



Angela Grauerholz

◀◀ OLGA KORPER GALLERY, TORONTO

Walking into Angela Grauerholz's latest exhibition was like walking into a photograph. Even before one entered the gallery space, the descriptive text—"Reading Room for the Working Artist: After Alexandr Rodchenko's Reading Room for the USSR Workers' Club in Paris 1925"—conjured the iconic black-and-white photos of the Soviet artist's famous room. Grauerholz recreated the furniture Rodchenko designed for the 1925 Exposition internationale des arts décoratifs et industriels modernes. Two long tables with sloping sides cut obliquely across the space, and a chess table rested in a corner with red walls. The sharp angle of the tables in the gallery, however, reproduced not the actual layout of the furniture in the original club, but the camera's point of view. The effect was of a photograph come to life, in living colour.

This heightened awareness of the indexical nature of photographs changed the way that one looked at the artist's own photos, which also hung in the space. These included black-and-white interiors such as a pool hall, an empty modern office space and Voltaire's study. Together, the installation and the photographs pointed to the creation of space, both social (through architecture and design) and symbolic (through representation).

Like many of Grauerholz's exhibitions, this one was elegant and personal, and dealt with the idea of the archive. The tables held 12 artist's books, each containing research on a broad theme, such as water, death, flight, script, images of artists and images of artists' studios, laid out in a collage-like structure. One, entitled *Flâneuse*, included quotes from Benjamin on Baudelaire, excerpts from Joseph Brodsky's book *Watermark*, images of people strolling in Paris and images from Grauerholz's series

Sententia I to LXII. Another contained her research on Rodchenko's room and on other artists whose work is in some way archival. In each case, Grauerholz had interspersed appropriated images and text with her own photographs.

A small, subtle video collage was also projected high up into a corner of the gallery, constructivist style. Some of its fleeting images—Proust on his deathbed, Malraux with his "Musée Imaginaire" spread on the floor before him, a close-up of a printed page—echoed those in the books. Others fell into the larger themes explored inside the volumes.

By contextualizing her own work with that of others, and highlighting the labour of artistic production, Grauerholz leads us to consider the constructed nature of history and the productive aspect of representation. In further including references to many art forms (photography, literature, design, installation, film, painting, drawing and sculpture) she stresses the intertextual nature of her own practice—and our experience of it—in a surprising, cohesive way. LAUREL MACMILLAN

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