

Derosia

Naoki Sutter-Shudo

Physical

February 15–March 23, 2024

Derosia has no choice but to exhibit *Physical*, an installation of paintings and sculpture by Naoki Sutter-Shudo.

Immediately upon entering the gallery one encounters a suite of scriptural paintings hung over larger fabrics. The depicted Japanese texts translate to “form/void,” “nothing nothing nothing,” “cut off the before, cut off the after,” and “the enigma of the universe.” Although rooted in the tradition of Zen mantras calligraphed in ink on paper in one go, these paintings are worked in oil, the characters drawn again and again until an ideal version emerges, after which the others are smeared into nothing but color. Often completed in a single session, the paintings trace the energy of a repeated mental incantation and entreat viewers to engage without mediation—an extreme focus on the present with no beginning or end.

While these painted principles inhabit the office—the locus of intellectual and mercantile activity—the main gallery is populated with various sculptures relating to the bodily and the spatial. This is a space of contemplation and sensuality. Slender geometric objects human in height commune with the architecture, connecting floor and wall or adding a corner where there is none. An esoteric column stands erect towards the sky. A circle of thorns sits on the floor, unshrouded. Nearby, a bootleg modernist coat hanger updates a Duchampian proposition. In a nook, an oversized aspirin pill made of soap awaits its reserved user. The only explicitly human head gazes out the window, a stick by its side, a silent guard or a voyeur.

Where the paintings take text as their starting point and transform into something like abstraction, the sculptures move in the opposite direction: abstract geometries gradually enter the realm of the symbolic and figurative. They are constructed primarily from wood: squared, cut, enameled and adorned. The soul of the tree is captured and embalmed for aesthetic pleasure. Objects that both confuse and reinforce pre-existing relationships between organic and inorganic, alive and unalive, original and replica.

Installed at the edge of the gallery, a metal placard with a coin slot entreats visitors to “pay here.” Upon payment however, there is no kinetic activation, a coin deposited will fall to the wall’s interstice, trapped for the foreseeable future. One is asked for payment without promise. The building swallows your money. The house wins.

Naoki Sutter-Shudo (b. 1990, Paris) lives and works in Los Angeles. Select solo exhibitions include *Gaga & Reena Spaulings*, Los Angeles (2024); *XYZ Collective*, Tokyo (2022); *Alienze*, Vienna (2022); *Crèvecoeur* at Contemporary Fine Arts, Milan (2022); *The Vanity*, Los Angeles (2022); *Crèvecoeur*, Paris (2021, 2018); *Bodega* (Derosia), New York (2021, 2017), and *Crèvecoeur*, Marseille, France (2019). Select group exhibitions include *Fondation Vincent Van Gogh Arles* (2023); *Musée d’Art Moderne de Paris* (2022); *Derosia*, New York (2022); *Les Urbaines*, Lausanne, Switzerland (2021); *Nordenhake*, Stockholm (2021); *Crèvecoeur*, Paris (2020, 2019); *Commercial Street*, Los Angeles (2020); *From the Xmas Tree of Lucy Bull*, Los Angeles (2020); *von ammon co.*, Washington D.C. (2019); *Le Plateau*, FRAC Ile-de-France, Paris (2019); *Franz Kaka*, Toronto (2019); *Bodega* (Derosia), New York (2018); *Anonymous Gallery*, Mexico City (2018); and *Freedman Fitzpatrick*, Los Angeles (2018). His work is in the permanent collection of *Musée d’Art Moderne de Paris*, France and *MAMCO Genève*, Switzerland.