

Visual Yogiisms in Marco Maggi's PARKING ANY TIME at Josée Bienvenu Gallery  
By Alex Glauber



Marco Maggi, 2010, Global Myopia (Parking Mirror), Cuts on 36 inch convex mirror. Courtesy of the artist and Josée Bienvenu Gallery.

The oft-quoted witticisms of famed New York Yankee Yogi Berra are funny, but not because they are jokes. Somewhere between tautology and truism, they become contradictions, or, as we fondly know them, Yogiisms. When once asked why he stopped going to a restaurant, he said, "Nobody goes there anymore. It's too crowded." What seems obvious at first leaves you scratching your head. Yogiisms are momentary slippages or misalignments of language that force you to reconsider quotidian communication. In Marco Maggi's current show, PARKING ANY TIME at Josée Bienvenu Gallery, he embeds brainteasers that eclipse their aesthetic underpinnings, just like Yogiisms. One such example is Blind Sliding, where drawings incised on aluminum foil and then placed in slide holders are failed attempts at communication: while the information is physically incised into the surface, the opacity of the material prevents us from illuminating the slide and therefore, the image. They are Braille for those who can see, which in turn, makes them blind. A visual Yogiism.

Maggi's language is one of intricate linear mark making, be it through cuts, incisions, or drawings that seem to grow across a surface. His sprawling webs of marks are regulated and systematic but nevertheless individual in each permutation. Conjuring associations ranging from ancient hieroglyphs to modern day computer circuitry, information and communication continue to be important themes for Maggi. At the core

of his interests is the fact that we live in a world in which we are overloaded with information. The result is ironic: the more we know the less we know.

Many of the works in Maggi's show reengage some of his most enduring formats: cut paper, slide carousels, incised Plexiglas, and graphite on graphite drawings. However, there is one particular moment where Maggi posits one of his best Yogiisms to date: Global Myopia (Parking Mirror). As though he meticulously engineered the smashing on a mirror, Maggi has advanced his signature markings across the surface of this 36-inch surveillance mirror. In the press release, the artist is quoted as saying, "We are setting up a society of dysfunctional information: reality becomes illegible and visual arts, invisible.....Speed is tragic in cars and arts. We must park now." After a viewer runs through the obvious associations that the mirror has with the themes of the show – analysis, movement, speeding, parking, and recklessly smashing – the true meaning of the work is revealed. The aesthetic and conceptual paradox lies in the fact that as the mirror duplicates the image, it ultimately abstracts it. The convex nature of the mirror forces the ersatz line to become unsynchronized with the original. As a result, the image becomes blurred. Not only is more less, but as the mirror (and Maggi) take stock of the image, we see a state of incoherence; a metaphor to Maggi's claim in the press release.

If you don't have a chance to see this great show, fear not. Maggi's mirrors will be featured outside of the convention center at this year's Art Basel Miami. – Alex Glauber, Contributor