

# TALMAN + MONROE

## SUBPOENA

JUNE 27 – JULY 26, 2008

MELISSA DUBBIN & AARON S. DAVIDSON  
ZACHARY FABRI  
LYNN PALEWICZ  
DAWIT L. PETROS  
JUSTINE REYES  
DONNA STACK  
TOOTH & COMB SOCIAL CLUB

**sub-poe-na** [sub-pee-na] *n.* a command to appear at a certain time and place to give testimony

1. *a subpoena ad testificandum brings people to testify before it*
2. *a subpoena duces tecum has evidence (documents, tape recordings, photos, guns, etc.) brought to it*

SUBPOENA is an experiment in authoring new histories through the union of performance-based work and new media technologies. Personal testimonies, hypothesized interactions and role-play are captured as data and transported through time and space to the public stage of the gallery. The nine artists in this show approach performance-driven work uniquely yet share a communal abstraction of linear time and causality. Engagement is further complicated by the fact that the technologies that enable viewers to witness the performances as art-objects are constantly erasing the necessity of their presence at the actual performed event. In SUBPOENA, gestures are presented as evidence and notions of authenticity, agency and authorship are highlighted by media that is simultaneously challenged and empowered.

SUBPOENA is an independent curatorial project for Nico Wheadon, Assistant Curator at Rush Arts Gallery and Resource Center. Wheadon is a New-York-based curator, artist and writer primarily interested in the intersections of creative writing, performance and new media. She is a graduate of Brown University's Art-Semiotics department and the Film and Television School of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague. Prior to her current post as Assistant Curator, Wheadon worked as Curatorial Assistant at the Studio Museum in Harlem and Teaching Assistant to professor and video-artist Tony Cokes in the Brown University Modern Culture and Media department.

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MELISSA DUBBIN & AARON S. DAVIDSON'S *Surrender Dorothy Or Die*, 2008 revisits early special effects in filmmaking—such as smokescreens and weather effects—by emulating the message the Wicked Witch of the East sky-writes to Dorothy while flying on her broom in *The Wizard of Oz* (1939). As artists intrigued by hierarchies in filmic expression, Dubbin and Davidson re-perform the witches sky-writing utilizing new technologies to rewrite the scriptwriter's unrealized original statement—"Surrender Dorothy Or Die" as opposed to "Surrender Dorothy"—back into the film text.

ZACHARY FABRI employs surveillance equipment as a means to document staged interventions in public spaces and writes new meaning into the appropriated, taped-evidence. This paired monitor installation combines with a live, movement-based performance element to further disrupt the panopticonic structure of viewership and indexed systems of comprehension. Fabri expounds on the histories of the spaces he navigates in and challenges rigidity with his surrealist and absurdist body movements.

LYNN PALEWICZ redefines self-portraiture to operate on dual temporal and spatial planes and presents hypothesized interactions between herself and a rendered version of herself as a five-year old child. Effectively, Palewicz's photographs collapse linear time and the documented role-play captures a dynamic performance of self-exploration, liberation, and the ability to

rewrite personal history. Only small traces of posturing remain as the artist's limbs are often severed by the framing, imbuing the fictional body with its own distinct agency.

DAWIT L. PETROS' multimedia installation brings together both classic forms of documentation—drawing and mapping—and newer information technologies to document proposed spatial interventions and performative gestures. Distance is conflated as it is the artist's inability to perform the two attempted public installations that is documented and access to computer technologies such as Google Earth images of the sites from space allow him to revisit the proposed site and draw his original intent onto time and space.

JUSTINE REYES stages her mother in foreign spaces costumed to have the look and feel of domestic comfort. The role her mother enacts trying to pose "naturally" in hotel rooms around the world is captured photographically and familiar objects begin to take on absurd meaning as the awkward physical engagement with these objects highlights an inability to perform traditional roles under the pressures of a new space.

DONNA STACK'S video works evidence personal testimonies about her own dealings with issues of self and identity and investigate the ways this self-exploration operates within external forces and structures of control. Stack's work is quiet in its visual assertions as movements are repeated in an almost meditative fashion, however, the slow build of frustration, pain and angst can be felt and shared as a collective response.

TOOTH & COMB SOCIAL CLUB (Heather Hart & Judith Hoffman) takes an interactive approach to documenting hypothesized role-play and what the artists term "authentic engagement". Participants are photographed and the mailed-in portrait is transcribed into psychic face readings—and then drawings—by the two performers according to the history of physiognomy. The distancing of the subject and disembodiment from the actual moment of the face reading highlights notions of self-presentation and the perception of visual identity.

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**MELISSA DUBBIN & AARON S. DAVIDSON**

[www.dubbin-davidson.com](http://www.dubbin-davidson.com)

**ZACHARY FABRI**

<http://zacharyfabri.com/>

**JUSTINE REYES**

<http://www.creativethriftshop.com/Artist%20Warehouse/Justine%20Reyes.htm>

**DONNA STACK**

<http://www.donnasuestack.com/handsewn.htm>

**TOOTH & COMB SOCIAL CLUB**

(Heather Hart & Judith Hoffman)

<http://www.heather-hart.com>

<http://judithhoffman.com/home.html>

<http://www.toothandcombsocialclub.com>

**TALMAN + MONROE GALLERY**

<http://www.tplusmgallery.com>

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