

Artists, as well as the general public, have long been concerned with the different rates of transmission—of energy, information, goods, bodies, and beyond—we experience in the contemporary world. As when Robert Smithson, in his nonsites of the late 1960s, juxtaposed steel, and thus the accelerated expenditure of energy involved in factory fabrication, with dirt and rocks, and thus the slower cycles of the earth. Today these paces range from the hyper speed of digital technology, to the older, and slower, modes that coexist with the contemporary—like those of craft production—to the nonhuman tempos that persist even as they are endangered, such as those of the natural world.

The five artists in this exhibition explore issues suggested by various modes of transmission. Lewis Stein's *Flashing Lights*, of 1978, anchors the exhibition in a not-so-distant prehistory of the present. This work isolates the basic life-force of Western modernity, electrical transmission, reducing it to a humorous yet sinister, tautology of a closed circuit consisting of two standard, industrial-grade light bulbs that turn on and off in an alternating fashion, with a syncopation that is mechanic, yet also humane in its evocation of biological functions like blinking and heartbeats.

Stein's photograph of a surveillance camera (1983-84) references another closed circuit: the camera transmits what it observes to an attendant, who was once human, but today is most often a digital database. Now a static subject, the camera's transmission is metaphorically severed and in the process agency is transferred back to the viewer, who contemplates the camera's mute form. Taken from a distance and blown up larger-than-life, its graininess presciently presages the depletion of the digital image through its endless circulation, while its subject-matter captures an earlier moment in the ubiquitous—while now largely taken for granted—regime of state and corporate surveillance.

Jesse Stecklow's work similarly engages questions of feedback and the transmission and circulation of data within systems he builds himself. An air sampler work from 2014 is paired with a new sculpture that responds to a particular finding in the data collected by the earlier work: the ubiquity of corn-based products, and especially ethanol. Stecklow introduced text into the sculpture, riffing off of the familiar phrase "ear of corn" and the use of acetic acid (which is distilled from ethanol) to treat ear infections, creating an anagram that playfully highlighting the diversity of uses of the common crop and the elaborate systems around them, especially in the US, where corn production is heavily subsidized by the government.

The materials in K.r.m. Mooney and Nina Canell's sculptures originate in the commercial world. For example, the electrical ribbon in Mooney's *violet ssi I*—which, like Stein's *Flashing Lights*, demarcates a closed circulatory system—and the subterranean cable in Canell's *Brief Syllable*

(Truncated), which makes visible the typically hidden physical infrastructure of digital communication technologies, displaying a severed segment of a cable used to transmit information across continents. As in Stein's photograph, the materials in Mooney and Canell's works have been severed from that world, their energy depleted in their removal from the flows of capital as postindustrial detritus cast off in capitalism's drive towards ever-greater efficiency.

The show is rounded out by a diptych by painter Nathalie Provosty that invites us to consider imaginative alternatives to the oppressive conditions highlighted by the machinic physicality of the other works. Nearly monochrome, Provosty's work requires attentive contemplation of the subtle variations in yellow tones before fully revealing the catenary structure of curving and linear forms that traverse the painting's topography. These pathways around and through the canvases propose imagined courses for the viewer to embark on. Both immanent ones that lead insistently back to the factual materiality of paint on canvas, and visionary ones that suggest places that transcend them. Here the physical and the imaginary coexist.

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