

CRAIG KALPAKJIAN

Solo exhibition

October 17, 2020 – January 9, 2021

The two-day opening is scheduled for Saturday, October 17th (4-8pm) and Sunday, October 18th (4-8pm).

Craig Kalpakjian's second solo exhibition at Kai Matsumiya expands the artist's most recently realized works engaging technologies of power, social control, and the abstraction of late capitalist systems, while effecting the transformation of space throughout the gallery. Kalpakjian's latest repertoire of work over the last 3 years will be displayed.

The square arguably composes the greatest demarcated articulation of space. Inside the square, established structure is easily understood. This structure, however, as a means of orientation, is voided when warped out of equilibrium, beyond its formal element into a space not properly square. Building on his work from his first solo show at the gallery, *After Josef Albers*, Kalpakjian debuts the **L7** series, comprised of squares in crisis-forms which are "off". While **After Josef Albers** replaced Albers's revolutionary color studies with a palette of varying light temperatures available to users of architectural software, the title "L7" is a reference to 1960s slang for a person or situation considered "square," or conventional and boring. When the squares are all "off", the reflexive desire to correct them may follow. That desire to correct runs at the heart of all such works in the exhibition as they are confronted by forces of control and surveillance.

Three **L7** squares are physically matched in the trussed and wired sculpture resembling a sophisticatedly confused self-surveilling apparatus, **Into the Corner**. Here, multiple cameras look in, out, around, and through motion lighting, video surveillance, monitoring, and feedback loops. The work seems to be attempting to orient itself in the room's enclosing architecture encapsulated by the L7 works, all towards, around, and away from the viewer. ***¹ The theme of entertainment that emerges seemingly dies yet shines again like non-linear history. This calls to mind certain art historical movements-turned-tropes like minimalism and abstraction and is a vital thematic for the artist. A defaced security mirror is transmuted into a partial disco ball with its convexed glitter shedding off as evinced by the work "**Beneath the Register...**". Like a dying tweaked wink from the lost ruins of entertainment, "**Beneath the Register...**". hangs at the top corner in the second room hovering above the entire space.

¹ *** Comprised of 5 security cameras, pointing in all directions, sitting atop a roughly 7' tall, slightly deformed, totemic truss, tangled with wires, just below the cameras a scanning spotlight with a moving mirror points its light towards each corner of the room at the ceiling. A small dashboard ball compass hangs down from the top. At the base a surveillance system monitor shows the live feed from all cameras, which are trained on the corners that the spotlight lights up in sequence. Another camera looks at the monitor screen itself, moving slightly, creating an undulating version of a familiar mise-en-abyme feedback loop reminiscent of early video effects.

In the second room, **Silent Running** returns to the gallery after its introductory presentation in the group show *Reset* throughout January 2019. While the materials of the artwork have not changed (Dual moving head spotlight, DMX controller, houseplant, lighting truss and base, surveillance mirror, counterbalance weight, watering can), the plant itself has grown significantly. Organic and technological systems intertwine as though the plant has been training to match the supremacy of the machinic light that nurtures it. The dual moving head spotlight at this juncture in time is still in motion, but perhaps more sporadically.

Finally, **Goal Less (mini)**, 2020, makes its debut appearance and finalizes the presentation. The configuration is such that the portable solar panel charges a battery power station, which feeds electricity to a connected daylight LED light panel that in turn provides light for the solar panel. Its very existence is tenuous and precarious as it aspires to sustainability, to be without loss, by capturing the energy absorbed from the light and transmitting it efficiently back into the system. Improvements in these elements enable the work to have a degree self-sufficiency, though it does require occasional recharging. Whereas *Silent Running* could perhaps be said to be a battle between its components until an undeterminable resolution is achieved, **Goal Less (mini)** is most certainly a work which literally nourishes itself from its own design and makings.

The gallery will present copies of Craig Kalpakjian's catalog: *Intelligence*, published by Sternberg Press (2018), and the inaugural catalog launch of the artist's current show. The digital version of the exhibition catalogue may be downloaded on the website (kaimatsumiya.com) Both physical catalogues may be purchased and picked up at the gallery.

Craig Kalpakjian has exhibited widely throughout the United States and Europe. Recent exhibits including his work have been: *The Sun Placed in The Abyss* at the Columbus Museum of Art, OH; *Distance of the Moon* at the Akron Art Museum, OH; *Artists' Choice: An Expanded Field of Photography* at Mass MoCA, MA; *The Optical Unconscious* at The Gebert Institute in Basel, Switzerland; *Drone-the Automated Image* in Montreal, ON, Canada; *After Photoshop: Manipulated Photography in the Digital Age* at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY; *Entertainment* at Greene Naftali Gallery, NY; and *The Evryali Score* at David Zwirner Gallery, NY.

His work is included in the collections of The Museum of Modern Art, NY; The Whitney Museum of American Art, NY; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY; The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, CA; the Centre Pompidou, Paris, FR; and has been featured in *Blind Spot Magazine*. He also regularly performs in the band Das Audit.