

A Contemporary Art Magazine with a Focus on the Los Angeles Art Scene

AUTHOR

Spring/Break Art Show 2020, Los Angeles



Emma Akmakdjian, Spring/Break 2020, Skylight ROW DTLA; Photo credit Lorraine Heitzman

Spring/Break, The Art Fair Artists Love

Skylight ROW DTLA, Los Angeles
February 14 – 16

Written by Lorraine Heitzman

Some art fairs are almost impenetrable and overwrought with too many visitors and even too many galleries, but Spring/Break 2020 proved definitively that less is more. In its second year in Los Angeles, Spring/Break hosted over sixty-five curated projects at Skylight ROW DTLA, a raw event space lined with giant windows befitting its industrial origins. The generously proportioned booths and the vast space contributed significantly to the experience of the fair. The positive response to Spring/Break is not entirely related to the ease of navigating the space, though. Another factor is the sense of community the fair promotes. Rather than choosing galleries that must recoup their costs in a cycle of ever-increasing prices, the organizers instead offer curators free exhibition space to encourage emerging artists and artist-run galleries. This is a model they have been following in New York for nine years, and here in Los Angeles it provided a welcome contrast to the more financially driven fairs.

Most projects originated in Los Angeles, but several participants came from Northern California and as far away as New York. The curators alternated between featuring the work of individual artists and showing works of several artists in select groupings. Somehow it all felt compatible and there were many rewards to be found in this year's theme of excess.

Using tact rather than bombast, Khang B. Nguyen curated Intra-Being: Ecological Civilization with twelve artists addressing the plight of our natural environment. Provocative works by Ann Phong, Colin Roberts, Hung V. Nguyen, Kio Griffith and Virginia Katz are among the strong works, but everything is unified to great effect. Jacob's West has a similarly well curated selection of quiet works. Included are Jonathan Ryan's textural paintings (recently seen at The Landing), and Rema Ghuloum's color abstractions. Chris Bors, an artist and curator from New York showed a quirky assortment of small works, including two gems from Georganne Deen. Evan Snyderman selected Gabrielle Shelton who exhibited her steel sculptures that owe everything to her business fabricating steel staircases but display a surrealist attitude. Caris Reid and Jen Dunlap share a booth that compliments their very different work. Reid's paintings are graphic portraits that succeed in their simplicity, while Dunlap's landscapes have that Charles Burchfield energy, invigorating her otherwise placid scenes. Chandran Gallery has three spellbinding paintings by Hiba Schahbaz, a Pakistani artist who lives in Brooklyn. In Pakistan, she received training from miniaturists, and the influence is apparent in the delicate line and bold colors. She keeps the fine details of the miniatures and blows up the scale to achieve a thoroughly modern, abstract version for our times.

Local artist run spaces were also in evidence at Spring/Break including Durden and Ray, Johanna Braun of Tiger Strikes Asteroid, and Jason Ramos and Michelle Carla Handel from Eastside International. Durden and Ray's "The Happy House" drew attention with their luminous yellow windows that accented the equally colorful work. Curated by Sean Noyce, Alison Woods, and Joe Davidson, Gul Cagin's weird portraits and Davidson's sculptures were both captivating and curious. At TSA's Corporeal Hysterical Excess (on mass hysteria

III) Cindy Rehm activated the windows with her collages printed onto sheer fabric that contrasted with the architecture outside, while Handel's ceramics in Any Way, Shape or Form at ESXLA impressed as usual with her imaginative use and command of materials.

Some large installations and media projects were scattered though out the site. Transfer LA projected Lorna Mill's pop collage of GIFs taken from the internet, and Lynn Helphenstein brought in Steve Hash's "Neither Here Nor There", a sculptural installation of ghosts, seemingly floating, but actually propped up on cinderblock pedestals. Seymour Polatin curated Taste of the Wild by Assaf Shaham that addresses relationships between our diet and life and death. His eerie tableau features CPR mannequins and attention to the expiration dates of processed food. At Supercollider X Femmebit, Emma Akmakdijian weaves marine debris into beautiful organic shaped tendrils that are reminiscent of seaweed, but serve as solomn reminders of the dangers our oceans face. Sadaf Padder engineers a collaboration between Sanie Bokhari and Nicholas Oh, entitled In Constant Climax where delicate drawings and finely decorated ceramic vases are paired together to celebrate the inherent autonomy of women despite historical precedents. Leila Jarman curated Marina Heintze's tour de force installation, Kama Shooter, a mash-up of almost life-sized figures inspired by sexual acts depicted in the Kama Sutra. Heintz uses target stickers and shooting silhouettes in repeated patterns that overwhelm and delight like a darker version of Kusama Yayoi's world.

This year, Spring/Break's exercise in excess was apparent, not only in its theme but also in the palpable joy of artists making and showing their art. If it felt less refined than the other art fairs, that only contributed to the fun.

[Spring/Break Art Show 2020 \(http://www.springbreakartshow.com/\)](http://www.springbreakartshow.com/)



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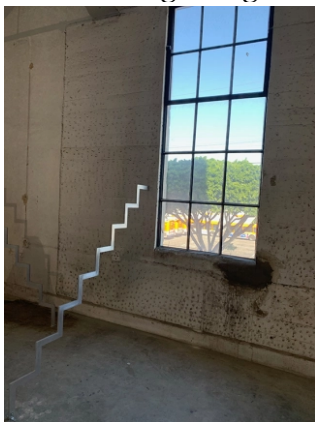
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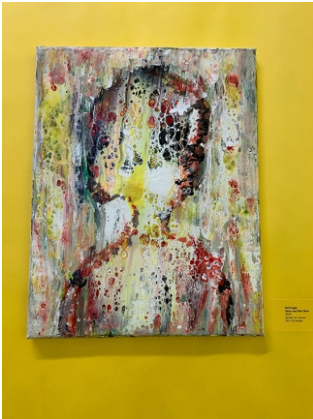
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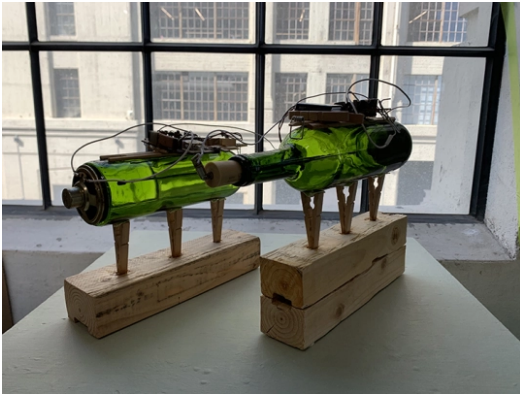
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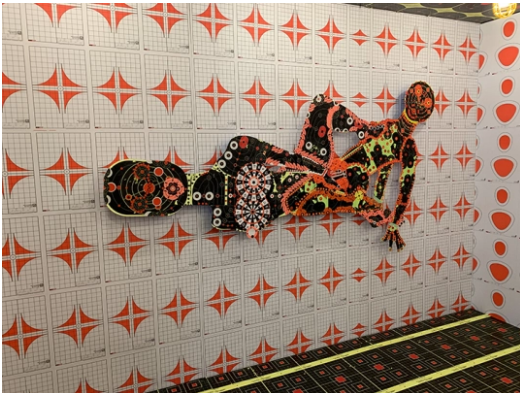
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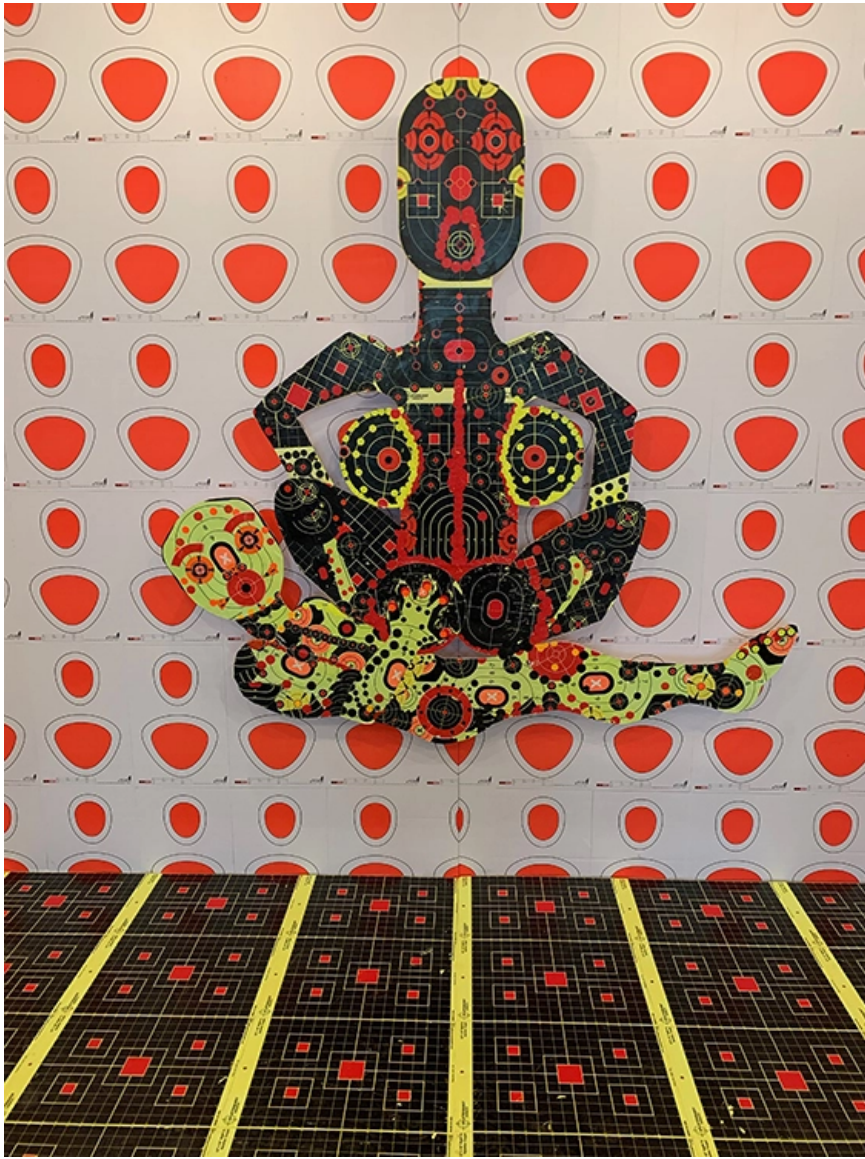
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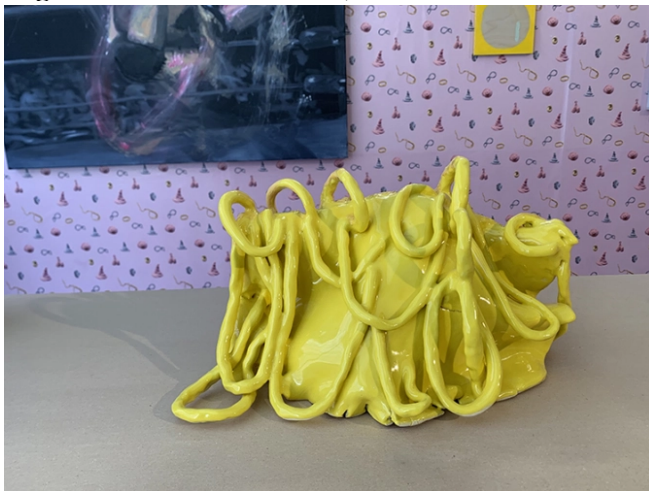


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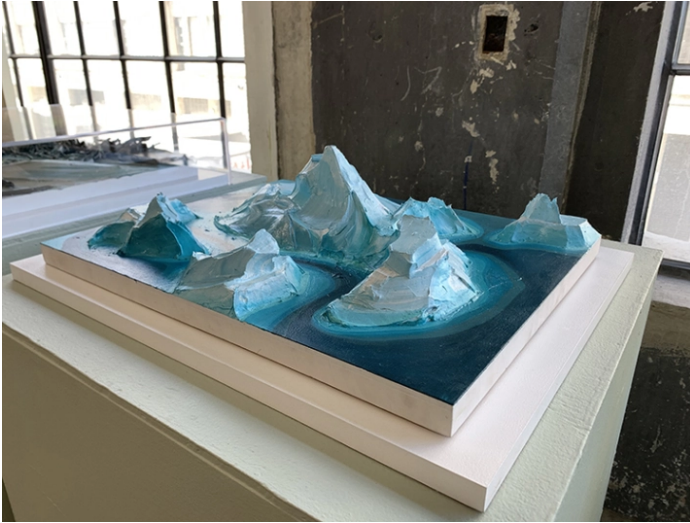
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Published by Author

Kristine Schomaker is a new media and performance artist, painter and art historian living and working at the Brewery artist complex in Los Angeles. For over 14 years she has been working with various interdisciplinary art forms including online virtual worlds to explore identity and the hybridization of digital media with the physical world. Whether virtual or physical, the object-based

work Kristine creates combines elements of color-based gestural abstraction, animation, pattern and design, neo-Baroque and Populence. Using installation, text, photography, mixed media, video and performance for her ongoing conceptual project My Life as an Avatar, she visualizes a narrative/dialogue with her virtual persona, Gracie Kendal. Kristine then documents her experiences on her blog. In 2012, exploring ideas of community, Kristine turned a local gallery into a modern day creation of Gertrude Stein's salon of the 1920's with a live mixed-reality dinner party merging the physical world with the online virtual world. Over the summer she also performed The Bald and the Beautiful in which she had her head shaved as a statement to challenge society's standards of beauty. Currently, Kristine is working as an Artist-in-Residence through the Linden Endowment for the Arts creating an immersive virtual environment which she is planning to bring into the physical world via sculpture/public art work. [View all posts by Author](#)

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