

THOMAS DANE GALLERY

Frankel, Eddy. 'Amie Siegel: Strata', *Time Out* Online. 9 January 2017.

Time Out

Amie Siegel: Strata



A chunk of pink marble sits in a glass box like a religious relic, a priceless jewel. This jagged hunk of rock is from the marble lobby in Trump Tower. As the inauguration of President Donald Trump sinks in, New York-based artist Amie Siegel shows she has a knack for timing, and an eye for our fetish-like obsession with material.

In the main work here, Siegel takes you into the bowels of the earth, the deepest underground quarry on the planet, to watch the mining of fine marble. In long, slow, sweeping shots projected across a massive screen and soundtracked by over-the-top orchestral music, she traces the material's journey to the opulent skyscrapers it's destined for. It's a journey of economics, aspiration and desire – from quarry to luxury pad.

But it's complex. The images of the New York flats are cut with shots of show homes, architectural models, digital walkthroughs of the building's swimming pool. This film is made of crumpled layers of artifice and reality.

It's like Siegel is asking if this is what you want. Because if it is, then you need to realise it's fake, a construction that apes reality. All that opulence is a shell, a mask on reality that you're expected to desire.

The desire continues in the video piece upstairs, which follows staff at London's Freud Museum as they Hoover, dust and clean Freud's objects and artefacts, their brushes tickling little Egyptian figurines and all sorts of other suggestive things.

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And then there's that harmless-looking little chunk of marble. It's a signifier of luxury, a symbol of power, an object of desire, a fetishised handful of nature, tying the whole show together.

Siegel's work may be quiet and slow, but if you give it the time it deserves, it's creeping, affecting and it might just rock you to the core.

<https://www.timeout.com/london/art/amie-siegel-strata>