

Art and Cake March 11, 2017

Biologue: A New Musical by Trisha Baga
356 Mission Road
January 27 - March 19, 2017
By Jody Zellen



For her immersive installation at 356 Mission, New York based multi-media artist Trisha Baga intertwines personal images with those culled from pop culture to create an environment through which viewers traverse, trying to connect the dots between the projections and an array of sculptures and found objects. The exhibit begins before entering the installation. Hanging in the long hall that leads into the darkened space are a series of kitschy lenticular prints featuring nature scenes, pets and wild animals covered by dabs of paint partially obscuring the images. These prints share similarities with Petra Cortright's digital layering of found images with simulated brush strokes and dollops of paint, yet because of their three-dimensionality and garish coloring they act as a preview to the installation.

Baga, like Cortright belongs to a generation of artists who borrow freely from the world of things, transforming the everyday into something unique and strange. In Baga's installation, pivoting desk-chairs provide moveable seating that can be rolled from projection to projection. Visitors are given 3D glasses upon entry for use in viewing some, but not all of the video works. To say that Baga's installation is all over the place is nothing short of a complement, as that seems to be her purpose. She aims to create a sense of fragmentation while simultaneously focusing on formal connections.

The centerpiece of the exhibition is a 25 minute single channel 3D video (the only piece with sound), entitled *The Voice* that explores ideas about the body and communication in the digital age. It is a study in absurdity and difficult to sit still and watch with so much else happening in the space. The 3D glasses go on for one video, then off, then on again as viewers wander through the disparate fragments in the installation. In two pieces, Baga simulates her workspace via props and projections and includes a 3D video of herself at work so viewers can catch a glimpse her physical body amongst the detritus.

As the viewer wanders through the installation their movements are parallel to the walkers in *Virhanka Trail*, an expansive installation piece that includes objects as well as a 9 minute looping 3D video that depicts both isolated and groups of individuals moving across the sand at a Japanese beach. The actual body in space as well as the imagery within this video is echoed in a series of static pieces comprised of seeds and foam on panel. These spotlight works are interrupted by moving projections which further fragment any sense of wholeness, in addition to playing havoc with the physical integrity of their surface.

Baga's *Biologue* is a confounding installation about media and mediums and how technology and the physical body interact. It also attempts to problematize the role of art and the artist in facilitating these connections and disjunctures.

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