

New York

“Process 01: Joy”

P!

334 Broome Street

September 16–November 3

It must take a particular kind of obsession, and a notably self-reflexive sense of humor, to organize an exhibition about feeling lost, lonely, or rebellious in a job, and then subtitle that exhibition “joy.” But with the first show to open at this new gallery and project space in Chinatown, director Prem Krishnamurthy, of the design studio Project Projects, manages to delve into the alienation of labor while still deifying the love of one’s work.

The centerpiece of the exhibition is an installation by Christine Hill that serves as a remote office and New York satellite for her long-running, Berlin-based *Volksboutique* project. *Volksboutique Small Business Outpost (Chinatown Division)*, 2012, consists of an enormous office desk replete with a typewriter, a blotter pad, a glass dish filled with peppermints, and a vase with fresh flowers, among other effects. The real work, however, is more durational than object-obsessed, less the desk itself than the paperwork being pushed across it for the show’s six-week run. Hill collects signs from local businesses, updates the graphics, and returns them to their owners (if they decide they prefer the new sign over the old).

Hill’s gesture flirts with generosity on one hand and gentrification on the other. Rather than dodge that ambiguity, “Process 01: Joy” embraces it, folding the *Volksboutique* between two very different artists who take up the pleasures and sorrows of work, and prove them maddeningly interchangeable. Two dozen gorgeous and playful letterpress monoprints by Karel Martens, made between 1958 and 2012, willfully misuse a technology intended for mass production to create unique objects. To the left is a roomful of material related to Chauncey Hare, an engineer who gave up his job at an oil company to pursue photography, only to find museums equally rife with complicities and conflicts of interest. Now a therapist specializing in workplace abuse, Hare is out of the art world completely, but a letter (on view here) to a critic he hoped would review one of his books is a devastating reminder of the work that matters, artwork and otherwise.



View of “Process 01: Joy,” 2012. Christine Hill, *Volksboutique Small Business Outpost (Chinatown Division)*, 2012, mixed media, dimensions variable.

— Kaelen Wilson-Goldie