

ality to his work, which allies it with Julian Schnabel's or Donald Echeverría's, but Brown's marking is distinctive, and his progression is unpredictable.

—Vincent Katz

## toshi Nomura McCaffrey Fine Art

Overdue, this remarkable exhibition is the first American one of the rigorously conceived Diptychs of Japanese artist toshi Nomura. As a young man, Nomura came to consider science a relevant source of art. Unknown to such contemporaries as Gordon Matta-Clark and Robert Rauschenberg, he adapted photography to sculptural uses. In Decem-

ber 1975, he produced the first in a years-long series of projects based on the systematic documentation of the waxing and waning of the moon in photographs posed at 15-minute intervals. These investigations were informed by the chance observation of the moon's passage behind telephone wires. The prints had the look of musical notations, and Nomura thought of them as scores. Thus inspired, he etched black-and-white film with lines in the manner of a musical staff and, using a telephoto lens, exposed a film to the position and phases of the moon. At roughly 32 by 40 inches, the stark "Moon Score," December 19th, 1975 records the moon's trajectory over the inscribed staff. During an early exhibition, gallery visitors began to sing, reading from the "score." A "Moon Score" image dated January 1, 1980 was here accompanied by a CD of the ethereal work performed by a string quartet. Another track was choral.

Other photography-oriented projects consist of repeated actions performed in a fixed place, such as the color prints 35½ inches on a slide titled *The Earth Rotation, February 4th, 1979, 16:32-17:32* and *The Earth Rotation, November 19th 1979, 14:16-14:46*. In the former, parked cars, only slightly abstracted, are discernible below an aqua sky. In the latter, clouds extend above weathered mountains and an expanse of water. Arranged in the order of their exposure, the sweep of a contiguous series of celestial images describes the path of *The 1986 Pilgrim: The Return of Halley's Comet, 1986-87*, a curving, elongated line of light described against the firmament.

In 1980 Nomura turned his attention to the sun, making exposures at regular intervals to produce images of the sun at forenoon, noon and afternoon over the course of a year. Included here were three such images, *The Analemma '91: Forenoon* followed by noon and afternoon; the sun diagrams an infinity symbol above a repoussé landscape. Further expressing his solar interests, in 1993 he began to build and race cars that have the look of a Formula One racer or the cockpit of a jet, trailing a flatbed matrix of solar panels. In anticipation of a forthcoming exhibition that will introduce other aspects of his career, the gallery made available film footage of Nomura's pioneering solar-powered transcontinental run across the U.S. in 1999.

—Edward Leffingwell

## Monica Majoli at Gagolian

With their subtly modulated tones and deep subject matter, Monica Majoli's watercolors were odd ducks in the 2006 Whitney Biennial, lost in the screaming banter of brat videos, poseur attitudes



Monica Majoli: *Hanging Rubberman #3*, 2004, watercolor and gouache on paper, 51 by 96 inches; at Gagolian.

and abject tchotchkes. Known for obsessively meticulous oil paintings depicting private sexual acts and wrenching self-portraits, Majoli has been a quiet force in Los Angeles for over 10 years, with each new work eagerly anticipated by a small cult audience. This exhibition, only her third solo show since getting an MFA at UCLA in 1992, is somewhat of an event, presenting her contemplative mastery of a new medium.

Majoli uses watercolor and gouache to paint solitary, rubber-encased male figures involved in sexual fetish acts of sensory deprivation. Focusing on the figures and their accoutrement in close-up, she avoids the lurid associations of the fetish-world, presenting her subjects' disembodied, isolated states as a kind of symbolist reverie, not unlike those conjured by Redon and Moreau. The figures are depicted outdoors in woody surroundings without signs of human habitation. Majoli uses atmospheric gray, violet and blue hues throughout, employing opaque gouache to depict the landscape backgrounds, and transparent watercolor to depict the figures. The gouache sections are painted as segmented contours, somewhat in the style of some early Californian landscapes or the canvases of Augustus Vincent Tack. For the hooded figures, watercolor is used in subtle, viscous layers with thinly watered-down sections emulating the effects of light on shiny PVC.

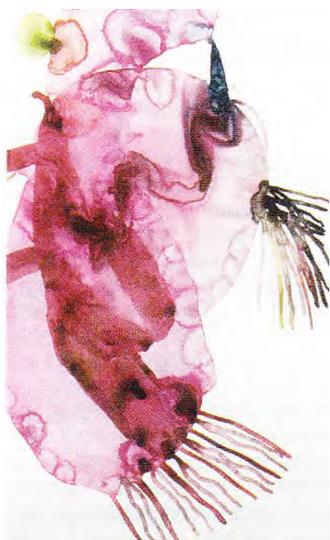
The sensitive, responsive quality of watercolor seems the perfect medium to convey the interior states of the male fetishists. The watery tones of the featureless heads seem to be reflections of the dreamy, out-of-body experience that the fetishists

desire. The tubes and chains that enable sensory deprivation seem extensions of their skins, appearing like alien appendages or antennae. In the four close-up "Heads" (2004-05), the rubber masks and body suits provide an expansive area for Majoli's sensuous watercolor hues and set the meditative tone of her project. Two other large drawings show full figures suspended by hoists over expansive forests. In *Hanging Rubberman #3* (2004), a horizontal figure totally encased in rubber and attached by chains to a sturdy hoist is presented from a low angle so that he seems suspended over a far-off landscape, isolated like some aberrant astronaut frozen in space. The vertically suspended *Hanging Rubberman #1* (2006) is hoisted by a torso-apparatus so that he dangles above a lushly dappled forest. His arms locked behind him and his legs held firmly apart, he seems to be standing still in the air. Mingling Eros and Thanatos, Majoli's melancholic ruminations portray a zone of sacrificial loneliness where identity and personality are subsumed by internal psychological desires even more powerful than nature.

—Michael Duncan

## Christian Heilmich at Lehmann Maupin

In Christian Heilmich's captivating exhibition, "Arrangement," eight paintings of imagined but anonymous architectural settings—a refreshment stand, a construction site, a rooftop and so on—offered a metaphor for the constructed nature of pictures. His renditions of depopulated retro-modernist architecture are large enough to walk into, but



Julian Brown: *Mexico*, 1998, watercolor on paper, 17 by 10½ inches; at Fisher Ildau Center.

er 1975, he produced the first in a years-long series of projects based on the systematic documentation of the waxing and waning of the moon in photographs posed at 15-minute intervals. These investigations were informed by the chance observation of the moon's passage behind telephone wires. The prints had the look of musical notations, and Nomura thought of them as scores. Thus inspired, he etched black-and-white film with lines in the manner of a musical staff and, using a telephoto lens, exposed a film to the position and phases of the moon. At roughly 32 by 40 inches, the stark "Moon Score," December 19th, 1975 records the