

Facsimile

Girls' Club

November 30, 2011 - September 30, 2012

Ghada Amer
Kevin Arrow
Amanda Burnham
Tim Davis
Tom Ericsson
Orly Genger
Catalina Jaramillo
Amy Mahnick
Rita McBride
Peggy Preheim
Elaine Reichek
Jonathan Rockford
Leyden Rodriguez-Casanova
Gustavo Roman
Jonathan Seliger
Alex Trimino
Kim Yantis

Girls' Club gratefully acknowledges the generous loans of work from artists and collectors participating in *Facsimile*.

This exhibition is designed to complement *Frances Trombly: Paintings* in Girls' Club's main gallery. No artist works in isolation, and as we reviewed works in the collection of Francie Bishop Good + David Horvitz, as well as those of artists working in our community and beyond, we discovered many overlapping tendencies that echo Trombly's practice.

Broadly, *Facsimile* refers to the creation of stand-ins or replicas that resemble recognizable images, that **seem** to be familiar things. Rather than showing the viewer something completely new, these artists uncover the new and mysterious using our own faculty for recognition as a co-conspirator. Counterfeits, *trompe l'oeil*, certified copies, prints and duplications all offer subtle pleasures as a result of their being removed slightly from the authentic original. Some precedents for facsimiles in contemporary art are Allan McCollum's *Surrogate* paintings and Sherrie Levine's appropriations of Walker Evans photos (re-photographing), and of course, Andy Warhol's ersatz *Brillo* boxes.

Other works in *Facsimile* present blank screens or voids upon which we may project unlimited narratives and meanings. The whiteness and void spaces of empty billboards, blankets and bedspreads, window blinds and sheets of paper are all sensitive surfaces available to receive and reflect what we bring to them. Some works affect the whiteness with the faintest impressions or actions, activating an uninflected "given" with a mild gesture or mark, such as Rodriguez-Casanova's *White Blinds* and Peggy Preheim's graphite drawing. Some inscriptions into that blankness are hidden, or barely visible, such as Ghada Amer's figures stitched into canvas and T.R. Ericsson's print made of cigarette smoke.

Sometimes they act as placeholders, marking the pauses between speech or action. The legacy of minimalism interpreted here is not emptiness, but the potential for meaning. Tracings and erasures, knitting, crocheting and embroidery are systems of mark making, handmade technologies that take one step further from the immediacy of drawing.

Certified copies and the easy transferral of content in the digital age have become standard practice today. A photograph of a check snapped by a smartphone becomes instant currency in a bank account. Originals and facsimiles swap value in a more fluid way than ever before. The works in *Facsimile* play in that gap between gold standard and legal tender. Peggy Preheim's meticulous drawings rely on the vividness of an original vintage photograph source. Elaine Reichek's multiple swatches are inextricably linked to the original works of art they reference.

Many of the works in *Facsimile* explore the fetish aspect of objects and our reliance on brands to feel like we belong. Seliger, Davis and Reichek touch on the power of icons and idolatry in their works. Decisions involving scale create surprising ironies, as in Rita McBride's *Parking Lot*. Catalina Jaramillo's *Celestial Sleepover* is an emotionally-charged artifact that vibrates with memory. These works challenge our intellect and stimulate our cognitive ability to recognize and sort layers of reality.

- M. Weinberg



Jonathan Rockford
Expand and Contract, 2008
latch-hooked yarn, crocheted VHS tape, found TV sets, 5' x 2' x 2'
courtesy the artist

Rockford is a local artist who uses craft materials to hack and/or customize ordinary objects. By altering the found TV sets using crochet and latch-hook techniques, he invents a new texture for the noise or snow of the television screen. *Expand and Contract* activates this no programming zone in between broadcasts.



Catalina Jaramillo
Celestial Sleepover, 2004-2010
white yarn, 13" x 12" x 12"

Transforming ordinary domesticity into a precious artifact, Jaramillo's work has metamorphosed from a performance work in which the artist was wrapped or "Mummified" by her mother, who is now deceased. Then mother and daughter knitted the yarn into a blanket, while facing each other from opposite ends. Then the two sides of the blanket were stretched to form a tent, based on instructions her mother discovered in a military survival manual. Now, the blanket retains the impressions and memories of a mother's hands, the artifact of a ritual shared by the two.



Gustavo Roman
The Haunt from "yet nightly pitch my moving tent", 2009
hand-drawn animation, 67 second loop
special edition of 1

The nocturnal impressions that traverse the whiteness of the bedspread speak to the body's physical and emotional impact on the blankets we wrap ourselves with. A subtle allegory describing the persistence of masculinity. Roman hand-inked more than ___pages to create this work. The blanket covering our bodies is the divider between waking and dreaming. This work enjoys a kinship with Catalina Jaramillo's *Celestial Sleepover*, which is also a blanket, but once was a tent.



Peggy Preheim
Mother's Back, 2008
pencil on paper, 11" x 8 1/2"

The faintest drawing of a solitary dog floating unmoored in white space, anchored only by his shadow. Tightly rendered drawings by Peggy Preheim, many inspired by found vintage photographs, express a delicate nostalgia, and in this case, the vulnerability of animal existence. The dog, isolated in a field of white, surrounded by an aura, becomes an icon, eternal, a brand stamped into our visual perception. Preheim's drawings play on the tensions between photographic reproductions, originals and copies.



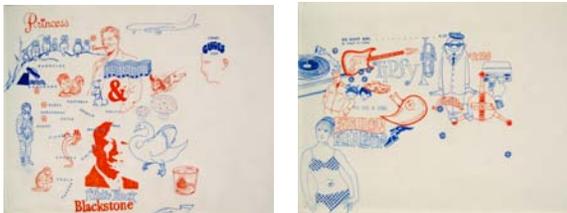
T. R. Ericsson
Kirtland Road, 2008
nicotine on paper, 11" x 15"

Inspired by his mother's lit cigarettes that "discolored the white ceilings and floral wallpaper patterns of the house into tarnished gold," Ericsson used nicotine to produce the pale, golden palette of this series. Digital photographs were burned into silkscreens, which were then placed above ashtrays filled with smoldering cigarettes, slowly creating pictures onto the paper while destroying the screen. The process required anywhere from fifteen to six hundred cigarettes to create a single image.



Rita McBride
Parking Lot, 2002
bronze, 8 1/2" x 27" x 15"

Rita McBride creates monuments out of banal architectural forms - awnings, HVAC ducts, stadium seating, and this *Parking Lot*. Reduced in size, a massive public structure that might escape our appreciation is transformed into a precious totem or a toy. As a small-scale replica, its social significance and its sculptural form can be contemplated. McBride is an American who divides her time between New York and Dusseldorf, Germany.



Kevin Arrow
Untitled (*Topsy*), 2006-08
Untitled (*Ancient India*), 2006-08
water-based pigment ink on vellum
8 1/2" x 11" ea.

Constellations of advertising imagery traced by the artist from a vast collection of vintage magazines, these delicate works isolate icons from the plethora of banal messages aimed at human consciousness from the heyday of print media. Without their contextual clues, Arrow is free to re-arrange them like a rebus on the page. He can re-engineer their meanings, constructing new narratives out of type and image.



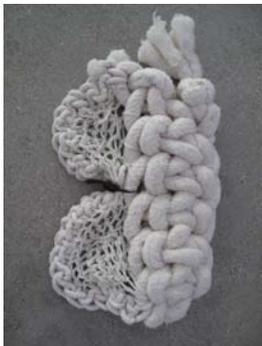
Leyden Rodriguez-Casanova
The Hanging of White Blinds, 2010
horizontal blinds
dimensions variable

Another reference to whiteness, the window blinds are also the blank divider between inside and outside. Rodriguez-Casanova mines elements of domestic architecture and home decor, and nudges them ever so slightly so that they reveal a new, wayward possibility.



Tim Davis
Rainbow Bread, 2006
c-print, 8 1/2" x 10"
courtesy Debra and Dennis Scholl

Davis's photographic vision is wide-ranging and ironic. From political and cultural commentaries in the US, Italy and China, to still lifes, his photos elevate wit above all. *Rainbow Bread* captures an unnatural palate applied to an edible staple, rendering it inedible, void. The bread becomes an item of entertainment, like a television set display of color bars.



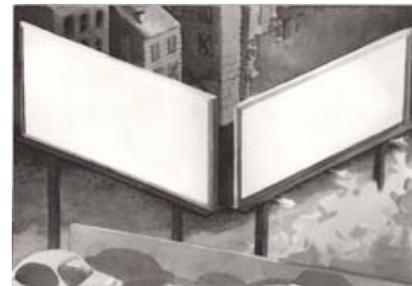
Orly Genger
Very Important Thing, 2004
rope and yarn, 17" x 10"

Restlessly exploring the physicality of crocheted yarn, Genger has produced massive installations that defy the stereotype of crochet as a demure, ladylike pastime. Her bold works explore the possibilities of knots to produce sculpture with surprising muscularity. The white yarn links to other works in this exhibition.



Jonathan Seliger
The Doctor Will See You Now, 2001
oil, alkyd, acrylic and modeling paste on canvas
13 x 12 x 6 1/2 inches
Courtesy Seavest Collection

Michael Kimmelman, writing in *The New York Times*, called Seliger's work "pop origami." Created with painting techniques, then folded to become freestanding sculpture, this work resonates on many levels. A *trompe l'oeil* rendition of a shopping bag from the Sigmund Freud Museum in Vienna, *The Doctor Will See you Now* suggests the double entendre of baggage - the bag itself and the emotional baggage relieved on the couch of Dr. Freud. It is firmly in the tradition of Andy Warhol's faux box of Brillo.



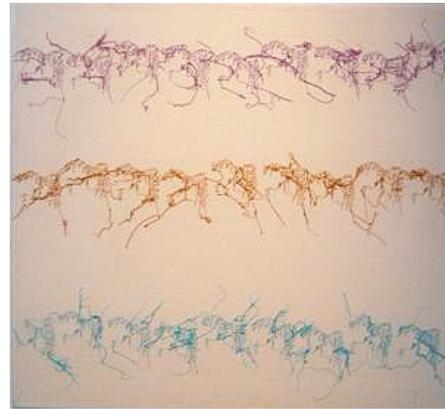
Amanda Burnham
Untitled, 2008
ink on paper, 7" x 12"

Amanda Burnham resides in Baltimore, Maryland, where she paints and draws vignettes of contemporary urban life. Focusing on what doesn't work in cities, her intimate works delight in the details. In this work, Burnham blanks out the giant billboards that normally dominate the landscape - and human consciousness - with exhortations to consume. Their absence of text and their whiteness allows the viewer to fill in the blanks, to inscribe meaning.



Amy Mahnick
Schoolhouse Rock, 2007
oil on linen, 16" x 18"

Amy Mahnick builds small sculptures out of household detritus and then paints the still life she creates. Her sculptures sometimes resemble characters or figurines that are then lit and staged like puppets in a play. A comic narrative is created out of "empties" and refuse.



Ghada Amer
Untitled, 1997
embroidery and gel medium on canvas, 22" x 22"

Barely visible at first glance, the figures embracing and kissing in this work by renowned Egyptian artist Ghada Amer resemble painterly marks on canvas. When we move in closer, we can see the couples. Many of Amer's works depict erotic figures and ecstatic female pleasure. She comments on the oppression of women in Islamic culture using the vocabulary of abstract expressionism and the technique of embroidery.



Elaine Reichek
Swatches, Albers 1-3, 2007
ed. 1/3
digital embroidery on linen, 12" x 10" ea.
Courtesy the artist and Nicole Klagsbrun Gallery

Reichek has exerted a tremendous influence on contemporary artists who use needlework to make conceptual art. This work is from a series called *Pattern Recognition*, in which machine-made embroidery *Swatches* that translate well-known artworks into samples traditionally used by the textile industry. Further reducing an already reductive artwork (the Albers), Reichek shatters the originality of the work into multiple entities, themselves an edition of 3.



Kim Yantis
Results in Ruin, 2010
mixed media on cloth, 14" x 17"

Results reversed are results undone, unraveled. This stitched work layers words and materials into a dense object that suggests labor and the accomplishments of handiwork, but the label indicates progress moving backwards. Yantis' work involves printmaking, folding paper, and discovery.



Alex Trimino
Intermission, 2010
crochet, video installation

The blank space in between the acts, the *Intermission* in this work's title refers to the two-minute delay between the rotation of the sculpture and its shadow projected onto the wall behind it. This delay between original and copy, between solid and shadow lends the work mystery. The crochet doilies were handmade by women in Colombia who are victims of domestic violence.