

THOMAS DUNCAN GALLERY

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Lucas Knipscher, Win McCarthy, Sigmar Polke

Rachel Uffner Gallery
47 Orchard Street,
near Hester Street
Lower East Side
Through March 3

Very much in the style of the day this appealingly casual, slightly disheveled exhibition suggests that the sorcerer's apprentices spent the afternoon conjuring and then knocked off early, before quite cleaning up. The sorcerer here is the German alchemist Sigmar Polke (1941-2010), represented by two photographs whose mysterious signs of disorder and decay may have been inspirational to the apprentices. These are the young artists Lucas Knipscher and Win McCarthy, who collaborated in this arrangement of paintings, sculptures, photographs and other odds and ends.

For example, the little piles of detritus seemingly ready for the dustpan that are actually part of Mr. McCarthy's aggregate of plaster, plastic, clay, wood and tempera hopefully titled "Things Are Coming Together." "Broken Sculpture With Reclining Sock," another McCarthy work, features a sock resting, like a slightly burnt offering, on a T-shape of smooth blue-tinted plaster held up by four hairpin iron legs. Otherwise, raw clay seems to be his go-to material, in both sculpture and works on paper.

Mr. Knipscher, who is slightly more restrained, plasters ikat fabric to canvas in a way that recalls Polke, and also takes photographs of high-end shower fixtures that he prints using exhausted developing fluid; their refined, penumbral eroticism evokes the drawings of both Ingres and Hans Bellmer. He also contributes three pairs of life-size

clownish feet on the ceiling, with long pendulums dangling down to the ground. They weigh almost nothing and add to the array without quite adding up.

The artists' collaborations seems most succinct: two sculptures, each consisting of a burning candle held aloft by a long length of wire twisting down from the ceiling so that the unchecked drippings form a little wax stalagmite below. In one of them titled "Candle in No Wind," the wax falls on a chunk of Mr. McCarthy's clay and is framed by two lengths of ikat-wrapped wood, courtesy of Mr. Knipscher, nestled in the window.

By and large the individual works tend to be overshadowed by the show's winsome totality and counterintuitive beauty, but some are nonetheless quite promising. ROBERTA SMITH

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