

Future's Past

09 Nov 2011 / Katie Geha /

The other night I was having a kind of tepid argument with friends about art. It ended with a friend saying to me, “Well, you *are* a critic.” It didn’t feel like a dismissal (she was more open to the art we were talking about and I was more, well, critical) but it was maybe a little hard to swallow. How fun, after all, is a critic? I mean, did you already notice that I deemed the argument “tepid”? Recently my dissertation advisor warned that some on my committee might think I’m writing criticism and not art history. I was a little confused, slightly deflated, but am slowly accepting my fate—I am a critic. Which, when I’m feeling generous just means I have opinions (often strong opinions) about art, music, literature—things that matter deeply to me. And if I wanted to get sappy, I’d say that I’m critical because for whatever reason, I really care.

This is all just to say that my new blog for Glasstire, *Katie Says* (inspired by another more goofy conversation with friends), will be about things I care about—art and music and writing and film—that I feel like writing about in an open forum and with a conversational tone. After all, the great populist critic Jerry Saltz recently stated: “I wish lots more young art-critics would start online blogs, art-magazines, screed-sheets, Facebook pages, whatever. Art critics aren’t paid anything anyway so there’s nothing to lose.” See, there’s nothing to lose.



E.A.S.T, the annual studio tour in Austin's east side neighborhood begins this week but already had a mini-start at Co-Lab this past weekend. *Future Diorama!* took over the recently renovated gallery cramming each nook and cranny with odd things to examine. The large open doors to the gallery are blocked off so one must funnel through the back, through the kitchen and then get birthed into the gallery filled to the brim with boxes and concrete blocks. The boxes, nailed to the walls are also filled to the brim with any number of cast off gems, doodads, and thingamabobs—scrap wooden sculptures, photographs glued neatly together, strange biomorphic ceramic sculptures, a moose head smoking a pipe. It's as if Co-Lab was turned into one large curio cabinet of junk shop Americana.

The night I visited, a projector streamed images of the Texas landscape as the experimental band /Future played, adding to the ambiance of all-over and all-at-once. Scanning the walls it was impossible not to imagine the possibility and potential of arrangement. Nothing looked fussy or overdetermined, but, rather, the intricacy of the installation demanded close looking. Such attention provoked the discovery of new objects and the associations and narratives created through their adjacency.



Future Diorama! was put together by the new Austin art collective Ink Tank. The collective features an evolving number of artists including core members Chris Whiteburch, Emily Cayton, Dave Culpepper, and Matt Winters. Whiteburch explained that the concept of the show revolves around how we conceive of the future. Instead of space-age minimalist architecture we'll be repurposing the things of our recent past. "In my opinion the future won't be all plastic and streamlined. Instead, it will look a lot like the past," Whiteburch said. "We'll be picking through the things we're throwing out today." That is, *Future*

Diorama! collapses the present and the past in its display of a utopian tinged nostalgic future.

Co-Lab will be hosting a closing for *Future Diorama!* Saturday, November 12th 7-11pm.

The exhibition is open on November 12th & 13th, 10am-5pm.



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