

New York

Société Réaliste

P!

334 Broome Street**September 5–October 27**

Jagged text on a new hot-red awning on Broome Street instructs “Lasciate ogne stranezza voi ch'intrate” (Abandon all strangeness ye who enter here). The work, produced by the Paris-based cooperative Société Réaliste as part of their first solo exhibition in New York, jiggers the welcome note to hell from Dante's *Inferno*, which mandates that entrants abandon all hope. That strangeness is commensurate with hope is the backbone of critique in “A Rough Guide to Hell,” which includes seven works that dilate the nearly immaterial architecture of computer code to the aesthetic persuasions of typeface, and on to the muscular conduits of capital that are urban designs. Société Réaliste perforates political and economic systems of representation that exploit social and cultural difference



View of “A Rough Guide to Hell,” 2013.

For the video projection *The Fountainhead*, 2010, the artists digitally altered King Vidor's 1949 film adaptation of Ayn Rand's ode to individualism and laissez-faire capitalism to exclude human figures, leaving a barren portrait of New York. A nearby floor-to-ceiling text intervention, *Circles of Errors*, 2013, presents a litany of phrases meant to mimic the cadence of computer error messages. Within this prose, “Idealized Restriction” calibrates to “Restricted Hospitality” and “Imagination Is Fatal” calibrates to “Failed Randomization.” These modulations build a loose narrative of the deadening effects of global streams of capital as they run alongside the ever-pervasive information network. The work uses a Frankensteinian font that Société Réaliste developed specially for the exhibition. Titled Media Police, the typeface has been assembled from a collection of international newspapers' logotypes via an exquisite corpse formula. It achieves the fractured aesthetic of glitch, and the regional identities inscribed in each element recombine into a surprisingly functional typeface. The only strange thing about Media Police is its legibility: It performs as a smooth agent of exchange, but represents no place at all.

— Annie Godfrey Larmon