

MAGGIE CARDELUS

BIRD PEOPLE

PARIS DEBELLEYME

11 Saturday - 16 Saturday



What is memory if not aesthetic, if not a feeling associated with a disappearing image? It is image taken to the brink of non-existence; the moment of vanishing. Memory is image gasping for air before it is swallowed up by emotion. Memory does this even if it has been caught and can't move, like a caged bird.

Snapshots take us immediately to memory: at least, at most, to an idea of memory. Snapshots are tyrannical and dictate to us how we should remember. Sooner or later what we remember most is the snapshot.

The cut-outs help me keep what would otherwise be lost. Slowly the cut-outs are building up into a story where people appear, disappear, recur, dart in and out of images, as they do through memory: as birds do in a landscape. I don't want to catch them, just to listen to them in the garden.

The show recalls birds and people; when people became birds; when memory became birds; when people became memory. The metamorphosis can happen in so many different ways, and it keeps on happening over time.

Bird People is a kind of memory site, where bird bones are layered with gestural drawings. What began as a portrait of a relationship between two people becomes about how other people's stories coexist with my own. Fatima in Fatima Flying was a bird about fifty years ago; Zoo became the sky a few months ago. Turi with Wings can't fly, whereas Zoo Flying plunges into the folding space of involuntary memory. Feathers dances in space and waves like dune grass, recalling a moment when four girls danced in costume on a beach deck looking like four tropical birds. Together memory is negotiated into forms that describe the complexity of remembering, of constructing memory, of inheriting memory, of forgetting.

Maggie Cardelus
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