

M+B

ARTFORUM

Critic's Pick: Daniel Gordon

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Daniel Gordon, Summer Fruit, 2014, chromogenic print, 60 x 70".

Daniel Gordon locates his photographs through a triangulation of painting, collage, and cutout. His C-prints compose still-life fare in complex tableaux, which he lights in-studio and captures on large-format film. Sourced from the Internet and cut freehand from printer paper, each element is inserted in a topography that makes little effort to disguise its seams. Plants sport skeins of hot glue; vases build up from clipped geometries; and apples resemble disused origami. Paper figures as a material at once volumetric and planar, drawn into space through facets and folds or collapsed into flatness by an abruptly scissored edge.

In *Summer Fruit* (all works 2014), Technicolor edibles occupy a field of clashing dots, checkers, and stripes. If the still life has historically been keyed to imaginative consumption, presenting spreads for the viewer to fictively digest, Gordon's scene precludes the same. His watermelons are conspicuously shrink-wrapped, his strawberries an unculinary cyan. Nature is made luridly artificial, as if to parody the still life as an art-historical cliché, wherein foodstuffs become vehicles of symbolic elaboration: a peach for fecundity, a peeled lemon for transience. Like the other photographs on view, *Summer Fruit* courts overdetermination. Apples and artfully ruffled tablecloths recall Cézanne's late still lifes, while jars with doubled, upturned lids invoke Cubism's signature mode of de- and recomposition.

This is to suggest that, for all their disjuncture, Gordon's C-prints are deeply familiar. Photographic space is dispersed only to be consolidated under the sign of modernist painting and papier collé. It's a seductive gesture, though one whose implications, both for photography and for modernism, are not entirely clear.