



"Surface Affect"

Tue May 29 2012

In this loose-knit but elegantly staged exhibition, six artists meditate on the fluctuating relationship between outward appearance and the conveyance of ideas or emotions. It's a theme that could encompass almost anything, but Abreu's selection, which incorporates recent work in painting, sculpture, sound and video, is characteristically refined. There's a neat play here on the movement from object to image and back, and some intriguing tweaks on the communicative potential of the found and the abstract.

Half the artists investigate the peculiarities of electronic media. Antoine Catala joins two flatscreen TVs face-to-face with a mirrored tube that suggests an uncanny extrusion of the broadcast image into real space. Florian Hecker directs a single speaker at a patch of tiled wall so that one almost expects its distorted aural output to have a discoloring impact on the hard white surface. And Sam Lewitt interweaves hard-drive magnets with credit cards, wiping their data in the process.

Other contributors emphasize the tactile. Rey Akdogan uses carpet scraps, padded boards and theatrical lighting gels in an apparent attempt to locate the point at which his sculptures collapse back into their component parts.

His wall-mounted assemblages of packaging and display materials seem to just barely hold together, their tentative feel probing where meaning itself might begin. Paul Pagk's abstract canvases, meanwhile, present soft-edged geometric fields of color in which form is never quite allowed to settle and solidify, and Raha Raissnia collages salvaged filmstrips with other materials to create unique slides for "live" projection.—*Michael Wilson*



Antoine Catala, HDDH



"Surface Affect," Installation view at Miguel Abreu Gallery