

Double Lift

Charles Mayton, Dana Lok, Emily Davidson, Kyle Breitenbach, Libby Rothfeld

Organized by Janine Iversen

June 22 - August 11, 2024

22 June, 2024

The show is titled *Double Lift*, and it has been organized by Janine Iversen, the same Janine Iversen who exhibited a solo show of paintings here, November of last year. This current show, which includes the recent work of five artists - Charles Mayton, Dana Lok, Emily Davidson, Kyle Breitenbach, and Libby Rothfeld - is maybe both an influence and byproduct of Iversen's November show insofar as it relates to the art viewing experience of the observer and an art work's agency in that relationship. Orbiting this relationship between viewer and image/object are questions of the role of projection and splitting, in the psychoanalytic sense, as perilously parallel to (or handily deployed) between the acts of painting and looking.

The "double lift" is a term for a specific type of card trick more broadly categorized as a "sleight of hand." Sleight of hand is somewhat of a misnomer - as nimble as one's fingers may be, such tricks and illusions rely upon misdirection. A subtle, involved manipulation of attention and expectation, misdirection is more sophisticated than mere distraction - hey look over there! - in that it playfully recruits the participation of the mark. For a trick to truly work, these deceptions must not be imposed from outside (gimmicked, cut-out, gorilla-suited) but instead arrived at and willingly chosen by those who perceive them. Despite consenting to being duped, the brain, specifically the visual cortex, wants to focus on both salient movement and its cognitive biases that privilege the eye to suspect a visual illusion, almost by default.

That our cognition is so easily hacked by visual means speaks to the complexity of deception and how our desires, biases, and preconceptions shape our understanding of reality. The best lie is the lie the audience tells itself.

An audience doesn't attend a magic show to be terrified by a rabbit vanishing in a hat. Likewise, we don't seek out experiences with works of art that overstate mystery or claim magic outright. The works in this exhibition are neither tricks nor cheap; what they propose as their structural thread, often negotiated on aestheticized terms, is the way participatory allowances are made and managed between the observer and the veil.

A very special thank you to Janine for organizing the exhibition, as well as to Charles, Dana, Emily, Kyle and Libby for sharing their work with us.

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