

*Thoughts on Mirror Area:*

The drawings are a stand in for a world. The best ones depict a cityscape, a landscape, arid, quiet, busy. The best ones depict a void. A place where the walls are cleared of clutter. The best ones are relatable, located in a very known city where few or almost no images circulate. *I find that emptiness enviable.* The only energies that circulate are bodies. Unnameable but capable bodies. The best ones depict aliens and familiar bodies, those people that remain after a very normal catastrophe, where their relationship to time —the before and after—is unchanged.

The drawings are purposefully empty. The architecture is edited away to a line as an edge where a door meets a wall or a window slides open. The line feels as though it is drawn from a single nerve inside of the artist himself. There begins the growing, from the nerve to the muscle to the flesh, the skin to moisten, an opening for desire holding things both peaceful and disturbing. In linking groups of drawings, I'm strolling through scenes of subjection, people unbecoming their uniformity and parading their melancholy. Molting is transfixing to watch.

“The drawing is made of many images,” Kennedy Costa says, “forming and reforming as the bodies themselves do.” This could describe an individual drawing, that one still image is composed of many changes and movements. And it can be said of all the drawings as a continuum, forever molting.

The work isn't personal. It is sensual, surprisingly. It shows a landscape within psychic time. It shows a house as a metaphor for within & without, being & sensing, displaying & masking. I love when Adolf Loos said, “The house does not have to tell anything to the exterior; instead, all its richness must be manifest in the interior.”<sup>1</sup> While Kennedy Costa's drawings tempt comparison to science fiction, it wasn't there I went first but to Beatriz Colomina's study of Adolf Loos and Le Corbusier and their radically different ideas of interiority.<sup>2</sup> She looks at architecture as a constructed image and a framing device. My feminist view of the line drawings was to organize my thoughts around emptiness and privacy. *The void as interior.* In some drawings, I see rooms for privacy. In others, I find rooms constructed by an emptiness the artist calls “a pregnant blankness”.

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<sup>1</sup> Adolf Loos, “Heimatkunst” (1914), in *Sämtliche Schriften*, Adolf Loos, vol. 1, p. 339

<sup>2</sup> Beatriz Colomina, “Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media” (MIT Press, 1996)

Everything is negotiated through the line of the drawing. It is the principal element in Kennedy Costa's art practice. This drawing series is a project of continuity but not a daily drawing practice. Beginning in 2014, Kennedy Costa chose ordinary materials, ink and pencil on standard cardstock paper. The main colors in the drawing series are those of the page itself: office grays, salmon, yellows, granite and sand. The ordinariness of the materials and the overwhelming number of drawings lends the work the quality of a displayed journal, an exposed interiority which was meant to be shared in private.

The drawings aren't arranged in chronological order and they don't seek a clear narrative or conclusion. Nor do they act as a statement on our "present condition". They're more of an exploration of unknowing through automatism, of learning to find a drawing in itself, not from references and observation.

Some pieces bring me closer still. A softer pencil line carried along and through 4 or 5 drawings. A man's gesture of liberation, open arms into the horizon. A flower speaking back to its gazer.

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*Of a terrain I see only the swamps, of their depth I see only the surface, of a situation I see only its manifestations, of these I see only a reflection, and even of that I see only the outlines.*

Karl Kraus, "In These Great Times"<sup>3</sup>

~Sydney Acosta, 2023

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<sup>3</sup> Karl Kraus, "In dieser grossen Zeit" (1914), translated in *In These Great Times: A Karl Kraus Reader*, ed. Harry Zohn (Manchester: Carcanet, 1984)