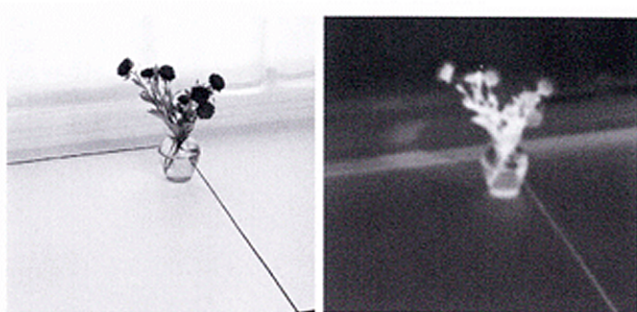


R E V I E W S



UTA BARTH, *Untitled (05.3)*, 2005. Two mounted color photographs, 76 x 80 cm each. Courtesy of ACME, Los Angeles.

LOS ANGELES

UTA BARTH

ACME

Uta Barth's elegant and serene new photographs continue her investigation into "perception and seeing as content in and of itself." The works appear at first blush to be floral still lifes, and as such Barth accepts the challenge of working with the baggage of a well-worn motif.

Her digital work has a spectral glow due to the incandescent coloring and the particular mounting of the translucent photographic paper. The presentation lets light pass through the paper and Plexiglas covering, hit a solid backing and then bounce back to the eye, creating the same internal optical effects known from egg/oil emulsion painting techniques.

Barth's pictures have a similar set up: a cream-colored table top is highlighted with an incised maroon-colored line and serves as foreground and middle ground. Small vases or water glasses sit on this surface, containing a discreet arrangement of flowers. The background is a back-lit, white window shade. The flowers are in crisp detail and focus as the surroundings blur out. Our POV is looking slightly down, creating a subtle interior animation and helping the work escape from a static frontal view. There is a 'Japanese' feel in this work in its cleanliness, enhanced by the pictorial device of combining geometric planes with intersecting lines.

Juxtaposed with the primary photograph are mirror image panels in negative and colored cadmium red. It gives a radiant heat to the proceedings lest it all become too cool, too cerebral. And they really do work together, pushing the artist's project a bit further into realms of perception, and out of the flower-painting genre it would solely inhabit if the photographs had not been so successful and decidedly beautiful.

Clayton Campbell