January 6 - February 5, 2000

Apex Art Curatorial Program
29 Church Street
New York, NY 10013

Talks @ Apex
January 12: Richard骁arth on "Stelarc Localized"
January 18: Craig Doubis on "From the Wing"
January 26: Kenneth Goldsmith and guests

double space
curated by l.s.bessa

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I. A. Angel's letter,
Devon Dickson
Kenneth Goldsmith
Jorge Pardo
Lars Rønning
Alain Robbe-Grillet
Fred Sandback
Caroline Scheufman
Byrd and Der Stuckker

Many thanks to Isabelle Merly, Harout Bezdjian and Seth Mcbride

reproduction of cover photo from "Jealousy" by Alain Robbe-Grillet © Grove-Atlantic Press
departing from bessonay’s claim that writing is architecture not interior decoration, and as the very trying to prove him wrong as to the second part of that statement—think of the case of rohe-grillet’s jealousy whose architecture seems disarmingly plat-simplé form for multiple purposes (paragraphs made of sentences that repeat on and on, blocks of text arranged in different combinations); the same can be said of the architecture in jealousy: square spaces for multiple purposes (a colonial construction formed by rows of regular shapes, rectangles combined in different patterns), in its original; [italics] the title is already doubled as it refers both to jealousy and to venetian blinds. the narrator inhabits these spaces like a ghost, for he is equivalent to the hypotenuse of a triangle whose existence we only suspect and which is never confirmed. (the two other forms are the base and the height). the space of the window is defined, whereas the narrator’s existence is only suggested, but not really: he is not to be seen as bound by angles, and the narrator, a diagonal to these angles, is still to be deduced from the given measurements. this narrator, such a fascinating concept, is in a way a stand-in for both the writer and the reader, facing a situation that unifies (independently of his will, like an edgar allan poe character; he seems to have been walled up alive, caught between the interstices of this space, what he sees and can’t prevent from happening is often happening in another room, which he can only glimpse through the blinds of a window. like this narrator, the reader is also walled in between the pages of the book—what one reads and can’t prevent from happening is happening in another space, which one can only glimpse between the lines, the window’s blinds parallel the lines of text on the book’s page; one reads (through the blinds/lenses) the narrator’s account of his reading through the blinds, it is as though rohe-grillet acknowledges the circular nature of reading (this circularity one only presumes, for it is only experienced as a segment of an arc) the reader is reading the narrator reading a situation, etc.), and how strange this book’s wordplay: sun-blinds and blindness, jealousy and jealousy, and what’s more, everything around seems to exist solely to end up in this book: the sun up and down in its repetitive movements, casting geometrical shadows around the house, and even the banana plantation expands further the organizing principle of the text; if only chance were not well organized, there will be, however, an element to mess up this geometry: the rectagles smashed on the wall by frankl, in a scene exhaustively analyzed from several perspectives, is a stain at the center of rohe-grillet’s rigid design (its interior decoration) and compromises the cleanliness of the overall plan, the stain is the mania in one’s realm of vision, a cancer on the vineyard, the area that becomes most visible: it indicates that between one’s perception and the object being observed there is a screen, the stain points to the artificial nature of the spectacle, bringing one’s attention back to the surface of the page: the bretonian ver- fremdungseffekt. the stain upsets (interrupts the course of reading) and at the same time provides an opportunity to release stress (by making one aware of the materiality of the page); the page is our most drastic invention, a small window into which one’s body is drawn and compelled to react. (one’s body is indeed a window, and one’s actions nothing but an attempt to keep it from contact with the world, a window within a window). the retina is only one type of blind that filters the light (the brightness of the blank page), the economy of the white, is perhaps harsh for one to endure, and without these lines one would plunge into the void). in ‘rhétorique métaphysique’ bruce nauman addresses the problem of the page-as-screen with such bluntness as to lead one to wonder what is so infuriating about it. in nauman’s artwork the text reads backwards, conveying aptly the idea that the reader is caught in an in-between space, walled up, arrested by language, works such as nauman’s and rohe-grillet’s are unsettling because they make evident this effect: in art that we take for natural and translate as an emotion, in these works simplicity is deceiving and fiction is built up upon this deceit. after all, what the eyes apprehended on the page is not a series of signs repeated in different combinations, hence a new theory is made necessary—one that would account for the mediation between these doubled spaces, a sort of string theory of writing; it would go something like this: on this page, picture a grid over which these words (letters, basically) aggregate, each letter (a string curvilinearly according to its own nature. thus this theory of space/time would comprehend not only three dimensions, or seven as is now proposed, but twenty-six: each string, a letter, driving the eye’s attention in a different direction, and the endless combinations of these strings producing an infinity of things (words). the mind moves across the fabric of the text as if following a thread, a line, a sentence, from left to right, from top to bottom, bridging gaps between the letters, between the words, be-