

“of any one of them that is at all”

Esmé Hogeveen on Kim Neudorf’s *“of any one of them that is at all”*

“...I’ve come up with an exhibition title . . . It is a sentence fragment from an excerpt from Merleau-Ponty’s ‘Phenomenology of Perception[.]’ The title is:

of any one of them that is at all

The full quote is:

‘existence can have no external or contingent attribute. It cannot be anything - spatial, sexual, temporal - without being so in its entirety, without taking up and carrying forth its ‘attributes’ and making them into so many dimensions of its being, with the result that an analysis of any one of them that is at all searching really touches upon subjectivity itself.’ (477)

I’ve also stretched out the fragment into a kind of poem. It was written partly to stretch out the title into more of an idea, and it was written about some of the paintings too. The poem is attached.”

[- k. neudorf]

Is *s t r e t c h* the thinning or the fulfilling of an idea? One often encounters phrases like, “the road stretched on into the night,” in which stretch is a kind of *Esfade*, or a self-acknowledged limit. The road will continue, surely, but in conceiving of the stretch ahead – the road itself stretching – we concede its unknownness. In such cases, to what does stretch refer? A relinquishment of fixity or an absence of fact? An unconfirmed site or sighting? Is the stretch ahead a destination that’s intangible simply because it exists in the future?

Stretching implies recalibration and the opening of space between known points. Perhaps most directly evoked by colloquial language, stretching also raises questions about truth. To embellish, to hyperbolize, to personalize, to reframe; stretching involves a reorientation of criteria. We may also think of this in (non-opposed) material and immaterial terms: stretching an object alters scale, whereas stretching an idea alters expectation.

In Kim Neudorf’s paintings, stretch is perceived as a means of inhabiting and examining trajectories. Reflecting upon Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s assertion that

“[experience] cannot be anything . . . without being so in its entirety,” in Neudorf’s work the activity of stretching between and beyond points of reference allows the viewer to partake in thinking with materials. Her paintings exhibit an embodied catachresis; the phenomenon whereby a kind of misnaming reveals, in degrees, the limits of linguistic sense-making. Exploring parallel permutations of the arbitrary within visual codes, of any one of them that is at all engages the reciprocal possibilities of image making and reading.

Related to metaphor, catachresis is a more determinedly roving frame for discerning and relaying meaning. Unlike metaphor or forms of more literal explanation, catachresis never simply operates in lieu of a given meaning or definition. Rather, catachresis involves a reaching, a reorienting, a *s t r e t c h i n g* out. This stretching, an extension of what is toward what may be, begins when one acknowledges the reciprocal nature of reading and being read. Catachresis therein becomes a strategy for excavating form and formlessness, and for proceeding to layer the two with a renewed attentiveness to what is entailed in making sense.

It is fitting that Neudorf uses the poetry of rearrangement to find a title for this exhibition; in stretching Merleau-Ponty’s notions she finds space for new ideas to dwell without pressure to kowtow or overdetermine. Working with deft awareness of genre, Neudorf creates bends in place of beginnings and ends. She pulls our focus here and there; we perceive of any one of them that is at all as a play upon still-life, yet a play without conclusion. A play that remains in play. A stretch of the imagination only possible when we recall that to stretch is to know ourselves better through finding new sets of relations amongst the materials at hand.

[email attachment:
- k. neudorf]

of any one of them that is at all
mineral nose, I mean as if gilded, or dog nose gilded, as in grease
boiled, sweet inlay evenly spread or spread as lunch repeated
an evenly repeated inlay sweet lunch spread, or inlay
or that is, I mean
of any one of them near which we are
to the which we will in no wise agree
to the dirt-line, usually marked off with dust, small grit, and boiled remains
to the beds usually marked off with one that is in no way at all
that is, of any one at all
that is in no way at all
gilded evenly, repeated in grease warmed and spread
repeated as if gilded in small grit, or inlay, or warm grease
already marked off, desired thing lined with dirt and evenly spread
near which we are

we will in no way agree
what should we, that is at all near which we are
of any one of them that is at all

Esmé Hogeveen, 2016