

THE SEEN

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ART SEEN: CHICAGO

MISTAKES HAVE HIDDEN INTENTION // DEVENING PROJECTS + EDITIONS

by Hiba Ali

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Disruptions, fissures, and cracks figure largely in the press release for *Mistakes Have Hidden Intention*, currently on view at devening projects + editions. The work involves the act of displacement through the arrangement of forms.



Charlotte Bastian, ON THE ROCKS, 2013, 29 x 41 cm

The artists featured in the exhibition are all affiliated with Scotty Enterprises, a gallery project in Kreuzburg, Berlin, that champions alternative approaches to the art market – where an upcoming Chicago-based exchange will also be on view, entitled *On Stranger Ways*, featuring Allison Wade, Volker Saul, Michael Pfisterer, Sterling Lawrence, and Dan Devening. The exhibition is divided into two rooms – one space focuses on histories, including the imaginary, the self-created, or the sourced online. One gallery hosts the video work of Simone Häckel, featuring a 6-channel video in which presumably YouTube users cover Taylor Swift's *White Horse*. Häckel's interests in depicting the desires of adolescence is apparent in *White Horse Never Came*, which also addresses online appropriation, fan girl culture, and the disconnect between them, since the singing fans start and finish *White Horse* at their own pace. Deliberately, or in some cases unconsciously, these fans self-editorialize – caressing their hair, adjusting the movement of

their body, restricting how much of their body can be seen, and what is visible in their background. To the left of Häckel's video is Annette Sonnewend's *Tracing the Trail; a personal / subjective archive of choreographies of films across the film history*. Similarly to Häckel, the strategy of the digital archive is analogous to her video – through dance, she inserts herself into now infamous dance scenes from *Bande À Part: Dance With Me*, *Big: Floor Piano Scene*, *Zorba the Greek: Zorbas Dance*, *Pulp Fiction: Dance Scene*, *Dogtooth: Dance Scene*, *Slumdog Millionaire: Jai Ho*, *Sonnenallee: Dance Scene*, and the *Blues Brothers: Dance Scene*. Sometimes a duo, trio, other times a group, the artist and her featured dancers mimic the movements of the actors usually against an altered background, relocated in a new space.

On the left side of this room, this notion of relocation involves being catapulting into outer space; this is what Christine Niehoff's *Moonbase Luna Delta II* installation asks the viewers to consider. This "fictitious moonbase corporation" considers a possible future, which is subsequent to humankind's colonization of the moon.[1] In the second gallery of *Mistakes Have Hidden Intention* the works pivot on both sculptural and painterly geometric planes, located in a *type* of landscape – either on the canvas or situated on earth's strata. On both the left and right sides of the room are stark photographs of landscapes, a collection of *Untitled (1 – 6)*, by Charlotte Bastian. Propped up in the corner, and also hung in middle of the wall are sculptures, entitled *Silhouette*, *Hommage to Blinky Palermo*, and *Salient II*, by Kiki Gebauer. Made of minimal materials, which cast quite a luminescent presence, Gebauer's previous work activates public industrial spaces in which she installs vibrant boards. Bastian's photographs have a raw engagement with the landscape, while Gebauer's sculptures vibrate; Bastian's photographs capture the shredded layers of the terrain. Accompanying Gebauer's work on a more vibrant plane, hung on the left and back side of the room, Bettina Weiß's modest sized geometric acrylic and oil paintings playfully reveal and conceal the wood grain underneath them and coincidentally mirroring the architecture of devening projects + editions' wood floor. This curated room of works roots the viewer in striated planes in the same way Sonnewend's *Rembrandt Remake: The Traders* inserts a human presence.



Annette Sonnewend, *devening projects + editions*, 2014.

The four figures wearing modular shaped masks in the piece appears to come from a similar affect of reenactment. The fissures and notion of distance that is figured through the organization of objects and images in *Mistakes Have Hidden Intention* disappear and become visible through capturing, excavating, and ordering the meanings generated out of slip-ups, omissions, and blunders. The experience of these faults also creates new intentions, and revisions, subtly brought to the surface of the concealed plans, designs, and thoughts they consider.

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Mistakes Have Hidden Intention at *devening projects + editions* runs through June 28, 2014.

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[1] — *Devening Projects + Editions*. "Devening Projects + Editions." *Mistakes Have Hidden Intention / Devening Projects + Editions*. N.p., 28 June 2014. Web. 02 June 2014.

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