

## Behind the curtain, a lock of hair falling

September 1 – October 1, 2011

Gallery Diet

It is the season of the body. Everything from the reexamination of AbEx's gestural politics to online dating urges us to consider touch in the expanded fields of technological and cultural transmission. The group show "Behind the curtain, a lock of hair falling" is a timely take on how cultural bodies brush together, creating an almost sexual excitement at the possibility of unexpected influence.

The oldest work on view is George Woodman's symbolically charged *La Pietra Madonna*, 2007, a black-and-white nude photograph of a pregnant woman painted over with a golden triangle. Despite Woodman's seventy-nine years, the piece seems immediately contemporary, even finding formal reverberations in Talia Chetrit's *Handstand*, 2011. Both include the naked figure and the triangle as a structuring element. The shape then pops up as the formal motif in Joshua Abelow's paintings and in Martin Oppel's angle-driven sculpture. While the triangle itself is straightforward, its reappearance admits an environment of extensive cross-pollination. Debo Eilers's sculptures comment on the process of abstracting influence in its various forms. Half vomitorium, half McDonald's PlayPlace, they use the ancillary wreckage of technology to summon its more nebulous social import. Matte plastic forms derive from computer bodies deformed by resin, thus forwarding the aura of the digital image.

Nicolas Lobo's "*Grape Syrup Action for Paul Octavian Nasca's 'U Smile 800% Slower,'* 2011, has the artist spraying clouds of cough syrup out of a fire extinguisher as a Justin Bieber song is drawn out to eight times its original length in the background. Quoting DJ Screw, whose mixtapes slow hip-hop to a brutal gurgle, the video contorts contemporary time and space to a codeine pace, while its visuals span layers of culture, at once peering in on teenyboppers, YouTube source material, and robotripping Houston rappers. As the cough syrup defaces the walls, the piece momentarily recalls both Crip tags and Sterling Ruby, suggesting more cultural altercation than alteration. But as the syrup then evaporates in a rather spiritual manner, the piece transcends genre, offering a calming marriage between the disparate cultural bodies.



Nicolas Lobo, *Grape Syrup Action for Paul Octavian Nasca's "U smile 800% slower,"* 2011, still from a color video, 14 minutes 37 seconds.

— Hunter Braithwaite