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Bay Area Currents 2009, Pro Arts, Oakland

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The works by the 11 artists selected for this year's Bay Area Currents Exhibition at Pro Arts reveal remarkable similarities in subject matter and the visual and structural elements governing their compositions.



Photo courtesy of Pro Arts

Many of the pieces are derived from detritus and trash, amply presented in the images, including Palingenesis: Cherynobl's Rebirth (2008) by Adam Friedman, which presents an hourglass shape with the chaos of the ruins of Chernobyl at the bottom funneling upwards to become an ordered pseudo-paradise with palm trees at the top, and Elegy to Trash! Confidence Wanes, by Daniel Healey. Two large pastel works by Donna Anderson Kam depict young contemporary street smart women struggling against political oppression in the midst of gutter garbage and trash.

Although the curator of this exhibit, Kevin Chen, Program Director at Intersection for the Arts, states that these works illustrate a movement away from written text, in truth many of the pieces rely heavily on verbal text and symbols, for example South East Asia (2008) by John Patrick McKenzie, who covers old maps with repetitive graffiti-like tags, and Creamed Chicken and Olives by Anne Vought, a wall piece of colorful cutouts of words and phrases arranged vertically, like "last of," "teeth," "sweet," and "pleas have" (sic).

Other works on view include felted wool sculptures by Stephanie Metz, photographs by Joan Osato and Elizabeth Pedinotti, and an impressive sound sculpture, Resonance, that actually works, by Alex Potts.

Exhibition at Pro Arts at Oakland Arts Gallery 150 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza Oakland, CA Show runs from June 23 - July 24

For more info: http://www.proartsgallery.org/index.html

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