

# FLASH ART



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of glass. When I enter the gallery – also a postindustrial building – K.r.m. Mooney’s sculptures immediately establish a metonymic tie to the landscape I’ve just traversed.

There is a material contiguity, as Mooney’s art embraces industrial materials and techniques. On the floor of the largest room rests *Accretion I* (all works 2018),



semitransparent polycarbonate sheets stretched on slightly arched aluminum frames; the two parts composing this sculpture can be easily mistaken for industrially manufactured skylights. And, indeed, they soon direct my attention to the gallery’s ceiling: it’s a canonical warehouse and, as expected, punctuated by skylights. *Accretion I* camouflages Altman Siegel’s architecture, yet it triggers a perceptual short-circuit in the visitor who is rarely asked to acknowledge the vertiginous verticality of the space.

*Untitled* also develops vertically. A collaboration with artist McIntyre Parker, it consists of a video projection – a loop of an almost fixed shot of a doorstep – whose source is powered by photovoltaic panels installed on the gallery’s roof. As I follow the projector’s cables, I find myself again scrutinizing the ceiling. Like *Accretion I*, *Untitled* holistically coexists with the gallery’s building and its surroundings. At the same time, though, it establishes a continuum with its environment, which is not only of a spatial nature: the looped image becomes a temporal device doubling the natural light-dark cycle onto which the whole mechanism depends, as if the art itself possesses a circadian rhythm.

There is a further contiguity between Mooney’s sculptures and the waterfront’s postindustrial landscape in how they similarly catalyze the passage of time. Thus, in *En I*, a golden band, one would say a ring, stays mounted to a state-of-the-art engraving block – eternally frozen in the process of its own making, between the work of the hand and that of the machine.

5 TONY COKES  
“Della’s House”

Hannah Hoffman, Los Angeles  
by Mona Varichon

Tony Cokes’s exhibition *Della’s House* powerfully inaugurates Hannah Hoffman’s new gallery space – inside the final residence of architect Paul Revere Williams and his wife Della – with four of seven videos made in response to this historic landmark.

In a pair of videos, *The Queen is Dead... Fragments 1 & 2* (2019), Cokes’s signature intertitles sample from obituaries for Aretha Franklin that demand that the loss of the Queen of Soul serve as a catalyst for redefining the narratives of our present monarchs and revolutionaries. One video fills the veranda with a soundtrack of Aretha hits, while the other features a remix by Robert Hood – member of legendary Detroit techno collective Underground Resistance – weaving together the essences of gospel and techno by sampling from Aretha’s famous performance of the gospel standard “Never Grow Old.” In *The Will & The Way... Fragments 1 & 2* (2019), excerpts from *The Will and the Way*, Williams’s 1994 biography written in collaboration with his granddaughter, rub against Radiohead

5 Tony Cokes, “Della’s House,” Exhibition view at Hannah Hoffman, Los Angeles, 2019. Courtesy of the artist and Hannah Hoffman, Los Angeles.

remixes, injecting dread or joy into Williams’s words as he describes his career designing thousands of public buildings and residences across the American continent as segregation still reigned in the United States. The parable-like excerpts speak to the power of adaptation and imagination – soul, in short – the very characteristics that made Williams a brilliant architect, equally known for overcoming challenging topographies and for designing spaces in which his clients could truly revel. “Some architects like designing only the exterior of buildings because that’s what everyone sees. I like designing both” – Williams’s words offer a fitting description of Cokes’s inward approach to filmmaking, with most of its content invisible to the eye yet decisively present to the acute spectator.

Meanwhile, Aretha’s voice emerges from speakers blending with Thom Yorke’s distorted vocals, highlighting the acoustics of a house designed for entertaining, whose architect also designed Frank Sinatra’s. *Fade to Black* (1990), the earliest work in the show, chronologically samples the opening credits of Hollywood movies to illustrate the vacuity of the portrayal of black people in their narratives as well as their absence from casts and crews. “Della’s House” examines what it means and looks like to be more than those pervasive images, reviving the ubiquitous forms of footnotes, remixes, samples, eulogies, honors, fan art, and film credits to translate the look and feel of interiority, starting with Cokes’s choice of the show’s title and ending when you step out of Williams’s design.

6 MARK A. RODRIGUEZ  
Paul Soto / Park View, Los Angeles  
by Eli Diner

It seems appropriate that Mark A. Rodriguez’s new show should be not altogether new. I know I’ve seen those flowers before, simpering six-foot folk-art confections now playing bouncer at the gallery door. Same with the framed mailers for dubious-looking life insurance policies, printed on cardboard and carved up into puzzles. But even you hadn’t caught these at the old Park View, even if

6 Mark A. Rodriguez, *Pushon*, 2019. Acrylic and oil-based enamel on wood. 94 1/2 x 32 1/2 in. Courtesy of the artist and Park View / Paul Soto, Los Angeles.



7 LEWIS HAMMOND  
“The Keep”

Arcadia Missa, London  
by Alex Bennett

Used as the final shelter, the keep – a fortified tower popular to castles of the Middle Ages – performs a last-ditch attempt at sanctuary. That this should exist in the center of a castle braces against the possibility of impending destruction. The keep had another historical usage: to incarcerate prisoners. A space reflective or representative as refuge, yet structurally binding or imprisoning, coalesces in Lewis Hammond’s paintings.

Given late capitalism’s reterritorialization of everyday life, the “outside” reads as antiquated. Hammond’s vignettes reckon with such claustrophobic contexts: the insinuation of the segregated, disenfranchised individual into a totalizing whole. Drawing from his own experience and black history,

you’d never before laid eyes on Rodriguez’s turned-wood table legs and tchotchkes, you’d still catch a whiff of that carrion familiarity which the work preys upon. It’s the bummer and bounty of the thrift store. The swap-meet anxiety dream: patinated Americana set askew.

Among the new stuff, we find a collection of storybook window shutters painted mint green (*Will call cabin 1*, 2019) – fourteen in all – which, according to the press release, are reproductions of an original pair salvaged from San Francisco’s Winterland Ballroom by a “historian and Grateful Dead fanatic.” A legendary venue in the annals of rock music, Winterland (shuttered in 1978 and demolished in 1985) is where Frampton came alive and where the Band danced their last waltz, but somehow the photos of the arena that came up in an image search show no sign of Rodriguez’s shutters. Which of course doesn’t have to mean that his story is apocryphal, just that it doesn’t matter if it is or not when we’re talking about replicas of relics of fairytale window treatments.

Next up: the Pushons. The press release does not address the name, and I didn’t ask. Apparently, though, there is a breed of dog so known – a portmanteau of Pug and Bichon Frise. Like the flowers, these are freestanding cutout figures made of painted wood. Blank in the back – as a sign should be – they have fronts in streaky, washy, mottled blues: running down through curving forms, these might have a littoral or even celestial bearing but for those faces – saccharine, giggling, and profoundly creepy faces. These might be the ghosts of an old colloquialism, sinister and banal.