

the experience. Wiener's images are indeed poetry, but to create them is not barbaric; it's humane.

—Valerie Gladstone

## G. T. Pellizzi & Ray Smith

### Y Gallery

Last year, at a ranch outside Brownsville, Texas, near the Mexican border, G. T. Pellizzi and Ray Smith made some art with guns. The property has been in Smith's family since the Spanish conquest. It has its own dump where the artists shot cans of enamel paint, house paint, car paint, and spray paint and let the pigments splash onto wooden panels. They also blew holes in the boards. And while the products of these chaotic experiments are abstract, they are also loaded with allusions to the artists' Mexican-American heritage, William S. Burroughs's shotgun art, the war on drugs, and border security.

The main reference, though, was Manet's painting *The Execution of Emperor Maximilian* (1867–69), which depicts the French-crowned emperor of Mexico and two of his generals, Miguel Miramón and Tomás Mejía, succumbing to a firing squad of republican soldiers. With their rifles, Pellizzi and Smith took on the roles of the executioners.

In the show (all works 2011–12), eight vertical panels named for Maximilian were covered in swathes of silver or blue, punctuated by splatters and bullet holes. Pebbles and plant debris, kicked up from the ground by the gunshots, have settled under the paint, adding organic accents. Two sculptures held the corpses of the metaphorical killings: *Mejía* is a trough filled with bullet-mangled cans and paint-spattered easels and antlers, and *Miramón* has dried gobs of pigment clinging to canisters on an L-shaped configuration of pallets.

The most powerful piece was *The Execution of Maximilian*, a wooden fence with crimson, pink, green, and tangerine splatters. It embodied the most obvious visual connection to both Manet's painting and U.S.-Mexico border politics and was over-



G. T. Pellizzi & Ray Smith, *The Execution of Maximilian*, 2011–12, oil, acrylic, and enamel paint on wood fence, 80" x 151". Y Gallery.

whelming in its painterly gusto. The guys must have had a blast making it.

—Trent Morse

## Victoria Burge

### Accola Griefen

In this beautiful, highly focused show, Victoria Burge opened up a world of inquiry through two quite different bodies of work: drawings and experimental prints. Her preoccupations and obsessions have been consistent over the years, and yet throughout, her work has shown variety and invention.

Operating almost always on a small scale, Burge raises considerations of the universe and infinite space—the micro inevitably speaks to the macro. She forces the viewer into her mental world and processes.

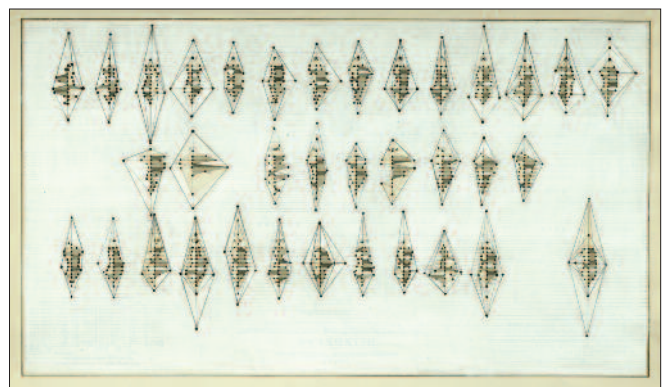
Her drawings, in ink, acrylic, and pencil, build on cosmologies and maps, with memories affixed to them through layering and references to specific places, often cities. Consumed by process, by art itself and how it mirrors the mind, Burge makes literal connections atop natural and artificial ones,

through antique star maps, street maps, topographical maps and lunar charts.

One thinks of Paul Klee, of heavenly harmonies, as Burge's diagrams suggest celestial and temporal rhythms. She connects places where she has been with suggestions of horoscopes and cosmic affinities.

The titles are at once descriptive and pure poetry, as in *Moon Blindness* (2011), a beautiful riff on an antique chart showing phases of the moon, and *Coding the Space between Spaces* (2011), adding connective lines to an old population chart.

As for the intriguing prints, they developed from Burge's investigation of the effects of light as it is reflected on water. The artist photographed the reflections at different times of day and on various rivers and then created vector drawings based on the pictures, which she laser cut into Plexiglas. With their white bubbles that seem to shift depending on the viewing angle, the



Victoria Burge, *The Distance of Memory*, 2011, ink, pencil, and acrylic on antique chart, 10 1/2" x 16".

Accola Griefen.

prints were most interesting as studies in process, whereas the drawings stretched in both their effect and meaning far beyond their lines and links.

—Barbara A. MacAdam