

Editorial: Recommendations

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Joan Hall

Blue Star Contemporary Art Center, San Antonio, Texas
Recommendation by Dan R. Goddard



Joan Hall, installation view (l. to r., 'C4,' 'C1,' and 'C2,' 2010, paper, found objects, Mylar, acrylic; foreground, 'Here No More,' 2010, found nets, paper, glass, plastic, cast resin, stainless steel

Continuing through February 12, 2011

Avid sailor **Joan Hall** responds to the plastic trash she sees floating miles from the ocean shore with her wall-mounted sculptures that resemble fishing nets bulging with man-made debris. Her visual lamentation about the decline of ocean life evokes feelings of being damaged, trapped and insignificant. Working with Japanese-style handmade paper and printed digital imagery, she uses a scalpel to cut out the fish nets and laminates them with Mylar for a translucent effect.

In one piece, she's inserted contrasting circular images of cancer cells and coral life forms, though it's difficult to distinguish the abnormal cells from the merely endangered. The largest wall work appears stuffed with sun-bleached shopping bags, illustrating that 10 percent of all plastic winds up in the oceans. She also uses flotsam picked up from the beach, such as the plastic fishing nets that form three garbage baglike sentinels in a melancholy floor installation, "Here No More."

Ivano Vitali's newspaper weavings that mix crafts traditions with that of Arte Povera are paired with Hall's recycled works under the title "Crossovers: Materials and Metaphors." Guest curator Meredith Dean brings together these distinct bodies of work based on shared handmade technique and environmentalist concerns.

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