

No Edit
Simone Hine

21 - 22 May 2022

STABLE

85 Pearson St, Kangaroo Point.

STABLE acknowledges the Turrbal and Yuggera people as Traditional Owners of the lands on which its gallery stands. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

The artist would like to thank Denise Thwaites, Bridie Gillman, Kylie Spear, Kyle Weise and Clare Said.

On Tue, 3 May 2022, Simone Hine wrote:

On Thu, 5 May 2022, Denise Thwaites wrote:

On Tue, 7 May 2022, Simone Hine wrote:

On Thu, 12 May 2022, Denise Thwaites wrote:

So, I should start by explaining what this work actually is, and how it will exist in the gallery.

No Edit is a sculptural work that consists of a Pelican case sitting open on top of a plinth. A white monochrome painting is suspended from the hook of a scale used to weigh luggage. From this scale, the painting hangs in a lopsided fashion via one of the D-hooks that would usually provide support for the painting to be hung level on a wall. The foam in the Pelican case has been cut to accommodate the painting and scale, suggesting that the work will be packed up and sent elsewhere or stored after the exhibition: the objects' presence in the gallery is temporary. -- In fact, it will go somewhere, right? Can you divulge, or is it important that the future of the work remains open and undefined for us?

The painting currently hangs in my kitchen, which is the hub of my household. It is in the same position that it occupied throughout 2021 when I was making the work. I think it is likely that it will be returned to the same position after the exhibition. The scale has travelled with me in my luggage for the best part of twenty years. The case is new. The scale and case will likely be used within their usual context after the exhibition. So, I guess that the objects will be together only for the exhibition. What will remain intact is the Instagram feed, even once the exhibition is taken down. Returning the objects to their usual function leaves the work open ended and undefined. Even the Instagram feed is unreliable because it requires the continued function of the platform. No care is placed on the preservation of the work, but that does not mean the objects cannot be brought together again.

The monochrome painting functions as a three-dimensional object. By suspending the painting in space, the build-up of paint layers become visible. These layers of paint are the result of a year-long process of producing a new painting every day, resulting in 365 successive paintings on the single canvas. Each day the canvas was prepared with a new ground and a new painting was painted, photographed and posted to the Instagram tag **timedateimage**, after which the process would begin again. The procedure evoked a performance score executed through a painterly process. -- I was delighted to find the 'timedateimage' account on Instagram! I was really struck, not only by the durational aspect of the project documented on the platform, but the ebb-and-flow between the different styles of painting that are now layered into this canvas. Naive and childlike imagery, alongside more abstracted geometric styles of painting, etc. Was this oscillation in style planned, or spontaneous? For me, it speaks to the fickleness of online identities. But perhaps that's unfair, because people are always changing. Maybe social media just allows us to see that transformation condensed.

Social media feeds, and Instagram stories in particular, informed the format of the painting. Endless streams of images are created as fleeting thoughts. These are not perfect published images: drafted, edited, reworked. They are quick flashes, dialogue starters, prompts, procrastination tools. Yet when I think of my process as I painted each image, it is a visual *stream of consciousness*. Originally a psychology term that can be traced to the late nineteenth century, the idea has become synonymous with James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1920). So, yes, the process was structured by social media, but continues a process designed to represent the unruly structure of thought. And, yes, a visual *stream of consciousness* could accurately be described as a doodling.

In terms of the style: the images that I produced were influenced directly by dialogues that occurred around the painting. I mentioned that the painting was hung in my kitchen; sometimes I responded to prompts from my children. I painted a robot and the surface of Mars at my son's request. My daughter suggested I paint the paintings that hang in our house with an object removed. In response, I painted the background of every square painting displayed in our house. Others represented observations made during the day, such as a balloon caught in a tree, a colourful bug, vintage wrapping paper, a small tree stabilized with red rope. Some play with the format and style of the Instagram interface itself. Most regularly, there were themes that engaged with the passing of time such as the odometer on my car, a potted plant as it grew, parking meters and signs. I painted postal letters when I received them. Sometimes

the surface of the canvas was the subject of the painting, usually addressing the materiality of the canvas, while also maintaining a flat workable surface. Some were the result of planning and maintenance, but most were spontaneous.

It's striking how the work provides these tiny vignettes into the complexities of daily life -- where the domestic sits alongside the esoteric, the technological, the artistic, the professional etc. In some ways, it's an artefact true to these few years, where it's been increasingly difficult to edit out the messy layers of labour. Kids and pets walking in on professional zoom meetings and what not, its increasingly difficult to pretend that those different layers of ourselves can be separated out into distinct identities.

I chose painting as a medium because the time spent in the production of each painting is visible within the brushstrokes that form the images. In contrast, the time spent each day photographing, editing and uploading images is invisible within the work, despite taking a similar amount of time. This led me to think about the difference between the economics of artistic labour as opposed to the labour of social media.

The labour of social media is performed as a leisure activity, with capital drawn from data that is accumulated across platforms and activities. This data is superfluous to the activity, but is central to the economy of these platforms. The extraction of data via algorithms functions most effectively when they run unobserved in the background. - The contrasting articulations of labour in this work are fascinating. I often think about the classification and extraction of leisure time in the attention economy. These platforms claim to provide an alchemic service that art once provides us with entertainment, while also generating value from our participation in these "leisure" activities. But the cost of this entertainment is often felt in more somatic and physiological ways -- our sore backs, dry eyes, dysmorphic relationships to our bodies. In that way, the accumulation of layers on the canvas reminds me of a sedimentation of images crusting over my cornea through endless scrolling through Instagram.

The physical effects of time spent in front of screens becomes most evident the moment I look away. When I am transfixed by an image, I lose track of time, I forget my body. Similarly, I did not notice the escalating weight of the painting as the layers slowly accumulated. The painting is much heavier than you might expect of a painting that size. I included the scales as a reminder of the accumulated weight of each layer as a physical trace of images. Sore eyes, the weight of materials, e-waste are all residual traces of our engagement with the digital.

Artistic labour associated with painting is synchronous with a capitalist economy of object production, where the uniqueness of the object produces value. This particular painting negates painterly value by erasing each image under the sequential layers of paint. - The question of erasure, both online and offline, is an interesting one. Parents go to lengths to teach their kids that anything posted online can be there forever, due to our ability to screenshot, repost etc. Likewise, the canvas layers erase the paintings underneath, but not in a permanent sense. An artful conservator with the right equipment could reveal the layers, despite best efforts to hide them.

The flipside: the volume of images on social media creates a white noise that hides images in plain view. Perhaps the white canvas in the gallery and the Instagram account that documents each painting, are two points on a sliding scale between what is hidden and what is lost.

Thinking about imagination and accumulation makes me wonder: do you think the Instagram account seems like 365 images?

This is an interesting question, because when I look at the feed I don't see each post as an individual image. They've become something like an animation, or a Muybridge-esque dissection of a continuous movement. So to me, the feed looks like a year. It reminds me of Bergson's notion of duration, as an experiential time that is dynamic, rather than fixed and measured. I see glimpses of a year that sped up and slowed down, where days were distinct, but also bled into one another. Maybe this is part of what accumulation and sedimentation of images online does; it transforms a plethora of distinct moments into a dynamic mass, a wall of sound or image.

