

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Table of Contents presents *Ambiguous Objects/Open Forms: BLESS, Gemma Holt, Joseph Magliaro, OOIEE, Slow and Steady Wins The Race, Various Projects, Inc.*

Exhibition Dates: June 14–August 2, 2019

Opening Reception: Friday, June 14, 6–9PM

Related Events: To Be Announced

Table of Contents has operated in a variety of forms for more than a decade.

In the spring of 2008, I cobbled together an ad hoc table from a set of wooden trestles and a rigid cardboard box—the heavy weight, international moving kind. With my partner, Shu Hung, we carried the make-shift table to Berlin’s public squares and markets and attempted to sell a variety of objects whose value leaned more poetic than practical: a personally significant book complete with marginal notes, a grocery list, a series of plastic bags filled with air gathered from sites near the stadiums of the Olympic Games in Beijing.

After relocating to Portland, Oregon in 2009, TOC took on a number of forms, but from 2011-2016, the project was known primarily as a Chinatown-based project space, housed inside the building once home to the city’s first dry-goods store. Upon first read, many approached TOC as such a store, but it also served as a design studio, a gallery, an event space, and, if you knew someone, a place to get coffee or occasionally a meal. I liked to tell people that it was a magazine, and, in the sense captured by Barbara Radice in her editor’s letter for the premiere issue of *Terrazzo*, I believe that it was. Radice said: *“Doing a magazine is like writing a book or making a movie; you never know what you’ll end up with and not knowing is part of the amusement. You start because you think you have something to say, something urgent or different or new, something very important, maybe even vital. What you want to communicate is not necessarily a thought, a line of argument or an idea with a beginning and an end, but more often—as now—a mood, an attitude, a predilection of the soul, a vision bearing the faintest blur of utopia.”*

For the summer of 2019, Koenig & Clinton has invited me to produce a new iteration of Table of Contents at its Brooklyn-based gallery. The installation will run for approximately six weeks and incorporate objects and artifacts from various TOC projects, along with recent work by a few of our past collaborators: Desirée Heiss and Ines Kaag of BLESS, Gemma Holt, Matt Olson of OOIEE, Mary Ping of Slow and Steady Wins the Race, and Elizabeth Beer and Brian Janusiak of Various Projects, Inc. For the installation, a series of display panels in different shapes with various arrangements of hooks has been created. These act as “open forms” or invitations to be activated by participating artists.

The title of the show—*Ambiguous Objects/Open Forms*—expresses an ongoing interest in objects that refuse to sit easily to one side of the border held up between the spheres of art and design, the useless and useful, and the strange and familiar. We’re fond of work that demonstrates that such dichotomies are untenable, and that the symbolic “openness” typically reserved for works of art and denied to “products” is simply a matter of preference and prejudice in the selection of good examples. In response to David Hockney’s pithy suggestion that “art has to move you and design does not, unless it’s a good design for a bus,” we propose that all objects have the capacity to incite affective states, whether through wit (Slow and Steady’s thoughtful reinterpretation of fashion icons), surprise (Gemma Holt’s use of material experimentation to belie expectation), participation (BLESS’s call to experience everyday adventures into the uncanny), transformation (Various Project Inc.’s shrouding of the industrial and organic), or conversation (OOIEE’s recasting of found art-historical forms).

In addition to this focus on ambiguous objects, the installation highlights our concern with spaces that challenge the behaviors and relationships typically understood to be appropriate within them. TOC has always owed a bit of gratitude to Oskar Hansen, whose notion of “Open

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Form” was conceived as an antidote to Modernist insistence on a hierarchical division of space, category, and function, and instead sought to provoke interactions between people that would break from the model of the isolated genius/hero dictating the program of a space to a public, and instead look toward achieving a non-monumental, process-based, collaborative sense of identity-in-community.

Rather than observe known codes of conduct, Open Form proposes that we *take a chance*, that we approach space without a fixed view of its borders and risk encountering others on uncertain ground. *How does one behave in a shop that’s installed in a gallery?* I guess we’ll find out.

-Joseph Magliaro

For further information please contact info@koenigandclinton.com or call (212) 334-9255. Hours of operation are Thursday-Saturday, 11AM-6PM and by appointment. Hours of operation through June 15 are Thursday-Saturday and by appointment. Starting the week of June 17, hours of operation are Wednesday-Friday, 11-6PM and by appointment.

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