

ARTFORUM

Anna Ostoya
BORTOLAMI GALLERY
520 West 20th Street
February 25–March 26

There's something spectral bouncing around the various pieces installed in this gallery. It's left behind a flurry of questions that all lead to one very particular origin: Artemisia Gentileschi's famous Baroque work *Judith Slaying Holofernes*, ca. 1620, which [Anna Ostoya](#) has cleverly dissected through an eclectic assortment of hard-edged paintings and ink-jet prints.

Ostoya's display is akin to a detective's evidence wall. She dismantles the Italian artist's painting and reimagines alternative scenarios for the gruesome biblical story we can see, which has merged with the real-life rape of Gentileschi we can only imagine. Ostoya begins with allusions to Picasso—one of modernism's more famous misogynists—in the geometric patterning of her paintings, such as *Holofernes Slaying Holofernes* (all works 2016). In the adjacent room are primarily photomontages, some of which seem to be tributes to [Georgia O'Keeffe](#), the one most obvious being *Sheets and a Hand*, where the titular elements dissolve into each other, creating elegant curves that look like flowers and female genitalia. *Two Faces*, *Judith and a Robot*, however, is punctuated with dark humor, as it features a robot's head superimposed on a woman's face, resulting in a disturbing hybrid creature.

Two Faces, *A Model and an Actress* unravels the complex duality of human nature. The actress's arresting gasp blends into the model's serene porcelain face, resulting in a two-faced, one-headed monster. And it seems we've come to the core of the show: The demon that haunts the space from the moment we walk in spins well out of control, and points to the Holofernes inside all of us.

