

Meredyth Sparks

We're treating each other just like strangers.

December 2nd, 2006 – January 25th, 2007 / Tuesday-Saturday 11am-7pm

Press release

In her first solo exhibition at Galerie Frank Elbaz, *We're treating each other just like strangers.*, Meredyth Sparks presents an ongoing series of collages that feature popular musicians. Sparks scans these found objects—namely record covers and photographs— which are then altered through a digital process of erasing and cropping and, once reprinted, applies aluminum foil and glitter to their surfaces. The materials bring to the image their own reflective qualities and atmosphere; aluminum foil appears to cut into or tear the surface of the image, while glitter reflects light outward into the viewer's space. This reflexive act erases the objects she selects, while imbuing them with a particular narcissism.

The formal structure of the collages is fashioned through a stenciling-process, by which body parts, shadows and the space between figures all serve as potential negative spaces that are isolated and repeated, along with more familiar slashes, squares and circles that merge abstraction and representation. The collage lends a stutter or skipping effect, altering the cultural circulation of these familiar images, which have the ability to replay events, desire and circumstances. If knowledge is prescribed, shaped and enacted by images from both the mass media and the subversive prestige associated with a sub-culture, Sparks' work encourages an awareness of the very seductions that shape culture.

We're treating each other just like strangers. also includes several clear Plexiglas constructions that cover over photographs. Through a shift in scale, the plexi pieces pull away from the material source while struggling to frame it. A tension also exists in an untitled piece consisting of two cut-outs of delicate hand-drawn birds, one standing on the gallery floor, and the other floating on a string. A spotlight casts the birds in silhouette. Through the sculpture's incidental movement, the floating bird swings back and forth and, in the shadows they both cast, appear to connect within a phantom space on the wall.

In a similar sense, Sparks both affirms and negates one of Bruce Nauman's earliest neons, which serves as a template and literal source of light within the gallery. *My name as though it were written on the surface of the moon* slips between a concrete object and a spoken word, gesturing toward a "third space" created through reflection and light. The artist is especially interested in how Nauman's piece evokes an "anti-gravitational" space or, more accurately, a non-space, in which the artist's last name, *Sparks*, extends in weightless suspension across the rear wall of the gallery. *My name...* points to Sparks' specific identity, while also referencing an absence, where the desire to make contact—both erotic and art historical—shapes one's relationship to her work.

Born in 1972, Meredyth Sparks lives and works in New York, USA.

Selected exhibitions : **2007** *Moscow Biennale*, invited by Nicolas Bourriaud. **2006** *We're treating each other just like strangers.*, galerie frank elbaz, Paris, (solo). *Music is a Better Noise*, P.S.1, New York, curated by Bob Nikas. *Thank You For The Music (London Beat)*, Sprüth Maggers Lee, London. *Deaf « from the Audible to the Visible »*, galerie frank elbaz, Paris. **2005** *The Lords, Notes on Vision*, Tart, San Francisco (two-person). *Sound Clash*, PH Gallery, New York. **2004** *First Look Photography*, Sean Kelly Gallery, New York. **2003** *It wasn't midnight. It wasn't snowing*, Hunter College Times Square Gallery, New York (solo).