

TOSH BASCO

ARTFORUM

MAY/JUNE 2020 I N T E R N A T I O N A L



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CINEMA WORKER
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COVER MAY/JUNE 2020

Tosh Basco, *Untitled*, 2020, digital photograph.

EDITOR'S LETTER

WISH YOU WERE HERE

ON THE COVER is a bouquet of tulips. The artist Tosh Basco bought the flowers at the beginning of quarantine with their partner, Wu Tsang. They documented the flowers as they decayed. The picture is primed for metaphor, and part of its appeal is that it's not hard to understand: It radiates the early boom-bust parable of tulipomania. The fable of the modern artist, extracting beauty from the transient, the fleeting, the contingent. All that phony separation of nature and culture that got us into this mess.

The artist sees decomposition as the prelude to composition. They see hope. Shot with an iPhone 8, it is an elegant, magic image, surprising in its novel familiarity. The background flickers with clinquant batches of "degradation," the lambent grays spooked by slippery crystals of reds and blues and greens. The imperfect JPEG decays too, lending the descended tulips a crisp luster. I think the friction is poignant in print. It is a perfect picture of an artist at home.

—*David Velasco*