

Meliksetian MB Briggs

Cody Trepte

Of Time

September 7 - October 26, 2024

Opening Reception:

Saturday, September 7th 5 - 8pm



"Contingency or randomness, gaps and blind spots are immanent features of formal systems, as they attempt to invent axioms and rules."

— Ina Blom

Meliksetian | Briggs is pleased to present *Of Time*, an exhibition of works by Los Angeles-based artist Cody Trepte. *Of Time* is the artist's fourth solo exhibition in the gallery and first in Dallas.

At its core, Trepte's work is concerned with time, and is informed by philosophical debates regarding temporality, ontology, contingency and positivism, ideas often paradoxical and unresolved. These notions are explored in a body of work drawing on a variety of sources from fields including philosophy, physics and astronomy. The contradiction between chance, and time as fixed or predetermined, is central to Trepte's work. As critic Kurt Mueller put it "utilizing the strategies of conceptual art, as well as the history of philosophy and science, Trepte makes prints and drawings and appropriates photographs to represent paradoxes, linguistic or pictorial ambiguities, and other absences, contradictions, and anomalies that defy direct explanation or concrete visual exposition."

Trepte addresses these ideas through a variety of formal means using photography, text, film and painting, often mediated by technology, such as simple computer algorithms and various printing techniques, and the handmade, emphasizing duality and giving form to the contradictory and opposing ideas within the work.

The exhibition is a survey from Trepte's oeuvre from the last 15 years, including brand new works shown for the first time, and emphasizes the consistency of his ideas and themes running through the varied works from this period. The earliest works in the exhibition, *Everything Has Already Begun*, 2009 are series of hand inked text works, the same text in various permutations, suggesting at once stasis and movement.

A number of works featured in the exhibition such as *Always*, 2019 are drawings using bleach as medium adding a durational element to the works. The text, hand drawn by the artist using household bleach, glows against the specially chosen paper, and as time passes, slowly changes as the corrosive material leaves its mark.

Photo-based works in the series *From Both Moments of Another*, 2014 use an algorithmically manipulated found image of a stone ruin, silkscreened over top with ballpoint pen ink, painstakingly drained from literally thousands of Bic ballpoint pens, the color of the work changing from black to bright magenta depending on the viewer's position, the angle of viewing, the light conditions and time of day. For Trepte, this gives form to the unfixed, the variable, and the conditional, manifested in an object which changes with every viewing.

Panel works in the exhibition explore contradictions between random and the fixed positions, in the case of the works *Again And*, 2021 and *Almost Always*, 2021. In other panel pieces, a simple algorithm, *rule 53*, a cellular automata, is utilized and transferred to the surface of the panel, the program creating a diagonal line which, if left unencumbered, would run to infinity, a metaphor

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movement of time through something fixed. These works are multilayered using prints from old toner cartridges as a base, overlaid with silkscreen again using ballpoint pen ink.

Three new mirror works feature images of stars. The largest star in each piece is a specific pulsar, a collapsed star that rotates with a specific frequency. These three pulsars rotate with such precise accuracy and frequency that they function as better clocks than the most precise atomic clocks in use today. Like Trepte's other mirrored pieces, the reflection is an integral part of the piece, each viewing reflects a present moment, a unique "now".

These wall works are complemented by a never before seen video, *Still Kicking*, 2016, an endless loop and a new wall vinyl installation, *Taking A Sight*, 2024, featuring a found image of a man using a sextant, a device used for navigating by way of celestial bodies.

Cody Trepte (b. 1983, Austin, Texas) received his Bachelor of Fine Arts at New York University and his Master of Fine Arts at the California Institute of the Arts / CalArts. Working in hybrid media including drawing, photography and film, Trepte has exhibited both nationally and internationally, including the 2012 edition of Made in L.A. at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Austin Museum of Art, Texas; Weatherspoon Art Museum, North Carolina, Centro di Cultura Contemporanea Strozziina, Florence, Kunstverein INGAN e.V., Berlin, among other exhibitions. He lives and works in Los Angeles. A video conversation with Trepte's friend and mentor Charles Gaines is featured on our website. To view Trepte's notes and writings visit www.codytrepte.com.