GALAXIES → EVENTUALLY THERE WILL BE NOTHING

MATTHEW MARTIN ARTIST

ReView - Timothy Ferris' *Galaxies*

→ Matt Martin's *eventually there will be nothing* (Galaxies)

In the context of the traditional review, where a critical evaluation is made through an inspection or examination in regards to some criteria, the palimpsest (a formal device that creates a correspondence between two things)

could in contrast be used to create this criticality through action (a critical doing)

and allow for the rhetoric of evaluation to be substituted for a more dialectical method.

Historically, a palimpsest is a manuscript or piece of writing material on which the original writing has been effaced to make room for later writing but of which traces remain; or by analogy, anything reused or altered but still bearing visible traces of its earlier form. Although this practice was most often done with little regard to the
original, primarily serving a pragmatic purpose not to waste parchment, it can instead be utilized as methodology for a sort of physical sublation, as it both preserves and changes the original. Or put another way, critically doing a palimpsest allows the physical alteration to become the dialectic interplay between the original and some other term, concept, or object. If contextualized then as a review, this process retains the basic premise of analysis, but changes it from a form of external evaluation to one of synthesis.

Specifically, I altered *Galaxies*, a large coffee-table book from the late 1980s into the palimpsest *eventually there will be nothing*. In this alteration, issues of authority and time are addressed, as in other comparable projects, such as Tom Phillips’ *A Humument* or Robert Rauschenberg’s *Erased de Kooning*.

In *eventually there will be nothing*, I start with the figurative raw material of the universe, and remove humanity’s explanation of it. This can be seen as similar to the actions of Phillips and Rauschenberg in that it recontextualizes the authority of what it has removed.

However, where in *A Humument* and *Erased de Kooning* are alterations of literature and art, *eventually there will be nothing* is an alteration of a scientific, albeit non-scholarly, text.
Enacting this kind of process within this context gives it more of a fundamental severity—there are few things that seem more fixed or certain than explanations based on scientific rigor—and it is easy to read the performative act of removal in this case as commenting on the scale of human thought in regard to the grandness, physically and temporally, of the universe, as it lumbers on long after us. (long before us)
Works Cited


Biography

Matt Martin is a Chicago-based artist whose projects are generally concerned with metaphysical questions of scale, indeterminacy, and recursive states; and are engaged with material and object intra-relations, primarily through two and three-dimensional assemblages and installations. www.acrylicsuperhero.com

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