



Dean Sameshima, *YMAP (Sun #2)* (detail), 2005, framed light jet print, 30 x 21 1/2".

honor of Harvey Milk and in peaceful protest of the light sentencing of his assassin, Twinkie-eater Dan White. I usually retch whenever I see a rainbow anything, but Dean Sameshima's use of rainbow pride here triggered glee: Tearing at the seams of Baker's handmade prototype, Sameshima allows the sign of craft to remain only in the rainbow tinting of his images scanned from underground 1950s and '60s physical-culture-turned-sugary-porn chapbooks like *Butch* that, picturing "young men at play" as nude or pouch-clad cowboys, gymnasts, wrestlers, footballers, and artists, sexed the postal system.

Sameshima's usually monochromatic tinting isn't capricious: His sources' simple color separation and newspaper-like stock kept most of the "adults only" material affordable to both budget queens and horny, questioning teens. In the blue-toned diptych *YMAP (Art)*, 2005, a well-hung and well-leiled brunet shows off both his front and rear assets, relaxing on a ready bed while a second figure uses a makeshift Warhol-meets-Kienholz "camera" (made, in part, of a "Toymato Soup" can and jerry-built tin flash) to "take" pictures. This device could only shoot phantasmatically, while the mostly anonymous photographers were left striving to realize with actual cameras and willing beefcake equivalents in the world. Sameshima asks if it is at all possible in an age of anything goes to risk something similarly eccentric and intense for the sake of desire.

With this exuberant boyfist, Sameshima acknowledges that, ever since Mike Kelley put two stuffed animals on a dinky afghan with a boom box droning theory in his 1991 "Dialogue" series, theory has often looked down-home and craft has become a sign of self-consciousness. By unfurling rainbows as sheer signification of the personal (re: craft) and by Viagravating the often too-latent sexual energy of rephotography, Sameshima skirts the potential impasse of theory to struggle with the personal. The young men at play become a study not in nostalgia (how could they, when from Abercrombie & Fitch to *Friday Night Lights* [2004] "jock" is the dominant aesthetic of all masculinity?) but rather in mourning for an identity now (?) kaput.

In *Boys In My Bedroom*, 1995-, the man-crazy second part of the show, Sameshima inverted (and perverted?) his negotiation of gay history by sorting out his private desires from the world's vast bombardment of cute "types." His dream is slim-hipped, Euro, Hedi Slimane-for-Diorish, but obsession extends it messily to include Luke Wilson, certain surfers,

teens with baby fat, a young Rainer Werner Fassbinder, and supermodel Ivan de Pineda, black-and-white photocopies of whom Sameshima has taped into delicate wall-paper-like "screens." This fierce archiving echoes, fractures, and diverges from the rainbow rhapsody. Relentless, its cruising is endless, all-consuming, and beyond normative relationality.

The apotheosis occurs with *Boys In My Bedroom*, #2, 2005, a dizzying, two-hour compilation of every glimpse of televised hotness that's caught Sameshima's eye, edited down to the guys alone. No one and nothing else matters, not Oprah, not narrative, perhaps not even "Dean." From spicy arrestees on *COPS* to Tom Cruise, the low-tech binge of singled-out talking heads and show-offs overwhelms, producing simultaneous exhilaration and unease. Love isn't the only drug anyone should be thinking of while ogling this sublime. Nearby, *Self Portrait*, 2005, comprised of nine Polaroid stills grabbed from Fassbinder's *Fox and His Friends* (1975), ends with ends with a bottle of Valium and a dead Fox.

—Bruce Hainley

DAVID HOCKNEY

LA LOUVER

David Hockney's colorful persona has long served as a foil for the quiet understatement of his pictorial output. Throughout the 1960s, these two elements—the artist and his oeuvre—were consistently misaligned. On his emergence, Hockney the artist embodied the optimism that gripped the United Kingdom in the postwar years as rationing gave way to what Lawrence Alloway called an "aesthetics of plenty." Registered in every detail of his carefully plotted social pose was a kind of content that forcefully mitigated the glacial ennui that permeated so many of his paintings, especially those he would make after moving to Los Angeles in 1964.

In recent years, the terms of that equation have been subtly skewed—if not inverted—and nowhere more so than in this latest clutch of watercolors executed in the Yorkshire countryside between 2003 and 2004. As with his last bravura turn at LA Louver, "Looking at Landscape/Being in Landscape" in 1998, these new pictures show Hockney returning to the land of his birth and finding there some affinities with his second home in the American West—most notably in their shared panoramic skylines. A work like *East Yorkshire, Spring Landscape*, 2004, for example, carries

clumps of weeds and grasses. Two trees at the top of the piece send cascades of roots into side-by-side maps of the city. The one on the left charts the meandering path of Mission Creek, a stream that ran freely through the sparsely populated terrain of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The oak tree's roots flow seamlessly into this stream, suggesting an undisturbed natural cycle. By contrast, in the map on the right, the eucalyptus's roots become part of a grid of streets. A ghostlike version of the creek is repeated behind this grid, like pentimenti on maps of the ancient world that reveal the sites of once-thriving but long-vanished empires.

While replete with deftly rendered decorative detail, *Mission Creek* sags a little under the weight of all the different ways it seeks to convey the single message that nature has been Irreparably Altered. *San Francisco Bay 1800/San Francisco Bay 2000* essentially tells the same story, but does so in a way that feels subtler and more open-ended, allowing viewers to reach their own conclusions.

—Maria Forges

LOS ANGELES

DEAN SAMESHIMA

PERES PROJECTS

Fagdom's Betsy Ross, Gilbert Baker, a "self-described 'flaming queen' by age three," designed the rainbow flag in 1978, but due to technical problems (an initial eight-color design could not be commercially fabricated because hot pink was at that time unavailable for mass production) it wasn't unfurled until a year later, in

distinct traces of the artist's *Mulholland Drive: The Road to the Top*, 1980. In both works, the land has been used proactively with a compositional technique that subsequently fills out with washes and a varied assortment of gestures, a painterly more inventively breaks with naturalism. Yet the difference

Above all, it is the delicate touch of the artist's touch that these new pictures work. These new pictures work floating away like a train of colored soap bubbles were to the somewhat weightless Hockney has addressed. Two of these deserve particular first, his scholarly excavation of optical extension in a yielded the still-control *Knowledge: Rediscovering the Old Master's Techniques of the Old Master's* mination of a long-term imaging devices of various renewed his desire for is precisely what the war and second, the illness a in May 1999, of the artist brought Hockney back to think here of Roland E. *Lucida* (1980), also recently searching through old an instance adequate to his mother's living presence instead that the photograph general is shadowed by

A related insight into new work, though rather the evidence (or seek to