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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### ***Roofless Motifs***

Harrell Fletcher  
Corin Hewitt  
Elizabeth McAlpine

**April 1-May 1, 2011**

**Opening reception Sunday, April 3, 7-8pm**

**Elizabeth McAlpine, *Words & Music (Headlines)*, will be performed the following dates:**

**Sunday, April 3 at 4:45, 5:45 and 6:45pm**

**Sunday, May 1 at 4:45, 5:45 and 6:45pm**

"Now this shows you the roofless motif which I think is very, very handsome. . . . This is really the old hotel and you can see that instead of just tearing it down at once they tear it down partially so that you are not deprived of the wreckage situation. That's very satisfying actually to me: it's not often that you see buildings being both ripped down and built up at the same time. . . ."

- Robert Smithson

In three acts of ventriloquism, chaos gives way to formalism. An exhibition of new work by Harrell Fletcher, Corin Hewitt, and Elizabeth McAlpine, *Roofless Motifs* includes performance, drawings, photographs and video where the spontaneity of performance and the entropic forces of nature push the limits of form. At the same time, the insistence of structuralism and our reliance on language further defines the parameters of each artist's work.

In 1972, Robert Smithson delivered a slide lecture to the architecture students at the University of Utah on Hotel Palenque, a partially demolished construction project he came across in Mexico. Offhand, and at times droll in its delivery, Smithson recounted the beauty and intrigue of the waterless pools, rebar jutting out of demolished concrete walls, and roofless buildings. Unclear if the lecture mocked academia and its fetishization of these sites or was a genuine recount of his visit, the notorious lecture has become legendary in Smithson's life and work.

Harrell Fletcher's video, *Robert Smithson: The Hotel Palenque*, covers Smithson's original lecture, delivering its content in a drier and more ambiguous tone. Questioning the distribution of knowledge and its interpretation, Fletcher's work resists traditional hierarchies, opening up dialogues between and across political structures. The bootlegged and casual nature of his work also suggests an irreverence toward the preciousness of the art world that galvanizes and instantiates the original.

Corin Hewitt's *Recomposed Monochromes* are created through the digital rendering of brown and gray organic materials such as rocks, dirt, and twigs from a flatbed scanner. These scanned images are manipulated in Photoshop, pushing the neutral colors to the limits of the color spectrum, and extracting underlying hues not immediately apparent from their origin. Hewitt then prints these vivid monochromes and composites the printouts with dirt and leaves, returning them (as objects) to nature. The partially eroded papers are then rescanned and reprinted creating luminous images of decomposing color and debris. Like much of Hewitt's recent investigations into performance, sculpture and photography, these works confront the fixity of objects, introducing both the entropy of decay and enacting a number of object/image reversals.

A central work in the show, Elizabeth McAlpine's performance, *Words & Music (Headlines)*, attempts to re-imagine the written word through sound. Assigning each key on a piano to letters and punctuation points, McAlpine transcribes the day's news headlines into sustained musical chords. Performed by five pianists simultaneously around an upright piano, the resultant composition is imbued with the randomness of the translation, but also the patterns and pace of language and current events. First enacted at the Barbican, and then at Laura Bartlett Gallery in London, this will be the first performance of the work in the United States.

In a group of related drawings called *News Lines*, McAlpine traces the image frames from the British dailies. Traced through carbon paper on sheets of newsprint, these works take on the crisp, lean look of architectural rendering, utilizing the structure of the printed paper to create new forms. As with other works in the exhibition, a confusion persists: Are these plans for the creation of something, or the remnants of a thing destroyed?

**Harrell Fletcher** has produced a variety of socially engaged collaborative and interdisciplinary projects since the early 1990s. He has had solo exhibitions at the Wattis Institute, San Francisco; The Power Plant, Toronto; LAXART, Los Angeles; and White Columns and the Wrong Gallery in New York. Selected group exhibitions include SF MoMA, the de Young Museum, the Berkeley Art Museum, the Drawing Center, SculptureCenter, Domain de Kerguehennec in France, the Royal College of Art in London, and the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne, Australia. He was a participant in the 2004 Whitney Biennial.

In the past four years, **Corin Hewitt** has produced a number of exhibitions that operate between performance, sculpture and photography. These projects include solo exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the Seattle Art Museum and Western Bridge, Seattle, WA; the Firehouse Center for the Visual Arts, Burlington, VT; and Small A Projects, Portland, OR; and a monograph produced by J&L Publications. Hewitt will have a solo exhibition at Laurel Gitlen in September 2011.

**Elizabeth McAlpine** is a London-based artist whose drawings, film-based works and performances have been exhibited recently in solo exhibitions at Laura Bartlett Gallery, London; Eastside Projects, Birmingham; and Statements at ArtBasel. She has been included in numerous group exhibitions at institutions and galleries including the Barbican Art Gallery, Thomas Dane and the Tate Modern, London; Transmission, Glasgow; East International, Norwich; and the Kadist Foundation, Paris.