

decomplexion

decomplexion, an exhibition of 5 artists who live and work in Los Angeles, will be opening at 6pm June 26th at Chelsea's Silvershed. The work is comprised of drawings (Dave Hughes, Michael Coughlan, Amy Russell), pastels (Michael Coughlan), photographs (Tom Simpson) and a site-specific installation (Kent & Kevin Young), selected and arranged by Miles Coolidge.

As befits an exhibition in an artist-run space, this show is more explicit about the conditions of production than are most group shows found in galleries and museums. A unifying thread that runs through the pieces selected is a reflexive tendency to consider the vantage point from which the artistic gesture is articulated. This is reflected in the insistence on materiality inherent in Kent and Kevin Young's wall-based installation, which uses sculptural components- various pieces of fabric and plywood- in the service of a formal language derived from painterly abstraction.

David Hughes' contribution, a boxed set of drawings and paintings, also uses plywood, but this time as the material basis of his designs rendered in pointedly diverse media- ballpoint pen, sharpie, acrylic among others. Sidestepping the dumbed-down interactivity of art that invites viewers to perform specific actions, these pieces (literally, pieces of Luon) ask only to be handled in order to be seen, bringing the viewers' experience that much closer to the maker's.

Michael Coughlan's and Tom Simpson's work relies on more explicitly referential strategies to address their condition. Coughlan's drawings and pastels use cartoon tropes to ambiguously satirical effect, simultaneously parading and mocking their ambition to traditional forms of artistic success. Simpson's photographs, on the other hand, rely on a specific, external source for their content- Brecht and Weill's *Mahogony*, and it's W.H. Auden translation. Here the problematically performative gesture of citizens' protest from the beginning of the play is recreated through the construction and photographic representation of fake protest signs from a non-existent production's version of the hilariously implausible fictional demonstration. The photographs sidestep their traditional testimonial role through being embroiled in this quasi-literary conceit, operating more as object-like vitrines for content than as windows into the space we live in.

Excerpted from her *Snapfolio* series, Amy Russell's drawings also function as transcriptions from another medium- in this case an album of photographs from her father's family. Instances of men and dogs performing for the camera are highlighted through the choice to not render the background. The artist's traditional prerogative of inflection is reclaimed as ironic commentary.

.....

Silvershed is an artist-run, indoor-outdoor contemporary art project-space in New York started by Patrick Meagher, Oliver Lanz and Yunhee Min in Spring 2008 and is a sponsored project of Fractured Atlas, a non-profit arts service organization.

SILVERSHED 119 W 25 PH NY, NY 10001 TEL: 646 322 3324 WWW@THESILVERSHED.ORG