

## KUNSTMASCHINE - Contemporary Art News, Reviews, and Events

<http://kunstmaschine.com>

Friday, November 06, 2009

20th National Exhibition: Los Angeles Printmaking Society



Los Angeles Printmaking Society, "20th National Exhibition" Barnsdall Park - L.A. Municipal Gallery

November 5, 2008

by Bryson Strauss

**LOS ANGELES** – Peter Frank pulled off another impressive curatorial feat for the “20<sup>th</sup> National Exhibition of the Los Angeles Printmaking Society” this weekend. Opening last Sunday at the L.A. Municipal Art Gallery at Barnsdall Park, the show featured a spectacularly diverse and competent body of work without being overly schizophrenic or myopic.

This exhibition featured the artwork of 193 printmakers and



Dave Lefner, "Arcade", reduction linocut

included two special exhibitions honoring Robert Blackburn (1920-2003). It also included works from some of L.A.'s most revered graphic workshops, such as Gemini, Mixografia, and Hamilton Press among others.

While in part driven by tough economic times, the recent heat around printmaking is not unwarranted. The work is good and the rising interest in fine art prints has spurred on a series of strong exhibitions that includes the addition of the International IFPD's Fine Print Fair at the L.A. Art Show. This, and a growing base of seasoned and nascent collectors has also drawn out the best in printmaking, illustrating the great amount of talent and vital possibilities of contemporary and traditional print media, including digital.

Highlights of the "20<sup>th</sup> National Exhibition" were distinctly Los Angeles and included a fantastic large-scale (62 x 120 inches) stencil print on gold leaf paper by German ex-pat, Dirk Hagner entitled "Nuestra Señora." This print showed a sweeping cityscape view of L.A., where nature and light and humanity collide in a lyrical yet stark and precarious relationship.

That was followed by the Nicolas Naughtington's political 62 x 32 inch, black and white woodcut called "Trabajadora," which hung next to Dave Lefner's very tight, nostalgic, reduction linocut entitled "Arcade." John Baldessari also had cameo with a very cool, multi-media piece from 2007 entitled "Noses & Ears, Etc.: Couple and Man with Gun."

Many of the other prints were experimental and bold, if not entirely compelling, such as Brian Anderson's wood cut cast in concrete with rebar, or the etched glass postcards spread out on a back-lit pedestal near the entrance to the show.

While most of the artists were not widely recognized, the overall work was excellent and the curation and installation were remarkably cohesive. A great exhibition!!

show runs through January 3, 2009



Dirk Hagner, "Nuestra Señora", Stencil Print



Nicolas Naughton, "Trabajadora," woodcut

