

"85" by Mariah Robertson.

Breaking down boundaries at Zevitas

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Last summer, Steven Zevitas Gallery mounted a crackerjack show, "Not About Paint," that examined how painting has lately flirted, danced,

GALLERIES and occasionally mated with sculpture. Now Zevitas offers a buzzy companion exhibition, "The Space in Between," which addresses artists experimenting with a host of technical processes, including photography.

It is a more contemplative, less antic show. Little intrudes on the viewer's space. A couple of projectors sit on the floor, and Zevitas has built a darkened video room, but the projected works — painterly videos by Colin Snapp and the team of Dave Miko and Tom Thayer — promote quiet, intimate engagement.

Miko and Thayer's "A Figure's Strange Triggered Change" features video projected onto an aluminum panel, which sports painted marks that relate to passages in the video. The projected images verge on abstract; they're shadowy and overex-

THE SPACE IN BETWEEN
At: Steven Zevitas Gallery,
450 Harrison Ave., through Aug. 18.
617-778-5265,
www.stevenzevitassgallery.com

PATRIOTIC EXPRESSIONS
At: Gallery Kayafas, 450 Harrison
Ave., through Aug. 11. 617-482-0411,
www.gallerykayafas.com

KIM FALER:
Everything Changes Everything
At: LaMontagne Gallery, 555 East
Second St., South Boston,
through Aug. 17. 617-464-4640,
www.lamontagnegallery.com

posed, saturated with color that pings off the aluminum. Its low-to-the-ground installation encourages the sense that you've happened on an animated hieroglyph with hallucinogenic color and hints of narrative.

Mariah Robertson and Tamar Halpern

use darkroom techniques to create abstractions, such as Robertson's lush "85," which drifts with a drippy teal grid over white, interrupted by a black curtain shot with tiny lightning bolts. Ned Vena's untitled piece made out of adhesive and vinyl on two steel doors looks like an Op Art painting. Lines converge into shimmering swells that imply volume. Sam Moyer's large ink-on-canvas piece, also untitled, could be a photo of the surface of black water. In fact, Moyer crumpled her canvas to create that rich surface, before mounting it on a wood panel.

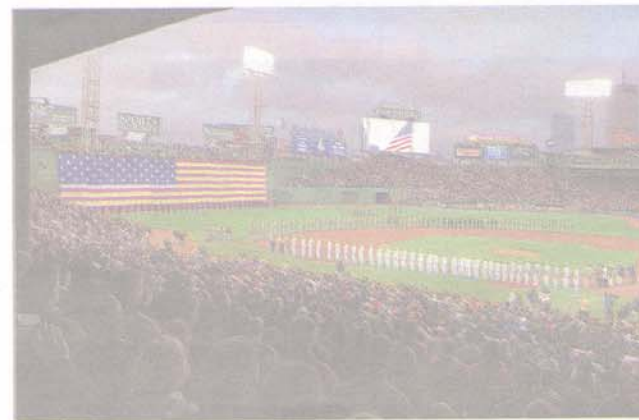
There's nothing new about artists experimenting with techniques; it's in the job description. The point is that it breaks down boundaries between mediums we have in the past seen as inviolable. Even so, painting ultimately provides the DNA for all these works; everything refers back to the plane and surface of a canvas, and the illusion of depth.

A multiplicity of voices
The idea for "Intra Country: Patriotic Expressions," the sweeping summer

group show at Gallery Kayafas, occurred to gallery owner Arlette Kayafas during the Republican primaries. "The rhetoric was so hostile and divisive," she said, when I stopped by the gallery. "I wanted to do something about patriotic expressions."

Love of country is not simple; we all may sign on to American values we hold dear, but those values come in wildly different shades of red, white, and blue. Kayafas wisely offers up a multiplicity of voices, although there's clearly a blue state slant to the show. Rachelle A. Dermer's "Miss America" artist's book and video, for instance, narrates the Facebook exchange between this liberal, lesbian artist and her cousin, whom she describes in her statement as "a paleo-conservative." It's a thoughtful piece, but ultimately it does not breach the divide.

Much of the photography in the show has a photo-journalistic feel, giving viewers room to form their own feelings, such as Bill Chapman's sweet, crisp "Armed Forces Night, Fenway Park, Boston, MA," **GALLERIES, Page 4**



Bill Chapman's "Armed Forces Night, Fenway Park, Boston, MA."

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with its dozens of servicemen ringing the diamond, sharply saluting a giant flag.

Then there's Charles "Teenie" Harris's photo of a mid-20th-century billboard, "Vote Republican, Pittsburgh, PA," which enjoins the public to "make our homes and streets safe" and features threatening hands looming over a blond girl, who most curiously holds a black-faced doll.

Roberta Paul's three "Paper Tiers" drawings are moving, large-scale versions of drawings of flags she asked her elderly father to make after Sept. 11. He had a type of dementia that affected his ability to draw, so the images, mounted vertically, get progressively more ragged and flailing. Kayafas says one visitor looked at them without realizing they were flags, and asked if they depicted the Twin Towers under attack.

There's much more here, some pointed, some puzzling over the cracks in our society, but Paul's proud but disintegrating flags, in a way, say it all.

Shifting contexts

Kim Faler aims to make us see anew the things we take for granted, by shifting the contexts for mundane things such as brooms and chain-link fences. Her show "Everything Changes Everything" at LaMontagne Gallery is sometimes sublime, sometimes overreaching.

"Untitled (fence)" is in the first category. It's a lovely drawing on two plywood planks. Faler dyes one pink, and on the other she draws in pencil and thread a wavering chain-link pattern. It swims like a net in water, rising off the surface but also vanishing in places.

Likewise, "Saudade" is simple, but conceptually layered — a push broom covered in patterned cotton fabric,



"Saudade" by Kim Faler is at LaMontagne Gallery.

propped in a corner near a pile of eating utensils, many of which are also wrapped in fancy patterns. "Saudade" has a surreal whimsy in its unexpected collision of ordinary things.

"Liberdade" pushes too hard, perhaps because it features a taxidermied bear, which is neither functional nor ordinary. Faler has shaved the bear and plastered it with drawings of headlines from a Brazilian newspaper, and perched it menacingly on a velvet-lined armchair. "Liberdade" is shocking and funny, but it fails to open up the commonplace in the way the fence drawing and the push broom do.

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