

Art Review:

Future Great 2012: Brian Kennon
by Andrew Berardini



The fetishes of fandom can have the aura of relics. For Brian Kennon, fandom and the images and ideas that serve as stand-ins find ways to be actively misinterpreted, as if the best method of dispelling the anxiety of influence were to reclaim the territory for oneself. Though difficult to imagine without the history of appropriation art that precedes him (from Sherrie Levine, who makes an appearance on the cover of Kennon's collaborative book *She Has a Hot Ass* (2011), to Levine's old rival Richard Prince), the work of Kennon depends less on appropriation than on misappropriation, which in modern political-speak means 'theft'.

Kennon's is a kind of theft that both honours those from whom he's stealing and still happily misinterprets for his own purposes. This kind of misappropriated fandom demonstrates the same appreciation for things and relics as the real thing, but is filtered through his practice as an artist of making things, often for consumption in art galleries, though regularly in the form of books. This fetish of the book is doubly realised in works using the pinup spread, the curves of the model's body mirroring the curves of the book.

For Kennon, bodies and forms were never truly separated from minds and ideas. Lately his misappropriations have taken on a kind of metacommentary, mixing images and influences, from invented group shows clustering together into a single print to the totalising of books about Los Angeles art into a single tableau, the latter work offering a brilliant commentary on collapsed space and totalitarian summations about art. Collapsing the false distance between concept and form, Kennon takes what most appeals to him, and makes it most physically his own.