

EXHIBITION EVENTS SCHEDULE

SEND: CONVERSATIONS  
IN EVOLVING MEDIA

June 11–August 10, 2008

SEND: Conversations in Evolving Media is an exhibition that examines the nature of changing communication systems, focusing on exchanges that are simultaneously public and private. From letterpress and the postal service to search engines and cell phones, the artists in SEND re-invent the uses of information technology to uncover how methods may alter the meaning of interpersonal correspondence.

Featuring the work of Meggan Gould, Alex Kahn, Jason Lewis, Carlo Pittore, and YOUNG-HAE CHANG HEAVY INDUSTRIES.

To participate in Cityspeak, text 207-329-6896  
Or online at [www.cspeak.net](http://www.cspeak.net)

Opening Reception:

Friday, June 20, 2008  
5–8 pm

Artists' Talks:

Jason Lewis  
Monday, June 23  
6:30 pm  
Space Gallery  
538 Congress St.  
Reception at ICA to follow

Panel Discussion:

Panel Discussion Featuring:  
Meggan Gould, exhibiting SEND artist  
Mark Bloch, Multimedia artist and writer  
Linda Lambertson, Associate Curator ICA  
Thursday, July 10, 5–7 pm

Alex Kahn  
Thursday, July 31, 5–7 pm

All events are free and open to the public.

The ICA would like to acknowledge the contributions and generous support of The Carlo Pittore Foundation for the Figurative Arts, Colby College Special Collections, and Casco Bay Frames.

GENERAL INFORMATION:



Institute of Contemporary Art  
at Maine College of Art

The Porteous Building  
522 Congress St.  
Portland, ME 04101  
207-699-5029  
[www.meca.edu/ica](http://www.meca.edu/ica)

Hours:

Wednesday - Sunday 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Thursday 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.  
First Fridays 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.

COMING UP AT THE ICA:

Ruminant

August 27 – October 19, 2008  
Opening reception: September 5, 5-8 PM

MECA Annual Art Auction

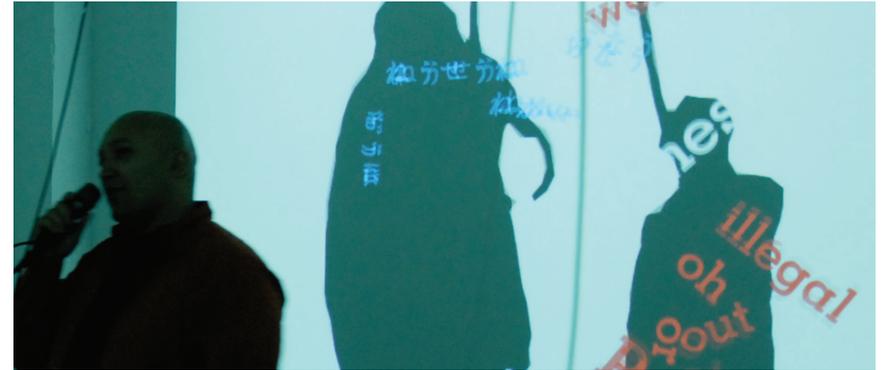
Auction Preview, November 4-7, 2008  
Live Auction, Saturday, November 8, 2008

Out There: The Mediated Landscape

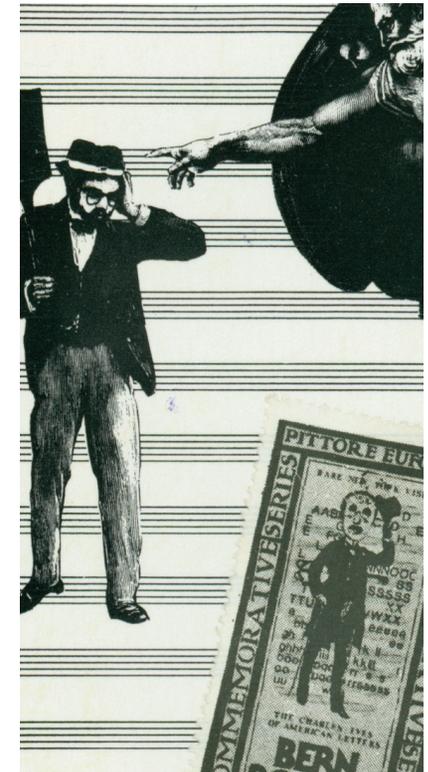
November 19 – December 21, 2008

INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART AT MAINE COLLEGE OF ART

SEND



CONVERSATIONS IN EVOLVING MEDIA



Maine College of Art



## INTERMEDIARIES

There are two sides to every conversation.

As I type this, I sit at a sidewalk café table at a local coffee shop. My moleskine notebook is open beside me, and I alternately jot down notes with a mechanical pencil, access my email, search the web for answers to questions, talk to fellow patrons. My cell phone rings its customized tone. I thumb in a quick text message reply, and hit "Send."

I am connected to the world. And the world answers.

To correspond means literally, to answer together. The word in context implies harmony, affinity, and equality, indicating parallel paths. Most often, it refers to an exchange of messages. The artists in SEND: Conversations in Evolving Media explore the systems we invent to deliver messages, navigating the spaces between the physical and virtual, public and private, hidden and visible.

Meggan Gould searches for collective understanding by investigating the constantly shifting relationship of text to image. Using nonsense as a vehicle for epiphany, Alex Kahn turns unsolicited email upside down to find value in hidden meanings. Jason Lewis reveals the man in the machine by inviting interactive experimentation and public expression with digital media. Carlo Pittore uses hand-made processes and the act of mailing letters to emphasize the significance of individual contact. The musical patterns of thought and discourse are offered for contemplation in the animated literary riffs of YOUNG HAE CHANG HEAVY INDUSTRIES. Each artist seeks out the elusive and ephemeral gift of correspondence, while questioning its interpersonal and political implications.

Since the advent of the written word, the attempt to concretize language has shaped our perception of what constitutes clear communication. Manipulation and objectification of language are devices employed to derive meaning; words themselves retain their fluid potential. How do the devices we use serve as intermediaries to understanding?

This exhibition contains examples of various conversational models. Auditory speech, the handwritten word, the printing press, the postal service, computer software, cell phone text messaging, email and the Internet all provide different forums for connection. In the process of translation from system to system, who is the messenger?

Dialogue requires time, is relative to distance, and is dependant on the openness and insight of sender and receiver. Each model determines the form in which information is sent, thereby affecting the content of the message. With so many mutable elements, how do we accurately convey what we really mean to each other? The challenges to definition are aptly

illustrated in the Go ogle project, where we can see the differences in something as simple and profound as our individual perceptions of the word, blue.

The conflation of worldly and spiritual intentions is a constant factor in communication. Gutenberg himself was not above capitalizing on people's need for a tangible form of metaphysical contact; he pursued the printing of religious documents as a commercial enterprise. As information networks become more powerful, our responsibility towards recognizing the consequential applications of these developments increases.

Poet and scientist Bern Porter, the subject of Carlo Pittore's painting and correspondence, once said, "The world has become abstract today... The bomb splintered language, turned the tower of Babel into a shadow." This is not an expression of technophobia, but a cautionary tale about the interdependent forces of language and action.

Linda Lambertson  
Associate Curator, Institute of Contemporary Art at Maine College of Art

June, 2008

Sources:

Schevill, James. *Where to Go, What To Do, When You Are Bern Porter. A Personal Biography.* Gardiner, ME: Tilbury House, 1992.

Stewart, Susan A. *Nonsense: Aspects of Intertextuality in Folklore and Literature.* Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979.

## CARLO PITTORE (CHARLES STANLEY)

Painter and Mail Art pioneer Carlo Pittore (1943-2005) was an iconoclastic and outspoken art activist devoted to the democratic, de-commercialized exchange of images and ideas. SEND will highlight works that represent a longstanding candid postal dialogue between Pittore and his friend and mentor, the noted scientist, poet, and artist Bern Porter.



Carlo Pittore  
*Canzoni Spirituali*

Founding member of the Union of Maine Visual Artists, Pittore studied painting at Chelsea College of Art in London, Accademia di Belle Arte in Rome, and the Brooklyn Museum Art School. He was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Fine Arts by the Maine

College of Art in 2005. The posthumous non-profit Carlo Pittore Foundation for the Figurative Arts is dedicated to the support of figurative artists.

## MEGGAN GOULD

Photographer Meggan Gould searches for alternating moments of clarity and dissolution within the cultural landscape. In the Go ogle project, Gould illustrates the impossibility of matching specific language with universal visual definition. The photographs of Go ogle are constructed by mining search engine results, yielding composite images that reflect an eerily vague potential in communication.



Meggan Gould

Mug Shot

Gould is Visiting Assistant Professor of Art at Bowdoin College, with an MFA in Photography from the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth, a Graduate Certificate in Photography, from the Spéos, Paris Photographic Institute, and a Graduate Certificate in Non-Fiction Writing and Photography from the Salt Institute for Documentary Studies. She maintains a studio in Brunswick, Maine.

## ALEX KAHN

Alex Kahn's letterpress and drypoint Spam Cantos play with the daily nuisance of spam email programs that employ Bayesian logic, spewing forth familiar and intriguing nonsense geared towards encouraging individual consumption. Using the proportions and format of the Gutenberg Bible, the Cantos marry historic forms of information transfer with state-of-the-art marketing methods.



Alex Kahn  
*Canto II*

Kahn's work encompasses printmaking, digital media, sculptural installation and pageant puppetry, with a focus on the qualities of inversion, displacement, and transcendence inherent in carnivalesque practices. Chief puppet creator for New York City's Greenwich Village Halloween Parade and co-founder of the non-profit Processional Arts Workshop, Kahn holds an MFA from San Francisco Art Institute,

completed a Fulbright Scholarship Award to study Carnival traditions in Trinidad, and was a Roman J. Witt Visiting Artist at the University of Michigan.

## JASON LEWIS

Digital artist Jason Lewis creates interactive installations that invite the public to experience text as a dynamic living entity. Works on view in SEND allow viewers to participate in sculpting an open dialogue via the use of microphones or personal handheld communication devices such as cell phones. Through a vigorous series of visual experiments and custom software applications, his practice continues to explore the boundaries and hidden byways of language.



Jason Lewis

*Cityspeak*

Lewis has written extensively about information theory and multimedia, is currently Assistant Professor of Computation Arts at Concordia University, and the Founder and Director of Obx Laboratory for Experimental Media. He holds a Masters in Philosophy of Design from the Royal College of Art, which he obtained after studying philosophy and computer science at Stanford University.

## YOUNG-HAE CHANG HEAVY INDUSTRIES

YOUNG-HAE CHANG HEAVY INDUSTRIES, Young-hae Chang and Marc Voge, creates deceptively simple text-based Flash animations set to infectious jazz scores. Revealing both the anonymous character and the uniquely personal experience inherent to internet browsing, YHCHI presents musings that are equally hypnotic and provocative.

YOUNG-HAE CHANG HEAVY INDUSTRIES has exhibited work worldwide in such venues as the Tate, the Centre Pompidou, the Whitney Museum, the Getty Center, the Venice Biennale, and the São Paulo Biennial.

Young-Hae  
Chang  
Heavy  
Industries  
Urgent  
Request

WE AT YOUNG-HAE CHANG  
HEAVY INDUSTRIES  
HAVE AN URGENT  
AND VERY CONFIDENTIAL  
BUSINESS PROPOSITION  
FOR YOU.