

## “Subject to Change”

Luca Nino Antonucci & Kate Bonner

April 18 - May 16, 2015

Image, frame, object, space. Make a picture, slide it between wood, slap it on the wall. Plexiglass is optional, but it does make a great sneeze guard. In each exercise, an image gains objecthood, a subject gains clarity, an artwork gains actuality. A bit of rectilinear focus does wonders on the brain.

In the last several years, artists Kate Bonner and Luca Nino Antonucci have consistently challenged the role of a picture's frame. By obscuring, interrupting, or bending the frame, the artists complicate expected notions of subject and object, and how we are to consider their relationships. While photography and printmaking are at the core of the artists' respective practices, presentation and form are where Bonner and Antonucci truly innovate, complicating what each work is truly of and about.

Bonner's recent oeuvre, first exhibited at *The path of a free object*, her summer 2014 solo show at Et al. in San Francisco, combines wood panel supports with small photographic prints of trees and nature. The prints are surprisingly pliant, either curved, curled, or collaged. The wood supports are immaculate objects in themselves, essentially acting as minimalist shelves to hold, prop and abut the photographs.

The importance of objecthood can be seen in the evolution of Bonner's practice. Her previous body of work, best described as digital collage on shaped MDF panels, were made of singular components. They looked as if they had been taken to some interdimensional sci-fi portal, hucked into the ether, and recovered on the other side, warped, bent and broken by whatever transgressions had encountered them. They were really good! However, as image and form were physically inseparable, their “oneness” provided certain limitations.

By extricating photograph from frame in her newer work, Bonner has found more dichotomous relationships to explore. For many artists, it would be enough to make several versions of a similar composition, but Bonner deftly moves from one surprising idea to the next, using simplistic means to create unexpected dynamism within each work. A new tactic has been to use “broken frames,” in which the perimeter of each support mysteriously starts and stops.

Luca Nino Antonucci has recently probed classical sculpture as a parable for contemporary notions of authenticity, authorship, and originality. His new works, framed prints depicting so-called “modest Venus” statues of antiquity, are intentionally obscured with textured acrylic. In each of the variants of this Roman form, themselves derivatives of a Greek antecedent, a nude Venus covers her vulva and breast as she emerges from a bath. Antonucci’s prints crop around this gesture, a voyeuristic act which eschews the limbs and head of the figure. Besides the humorous resemblance of the acrylic frame to that of shower door glass, the acrylic mimics the “modesty” of the original gesture, attempting to conceal the provenance of the image/object just as Venus herself attempts privacy.

Copies, in all of its connotations, are paramount to Antonucci’s ideas, whether they are plaster replicas of sculptures, sound recordings, or copy machine reproductions. (Antonucci, it should be noted, is a printer, bookmaker and founder of Colpa Press, a publishing and design partnership in San Francisco.) The context of an image or object, with all the social and art historical baggage it may tow, is a framework in itself. If it’s revelatory to see a famed object in a museum, previously only experienced as photographic image, how does that change when the object is deployed as advertisement or tourist folly?

On a car trip from San Francisco to visit tmoro projects, Antonucci lamented the preponderance of Modernist-influenced artworks in Bay Area commercial galleries. The problem is not the influences in the works themselves, but in the Modernist-influenced architecture of the galleries, and that of the homes they will likely be sold to. The works, according to Antonucci, become “decorative,” camouflaged by the indifference of their surroundings, their potential muted by the similarity of its environs.

I agree with him. It isn’t a matter of whether the artwork “looks good above the couch.” A frame, in any sense of the word, distinguishes interior from exterior. To challenge the distinction of these lines is far more interesting than to blur them.

Evan Reiser

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Luca Nino Antonucci lives and works in San Francisco, California. He received his MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute in 2010 and is now a resident artist at Basement. He is co-founder of Colpa Press, a publishing and design company specializing in art books and prints. He has exhibited predominantly in San Francisco, New York and Berlin.

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Kate Bonner received her MFA from California College of the Arts in 2012. She lives and works in Oakland, CA. She has exhibited at The Wattis Institute for Contemporary

Art, San Jose Institute for Contemporary Art, Queens Nails, The Popular Workshop, Important Projects, Et al., Luis De Jesus, and NADA New York, among others. (Kate Bonner's works courtesy Et al.)

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Evan Reiser is an artist and curator living in San Francisco. He is the founder and proprietor of City Limits, a gallery in Oakland, California (with Stephanie Rohlfs) and 100 , an apartment gallery in San Francisco which will debut in April, 2015.

## About tmoro projects

tmoro projects is an independent, nonprofit 501 (c)(3) organization (pending approval) that serves as a catalyst for contemporary art. Located in the heart of Santa Clara County (Silicon Valley), tmoro projects seeks to enrich this community through a range of contemporary art exhibitions and public programs. It is run with the help of Bay Area artists, scholars and students. It is not driven by commercial interests and hence we do not have a fixed roster of artists.

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tmoro projects is located at 1046 Sherman Street, Santa Clara CA.

### Directions to tmoro projects

via Caltrain: Exit the Santa Clara station, walk southeast on Benton Street, and turn left onto Sherman Street. It is a 3-minute walk.

via I-880: Exit CA-82N/The Alameda, turn left onto Benton Street, take the 1<sup>st</sup> left onto Sherman Street.

via 101: Exit at De La Cruz Blvd, make a slight right over Caltrain railroad, turn left onto Lafayette Street, take the 3<sup>rd</sup> left onto Benton Street, take the 3<sup>rd</sup> right onto Sherman Street.