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with an exhibition poster by CTMS (Christopher Tröster & Max Schropp)

## II. IT RAINS, IT SNOWS, IT PAINTS

*Translated by Suzanne Ruta*

Back there in the distance, within the realm of stupidity, the battle still rages, and it takes all the desperate efforts of the merchant class (critics, galleries, museums, organizers, *avant-garde* magazines, artists, collectors, art historians, art lovers) to keep reports of the combat on the front pages of today's paper. Panic strikes the art establishment as its members begin to realize that the very foundation on which their power is established—art itself—is about to disappear. Faithful to their arch-conservative or arch-*avant-garde* positions, they continue to champion art vs. anti-art, form vs. anti-form, creating today's news so as to have something to talk about, to analyze, to sell tomorrow. Black and/or white, hot and/or cold, pop and/or op, pro and/or con, object art and/or conceptual art, subjective and/or objective, maximum and/or minimum, are their stock in trade, their way of thinking, their way of dividing to conquer. But their conquests now are at an end, for the question of art, which is the only question, cannot be contained within their confusing and archaic frame of reference, their primitive dualism of pros and cons.

"A work of which nothing can be said, except that it is;" there's the crux of the issue, the nucleus, the central tension around which all activity falls into place. Painting will henceforth be the pure visuality of painting; it will create a means, a specific system not to direct the viewer's eye, but simply to exist before the eye of the viewer.

The impersonal or anonymous nature of the work/product causes us to be confronted with a fact (or idea) in its raw form; we can only observe it without a reference to any metaphysical scheme, just as we observe that it is raining or snowing. Thus we can now say, for the first time, that "it is painting," as we say, "it is raining." When it snows we are in the presence of a natural phenomenon, so when "it paints" we are in the presence of an historical fact.

## Artist Biographies

**Merlin Carpenter** (b. 1967 in Pembury, UK) lives and works in London and Berlin. Since the early 90's his work has been the subject of international solo exhibitions, recently at Kunstraum Schwaz; Guzzler, Victoria; dépendance, Brussels and Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York. His work has been included in institutional exhibitions at Kölnischer Kunstverein; Kunsthalle Bern; Fondazione Prade, Venice; Centre Pompidou, Paris; mumok, Vienna; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York and Museum Brandhorst, Munich.

**Edie Duffy** (b. in 2001 in Perth, Australia) lives and works in Melbourne. She holds a BFA from RMIT University, Melbourne and an Honours accreditation from Monash University, Melbourne. Recent exhibitions include Asbestos, Melbourne and Branching Universe, Melbourne. Duffy is a recipient of the Wayne Conduit Memorial Award.

**Catherine Mulligan** (b. 1987 in Nutley, USA) is a painter based in New York. She gained her BFA from University of Pennsylvania and her MFA from Indiana University Bloomington. Her work has been exhibited at Tara Downs, New York (2023); Queer Thoughts, New York (2022); Downs & Ross, New York (2022); M+B Gallery, Los Angeles (2021) and Bonner Kunstverein (2021). Mulligan is the recipient of two Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation grants.

**Laura Langer** (b. 1986 in Buenos Aires, Argentina) lives and works in Berlin. She studied Cinematography at Universidad del Cine in Buenos Aires and Fine Arts at Städelschule, Frankfurt am Main. Recent solo exhibitions include "Execution" at Lodos, Mexico City (2023); "Lateral" at Braunsfelder, Cologne (2023); "Headlines" at Kunsthaus Glarus (2022); "Homesick" at The Wig, Berlin and Weiss Falk, Basel (2021) and "Liberty" at Portikus, Frankfurt am Main (2020).

**Simon Mielke** (b. 1990 in Essen, Germany) lives and works in Cologne and Düsseldorf. He studied at Folkwang Universität der Künste, Essen and at Kunstakademie Düsseldorf with Dietmar Lutz and Trisha Donnelly and graduated in 2022. Recent exhibitions include Lucas Hirsch, Düsseldorf (2024, 2022); Kunstverein für die Rheinlande und Westfalen, Düsseldorf (2023); Basis, Frankfurt (2023); Catherine Zeta, Cologne (2022); Kunstverein Siegen (2022); Löwengasse, Cologne (2022) and Kunstverein Harburger Bahnhof (2020).

**Max Sandfort** (b. 1999 in Cologne, Germany) lives and works in Düsseldorf. He studies Fine Arts at Kunstakademie Düsseldorf with Tomma Abts and Trisha Donnelly.

**Ben Schumacher** (b. 1985 in Kitchener, Canada) lives and works in Berlin. He is a member of *fpbjpc* and co-founder of *Benny boys fuck palace*, *p-she* and *editions cox*. Selected solo exhibitions include "Anatomie des Fachfests" at Weiss Falk, Basel (2019); "The China Chalet Group" at Bortolami, New York (2018) and "Käsesakramentsystem" at Kunstverein Braunschweig (2017).

**Reena Spaulings** is an anonymous group of artists speaking to ideas of collectivity, anonymity, and artistic categorization through literature and artistic production. Their work has been featured in solo exhibitions at Museum Ludwig, Cologne (2017), St. Louis Contemporary Art Museum (2008) and Kunsthalle Zürich (2007).