

Ian Pedigo

New York Times
April 11, 2008
By: Roberta Smith

The New York Times

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IAN PEDIGO: 'TITANIUM PRO' Located at the overpopulated intersection of collage and assemblage — and using a combination of magazine images, found paper, tape and cast-off domestic building materials — this work avoids many of the current clichés. Everything is used sparsely and with a geometric sense of structure; details stand out and include drawing, applications of color and little touches that may or may not be accidental. All is revealed. Thought and physical precision foment a kind of resurrection. Klaus Von Nichtssagend Gallery, 438 Union Avenue, near Devoe Street, Williamsburg, Brooklyn, (718) 383-7309, klausgallery.com, through April 20. (Smith)

Ian Pedigo

Artforum

January 2009

By: James Yood



Ian Pedigo

65 GRAND

The old dictum that certain sculptors prefer to work with, rather than on, materials rings true in the case of Ian Pedigo. His efforts fall somewhere between found-object assemblage and three-dimensional collage; he takes the more or less utilitarian stuff of the world—the works in this exhibition, for example, incorporate lampshades, denim, foam insulation board, carpeting, plastic sheets, Homasote, magazine clippings, concrete, fabric, and plastic cups—and combines it so as to coax out poetic visual subtleties. Showing a predilection for planar arrangement, Pedigo builds what look like drawings in space: barely volumetric constructions of often wan and flat elements.

In *Division* (all works 2008), a long, thin, wooden pole leans against the wall at a forty-five-degree angle. The pole is draped in a translucent plastic sheet and a smaller, more opaque piece of material cut from a window shade; near the bottom of the plastic sheet, the artist has adhered an even smaller piece of blue denim. The sheet and the shade are bisected by the pole so as to fall to one side as triangles and to the other as trapezoids. Because they were originally folded, the materials carry creases, which together render additional quadrilaterals and squares. What might seem a casual and somewhat passive gesture, the placing of common materials over a simple piece of wood, ultimately produces geometric cacophony; Pedigo here brings out hidden or overlooked details, as he often does, allowing surprisingly complex moments of formal delectation to come when one might least expect them. *Of Practicable Equanimity* is an even more curious object, in which two minimally altered lamp shades have been set end to end, top to top, creating a vaguely figurative shape narrowing, as it were, at the waist. Four cups of the disposable drinking type—three in their original plastic form and one cast in concrete—prop the lamp shades up so that they straddle a shallow traylike form placed directly on the floor. The work suggests a ceremonial or religious function; it looks like a kind of bare-bones baptismal font.

A First Slight Beginning or Appearance, the largest sculpture here, features a rectangular board cantilevered from the wall, though the thinnish pieces of cotton that dangle from it look like supporting legs. The tablelike structure supports two pieces of foam insulation board and Homasote, which together with their support form a broad, squat ziggurat, drawing out the secret harmonies embedded in materials meant to be practically nonvisual, to be hidden behind walls or masked. Stray bits of text, surprisingly bright veneers of blue and silver, and small creases and indentations suggesting grids or packaging scars are all revealed by the artist, who, through an act of reshuffling, plucks them from invisibility and places them in pertinent, dramatic dialogue. As these works show, Pedigo is particularly adept at rehabilitating and exalting the hidden and humble.

—James Yood



Ian Pedigo, *A First Slight Beginning or Appearance*, 2008, foam insulation board, Homasote, cotton, 78 x 40 x 40".

Ian Pedigo

Frieze.com

May 22, 2008

By: Chris Sharp

frieze



Ian Pedigo, view of exhibition 'OnBalanceVolume', courtesy Pianissimo, Milan

PIANISSIMO, MILAN, ITALY

Ian Pedigo

The work of American sculptor Ian Pedigo enjoys a unique mobility among the aesthetic of refuse currently collecting in some of the main arteries of the art world. Largely eschewing the impulse to stretch art's formal terms to reductive breaking points, Pedigo's work instead uses a certain formal complexity to enter into - if not to synthesize - a number of different discourses. For his first solo show in Europe, the Alaska-born, New York-based artist presents five sculptures and two wall works, offering a restrained yet incisive introduction to his practice.

Pedigo composes objects from found materials that range from scraps of wood to cardboard to magazine clippings to swatches of cloth, Plexiglas and multicoloured electrical tape. Working in the historical mode of assemblage, the artist hybridizes found objects in the venerable tradition of Bruce Conner and the late Robert Rauschenberg, for their deployment of recycled stuff, as well as Richard Tuttle, for his use of transparent plastics, among other things. Gedi Sibony is an easy mark when discussing Pedigo's work, for their kindred materials, but any other resemblance ends there; it would be altogether more compelling to bring up the work of, say, Manfred Pernice and Ian Kiaer.

Persuader to enclosed space (civic messages) (2008), the first work one comes across on entering the gallery, is made of a white, patterned cardboard box, cut and geometrically articulated so as to resemble a maquette of sci-fi futuristic architecture. The cardboard is placed on a low pedestal made from a grey formica-covered countertop, the base of which is painted in blue and orange. Pedigo's distinctly drab, second-hand store palette feels similar to that of Pernice (whose palette, incidentally, seems to draw heavily from Berlin's U-Bahns), while the maquette quality of the object brings to mind Kiaer's precious intimations of utopian architectures, countering the British artist's delicacy with a laboured, highly structured ruggedness. However, Pedigo's practice seems to have fully internalized the interest in architecture, incorporating it into its formal vocabulary, as opposed to creating sculpture about architecture. In other works these concerns become less apparent, but are nevertheless still there. Surroundings are Left Open (2008), which comprises gridded swatches of fabric partially circled by a taped-down string, comes off as a topographical depiction of a building or a compound.

Wall from Distant Memory (2006-8) and Glacier-rich Avenues (2008), play out sci-fi tropes a bit more conspicuously. Incorporating a used wooden doorframe, wool, Plexiglas, a plastic sheet, and wooden sticks, the inclined form of Glacier-rich Avenues brought to mind a kind of space ship. As did the more painterly Wall from Distant Memory, despite primarily doubling as the silhouette of a skyline, which consisted of pyramidal cardboard shape attached and propped against the wall by a series of two-by-twos, jutting out from the top and bottom of the cardboard's borders. About to Clear (2008) is the work that most patently synthesizes the numerous formal stakes of the show. The cylindrical form of the work, along with the corrugated craft paper that envelops the lower section of the structure, is initially evocative of Pernice's urban emblems - his columns or rubbish bins. But the insertion of lighting gels, which suggest windows, along with the bamboo sticks rising up from its hollow centre, which suggest antennae, shifts the work towards a kind of sci-fi tower maquette or even the fuselage of a rocket poised for take-off. In this way, Pedigo's shape-shifting sculptures are made to wear the different hats of severely articulated detritus, sci-fi motifs or architecture, and anonymous, urban elements, all of which are fused together to form a soundly ramshackle whole.

Ian Pedigo

Art in America

June 2010

By: Steven Maine

Art in America INTERNATIONAL REVIEW

New York Although the checklist enumerated nine discrete works (all 2010) in Ian Pedigo's recent exhibition, the viewer immediately understood it as a unified installation. Formal and conceptual echoes bounced among assemblages of found objects and brought the architectural features of the modest, no-nonsense space into play. Throughout, Pedigo juggled painterly and sculptural attitudes toward light, notwithstanding the exhibition's deadpan title, "Accumulations of Matter."

Pedigo effectively sets up tensions within and among his "accumulations," electrifying the spaces around them. A Presence Inferred Only by Its Effect on What Is Visible faintly suggested both an image and an irreducible object. A previously whitish padded blanket of the kind used by movers had been rubbed or rolled with black paint until only its deepest crevices remained untouched; it hung on the wall across the gallery from the work's other component, a silver foil-covered rubber ball one foot in diameter. The deeply odd Erratic is a banged-up folding chair painted silver, with a screwed-together frame of birch branches poised on its front edge and a precarious display of metal tubing, plate glass, blue-gray lighting gel and a small pile of slate balanced on its back.

There was still more silver in There They Were Left Strangled, a crooked arc of grounding rod bedecking a 5-foot-long wood log. This natural/industrial hybrid lay on the floor across an 8-inch-wide strip of carpet that nearly matched in hue the gel of Erratic. It ran up the wall near the log to within a couple of feet of the ceiling, and extended across the floor and up the far wall to waist height, further complicating any easy comprehension of the blanket-and-ball piece. An inconspicuous cut in the carpet coincided with a crack in the plywood floor, bring-



ing that element and material into play as well.

In Preoperational Stages, nine patches of lighting gels in shades of gray, brown, pink, pale blue and silver formed a bricklike pattern on the back wall, economically (and amusingly) conflating the physical and the retinal, the blunt factuality of matter and the evanescence of chroma. Installed opposite, Emptied Projections expressed the role of light differently, partially obscuring the view through the gallery's door and six plate-glass windows with lengths of milky-white light-diffusion material.

In this charged space, gallerygoers became unwitting accomplices in the installation, as sometimes happens at exhibitions of Richard Serra or Anne Truitt. Coming to grips with the subtleties of this tough and lovely show provided a gentle thrill.

Ian Pedigo, *Titanium Pro*

Klaus Von Nichtssagend Gallery, through Apr 20

Since his breakout turn in several New York group shows last summer, Ian Pedigo has continued to build a solid reputation for abstract works that rise above the common materials used to create them—cast-off Formica, wood, tape, gels, cloth, carpets and pages appropriated from magazines and calendars that almost always register as a little worse for wear, even after their “Extreme Makeover (Art Edition).” Pedigo’s quandary here? Being misconstrued as merely repeating himself to make six new sculptures and collages for his most recent solo show. Pedigo does well to stay the course, however, as large works like *Putting a Dark Cloud On* best attest. Cleverly hung near the gallery’s storefront window, the piece features a gel-covered opening that literally diffuses the light while a floral swatch playfully channels the likes of Monet and Van Gogh. If *Already No Longer the Same*—a diminutive floor piece made of flat wood cutouts layered and truncated by a wedge of Formica—appears modest by comparison, standouts like *Saying it was Disproportionate* and *Summit Associates* effectively showcase how Pedigo transforms materials with startling economy. By continuing to focus on surface treatment, Pedigo questions how objects that lay claim to being art (perhaps even his own) are suspect at best. Luckily, “Titanium Pro” also makes clear that Pedigo understands the difference between lapsing into redundancy and creating an expansive, if precise, formal language—a clear sign that whatever he does next will be worth the wait. —*Ingrid Chu*



Ian Pedigo

Artforum

November, 2007

By: Suzanne Hudson

ARTFORUM

“Stubborn Materials”

PETER BLUM

“After innovation—the critical deluge; after the deluge—fashion; after fashion—the group show; after the group show (and its coverage by mass media)—criticism of criticism. These episodes replace each other rapidly on the art scene today, crowding good and bad art alike off the stage in preparation for the next act.” The words, Lucy Lippard’s, are from 1966, but they couldn’t feel less dated. The banality of most group shows, compounded with their inevitably short shelf lives, makes a good one—summer or otherwise—that much more arresting. “Stubborn Materials,” curated by gallery director Simone Subal, was one such show, especially because its strategy seemed to be to deter cursory scanning by assembling works that subvert presumptive meaning. Resisting gimmicky double takes in favor of earnest wit born of happenstance accumulations (and savvy juxtapositions of unspectacular supplies), the works gives the impression that their details count.

Less a look (or in Lippard’s terms, fashion) than a set of sympathetic, willfully refractory tendencies, the works, representing nine New York-based artists—Larry Bamburg, Jonah Freeman and Michael Phelan, Nick Herman, Rosy Keyser, Jutta Koether, Ian Pedigo, and Heather Rowe—suggest a kind of DIY formalism. Process-driven abstraction reigns, with stuff culled from the aisles of Home Depot (house paint, vinyl, insulation foam, wallpaper, mirrored glass) and the pages of old magazines. Keyser’s *Sad White Music*, 2007, an orb of house paint on a sawdust-encrusted canvas support, and *Smithson*, 2007, a collage of enamel and paillettes on a blown-up 1970s copy of *Smithsonian Magazine* with a rope-harnessed rain-forest biologist swinging above a verdant canopy on its cover that becomes the painting’s ground, exemplify both operations.

Reclaimed debris, while hardly localized, is a crux for Pedigo: *Blind, blocks*, 2007, comprises a straw beach mat and newsprint collaged on a wall, while the forlorn *Structure Left Remaining*, 2006, features a marked-up block of foam fixed atop a spindly bamboo tripod. Or take Bamburg’s *Untitled Variable*, 2007, a jerry-rigged marriage of fishing wire and ceiling fans that whirl at different speeds, sweeping detritus—here a Band-Aid, there a cricket—dangling from their nearly invisible filaments, into a quietly intense vortex that cannot but echo the iconography of Keyser’s dangling scientist.

Appropriated and recontextualized, substances are less obdurate and more duplicitous in Herman’s cultural archaeology. A polyurethane cast of a rock shimmers as though it were metal in *Part*, 2007; feathers are cut from magazines in *Blind*, 2007, and so on. (Seen against Freeman and Phelan’s large-scale print of its titular substance,



View of “Stubborn Materials,” 2007.

Reynolds Wrap Aluminum Foil #22, 2007, and its pendants, which recall scholar’s rocks as much as the abstract photographs of James Welling, the material conceit really works.) A narrativized play on deception, *Halves*, 2007, likewise makes Herman’s point with its toy-derived, albeit now life-size, plaster casts of half a wolf and half a sheep facing off across the gallery, balancing as feebly and elegantly as Pedigo’s poles. Mean-

while, Koether’s liquid glass-drenched inverted triangle #3, 2006, rebuffs advances or circumscriptions.

But Rowe’s *Plans that have fallen through*, 2006, an homage to the faceted dome of Weimar architect Bruno Taut’s Glass Pavilion at the 1914 Cologne Werkbund Exhibition, reimagined through flocked wallpaper tracery and a wooden platform buttressing a tinted glass lattice, might just be the work that best articulated the show’s position. Forgoing a modernist will to resistant autonomy in exchange for associative, and decidedly noncausal, relations to equally obstinate matter—and lost utopian causes—is the game. The word *stubborn*, then, might reference something hard to suppress as much as something capable of resistance. Perhaps, as Rowe’s work proposes, they are the same thing.

—Suzanne Hudson