

West-End "Micro-Review": Sara Graham and Monica Tap at MKG 127



Sara Graham: Streetfinder Project

Article by Benjamin Bruneau
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In a quartet of short reviews featuring the early 2013 shows of Toronto's evolving west-end gallery district, **ARTINFO Canada** Assistant Editor, **Benjamin Bruneau**, produces capsule criticisms featuring a handful of Canadian and international artists at some of our most prominent institutions. See Bruneau's review of **Miroslaw Balka** at **Scrap Metal** [here](#), his review of **Jon Sasaki** at **Jessica Bradley** [here](#), and his review of **Sara Graham** and **Monica Tap** at **MKG 127** below. (Our fourth arrives Thursday.)

MKG 127 gallery presents two artists whose strategies of abstraction hinge on translation and

enlargement. **Sara Graham** has revisited a series of modified map-books, first produced fifteen years ago, wherein the artist has sliced away all but the highways and major roads from each page, revealing an arterial palimpsest of interchanges. These works are not present; instead, Graham has photographed them and enlarged them significantly. There's a lovely rhythm to the compositions, each named for the city they delineate; it's hard not to try to guess the municipality via the character of the image. (Severe grid? Must be Toronto. Wavy? Looks like Halifax.)

It's difficult to avoid wondering after the source material, though. While lovely, Graham's photographs merely point to the remarkable effort she's invested in producing the photographed objects. Their size and flatness (both literally and in terms of depth of field) are inevitably disappointing in comparison to the absent books.

In the front space, two new paintings by **Monica Tap** continue the artist's investigation of low-res video capturing moments of high-speed travel. Tap has a keen eye for the psychedelic palette of data loss, those sharp and unexpected glints of lurid and unexpected noise that result from video compression. Tap preserves a wonderful sense of motion and a teetering, just-so sense of her subject. These are images essentially of compromise — of poverty over quality in order to conserve time and space — which have been completely reversed, as the artist reinvests time and lush material to rejuvenate them.