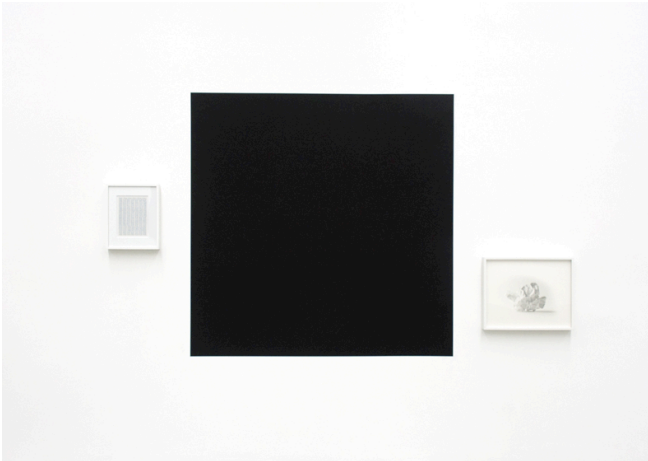


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ART REVIEW

## 'Country Music' at Blum & Poe Gallery



It's summertime and the living — at Blum and Poe at least — is easy. While art usually thrives on complexity, the refreshing group show “Country Music” takes the opposite tack, focusing instead on simple pleasures.

Maureen Gallace's tiny, sun-drenched images of summer homes are painted with such assurance that they fairly radiate comfort. Charles Raymond's series of delicate pencil drawings from the original, 1972 edition of “The Joy of Sex” depict him and his wife in 15 different sexual positions. Far from

clinical but hardly prurient, they are clear-eyed testaments to the quiet pleasures of intimacy. And Ry Rocklen's gesture of planned serendipity, “Lucky Penny Pick-Up,” is hardly noticeable unless you're one of the lucky ones who finds a penny on the gallery floor.



In addition to works by Friedrich Kunath, Richard Hughes and Jack Pierson, the show features several pieces by Emilie Halpern that perform clever shifts of perspective: a curling length of audiotape represents the amount of time (26.3 seconds) lost each year under our Gregorian calendar; a black square quantifies the distance the moon has drifted from the Earth since the last Apollo mission. And “First Love Letter” charts perhaps the greatest loss — lost love — in a piece of notebook paper covered in tiny “I love you’s” that camouflage one, matter-of-fact “I hate you.” Sometimes big revelations come in the simplest of packages.

— Sharon Mizota

*Images: Emilie Halpern's First Love Letter, Moondrift, and Last Love Letter (top), and Installation View, 2010. Photo credit: Robert Wedemeyer.*