



**Queries: art work by Daniel Loewenstein, Thomas Gartside,
Virginia Maksymowicz, John Woodin, Blaise Tobia**

September 30 - October 29, 2011

Art on the Avenue Gallery: 3808 Lancaster Avenue / Philadelphia

website: <http://tandm.us/queries>

Receptions: Friday, September 30 and Friday, October 14, 5-9 PM

Regular Gallery Hours: Wednesdays 5-9 PM; Saturdays 12-6 PM

Philadelphia Open Studio Tours (POST): Saturday and Sunday, October 1-2: 12-6 PM

Queries is part of the Look! on Lancaster Avenue arts project - a collaboration among the City of Philadelphia, Drexel University, the University City District, the Peoples Emergency Center and the artists and arts institutions of University City: website: <http://lancasteravenuearts.com>

Queries - statement by curator/artist Blaise Tobia

Honestly, I wanted to call this exhibition “Queer Art,” but most of the other artists weren’t ready for the controversy that might provoke. So we settled on “Queries,” which captures some of the sense of quirkiness that was my motivation in organizing it, while also foregrounding the idea of questioning or investigation.

It’s mostly an exhibition of photographs, but even the non-photographic work, by Daniel Loewenstein and Virginia Maksymowicz, has strong affinities with photography. Loewenstein’s prints are produced using essentially photographic technologies, and the directly inked imprint plays a key role in several of them. Maksymowicz’s *Objets Enimatiques*, like most of her work, originate as casts from objects and living beings. Both of these bodies of work have much of the indexical nature of the photograph. And, like photographic prints, Loewenstein’s and Maksymowicz’s works are multiples.

The photographic works—by Thomas Gartside, John Woodin, and myself—encompass a broad range of subject matter and approaches—but all of them derive from a desire to utilize the photographic medium in ways that are unusual, maybe even “queer” (in the sense of that word that still remains its primary definition). The photographs displayed by Woodin and myself are definitely not ones that we normally show or are known for. The photographs by Gartside are more in line with the work he has been exhibiting lately, but they still represent a significant departure from his earlier production. Loewenstein’s prints are a new direction for him, his primary medium having been sculpture through most of his artistic career. Maksymowicz has been making these plaster oddities for a long time, but they’ve remained an un-exhibited byproduct of her major casting projects until now.

So, why an interest in work that may be seen as “quirky” and outside an artist’s primary *oeuvre*? Maybe because these diversions traverse a less constricted creative space, where experimentation, accident and humor can take the lead. Maybe because their “quirkiness” opens up the range of possible responses in the viewer, by taking him or her somewhat off-guard. In any case, these works function for me in a way that I wish more art functioned—playful, but by no means trivial; evocative rather than didactic; formally astute but not self-satisfied.