

Art in America

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William Kentridge

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Charlotte Salomon

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cal, perfectly redundant twins that repeat a one-eyed view of nature. For depth, there are only the broken bits of hydrocal, which cohere at best around a punning use of the term "blue chip" and its promise of stability.

It's the same with *Two Seas*, a pair of photos of unbounded open water, as finely rippled as a drawing by Vija Celmins. On the floor nearby was *Sky Pile*, an untidy heap of bricks, seemingly fallen from a wall fractured at random, bits of mortar still attached. All are bathed in milk paint varnish, which renders them a ghostly gray, and gives to their evocation of violent demolition the same caught-breath hush as with Charles Ray's gray fiberglass cast of a crashed car.

The third set of images, *Double Float*, is a kind of fresco. Its two horizontally brushed rectangles of pale-blue milk paint, applied directly to the wall, could be either sea or sky or some other dreamy medium of weightless suspension. Juxtaposed for ballast—for gravity with a vengeance—was *Cement Shoes No. 1*, a pair of concrete-block brogans which rather heavily suggests a body disposed of gangland style, feet-first into the deep. The piece consists of two gray cement blocks cut neatly in half so the shapes of the two cast feet are visible. Also on view, near the gallery's entrance, was *Cement Shoes No. 2*, in which unbroken blocks are embedded with wax casts of legs cut off at the shins.

Humor is an important part of this work, though no single punch line serves. The implications are, in fact, a little obscure. Too much traffic with illusion can make you see double? The

material world is a killer? Perhaps Lemieux is simply saying that being in a body with your feet on the ground, and having a mental life, lead to the very different orders of visual experience that are both part of perception's daily business.

Blues, the last work in the show, can't easily be assigned a place in its neatly bifurcated domain. A hinged white box filled with plastic medicine bottles all cast in pigmented hydrocal, *Blues* is, as its name suggests, moody and offbeat. It skews the physical/sculptural vs. optical/pictorial axes that run through the exhibition by introducing a chemical twist: drugs, of course, often go in the body and come out the mind. What Lemieux seems to be hinting at is that although art works the same way, it's an unpredictable system, and most interesting when it balks.

—Nancy Princenthal

Yong Soon Min at Art in General

Yong Soon Min returns to New York with her special repertoire of symbolically charged materials that poetically evoke Korean history while dissecting Korean and Korean-American identity. Her new work is a complex weave of Asian diasporic reflection and memorialization replayed for us against a backdrop of geopolitical conflict and Cold War demystification.

Geohistorical reflections (lyrically enriched by images of what Min calls "Defining Moments") are at the core of her work, and are best expressed in *The Bridge of No Return*, a vividly metaphoric sculptural installation that symbolically invokes a



Annette Lemieux: Installation view of exhibition, 1998; at David McKee.

historic prisoner exchange at the end of the Korean War. In this incident, captured soldiers on both sides were given the option of going to the North or South—with no hope of ever returning to the other. A freestanding, fence-like 8-foot-high structure of aluminum struts and wire mesh, the work is a snaking "S" form that invokes the spiritual concept of yin and yang. Its physical transparency allows the viewer to symbolically and simultaneously encounter the inextricably linked experiences of North and South Korea. It's a symbol of male and female, of night and day, of the interdependence of human experience. But it also references the split between people (the yin-yang icon is on the South Korean flag) as well as the cultural and metaphysical separation of Korean immigrants (and their hyphenated offspring) from the Korean nation and its bifurcated history.

The fence-like form is covered in culturally charged language fragments printed on magnetic strips and is metaphorically divided into night and day by a horizontal row of clock faces hung on both sides. Photographic images on each clock face represent a series of national Korean "defining moments." The work is ultimately a three-dimensional cultural portrait of pan-Korean sensibility and Min attempts to somehow reconcile her relationship to both the totalitarian North and the crisis-ridden, free-market republic in the South.

Min's work beautifully monitors and represents the inner life of the immigrant/expatriate. An immigrant herself, she remains focused on the intricate connections between national culture, the poetics of identity and the

unpredictable, hybrid reconfigurations of the individual life caught in forced cultural dispersion.

—Calvin Reid

Daniel Reynolds at Deven Golden

Daniel Reynolds's show was based on an intriguing attempt to remove the artist's hand from the work of art. His abstract paintings consist of highly articulated forms and subtle color tones; yet these attributes, in particular the paintings' wonderfully complex visual structures, result from such impersonal processes as gravity and chemical interactions.

Reynolds does not so much make a painting as set up conditions in which a painting is made. In conversation, he describes his painting process with the detachment of a scientist. He portrays an automatic procedure, in which he mixes a small amount of enamel color into polyurethane (a synthetic often used as a finish for floors) and then pours the material onto a piece of plywood laid flat. Gravity takes over and flow patterns develop without direct intervention on his part. He may repeat the procedure during the brief period when a coat is neither too dry nor too wet, resulting in interesting interactions between the different layers.

As Reynolds comments, these works "create nature out of plastic." The paintings demonstrate nature's capacity to produce stunningly complex, and seemingly ordered, visual form. In one large enamel-on-board work from 1997, the translucent colors appear to have been laid down in palimpsest fashion; the rounded shapes of grayish blues, light

Yong Soon Min: Installation view of *The Bridge of No Return*, 1997; at Art in General.

