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Love, Lucia. "Exhibition // Painting the Fiction of 'Saturday's Ascent': Andrew Sendor at Sperone Westwater New York." [www.berlinartlink.com](http://www.berlinartlink.com) (Berlin Art Link), 26 April 2017.

**BERLINARTLINK**  
THE INSIDER'S GUIDE TO CONTEMPORARY ART AND CULTURE



Andrew Sendor: 'Saturday praying with The Seven Sisters in Geirangerfjorden, Friday, March 13th., 2016' oil on matte white Plexiglas in polished aluminum frame, 68 x 51,5 x 4 cm

Andrew Sendor's installation 'Saturday's Ascent'—now on view at Sperone Westwater in New York—is an elaborate narrative of a professional mountaineer, named Saturday, and her exploits and subsequent disappearance. The exhibited painted images are the culmination of a writing process meant to develop the characters' backstories. Each character is then cast and costumed to appear in photographic references, which Sendor translates in grey and blue scale. The majority of these images are reinterpreted on white plexiglas panels that function as floating voids, hosting fractured and crooked depictions that illuminate Saturday, the climber's, various relationships to her fiancé Delmar Beret, his twin brother Lamar Beret, her equestrian endeavors and, of course, the mountains she conquers for sport and livelihood.

In the exhibition, the cinematic or literary tradition of constructing fictitious, yet plausible, history is combined with a practice of photo realism to a wistful, dreamlike effect. As Sendor describes the prevalent relationship to photography: "Our landscape of images currently exists as a flow. Most photography is viewed in a constant motion. It's a fleeting experience."

We are struck with a cheapening of the medium which was once slated to take down painting with its detail capturing accuracy. Painters working with

photographic reference have always had to contend with the economy of representation. In its fledgling state, photorealist works from the 1970s—by artists like Don Eddy, Leigh Behnke, John Baeder, and Audrey Flack—were reacting to a host of gladiators in the Thunderdome of art thought. In one corner was the mechanization of screen-printing in Warhol's 'Diamond Dust Shoes' and, in the other, an old reigning champion, drunk, emotional abstract painters. In yet another corner we had conceptual art that threatened to evaporate under the anorexia of Marxist thought. As if this dome didn't have enough corners, there was also a camp of deskilled artists using the metaphor of shoddily made art to critique a wider concern for the shallow knowledge pool of an increasingly devalued workforce of specialized labor.

In the midst of this competition, photo realism had to wait for a market revaluation through support of artists like Gerhard Richter and Luc Tuymans, who reinvigorated interest in photographic reference through its relationship to history.



Andrew Sendor, 'Saturday's Ascent', exhibition view at Sperone Westwater

As Tuymans relays, we have adopted a mistrust of history because its evidence is so easily manipulated. Viewing a depiction of 'Chronic the Hemphog' online only serves to remind us of the absence of Sonic if we hold the original character as a cultural touchstone. Without inquiry, we may await his cartoon isolated from the knowledge of any precedents. A similar revision may occur on any level of culture, which for Sendor adds to the instability of images. This belief manifests through stuttering and fractured depictions of his more realistic subjects.

As Sendor explains, "to obfuscate linear narrative, anachronistic or specifically time-sensitive details are incorporated into each body of work". The choice to maintain a monochromatic scale both binds the diversity of subject and "removes them from our daily shared reality", a bit like a mountain climber challenged by the mystery of her own survival.

Where is Saturday?! At its heart there is a haunting quality to these depictions of a highly-skilled and resourceful woman brought to life through others, if only to be sent back into obscurity via the missing persons column. We are given a more tangible image of the subject-



Andrew Sendor: 'Portrait of Delmar Beray & Saturday with Mount Thor, Wednesday, August 17th (included in Saturday's altar on Monday, December 5th), 2017', oil on matte white Plexiglas in white powder coated aluminum frame, 104 x 83 x 5 cm

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made-object rather than the ephemeral glowing screen encounter, but as a result the source becomes elusive. Through audio and physical description of Sendor's exhibition, we are given locating the original Saturday as a hero's task, a hope for continuity.



Andrew Sendor, 'Saturday's Ascent', exhibition view at Sperone Westwater



Andrew Sendor: 'Lamar Beray with Helvetica on Wednesday, November 9th., 2016', oil on matte white Plexiglas in artist's frame, 54 x 46 x 4 cm