

M + B



EDITORIAL: FEATURES



Matthew Porter

M + B Gallery, West Hollywood, California
Recommendation by Michael Shaw

Continuing through May 11, 2019

Matthew Porter's "Skyline Vista" is, by turns, equally satisfying and frustrating. The hilltop cityscapes, in L.A. and San Francisco, are lovely portraits dripping with golden-hour sunlight, but their lead players-cum-punchline, vintage muscle cars from the 1960s and '70s caught in a moment of peak air above the crests of the hills, are fictions that are not easily forgiven. These

aren't re-created scenes from a Steve McQueen movie, or, to get more specific and at least as dated, the TV show "The Streets of San Francisco." The obvious tip-off to the simulacrum is that each car is devoid of people; the inside dope on the source of the trick is that these are model cars that have been meticulously lit and photographed — and edited in post — to perfectly match their urban street pairings, in all their late-afternoon-sunkissed glory.

In some ways, it's an old-school Hollywood trope: artifice, façade, mirage ... but, to go by what's experienced upon first encountering the press image of the show, in dimensions small enough to lead you to believe in this being an awesome stunt, it's also a tease. Who wouldn't want for these to be sky-flying feats that the artist somehow executed as a photographer-turned-set-director? Still, there's significant play in how we, as viewers, reconcile ourselves to these fabrications. It at least offers a modicum of conversation, and in the meantime, we can savor some beautiful cityscapes in a new light (literally and figuratively), bathing in their afterglow ... if indeed it's a bath that's all too brief.