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"Fore"

12.18.12

AUTHOR: ARA H. MERJIAN

11.11.12-03.10.13 *The Studio Museum in Harlem*

Featuring work by twenty-nine different artists—many o
contributions—"Fore" continues in the vein of the Studic
alliterative "Freestyle," 2001, "Frequency," 2005–2006, i
introduce emerging talent in a number of different medi
sure, many of the artists in "Fore" have already staked c
Noah Davis contributes with *Found Photo*, 2012, a char
young man in three-quarter profile, set against a window
vagrant Clyfford Still painting. Equally striking is Jennife
unceremonious hand—a hand fittingly wed to their imag
occasionally pool and coagulate on the surface of the w
informality. Firelei Báez's gouache drawings on paper a
of floral, decorative patterns and set onto the empty spa
bodies draw upon popular imagery, Caribbean history, i
slight distance from the wall, the paintings demonstrate
that bring the pages alive, as if drawing out a faded nan
paper.

Painting is by no means the only mode here. Sadie Ban
Untitled (Boombox), 2012, with its eponymous applan
stuffed with dirt—are striking in their quiet incongruity. T
conjures up a parallel discourse here, particularly given
the works also evince an unadorned lyricism, free of an
treatment and humorous nuance in Steffani Jemison's *I*
two-channel *Dagging*, 2012, which juxtaposes footag
Caribbean dance-hall "dagging" (a bawdy and raucou
tangle here in an extended pas de deux that conjures u
highlights include the splintered signage of Brenna You
pen-and-ink portraits, with their looming visages and lite

any article from the

multiple
shows (the
ditions have helped
fic installation. To be
temporary scene.
iit of a foregrounded
tion recalling a
s, painted in a loose,
Letting the oil paint
eir unhurried
' rendered. Made up
k pages, Báez's lone
y Goya. Hung at a
l, literary imagery
eft of yellowed

allations—like
port improbably
lack) perhaps
'ghetto blaster." Yet
leo finds poignant
and Nicole Miller's
with footage of
id defiant indecorum
ng adulthood. Other
d Toyin Odutola's

links

Gavin
Brown's
enterprise

team

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CULTURE MONSTER
ALL ARTS, ALL THE TIME

Art Review: Nicole Miller at LAXART

August 13, 2009 | 12:30 pm



In Nicole Miller's curiously mesmerizing video projection at LAXART, we see a man from the waist up, in T-shirt and sport coat, facing us but never making eye contact. During the seven-minute piece, the man's eyes bulge and squint, his lips and cheeks stretch, clench and distend, tense and ease. His head jerks and bobs as his body spasms, shoulders lifting and dropping, torso compressing and extending. Whether this is a performance or some kind of involuntary seizure becomes clear with the work's title, "The Conductor."

Miller amps up the significance and oddity of the man's behavior by stripping down the portrait, divorcing the conductor from his functional context: There is no concert hall, no orchestra and, most jarringly, no sound. His arms remain fixed at his sides as he operates in silence against a nonspecific background of gold, white and crimson bursts. His bodily choreography verges on the parodic and grotesque, and yet there is great poignancy in his complete immersion in the task of bringing music to life.

From start to finish, he physicalizes a broad spectrum of feeling, musical and otherwise, registering excitement, amusement, whimsy, anticipation, skepticism, bliss, concern and rapture. Is it important that the actor wears what looks to be a Jimi Hendrix T-shirt, and that he, too, is African American? Miller, fresh from the MFA program at USC, gives us this quirky, slightly cryptic episode and nothing more. But it's enough, as a small-scale conceptual exercise in transforming the familiar into something alien and disturbing, and as an indicator of her own potential to snag both eye and mind.

LAXART, 2640 S. La Cienega Blvd., L.A., (310) 559-0166, through Aug. 22. Closed Sundays and Mondays. www.laxart.org.

--Leah Ollman

Above: The Conductor (installation view). Photo credit: Courtesy of Kelly Barrie

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Roving Eye: Ready for the Readymade

by [dean daderko](#) 04/02/12 My colleagues and I are finalizing plans for "It is what it is. Or is it?" which opens May 1, and will be the first

The Fellows of Core Residency Program have work up at the Glassell School of Art. The artists-in-residence are Miguel Amat, Anthea Behm, Lourdes Correa-Carlo, Fatima Haider, Jang Soon Im, Gabriel Martinez,

Miller's video *Dagging* (2011) focuses on the dance phenomenon of the same name. Shot in the winking colored lights of a dance club, young couples engage in frenzied mock sexual couplings. Alternating between ambient club sound and slow-motion silence, the bodies of the dancers evoke ecstasy of the body in extremis, trapped in conventional sexual roles (top/bottom, active/passive), and seemingly ready to break out of them. I found myself watching all 34 minutes of the video with rapt attention.

The Menil has two engaging exhibitions on view: "Richard Serra Drawing: A Retrospective," curated by Bernice Rose and Michelle White, and "This World is Not My Home: Danny Lyon Photographs," curated by Toby Kamps.

The Serra drawing show, which unfolds in a mazelike build-out, impresses with the work's matter-of-fact, sometimes brutal physicality. Many of the drawings have been executed in black oil stick on Belgian linen stapled directly to the walls. Playing off of the architecture, pieces darken corners and opposing walls, and in a few cases create dizzying perspectives. Serra's drawings register physically and emotionally, and the

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