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many LA artists since the early 1990s. Others included here were Mark Grotjahn, Jason Meadows, Laura Owens, Monique Prieto, Evan Holloway and Jorge Pardo. In what amounts to a refreshing contrast to other group shows, *Think Blue* focuses on an elusive state of mind that is representative of often troubled, often beautiful, and always entertaining "place" that is Los Angeles.

—Tommy Freeman

*Think Blue* closed in August at Blum & Poe, Los Angeles.

Tommy Freeman is a freelance writer based in Los Angeles.

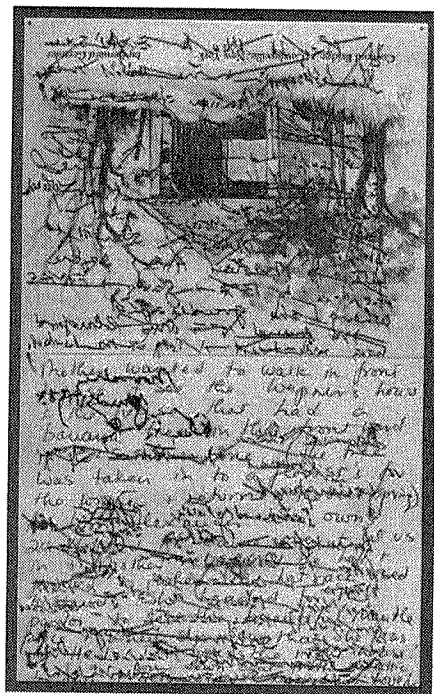
## 'Collected Recordings' at d.e.n. contemporary art

**T**hinking about mixed-media visual art that incorporates found materials recalls the composite narrative melodrama of

Ed Kienholz, the political and psychological incisiveness of Joseph Cornell, or the conceptual rebellion of Marcel Duchamp. But as *Collected Recordings* demonstrates, an artist's affection for the minutiae, the cast-off, the disregarded and the ephemeral, expresses

itself with a poetic subtlety, a lightness of touch that speaks in whispers without fanfare. Each of the artists in this exhibition is a dedicated collector of the elusive, the accidental and the happened-upon; but each of them in turn incorporates their findings into new, hybrid constructs that both illuminate and transcend their original properties.

Marc Dombrosky embroiders on found paper, in abstract networks of lines referencing the extant text. Ranging from the mundane to mathematics to other



Marc Dombrosky, detail of *Overwrite (Dearest Susan ...)*, 2003, embroidery on found paper, 8" x 4-3/4", at d.e.n. contemporary art, Culver City.

languages and alphabets, the attention paid to lost or discarded documents by the artist literally rescues them from obscurity. His unexpected use of a folk craft idiom gives permanence to detritus, and lends a narrative foundation to his abstract embellishments. *Overwrite (Dearest Susan ...)* is a poignant example of this dynamic as Dombrosky performs this renovation on a misplaced love letter, adding his own layer of romance and ambiguity to that which the note already possessed. Michele Costa Baron's *Index* series also immortalize found materials—stained or otherwise discarded office supplies mostly—in a series of preciously assembled and intimately scaled collages that demonstrate a deep appreciation for accidental beauty.

Suzanne Bocanegra's installation, *All the Petals from Jan Brueghel the Elder's "Bouquet" 1606*, is her first showing in Los Angeles, but will surely not be her last. Beginning with the sumptuous classic still life for which the piece is named, Bocanegra re-creates each individual petal of each flower in the work in a combination of paper, pigment, cloth and wax and affixes them to the wall in clumps and passages according to their placement in the original painting. The composition is not replicated exactly; she lays it out on a flattened grid that compresses the picture plane but asserts the object-hood of each petal as a handmade object. Her reverence for the painting is clear even as she deconstructs it, as is the gravitas of the diligence and patience required to execute her vision. Her explosion of scale and the translucence of the wax medium unexpectedly evoke the luminosity and preciousness of the excavated painting.

Simply put, Virginia Katz ties pens and paper to trees and lets the wind and weather do the rest. The work evokes surrealist "automatic drawings", spiritualist séances and other parlor games of the subconscious, wherein a certain formal truth is pursued by attempting to remove the artist's ego from the creative process. The resulting drawings in the *Border*

*Crossing Series* (2005) have a surprising variety of marks and patterns ranging from the hyperactive scrawl of an angry Cy Twombly to the obsessive pointillism of a child drawing a night sky. The unmediated urgency of their making survives being framed, and they rather hum with its echoes. Katz's deliberate and near-total relinquishment of control over the ultimate forms of her drawings ironically has the effect of making them very much her own.

Peter Owen's mostly untitled works are urban *plein air* paintings, found landscapes from neighborhoods all over town which the artist traverses by foot in search of compelling views. Like badly erased palimpsests or sandwiched photographic negatives, several landscapes are layered over one another in each image; their cumulative translucencies evoking the sliding optical effect of moving through urban streets. The compound armature, entropic perspective and heavy gray-scale palette all support their metaphor for how cities evolve over time both architecturally and ethnically. Generations layer themselves on top of their own histories and become composite museums of themselves.

Glenn Bach is a sound artist, but the process by which he stalks his subject is analogous to what Owen is doing with his paintings. In *Atlas Panoramic Stacked*, for example, Bach uses pen and ink to represent the route he took, on foot, to and from work every day over a rather extended period of time. The imagery thus derived is like Owen's stacked in translucent layers thus creating more than a vista, but an impression of motion through it. However, what is represented in Bach's work is not the architecture of place, but its landscape of sounds; his drawings chronicle the canyons, pockets and patterns of noise, echoes and voids that swirl and rush through streets and alleys like water in aqueducts. In an earlier work, *Backyard Patio, Three Days*, Bach again uses this same strategy of mapping the emotional content of a single environment over the course of time. The ambient noises from cooking inside the house behind him, airplanes buzzing overhead and so forth form a poetic impression of a specific environment using a descriptive language not normally associated with figurative drawing. Yet—and this is actually true of all of the work in the exhibition as a whole—this conflation of perceptions accomplishes precisely what fine art is supposed to: showing us our world in a whole new light.

—Shana Nys Dambrot

*Collected Recordings* closed in August at d.e.n. contemporary art, Culver City.

Shana Nys Dambrot is a contributing editor to *Artweek*.



Suzanne Bocanegra, detail of *All the Petals from Jan Brueghel the Elder's "Bouquet" 1606*, 2005, gouache, watercolor, fabric on paper, 125" x 77", at d.e.n. contemporary art, Culver City.

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