

Dave Tourjé

Dave Tourjé/L.A. Aboriginal

Gregory Way gallery by Eve Wood

In much the same vein as maverick assemblage artist George Herms, Dave Tourjé has compiled a compelling and witty new body of work on view at Gregory Way Gallery in Beverly Hills. Working with a variety of objects, many of which fall into the category of human detritus, the leavings of an all-too complicated and congested urban environment, Tourjé has managed to fashion sculptural works that simultaneously push the boundaries of "accidentalism," i.e. coming upon art in the streets, on the beach, in a turned-over trash bin, while also maintaining the thread of narrative throughout. Of course, there are elements of sadness here as well as ribald humor and Tourjé's narratives are idiosyncratic at best, fraught with a kind of punk-rock disillusionment while also seeming to retain their innocence, as Tourjé's artistic impulse feels fresh and energetic at every turn. Works like the enigmatic "Terminal Elevation Principle Vol. 2" juxtapose the ragged skeleton of what could be Mickey Mouse's demonic twin with images of LA skateboard culture and a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, calling into question the endless quest for a fictional identity that seems somehow believable, or so we hope, as we make our way through the sometimes sickening artificiality that is Tinsel Town. But this piece also suggests a new found exuberance in today's youth culture, forging new avenues for genuine self-expression.

All in all, Tourjé's impulse to remake the old, the defunct, the ugly and the so often discarded, is a profoundly hopeful gesture, not only for the artist but for the viewer as well, as Tourjé proffers up an immense and strangely limitless array of possibilities for understanding ourselves, and the way in which each of us navigates our own lives in a difficult and fractious modern day world. ■