
undercurrent

70 John Street /Brooklyn, NY 1120
Thursday–Sunday, 1–7 pm

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MATT KENYON /*Wolf at the Door* **04.22–05.22/22**

Opening: April 22, Friday, 6–9 pm
Gallery hours: Thursday–Sunday, 1–7 pm

Undercurrent is pleased to present Matt Kenyon's solo exhibition *Wolf at the Door*. This show is the artist's continuation of SWAMP (Studies of Work Atmospheres and Mass Production) art practice. SWAMP focuses on critical themes addressing the effects of global corporate operations, mass media and communication, military-media-industrial complexes, and general meditations on the liminal area between life and artificial life. Since 1999, SWAMP has been making work in this vein using a wide range of media, including custom software, electronics, mechanical devices, and sometimes working with living organisms.

His style is elegant and subtle with the twists of wonder, surprise, and unexpected paradox. Each of Kenyon's work has built in individual content and visual metaphor / narrative similar to poetry, short story, or film. The idea and content are where the work begins and determines formal solutions for these machines of thoughts. These are exquisite objects, not only created for contemplative meditation, they are commemorative monuments holding the quality required to inspire action to change social structure.

Wolf at the Door consists of six kinetic, or mentally shifting objects / structures / constructs addressing specific global issues of climate change, housing crisis, mass shootings, health and mental health. They complement each other, by creating cohesion of vastly different subjects with an overarching sense of tension, trauma, and premonition of things to come. *Wolf at the Door* asks what euphemisms like a debt waterfall, an untapped resource, or a key investment would look like if they reflected the human stories they have unleashed.

Below are descriptions of individual pieces provided by the artist:

CLOUD /2020 /Cart, helium, foam, custom electronics

Cloud demonstrates the cyclic nature of real estate speculation that prospers even in the water of the 2008 housing crash. The cloud houses, and the aspirations they represent, rise to form a subdivision on the ceiling of the gallery. Over time the foam breaks down and the houses eventually collapse. House clouds are released based on housing value trends from the area to return these complex systems back to a human scale. Cloud can also be wheeled into a neighborhood as a form of community protest or an SOS signal.

TIDE /2022 /Champagne glass pyramid, casts of houses, custom electronics

By contrasting the opulent image of a champagne glass pyramid with the crisis of climate change and rising flood risk, Tide creates a visual metaphor for the fragility hidden within the current housing market. This crisis is already part of the lexicon—when someone owes more than the house is worth, people say the mortgage is "underwater". Over the course of the show, the slow drip will gradually fill the pyramid flooding the interconnected glasses and making the houses invisible. Through the fluctuating visibility of these houses, Tide calls attention to the way climate change continues to create uncertainty in neighborhoods, long after the news cycle has moved on from each individual extreme weather event.

ALTERNATIVE RULE /2020 /Micro-printed alternate-rule paper

Though it might look like the paper you use to learn penmanship, in Alternative Rule, the lines on the paper are made up of micro-printed names and dates of children who have been victims of gun violence since the Columbine High School shooting. People of all ages are invited to take a sheet of paper and write a letter to members of the government to advocate for gun control in America. Alternative Rule is a memorial and a protest tool created for the activists of the next generation, many of whom are already organizing in their own schools on the national level.

LOCKSET /2020 /Custom cut keys

When houses change hands, so do keys. In Lockset, the keys are also portraits of housing activists, people who have been evicted and have gone public to protest, and homeowners in neighborhoods with high rates of foreclosure. These keys allow a portrait of the previous owner to covertly remain inside the lock of their home, even if the property has changed hands. These portraits also allow locks to be rekeyed to match the key portrait, acknowledging the ownership history of a house.

SUPERMAJOR /2013 /Vintage oil cans, custom electronics

A rock of vintage oil cans sits innocuously on the gallery floor. A punctured can, located somewhere mid-stack, has sprung a leak. The oil flows out in a steady trickle, cascading onto the pedestal below; a golden-brown pool forms at its base. Upon closer inspection, however, the oil is not originating from the can. Instead, its stream is reversed. Drop-by-drop the oil flows upwards, defying gravity. At times, droplets even appear to hover in mid-air. Returning to its source, the upward ascent of oil continues uninterrupted as if neither the can's reserves nor the puddle can either be depleted.

TAP /2016 /Reclaimed kitchen sink, audio interviews, custom electronics

The water is on fire. The image of a contemporary kitchen sink spouting forth has become synonymous with fracking. Across America, residents have experienced a slew of chronic health problems that can be traced back to contamination of their air, water wells, or surface water resulting from nearby oil and gas fracking. In Tap, the flame itself functions as a plasma speaker—voicing a shifting collection of media coverage and individual stories from people whose lives have been affected by fracking. The flow of the frame and personal narratives seeks to fuse the complexities of iconic imagery, exploitation, and domestic space.



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