteration of its past by the aggressive removal and rebuilding of urban areas, as well as the rapid expansion of mass media's influence on the "optical space" of the public realm.

Images, the cinema and television divert the everyday at times offering up to it its own spectacle, or sometimes the spectacle of the distinctly non everyday; violence, death, catastrophe, the lives of kings and stars—those who we are led to believe defy everydayness.[8]

Henri LeFevbre, *The Everyday and Everydayness*

Spectacle and the Everyday

The Situationist's significance to urban issues was in the connections they drew between the consolidation and re-ordering of space through the removal of large parts of existing city neighborhoods, and the "spectacle"[9] realized by new film and television mediums of commodity culture. Like Benjamin's "dream world" arcades, the spectacle could access the unconscious "terrain" of the urban dweller, but with far more insidiousness than might ever have been imagined in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Addressing the potential conflict between the complex hier-archies of behavioral codes that exist in a "functional" modern metropolis, and the contradictory, pleasure-seeking impulses of human instinct that seek the improvisational over the planned, Henri LeFevbre, a member of the Situationist group, emphasized the quotidian or "everyday" experience of contemporary life as a means to escape the alienation produced by a controlled and "rationalist" urban environment. Concerned about the effect that an increasingly sophisticated technological society was having on city dwellers that experienced the gradual displacement of the "historical city," the concept of the everyday, rooted to some extent on rural time cycles around which one could orient oneself, was a deliberate response to the destabilizing nature of the spectacle. This defense of the ordinary or common experi-ences in daily life represents an effort of resistance that, because of its emphasis on "nothing special," is in less danger of being returned to the spectacle itself. LeFevbre also stressed the everyday's contradictory nature, encompassing both the monotony of the "daily grind" and the potential for a momentary break from habitual behavior, which might interrupt the stream of constant stimulus offered by mass commercial culture.

Its contemporary relevance is in some ways subtle and in others obvious. The combination of the increased consolidation in ownership of both urban space and media companies means that more and more "messages" are coming from fewer and fewer sources. Mass media, invested for the most part in serving as a distraction from the workaday world, depend a great deal on the continued stimulation of their audience. By contrast, the notion of the everyday represents a pause to refocus attention on the "here and now," which is lost in the rush of commodity culture. The ordinary or common aspects of daily life often elude commercial expropriation because they're available to everyone and therefore not easily sold. When attempts are made to market

Williamsburg, Brooklyn's "pedestrian street" looking towards the waterfront.

The "Radiant City's" towers-in-the-park paradigm may have its most recent incarnation in the above proposal for the Williamsburg-Greenpoint waterfront, two blocks away from where the picture on the left was taken.

the everyday, like the "voluntary simplicity" of *Real Simple* magazine, they generally are geared only to the affluent, a thinly veiled ambition to sell "less" as "more" to those who have plenty. For the rest there's the non-stop Baroque of violent fantasies, reality shows featuring "regular" people (another attempt to market the ordinary, but as humiliation and farce), S.U.V.'s charging valiantly through untouched nature, and the routine horror of distant conflicts.

Though the alienating qualities of modernism have been thoroughly critiqued and analyzed in architectural circles, the postmodern alternatives of historical pastiche intended to dress up its austerity (Philip Johnson's AT&T building) and more recently the neo-expressionist "sculptural" buildings of Frank Gehry, have failed to confront the antagonism towards the city's sidewalks revealed by Jane Jacobs, or the investment in heroic gestures, which comprises part of its legacy. Other attempts, like those by the New Urbanist movement to recover a "lost human-ism," are reactionary in nature, relying on Disneyesque clichés[10] of what cities and towns "once were." New developments like those planned for Brooklyn's waterfront[11] continue to incorporate the Radiant City model, while new museum buildings indulge in sensational forms for spectacular results.

Faced with the possibility of a population-turned-audience bearing passive witness to its own seduction, the post-industrial cityscape shows few signs of potential breaks in the seamless flow towards public disengagement. With no end in sight to the commercial appropriation of both public and psychic space in our "global economy," the notion of a tangible relationship to environ-ments and objects, a preference for context over sensation, and for meanings to emerge from places rather than be imposed on them, provide a potential space for a healthy skepticism towards the endless and often empty seductions of consumer culture that dominate the contemporary city.

Peter Scott
CURATOR

1. Le Corbusier "La rue", *L'Intransigeant* (May 1929), republished in Le Corbusier and Pierre Jeanneret, Oeuvre complete 1910–1929 (Zurich, Girsberger 1937), p.118 and Anthony Vidler, *Warped Space, Art Architecture and Anxiety in Modern Culture,* 2000, MIT Press, p.61

2. Robert A.M. Stern, Thomas Mellins, David Fishman. *New York 1960: Architecture and Urbanism between the Second World War and the Bicentennial,* Monacelli Press, c1995, p.409

3. Jerold S Kayden, New York City Dept. of City Planning, Municipal Art Society of New York, *Privately Owned Public Space: the New York City Experience,* John Wiley, 2000

4. Susan Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project,* MIT Press, 1989 p.83

5. Jerold S Kayden, New York City Dept. of City Planning, Municipal Art Society of New York. *Privately Owned Public Space: The New York City Experience,* John Wiley, 2000 p.162–163

6. Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities,* Modern Library, 1961

7. Lewis Mumford, *The City in History: its Origins, its Tranformations, and its Prospects.* Harcourt, Brace & World, 1961

8. Henri Lefevbre, *Everyday and Everydayness* reprinted in *Architecture of the Everyday,* edited by Steven Harris and Deborah Burke, Princeton Architectural Press, 1997, p.32–37. This book provides an in depth examination of the possibilities of the everyday within the context of recent architectural practice.

9. For more on the "spectacle" see Guy Debord, *"The Society of the Spectacle,"* 1967, available online— *http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/debord/society.htm*

10. The "flagship" town of New Urbanism is Celebration, Florida, conceived and created by the Disney Corporation, of which a number of studies are available.

11. The city's plan: *http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/greenpointwill/green overview.html.* The local reactions: *http://www.gwapp.org/* "The current rezoning would allow 22 towers up to 40 stories tall on our waterfront."

The artworks illustrated on the following pages are included in the exhibition "Out of Place."

Michael Ashkin
No. 107, 1999
Mixed media
35" x 20 3/4" x 41 7/8"
Andrea Rosen Gallery

Beaumont
Camouflages Cells, Azusa, CA, 2004
Digital c-print
42" x 30"
Courtesy of the artist

Jennifer Bolande
Appliance House, 1998–99
Duratrans/lightboxes steel frame
91" x 59" x 5"
Courtesy Alexander and Bonin Gallery

Michael Ashkin's scale model sculptures primarily depict industrial waste sites on the outskirts of the city, forgotten zones that exist uneasily in post-industrial society's collective unconscious. Because of the high degree of detail in the work, the usual sketchiness of this nebulous territory is brought into crisp focus, elevating an ordinarily marginal area of the built environment to a featured role in an open-ended narrative on the fate of seemingly abandoned territory. On the fringe of a city where all space is spoken for, Ashkin's work references little noticed places one might get glimpses of along the highway from New York to New Jersey, which possess fading evidence of the human activity that's left its mark on the sites. Vastly reduced in scale from their subjects and framed by their base, the sculptures assert filmic qualities of mood and character while articulating the side effects of industrial production in areas abandoned to uncertain use.
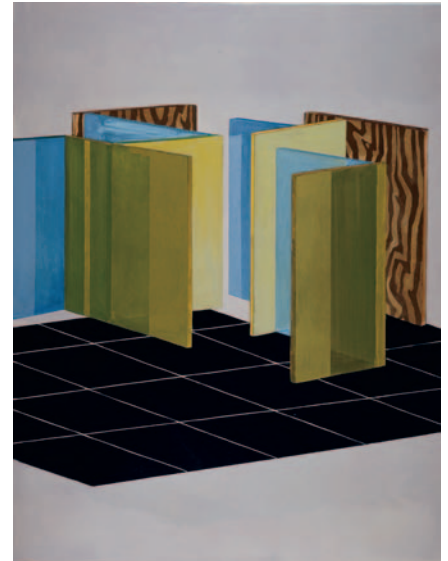
Beaumont's photographs of camouflaged cell phone towers have an unreal quality that results when nature is transformed into theatre. An acute example of the "truth is stranger than fiction" phenomenon, these "cloaked" towers appear as various forms of trees depending on their region or climate. Turning the Darwinian notion of natural selection on its end, the fake evergreens and palm trees represent a "permanent" state of nature and remain immutable save for the interests of real estate and development. Beaumont's almost deadpan treatment of the towers, photographed straight on and filling the frame, lend her subjects the quality of portraiture, revealing the "hidden" identity of the transmitting cells that are masked to make this relatively new technology appear "natural."

Jennifer Bolande's sculptures return to icons of modernist architecture, addressing the universalist appeal of the International Style from the perspective of some of its most known structures on the urban skyline. *Appliance House*, *Small Skyscraper*, and *Untitled Speaker* use as a point of reference the Lever House by SOM, Miles van de Rohe and Philip Johnson's Seagram's building, and the United Nations Secretariat respectively. By constructing the facade of the sculptures with photographic transparencies, these model buildings emphasize the "image" of each structure as a key component of its identity. Sending up the notorious modernist credo "form follows function," Bolande's photographic "skin" on the façade of *Appliance House* reveals images of washers and dryers from a downtown appliance store, an oblique reference to the Lever Brothers for whom SOM designed the building, a company that manufactured soap.

Anne Daems
Untitled, 1995
Color photograph mounted on aluminum
15" x 22"
Courtesy Micheline Szwajcer

Dan Graham and Robin Hirst
from "Corporate Arcadias,"
1987–2005
Three Ladies at IBM Atrium
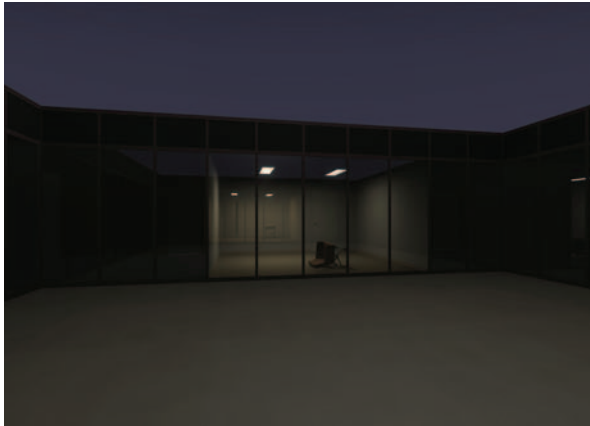Photograph
1987
Courtesy of the artist

Cannon Hudson
Simplex, 2004
Oil on canvas, 63" x 49.75"
Courtesy Oliver Kamm 5BE

Anne Daem's photographs of ordinary settings and events, because they are composed as though taken "at a glance," have a hypnotic quality caused by the isolation of an otherwise random event. Showing people walking to their cars, sitting, or waiting on the street in ways that usually escape notice, Daem's pictures frame that which is often ignored and, in the process, reveal an alternate experience of everyday activities, rescuing the purely functional from the dreariness of routine, while activating the spaces she depicts with a sense of apprehension concerning events that have yet to take place.

Dan Graham's and **Robin Hirst**'s article Corporate Arcadias published in *Artforum* in 1987 and presented as a text piece for *Out of Place*, offers an astute historical analysis of the emergence of public atriums, within the private realm of corporate architecture. Beginning with the early Enlightenment, the text locates a number of historical examples of "arcadian" and "garden in city" ambitions for urban planning. The mid-19th century Parisian "winter gardens" that offered a respite from everyday life are described as predecessors to the corporate atriums of the late 1980s, most of which are located in midtown Manhattan, and offer "an urban fantasy of the picturesque brought into the city central," while embodying the inevitable contradictions of privately owned and operated spaces that are open to the public.

Cannon Hudson's visceral paintings describe vaguely modernist architectural structures and spaces that, while seemingly invented, are articulated with details specific enough to convince us they "exist." Depicting views of environments that appear drawn from the residual effects of our physical experience of "modern" life, they invoke styles and design elements that are vaguely familiar but perhaps not up to date. Hudson's paintings seem to make reference to a past obsessed with its future, resulting in settings full of a deliberate optimism that appears frozen in limbo.

Louise Lawler
Arranged by Donald Marron, Susan Brundage, Cheryl Bishop at Paine Webber..., 1982
Black and white photograph
Courtesy Metro Pictures

Craig Kalapkjian
Dear Tech Support Operator, 2004,
Giclée print mounted on Plexiglas, 43.5" x 58"
Courtesy Andrea Rosen Gallery

James Mills
Community Library, 2000
Books, bookshelves, dim. variable
Courtesy of the artist

Craig Kalpakjian's computer generated images of anonymous corporate architecture appear as film stills from a fluid computer animated program used to describe imagined interior and exterior spaces. In *Dear Tech Support Operator*, an overturned office chair lies idle in an otherwise empty room, suggesting an event that has either taken place or is about to. Seen through a glass wall from the courtyard of a one-story office building at dusk, the dim fluorescent lights provide only slightly more illumination than the early evening sky, adding low key suspense to a "set" where possibly nothing will happen. Describing empty places that are usually the site of a great deal of activity and ambition, Kalpakjian's contemplative pictures show these buildings in a passive state, completely fabricated landscapes and interiors that, while constructed for the purpose of human use and activity, seem to have a mind of their own.

Louise Lawler's *Arranged by Donald Marron, Susan Brundage, Cheryl Bishop at Paine Webber...,* photographed in the Paine Webber offices in 1982, depict the placement of contemporary art within the "workaday" world of the office setting. Lawler's photographs, in highlighting the ownership and "use" of art, combines a "behind the scenes" view into places where the general public may not go, with the detached presence of documentary evidence. Through the framing of contemporary art "at work" in these settings, Lawler's distanced perspective contrasts with the attributes of "individualism" that the artworks featured in the offices are assumed to possess, underlining their function as motivators for the creative thought considered necessary for a corporation to maintain its competitive advantage.

James Mills's site-specific installation, fitted to the width and height of a wall of the UBS Gallery, employs a simple but effective inversion of the organizational function of bookshelves. Turning his massive collection of paperbacks inward, Mills negates the presumption of accessibility that widely circulated romance novels and self-help books enjoy, offering instead a wall of muted color patterns that conceal popular titles usually made endlessly available. Seen in the context of the UBS lobby gallery, a private space made accessible to the public, Mills inverted library combines the "personal" nature of paperback collections with the voluminous display of books associated with public libraries, investigating the uncertain terrain occupied by the overlap of public and private space.

Jon Naiman
Plain Air Series, #16
C-print, 16" x 20"
Courtesy of the artist

Tom Moore
Untitled, 2004,
C-print, 12" x 18"
Courtesy of the artist

Jeff Preiss
Scan Odyssey, 1997–2005
Two screen installation, 16mm film to DVD
Courtesy of the artist

Tom Moore's pictures reveal the perpetual dilemma of the cataloguing and capturing of natural phenomenon by the human race: No matter how "realistic" the setting or context, the image of "nature" on the other side of the glass often reveals more about the captors than the captives. In Moore's images of uninhabited ape cages at the Berlin Zoo, the harshly lit clinical interiors suggest this charade has been put to rest, but with little change in the result. In a vain attempt to appropriate nature for display in the urban environment, the cages seem more suited for use as a morgue than to witness animals leading their daily lives. The technical appearance of the odd assortment of equipment, apparently used to amuse or control the inhabitants who are conspicuously absent, offers a stark contrast to the straw and other organic elements, which seems out of context in the extremely hermetic environment of the rooms themselves.

Jon Naiman's photographs of "plein air" painters at work in decidedly un-pastoral locations around the city contrast the anachronism of 19th century romantic landscape painting with the harsh realities of urban construction sites and industrial zones. Truly out of context in these settings, the artists in Naiman's photographs seem oblivious to the chaos or aggressively "urban" qualities of their environment, while remaining attentive to their chosen view. Engaged in a determined struggle to bring harmony to their chaotic settings, Naiman's artists, conspicuously "set apart" from their subject, "the city," appear as representatives of the urge to pacify or beautify it, defiantly retaining the concentration required to bridge the gap between the quietude implicit in their chosen discipline and the intensity of what's around them.

Jeff Preiss's film is drawn from an intensive engagement with the built environment as is evidenced by a seemingly unlimited array of building types, architectural styles and cultural settings seen mostly from the vantage point of the street. Preiss's restless camera pans and quick editing cuts engage the viewer in an experience of the architecture of a city that recalls what Walter Benjamin referred to as a "state of distraction," an urban phenomenon where the city dweller, faced with the intense stimulus of its complex make-up, experiences its buildings not as autonomous, free-standing structures but instead as ephemeral images upon which one imposes a logic as they move through the city's streets.

R.H. Quaytman
Chapter 5, UBS, 2005
Detail of silkscreen on wood
Courtesy of the artist

Jude Tallichet
All Star, 2002
Sandblasted acrylic and eight channel sound,
dims. variable
Sara Meltzer Gallery

Heidi Schlatter
Untitled (garage), 2002–2005
Photo on vinyl
89" x 115.5"
Courtesy of the artist

R.H. Quaytman's paintings, often done in series or sequence, combine formal invention with specific narratives that address a place, event or individual. Silk-screened by hand over a plywood surface with an appreciation for "accidents" that occur in the process, Quaytman's photographic images allude to events or sites and function as "found" evidence to the existence of her source. With the tension implicit in the hybrid compositions of non-objective formal constructions of stripes or patterns that vie for painting space with imagery drawn from real world sources (in this case imagery drawn from the vicinity of the UBS building), Quaytman's paintings resist the exclusive roles of either fiction or non-fiction, granting equal import to the "real" and the invented.

Heidi Schlatter's large-scale photograph of a garage door is printed on a vinyl support similar to those used for large-scale advertisement on the sides of buildings. Creating a kind of anti-ad that features an unglamorous and all-too-real door that might be found in a local industrial zone eclipsed by the global economy, Schlatter's image negates the fictional window through which art often interprets the world in favor of a full-scale representation of her subject. Recreated "life size" in materials normally associated with "outdoor advertising," Schlatter's piece is disconcerting in its monumental assertion of the "ordinary" within the context of an art gallery, while offering an ironic counterpart to the massive billboards and commercial displays that engulf pedestrians in the streets outside.

Jude Tallichet's collection of sculptures entitled *All Star*, some of which tower over the viewer, are translucent glass models based on a familiar set of skyscrapers that have achieved the familiarity of cliché. Including, among others, Seattle's Space Needle and the Eiffel Tower, Tallichet's iconic structures are landmarks that evoke a touristic vision of their place of origin. Seen in the context of midtown Manhattan, a center of business activity that is punctuated by tourist destinations like Rockefeller Center, the Empire State Building and Times Square, these large sculptures take on a disconcerting quality of trinkets enlarged many times beyond their scale, whose more manageable facsimiles might be found a few blocks away.

Momoyo Torimitsu
Danchizuma-Endless Sunrise, 1998
Mixed media, dims. variable
Courtesy of the artist

Karen Yama
Bread, Tomatoes and Eggs, 2004
Digital c-print, 66" x 53.5"
Courtesy of the artist

Momoyo Torimitsu's sculptural installation *Danchizuma-Endless Sunrise* combines the psychological qualities of portraiture with the detachment of architectural models. Sealed under a plastic bubble, the detailed model of a Japanese "bed-town" or suburb on the outskirts of Tokyo features small lights that identify the spot where the portraits of "Danchizuma" (roughly translated as "housewife," but one whose social role is both revered and ignored) were taken that hang on the walls. Photographed from below and also contained in a bubble shape, the subjects are offered a heroine's status, putting up a brave front against the homogenous embrace of a "perfectly" planned community.

Karen Yama's snapshots taken of employees' family pictures and memorabilia in offices seem strangely exposed, perhaps in part because the displays promote and celebrate the uniqueness of their private lives in the "public" context of their workplace. Documenting the presentation of personal effects by office employees that, when photographed appear like still-lifes, Yama's photographs reveal the fine line between revealing details of one's family life while maintaining the "professional" decorum of the workplace. Transforming these everyday settings with planes of color inserted over the background, the photographs lend the office spaces a hermetic quality within which the articles of the employee's personal life stand in stark contrast.

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The UBS Art Gallery
1285 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10019

This exhibition is organized by Momenta Art and sponsored by UBS.

Momenta Art is dedicated to increasing awareness of emerging and
underrepresented artists and fostering dialogue between artists and their
audience through concurrent solo exhibitions and group exhibitions.
The work we exhibit at Momenta strives to bridge aesthetic, social and
conceptual concerns. Momenta Art, a not-for-profit gallery space, is located
at 72 Berry Street, Brooklyn, NY 11211. For more information visit us at
www.momentaart.org.

Peter Scott is an artist, writer and curator who lives and works in Brooklyn,
New York and can be reached at abandps@earthlink.net.

COVER:
Site of UBS Lobby (formerly Paine Webber)
Top: 1961, bottom: 2005