

Today, everyday is today

Cherine Fahd's new body of work, *Today* is art making that examines the everyday. Like much of her photographic work depicting situations and people within contexts of daily life such as streetscapes, domestic scenarios and public spaces, this new series of work explores the everyday, albeit tangentially, as a processual and finely grained examination of the bearing of time.

The everyday is personal; it's mine, yet it disperses across the sensuousness and physicality of daily life. It encompasses the habitual activities of walking, eating, talking, of moving between activities and destinations. The habitual can be tinged with negative connotations to boredom, the repetitious and the inconsequential. The repetition of the everyday is not as uniform as one might consider. The everyday can be richly textured, variegated even, broken up by activities and engagements that absorb us in such a way that frees us from bearing time.

The main work is two large-scale canvas drawings that contain lines of the word today. One canvas is written on in a marker that is impermanent so the text and the artist's efforts are thwarted by the words fading away. The other canvas is written on with a permanent marker, or at least permanent for 60 to 100 years according to the manufacturer's specifications. Whilst one fades quickly the other remains as a testament to its double, as a comparison or reminder of what was. The photographs from the series *Unstill* accompany the canvases. In these paired images, barely perceptible movement and duration are recorded in *Unstill (a.m.) (p.m.)*, while *Unstill (fruits) Thursday & creator* record a sleight of hand between one moment and the next.

When I read the title of the show, *Today* I hear a faint hint of optimism, a quiet, gentle conviction. It is consciousness of a deeper than normal inhalation of breath preceding a difficult task. It is fortitude. Today marks the moment, it is the marker of the present. It is the place where we contend with what needs to be done or what, if we can put off until tomorrow. It is unavoidable and unassailable. Today is where we live most of our life. In both drawings a patch of white appears on the right hand side of the canvas. The artist has left this blank. She refers to these blanks as necessary omissions: as a blank void releases us from the unbearable confines of today, making possible our participation in a future, in a contingent, and perhaps bearable future.

The artist spent a period of residency producing these works. Each single word 'today' is one articulation of the artist's existence, transcribed physically in the hand-written word. This act is repeated, following an instruction the artist formulated at the beginning of the work. According to Henri Lefebvre if an event or action takes place in the same way as its predecessor, the sequence is repetitive as it precludes any possibility for variation. While rhythm on the other hand is characterised by a responsiveness to conditions as they unfold in a sequence of action. Despite the repetitious inscription of a single word in these works a rhythm permeates the drawings. Barely perceptible differences between each word, variation in alignment and tone contribute a pattern of activity, neither systematic nor formulaic. The softly undulating vertical lines create an open-weave rhythmic structure that reveals long white gaps. It is within these openings the imperceptible transformations that make up everyday life seep into the picture frame. The rhythm here is the patterning of work itself.

Todd Robinson

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