

Diana*

Sophie Gogl & Marina Sula

Sophie Gogl's painting "Sweet Jets", showing plane-shaped chocolates in an open plastic box, first seems to lead us to a certain kind of realism, coming from the painter's sense of objectivity together with the anecdotal character of the scene. As if the painting was, again, carrying the weight of the medium's triumph of self-consciousness: a painting so aware of being unpacked that it gets unpacked twice, revealing both itself and the plastic box. The melting planes could then be read as the painting's steady disappearance in the logics of hermeneutics. Melting is so revealing, that it is often used as an apt metaphor, for instance, to describe the phenomenon of inflation. Instead of gauging its realness by mentioning the CPI (Consumer Price Index) or using the GDP Deflator (or implicit price deflator), a concerned economist could therefore preferably talk about melting to describe the loss of purchasing power. However, the use of metaphors is not as innocent as it seems. As strong images, they reframe people's thinking about the ideas they aim to describe. If we do associate melting with purchasing power, it could as well lead to a distrust of the economic order, a disturbance leading to meaninglessness.

All the photographs that build up the exhibition seem close to this feeling of slippage, as the content never appears as a steady target. Contra "Target Fixation", where an individual becomes so focused on an object that they inadvertently increase their risk of colliding with it, there is no steady aim here, the exhibition offers a delivery method that is not a familiar point-and-shoot, where the focus is automatically adjusted for the eye. Moving from one work to the other feels more like an orchestrated lapse - a stage for a kind of short-circuit. Marina Sula's photographs take this oblique route, placing the images in a particular sense of inaccessible proximity. For example, the reflection of a plate of biscuits in a mirror narrows the distance, or a door left open of a gray sedan, framed by two yellow stars, like the ones of the European flag. They show a car glass blurring the outside, or a heap of balloons and pizza boxes, the mourning of a party. The careful attention to light and photography's concern with the "local color", their staged character and stillness - following Sontag, photography's elegiac essence -, or their structural qualities reinforced by the framing, all those elements convey to lodge them somewhere just a bit out of focus, in a cognitive storage place our mind retains access to. A productive periphery, as advertisements of their own escape.

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