

TWO COATS OF PAINT

August 3, 2016

Interview: Timothy Nolan and his public art project at LAX

10:05 am by [Sharon Butler](#)



Timothy Nolan, "Like Sound Going Sideways." Photo credit: All images via PanicStudio LA

If you find yourself in Terminal 7 at the [Los Angeles International Airport](#), you can't miss [Timothy Nolan's](#) new public art project, a series of large-scale prints, made from collages that incorporate images of maps, galaxies, and other ephemera from the days when we looked things up in encyclopedias and used atlases to find our way. I wondered how Nolan, who is represented by [CB1 Gallery in LA](#), got the commission, how his installation relates to the rest of his work, and what it was like working in an airport.

Sharon Butler: *Tell me a little bit about your work. Did you propose a project that you felt would reflect something about that specific site—an airport? Did you want to make work that you felt would appeal specifically to people who are in transit?*

Timothy Nolan: In my current work, I start with handmade collages, combining photography of unique geological terrain, outdated scientific graphics, and Art Deco patterns. These are scanned, digitally and manually marked, cut, and re-collaged. The larger works are then printed on aluminum or vinyl (in the case of the recent wall mural.) The results marry my interest in abstract painting and Pop Art with my fascination for quantum mechanics and astrophysics. The work alludes to natural phenomena and the intersection of culture

and nature. I invite viewers to consider themes of transitioning ecosystems, and the quest for discovery beyond the visible realm.



Timothy Nolan, *Like Sound Going Sideways*, 2016, latex print on vinyl, 96 x 473 inches.

I thought these themes were pretty relevant to travelers who either just got off a plane or are about to board one and travel at 30,000 feet. I know when I look out the window of a plane, I'm always thinking about what's out there, both above and below. As you descend into LAX, the juncture of nature and culture is front and center: rugged mountain ranges, the Pacific Ocean, and miles of sprawling development.

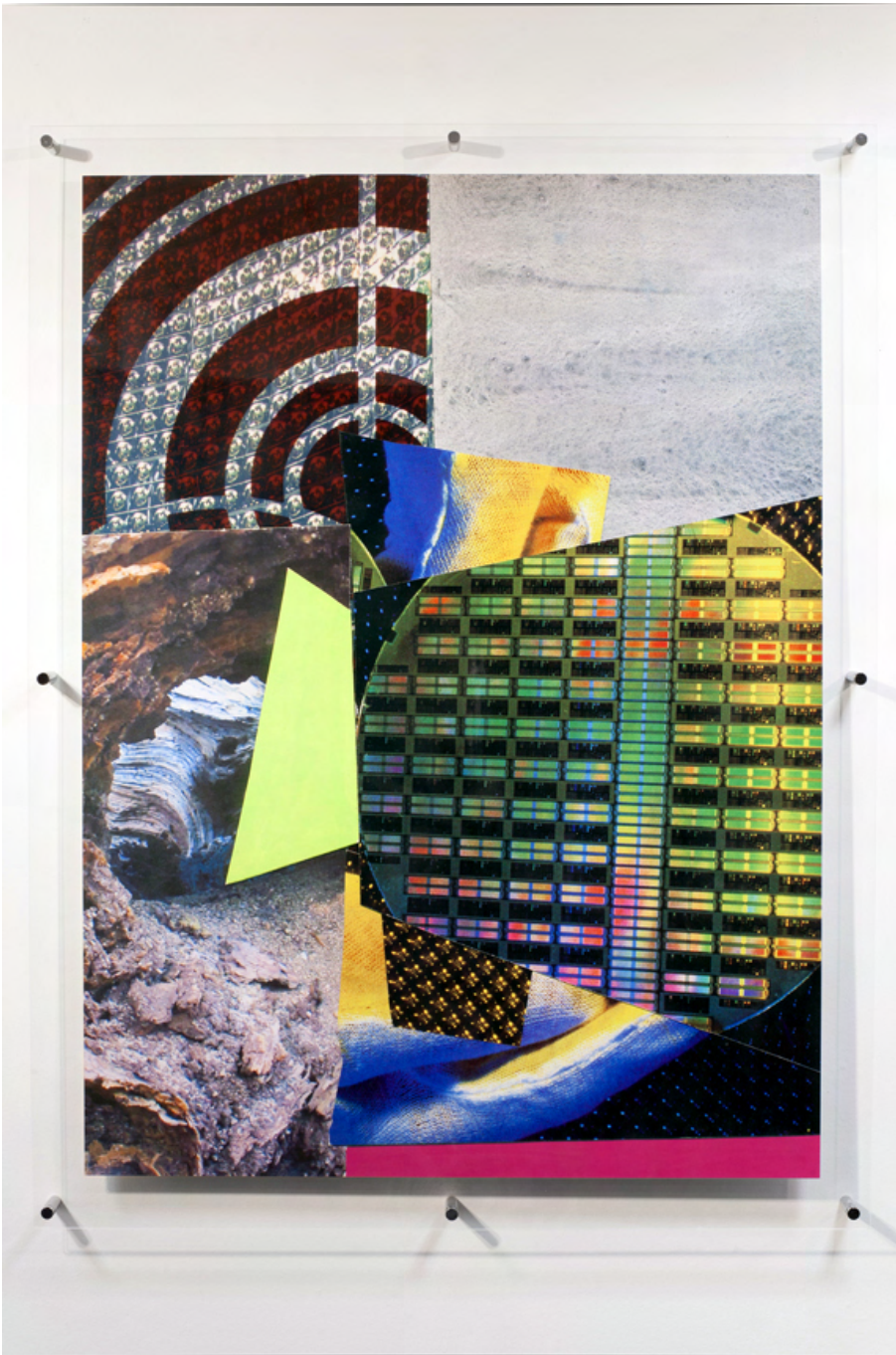
I designed the mural for the specific walls in the hallway. I conceived of it as a diptych, with one half on the wall that is set back about 18 inches from the other. The imagery was in line with what I had been working on for a few years, which I thought would resonate with air travelers and their view from up there. But I also managed to sneak in an aerial view of the airport's environs. I found this book of Landsat images taken from NASA satellites in the 1970s – pre-Google Earth! I liked the arc of the coastline; it seemed like the perfect counter to the nebula in the left hand panel.

SB: *Tell me about the process of having your work selected for this project. What kind of proposal did you have to prepare?*

TN: The **LAWA Art Exhibition Program** puts out a call for proposals every two to three years. I proposed this project in 2013. At the time I was just making small collages, but I knew there was a way to blow the images up and print them. The proportions of those collages were akin to roadside billboards. They were invented landscapes that suggested expansive panoramas, but they were only 7 x 15 inches. So I proposed blowing one up across a large wall.

I knew that once I was awarded the project, installation timing would be impacted by a number of factors at the airport. Other than coordinating the appropriate locations for the types of work and artists they choose for their program, the LAWA arts team has to work around airport and airline schedules, as well as various construction deadlines.

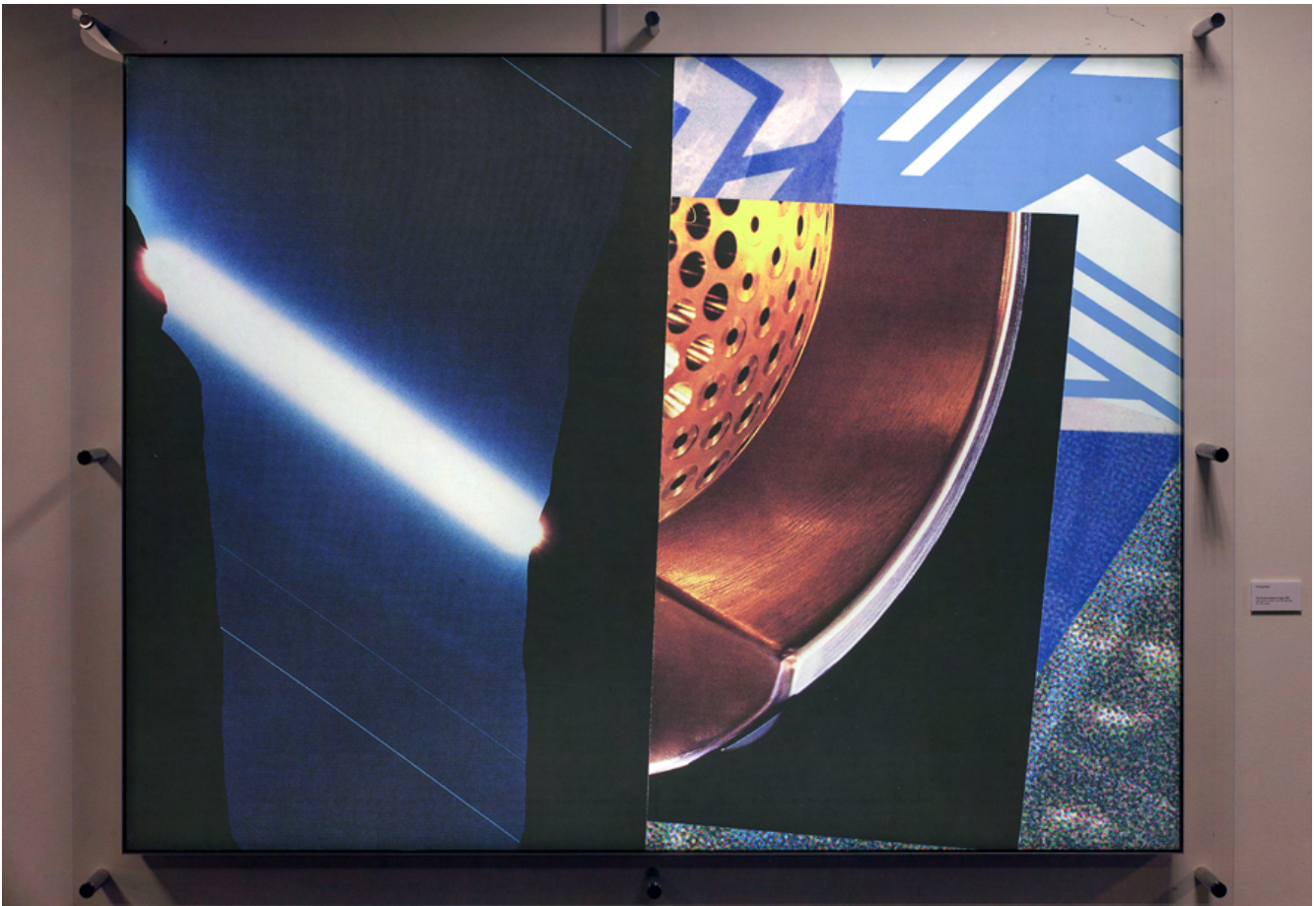
In early 2014, I was awarded a 200 foot hallway in Terminal 7, servicing United Airlines. This large expanse of running wall allowed me to include six large scale aluminum prints, a six foot lightbox, and some straight collage work.



Timothy Nolan, *The Last Convincing Clue*, 2015, dye-sublimation print on aluminum, 60 x 43 ¾ inches.



Timothy Nolan, *In the Everything Flows*, 2015, dye-sublimation print on aluminum, 45 x 41 1/3 inches.



Timothy Nolan, *The Constant Speed of Light*, 2015, latex print on Samba with LED light box, 72 x 54 inches.



Timothy Nolan, installation view with three collages on paper, all 2013, 7 x 15 ¼ inches and 4 ¼ x 15 ¼ inches.

I got the go-ahead to prepare for the project in May of 2015, with a tentative installation date of March 2016. I planned carefully, choosing the materials and fabricators well in advance, completing all print tests early in the process, and even printing and framing the balance of the work to be shown.

In short order, because of that occasionally unpredictable scheduling at the airport, the project was expanded at the last minute to include a second area in the same terminal. For this wall, I produced a triptych which includes three 6 x 6 foot panels printed on aluminum, and it floats above the newly built United Airlines ticketing area.



Timothy Nolan, *Shine On* (triptych), 2016, installation view, dye-sublimation prints on aluminum, 66 x 66 ½ (each panel).



Timothy Nolan, *Shine On* (triptych), 2016, dye-sublimation prints on aluminum, 66 x 66 ½ (each panel).

SB: *I have always thought that making public work entails a lot of bureaucracy and meetings. Is this true? Was it difficult to get to the installation phase?*

TN: I guess it depends on your tolerance for bureaucracy. Considering we're talking about one of the largest and busiest airports in the world, I didn't find it too bad. There were a few site meetings, and lots of emails back and forth. I had to sign a contract and hit benchmarks like submitting an exhibition plan, an exhibition checklist, and text for the didactic panel. This all happened over a two year period, although most in the months leading up to the installation. The program has grown a lot in recent years, which is really great for the city and its artists.

SB: *Explain how you installed the work at the airport. Did they pay for your parking?*

TN: Ha! Yes, parking was validated. But installing work in an active airport is very different from installing in a gallery. Everything has to go through security, and the installation crew has very set hours, so it took a week. But they did a bang-up job getting everything up behind the requisite Plexiglas panels. The ticketing area had to be installed after hours, so that was a midnight to 5 A.M. install.



Timothy Nolan, *Like Sound Going Sideways*, 2016, latex print on vinyl, 96 x 473 inches.

SB: *What is it like having work at a major metropolitan airport? Would you do it again? I think the show should travel to other airports!*

TN: It's staggering to think about the number of people who will see my work during the run of this exhibit – exponentially more than all the people who have ever seen my work in galleries over my 20+ years of exhibiting. In fact, on the first day of installation, I saw three friends and art colleagues who were passing through the hallway on their way in and out of L.A.

This exhibition at LAX is presented in partnership with the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, and is meant to be site-specific. Of course this does not mean the work couldn't be reconfigured, referenced, reimagined, or partnered with new work as part of a different public project. All large airports and other public spaces have their own requirements and application processes, so I continue to apply for similar projects. But if there's an airport out there who might be interested, let's talk!

In the end, art is a mode of communication, and I feel very lucky to get the opportunity to communicate with such a large audience. Granted, many may not have the time or inclination to look closely, but I'm grateful for whatever impact, no matter how subtle, the work might have on an unsuspecting viewer.

Finally, translating my design into a 40-foot mural was a real thrill. I had a pretty good idea the work could hold at that scale, but seeing it come to life after dreaming about it for three years was truly transformative for me as an artist. It really opened up a whole new world for me in the studio. So yes, I would do it again in a heartbeat.

“[Timothy Nolan: Like Sound Going Sideways](#),” Los Angeles World Airports, in partnership with the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, as part of the Art Exhibits Program at LAX. Terminal 7, Los Angeles International Airport. Through January 2017. Nolan’s work is also on view in “[Measure, Gesture, Form](#),” at the Portland Museum of Art through August 7, 2016; and in “[Summer Reverie](#)” at CB1 Gallery, Los Angeles, through August 28, 2016.

Two Coats of Paint is an NYC-based art project, that includes an award-winning art [blog](#), [artists residency](#), and other special undertakings. Questions, comments, and other inquiries may be sent to twocoatsofpaint@gmail.com.

About the art blog: Launched in 2007 and nationally read, the art blog *Two Coats of Paint* publishes original content with an emphasis on contemporary painting and related issues. *Two Coats* has been sponsored by numerous museums, universities, galleries, and arts organizations including the Guggenheim Museum, Whitney Museum, New Art Dealers Association (NADA), School of Visual Arts, Maryland Institute College of Art, American University, and Rhode Island School of Design. In 2014, *Two Coats of Paint* received a prestigious Creative Capital/Warhol Foundation Arts Writing Grant for blogging. Publisher [Sharon Butler](#), an accomplished painter, is affiliated with the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and the University of Connecticut. Two Coats of Paint is based in New York.

LAX AIRPORT ART PROGRAM REDEFINES THE EXPERIENCE OF TRANSITORY PUBLIC SPACE

WORDS SHANA NYS DAMBROT

PHOTOS PANIC STUDIO LA; COURTESY OF LOS ANGELES WORLD AIRPORTS

Even at its best, an airport is still a place of enforced loitering, usually with little beyond the tedium of queues and onslaught of shops, bars, advertisements, admonitions and muted TVs to engage your senses for the duration of your too-long wait. But as the international design and architecture world steps up its game, the airport experience has been changing at hubs from Houston to Miami to Chicago. Nowhere is this more the case than in Los Angeles, where LAX has launched an expansion and renovation—with an innovatively integrated visual art program as the jewel in its crown of plans. Sarah Cifarelli, Airport Art Manager for the Los Angeles World Airports (the public/private organization overseeing the agenda) puts it this way: “By expanding the art presence at LAX, we hope to give passengers an art experience at all stages of their journey.”



Courtney & Greene, Studio Furniture, Terminal 3 Arrivals. Photo: Panic Studio LA

Occupying 11 diverse exhibition sites across Terminals 1, 2, 3, 6, 7 and Tom Bradley International Terminal, a roster of both permanent and rotating temporary installations of painting, sculpture and video enlivens and redefines ideas about public space and reinforces the city's brand as a cultural capital and arts-driven economy. LA's Department of Cultural Affairs is a major partner in the undertaking, which explains why many of the artists involved are among the best-known in the city. Of course, that doesn't necessarily mean everyone will love everything they see. But that's fine, because the program aims to present not only pleasing pop or defanged decoration, but serious contemporary fine art, from the narrative and historical to the mysterious and experiential. While LAWA is busy figuring out the logistics of what an airport art-walk might look like, in the meantime you don't even need a plane ticket to see it all, as several artworks are mounted in parts of the airport that are open to the non-traveling public.

Mark Bradford's suspended sculpture in Bradley International Upper Departures Level is a permanent work called *Bell Tower*. Quite large, at more than 24 x 33 feet, it's constructed of 12,000 pounds of aluminum plates, tubes, wood and paper, and suggests a cross between Bradford's signature brand of palimpsestic abstract expressionism and the central broadcast module of a sports arena. Many find it haunting and unusual, a massive structure assuming the heft and panoptical presence of an information beacon, yet pulsing instead with richly layered texture, color, decay and the accumulation of emotion rather than directive. Its un-prettiness has been somewhat controversial, but the work's strangeness and tattered majesty succeeds in both activating and asking questions about the sometimes confusing qualities of shared experience in public spaces.

Also in Bradley, in the Arrivals Customs hall, is a dimensional mural-based installation by Erika Lizée. A temporary work on view through February, 2017, *Transfiguration* occupies a lengthy vitrine a few feet deep along a busy hallway.



Tim Nolan. LAX Terminal 7. *Like Sound Going Sideways*, "Shine On" Photo: PanicStudio LA Installation View

Lizée's gift for illusionistic depth and blended rendering techniques here combines with actual sculptural and bas relief elements, adding real shadow and movement to a large-scale, otherworldly form with the attributes of botanical and extraterrestrial sentience. In Terminal 3 Upper Level Ticketing (no ticket required) through July, 2018, Megan Geckler's *We've got to cross this great big world somehow*, tethers the earth to the sky in a pair of soaring sculptural vortices made of hand-dyed ropes and advanced mathematics. Geckler's trademark large-scale weaving technique is applied in hot and cool colors that occupy high-ceilinged spaces, flooded with natural light, in a manner both monumental and breezy, creating an engaging optical puzzle that actually makes your time in the security queue its own reward.



Luciana Abait. Terminal 3, Arrivals.



Megan Geckler. Terminal 3, Departures.



Erika Lizée. *Transfiguration Installation.* Tom Bradley International Terminal, Arrivals.



Barbara Strasen. *Flow & Glimpse,* Terminal 2



Carolyn Castano. *Desert*, Terminal 1.

Elsewhere at LAX, Ball-Nogues Studio and Pae White Studio have each created permanent installations, *Air Garden* and *Woven Walk* respectively, also playing on the idea of suspended, hovering and weaving-based architectural interventions. *Air Garden*'s color and contours appear to change according to vagaries of ambient light, while the "tapestry" *Woven Walk* is a colorful play off the undulations of extant ceiling cables, augmented with fiberglass and aluminum threads. In Terminal 2 Departures Atrium, (non-ticketed space) the long-term installation by Barbara Strasen, *Flow and Glimpse*, is composed of some 90 wall-mounted panels. In its way, Strasen's work is designed to be responsive to ambient light and the changing perspective of viewers in motion. The images are lenticular, with each panel combining two images of Los Angeles—one natural environment and one manmade—into a flip-flopping interspliced whole, orchestrated across six walls of the atrium.

Terminal 1 Baggage Claim (non-ticketed space) features *Ventanas* by Carolyn Castaño, a series of watercolor paintings mixing landscape, abstraction, references to the history of air-travel graphics and the compositional structure of the window. In the Terminal 7-8 Departures Hallway and Ticketing Lobby, Timothy Nolan's *Like Sound Going Sideways* and *Shine On* also directly reference the everyday surrealism of air travel in their collage-based images merging natural and built images, original photography and vintage decorative and topographical source materials. Both are vibrant, Pop-inflected collections that combine narrative, poetic content with the simple joy of enlivened transitory space. Speaking of which, back in Bradley International, the permanent video installation *See Change* features 28 site-specific works and four hours of looped programming by 17 artists from LA, New York and beyond. The installation includes a 58-screen, 90-foot video array suspended from the ceiling, and a 25-screen wall, streaming non-stop every day from 6 a.m. to 2 a.m.

In past years, musical and even site-specific dance performances have taken place throughout the terminals, no doubt to the happy bewilderment of unsuspecting travelers, and more such events, as well as the idea of a public airport-wide artwalk, are currently being planned. Visit www.lawa.org for emerging details as they alight.



TIMOTHY NOLAN

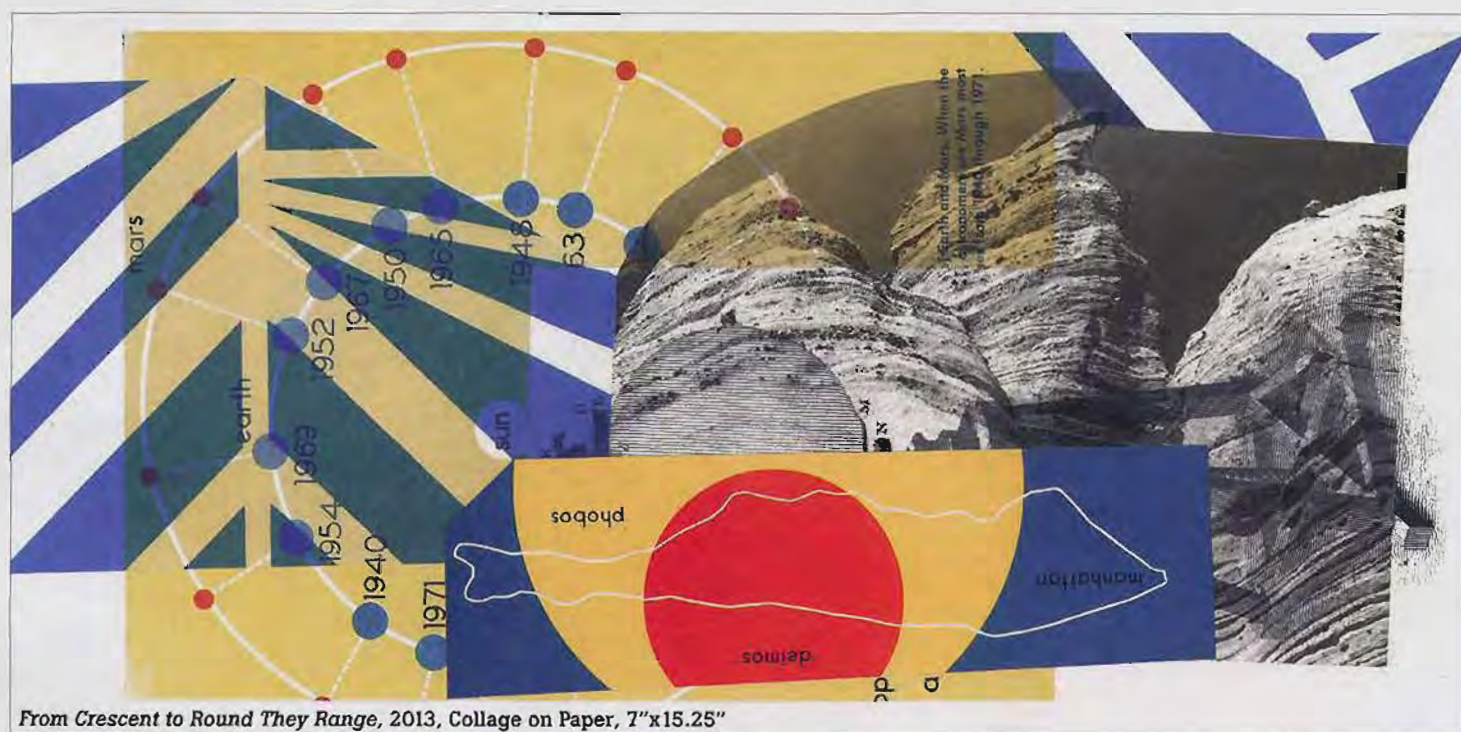
CB1 GALLERY · Los Angeles, CA.

It has become commonplace to dismiss paper books and journals as relics of the past, dead weight for the mobile and the global. Bookstores do not carry current maps and atlases. Smart phones and laptops give us directions and pinpoint precise locations gathered from satellites and surveillance technology. The small screens tell us how to go where we want to go; but in that shrinking of space and time, it is hard to see—and easier to forget—the larger picture of our surroundings.

For his exhibition "The Soft and Sweet Eclipse," Timothy Nolan scoured used bookstores for publications on cartography, geography, and astronomy and created collages of the greater world of butterfly effects. "From Behind the Moon in Dim Eclipse," one of two large dye sublimation prints on aluminum, is a juxtaposition of an atlas, illustrations of the solar system, an elevation view of a mountain, and abstract graphics layered on each other. Like an eclipse, a view of one object obscures that of another. But the palimpsest reminds us that the cycles of the sun and stars affect geologic formations that shape our environments.

The collages allude to the relationships between human activity and environmental events. "From Crescent to Round They Range" is an image of hills and a wheel of non-chronological time spanning the 1940s to the 1970s. On a rectangular strip of paper, a red orb rises out of a yellow orb on blue background, cut by an outline of Manhattan. The red orb is reminiscent of the Rising Sun, the symbol of Japan, the only country to have ever experienced not one but two nuclear bombings. The words "manhattan," "deimos," and "phobos" form a triangular formation on the paper strip. The references to the moons of Mars—"Terror" and "Fear"—and significant dates from the World War II, anti-colonial and Cold War eras gesture toward understanding the repercussions of the Manhattan Project as an ongoing fear, as in the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster.

Other collages in the exhibition bring together images of ocean currents, spacecraft components and constellation maps. This geography of the terrestrial and the celestial reminds us of the longer arc of geologic and astronomic time, a view offered by atlases and cumbersome paper maps that require awkward handling and patient searching for one's location in the world. —**Chuong-Dai Vo**



From Crescent to Round They Range, 2013, Collage on Paper, 7"x15.25"

THE HUFFINGTON POST

THE INTERNET NEWSPAPER: NEWS BLOGS VIDEO COMMUNITY



visual art source

Editorial: Recommendations, August 17, 2010

Timothy Nolan

at Marx & Zavattero, San Francisco, California

Recommendation by Chérie Louise Turner



Timothy Nolan, 'Pitch,' 2008-10, laminate and enamel on panels, dimensions variable, 24 elements

Continuing through August 21, 2010

Los Angeles-based artist **Timothy Nolan** delivers contemplative sculpture that is all clean geometric forms, a subtle palate of silver, black, gray, and white, and various surface treatments - mirrored, reflective, flat. Nolan continues his investigation of patterns, repetition, and systems, both made and natural. The work easily draws the viewer into the complexity encompassed, including the exploration of visual perception and construction of illusory versus real space.

Evident throughout is the influence of minimalism and cubism; the artist is also inspired by craft and op art. The exhibition features floor and wall sculpture as well as works of silver metallic paper on panel and other two-dimensional pieces. The centerpiece - both literally, as it takes up a large space within the gallery, and figuratively; it's enchanting - is the twenty-foot-long "Pitch." Comprising more than twenty triangular pieces of various sizes, with several of the surfaces mirrored and reflecting off of each other, the work evolves into endless shards and crystalline structures, elegantly getting to the heart of Nolan's interests. In the wall sculpture, "Stack" - which is also made up of a series of over twenty non-identical hard-edged shapes, these composed of printed vinyl on aluminum - geometric shapes in five gray-scale hues also play with our comprehension of light and shadow and the shaping of space; the piece appears to be more three-dimensional than its flat surfaces really are.

While Nolan's artwork overall is hard-edged and calculated in appearance, it's not cold. This is meditative work that we not only see but experience



Calendar

Wednesday, Jul 21 2010

Folded Metal

By Hiya Swanhuysen



Math art. Moebius aluminum siding. Bauhaus Escher. Timothy Nolan's art can make your eyes cross if you look at it too hard, or too long, but it's worth it, and fun. His new exhibit, "**Tilt,**" is anchored by a piece called *Pitch*, which looks like someone origami-ed a mirror. His wall work is large, minimalist collage-style stuff – big, silver swaths of razor power that would look equally at home in an Art Deco living room or an industrial-chic loft space. Nolan is playing with light and reflection, using an aesthetic that draws on the shiny glam of minimalist Op Art, but pushes its meditative qualities more than its eye-trickery. July 24-Aug. 21, 2010

March 24, 2010

Art

Timothy Nolan, Jaime Scholnick, and Osvaldo Trujillo: *Axis Mundi*

“ The current exhibition — just the second at Downtown's freshly-minted CB1 Gallery — is a three-person show of diverse works in whose confluences and contrasts the power of each is expanded, and in whose aspects the architectural space is further complicit. Jaime Scholnick's sculptures are intricately decorated monuments and talismans made of Styrofoam and painted line-work like obsessive sacred geometry; but they are not about Styrofoam *per se*. They belong to a broader art historical tradition of deliberately misusing (read: redeeming) post-industrial cast-off; not to mention how unwieldy even plaster would be at that scale. Osvaldo Trujillo's intimate drawings of Escher-esque fantasy structures and scenes are no less intricate, but their magic is more overt, and his draftsmanship is impeccable. Timothy Nolan's collages also recycle non-traditional art materials, incorporating reflective textures that add life, movement, and sparkle to his abstract geometrical flights. Each alone is a joy, but taken as an installation and spatial experience, the whole is nothing short of astonishing in both its ambition and serenity. ” - *Shana Nys Dambrot*

COLA 2008 Catalogue Essay

TIMOTHY NOLAN

Born 1962 Tacoma, Washington; lives and works in Los Angeles

Over the past twenty years, employing modest materials, Timothy Nolan has developed a range of complex, abstract artworks that obsessively, yet delicately and elegantly, honor organic structures and machine patterns via human synthetics. Nolan's creativity favors discerning order over sentimental expression. He enjoys the challenge of creating a lyrical composition from a limited palette of colors and forms through disciplined trial and error. His fascination with selected patterns exposes their possible human significance through repetition, repositioning, and/or recasting. The resulting drawings, low-relief wall sculptures, and floor pieces are precisely designed using systematic routines: repeated strokes, methodical formations, or habitual penetrations. Each work establishes space for the play of light on vision; some dangle or shimmer, and others appear to float or vibrate.

Most of Nolan's artworks beg us to tilt our heads or lean in for further inspection. His pieces have stealth titles (i.e., Trim, Bend, Link, Wave, Shift, Rise, and Scale). These clever noun-verb labels describe both the viewer's experience and the artist's actions (cutting, curving, hanging, unrolling, sifting, building, and measuring). For those who find beautiful significance in a computer circuit board, Nolan's work is a soothing place to rest the eyes while rousing the brain. His artworks require the same attention as puzzles or riddles. The plain constructs, repeated motifs, and implied histories confirm intellectual awareness, critical analysis, and metaphysical fulfillment.

Extorting customs from cubism, minimalism, op art, craft, and decoration, Nolan explores geometry without being solely perceptual, formalist, optical, anthropological, or mathematical. He is a postmodern abstract artist, referencing the digital future by creating analogs for today's systems age. The trine and pentad elements in his works may "queer" traditional binary polarities like male/female, taking us toward more perplexing dimensions such as memory/representation/assumption and hand-fashioned/machine-made/synthesized/simulated/cloned. Such interpretations are, however, more projective than evidentiary. With any or all of these concepts lightly in mind, Nolan explores deviations from prior patterns of nature and manufacturing.

Nolan's career signifies the transition from machine industries to our technological future—when labor is more speculative than physical and humankind is barely discernible from its inventions. As Geoffrey Batchen has keenly noted in *Burning with Desire: The Conception of Photography*: "Already there is no one reading this who is a 'natural' being, whose flesh has not been nourished by genetically enhanced corn, milk or beef and whose body has not experienced some form of medical intervention, from artificial teeth to preventative inoculations to corrective surgery... Who can any longer say with confidence where human ends and non-human begins?"

Likewise, Nolan's concentration and production subsist as a grand metaphor. He reminds us that systems (language, numbers, music, gestures, and structures) have the form to invoke history. His compositions prompt us to remain connected with original codes through present iterations, pointing toward a new consciousness. Propelled by his 2008 C.O.L.A. fellowship, Nolan is currently developing and manufacturing modular wall sculptures that expand his working scale and capacity for site-specific projects. This may result in some impressive showings in public spaces or on exterior architecture.

Without stress, using ideology and methodology, Timothy Nolan creates quirky yet witty artworks that are curiously intuitive. His craft clarifies a great denominator: the patterns we repeat, revise, and redesign signify multiple reformations of human nature.

Joe Smoke

(Cultural Grant Program Director, Department of Cultural Affairs, City of Los Angeles)

"Sequence." Timothy Nolan's reductive paintings are paroxysms of obsessive patterning. Inspired by the weave and texture of fabric, their networks of lines and simple shapes look both mathematical and natural, suggesting constellations, crystalline structures, or light filtering through trees. The large painting *Converge* is a net of white starbursts on black that creates the illusion of a faceted, organic texture. It's as if Nolan started in the center and just kept riffing on his system of lines until he got to the edges of the paper. *Surge* is a smaller work that feels more decorous and self-contained; its arrangement of marks floats just short of the edge of the panel. Nolan makes no attempt to hide the quality of his brushwork, and gets a surprising range of effects out of what is essentially the same arrangement — intersecting starbursts that form prisms of shimmering black, white, silver, and gray. The vibrations of shapes and tones are enchanting, all the more so for the casualness with which they're executed and the simplicity of their materials. *Slide*, the exhibit's only sculptural piece, is an array of triangles of white and gray card stock affixed to rows of fishing line with metal office clips. It creates a flickering, unexpectedly complex web of light and shade. This balance of abstract pattern and everyday style gives the works a delicacy and physical presence that's quirky, yet sublime. Through July 8 at Heather Marx Gallery, 77 Geary (at Grant), Second Floor, S.F. Admission is free; call 627-9111 or visit www.heathermarxgallery.com. (Sharon Mizota)
Reviewed June 28, 2006.

Visual arts

LAST CHANCE



Steve Zeyher

Timothy Nolan's 9-foot-tall installation "Slide" is part of his second solo show at Heather Marx Gallery.

:: Timothy Nolan :: As the continuing popularity of M.C. Escher and the inarguable awe of the Great Pyramids demonstrate, geometric forms fascinate. In Los Angeles artist Timothy Nolan's second solo show at Heather Marx Gallery, he explores the possibilities of geometry in both two-dimensional drawings and in a towering three-dimensional installation called "Slide." Roughly 9 feet tall, "Slide" uses monofilament lines through eyehooks set at 18-inch intervals. Hung on those threads are silver and white cover stock sheets cut into triangles; it's like a sharp-angled spiderweb, bringing into relief the tight lines of his flatter works.

Through Sat. Heather Marx Gallery, 77 Geary St., S.F. (415) 627-9111. www.heathermarxgallery.com.

AROUND THE GALLERIES

Patterns emerge through meditation

By CHRISTOPHER KNIGHT
Times Staff Writer

"Shift," the centerpiece of a show by Timothy Nolan, is an improbable cross between a Minimalist installation and a Buddhist sand painting. And why not? Both forms encourage meditation on aspects of the conflict between sensual experience and mute materiality, ephemera and permanence. Together, they also collapse East and West, ancient and contemporary.

At the Newspace Gallery, Nolan has laid out "Shift" in the main room. At first, it looks like stray linoleum. Using silvery gray powdered graphite and a mixture of baking soda and baking powder, he dusted the floor with a tight, alternating pattern of small gray and white diamond shapes. They create one large diamond, whose placement was determined by the architecture and spatial volume of the room.

Over the delicate powdery surface of the pattern, which could be blown away by a strong gust of wind or the ministrations of a well-placed broom, Nolan sprinkled flakes of glitter. They provide essential sparkle for the diamonds. The white and gray shapes create an illusion of cubes, like an optical conundrum by M.C. Escher.

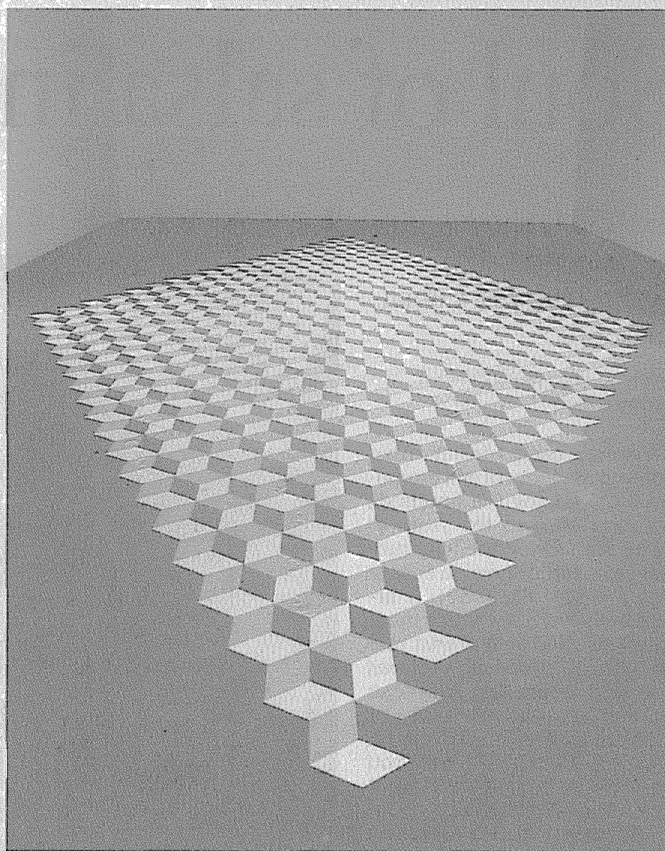
As you move around the floor design, though, the illusion shifts. Three dimensions collapse into two, then pop back up. White zigzags are crossed by gray stripes. Stacked cubes flatten into strips folded in accordion pleats. The pleats suddenly switch directions. The fragility of this temporary work concentrates time. The fact that it won't last throws the experience of "now" into high relief. When that occurs, the "now" looms as a pattern of illusion — one that's as seductive as the sparkly work.

The show also includes four paintings on translucent sheets

of white acrylic and one diptych on two tall sheets of white Mylar. Using white and silver oil paint, Nolan makes dense thickets of little rectilinear shapes — polygons, small squares and so on.

Usually, no clear pattern is discernible. An overall sense of harmony and balance does suggest that your mind might be struggling to impose a larger order. A lacy web of radiating straight lines in the diptych even manages to create a pattern of interlocking circles — although a curved line is nowhere to be found.

Newspace Gallery, 5241 Melrose Ave., Hollywood, (323) 469-9353, through April 3. Closed Sundays and Mondays.



JOSH WHITE

TIMOTHY NOLAN: "Shift" is an M.C. Escher-like conundrum.

Reviews

Timothy Nolan at Newspace

... these images (within the collective unconscious) are deposits representing the accumulated experience of thousands of years of struggle for adaptation and existence.

—Carl Jung, *Psychological Types* (1923)

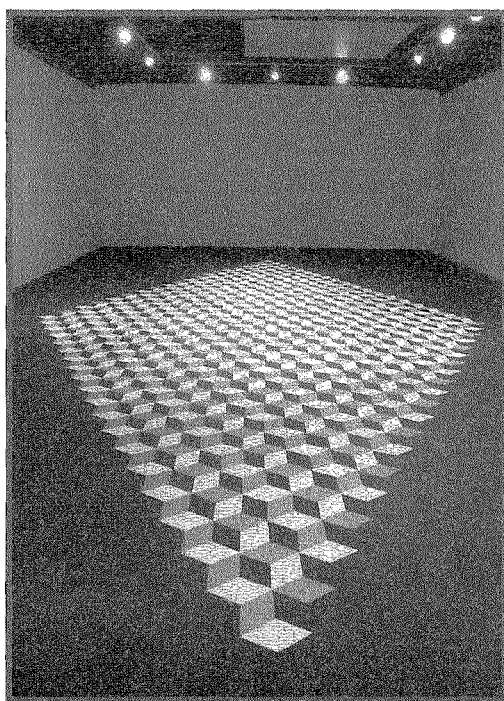
The images that populate the collective unconscious as defined by

Carl Jung are known as archetypes. They can be described as recurring or repeating units and stem from an ancient idea within Western thought attributed to Plato who referred to a similar concept as divine form or pattern. Plato theorized that divine forms or archetypes were used as templates to fashion substantive/material models. Jung's idea proposes that these original forms or blueprints are common and remain within all of humankind. They are stored at a fundamental level—a level he named the collective unconscious. In other words, according to Jung, archetypes are prints or patterns that reiterate images from the origin of species that humankind holds in common. These are present in each human psyche everywhere and for all time, thus creating a shared or collective unconscious. Archetypes, because of their pervasiveness and persistence, constantly affect behavior and perception. Jung suggests that when you succumb to the influence of an archetype; you don't have it, it has you.

Jung moved away from Plato's idea of a basic and endless, self-same and repetitious form or blueprint that served as the fundamental image type stored in the collective unconscious. He made this critical move in his thinking to account

for shift—the cumulative minute changes that permit adaptation and account for cultural nuance. He proposed that universal, initial or basic images/archetypes may be present collectively but suggested they are vulnerable to and share space with a succession of variations or versions of the original. Each version is especially valid within certain parameters but all can display as an archetypal pattern that resonates with the force to grip viewers who are susceptible or vulnerable to the basic form despite being unable to decode specific distinctions. This is the territory that Timothy Nolan seems to be mining within his recent exhibition titled, *Shift*. He is focused on critiquing the self-same permanence of universal patterns even as he validates the existence archetypal influences. Nolan is concerned with the deconstructive properties of gradation or shift—the subtle and unpredictable changes that establish space within an archetypal experience for selective rather than universal legibility.

The centerpiece of the show, *Shift*, is a large and fragile image comprised of powdery materials arranged so as to appear as a two-dimensional pattern on the cement floor of the main gallery. The image is an arrangement of diamond



Timothy Nolan, *Shift*, 2004, baking powder, baking soda, graphite, glitter, 324 square feet, at Newspace, Los Angeles. (Photo: Joshua White.)

shapes that give the illusion of interconnected blocks. It is a familiar and appealing picture—an archetypal pattern that has occurred as graphic design on pottery, fabrics and in other ways—spanning history and cultures. The cubes are white, light gray and dark gray. Each side is colored and given definition with baking powder, baking soda or graphite (the powders were sifted through a stencil) or a patch of cement floor. Nolan's point about the transient nature, or latent potential for shift,

within patterns was very clear the day I visited the exhibition. A viewer, on the previous day, had assumed the image was a projection from a camera hidden on the ceiling. S/he bent down and dragged fingers across a couple of diamond shapes to interrupt the flow of light. The result: trails of white powder across gray diamond shapes and thus—disruption. The pattern lost its integrity in an instant. Yet, the pattern did not lose its power as a mnemonic image.

Nolan's other works in the exhibition are more conventional. They feature viscous marks of white oil on cast acrylic panels. Each piece, however, repeats the message of the floor work by creating an illusion of transience. The panels display a low contrast, overall system of characters that seem but momentarily fixed to their grounds. Like the powders in *Shift*, these appear ready to float off into the surrounding environment if subjected to the slightest disturbance. A puff of air, a trailed finger, might make all the difference in the world. It

is obvious when observing this work that art may be a universal gesture with significant forms, archetypes, images and patterns fixed in a collective unconscious, but true to the nature of gestures it is not permanent—it is always an ephemeral experience and subject to shift—we can't own the moment. To quote Nolan's statement that accompanies the work, "The art is crystal clear. It is impermanent, making its memory ever more imperative." Both types of memory, the conscious as well as the unconscious memory, interact to extrapolate and store information from the meta-moments that make up an art interaction, but Nolan makes a convincing case for the idea that art only exists "in the presence of itself." We never really get it.

—Charlene Roth

Timothy Nolan: *Shift* closed April 3 at Newspace, Los Angeles.

Charlene Roth is a contributing editor to *Artweek*.

Artweek

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Art Reviews

By CHRISTOPHER KNIGHT
TIMES ART CRITIC

Industrial Strength: For his fourth show at Newspace, Timothy Nolan has made an elegant and unusual group of 18 white-on-white monoprints on translucent sheets of cast acrylic. At once handmade and manufactured, simple in style yet complex in conception, they occupy an unusually provocative territory.

Made by pressing a textile fragment in white oil paint and then using the textile as a printing plate, Nolan's works create a type of visual Braille. Your eye reads the intricate linear patterns as dense but fragile networks of surface bumps, ridges and ripples.

The textile fragments were laid out in a variety of ways for printing. Sometimes they're in rows, sometimes crosshatched, sometimes zigzagged or in waves. The individual titles—"Wave," "Crest," "Link," "Split," "Whirl," etc.—loosely describe the form those patterns take.

Mounted on acrylic brackets, the plastic panels stand away from the wall. Each pattern thus casts subtle, indistinct shadows through the translucent panel. The patterns may be printed, but like a fragile memory they refer back to the tangible material from which they were made.

The ancestry of Nolan's monoprints includes Robert Rauschenberg's famous "Automobile Tire Print" (1953), made by rolling an automobile tire dipped in black paint across sheets of paper. Playful tension between slick industrial technology and the raggedy human hand is integral to his subject.

Textile production was of course the basis for the first phase of the Industrial Revolution, two centuries ago, while Nolan's delicate linear patterns inescapably resemble circuit boards; his cast acrylic sheets have the look of a computer screen. Technology tends to be Utopian in its aspirations, but Nolan's singular monoprints assert that imperfection is embedded in the reality of all technology—not least because flaws are integral to our humanity.

Newspace, 5241 Melrose Ave., Hollywood, (323) 469-9353, through Nov. 24. Closed Sunday and Monday.

Southern California

Timothy Nolan at Newspace

An ancient group of American people, the Mimbres, produced an evocative body of pottery. They were pueblo dwellers who flourished for a time in the four corners region of the Southwest. The tribe disappeared (possibly assimilated into other clans) around 1500 AD. The artifacts that survived are mainly grave bowls. These were placed over the head of the dead when they were buried. The exterior of the pieces are blank in stark contrast to their intensely decorated interiors. In many cases a hole is punched through the bottom of the bowl.

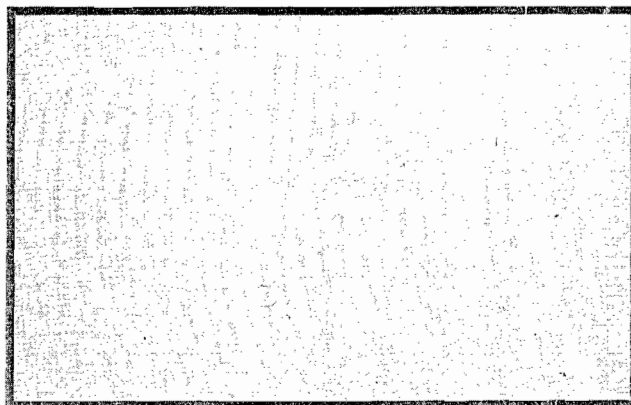
Some suppose the hole had a spiritual function and was meant to serve as a conduit for the soul through the represented real world (the interior of the bowl) into the realm of the unknown (the nonrepresentational exterior).

What is relevant here is the notion that the iconography on the bowls reveals a complex visual system wherein specific patterns (or the lack of pattern) stand in for (re-tell) intricate histories, myths and legends. One pervasive example is a series of alternating dark and light ribbons of color encircling the interior of the bowls just below the lip. These are commonly interpreted to represent a hierarchical stratum of continuity and cycle. Some circles are intact while others are broken. Another example is a black and white checkerboard pattern. The straightforward simplicity of it is said to elicit all the lore surrounding the trickster figure. A familiar pattern can efficiently encode a wealth of detailed information within communication. A case in point is a cornerstone of early education. Children are taught to respond predictably to social patterns that include language and numeric systems.

For the past several years, Timothy Nolan has been exploring the ability of

more fundamental patterns, particularly the geometries of stretched woven fabrics, to convey multifaceted data. He, not unlike the Mimbres, uses repeated motifs that are themselves repetitive constructs to create an effective visualization or overview of aspects of his culture. The patterns here, as do those on the bowls, contextualize by providing a reference to his observations of relevant historic, even legendary data.

In a current series on view at Newspace titled *Link*, Nolan has put aside an earlier device—the weaving of supple fabrics into a variety of prefabricated, often previously functional, metal frames—for frank, two-dimensional representations of the fabric patterns themselves. These are printed in white ink onto Mylar or acrylic panels using a printing press and fabric fragments



Timothy Nolan, detail of *Wave #228*, 2001, oil on cast acrylic panel, 24" x 18", at Newspace, Los Angeles.

reconfigured as printing plates. Process and material reinforce one another to make available to the discerning viewer, volumes of historic information that widens to include the contemporary. Exceedingly subtle images of common woven designs point toward a roster of reference extending from the earliest of human times to the present.

The grand scope of reference is due to Nolan's far-ranging and penetrating interest in the relationship between the handmade and the industrially produced, as well as digital production and the shifts that have occurred as new technologies merge with established modes of manufacture. *Link* excels because modest images, images of textile patterns in this instance, were understood to be capable and convincing conveyances of a complex view. An example is *Bend*. White oil on a cast acrylic panel features a print of seven strips of ribbed fabric. The strain of process has contorted the matching strips just enough to render each idiosyncratic. The weave is highlighted and we, the audience, are confronted by recognition of the initial strokes. These can be seen as the primal overlay by human hands of two threads but also the random digital rendering of a database. Importantly, once repeated, they become a suggestive pattern and the transcendental element of Nolan's inquiry.

—Charlene Roth

Timothy Nolan: *Link* closed November 24 at Newspace Los Angeles.

NO TEXTILE WITHOUT A TEXT:

The Uses of Pattern in the Work of Timothy Nolan
by Carmine Iannaccone

There is pleasure to be had in pattern. Every infant ever cooed to sleep by a repetitive lullaby knows that. For many tribal cultures, the patterning that adorns their hair, skin, or pottery is also a source of power, insofar as its regularity compensates for the often-unpredictable forces of nature. Depending upon the circumstances though, these positives can just as quickly become negatives. For an adult, a repetitive ditty can be maddening. In industrialized societies, the predictability of mass-produced goods has become the insignia of soullessness. Either way, it's difficult for humans *not* to have a reaction to patterning - our species is too deeply attuned to it. It's important to realize this at the outset because it helps explain why Timothy Nolan's work does much more than the obvious job of producing beguiling visual rhythms. Both his earlier sculpture and current work on Mylar and acrylic play upon our sensitivities to pattern in general, enticing our appetite for it on one hand, while also stroking a potentially raw nerve. What makes his art significant isn't the way he manipulates patterning, but the way he exposes our predisposition to it, raising the question of where that predisposition puts us in the current age.

*

One hundred and ninety years ago, textile workers in England made an assessment of their own age. In the name of a mythical leader named Ned Ludd, they rioted against the knitting machines and power looms they felt were robbing them of a livelihood. Their protest was quixotic, but it did galvanize an enduring suspicion of technology in our society. Although certainly not a Luddite, Nolan does establish a dialectic between handwork and mass-production in his art which, ironically, returns to the figure of textiles. Working entirely by hand in an early body of sculpture, he systematically wove long lengths of webbing, ribbon, and elastic into a variety of found metal objects. Machine-made things like spoked hubcaps, barbecue grills, even an extension ladder became de-facto looms. But because the "fabric" he created on these armatures was inextricable from the object, both were gently subverted.

Those early pieces energized negative space in Nolan's work in a way that would carry through to everything else that followed. His palette of white on white, in particular, continues to push the figure/ground relationship to its limit. When, in another body of work, he threaded ribbon into the interstices of large sheets of wire mesh, he essentially reversed the spatial priorities of the material, foregrounding the part of it that wasn't there (the spaces) while forcing the steel armature itself into the background. The lovely patterns that resulted weren't "created" so much as "released." Not that anyone would suggest pattern isn't already there in such products, only that it's incidental and, as a rule, numbing rather than attractive. So Nolan's gesture not only reversed the spatiality of the material, but its cultural significance as well, blurring utility with adornment. And that's why, despite appearances, he's not a formalist. Nor is his work motivated by the disengaged optical or perceptual concerns that drive other forms of abstraction. On the contrary, it is deeply rooted in the social realm. It always refers back to some set of human groupings, however they're identified: craftsmen/factory workers, males/females, pragmatists/aesthetes.

In this light, it's not insignificant that a recent suite of drawings on Mylar were all produced with old drafting templates now rendered obsolete by computer graphic programs - another case of technology replacing the human operator. But it's not so simple. Technology doesn't replace human operators, it replaces older technologies, and it doesn't just replace them, it re-defines them. Old tools have a way of hanging around, with new values attached. As the Luddites discovered, technology doesn't eclipse craftsmanship, it redefines its use and its meaning by establishing a new social paradigm into which it must fit. Timothy Nolan's work is the staging area for that interaction where different modes of production test one another, redefine limits, shift parameters. His current pieces on cast acrylic were made with a printing press and plates constructed of (not surprisingly) textile fragments. Whereas the mechanism in this case is meant to insure the perfection and uniformity of an edition, Nolan's output is scarred with the evidence of being hand-made: the designs are often unevenly inked, out of registration, and simply not repeated (there is no edition). But if all this equates the human touch with error and imperfection, it's not as though the artist loses a competition, like a latter-day John Henry (another great Luddite) battling the steam drill. The artist is merely re-defined. Rather than the traditional master craftsman he now becomes...what?

The body of work that Timothy Nolan has produced re-casts him as an author rather than a craftsman. Although it bears no messages, Nolan's textile patterning does have a text to it, one which re-writes the technological codes to which it is beholden. His work documents the complex relationship of humans to machines, and how the meaning of both continues to evolve in our time.

ART REVIEWS

By LEAH OLLMAN
SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

Humorous Order: Timothy Nolan is a Minimalist with a sense of humor. He exercises stringent discipline in his work, but not as an end in itself. Instead, order and repetition at times make for a sublime visual spectacle and, at the very least, a fun retinal buzz.

"Trim," the title piece of his show at Newspace, consists of two tall panels (98 inches high) of galvanized metal whose grill-like surface has been woven through with white satin ribbon. The result is a terrific fusion of opposites, as the hard, masculine-associated industrial material consorts with the soft, feminine and domestic one.

The ritualized handwork of weaving characterizes all of the wall pieces, which buckle and warp like tapestries. Nolan repeats the format throughout the show, varying the width of the ribbon, the grid pattern of the armature and the size and orientation of the works.

Just when the formula starts to feel exhausted, he extends and invigorates it through a dazzling floor piece called "Settle," made by dusting a mixture of baking soda, baking powder and glitter into a pattern of nearly 100 precise squares. Like Rachel Lachowicz's remakes in lipstick of the macho icons of Minimalism, Nolan turns inside-out Carl Andre's zinc and magnesium floor tiles of the late 1960s, replacing their permanence with transience, their hard density with ephemeral dust, their matte dullness with a glimmering delicacy. As transitory as "Settle" is, its spunky, subversive spirit makes an impact that can't be swept away with a stroke of the broom.

■ *Newspace, 5241 Melrose Ave., (213) 469-9353, through March 28.*

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'Themes and Variations' at the Torrance Art Museum

A small showcase like the Torrance Art Museum does not—cannot—mount exhaustive surveys. When it takes a look at current local abstraction, as in *Themes and Variations*, it provides examples, not samples, of a broadly defined practice, and does better to bring forth the individual sensibilities of the participating artists than to identify commonalities among them. All the twelve artists comprising *Themes and Variations* share a commitment to making art that is in no way a pictorial representation of anything else. Evocation of something in the "real world" is accidental or incidental; natural or manmade forms may inspire formal elaboration—some of the themes and variations the title of the show alludes to—but the artists, in elaborating thus, move away

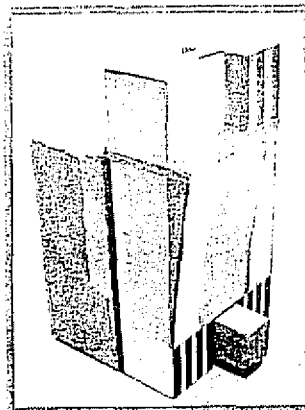
from rather than towards a mirror of the world. Abstraction is its own world—or universe.

Themes and Variations, then, was a sum of parts, not a whole, a for-instance look at how various artists, from various backgrounds working in various manners, create their own universes and populate them with distinctively conceived and wrought artwork. Some are more distinctive than others, but no artist in the show was merely consistent; no matter how dependent on a self-determined formula, every painter or object-maker (or in a



couple of instances, painter-object-maker) was shown to bring expansive and often unpredictable variation from that formula. "Formula" of course equates here with "theme"; curator (and museum director) Kristina Newhouse clearly conceived of "theme" in musical as well as pictorial terms. That is, the works of any one artist in the show restated and re-examined a basic visual formulation, defined by size or shape or gesture or material or whatever, rather than a basic subject matter (such as still life, say, or global warming). Some of the work may bear such extra-formal content, but that content was not at issue here.

Above: Pamela Jorden, *Untitled*, 2007, oil on linen, 66" x 90"; below: David McDonald, *Whole Parts*, 2007, mixed media, 42" x 26-1/2" x 22-1/2" at the Torrance Art Museum.



In this, Newhouse brought us back to the origins of abstract art a century ago, in the painting of artists who took their cues from spiritual and musical models. It's not likely any of the twelve artists in *Themes and Variations* systematically translates musical pitch into color, or practices Theosophy, but to various degrees the formulas they devise and their methods for cultivating these formulas reflect a sense of responsibility to both the sensory and the ineffable qualities of such practice. They want their work to move the viewer much as music moves the listener, and they also want to be moved themselves in the process of making the work. The most gestural painters included in the show, Philippa Blair and David Palmer, certainly impart this sense, recapitulating the abstract expressionist concept of jazz-like improvisation in the accretion of many active, even nervous brushstrokes. A broader lyricism pervaded other painterly approaches in the show, those of Michelle Fierro and Pamela Jorden, and still others—the painting of Brad Eberhard and the sculpture of David McDonald—engaged an almost architectonic rigor; but musicality inflected their sense of space, color and rhythm.

Music was not the hidden agenda of *Themes and Variations*, however—at least not the only one. Structure itself was the theme upon which artists such as Tim Nolan, Eric Zammitt and Brian Wills built, achieving a wide variety of effects—Zammitt's lustrous buzz, Wills's shimmer, Nolan's unfolding and multiplying—but a shared feeling of natural stability. Nature itself seemed to impel the floating forms in Coleen Sterritt's work on paper and, in very different ways, the bristling little objects of Robert Walker and the sprawling, sprouting thing Tyler Vlahovich planted in the middle of the gallery like a worn couch overtaken by a jungle. The conjuration of nature is another of abstract art's basic conceits, and it was if anything reassuring to see it, along with the emulation of music, driving and defining the production of abstract art. Whether they know it or not, Newhouse avowed in the selection of these dozen variators, these southern California artists are maintaining a modern tradition.

—Peter Frank

Themes and Variations: New Abstraction in Los Angeles closes November 3 at Torrance Art Museum, 3320 Civic Center Dr., Torrance.

Peter Frank is a freelance writer based in Los Angeles.

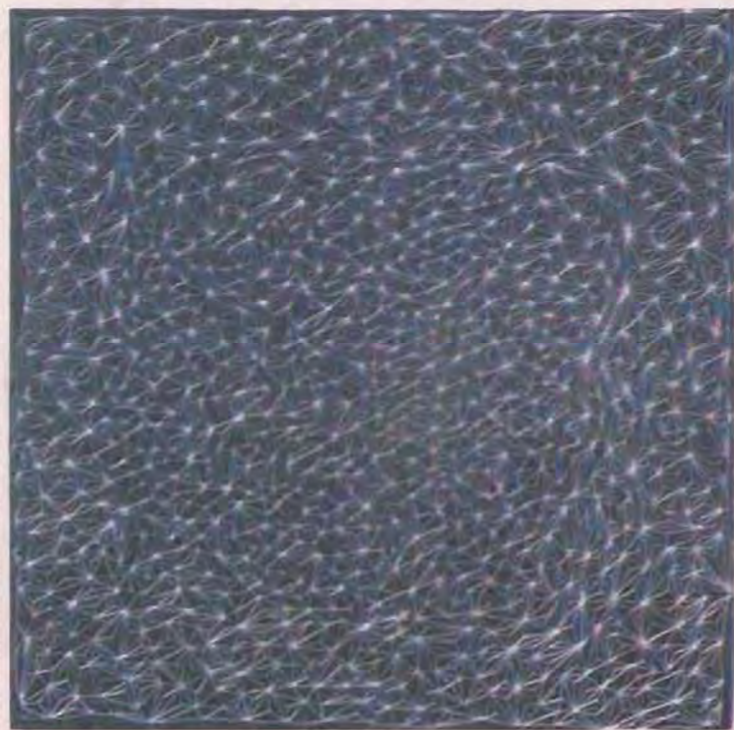
By LEAH OLLMAN
Special to The Times

The definition of drawing, expanded

A delicious bit of market-driven irony has boosted drawing, the oldest visual art form, into the limelight as the hottest new trend. The more attention drawing gets, the more new adherents it seems to attract. Never mind that some of them are working in paint and sculptural materials; if a work is in a drawings show, it must be a drawing. Cross-fertilization and discovery matter more than exclusionary definitions anyway.

The "Major Drawings" show at Carl Berg showcases nine artists who work large, either in the spirit of drawing, with directness and immediacy, or the old-fashioned way, with pencil and paper. Versatility and vitality largely run high.

James Buss draws innocuous roadside scenes with exquisite finesse and sets them, like snapshots in oversized mats, within huge panels that telescope our focus deep into the details. Chelsea Dean is also a technical wizard, building up images of plants from loops of hair-thin lines. Engaging drawings by Margaret



Carl Berg Gallery

DRAWING EXHIBIT: Timothy Nolan plays with pattern and deviation in his untitled work at Carl Berg Gallery.

Griffith and Timothy Nolan play with pattern and deviation, repetition and improvisation.

Of lesser interest are watercolors of burst balloons by Neha Choksi, which barely transcend the level of sophomore exercise. Steve Schmidt's manic, skittering line (made by attaching his pencils to power tools) has more energy than purpose, and John Geary's charcoal drawing of a young chimp is accomplished but dull. Gelah Penn has spun a frivolous stream-of-consciousness doodle in the space of the gallery's front window using colored plastic thread that's been strung, knotted and whipped into frizzy tumbleweeds.

The most stirring piece in the show is Tony de los Reyes' "Trinidad," painted in bistre, a pigment made from soot. The

drawing consists of a single gesture, a large, swift comma the color of dried blood. The pigment has pooled in several areas and dried to a glossy dark crust, but in between, where the paint is translucent, De los Reyes has conjured faint images of ships, perhaps in battle. The history of conquest wafts through, within the pure potency and fury of the physical mark.

Carl Berg Gallery, 6018 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, (323) 931-0060, through Saturday, www.carlberggallery.com

Southern California

'Major Drawings' at Carl Berg Gallery

Almost perforce, drawing surveys now feature work not made on paper or with traditional drawing materials. In fact, it's actually a relief to find such a survey whose meta-drawings all display methods or at least reasoning that directly addresses draftsmanly line, gesture and substance. And it's reassuring that the expanded-format works included in *Major Drawings*—and its, er, drawing drawings no less—are so assured and engaging.

Bringing gallery artists together with artists not represented (at least yet) by Carl Berg, *Major Drawings* wanted simply to reaffirm the fact that drawing is no longer considered a second-tier practice, least of all by artists themselves. This, too, would seem to be a point proven decades ago by Robert Rauschenberg and an army of post-minimalists. But with other troops currently afoot—platoons of cartoon-influenced figure-drawers converging on us from points as far afield as Japan, Canada and the Bay Area—perhaps it was time to champion younger draftspeople who think big, work bold and successfully revive (whether they know it or not) some very fruitful directions first proposed a generation ago.

None in *Major Drawings* thought bigger and worked bolder than Gelah Penn. The Brooklyn-based artist filled Berg's ample display window with an explosion of hair, fur, wires, tendrils and many other manners of lines described physically in three-dimensional space. Again, Penn's strategies are not new, harking back as they do to fuzzy, hairy, stick-thinny installations of the 1970s and 1980s (by such as David Hammons, Nancy Graves and Ellen van Fleet), but in her energy, exuberance, distinctive approach and evident conviction she makes them her own. Similarly, James Buss takes up where Vija Celmins (among others) leaves off, covering small areas of large sheets with concentrated graphite marking in order to describe itchy textures and ambiguous terrains. John Geary, working a lot larger in charcoal, picks up on Celmins's hyperrealistic aspect, applying it to an image (a simian of some sort—perhaps a baby gorilla?—chewing on a branch) that is almost unsettlingly banal.

Steve Schmidt's two works effectively cover large areas with obsessive pencil doodlings. Paul Klee wrote of "tak-

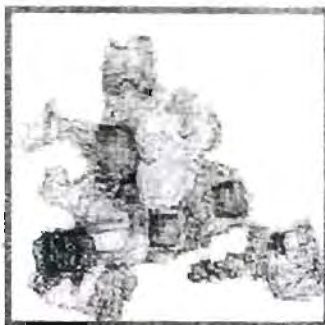
ing a line for a walk," and Schmidt allows his graphic contemplation to take him for quite a stroll, wandering all over the place, back on itself many times, until the paper is choked with a dense, mysterious tangle. Timothy Nolan effects a more regular weblike structure by laying kinked white lines all over a colored surface, in a pattern more regular than Schmidt's, but still fluid and shyly erratic. By contrast, Tony de los Reyes goes for an almost painterly image, applying hister to paper in a wavelike formation inside of which dark colors begin—just begin—to coalesce into recognizable forms.

The only quality shared by these works—and those of Neha Choksi, Chelsea Dean and Margaret Griffith—besides their physical breadth is their visual delicacy. Indeed, if you permitted yourself a gustatory synesthesia, *Major Drawings* became a visit to a patisserie, a collection of baking, iced and spun sugar wrought by three-star pastry chefs. We're not making nutritional metaphors here, but sensual ones: These artworks seduced the eye and melted on its tongue. Rather than glaze the mind, these assured and virtuosic works gave it a rush.

—Peter Frank

Major Drawings closed March 11 at Carl Berg Gallery, Los Angeles.

Peter Frank is a freelance writer based in Los Angeles.



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AUG. 22, 2005

THE NEW YORKER

GALLERIES-UPTOWN

"REPEAT PERFORMANCE"

Repetition is the hallmark of minimalism, but it's evident in practically every period of art, from craftsmen's reproductions of religious icons to Warhol's soup cans. Here, repetitive mark-making is executed in baking soda, graphite, and glitter (Tim Nolan's wonderful geometric floor painting "Shift"), beeswax and paraffin (George Stoll's cast tumblers, which make their way into many of this gallery's shows), and staples (Alison Foshee's simple oak, willow, and ginkgo leaves are "drawn" into the paper with staples). Rounding things out are several of the usual suspects from art's golden age of repetition, the nineteen-sixties: Carl Andre, Walter De Maria, Frank Stella, Agnes Martin, and Eva Hesse. Through Sept. 17. (Anthony Grant, 37 W. 57th St. 212-755-0434.)