

PARTICIPANT Office Party at RENTAL**July 29 – August 19, 2007****Opening Reception: Sunday, July 29, 7-9pm**

From July 29 – August 19, 2007, **PARTICIPANT INC** takes up temporary headquarters at **RENTAL** with the exhibition *Office Party*, including works by **Eric Heist, Lovett/Codagnone, Diana Puntar,** and **Børre Sæthre**. Also on view in the *Back Room* portion of the exhibition will be works addressing work, workplace, and works available by **Stephen Andrews, Matthew Antezzo, Michel Auder, Lutz Bacher, Robert Boyd, Kathe Burkhart, Robin Graubard, Michael Lazarus, Virgil Marti, Laura Parnes, Luther Price, Adam Putnam,** and **Shellburne Thurber**.

Especially for *Office Party*, **Diana Puntar** fabricates necessary furniture (desk and mini-bar) in a stylized stone wall pattern of ubiquitous materials. Puntar's sculptures, made from supplies common to American homes, dramatize our culture's eager acceptance of synthetic, disposable imitations of the real—in terms of nature, wealth, and the new. Natural forms, rendered in layers of plywood with surfaces such as aluminum mirror, laminates, lucite, sit like tree branches, rocks, and logs, and insinuate a peculiar, faux three-dimensionality. Her simulated "outside" alludes to the fear that there is no longer an exteriority to pursue in American culture—we are trapped inside, and whether it's an office cube or the back yard, "good fences make good neighbors."

Also made for the occasion of *Office Party*, **Lovett/Codagnone** combine vinyl text and black painting on mirror to starkly confront the viewer with an unwholesome byproduct of failed aesthetic compulsion. They reference the iconic cautionary text from Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining*, a fragment of Jack's anticipated masterpiece of several hundred pages: "All work and no play make Jack a dull boy." Part of a new body of work, their mirror pieces expand upon the collaborative team's interest in the political ramifications of conflating public and private—but depart from self-reflexive strategies to issues of collective identity. In addition to mirrors, works in the series deploy items such as the American flag and police barricades, rendered uncharacteristically black, to imply a fetishization of power in relation to a collective that must be controlled or, in this case, put in front of a mirror.

Eric Heist's works from his 2005 project *Travel Agents (Desk and Posters, Africa)* simulate furniture and props based on a ubiquitous travel agency. Pinned to a bulletin board, posters of exotic locales are inscribed with names of US military operations associated with them; and going behind the corporate desk reveals a diorama of a shrouded figure couching in an ashen landscape. Heist's agency seeks to make apparent the direct relation between the hidden consequences of Western military and economic power and the leisure industries they uphold.

Børre Sæthre's *Untitled Super 8 stills #1-4 (between scenes/porn sets, Eastern Europe, 1997-99)* present a photographic tableaux extracted from predominant action, shot during breaks in a porn shoot. The framework of design methodology that informs his immersive installations is here zoomed-in upon through a photographic depiction of a stylish interior (complete with Eero Aarnio's 1968 Pastille chair and languid males) lacking in exploit—to posit that voyeuristic longings may linger within seemingly impermeable interiors. A realization that even plastic environments can absorb emotionality, everyday trauma or excitement, serves as motivation to subsequently heighten this fact in works that rupture pristine surfaces—revealing their failure to conceal the abject, the depressive, the libidinal.

PARTICIPANT INC is in the process of relocating. www.participantinc.org

RENTAL is located at 120 East Broadway at Allen, 6th floor, NY, NY 10002
www.rental-gallery.com

Gallery Hours: Wednesday – Sunday, noon – 7pm

PARTICIPANT INC's exhibitions are made possible with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency.

PARTICIPANT INC receives generous support from the Harriett Ames Charitable Trust, Bloomberg, The MAT Charitable Foundation, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, and numerous individuals.