

ARTFORUM

Helfand, Glen, "Critics' Picks: Will Rogan," *Artforum*, July 20, 2018



Will Rogan, *The obscurity of the mid day twilight*, (detail) 2018, marine paint, mast, ceramic, sea life, 20 1/2 x 21 x 21".

SAN FRANCISCO

Will Rogan

ALTMAN SIEGEL

1150 25th Street

June 28 - August 25

"Albatross," Will Rogan's strangely potent exhibition, is timely in multiple senses. The sculptures, found objects, and photographs allude to the effects of climate change and also to the concept of time itself, in its varied scales and paces. Immediately, seascape photographs and rocks placed like Minimalist sculptures on the floor establish a geological baseline.

Weights and chains from cuckoo clocks droop from photographs in small handmade frames,

and elsewhere, horological mechanisms have been reconfigured to make die-cut shapes of urns, keys, and faces that rotate at their own, sometimes nervous rhythms. Time slips on, glacially, humanly.

Rogan currently lives and works on a houseboat in Sausalito and summers in the Antarctic, making photographs while on research trips—generative experiences that are reflected here. *The obscurity of mid day twilight* (all works 2018), for example, repurposes his boat's mast, a tall object painted shiny maritime white, as an elongated pedestal that reaches into the exposed gallery rafters. Placed on top is an urn that was submerged for a year and a half in the water below Rogan's domestic vessel, attracting whatever algae, barnacles, or sea grass would grow. From the floor, it looks like a wise, mangy owl.

The large stones and boulders also serve as bases for oversize ceramic novelty mugs filled with slowly evaporating seawater. These porous vessels, fired but unglazed, have already begun to grow a fuzz of salt crystal from the brine. In *Filter, Stress (What Stress?)*, the parenthetical phrase is inscribed on the mug's surface in scribbly Roz Chast-ish script. A nearby photo, *Eclipse Snake*, depicts a rattler the artist encountered on a hike. The wood frame, carved with frantic squiggles, exudes a sense of impending, camouflaged danger.

— Glen Helfand