



名曲工厂：
框架、泡沫和酸奶冰激凌
HIT FACTORY: FRAMES, BUBBLES,
AND FRO-YO

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“高速公路”眼镜公司出品的太阳镜品牌“洛杉矶之光”
L.A. Rays by Freeway Eyewear
PHOTO: Joshua White

中国艺术家常去的酒吧顾客寥寥，亦缺少烟雾的喧嚣——晚上七点在夜生活世界来说还是清晨。阿列克斯·以色列出现时并未穿所谓正装。T恤、牛仔裤、连帽外套、太阳镜，冷的话加一件棒球外套，他在网上的图片不少就是这副打扮——这次取而代之的是白T恤、白短裤、灰球鞋，和前阵子热议的“不觉明厉”风格接近。要认出他并不难，因为他把自己的侧影做成了作品“自画像”系列。阿列克斯正当红，今年5月12日，其绘画作品《天空背景》（2012年）在佳士得拍得高价，是其首件超过一百万美元的作品。生于1982年的阿列克斯2003年耶鲁大学本科毕业，2010年在南加州大学罗斯基美术学院获得硕士学位，同年成立太阳镜公司。

除了本科几年，阿列克斯都住在洛杉矶，其父1987年在那开了一家名叫“大冻”的酸奶冰激凌店，阿列克斯小时候每天的必备动作就是去父亲的店吃酸奶冰激凌。虽然后来店铺转手，艺术家接触这种成行成市的冰冻甜品的习惯一直延续至今。“升华进食”——德里达曾把人吞咽食物的举动，比喻为在身体里，为穿肠而过东西建构内在空间。“酸奶冰激凌是我的玛德琳小蛋糕”——艺术家如是说。阿列克斯雕塑作品《大冻》和父亲的店同名。那冰激凌造型的大理石雕塑装在日常的泡沫塑料杯中，两种白色物质，一轻一重、一软一硬，均是寿命长久之物，“我

想看看它们谁能经得住时间考验”。

阿列克斯的艺术实践撷取了洛杉矶的视觉和文化资源，包括每年大量出口，具有主流意识形态、世界观甚至关于世界末日想像的——好莱坞。梦工场的视觉语言是世界语言，是叙述世界的模板，不管它是乌托邦还是废墟。阿列克斯和华纳合作，他其实并没有自己的工作室，这倒有意无意回应约翰·巴尔代萨里提出的“后工作室”概念。然而，比起仅仅埋头笔记本电脑工作的“后工作室”来说，艺术家阿列克斯合作伙伴要强大得多。丹尼尔·布伦在文章《工作室的功能》（1971年）里写道，艺术家工作室是一个私人空间，也是象牙塔，它是作品诞生之所，是静默之地，是艺术家一系列作品诞生的第一个框架、第一条界限出现之处。工作室的建筑特征可以与展出地点（美术馆或画廊）互相置换。阿列克斯的绘画《天空背景》出自华纳布景师的手笔，其中的淡蓝和粉红构成了洛杉矶天空黄昏的倦容——华纳的电影商标片头背景也是广阔天空。阿列克斯与这家1903年成立的电影制作公司合作的绘画作品（也包括各种形状的单色画），都是暖色渐变的丙烯作品，除了长方形，也有圆形、椭圆，甚至西班牙复兴主义建筑中常见的圆拱形，艺术家要求华纳将商标印在作品上。这种合作超越了“后工作室”的游离状态，建立在个体逻辑基础上的独立身份和无止境生产视觉图像且毫无个人私密可言的商业工

厂之间，并非单纯的来料加工关系，而是互相牵引和影响，华纳甚至将阿列克斯制作的商标用到自己的产品上。

“道具”系列将以上绘画与电影道具并置，艺术家从电影道具库借来各种物件——塑料天鹅、单轮单车、佛像、拳击沙包、飞机模型、潜水蛙鞋、古希腊式立柱、导演椅、点唱机、木吉他、船舵、西方古典雕塑……不但形成了一种张力，还临时组建为一个新的整体，作为背景的绘画与道具之间暂时构成了一种正形和负形的空间关系。

电影道具库本是视觉经验共时性和历史性的异托邦，因为道具来自不同历史背景的电影，来自屏幕中不同的文化语境。这些在时间逻辑上并不可能同时出现的视觉符号：三十年代美国玻璃厨具制品、九十年代的大哥大、十九世纪末欧洲古董织物和非洲部落面具，都安分地躺在货架上。由于“道具”系列的场地特性，阿列克斯曾走访洛杉矶、纽约、柏林、罗马以至北京等地的电影道具库，它们都惊人的相似，除了罗马的齐内西塔——那是三十年代末墨索里尼为复兴意大利电影而成立的片场，也是费里尼常用的拍摄场地，《甜蜜的生活》和《爱情神话》在此诞生。这个片场的道具库房有很多古典题材的道具，故此他意大利翁布里亚的教堂博物馆中展出了大量古典雕塑道具，这倒和教堂毫不冲突。“道具”系列还有一次比较特殊的临时组合方式，源自阿列克斯与杰夫·昆斯的一次合作：在粉



《星期天的清晨》，2013年，租借的电影道具和布面丙烯绘画《天空的背景》，尺寸可变
Early Sunday Morning, 2013, Rented cinema props and *Sky Backdrop*, Acrylic on canvas
Dimensions variable. Exhibition view, Gagosian Gallery, Rome, 2013
PHOTO: Matteo D'Eletto

THE USUAL SMOKE and clamor are notably absent from the bar, a habitual artists' haunt that today remains largely empty. As nightlife goes, seven in the evening might as well be early morning. When Alex Israel arrives, he is not wearing what one would call formal dress. T-shirt, jeans, hoodie, sunglasses; if it's cold out, maybe add a baseball jacket—an image search of the artist online usually turns up this familiar ensemble. Today, he chooses a white t-shirt, white shorts, and gray sneakers, on the verge of “Normcore” (a style delineated by artist-operated trend forecasting agency K-Hole,

Normcore explores the cultural imaginary of this everyday, free-and-easy kind of look). He is not difficult to recognize, having converted the silhouetted profile of his own face into a ubiquitous corporate logo for his “Self-Portraits” series. Israel is heating up; on May 12 this year, his painting *Sky Backdrop* (2012) went for a staggering price of over USD 1,000,000 at Christie's. Born in 1982, Israel graduated with a bachelor's degree from Yale in 2003 and a master's from the University of Southern California Roski School of Fine Arts in 2010, the same year he founded his sunglasses company, Freeway Eyewear.



《大冻》，2013年，大理石和泡沫塑料杯，22 × 9 × 9 厘米
The Bigg Chill, 2013, Marble and styrofoam cup, 22 x 9 x 9 cm
 PHOTO: Hans-Georg Gall

色斜晖的绘画前面，是昆斯橘色的大复活蛋雕塑，上面有桃红色大蝴蝶结。近期，阿列克斯又尝试将“道具”系列中不稳定的组合关系落实，《马耳他之鹰》把1941年的同名经典影片里的麦高芬¹——一尊黑色的猛禽雕塑——放在绘画的拱形凹槽中，而这种构成关系是洛杉矶遗留下来的西班牙风格建筑中常见的形式。

哲学家常以面孔作为主体绝对他性的比喻。列维纳斯认为，面孔命令并任命着我们，伦理和社会关系中的不对称性也随之而来。面孔就是对自身的担保（《整体与无

限》）。脸的轮廓是一种强硬的抵抗：将一个人化约为某种事物的附庸，它让我们必须有意识地接受和他人的差别，不管我们喜欢与否。

培根的绘画中被各种色块和笔触扭曲的人脸，曾触发德勒兹提出“头”与“脸”的区别：头是连接身体的动物性灵魂，脸是覆盖头的空间设置。无论如何，脸是独一无二的化身。

阿列克斯通过将自己的脸符号化、商标化，并将之进行工业复制“自画像”系列（2013年），把本身具有唯一性特点的图像投

入到商品世界的无限生产中。“自画像”系列在玻璃纤维板上上色，色块构成了艺术家招牌式的侧影：头发、下巴、墨镜、脸颊。希区柯克的电视节目《希区柯克剧场》在开场时的招牌侧影与自画像异曲同工——代表着资本社会中的唯一性向著作权过渡——阿列克斯坦言“自画像”系列的灵感正是来自

1 电影术语，指可以推动剧情发展的物件、人物或目标。

Other than his years spent on the east coast as an undergraduate, Israel has always lived in Los Angeles. It was there, in 1987, that his father opened a frozen yogurt shop called The Bigg Chill. As a boy, his daily routine included a visit to the shop for a snack. Though the business was later sold, prolonged early exposure to this frozen dessert, a staple of the city, continues to influence him today. This is Israel's form of “sublimated eating,” Jacques Derrida's metaphorical appropriation of the act of swallowing food, which signifies the construction of a space within us for whatever parts of the outside world we digest. “Frozen yogurt is my madeleine,” Israel remarks. His work *The Bigg Chill* is a life-size marble sculpture of white frozen yogurt housed in an ordinary white styrofoam cup. Both monochromatic objects—one light, one heavy; one soft, one hard—have extremely long shelf-lives. “I want to see which one stands the test of time,” he says.

Israel's practice picks and chooses its material from the visual and cultural resources of LA, very much including that famed place of mass exports, mainstream ideology, and apocalyptic imagination: Hollywood. The visual language of the dream factory is a narrative template for the world, from utopia to wasteland. Cooperating extensively with Warner Bros., the artist does not actually have his own studio, a situation that, intentionally or not, corresponds to John Baldessari's LA-centric conception of “post-studio practice.” But Israel's particular post-studio is more than working on a laptop at Starbucks—it is clear that his collaborator is the markedly more powerful party. Daniel Buren, in his essay “The Function of the Studio” (1971), writes that the studio is a private space, an ivory tower; it is a silent space where works are born and the artist's first frameworks and boundaries come into view in the genesis of a series. The architectural features of the studio are broadly commensurate with the exhibition venue of the museum or gallery. Israel's “Sky Backdrop” paintings are actually painted by a Warner Bros. scenic artist; its light blues and pinks present a sleepy LA sky at dusk. Warner's trademark movie backdrop is, likewise, a dreamy vast blue sky. The paintings born of Israel's cooperation with the massive film produc-

tion company, founded in 1903, are mostly monochromes in various shapes executed in acrylic, typically warm color gradients in which brilliant reds and oranges frequently appear. In addition to rectangles, there are circles, ovals, and even arch shapes in homage to LA's Spanish revival architecture. The artist requests that the Warner Bros. signature mark appear on each of the works. In these ways, the collaboration goes beyond the roving state of the post-studio; Israel's practice is built on a foundation collectively formed by his own individual logic colliding with the endless production of images native to commercial media space—where individual privacy is, conversely, nowhere to be found. This is not a simple processing of materials, but rather a real exchange with genuine traction and mutual influence. Warner Bros. has even placed the logo for Israel's work on its own products.

In Israel's ongoing “Property” series, he juxtaposes a range of film props against his backdrop paintings. He rents all kinds of objects from prop houses: a plastic swan, a unicycle, a statue, a punching bag, a model airplane, diving fins, a Greek column, a director's chair, a jukebox, an acoustic guitar, a ship's wheel, a classical Western sculpture. Not only producing a kind of visual tension, the composition of props on backdrops also momentarily constitutes a new entity all its own. The paintings in the background and the props in the foreground, for the time that they share the same space, form a geometric landscape of positive and negative forms.

These props hail from all kinds of films with various historical backgrounds made for screens in all kinds of cultural contexts, so the prop houses that collect and store them are visual heterotopias. In the space of a single prop house appear visual symbols that could not, in terms of temporal logic, ever appear at the same time. American glass kitchenware from the 1930s, a mobile phone from the 1990s, nineteenth-century antique fabrics from Europe, and African tribal masks: they all sit together, neatly ordered atop rows and rows of shelves. Because the materials for the “Property” series are site-specific, the artist has visited props libraries in LA, New York, Berlin, Rome, Beijing, and several other cities. All of the libraries are



“道具”系列（黛安娜和维纳斯），2010年至今，租借的电影道具，尺寸可变
“Property” (Diana and Venus), Both 2010, Rented cinema props,
 Dimensions variable. Exhibition view, OCMA Biennial, 2010
 PHOTO: Joshua White

这位好莱坞的悬疑教父。新近的“自画像”系列运用了洛杉矶海岸的图像，艺术家的脸作为著作权的象征，与以海滩文化为傲的南加州文化肌理彼此贴面，二者上演了资本体制下图像不断的生产和互相邂逅。

玛莉莲·曼森、克里斯蒂娜·里奇、奥利弗·斯通、维特·沙宣、梅拉尼·格里菲思、周英华，他们有相似之处吗？——他们都是阿列克斯访谈系列《洛地开球》的嘉宾，都住在洛杉矶，且是艺术家眼中对洛杉矶文化有所贡献的人。

《洛地开球》大多在伊斯莱尔临时搭建的“高速公路工作室”拍摄，其拍摄背景由艺术家的圆拱形单色绘画构成。该采访系列共三十三集（目标为一百集），仍在制作中。

清谈、脱口秀的历史很长，和电视诞生的历史相差不远，由于制作费低廉，再加上名人效应，是电视媒体喜闻乐见的产品。主持人是脱口秀的主场人物，掌控节目的气氛、节奏、客座嘉宾人选、互动方式，也是观众的化身——他时而友善时而言语尖刻，代表着某种想象中注意力的化身。他

们的话语分花拂柳地拨出一条道路，让受访者跟随，并模拟观众的凝视描绘自身的某种形象。

这些对话大多经过彩排。即使出现针锋相对的场景也是筹划已久。《洛地开球》模仿八九十年代美国脱口秀美学，但艺术家并没有像脱口秀主持人提前设计谈话内容，而是从一堆小纸片中随机抽出问题：

“你有过敏症吗？你第一幕儿时回忆是什么？你是（任何一家）博物馆的会员吗？你用推特吗？你最喜欢的颜色是什么？你的完美沙拉里面有什么材料？”

艺术家的冷脸和掩藏在太阳镜下的眼神像一面墙，让一些受访人物坐立不安。他们当中不少已从事业高峰退下，对镁光灯已经陌生，却还希望得到公众的注意。缺乏针对性的对话、飘忽游离的主持人，让受访者茫然，不知道应该呈现出哪一张面具示人。

在信息饱和与信息爆炸的世界中，无限的图像与有限的注意力总是展开争夺。一般认为，专注如同稳定、同质的流程，走

神则是隔断，大众视觉文化被看作专注和走神之间的互相拉锯的零和博弈²。然而，很多人没有发现，走神其实是专注的副产品，为了有限的注意力集中，就必须把目标信息意外地模糊化和忽视——电影放映时关灯，就是将观众的目光集中于银幕，为观众游弋的心神设计框架，创造出新的注意力投放方式（例如声影同步的电影）——尤其是对当下的感知。注意力是消费社会的硬通货，观众被大众媒体的注意力经济学驯服，他们的目光大多从设计好的情节中流去——很少人注意脱口秀中嘉宾惶惶

² 指参与博弈的各方，在严格竞争下，一方的收益必然意味着另一方的损失，博弈各方的收益和损失相加总和永远为“零”。双方不存在合作的可能。

“道具”系列（老处女和剩男），2010年至今，租借的电影道具，尺寸可变
“Property” (Spinster and Bachelor), Both 2010, Rented cinema props, Dimensions variable. Exhibition view, MFA thesis exhibition at USC Roski School of Fine Arts, 2010
 PHOTO: Joshua White



strikingly similar, aside from Rome's Cinecittà—a studio established by Mussolini in the late 1930s geared specifically towards the revival of Italian cinema, and, later, a frequent filming site for Federico Fellini, who shot *La Dolce Vita* (1960) and *Satyricon* (1969) there. Because this particular studio's props house maintains an abundance of classically themed items, the majority of the work in Israel's exhibition at the Museo Civico Diocesano di Santa Maria dei Servi in Italy's Umbria region resembled classical sculpture, aligning nicely with the venue. One incarnation of the “Property” series arose out of a particularly special collaboration, when what was placed in front of the pink sunset of a “Sky Backdrop” was none other than Koons's gigantic orange easter egg with a big pink bow on top. Recently, Israel has set to work trying to independently implement the same sense of instability the combinations of “Property” produce. His work *Maltese Falcon* (2013) centers an appropriated statue of the Maltese falcon—the MacGuffin from the eponymous 1941 film—in an arch-shaped niche cut into a backdrop painting, a compositional relationship easily associated with the Spanish colonial architectural style of LA.

Philosophers often use the face as a metaphor for absolute alterity. Emmanuel Levinas holds that the face “orders and ordains” us, and that the existence of asymmetry in ethical and social relations stems from this reality. A face can “guarantee itself,” as he writes in

Totality and Infinity; the contours of a face put up significant resistance, reducing a person to a kind of vassal of interrelation. Like it or not, the face makes us aware of the inevitable differences between self and other. For Deleuze, it is Francis Bacon's paintings of human faces, with their variegated streaks and blotches of color and distorted brushstrokes, that trigger the distinction between the “head” and the “face”; the theorist posits that the head is an animal spirit, adjunct to the body, whereas the face is merely a spatial structure covering the head. The face is the only outward incarnation we have. Israel turns his own face into a symbol—a commercial logo that he reproduces on an industrial scale for his “Self-Portrait” series. With “Self-Portrait,” he throws his own unique visage into the world of unlimited commercial production. The series is produced in acrylic and auto body putty on fiberglass; each section of color marks a piece of the artist's signature side profile: hair, chin, sunglasses, cheeks. The trademark silhouette at the opening of Alfred Hitchcock's television program, *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*, once achieved similar results, representing the gradual transition in capitalist society from uniqueness in its own right to uniqueness as a subject of copyright. Israel admits that the “Self-Portrait” series is indeed inspired, at least in part, by the Hollywood godfather of suspense. A new branch of the series combines visuals of the LA coast with the artist's face: a layered com-



2012年装置现场, 意大利翁布里亚教堂博物馆
 Exhibition view, Museo Civico Diocesano di Santa Maria dei Servi, Città della Pieve, Umbria, Italy, 2012
 PHOTO: Ornella Tiberi

不安的身体动作。《洛地开球》刻意松弛大众媒介对起承转合节奏和亮点的强调; 内容上也缺乏时效性。整个温吞节奏与传媒热爱的视觉奇观截然相反。

阿列克斯在《洛地开球》中戴着自家品牌的墨镜:“高速公路”和“洛杉矶之光(LA Rays)”。

太阳眼镜是名人文化中的重要配饰,

遮盖疲倦双眼,也掩饰内心,以免灵魂之窗不小心泄露了面具下的真性情;另一方面墨镜也限制了视野和能见度。阿列克斯的墨镜把这种框架构成的隔离感,与洛杉矶的主要公路干道进行意象上的结合。他的墨镜全部以洛杉矶重要公路干道命名,这个系列统称“高速公路”。

“LA Rays”是艺术家在苏黎世一家

跳蚤市场找到的一个被弃用的旧墨镜品牌,艺术家将之重新注册为己用。阿列克斯认为,人们把这些灌注了观念的太阳镜架在鼻子上时,特别是视野被局限时,也就象征性地被艺术家的观念所影响——如同买下了名牌产品就在一定程度上代表着对该产品理念的认同。

阿列克斯近期着手与电视剧《海滩游

bination of an empty symbol with the textures of the beach culture aesthetic in which Southern California takes pride. Together, the two perform an unexpected encounter between images that emphasizes capitalism's constant state of image production.

What do Marilyn Manson, Christina Ricci, Oliver Stone, Vidal Sassoon, Melanie Griffith, and Michael Chow have in common? Among other things, they are all guests on Alex Israel's video interview series “As It LAys,”—and they all reside in LA. For the artist, they have contributed something important to LA culture. “As It

LAys” is filmed primarily in Freeway Studio, a temporary structure Israel constructed with a stage backdrop in the form of an arch-shaped monochrome produced by the artist. So far 33 episodes have been filmed out of a target of 100, and the project remains in production. Television talk shows have a history dating back almost as far as TV itself. They are a beloved product of the medium, thanks to their low production cost and the added bonus of celebrity guests. For most talk shows, the host is the home-court captain, controlling the atmosphere, the rhythm of the show, the choice of visiting guests, and modes of interaction. Most importantly, he is a spokesperson for the audience. At times friendly and at times vitriolic, the host is the embodiment of some imagined attentive force. He adeptly guides the way, simulating the audience's gaze, while the interviewee dutifully follows. Most dialogues on talk shows are rehearsed. Even when guest and host are diametrically opposed in their views, this tension, too, is likely choreographed well in advance. Though “As It LAys” mimics the aesthetics of a 1990s American talk show, Israel does not plan out the content of his dialogues ahead of time. Instead, he draws questions at random from a pile of scraps of paper: “Do you have any allergies? What is your earliest childhood memory? Are you a member of any museum? Do you use Twitter? What is your favorite color? What are the ingredients of your ideal salad?” The artist's deadpan expression and dark sunglasses form a sort of wall, causing



《洛地开球》，2012年，布景现场
AS IT LAYS, 2012, Video set. Exhibition view, “Alex Israel,”
 Le Consortium, Dijon, 2013
 PHOTO: Zarko Vijatovic

侠》³的制作人合作拍摄电影——与洛杉矶影业的关系亲上加亲。艺术家还在筹备防晒霜和滑水衣的公司——南加州的海滩文化在与皮肤紧密接触的商品上进一步得到体现。

“框架”是阿列克斯艺术实践的关键词。同处于洛杉矶的艺术家埃拉德探索摄影的图像物性——其摄影作品甚少超过传统杂志页面（约11×14英寸）——商业图像的尺寸成为了感官经验。物理性质所框定的图像信息在观众的感官上打开了一扇特定的大门。埃拉德作品与框边颜色相同，不断唤醒图像的物质和概念之间的视差距离。阿列克斯艺术实践中的“框”有时体现得很直白：他出产的阻断目光交织的太阳眼镜，就是由“框”组建出来的；访谈录像的取景框，与拍摄到的道具组成了一个空间，好莱坞生产图像的精细工艺潜移默化地对阿列克斯作品产生影响，这又是一个“框”；阿列克斯借鉴希区柯克在电影中把自己的脸做成商标的做法，所挑战的是艺术圈弱化身份强调作品本身表现力的主流意识上的“框”；还包括在作品《洛地开球》中嘉宾背后的临时布景，也是凸显嘉宾的一个“框”……框架往往带来限制的印象，就像大卖场的铁丝网格，流动的只是轮换的商

品，底下的结构不动如山。阿列克斯作品的框，除了上述固体形式，也有流动状态。“道具”中的物件逃离了它们特定电影语境和日常生活的物质性，“道具”里的绘画形状还体现了洛杉矶在西班牙时期的建筑特点，也是绘画史和各种争论的体现（例如绘画平面和作者意识深度的矛盾关系）——透过作品，可以再次发现以华纳为代表的好莱坞图像生产系统有着非常明确的特性——就像一个肥皂泡沫被自身的空气撑满——所有的这些都在“道具”中互相挤压，那里没有核心或主角，它们的相遇改变了彼此的形态。比如“道具”中的绘画不但为道具发挥着背景的作用，还在空间视觉里填补了道具中镂空的部分，形成了有趣正负空间关系。

阿列克斯对墨镜的命名隐喻着洛杉矶的公路系统。私家车代步延伸了人的身体，但身处车内这个被包裹起来的私人空间，人的感受力又被切断——车辆的高速行驶必然会钝化人们对路边风景的专注。我们可以通过车窗之“框”看到，如此观赏速度是怎样吞噬掉与我们相距的那些景物。汽车文化带来了人与城市风景的隔离，但汽车对洛杉矶多中心城市发展的作用又不言而喻，这些都与作品《高速公路》里的框在

意象上相互关联。它们在阿列克斯的作品中互相支撑，彼此接近，如同在美学上形成了马伦哥尼效应⁴——框定的泡沫之间有着纤薄的壁垒，但在互融之时，又像德里达所说的“升华进食”般创造了和而不同的新空间。阿列克斯作品中不少元素——《洛地开球》里的过气名人、电影道具、绘画——像同台演出的演员，展览时共同支撑起的临时整体框架，展览后各自归位，像泄气气球一样余下扁平的一块。格林伯格说现代主义绘画的“平”，在于摆脱复制立体的现实幻想，展示潜意识的水深。阿列克斯的作品并非要重现电影和现实场景，而是要探索这些物件和概念之间的鸿沟，以及它们之间互相连接的隔离。

3 美国1989年开播的救生员剧《海滩游侠》由大卫·哈塞尔霍夫和帕米拉·安德逊主演，成为当时世界上收视率最高的电视连续剧。故事情节围绕海滩护卫队员营救故事展开，最大看点是海边的旖旎风景，以及无数的泳装帅哥美女。据估计在142个国家和地区内每周收看该剧的人数超过11亿。

4 两种液体相接触时，表面张力强的液体会将表面张力弱的液体拉过来，因此会出现后者向前者渗透。

《洛地开球》，2012年，行为：采访莫莉·林沃德

AS IT LAYS with Molly Ringwald, Live performance presented by MOCA Los Angeles, 2012
 PHOTO: Stefanie Keenen

《洛地开球》，2012年，行为：采访莱尔德·汉密尔顿

AS IT LAYS with Laird Hamilton, Live performance presented by MOCA Los Angeles, 2012
 PHOTO: Stefanie Keenen



some of his guests to feel uneasy. Many are past the peaks of their careers and have already withdrawn from the spotlight, but still harbor hopes of attracting public attention. Unfocused dialogue and an erratically whimsical host leave interviewees in the dark, unsure which side of themselves to lead with.

In a world over-saturated with information, infinite images and finite attention spans are in constant battle. It is generally believed that focus is a state of stable, uninterrupted flow, and that distraction occurs when that flow is broken up. Popular visual culture is seen as a see-saw or zero-sum game between focus and distraction. But what most people don't realize is that distraction is actually a byproduct of focus; to concentrate the limited attention we have, we must concertedly blur and neglect other information. House lights are turned off during a film in order to focus the audience's gaze on the screen. Frameworks are designed for the audience's wandering minds; new methods are created to reinvest attention in the immediate environment, like a perfectly synchronized soundtrack. Attention is the currency of consumer society, and the audience is tamed by this economy of attention as it is orchestrated by mass media. The view-

er's gaze, for the most part, flows into a preordained plot curve. Few people notice the anxious ticks of talk show guests. But “As It LAys” relaxes television's typically rigid emphasis on formulaic transitions in rhythm and points of discussion; the content of the dialogue is similarly out of step. Its lukewarm pace is precisely opposed to the kind of visual spectacle so beloved by the entertainment business.

Filming the “As It LAys” series, Israel wears pieces from the two lines of his own sunglass brands: Freeway and L.A. Rays. Sunglasses are an important accessory of celebrity culture, masking not only tired eyes but also feeling hearts—preventing any hint of a true emotional state accidentally slipping out through the windows to the soul. On the other hand, sunglasses also limit the both the visibility and visual field of whoever puts them on. Through the imagery they provide, Israel's sunglasses combine the sense of isolation generated by this paradigm with geographic context. All of the models in the Freeway line are named for the major roads of LA. L.A. Rays, by contrast, consists of repurposed vintage sunglasses the artist found in a Zurich flea market. He maintains that, when people put on his sunglasses—objects that he has endowed with a specific meaning—



“自画像”系列, 2014年, 丙烯, “霸道”汽车修补剂, 玻璃纤维板, 175 × 152 厘米
Self-Portrait (Paradise Cove), 2014, Acrylic and bondo on fiberglass, 175 x 152 cm
 PHOTO: Jason Mandella

and voluntarily confine their vision, they are symbolically influenced by his project, just as buying and displaying a brand-name product implicitly indicates a sense of identification with that brand's message. Israel has recently embarked on a collaboration with the producer of *Baywatch*, on a film targeting teenagers. The artist is also developing a sunblock and wetsuit company: Southern California beach culture reflected in products even closer to the skin.

Framing is the major keyword for Alex Israel's artistic practice. Fellow LA artist Elad Lassry explores the materiality of photographic imagery in his work: his photographs rarely exceed the traditional size of a magazine page, the dimensions of commercial images serving as a kind of sensory data. The way an image is physically framed communicates information, and this information opens up a particular sensory door for the viewer. The framed edges of Lassry's works are often the same colors as the images themselves, bringing to life the parallax between the physical and conceptual natures of the image. The frames of Israel's artistic practice are, at times, realized in similarly straightforward ways: the sunglasses he manufactures are a barrier to interaction between the gaze and the outside world, and are literally formed out of objects known as "frames." In the filming of talk show interviews, the camera aperture is a frame. When photographed, his props are framed within their backdrops. Even the subtle influence exerted on Israel's work by the meticulous handiwork of Hollywood-generated images could be called a sort of framing: when Israel draws on Hitchcock, turning his face into a logo, he challenges the mainstream consciousness that frames the art scene and weakens individual identity by putting emphasis primarily on the expressive power of art. Even the provisional backdrop he builds for "As It LAys" is a frame drawing the eye to the celebrity guest of the day.

Frames are often associated with restriction. One imagines the gridded shelves on which products hang in a supermarket, where the only things that flow without restriction are goods for sale—in constant rotation—while the structure in which they move remains still. The frames around Israel's works, however, are not fixed; they too can flow. The objects in "Property" flee their fixed filmic contexts as well as the utilitarian, physical properties with which they would be identified in everyday life. Paintings in the "Property" and "Flat" se-

ries both embody the architectural legacy of LA and reflect the history of painting, accompanied by the wide variety of disputes in both of these cultural spaces, such as the contradiction between the flatness of the painting surface and the depth of the painter's consciousness. Here we rediscover the defining characteristics of Hollywood's system of image production. Like the air that fills a soap bubble to the point of bursting, the elements comprising "Property" press against one another with evenly distributed, forceful tension; there is no central protagonist. Object and painting encounter and influence the shape of the other. Paintings not only serve as backgrounds for props, but also fill out the voids produced by the outlines of the objects, forming positive and negative spaces. The same thing occurs in Israel's choice of names for his sunglasses, which serve as geographic metaphors: sunglasses and freeways, molding and pushing back on one another with equal force.

Driving a car, it becomes an extension of the body. But, wrapped up in this hermetically sealed moving space, our senses are amputated. High speeds inevitably turn our engagement with roadside scenery into a passive experience. We look out from the frames of the car windows, but the speed at which we move swallows up our experience, and holds us at a distance from what we see. Car culture is part and parcel of a sense of isolation native to the cityscape—the importance of cars to LA's polycentric urban environment goes without saying. With their distinctive imagery, Israel's frames allow these kinds of Los Angeles contradictions to play off of one another. In his work, they bolster and wrestle with one another, forming a kind of Marangoni effect in which the tension between the two forms allows them to exchange shape and position. The foam of the frame maintains the thin barrier that rests between them, but, in another instance of sublimated eating, they create a new and different shared space together as they take each other in. Many elements of Israel's work—the celebrities on his talk show, the movie props, the paintings—are like actors, performing on stage. When it's showtime, a temporary framework appears in which they support one another and coexist. But, after the show, they return to their respective homes. As the flatness of post-illusionistic modernist painting betrayed the depths of the unconscious, so this big, bursting balloon deflates back into the flat piece of rubber it once was. 🍷