

Liz Magor

29 October to 5 December 2015



In past work, Liz Magor has investigated the capacity for found objects (beer, sleeping bags, cigarettes) to burrow within the open, interior spaces of sculptural objects. In this new body of work, she examines how the function of an object, when layered with other objects, is transformed into a surface. This is not a process of simulation. It is a question of display.

Unique casts of boxes form the sculptures' primary component. Beaten and battered, they have nearly lost their characteristic cubic form. Closed, they are no longer able to provide storage. Produced by coating the boxes' insides with polymerized gypsum, the result is photographic; the positive surface exposes the unseen negative space of their interior. On top of each a would-be hand, a solid cast of an individual glove, cradles a colourful preserved bird enclosed in plastic. Stiff, it lies there. A skin of feathers, stuffed. Also like a photograph: it is the record of a subject that once moved, swiftly. Now stilled, it has become an image of its former wildness. This thing has undergone an ontological shift, quite literally, a shift in being, from *being* alive. Now dead and hermetically sealed – against air, deterioration, empathy – its exteriority exceeds its internal potential.

What do single gloves, beaten up boxes, and dead birds have in common? In their past lives these objects were containers: a box for papers, utensils, or mementos; a glove for a hand; a bird for kinetic energy, life. In Magor's studio, they collect dust. They begin to form stacks, becoming inadvertent shelves for one another. While she actively collects them, in reality they are all around us, these types of things. Things, that for poet Lisa Robertson, "don't function like signs", but rather, as "image[s] thick with latent time". We call them dust collectors. Things too dear to throw away but fundamentally lacking in use value. They stick around, obstinately waiting.