

Dana Schutz, Charles Long, Don Ritter

SITE Santa Fe

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This was the first curatorial effort at the decade-old nonprofit for new director Laura Heon. The simultaneous but separate shows by a painter, a sculptor, and an installation artist were united only by the artists' talent and inventiveness.

Sixteen oils by Dana Schutz portrayed an alternate universe of sunny, neon-tinted landscapes populated with a cast of bizarre characters, including a naked man with a pig's snout, a strangely horselike amalgam of members of the Bush cabinet, and numerous individuals intent on devouring their own body parts. A virtuoso technician, Schutz borrows from Expressionism, Surrealism, Impressionism, and other styles. The result, however, is a visual language all her own that encompasses playfulness, perversity, and surprise.

Sculptor Charles Long favors primi-

tive, blobby forms that appear to have bubbled up from his unconscious. In fact, his sculptures originate in the Los Angeles River, from which he plucks discarded furniture, shopping carts, and



Dana Schutz, *Twin Parts*, 2004, oil on canvas, 78" x 72". SITE Santa Fe.

other detritus before encasing large parts of the objects in layers of plaster and paint until their original forms disappear. When assembled in a large gallery and illuminated by searing white light, the pieces took on a blue-white cast and gave off sharp shadows. Long's universe was eerie, sterile, and starkly beautiful.

Don Ritter offered two computer-assisted installations that created surprisingly authentic experiences. In the first, visitors walked a darkened path, accompanied by the sounds of honking horns and screeching tires, as if blindly crossing a city street. Nearby, viewers were asked to step up to a podium and speak into a microphone facing a wall of monumental video screens filled with images of an audience. Computers adjusted the street noises and crowd response in the respective pieces according to the visitor's pace, volume, and physical bearing. Ritter's play with his viewers' phobias recalls the anxiety-provoking tendencies of Surrealism—a style not central to any of the artists' visions but alluded to throughout the shows.

—Dottie Indyke