

Elizabeth Dee

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Daniel Rich

Elizabeth Dee is pleased to announce exhibitions of new work by Kevin Landers and Daniel Rich in the gallery at 545 West 20th Street. A reception for the artists will be held on Thursday, March 24, from six to eight pm.

In the Main Gallery, Kevin Landers will, for the first time, present an exhibition devoted solely to his sculpture. Landers fabricates quotidian urban objects—a boombox on a five-gallon bucket, brightly colored bags of chips on the kind of wire rack found in local bodegas, gray industrial shelving filled with secondhand appliances, a counter of lotto tickets, a bicycle chained to a signpost. He crafts these objects by hand, re-creating them out of the most ordinary materials—Plexiglas, plastic, wire, metallic tape, vinyl, Mylar. A 1970s-model calculator, together with dated stereo equipment, a hair dryer, an electric fan, and an old Walkman, are pieced together entirely from different colors of Plexi, as are the shelves on which they rest. Boldly patterned Mylar bags abstract potato chip packaging design in a display on a stand made from bent wire and metal conduit tubing. Hand-drawn lottery tickets fill the slots above a counter with an attached pen that is not a pen, but a bit of plastic tube attached with duct tape and string.

At first glance, Landers's sculptures are utterly convincing as the objects they represent. Landers finishes them with a plethora of telling detail. A second look reveals the artist's hand. The sculptures are rough hewn, like quick sketches. They possess a ratio of abstraction and contingency that echoes that of their sources, slightly forlorn objects in the real world and things remembered from the past and affectionately rendered in tangible form. Landers carefully evokes the rundown and the makeshift of the New York neighborhoods that he knows and loves; like his photographs, his sculptures picture things and situations that conjure specific urban locales—the grocery, the thrift shop, the street corner. Landers's is a poetics of the outmoded, the obsolete, the cast off, the jury-rigged, and his practice attests to his activity as a kind of romantic of the Lower East Side and a bard of the overlooked.

This is Kevin Landers's tenth solo exhibition and his third with Elizabeth Dee. In 2004 he held a one-man exhibition at Angstrom Gallery in Dallas, and in 2002 at Gilles Peyroulet et Cie. in Paris. He lives and works in New York.

In Gallery 2, Daniel Rich will show new paintings, executed in enamel on wood in a painstaking technique using hand-cut stencils. Rich pictures structures, whether Louis Kahn's high Modernist interior of the National Assembly Building in Bangladesh, the Brutalist pastiche of the American Embassy in Cairo, the slightly exotic Internationalism of the Hotel Palestine in Baghdad, the anonymous vernacular of a hunting blind, or the sand covered fortifications of Al Qaqaa. All these sites are depicted in a cool, hard-edge style of flat, barely modulated areas of color. Life seems to have abandoned these places, perhaps in some post-apocalyptic moment. Depopulated and nearly barren, these specific constituents of the built environment appear to serve as metaphor of a contemporary global condition. These buildings and structures, particularly in combination, seem overdetermined, but the exact sum of the images' equation remains cryptic.

Daniel Rich received his MFA from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, in 2004. This is his first solo exhibition. He lives and works in New York.