

SPRING/ BREAK ART SHOW

Fiona Buchanan
two sunsets
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curated by john ros

Two Sunsets is a new installation concept by Fiona Buchanan that responds to the theme *In Excess* within the spectrum of excess and post-excess. The space created sets the real and surreal into interplay to envelop the viewer and provoke them within a mythical post-human space. Reflections are meant to blur the lines of the real and surreal as a direct result of post-excess and directly related to the climate crisis and the over consumption habits we have accepted as daily convenience. This installation studies an aftermath to the fumbling trajectory of this mission pursued in excess.

The installation is comprised of ten/eleven paintings. The paintings show a world in which cars, while at one time made and used by humans are no longer operated by people and the only functioning "beings" around. These wonky characters are left to their devices, which in this post-used environment isn't much. The atmosphere is colorful and inviting, while also unsettling – the palettes are off, sour or polluted and the cars idle, fall and screech to a halt. They don't seem to do anything or begin or end anywhere in particular, nodding to their uselessness and our absence. The landscape in these paintings references the US with sprawling Western Valleys and desert-like terrain. It includes vignettes of spectacle and natural beauty that are muffled and skewed with mistreatment. These places are used up and forgotten.

To bring the space into each painting (and to bring the paintings out into the space), each painting becomes a "road sign". A sculptural sign post is added from floor to painting and a cast shadow is painted directly on the wall for each. The physical post and painted shadow mimic qualities within the paintings, bringing the overall effect of "post excess" into the space. The signs and shadows mirror the cars' inanimate subject-hood and become the characters of the installation. In the middle of the room is a freestanding, lighted, double-sided sign with two paintings mounted back to back. The sign has its own shadow, made of canvas tacked to the floor. The sculptural "characters" meld the real and surreal aspects of the works and the room to play with the viewer's sense

of space. The shape of the room is dictated by these shadows that bend strangely, suggested by the real and affected by the surreal. The paintings in the installation describe an environment bereft of humans and instead inhabited by cars as a kind of detritus/figure hybrid. The car post excess is our impotent shell, the coupled illumination of its headlights the new rays of the sun.

The materials used in this exhibition speak to the theme of *In Excess* by enacting the opposite. Supplies used in considered amounts bring the space to life. The conservative structures and minimal nature of materials juxtaposes excess and underlines the used, stripped down world that is presented.

At first the feeling of *Two Sunsets* is digestible and even light – it provides the feeling of a room of artifacts explaining a past time, well studied and understood. The combination of the whimsy of the paintings and exaggerated shadows invite the viewer but upon further observation an eeriness sets in – the lack of familiar sentience and the cars as unsettling understudies contrasts the works' initial sweetness. Portraying images of this forlorn place these works advertise their own environment to each other and suggests that the landscape must appeal to itself to meet its own needs, like a person holding a sign while looking into a mirror. In this world, excess is reached and passed and the cars reference themselves cyclically, unknowingly.



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