

Julia Couzens' "Weird Angel" in "A Different Kind of Conversation"
Review by Constance Mallinson

Curated by Nancy Evans
Timothy Hawkinson Gallery
7424 Beverly Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90036
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artiq_cm Julia Couzens' "Weird Angel" in "A Different Kind of Conversation" curated by Nancy Evans, Timothy Hawkinson Gallery June 19-June 22, 2025

After nearly consigning to the dumpster a series of small simply shaped ceramic sculptures resembling a leaf and section of tree burl cast in 2005, Nancy Evans instead had the idea of giving them "a second life" by asking a number of artist peers to complete the pieces. In keeping with her often-stated desire to create conversations both in her studio and now with this collaborative project exhibited as a brief pop-up, she quotes John Baldessari's "I think art if it's meaningful at all is a conversation with other artists...you move back and forth." -- to drive the undertaking. In lieu of a dialogue between artists whose approaches were extremely diverse, however, was a sense of eavesdropping on the individuals who used the objects as their canvases to impose their individual established practices and display their ingenuity. Because of their hand-held sizes, the unimproved objects lent themselves to fetishizing and expressing personal obsessions. Elliott Hundley chaining Evans' piece to a Chinese porcelain knickknack of the type seen in his solo shows suggested that even with a collaborative set-up artists are always tethered to their practices. Pieces were embellished with jewels, glitter, drippy wax, painted patterns, collected natural materials. drawing --Tom Knechtel's hare drawing had a scrimshaw effect while photographer Paula Goldman made a photo series with the object. The standout was the eccentric "Weird Angel" by Julia Couzens. Known for her witty fiber collages, Couzens transfigured Evans's piece into the feet of a curvy sculptural form complete with a furry pubis and fleshy nylon encased "legs" nestled in a wooden platform" --a cartoon of an Ikea furniture component in a sex position. This artwork was conceived because of Evans' radical, vulnerable act and communal esprit of "Take my failure and make something of it." Maybe then the conversation could concern how letting go of our attachments as artists in this way is an antidote to predictability, opening up the possibilities for real creative transformation.
