

Ronald Feldman Fine Arts

KELLY HEATON

For Immediate Release: August 19, 2012

The Parallel Series

September 8 – October 27

With her latest body of work, *The Parallel Series*, Kelly Heaton has created an immersive experience of sight, sound, and soul within a painterly context. Countering two platitudes in parallel, "Painting is dead" and "God is dead," Heaton's new images literally come to life with the pulsing, chirping, and breathing of the natural world that surrounds her in rural Virginia: a simmering fire, a rainy spring forest, insects on a summer night, a beating heart, the cry of a lonesome bird. None of the effects are recordings. Analog electronic circuits, designed by Heaton to generate this audio-visual show, adhere to the paintings' surfaces. Form, function, and content are integrated into highly original compositions of *The Parallel Series*.

The landscapes, *Spout Run at Dusk*, *Spout Run in the Rain*, *Summer Insects (Midday July)*, and *Fireflies – With an Insect Chorus at Dusk in a Grassy Field*, provide visceral experiences of nature's pleasures. The sounds of crickets, cicada, and birds are electrical phenomena crafted by Heaton. When the paintings are "turned off," their dormant surfaces continue to sparkle with shiny plastic parts, the glint of lead solder, and the lively interplay of seemingly infinite, miniature electronic components: resistors, capacitors, and transistors; transformers, sensors, and timers; and yards upon spools of wires.

Other paintings manifest an esoteric dimension within the show's naturalistic soundscape. The golden orb of *Beginning*, Heaton's first successful integration of electricity and painting, evokes The Big Bang. *Solar Plexus* invites Eastern meditation. In *Self Portrait (Resisto Ergo Sum)*, pulsing lights encircle an image of the artist's head, like barbed wire set alight with psychic fire. *Portrait of Jesus Christ* and *The Holy Spirit* have an audible heartbeat, while other drawings breathe to the rhythm of ancient Chinese medicine. Silos of religion dissolve to the sound of summer crickets.

Twelve small studies present simple circuits with diagrams, text, and drawings. Also displayed are sketches and watercolors made during the nine-year period that Heaton taught herself analog electrical engineering.

Same as any technology, the electronic components in these artworks are not engineered to work forever, inviting a comparison to the impermanent sand mandalas of Tibetan Buddhism. *The Parallel Series*, through the intersection of nature, energy, and spirituality, asks what does one gain when a painting is imbued with electronics; and what does one lose when the electricity is gone. Audio and video recordings will archive the work.

Trained in art and science, Kelly Heaton received her Bachelor of Art from Yale University in 1994, her Master of Science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 2000, and was awarded a residency at the Duke University Department of Computer Science in 2002. The Feldman Gallery exhibited Heaton's last solo show, *Live Pelt* in 2003, described by the critic Kim Levin "as conceptually perfect" in *The Village Voice*. The multi-media installation deconstructed the Tickle Me Elmo doll as a vector to channel information about America's Pop culture and its historical fur trade, and featured *The Surrogate*, a vibrating coat fashioned from the electronics of 64 pre-owned Elmos won at eBay auctions.

Reception: Saturday, September 8, 6-8. Gallery hours are Tuesday - Saturday, 10-6. Monday by appointment. For more information, contact Eleanore Hopper at (212) 226-3232 or Eleanore@feldmangallery.com.

31 Mercer Street, New York, New York 10013
212 226-3232 fax 212 941-1536 www.feldmangallery.com