

Opening Saturday, 26 November 2016 from 6 to 9.30 p.m.

From 26 November to 30 December 2016

hours: Tuesday to Friday from 3 to 6.30 p.m.

JOSH TONSFELDT

(Independence, 1979 – lives and works in Brooklyn) proposes a series of new works using the photographic medium for a generalized investigation into how the mediation of screens affects our daily lives. The installation of the works in the exhibition space is arranged through the display of two electronic devices.

On one end is a Baby Shusher, a little machine that simulates reassuring sounds designed to help infants fall sleep. On the other end, there is a series of television screens in the sculptural form of an installation. According to recent studies, the light emitted by screens suppresses the production of melatonin, triggering a state of wakefulness in those watching them. Consequently, the presence of various electronic devices in our lives interferes with our wakeful hours and our sleep. The screen is thus not only the medium through which the artist conducts his research, but is also the subject of his investigation, which unfolds through the entire photographic process, from the moment the picture is taken until it is printed.

There are multiple subjects and, in some cases, they are extremely intimate. Nevertheless, the specificity of an image is somehow suspended through ink-printing on gesso. The nature of this fragile material, normally used in sculpture, its depth and its stratification generate a divide between the supported image and its support, giving the works a dual nature, part photograph and part sculpture. The image itself acquires a blurry, surreal and almost atemporal appearance. It looks as if it were about to dissolve, just as the gesso itself seems to be at the point of falling apart. In other works, in the form of trays/frames likewise in gesso, Tonsfeldt places a polymer screen in front of objects, including technological components. In these cases, the mediation of the screen becomes literal, manifest. Paradoxically, the instrument ascribed with representation, now obsessively in high definition, conceals the objects under a lenticular display, transforming them into an image that becomes invisible or changeable depending on the light or the observer's position. The three-dimensional nature of the sculpture is translated into the two-dimensional form typical of television viewing. By proposing a varied catalogue of fragile, unreal and somehow hermetic images, through the mediation of a technological instrument Tonsfeldt is able to transform the work into a dimension tied to the memory of a more intimate and familiar past.

Josh Tonsfeldt has exhibited his works at numerous exhibitions staged by international institutions, such as Zabłudowicz Collection, Kunsthalle Helsinki, Helsinki – “Atlante delle immagini e delle forme” GAMEC, Bergamo, Italy – Artists' Choice: An Expanded Field of Photography, curated by Liz Deschenes, Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, MA Part Picture, curated by Chris Wiley, Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art, Toronto, Canada – Surface Tension, organized by James Richards, Serpentine Gallery, Memory Marathon, London, UK