

Freed Foundation

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LETTERS

CONTRIBUTORS

Kristin Lucas

- Charissa N. Terranova -



Lucas' captives, a previously unknown group calling itself the "Invisible Framing Action," released this photo today, along with a cryptic list of demands that called for the release of a number of so-called "political prisoners," none of whom are actually thought to be incarcerated. Coincidentally missing from the demands was any mention of a ransom. Said an unnamed official, "Until we get an actual dollar amount, there's really not much we can do."



Another photo of Kristin Lucas was released today by Invisible Framing Action, but the group paradoxically asserted that "the picture PROVES that we have freed Kristin Lucas, because this IS NOT Kristin Lucas." An unnamed official said authorities have "no f---ing idea what they're talking about," and pleaded with the FBI to "just tell us what you want, really", as the Lucas hostage crisis moved into its second month.

Perry Hoberman, *Hostage Crisis*,

2007; inkjet print on paper; 16 ½ x 44 inches

Kristin Lucas' *Show #14*, the many-headed beast that it is, comes off without a glitch. It works supremely well, both formally and intellectually. In the back gallery, works by twenty-two additional artists provide an added dimension to the exhibition. As diverse in medium as the main exhibition—including photography, video, electronic music, drawing and painting—each artist renders a unique portrait of “Kristin Lucas.” This collective effort sheds light on the hidden self-portraiture in the multiple fictions presented in the main space. According to Lucas, you are what you surf, at least digitally speaking. No more simulacra here. Your digital self is not a mere reflection: you are the screen.

Lucas' work bears this message in an array of media, including photographs mounted like creepy advertisements on light boxes, a three-channel video, an ersatz computer and the documentation of a legal battle to change her name from *Kristin Sue Lucas* to *Kristin Sue Lucas*. Yes, that's right. Lucas went through the bureaucratic process of having her name changed to the same name in order to “refresh” her identity, so to speak. In a six-part, text-based piece entitled *Refresh*, court documents reveal this process, including commentary from the bewildered yet thoughtful judge who presided over the case. Surprisingly, the judge wrapped up the case by granting the would-be name change, delivering the insightful comment: “You have changed your name to exactly what it was before in the spirit of refreshing yourself as though

you were a webpage.”

Equally complicated is *Whatever Your Mind Can Conceive* in which the artist combines theatrical performance, meta-narrative, installation and video to document the fiction of a lonely eccentric. Working in tandem, the videos tell the broken narrative of a fictional bingo caller (Lucas) with mysterious buboes on her face. Two projections—one screened directly on a makeshift wall (a wooden packing crate), the other cast at an angle on plywood—show Lucas standing in the windswept landscape of the Nevada dessert. Her mouth moves to inaudible effect as sonorous music by Geoffrey Morris overtakes the space.

Complementing the rocky terrain in the projection, fiberglass-cast rocks rest on the gallery floor. The narrative itself unfolds in a video projected onto a faux fiberglass computer, which tells the story of the bingo caller’s visit to a doctor—a real hypnotherapist in Nevada—ostensibly because of a bubbling rash on her face. We soon come to find out that the rash acts as antennae for channeling bingo numbers. The craggy rocks and computer read like a futuristic ruin, propping up Lucas’ fantastic tale of technology run amok.

Though edgy, Lucas is not peerless. She shares good company with, for example, Phil Collins, whose final iteration of *the world won’t listen* at the Dallas Museum of Art enlisted a similar mix of event documentation and high-tech presentation. Where Lucas really succeeds, however, is in a roundabout acknowledgement of the delusion of self-portraiture. Her work is an indictment of narcissism and an affirmation of a simple truth: we can never really see ourselves as others do.

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