

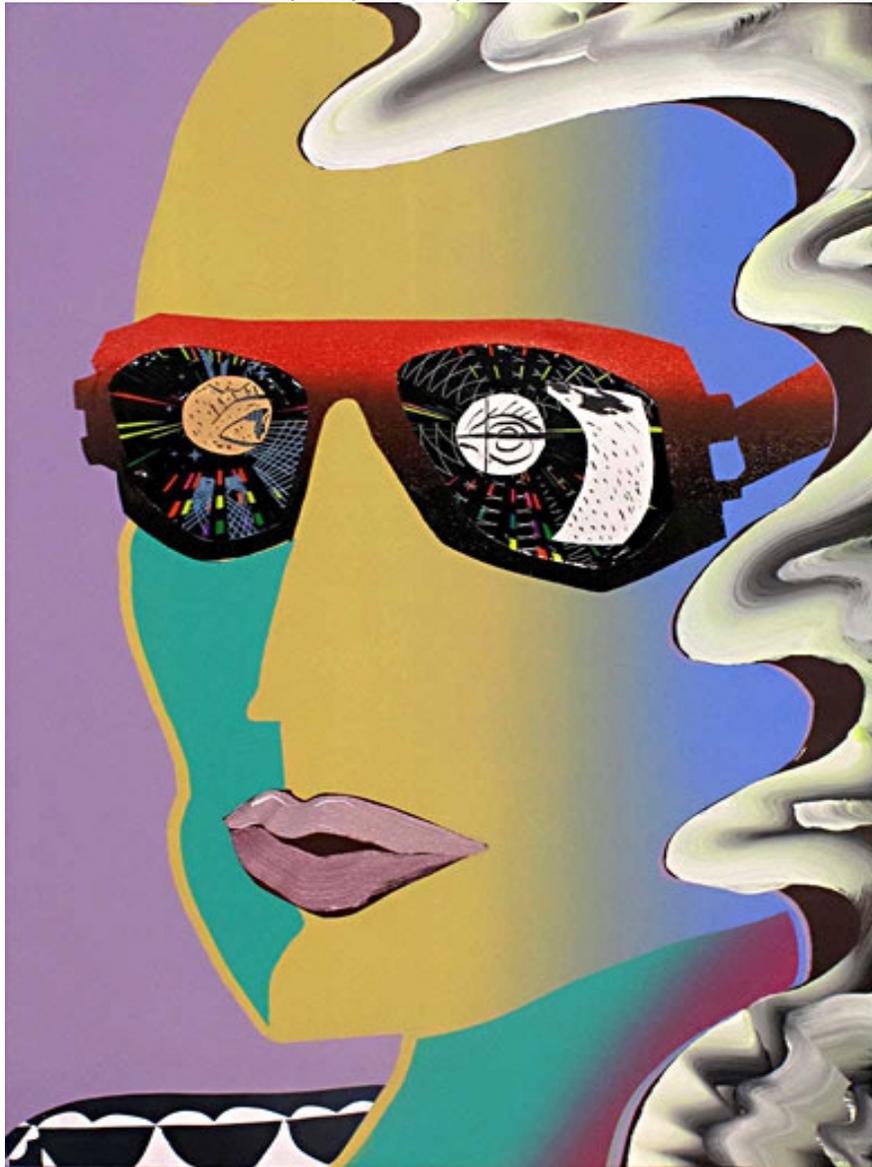
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"Mons Dew" at MASS Gallery

Five artists bombard the senses with brightly colored images that speak to personal consumption of commercial goods

REVIEWED BY CAITLIN GREENWOOD, FRI., OCT. 16, 2015



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Cazal by Melissa Brown

In 2010, the British virtual band Gorillaz put out *Plastic Beach*, an album that details a postapocalyptic world where humanity's folly plays out on a new landscape of physical refuse. Plastic trash makes up our new topography, with discarded household items gleaming in the sun, stretching for miles on end. Lead singer Damon Albarn croons in the album's title track, "It's a Casio on a plastic beach./ It's a Styrofoam deep-sea landfill."

The planet has fallen into superficial chaos, and Albarn can do nothing more than sit back and take in the new world order.

"Mons Dew" feels like a natural extension of Albarn's *Plastic Beach*. The exhibition at MASS Gallery intends to "confuse, illuminate, and delight the senses" through sculpture, painting, and video work from five artists: Patrick Berran, Melissa Brown, Andy Coolquitt, Stacy Fisher, and Shara Hughes. While each artist brings an entirely different approach to his or her work, "Mons Dew" adopts a color palette of bright, almost neon, hues. Additionally, the show brings many manufactured or commercial objects to the forefront of the work.

Berran's fluorescent paintings stand adjacent to Brown's video *Casino Trip*, which depicts images of card decks and various other game icons in stop-motion animation, complete with all the dinging and buzzing audio from casinos. It's sensory bombardment, which carries throughout "Mons Dew."

At the exhibition center stands Coolquitt, who can be polarizing for arts enthusiasts – some love his deconstructed approach while others have a hard time pinpointing his creative narrative. His pieces here consume MASS's gallery space and infuse the exhibition with found-object sculpture and ephemera. While Coolquitt provides an expansive array of objects to study, Hughes and Fisher offer much more simplistic work. This simplicity should balance out the indulgent visuals from Berran, Brown, and Coolquitt, but instead it forces these artists into the background of the exhibition, behind its more aggressive players.

"Mons Dew" explores a distinct thread of visual cues that speak to personal consumption and individual expression, though some of its artists feel more cohesive in their execution than others.