

JUNE  
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## DISPATCHES



### MIND OVER MATTER: MATHIEU BRIAND

*UBiQ: A Mental Odyssey* is the title of French artist Mathieu Briand's yearlong ten 'chapter' exhibition of drawings, painting, videos, machines, sculptures and interactive installations, reaching its midpoint in Paris right now. And in Briand's lexical cosmology, *UBiQ* means 'everywhere', as in *ubiquitous*, which describes both the artist's global presence of late (Los Angeles last year, MIT until April and the Tate Modern's Turbine Hall in May; hometown Marseilles before that; Paris, of course, and Basel this June; China and Lausanne on the horizon) and this *Mental Odyssey*, a phantasmagoria of works

so rife with allusions and associations - literary, cinematic, historical and personal - that trying to outline it here is like reducing a 5,600-word Borges story to an umlaut. Which is just one of the audacious undertakings Briand pulls off in Paris: while *UBiQ* is a variation of *Ubik* (1969), the title of a sci-fi novel about shifting realms of reality and unreality by Philip K. Dick, the dots over the 'i' pay tribute to Tlön, the mysterious world described in encyclopedic detail in Borges's speculative short story 'Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius' (1940). The dots also represent the earth and the moon and the space between them, where, for Briand, the ubiquity of *UBiQ* is even more ubiquitous; and/or two wheels or circles, which are equally omnipresent. Add pirate ships, Kubrick's

*2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), an out-of-print comic book by Juan Giménez, an acid trip near Corbusier's Cité Radieuse and a 1951 outbreak of mass hallucination in a small French town caused by ergot, a cereal parasite and the active ingredient of LSD, traced back to a baker named Roch Briand (no relation), and you appreciate why *UBiQ*, like the effects of a psychotropic substance, is not something you can lucidly describe, but must swallow outright and experience firsthand. Christopher Mooney

MATHIEU BRIAND: *UBiQ: A MENTAL ODYSSEY* TO 5 JANUARY 2008, CHAPITRE IV: 6-23 JUNE GALERIE MAISONNEUVE, PARIS, WWW.GALERIE-MAISONNEUVE.COM

*UBiQ: A Mental Odyssey*, 2006 (installation view, MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge, MA). Courtesy the artist and Galerie Maisonneuve, Paris