

Independent NY 2023  
Stan VanDerBeek & Chason Matthams

Magenta Plains presents an intergenerational dialogue between late multimedia artist **Stan VanDerBeek** (1927-1984) and emerging artist, **Chason Matthams** (b. 1981).

A visionary experimental filmmaker known for his pioneering work in art and technology, VanDerBeek created early animation films in the Surrealist tradition of collage, splicing newspaper and magazine clippings with original and found footage. A selection of related framed collages and drawings from the 1960s-1980s at the Independent complements a concurrent exhibition of VanDerBeek's single-channel 16mm and 35mm films at the gallery on Canal Street, on view from May 3 to June 17.

Known for his technical prowess, Matthams is a painter utilizing the "hyperreal" as a source of expressive potential, depicting still lives and other objects including the recurring motifs of cameras, flowers, and antique marble busts. Conceived as metaphors for perception itself, his paintings seek to capture the ephemeral and fragmentary nature of human consciousness. This concern for the nature of both perception and the fleeting nature of shifting technologies is inspired by Matthams' background in animation and interest in operational camera equipment, making for a dynamic conversation with VanDerBeek's cut and paste works on paper.

**Artist Biographies****Chason Matthams (b.1981, Pacific Grove, CA)**

Chason Matthams' masterful, detail-oriented style and manipulation of varying hues and gradients imbue inanimate subjects with emotional weight. Flitting between mechanical and organic objects, Matthams' is an alchemist, transmuting the format of the still life into quasi-spiritual tableaux, in which the subjects become idols verging on objects of devotion.

The camera paintings are lit with a strange, otherworldly light, transforming each of these mechanisms into objects of sci-fi intrigue. Most obviously unnerving are the camera lenses, which take on the coloration of their pastel, non-specific backgrounds. Intensifying the general palette of the paintings, each camera's lens reflects an abstracted, inorganic world contained within the interior of these nascent artificial intelligences. His Corsage paintings depict capsules of static flowers, drifting through gently illuminated no-places. Even more everyday than his cameras, these objects become monumental, nearly mournful in Matthams' rendering. Floating above their impossibly still refectons, the corsages inhabit an astral plane where simple plastic and organic matter seem to be permanent fixtures, frozen in time.

Matthams graduated with a BFA in Fine Art from New York University in 2004 and an MFA from New York University in 2012. Previous solo exhibitions include Glimpse, Magenta Plains, New York, NY (2022); A Hell for Rainbows, Thierry Goldberg Gallery, New York, NY (2019); Advances, None Miraculous, Thierry Goldberg Gallery, New York, NY (2015); and Tyler Wood Gallery, San Francisco, CA (2019, 2013). He was included in Blossom, a three person exhibition with Ted Pim and Marisa Takal organized by the Tong Art Advisory at the Artron Art Centre, Shenzhen, CN (2021). His work was featured as an Artforum "Portfolio" in March 2020. Matthams lives and works in New York, NY.

**Stan VanDerBeek (b. 1927, New York, NY; Died 1984, Baltimore, MD)**

Stan VanDerBeek was a prolific multimedia artist known for his pioneering work in experimental film and computer art. He studied at The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art, New York (1948–1952), and at Black Mountain College, Asheville, North Carolina (1949–1950). VanDerBeek's work is currently featured in See Saw Seems, Magenta Plains, New York, NY; Signals: How Video Transformed the World, The Museum of Modern Art, New York and Coded: Art Enters the Computer Age, 1952–1982, Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

Selected museum exhibitions that have featured VanDerBeek's work include VanDerBeek + VanDerBeek at the Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center, Asheville, North Carolina (2019); Judson Dance Theater: The Work is Never Done at the Museum of Modern Art, New York (2018); Delirious: Art at the Limits of Reason, 1950-1980 at the Met Breuer, New York (2017); Thinking Machines: Art and Design in the Computer Age, The Museum of Modern Art, NY (2017); Dreamlands: Immersive Cinema and Art, 1905-2016 at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2016); Beat Generation, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France and ZKM, Karlsruhe, DE (2016); Electronic Superhighway: From Experiments in Art and Technology to Art After the Internet, Whitechapel Gallery, London, UK (2016); Leap Before You Look: Black Mountain College, 1933-1957 at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston (2015); America is Hard to See, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY (2015); the 55th Venice Biennale (2013); Ghosts in the Machine, New Museum, New York, NY (2012); and Stan VanDerBeek: The Culture Intercom at the

MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and at Contemporary Arts Museum Houston (2011).

He was included in the historic exhibitions Cybernetic Serendipity, Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, UK (1968); Art By Telephone, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (1969); Software, The Jewish Museum, New York, NY (1970); and New American Video Art: A Historical Survey, 1967-1980, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY (1984).