

Cudelice Brazelton IV  
Under Conditions

26 November 2022 – January 28 2023

Opening: November 26, 3 – 8 pm

The exhibition entitled Under Conditions showcases Cudelice Brazelton IV's (b. 1991) works. The artist was born in Dallas and now lives in Frankfurt. He did temporary jobs at steel and general labor facilities to help him sustain his practice. This background informs his works in composition and circulation, as they resemble urban landscapes in assemblage. The series of collages expose his techniques of tearing, reconstructing, piercing, and piecing together. Movement and labor are visible in Brazelton's works.

Materiality is essential in Brazelton's practice. He works with industrial materials reminiscent of his own US reality but also focuses on materials common to everyone, such as skin. It is evident that skin is a heavily-charged signifier that can dictate social relations. This material is often literally zoomed in on, becoming a prominent point of his examination. The formal composition of Scene refers to wrinkled leather. The carved-out canvas reveals an ink-jet-printed image of Brazelton's body. The piece sets a tonal view of the show in the back of the gallery and invites a potentially cinematic experience.

Brazelton's fascination with skin abrasion can be felt in the use of oilskin canvases. He layers the fabric through tracing and folding. As explained by the artist, „like shedding skin, the surface of these works flakes off from the electrical tool brush used to render an outline of a haircut while the folded waxed canvas holds its creases for bodily effect”. Thus, while no figure is depicted, we can still feel a human presence. Brazelton's forms suggest an identity through the use of black cosmetics and stylistic manipulations. His interest in identities links back to subcultural processes that mark the skin. The markings, like tattoos, have at once very specific meanings only familiar to members of the same group, as well as show a universal human desire to express one's difference.

Brazelton's art is often device-like. Site-specific works mount into as well as transform the gallery space. Spur crosses the walkway to the next room like a blockade. An expandable metal clamp grips a printed image of a black rope characteristic of theatre entrances. The interplay between the audience and Spur invites a theatrical encounter as the blade-like object disrupts the viewer's path. Experimentation in function becomes more than a cold concept once given a lived posture.

This theatrical experimentation continues in Wrong Coat, where a dark gray corduroy sheet is nailed to the gallery's wall. The concave serves as a slot for a cape-like gesture that arcs like an open coat. A foam head used for wigs is attached to a swiveling handle slathered in pomade wax. The sculptural element of the head is mounted at the top center of the doorway, creating a bizarre figurative installation of a tall waxy figure shrouded in cord. Wrong Coat references Brazelton's interest with James Son Ford Thomas' eerie clay sculptures and the Capuchin Catacombs of Palermo. The figures give what he calls an urban sense of dark humor. He says, "this strategy allows me to disrupt the rigid self-serious implications of a conceptual and minimal exhibition format". The gallery space, as we know it, becomes disrupted.