

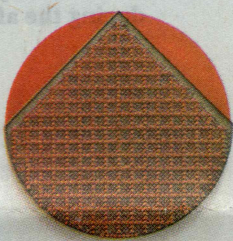
CHARLES DESMARAIS

Art

Mexican gallery's works in bold show

"From Here to There," a group exhibition of artists represented by the innovative Mexico City gallery Kurimanzutto, is on view at Jessica Silverman Gallery through March 5. It is less a thematic presentation than an abbreviated introduction to an international group of like-minded makers. Nevertheless, the works have an easygoing intellectual vigor and the show an unassuming, stylish look — two attributes rare enough to bring me back for a second visit.

Partnering between commercial galleries to promote a career or offset a specific project's production costs is common enough. But one ambitious business entirely entrusting its space to another is not something *Desmarais continues on E4*



Jessica Silverman Gallery

"Sonic Rotating Geometry Type E — Copper and Nickel Plated #46," by Haegue Yang.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Lively display of Mexico City gallery's works

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you often see. (The Chinatown gallery Et al., etc., opening a second space in March at the Minnesota Street Project, will try out a policy of sharing half of its large room with a succession of colleagues in its first year.)

In this case, at least, it comes together terrifically well. The decision to devote Silverman's main storefront to disparate works by various artists, unified by color — stark tones of red and/or black — could feel forced. It doesn't, though.

Unified presentation

Danh Vo's seven different-size wool rugs are dyed a deep red using traditional Mexican pigments painstakingly extracted from the cochineal scale insect. They reference monochrome Modernist painting but with a down-home finish and a hand-worked authenticity. For this exhibition, the rugs, formally spaced around the polished concrete floor, become flattened pedestals or "plinths," as the gallery calls them, for other works.

Playing off the geometric patterning of Vo's untitled floor layout is a constellation on an adjacent wall of 456 red and black rectangles by Abraham Cruzvillegas — a cloud-shaped installation with a title so long that I would need special editorial dispensation to reproduce it. But it starts, "Itchy blind self-portrait drinking a Colimita beer by the patio ...," and deeper investigation of the color-block elements pinned to the wall reveals them to be the painted backsides of paper and cardboard scraps — recycled fragments, one assumes, of autobiographical relevance.

There's a lot to see with some 18 artists participating, several with multiple works. The seriocomic tone set by Vo and Cruzvillegas imbues the whole of the show. Their



Jessica Silverman Gallery

Jimmie Durham's "Arc de Triomphe for Personal Use" (front), Danh Vo's wool rugs, and works by Abraham Cruzvillegas (left), Damián Ortega, Gabriel Orozco and Leonor Antunes.

works, and many others presented here, reflect an attitude promulgated through the efforts of Kurimanzutto's best-known co-founder, internationally celebrated conceptual artist Gabriel Orozco: a casual stance of playfulness and disregard for high-minded, capital-A art statements. It's an outlook that should resonate with artists and audiences in the Bay Area, accustomed as we are to the kindred working styles of a grand succession of pioneers from Bruce Conner, William T. Wiley and David

Ireland in the '60s and '70s to Stephanie Syjuco and Chris Sollars today.

Antiwar imagery

Orozco and colleagues José Kuri and Mónica Manzutto started their gallery in 1999 with a close-knit group of Mexican artists, including Damián Ortega, Dr. Lakra and others who have seen wide success. It has expanded to include key players in the international arena such as American Jimmie Durham, whose proudly pathetic "Arc de Triomphe for



Jessica Silverman Gallery photos

"Contract (SWMU 6-2)," by Allora and Calzadilla, is part of "From Here to There" at the Jessica Silverman Gallery in S.F.

From Here to There: 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Tuesdays-Saturdays. Through March 5. Jessica Silverman Gallery, 488 Ellis St., S.F. (415) 255-9508. www.jessicasilvermangallery.com.

Personal Use (London Version)," looking more like a makeshift security screening station, is the entrance for the Silverman show.

American/Cuban collaborators Allora and Calzadilla, who represented the United States in the 2011 Venice Biennale with the tough antiwar symbol of an overturned tank, here include a large, muddled photographic image of palm trees, unromantically titled "Contract (SWMU 6-2)"; it refers to the Puerto Rican island of Vieques, a controversial

bombing range that became a national wildlife refuge after the U.S. Navy was done with it.

A recent work by Haegue Yang, "Sonic Rotating Geometry Type E — Copper and Nickel Plated #46," is a fresh take on the Kinetic art of the mid-20th century, complete with amusingly, and not unpleasantly, jingling bells.

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