Dorp

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Which of all my important nothings shall I tell you first?
Jordan Derrien & Daniel Graham Loxton
9ᵗʰ -31ˢᵗ January 2025, with an opening on 8ᵗʰ January 17:00 - 20:00

Dorp is pleased to announce its grand opening with a two-person exhibition of new work by London based artist Jordan Derrien and New York based artist Daniel Graham Loxton. Dorp is an artist-run curatorial project with no fixed location.

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For a long time, people have understood art — especially painting — as a kind of alchemy. Under this understanding, the archetypal artist is marked by a special power that allows them to turn their inert materials into something that hums with a new significance; one not suggested by its component parts. Though slightly tired and slightly dramatic, the idea of art as something that emerges unpredicted is a seductive one. It sets artworks apart from the other objects by making them essentially unknowable. It stamps a hole in our understanding and fills it with something tantalisingly mysterious. For most artists, the process of transformation is deeply intentional and deliberate, and one in which they are front and centre. With the flourish of a magician pulling a rabbit from a hat, the artist reveals art: something impressive, novel and unmistakably theirs.

Each in their own way — through their materials, processes and modes of understanding — Jordan Derrien and Daniel Graham Loxton tease this way of thinking about art. This exhibition takes place at the borderlands of authorship and anonymity, artwork and object. Here, the usual performance of art-making is refused. The artworks on show are notable for their lack of gesture. As viewers, we are left to wonder how and where the alchemy might be taking place.

In Derrien's paintings, architectural mouldings are fixed to the faces of painted canvases. Viewed from the front, they are deliberately sparse and uncompromising in appearance. At first glance they appear author-less, but this isn't the case. Look at the sides of these paintings and you'll see uneven, distinct brushstrokes that tell us that he was (is?) here. What isn't here is the kind of image that we expect to see rendered in paint on canvas. Instead, the items of hardware that his paintings comprise echo the architecture of the space around them. With their opacity, they serve not to reveal but to cover; they are walls.

In a parallel way, Loxton is a sort of concealed subject within his work. In contrast to Derrien's squared-off paintings, his jewel-like collages are irregular in shape and sit directly on the wall. They are like insects that have landed momentarily, vulnerable to a gust of wind or wandering hands that might threaten to displace them. They are composed of materials found in the artist's studio that might otherwise have been discarded — the flotsam and jetsam of his painting practice. They accumulate, harvested from pockets or liberated from books. It's not a process that he devises as much as it is a phenomenon that exists in his periphery. Like Derrien, Loxton isn't concocting something here. When he paints he comes into contact with the baggage of art history, the smell of linseed oil and turpentine forcing him into a conversation with the painters who went before him. In these works, though, he side steps that conversation, allowing happenstance to serve as the engine of their creation.

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Like any good magician, most painters use performance and sleight of hand to conceal the magic at the core of their trick. Here, Derrien and Loxton engage with the history of painting by doing the exact opposite. Both artists lay bare the romantic trope of art as alchemy, reducing it to its most chaste formulation: *the artist moves matter from one place to the other, enchanting it*.

Phin Jennings.

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The exhibition is on view by appointment only. To make an appointment, or for more information and images, please contact info@dorpprojects.com or @dorpprojects on Instagram.