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Trisha Baga, *BIOLOGUE* (2017)
(Installation view). Image
courtesy of the Artist, 356 S.
Mission Road, Los Angeles
and Greene Naftali, New York.
Photo: Brica Wilcox.

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Trisha Baga, *The Voice* (2017).
3D video, single channel with
sound, 25 minutes and 22
seconds, edition of 5. Image
courtesy of the Artist, 356 S.
Mission Road, Los Angeles
and Greene Naftali, New York.
Photo: Brica Wilcox.

Trisha Baga at 356 Mission

January 27–
March 19, 2017

Globs of paint sat atop a saccharine hologram image of golden retriever puppies, creating an odd flatness atop the hokey 3D simulation; the trick revealed. A row of these painted holograms led down the wall into a dark cavernous gallery, becoming increasingly shrouded in darkness. Trisha Baga's mammoth exhibition *Biologue*, at 356 Mission, reveled in oppositional interplay: shadow and light, flatness and dimensionality, sociopolitical understanding and total, unfettered bewilderment.

The first video projection encountered in the space, *Treez of a Beez* (all works 2017), grounded the installation in the artist's studio. A video projection picturing the artist's desk glowed behind (and on top of) an actual desk plopped into the space. Littered across the table were the familiar frenetic tools for coping in our recent whirlpool of American politics: a myriad of newspaper pages about Trump's election; an Arts & Leisure article titled *We Will Not Be Ignored*; a half-eaten Danish; a jar of Tums; a Mac computer. Bumper stickers that read "procedure," "graph," "results," and "conclusion" sat towards the edge of the desk, awaiting use. This slew of smattered objects might inform the artist's work in the studio, but

more likely, they stilt it; one can imagine Baga seated at her desk computer, scrolling through Trump's Twitter feed, neglecting a canvas sitting nearby.

Past this glowing still life, in the main space (where you'd be armed with 3D glasses), multiple projected videos fought for attention. Baga described her installation as "theatre in the round," and it certainly demanded 360-degree awareness; the rolling office chairs sprinkled throughout the gallery could hypothetically be put to practical use, spinning about so you would not miss a thing.

Virhanka Trail uses tourists at a famous Japanese beach as its subject matter. Projected across a pile of crumpled brown paper, and flat panels that pull sections of the video out into the space, the tourists throng along a large, sandy stretch. Some stop to pose for photos, most look travel-tired but committed. The endless stream of passersby was much quieter visually (and audibly) than its neighbor, a 3D video titled *The Voice*. And it certainly was loud.

The Voice added a palpably frenetic and looming quality to the room. The 25-minute video is a marathon of attention grabbing clips: snippets of news footage, fictional characters, and YouTube videos. The sound editing is chaotic and assaulting. Palpably though, the piece embodies a deep-seated panic that has been looming since Trump's inauguration, or maybe, more simply, since the coining of the phrase FOMO.

Baga's exhibition is at once playful and political, resolute and spaced out, swapping political didacticism for unabashed foolery. Moments of terror are met with gorgeous aesthetic choices and a hefty dose of levity. Try though we might to read all of the latest *New Yorker* articles, or keep NPR on a soft din as we go about our days, there is a sort of manic reality that sets in. While it's imperative to stay abreast of our current political landscape, with so many competing news outlets and social channels, our frantic political FOMO may simply lead to more confusion. Instead of clarity, we are often left with only a jumble of flashing images and nothing concrete to show for it but a half-eaten danish and some Tums.

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