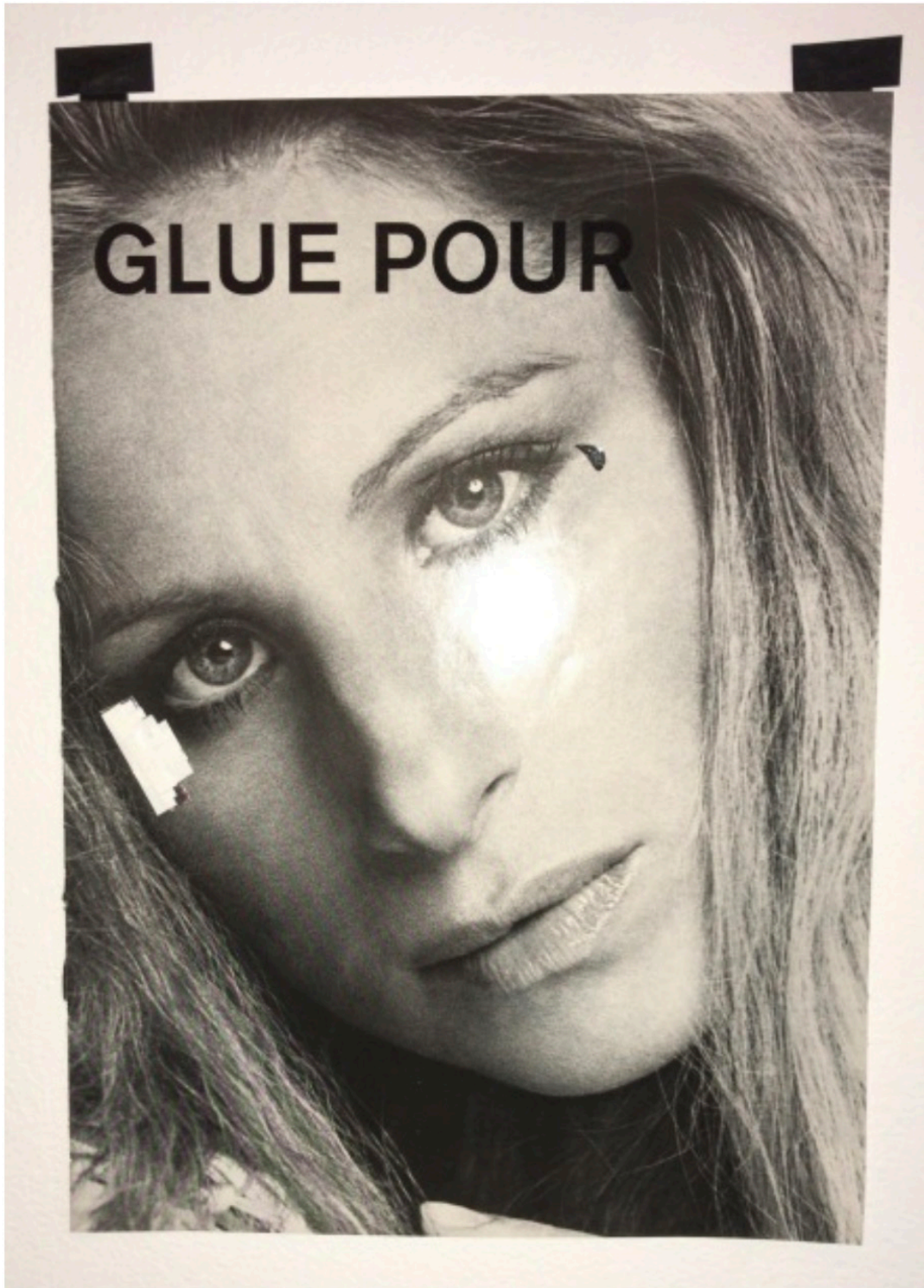


ART OBSERVED

NEW YORK — MARK VERABIOFF: “TEARS” AT TEAM GALLERY THROUGH MARCH 3RD, 2018

January 28th, 2018



Mark Verabioff, *Concerned Women For America Rim Glue Pour Cultural Confinement Rundowns Pool Side* (2017) (detail), all images by Osman Can Yerebakan for Art Observed

Entering Mark Verabioff's first exhibition with Team Gallery, the audience encounters expansive, full-wall images of entertainment industry figures symbolizing generations of American pop culture, such as the controversial photos of child actress and model Brooke Shields, iconic fashion editor Diana Vreeland (photographed by Francesco Scavullo), and teen heartthrob Nick Jonas. Known for his image and text based practice in which he cross-references words and pictures in relation to their abundant presence and status in visual culture, Verabioff mines the archives of art history, feminism, gender politics, and pop. The L.A.-based artist's riff on language and pictures stems from his exhibition title, *TEARS*, brewing two distinct meanings and pronunciations of the word "tear" in contextual and performative levels. Other words with versatile meanings and utterances, such as "rim" and "pour" extend his play on language.



Mark Verabioff, *TEARS* at Team Gallery (Installation View)

The act of ripping off a page, and the drops shed by the eye encapsulate two avenues Verabioff takes with the word "tear" throughout the exhibition. Conveyed through tear drops adorning various eyes are notions of guilt, shame, and redemption; they appear around the eyes of many celebrity photos amassed by the artist, both in wall-spanning vinyl decals and small prints off of magazine pages. The vast collection of photographs shows woman celebrities at the prime of their careers include Grace Jones, Cher, Madonna, Candy Darling, and Diane Ross, with the word "ANTIFA" reading on the top left corner of each image.



Mark Verabioff, *TEARS* at Team Gallery (Installation View)

Although “antifa” calls to mind political activism and vocal opposition, the artist’s appropriation of the word in the company of glamorous celebrity photography furthers his approach to language as a social phenomenon and political tool. Either posing for Scavullo’s lens or featured in an anonymous magazine, these women, among which are also unknown models, overall constitute a transcendental aura within the gallery as they stare into our eyes with glamour and confidence. Yet they challenge the limitations and expectations imposed by the society and media due to age, sexuality, and their career.



Mark Verabioff, *Concerned Women Rundowns Poolside* (2017)

The artist utilizes a torn piece of tape to create the typical paisley pattern or a rectangular shape at the edges of these famous eyes. Strength and vulnerability, two opposites embedded in the act of crying, complicate these figures' recognition in society as icons and victims, recalling Warhol's use of Marilyn Monroe and Elizabeth Taylor photographs. The performative gesture of ripping "things," pages or tapes in this case, imbue an archivist but also anarchist nature to Verabioff's process, which expands to his mixed-media acrylic paintings blending various pictorial and textual traits onto canvas.

Mark Verabioff: *TEARS* is on view at Team Gallery through March 3, 2018.



Mark Verabioff, *TEARS* at Team Gallery (Installation View)

—O.C. Yerebakan