

# Scrawl # Three

**CALL AND RESPONSE** curated by Jeffrey Mitchell

By William Owen and Robert Mittenenthal

W: The storyteller's intuition evokes a response.

R: *As Jeffrey Mitchell suggests these stories tell themselves. They find us as much as we find them. He's identified a number of unilateral dualities for us to peruse. We might as well say there is nothing left to describe or explain: the works need to speak – and as the old forms fulfill, we're discharged.*

W: The objects watch their curation. This weaving is a way to have a group show.

R: *Yes. The artists and works get down to their use - which is up to us. An anthology flowers and a combination of difference and resemblance can draw its own blank.*

W: Will Owen tells it straight. Robert Mittenenthal tells it slant. The gallery approached us because we're approachable.

R: *Sol Hashemi and Jack Ryan start at the moon, to quote Louie Zukofsky: "...it looked as if it/ looked up someway above earth/ a hectic of an instant /... the same / earth gaze returns to them/ weightless, inkling of outlines, unearthing/ always only their own past futures..."*

W: The light, the organization, the intent gaze – is the invention of open air, which parades itself and resolves uprooted in another sphere.

R: *I follow the luminescence to lunar positions and the tangled cords of the seductive circle. I happily fixate on layers of top down illusion – the tentacted grasps of Sol's full moons on the rise.*

W: What's risen here is the 'no' of a waning animal.

R: *But that still doesn't explain the skull, an animal fixture which is also a fixation?*

W: That's how there's nothing to look at and I want to see it.

R: *Brett Walker and Sonya Stockton lead me to cover what withholds and reveals.*

W: The photographs prop up a subject, even though the props are missing something: you can walk right off the edge of your sudden interior. The body emerges as the persona retreats from the camera.

R: *We are defined as much by our pink sneakers as our not-so-high heels – the*

*pedestals upon which we displace ourselves.*

W: Chaune Peck and Jenevive Nykolak show the possibilities of a hole.

R: *The word "triangle" comes to mind but not sure it's geometry that connects these two.*

W: A rupture can be a path to origin, or a space cleared to open potential.

R: *The flayed flesh or revealing musculature of this Rococo make almost edible flowers, virtual polyps, cold open sores. Regarding Peck's title, crystal might prove something exists before human consciousness, but it's hard to make out 'life'.*

W: No life but light and its duration – the darkest places have the oldest light; the crystal's human life is what's looking, while Nykolak makes room and realizes an abyss that painters have lined with florid skin.

W: Jamey Braden and Dorian Dyer rescue and enshrine heritage, with a naïveté that sets out to climb the mountain.

R: *Yes. It's clear that the artist is no dictator. Braden's talismans etch out a message, incorporating various objects and images. Constellations of ornamentation made whole. With Dyer we're in the realm of that which pushes us away at the same time that it pulls us in.*

W: Drawing miniscule lines, we're shown the dream of an emblem; the bald eagle saves the cosmos. These shrines announce themselves by their pronounced size: I respond immediately to what Dyer makes large, as I do to what Braden makes small.

R: *Gretchen Bennett, Joshua Lindenmayer and Matthew Cox impose presence via absence. Images are severed from their qualities. Graphemes painted or etched onto skin.*

W: The gallery is a collaboration of cleared space and focused objects, and you're one of them: a body at play with every body.

R: *It's as if "Slapstick" were in search of its own name.*

W: What spaces gather around the gallery pillars that just barely fail to match geometrically? What's missing?

R: *The imperfect pedestals that levitate or lean; they shimmy up to display nothing but light.*

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Robert Mittenenthal is a curator of the subtext reading series (SubtextReadingSeries.blogspot.com) His most recent books are Value Unmapped (Nomados) and Wax World, which is forthcoming from Chax.