

"IF YOU LIVED HERE, YOU'D BE HOME BY NOW"

BY CHRISTOPHER STACKHOUSE



Above, view of Josiah McElheny's wall mural *It exists only in the memory of those who stood inside (After Blinky Palermo at Bremerhaven, 1970)*, 2011, and Carl Andre's floor piece *Aluminum-Copper Plain*, 1969, at the Hessel Museum of Art.

Right, exhibition view with works by Paul Evans, Gerhard Richter and Andrea Zittel. Photos this page Chris Kendall.

ermo at Bremerhaven, 1970), 2011, references Palermo's wall painting *Fenster I (Window I)*, 1970, as documented in *Suite of 50 panels of documentation of wall drawings*, on view in the retrospective in the CCS Galleries. Palermo's group of framed drawings, photographs and collages record installation directives and plans for site-specific works. McElheny's mural is at the entrance to the exhibition, sharing space with Carl Andre's floor piece *Aluminum-Copper Plain* (1969) placed on top of an installed section of hardwood flooring. Nearby are photographs by Moyra Davey and paintings by Glenn Ligon and John Currin.

Four *Correalistic instrument chairs*, designed by Frederick Kiesler in 1942 for sitters to contemplate paintings in Peggy Guggenheim's Art of This Century, are placed in a room with

COINCIDING WITH "BLINKY PALERMO: Retrospective 1964-1977," co-hosted by the Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College Galleries and Dia:Beacon, is a lively ensemble of art at Bard's adjoining Hessel Museum titled "If You Lived Here, You'd Be Home By Now." The works are largely drawn from the Hessel Collection, including some new acquisitions, but there are also pieces borrowed from private collections, galleries and institutions. The show is an instance of "exhibition as work of art," privileging the vision of artist (and the show's co-curator) Josiah McElheny, whose own artworks are included. He uses the opportunity to collapse the boundaries between residential (private) and institutional (public) art viewing, inviting visitors to sit, lie and lounge on furniture designed by artists from Franz West to John Chamberlain, while looking at paintings by Christopher Wool or a video by Chantal Akerman (*Dans le miroir*, 1971).

Recalling Palermo, McElheny explores the connection between site specific-ity and the more common treatment of art objects as pure and self-contained.

CURRENTLY ON VIEW

"If You Lived Here, You'd Be Home By Now" at the Hessel Museum of Art, Annandale-on-Hudson, N.Y., June 25-Dec. 16.

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McElheny's goals for the show are enhanced by alliance with Lynne Cooke, who organized the traveling Palermo retrospective, and Hessel Museum/CCS executive director Tom Eccles. The invitation to McElheny to collaboratively select works from the museum collection repeats a gesture extended to artists in the past, such as Rachel Harrison and Martin Creed. Cooke, Eccles and McElheny together staged an intimate scholarly approach to creating conditions under which Palermo's work can be considered in an up-to-the-minute contemporary light.

As a nod to Palermo's wall drawings and paintings, McElheny executed several of his own murals throughout various rooms. Rather than the usual perception of Palermo as highly esthetic graffitiist announcing that he "was there," McElheny sees the German artist as saying, more generously, to those who experienced his original wall works, "You are here." McElheny's large abstract piece, *It exists only in the memory of those who stood inside (After Blinky Pal-*

paintings by Philip Guston, Eric Fischl and Robert Moskowitz, and a small punctuating but disorienting painting by R.H. Quayman called *Anne Tyng's Bedroom* (2001). One gallery is actually decorated as a bedroom with a suite of furniture (a four-poster polished chrome bed and chrome side tables) titled *Cityscape*, designed in the '70s by artist and furniture designer Paul Evans. From the bed (which visitors are encouraged to use) one can absorb the uncanny aura of a Beuys felt suit across the room from an Andrea Zittel wool dress on a tailor's mannequin, while viewing an early Gerhard Richter painting of a pillow called *Kissen* (German for "cushion") from 1965. With the placement of the rarely seen Richter painting in a bedroom setting, McElheny winks at the notion of "bedroom art," and takes to task the often diminishing reference to art in the home as "decorative." One of many things asked of us by the artist/curator here is to evaluate the importance of living with art and its potential range of edification. ●

