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ART IN REVIEW

## Lucas Blalock: ‘Id, Ed, Ad, Od’

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These days there is a lot of photography about photography, what it can do and what it can't, its facts and fictions. The field includes Michelle Abeles, Catherine Lee, Annette Kelm and Elad Lassry as well as Lucas Blalock, whose spare, seven-work show at Ramiken Crucible is a quiet knockout. Like many of his contemporaries, Mr. Blalock is an equal-opportunity photographer. Using a camera and, when needed, a computer, he pursues setup, traditional and also manipulated photography.

In the most impressive works here, Mr. Blalock digitally manipulates his own images, introducing glitches and wrinkles that give them a weird mutational energy, as if they are not quite sitting still. This is perhaps most evident in “The Guitar Player,” where the image of a man with one arm poking through a piece of Astroturf — which he holds like a musical instrument — is subtly sliced and torqued. The result is Cubist, implicitly sculptural and slightly monstrous: the upper part of his face points one way, the lower part another, and his mouth has two expressions.

In “Picture for Mark I,” Mr. Blalock uses a Photoshop clone stamp tool like a cookie cutter, duplicating and expanding an image of a piece of wood into a strangely pocked, unsettled, elemental landscape worthy of Max Ernst. And in “Kiddie Pool,” he cuts and rejoins an expanse of patterned turquoise plastic, enhancing its optical intensity. The show's one traditional photograph is black and white and tucked discreetly behind a wall. It records a rustic log-cabin motel with a picket fence, peaked entrance and neon “Vacancy” sign, indicating that even in real life, Mr. Blalock prefers a cobbled-together, seams-showing effect.