

Trendy spaces in Mission arts scene

Two may be a start of something, but three is a trend.

On Friday, Nov. 10, the quirky, scrappy San Francisco art gallery Et al. opened a new space, Et al. etc., at 2831 Mission St. That's right next door to the larger, more established Ratio 3, and around the corner from Capital. Together, the three galleries amount to a great reason to invest an hour of your art-time budget at the corner of 24th and Mission.

All three appear at first to be dripping with hip attitude. None includes the word "gallery" — or "art," for that matter — in its official name (Capital would ideally be written with a strike through the word, but that's not The Chronicle style). The facade of Ratio 3, which has been at 2831A Mission for years and now sublets space to the two others, is painted out in black; if the security gate is unlocked, the place is open. Capital is on an alley at 26 Lilac St.; alternatively, you can get there through a back door from Ratio 3.

Et al. etc., which closed its Minnesota Street Project space this year, is in a former tattoo parlor — a huge sign still hangs above the door proclaiming, "Walk-ins Welcome." The original Et al. has continued to operate in a Chinatown basement at 620 Kearny St. — pass through Union Cleaners and down the stairs at the back.

The nicest people run them all, however, and a brief conversation with the attendant — probably the owner — is part of the pleasure of a visit.

The first show at Et al. etc. is a lively one that upholds the gallery's tradition of curveballs thrown right through the strike zone. "Jam Session" presents childlike drawings by 78-year-old Betty Bailey, along with a charmingly aimless film by Johanna Billing.

Bailey's drawings are a glimpse into the golden years as seen through the eyes of a counterculture original. She and her husband, Clayton, run what they call the Bailey Art Museum in Crockett, where, according to Atlas Obscura, "junkbots and mud babies are the masterpieces." Scenes from a casino ("Playing the Slots," 2005) and from "Medical Marijuana

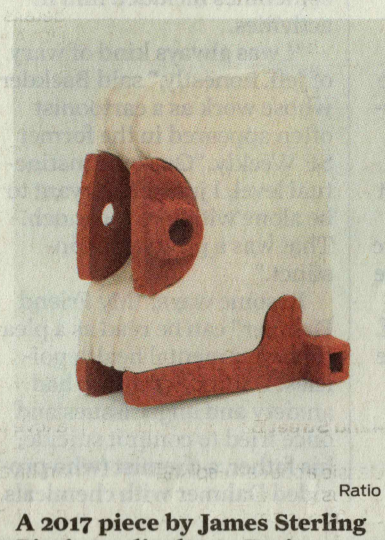


Michael Macor / The Chronicle

Above: Aaron Harbour and Jackie Im own the Et al. etc. gallery. Below left: Betty Bailey's 2005 "Playing the Slots" is on view.



Et al. etc.



A 2017 piece by James Sterling Pitt is on display at Ratio 3.

Ratio 3

Jam Session: Betty Bailey and Johanna Billing: Noon-5 p.m. Wednesdays-Saturdays (closed Nov. 23-25). Through Dec. 23. Free. Et al. etc., 2831 Mission St., S.F. (415) 269-4873. <http://etaletc.com>

Forms on Forms: James Sterling Pitt: 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Tuesdays-Saturdays. Through Dec. 22. Free. Ratio 3, 2831A Mission St., S.F. (415) 821-3371. www.ratio3.org

Raque Ford: My Biggest Fan: Noon-5 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays. Through Dec. 23. Free. Capital, 26 Lilac St., S.F. (415) 706-1786. www.capital.gallery

Manor" (2013) alternate with moments plucked from daytime TV or daily routine.

Billing's technically flawless "Pulheim Jam Session" (2015) is an unending video loop showing a world on the cusp of agriculture and industry, at the edge of the antique and the crisply contemporary. A pianist improvises an ethe-

real, halting melody. People in their cars are stalled on a country road, in a goodwilled version of the final scene of Jean-Luc Godard's "Week-end," then happily move on. We are destined to lives in a perpetual cycle, the film seems to say. And that's OK.

At Ratio 3, long polished shelves hold small, intricately

jigsawed plywood sculptures by James Sterling Pitt. Their ingenuity is too mature for them to be children's toys, but their charm is that they could almost be mistaken for such.

Capital is currently showing plastic cutouts by Raque Ford that update flower-child, pictorial graphics with a

touch of goth humor. One 2017 work has its title engraved into it: "I sold my soul but I swear I'm a sensible person."

Charles Desmarais is The San Francisco Chronicle's art critic. Email: cdesmarais@sfgchronicle.com Twitter: @Artguy1