Aaron Curry: Left to right, *Boy with Horns (with Mountains in his Pocket)*, *In the Absence of Danny Skullface (#2)* and *Danny Skullface Sky Boat (Reclining)*, all 2009; at Michael Werner.

But since the words are not from the "same mind" but merely come out of the mouths of actors playing a host of characters conceived by different writers, that effect is somewhat fractured.

The works' merit as a sociological exposé is perhaps unavoidably undermined by their inevitable entertainment value. As usual, the acting titans steal the scene. Moreover, Breitz doesn't capture an idea of gender truth so much as reveal her own biases. Streep, for example, has played a number of strong, independent women, and a very different story could've been cobbled together from different clips. Which perhaps reveals a larger truth: all of us—artists, editors, etc.—filter our experiences to suit preconceived ideas and to construct the stories we wish to tell.

—Stephanie Cash

AARON CURRY
MICHAEL WERNER

Though it is wearying to track the dichotomies in the gleefully schizoid work of Aaron Curry, the artist presents them with undeniable panache. "The Colour Out of Space," this young but established L.A. sculptor's New York solo debut, opposes high and low, flat and spatial, abstract and figurative, rough and slick, esteem for the language of midcentury modernism and eagerness to send it up. Concocted from a menu of influences that nearly cancel each other out in a haze of equivocation, the work is cerebral and ambitious, but too clever for its own good.

It's also less thorny than his work in

"Unmonumental" at the New Museum last spring. The six freestanding sculptures at the main gallery (the show spilled over to Werner's nearby ancillary space) are assembled of flat, biomorphic shapes fitted together at right angles by means of interlocking slots. They recall Noguchi's sculpture from the 1940s, though in plywood, steel or anodized aluminum rather than stone. All are dated 2009. *Boy with Horns (with Mountains in his Pocket)* sports silkscreened "spatters" in hot pink. Gestural sweeps of blue paint, blended with a vibrant purple nearly matching the base on which it sits, reiterate the work's Henry Moore-like contours.

The construction method emphasizes silhouette and provides wildly different profiles as the viewer's vantage point shifts. Over 8 feet tall, *Ohnedaruth* alludes to both the flamboyant contrapposto of a jazz dancer striking a pose and the uptilted head of a mooing cow. The polished edges of its dark, unpainted steel provide the retinal dazzle that other pieces get through chroma and mark-making. In the 9-foot-tall, predominantly orange *Deft Compostion (Deft Composition)*, the arching, undulating outlines of the plywood components vie with the twitchy trail of a computer mouse painted on the plywood and magnified so that its wrist-derived switchbacks become shoulder-scale. It makes you wonder what Miró might have done with a Paint program.

A few metal prop pieces, irregular shapes embellished with spray paint and leaning against the walls, seem like

afterthoughts, or salvage from the more elaborate works. Strenuous exercises in stylistic hybridity, 11 silkscreen-and-gouache works on paper combine appropriated imagery (notably, a hideous creature by *Mad* cartoonist Basil Wolverton) with flat areas of clanging color, more "spatters," flurries of arbitrary brushwork and, as if from overexertion, tromp-l'oeil beads of sweat.

Compensating for the absence of the artist's self, a couple of sculptures are prominently emblazoned with his spray-painted initials. Rather than animate Curry's relentlessly dialectical endeavors, irony encumbers them; he will make work of real power and authority when he stops showing off how much he knows.

—Stephen Maine

MUNGO THOMSON
JOHN CONNELLY

Long interested in both the subtext and paratext of, well, everything—from Road Runner cartoons to NASA images of outer space—Mungo Thomson has built a career on pulling back curtains to reveal the mechanics of production and reception. For "The Varieties of Experience," the artist used predigital tools to expand on his tried-and-true themes and strategies.

Best illustrating this return to older technology was the 2009 *Untitled (Margo Leavin Gallery, 1970-)*, a stop-motion, looped 16mm film featuring various shots of the Rolodexes in Thomson's L.A. gallery. As they spin around, the Rolodexes flip through the names of thousands of contacts the gal-