

ARTISTS' WRITING

Phono, 1999

Chad Gerth

These photographs are about five things that are also directly related to vinyl records: sound, memory, time, movement, and surface.

The turntable photographs are real-time documents of preserved sound being released and preserved again by the camera. There is an intersection between the system of the record player and the process of photography. As photographs, they emit no sound, yet a viewer may unconsciously remember or imagine the song depicted—the year, the band, the time period. Durations can be compared and considered. The ghost arm is the result of the leftover time (silence) needed to maintain equal exposure times for each song (seven minutes). Longer songs in this series have fainter ghost arms, but the arc of the needle's movement is not always constant because different records are tracked differently.

The grooves of a record require movement and time to decode the information they hold. As time and movement are recorded on photographic film, colors and shapes change, sound is lost, movement becomes stillness, miniscule grooves become patterns. Object and event become process, process becomes surface, and the surface holds information which can be revealed but not decoded. Photographs are two-dimensional by nature, so this information on the surface of the record must be decoded by some other process, possibly memory.

Time can be recorded in many ways. Consider how many ways we are bound to time. Music and sound require time to occur. Photography requires an exposure duration. Memory is instantaneous, but contemplation takes time. These photographs are the result of long exposures, but can be viewed in an instant. How much time passes before the encoded information is unlocked and contemplated?

Artist Statement

Charles Goldman

For my installation, titled *33 Revolutions Per Minute*, my intent is to explore various notions of time as determined by our culture's obsession with popular music. In today's world, popular music has become the soundtracks to our lives. It is both witness and purveyor of our each and every move. Particular songs often become stand-ins for real, lived experience. The same song could be playing while we are falling in love or while we are staring at the ceiling. And, guaranteed, the real life situation is playing out differently than the recorded one, yet the two become blurred all the same. I am interested in how growing up with popular music has warped the expectations we have of our emotions, our lives, and of time in general.

Outtakes, 1966–1999 (2000) is a continuation of a project begun on a Pee-Chee folder in the 7th grade. It is a five hundred foot long by four inch wide drawing of a line of all of my, 1,500 or so,

record albums, CDs, and cassettes. The thumbnail sketches are done in non-photo blue lead, commenting on the reproducibility of popular music and the irreproducibility of personal experience. The blue monochrome line is also representative of the hum, the white noise created from the layering of sound and vision. Yet out of this hum, each drawing, ideally, serves as a visual cue towards a specific event in my (and hopefully in the viewer's) life. The specific will always arise out of the general and vice versa. This truth is especially pertinent when it comes to popular music, considering its large-scale mass production and appeal, alongside the specificity and intimacy it has within our personal lives.

An untitled photograph on the back cover of *Kiss Alive!* shows two feathered hair youth from the mid-seventies proudly displaying a banner with the Kiss logo and the painted faces of the four members. The young men stand for the photographer, presumably, in front of the stage before the concert begins. Other fans, mostly male, wait patiently for their heroes. The audience extends into the distance. In my version of the untitled photograph, the banner is erased and replaced with the spray painted words: YOUR NAME HERE. Thus establishing a reversal of the hero worship that Kiss and other super groups helped to establish in the early seventies. An evening out of the playing field between the idol and the idolized is offered as a possibility.

Hanging Around Listening to Music (2000) is an eight-hour, real time performance/installation filmed with four video cameras and played back on four monitors. The performance consists of just that—me hanging around listening to music. For the installation, the monitors are positioned on a makeshift stage. The videotapes are randomly played back, creating a discord of sights, sounds, and the memories of both. There is really no such thing as "down time." We are constantly being fed information and it often comes in multiple doses. Long before the high-tech industry came about, popular culture instigated a confusion between the real and the virtual. Each experience we have is a cacophony of previous experiences, both actual and imagined, combined with the present one, which is also either actual or imagined.

Collaboration (1998) is a manipulated *The Best of Frank Sinatra* record album. It is a very shoddy method towards achieving an unobtainable dream. The hole in the center of the vinyl is re-drilled slightly off center. A new Pantene blue label is placed over the new hole and a new Pantene blue cover barely covers the old sleeve. On the spine is printed in small, black letters—Sinatra/Goldman.

An untitled series of eight white wool blankets are made to resemble the inside sleeves of record albums. They lie scattered on the floor. The wool sleeves promise comfort and warmth (just like your favorite song does) but the large hole in the center prevents any such possibility. They speak against the empty promises and the futility of popular music's romantic ideology.

The act of making a compilation tape for a love interest is a very specific and deliberate act. Every song and every segue are carefully considered before being committed to the cassette tape. The message is as complicated and idiosyncratic as any flirtation. A series of six photographs correspond with a series of six mixed tapes made for a past or present love interest. A photograph is taken of each song as the LP spins on the turntable. Each final, contact sheet is a visual record of a series of songs as they pass on their intended messages. The photographs

attempt to unveil the reality of what is actually taking place, a needle is passing through thin grooves in black vinyl—nothing else.

Generic LP (2000) is a 45-minute video tape projection of a standard LP with a blank, white label playing on a turntable. My hand appears to place the LP on the turntable, to put the needle on the album, and so on. There is no sound but the needle does follow the grooves and the arm moves through the supposed series of songs. There is an openness and an option to the experience offered in the videotape, just as there is to the experiences offered in the unlimited possibilities of experience and emotion that have been recorded on wax.

What is the value of personal experience when we communicate through shared experiences? Is popular culture actually another language that exists somewhere between Sign and Esperanto? When does the experience of the favored pop star of the moment take precedence over our own? And how is it possible to know what is unique to ourselves when we share so much with everyone else? When one is left alone with only his music collection does that person have everything or nothing? *33 Revolutions Per Minute* is a musing on the possibilities of shared, exchanged, and substituted experience via recorded popular music.

Agitha Denmark Project

Carl Warnick

Libraries and collections are objects that yearn for order and correctness, yet always drag behind them and contain within them the chaos they were born from. Out of that chaos also comes the need to grow and duplicate.

The original performances of the *Agitha Denmark Project* asked people to "support dissemination" of "duplicated parts" of a sound collection. Those performances focused on the conversational aspects of the piece. This presentation of *Volume Two*, while not necessarily battling the echoes of past performances, utilizes a more sculptural and economic part of the piece.

Known Issues:

Artist, Album, tracks that are missing:

Eno et al. - Music For Films III - 4,14

Seti - Ciphers - 4

Various - Noise Kills Punk Dead - 40

Soft Machine - Alive and Well - 8

Bjork - All Is Full Of Love - 3

Two Lone Swordsmen - Stay Down - 13-16

The Meters - Funky Miracle - 18 on Disk One

Transporter - Transporter - 9-14

Prina, Hall & Oats

To be in love in this way is to follow the possibly slight tremors of desire towards a moment.

To construct that moment, or spaces for that moment to bloom, is a calculated effort to nurture love.

to mark

to mark yourself

to construct your

interactions with

yourself to scrape

away at what might have been

left accumulated