

Dambrot, Shana Nys, "By George", LA WEEKLY, 7 July 2011.

LA WEEKLY

By George

By Shana Nys Dambrot

George Herms: Xenophilia (Love of the Unknown) is exactly the kind of show MOCA should be doing – a well-deserved, independently curated examination of the particular career of an established, even legendary, L.A.-based artist and his unique influence both inside the city and around the nation. Herms has been showing art for something like 50 years, and his enthusiasm remains both undaunted and infectious; if

anything, his embrace of a counterculture aesthetic that privileges ideas, gestures, and the redemption of discarded materials is more vibrant than ever. The evolution of his approach to assemblage that imbues found objects and deracinated phraseology with a jazzy, transcendent new lease on life is shown to advantage in this survey of sculptures and images, potently augmented by the work of friends, colleagues, and younger generations. Alongside Herms' own Beat-inflected take on *arte povera*, the accompanying works in a variety of media (painting, sculpture, photography) by artists as diverse as Robert Rauschenberg, Elliott Hundley, Ari Marcopoulos, Ryan McGinley, Jack Pierson, Amanda Ross-Ho, and Ryan Trecartin prove the flexibility and insistence of Herms' aesthetic – and its enduring relevance to a new generation of artists who both undermine a market-driven fetish for perfection and celebrate the giddy exuberance of this subversion. *MOCA Pacific Design Center, 8687 Melrose Ave., exhibit runs July 10-Oct. 2, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; Tues-Fri., 11 a.m.-6 p.m.; ; free. (626) 6222. moca.org.*

