

Art in America

INTERNATIONAL ● REVIEW



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Slater Bradley: *Don't Let Me Disappear*, 2009-11, HD video projection, approx. 10½ minutes; at Team.

Peanut Cascade Marker (2012, 28 by 19 inches) is a close-up study of a tree trunk that still evokes a sense of the surroundings. The pastel blue and purple background has the murky richness of a Helen Frankenthaler while retaining a certain tie-dyed slapdash bliss. The trunk's bark is dark and rich, with impastolike layers of paint adding a weathered feel to emerging faces. The tree fits into the Art Brut esthetic but also resembles the talking apple trees from *The Wizard of Oz*.

In *Overlord Envy* (2012, 60 by 44 inches), the landscape is full of grand gestures and fleeting moments, like the Ukiyo-e woodblock prints (translated as "pictures of the floating world") that seem to inspire Brown. The iridescent background is punctuated by brilliant slabs of stone and wispy blades of vegetation. Pale blue trees stretch regally toward a castle of cliffs; the facial expressions here appear almost reverential. Sheets of paper float in and out of view, reminding us of our presence as interlopers in this natural setting. Yet Brown's fantastical world allows us to be joyful participants in an alchemy of vision.

—David Greenberg

SLATER BRADLEY TEAM

As Holden Caulfield walks the streets of New York City on his way to a nervous breakdown in J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*, he finds himself, each time he's about to step off a curb, beseeching his deceased little brother, "Allie, don't let me disappear." In his excellent video

Don't Let Me Disappear (2009-11, 10½ minutes), the sole work in his recent show, Slater Bradley employs his long-time doppelgänger, the dreamy model/actor Benjamin Brock, to represent Caulfield, wandering modern-day Midtown Manhattan. In ways funny and ominous, sound and image come together to depict a young man on the edge.

For the first two minutes, one sees only the legs and feet of Brock and other pedestrians. As the camera rises, we are at 53rd Street and 5th Avenue (near the Museum of Modern Art). Brock listlessly peers into a chauffeured car; drifts by Versace, Cartier and Façonnable; and hesitates, again and again, at the sidewalk's edge, whispering, "Don't let me disappear." A ponderous electronic soundtrack contrasts almost comically with the non-events on-screen as it summons up the doppelgänger's state of mind. The camera studies Brock's face in such close-up that one gradually notices a scar on his upper lip.

As Brock lingers in front of a cathedral, churchy music swells. When he slides in slow motion down a handrail on the front steps, the viewer doesn't know what to feel, perhaps identifying with the character's muddle of emotions. Finally, Brock enters Central Park, muttering to himself: "Sometimes I feel like my whole life is behind me" and, under his breath to someone off-screen, "You look ridiculous in that makeup." In silhouette as he enters the darkness of a pedestrian underpass, he picks something up off the ground; when he emerges into the light at the other end, he sports a red hunting cap, complete with earflaps, of the sort Caulfield wears.

The work was projected on a large screen, and visitors watched from wooden risers; four large speakers on high stands created an immersive soundscape whose high sonic drama effectively matched the video's high-resolution visual punch. And the work is as plentiful in literary allusions as it is sensually rich. Bradley was inspired by E.B. White's essay "Here is New York," which highlights the importance to New York of the transplant from other places; a longtime New York resident, Bradley comes from San Francisco. The artist also draws on Walter Benjamin's take on the flâneur; the German philosopher's city stroller remains alienated from his surroundings. Additionally, a voiceover occasionally mumbles lines from Russian writer Mark Levi's 1934 *Novel with Cocaine*, the story of a young man's descent into hedonism amid national strife in Russia from 1916 to 1919.

In past works, Bradley has deployed the doppelgänger to explore celebrity worship and identification, with Brock depicting Michael Jackson, Kurt Cobain and Joy Division singer Ian Curtis. Holden Caulfield is a perfect addition to this roster of tormented young men.

—Brian Boucher

NORIYUKI HARAGUCHI MCCAFFREY

While this was not Noriyuki Haraguchi's first New York show, he's little known here, which is not the case in Japan. He was one of the students involved in the important Mono-ha movement in the late



Noriyuki Haraguchi: *A-7 E Corsair II*, 2011, canvas, aluminum, wood and mixed mediums, approx. 14 by 86 by 62 feet; at McCaffrey.



Richard Kalina: *Parallax*, 2011, collage, acrylic and Flashe on linen, 48 inches in diameter; at Lennon, Weinberg.

'60s and early '70s and has exhibited regularly since then. His European exposure began with Documenta 6 (1977), when he was one of the first two Asians included in that quinquennial. He showed a memorable "oil pool": a low metal container that took up most of the gallery was filled with waste oil, making an opaque and gorgeously reflective surface also notable for its odor.

Haraguchi's work has always been materials- or experience-centered; that was part of the Mono-ha ideology, to focus on the significance and presence of raw material. He favors industrial substances without charm, such as concrete and steel. But here the industrial was conveyed via image or allusion. One of the oldest works, *Tsumu 147* (1966), is a mixed-mediums-on-panel piece. With its aligned rows of black (painted) rectangles on a grubby brown background, protruding metal handles and what looks like an aged and cruddy latch mechanism, it evokes a louvered engine cover. Nearby was a tiny model of a battleship in a Plexiglas case that makes up the top quarter of an otherwise white-painted box hanging on the wall (also 1966).

A battleship model might sound like child's play, but it suits the exhibition's theme, "Works from Yokosuka." The city where Haraguchi grew up, Yokosuka is the site of a U.S. naval base. The other pieces in the show had to do with the bodies of fighter jets and evolved from the artist's often-recounted experience of following the tail-and-exhaust assembly of a plane being moved down a highway one night. Two 1969 wall works, *Air Pipe*

B and *C*, are abstracted forms consisting of a plywood oval not quite perpendicular to the wall, with white-painted canvas stapled around its edges and sweeping out onto the wall in exquisitely gentle but taut and sharply cropped curves.

The centerpiece of the show was the new work *A-7 E Corsair II* (2011), a 14-foot-tall construction that nearly fills the room. It's a tail assembly, carefully constructed of wooden ribs, metal flanges and raw-canvas skin with graphite markings. Looking through it toward the oval rear opening is like being inside a Lee Bontecou relief. Despite its specifics, the monumental form is a poignant hollow shaped by labor and material. The politics of fighter-plane symbolism escaped Haraguchi back in the Vietnam War era and might likewise be irrelevant to American viewers today, since our multiple wars are even less immediate. We can see what Haraguchi saw: sculptural beauty in functional form.

—Janet Koplos

RICHARD KALINA LENNON, WEINBERG

Richard Kalina's recent paintings are systematic yet intuitive, summoning—despite their rigorous abstraction—the optical play of color and light in Seurat's work. This handsome exhibition, Kalina's ninth at the gallery since 1993, included six watercolors and eight medium-size works on linen, which employ a collage technique that the artist has been fine-tuning over the last decade. Many of the titles refer to scientific concepts in disciplines ranging from physics to cybernetics, yet the results feel like poetic inter-

pretations rather than literal illustrations. Though the precision of the works lends them an immaculate appearance, closer looking reveals a handmade touch.

Each of the collages on linen is a variation on a theme. For example, *Azimuth* (2011, 70 by 40 inches) consists of a glowing field of overlapping orange, vermilion and crimson parallelograms composed of cut or torn pieces of painted rice paper. This is surrounded by a jagged border of raw linen and overlaid with an arrangement of mostly pastel ellipses that vary in size and orientation. The yellow, green, orange, blue or thistle-colored ellipses—also patchworks of torn rice paper—float behind a spacious grid of narrow white lines. A small square of brown linen is exposed at each intersection of the grid. Wrinkles in the rice paper add texture. The contrasting chromatic notes and the small linen squares create a visual musicality that conjures up Bach's contrapuntal inventions.

To make these works, Kalina primes sized linen with a white ground, taping off the areas where he will leave the linen showing. He adds the bits of jewel-toned rice paper to the primed area until the desired luminosity of color is achieved. Finally, he applies the white lines, which connect the regular squares of nubby linen to each other and the edges.

In *Parallax* (2011, 48 inches in diameter), one of two tondos shown, the linen squares have been left out. Here, free-floating circles passing in front of the grid are arrayed into three concentric rings on top of a subtly varied purple ground. The staggered positions and colors of