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Art review: 'The Newest' at Phil

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"The Newest" brings together a couple of collages, a few photos, a painting, a drawing and a sculpture by six young artists who live in Los Angeles. It's a sampler show that abandons logic for pleasure, leaving viewers free to weave whatever connections they want (or need) among its consistently intriguing works.



At the storefront gallery called [Phil](#), Jeff Ono's "Life Worlds, Death Worlds, Rotting Worlds" is the centerpiece — a free-standing

abstraction that plays fast and loose, and very effectively, with the relationship between pedestals and the sculptures that traditionally rest on them. The sum of its metal, fabric, wood and paper pulp parts add up to a whole lot more than expected, because they play so well with one another, reversing roles and providing contrasts in ways that make you think they're goofing off.

That's what the works by the other artists do too, especially Matt Connors' casually elegant little abstraction in oil on canvas; Dennis Koch's large abstract drawing, made with colored pencils stuck into the business end of a power drill; and Elad Lassry's pair of small photographs depicting, in saturated shades of gray, an animal trainer and a flamingo, both standing so still they seem to be sculptures.

Ben Reyer's two collages, cut and pasted from sports, news and porn magazines, lack the casual open-endedness of the other works. The same goes for Matthew Grover's medium-sized C-print showing a car's damaged fender. But they add to its easygoing serendipity.

— David Pagel

Phil, 4918 York Blvd., (213) 280-7340, through Jan. 9. Open Saturdays and by appointment, www.philart.com

Image: Dennis Koch, *Untitled*, 2009. Photo credit: Courtesy of Phil Gallery.

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