

Franz Kaka

CONNIE WILSON
DOREX

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Dorex

April 22nd - May 21st, 2022

In the mid 1960s, a man named Gerald Foos purchased a 21-room motel near Denver “in order to become,” as Gay Talese writes, “its resident voyeur.” Rectangles were cut in the ceiling of each room and outfitted with louvred aluminum screens that passed as vents from below. Foos, and sometimes his wife, would post up in the attic, kneeling, going undetected as they crawled and often paused along a carpeted path that connected all the rooms from above.

We all look at a lot of things all the time; things that don't concern us. But the human animal walking around with eyes open (out of survival; with curiosity; conducting quiescent field research; “people watching”) might at any point feel a difference in the way they cast their gaze. The sight organs stop being a rote tool in the head and become something more like streams of focused, coherent light in a single wavelength. A flicker of eros transforms observation into participation—or at least a sensation of being implicated.

The infinity mirrors in Connie Wilson's exceptionally small hotel rooms mandate that we never lose sight of our sight after we've accepted the invitation to look. Is it embarrassing to admit that we're snoopy, nosy? Is it a trap set up to confirm our perversions? Is the tiniest show (of...?) about to start? Is there any chance this could be exactly what it is? Our giant, single eyeball, drinking in the mundane trappings of a room that could be anywhere. Are we waiting for someone to emerge? Or relieved to find ourselves alone in—maybe even the undeserving overlord of—this handmade replica of a place built by humans that bears no human trace? A space free of identity formation, where “all there is to do is to ‘see what happens,’” as Marc Augé writes.

The paradox of non-places, that anthropologist points out, “is that anyone can feel ‘at home’ in them [...] because they are equally alienating to everyone.” Given the situatedness of these replicated, recursive rooms in oil tanks—industrial forms designed to do the work of fires, which is to say the work of warming, a most fundamental bit of homemaking—it seems we're implored to settle into this limbo, this anonymity, any existence easily erased by the housekeeper in the morning. And that's okay because what we really are ostensibly resides somewhere else; we love the thought of that, what a relief. But, in this time when we're moving as fast as we do (forced to move, forced by the \$\$\$ machine), I can't help but wonder: is there really an elemental location? Or might all of this be contained in a hotel room so capacious as to be unseeable? “Point of view offers two possibilities: partial and complete,” Susan Stewart writes in *On Longing*. “What remains silent is the third and anonymous possibility—blindness, the end of writing.”

Jac Renée Bruneau, 2022

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Connie Wilson (b. 1993 Belfast, Northern Ireland) received her BFA from NSCAD University in 2016 and an MFA from the University of Guelph in 2021. Wilson's work has been shown at Canadian galleries including Christie Contemporary, Toronto (2022); The Plumb, Toronto (2021); Boarding House Gallery, Guelph (2020); Calaboose, Montreal (2018); Musique, Halifax (2016); Anna Leonowens Gallery, Halifax (2015). in 2015 she served as an artist in residence at Andrea Zittel's A-Z West in Joshua Tree, California. Wilson is currently based in Guelph, Canada.

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