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HYPERALLERGIC



The Urgency of Desire Meets the Immutability of Time

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SAN FRANCISCO — Text appearing in all capital letters suggests one of two things, either yelling or someone unable to unlock the Caps Lock key. While I remain unforgiving of this digital faux pas, the show [WANT.HERE.YOU.NOW](#), currently on exhibit at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts certainly warrants attention (now, actually). Curated by the center's Curator of Public Programs, Katya Min, the show brings together three Bay Area artists — Ana Teresa Fernandez, Jennifer Locke, and Kenneth Lo — for an examination of time.

Time doesn't change. It is linear and flat. But all too often we hear there never enough of it, or sense it as fragmented, or feeling as if it is at a stand still. Yet it is our perception and selfishness that lead us to believe it is something we have the ability to control. The title of the exhibition suggests an immediacy — much like the urgency of the new begs us to see the latest cat videos, political activity, or what bagel our friend is having this morning. Who doesn't want to be urgently wanted?

Upon arriving at the Room for Big Ideas at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, I found a slow grind of the works as they sat facing one another. I gravitated to the work of Ana Teresa Fernandez since it was the first piece encountered as one walks into the room. While Fernandez may be known for her earlier representative [paintings of women engaging in acts of subversive domesticity](#), her practices includes social sculptures and mixed media works that incorporate text to engage and disrupt the viewer's perception. For this particular show, with "FIND," the viewer experiences a bit of a parallax. Wooden dowels carefully mounted to the gallery wall comprise the work. At the end of each dowel, little round mirrors confront the viewer. As I moved from side to side and walked towards and away from her sculptural piece, the word "FIND" becomes "FIN". The "D" is made up of dowels excluding a mirrored side. As one steps back, the word

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“FIND” becomes apparent as our perception begins to blend the off white dowels that form the “D” to the gallery wall. “FIND” changes due to the reflections and glimmers of light bounce and move erratically across the letters. As we back away, we come to see “FIN.” Always beginning. Always ending. Always present.

Making my way over to [Kenneth Lo's](#) piece, I am taken aback by the overtly descriptive and lengthy title of the work, “your issues vs mine until we both explode into silence (For T. I promised bittersweet art about you in a late night drunk text I sent one week after the last time you left me).” While I have never been the biggest fan of lengthy titles, Lo makes it work extremely well. His mixed media installation takes a moment in time that no one but Lo and a mysterious love interest known as “T.” experienced. It is all too often we see and experience artworks about the intricacies of love and romance, but Lo's work presents something witty and fresh about love gone awry. The awkwardness of a moment memorialized as a roman candle. Lo pulls from a traditional drawing technique to entice us to light the candle by having the viewer press a red button on the side of the installation to ignite the flame.

The viewer then simultaneously hears the crackling sound of a playful firecracker, as recorded by the artist himself. This audio construct serves as a metaphor for the instantaneous love and the fizzling of a bittersweet romance. The dense dark black box amplifies the illumination of the roman candle erupting. The very moment where we try to navigate between fact and fiction is where we find the immediate gratification versus long drawn out achy affection. Love and romance, historically, have been gendered by women's experiences. But Lo's depiction of heartbreak as a whimsical, dark, humorous piece of art serves as quite the monument to a fleeting moment in time. Not your typical girlfriend art. Then again, does girlfriend art even exist? If not, bravo, Kenneth Lo for starting a potential trend.

Rounding out the show, Bay Area performance artist, [Jennifer Locke](#), presents her work, *Appointments*, which is based on meeting with selected participants for a site specific performance with the artist. At the opening, there were only two appointments on view. Appointment 1 involved a man with headphones, holding a pair of glasses, and a bright white shirt. The appearance of his face and the way his shoulders were positioned give an impression of strain. While Appointment 2 entails two people underneath a bed sheet in front of a doorway. As the viewer watches the man or the bed sheet billowing lightly between the bodies, an urgency arises in the desire to know.

What exactly are we watching? What moment should I wait for? Even with an urge to walk away, Locke's video installation begs for just another moment, then another. From the architecture of the space to the bodies implicated in the frame, it's inevitable to feel a sense of desiring to climb into the screen and want to know what is happening at that very moment. Yet, strangely, we are quickly reminded that there is no now. We are viewing something that has passed and the four other empty screens beg the question

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of what is to come next and wonder if those events to be depicted have already happened or are they currently happening as we perceive them.