

Petzel

For Immediate Release

TROY BRAUNTUCH

May 8 – June 13, 2013

Opening reception: Friday, May 10th, from 6:00 – 8:00 PM



“The word in language is half someone else, and The word in language is half someone else’s.”

— Mikhail Bakhtin

That Texas summer was so hot; dried dust permuted continuously. Reddish, yellow and brown hazes influenced the measuring of distance and sight. The fire spread rampantly. It quickly scorched the trees, removing moisture from objects until they evaporated into light, silky flakes falling at ease, transfigured by the blaze.

A camera sits on a table and the flames are recorded in the reflection of the lens. It watches the fire until the flames touch its face. The film turns to ash and images become ash; there are now no more images. The once “A Kind of History” is spread into the air. The camera’s content comes to light and is shared throughout the space. Soot buries all remaining objects and billows outwards as visitors walk through these ruins. Attaching to the facades, the ash re-covers every surface of the building’s interiors. Or are they exteriors?

Troy Brauntuch’s surfaces, pigments and residue of images for this show, his fourth at Petzel Gallery, locate themselves amongst the haze of an American mythology and the space in which all things are recorded...and then forgotten. Sheets of soot arrange and re-arrange the history of the object and the horizontal picture plane that catches them. Lying on the surface and softly erased, pigments depict interiors and exteriors that become indistinguishable through ruin, appropriation and reflection. The pictures are constantly in view of and in conversation with one another. Motion and gaze set off a chain of events. The far-reaching consequence of the outward image and the uncertainty of what these subjects are seeing.

The Blue haze gradually gives way to emergency and taillights of the State Trooper’s vehicle. The road is empty, becoming smaller and more vague; the dashed lines disappear on the asphalt. Who is out there? There is no one out there.

The yellowish-grey racehorse is now being put to sleep; the half drawn fabric is pulled further up while the stall door turns silently on its hinges. The horse’s ears stand to catch the sound of the man entering.

The horizontal iron bars appear over the dim, black background. Stretched across his face, entrapping the eye, the silver bull lifts his head to glimpse at the man behind camera.

Across the room, the fugitive sits low in the back of a car ready for departure, hands cuffed behind, body forced to slump. The palms of his eyes push outward through the echo of the thin, black power lines reflected on the window. The youthful head has charred bands across his face. A woman figure enters the scene. In some light, the image is heavy; in another light she seems to float on the surface. The dress weighs down onto the picture-plane. As she is pulled forward for a moment, the light hits every fold: she soon recedes because she knows she is leaving.

In the drawing room 4.35, the image rusts away; an arranged interior used for describing space without the aid of a camera. The dirty-red spined objects hook onto a wooden structure that is covered by a thin bed sheet. The prop-room has little to offer the students and the youthful class is tired from the heat. The heavy white-plaster statue is rolled out once again and remnants of its pusher are evidenced by the charcoal-stained fingerprints.

-Christopher Culver, 2013