

David Gilbert

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“Out-of-”

MICHAEL BENEVENTO
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In a midnight-blue room at the back of this gallery hangs a lonesome work (*Untitled [XIX L]*, 2007) by James Turrell: a small reflective hologram of two polygons, joined along one edge, though both are never visible at once. Light from the doorway bounces off the piece and casts a trapezoid onto the floor, which is flecked with glitter. “Out-of-,” curated by Leila Khastoo, is so multifaceted, so compressed, that even in this inner sanctum, the eye darts between dozens of glinting surfaces.

Crammed facing the entrance are fifteen monitors of various sizes, fed by tangles of cables. The ceiling has been lowered to around seven feet with black WeedBlock fabric. This aggressive display further fractures one's distracted attention. The videos themselves deal with legacy (Francesco Vezzoli's *The Return of Bruce Nauman's Bouncing Balls*, 2006, for example, which presents a view of shaved testicles jostling above a snowcapped mountain); distance from history (Kerry Tribe's casting call for actors to play her own family in an experimental documentary); appropriation (an Oliver Laric video of slow-motion stock footage); and artistic process (*Packing Fountain*, 1996, by Simon Leung, in which an art handler crates Duchamp's fountain in real time). Yet the setup layers these more or less subtle meditations into a frantic, Internet-style jumble of associative overlap, itself foregrounding the push-pull of time, or the difficulty of attention to time. Leung's video is angled toward a mirror on the wall in yet another level of reflexivity in a room crowded with deflections. The running commentary of *A Video Portrait: Chris Burden*, 1989, often overpowers the other audio.

The second half of the room contains just three large photos, each on its own wall and lit by assorted lamps. Zoe Leonard's black-and-white prints of a mortared-over window (*Wall*, 2002) and cinder-blocked door (*Untitled*, 2000/2003) contrast with David Gilbert's *The Flea Circus*, 2011, which depicts a messy artist's studio. These images yield some floor space, but remain visually confining. The false ceiling stops as one enters the back room with Turrell's piece, which, far from being meditative or phenomenologically musing in the way one might expect, now feels positively schizophrenic. As one exits the gallery, back through the crush of plinths and equipment, the black backs of the monitors seem almost serene.



View of “Out-of-,” 2012.

— Travis Diehl