

"Synecdoche at Jessica Silverman Gallery"

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Tony Lewis. *Automatic*, 2015; Pencil, graphite powder, and tape on paper; 83 3/4 x 71 1/2 in. Courtesy of the Artist; Shane Campbell Gallery, Chicago; Massimo De Carlo, London/Milan; and Jessica Silverman Gallery, San Francisco.

Synecdoche, an exhibition at Jessica Silverman Gallery featuring twelve works by five artists, borrows its title from rhetoric, with each work to be read as a smaller piece of a larger narrative or theme. A trope that is easily defined verbally (examples include "all hands on deck" or "the meeting was full of suits"), synecdoche is more cerebral when applied to visual art.

Works by Julie Beaufils and B. Ingrid Olsen break down the human form, truncating, framing, and in some cases duplicating body parts to effectively riff on themes larger than the individual segments or works themselves. In *InLove the View* (2015), a large painting by Beaufils, a female body form painted in silhouette bends over, supple and supplicant, while disparate body parts (lips, an eye, an ear) are painted below. The painting creates a literal rift between the female body that is fetishized and objectified and the body that experiences and creates.

B. Ingrid Olson's *A Marker of Space Between Arms and Hands Was*

Hands (2015), an intense, close-up image,

doesn't seem to capture the artist herself so much as provide a voyeur's view of creation. In this work, layered photographs and a mirror image offer multiple perspectives of the artist's forearms and hands against a backdrop of white tiles. By uniting the shifting perspectives of Cubism with the realism of photography, the piece draws the viewer into a larger dialogue about the nature of photography as a more "realistic" form of art.

The bold lines, black-and-white color scheme, and large scale of Tony Lewis's drawings of stenographic symbols catch the eye and move the exhibition's focus more explicitly to language. Across four pieces of paper illustrated with graphite powder and taped together to form a larger surface, a curved shepherd's crook of a line sweeps left of a smaller circle. If not for an essay by Joseph Akel found in the exhibition catalog, the synecdoche might be lost in translation. Written in Gregg shorthand, Lewis' drawings depict the word "automatic." However, even without this knowledge, *Automatic* (2015) still impresses. To this viewer it seemed more interesting to think about how synecdoche works only when given a wide enough network of shared symbols. The marbled paper backdrop, separated into tiles of paper, cleverly evokes the marble floor of the courtroom, one of the few places where stenography is still used. While some works in the exhibition demonstrate a tenuous connection to synecdoche, others simply need the right information to put the pieces together.

Synecdoche is on view through August 22, 2015 at Jessica Silverman Gallery, San Francisco.