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5 Photography Exhibitions to See This Summer

From dream states to Russian decadence, here are this summer's must-see photography exhibitions in New York.

By Genevieve Allison



Erin O'Keefe, *Things as They Are #11*, 2015. Courtesy Denny Gallery

Big Nothing

Sous Les Etoiles Gallery, 560 Broadway, New York
Through August 19, 2016

Since Man Ray and László Moholy-Nagy first succeeded in severing photography from its figurative and narrative conventions, abstract and cameraless photography has become a field unto itself. In this elegant group exhibition, organized by the photographer Richard Caldicott, six artists display their concern for technical and material process in generating “concrete” or nonobjective photography, from Karl Martin Holzhäuser’s *Lichtmalerei* (Painting with light) (2002) to the computer-generated pinhole work of Gottfried Jäger. Ellen Carey’s photograms and paper negatives explore the relationship between the aperture and the frame. A series of small works by Erin O’Keefe (*Things as They Are*, 2015–16), which appear at first to be finely rendered paintings, are in fact photographs of painted and translucent materials that the artist, who trained in architecture, has carefully arranged. Inverting historical techniques, Luuk de Haan experiments with light sources such as digital screens to create his grainy, amorphous prints. Although some of the cameraless techniques exemplified in this exhibition date to the earliest innovations of the medium, they appear fresh in an era of photographic culture shaped by mobile camera phones and a relentless stream of digital images.

Genevieve Allison is a writer and editor based in New York.