



Art Beat Bay Area
SF Bay Area Visual Arts

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Review: David Jang at Sandra Lee Gallery

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David Jang, "Proliferate"

The common feature that runs through the recent solo exhibition (up through September 30, 2011) of work by Los Angeles–based artist David Jang is repurposed material, which the artist has used to create a small installation piece, a wall sculpture, and two-dimensional pieces. What is most refreshing is Jang's creative refiguring of his chosen mediums and objects; their original purpose or configuration

is not immediately evident. More to that point, the work isn't reliant on this eco-trend; it's not defined by the recycling, only provided with greater depth. Two pieces in particular are exemplary in this regard: *Novelty* and *Proliferate*. The former is a sculpture that comprises seven variously sized Hydrangea-like, half-sphere silver forms—created with inside-out chip bags. Taken at face value, the piece bursts with shiny complexity—the organic shape juxtaposed with the man-made metallic sheen. Factoring in the material as chip bags adds an element of festivity or community (one can imagine a party of chip eating to provide the artist with the needed materials; the tight gathering together of the bags also contributes to this idea of community). Much quieter, *Proliferate* is a long off-white/yellowish ribbon-like piece that snakes back and forth in loopy zigzags, standing up on its thin edge; for this work, Jang covered a roll of paper towels in resin. Simple, beautiful, and moveable. Several other works in the exhibition are made from large pieces of wood, covered, at least partially, with a layer of deconstructed/flattened soda cans, with circles repeatedly etched into the surface. These rough, heavily textured works—and explorations of form, pattern, and composition—speak to the artist's interest in portraying the cyclical nature of being, of life, and repetition (not only does Jang use the same shape over and over, but his use of multiple iterations of the same types of objects in one piece—cans, bags, etc.—also addresses mass consumption and throwaway culture). The rusty patina, while adding subtle color, also speaks to progression, aging, and renewal (these cans are experiencing a new beginning as an artwork). While repurposing materials and formal explorations aren't groundbreaking endeavors, Jang brings, especially to the former, a unique, playful aesthetic worthy of thoughtful contemplation.

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