

Susan Hobbs

Rhonda Weppler and Trevor Mahovsky

The Pool in the Shell

March 2 – April 8, 2023

The relief sculpture *Idle Hands* is a record of the tools hung on the wall of the garage of the artists' Toronto studio; depicted are tools used to maintain the studio and yard, as well as to make their art. The artists used patinated copper foil and their signature repousse technique to take impressions of tools – in the process each tool is handled and employed towards a different kind of task. The tools are each covered with, and embossed into, a darkly patinated foil, which is then removed from the tool as a muddy, rusty looking shell and hung – as a kind of ritualized dirtying and cleaning. *Idle Hands* is a document of the tenuously held together world of the studio, a place that blends working with time wasting, acts of touching and handling with acts of looking and reflecting, and literal traces of material and process with the hallucinatory illusions of trompe l'oeil.

Also included are a series of watercolours in which tools are likewise put to the task of self-depiction, such as a work in which a paint set is depleted over the course of being used to create a series of paintings of itself.

Rounding out the show are a series of photoworks depicting objects such as watercolour sets and compacts, partially cut out, to create an elementary illusion of depth. The cut area is bent forward to suggest the re-entry of the image into the world of things. In the case of the watercolour set – itself a tool for representation via transitions between states of stability and fluidity – as it is used, digitized, resold, printed and physically manipulated, there is inflection and crossover regarding the ways it might be thought of in relation to documentation, illusion, image, objecthood, movement and stillness.

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