

Liz Brizzi - *Adrift*

April 26th - May 17th

Thinkspace (Los Angeles) is pleased to present *Adrift*, the gallery's first solo exhibition of new works by Los Angeles based, French born, artist Liz Brizzi. Her mixed media collage paintings combine photography, paper and acrylic washes of paint on board to build complex and layered graphic works that capture the architectural specters of the urban core. Originally looking to the forgotten and often bereft and marginalized corners of Los Angeles, and traveling to its outskirts and un-gentrified peripheries, Brizzi sought to excavate the beauty of its imperfect embrasures. In *Adrift*, the artist extends this interest through travel and philosophy, delivering new works based on imagery from her recent travels to Japan and South East Asia.

As the title of the exhibition aptly suggests, Brizzi is an artist adrift and in search of the mutable lives of structures. Through her travels, Brizzi has sought to capture the cultural specificity of her subjects, looking to the ways in which architecture speaks of its city's past and present. A central component of her practice involves the undertaking of urban "safaris" on which she seeks and arrests the absentia of industrial relics and buildings through photography. Her work can be defined as architectural portraiture, seeking the evasive identities of these receding and often forgotten edifices. Whether in a decrepit neon sign, a vacant alley way or a gutted building, Brizzi excavates the lives of partial vestiges. In the absence of human subjects, the works focus on these architectures and environments as living entities subject to the ravages of time and neglect.

Brizzi's gritty and colorful works are ambient, and capture the moodiness of these urban hauntings with impressionistic license. At once graphic and painterly, the works are often composites of fractured moments and vistas. Architecturally devised compositionally, the panels are nonetheless as deeply emotive and stirring as they are technically impressive. They feel both holistically bound and fragmentary - a beautifully injured vision of remnants and unknown hollows. An avid traveller with an interest in Japanese philosophy, particularly the tenets of *Wabi-Sabi* which expound an appreciation of transience and imperfection, Brizzi is a spatial poet in search of ragged edges and haunted fissures.

Jolene Lai - *Play*

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Thinkspace (Los Angeles) is pleased to present *Play*, featuring new works by Jolene Lai in the project room. Lai's work disarmingly extracts visual magic from the mundane repetitions of daily life, and from the familiar narratives that lurk in our shared consciousness. Like adult fairy tales, the artist transforms known situations from memory and the every day, building playful symbolic narratives through free association. Lai transports the viewer through a whimsical cast of characters and symbols, at times absurd and at others tragicomic. Her work often feels like a waking dream as the familiar is uncomfortably amplified through strange poetry.

The artist works primarily in oil and acrylic on canvas, or mixed media on watercolor paper, building visual tensions with highly detailed and dimensional areas set against moments of graphic flatness. This push and pull in her technical execution aptly reflects the thematic oppositions inherent in her work. They combine the known and the unfamiliar with seamless ease. An aggregate of contrariety, her works are hauntingly of this world and yet derived from a disquieting beyond. They emotively reveal the complex facets of shared human anxieties, desires and musings through surreal imagery that proverbially cuts to the more foreboding recesses of the familiar.

In *Play*, the artist will present five new works in oil and acrylic on canvas. The imagery is inspired by a nostalgic revisitation of childhood themes and toys, and features a female character faced with adult situations and impulses that are mediated through the play things and fantasies of childhood. Just as the impulses of nostalgia are haunting, bittersweet and at times traumatic, so too is her beautiful escapism. Stolen hearts, flighty birds, larger than life friends and assailants, broken faceless loves and identities - Lai's work tugs at our seams.