

Louche Ops

press release for Green Lobby

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opening Saturday, Feb 25 from 6-9

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While the purposes and qualities belonging to artificial flora vary greatly depending on which historical context one is considering, the modern use of them has typically been to dress up dress up transitory and otherwise unspectacular spaces., acting as docile apologies for the hostile vacuity of corporate architecture. T

Mimicking a natural subject, their presence signals that an actual plant would die if put in its place due either to harsh environmental conditions or simply from neglect. This specific kind of lifelessness, which registers more as kitschy than creepy (unlike mannequins, taxidermied animals or other forms of deathly decorThis feeling of lifelessness) seems to come from what is typically a half hearted effort to pass just as the wallpaper or framed posters in many of these places appear to be, stock selections and make offering a kind of meak image of immortality and adding to the general effect of waiting rooms and lobbies one that is more or less unconvincing of waiting rooms, lobbies and malls the feeling of an unconvincing theatrical production. fact that unlike organic flora, they do not die. Perhaps this effect was meant to prepare us for the level of experience we ought to expect in these places, a kind of atmospheric social novocaine. But the need to soften the hostility of corporate space is dissipating since by now we've all been so thoroughly exposed to these conditions.

This expansion has leaked into most of our daily negotiations whether dealing with wifi connection troubles or patiently enduring a rehearsed script a waiter might deliver concerning the benevolent chain of human policy from which a salad has emerged; or trying to follow the parade of cultural productions from our laptops i.e. human (intern) for scale. We've internalized the etiquette of these structures to the degree that we can barely perceive its absorption, just as the fake plants that were once in the lobbies of banks have transcended into a panoramic green screen from which the terms of our social economies are presented to us. If photography had been the imperial command for projecting fantasy as evidence, artificial plants were more like rent-a-cops.Perhaps their banality is meant to prepare us for the level of experience we ought to expect in the places where they're typically encountered, a kind of atmospheric novocaine. But the need to soften the hostility of corporate architectural space has lessened since we've been conditioned to internalize these experiences from so many reps.

As objects, these plants have been liberated from their tenuous connection to the truth claim and are now free to be explored (or to explore) as more complex vessels. Now when I see them in hotel lobbies or doctors' offices, I suspect that they are just there as props to preserve a twentieth-century effect, whereas their removal might breed suspicion that the terms of the infrastructure had quietly evolved in plain sight, replaced by an all-encompassing rebar of vegetative plasticity.