

# notes on looking

Contemporary Art from Los Angeles

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Peter Holzhauser and Nathan Danilowicz at Primer II



Curator Marco Rios, at the Luckman Gallery, presents yearly an exhibition titled *Primer* which features a single Los Angeles artist from

each of several disciplines and one work or a series from each of these artists. This year *Primer II* includes work by Yanira Cartagena, Nathan Danilowicz, Peter Holzhauer, Norm Laich, Hazel Mandujano, & Eric Torborg.

Peter Holzhauer is the representative photographer among this grouping and is an artist whose work I have been following around Los Angeles for several years. In this show all his work is b/w, and all seem to be photographs of Los Angeles, or at least places that might be LA. (Holzhauer works beautifully in color, too, see his website for examples: <http://peterholzhauer.com/index.php>. Prepare to find more clarity than your eye or brain can handle at one viewing. Insert smile emoticon here.)







I find online a video with Holzhauser discussing LACMA's New Topographics exhibition of last year and this connection makes sense:

Holzhauer pulls incredible specificity out of possibly mundane subjects, much as the photographers of that past day also did. Think about it – how many Jiffy Lube’s litter our landscape and yet how many are there that look like the one above. I’d guess none, because someone needs to take a picture for that level of perfection to happen. In situ, the glowing, magical seeming lube pit pictured above would have neighbors and context and these things fuck up perfection. Choices make pictures – choosing what to leave out as much as what to include.



There is a way in which Holzhauer’s work feels old fashioned to me – how does the artist engage with 21st Century technologies? Where’s the mining of ideas from or critique of social media? How does this work negotiate the history of photography unless one accepts reproduction as negotiation? And then I look again at the photographs that Holzhauer makes, smack my stupid head and remind myself not to buy into a critically limiting progressive reading of culture as constant avant gardism and I pleasure my eye and my mind by



looking at and thinking about the photographs themselves. Sometimes not engaging in radicality (to use a term coined by Brian Kennon) can be a most radical act indeed.





For fun, this is Peter Holzhauser making the Mulholland Bridge photo, documented for Carmeggedon by AP photographer Jae C. Hong and Yahoo News. "Mr. Gorbachev, take that bridge down!"