



New York Art Critics Association
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Jonah Dillon, Foreign & Domestic, thru Oct. 25.

The hulking rusted industrial fan with the cast iron Jesus, easily one of the most unforgettable sculptures of the year, needs to be experienced in person. The video in this post has no sound, and sound, along with the continuous flow of air in your face, is key. The crucified Jesus is an iconic image enveloped in silence yet here reverberating with the constant flutter and hum of the blades' rotation. Up close we see that there is no cross. In its absence, the body of Jesus itself is cruciform, the fan becomes His cross to bear. The more time spent with this work, and it is meditative, the more these two objects somehow seem to belong together, as incongruous as at first they may have appeared.

Surprisingly, there is nothing irreverent about it. The same can be said of the sculptures by Danh Vo that also feature the figure of Jesus on the cross, even when encased in roller luggage. (He moves in mysterious ways.) Vo's recent exhibition at White Cube overlapped with Jonah Dillon's, and while both artists can be seen as bricoleurs, it was instructive to note how the found object poetics they engage couldn't be more different. Vo's are entirely European, a medieval abbey haunting a clean, neutral gallery space. Dillon's are not only "in the American grain," worn and forlorn, the past truly spooking the present, but manage to simultaneously disturb and soothe the senses. Any derangement registered is wholly cerebral, a horror vacui, a fear of the void, and our demise, and in this the sublime.

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