

Suara Welitoff

BARBARA KRAKOW GALLERY

10 Newbury Street

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Suara Welitoff's three videos—silent, black-and-white, a few minutes long, and looped continuously—explore the tenuous demarcations between past and present, between an original moment and its recollection or revival. Exploiting the look of film—in particular its scratches and flickering—as well as the glitches from compressed digital video, these works produce a preternatural sense of déjà vu. A brief clip of a child drawing a whorl on a chalkboard repeats in *Untitled (Spiral)* (all works 2013), with jolted edits triggering the same action to begin at different points, while the titular words of another work, *Five Years Later*, are permanently fixed onscreen as clouds float behind them—time passes but remains eternally suspended. Wearing a cross necklace and with an agrarian scene behind her, the woman in *Interview* moves in slow motion, gesturing and sighing expressively, like a heroine from an Italian Neorealist film, but the jump-cuts never show her speaking. It turns out that some of Welitoff's source imagery originates from postwar cinema—the woman being interviewed is Anna Magnani, star of Rossellini's 1945 classic *Rome, Open City* (as seen in a video posted to YouTube), and *Untitled (Spiral)* comes from Truffaut's *The Wild Child* (1970)—but the artist transforms the appropriated footage into visual metonyms for fading memories that confuse lived and fictional experience.

Welitoff recycles her personal archive for five photographs—also black and white—that condense time and space into singular, mysterious images. *Untitled* is a fuzzy, patterned picture of stars that the artist downloaded from NASA's website, printed, scanned, and enlarged, and *Untitled (Shadow)*, a nearly abstract photograph of houseplants and floor tiles, was taken years ago with a chintzy cell-phone camera. Two blurry portraits of women—one of the artist and one of another woman—derive from Polaroids Welitoff took the early 1990s. She even produces her own film-noir scene with *She Liked to Feel Time Passing (For CL)*, a still from a film shot in London in the mid-1990s that looks out the window of a bus or trolley, showing a man striding alongside it with his hand to his ear, presumably holding a cell phone. The degraded quality of this image, resulting from both authentic graininess and magnified pixilation, generates a haunting yet intriguing feeling of the uncanny.

— Christopher Howard



View of "Sometimes Time Trembles," 2014.