

“Schizo-Culture: Cracks In The Street”

SPACE

129-131 Mare Street

October 3, 2014–December 7, 2014

This exhibition is a major presentation of research into “Schizo-Culture: On Prisons and Madness,” the 1975 Columbia University conference where the Semiotext(e) publishing collective introduced radical French philosophy to a North American audience. The 1978 book *Schizo-Culture* was revised and republished earlier this year and edited by the group’s de facto leader Sylvère Lotringer and London-based writer David Morris. Extending that catalogue’s examination of the conference’s potent legacy, this display, cocurated by Morris, Paul Pieroni, and the artist Katherine Waugh, brings together extensive audio recordings and documentation along with works from the conference’s original participants, including some of William Burroughs’s ’80s “Shot Sherriff” paintings, posters from *Plastique Fantastique*—such as *thr s nt & nvr hs bn nythng t ndrstd*, 2013—and Vivienne Dick’s video *She Had Her Gun All Ready*, 1978.



View of “Schizo-Culture: Cracks In The Street,” 2014.

Most striking is an untitled, black-and-white collage made this year by Semiotext(e) cohort Hedi El Kholti, whose source material was the 1978 published tome of *Schizo-Culture*. From a distance it looks like a large-scale, hazy scrawl of jumbled words and overlaid images displayed like a wall of graffiti. But up close, it turns into a makeshift reading room—recognizable are excerpts from a variety of magazines, postcards, and poems. The arrangement overall is similar to the publishers’ installation in the last Whitney Biennial—which was criticized as merely an archive of past publications and ephemera, but that criticism is unwarranted here. Instead, this exhibition visually demonstrates the group’s lively philosophies addressing the creative potential associated with schizophrenia. El Kholti’s piece exemplifies this in its attempt to break down formal hierarchies, also evident in social structures, in favor of fragmented and therefore original methods.

— Ajay Hothi