

Young Projects: L.A.'s Premiere Video Art Gallery

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Video-based art is as ubiquitous as painting in the contemporary art world, and its modern international history is embraced by institutions, fairs, critics, and audiences. Of course, the internet and cheap digital equipment has fertilized this phenomenon -- but the history of the medium goes back as far as the invention of the moving image, and its avant-garde practitioners in the 1960s, '70s and '80s accomplished miracles with early technology. New generations increasingly view video as a central artistic practice -- one with fractally diverse expressions, from the spectacularly epic cinematics of Christian Marclay, Bill Viola, and Matthew Barney to the cloyingly low-fi works of Cory Arcangel and Paul Chan, and thousands of conceptual and stylistic permutations in between (Mike Kelley, Douglas Gordon, Nicole Cohen, Shirin Neshat). The point is video is everywhere and everything, with tethers to painting, sculpture, short film, installation, and performance.

Although only some video artists make overt references to "the movies" it still seems like Los Angeles -- more specifically, Hollywood -- as the world cinema and television production capital, would be the most engaged, curious, familiar, enthusiastic audience base for what is arguably the most zeitgeisty medium of the moment. And yet, gallerist, curator, scholar, and erstwhile critic Paul Young's **Young Projects Gallery**, in the Pacific Design Center, is the only contemporary art gallery in town dedicated to art of the moving image.



Young founded the gallery in 2009, as part of the first-generation influx into the Pacific Design Center when what was then known as the Design Loves Art program offered excellent deals to lure recession-bruised independent galleries to the second floor of the Blue Building. Young actually did not have a gallery space before then, but he had just published the definitive guide to the genre, "**Art Cinema**" from Taschen, and as a prolific writer on art, architecture, and film, he was in a unique position to yield to temptation, and opened the venue. The book "explores how artists have used the medium to explode cinematic conventions and convey a truly expressive cinema one that uses rhythm, color, structure, and content to express a staggering array of ideas and feelings. Broken down into ten sub-genres, including collage, appropriation, lyricism, structuralism, parody, and installation... over five hundred films and filmmakers are included." That synopsis could just as easily describe the program of the gallery itself, as over the years Young has presented the work of scores -- hundreds if you include group shows -- of artists operating along this continuum, ranging in scope from historical surveys of both local and international giants to the experimental progressive works of emerging talents.



His most recent exhibition, "**Christoph Draeger**," was a powerful example of what a creative relationship to the movies can look like in video art; and "Destroying L.A." was also the first survey of Brooklyn-based Swiss artist Christoph Draeger in the U.S. Draeger's practice is wide-ranging, but his main thing is to explore configurations of "the remake" both in terms of artists remaking movies, and studios remaking their own features. Some pieces cast amateurs in iconic scenes, in some he reenacts longer passages himself. In the eponymous "Destroying LA" (2014), he examines Hollywood's zesty and prolific methods of destroying the city on film; and "Schizo Redux" (2004) is a full-length feature film that super-imposes Alfred Hitchcock's "Psycho" (1960) on top of Gus Van Sant's shot-for-shot 1998 remake.



Young Project's next round of shows opens on Thursday, September 17 (along with all 15 or so of the other galleries currently in residency on the **designLAB** roster) and he's using the full potential of his two separate spaces to offer a trio of solo shows as salient to the current landscape of the genre as Draeger's was -- with just as much humor, but with much less Hollywood.

George Barber's "By the Way" is also the legendary British artist's first U.S. solo show, and, in fact, a predominance of Young's program presents the debut U.S. exhibitions of artists who are well-known everywhere else. This international scope of insight is part of what makes the gallery such a treasure and resource for anyone curious about the genre -- although he is also committed to working with local artists on special projects. **Barber** is known for a dry subversive wit and a penchant for the surreal which has served him well from the scratch videos of the 1980s all the way to his most recent work demonstrating an embrace of fancier technology with no less creative bravado.

Egill Sæbjörnsson's "P.L.A.Y. with Things" is the Icelandic, Berlin-based artist's first L.A. gallery show, and he will show an assortment of new and recent site-specific installations in which he uses projection mapping to seemingly animate static objects with video and animation. And finally, Los Angeles-based artist **Stas Orlovski**, presents the brand new work "Skazka," an animated sculptural installation featuring sound by Steve Roden and editing by Beau Leduc -- the same dream team responsible for last year's mesmerizing "**Chimera**" at the Pasadena Museum of California Art, inspired by the magical projections of 18th and 19th century phantasmagoria shows. Previous iterations of his uniquely hand-made animations have been projected onto static wall-mounted collages, but for this show at Young Projects Orlovski has been working on a large-scale stage set with freestanding figures and immersive optics in the vein of old-school Bauhaus theater. Showcasing a diverse swath of artists, Young is an aggregator and a curator, creating a multi-angled look at video art today.



*For more information visit the **Young Projects website** or the gallery's **YouTube channel**.*