

Flash Art

Reviews

Becky Beasley & Michael Dean Laura Bartlett - London

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By Charlotte Bohnam-Carter

REVIEWS

BECKY BEASLEY & MICHAEL DEAN LAURA BARTLETT - LONDON

Like most two-person shows, "Our Blindsides" — an exhibition of new work by Becky Beasley and Michael Dean — is billed as an 'intimate conversation' between the two artists. In Dean's case, Beasley's impact on the genesis of the work is straightforward.

Starting with Beasley's *Literary Green* (2009) — a work in which the artist used the negative space in a photograph as a template for the design of a table — Dean created a typeface that responds to the shape of Beasley's table. The resulting 'typographical objects' are vertical concrete sculptures that lean against the walls of the gallery, sometimes in pairs. Like many of Dean's previous sculptures, the works have an intriguing surface quality; scarred, scratched and raw.

Beasley's contributions to the show have a strong aesthetic resonance with Dean's sculptures. The new series, "You're" (2010), is devised from the off-cuts of an earlier series, "Curtains" (2009), and are again seamed photographic prints. The creases in the images mimic the folds in Dean's concrete sculptures. However, how Beasley arrives at the forms in her images feels less

systematically linked to Dean's practice than Dean's clear appropriation of Beasley's earlier work. As a 'conversation' between two artists, the exhibition relies a little too heavily on a backstory, in the form of a press release, as a kind of legend or key to the show. If *Literary Green* had been exhibited, the viewer might have been able to make his own connections, based on forms, rather than explanations.

In her practice, Beasley constructs webs of references within and through her work. A literary passage becomes the basis for the form of a new piece. The works come about through a process of translation, from an imagined form into something real. Dean, who has in earlier works interrogated the role of language and text, carries forward the idea of translation, in his re-interpretation of Beasley's work.

It is here that the web becomes more convoluted and most interesting.

Charlotte Bohnam-Carter



BECKY BEASLEY & MICHAEL DEAN, *Our Blindsides*, 2010. Installation view at Laura Bartlett, London. Courtesy Laura Bartlett, London.