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Contact:

Veronica Mijelshon, Gallery Director
veronica@nurtureart.org 718 782 7755

NURTUREart Non-Profit, Inc. presents

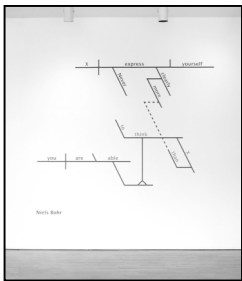
Well Read
March 11 – May 7, 2006

Opening reception: Saturday, March 11, 6 – 11 p.m.

February 17, 2006, Williamsburg, Brooklyn, NY – *Well Read* is a group exhibition curated by Christopher Howard that explores what it means to “read” in contemporary art and culture. In conjunction with the exhibition, NURTUREart presents a curator’s talk on Saturday, April 15.

Through an expanded concept of reading, *Well Read* examines the cognition and understanding of visual signs, the aesthetic role of language, the negotiation between authors and readers, and the expression and confounding of meaning. Although language appears in some works by the ten included artists, the exhibition aims to transcend the traditional text/image dichotomy, investigating how art conveys information through a variety of means, and how viewers receive and understand this information.

Featured artists are: *Stephanie Brooks*, *Beth Campbell*, *Cui Fei*, *Gabriel Fowler*, *Vandana Jain*, *Nicholas Knight*, *Heidi Neilson*, *Matt Siber*, *Duston Spear*, and *Molly Springfield*.



Two artists deal directly with language, emphasizing the visual forms—real or imaginative—that verbal expression can take. *Nicholas Knight* diagrams sentences culled from the writings of eminent thinkers, authors, and artists, showing how parts of speech and sentence structure work to create meaning, literally, visually, and philosophically. *Beth Campbell*’s text-based flowchartlike drawings, from her series “My Potential Future Based on Present Circumstances,” begin with an autobiographical scenario and swell into a topsy-turvy web of possible outcomes, from the serious to the absurd. One critic has written, “She makes art out of the way we think”—these drawings could thus be seen as reading her thoughts.

Visualizing the mental images of memory and nostalgia, *Molly Springfield* paints handwritten notes—the kind grade-school students pass during class—often doubling and reversing the words, creating a translucent space that fluctuates between legibility and illegibility. Her meticulous, photorealistic drawings of photocopied pages of art books and literary works juxtapose the permanence of scholarly knowledge with the disposability of the Xerox copy.

Cui Fei and *Stephanie Brooks* use language to explore new aesthetic and conceptual spaces. *Cui* pins dozens of small, dried twigs to the wall; these forms imitate the characters of Chinese calligraphy, which themselves derive from nature. She also glues rose thorns to sheets of paper—love letters that are a perilous yet intensely poetic form of Braille. *Brooks*’s untitled plaques present texts stating, for example, “Something beautiful” and “The best day of my life”—things inadequately represented by words, images, or a combination of the two. For *Love Songs*, she turns personal letters and published texts into musical notation for sheet music.

Vandana Jain reconfigures familiar corporate logos in her “Tangrams” series. Freed from brand identity and controlling functionality, these symbols playfully resist consumer culture. *Gabriel Fowler* fabricates sculptural works that resemble ordinary street and commercial signs. Yet he substitutes those signs’ factual nature for abstract, open-ended, and humorous interpretations.

Matt Siber photographs urban street scenes and digitally removes all words and numbers that appear within the frame. He then creates two separate pictures—one of the street scene, the other of the transplanted characters—showing not only how language permeates the contemporary world, but also how the composition of signs, symbols, color, and architecture are laden with signification.





Dustin Spear's paintings contain riffs on street graffiti, fragments of writing by Stephen Crane, and enigmatic images of a backpack, which can all be read in terms of the outlaw, criminal, and terrorist, and as an urgent reflection on war.

Eschewing narrative storytelling, *Heidi Neilson's* artist's books and postcards explore the role of punctuation—an integral but often overlooked part of written communication—as symbols that express tone and emotion, as well as a sense of closure. In another body of work, she collages cut-up maps into unusual configurations, allowing the viewer read geography and topography in new ways.

Christopher Howard is manager of media and communications for the College Art Association (CAA). He is editor of *CAA News* and www.collegeart.org and served as staff editor of *caa.reviews*, an online book- and exhibition-reviews journal, from 2001 to 2005. Howard has written on art for the *Brooklyn Rail* and *The Art Book*, among other publications, and helped organize *The Early Show: Video from 1969–1979* at the Bertha and Karl Leubsdorf Art Gallery at Hunter College, on view March 16–May 6, 2006. He is pursuing a master's degree in art history at Hunter.

The artists' reception will be held on Saturday, March 11, from 6 to 11 p.m. as part of the Williamsburg Gallery Association's "After Hours." NURTUREart is pleased to participate with dozens of other galleries in this event celebrating the Armory Show; for further information, please visit www.williamsburgcelebrates.com.

Well Read is a NURTUREart Emerging Curators' Program collaboration. Learn more about the Emerging Curators' Program at www.nurtureart.org.

Pictures: **Nicholas Knight**, *Never Express (Bohr)*, 2004, tape, vinyl, and pencil on wall, size determined by installation.
Gabriel Fowler, *Intersection*, 2004, reflective vinyl lettering and aluminum with stand, 24 x 24 x 120 in.
Heidi Neilson, page from *Atlas of Punctuation (Horton Hears a Who!* by Dr. Seuss), 2004, letterpress printed book, edition of 100, 9.75 x 8.5 x .5 in.

Directions:

NURTUREart Gallery and Emerging Curators' Resource Center:

475 Keap Street in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. It is located near the intersection of Union and Metropolitan Avenues, just steps from the L train Lorimer Street station or the G train Metropolitan Avenue station. The gallery is open to the public on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays from noon to 6 p.m., and by appointment: 718 782 7755.

NURTUREart is a New York State licensed, federally tax-exempt charitable fine art services organization founded in 1997 by George J. Robinson and run completely by volunteer professionals. Founded on the conviction that success in the visual arts is the result of collaboration not exclusion, NURTUREart is committed to nurturing emerging artists and curators through exposure, enrichment and opportunity. NURTUREart has mounted numerous exhibitions of its Registry Artists' and Curators' work, and presented a wide variety of enrichment events and Muse Fuse gatherings at its Williamsburg gallery and at host venues throughout the New York Metropolitan Area. Visit www.nurtureart.org.

The NURTUREart Gallery & Emerging Curators' Resource Center is funded in part by the Lily Auchincloss Foundation, Milton and Sally Avery Arts Foundation, Inc., Brooklyn Arts Council, and Leibowitz Foundation. NURTUREart appreciates their support.

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