

Louche Ops

Green Lobby: Exhibition Text

While the purposes and qualities belonging to artificial plants vary depending on which historical context one is considering, their modern use typically places them in peripheral spaces, like docile apologies for the abrasive vacuity of corporate architecture.

The presence of a plastic plant implies that an actual one would die if put in its place, due either to inhospitable conditions or neglect. As if projecting their own lifelessness, this form of decor lends to the general effect of waiting rooms, lobbies, and malls, the feeling of an unconvincing theatrical set. Perhaps it's ambient novocaine intended to prepare us for the types of depersonalized experiences we could expect to have in such places.

The title of Philip K Dick's novel *UBIK* refers to the brand name of a fictional aerosol product (short for ubiquity) capable of producing various trompe l'oeil surfaces depicting whichever effects of futurity or nostalgia might be desired, when sprayed upon the scaffolding of a deteriorating urban infrastructure. It's a vision from fifty years ago picturing the time we live in now as a panorama of unrelated desires plastered over one another, vying to distract from the vacancy of its support.

Relieved from their utility as corporate set design, artificial plants have also been released from the task of verisimilitude. In retirement, they've become more reflective as signs, possessing an embedded index of what it is to have been used as a foil.

Some still collect dust in hotel lobbies or doctors' offices like props left behind, seemingly to preserve a 20th century effect. Removing them could imply that the infrastructure they once served has quietly evolved and that they've been replaced by an all encompassing rebar of vegetative plasticity.

- James Krone

