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## Art Houston

### Saturday, July 9th

**Anya Tish Gallery**  
**Archway Gallery**  
**Art Palace**  
**Booker-Lowe Gallery**  
**Hiram Butler Gallery**  
**John Cleary Gallery**  
**Colton & Farb Gallery**

**Meredith Long & Company**  
**McClain Gallery**  
**McMurtrey Gallery**  
**Jack Meier Gallery**  
**Bryan Miller Gallery**  
**Moody Gallery**  
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# NO WHITE WALLS ALLOWED **ArtHouston 2011**

**Catherine D. Ansporn** forecasts the best of this month's sizzling, gallery-wide summer open house — photographs of American metropolises rendered in Jell-O, anyone? — then reflects upon the Whitney Biennial discoveries that began their ascent in ArtHouston many Julys ago, including a painter whose canvases now command seven figures. (Can you name her?) Read On.

## THEN AND NOW

Art collectors and canvas-gazers, save this date: **Saturday, July 9**. It's not an art fair, but something homegrown and more organic: **ArtHouston**, an open house that showcases hometown galleries and touts their hottest talent. Conceived 32 years ago as Introductions to inject life into the slumbering summer art scene, ArtHouston's exhibitions have taken on greater import through the decades with the increasing global prominence of the Core Program at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston's Glassell School of Art. Some of the most important debuts of the Core crop during ArtHouston have been: **Shahzia Sikander** at Barbara Davis Gallery, 1996 (including the artist's first-ever wall drawing); **Julie Mehretu** at Barbara Davis Gallery, 1998 (Mehretu's paintings based on dizzying global maps and urban centers have meteorically risen from \$1,000-some then to the million-dollar range now and have earned her a \$500,000 MacArthur Award); and **Leandro Erlich**, whose 1999 "Rain" installation

at Moody Gallery went directly to the Whitney Biennial 2000 eight months later. More than Core Fellows have had their day. Beijing-born **Yun-Fei Ji** soloed in Introductions 1990 at Meredith Long & Company to go on to the Whitney Biennial in 2004. And in 1999, Inman Gallery showed an obscure San Antonio talent, **Dario Robleto**, whose arcane conceptual sculptures employed strange materials such as stolen dime-store lipsticks and a cosmetic holder cast from melted LPs; Robleto also hopped the Whitney Biennial train (2004) and earned increasing national renown, all achieved while remaining in Texas.

**THE BETS ARE ON "DREAM SKIPPER" AT BARBARA DAVIS GALLERY:** Though we're not always a fan of group shows for ArtHouston, any exhibition that combines international painter **Mie Olise** (who mines magic from modern fairy tales), with notable hometowners **Joe Mancuso**, **Daniel McFarlane** and **Anthony Shumate** is a must (July 9 – September 2).

**ABORIGINAL OFFERINGS AT BOOKER-LOWE GALLERY:** Billed as "Affordable Australian Aboriginal Art," this exhibition presents an enticing collecting opportunity to enter the aboriginal realm, with all work between \$250 and \$2,500 (July 9 – September 14).

**PAUL HORN SELECTS AT COLTON & FARB GALLERY:** The wild man, aka provocateur **Paul Horn**, returns to curate a group view. Watch for **Matt Messinger's** surreal paintings and sculpture tinged with graffiti, as well as Whitney Biennial-exhibited **Daniel Johnston** of the cartoon-inflected drawings (July 9 – August 20).

**LIZ HICKOK'S "JIGGLING GEOGRAPHY" AT DE SANTOS GALLERY:** Any photographer who recreates American cityscapes in Jell-O has our attention. This West Coast artist was one of the "Discoveries of the Meeting Place" at FotoFest 2010 (through July 31).

Elizabeth Peyton's *RM*, 2007, at Hiram Butler Gallery

John Stuart Berger's *Fabglamzilla*, 2010, at PG Contemporary



## FASHION FUSION AT 4411

**MONTROSE:** Check out a full-on fashion convergence and pop-up boutique curated by **Zoë Jackson-Jarra** at 4411 Montrose's new project space, The Venue, with daytime shopping (benefitting Yellowstone Academy) capped by an evening runway show (Saturday, July 9).

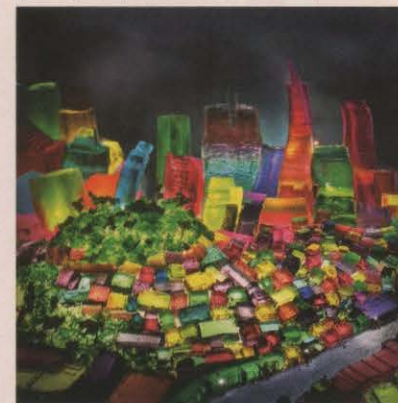
**"A PIXELATED BUNCH" AT G GALLERY:** Recent Row Houses exhibitor **Sapphire Williams** selects her faves in an edgy group view incorporating painting, sculpture and performance by some under-known up-and-comers (July 9 – 25).

**PRESCIENT PORTRAITURE AT HIRAM BUTLER GALLERY:** "Faces" pairs unforgettable visages on paper by **Chuck Close**, **Timothy Greenfield-Sanders**, **Sherrie Levine**, **Vik Muniz** and **Elizabeth Peyton** with a quartet of new diaphanous abstractions by **Terrell James** (through July 23).

**TAKING IT TO THE STREETS AT PG CONTEMPORARY:** **Aerosol Warfare**, which propels Houston's graffiti movement, is paired with West Coaster **John Stuart Berger** to concoct a simmering lowbrow stew in "Street/Science" (July 8 – August 6).



Irene Namok's *Slow Coming in Tide* (detail), 2010, at Booker-Lowe Gallery



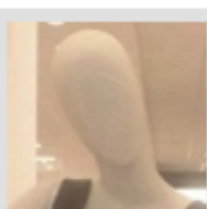
Liz Hickok's *Coit Tower*, 2009, at De Santos Gallery



Mie Olise's *Light House*, 2011, at Barbara Davis Gallery



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#### Galleries

## Colton & Farb's "Use Your Illusion" Not About Guns N' Roses

By [Troy Schulze](#) Wed., Aug. 17 2011 at 11:30 AM

Categories: [Galleries](#), [Visual Arts](#)



Kevin Peterson

Inked

[Colton & Farb Gallery](#)'s summer group show "Use Your Illusion" takes its name from a Guns N' Roses album, out of context, to play around with the idea of reality vs. unreality. (What's with the Houston gallery scene's fandom over Axl Rose's former band, by the way? Anya Tish Gallery presented a show last May called "Guns and Roses.")

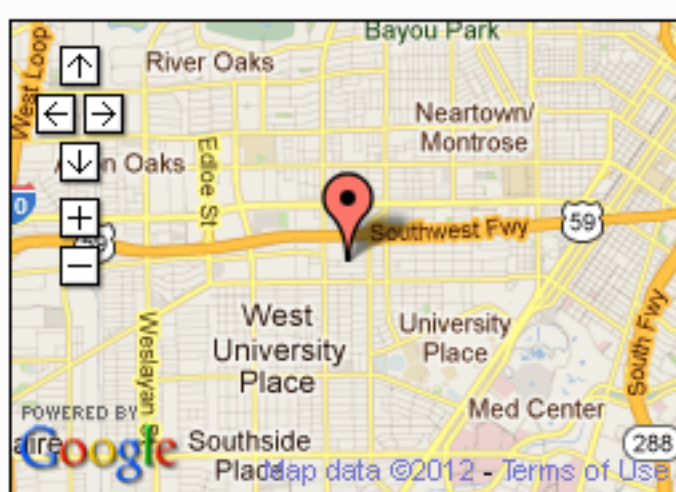
Paul Horn curates this show with little rhyme or reason; he even includes some work I'd classify as dubiously appropriated and trite, but there's enough solid stuff on display to recommend it, on the merit of a handful of artists, despite its haphazard, clumsy installation. To the gallery's credit, only a few of the artists on display are actually represented by Colton & Farb.

I'm a big fan of Kevin Peterson's portraits of privileged preteens captured against urban graffiti walls. It's an easy juxtaposition in cultural/class terms, but they look so cool. Here, Horn picked an image of a girl wearing a Ralph Lauren tennis suit against the brightly colored abstract background, which injects name status into Peterson's usual portraits of structure-vs.-chaos. I just wish it wasn't hung low in a narrow hallway.

One could spend a half hour admiring the collection of Daniel Johnston illustrations in one room. Johnston fits utterly into Horn's theme, with his nightmarish cartoons chronicling his manic depression, as well as the strange and comic characters of his unique, pop-inspired mythos. But did Horn have to include the now overexposed photo of Kurt Cobain wearing the Johnston T-shirt? Johnston is a respected artist; he's beyond this dead-celeb "endorsement."

The always-interesting Matt Messinger is well represented here with a slew of strange combines and wildly divergent content. And Scott Burns delivers some funny sci-fi watercolors, like *Folding Space from Hazzard*, an image of the Spice Guild Navigator inside his chamber, from David Lynch's *Dune*, emerging from a cosmic cloud decked out in the Dixie flag like the General Lee. Through August 20. 2445 North Blvd., 713-869-5151.

### Location Info



#### Colton & Farb Gallery

2445 N. Blvd., Houston, TX

Category: [General](#)



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# Use Your Illusion



Suzanne Buckland

Houston Art Examiner



Original Artwork by Soloman Kane  
Photo credit: Courtesy of the Artist

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Use Your Illusion

Curated by Paul Horn

July 9th to August 20th, 2011

Opening Reception: Saturday, July 9th from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

JOHN BRUCE BERRY SCOTT BURNS DANDEE  
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PAUL HORN DANIEL JOHNSTON SOLOMON KANE  
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Carolyn Farb and Deborah Colton are pleased to announce *Use Your Illusion*, a Group Exhibition of mixed media work curated by Paul Horn at Colton & Farb Gallery, Houston.

The title of the show, *Use Your Illusion* is taken from a Guns N' Roses album from the late 1980s. These words have a broader meaning when taken out of context. A play with the concepts of reality and illusion is in the core of this project and the concept of this exhibition can be summed up with a quote from one of the artists in the show, Solomon Kane, "The art of *Use Your Illusion* will embody Abstract Symbolic Surrealism informed by psychology, religion, and philosophy -- art that stretches the mind and soul with metaphysical meaning." From the mad-frantic cartoons of Daniel Johnston to the photo-realist paintings of Kevin Peterson, *Use Your Illusion* will encompass every reality of the human experience. From the sophisticated low-brow graffiti of Nicky Davis to the shimmering pearl encrusted gates of Sharon Kopriva's latest paintings, *Use Your Illusion* will create a dialogue between dissimilar yet coinciding realities.

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Colton & Farb Gallery is part of Deborah Colton Gallery, which is founded on being an innovative showcase for ongoing presentation and promotion of strong historical and visionary contemporary artists world-wide, whose diverse practices include painting, works on paper, sculpture, video, photography, performance and conceptual future media installations.

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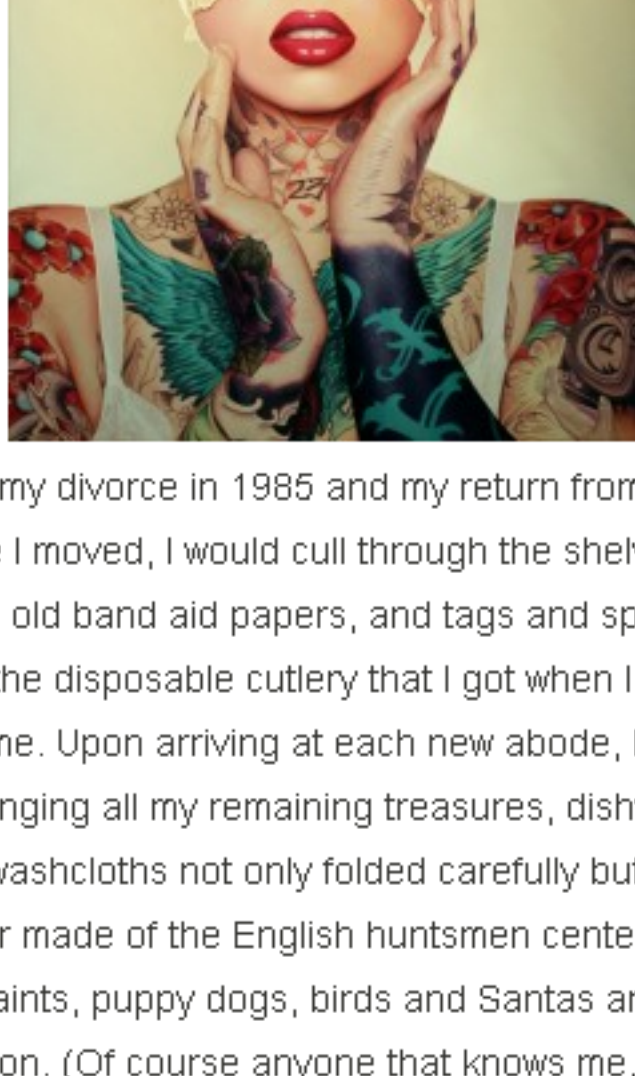
## Colton Farb: Use Your Illusion

July 22nd, 2011 – BETH SECOR

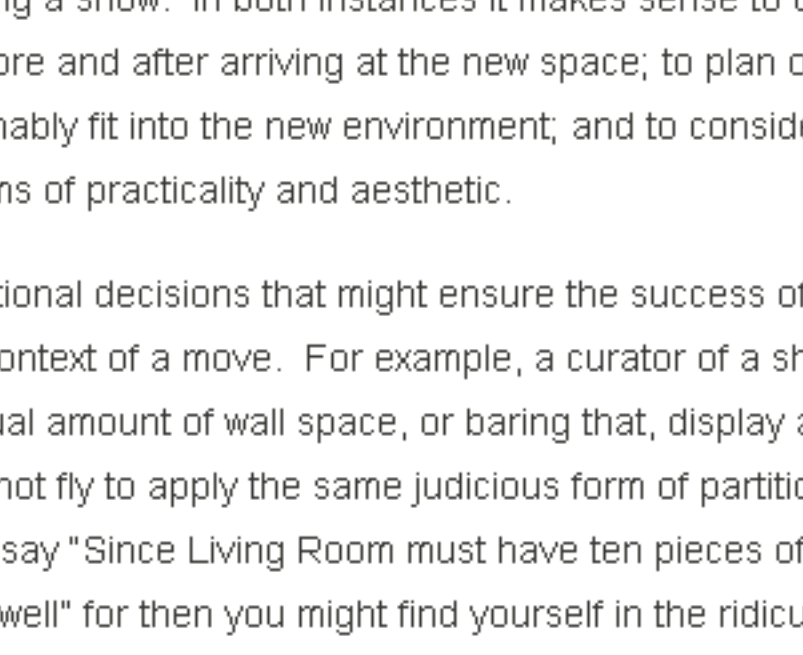
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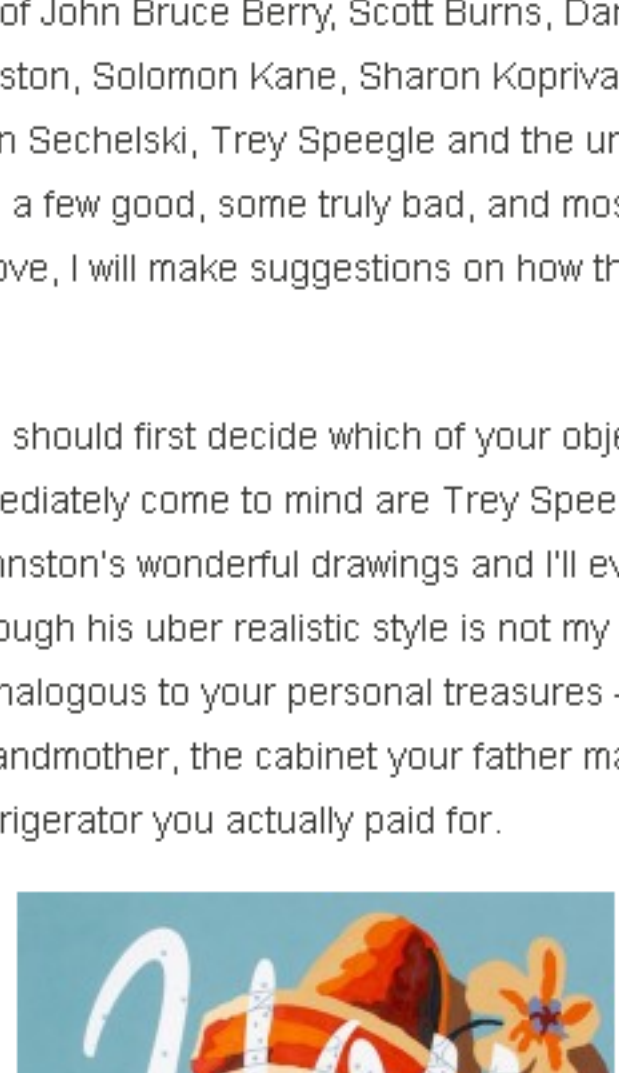


In my younger days, between my divorce in 1985 and my return from Baltimore in 2004, I moved many, many a time. Each time I moved, I would cull through the shelves, and drawers and cabinets of my house and get rid of the old band aid papers, and tags and spare thread and extra buttons attached to new clothes, and the disposable cutlery that I got when I ordered out, and all the other crap that accumulated over time. Upon arriving at each new abode, I would take great pleasure in carefully and thoughtfully arranging all my remaining treasures, dishware, clothes, and books, and everything else – towels and washcloths not only folded carefully but placed on equal but separate shelves, the painting my father made of the English huntsmen centered over the front door, the statues of the Virgin Marys, Saints, puppy dogs, birds and Santas arranged in such a way as though engaged in conversation. (Of course anyone that knows me, realizes this initial period of meticulous arrangement is shot to hell after about a week of living in the new house – Santas shun the Virgins, the huntsmen slide off their horses, and the towels engage in intercourse with the washcloths, with the end result an overabundance of useless hand towels.)



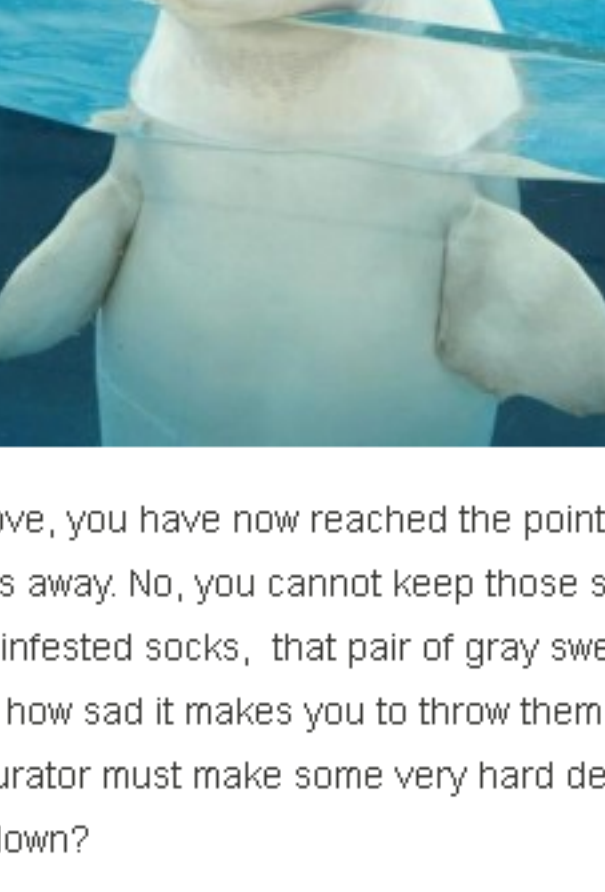
After seeing *Use Your Illusion*, an exhibition curated by Paul Horn at Colton Farb Gallery (July 9 – August 20, 2011) I started thinking about how the process of moving to a new home is very much like the process of curating a show. In both instances it makes sense to cull out that which is trash and extraneous both before and after arriving at the new space; to plan on how many and what kind of objects will reasonably fit into the new environment; and to consider object placement within the allotted space, in terms of practicality and aesthetic.

Of course there are additional decisions that might ensure the success of a curated exhibition but that would not fly in the context of a move. For example, a curator of a show might think it only fair to give each artist an equal amount of wall space, or baring that, display a more or less equal amount of work. It would not fly to apply the same judicious form of partition to each room of a house. You would never say "Since Living Room must have ten pieces of furniture, then Kitchen must have ten pieces as well" for then you might find yourself in the ridiculous predicament of balancing on the top of a chiffarobe while trying to fry eggs.

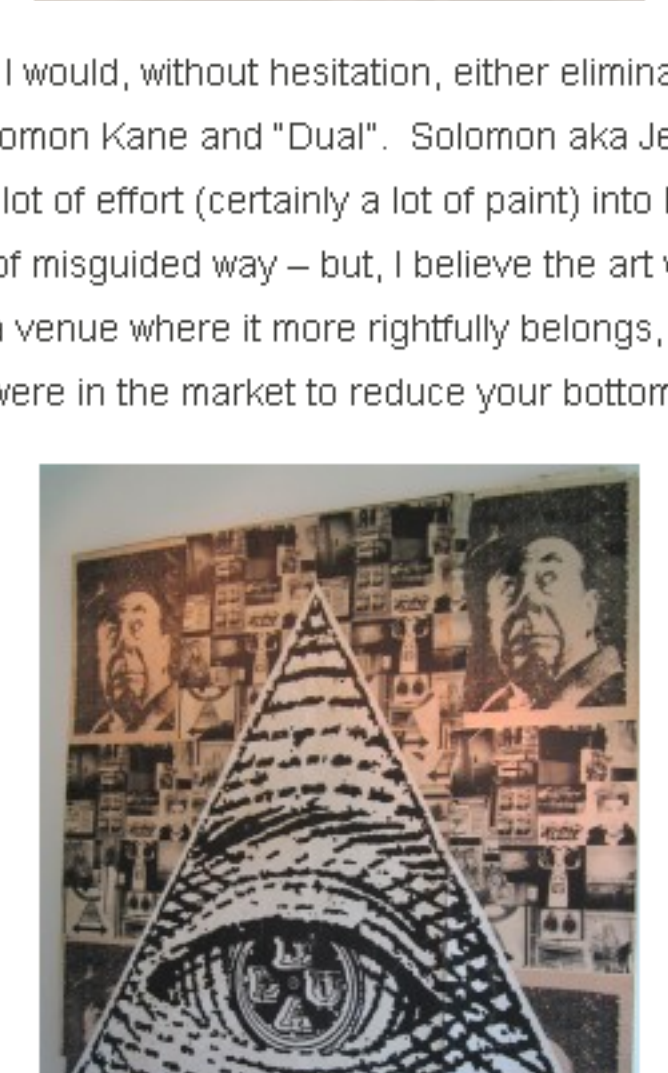


Which is all a very circuitous way of comparing *Use Your Illusion* to a not so successful move. (The exhibit features the work of John Bruce Berry, Scott Burns, Dandee Danao, Nicky Davis, "Dual", Paul Horn, Daniel Johnston, Solomon Kane, Sharon Kopriwa, Matt Messinger, Angelbert Metoyer, Kevin Peterson, Kevin Sechelski, Trey Speegle and the unlisted John Paul Hartman.) The show is a jumble of works, a few good, some truly bad, and most in the middling range. Using the analogy of a successful move, I will make suggestions on how this exhibition might have fared better.

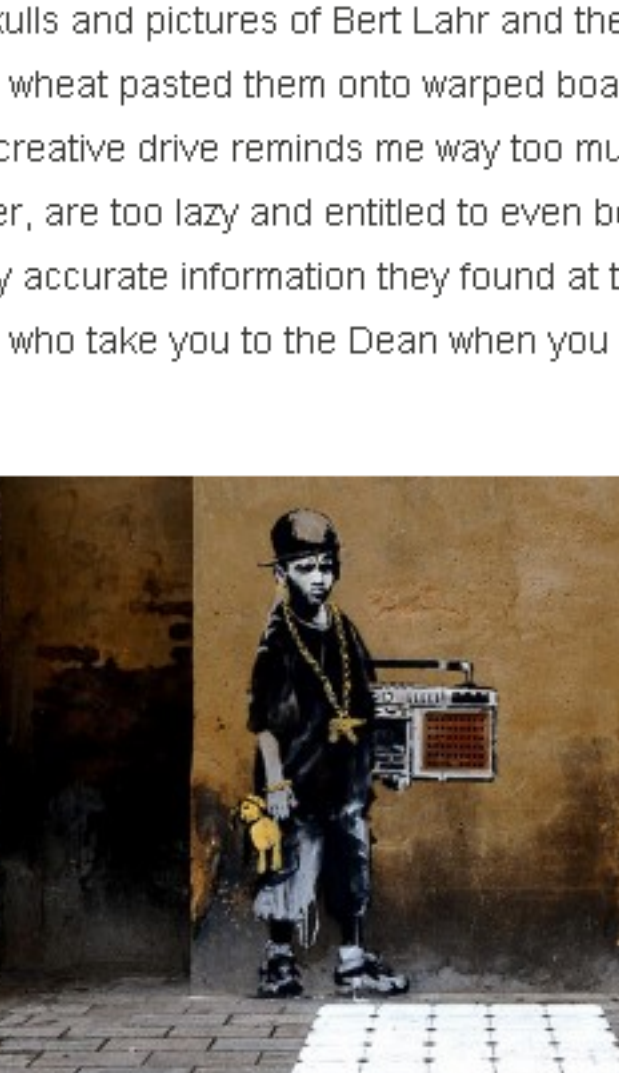
When packing for a move, you should first decide which of your objects are indispensable. As for this exhibit, the works that immediately come to mind are Trey Speegle's *You Who*, most of Matt Messinger's pieces, Daniel Johnston's wonderful drawings and I'll even concede to admiring Kevin Petersen's technique, even though his uber realistic style is not my cup of tea. If you were moving, this caliber of work would be analogous to your personal treasures –the wicker couch and rocking chair that belonged to your grandmother, the cabinet your father made, the distressed dresser a friend gave to you, and the refrigerator you actually paid for.



In an ideal situation, you would only have treasures. But since our hypothetical move is a more common and realistic situation, then you need to decide which of your objects are still functional or essential to the comfort of your new home, pack those away and put them in the van. These would be like your bed, you have to have that, your clothes, you can't run around naked all the time, at least one cup, etc. Shifting to the realm of *Use You Illusion*, those kind of items would translate to the artworks that, although not perfect, could still make for a somewhat decent show – for example Nicky Davis' and Dandee Daneo's paintings, John Paul Hartman's Mickey Mouse inspired pieces and Scott Burns's drawings to name a few.



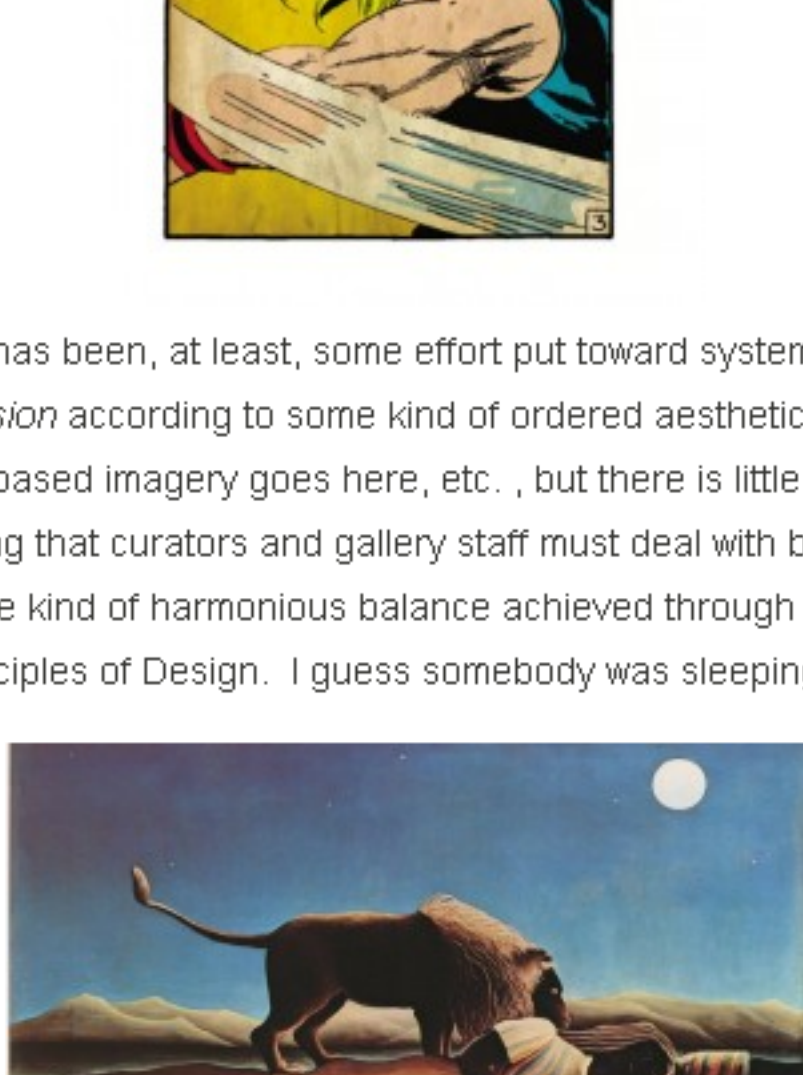
Continuing the analogy of a move, you have now reached the point where its time to start cleaning out drawers and throwing things away. No, you cannot keep those stained, torn and stretched out under panties, the single crust infested socks, that pair of gray sweat pants that make you look like a Beluga Whale, no matter how sad it makes you to throw them away. In the parallel universe of curating, it is now that the Curator must make some very hard decisions – what work does not fit, what work brings the show down?



There are at least two artists I would, without hesitation, either eliminate or severely reduce their holdings from the show – Solomon Kane and "Dual". Solomon aka Jeff Reese at least tries damnably hard – he's puts a lot of effort (certainly a lot of paint) into his work, he thinks about social issues in his own sort of misguided way – but, I believe the art world would be better served if Kane's work were hung in a venue where it more rightfully belongs, such as the kind of furniture store you would go to if you were in the market to reduce your bottom line.



As for "Dual", I'd not only get rid of his work, I would have never considered it in the first place – first and foremost because it is mind numbingly boring and unoriginal. And I am not railing against "Dual's" work because I am too old to understand or appreciate the whole wheat paste street art concept thing (which if I were, would make me about 10,001) or because I don't understand and appreciate appropriation, which I absolutely do and am guilty of myself. What I don't understand or appreciate is when someone who claims to be an artist is so unmotivated that he doesn't even attempt to take the ideas he lifted from another and turn them into something that makes them his own, other than marking his territory by putting his name on the piece. "Dual" is no Banksy, he's not clever or mysterious, he's just some kid who has silk screened a bunch of Dadaist Madonnas and Victorian optical illusion pastiches of Bert Laehr and the overly, overly used Eye of Conception and then shittily wheat pasted them onto warped boards. My ire is up, because this lack of intellectual curiosity or creative drive reminds me way too much of students who, when asked to write a research paper, are too lazy and entitled to even bother to footnote or even paraphrase the not necessarily accurate information they found at the first site that appeared in their Google Search, and then who take you to the Dean when you give them the grade they deserve, which is a big fat F.



O.k., back to the analogy. Before we start loading the boxes and furniture into the van, let's measure the new space, so as to gauge how much stuff we can realistically bring along. Then, once we start unpacking, lets not just put the objects in the first room or drawer that presents itself, but rather take the time to rearrange things until we figure out the most practical and visual pleasing way to store and display them. For example, say you have three couches in your old house, but your new house, which is not even a house, but is an apartment, only has room for one. So what do you do? Either sell the extra couches, lend them to friends or put them into storage. Get rid of them – don't lean them against the wall, or cram them under the bed and certainly don't ask your neighbors to step over them when they come to visit. And when you place that solitary couch in the new apartment, make sure it is in a room large enough to accommodate it, so that when you finally do sit down to watch television, you don't have to hold the t.v. on your lap.



All of which is a round about way of saying, there is too much work in this show, even for a space as large as Colton Farb. With the exception of the main gallery, art is placed everywhere – in narrow cramped hallways (two of Kevin Peterson's painting); in nooks and crannies (John Bruce Berry); on the floor leaning against the walls (A Matt Messinger painting, a "Dual" wheat paste thing, and a couple of Daniel Johnston collages – which in all fairness, I was told were so placed so to replicate his work environment), This leaning things against the wall business is all very well and good if it looks like it was done that way on purpose and/or if the artwork plays off and interacts with its environment and other objects surrounding it (as in Robert Gober) but when it doesn't work, it just looks like you ran out of nails.



However, I will say there has been, at least, some effort put toward systematically grouping the artworks in *Use Your Illusion* according to some kind of ordered aesthetic- i.e. black and white pieces go here, cartoon based imagery goes here, etc. , but there is little evidence of the rearranging and arranging that curators and gallery staff must deal with before achieving a visually harmonious balance – the kind of harmonious balance achieved through the application of – believe it or not- the Principles of Design. I guess somebody was sleeping in class that day.



One final gripe. You want to know what really bothers me? Maybe I am annoyed because I suffer from the overly heightened sense of equity that is forced into a parent's psyche the minute his or her child develops into a cognizant being –i.e. under no circumstance would you, when presented with two kids and ten cookies, give one kid nine cookies, and the other poor sap one. Don't let some of your artists show ten million things, and the others only one or two! It just doesn't make sense. Either give everyone the same amount of wall space or let them show the same number of works. Not only is it the fair thing to do, but it also makes for a more even and better show.



So enough criticism. I an of the eternally hopeful opinion that a curator can take almost any level of artwork (children's, seniors, monkeys, elephants, emerging and established artists or a mix there of), and through the application of my rules of moving, turn that mix into a relatively decent, cohesive, visually appealing show. So Mr. Horn, the next time you take on the task of curating, which I feel confident that you will again, just pretend you are relocating your belongings to a new house in a new neighborhood on the other side of town.

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## Use Your Illusion

Sat. 07/09 | 6:00PM - Sat. 08/20 | 8:00PM @ [Colton & Farb Gallery](#) ([map](#))

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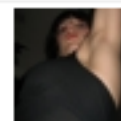
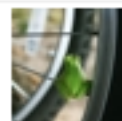


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## EVENT DETAILS

In conjunction with ArtHouston 2011, Carolyn Farb and Deborah Colton are pleased to announce *Use Your Illusion*, a Group Exhibition of mixed media work curated by Paul Horn at Colton & Farb Gallery, Houston. On view July 9th to August 20th. Opening Reception: Saturday, July 9th from 6:00 8:00 p.m. The title of the show, *Use Your Illusion* is taken from a Guns N' Roses album from the late 1980s. These words have a broader meaning when taken out of context. A play with the concepts of reality and illusion is in the core of this project and the concept of this exhibition can be summed up with a quote from one of the artists in the show, Solomon Kane, "The art of *Use Your Illusion* will embody Abstract Symbolic Surrealism informed by psychology, religion, and philosophy -- art that stretches the mind and soul with metaphysical meaning." From the mad-frantic cartoons of Daniel Johnston to the photo-realist paintings of Kevin Peterson, *Use Your Illusion* will encompass every reality of the human experience. From the sophisticated low-brow graffiti of Nicky Davis to the shimmering pearl encrusted gates of Sharon Kopriva's latest paintings, *Use Your Illusion* will create a dialogue between dissimilar yet coinciding realities. The Artists in *Use Your Illusion* understand the world in a subtle way, as seen through a dimly-lit mirror. It is through such distorted illusions that they are trying to make things clear. Paul Horn is a Houston-based artist and curator. He has curated several exhibitions, including the very successful Camp Lucky for Deborah Colton Gallery in 2004, where over 1,200 attended the opening. Horn's work has been featured in both Art in America and Art Forum. Daniel Johnston is an artist and musician who currently lives and works in Waller and Austin, Texas. Johnston's cartoon-inspired drawings and other work have been shown in the 2008 Liverpool Biennial and various U.S. and U.K. Galleries. Johnston's self-written and self-performed songs and art have a cult following that is especially strong in Austin. The work of Scott Burns and Dandee Danao is also influenced by cartoons, comics and illustration. Kevin Peterson is a Houston-based artist who creates photo-realist paintings that offer a contrast between innocence and corruption, frequently depicted by young figures in dilapidated, graffiti-filled settings. Kevin Sechelski, Nicky Davis, Dual, and Matt Messinger also employ graffiti elements in their work. Solomon Kane, a Houston-based artist, creates psychedelic works of art using materials that glow when shown under black lights. New York-based Trey Speegle has developed an ongoing body of work based on paint by numbers game reflecting on our wish to understand and construct reality. Colton & Farb Gallery is part of Deborah Colton Gallery, which is founded on being an innovative showcase for ongoing presentation and promotion of strong historical and visionary contemporary artists world-wide, whose diverse practices include painting, works on paper, sculpture, video, photography, performance and conceptual future media installations. Pictured above: Kevin Peterson, *Inked*.