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CANADIANART

Daniel Borins & Jennifer Marman: Another New American Century

ART GALLERY OF YORK UNIVERSITY,
TORONTO JAN 28 TO MAR 29 2009



Jennifer Marman & Daniel Borins, *Passports*, 2007

Forged passports. A sci-fi *Pietà*. And paintings that fall off their canvases. It's clear, reviewing selected works by Jennifer Marman & Daniel Borins, that to them art is never quite what it seems. The Toronto duo has made a career out of binding familiar with unfamiliar—Led Zeppelin band members into a dry, diagrammatic print, for instance, or a balcony from the terror-laced Munich Olympics into Smurf-scale.

At the same time, some Marman & Borins artworks reflect a core interest in the related interplay between viewer and artwork. As their 2003 work *Presence Meter*, currently exhibiting at the National Gallery's "Caught in the Act", indicates, the closer someone gets to a work, the more the work itself can change. (It's a handy principle for engaging with some of their more enigmatic pop-culture-inspired works.)



Jennifer Marman & Daniel Borins, "Project for a New American Century," 2009, Installation View / photo Art Gallery of York University

Now, with a solo show, "Project for a New American Century," just opened at the Art Gallery of York University, Marman & Borins have an opportunity to create an entire art/non-art environment—quite possibly a "monolithic prison-like enclosure" inspired by anti-Franco anarchists and brutalist university architectures alike. With that environment taking up one gallery space, another space plays out comparable "what if?" scenarios in painting and sculpture, yielding minimal landscapes and abstractions that could well be an aerial view of a suburban Canadian campus.



Jennifer Marman & Daniel Borins, "Project for a New American Century," Installation View / photo Art Gallery of York University

Smaller selections of Marman & Borins's practice are also on exhibit as part of "True Lies," a group show at Georgia Scherman Projects (www.georgiascherman.com) to February 14. There, sculptures imitate paintings that imitate sculptures, still stones gather Astroturf-branded moss and handmade passport replicas for Canada, the United States and Israel rest in a Plexiglas case. What country is Marman and Borins's art giving us access to? It's hard to tell, exactly. But it sure can be a fun, and sometimes even thought-provoking, place to visit. (www.yorku.ca/agy, 4800 Keele St, Toronto ON)



Jennifer Marman & Daniel Borins, "True Lies," *Folded Painting*, 2008 / *Folded Painting Sculpture*, 2008, Installation View