

Review:

Reality Shows at William Havu and Goodwin Fine Art

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Over at Goodwin Fine Art, the duet *Habitat* presents painter Sharon Feder, a Colorado artist who creates semi-abstracted street and industrial scenes, and Arizona photographer Kate Breakey, who contributes photos of birds, reptiles and flowers printed on glass or done as photograms.

The Feder paintings in the front gallery struck me as experimental, since they're markedly different from her earlier works. Although the show includes a number of variations on an established Feder theme that exploits the geometric aspects of perspective, in the more recent pieces, the lines she uses to convey pictorial depth are overt. Her earlier paintings were simpler and more straightforward, with a precisionist edge; that's been replaced by ghostly and vaporous constructions that are sometimes placed right at the picture plane as the architectural scene falls away from the surface. In "Next, No. 10," the receding street of neglected storefronts is seen behind a screen of nearly transparent lines, smudges and scuff marks. The elements of the picture, like the plants and the fence in the foreground, are barely there, rendered so that the surface beneath them is revealed.

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The Kate Breakey photos in the back gallery strike a very different mood, and not just because of the inherent differences in the two distinct mediums of painting and photography. Breakey displays two separate techniques: photos printed on glass that have been backed by gold leaf; and photograms done in a range of muted grays. She uses the inherent characteristics of her methods to add a painterly character; looking at these photos, it occurred to me that her style constituted a mirror image of photo-realist painting. Just as photo-realist painters look to photos to guide their creations, Breakey uses the distinctive qualities of painting to inform her photos.

The photos on glass are presented salon-style in a dense cluster on the south wall, and the photograms are shown the same way on the west wall; both displays are small and intimate, and each has been separately framed using either gilt or black-painted moldings in traditional patterns. The setup and the subjects, who were photographed as though they were specimens in some kind of Victorian natural-history museum, lend the whole Breakey show a goth-like feel. The photos were all so compelling that it was impossible to pick a single standout.

The artists at Havu and Goodwin are all taking their own routes to the same goal: using old-fashioned representational imagery in some kind of contemporary way.

Habitat, through September 9, Tina Goodwin Fine Art, 1255 Delaware Street, 303-573-1255, goodwinfineart.com.

For complete Review:

<http://www.westword.com/arts/reality-shows-at-william-havu-gallery-and-goodwin-fine-art-9395857>