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Review: '6018 Wilshire' at Edward Cella: Last show before the wrecking ball



Installation view of "6018 Wilshire," the closing exhibition at Edward Cella, featuring the work of 101 artists. (Edward Cella Art + Architecture)

By DAVID PAGEL

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The exhibition "6018 Wilshire" brings together 120 works by 101 artists, all of whom exhibited at this address at one time or another in the last 12 years. It's a surprisingly satisfying mishmash of paintings, sculptures and photographs, as well as drawings, collages and videos, with a few mini-installations tossed in.

Sensuality links just about everything, with each artist's deep love of stuff borne out by the way they work with materials: hands-on and intimately, wrestling some details of texture, shape and color into form while leaving others free to run amok. A taut relationship between willfulness and abandon comes into focus as care and recklessness strike just the right balance.

Organized by Carl Berg, who ran Carl Berg Gallery at this location from 2003 to 2009, and Edward Cella, who has run Edward Cella Art + Architecture here since 2009, “6018 Wilshire” is the last exhibition in this building. In February it’s scheduled to be torn down to make way for the subway.

Berg has managed to install the jampacked swan song so that its works do not fight with one another but form a freewheeling treasure hunt. This leaves visitors free to meander and sample. Little epiphanies take precedence over big-picture overviews. In-the-moment experiences — too numerous to sum up — make questions about what it all means seem silly, off the mark and out of touch with what art does best.

Delights, both sensual and cerebral, abound. Things start fast in the first gallery, with Carolie Parker, Devon Tsuno and Erin Marie Dunn’s works on paper splintering sunlight into a flickering prism of liquid loveliness. Supersaturated colors also animate Doug Meyer’s painting, Jeremy Kidd’s photograph and Penelope Gottlieb’s wall relief.

Sculpture stands out in the second gallery, where works by Tim Hawkinson, Jacci Den Hartog, Lynn Aldrich, George Stoll, Adam Berg and Michael Pierzynski take visitors on a whirlwind tour of the imaginative possibilities of three-dimensionality.

The links among the works in the last gallery are the loosest, suggesting a collection of misfits. Even so, Judy Fiskin’s tiny silver print, Thomas Whittaker Kidd’s corny Realism and Ruth Pastine’s luminous abstraction get on well with one another, inspiring visitors to put logic on hold and weave their way through this terrific farewell party of an exhibition.

Edward Cella Art + Architecture, 6018 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, (323) 525-0053, through Dec. 20. Closed Sundays and Mondays. www.edwardcella.com