

Richard Sides

*Looking At Rooms In A New Light*

September 11 – October 26, 2025

The title *Looking At Rooms In A New Light* derives from an installation I made in an old wooden house on a Canadian island in 2022. I covered all the windows with aluminium foil and cut two holes to create camera obscuras of the surrounding ocean. During a road trip there I found a homemade ringbinder in a consignment store for interior design tips. One page read “Looking At Rooms In A New Light”. This sounded cosmic to me. That night I was looking at the sky and it was so clear and dense that the stars just looked like dust clouds.

Earlier this year I was having a conversation about space travel and the problematic geopolitics of interplanetary expansion as a technological regime. There’s all sorts of designs for different fictional spaceships which made me think about hoovers and how they kind of are spaceships, too. After this, I started noticing abandoned hoovers in the street and eventually decided to pick some up and place them into plexiglass boxes, still full of dust and dirt. These cosmic staubsaugers become analogies of scale and stardust, boredom and cleanliness. Laxlan said he thinks Koons’ idea of abstraction is equivalent to the acceptance of pleasure from advertising – acknowledging the 80s reality as melancholia – a key relationship between abstraction and the readymade.

Enamel is a resin-based paint that comes with a high-gloss finish. It dries slowly and therefore it settles very flat, revealing the details of the surface underneath. The hardware store Bauhaus stocks a very limited, but affordable range of enamel colours off-the-shelf. Using these 4-5 hues I have taken to seeing what subtleties of colour and light I can produce on top of my existing artworks. The result is more akin to being within a reflection, rather than passing through the surface’s threshold into the images underneath.

When slipping from hermeneutics into abstraction, considering UFOs or non-idiomatic music, there might be something waiting there: something less digital, something boring. Different perspectives to think from. Dara said that all colours have specific emotional responses when observed closely. Bernardo Kastrup has formed his philosophical enquiries around “Analytic Idealism”, a world out there detached from our own minds, or more precisely our sensory capacity. By the way of tools we grasp the materiality of the imperceptible things around us, like micro worlds, the sky, the ocean, how electricity works, coding etc.

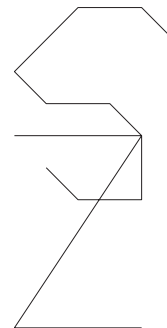
Could this be how robots experience the analogue? Can they help us find a new perspective beyond the fixed, authoritarian worldview across Western culture? Is the dance a done deal? Colours and boredom and cleanliness... the only thing that blocks access to a different resolution is the thing itself. And who wants to really wait patiently to see what’s inside? Temporality is a hindrance in hindsight.

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*La vie en microtonal rose* is an installation using large enamel-painted cardboard sheets that produce sound via transducer speakers. The microtonal sound frequencies are produced using self-built FM oscillator patches, where specific parts of a virtual instrument are attached to the three panels. The final composition is a recording of an improvisation made within the space.

*Human room* is a basic form of architecture, one that houses a single body and has no light inside. I saw a similar box in the old apartment of William Burroughs, that I have since discovered is modelled on Wilhelm Reich's Orgone Accumulators. These human size Faraday Cages supposedly harness "orgone energy" and cure cancer. In Ken Russell's film 'Altered States', the main character, a scientist, spends prolonged time in an isolation tank exploring the limits of consciousness through his own body, goes to the very beginning of human life, and beyond, discovering that everything in the universe is bound by love; that the meaning of everything is love.