

M+B



Art Insider: Playing with perception, off-kilter balance, and LA on fire

Written by Lindsay Preston Zappas
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This week grayscale paintings explore Americana, fabric sculptures straddle mediums, an artist plays with expressive linework, and LA artists respond to fire.

Kara Joslyn at M+B

At M+B in West Hollywood, it may not be obvious at first that Kara Joslyn's prime reference points are 1950s paper crafts. Her moody grayscale paintings have sharp lines and illusionistic shadows that feel aptly contemporary in our digital age. The exhibition, *Tragic Kingdom*, elicits the seminal No Doubt record, yet pulls us towards present day horrors. The album title itself was meant to be a play of words on Disneyland's Magic Kingdom, and Joslyn seems to welcome these complex American references. From emo-tinged punk to mid-century crafts, these works examine a kind of American spirit. In *Gatekeeper (trouble ahead, trouble behind)*, a paper-craft hockey goalie is stuck in stasis. Much like our current politics or environmental collapse, finding a way forward or backward proves difficult.



"I'm like an exit away" (2019). Acrylic and polymer automotive paint on panel

Joslyn references a Marie Curie quote: "One never notices what has been done; one can only see what remains to be done." Similarly, her work moves between time and modes of reflection to confuse the starting point and play with believability. Joslyn explains, "Unlike in photography, in a painting (often referred to as window, or mirror) there is an element of disbelief within the viewer. Trompe l'oeil translates to 'fool the eye.' I always appreciated the trickster nature of that phrase. To fool the eye. The images come from books meant to instruct on how to make something volumetric and dynamic out of something flat and shallow. If photography is the truth that tells a lie, I would like paintings to be a lie that tells the truth. Everything symbolic is everything real."

On view: November 16 – December 21, 2019