

Petzel

Bill Anania, "Exhibition Review: 'The Voyeur: Photoroman Collages, 1976-1979'," *Musée Magazine*,
January 3, 2018.

MUSÉE

VANGUARD OF PHOTOGRAPHY CULTURE

JAN 3

Exhibition Review: "The Voyeur: Photoroman Collages, 1976-1979"

REVIEWS



The Voyeur III (Photoroman), 1977-78, Collage © John Stezaker & Petzel Gallery

Review by: Billy Anania

Sentimentality is relative in the photoroman collages of John Stezaker. The English artist is known for his enigmatic works that blend monochromatic portraits with colorful nature scenes. But in the late 1970s he operated primarily with romantic Spanish and Italian photographs, turning intimate scenes into abstract anonymity.

Petzel

Bill Anania, "Exhibition Review: 'The Voyeur: Photoroman Collages, 1976-1979,'" *Musée Magazine*, January 3, 2018.

This is the last week to catch Stezaker's latest solo exhibition at Petzel Gallery's Upper East Side location. "The Voyeur: Photoroman Collages, 1976-1979" will be on display until Saturday, January 6.



Untitled (Photoroman), 1977, Collage © John Stezaker & Petzel Gallery

The title takes its name from a specific series in the exhibition. In "The Voyeur I," Stezaker conjoins two disparate lovers. But where there should be tenderness is instead tension in their forced embrace. The space where their lips should meet is absent, and in its place is the slanted cut from the artist's blade.

In addition to romantic scenes, Stezaker also manipulates various domestic scenes of women bathing. With their backs to the camera, the subjects here become pieces of a greater puzzle. In their unknowing state, they convey gracious complexity.

Petzel

Bill Anania, "Exhibition Review: 'The Voyeur: Photoroman Collages, 1976-1979'," *Musée Magazine*, January 3, 2018.



The word made flesh III (Photoroman), 1977-78, Collage © John Stezaker & Petzel Gallery

Perhaps the most striking elements here are the empty spaces between lovers. Stezaker purposely manipulates the bodies of his subjects to achieve a more sensual longing. Some corporeal features are distorted, while others are altogether eliminated. As such, the artist reinterprets each scene according to his particular aesthetic.

Stezaker's exhibition questions the nature of romantic relationships in a modern setting using antiquated imagery. The artist intentionally leaves out the most intimate aspects of each piece, creating new contexts for his nameless subjects. And in this way, it's hard to tell who the voyeur really is, the artist or viewer.

Petzel

Bill Anania, "Exhibition Review: 'The Voyeur: Photoroman Collages, 1976-1979,'" *Musée Magazine*, January 3, 2018.



Kiss 1 (Photoroman) 1976, Collage © John Stezaker & Petzel Gallery

"The Voyeur" is Stezaker's fifth exhibition for Petzel Gallery, and the first at 35 E 67th Street. For more information, visit www.petzel.com.



The Voyeur 1 (Photoroman), 1976, Collage © John Stezaker & Petzel Gallery

<http://museemagazine.com/culture/2018/1/3/exhibition-review-the-voyeur-photoroman-collages-1976-1979>