

albertini 2014 the kite

About THINKING as the art of desire, and ART as the desire of THINKING FRESH 2014, 2015, 2016...

RED FOR CHRISTMAS : JEFFREY VALLANCE

At Edward Cella Art & Architecture, Los Angeles — NOW MORE THAN EVER

SCRATCHY NOTES OF A DREAMER

by Rosanna Albertini

So what does good art do in 2016 that is different from the time of the Renaissance. Satan took his revenge then more than now, killing the artists, and everybody else, at a very young age. If you take it cum grano salis, simply following your good sense, you might say 'a lot,' and yet there is no change in the dreamlike essence of art. Think of Piero della Francesca painted eyes looking into eternity, almost extracting their bodies from earthly, painful struggles for survival. Good artists know perfectly that names and images and facts are masks of inner uncertainties, like stickers we peel from the refrigerator. We still don't remember what's inside.

The point is our presence in the landscape: and Jeffrey Vallance is the wizard artist showing our uncomfortable loss of power once our ordinary self confidence goes to hell. Satan's most subtle intrusion. What happens then? There is no more separation between our animal self and the tentacular temptations of a rationalized landscape reducing to dead meat our hopes and desires. VONS, RALPH'S, IKEA, RITE AID, OFFICE DEPOT, HOME DEPOT, GOOGLE, you mention others, solve any problem, answer all the questions. Our red blood is spilled into money. The more tentacles expand, the more our brain is emptied, like an impersonal bag filled with surprising and repetitive acts of obedience. Economy is so 'reasonable.' Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel shivers in his grave. He knows he was the first to tell - and write- that real things are reasonable. He didn't expect poets and visual artists were going to be his future fellows, even those who never read his name. It all depends on what one means by 'real things.'

"Before I put an image on paper, I make the scratchy markings as a ground.

To make these scribbly backgrounds for the drawings, first I must get myself into some kind of altered state, in which I find myself surprisingly ambidextrous. With eyes closed, both of my hands rapidly jerk across the paper, but unexpectedly my feet want to move with the same motion. The gyrations get so intense that it feels like my body is about to have a seizure. Although the process is quite exhausting, I enter into a rapture-like state bordering on uncontrollable laughter. Granted, the lines are just scribbles; however I can't draw them the same way in normal consciousness."

(From RUDIS TRACTUS – Rough Drawings, Edward Cella catalogue, 2016)



JEFFREY VALLANCE, *Satan Hates Good Art* 2001
Pencil and pen on paper 22 1/2 x 30 inches Courtesy of Beth Rudin De Woody and Edward Cella Art & Architecture, Los Angeles



JEFFREY VALLANCE, *The Octopus of Life*, 2016
Mixed media on paper with commercial labels, stickers, and printed paper collage 23 x 29 in. Courtesy of the artist and Edward Cella Art & Architecture, Los Angeles. Photo: Gene Ogami



JEFFREY VALLANCE, *Chicken* (Gallus gallus domesticus), 2016
Mixed media on paper with printed paper collage, 22 1/4 x 30 in. Courtesy of the artist and Edward Cella Art & Architecture, Los Angeles. Photo: Gene Ogami

Images placed into such a rapturous and agitated field of signs springing from the artist's uncontrolled hands can't resist the frenzy dance of his spirit: whatever they represent, in their "animal realm of the spirit," (Hegel again) a bat or a squirrel, a cat or a chicken (the eternal Blinky sacrificed to the supermarket devaluation of her single, unique living adventure), they look electrified. Estranged from the artificial mess of ordinary life on earth, terrified because they feel their skin cracking and bleeding, their fur becoming spare, drops of blood replacing their tears, filling their lips, their nose. As if exposed for what they are underneath the skin as the anatomic medical drawings of our obsessed Florentine memory. But the real one who is exposed is the artist: Jeffrey Vallance's mental state of discomfort. His own skin is hung in every drawing. They are not the Cappella Sistina, where Michelangelo painted the laid skin of his body in a corner of the ceiling. They portray our own reality, from where dreams and values fly away like rockets beyond the horizon. "Leaving for dead in the Exterior World anything in it that is real." Fernando Pessoa, the master of disquietude.

"The dreamer is not superior to the active man because dreams are superior to reality. The superiority of the dreamer derives from the fact that dreaming is more practical than living, and that the dreamer extracts from life a grander, more varied pleasure than that of the man of action. ...

Since life is essentially a mental state [I can see Hegel's large smile] and everything we do or think is valid for us to the degree we think it's valid, its validity depends entirely on us.

The dreamer is one who sends notes, and the notes he sends course through the city of his spirit in the same way notes do in reality.

What does it matter to me that the paper money of my soul can never be converted into gold, when there is never gold in the factious alchemy of life?"

Fernando Pessoa, *The Book of Disquiet*, Translated by Alfred Mac Adam, Exact Change, Boston, 1998

Thank you Jeffrey, your dreams are my gold.



JEFFREY VALLANCE, *D.C. Hypodermic*, 2016
Mixed media on paper with sticker, and printed paper collage 22 x 29 3/4 in. Courtesy of the artist and Edward Cella Art & Architecture, Los Angeles. Photo: Gene Ogami



JEFFREY VALLANCE, *Scared Fruit Bat (Pteropus tongamus)*, 2016
Mixed media on paper with commercial labels and printed paper collage 22 x 29 3/4 in. Courtesy of the artist and Edward Cella Art & Architecture, Los Angeles. Photo: Gene Ogami



JEFFREY VALLANCE, *Squirrelly Squirrel (Sciurus griseus)*, 2016
Mixed media on paper with printed paper collage 23 x 29 in. Courtesy of the artist and Edward Cella Art & Architecture, Los Angeles. Photo: Gene Ogami



JEFFREY VALLANCE, *Kittens in a Basket*, 2016
Mixed media on paper with printed paper collage, 22 1/4 x 30 in. Courtesy of the artist and Edward Cella Art & Architecture, Los Angeles. Photo: Gene Ogami