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## Five artists who help make the scene in L.A.

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RECENTLY I decided to jot down an informal list of exhibiting L.A. painters born in or after 1962. That was the year Andy Warhol's Campbell's Soup can paintings had their public debut at the old Ferus Gallery on La Cienega Boulevard. Warhol's landmark show sounded a death rattle for Abstract Expressionist painting and with it the monumental edifice of the New York School. In no time flat, my roster named 45 L.A. painters under 45, so I put down my pencil.

More than at any time in the last 30 years, painting is now a staple in the city's burgeoning art galleries. My quick accounting recorded young painters with established international reputations, such as Laura Owens, Kevin Appel and Mark Grotjahn, as well as those just starting out or early in their careers, like Rebecca Campbell, Ruby Osorio and Allison Schulnik. (Since the late 1990s, women have been conspicuous among painters.) The largest number were somewhere in-between.

Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects emerged as the gallery most keenly attuned to the development. The gallery, initially in mid-Wilshire, now has a space in booming Culver City. A branch in Berlin opened this year. (Germany, unlike the U.S., has never been painting-phobic.) Vielmetter's program is eclectic, with regular presentations of sculpture, video, installation and Conceptual art. Yet perhaps because its stable consists mostly of younger L.A. artists, painters enjoy parity.

Here are five who show at Vielmetter:

### JANE CALLISTER

Callister, who teaches at UC Santa Barbara, makes luscious abstractions that suggest deserted, extra-

terrestrial shorelines. But something's up inside the goo. Spiky geometry collides with gesture, where the fluid movement of paint is like primordial ooze. Often built on a warm ground of fleshy pink, the intermittent pours, puddles, splashes and clumps of abstract color-shapes exude a sensual fever-kick.

### YUNHEE MIN

Min makes paintings whose scale and form intersect with conventions of installation art. Wide, vertical bands of flat pigment -- especially tertiary colors like magenta and aquamarine -- get lined up across a horizontal expanse. But her canvases are seldom rectangular or square. Instead, these subtly shaped trapezoids cause visual space to bend and warp, performing a gentle calibration of your perceptual

equilibrium.

### STEVE RODEN

Roden works in a variety of mediums, but the translation of sound into a personal system of notation underlies most of them. That includes his vibrant paintings. The choice of colors, the arrangement of elements, the number of shapes and other aspects of the composition initially seem to have occurred at random. Closer inspection yields an inexplicable sense of guided intuition -- an authentic intelligent design.

### TIMOTHY TOMPKINS

Tompkins paints with glossy enamels on metal panels, as if he's making commercial signage. Filtered through photography, his landscapes, figures and still lifes feel remote, like vision through fog. Their sense of icy distance is enhanced by canny pictorial references to a host of painting predecessors. These include Vermeer, Delacroix, the Hudson River School, Chardin, Monet and -- in a bleary series of Empire State Building images, which resonate with post-

9/11 anomie -- Warhol.

### ROBERT OLSEN

Olsen has painted vending machines, ATMs, parking meters, bus shelters, gas stations and department store mannequins, often on small panels and frequently at night. Color is minimal, luminescence maximized. Deathly pallor merges with implications of anxiety and small disaster. The pictures have the specificity and presence of portraiture, resonating with the bleak beauty of American life today.

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