

MOD: TRICIA COLLINS CONTEMPORARY ART • NEW YORK, NEW YORK

This fall at Tricia Collins Contemporary Art, a group exhibition entitled "MOD" cracked open the season. One reviewer purportedly inquired if "MOD" was an acronym: "MOD" as an acronym exists only in the most remote sense that an acronym is a word composed of letters standing for full words. MOD in reality means the fashion/aesthetic movement of the '60s & early '70s announced in fashion, music, art, and design. "MOD" in Tricia Collins' curatorial hands generates a tongue in cheek reference to the MOD of Modernism—as well as Vespas, the chic of Russ Meyer films, black/white/red checked couture, and Marianne Faithful. This exhibit is composed of historical evidence, contemporary clues, and whimsical plays off of this notion of MOD in art.

A couple of years ago when Tricia Collins was interviewed for *zingmagazine* one of her most compelling statements was "any individual can participate in history". The moment of history, is after all, composed of the collective moves of individuals. It appears that in "MOD", history is participating in individuals. Motifs such as the checked patterns of fabric are recycled into a touching/funny portrait of two girls on a Mondrian gameboard by veteran Swedish artist Lena Cronqvist. On the same wall is a small work by Jeffrey Hargrave addressing issues of race and the composition of an ethnic identity, backgrounded by comics, and forefronted with polka-dotted design do-rag on his own comic figure. Flowers, in the form of daisies, such as Bing Wright's elegant tower of not-quite, but almost, a cubist daisy compendium, or Cynthia Roberts' not-so-real black daisies on a star studded silver field, fields of flowers as in Paul Steketee's SNIFF, an ultra-hip but sweetly mysterious color print, or design-crazed flora of Lee Stoetzel's arabic interior, figure prominently, not to forget Claire Morris's intimate encapsulation of a *House and Garden* version of "MOD". Vik Muniz's VIOLETS (AFTER HOKUSAI) continue the flower power through a careful manipulation of perception that we've come to expect from this artist: the violets are elegantly figured in wire, then photographed—minimal and expansive at the same time. The mood of "MOD" is captured in Veronica de Luca's spin painting (a noble red polyurethane on canvas, carefully modulated with chopsticks), Walter Robinson's vintage bullseye spin painting, Lucas Reiner's luscious scribbled painting, Layla Lozano's UNDULATE with its swimmingly sexy 'n light legs evolving out of a clearly design oriented paper construct, and the mood is also identified in James Hyde's ENTAIL—a raunchy, overstuffed pillow-like piece with vinyl tape creating a very primary color pattern, akin to the reduced glamour of "MOD" in fashion and design. Transfiguring the black/white/red aesthetic into contemporary art terms are Cordy Ryman's beautiful encaustic and wood construction, and Mark Milloff's unearthing of color through a curious burial in layers of almost sculptural paint. Warren Isensee's GURU RUG is an understated triumph where art absorbs the mechanics of design and science, while completely subverting them to the higher demands of art. Another way in which these elements are brought to the fore in this show is through a kind of documentation of a time. Devon Dikeou's BLOW features a found-photograph of Mick Jagger, delicately spiced with cocaine in the cracked glass of the frame; Lance Horenbein's GALAXY 66 portrays the car as state of mind, a verdant relic recalling the day when. Tim Vega just plain does it, with his grafittied stairs. Finally, Steve Mumford takes a car and blows it apart into rays of turquoise and purple, almost as if under water, creating a slo-mo blast.

The curatorial orchestration brings these players together to bounce the historical moments off one another. While every work in this show can in some way be seen as derivative, we exist in a moment where the new depends on the old, instead of countering it at every turn. "MOD" is us through those moments, not now versus the nostalgic verity of then.

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"Real is a Feeling" at Gildar Gallery

by michael paglia

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To coincide with Denver's "Month of Photography"--a biennial event--Adam Gildar, director of his eponymous Gildar Gallery, organized "Real is a Feeling," a group show about reproduction and subjective perception, dominated by photo-based pieces. The exhibition starts off with Travis Egedy's nearly three dozen framed snapshot-style color prints, mostly depicting young people on the edge--hanging out on the street, at punk rock concerts, and even at the Occupy Wall Street demonstration in Zuccotti Park. This show-within-a-show reveals that Egedy is clearly attracted to the outrageous and to the threat of violence.

The other artists included, unlike Egedy, create conceptual work. There are the paired digital prints of Google searches by Mario Zoots who typed in "Love me" and "Show me" and then took screenshots of the possible topics the search engine produced at a specific time on a particular day. Adam Milner also uses computer images, in his case, presenting disembodied hands floating above memory foam impressions of them. The found and altered images were taken from mattress ads on the web. Detached from their original purpose, they convey an unmistakable otherworldly quality. Milner also created the work titled *More More More*, which features a blanket printed with the image of another blanket. Displayed on a plinth, it's hard to distinguish the actual wrinkles from the images of them. Fooling the eye is also what a trio of Lee Stoetzel black-and-white prints are about. At first glance they look like familiar scenes--the Hollywood sign, the Brooklyn Bridge, and the Pyramids. But they are actually models Stoetzel created from the contents of McDonald's "Happy Meals." Pop cultural references likewise appear in Adam Stamp's salutes to Colorado and California, in both cases mashing up travel icons with other subtle symbols to convey the character of the respective states.

There are only a couple three-dimensional pieces, counting **Devon Dikeou's** found photo of Mick Jagger which had been used as a cocaine tray, and the dead-on--and spectacular--rendition of a Gucci bag done in patinated bronze by Ian Stoufer revealing the artist's fanatical attention to detail. Photographs by Margaret Lee appropriating art by others; a minimalist aerial landscape by Dmitri Obergfell; a storybook nude by Kristen Hatgi Sink; a portrait of a child beauty queen by Susan Anderson; and a pair of long exposures by Shannon Taggart set in a religious community filled out this intriguing show.