



Kenneth Anger:
Left to right, *Scorpio
Rising*, 1964,
*Invocation of My
Demon Brother*,
1969, and *Lucifer
Rising*, 1981, all
16mm film; at P.S.1.



John Stezaker: *Wedding (Film Portrait
Collage) II*, 2008, collage, 10¼ by 8½
inches; at Friedrich Petzel.

Candice Breitz: *Her*, 2008, s
channel video installation, ap
minutes; at Yvon Lambert.



seems less the archetype of a rock goddess and more the schlocky vixen of so many bad Hollywood B-movies. But the lushness of color and the grand soundtrack experimentation (such as Mick Jagger's electronic distortions in 1969's *Invocation of My Demon Brother*) can more than compensate for the awkward kitsch of these psychedelic films. P.S.1's bold survey presents the sheer scope of Anger's baroque ambitions and provides a much-needed examination of his vast influence on both avant-garde and popular culture.

—David Greenberg

JOHN STEZAKER

FRIEDRICH PETZEL

We expect collage to suggest multiplicity and fragmentation, but John Stezaker coaxes a rickety unity from disparate components. A small but terrific 2006 show at White Columns introduced New York audiences to this British artist's work, which was also seen last year in "Unmonumental" at the New Museum. His first solo in a New York commercial gallery, "The Bridge" included recent examples from several distinct series. It is surprising that Stezaker, who has shown in Europe for decades and taught at the Royal College of Art for many years, is not better known here.

For the "Film Portrait Collage" series (all works are approximately letter-page size), the artist slices off a significant section of an actor's studio portrait—glossy, black-and-white and decades old—through the middle of the face and body. He grafts it to

another, often at an angle, producing a fully formed yet hybrid personality. The viewer both understands the mechanism and—craving gestalt—succumbs to the illusion. Some of these characters look demented, at war with themselves, not integrated: *Wedding II* (2008) pairs a sly, tousle-haired cardsharp with a winsome girl-next-door. Trouble! The bifurcated subject of *Seat VI* (2008) is sweetly avuncular, a big lug with enormous lapels, a tiny head and two pairs of hands folded in his copious laps.

Like reverse plastic surgery, the series suggests the distortions lurking behind celluloid glamour and the fabricated nature of photographic propaganda. With 20th-century art in his rearview mirror, Stezaker negotiates a contract between Picasso and Duchamp, the genius of making and the genius of finding.

Works in the "Mask" series are Stezaker's tidy essays on the comparative morphology of aspect and prospect. In *Mask LXXVIII* (2007), a broad-shouldered gentleman's visage, occluded by a postcard of a formulaic sylvan scene, emerges in the latent physiognomic attributes of the landscape: a shadowy copse becomes an eye socket; a riverbank on the right continues the line of the jaw. There's panoramic space where there should be a face.

The show's title, "The Bridge," focused attention on six works from 2008, each called *The Bridge (from the Castle series)*, which are derived from duotone prints culled from prewar travelogue books (many of Prague). Whether the image is horizontal or vertical, a single

cut runs from corner to corner. They are more elliptical and moody than the other works. In one, rolling rapids beneath distant hills morph into the wall of an antler-hung lodge.

The artist credits Guy Debord and the Situationist International with redefining the function of the artist in a society flush with images. In the late 1960s, Stezaker decided only to intervene with existing photos, like the American "photographer" Robert Heinecken, though his romantic spirit is quite apart from Heinecken's cruel edge. But like Heinecken (and unlike film-still retrofitter John Baldessari), Stezaker both preserves the integrity of his source material as object and observes the photograph's original program, thereby privileging the plastic immediacy of the collage process and spanning the great divide between publicity and private obsession.

—Stephen Maine

CANDICE BREITZ

YVON LAMBERT

Though Candice Breitz's video works comprising snippets of Hollywood films are considered too facile or fawning by some viewers, the Berlin-based, South African artist purports to have a higher ambition than stargazing: to comment on stereotypical gender roles as they are shaped by popular culture. In her recent show, she crafted an engaging pair of works, *Him* and *Her* (2008), which, like her earlier *Mother* and *Father* (2005), seem to reinforce such stereotypes. *Him* features clips of Jack Nicholson from 23 films made over the past 20 years, while *Her* is