



adding to the show about temporality in the model gallery

rachel hecker: gallery model

situation: the studio is upset by a construction project. it's impossible to paint or make anything substantial in there, even if i wanted or had the psychic bandwidth to do so, which in this time of pandemic and crisis i do not.

solution: make really small things. keep the hands and mind focused on something other than the pandemic, or my obsessive diet of horrific news.

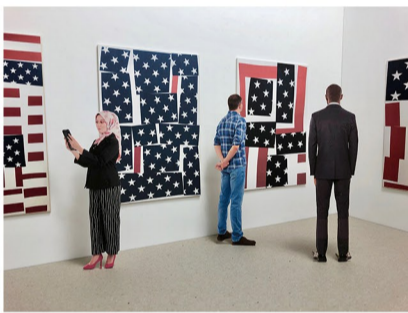
story: i have a 1:12 scaled model in my studio of a generic gallery space. i built it years ago to test out ideas for sculpture before committing to building larger scaled work, and to work out plans for installations. in it were the beginnings of an installation for a potential exhibition that dealt with temporality that hadn't found a conclusion, but seemed to have possibility. a miniature coffin with a "reserved" sign on it...a melting snowman...some text paintings...a start...kind of timely.



to this dormant collection i imagined adding a "portrait" of my parents that i have wanted to complete but haven't had the skills to do so - a really nice, well produced, large scale photograph of the mourner ribbons that i wore at my parents' respective funerals. i'm not a photographer, but it occurred to me that i was probably capable of making a smaller version or surrogate for this image, that would function well in the model due to the compression of scale. i took the photo of the ribbons and edited it on my cell phone, printed and mounted it, and began expanding the miniature exhibition. i also began growing the project conceptually to more broadly describe the attributes and activities of an actual gallery.



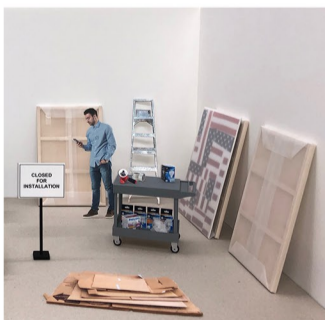
virtual exhibition of actual paintings



making models is deeply satisfying. i like caring for things, and making very, very small things accurately requires a special kind of attention. and the gallery model is - as models generally are - a miniaturized ecosystem that i can control and make order in during these impossibly pressurized times. it is a small open box populated by little people and things made of stiff paper and wood that sits on my desk and snaps to life when photographed, releasing its final balm of humor when you get the joke.



installation in progress at model gallery



some of the "pieces" in the model/gallery are photos of actual paintings that i made, like the flag paintings, while other work exists only in scaled form. the things that hinder me from making work in the real world - like my lack of fabrication skills or the cost and effort associated with making large scaled sculpture and painting - don't apply in the model gallery. i can make anything, and this is liberating. this permission also extends to the kind of virtual work that i will be making for the model, because failure on a small scale is always an option.



we are celebrating with an opening reception for our current exhibition of photography, "Adorable Pets from China", because our governor lifted covid-19 restrictions despite the sharp incline in covid-19 cases in houston.