

Justin Schlepp – The Counter-Paralyse
August 24 – September 28, 2013

David Petersen Gallery is pleased to announce a solo exhibition of new work by Justin Schlepp.

Six years ago Justin came across an article about a failed attempt to turn Jean Giraud's graphic work "The Airtight Garage" into a feature length motion picture. The film, scheduled for release in 1995, was purportedly picked up by Kurosawa Enterprises USA after being dropped by the Russian animation studio Soyuzmultfilm as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the loss of government funding. The circumstances surrounding the production's incompletion inferred a work whose economy was so specific that it could resist translation. With an intention of knowing as little about the graphic novel as possible, the artist set out to inhabit the climate of the film's incompletion as general tone for a negative praxis.

The works on view through September describe the climate of the airtight garage. The garage is itself only a climate which is essentially the imagination wary of its excessive valuation, a cortical arena both toxic and tender. They are hinged according to subtle shifts of aspect through shorthand, along contours, or coaxed to saturation.

An example of this can be seen in what may be the smallest drawing in the exhibition, a plan view of Michelangelo's fortifications of Florence made to bloom with the application of Mandelbrotian fractals. It is situated on a table along with a model of the interior of the IBM pavilion designed by Ray and Charles Eames for the 1968 World's Fair. The "people wall" which reduced the spatial investigations of the Constructivist and Neo-concretist movements to a generic "modern" motif was designed to accept simultaneous film projections. Here it is shelled, returned to a spatial object existing somewhere between the imaginary and the concrete.

It is not uncommon for Justin to work under self-imposed conditions for a given period of time. The most persistent example being a ballpoint pen that serves as stand in for all potential materials. Since the pen eliminates the possibility of erasure, a finished drawing (if such a thing exists) is the cumulative result of several attempts over several pages. And since these pages themselves are not necessarily in sequential order but subject to recollection over the course of weeks sometimes months, the images evident a non-linear [woven] time art, fusing non-observational, observational and automatic drawing [conjuring the veristic pictorial syntax of the surrealists as well as postmodern architecture and folk assemblage, i.e. the surrealists in LA]

Like Giraud and Kurosawa who both admired the genre of the western. The economy of this enterprise had yet to be discovered. Since the drawing's success is relative to an object's inability to be realized. Each carves out its own mortgage. Some read like a tradeshow display where the repetition of homologous units are left out, leaving only the important transitions and possessing the passionate yet unnecessary flourishes of diction of a prison intellectual. This blanching of artistic production resulted in a schism between the one who desires and the one who makes. While the drawings became distilled and potent confections, the artist, became subject to more menial and repetitive tasks.

A solitary object rests on the floor of the gallery. Made in close collaboration with a friend and threading artistic production along the hours of the day, it is a gift between personae; intact and radiant.