

Press release:

Public Key

Curated by:

Angeline Scherf

May 15-June 15, 2002

Opening reception: Wednesday, May 15, 6-8 pm

Philippe Blanc
Dr. Brady
Cercle Ramo Nash
Florian Faelbel
Richard Kongrosian
Alexandre Lenoir
Martin Tupper
David Vincent

Public Key, an encrypted art in a transparent society

Cryptography has become one of the major stakes of our networked societies. Today, two conceptions of freedom compete with each other over its control. One is hegemony, the freedom to do business everywhere in the world, without moral or ecological consideration, and beyond democratic monitoring. The other freedom belongs to the citizen; it is the freedom to think, despite the systematic misinformation. The first stands firm in front of all forms of manipulation and pretends to represent the common good in order to impose its universal claims. It seeks through all means to limit the citizen's use of cryptography. The second defends the right to difference, and does not attempt to create a media consensus. Its force lies in its contradictions. Cryptography has become a condition of survival and it proclaims the right to confidentiality in communication for each citizen.



Richard Kongrosian *Spy Turtle*, 2002
Modified car roof box

This confrontation is as essential in the art world as it is elsewhere. Artistic institutions could be dominated by the international market system. Design and publicity are everywhere on the brink of integrating and emptying out the last non-spectacular zones of experimentation. If, in the micro-milieu of art, cryptography does not rely on digital means, or on sophisticated algorithms, it is nonetheless the final recourse imagined by the artists in this exhibition. Here, it is a question of encouraging a breaking away from spaces of institutional, market, and media visibility, before strategically and wilfully vanishing, or before involuntarily disappearing through exhaustion. An ambiguous invitation in the framework of an exhibition, and a paradoxical one in a press release, but today, perhaps only artists are capable of openly inventing new, free and undetectable behaviors, of recognizing each other without distinctive signs, and of forging, throughout the planet, an alternative community, which does not require the media in order to establish its legitimacy or its power to act.

A color brochure containing an essay by Angeline Scherf will be available free of charge. Please contact apexart for further information.

Hours are Tuesday to Saturday, 11-6.

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