

Kayne Griffin Corcoran

Lehrer-Graiwer, Sarah. "Reviews: Daniel Knorr Kayne Griffin Corcoran." *Artforum*, Nov 2013. 295-296.



View of "Daniel Knorr," 2013.

Daniel Knorr KAYNE GRIFFIN CORCORAN

Daniel Knorr's Los Angeles debut was so conceptually tidy and neatly packaged as to seem pat, yet it opened onto divergent readings. The show's fourteen brightly colored, polyurethane wall reliefs, titled "Depression Elevations," 2013, were cast from potholes in the streets of LA (with one piece molded from the cobblestones of Berlin, where Knorr is based). In addition, the artist roamed the city's famously car-centric urban sprawl to collect all kinds of litter—from disposable floss toothpicks to license plates to snack bags—which he then had pressed between the pages of two hundred unique artists' books, constituting the ninth edition of his *Carte de Artiste* publication series, 2007–, which documents the places where he has exhibited.

"Depression": Potholes are signs of breakdown, decomposition, damaged property, economic downturn, neglect, being in the pits or in a slump—in sum, they represent the collaborative if unwitting wear and tear of civic infrastructure over time and on a mass scale. No two potholes are alike: The shapes of their depressions are uniquely irregular, even if they are all similarly rounded and stretched oblong by tires in motion. "Elevations": Knorr's cast reliefs of the potholes' empty spaces are transformed, by their bright colors and translucent plasticity, into cheerful uppers, or mood enhancers that are intoxicating in their extravagant artificiality, like visual pills to be popped.

More than one thing about these works is lip-smacking and oral. (Doesn't a pothole also suggest an open mouth, another thing to get stuck in?) Mounted with their craggy, bulging underbellies touching the wall, the casts presented a smooth, flat upside to the viewer that was shiny, slick, and wet-looking, as though it had been licked. Knorr's colors are those of Jolly Ranchers, Life Savers, Slurpees, slushies, and Mountain Dew, with their chemically concocted flavors: Take your pick of cherry, blueberry, tropical mango, grape, or lime. Syrupy sweet but also acidic and toxic, these works made me pucker and melt at the same time. Of course, this was also a site-specific choice of material on the artist's part: Resin, with its glassy surfaces and pellucid hardness, plays off the region's celebrated history of using such industrial materials in aeronautic-, automobile-, and surf-related design, which made possible the space-age, sucked-lozenge aesthetic of Finish Fetish sculptors from John McCracken and Craig Kauffman to Peter Alexander and Helen Pashgian.

This was Knorr's most decorative and overtly object-oriented body of work yet—so hyperbolically candied and delectably gaudy as to seem a genuine parody of blue-chip decadence. The show's only colorless cast, positioned at the gallery's entrance as the project's starting point, had an understated, almost frigid elegance in comparison with the rest, while the flecks of dirt stuck in its backside made the piece approximate a discarded chunk of faux ice on a film set. In contrast, the project's end point was lush and garish, vivid and painterly with infectious exuberance: One canvaslike, rectangular panel swirled with inky clouds of indigo; another polychromatic piece overlapped the primaries to form a loose color wheel. A hot-pink cast recalled Michael Asher's early use of molded Plexiglas in that same electric hue (*Untitled*, ca. 1967), connecting to a local precedent in which material and form married Minimalism,

Conceptualism, and Pop. Across the room, a large piece in dark purple alluded weirdly to amethysts, geodes, and new age crystals. Knorr's sculptures gesture to opposite poles of West Coast culture. What he poured into and pulled out of the streets of Los Angeles ultimately became petrified into glossy pieces of eye candy in the gallery, as if he had funneled the stuff of good and bad taste together into these puddles, solidifying them into a show of complex and conflicted appeal.

—Sarah Lehrer-Graiwer