

# art ltd.

## "Excerpts from the Natural World" at Chandra Cerrito Contemporary

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Sarah Hinckley, *just a dream some of us had*, 2014, oil on canvas, 30 x 25", courtesy of the Artist and Chandra Cerrito Contemporary

In his essay "Nature," Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote: "In the presence of nature, a wild delight runs through the man, in spite of real sorrows." In the three-person exhibition "Excerpts from the Natural World," at Chandra Cerrito Gallery in Oakland, the artists turn to nature for inspiration and source material for their work. Using such source material as bees, acorns, lead, rocks and botanical imagery, these tactile works call attention to humanity's intersection with nature and our role as simultaneous protector and destroyer.

# Chandra Cerrito Contemporary

Esther Traugot is a gatherer, collecting dead bees whose mass demise in recent decades signals potential collapse of the earth's precious ecosystem. In a gesture that mimics amenity and condolence, Traugot crochets tiny blankets that she wraps around each one, placing them in a mandala-shaped group, under a dome vitrine. On an adjacent wall, hundreds of acorn tops are adhered to the wall in an expansive cluster, each one filled with a delicate, crocheted disk nestled inside, as if to honor their separation from the rest of the seed and its falling from the oak tree.

Mari Andrews' work *Very Small Array* takes its cue from the Karl G. Jansky Very Large Array —the largest radio telescope array on earth, located in New Mexico. Installed on the wall of the gallery is a network of inert wire appointed with lead "dishes," emulating the telescopes' ability to compile and store data. Each dish contains a natural object such as a rock, shell, or plant pod, symbolic of their inter-dependency. Also on view are Andrew's folded lead panels painted with organic shapes rendered in mica flakes, coal dust, rust or soil painted on the surface; they have an amulet quality that venerates the materials. In comparison, painter Sarah Hinckley takes on the role as documenter, collaging together moments of observation on the streets of New York City — from patterns in fashion of passerby or the changing colors of the seasons. Henri Matisse's cut-outs come to mind with this work for its use of color and botanical imagery and equally expressive and off-kilter compositions; the quiet works are agitated by evidence of dripping paint on the sides of the unframed canvases. Each artist incorporates hours of mapping, documenting and gathering in her practice, resulting in static works that collectively contemplate aspects of the landscape beyond our grasp, shown in evidence of the hand and its close touch.