

Gert & Uwe Tobias

Maureen Paley
London

Compressed into two rooms, this show gave a rich sense of the Tobias brothers' range of talents and materials. Born in Romania and based in Cologne, they work in collage, painting, ceramic sculpture, and, perhaps most distinctively, colored woodcut. The results vary, but the duo's blend of traditional folk motifs with grotesquely comic elements, Pop-art colors, and a whiff of the surreal is convincing in any medium.

The different types of works here, all from 2011, bore little relation to one another, as if we were looking not at two artists but a whole school. A series of small portraits on canvas that suggest mutant, diseased medieval burghers seemed far removed from the much larger woodcuts, which depict flattened interiors peopled by random jumbles of objects.

In one untitled woodcut, we see a windowed room cluttered with flowers that look as if they were rendered in needle-point, a fox's head, and a shrouded figure rising up in a spiral. Frilly pink curtains and simple furniture evoke a cloying domesticity that contrasts with the mass-produced, Pop esthetic signaled by the work's garish, advertising-like col-

In a still different category were 21 small collages, often with cutouts of birds or insects on foggy washes of color. Some looked exquisite, others a bit flabby and thrown-together, but, again, they succeeded or failed on their own terms and not as sketches for larger works.

A group of glazed ceramic sculptures was more inscrutable, suggesting amorphous growths at first look and acquiring a certain sensuality and hints of figuration on closer inspection. Or they veered into readymade territory. One consisted of an overturned teapot and vase, topped with a saucer and crowned with one of the artists' undefined ceramic shapes.

—Roger Atwood



Dan Flavin, "monument" for V. Tatlin, 1967, cool white fluorescent lights, 96" x 28½" x 4¼".
Galerie Perrotin.



Gert & Uwe Tobias, *Untitled*, 2011, colored woodcut on canvas, 78¾" x 118¾".
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ors and silk-screenlike surface. The artists tap into the traditional while manipulating and transforming it, as seen also in a group of woodcuts currently on view at the Saatchi Gallery's sprawling show "Gesamtkunstwerk: New Art from Germany."