

FREE

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ART

Museums & Galleries

'Incidents
and Notations'Through May 3,
New Langton Arts

THEORETICALLY, every picture tells a story. In this enigmatically entertaining group show, the tales may not be easy to decipher, but they're in there someplace. Seven artists present works that evidence a past action or performance or a carefully constructed fantasy. Some require explanation (which isn't always provided in the wall labels): Morgan O'Hara's drawings and wall paintings, for example, are actually portraits composed of such unlikely elements as the names of the subject's favorite authors and diagrams of musicians' hand movements. Meanwhile, Phyllis Baldino's curious assemblages of dish racks and bong-like garden-hose attachments take on new meaning when seen as artifacts from oblique but addictive video snippets. A circular floor arrangement of vibrant drawings and foam blobs by Pauline Stella Sanchez, we learn, is an offering to an imaginary Sun Queen. Other works, however, are infused with more accessible conceptual art activities: Martin Kersels makes drawings with tears and successive photos of a man falling on L.A.'s Melrose Avenue, while Harrell Fletcher and Jon Rubin, with hilarious drawings, collaboratively imagine a past together at Rubin's bar mitzvah. Not surprisingly, Tim Hawkinson (who wowed with a solo show at Center for the Arts) steals the show with a tiny self-portrait made from painstakingly reworked layers of snapshots. As an action-encapsulating object that functions quite well on its own, it almost single-handedly sums up the show's engaging curatorial story. *Wed.-Sat., noon-5 p.m., 1246 Folsom, S.F. (415) 626-5416. (Glen Helfand)*