

M+B

art on paper

EXHIBITION REVIEWS

By S. R. Lehrer
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Kim McCarty, September 15, 2008, watercolor on Arches paper (60 x 44 in.), 2008.
Courtesy Kim Light/LightBox, Los Angeles. Photo by Ed Glendinning

Kim McCarty at Kim Light/LightBox, Los Angeles

Swells of pale amber, violet, crimson, and burnt orange; pigment suspended amid faint washes: With these effects, Kim McCarty masterfully exploits the watery aspect of watercolor, layering and pooling stains of color through wet-on-wet application. This exhibition of new work,

exhibition reviews

which consisted primarily of portraits and figure studies, centers on five large-format paintings on paper depicting nude teenage youths from the waist up. The adolescents are generally flat-chested, androgynous, and waifish with tousled bed-head hair, widely spaced doe eyes, dots for nostrils, and full lips cumulatively conjuring ersatz works by Egon Schiele.

McCarty is at her best when she loosens up and allows her medium to guide representation, as in the smaller, more intimate figure studies—hung in a four-by-three grid—of partially silhouetted bodies from the knees up. Though faceless, the subjects are not as consumed by the contrived, vain poses of the larger

works that distract and detract from the medium's suggestive poetry. Instead, bleeding pigment and watery emissions generate loose form, lyrically implying the body in states of being: a stain, a spill, a pour, a sponge, awash, wet.

—S. R. Lehrer