

SATURDAY, AUG. 16, 2014

Los Angeles Times



NANCY BAKER CHAILL'S large graphite drawings seem to nestle-eggs within suggestive voids.

'Imagery' that skirts explicit

Sometimes a cigar is just a cigar, but sexual allure is always in the eye of a beholder.

At CB1 Gallery, the order of the day is scopophilia — a fancier, more nuanced cousin to voyeurism. “May Contain Explicit Imagery,” a three-person show organized by artist Tucker Neel, looks at several ways in which “libidinal subjectivity” can be projected onto very different constructions of abstract art.

Although resolutely abstract, the twists come fast. Nancy Baker Cahill's large and impressive graphite drawings of snaking, intertwined and internal bodily forms seem to nestle eggs within suggestive voids, while cartoonish Chicago Imagist motifs meet psychedelic poster style in John Weston's wacky acrylic paintings. Cahill's gestural graphite spikes the sensuality through the visual primacy of touch, and Weston juxtaposes hard-edge color with soft spray-paint to lend optical tactility to shapes suggestive of body parts.

Abstraction thrives in the technology of Kiki Seror's large, show-stealing

murals, which are made from hundreds of time-lapse photographs of notorious pornographic movies of the late 1970s and early 1980s. Debbie re-does Dallas, and John C. Holmes rides again.

The films immediately predate the ubiquity of digital video in the genre, giving Seror's big, blurry murals an archaic look. Viewers are put in the unexpected position of being archaeologists confronting the distant rituals of some lost civilization: Can those folks really be doing what they seem to be doing?

—Christopher Knight