

The Real Thing

Cory Arcangel
John Baldessari
David Barbarino
Daniel Baumann
Pierre Bismuth
Claude Closky
Aleksandra Domanović
Claire Fontaine
Diana Franssen
Marita Fraser
Gelitin
Wojciech Kosma
Mathieu Laurette
Miltos Manetas
Katerina Matsoukis
Momus
Hanne Mugaas
Marisa Olson
Falke Pisano
Seth Price
Rafaël Rozendaal
Georg Schnitzer
Dexter Sinister
Peter Umgeher
Lawrence Weiner

Curated by Vvork

We run a website presenting art called Vvork.

On average three or four artworks are published daily. The continuity of this practice (started in April 2006) led to an invitation to curate an exhibition for MU.

There surely is a difference in selecting works for MU compared to our daily internet activity but we define both as curatorial practices. This needs to be emphasised as we consider the work shown online as an authentic experience, not documentation. Redefining documentation as an alternative reality opens up space for equally authentic variations. According to Jean Baudrillard "the work of art is not threatened by its double". Bootlegs and interpretations should consequently accelerate the circulation of ideas.

Some of our favourite works have only been described to us, unsurprisingly as the majority of our art experiences have been mediated in one form or other. The majority of works presented in this show have been selected through written commentaries, verbal descriptions and jpegs found online. In fact most of the works presented at MU are the type of manifestations mentioned above: stories, descriptions, translations and interpretations, all understood as primary experiences.

The title is lifted from a short story by Henry James portraying a painter struggling with the dichotomy of appearance and reality:

"Combined with this was another perversity – an innate preference for the represented subject over the real one: the defect of the real one was so apt to be a lack of representation. I like things that appeared; then one was sure. Whether they were or not was a subordinate and almost always a profitless question."

Henry James, *The Real Thing*, 1892

If art and aesthetics are primarily perception as Paul Virilio claims, defining the authenticity of an experience should be left to the recipient, not the creator.

Vvork, 2009



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