

ANTOINE CATALA

by Fran Gavin | March 10, 2014

CATALA IS ONE OF THE MOST EXCITING ARTISTS TO FUSE TECHNOLOGY AND SCULPTURE, EXPLORING THE INTERNET AS A TOOL THAT IS REFORMULATING MANKIND



What is visual language? The aim to communicate ideas through imagery and objects is arguably the entire purpose of art. It's something at the heart of the work of Antoine Catala, a French artist based in NYC who makes work that utilises technology in innovative ways.

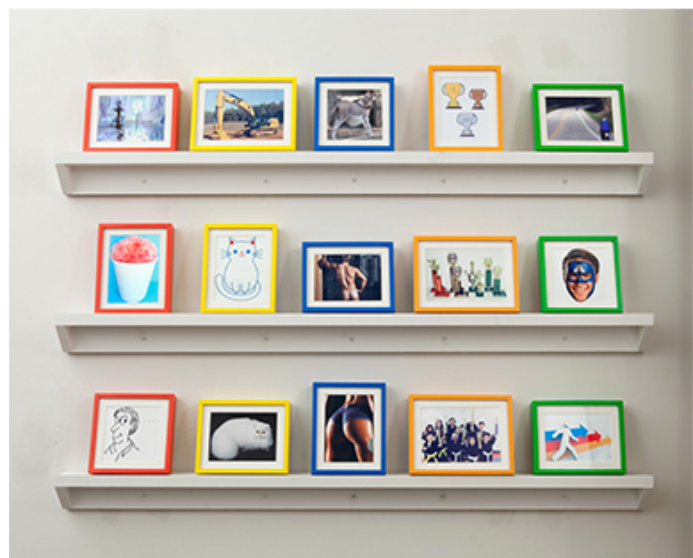
One of the central interests in Catala's work is the relationship between the Internet and human language. His installations and sculptural works play on how word and image connect. His exceptional recent show at 47 Canal St, for example, unified each work into a giant rebus, spelling out the phrase 'I See Catastrophes Ahead'.

"I'm fascinated by images, their psycho-physical perception, and dissemination. Images are shortcuts, hybrids between the virtual and real.

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The more we surround ourselves with images, the quicker we create an artificial universe around us and we, humans, transform in that man made universe.” he explains. “I believe, in a very McLuhan way, that the tools we use to surround ourselves with images have a greater impact on society than the images they circulate.”

Catala uses movement and kinetic elements in much of his work. This first manifested itself in pieces that pushed the experience of watching television into something beyond mere consumption. In ‘TV Blobs’ (2009) he streamed live TV into projected forms that move like 3D kaleidoscopes. “My aim was to accentuate the already physical relationship we have to television, in order, not to



highlight passivity, but to enhance the emotional connection through simple tropes.”

His approach to material is always inventive. ‘Logo to Myself and Others’ (2013) was made from a two state silicone membrane that inflated and deflated as if breathing. In other exhibitions, drones hovered within exhibition spaces next to cubes filled with stock imagery. “The helicopters have quite a menacing presence. The idea is a mixture of robotics and language. Words automata,” he notes.

Catala is quickly becoming one of the stars of his generation, with a solo presentation at Art Basel last summer and work in the influential ‘Speculations on Anonymous Materials’ show at Kassel’s Fridericianum, alongside artists such as Ed Atkins and Michele Abeles. Nothing is haphazard here. This artist’s work is all about groupings and classification of imagery. “The aim is to “reveal the mechanics that the system that produces and distributes the images.” Post-Catala, floating on the waves of the Internet is never quite the same again.

