

WAAVE+DADA

Ian Wallace: "Review"

June 12, 2015



An intertextual exploration into dialectics and cultural mediation, the framework of Ian Wallace's solo exhibition at *Jessica Silverman Gallery* is simply brilliant.

Currently on view in San Francisco, "*Ian Wallace: Meta Masculin/Féminin*" unfolds like a philosophical exposition on the nature of dichotomies and dynamism embedded within culture, gender roles and the creative process. Referencing filmmaker Jean-Luc Godard and the French New Wave era in title, style and

re-appropriated imagery, Wallace utilizes a collage aesthetic as an expressive, yet formalist 'tongue-in-cheek' approach to composition and social compartmentalization. The plains of paint accent the male and female protagonists as existentially disconnected characters, lost in a void of cultural knowledge. It is both textually complex and purposive, posing "*a philosophical problem played out aesthetically within the framework of a work of art...*".

And yet Wallace doesn't intend to answer this "*problem*", but rather reimagines the issue as an aesthetic ennui of sorts; the division between the photography and blocks of acrylic are a purposeful discordance that Wallace describes as a '*cleavage*'. One can even read the implication as evidence that the separation is a pseudo-authoritative, social construct within a larger narrative. "*I was specifically attracted to the graphic symbol of the slash or solidus that separates the words Masculin and Féminin, and acts as an analogy to my symbolic, dialectical approach to the subject,*" he adds. Much like Godard, the function of these edits or separations (the literal cuts and edits of film) also becomes a playfully self-reflexive means of beckoning the viewer to question and recognize the biases of all authorities, including that of the artist.

With the addition of sketches and unfinished notations from Wallace's creative process, "*Meta Masculin/Féminin*" is truly a stunning, thoughtful exhibition worthy of your attention.