

Of Intricacy

Nena Amsler

Daniel Brodo

April Durham

Jacqueline Freedman

Erika Lizée

Cielo Pessione O'Brien

Joseph Santarromana

Elizabeth Saveri

Hoang Vu

● 'Of Intricacy'

● On "of Intricacy" essay Page 1-5

● Nena Amsler Page 8-9

● Daniel Brodo Page 10-11

● April Durham Page 12-13

Table Of Contents

● Jacqueline Freedman Page 14-15

● Erika Lizée Page 16-17

● Cielo Pessione O'Brien Page 18-19

● Acknowledgements Page 27

● Joseph Santarromana Page 20-21

● Elizabeth Saveri Page 22-23

● Hoang Vu Page 24-25

'Of Intricacy'

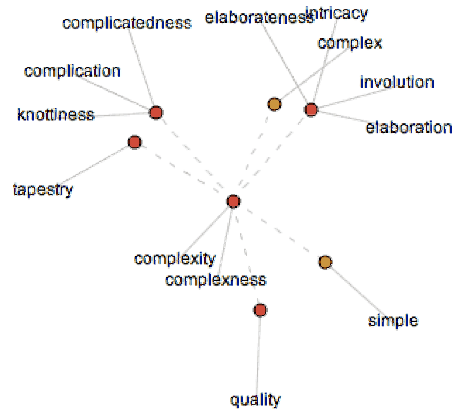
● n

"of Intricacy" announces the intent to foreground the type of visible residue that is associated with the physical notion of the intricate – in the sense of the complex and, even the entangled or at least, the densely complicated. A painting on which hours have been spent, patiently extending the same color meticulously over the entire surface, is also an intricate operation; but the resulting monochrome is appreciated precisely for an apparent lack of chromatic or textural differentiation. The eye, unable to discern visible differences, draws the mind into a thoughtful kind of memory loop in which perception is stilled and reason is engaged. The eye cedes in large measure to the mind's eye. "of Intricacy" concentrates on artists and artworks where the labor intensity and visible elaboration of work tangibly and perceptually activates the viewer's fascination about how these things came to be. Meticulous activities are registered not as a lack, but as an abundance. The thought provoking qualities of this work is a counterpoint to the issues that stem solely from looking. The eye, lost in a myriad of visual meanders, tracks and re-tracks the territory, unable to fully reason out its physicality. The haptic, our complex sense of touch, with which we measure the space around us, is meshed inextricably with thought, allowing neither to entirely subdue the other.

This is an exhibition of artists who all make art that is involved with how things are built up through accretion and additions. Rather than privileging the idea(s) at the source of their work, they have allowed the physical results to leave us dumbstruck, without a language or grammar to precisely describe what is there. I looked for artists whose work was compelling and diverse in their approaches and results to this matter, and worked with them on the specific exhibition site. This gallery, ex-Library/historical landmark and multi-use facility is rife with the kind of the contextual contamination that intricacy thrives upon.

"of Intricacy" exhibits works by Nena Amsler, Daniel Brodo, April Durham, Jacqueline Freedman, Erika Lizée, Cielo Pessione O'Brien, Joseph Santarromana, Elizabeth Saveri and Hoang Vu. Collectively, in this forum, their philosophy is distant from a reductive or minimalist philosophy. Their efforts are highly involved, utterly personal and persistently individualistic. Likewise their forays into intricacy represent a moment in time, not a movement over time. I appreciate them allowing me to 'mis-represent' them as a group, with the sole intent of watching my elaborate mes-en-scene collapse happily into their far more elusive (ungraspable) and ineffable specific artworks.

On — ‘Of Intricacy’



The minute, acrylic paint panels or layered sheaves or material chunks that Nena Amsler meticulously creates conjure up imagery found under microscopes or in exotic geological samplers. She describes her own work “as an exploration of disobedience, where the acrylic paint is disobediently applied by being poured, dried and peeled, then cut. These “paintings” are disobedient in bending and stretching the medium.” These strangely wrought fragments and miniatures abound in possibilities for mnemonic slippage. The semantic haloes range from surrealism to digital photography to the history of abstract painting. Nena’s controlled disobedience regarding paint and its “plasticity” opens the door on multiple interpretations for the viewer to wrestle with. Simultaneously, the process she has instigated leaves lavish, yet elliptical, sets of colored particle networks in its wake.

In the elaborate art making systems that Daniel Brodo has been developing over time, the materials he arranges or assembles or collects end up coalescing into three-dimensional things that are a direct expression of the system that produced them. He takes up unexpected cast-offs like cigarettes, bamboo skewers, sugar cubes or the numerical relationships gleaned from lotto tickets and puts them into rule bound games from which an object or objects emerge. He describes his own procedure as “akin to the rules of a game. That is, I decide on certain parameters for ‘moves’ (how materials are to be assembled) and I repeat them until a certain goal is reached, usually a minimum size.” The works left behind as a kind of trace of his laboriously evolved game systems are unpredictable, entrancing, mysteriously complicated. His marvelously over-extended reasoning begets extremely quirky residues.

The maps without legends that April Durham has been crafting over the years comprise, time and again, image fragments, writing and an almost diagrammatic flow. Her tales speak in tongues, they are oblique, multi layered and often rambling, polyglot sagas into which the viewer must dive headfirst if they want to make sense of them. Vice versa, the viewer can simply skim their variegated surfaces and enjoy the kaleidoscopic array of gestures and glyphs as they swirl on the uppermost layer of the work in saturated color and emphatic design. April has written that she has modeled her work on the "overlapping arrangement of a fugue, where multiple voices speak as through a type of malfunctioning harmonium. Accumulation of information is presented with subtle demand for deciphering that is both intense and absurdly humorous." Collaging her desire for absolutes to the peregrinations of a diarist has spanned results of epic proportions.

Jacqueline Freedman's art functions within a physical domain that is without scalar constants. Either unimaginably large or small, the gestures they register move both at the protracted pace of a microscopic creature and accelerated velocity of a celestial body. Mark-making units are repeated, both in linear aggregations or in slab-like amassing, and ghostly deposits of white trails laid over deeply colored surfaces pull the viewer into her abstract orbits. Jacqueline has said of her work that the "images I make are also reminiscent of an idea of fractals, where a pattern is repeated to describe perpetual change; movement that is not fixed." Working to give form to a vision in which images solidify and are circumscribed by a pause, even as they undergo perpetual transformation, she expresses disquietude about the measure of time.

The haunting iteration of abstract principles in the work of Erika Lizée makes for a disconcerting experience; disconcerting, in the sense of needing re-orientation and scrutiny. Her coincidentally thick (deep and illusionary) and thin (flat and material) drawn out surfaces place the viewer in an oddly satisfying quandary. The enigma of how abstraction delves into the visible to extract that which is beyond visible is the source of fascination we have with it. As Erika herself has noted "the ethereal and abstract elements represent our thoughts and intentions, as well as a sense of the unknown. Vacillating between representation and abstraction, this work captures transformational moments of the unseen interplay between these two spheres." Undoing the compartmentalization of self-induced perceptual and conceptual thresholds is the goal of art. Her ethereal sorties into this densely stratified territory beguile and challenge.

on — ‘Of Intricacy’

The complexity of line-work inter-woven into the artwork of Cielo Pessione O’Brien extends out from activities situated in the everyday and moves forward to the reverie of dreams, diurnal and nocturnal. The material fascination of seeing strand after strand being placed in braids, knots, plaits and tresses, coupled with the quasi physical recognition of how the physical worrying of this material adds up to a greater whole, leaves the viewer with a very specific sense of fulfillment. As Cielo has herself noted, “artwork can also pay homage to the ordinary and the everyday, on the condition that it rigorously require the viewer to untangle themselves and move beyond the usual condition of the ordinary and everyday.” The warp and woof of horizontal and vertical layers in a loom or in cloth has a precise correspondence to yes and to no, to the pull of gravity and our resistance to that pull. Herein lies the profoundness of her connection to this oft-overlooked and vital source.

In the ensembles of small works by Elizabeth Saveri, images of normal household things are moved from their usual context and isolated within frames taken from the arts. Painted with the tender care of the miniaturist, these fragments from the kitchen or the garden or the bedroom beckon for close examination and focused attention. They provide the viewer with a chance to notice the neglected. The luxury of her pausing, perusing and painting the worn edges of things that are simply taken for granted is done without excessive pity or nostalgia. She herself has written that the, “even though the objects painted are mundane objects, they take on importance and memorialize a certain moment in...life.” Overlooking can either mean failing to notice something or to look at something from above, more expansively. Her unassuming collections of visual aphorisms draw us into the subterranean complexities of the mundane.

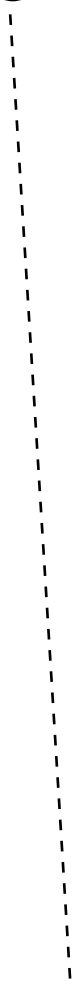
The conceptual, sequential and (most recently) digital play at work in the art of Joseph Santarromana has meant that the forms of his work have undergone transformation together with the details of his ruminations. Constant to the otherwise shifting parameters has been an autobiographical or even pseudo-autobiographical intent. Whether he was morphing his portrait digitally with that of all those he knows (distant and near) or creating an alter-ego identity as a fragmented body of projected images, he has investigated the complexity of identity. As he has himself observed, "the focus of many of my works is on the relationships of superimposed Ideas / concepts on innate feelings / beliefs that guide the viewers gaze (both outwardly and inwardly)." Culled from his abiding interest in media and based in his work on representation in the media arts, he has poised the question for the viewer of how we structure our perception of and more profoundly how we empathically participate in the creation of the world around us.

The work of Hoang Vu alternately navigates between two and three dimensions as he creates patterns of different types. By juxtaposing and overlapping shapes in painting or by knotting, weaving and the placing coats of thin acrylic paint "skin" over stiff wire, he creates these works of forms and patterns. In turn, the viewer pinpoints sentiment in his forms of play. Whether it is a distant echo or more tangible reference, the work is never far from the body and its accumulated physical history. The memory inhabiting his work overall addresses the complications of enduring. The self-evident stability of the sculpture, in particular, is bracketed by a sense of vulnerability and even a hint of mortality. As he has written of his work, "the...focus alternates between these competing approaches until eventually the organic fragility fuses with the geometric stability." He fashions a way out for us, establishing a set of cyclical incarnations through which entropy is encountered and ultimately overpowered.

~John O'Brien



 **Of Intricacy**



‘Of Intricacy’

Installation View



Installation title: “**Para-site**”
Acrylic paint
2008

Nena Amsler



"SPUME" (2008)
3" x 2" x 1/2"
acrylic paint



"GIBBOSITY" (2008)
2 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1/2"
acrylic paint

was born in Zürich, Switzerland.

She currently lives in Pasadena and works in LA.

She is a painter inspired by the sculptural potential of paint. She has exhibited her work in California, New York, Canada, Austria, Belarus and Switzerland.

She runs HAUS, a contemporary art galley in Pasadena, with her husband, William Rabe.

Installation View



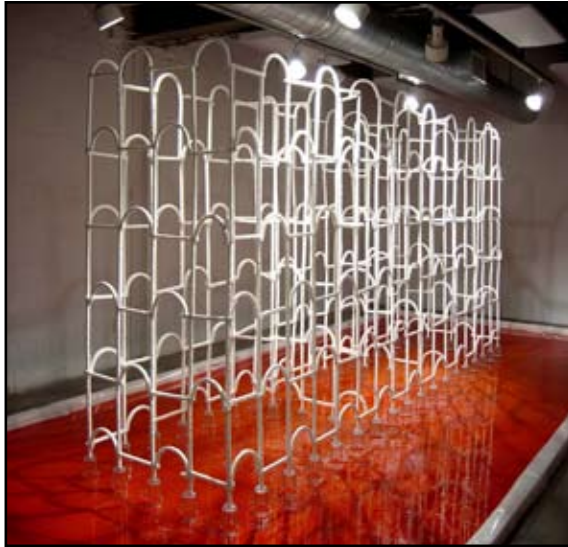
From left to right:
Tri-Hexahedron Cluster- Perfect/Distorted, 2008
Bristol, pencil (metal armatures)



Cube Cluster- Perfect/Distorted, 2008
Bristol, pencil (metal armatures)

Studio Notes, 2008
Pen and pencil on paper, bristol, inkjet prints, lottery tickets.

Daniel Brodo -----



"STRUCTURE OVER RED POOL" (2005)
sugar cubes, icing, Kool Aid, drinking glasses, wood, plastic
7 1/2' x 15' x 8'



"SUGAR CITY" (2004) detail
sugar cubes, icing, Kool Aid, plastic cups
dimensions variable

was born in Ottawa, Canada

He currently lives in Hollywood, California.

He works primarily in sculpture and installation with media that varies from sugar cubes to terra cotta.

'Of Intricacy'

Installation View



"Glosso Lalia in Hyperbole (from RW Emerson's Notes on Holiday)" 2007
Graphite, colored pencil, markers, collage elements, gold frames on paper.

April Durham -----



“Chromophobic Diaspora in G” 2005
graphite, ink, colored pencil, collage elements on paper with text on vellum (verso). Installed size varies.



“When R.W. Emerson Goes on Holiday to Visit Tide Pools and Crop Circles” 2006
graphite, ink, watercolor, charcoal, colored pencil, oil stick, and collage elements on newsprint. Installed size varies.

was born in Los Angeles and she currently lives and works between Riverside and Los Angeles, CA. She is an artist who writes and draws. She was an Artist in Residence (2003-2004) at Beyond Baroque in Venice, CA and recently she founded and directs the Small Wonder Foundation for Art and Literature in Riverside, CA.

'Of Intricacy'

Installation view



"infinite/finite?" 2008
79" x 75"
White pencil on black paper

Jacqueline Freedman -----



"INSIDE SPACE" 2007
23" x 32"
rapidograph and white ink on hand made paper



"Knit/Pearl" 2007
23" x 32"
rapidograph and white ink on hand made paper

was born in Washington D.C. and has lived in New York City and Boston. Currently living in Los Angeles, she works with drawing, painting and mixed media. She exhibits in Los Angeles and has also exhibited in Boston, Philadelphia and Ireland. She is an Adjunct Professor of Art History and Film Appreciation at Los Angeles Harbor College.

'Of Intricacy'

Installation view



"it's possibly all in your heads" 2008
Graphite drawings

Erika Lizée



“Together our intentions grow stronger” 2008
graphite on paper



“Developing clarity in this visualization” 2007
graphite on paper

was born in Chicago, Illinois and currently lives in West Hills, CA.
Her work includes drawing, painting and installation. She received her MFA in 2007 from CSU-Northridge and has been exhibiting her work in the Los Angeles area.

Installation view



“Seneca Docet” 2008
Acrylic paint, leather, straw, gesso and nails



“Quotidie” 2008
Wool, cotton, silk, linen, acrylic yarn, glass, plastic, kitchen knives.



“Pocket Mantra n.4” (wearable art work), 2007
cotton, linen, metallic, silver, acrylic, vintage tissue



“It will come to pass” (wearable art work), 2004
cotton, glass, hematite, wood, ceramic

was born in Rome, Italy.

Currently lives and works between Los Angeles (California) and Umbria (Italy).

After finishing her degree in art at the Liceo Artistico, she completed her University studies with a doctorate in Modern Literature at the Sapienza University of Rome.

She works in the visual arts (fiber arts, installation and printmaking) and works with performance, in both traditional and experimental settings.

Installation view



“Vie in Brown” 2008
C-Print, 42” x 65”

“Joseph in Ochre” 2008
Digital print, 42” x 65”

Joseph Santarromana



"Genesh", 2007
digital Print, 15"x 24"



"Gongyo", 2005
video installation: LCD monitors, fish, chair,
VR glasses

was born in San Juan, Rizal in the Philippines.
Currently lives and works in Los Angeles, CA.
Joseph is a media based artist working primarily in single channel
video, video installations and digital imaging.

Installation view



"Domestic Flow" 2005
44 framed watercolors on paper

Elizabeth Saveri



"Portraits of Trash in my Neighborhood", (detail) 2005
framed watercolor on paper, 6" x 8".



"Portraits of Trash in my Neighborhood", (detail), 2005
framed watercolor on paper, 6" x 8"

was born in San Francisco, CA.

Currently lives and works in Los Angeles, CA.

She is an artist who paints and draws and her work has recently been exhibited in Chicago, New York City and Los Angeles.

Installation view

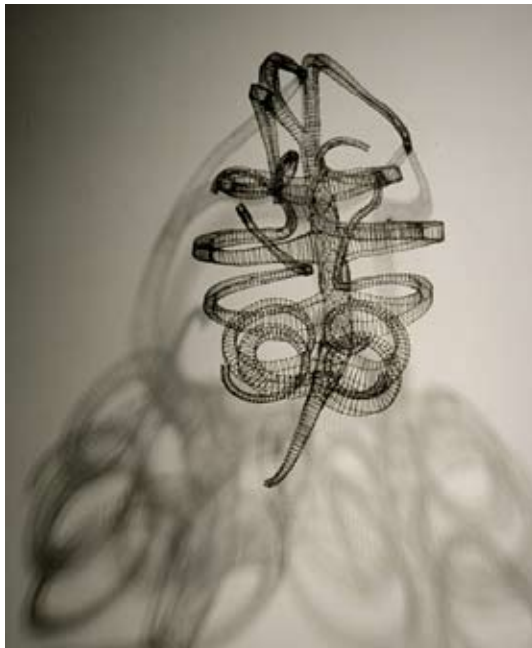


left to right:
“**Snaky Love**” 2007, Wire, plastic, fabric, 21”x15”x11”
“**The Kiss**” 2007, Acrylic on canvas, 45”x46”x2”
“**The Box Kite**” 2006, Wire, 4”x5”x4”
“**The Palm Leaf**” 2006, Wire, 8”x8”x5”



left to right:
“**The Rib Cage**” 2006, Wire, 29”x15”x16”
“**Split-Ends**” 2007, Wood veneer, human hair, acrylic paint on canvas, 40”x40”x2”
“**Love Is Evil**” 2007, Wire, plastic, fabric, 17”x7”x9”

Hoang Vu



"The Rib Cage", 2004
wire, 20"x 16"x 12"



"Split - Ends", 2007
hair, wood, veneer, acrylic paint, 40"x41"x2"

was born in Saigon, Vietnam.
Currently lives and works in Los Angeles, CA.
He is an artist who works in sculpture, painting and drawing. He exhibits regularly in California and teaches at The Art Institute of California in LA.

Acknowledgements

All installation photos are by **Robert Wedemeyer**.

Nena Amsler's work was photographed by **William Rabe**

Daniel Brodo's work was photographed by **Robert Wedemeyer**

Jacqueline Freedman's work was photographed by **Gene Ogami**.

Elizabeth Saveri acknowledges **Hudson Franklin Gallery in New York City** for the artwork.

Catalog design by **Joseph Santarromana**, buy video art at "**system-yellow.com**"



Thank you to the board and staff of **Center for the Arts, Eagle Rock** for making this exhibition possible.

www.centerartseaglerock.org

The mission of Center for the Arts, Eagle Rock is to present innovative and multicultural arts programming to the communities of Northeast Los Angeles. We target nontraditional and underserved audiences at nontraditional venues, providing access to excellent arts education to our youth and contemporary art experiences to all in our area.

