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The acquisition by S.M.A.K. (The Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst, Gent) of the six artworks presented in this publication implies more than the conservation of material objects. Sometimes completely absent, the status of these objects is ambiguous, articulated somewhere in between established art categories such as painting, sculpture and installation, and often challenged by the importance of site-specific, process-based, discursive and ephemeral aspects. The decision to collect these works involves a serious and often ongoing dialogue with the artists about the integrity and essence of the artworks, thus reconsidering established institutional practices and developing new methods and approaches.

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