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Yair Oelbaum

Teiku

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Teiku (tay-COO) is an Aramaic term literally meaning “let it stand.” While most talmudic discourse ends with one prevailing opinion, teiku is sparingly used as an expression that concludes talmudic debates, declaring a true stalemate between the arguing parties, at least in the then-current discourse. Arguments ending in teiku are said to be unresolved and postponed until the arrival of the messiah, at which point the conclusion of the debate at hand will be revealed.

Identifiability is generally concealed in the photographs presented here, though the subject matter may ensnare you in a similarly fated discourse. Like talmudic wrangling, the dental and crime scene Polaroid camera used to produce these images was passed on to me by my father, whose use for it was long gone.

The abstract (leaning) photos depict scavenged trash, revered objects, constructed components and items from the natural world arranged and photographed as still lifes, ephemeral sculptures whose dull, reverberating beauty can exist only on this plane and in these configurations. They are also portraits, aiming to capture the rich spirit of the depicted models and elements.

None of the photos included in this exhibition have been taken with the film intended for the camera. The Polaroids reproduced here have been re-loaded into recycled compatible cartridges. The exhibition also contains a variety of images taken with negative film cut down or folded/wrapped to fit inside recycled Polaroid Spectra cartridges. These methods serve to prolong the life of the obsolete device.

The ethereal body glimmers as ash discharged from a cherry to disperse into atmosphere.

Yair Oelbaum (b. 1988, New York) published his first collection of photographs, *Asleep in Dirt* (Buchhandlung Walther und Franz König) in 2024, which compiled macro photographs shot between 2014 to 2022. Teiku is his first solo exhibition and contains photographs made with similar methods shot since 2022.