Twice Removed

Hisham Akira Bharoocha
Joey Cocciardi
Julie Henson
Lara Nickel
Diego Rodriguez-Warner
Ginevra Shay
Laura Shill
Su Su

Organized by Derrick Velasquez

April 24 - June 5, 2021

Trestle Gallery is pleased to present Twice Removed, organized by guest curator Derrick Velasquez, of Yes Ma'am Projects, an artist-run space in Denver, Colorado. The exhibition is the last of the pandemic-delayed, Artist-Run 2020 series, a year-long exploration of artist-run projects throughout the country.

Twice Removed brings together artists Hisham Akira Bharoocha, Joey Cocciardi, Julie Henson, Lara Nickel, Diego Rodriguez-Warner, Ginevra Shay, Laura Shill and Su Su. The artists in this exhibition produce works that dissect and rebuild a vast sea of imagery becoming collages with a sensitivity toward the relationship of individuals and their cultural connections. They are related to personal, political and historical dynamics that temper the desires of humankind.

The term “twice removed” plays on two fronts in this exhibition. First, is a process of physical or visual removal. Each artist pulls from what could be considered the vast lexicon of the real world and provides a level of clarity despite layered or missing information. These numberless affiliations become crystallized by utilizing techniques that are material-heavy and analog in nature. The machinations that allow these artworks to manifest range from processing multi-layered darkroom techniques, to ripping and breaking drywall to use as a painting substrate. The second play on the title refers to these almost-familiar associations between cultural imagery that may be separated by a potential number of generations like that of a second cousin who you hear about but may never meet.

The pandemic has allowed time for reflection however we may not have the ability to piece together the devastating, complicated, or triumphant moments from the last year. This exhibition, which was supposed to open in March of 2020, is here to acknowledge that the artists in this show have exposed their vulnerabilities through art making while also letting them know that whatever they made during this time is valid with the full belief that we can construct the new realities necessary to make sense of or not make sense of a lost year.

Hisham Akira Bharoocha’s work touches on the intricacies of mental architecture and self-made symbolism. His fascination begins with how the mind creates behavioral patterns based on the way a person is raised, what kind of cultural background that individual has, and what type of environment he or she is brought up in. Once a human begins to develop, it creates associations between life experiences, objects and imagery to better understand the world surrounding it, how to assimilate to it, and how to define oneself through this understanding.
Through various casting and printing techniques, Joey Cocciardi combines the beauty of the human and floral figure into immersive washes of imagery, exposing the beauty of nature and all of the “stuff” we consume. This use of the natural and unnatural environments asks us to question relationships to our own histories and to that of others.

Julie Henson is an artist whose work explores gender, power, and performance through American icons. Often focusing on female athletes, politicians, televangelists, and music performers, her practice explores the ways in which women, and their bodies, are portrayed in the media, bridging the gap between a person’s image and physical being—their myth and their reality.

Lara Nickel uses meditative processes to manipulate objects, materials and imagery attached to a personal narrative fallacy. Used as coping methods, the results physically manifest emotional hardships and anxieties in an illusion of understanding the difficulties that transpire from endured challenges. Nickel’s *as above, so below* connects the earthbound and the heavenly with a two-sided quilt showing aerial views of her brother’s lawn mower hippie crop circle and Agnes Denes’ ‘Tree Mountain in Finland.’

In a revisitation of a past technique Diego Rodriguez-Warner culture jams art historical motifs and layers them onto destroyed pieces of drywall. The complex scenes created combine Japanese woodblock prints, European figuration, greek wall painting and many other styles to exude the florid and the fecund in a singular style.

Ginevra Shay creates unique color darkroom photographs that layer cityscapes viewed through windows with flora burned in as a top layer. This accumulation creates mysterious images representing ideas of growth, memory and impermanence of life of loved ones. The combination of the personal and structural contemplates how these vignettes and ideas softly hold together through diffusion, deconstruction and reconstruction.

Laura Shill’s *Absent Lovers* is a series of handmade cyanotypes whose imagery is taken from Harlequin romance novel depictions of lovers entangled in passionate embraces. Shill photographs these covers and removes all but one lover, left alone in an expression of impassioned anguish floating in a white void. The cyanotype both brings the hand back into the mechanical process of reproduction, and unifies the images, spanning from the 1950s to the 21st century in melancholy blue. A pronounced absence within the image brings into focus the gendered politics of desire and pleasure.

Inspired by Surrealism and Pop, Su Su creates dreamlike, fractured motifs with vibrant color schemes in her Extrusion paintings; creating a frozen time-lapse that carries the weight of her own emotions and visual culture analysis, both historical and contemporary. Although she controls and calculates the movement of her hands while extruding, injecting, and brushing, when the paints are pushed through the mesh, she also embraces chance and the independent physical impulses of the materials.