



Published July 1, 2008

TENSEGRITY

By James Kalm



Okay folks, it's a strange name, coined by the recently celebrated utopian guru Bucky Fuller (don't miss his mini-retrospective at the Whitney this summer), and it describes the forces of dynamic tension which hold up things like his geodesic-domes. For this collection of works, it describes not only their physical states, but the strange aesthetic and philosophical realm that these artists are working in. "Gate" (2008) by Michael DeLucia confronts viewers as they enter the gallery. This section of chain link stands eight feet high and carries a familiar quotidian quality. But this section of fence is coated in a thick layer of concrete and made me think of an ice storm. Odd remnants found after a forest fire might describe Elisa Lendvay's small sculptures fashioned from

charred logs, paper mache and acrylic. Like a classic Modernist, (or a nuclear physicist) Keiko Narahashi explores the reality of painting by breaking it into dozens of small pieces. In "assembler" (2008) the artist arranged these pieces on the wall and floor and finds a sculptural element in the surface, color and volume of the divided parts. Joy Curtis builds a column whose vertical striations of paint and wood make it appear as if it was extruded, under pressure, directly from the gallery floor. Finally Jim Lee takes the whole idea of making a painting on canvas and complicates it to hilarious ends. In "untitled (Shaft)" (2007-08) a narrow vertical painting has a stretcher that could double as a miniature wooden suspension bridge. Funky staples, nails and drippy glue keep his structures from becoming prissy.