Los Angeles Times

Group show at Moran Bondaroff: A playfulness in its secrets

By Sharon Mizota
August 1, 2016, 2:55 PM

Installation view of "Eternal." (Whitney Lasker)

The three-person exhibition "Eternal" at Moran Bondaroff gallery is a cross-generational conversation on the use of found and recycled materials in art. It's not the most compelling theme, but the show does result in some interesting juxtapositions.

"Eternal" features contemporary works by New York artists Agathe Snow and Marco Barrera, who in turn selected older works by SoCal assemblage veteran George Herms. Herms' wall works and sculptures — quixotic, surreal arrangements of found materials from the 1960s to the 1990s — are joys, poetic and subtly funny. "Annex to the Secret Archives" from 1974 is a table bearing a box of carefully organized

tidbits of mysterious origin. Relegated to the "annex" of the secret, they are perhaps beyond knowing.

Snow's hanging metal circles, studded all around with objects formed from shredded cardboard or things like jump ropes and hand balls, feel like exuberant whirligigs, as if they are about to send human legs or birds spinning off into space. They convey a playfulness similar to Herms' mischievous concoctions.

By contrast, Barrera's works, agglomerations of chain-link fence, dirt and found objects like dinner plates and statuary, feel heavy and overwrought. Several suggest fantastical figures that might feel at home in an urban "Lord of the Rings." They're not as fun as Snow's or Herms' contributions, but they do remind us of another, darker direction for assemblage, descending from Edward Kienholz's threatening tableaux.

Moran Bondaroff, 937 N. La Cienega Blvd., Los Angeles.
Through Aug. 27.
Closed Sundays and Mondays.
(310) 652-1711, www.moranbondaroff.com