

The New York Times

Art Gallery Shows to See in February

By Travis Diehl

CHINATOWN

Joel Dean

When artists add books to their sculptures or installations, it often comes across as pretentious and lazy. But Joel Dean's new show works, possibly because it's all books, and all the same one: a faithful reproduction of "Metatron" by the writer and activist Sol Yurick (author of "The Warriors"), published in 1985. A careworn copy sits on a pedestal.

The new edition, titled "A Copy of Metatron," packed a bookshelf. They're free to take; as of Tuesday, there were 70 left. It seems like Dean truly wants people to read the book. Why? Maybe because its mystical descriptions of cybernetic consciousness and angels made of data presage today's evangelistic rhetoric around artificial general intelligence and the "singularity." This dense, brawling text, in a stubbornly physical yet mobile presentation, demonstrates how much today's tech depends on yesterday's imagination. *TRAVIS DIEHL*