

ELEMENTS:  
THE DEVIL IS ON THE EARTH

DOVE BRADSHAW



HUBERT WINTER GALLERY

VIENNA

WILLIAM ANASTASI. INCIDENTS AND COINCIDENTS: 60s and 70s  
Photographs in Which the Camera is the Subject  
DOVE BRADSHAW. ELEMENTS: THE DEVIL IS ON THE EARTH:  
Sculptures made from Elements on the Periodic Chart that Relate to  
Myths, Fairy Tales or a Conundrum.

Galerie Hubert Winter presents a very specific selection of photographs by Anastasi and objects by Bradshaw that are subtly choreographed by Dove Bradshaw. They comprise an analysis of the consequences of freedom, contingency, automatism. Even though Anastasi and Bradshaw use apparently different languages and seemingly deal with different topics, they build—via their contact points—a common ground. The investigation of absolute simplicity without any kind of illusionism characterize both the works of William Anastasi (b.1933, Philadelphia) and Dove Bradshaw (b. 1949, New York where they work and live together since 1974). The works presented in the exhibition explore at once the possibilities/impossibilities of representation, of both construction and destruction of images and narratives.

*“At the center of Anastasi’s presentation is the foundational idea that originated in his 1966 Six Sites, photo-silkscreen ten percent reductions of the visual signals on the walls upon which the works are hung. Thus the site itself was introduced as the subject of the exhibition. A related idea from 1967 and 1968 involved the reflective nature of a retina, a mirror and a photograph in its glass or Plexiglas mounting. For the two in situ works here, hung and lit where and how they were made, the real reflections superimpose onto the photographed reflections when the viewer aligns himself where the camera stood with one eye closed. Then the black and white image jumps into color and the image becomes three-dimensional.*

*In 1968 and continuing a decade later Anastasi’s focus was directed to the camera itself: however this is his first exhibition in which the camera is the subject of the photograph. Anastasi embraces the whole discussion on the validity of photography, on its artistic and/or documentary value, on representation, on the tradition of portrait (photographs, reflections, shadows and cameras impede a proper representation) and more broadly on the act of seeing. For instance including the reflection on glass/Plexiglas, something one tunes out in order to see an image, Anastasi does what artists do, he brings awareness and enjoyment to the habitually unseen, the unnoticed. At the same time he both questions and reinforces the documentary value of photography. While on the one hand he shows the device itself and refers to its plain being and functioning as a mirror that can both reveal and progressively conceal; on the other he reaffirms its proof value, the here and now by reproducing his works in situ, hence stating the actual happening of a certain moment of existence under certain circumstances. Thus, reproduction is at stake, together with the performative aspect of re-enactment.*

*My practice touches on similar topics while using different tools. Selecting six elements on the Periodic Chart—lead, silver, gold, arsenic, sulfur, mercury—each is connected respectively to a particular conundrum, a fairy tale or a myth. They are represented in realistic forms as common objects, a feather, a bullet, an egg, an apple, a bust and a figure. Perhaps the viewer is then led through diverse pure elements and objects in a kind of mythological travel, between heaven—or the lost paradise through the Eden Myth, a cast of an apple covered by apple seeds— and hell via Lucifer, a life size bust of Anastasi which was formed in plasticine and then cast into sulfur. C. G. Jung defined sulfur to be not only the soul of “metals,” but the one of all living things. The idea of a journey between life (the golden egg Nothing) and death (Spent Bullets) is also introduced by a small statue of Mercury, the god of travel, currency and thieves, whose caduceus, the medical symbol he carries with the double snakes and winged finial wraps around a mercury thermometer fabricated in a laboratory. Often I use unstable substances intended to change, however here they are meant to be immutable. The chosen elements have become subjects, words, materials that tautologically refer to themselves as they simply are. On the contrary, existing as part of an infinite game of cross-references, hopefully they can create endless, mirrored and mirroring cosmos. ‘[...] there is not an all, given all at once: there is a finite number of elements whose combinations are multiplied to billions [...]’ Italo Calvino. “The Castle of Crossed Destinies”*

Dove Bradshaw

## Not Even Apples Are Pip-healthy

One explores what one sees, or more commonly ignores what one tries to overlook; while the other makes up the more or less visible world. And thus the two who live together for decades seem to simply form base reality. But they have more to offer than merely that.

William Anastasi has such a magical apparatus that cannot stop time, but can hold onto it for a moment: a camera. Or several. And captures what is usually outside of the picture. With him, of course, it is always present. It is even the subject. Reflected in his eye. Everywhere there are remakes, works from the 1960s, that so to speak have traveled through time and space, in order to be repeated here at Gallery Hubert Winter. Analogical. A duel: two cameras target each other. And? Which one won? Both. Anastasi's reflections on photography welcome actual physical reflections. He follows a simple concept, though secretly quite complex and refined. He fills an empty picture frame with what the camera has seen when it looked at this void (namely through the means of its reflective glass). He continues to drive this game of reflections.

And Dove Bradshaw? Does not have a magic box. And yet has moved beyond it. She transforms trivial things into fairytale, mythical props that tell quite elementary stories. About heaven, hell and the earth in between. Elements on the Periodic Table (gold, sulfur, lead, arsenic ...) are their sculptural material. A broken eggshell (from the fairy tale goose?), a leaden feather (that certainly has fear of flying) and the apple that is entirely evil (well the fruit that caused the fall) is made of apple seeds which are poisonous (sic. actually arsenic). Apples are healthy, but not pip-healthy. Bradshaw even portrays her partner as a Devil: "Lucifer." Okay, she did not make horns for her head of Anastasi, but it is made of sulfur (hello?). Smells of Hell. Anastasi's bust closes the circle. (Oh and how many circles of hell?)

Claudia Aigner



*Lucifer*, 2018, sulfur, life size bust



*Eden Myth*, 2014/2018, arsenic, cast from an apple  
and covered in apple seeds that contain arsenic



*Mercury Mercury*, 2018, marble, glass, sealing wax, mercury



*Conundrum*, 2018, lead cast of a goose feather



*Spent Bullets*, 1979/2016, silver casts of  
.38 caliber New York Police Department shot bullets





*Nothing III, Series 2, 18 carot gold cast of a goose egg shell*

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