



## ARTISTS AND RODENTS DESCEND ON THE PIT IN "REVEAL THE RATS"



REBECCA MORRIS, UNTITLED (#516-15 - 524-15), 2015 THE PIT

The Pit's modest exhibition space is satisfyingly compact. Located in Glendale, California, the young gallery rejects the idea of a hangar-sized hall and instead offers a clean, well-lighted space that provides enough room for the work to breathe, even as the space remains intimate enough for a healthy cross-pollination of dialogue.

Artists founded the gallery, which may help explain an emphasis on art-making in the current exhibition. "Reveal the Rats" presents a refreshingly multigenerational roster of artists, from Anna Betbeze and Despina Stokou to more established figures such as Rebecca Morris, Sterling Ruby, and Lara Schnitger. As the artists joyfully express their shared affinities for processes of negation, destruction, and deconstruction, the show's connecting theme is a characterization of the rat as an industrious scavenger, a prolific creator misunderstood as a destructive creature—a definition that reflects back onto the artists and the art-making process.

For Morris and Ruby, this involves elevating studio detritus to the status of art object. Morris' misshapen paper cutouts, for instance, are the results of a masking process she uses to make large-scale canvases. Ruby puts a perfectly pristine bronze frame around the filthy, stained fabric from his studio. A Calvin Klein logo asserts the work's awareness of its own commercial status.

Elsewhere, Betbeze burns and blemishes colorful wool textiles to form a distressed composition, while Stokou and Schnitger playfully work with collage and quilting. Regardless of medium, an artwork here is a rat-race of consuming, regurgitating, and repurposing material. Making a work becomes a self-generative act, with the waste and scraps of one step becoming the foundational crux of the next.