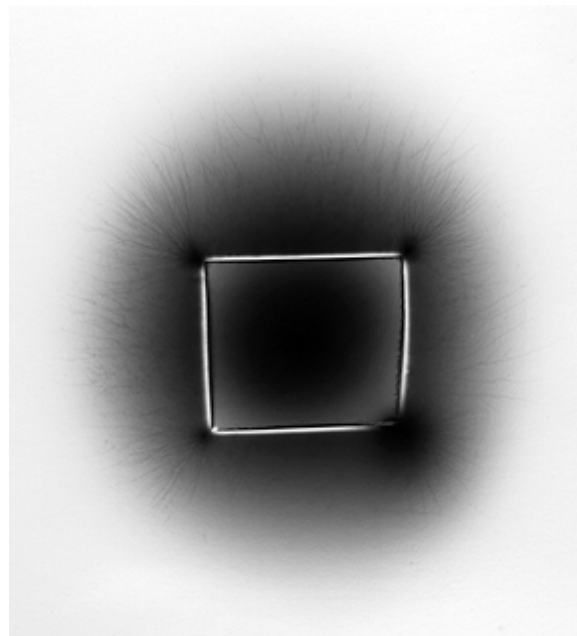


ARTS NEWS

SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL
"love small show III"
through November 19
Juried by Adria Arch
artSPACE@16
16 Princeton Road, Malden
<http://www.artspaceat16.com/>
781-321-8058 voicemail *3
Hours: Sat. 12:00-5:00 PM and by appt.



Electrical Photogram Drawing 37, Michael Cirelli

The problem with this exhibit is that, like the world, it's made up of so many small but interesting things, you have a hard time choosing what you like most. Unlike life experience, it's been carefully juried by Adria Arch, Education Director of the Arlington Center for the Arts, and deftly hung by artSPACE@16 gallery owner Sand T, so that viewing it is more guided serendipity than total crapshoot, and the reward is definitely assured.

The show, which runs through November 19, gathers the works of 45 artists, local and national. The only criterion for submission was dimension – the works had to be no larger than 12 inches square.

Viewing small works gives you the sensation of dominance and the discovery of treasure. You're looking into a small, created world. That's one of the reasons why this show works so well, besides the quality and variety of the pieces.

Russell Brodie's oil on wood skylines of Baltimore and Philadelphia are significant not merely for scale, but also for using the miniature to capture a contemporary American city, with all its rust and gray urban imperfections. (Philly 2" x 5 1/4"; Baltimore – a smaller city – 1 1/2" x 2 1/2").

Alex Segreti's camera loves the city, too – in this case, Chicago. Silver prints of the Pilsen Building, a car, and the neon sign of the Foremost liquor store capture the excitement of urban artificiality, with a restrained nostalgic fondness. Photographed with a holga camera, the Pilsen Building looms, the car comes up mysteriously from the lower left of the frame from out of nowhere, the liquor sign sets the viewer up for a film noir fantasy.

In "Repair," "Mend," and "Improve," (etching, drypoint and chine collé) Serena Perrone uses the visual language of nineteenth century freak show culture to comment on self evolution. These delicate drawings should have been sold as a trio because they all are needed to describe one process. In "Improve," the psyche, drawn as quasi-Siamese twins, each

with one leg supported by a crutch, cuts itself in two with a huge scissors. “Mend” is an M&M-like button that supports itself on spindly, booted legs while it works on the patching-up process. “Repair” stitches the psychic Siamese twins together up the seam of their dress in this whacked-out symbolic wonderland. Choice of medium, rendering, and concept are excellent.

There was only one political piece in the show: “Baby Agent Orange” (Michelle Kweder) wrapped a found medical encyclopedia on an acrylic-painted canvas board with organza ribbon, canvas ribbon, and string, as a small, neat memento of the chemical warfare tactics in the Vietnam era.

For intriguing technique, check out Michael Cirelli’s Electrical Photogram Drawings. They are generated on light-sensitive photographic paper. Objects placed on the paper are, as Cirelli says, “electrocuted,” producing beautiful geometric shapes sometimes surrounded by black nebulae.

As artSPACE@16 continues to mount quality shows, it attracts submittals from all over the United States – this show features artists from California, Texas, Illinois, West Virginia, Philadelphia, New York, and Rhode Island, as well as Massachusetts. Yet the work of two fine Malden-based artists is also included in “Love Small.” Michelle “Steve” McCauley’s patchwork pieces play with color and composition for a real visual kick. John Rodzvilla’s machine-inspired images are drawn from a collection of cartoonish characters, robots, and toys he’s found in books and television and repair manuals. Rodzvilla’s whimsical pieces include “Momotaro in the Machine,” a sort of Inca Mammon framed by mounted painted pennies, and “Machine 006,6/28/2005” a (small) love affair with gadgets and widgets.

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