



V MAGAZINE

A NEW KIND OF GOLD MINING

TEXT JOSEPH TEELING

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Bea Fremderman, "Untitled", 2015, ink on paper, 14" x 17"
Courtesy the Artist and Aran Cravey, Los Angeles.

ARTIST BEA FREMDERMAN EXPOUNDS UPON HER LATEST SOLO SHOW IN LOS ANGELES: AN EXPLORATION OF WEALTH, TRADITION, AND COMMUNICATION TODAY

Bea Fremderman is an artist living in New York. Her show *Hindsight is 20/20* is currently on view at Aran Cravey Gallery in Los Angeles. She has shown internationally since 2007 in spaces including the New Museum, Rhizome, and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago. The show in L.A. is a witty floor plan of dark humor and despair. Formally seductive multidisciplinary works address overproduction, value and waste, leading the viewer through the titles (all based on old Russian proverbs) to the objects ranging from prints and concrete sculpture, to Eastern Bloc wool boots and chicken



coops. Fremderman manages to keep us smiling, if somewhat uneasily, while we contemplate the relative nature of value.

Can you pick three pieces from the show and describe their production and content?

BEA FREMDERMAN Untitled (drawing): This is my favorite piece. It's the last piece you see in the show because it is hung on the back of the chicken coop, which is in the back of the gallery. I wish I was a better draftsman, but I'm not. I had a vision for this piece and originally I was trying to figure out a way I could produce this work myself. I was toying around with the idea of making a 3-D rendering (which I can do), but it honestly didn't feel right. I wanted something a bit more intimate and human. Also something that the viewer knew took time. I sketched out a few ideas and presented them to a friend who was commissioned to execute the piece. I have a day job. I need to have a day job in order to pay my bills. I love my job because it allows me to do what I'm really passionate about in life and that is a great thing. Most of us don't feel like ourselves at work. We do what we're supposed to in order to pay the bills, afford the things in life that make us a bit happier and enjoy the company of others over an overpriced glass of wine. Jobs allow us to leisure. In leisure time, we finally connect to our true selves and no longer feel disassociated from who we feel we are. The drawing is an objectified version of myself. A box figure in the heterotopic confines of an ambiguous elevator. The setting is similar to an office or bureaucratic setting. In my hand is a cellphone and a credit card. The figure is staring directly at the viewer with a Mona Lisa-esque gaze.

Untitled (Bench): The idea for the bench actually came to me in a dream. It's very unusual for me to remember my dreams, but as soon as I woke up I quickly sketched out the divided bench I had dreamt up, at four in the morning. The design is familiar but strange, not only because of the bird spikes but also because of the brutality of the design itself. A divided bench like that is usually found in public spaces. At bus stops, outside of corporate high rises, etc. Usually, division benches try to hide the fact they aren't permitting someone to lay down. At first glance those benches seem harmless. Almost polite in a way, like they are breaking up space so you don't have to touch the person sitting next to you, sterilizing the space in between individuals. The reality of the bench's design is that it keeps people from truly resting.

Hungry Bellies Have No Ears (gold scrap, bar and tooth): The pieces of gold scrap from discarded electronics are reappropriated and coalesced into a functioning part of the body, the ersatz tooth, which resides in the main faculty for communication in the human body. So you have discarded currency of information, contemporary gold panning through flow of discarded technological ephemera...Something I always find



myself thinking about is how in 1971 the US went off the gold standard. That value in regards to US currency became a concept and something to be interpreted. Equally as interesting to me is panning for gold. That out of nothing you can find something, that in dirt there's value. Now there's a new kind of gold mining that consists of recovering gold from electronics. It's crazy the amount of obsolete electronics everyone owns. My parents for example have a huge stack of old VCR and DVD players in their master bedroom. I know that in my room they repurposed one of my underwear drawers as an old cellphone drawer. I don't think they have enough time to go to the recycling center, so everything just kind of gathers in the house. Most of our computerized electronics contain gold because gold is a conductor of electricity. Hungry Bellies Have No Ears is a sculptural triptych consisting of three acrylic boxes held together with gold screws. The first of the three boxes is filled with miscellaneous electronic scrap that contains gold conductor bits. The second contains an impure gold bar that was melted down from all the bits. And the third contains a pure gold crown tooth. The idea was, something that was once obsolete is now functional again because of the integral property of gold. The gold goes from a transmitter of electronic information, to a material, to a functional part of the body that also transmits information.