Nationalgalerie
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

TWO BY TWO
MARY HEILMANN & DAVID REED

Essay von Mary Heilmann

I saw David Reed's show at the Museum of Contemporary Art in La Jolla in 1999. The images of hyperbolic, photographic brush strokes connected my imagination to memories of the waves that broke down the hill at Windansea, the La Jolla break where my friends surfed in the early 60's when we were in college at Santa Barbara.

David was born in San Diego. My family moved from San Francisco to Los Angeles when I was seven for my father's work and stayed until I was thirteen, when we returned to San Francisco after his death.
David's father had a men's clothing store downtown in San Diego. One uncle, O.P. Reed, a painter, later had an art gallery in Hollywood. Another uncle, John August Reed, an architect, worked with Lloyd Wright, the son of Frank Lloyd Wright, and designed a modernist home for David's family. They were part of the scene that included the refugee artists, filmmakers, and architects Rudolph Schindler, Esther McCoy, Nicholas Wilder, and John McLaughlin.

So I'm looking at our cultural connections. 1940s Los Angeles is a huge part of the back-story of my work. My father was a civil engineer, starting out as a surveyor but later, working for the huge contracting firm, Morrison- Knudsen on construction projects: roads, tunnels, bridges and dams.
To me, the centerpiece of this show is David's installation piece, Scottie's Bedroom, which channels a moment from the movie Vertigo (set in San Francisco) with its final catastrophic scene taking place down the highway in San Juan Capistrano.

My sound piece, taken from the film, is woven into the show as a way to psychically join our two contrasting oeuvres, and to foreground our northern-southern California connection.

Mary Heilmann
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