



Michael Wetzel: *Hunting Club*, 2009-11, oil on canvas, 60 by 48 inches; at LaMontagne.

*Hunting Club* (2009-11) depicts a destabilized world where a cropped image of a recently killed pheasant arranged on a platter is juxtaposed with a trussed, similarly plated, roasted bird; they are positioned at opposite ends of a green-and-blue-striped tablecloth. A trio of sparkling champagne glasses arranged in the lower right situates the viewer at the periphery of a festive nighttime celebration, seen through an oval frame that could be a mirror or a window. A partial image of a hunting horn dangles from a cord while pink champagne flows and bubbles from a tower of glasses.

Wetzel employs a geometric framework of triangles, trapezoids and circles in *Gin* (2010-11), named for the bottle of Tanqueray that is cropped by the left edge of the canvas. A bouquet, seen from above, fills the lower right corner. Two martini glasses adorned with lime swizzles are seen from different perspectives: one from above, the other straight on. They accompany plates of neatly arranged triangular cucumber sandwiches. Two tiny horses in the area above the green tablecloth, which is decorated with subtle lion-and-crown emblems, suggest that we may be peeking into the prestigious realm of the English aristocracy—perhaps as visitors to Epsom Downs, the most iconic of the sporting and social races. Wetzel's painted world in red and green seems to exist somewhere between fancy and reality.

While the artist's table settings are for the most part alluring, three small portrait busts of women adorned with

oversize pearls are mere ornament. Their skin disintegrates into a mesh of cross-hatched lines. Like the country clubs they attend, these anxious-eyed women seem to be attractive yet ultimately unsatisfying symbols of excessive luxury.

—Francine Koslow Miller

#### ATLANTA ADRIENNE OUTLAW WHITESPACE

Myths and fairy tales often involve sinister characters whose powers allow them to physically transform their victims or manipulate the outcome of events. Nashville-based Adrienne Outlaw sees a parallel in today's world, where advances in biotechnology allow scientists, pharmacologists and surgeons to alter the body, mind and nature, albeit in the name of progress. In her exhibition "Witch's Brew," Outlaw assumes the role of mad scientist to create beautifully crafted sculptures that mix the natural and the manmade, and pose the question of whether physical beauty may perhaps conceal internal dangers.

Scattered randomly throughout the two galleries were works from Outlaw's ongoing "Fecund" series, which she began in 2003. As with Duchamp's *Étant donnés*, viewers are invited to peek into a small aperture in these wall-mounted sculptures to see the objects arranged inside. The sculptures' exteriors are lushly decorated with velvet, fur, beads, leather, crocheted yarn and other sensual materials. Inside, however, are objects that can inflict harm: sharp barnacles, stinging bees, porcupine

View of Adrienne Outlaw's interactive sculpture *How to Mistake Your \_\_\_\_\_ for a \_\_\_\_\_*, 2011; at Whitespace.



quills, straight pins, sea urchins. Some are even arranged around a mirror so that the viewer's reflected eye is surrounded by the ominous materials.

Ten works from the "Fecund Video" series, begun in 2007, were also included. With no exterior ornamentation, these austere wall-mounted works are decidedly colder. Viewers must peer into conelike shapes painted the color of light flesh, which gives the impression of peering through the nipple of a breast into the interior of a body. Inside, small video screens contain looped clips that range from Outlaw breastfeeding her baby (the distorted image has sexual connotations) to cellular division and embryonic bloodflow recorded in the lab of her biophysicist husband. The series alludes to Outlaw's concern about the growing distance between technological advances and the bioethics field.

A more interactive representation of this concern is her disquieting sculpture *How to Mistake Your \_\_\_\_\_ for a \_\_\_\_\_* (a nod to one of neurologist Oliver Sacks's books on brain function, *The Man Who Mistook His Wife For a Hat*). The work requires two participants to kneel on red velvet pillows, facing each other across a pedestal. After each dons an exquisitely crafted hat (one made from rabbit fur and a blowfish, the other woven sinew), the subjects gaze into a small mirror set at eye level on a rack of laboratory pipettes. When focusing on the mirror, the participants see themselves. But as their vision shifts and refocuses, their eyes appear to be superimposed on the other's face, as if a part of them had been cloned and grafted onto their partner. The pipettes



Kirsten Everberg:  
*Phillips Import/  
Export*, 2011, oil and  
enamel on canvas,  
6 by 5 feet;  
at 1301PE.

contained human, animal and plant matter, serving as a reminder of the insidiousness of genetic modification. Perhaps *Outlaw* is not only questioning the scientific advances of the present but providing us a glimpse of the future.  
—Rebecca Dimling Cochran

#### LOS ANGELES KIRSTEN EVERBERG 1301PE

Fusing abstract expressionistic smears and dribbles with realist painting, Kirsten Everberg depicts strange, aqueous spaces that evoke dreams more than they do their real-world referents. Teetering on the edge of beauty, Everberg's paintings present viewers with something they can recognize and engage with (a landscape, an iconic building), but often in a gestural style that flirts with messiness and disorder. Everberg's fourth solo show at this gallery featured nine large-scale paintings (most approximately 6 by 5 feet), the strongest of which evidence a subtle refinement, or loosening, of her signature style.

The pictures fall into two distinct groups: landscapes rendered in lurid greens—moss, olive, mint—and interiors in slate grays and ocher. Everberg based the works on sites in her home city of Los Angeles: the Arboretum and the Bradbury Building. The titles, however, indicate far-flung locales—places the sites could, and in a few cases do, portray in Hollywood movies. The Bradbury, with its ornate stairways and hallways, is presented as the *Hotel Royale, China*, in one image and a military hospital in Great Britain in another,

while the landscapes—filled with lush vegetation that overwhelms any glimpse of architecture—bear names including *Dutch East Indies* and *Burma*.

This sleight of hand is at odds with the populist quality of the paintings; although the compositions are in fact expertly crafted, the loose mark-making has a you-can-do-it-too effect that is part of the works' appeal. Everberg begins the pictures with an underpainting in oil, which she then covers with drips and splatters of enamel. But hers is no Pollockian endeavor. The marks are generally conceived as parts of a representational whole—thick swaths of black paint ultimately serve as building columns, for instance, and strokes and pours of green enamel as foliage. Clarity is enhanced when such forms appear against sporadic areas of open abstraction, such as the sublime spot, directly at the center of *The Congo* (all works 2011), where lines and squiggles cease to be palms and a placid landscape slips incongruously, effortlessly, into chaos.

The idea behind these works is that Los Angeles is a place of perpetually shifting meaning due to its (now diminishing) use as a set for films. Instead, however, the conceptual conceit seems only to acquiesce to a kind of Hollywood esthetic colonialism, in which distinctions in venue or country are smoothed over, eased into a catchall vista. The conceit is no match for the joyous eccentricity and lavish tactility of Everberg's painting itself, which continues to engage the viewer and to provoke states of curious reverie.

—Annie Buckley

#### SANTA MONICA VIRGINIA KATZ RUTH BACHOFNER

In 2003, Virginia Katz's "drawings" consisted of the patterns created by waves on partially submerged paper, or by pigmented tree branches as they swayed over attached sheets of paper. In the more recent works on view in her show "Charted Territories," she continues to explore the similarities between marks made by the hand and by nature, while pondering the implications of human interactions with and interventions in the natural arena.

Katz's "Mud" series (2011) comprises modestly sized wood panels layered with several inches of oil paint, then carved like clay to resemble geological forms or to evoke the sculpting effects of flowing water, wind and erosion on the land. Due to the hefty physicality of the paint and the panels' natural brown, rust, green and white coloration, the works have the appearance of the dried mud of riverbeds, canyon rock walls, mountain peaks or ice floes. Recalling 3-D casts of the earth's surface by the British collaborative The Boyle Family, Katz's landscape vacillates between being pictured and being made concrete as object or souvenir.

Katz creates her richly textured and patterned "Formations" (2007-ongoing) and "Paths" (2010) by painting, drawing, collaging and monoprinting with leaves, vines, bark, soil and crumpled foil drenched in ink. Inspired by aerial and NASA satellite images of earth as well as by direct observation of physical phenomena gleaned from daily walks, these works are as much absorbing, near-