

BARTLEBY REVIEW

CHICAGO MERCANTILE EXCHANGE

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DECEMBER 14, 1977

ATTN: PIT TRADERS
FROM: LEO MELAMED
RE: NEW POLICY ON ATTIRE

Please take note that the Chicago Mercantile Exchange policy on appropriate footwear has changed, effective immediately. Due to injuries, platform shoes will no longer be permitted in the trading pit.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Leo Melamed,
Chairman

I Will Not Quote Bifo •••• Steffanie Ling

Brady Cranfield and Jamie Hilder

'Due to Injuries...'

221A
100-221 East Georgia
Through October 19

A stack of pineapple juice colored memos can be found in the corners of galleries where invitations to upcoming exhibitions are housed. This particular memo is dated from December 1977. The Chicago Mercantile Exchange has forbidden the wearing of platform shoes in the trading pit. To discern the memo's value, I inquire with the gallery about the memo. It's for Brady Cranfield and Jamie Hilder's upcoming curatorial project at 221A. I went to the opening to find out what the memo more precisely meant. The opening was well attended and buzzing about a forthcoming talk by Italian philosopher and critic Franco 'Bifo' Berardi that would be given in conjunction with the show. Feeling social and liking my outfit, my mission to glean the meaning of the memo that evening was aborted.

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Following up by attending Bifo's talk at SFU Woodward's, he spoke fervently about semio-capitalism, poetry and mantras. He answered many questions in depth and length, which I cannot recall in any depth or length. However, my memory has indexed with surprising clarity a moment when he drew a correlation between South Korea's high percentage of connectivity and its high suicide statistics. But what really dropped the anchor of remembrance was his remark on the quite small hands of Korean people who must grasp their electronic devices with the care and nurture of two hands. A care and nurture that should ideally be reserved for a delicious hamburger, or perhaps even a human child.

Eventually, I returned to the exhibition space. I entered into a stark inversion of my last visit. First thing, a slightly soul crushing confrontation with an immense spatial void produced by Cranfield and Hilder's choice to line all the objects in the exhibition against the perimeter of the gallery. The emptiness is not particularly oceanic, but vast enough to compel me to quickly relocate and begin looking intently at something, anything. That "something, anything," cannot be a press release though. However, there is a tall stack of posters with a twist on Uncle Sam. I unfold the poster expecting to reveal a polemical essay or parallel text accompanying the project but to no avail.

With no press release produced for the exhibition Cranfield and Hilder left me with no choice but to simply ask the gallery attendant. He was



eloquent and informed about the show and successfully extinguished my impressions of the pyramid of gold leafed bricks as a Minimalist hangover. I begin to notate what he says about the exhibition upon the Uncle Sam poster, but I have not included any of it in this review because I can honestly say that those notes are less important than the saga. Thus far, all my attempts at making traditional object-subject relationships with the exhibition space have been unsuccessful, instead leading me down immaterial or conversational paths. Cranfield and Hilder's exhibition is a material pretense in the sense that it is not conducive to subject-object relationships. Rather the objects in the exhibition are employed as props or departure points for the re-installment of dialogue, in the least metaphysical sense possible—seemingly prosaic, human interaction as the result of curatorial or artistic endeavors. Do you think a press release should come under the umbrella of Bifo's notions of "connectivity"?

Steffanie Ling