

Salon No.7

Works 222 – 247
Nov 13 – Jan 22, 2010 –11



Artists

Ricky Allman
Alejandro Diaz
Matthew Heller
Sean Higgins
Janet Jones
Steve Kim
Joseph Kohnke
Peter Lograsso
Nick Van Woert

Marine is pleased to announce Salon No. 7, Works 222 – 247, presenting the work of Ricky Allman, Alejandro Diaz, Matthew Heller, Sean Higgins, Janet Jones, Steve Kim, Joseph Kohnke, Peter Lograsso and Nick Van Woert. Salon No. 7 explores the sublime within the contemporary or post apocalyptic landscape. This exploration of a new futurism, both real and imaginary, could also be seen as the contemporary or “techno” sublime. The idea for the show was inspired by and grew outwards from the work of Canadian artist Janet Jones. The artist explains, “Extreme contrasts of light and dark evoke the sublime, not the sublime in nature as seen in the work of the 19th century painters such as Friedrich and Turner. Now that nature has been observed, measured, subjected to experiments and tabulated as part of the Enlightenment Project, it may retain its beauty but in our arrogance we assume that it has lost much of its sense of terror intrinsic to the sublime. In our ability to evoke this emotion, ‘god’ has been replaced by man. Within the contemporary world, man’s technological achievements have become the new sublime, the techno-sublime. But in assuming this role of ‘god’ have we become Mary Shelley’s Dr Frankenstein?”

Ricky Allman’s recent paintings address the notion of encountering moments of hope and idealism in a post-modern and cynical society obsessed with irony

and relativism. His mix of dreamy futurism and bold expressionism evokes contradictory worlds of order and chaos with a sometimes-sinister beauty.

Alejandro Diaz uses humor to critique cultural stereotypes, socio-political economies and the contemporary art world. His sharp yet accessible, seemingly irreverent neon sculptures, belie layers of meaning. Matthew Heller’s paintings explore the complexities of our universe through intuitive and abstract ideas. Figures are often connected by a seemingly nonsensical geometrical interface, imperfect yet attempting to organize itself.

Sean Higgins’ bold exploration of real and imagined landscapes probes notions of space and time. Photographs, distorted or enhanced, have the power to challenge reality, provoke memories and shape perceptions of the future.

Janet Jones’ paintings explore contemporary notions of the sublime, both real and virtual. They also tackle ideas of the gaze and space within feminist geography and particularly our contemporary globalized environment.

Steve Kim paints everyday scenes from his life in an attempt to transform visual experience. Using photographs of seemingly mundane events, Kim

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renders them almost unrecognizable by employing a skewed perspective, leaving large sections of canvas blank and morphing everyday events into something uncanny and unsettling.

Joseph Kohnke's kinetic sculptures combine found objects, motors, and human interaction. His work explores the expressive shift that can occur when an inanimate object is given the characteristics of life. Kohnke has made plants wilt when they sense the viewer's presence, CPR masks that blow eerily into unmanned harmonicas, and lunchbox missile silos, among many others.

Peter Lograsso's work makes a poignant comment on the bleak human interactions often explored in dystopian, sci-fi literature, yet somehow seems all too relevant in present day Los Angeles. His photographs possess a raw, often bleak, yet disarming beauty.

Nick Van Woert's captivating sculptures simultaneously criticize and surrender to the built environment and our tendency towards territorial and material expansion. Referencing the history of art and architecture, Van Woert's anachronistic use of material and form highlights meaning and discusses the timelessness in sculpture and art in general.

In the Bedroom

Marine is pleased to present the second show in our solo project space "If you wait long enough everything changes", an installation by Jordan Swerdloff. Swerdloff's giant elephant sculpted from PVC and plastic wrap was inspired by a Carl Sagan quote, explaining that all things, at some point or another, are bound to change through natural processes or artificial factors brought about by human activity. The installation explores the obvious manipulation of space in relation to the presence of a large object occupying that space. While the materiality of the work is important and immediately experienced, intangible and underlying readings unfold and become evident, readings such as the literal reference to the saying "the elephant in the room" to questions regarding our place in the natural world. When these forces intersect, the effects and potential results are at once curious, inspiring and frightening. Swerdloff is intrigued by the ever-blurring boundary between 'natural' and 'artificial' brought about by the human capacity and drive to advance technology and reshape the environment.

Jordan Swerdloff is a recent BFA graduate of Art Center College of Art and Design, Pasadena. He also has a BA in Art History from Cornell University. He lives and works in Los Angeles.

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