

Joel Dean

***A Copy of Metatron***

January 29 - March 1, 2026

*“...in the process of borrowing symbolic energy from the past,*

*new simultaneities and odd juxtapositions, like dreams, emerge.”* - Sol Yurick, *Metatron* (1985)

Turquoise is proud to present *A Copy of Metatron*, an exhibition and artwork by the artist Joel Dean. The exhibition will run from January 29th to March 1st, 2026. It will be the first exhibition in our new location at 81 Elizabeth Street, Suite 302, in Chinatown, Manhattan.

*Metatron*, also known by its longer title *Behold Metatron: The Recording Angel*, is a longform essay written by the socialist writer, thinker, activist, and teacher Sol Yurick, published by Semiotext(e) in 1985 as part of the publisher's *Foreign Agents* pocket paperback series. Semiotext(e)'s founder Sylvère Lotringer began the series in 1980 as an initiative to import French critical theory into the United States, introducing American audiences to the work of prominent French thinkers like Gilles Deleuze, Michel Foucault, Paul Virilio, and Jean Baudrillard, among others. The first of these “little black books,” as they were known, was Baudrillard's monumental text *Simulations*, now famous as the inspiration for the 1999 film *The Matrix*. Yurick's Semiotext(e) edition was, curiously, the first and only work by an American to be included in the publication's series.

Part of a more ambitious project titled *Burning The American Bank*, *Metatron* is a book about data, technocracy, techno-capitalism, the Digital Age, networks, media, hypercapitalism, software, television, banking, information, infomatics, computers, and the oncoming era of technological domination in a hyper-modern world. This exhibition presents a facsimile of Yurick's paperback in an edition of 350 copies, available for free to the public. Integral to the conceptual framework within which Dean works (across several media as a painter, sculptor, performer, craftsman, and writer), *Metatron* is a lodestar for the artist's practice as a subject living in today's world. Faithful to Semiotext(e)'s 1985 original in every detail, except in its designation as “a copy,” Dean's replica is a manifestation of an idea. The artist's gesture may be seen as a tangible way of engaging with the intangibilities of information.

Born in New York City to Jewish immigrant parents, both of whom were dedicated communists and politically involved as trade-union activists, Sol Yurick was an irreverent and visionary character. Described in his obituary as a writer “too radical, too extreme, and too violent for the respectable literary establishment of New York” and as an artist who “fully embodied the city's anguished spirit in the 1960s,” Yurick was fiercely devoted to criticizing the injustices of the American empire. After graduating with a degree in literature from New York University, Yurick began writing stories in his spare time while working as a social investigator in the department of welfare of New York City. Throughout the 1960s, he was involved in the activist organization Students for a Democratic Society and vehemently opposed the Vietnam War. His first novel, *The Warriors*, a street fable about inner-city gang life, was published in 1965, and was later adapted into the 1979 cult-classic film of the same name. His second novel, *Fertig* (1966), was a scathing critique of the American healthcare and legal system and was also later adapted into a film. In 1972, Yurick was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship, and in 1973 he edited an anthology of previously unpublished Brooklyn writers. By 1987, after publishing *Metatron*, Yurick had taken another office job, somewhere in Brooklyn, continuing to write, to organize, and to condemn what he saw as an increasingly unsustainable status quo. After his death in 2013, per his wishes, Yurick's entire corpus was released into the public domain.

*A Copy of Metatron* was designed by Joel Dean in collaboration with Lucas Reif and was printed and bound in Tallinn, Estonia.