

MATTEAWAN GALLERY

For Immediate Release:

Drive-Thru

Christopher Albert

Liam Goodman

Peter Iannarelli

Matt Kenyon

August 10 - 31, 2013

Opening Reception Saturday, August 10, 6-9 pm

Beacon, NY, July 28, 2013 - Matteawan Gallery is pleased to present Drive-Thru, a group exhibition featuring work by Christopher Albert, Liam Goodman, Peter Iannarelli, and Matt Kenyon. The exhibition runs through August 31, 2013, and features sculpture, multi-media works, and video. On the night of the opening, Liam Goodman will also be presenting *The First Annual Fast Food Training Film Festival*, which includes films from the 70s and 80s that will teach the viewer about good customer service and how to fry chicken and grill hamburgers.

The four artists in this exhibition respond to fast food in different ways. Matt Kenyon's video *Meat Helmet* is a critical look at the fast food industry that addresses the health issues and nutritional value of eating fast food. Kenyon invented a helmet to aid in chewing a hamburger that also burns calories. The person wearing the helmet would have to chew for 8 hours to burn off the calories from one Big Mac. *Meat Helmet* addresses the absurd attempt of fast food chains to market their food to people who are health conscious.

Peter Iannarelli takes common household objects and transforms them into works of art, thereby distancing them from their original purpose and focusing on their form and design. His works made of plastic spoons and forks melted together are playful and clever abstract sculptures. In the context of this exhibition, the spoons and forks also remind the viewer of the waste in fast food restaurants, where all the utensils, containers, and cups are thrown away at the end of a meal. In either case, Iannarelli is forcing us to take a closer look at these objects and to see them in a totally new way.

Christopher Albert examines his relationship to fast food and is interested in the transformation of materials. Albert collected McDonald's cheeseburger wrappers and sewed them together to make collages, as well as a shirt that he intends to wear the night of the opening. He cast an actual hamburger in plaster and wrapped it in red and white striped fabric that resembles Ronald McDonald's or Wendy's costume, but which can also be seen as an American flag. The modified burger wrappers are a commentary on the American fast food industry, in which image is everything and the food is secondary. At the same time, the wrapped hamburger also alludes to the art of Christo, Jasper Johns, and Robert Rauschenberg who, in their own ways, used everyday objects and references to popular culture in their work.

Liam Goodman's montages of old fast food television commercials are enjoyable as pure kitsch and they bring back memories of watching TV as a child. The commercials also say something about the corporations behind the hamburgers, since the point is to sell as much fast food as possible, while targeting different demographics. Fast food marketing goes right for the senses, with little said about the health effects of what one is eating. As a commercial photographer and a child of the 80s, Goodman is

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fascinated by the role advertising plays in our world. Seeing what goes on professionally has made him cynical of advertising, yet it is difficult for him to not feel nostalgic when watching ads from his childhood.

Fast food is a complicated subject that touches on health, economics, jobs, and many other issues of our time. As this press release is being written, fast food workers across the country are protesting for better wages. For some, eating fast food is a daily activity motivated by economic factors, for others it is a fast meal that tastes good, and for others still, it is a guilty pleasure, a reminder of simpler times when we didn't count calories or question where our food came from. Many people remember the excitement of getting a Happy Meal or a milkshake from a drive-thru as a child. Fast food is marketed to be fun, spontaneous, and satisfying. The four artists in Drive-Thru touch on all these issues and more.

Christopher Albert grew up in Colorado and is currently based in Beacon, NY. His work takes on many forms and often uses unconventional materials to explore themes of transformation, as well as our relationship to material culture and the world around us. Albert studied at Colorado State University and has exhibited his work nationally. He is also involved in curatorial projects (kork) and blogging about art (MAYKR), and is the co-producer and co-host of The Dead Hare Radio Hour, an art-related podcast.

Liam Goodman is based in Beacon, NY and has exhibited his work recently in both New York and California. He is interested in pop culture and the ways in which advertising relates to food, gender, and memory. He works as a freelance photographer and is the creator (along with Josh McKible) of *The Secret Towel*, a comic addressing social and political issues. He has a B.F.A. in Studio Art from Colorado College.

Peter Iannarelli lives and works in Beacon, NY. His art originates from the ready-made tradition, in which he takes objects from everyday life and tinkers with them to create new dialogues and subtexts. He has exhibited in the New York area as well as nationally, and has work in both private and museum collections. He received a grant from the Vermont Studio Center and was a visiting artist at Dia:Beacon. Iannarelli received a B.F.A. from the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY.

Matt Kenyon is interested in the convergence of art, emerging technologies and popular culture. In 1999 he co-founded SWAMP (Studies of Work Atmosphere and Mass Production) with Douglas Easterly. Their work focuses on themes such as global corporate operations, mass media and communication, military-industrial complexes, and meditations on the liminal area between life and artificial life. Kenyon's work has been shown at the Museum of Modern Art and Exit Art in NYC, as well as in museums in Germany, Ireland, and England. His work was recently included in *(in)Habitation* at the Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit. Kenyon has an M.F.A. in painting and printmaking from Virginia Commonwealth University and is currently an Associate Professor in the School of Art & Design at the University of Michigan.

Gallery hours are Friday and Saturday from 12-5, and Sunday by appointment. For additional information please visit www.matteawan.com or contact Karlyn Benson, info@matteawan.com or 845-440-7901.