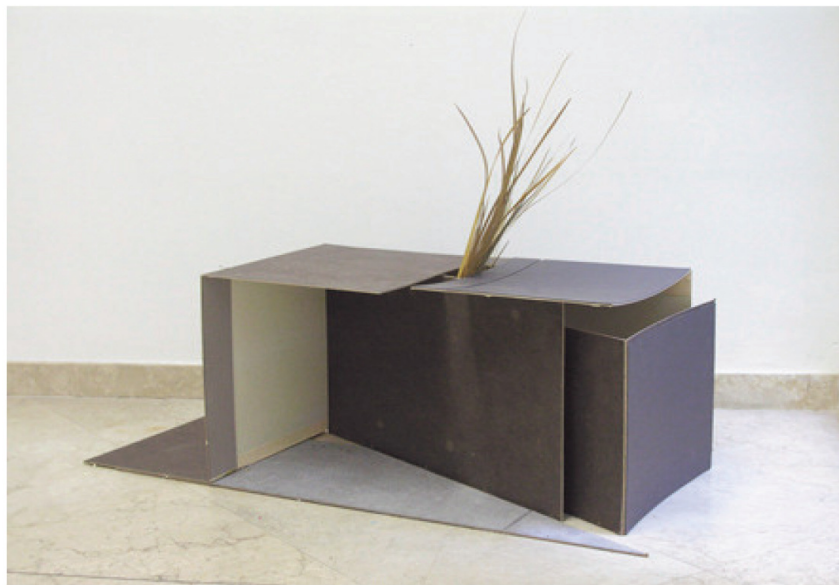




Ian Pedigo GALERIE CARDENAS BELLANGER

- Lillian Davies -

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Ian Pedigo, *On a Scale of One to One*, 2009; chip board, dried grass; 28 x 40 x 15 inches

For his first solo exhibition at Galerie Cardenas Bellanger, *The State Of Before As Its Form*, Ian Pedigo expands his sculptural concerns to an address of space and landscape. Pedigo's new works—four sculptures, two wall pieces and a mural—incorporate natural materials like stone and wood into a typically industrial vocabulary of found objects. Banal products such as carpeting, spray paint and felt remain present, and their juxtaposition with the organic emphasizes their status as processed goods. Through composition and concurrence, Pedigo pushes each construction just beyond the sum of its parts, launching found objects into the space of the imagination—no longer symbolic but poetic.



In Their Errant Locations, 2009; survival blanket, inflatable ball, wavelite, jasper, concrete; 20 x 70 x 72 inches; courtesy the artist and Cardenas Bellanger, Paris

Generously, Pedigo leaves his works open to interpretation, pliable within each viewer's unique network of references. Mimicking the oft-invisible structures of prefab buildings or mass-produced furniture that envelop daily—particularly urban—life, Pedigo maintains an attention to the architectural. His mural *Desaturation* runs the length of the main gallery, mirroring its dimensions and echoing its warm white glow. A dried bundle of wild grass extends from the inside of a simple, black, chipboard structure in *On a Scale of One to One*, breaking the rigidity of the work as well as the continuous geometry of the rectangular object. Echoing the proportions of the gallery while inverting its white walls in black it also draws viewers' eyes well below the traditional space of visual consumption. By realigning our sightline, Pedigo subverts an architectural—and corresponding institutional—directive for the experience of an art object.

Meanwhile, fluorescent light tubes and wooden planks embellished with packing tape balance in the center of the space in *Certain Distances from the Floor*. By creating an aesthetically striking tower out of materials typically associated with the presentation or transportation of an object other than itself, Pedigo achieves yet another form of institutional critique: he undermines the myth of the rarified art object by elevating its container's form.

Although Pedigo's wall-based pieces carry a visual link to his freestanding works, they also introduce a consideration of landscape. As measured abstractions of space and surface, both pieces employ open expanses of color and texture, and red carpet and black felt respectively. The installation *In Their Errant Locations* furthers this

spatial, almost painterly concern. Pedigo stills an inflatable Pilates ball with rocks, concrete and a crumpled silver survival blanket. He stages these objects on the floor creating an unfamiliar terrain, surpassing tableau in his proposal of a navigable space. *The Evidence is Indirect*, the only purely organic work in this exhibition, models what might be read as a tree or a shrub out of a birch tree branch and thin wooden rods joined in a lopsided pentagon. Pedigo plants each discrete work precisely within the space, thus turning the entire exhibition into a reawakened landscape.

More than one critic has described Pedigo's works as artifacts from a "primitive" or "primeval" age, or as relics with "ceremonial or religious" functions. However, it seems more compelling to read his constructions as manipulations of the present moment—as attempts to shape the future of our perception. While Pedigo's sculptures are decidedly low-tech, his gesture—a revisionary action—remains primary. In each work, Pedigo composes a unified, albeit precarious, whole.

Lillian Davies is a freelance critic based in Paris.