

# Recognize it? Think again.



Frank Egloff's "After Rodchenko, 1932, and Tomatsu, 1964" juxtaposes soviet gymnastics on a spinning contraption with Japanese men beneath a network of utility wires. (Courtesy of Barbara Krakow Gallery)

Artist reinterprets  
reality with  
photographs  
and paint

## Frank Egloff: rethought

At: Barbara Krakow Gallery,  
10 Newbury St., through Nov. 29.  
617-262-4490,  
barbarakrakowgallery.com

With photographs, it's easy to assume you're looking at a representation of reality. Frank Egloff's paintings of photographs, on view at Barbara Krakow Gallery, deconstruct that assumption. The basic visual information is the same, but Egloff deploys a few tricks to throw you off: He adds a border, or shifts tones, or breaks up the image. Sometimes he conjoins two pictures that were shot years apart.

In every case, he draws you in. Works that as photographs are representationally straightforward become enigmatic. "After Weston, 1925," expands upon Edward Weston's lovely portrait of Tina Modotti. Egloff stretches it into a horizontal image, fracturing Modotti's face into several stuttering vertical bands. He both highlights and toys with Weston's formal purity: The jagged black swoop of her neckline and the boxy shadow of her jaw now stretch and repeat, like a small line of chorus girls, pulling the viewer toward abstraction.

"After Rodchenko, 1932, and Tomatsu, 1964" abuts Alexander Rodchenko's heroic image of Soviet gymnasts on a spinning contraption made up of ladders and a trapeze with Shomei Tomatsu's circumspect photo of Japanese men beneath a giant network of utility wires. The wires join up with the ladders, sweeping the eye across the canvas. Egloff paints the diptych in three tones: The Soviets are in blue, the Japanese are in beige, and Tomatsu's wires encroach onto the Rodchenko canvas in a vertical, dun-colored band. With these tones, Egloff subtly breaks up his picture and focuses the viewer, as if through another lens.

These paintings are so well executed, both conceptually and technically, that it's easy to lose track of time gazing at just one of them.

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