

## Hybrids and Other Sorts

June 7-July 27

BECA Gallery

The current show at BECA Gallery is all about context, whether decontextualized, recontextualized, or somewhere in between. The name of the gallery is an acronym for "Bridge for Emerging Contemporary Art," and their mission of representing lesser-known local artists, international artists, and artwork that is atypical for the New Orleans gallery scene, is filling a significant void in the community.

The show, entitled "Hybrids and Other Sorts," was a national open call for innovative work of different mediums, relating in forms of hybrid, collage, and layering.

A series of three paintings, by artist Kathy Sautter, boldly greet visitors— a layering of acrylic colors and archival transfer images is complemented by varying methods of application of paint and texture. These three paintings clearly establish the intent of the show and the possibilities for interpreting the hybrid theme/catalyst.

Co-directors Kurt Schlough and Melissa Roberts curated the work of these nine artists through a blind jury process. The winner of the solo-show award, Cary Horton, was selected for a series of photographs that combine digital techniques with film to create surreal montages. The five images together are shockingly simple but create a sense of contrast; the process of creating these images layers meaning of creation into the overall message of the finished pieces.

The show has sculpture, installation, painting, mixed-media collage, and photography. It truly presents a cut through the current art scene, and refreshingly exhibits a juxtaposition of medium, method, and style.

Simple, unframed collages by Anne Beck are unassumingly complex. The solvent prints are layered generously through subtractive and additive processes, and layered also in subject— one presents man-made urban figures imposed on a landscape of what appears to be sea lions. Another shows a streetlight pole that terminates not in a streetlight but in a tree canopy of leaves— a true hybrid of contemporary culture, urban versus suburban, man-made versus natural.

The diversity of medium and content of the work of these nine artists is woven consistently through a common narrative— the process of creating a layered artwork, whether of one medium or many, additive or subtractive, hand-crafted or digitally composed, presents itself in the final process so that the layering of ideas proliferates the layered artworks.

The group-show provided access to artists and artwork in a context which was complimentary to each of the pieces shown. I found the show rich and was pleasantly surprised by the diversity of the work selected for the exhibition. The gallery also houses the studio space of co-director Kurt Schlough, presenting another layer of process-to-product to gallery visitors. The show will run until July 27<sup>th</sup>, and will have a reception on Saturday, July 5<sup>th</sup>. *Alison Popper*



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