

a. SQUIRE

Eli Coplan
Art Basel Statements
Hall 2.1, booth M6
16-21 June 2026

It is a conceit of capitalism that technological innovations should grow to be indispensable. “Beauty and significance, except in youth, are born of loss,” says Stanley Cavell. “But otherwise everything is lost. The last knowledge will be to allow even that knowledge of loss to vanish, to see whether the world regains.” The television was an indispensable novelty. So, we are told, is artificial intelligence.

This presentation, by the New York-based sculptor Eli Coplan, is formed of two interrelated bodies of work. Both the wall-mounted *Delaminations*, and the floor sculpture, *Snow*, contend with the paradox of progress in a world determined to fossilise old ideas in secret.

The works from the first body consist of one principal element: a polarising film prised from the glass of an LCD television. Hanging now in the absence of its monitor, the film distils what Jaleh Mansoor [speaking of Fontana] has described as TV’s “ghostly economy of mutually entwined absence and presence, dematerialization and embodiment, abstraction and technics.” It is the product of Coplan’s painstaking efforts to undo by hand an intensive process of industrial manufacturing. Some examples arrive relatively intact. Others more closely resemble the ripped and punctured paper screens of Saburo Murakami. The assault on the device, and the annihilated image that results, is but one deconstruction of television in a time of doctrinal media imperialism.

The modified 1966 Ludwig snare drum standing in the centre of the booth belongs to a parallel endeavour. In place of the drumhead sits a metal disc which has been fitted with a thermoelectric refrigeration system. The connected liquid cooling loop, designed to manage excess heat produced by high-performance computer processors and graphics cards, absorbs warmth pumped from the disc’s surface by a series of small cooling chips and disperses it into the surrounding air. Over time, frost accumulates. The crystalline plane sparkles slightly as the light catches, its muteness another instance of a channel interfered.

Eli Coplan (b. 1992, San Diego, CA) lives and works in New York City. Recent solo exhibitions include *Snow*, Tureen, Dallas (2026); *US TV AND FILM*, a. SQUIRE, London (2024); and *Disney Plus*, Commercial Street, Los Angeles (2023). Coplan has participated in recent group exhibitions at Beau Travail, Stockholm; Theta, New York; Julia Stoschek Foundation, Düsseldorf; The Wig, Berlin; and Stadtgalerie Bern. He is the curator and programming manager at Giorno Poetry Systems in New York.

a. SQUIRE

Works

Clockwise from left:

Delamination 12, 2026

Polarising film

50.3 x 89.2 cm

19 3/4 x 35 1/8 in

AS-COPLE-0018

Delamination 13, 2026

Polarising film

93.7 x 165.6 cm

36 7/8 x 65 1/4 in

AS-COPLE-0019

Delamination 16, 2026

Polarising film

60.3 x 110.3 cm

23 3/4 x 43 3/8 in

AS-COPLE-0022

Delamination 11, 2026

Polarising film

59.7 x 106.1 cm

23 1/2 x 41 3/4 in

AS-COPLE-0017

Centre:

Snow, 2026

1966 Ludwig Supraphonic snare drum, stand, aluminium panel, thermoelectric heat pumps, water blocks, thermal insulation, thermometer, cables, power supply, tubing, PC coolant, radiator, pump, fans

Drum: 81 x 39 x 39 cm, 31 7/8 x 15 3/8 x 15 3/8 in; radiator: 46.9 x 64 x 16 cm, 18 1/2 x 25 1/4 x 6 1/4 in

AS-COPLE-0015