

DAILYSERVING

Shotgun Reviews: Evergreen, Searchlight, Rosebud at Jessica Silverman Gallery

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Margo Wolowiec. *Evergreen, Searchlight, Rosebud*, 2017; installation view, Jessica Silverman Gallery, San Francisco. Courtesy of the Artist and Jessica Silverman Gallery.

Margo Wolowiec’s work intersects many planes: physical and virtual spaces, pleasure and danger, analog and conceptual practices, and the mediums of painting, sculpture, textile, and installation. Wolowiec’s exhibition *Evergreen, Searchlight, Rosebud* at Jessica Silverman Gallery, on view through May 27, explores these thresholds through her multidimensional practice.

Wolowiec sources her images with a digital program that captures photographs from social-media platforms like Instagram and Facebook using predetermined hashtags, such as #BlackAndWhite, or geolocations, like the Louvre or Dubai Mall. Additionally, she sources text from screenshots of established and fake online news sites. She prints the compiled images onto strands of thread with a sublimation dye printer, and manually weaves them with floor loom; the final textile is mounted on a frame or in a freestanding support.

For this body of work, Wolowiec drew heavily from the hashtag “rosegarden.” The variables in Wolowiec’s methodical process result in pixelated images of text and flowers. In *Imagine How Many* (2017), Wolowiec combines text with images of flowers in a grid-like formation. Hyperlinks and blue highlights are identifiable in the text, but the text itself is abstracted to illegibility, preventing the viewer from knowing if information is false or verified; an editor’s “delete” symbol punctuates this layered indeterminacy. The visual ambiguity—disorienting among familiar, lush floral imagery—denies meaning, indicating the slippage of translation.

In this series, Wolowiec incorporated a new material, copper mesh, in her freestanding diptych structures. The interlocking copper rhymes with the warp and weft of the nearby textiles, while the wire's rigidity contrasts with the supple textiles, creating a luminous, jewel-like screen through which one may view the works. Wolowiec's screens reference Faraday cages, copper-wire mesh enclosures that block electromagnetic fields; [1] these shields suggest that we might need protection from our seemingly innocuous and ubiquitous phones, computers, and televisions. Wolowiec's copper layers are simultaneously inviting and threatening, functioning both as a viewing screen and a protective partition.

Because social media often projects an idealized version of reality, online experiences can trigger desire and longing, as well as anxiety and insecurity. Wolowiec's work, which directly and indirectly relies on the internet and digital interfaces, poignantly illustrates this tension. Although Wolowiec's copper mesh doesn't enclose the viewer as a Faraday cage would, it nevertheless threatens to negate her own process. Wolowiec's screens provide a partial intervention for our internet-saturated lives, and suggest that social media, though enticing, is unknowable and precarious.

Evergreen, Searchlight, Rosebud *will be on view through May 27, 2017.*