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DIKE BLAIR / NOAH SHELDON

D'AMELIO TERRAS, NEW YORK

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D'Amelio Terras have shown some genius in pairing Dike Blair and Noah Sheldon for this not-quite-collaborative show. Blair has been exhibiting since the mid-1970s, and Sheldon has had only three solo shows since his 2003 debut, yet they are one in mood. Blair's installations have revealed a connoisseur of corporate interiors, of swatch pads and carpeting, and he has, of late, also been producing softly watery still lifes of modern objects. His dream exhibition venue, apparently, would be a meditation room at an airport. Sheldon, meanwhile, assembled a brilliant show of oddball serenity for Terras last year, a roseate oasis of sculptures and photographs that had *New York Times* critic Roberta Smith rightly imploring the Metropolitan Museum to purchase it *in toto*: 'it would function like a modern, slightly Dada version of the Ming Scholar's Court in the Chinese galleries', she wrote. So this ought to be a heavenly match.

Blair set to work on his contribution last year, and following a strategy of reproduction he has employed before, he's covered the walls with an untitled series of framed, ink-jet-printed copies of eyes depicted in his paintings. A generous white backdrop cushions the lifesize images, which capture the eye and its locale – eyebrows, some nose, the changing contours of the skin – with a keen sensitivity to all its hues. Some images are paired in the same frame, others stand alone, but none line up with their true neighbour. The models for the original paintings were all close acquaintances – the artist's wife, friends or former students – and although at first glance the impression is that of a wall of cameras, the ultimate edect is more like that of being eyed up from the end of the bar by a million flirts.

Blair's is a gentle but insistent gesture, and the perfect kind of ordering that, in Sheldon's shoes, you might want to be handed in this game of Exquisite Corpse. Sheldon has responded with *The Idea of North* (2008): he dashed to Canada, snapped a mood study of his journey and has poured out the results in the form of 10 x 15 cm photographs, 480 of them, displayed for viewers to sort through on a white oak table. There's snow – lots of it – as well as ice skaters, seagulls, fungus, rainbows, pines, motels and a lonely red windsock. They're images that are sharply focused on their object, and chilly in contrast to the surprisingly warm gaze of Blair's onlookers. Yet despite their multiplicity of viewpoints, they order up a conventional narrative: 'artistic', predictably poetic.

Blair, writing in the show's press release, says that Noah was still racing around Canada just eight days before the show opened. 'Noah is often best when flying by the seat of his pants', he writes. I'm afraid I'd disagree. *Morgan Falconer*



Dike Blair, *Untitled (Nadia)*, 2007,
archival inkjet on 100% cotton
rag, 36 x 46 cm, edition of 10 + 2AP.
Courtesy the artist and D'Amelio
Terras, New York