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ART IN REVIEW

Barbara Probst



Murray Guy, New York, Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn

In her exhibition at Murray Guy in Chelsea, Barbara Probst explores the limits of photography in a diptych of a man and a woman gazing into separate, adjacent cameras.

By **MARTHA SCHWENDENER**

Murray Guy
453 West 17th Street, Chelsea
Through Dec. 21

For most of her career, Barbara Probst has used two of photography's features — often considered flaws — as springboards for her work. One is that photography is monocular, a limitation compared to binocular human vision. The other is photography's static nature, compared to moving images like video or film.

The first idea is explored here in a simple but captivating diptych of photographs in which a man and a woman sitting next to each other gaze into separate, adjacent cameras. The result is two similar but remarkably different views of the same scene. The second idea — centered around time, sequence, viewpoint and narrative — is a grid of 12 photographs created by multiple cameras pointed at various locations near the corner of Broome and Crosby Streets in SoHo and triggered by a radio-controlled shutter release.

Technical-image precedents proliferate in Ms. Probst's work: the optical tricks achieved through camera obscuras and other devices in 17th-century Dutch paintings, Eadweard Muybridge and Étienne-Jules Marey's early camera experiments, Soviet films like Dziga Vertov's "Man With a Movie Camera" (1929), and the postwar film and photography theory appearing in journals like *Cahiers du Cinema* and *Screen*. There are also allusions to French New Wave and Italian cinema, as well as surveillance and fashion photography. But Ms. Probst's skill, sharpened to mastery in this, her fifth show at Murray Guy, is in reining these references in and sculpting them into images that function like concise visual poems.