



Isidro Blasco: *Side Building*, 2006, C-prints, board, wood and hardware, 107 by 120 by 72 inches; at DCKT Contemporary.

of hue. They also incorporate an intuitive structure derived from preserving the history of each painting's creation. By working this way, Ehrlich aligns himself with the tradition of the New York School, whose lively gestures form part of his vocabulary.

Ehrlich often drives his point home with a form that dominates the composition. The 9-foot-square *Drift*, 2005-07 (all works oil and mixed mediums on panel), features a jagged white diagonal that moves from lower left to upper right; it resembles nothing so much as a lightning bolt crossing the sky. Its poetic resonance is intensified by the yellowish field extending behind it, while the top, mostly a rust red, and the black bottom portion frame the painting's barely contained energy. *Stryk* (2007, 4 by 7 feet) has an equally energetic and volatile surface. Drips punctuate a yellowish-red field that takes up roughly the upper two thirds of the painting; a

black area below is activated by splashes of white paint. A broad slash of white curving down from the upper left seems to signify spiritual energy; one remembers that Ehrlich spent several years in Japan (1979-83) studying ceramics, which must have helped shape his sensitivity to materials.

Working in layers and leaving each transparent to the pattern of gestures that preceded it, Ehrlich makes exuberant paintings that acknowledge their pasts, both those that are particular to the making of each work, and those that pertain to the history of his medium.

—Jonathan Goodman

### Isidro Blasco at DCKT Contemporary

Photographic representation of space colludes with sculptural reality in the tough, elegant work of Spanish-born New Yorker Isidro Blasco to form a hybrid with an affinity to architectural models. The artist photographs apartment buildings and streetscapes (including tacky commercial signage and shambling pedestrians) in his Queens neighborhood, taking multiple shots of his subject at various angles but from the same vantage point.

From large, glossy digital color prints he selects segments and mounts them on museum board and plywood. By means of a complex buttressing system, he assembles these panels in bristling high relief, with gaps and overlaps distending and distorting the spatial relationships recorded in the photos. The pictorial dynamism of, for example, *Side Building with Hydrant* (61 by 58 by 22 inches, all works 2006) results from the

contradiction between the racing photographic perspective of the bland brick building and the support's planar physicality. Supposedly, for each assemblage there is one viewpoint from which the structure coheres visually into pictorial seamlessness, but more interesting is the physically discontinuous picture plane's intimation of instability, of dissolving mortar and slipping foundations.

This show, titled "The Middle of the End," consisted largely of portions of a room-filling installation of the same title that was seen last spring at Atlanta's ACA Gallery. Several segments were reworked as individual pieces to hang on the wall; just one retained its original freestanding orientation. *Side Building* (107 by 120 by 72 inches) consists of views of the same apartment building, tidy but looming. With its stilts, shims and shiny clamps, the back of the piece is as visually engaging as the front. It suggests that behind the poised facade of quotidian city life is a precarious support system, pieced together with whatever scraps are handy.

Blasco is great with interior spaces, as well, as in the smaller *Laundry Room with Mirror*, wherein overlapping panels add shadows to an already shadowy site. These visual complications to familiar photographic space recall David Hockney's piecemeal depiction and the architectural apparitions in Mary Miss's photo/drawings.

Blasco, unsatisfied by investigation of spatial perception, has lately broadened his thematic scope to address domestic terrorism. He alters some of his photos, digitally splicing in explosions that rip through his sleepy, oblivious enclaves. This addition is a misstep, providing a too-literal narrative explanation for the ruptures in the urban fabric we see in the work, and undermining its otherwise intriguingly understated sense of dread. It is tempting to think that the front-line-is-among-us idea is just not taken far enough, except that *Car Bomb*, a wall work in which a horrific conflagration fills the left half, is both the most explicit and the least interesting piece in the show. A strength

of Blasco's approach has been the emotional restraint behind its formal innovation, conveying not destruction but disorientation, the unsettlingly simultaneous expansion and compression of space that the urban dweller experiences.

—Stephen Maine

### Daniel Douke at OK Harris

Daniel Douke's carefully observed and meticulously rendered paintings replicate the common commercial carton. More than trompe l'oeil, this Pasadena-based artist's deadpan works achieve a level of scuffed verisimilitude exceeding the acrylic-painted wooden product boxes exhibited by Warhol in 1964. In this survey, Douke's extraordinary 35½-by-3-by-3-inch faux shipping carton *Ottumwa* (1979, acrylic on masonite) tentatively leans its length against the gallery wall. It dates from the year of Douke's first exhibition at OK Harris (swimming pool landscapes preceded it). A label on one end



Brent Green: *Paulina Hollers*, 2006, color film, approx. 12 minutes; at Bellwether.

Daniel Douke: *GTX*, 2006, acrylic on canvas, 15 by 9¼ by 9 inches; at OK Harris.



identifies the carton's putative contents. Its reductively buff-gray surface—shared by other objects in the show—is casually scrawled with the number 820 in what appears to be an ordinary marker but could be airbrush.

In the roughly 15-by-10-by-9-inch acrylic-on-canvas *GTX* (2006), the graphics are more emphatic than in the previous example, and the offset printing is believably rendered in a reddish orange, green and black, replete with bar code and Web address, a Platonic shadow of the real thing. Here Douke's simulated marks of abrasion make the box appear worn from handling and shipping; the eye is taken in by this wholly crafted illusion. What is not visible is the framework support-