



“Sean Raspet: Sean Raspet’s Deformulation”

March 5, 2015



Sean Raspet, *Program for Continuous Controlled Vaporization*, 2014 – 2015

Commercially produced substances (including natural and artificial flavors, cosmetics and cleaning products), 3 HeraTherm Advanced Protocol ovens with programmable temperature increase, Omniaire 600V negative air machine, activated carbon filter
Dimensions variable

Pointing to Lucy Lippard’s concept of the ‘dematerialization of the art object’, Sean Raspet has taken over the space of Société, saturating it with by the smell of transformed compounds into an invisible, immeasurable, but nonetheless real force. This metaphorical force field, reminiscent of Robert Barry’s *Electromagnetic Energy Field* (1968), occupies the gallery space with an undefined charge of atmosphere- the force of financialisation and a heavily abstracted economy.

“Propyl acetate, butyl acetate, isoamyl acetate, 1-butanol, pentyl acetate, 2-methyl-1-butanol...” This is the recipe for the “Fruit Intersection of (Apple () Pear), then (Pear () Banana), and (Banana () Apple)” from Sean Raspet’s exhibition “Deformulation” that opened last week at Société gallery, combining sculptural pieces and odour to unsettling effect. White plastic containers with the title *Fruit Intersection Average* ($\langle \text{fruit} \rangle$ () $\langle \text{fruit} \rangle$) house machines that diffuse the liquids into their constitutive components, emitting a sickly smell. “A machine heats up a compound or a mixture at a very slow rate, and each compound has a different boiling point, so gradually different odours evaporate,” Raspet explained in a recent interview with Mousse Magazine.

Expanding the titles of his works into the scientific “poems” of chemical equations (i.e. “Nc1c(C(OC)=O)cccc1”, 2014), deconstructing and reformulating Coca-Cola’s™ soft drink into its enantiomer, or chemical mirror image, Raspet questions the ownership/authorship in patent-making and scientific annotation. This examination of linguistic forms is translated into the gallery space through repetition and objects appearing as symbols. Raspet transforms the space into a seemingly neutral environment of high-tech, rigorous procedures.