

For his debut solo exhibition in Los Angeles, Andrei Koschmieder presents a new series of sculptures of suitcases, specifically drawn from the iconic shape of Rimowa Luggage. Over the past several years, Koschmieder has developed his distinctive technique of sculptural painting hybrids, a peculiar liquefied amalgamation of paper, inkjet dye, spray paint, and epoxy resin. The effect is one of mimicry and facsimile – for example, past works have included faux readymades of radiators, corrugated scrap building materials, trash cans, steel posts – often elements that might remain unnoticed or quietly blend in to the surrounding scenery. Imperative to the materiality of his reproduction, which is often a labor intensive process of printing then molding and painting, Koschmieder’s work holds a deeply handmade quality, exceedingly more rare in a digitized, 3D printed, and techno-fabricated world.

Koschmieder lives and works in New York, and in preparing for the Los Angeles exhibition, the production of works became contingent upon an economy of means – how to determine solutions for art making when travel is necessary, and when massive budgets for shipping are unavailable, or uninteresting. Enter the humble suitcase: an essential element and container. Beyond mimesis of the object itself, Koschmieder’s sly reproductions also challenge and approximate their surrounding discourse and social positioning. These are no ordinary suitcases, but sets of Rimowa Luggage, a German brand often favored by the art world and creative class, known for their sleek surfaces and hefty price tags, and aggressively rebranded for the millennial market following the company’s recent purchase by Louis Vuitton. The company’s design and branding speaks to longevity, purpose, and a restlessness for exploration via the durability of their product, with their tagline “No one builds a legacy by standing still.” Koschmieder’s replicants are worn, rusted, inverted, some with exposed holes eaten away at the surface. Rather than elevated to the status of a luxury item, the effect is one of a scrap yard, with luggage left to deteriorate. The suitcase is a stand in for the desire to be everywhere at once – and the realities of limitations – in an increasingly globalized era in which mobility itself has become an economic status.

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