



Review

The Measure, The Weight, The Ground, The Scale

By Danica Willard Sachs *July 2, 2015*

The process of making a photograph bears striking resemblance to the process of making a bronze sculpture. Just as a photograph begins with a negative, bronze sculptures begin with a clay model, sometimes followed by a plaster cast, and are eventually cast in bronze to produce the final result. Clay models can be replicated endlessly into plaster casts (and eventually bronze sculptures) in the same way that multiple photographs can be generated from a single negative. Jason Kalogiros' artworks in *The Measure, The Weight, The Ground, The Scale*, on view at Capital, bring to light the inherent reproducibility shared between this mode of sculpture and photography, in turn raising questions about the supposed autonomy of the art object.

The exhibition features three very similar photographs—all of the same 24-by-20-inch size, with the same composition—interspersed with five small bronze sculptures hung on the walls in between. Kalogiros' process begins with a simple drawing. Using a T-square, he forms an irregular grid in black ink across the surface of white paper—a nod to minimalism further amplified by the exhibition's unifying black-and-white palette. Next, Kalogiros photographs his drawings head-on, creating an additional level of mediation. At first glance, *Untitled (Drawing)* (2015) and the two other photographs in the show pass as drawings. Close examination, however, reveals a uniformity of the black line, and a lack of a trace indentation left on the paper by a pen, signaling to the viewer that these are in fact photographs.

From here, Kalogiros returns to his original drawings to make the small bronze sculptures mounted on the wall between the photographs. In *Untitled (Drawing)* (2015), he cuts the drawing into strips, uses a quarter as a stencil to remove a few circular snippets from the strips, and arranges these into a stack to make his mold. This object is then cast in bronze and patinated. The resulting sculpture bears little resemblance to the photograph of the same title affixed to the wall next to it, and yet—in photographic terms—they could be said to share the same negative.

Kalogiros repeated this approach to make the rest of the works in the exhibition, using different drawings to generate the other photographs and sculptures. Some of the sculptures are finished with the black or white patina. This limited palette, paired with the repetition of the same process to make each work, surprisingly

does not make for a tedious show. Rather, Kalogiros' deceptively simple approach draws attention to the subtle variations in each object: pleating the drawing, say, instead of cutting it up to make the cast for the bronze, or placing bits of tape on the surface of the drawing before photographing it to disrupt the rigidity of the grid.

Kalogiros' interest in a process-based approach to object making is not new. His previous output includes photographs of sunsets made with pinhole cameras, and photograms using found printed materials—both ways of making a photograph using the simplest means possible. In *The Measure, The Weight, The Ground, The Scale*, the artist employs the methodology of photography to interrogate the discrete boundaries between media. Walter Benjamin asserts in his pivotal essay, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," that "to an ever-greater degree the work of art reproduced becomes the work of art designed for reproducibility."¹ For Benjamin, reproducibility comes at the expense of authenticity, or aura. But for Kalogiros, this dichotomy between replication and autonomy becomes less clear as more minute deviations are introduced into his work, marking the later copies as mutations of the original rather than as mere replicas.

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The Measure, The Weight, The Ground, The Scale is on view at CAPITAL, in San Francisco, through July 18, 2015.

Notes

1. Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), 224.