

EXHIBITION REVIEWS



View of David Tremlett's exhibition "In Space," 2008, showing (left to right) *La Morra* and *Horizontal & Vertical*; at Gering & López.

NEW YORK DAVID TREMLETT GERING & LÓPEZ

With nearly four decades of work behind him, the British artist David Tremlett is still little known in the U.S., despite having exhibited widely in Europe and as far afield as Tokyo, Tanzania and west Texas, and having been shortlisted for the Turner Prize in 1992. Tremlett considers his wall drawings, which typically are executed in pastel on interior or exterior architectural surfaces, as essentially sculptural in nature. A great many of his projects, such as "In Space," recently seen at Gering & López, are temporary, reflecting the artist's conceptual conviction that "the permanence of the work is in the idea."

This crash course of an exhibition comprised eight new wall drawings, each associated with a recent project. Six were longer than 16 feet. In *Horizontal & Vertical*, white-streaked bands of red and blue placed against a field of pale, silvery gray regarded each other as boxers emerging from their corners. The composition reprised a major (permanent) 2004 project for the British Council's cultural center in Nairobi. A network of geometric cells in a wide range of warm grays dominated *La Morra*, defying perspectival space despite the proliferating diagonals. The piece was named for the Italian hill town where

Tremlett and Sol LeWitt collaborated on decorating a chapel in 1999.

Drawing Within 3 Lines combined trademark Tremlett motifs: stacked bands or strata (here, in two grays and a leathery brown) and eccentrically truncated shapes that resemble shattered letterforms and evoke commercial signs and graphics. The artist departed from his customary pastel in *Kolkata*, an expanse of glistening, blackish railroad grease slathered on the wall by the handful, named for the Indian city (formerly Calcutta) visited by the artist. A striped band of graphite along the composition's bottom evoked the fringe of a garment, or train tracks. The piece seemed a bit of a lark, but its caricature of tactility was an effective counterpoint to the smoothly rubbed pastel elsewhere.

While the works acknowledged the gallery's architecture, few did much to disrupt it perceptually. As a sampling of Tremlett's current vocabulary, the show perhaps inevitably looked cobbled-together, though it did imply an oblique commentary on the decorum of the gallery as a site. The quirky poetry of Tremlett's work might, after all, be best suited to the derelict and disused spaces of which he is particularly fond. One wishes the Dia Foundation of old had taken him under its wing and provided him with a big, empty building to work with.

—Stephen Maine

NATHAN CARTER CASEY KAPLAN

One of the most formally buoyant gallery exhibitions of this season's opening round, Nathan Carter's "Radio Transmission Contraptions" had wit to spare and energy to burn. Visually rambunctious sculpture was predominant among the 21 works in this megawatt show, which, in thrall to mid-20th-century rhythms, channeled Calder's playfulness, Miró's tethered violence and the jazzy muscle of Stuart Davis. Underlying Carter's central conceit of the art object as jury-rigged device for strategic communication is a furious nostalgia for a forward-looking past in which creative means and the dissemination of information seemed limitless.

The retro stylings began in the first of the gallery's three spaces, which housed a dozen or so bristling, jaunty sculptures (all 2008). Around 3 or 4 feet high, these are caricatures of the transceiver/antenna paradigm of ham and shortwave radio equipment. Carter's riffs on "wireless" are made largely of wires: typically, three slender steel rods blooming mutant antennae sprout from eccentrically shaped ceramic bases. Most employ swank two-color schemes, such as black and salmon (*Radio Berlin Inactive Under Repair*) or vermilion and mint green (*Radio Halifax Music and Weather*). The works' placement