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L'idée Fixe: John Divola + Sayre Gomez + Joe Goode

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A group exhibition featuring a single work by each artist, which examines the window as the fulcrum upon which each one balances the internal and the external; representation and abstraction; and the abject and the sublime. Through August 4 at Steve Turner Contemporary.



L'idée Fixe, which translates as “fixed idea” or “obsession,” refers to a 1927 René Magritte painting of the same title in which the artist used the convention of the window to present four clearly demarcated vignettes—a forest, a cloudy sky, a hunter and an apartment’s façade. All the works included in this exhibition consider the window as a frame, collapsing two visual experiences into one. This framing mechanism creates an illusion, inviting viewers to be entranced by an abstracted image while suggesting that there is an entirely different experience beyond the wall on which each work hangs.

John Divola’s photograph is from his Zuma Beach series in which the artist spray-painted the interior of an abandoned beachfront property which became the foreground for capturing a series of spectacular sunsets. The color gradients of the sky meld beautifully with the dilapidated interior, thereby conflating notions of the beautiful and the abject.

Sayre Gomez presents an architectural intervention, which will consist of a window installed directly into the gallery wall. In so doing, the work will expose a second window that was covered by the initial build-out of the gallery. The piece will allow natural light to filter into the room, light that is partially obscured by a tinted film that the artist distressed and applied to the inside of the installed window. In this work Gomez refers to both the history of abstraction and the legacy of the readymade.

Joe Goode offers a painting from his Vandalism series in which the surface of a painted blue sky is torn and scored to expose its underlying substrate. In this series, Goode continues to explore vandalized planes through painterly means. The tears within the painting cause a rupture in the vibrant field of blue, revealing the materiality of an otherwise perfect image. By intention, the piece is framed under glass so one may see one's own reflection within the painting, an experience resembling that of looking through a window.

