

Art Picks from Print

By Paul D'Agostino

ROBERT LANSDEN: CHANCE AND NECESSITY *Robert Henry Contemporary, 56 Bogart St., through November 25th* Painstakingly composed, executed with no apparent procedural traces and mesmerizing in their warps and wefts, Robert Lansden's rigorously detailed drawings on view at Robert Henry Contemporary seem to evidence very little of the 'chance' in the exhibition's title, the tail end of a quote by Democritus regarding the two primary impetuses of existence. Obsession and compulsion—and perhaps a rather strictly structural form of coincidence—come to mind much more readily as one takes in the fine lines and finer interstices of these abstract, mostly monochromatic renderings in watercolor, ink, gouache and felt tip pens. Don't be surprised, at any rate, if these presumably self-meditative drawings gradually draw you to meditate, too.

MARK BRADFORD *Sikkema Jenkins & Co., 530 West 22nd St., through December 22nd* The subject of a recent mid-career survey show that traveled to a number of different cities without ever alighting, much to our chagrin, upon New York, this Los Angeles-based artist is known primarily for his large canvases that ripple and rupture in erosive layers of mixed media, collage and décollage. While subtractive processes and variable abrasion characterize the compositional thrust and complicated surfaces of his works, Bradford's compositions can also be effulgently vibrant, intermittently painterly and thoroughly—with great consistency—absorbing. What's more, at times they seem to operate somewhere outside their two apparent dimensions. Get a feel for his oeuvre while a bit of it is in town this time around.

JULES DE BALINCOURT: ECSTATIC CONTACT *Salon 94 Bowery, 243 Bowery, through January 13th* In the well known Brooklyn-based artist's first solo exhibition at this particular gallery, de Balincourt has produced a new suite of works that are curiously colorful, occasionally experimental in their

compositions and quite playfully evocative—if not ecstatic—overall. Abstracted in various ways and to various degrees, the artist's imagery here includes soldiers and ships, fireworks and seas, landscapes and at least one long lost configuration of continental plates. The mood seems light because the palette is so bright, yet what have those troops in *Off Base* been up to, pray tell? And is *Son of the Earth* an envisioned ode to our star or instead, perhaps, an alarming take on global warming?

GUIDO VAN DER WERVE *Luhring Augustine Bushwick, 25 Knickerbocker Ave., through December 16th* Concert pianist, composer, artist and particularly performative dutchman Guido van der Werve dons all such hats, and surely several others, in the video works that recently filled out two solo exhibitions at Luhring Augustine Chelsea and Luhring Augustine Bushwick. Although his newest work at the former is no longer on view, his older though nonetheless quite recent pieces are still queued up at the latter for several more weeks. Steeped in historical anecdotes pertaining to classical music and personal narratives, these videos are pensive and melancholic without descending into brooding, and they occasionally veer into very well-tuned humor as well. It's not a spoiler at all to tell you, for instance, that the tissue-begging feel of a piece titled *Nummer vier* dips ultimately into hilarious absurdity.