

ANOTHER YEAR IN LA

Pacific Design Center, Suite B267, 8687 Melrose, West Hollywood

WORDS PETER FRANK

COMING OUT: **Sculpture (California)**

Another Year in LA could be called Los Angeles' quintessential community gallery – community of artists, that is, open to the variety of artistic modes currently being practiced in the city. Well, make that the state; AYIL's gallerists, Cathy and David Stone, who hail from Sacramento, have established active connections with fellow painters, sculptors, draughtspeople and conceptualists up and down California. Their group shows, in particular, manifest the spectacular variety of current artistic practice on the West Coast. To be sure, the Stones favor the eccentric – the eccentric use of materials, the eccentric combination of forms, the expression of eccentric ideas about the world. But in this, they mirror the attitudes that prevail, and have long prevailed, out here. Their survey of California sculpture, for instance, comprised only ten artists, but no two resembled each other remotely, save perhaps in spirit. The seemingly jerry-built structures of Coleen Sterritt, for instance, with their slyly comic references to the figure, are miles from Stephen Kaltenbach's self-mocking time capsule ("open before my retrospective at MOCA in LA"), or the elegant double column Robin Hill constructed out of wax-cast old slide-projector carousels, or Nancy Evans' funky, gritty votive statue of a mythic animal. There was no thematic rhyme or reason to "Sculpture (California)" beyond its title's relaxed parameters, but the works talked to one another, some reserved and intellectual, some witty and articulate, some urgent and slightly abrasive in their eloquence; party organizers should be as deft as the Stones are at such curation. The other sculptors in the show were Tom Bills, YaYa Chou, Julia Couzens, Carlee Fernandez, Christopher Füllemann and Gerald Walburg.

GOING IN: **Drawing (Los Angeles)**

(THROUGH JULY 27)

"Sculpture (California)" was the second in a triptych of small purviews, and in fact, the only one to go farther afield than LA itself. "Painting (Los Angeles)" preceded the sculpture show with canvases (and non-canvases) by Fumiko Amano, Katy Crowe, Linda Day, Samantha Fields, Linda King, Jacob Melchi, Gina Stepaniuk, and Jerrin Wagstaff (an effervescent assortment, as anyone who even knows half these talents will recognize). The current exhibition, "Drawing (Los Angeles)," challenges the definition of "drawing" with simi-

lar blitheness. Its protagonists are fewer in number than before, and thus each artist is able to show a more extensive selection of work – and, for that matter, larger work. Here, the Stones seem to be making a concerted point: drawing is an intimate medium on any scale, so the bigger the better. Stas Orlovski's enigmatic images certainly weave their magic writ large, while John Knuth and Christopher Russell both exploit the room given them to exercise a sensuous materiality and a serial explication of form. For her part, Alisa Yang conflates abstract texture with a finely-honed sense of image that borders knowingly on the cartoonish and the childlike, and Jackie Freedman pastiches idioms and materials with almost virtuosic bravado into basically but not securely abstract compositions. None of these expansive works on paper (or what passes for paper) has been ripped out of a notebook, but the casual assertiveness they all share, their clear connection to raw artistic impulse and the taking of risks, is exactly what we look for in drawing.



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