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## DAILYSERVING

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## Stay Home: Will Rogan at Altman Siegel Gallery



Will Rogan, "Busts," 2010, 6 altered magazine pages, 11 1/8 x 8 1/4 inches each; image courtesy of Altman Siegel Gallery, SF

In 1980, French theorist and critic <u>Roland Barthes</u> published the book <u>Camera Lucida</u>, addressing the nature of photography and its inherent relationship with the mechanics of time. Barthes deconstructs this correlation and the concept of <u>memento mori</u>, roughly translated to mean "remember your mortality," and how photography exposes the vulnerable temporality of life. <u>Will Rogan</u>'s exhibition, *Stay Home*, now at the <u>Altman</u> <u>Siegel Gallery</u> in San Francisco, clearly roots itself in continuing this investigation.



Will Rogan, "The Elusive Nature of Time," 2010, Gelatin Silver Print, 16 x 20 inches; image courtesy of Altman Siegel Gallery, SF The exhibition is comprised mainly of three separate series. The first is made up of photographs repurposing a book on the subject of time, originally published by Life Magazine Science Library in 1966. "The Elusive Nature of Time," (2010) and "Man Versus Clock: the Unequal Struggle," (2010) are intriguing as Rogan gets close to actually documenting allusion. The layers that overlap within these images are palpable. The viewer experiences images of chapters of a then-relevant book, whose own *memento mori* has set in once the words hit the page, then captured by Rogan's action of photographing the book, sealing its fate which was already determined at the minute it was conceptualized.



Will Rogan, "Mediums 4 (II)," 2010, paper, wood, beeswax, dimensions variable; image courtesy of Altman Siegel Gallery, SF

In works such as "Medium 4 (II)," (2010), Rogan implements hand-cut wood sculptures to reference this idea of temporality within an art career's shelf-life. Rogan applies images of artists he has salvaged from discarded art catalogs encountered at the San Francisco Art Institute onto the pieces of wood, positions them without any adhesive, resulting in freestanding assemblages. What is to be inferred from these works? At one point, these artists were, quote unquote, important enough to have their picture taken. Yet, their catalogs have been discarded. Is Rogan suggesting that these photographs capture the peak and then eminent decline of the life of these artists' career? It may seem a bit over-determined, however. what comes to mind are the various cultures, such as Native American or Aboriginal, who held the belief that having ones' photograph taken left the soul in danger.



Will Rogan, "Can," 2010, Gelatin Silver Print, 16 x 20 inches; image courtesy of Altman Siegel Gallery, SF The final series of the exhibition is a body of photographs the artist took around the neighborhood he lives in and which the exhibition draws its title. The subject matter of this series is varied: a lone sneaker facing an indistinguishable wall; a discarded aluminum can emanating an iridescent light; a window pane that has been cracked in the shape of a teardrop and then outlined with duct tape in an attempt to fix the problem.

These works are presented as Rogan's attempt to

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capture what he considers outside found sculpture within the "urban and domestic landscapes around him." There seems to be some implication that this series is a bit separate from the other two, and it isn't quite clear why as they unequivocally fit within his investigation of the arc of time. Each individual subject serve as makeshift wormholes, leaving the viewer to imagine what happened in the ever-allusive past to lead up to its being captured on film—and its impending decline since the click of the shutter button.

*Stay Home* will be on view at Altman Siegel Gallery through November 6th, 2010.