

Danny Sobor

Just a window. In

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FORTNIGHT INSTITUTE

21 East 3rd St. NYC 10003

Film, photography, and the internet's digital filtration system are the first steps in Sobor's methodology. The digital detritus that Sobor sorts through is grounded in Yandex's reverse image platform, to which he feeds images saved in his own inventory. The uncensored platform lends an unbidden flow of visual information, ripe for extraction. Sobor's method of sourcing reference materials is thus consigned to the back alleys of the internet, as the already tenuous pictures or screenshots are often untraceable, or entirely removed from the internet upon probing. Screenshots and thumbnails are then compiled by Sobor as a means to ignite something convincing enough to render in oils, making their existence concrete as real world objects.

These are thin paintings, the amount of oil added initially is scant, and Sobor further minimizes his material with the imposition of a dry brush. This methodology produces a veiling effect, as though one must puncture a cloud in order to reach the clarified image. The selection of works in *Just a window. In* are characterized by a palette comprising pale blue, greenish yellow, and consistently iron red undertones. The specific paints that he uses belonged to his father, who passed away unexpectedly in 2019. Small tubes of transparent oxide red and chromium oxide green, in specific, formed the basis of his palette, which Sobor employs here as both tribute and memorial.

Hito Steyerl's essay "In Defense of the Poor Image" defines the concept as "a ghost of an image, a preview, a thumbnail, an errant idea, an itinerant image distributed for free, squeezed through slow digital connections, compressed, reproduced, ripped, remixed, as well as copied and pasted into other channels of distribution." She further regards the poor image as one that "is liberated from the vaults of cinemas and archives and thrust into digital uncertainty, at the expense of its own substance." In Sobor's world, the prehistoric technology of paint thus meets an age of technologically-bent accelerationism, where the complete overabundance of information encumbers users with the weight of digital inheritance.

Sobor further distances his images from their already alienated position on the internet by rendering them in paint, constantly laboring to find a quiet blur. He also remains sympathetic to Eberhard Havekost's work, which Barry Schwabsky distinguishes as "representations of something that refuses to be identified." As Sobor's own paintings are abstracted from indistinct sources, his anonymized images are open to interference from the viewer and the painter, himself. One can inscribe a woman in a window with Hopperesque wistfulness or a haunting chandelier with Anthonie de Lorme's spectral interiors.

Without clear temporal markers, Sobor's paintings exist outside of time. He remains largely unburdened by historicity, leaning into and out of painterly sentimentality. While maintaining a foothold in figuration, Sobor calculates the least amount of information that needs to be available for visual coherency. His insistence on foreground-background play, too, contributes its own measure of mystification. The resulting images are difficult to parse in a way that excites the viewer, as the content and form coalesce to orchestrate the paintings' restless indeterminability.

-Text by Reilly Davidson

Danny Sobor (b. 1992) lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. He grew up in Chicago, Illinois and graduated from Brown University with a dual degree in Neuroscience and a B. F. A. in Visual Art. Danny spent most of his adult life in Detroit, Michigan where he taught himself to paint. There, his exposure to futurism, techno, and vacancy shaped his worldview of technological/material interaction. *Just a window. In* is his first solo exhibition in New York City. Danny recently showed in group shows at Fortnight Institute and Outlet Projects in New York.