

## CRITICS' PICKS

### Emilie Halpern and Eric Zimmerman

ART PALACE

3913 Main Street, Houston, TX

May 8–June 26, 2010



View of “Cosmos,” 2010. From left: Emilie Halpern and Eric Zimmerman, *You Are Here (Endlessly)*, 2010; Emilie Halpern, *2061*, 2008; Emilie Halpern, *Feather Lips*, 2010; Eric Zimmerman, *The Velocity of the End (From Here to There)*, 2009; Eric Zimmerman, *There I Was (Nothing Is the Rule, Something the Exception)*, 2010; Emilie Halpern, *Cosmos*, 2010.

A cosmos is a view of the universe as a system, an entity with its own intrinsic logic. “Cosmos,” Emilie Halpern and Eric Zimmerman’s collaborative exhibition, also follows a rigorous system of order—the show is dense, and the universe the artists present is one built by accretion. Images and concepts constantly overlap, and though “Cosmos” comes close to feeling like a hermetically sealed vacuum, the works’ subtle playfulness and the gallery’s airy spaciousness provide ample breathing room.

The layout of the exhibition itself reads like a Venn diagram. Each artist has filled two small rooms with his or her own output, and the more expansive central room contains Zimmerman’s large-scale graphite drawings and Halpern’s photographs and sculpture. Here their individual works converge in a visual dialogue. Zimmerman’s meticulously wrought drawings—which contain enough layered information on their own to keep a viewer occupied for hours—converse with Halpern’s photographs, which are visually stunning in their simplicity. Her instantly iconic *Yoko* (all works cited, 2010) features a color illustration of two parakeets collaged over a found image of Yoko Ono, which Halpern has rephotographed. Aural overlapping complements this visual push-pull in two pieces. Zimmerman’s audio program that accompanies his multimedia construction *After Rodchenko (Points in a Constellation)* contains pairings of sound and music in a double-channel format so each ear hears a separate track. The result is surprisingly harmonious, as when a segment of Japanese flute enriches a passage of Bach’s *Well-Tempered Clavier*. The artists’ collaborative piece *You Are Here (Endlessly)* features a recording of the overlapping voices of Zimmerman and Halpern as each reads passages from Carl Sagan’s 1994 book *Pale Blue Dot*. Ultimately, Zimmerman and Halpern maintain aesthetic autonomy while still achieving a balance within their self-made, ordered cosmos.

— Chelsea Weathers