

the art world, exposed in “Readykeulous by Ridykeulous: This is What Liberation Feels Like™,” a group show co-organized by Eisenman and the artist A. L. Steiner that ran concurrently with the exhibition. Steiner and Eisenman filled the museum with statements of political revolution generated by a broad swath of participants, from Leidy Churchman to Eileen Myles to Kara Walker. Eisenman brings this queer history to her materials and does so with an earnest desire to share it with the public. In her work, she encourages her viewers to look to the margins, where we might find Death carousing with partygoers, or a mess of multi-colored pigments stuck to the canvas’s edge like barnacles. In learning to look with an unbiased eye, we can approximate a new mode of vision that takes into account diverse lives, stories, genders, sexualities, and modes of embodiment.

—William J. Simmons

CHICAGO

Lucie Stahl

QUEER THOUGHTS

Lucie Stahl’s exhibition at the venerated apartment gallery Queer Thoughts in Chicago’s Pilsen neighborhood was a fitting last project before the gallery relocates to downtown Manhattan. Known for featuring work that embraces the shape-shifting properties associated with the concept of “postidentity,” Queer Thoughts reaffirmed its agenda with a corporeally charged installation punctuated by several cast-polyurethane molds of hands and faces and three of Stahl’s characteristic polymer-coated ink-jet prints of body parts submerged in gel. Stahl ferreted into the private domain of the third-floor walk-up apartment, installing work on its kitchen walls, thus underscoring a link between postidentity hybridization and the breaking down of the distinction between public and private spaces.

The tensions produced by contradictions between living space and diminutive gallery, and between visitors to the show and friends of Queer Thoughts, were exploited by the artist to capitalize on gestures of indeterminacy in her work.

The show’s title, “Pits,” was not explained in the exhibition’s didactic; however, one can understand it as a direct material reference. In her studio practice, Stahl mixes a reactive polymer compound with water-based acrylic, which gives the transparent plastic a tint of color. This watery addition also puts in motion a volatile chemical reaction, and the polymer medium becomes suffused with tiny air bubbles as it sets, resulting in semi-transparent impressions of body parts with pitted surfaces. The casts of inexact three-dimensional hands and faces encased in the material are thus rendered not precious and glass-like but hard and sudsy-looking. In a two-second looping video on the gallery website, two buckets of animated viscera, here dyed red, demonstrate the alchemical reaction of Stahl’s plas-

tic medium, a bubbly goop antithetical to our usual experience of plastic as uniform and static.

Set within the small, brightly lit main gallery where Stahl’s plastic appendages dotted the walls was a homely walk-in closet with an old vinyl floor. Stahl had covered the closet’s interior with scanner-generated imagery depicting colossal fingertips pressed into translucent gel, similar to those that hung demurely on the walls in the kitchen. A milky plastic hand was mounted to appear as if reaching out from the fleshy closet wall. Titled *Hand Jobs (Spirits)* (all works 2014), it held a wine bottle and a burning white tapered candle that illuminated the tiny room. Here there was only enough space for one viewer, who was forced to close the door in order to approach the wraithlike hand. Once the door was closed, a one-way glass embedded into the cutaway closet door became visible, revealing the glaring white gallery outside the closet. From the exterior of the closet, this element of the installation, *Woman In Womirror T*, appeared as a mirrored inset, with a face in glassy relief mounted at its center.

Attracted to the transformative properties of liquid and gelatinous states, Stahl has found a solution to the problem of capturing the visual impact of material transmutations. In her work, liquid, mucoid, and solid states are scanned and printed; body parts are mold-casted with mercurial compounds. These porous associations were equally at play in the wall text Stahl generated for “Pits”: “Tracking down a strange, loose narrative of the acutely violent aspects of power and resource distribution, informed by a female factor that runs like a bloody current pulling loose debris in from the shores of a male dominated landscape, shouting is the only way to be heard over the roar of yourself. Woman in Womirror.” Stahl’s ambiguous body imagery injects powerful feminist political implications into the postidentity stratagem. Yet it is her beguilingly unstable, alchemical approaches to artmaking that provide the most compelling challenge to identity norms.

—Michelle Grabner

Lucie Stahl, *Shroom Cloud Hands (Purple)*, 2014, polyurethane, acrylic, 10 ½ x 6 x 3 ½”.



AUSTIN

Do Ho Suh

THE CONTEMPORARY AUSTIN

So many weighty themes are piled onto Do Ho Suh’s fabric sculptures, it seems remarkable that his diaphanous structures don’t collapse under their heavy load. History and biography, longing and belonging, migration and globalization—these are only a handful of the ponderous concatenations apparently called to mind by the artist’s works. Such associations are perhaps not surprising, given that Suh’s work addresses architecture, a perennially symbolic subject, and specifically the home—surely the most intensely symbolic of architectural spaces. Indeed, in his more literal moments, Suh has not hesitated to exploit architecture’s unique capacity to function as a highly legible reification of relations of power, politics, culture, and identity. For example, *Fallen Star 1/5*, 2008–11 (not on view here), is a scale model depicting the traditional Korean house that was Suh’s childhood home in Seoul crashing through the wall of the Providence, Rhode Island, apartment building that was his first habitation in the US. (Culture shock, it would seem.)

Such rhetorical gestures have an undeniable resonance with Suh’s peripatetic and globalized personal history. (The South Korean-born artist was educated first in Seoul and later in the US. He now splits his time among New York City, London, and Seoul.) But they also rely heavily on the semiotic play between clear stylistic markers—the stately redbrick and Georgian moldings of Suh’s American apartment pierced by the tile roof and intricately carved timbers of his Korean house—and interpreting Suh’s work primarily by reading buildings as signs threatens