



BLACK CROWN GALLERY

814 Alice St | Oakland, CA 94606

www.blackcrowngallery.com

For immediate Release

SURFACE TENSION

Maggie Preston | Phillip Maisel

Black Crown Gallery

814 Alice Street | Oakland, CA 94607



March 24th - April 29th | 2017

Open hours | Friday and Saturday 1-6pm & by appointment

Opening Reception | Friday, March 24th 6-9pm

Artist Talk | Saturday, April 22nd 4pm

Black Crown Gallery is pleased to present *Surface Tension*, a two-person exhibition featuring new work by Phillip Maisel and Maggie Preston. Both artists have practices deeply rooted in photography,

though each in their own way create distinctive artworks that confuse the flatness of surface and the illusion of depth typically inherent to the medium. Alternating between creation and rendering, between two-dimensions and three, Preston and Maisel blur boundaries between media and cause viewers to question their own perceptive abilities—all while calling attention to the assumptions of documentary fidelity inherent to photography. Both Preston and Maisel enter into their pieces with a fixed geometry, only to assertively break from it. While doing so, mechanical production and the act of the hand are intertwined in a visual knot impossible to untangle.

In *Templates*, Maggie Preston has created a series of sculptures and photographs, each a near-abstract tangle of black shapes and lines that seem to twist and arc through space, while simultaneously sitting flat on a two dimensional plane. Starting with a fixed form cut from black card, Preston bends, folds, loops and cuts until it becomes something entirely new. She then photographs the transformed shape against a white background, the resulting image only vaguely referring back to the original. Preston then produces sculptures based on the graphic forms of the photographs—but at a significantly larger scale. The thick steel forms seem to vacillate between two and three-dimensions, between rigidity and fluidity, and defy a solid placement in space.

Phillip Maisel's images from the series *For Your "Open"* literally and figuratively unfold: utilizing a range of objects to occupy the frame of his camera, Maisel creates geometric—even architectural—arrangements that play on the flatness of the pictured materials, the depth of the space they describe, and the surface of the photograph itself. The photographs work in sequence, presented as systematic progressions though forms, the order and position of the materials shifting in one photograph to the next, each new image presenting new possibilities from the seemingly limited palette of carefully selected color and pattern. This steady evolution—combined with collaged and three dimensional inclusions—create prismatic descriptions of a seemingly closed space.

Phillip Maisel, born in Chicago and based in San Francisco, received his MFA from the California College of the Arts, San Francisco, CA. His work has been exhibited at Gregory Lind Gallery, Right Window, and Southern Exposure in San Francisco; Shulamit Nazarian in Los Angeles; Document and Heaven Gallery in Chicago; The William Benton Museum in Connecticut; The University of New Mexico in Taos; and

DeCordova Museum in Massachusetts. His work has been reviewed in *Modern Painters*, *Art Practical*, *Fabrik Magazine*, *Square Cylinder*, and *New City Art*, among others. In 2015, his work was featured in curator Charlotte Cotton's latest book *Photography Is Magic*, a critical publication of contemporary photographic practices.

Maggie Preston is a native Californian who received her MFA from the California College of the Arts, San Francisco, CA. Her work has been exhibited both locally and nationally, including a solo exhibition at SF Camerawork, San Francisco, CA, as well as group exhibitions at Mixed Use (Minnesota Street Projects), San Francisco, CA; Ampersand International Arts, San Francisco, CA; Krowwork, Oakland, CA; Berkeley Art Center, Berkeley, CA; Rayko, San Francisco, CA; Pro Arts, Oakland, CA; San Francisco Arts Commission Gallery, San Francisco, CA; David Brower Center, Berkeley, CA; and the Houston Center for Photography, Houston TX. In 2012 Preston was awarded an artist residency with an accompanying exhibition at Rayko Photo Center San Francisco, CA. She has taught at a range of institutions and organizations including California College of the Arts, San Francisco Art Institute and Youth Art Exchange, all in San Francisco, CA.

For press inquiries and images, please contact:
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