

Rivington Arms

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For Immediate Release:

Plasticine Heads

October 24 – November 27, 2002

Rivington Arms is pleased to present *Plasticine Heads*, new work by Jonah Koppel opening October 24, 2002.

Jonah Koppel's portraits on felt are derived from vague likenesses that hint at some type of status. Using graphite Koppel draws ambiguously to produce responses based more in memory and familiarity rather than instant recognition. The portraits set a trap for the viewer who expects to be able to identify the faces, catching them off guard and thus creating, in Koppel's opinion, welcomed confusion. His "Series: Idiots" is pinned to the wall, pushing the viewers to interact with the installation of wide-eyed oddities staring back at them.

The felt pieces are crudely cut around and sliced into, the rips in the portraits break the illusion of the work by allowing the viewer to look through the felt to the wall behind. The "Series: Idiots" becomes even more sculptural as parts of the portraits flop forward, the light casting exaggerated shadows and increasing the feeling of removed peculiarity. Koppel bridges the gap between his academic subject matter and his romantic sensibilities with his use of tactile and sensual materials.

The "Series: Idiots" is hung thematically in a rigid hierarchy, as if the felt heads are both Shakespearian characters and traditional portraits that could be stumbled upon in the halls of the United Nations. Equally impressive in their stature and mass are Koppel's two plasticine sculptures of heads. Sitting rigidly on top of high plywood pedestals the heads convey a governmental air in their presentation. The materials Koppel used for this show, felt, plasticine, prosthetic eyes and teeth, cotton, and wood, are all substances that have taken on a new weight in their treatment. The sculptures are perfectly put together and extremely thought through, juxtaposing their conservative and conventional display. Koppel is trying to make traditional and wholly un-ironic work in the hyper conscious time that we live in.

Having graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design in 2001, Koppel has temporarily relocated to Chicago.

In addition to the artwork Rivington Arms sells smaller works both related and independent to the artists such as art books, posters, rings, t-shirts, CDs, and small sculptures.

Rivington Arms is open Tuesday – Friday from 11am – 6pm, Saturday and Sunday 12pm – 6pm.

