

New Wine New Bottle
June 13-August 30, 2014

Fleisher/Ollman's second exhibition in its recently opened Arch Street location showcases new work by a selection of gallery artists. While the exhibition highlights a wide range of distinct practices, when seen collectively surprising resonances and inter-relationships come forward, putting into relief ideas such as the urban landscape, mythologies of popular culture, art and narrative, contemporary abstraction, and the primordial.

The Dufala Brothers, renowned for their comprehensive assault on all media, engage ideas of consumption, re-purposing, and use-value, particularly evident in their sculpture and drawing. Their work is inflected by a certain Philadelphia sensibility, where rusting industrial landscapes serve as inspiration for reimagining the idea of the ruin. Dan Murphy has been similarly inspired by what we might call the urban forlorn, training his lens on both the intentional and accidental manner in which urban environments offer themselves to be read—whether it be through graffiti, the layered residue of old posters on the surfaces of cities or the aesthetic possibilities of trash heaps.

Nick Paparone and Anthony Campuzano, whose work is seemingly unrelated at first glance, both explore various mythologies of popular culture. Paparone makes images and objects—consumer goods, really—that suggest the lifestyles of the branded elite. Paparone's industrially fabricated and commercially printed art works demonstrate how material desire is tailored for particular consumers, but also reveals the limitations of lifestyle marketing since individual taste can never be neatly contained. Campuzano's drawings speak to this very conundrum inherent in consumer society. The reception of the media's messages is never a one-way street and receivers like Campuzano interpret them in highly idiosyncratic and creative ways. Campuzano appropriates newspaper headlines, celebrity gossip, song lyrics and other texts and transforms mass culture into a personalized world of handcopied letterforms, intensely labored surfaces, and bold colors.

Like Campuzano, Jennifer Levonian is attuned to how narratives form our identities, even if the stories that interest her are often mundane. Working in cut-paper animation, Levonian explores everyday life by focusing on events that often go unnoticed, transforming them into humorously bizarre narratives. For this exhibition, Levonian presents an animation originally commissioned by Bryn Mawr College, entitled *The Poetry Winner*, a tale of a college student's path from award-winning poet to retail clerk in her hometown supermarket during summer break.

Isaac Lin, Kate Abercrombie, Mark Mahosky, and Chris Corales each have their own particular take on abstraction, but none are standard-bearers for abstraction with a capital "A." They, in fact, might not even consider themselves "abstract artists" at all. Lin explores the realm where representation and buzzing abstraction meet. He invents calligraphic scripts and uses colorful patterns that suggest saturation, complexity, harmony, and the ineffability of language. Kate Abercrombie reinvigorates Pattern and Decoration painting of the 1970s by way of Cubism and Islamic art. In work presented in

New Wine New Bottle, Abercrombie investigates the abstract compositional possibilities of presenting personally significant objects (owned by her late aunt) from multiple perspectives. Abercrombie, thus, suggests an omniscient viewer capable of seeing the world from a range of vantage points, as shapes coalesce into recognizable objects and then dissolve back into abstract forms. Mark Mahosky, who last summer showed a group of Civil War battlefield drawings in the Anthony Campuzano-curated exhibition *A Complete Die, Etc.* at Fleisher/Ollman, returns to the gallery with a presentation of striped, abstract paintings on panel and newspaper. Their raw imprecision serves as a foil to Abercrombie and Lin's more exacting methods. Mahosky's choice of newspaper as surface for painting is his way of bringing abstraction back into the world, which, according to the artist, has been separated from the realms of the social and political for far too long. Chris Corales' collages upend our usual assumptions about the medium as a more-is-more strategy by creating minimal works that underline a kinship with abstract painting. Corales scavenges for discarded paper, incorporating a range of materials including record sleeves, shopping bags, produce boxes, and book covers in the pursuit of a formal elegance that straddles the abject and the refined.

Tristin Lowe and Paul Swenbeck share a certain Yankee ingenuity as tinkerers/artists and also have a mutual interest in the primordial, myth, and the occult. Swenbeck presents new sculptures that combine his signature ceramics with wire and magnet spine-like forms that suggest animal/plant hybrids, a mutation from the evolutionary past. Lowe has long pursued a certain life-giving rationale in his art making, breathing life into mythological and cartoonish inflatable sculptures like the cyclops *Alice*, the pink elephant *Dumbo*, and the great white whale *Mocha Dick*. In *New Wine New Bottle*, Lowe examines the origins of life itself with a neon comet. Once considered heresy, scientists are now embracing the idea that life on earth originated from organic molecules inside a comet's icy core which were released into Earth's primordial seas billions of years ago upon impact with our planet.