

frosch&portmann

The Raw and the Cooked

frosch&portmann is pleased to present *The Raw and the Cooked*, a group exhibition curated by Dennis Dawson.

"Certain categorical opposites drawn from everyday experience with the most basic sorts of things—e.g. 'raw' and 'cooked,' 'fresh' and 'rotten,' 'moist' and 'parched,' and others—can serve a people as conceptual tools for the formation of abstract notions and for combining these into propositions."

— Claude Levi-Strauss

The 'raw' and 'cooked' are shorthand terms meant to differentiate between what is found in nature and what is a product of culture. Part of our human-ness is our need to reconcile these opposites and to find a balance between the two. Where do we locate this line between nature, which tends to be emotional and instinctive, and culture, which is based on rules and conventions?

An artist/cook acts as a mediator between these two states, one who transforms an object from the natural world into one fit for human consumption.

Whether similar to star cook Paul Prudhomme or more akin to the fictional Meth "cook" Walter White, the artists in this show are all engaged in a similar process with each drawing upon a varied mix of available ingredients to make concoctions that are at once highly individual and rendered suitable for cultural consumption. Of course, what one society, audience, or religious group finds edible often varies from one to the next.

What constitutes self and what lies in opposition? Within a given approach or practice there is often present an implied and persuasive tendency that is polar opposite to that originally intended. Are indications of the other latent within a given approach?

The success of an abstract painting is often dependent upon the understanding that abstraction is already a much mediated image, and likewise, a successful figurative/representational work is reliant upon the principles of good design along with an awareness of the language of abstraction. And there are those works that employ language and words with the acknowledgement that text is often viewed as image and that image, conversely, is a text.

The artists here each set out clear parameters for their individual works, and yet there exists the possibility for a reading of the works that draws upon opposing, disparate concepts that differ from those which are intended. Quite possibly the raw and cooked, the moist and parched, the fresh and rotten or any number of disparate ideas exist side by side within a single utterance.