

Mousse Magazine

EXHIBITIONS

“No Thing: Pope.L, Adam Pendleton” at Galerie Eva Presenhuber, Zurich

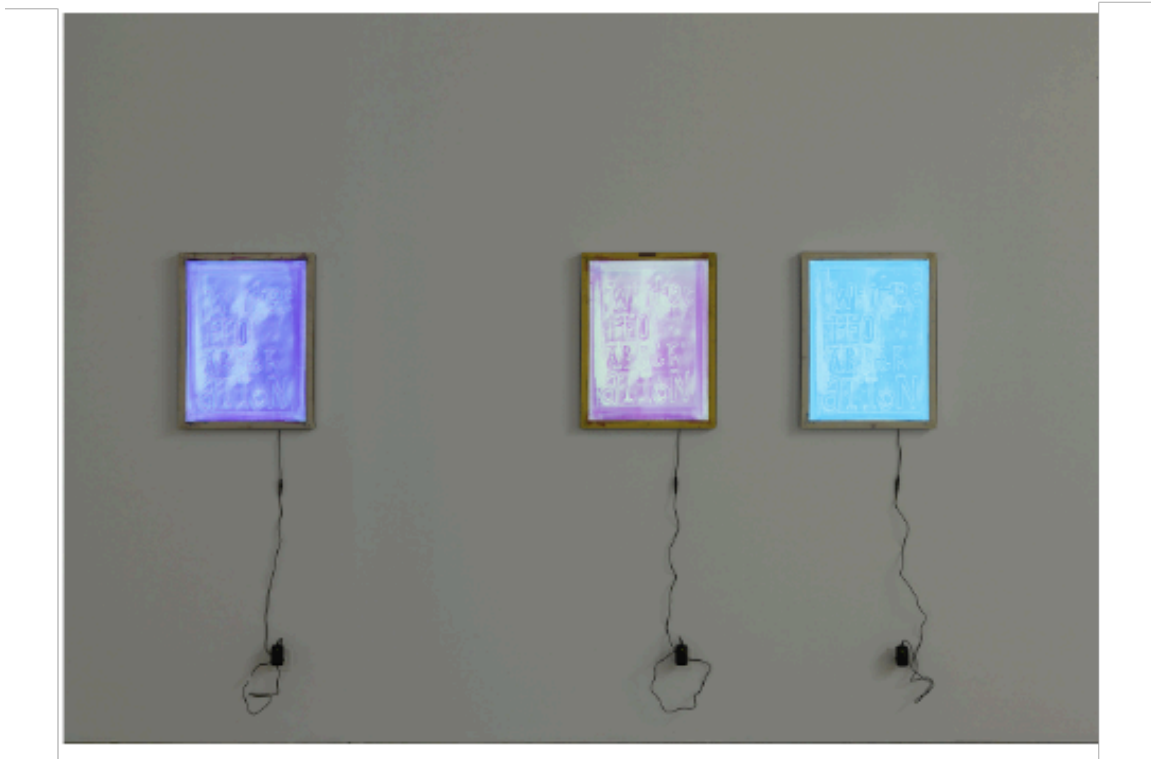
Since the 1970s, Pope.L (b. 1955 in Newark, New Jersey) has created a multidisciplinary oeuvre, including performance, installation, painting, drawing, sculpture, objects, and writing. Pope.L creates scenarios and poetics in order to address issues of category and identicalness usually parlayed via his interest in language, nation, gender, race, and class. In his “crawls,” one of his best-known performance sets, Pope.L literally crawls – alone or with other participants – through the hallways of buildings and city streets. In doing so, he draws attention to marginalized positions in society, and to the contradictions and double-binds through which we perceive ourselves and others. His performances often involve local citizens and thus build temporary communities who share the experience and struggle. Similar to his performances, Pope.L’s pictorial and sculptural works focus on bringing together disparate materials and symbols that create a poetics of the puzzle. Pope.L constructs works that intersect artistic practice and social meaning, such as the ambiguity of color in his Skin Set Drawings. In his sculptures, he often uses materials connected to manual labor or builds motorized objects. This is a reference to 1920s Constructivism and Fluxus. Some of Pope.L’s works and statements are straightforward while others are exceedingly absurd and enigmatic. However, the works always have a tone that sticks and irks the consumer. All the pieces in Pope.L’s contribution to No Thing were made in 2018.

Adam Pendleton’s (b. 1984 in Richmond, Virginia) practice includes painting, silkscreen, publishing, collage, and video. He moves seamlessly between genres, creating works that provoke reflection on language, history, politics, and subjectivity. Pendleton appropriates language as well as images, drawing from different contexts and periods in a multiperspectival approach. Cut out and isolated from any original background, reconfigured into layers, grids, and single letters, visual and verbal material becomes experienceable in its abstract corporeality. The works critically juxtapose sources of diverse origin and varying legibility, often obscuring and problematizing their identities by subjecting them

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to multiple rounds of processing, overwriting, and montage. In his recent series of works on Mylar, Pendleton frequently incorporates images of traditional African masks; *Untitled (masks)* (2018), a new 20-part work, iterates on a single found photograph of a Dan mask, which Pendleton has photocopied, enlarged, and layered with zig-zags, hatching, and brush strokes. Techniques of marking and masking, together with the clear Mylar film that serves as a substrate, work to compose a complex play of transparency and opacity, disclosure and concealment.

Tillmann Severin



“No Thing: Pope.L, Adam Pendleton” installation view at Galerie Eva Presenhuber, Zurich, 2019
Courtesy the artist and Galerie Eva Presenhuber, Zurich / New York. Photo: Stefan Altenburger
Photography, Zurich. © Pope.L



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Pope.L, *Swiss Are People Lonly*, 2018

Courtesy the artist. Photo: Stefan Altenburger Photography, Zurich. © Pope.L