

Los Angeles Times



CULTURE MONSTER  
ALL ARTS, ALL THE TIME

“Review: Candice Lin's unsettling take on contemporary society”

Mizota, Sharon

October 15 2012



Candice Lin's unsettling new installation squeezes some big ideas into the tight spaces at François Ghebaly Gallery. It opens with a row of small sculptures encased in bell jars: an ear of corn, a Brancusi and a Yoruba carving of Queen Victoria.

They are made of a spongy material that's oddly familiar — oh wait, they're dildos. Haven't you always longed to take America's signature crop, high modernism, and the colonial encounter to bed? In one way or another, Lin suggests, we already have.

Down in the lower gallery is a diorama of sorts, consisting of hairy, black corn stalks that sprout kernel-like brown teeth, and a black pig from whose orifice — you can guess which one — a video is projected. It portrays a conversation between two clay-mation pigs about a U.S.-funded program in which hardy, black Caribbean swine were killed and replaced by their more fragile, pink, U.S. cousins. The references here come fast and thick, from GMOs and relentless profiteering to international “aid” and racism.

This tableau is accompanied by another video in sign language, a large image of a Navajo talisman, a sculpture of a desiccated man, a table full of phallic plants, and a perversion of the Manneken Pis fountain. It's a bit much, and at times feels like a crazed attempt to expose all that's wrong with contemporary society. Yet striking connections emerge, collapsing the macro into the micro in one hot stew of burbling desire.