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Clockwise from top left: gifl: *Children of a Wiser Day*, 2013; Robert Attanasio: *Critical Condition*, 2012; Bob Seng: *Exit 778*, 2011; Adam Taya: *Jungle Variations*, 2011

Critical Condition

Curated By: Robert Attanasio

JIM KEMPNER FINE ART

501 West 23rd Street, New York, NY 10011

June 6th – July 13th

Opening Reception: June 6th 6-8pm

Our world churns in continuous flux, heaving with the collective need to survive in ever-expanding artificial environments.

Striving for perceived success, our society favors consumerism, celebrity culture and other distractions. We are encouraged by media and a polarized political system to complacently swallow what we are fed.

Critical Condition, curated by Robert Attanasio, seeks to shake us out of our slumber by bringing together four artists whose work shines a spotlight on the artifices threatening to overtake us. Discussing the hypocrisy of modern warfare, the hypnotic methods of advertising and the mindless acceptance of the status quo, these artists provoke viewers to confront the corporate power structure while proposing new ways of seeing. They are artists as critics, dismissive of the approach of “business as usual” and “art for art’s sake.” Being blunt is the new subtlety.

Robert Attanasio's work is at once mischievous and thought provoking. Asking viewers to reconsider the obvious with his sly depiction of everyday concerns, he pushes the boundaries of how we perceive and understand daily life and its struggles. His favorite target is the art world, but the "real" world is always part of the equation. gilf! challenges viewers to transcend the mind-numbing effects of the syndicated voice by inviting them to change positions in front of her work. At the proper angle, hidden words pop off the wall addressing hypnotic and manipulative concepts. The artist's response to these formulas, muted in the background, offers an alternative to the manipulations. Bob Seng deconstructs symbols that command compliance. EXIT signs and American flags are subjected to scraping, fire, even caustic treatments that parallel current political and economic processes. Adam Tave's camouflaged target series depicts the notion of hiding in plain sight. While confounding the hunter, these pieces question the true target, or desired result, of our combative nature.

In challenging existing conditions, these artists invite viewers to adopt a clear-eyed approach to the world around them. Their work is urgent and their aim sharp. This is a pivotal point in history where hypocrisy must be addressed to avoid the permanent damage of a fragmented society and a devastated environment. This moment no longer allows us the luxury of "going with the flow," especially since we all know, only sheep and dead fish go with the flow.

As Nelson Mandela said:

"There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine as children do...

And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same.

As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others."

As an antidote to the seductions of false security, Critical Condition insists on running headfirst toward precarious risks.

For more information, please contact Dru Arstark at dru@jimkempner.com or Sarah Bielicky at sarah@jimkempner.com or call the gallery at (212) 206-6872.