

“Detouched”

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There's some semantic juggling going on with curator Anthony Huberman's concept for "Detouched." The word he has chosen for the exhibition's title, he writes, isn't a real word, instead existing "somewhere between re-touched and detached. It's also fairly close to untouched, which means that it has a lot to do with touch . . ." This introduces works by A. K. Burns, Alice Channer, Sunah Choi, Dennis Oppenheim, and Seth Price, which are juxtaposed to explore ideas of physical presence in a world where experiences are now distanced, felt through the taps of our fingertips as we interact over the Internet.

Burns's video installation *Touch Parade*, 2011, is a set of reenactments of YouTube videos dealing with touch compulsions. Vegetables and eggs are ground underfoot; rubber gloves are donned in layers; a balloon is rubbed, held, explored. The repetitions consolidate to create a sort of immersion in sensation, becoming visceral as it builds. Oppenheim's film *Air Pressure (Hand)*, 1971, operates in a similar territory, as a jet of air is directed at the artist's flesh, distorting and moving the skin of his hands, reminding us of how alien the substance that covers our bodies can sometimes seem. This film also works as a meditation on the artist's primary agent—the hand.

Choi shows *Abdrücke (Imprints)*, 2011–13, a series of five graphite and pastel frottage drawings. These reproductions of surfaces, sidewalks, and gratings may be seen as simulacra, metaphors for Baudrillard's view that contemporary experience is merely a simulation of reality. Channer and Price contribute sculptural elements to the show. Channer's *Amphibians*, 2012, is an assemblage of stainless steel, aluminum, marble, and elastic, arranged in a form that is not quite animal but seems uncannily on the cusp of becoming alive; while Price's *Untitled*, 2007, is an example of that artist's most pared-back work. Plastic coatings negate the materiality of the cherry burl and bird's-eye wood, from which the artist has cut a pair of flat abstract shapes. Faces materialize in the negative space, and the wood is recontextualized, hanging on the wall, its utility gone—untouchable.