



GalleristNY

'Decenter' at Abrons Arts Center

By Will Heinrich 3/05 4:38pm

0 / 7

NEXT



START THE SLIDESHOW

To commemorate the centennial of the 1913 Armory Show, which introduced America to the multiplicative meta-realities of Cubism, curators Andrianna Campbell and Daniel S. Palmer invited 27 artists to install work in the Henry Street Settlement's Abrons Arts Center and/or online. The nonvirtual work includes a handsome abstraction by Andrew Kuo, John Houck's *Untitled #155, 809,999 combinations of a 2x2 grid, 30 colors* and Douglas Coupland's inhumanly cheery six-

foot-square acrylic QR code, *Imagine a Car Crash...*, a next-level commodification of Mondrian's famous *Broadway Boogie-Woogie* that can elicit a J.G. Ballard line about an endless car crash from your phone if you have the right app. But whether composed of mathematically generated sharp angles or reactive stabs back into an imagined primitivism, the nonvirtual work goes mainly to show that one medium can't really take the measure of another. If the Internet is now Cubism, we must find Cubism on the Internet.

So to commemorate the centennial of the Modernist fracture of the world into a kaleidoscope of cacophonous isolation, leading finally to the decoupling of content from form, with all the terrors and possibilities that implies, the curators put up a website (decenterarmory.com/network). The invited artists' names, along with links to their online work, are displayed on white labels, which connect to black labels showing the names of artists invited in turn by the invited artists. Inspired by Alfred H. Barr Jr.'s 1936 diagram of abstraction's antecedent -isms, the network looks very much like the reworking of that famous diagram currently hanging outside MoMA's "Inventing Abstraction" exhibition—except that because it's online, it can be organically endless and interactive. The labels proliferate and overlap, but the visitor can pull them out and rearrange them, making the straight lines between them stretch like Euclidean rubber bands. The result is a dauntingly chaotic but addictively alluring palimpsest that could very well lead you, via Rafaël Rozendaal's brilliantly silly web animations and Artie Vierkant's *Similar Objects (.com)* to Justin Kemp's ridiculously incisive 11-second video, *Extinguishing a scented candle with Febreze*. (Through April 7, 2013)