Bass, Math, “Take the fire and leave the rest,” ==, published by MFC – Michèle Didier, Brussels, Belgium


== is a work by New York based artist Matt and features newly commissioned essays, interviews between artists and editioned works. It consists of a book containing 108 pages and measuring 29,3 x 22,8 cm.

This edition contains also five multiples by:
- Liz Deschenes
- Nikolas Gambaroff
- James Richards
- Kay Rosen
- Erika Vogt

The ten critical texts regarding the five artists are from:
- Sarah Charlesworth and Carter Mull for Liz Deschenes
- Chris Kraus and Nora Schultz for Nikolas Gambaroff
- Ed Atkins and Steve Reinke for James Richards
- Alejandro Cesarco and Cary Leibowitz for Kay Rosen
- Math Bass and John Miller for Erika Vogt

The interviews are from:
- Ajay Kurian & Sreshta Rit Premnath
- Caleb Considine & Caitlin MacBride
- Josh Tonsfeldt & Uri Aran
- Alex Kwartler & Michele Abeles
- Paul Lee & Jacob Robichaux
The experience of looking absorbs the body all at once; the way the feet are planted, where the eyes are directed. Being in a perceptual body becomes absorbed in the act of looking. I find myself disappearing into the screen, stepping into images of shimmering crude symbols that dance across a nondescript space.

The substance of film is physical, reeling, momentous. Open and exposed, flashing and heaving. As it propels itself into being, it is exhausted onto a surface, a heavy immobile wall, some thin and flimsy screen, some willing body.

Using film and video Erika Vogt re-photographs projected images on a wall—a process which activates these mediums. Film turns into video and video turns into film. Her reappropriation of found and self-generated images builds upon layers of materiality, producing an eerily physical presence to an otherwise banal and predictable surface.

In one space, there exists the materiality of film, the ephemeral sequencing of video, the weight of the body as it exists in time, impermanent, and at junctures, invisible.

Vogt touches this body, moves it over, lands it into action, directing and disturbing its stationary position.

I read the projection as an object that is being looked over, an object that is being seduced into space, turned upside down and touched by another recording device. It floats and changes size as it is being impressed by another camera. Through this exchange I feel my body becoming absorbed in an alternating ritual of stasis and movement.

Images jump to the distant sound of metal; jingling, falling coins are raining down from the ether. Through a thin, almost imperceptible slit, a fracture in the diegesis, two pairs of hands exchange objects.

A large piece of dredged up concrete from a rusty hoe.
A scale.
A triangular ruler.
A thin slat of wood.

Inside and outside become conflated and confused with one surface. As it is becoming, it is being destroyed.

There is no direct orientation, no center of gravity, and there doesn’t have to be. Picture yourself in a boat on a river surrounded by tangerine trees and marmalade skies.

Old weights and antiquated tools are pulled to the ground. The weight of their history becomes the weight of obsolescence.

Attached to these objects are stark white handles that have been tied into knots, standing upright as if being held by ghosts.

When one thing is pulled in two directions a tension exists, along with a space for the breath to expand and contract.

During the exhibition audience members were encouraged to hold onto these objects on display, to carry them around and experience the exhibition with weighted objects in hand.

White handles also were attached to a set of long, brightly painted wood slats to be held and carried, cutting through space, extending the body beyond its immediate containment.

I visited Erika in her studio a few weeks ago. We drank tea, ate tacos down the street, and talked about roller coasters and forms of currency. Afterward I wished that I had recorded us.

“This is just going to be fire,” she said, as stock footage of a metal forgery flickered off the wall.

Take the fire and leave the rest.
Erika Vogt’s Geometric Persecution

John Miller
The soundtrack is film footage, and Geometric Persecution is a permutational game–tic-tac-toe tooed arm. The figure, hand belongs to a fragmentary scenarios. An X appears, followed by an open hand, semble-gamelike structure. A who holds it. The plumb bob rests in steps crunching on scraping, wind hitting the screen. Toward the beginning of Erika Vogt’s video Geometric Persecution, a luminous X appears, clad in black, moves across what appears to be an abandoned lot. Tall, dry grass has sprouted from cracks in the concrete. The light is bright and harsh. The figure’s steady progress suggests that the plum bob works like a di-vining rod. As such, the design of the shot implicates the viewer in an act of magic. The purpose of a plum bob (an instrument used since ancient Egypt) is to measure verticility. In this shot, however, it seems to exert a horizontal, antigravity tional pull. Such a movement would seem to grant the plum bob an animus, much like the planchette on a Ouija board, whose movement is gener-ated by those holding the board itself. Next, in a rapid series of reverse shots, this simple but inscrutable object implacably guides its owner first to the left, then to the right. In yet another cut, it disappears, and the camera continues to follow the open hand, now moving backward along an obscure path.

In yet another se-quence, various tools—a triangle, a compass, a rod, a scale—pass from one set of hands to another. The scene’s tight cropping empha-sizes the tools more than the people who handle them. The tools themselves are simply passed along, not used. As a result, they emit a talismanic aura. The camera returns to the desolate lot, this time revealing more of the androgynous figure whose black clothing includes a cape or perhaps a head scarf. The figure stands, balancing on his or her palm a long stick in the air, moving gingerly so the stick remains upright. The cape might be a magian’s cape. Or Prince Valiant’s. The stick, in turn, could be the Singing Sword. At the very least the stick, like the plum bob, has acquired an animus that seems to animate the figure—contrary to common sense.

Another shot shows the same figure hanging upside down from a bar at the knees. For this shot, however, Vogt has rotated the image 180 degrees, and the whole figure rotates. If this graphic appeared only once it would read as a con-ventional title. Instead, Vogt repeats it. It re-turns again and again to haunt the video like a guilty conscience.

Not to be over-looked amid the over-lays of blotchy graph-ics, rapid streaks, and numerical sequences is Vogt’s emphasis on what guarantees film and video’s funda-mental coherence: the screen. We see a screen within a screen. If it often functions as a square, the phrase repeated four times to form its edges. Slowly the edges close in and the interior volume shrinks. The ends of each phrase now pro-trude past the shrink-ing square’s corners, and the whole figure rotates. If this graphic appeared only once it would read as a conventional title. Instead, Vogt repeats it. It returns again and again to haunt the video like a guilty conscience.

Curiously, the title emerges as an alternate figure in the video as well. As opposed to implying animism Vogt here literally animates the phrase “geometric persecution.” It appears first as a square, the phrase repeated four times to form the black box of the camera, however, is the arbi-trariness. The black box of the camera, or Prince Valiant’s. The stick, in turn, could be the Singing Sword. At the very least the stick, like the plum bob, has acquired an animus that seems to animate the figure—contrary to common sense.

Another shot shows the same figure hanging upside down from a bar at the knees. For this shot, however, Vogt has rotated the image 180 degrees, and the whole figure rotates. If this graphic appeared only once it would read as a conventional title. Instead, Vogt repeats it. It returns again and again to haunt the video like a guilty conscience.

Not to be overlooked amid the overlays of blotchy graphics, rapid streaks, and numerical sequences is Vogt’s emphasis on what guarantees film and video’s fundamental coherence: the screen. We see a screen within a screen. It often functions as a square, the phrase repeated four times to form its edges. Slowly the edges close in and the interior volume shrinks. The ends of each phrase now protrude past the shrinking square’s corners, and the whole figure rotates. If this graphic appeared only once it would read as a conventional title. Instead, Vogt repeats it. It returns again and again to haunt the video like a guilty conscience.

Curiously, the title emerges as an alternate figure in the video as well. As opposed to implying animism Vogt here literally animates the phrase “geometric persecution.” It appears first as a square, the phrase repeated four times to form the black box of the camera, however, is the arbitrariness. The black box of the camera, or Prince Valiant’s. The stick, in turn, could be the Singing Sword. At the very least the stick, like the plum bob, has acquired an animus that seems to animate the figure—contrary to common sense.

Another shot shows the same figure hanging upside down from a bar at the knees. For this shot, however, Vogt has rotated the image 180 degrees, and the whole figure rotates. If this graphic appeared only once it would read as a conventional title. Instead, Vogt repeats it. It returns again and again to haunt the video like a guilty conscience.

Curiously, the title emerges as an alternate figure in the video as well. As opposed to implying animism Vogt here literally animates the phrase “geometric persecution.” It appears first as a square, the phrase repeated four times to form the black box of the camera, however, is the arbitrariness. The black box of the camera, or Prince Valiant’s. The stick, in turn, could be the Singing Sword. At the very least the stick, like the plum bob, has acquired an animus that seems to animate the figure—contrary to common sense.

Another shot shows the same figure hanging upside down from a bar at the knees. For this shot, however, Vogt has rotated the image 180 degrees, and the whole figure rotates. If this graphic appeared only once it would read as a conventional title. Instead, Vogt repeats it. It returns again and again to haunt the video like a guilty conscience.

Curiously, the title emerges as an alternate figure in the video as well. As opposed to implying animism Vogt here literally animates the phrase “geometric persecution.” It appears first as a square, the phrase repeated four times to form the black box of the camera, however, is the arbitrariness. The black box of the camera, or Prince Valiant’s. The stick, in turn, could be the Singing Sword. At the very least the stick, like the plum bob, has acquired an animus that seems to animate the figure—contrary to common sense.

Another shot shows the same figure hanging upside down from a bar at the knees. For this shot, however, Vogt has rotated the image 180 degrees, and the whole figure rotates. If this graphic appeared only once it would read as a conventional title. Instead, Vogt repeats it. It returns again and again to haunt the video like a guilty conscience.

Curiously, the title emerges as an alternate figure in the video as well. As opposed to implying animism Vogt here literally animates the phrase “geometric persecution.” It appears first as a square, the phrase repeated four times to form the black box of the camera, however, is the arbitrariness. The black box of the camera, or Prince Valiant’s. The stick, in turn, could be the Singing Sword. At the very least the stick, like the plum bob, has acquired an animus that seems to animate the figure—contrary to common sense.

Another shot shows the same figure hanging upside down from a bar at the knees. For this shot, however, Vogt has rotated the image 180 degrees, and the whole figure rotates. If this graphic appeared only once it would read as a conventional title. Instead, Vogt repeats it. It returns again and again to haunt the video like a guilty conscience.

Curiously, the title emerges as an alternate figure in the video as well. As opposed to implying animism Vogt here literally animates the phrase “geometric persecution.” It appears first as a square, the phrase repeated four times to form the black box of the camera, however, is the arbitrariness. The black box of the camera, or Prince Valiant’s. The stick, in turn, could be the Singing Sword. At the very least the stick, like the plum bob, has acquired an animus that seems to animate the figure—contrary to common sense.

Another shot shows the same figure hanging upside down from a bar at the knees. For this shot, however, Vogt has rotated the image 180 degrees, and the whole figure rotates. If this graphic appeared only once it would read as a conventional title. Instead, Vogt repeats it. It returns again and again to haunt the video like a guilty conscience.

Curiously, the title emerges as an alternate figure in the video as well. As opposed to implying animism Vogt here literally animates the phrase “geometric persecution.” It appears first as a square, the phrase repeated four times to form the black box of the camera, however, is the arbitrariness. The black box of the camera, or Prince Valiant’s. The stick, in turn, could be the Singing Sword. At the very least the stick, like the plum bob, has acquired an animus that seems to animate the figure—contrary to common sense.

Another shot shows the same figure hanging upside down from a bar at the knees. For this shot, however, Vogt has rotated the image 180 degrees, and the whole figure rotates. If this graphic appeared only once it would read as a conventional title. Instead, Vogt repeats it. It returns again and again to haunt the video like a guilty conscience.

Curiously, the title emerges as an alternate figure in the video as well. As opposed to implying animism Vogt here literally animates the phrase “geometric persecution.” It appears first as a square, the phrase repeated four times to form the black box of the camera, however, is the arbitrariness. The black box of the camera, or Prince Valiant’s. The stick, in turn, could be the Singing Sword. At the very least the stick, like the plum bob, has acquired an animus that seems to animate the figure—contrary to common sense.

Another shot shows the same figure hanging upside down from a bar at the knees. For this shot, however, Vogt has rotated the image 180 degrees, and the whole figure rotates. If this graphic appeared only once it would read as a conventional title. Instead, Vogt repeats it. It returns again and again to haunt the video like a guilty conscience.

Curiously, the title emerges as an alternate figure in the video as well. As opposed to implying animism Vogt here literally animates the phrase “geometric persecution.” It appears first as a square, the phrase repeated four times to form the black box of the camera, however, is the arbitrariness. The black box of the camera, or Prince Valiant’s. The stick, in turn, could be the Singing Sword. At the very least the stick, like the plum bob, has acquired an animus that seems to animate the figure—contrary to common sense.