

artillery



KATJA SEIB

by Annabel Osberg ·

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What we take as concrete reality often seems as changeable as a hologram: a door appearing orange in the morning looks yellow in afternoon light; former familiars refashion their characters beyond recognition. Inklings of such slipperiness with regard to perception and identity pervade German-born painter **Katja Seib's** shadowy, dreamlike scenes. Suffused with enigmatic symbolism and misgiving, the paintings in her current show, "chasing rabbits," suggest second selves, mutable personalities, and decision-making dilemmas. Forms evoking mirrors or trees hang overhead a sleeping couple in *he is the sweetest peach to fall but I don't like peaches at all* (pictured above, all works 2019); the woman improbably wears black evening gloves, and her pillow bears a makeup print of her face as though it were developing a countenance of its own; while another woman, perhaps the female sleeper's doppelganger, looms beside the bed with hand to her head in a theatrical expression of despair. Mystery is compounded by the repetition of the title on a small chalkboard within the painting, one of many instances where a poetic phrase reinforces intrigue or humor in Seib's work. In *7 lives (I been different people many times)*, a ginger-and-white tabby lounges near a pile of cushions adorned with different women's portraits. Were the "7 lives" lived by the cat, or by its absent mistress?