

Seth Price

What Decomposes Is Nature

April 28 – June 1, 2016

Galerie Chantal Crousel is pleased to present a selection of works on paper by Seth Price.

Since 2000, the year when he entered the art scene, his vast practice has moved from sculpture to music, writing to video. Seth Price has always made preliminary sketches, collages, collected documents, and filled notebooks – all real support for his creations, like the works made up of ropes or bomber jackets vacuum-formed on canvas where the starting point has frequently been a sketch.

Much like the corpus of his work, his drawings offer a variety of styles and refer to several universes: the media, advertizing, pop culture, satirical drawings, etc. They allow him to experiment and to test various media and techniques (graphite, watercolor, charcoal, enamel paint, ink jet...), all of which will influence his production.

Carpenter dates from 1997 when Seth Price had just arrived in New York City and wanted to be a graphic designer. It was part of a portfolio that he had drawn up specifically to showcase his “talents” - modest according to him - as an illustrator and typographer.

The “Bonne Année” prints were created several years later, in 2003, just after the artist got his first scanner and his first printer. He was focusing on ads that used digitally altered images, scanning them, and making posters. Seth Price explains, “I had the idea for the Bonne Année pieces when I saw an actual holiday greeting card from the French Communist Party, probably from the early 1970s, that used Vermeer’s *Girl With A Pearl Earring* as the background. I couldn’t believe it, it seemed so French: the perfect tastefulness, without reflection, with no hint of irony or aggression, as if the *soixante-buitards* never lost an innate sense of bourgeois decorum.”

Experimenting with the images and the technology that led him to create these posters inspired his *Calendar Paintings* series in which he takes the association of text/image/utility to another level.

The *Calendar Studies* also served as the basis for this series. *The Road Ahead*, for example, is a spin on the title of a book by Bill Gates about the information highway. As Seth Price puts it, the image in the poster “is a famous CGI flex by Lucasfilm’s Graphics Group (now Pixar) showing a stretch of Marin County road where San Fran tech guys like to floss their newest rides and pump funk-step.”

Vacuum Sketches are drawings that the artist uses for his vacuum-formed works, that are produced as follows: he scans his sketch, prints it on a big slab of transparent plastic, then this is vacuum-formed on a knotted rope, painted on the back edge, then mounted on a patterned surface. As Seth Price says, “making a big process out of some quick, crappy, little cartoon.”

Title Screen or *Public Space* belong to a set of pieces that the artist began after the execution of the American journalist Daniel Pearl in 2002. The video of his decapitation was released on the Internet by his murderers, members of Al-Qaeda, and heralded terrorism’s entrance into the digital age. The inscriptions in Arabic come from the video that was briefly available on the net.

These drawings are a fascinating door key to the artist’s multifaceted and sometimes complex work. The question of the image, its source, its circulation, and its manipulation are all central issues in his work, and begins to sprout in his works on paper. They are shards of ideas from different periods, and grouping them offers a glimpse of the multiple connections running through his practice.

Seth Price was born in 1973. He lives and works in New York City.

His solo shows include the Institute of Contemporary Art in London (2008), the Kunsthalle in Zurich (2008), the Museo d’Arte Moderna in Bologna (2009), and more recently *Wrok, Fmaily, Freidns* at 356 South Mission Road, in Los Angeles (2016).

His work has been shown at numerous biennials (Venice, 2011; Gwangju, 2010; Whitney, 2008; Lyon, 2007), and at the documenta in Kassel in 2012. He recently participated in the following group exhibitions: *La Boîte de Pandore*, Musée d’art moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris; *Images*, Fridericiaum, Kassel ; *Painting 2.0: Expression in the Information Age*, Museum Brandhorst, Munich; *Under The Clouds: From Paranoia to the Digital Sublime*, Serralves Museum of Contemporary Art, Porto.

Seth Price is also a writer; his novels *How to Disappear in America* (2008) and *Fuck Seth Price* (2015) were published by Leopard Press.

In 2017, the Brandhorst Museum in Munich and then the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam will host a retrospective of his work.