

UPDATE 85-86

JUNE 10-JUNE 28

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JOHN FRANKLIN

April 2—12, 1986
(Main room show-Meyer Valsman)

John Franklin showed a large number of intriguingly subversive objects. The central pieces were a series of three small-to medium-sized canvases that appeared to be striped paintings a la Daniel Buren, but were actually blank canvases with Typewriter and Time-clock ribbons stretched tautly across their surfaces. Mr. Franklin left clues as to these objects' physical nature; the inevitable fingerprints where carefully but discreetly displayed on the canvas edge, giving evidence, acceptable to the FBI, that the "artist's hand" was indeed present in these objects' fabrication. These three "paintings", *Post Mark*, *Flag*, and *Awning*, all refer directly to the real world objects after which they are titled, and indirectly to a multitude of references from the history of abstract art.

The witty manipulations of objects through simple means, to make them subversive, is Mr. Franklin's talent. By taking an elevator mirror, signing it, titling it *Tre Ochi*, (third eye, in Italian) and placing it in the top corner of the White Room so each viewer was visible to himself as part of the installation, he calls into question the self conscious manner in which many viewers look at art.

His subjects are as far-ranging as recent art history, molecular science, botany, optical perception, the merchandizing of products and sexual politics. He handles them all with a sweep of his sharp eye and even sharper mind.



Installation view, 1986