

CRITICS' PICKS

CURRENT PAST

New York

Chris Ofili
Tatiana Kronberg and Anne Eastman
Mira Dancy and Sarah Peters
Jennifer Paige Cohen
Michelle Grabner
Nam June Paik

Los Angeles

JPW3
Cayetano Ferrer

San Francisco

“Secondhand”

Boston

Jasper Johns

Chicago

Sabina Ott
“Experiments in Environment: The Halprin Workshops, 1966–1971”

Fairfield

Guerrilla Girls

Miami

Adler Guerrier

Minneapolis

Alexa Horochowski

Washington, DC

Salvatore Scarpitta

Toronto

“Dispatch: War Photographs in Print, 1854-2008”

London

Andro Wekua
KP Brehmer

Brighton

Keith Vaughan

Limerick

Elaine Byrne

Paris

Niki de Saint Phalle
Katinka Bock
Letha Wilson

Metz

“Formes Simples”

Berlin

Grit Richter

Milan

San Francisco

“Secondhand”

PIER 24

Pier 24 The Embarcadero

August 1–May 1

In its first several rooms, “Secondhand” appears to embody a diligent curatorial argument about notable trends in contemporary photographic practices surrounding found images, with by canonical work from Richard Prince and John Baldessari, as well as Larry Sultan and Mike Mandel’s *Evidence* (1977), the groundbreaking conceptual book culled from massive police and science archives. The show quickly moves to a noteworthy group of recent photographers working with Photoshopped, decontextualized, vernacular images—in particular Matt Lipps’s collaged archive from the now-extinct magazine *Horizons* and Erik Kessels’s inexhaustible compilations of found snapshots, which have gone beyond his famous Flickr repositories into more intimate documentations of personal lives, the work’s sentiment and sheer volume both anchoring the show.



Matt Lipps, *Untitled (Women's Heads)*, 2010, C-print, 40 x 53”.

But what makes “Secondhand” remarkable is the range of vernacular photographs from numerous other collections and archives: shrewd counterpoints to the more manifest practices on display. The first show at Pier 24 to feature a majority of works on loan, “Secondhand” includes grease-marked minor-league baseball pictures (showing crop-marks, pre-Photoshop) and lowbrow postcards, exquisitely embroidered by hand. Perhaps most moving of all are the deeply subtle interventions by Melissa Catanese, who has arranged a series of found snapshots into a free-associative timeline along one wall. In contrast to these quieter creations of narrative order out of chaos, the wild abundance of the more dramatic work feels impersonal by comparison.

— Monica Westin