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ARTnews



Artists' First Influences

John Cage:
The Sound of Silence

The Ever-Notorious
Marc Quinn

AIDS in the Art World

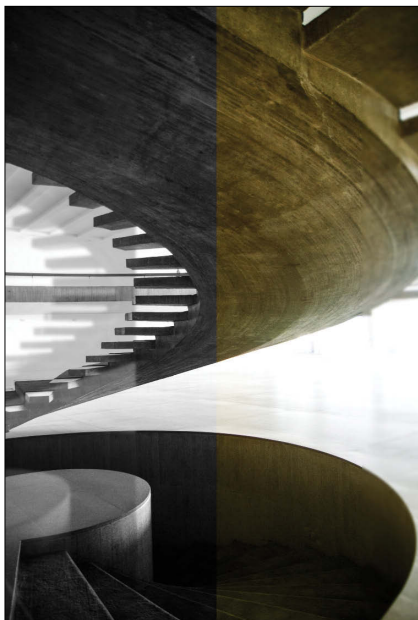
Jorge Miño

Praxis

Jorge Miño's "Crosslines Series," consisting of seven new untitled works of altered photography, presents a landscape of not exactly fictional but dislocated scenes—familiar, but unplaceable. The unreality is uncanny—streamlined yet unfocused. The original images from which Miño works, modern constructs from living cities, render the influence of human craftsmanship doubly invisible, both in his unpopulated vistas and in the subtle way he manipulates the original photograph.

Printed on matte, cotton-based paper, some of these photographs have been colorized, overlaid with filters, selectively blurred, double-printed, and reversed. The image of a curving slope of a ramp, used in two separate works, is not at all the same curve or place; both stand at one remove from the original, and both are located, if anywhere, "somewhere else." Familiar, yet unknown, logical yet architecturally impossible, the works convey the feeling that they have not been created yet, even though they never could be.

In one photograph, a broad spiral staircase, captured at an angle that shows the curving underside and the abyss into which the unseen steps presumably descend, is bisected into sections of sepia and black and white,



Jorge Miño, *Untitled*, 2013, photograph on Hahnemuhle paper, 69 1/4" x 46". Praxis.



Byung Hoon Choi, "In One Stroke," 2014, dimensions variable, installation view. Friedman Benda.

calling to mind solid and illustrated instances of spatial manipulation.

The images suggest Baroque exercises in the architecture of the fantastic, such as the double-helix staircase at the Château de Chambord and the unplanned and uninhabitable winding mazes of San Jose's Winchester Mystery House, as well as the jigsawed self-invalidating etchings of M. C. Escher.

Floating, surreal, and semisolid, Miño's spaces exist somewhere in fanciful realities. They were made plausible by the medium of photography and the inability of the camera to lie. But the manipulations they received in the lab and the sometimes grainy quality of the cotton paper brought them closer to something printed from the etched plate—Escher's logically detailed illogic. —Kiki Turner

Byung Hoon Choi

Friedman Benda

Near-perfect combinations of minimalist form and utilitarian function, Byung Hoon Choi's works are inspired by the biomorphic shapes found in nature and in landscaping, as well as the ideal forms of philosophy, Korean tradition, and the works of 20th-century sculptors Barbara Hepworth and Isamu Noguchi. Choi favors clean silhouettes in natural materials such as wood, clay, and stone. For this show the artist-designer exhibited ten sculptural basalt benches that balance organic and constructed arrangements.

Each of the three rooms held a group

of works that seemed to progress from those in the other rooms, with the result that the whole show felt like a continuum in the evolution of a species. Within each space, one could observe stages in the development of individual organisms.

Five works lay tranquilly in the dimly lit first gallery, suggesting a nest of hibernating animals. The sculptures coupled unfinished rock bases with highly polished stone curves that recalled the quick brushstrokes displayed in the preliminary sketches hanging near the gallery entrance. Half interred, the smooth basalt shapes seemed to emerge from their roughly chiseled shells like Paleozoic creatures coming out of the water.

In the following gallery, two benches evoked the metamorphosis of an insect from larva to adult. Grounded in raw basalt bases, similar to those in the previous room, these works featured serpentine forms doubling over on themselves as if unfurling from cocoon-like casings.

Finally, the gallery opened up at the back to reveal three works composed of gleaming, delicately poised lines of basalt. In *afterimage of beginning 013-400* (2013), two lines intersect, creating a graceful, infinite loop. Here, Choi's designs were freed from the heavy bases seen in the previous pieces and rested serenely on the gallery floor. All of the designer's ideas about craftsmanship, ideal forms, beauty, and nature culminated in these few works, which appeared to slumber, unaware of their beauty.

—Frances Vigna