

BROADWAY

Andrew Kuo
Me, Lately
November 9 – December 23

I first learned of Andrew Kuo through his nineteen-nineties zine, *Trash Heap*—it was great, trust me—though in some alternate, totally plausible timeline, we grew up as family friends. (Long story involving some islands.) The older you get, the more fun, or futile, it is to imagine how the pieces of our past might have been rearranged, because the impressions we retain have become so fixed. I still think of Kuo as the *Trash Heap* guy, even though he's also a brilliant painter, which is how most people of the present day should identify him.

Me, Lately, his latest show, is both funny and, if you understand the islands thing, devastatingly sad, a stab at neurotic, rules-driven precision as well as total submission to the sublime blur of it all, it's the feedback and bliss-out parts all at once. It's about time, which has passed sooner than you can think about it. A series of melty clocks, which evoke a child's pinwheels or annual earnings reports, attempt to carve life up into discernible pieces—a strategy for wrestling back control of time, a contemplation of whether the discovery of historical patterns might make everything more predictable in the future. Does the past contain clues we need to behold just right? Maybe it's not what happened, the formulas that connect then and now, but the sensations you remember. A bootleg Knicks jersey that bleeds onto your white tee; you never would have planned it, but it looks cool.

Another series of paintings give the punchline away as letterhead. Instead of time divvied up neatly, it's the opposite. Zoom all the way in, between the clock's unforgiving ticks, and disappear into the glorious swirls and streaky echoes conjured by New York places, moments, jokes, a surrender to the uncontrollable swells of memory and coincidence. It never gets old, even if we do; you just had to be there.

--Hua Hsu
New York
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