
Reviews

“I Live My Thoughts”

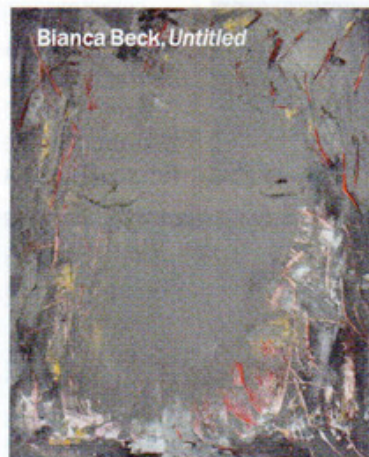
★★★★★

Laurel Gitlen | Small A Projects,
through Oct 24
(see Lower East Side)

At first glance, this show seems like a study in formal contrasts. Bianca Beck's paintings bear violent scars, their canvas or panel surfaces having been hacked or punctured by the artist. Josh Brand's photographs are ethereal and barely there, offering only the faintest suggestion of an identifiable reality—instead they seem to capture an oneiric domain. Interspersed throughout are anonymously created “memory jugs” from the 19th and early 20th centuries, vessels that, as the label suggests, are encrusted with such keepsakes as spoons, buttons, shells, forks and skeleton keys. Different as they are, the fiercely violated paintings, tactile folk objects and atmospheric photos coexist with apparent ease.

Yet the three

bodies of work function together as more than stylistic foils for one another. Brand's *Untitled (Moon)*, from 2010, is tinged with a romantic longing that is undercut by the minuscule size of the lunar focal point, as well as by the black frame of what might be a contact sheet—subject matter thus taking a backseat to process. Beck's straightforward allusions to the body similarly balance content and transparency of technique: The thick encaustic on one canvas has been sculpted into two symmetrical bulges that resemble either eyes or breasts, while a Lucio Fontana-like rip at the center of another canvas, surrounded by a hazy



Bianca Beck, *Untitled*

oval, distinctly recalls female genitalia. But with the addition of the memory jugs, the works are thrust into a different sphere altogether, one in which they become recording devices: a Proustian registry of one's existence at a certain time and place.

—*Claire Barliant*

46 TIMEOUTNEWYORK.COM September 30–October 6, 2010
