

## Quick Draw: Dunn and Brown's impulsive show shines light on rising stars

By Janet Kutner



Snap to and pay attention. Dunn and Brown Contemporary has made some exciting new discoveries. The gallery's eight-person show is actually titled "Snap", a reference to the quick way it was put together with an inference of snap, crackle and pop.

Most exhibitions are planned a year in advance, but this one took less than two weeks. Spontaneity was what gallery co-owner Tally Dunn had in mind when she left the March slot open. Energy matched by obsessive detail is what she got.

A whirlwind tour of 30 studios in 10 days - Dallas, Fort Worth, Denton, Houston, Austin - turned up more talent than she had hoped for. The youngest artist, Ryan James, is 21. Most of the artists are in their late 20 or early 30s.

They may have Texas studios, but they come from far away. The biggest piece in the show, a sprawling soft-sculpture Junkyard filled with hand-sewn objects that appear to be remnants of pillows and stuffed animals, is by Aido Hachisucka of Japan. The artist moved to Houston from Los Angeles to be a

part of the Glassell School's Core Fellowship program and envisions her piece as a habitat for a French bulldog she has acquired.

Kate Catterall of Northern Iceland earned a master's degree from the University of Glasgow before moving to Austin to teach design at the University of Texas. She brought the Irish love of the landscape with her. An elegant wall relief features 12 soil samples she collected during a trip to Los Angeles. Each specimen is displayed in a capsule made of hand-blown glass, with its chemical breakdown neatly inscribed on the surface - proof that the most basic elements yield beauty.

Other artists made do with even less. Paul Booker enlivens an entire wall with tiny red-paper arrows that wander outside the frames of pristinely crafted shadowboxes, forming clusters like swarms of bees. Polly Lanning paints on plywood, combining neo-geo abstraction with process art. Randall Friedman also paints on planks of wood, juxtaposing sleek enamel surfaces with iconic shapes reminiscent of hands engaged in sign language or obscure body parts.

Some of the liveliest works are really small - 6-by-6 inches in the case of Monica Vidal, who creates exquisite little collages from brightly patterned sheets of origami paper that she pierces with a hole punch or Exacto-knife.

Katy O'Connor, a figurative painter from Austin, presents a whole collection of personality types in spontaneous ink-on-paper sketches that capture eccentric poses, nuanced gestures and clothing details in equal measure.

Mr. James's work is more subtle and tongue-in-cheek. Satin "pillows" slightly bigger than drawer sachets hang on the wall, each hand-embroidered in a different style of lettering, and each depicting just one word - the color of the thread.

Precious, perhaps, but also provocative given the pretentious names assigned by manufacturers, which can be surreal. There's nothing pretentious about this show, however. Modest is more like it. Many works are priced at \$300 to \$500. Instant gratification is what it's all about.

It's nice to see a gallery known for prominent midcareer Texans such as David Bates, Vernon Fisher and Nic Nicosia giving the younger generation a chance. Ms. Dunn helped launch the career of Trent Hancock of Paris, Texas, now a hot property on the national scene and the only Texan included in the current Whitney Biennial in New York. It pays to keep a finger on the pulse.