

LA WEEKLY

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“5 Free Art Shows to See in L.A. This Week”

By Catherine Wagley



Lothar Hempel's *Acid and Iron*, 2011

Churning mess

Joshua Nathanson, the artist who curated “GRIND” at Various Small Fires, wanted his show to approximate the dysfunction and clutter of 21st-century city life. “The city is a churning mess of ancient/current/future,” he wrote in the press release. “Grand hopes now seem naive and it’s really a bummer.” His show is indeed a mess. B. Thom Stevenson’s rugs recall Cubism, sidewalk chalk and high school yearbooks. Asha Schechter’s big inkjet prints of commercial objects adhered to gallery walls are obnoxious — the oversized La Croix can takes the cake — but fittingly so. Lothar Hempel’s photographs on aluminum show a triumphant figure, like a cross between David Bowie and some Greek god of fire, before metal and stone (there’s also a light bulb sticking out of the aluminum). The scene is industrial and glam.

812 N. Highland Ave., Hollywood; through Aug. 27. (310) 426-8040