

G L A D S T O N E

Richard Aldrich

Double Gemini

October 30 – December 21, 2024

Opening Reception: October 30, 4pm – 6:30pm

760, Samseong-ro, Gangnam-gu

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Initially I had the idea to think of the two floors as the dual sides of a personality. Personalities usually have more than two sides, but for the sake of the show, I thought that it could be generalized into two. There is a bit of an embarrassment to such a basic idea, but I think often good things come out of bad ideas. It's like the old axiom: bad ideas make good art (and its sister axiom: good ideas make bad art). This has often been an interest of mine, to take something so strongly and magnetically attached to an already ordained idea and somehow wrench it free. Twenty years ago, I was interested in cutting the canvas, a gesture that in the year 2000 could only be seen as a reference to Lucio Fontana. But how can you make something like that actually work? It is an interesting problem, to move beyond the seemingly overt reference—can the end result transcend its inauspicious beginnings? Accordingly, I put two darker pairings in the lower level along with two emo sculptures, and two brightly multi-colored paintings above with a more seemingly superficial sculpture.

I also installed carpet in the lower level in order to create a different aural space: muffled sound and no footsteps. I have done similar things in the past— covering lightbulbs with grey gels, or including sound components, subtle or otherwise, all in the service of creating theoretical and actual sensory changes to viewing more traditional paintings and sculptures. Important to note, in the sense of what this means to me specifically but also in terms of how an art show can engage in unrelated ideas at once, I have recently been thinking about this particular room, from when I was in school where I would experiment with setting up installations. I explored a lot of ideas in that room, installation and otherwise, some of which I am still working out today. It had a junky grey carpet that was in need of repair. I think that, like a sled, it is seeping into my unconscious somehow. To what end I am not sure.

A pretense gives the viewer something to latch onto going in. Often that something is an idea that precedes or describes a series of paintings. But my interest in painting was never about translating an idea into a group of works. There are ideas in my paintings, but they are secondary, or often I have thought of them as red herrings—really just doorways to help you into the room. In this way, the best thing about pretense is that it is exactly that, but hopefully one can move onto something deeper or more nuanced than that initial hook.

I should say here that I am a Gemini, and I should say too that Barbara was one as well. In fact, we were born on the same day. Geminis typically are all about conflicting personalities— they are moody, mercurial, etc. Since I am one, I can't say exactly if I am this way to any extreme or if it is any different than any non-Gemini person who sometimes is annoyed and is sometimes laughing.