



HOUSTON

Francesca Fuchs: "(Re)Collection: Paintings of Framed Paintings, Prints and Photos" at Texas Gallery

Francesca Fuchs' solo exhibition at Texas Gallery has a straightforward premise. She reproduces framed paintings, drawings, prints, and photographs from her personal collection using her signature transparent brushstrokes of acrylic on canvas over board. Her elegant lines and subdued palette are unmistakable, and in this exhibition, are like a veil of subjectivity through which the images she has selected are re-presented and, as the title states, (re)collected. Conceptually, her project echoes other appropriation-based paintings such as Gerhard Richter's blurs or Elizabeth Peyton's androgynous idealizations. However, unlike Richter or Peyton, Fuchs' hand does not have a leveling effect. Each of her canvases is distinct despite its relation to her style and other works in the series.

The painted frames are key to establishing autonomy for each canvas. The "frames" set each painting apart from the others, subtly defining its distinct context. Raw canvas wrapped around the edges and woven texture seen through her thin application of paint remind us that this is in fact acrylic on canvas. Yet, wide frames signal paintings; thin frames with mattes indicate prints, drawings, or photographs. A work like *Framed Painting: Cubistic Still Life* (2011) absorbs viewers and tempts them to decode its jagged forms and dynamic composition. Nonetheless, its low-contrast colors and viscous pigments remind us that this image is

only one part of a whole series. One can also think of Fuchs' frames as lines she will not cross. She will choose artworks to reproduce; she will meticulously render them; but she will not change the original image to suit her needs.

Tension between the individuality and collectivity of the artworks is dramatically emphasized by their salon-style hanging on one large wall in the gallery. In fact, the arrangement feels all too familiar, like a page of thumbnails in a Google Image or Flickr search. Fuchs is on to something here. When scrolling through an array of images online, one understands that the meaning of each is not dependent on the others that surround it. She taps into this habit of seeing where one scans and picks out certain images to delve into one at a time, even as one is constantly aware of the entire array. Her exhibition is a must-see and an insightful take on the current status of images, paintings, and artists.

—RACHEL HOOPER

"CUBISTIC STILL LIFE," 2011, **Francesca Fuchs**
 ACRYLIC ON CANVAS OVER BOARD, 28½" x 25"
 PHOTO: COURTESY TEXAS GALLERY