

GALLERY 400

400 SOUTH PEORIA STREET (MC 034)

Chicago, IL 60607

UIC SCHOOL OF ART & ART HISTORY

312 996 6114

gallery400.uic.edu

Tues–Fri 10–6, Sat 12–6

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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It's the Political Economy, Stupid

November 1–December 14, 2013



Image: flo6x8, *Body Versus Capital*, 2011, video, 40:00 min. (still).

October 21, 2013—Chicago, IL—Featuring artists **Zanny Begg** and **Oliver Ressler**; **Filippo Berta**; **Libia Castro** and **Ólafur Ólafsson**; **Julia Christensen**; **Paolo Cirio**; **Noel Douglas**; **Field Work**; **Yevgeniy Fiks**, **Olga Kopenkina**, and **Alexandra Lerman**; **flo6x8**; **Melanie Gilligan**; **Jan Peter Hammer**; **Alicia Herrero**; **Institute for Wishful Thinking**; **Sherry Millner** and **Ernie Larsen**; **Isa Rosenberger**; and **Dread Scott**. Chicago-born artist **Dread Scott** stands on Wall Street burning dollar after dollar before police show up in *Money To Burn*, just one of over a dozen contemporary videos and artworks that make up *It's The Political Economy, Stupid*. A traveling exhibition co-organized by **Oliver Ressler** and **Gregory Sholette**, *It's the Political Economy, Stupid* features video, photography, installation, and drawing by artists from around the globe who critically address the "new norm" of the prolonged economic and political crisis that began in 2008. The title of the exhibition stems from James Carville's catch phrase, "It's the economy, stupid," which became closely identified with Bill Clinton in his 1992 presidential campaign.

Over three decades, neoliberal capitalism has driven most of the world's governments to partly or wholly abandon their roles as arbitrators between the security of the majority and the profiteering of the corporate sector. *It's the Political Economy, Stupid* proves that both art and

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artists can productively engage the seemingly insurmountable problems that stem from capital, crisis, and resistance. **Libia Castro** and **Ólafur Ólafsson**'s video *Lobbyists* portrays the immaterial labor of lobbyists and activists in Brussels and Strasbourg, while **Filippo Berta**'s *Homo Homini Lupus* video depicts a group of wolves fighting over the remnants of an Italian flag. **Jan Peter Hammer**'s *The Anarchist Banker* resituates the framework of a 1920s short story in the present day as a banker's conversation with a television journalist and **Melanie Gilligan**'s *Crisis in the Credit System*, short TV-style episodes that dramatize financial employee workshops and their aftermath, are based on extensive research and conversation with major hedge fund managers, key financial journalists, economists, bankers, and debt activists, while **Zanny Begg** and **Oliver Ressler**'s *The Bull Laid Bear* combines interviews of economists and activists with hand-drawn animations, creating a semi-fictitious world of gangster bankers and corrupt courts. In less sobering visions, **Institute of Wishful Thinking** approaches crisis from the viewpoint of artists and designers who believe that they can identify and change social problems, while **Julia Christensen**'s slideshow *How Communities Are Reusing the Big Box* picture the many reuses of abandoned superstores in the United States.

In a five-part video narrative titled *The Revenge of The Crystals*, **Field Work** depicts the aftermath of a revolution. In *Body Versus Capital*, **flo6x8** presents footage of unannounced flamenco performances in banks, while **Isa Rosenberger**, in her work *Espiral*, pays homage to German dancer and choreographer Kurt Joos' *The Green Table* (1932), a ballet that engages the economic crisis of the 1930s, updating the references to include present day Austrian banking systems. **Alicia Herrero** questions the materiality of art and the limits of artistic genres within the ideological framework of capitalism in the video *Bank: Art & Economies*, while **Yevgeniy Fiks**, **Olga Kopenkina** and **Alexandra Lerman**'s *Reading Lenin with Corporations* features readings of a 1916 Lenin text by corporate leaders and professors of economics. **Sherry Millner** and **Ernie Larsen**'s video essay, *Rock the Cradle*, centers a crucial moment that unites numerous groups in a society. Shot in the streets of Thessaloniki, Greece and at an anti-fascist festival in Serbia, the video portrays youth, workers, grassroots union activists, illegal immigrants, and anarchists in a remarkable resistance against the socioeconomic crisis.

It's the Political Economy, Stupid is accompanied by a catalogue (Pluto Press, 2013) featuring analysis and essays by Slavoj Žižek, Brian Holmes, Judith Butler, David Graeber, Julia Bryan-Wilson, John Roberts, and others.

Related Programs:

Opening Reception, Friday, November 1, 5-8pm

Talk: Oliver Ressler, Gregory Sholette, and Brian Holmes, Saturday November 2, 2pm

Tours:

Gallery 400 offers guided tours for groups of all ages. Tours are free of charge but require reservation. Please complete our online form (accessible at gallery400.uic.edu/visit/tours) to schedule a tour of *The Program*. For more information, or to discuss the specific needs and interests of your group, please contact us at 312 996 6114 or gallery400@uic.edu.

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Gallery 400 is supported by the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; the School of Art and Art History, the College of Architecture, Design, and the Arts, University of Illinois at Chicago; and a grant from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency. Howard and Donna Stone and Jeff Stokols and Daryl Gerber Stokols provide general support to Gallery 400 programs. Additional support for *It's the Political Economy, Stupid* is provided by the Goethe-Institut Chicago.

Founded in 1983, Gallery 400 is one of the nation's most vibrant university galleries, showcasing work at the leading edge of contemporary art, architecture, and design. The Gallery's program of exhibitions, lectures, film and video screenings, and performances features interdisciplinary and experimental practices. Operating within the School of Art and Art History in the College of Architecture, Design, and the Arts at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), Gallery 400 endeavors to make the arts and its practitioners accessible to a broad spectrum of the public and to cultivate a variety of cultural and intellectual perspectives. Gallery 400 is recognized for its support of the creation of new work, the diversity of its programs and participants, and the development of experimental models for multidisciplinary exhibition.