

(In)visible Hand: Joseph Coniff and Marina Kassianidou

Curated by Kealey Boyd

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The art of Joseph Coniff and Marina Kassianidou deceives and challenges the eye through the surfaces of domestic consumption. Their material interventions are subtle like the patterns of our lives and the economic systems that dictate them. Coniff's removal (or restorative) acts with found wallpaper suggest the changing ownership of space or its reinvention. Kassianidou interrogates our preferences, especially when mass-produced materials lend the illusion of well-crafted ones or when a pattern mimics nature. Despite appearances, even on a cellular level, the materials are hierarchical.

When Adam Smith argued there were unintended social benefits to individuals acting on self-interest, he labeled this action an *invisible hand*. Like the work of Kassianidou and Coniff, it is possible to pivot and observe this claim through the economy of specific materials. Consider our tacit knowledge of the physical world, such as the viscosity of an acrylic paint or how a board of walnut should look coming out of the wood planer. This material intelligence is less common today largely because there are less guilds and apprenticeships since the advent of the machine. That is problematic because material literacy has a socially connective tissue, often requiring consumers to know who made an object and a curiosity of the life of the crafter. This type of knowledge also includes an awareness of ethical responsibilities to the environment and community. Kassianidou and Coniff reveal the emotional memory and aspirational appearances of material while making the wisdom of things in our life more visible.

Marina Kassianidou was born in Limassol, Cyprus. She lives and works in Boulder, Colorado, USA, and Limassol. She holds a B.A. in Studio Art from Stanford University, California, USA, an M.A. in Fine Art from Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, London, UK, and a Ph.D. in Fine Art from Chelsea College of Arts, London, UK. She has presented work in solo exhibitions in Nicosia (Cyprus), London (UK), Chicago, Denver, and South Bend. She has participated in group exhibitions in Cyprus, Greece, Spain, Italy, the UK, the US, Australia, Israel, and France. Her work is found in several private and public collections, including the Cyprus Ministry of Education and Culture. Selected awards include grants from the Fulbright Program and the A. G. Leventis Foundation and residencies at the Virginia Center for Creative Arts, Hambidge Center for Creative Arts and Sciences, Ragdale Foundation, and Can Serrat. She is a recipient of the 2016 Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters and Sculptors Grant.

Please direct any inquires for purchase to the artist.

Joseph Coniff received an MFA in 2016 from the University of Delaware, Newark and a BFA from Rocky Mountain College of Art and Design in 2011. His work has been included in *New American Paintings*, *Creative Quarterly*, *Studio Visit Magazine*, and *Vogue Espana* among other. Coniff has been called one of Denver's most notable emerging artists and has received numerous awards and recognition in the Denver press. He has completed residencies and guest lectures in Wassaic, NY; Santa Fe NM; Berlin, Germany; and at Black Cube, Denver, CO. Coniff's work has been exhibited nationally and internationally in Denver, Marfa, New York, Los Angeles, Philadelphia and Berlin and is in numerous public, business and private collections nationally and internationally.

Please direct any inquires for purchase to the artist or Rule Gallery (Denver, CO & Marfa, TX).

Kealey Boyd is an art historian, writer and educator. Her writing appears in *Hyperallergic*, *College Art Association (CAA Reviews)*, *Artillery Magazine* and many other places. She is also a lecturer in Art History and Theory at Metropolitan State University of Denver. Her research interests include methodologies for interpreting painting and other visual forms as an integral element of political and cultural discourses.