

Alice Ding

*Normal Artists*

July 18 – August 30, 2026

Art is too known to us. One could say. And what makes one an *artist* today might be the capacity to *let us know art again as if for the first time*. Here we have some stuff. Looks like art but probably is not art. Over there is some other stuff that does not look much like art but, you know, just from the way the world operates these days...it probably is art. And over here is some further stuff...well...so...you are enjoined to encounter, as it were, a situation, not to evaluate the artfulness of individual objects, or, then again, maybe you are, but only in some distressed, tangential, somewhat embarrassing way. Polyvalent, yet flat; the projects navigate a tender seam between something and hard nothing. *Really, is this about percentages?* Someone said the best work here is *not locatable as either art or non-art*. True. Mired in an uncanny valley, a mushy middle, the selection of materials provokes an uncomfortable feeling of incompleteness, lack. You work through little psychological, interpretive hiccups, not huge societal issues. It seems you need a whole field of these kinds of minor art inflections to get the right effects, but the reception will not be uniform. Aesthetic randos are going to take home the discount Dollar General product, about 15% art; others—occasional museum-gallery goers—will get the Wal-Mart model that hovers around 40%; a clutch of people in black will be gifted the higher end, cheap chic, Target version which is, maybe 70-80% art. Only veteran self-ironizing cognoscenti will be able to experience a Macy's-level—maybe even Nordstrom's-level—art experience. *And to go higher than that?* Well, that, simply stated, would be an art dream come true.

—Matthew Jesse Jackson