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Peter Soriano

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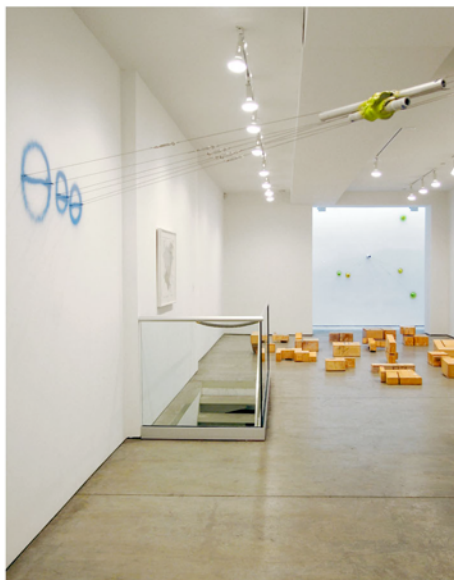
December 2007

Peter Soriano at Lennon, Weinberg

In his recent exhibition, Peter Soriano showed two bodies of work created over the past year. One was a series of small architectural models neatly laid out on the floor of the gallery. The other consisted of sculptures, mostly wall-mounted, made of wire and metal tubes and hand-molded plastic. A framed working sketch for one piece from each series was also included.

The architectural models, made of plywood, represent emptied spaces Soriano has lived in and reconstructed from memory. The materials are a mix of smooth and rough: the edges are clean but the wood putty at nail holes and joints is left visible, or sometimes nail holes are not filled. There is a pleasant lack of grandiosity in their presentation, arrayed like forensic evidence: life reduced to boxes on a concrete floor. Nevertheless, sculpture of remembered architecture has been a big subgenre for the past 20 years, and these works don't manage to revitalize a crowded field. The models end up seeming rather inert, not conjuring up much about memory, childhood or, for that matter, formal aesthetic decisions.

Soriano's other, much more engaging, body of work is crafted from everyday light hardware materials like steel cables and aluminum pipes. Five of the six pieces were attached to the walls in various ways, with a real charm lying in the manner in which he



Peter Soriano: *Three Tube Contact* (on wall and ceiling), 2007, and *for Ips* (on floor), 2006-07; at Lennon, Weinberg.

suspended the wires, relying on basic but ingenious devices to link them and keep them taut.

Seven Sprayed Contact (2007) was the simplest sculpture. An aluminum pipe, painted with clean-edged circles in blue and orange, protruded 16 inches from the wall, held in place with a rail flange. Seven wires extended from the projecting end of the tube and were attached to the wall with eyehooks at various distances from the tube. Each wire was tightened with cable

tensioners partway up its length. The spots where the wires attached to the eyehooks in the wall were covered in plastic mounds that were then spray-painted in various shades of green, yellow and orange.

Other pieces hugged corners or traversed the gallery. The meeting point with the walls was usually spray-painted with

curving patterns—almonds, spirals, circles—in the bright toy colors that were often a part of Soriano's earlier, more object-based resin sculptures. There is, for all the cheery colors and appealing Play-doh look of the plastic, the feeling that the elements are perfectly tensed, that if anything were changed the piece would fly apart and dangle uselessly. The most engaging thing about these works was the sense they conveyed of tremendous intelligence restrained, held in abeyance to a spirit of play.

—Julian Kreimer