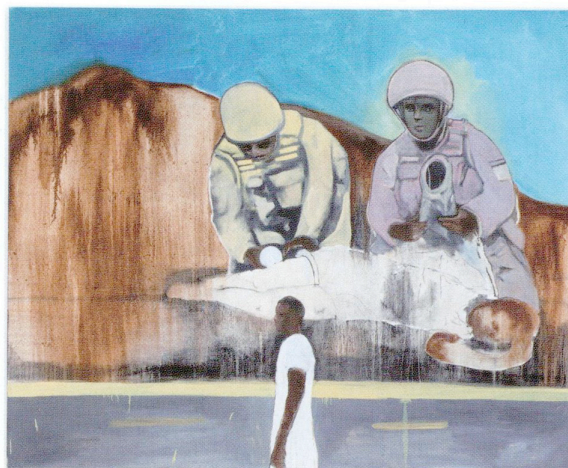


Yuki Nakamura:
Filament Drawing,
2010, DVD projected
on porcelain,
11 by 5 by 5 inches;
at Howard House.



Noah Davis:
*What They Did to
Themselves*, 2010,
oil on canvas,
77 by 94 inches;
at Roberts & Tilton.

in tone between chronicle and fable. Discontinuities of scale—a man seen standing within an overturned drinking glass, for instance—mix the freshly imagined with the written record.

With an odd, flat exception or two, all the paintings exude a powerful, vaguely unsettling feeling of disequilibrium. *1984* (2009) is an indelibly disturbing portrait of a young child sitting on the edge of a bed before a flamingo-pink wall. The small figure wears a ghostly white mask with oval eye holes and a faint, incongruous smile. A dark brown shadow clings to his/her body, reading much like a second character. The image recalls the darkly psychological photographs of Ralph Eugene Meatyard in its tight conflation of mundane and grotesque, innocent and malign.

What They Did to Themselves (2010) is the other stunner in the show, a narrative fragment derived, perhaps, from a war photograph, subjected to the shape-shifting pressure of a dream. Two uniformed military men, one in egg-yolk yellow, the other mauve, crouch beside a sketchily outlined fallen figure. One of the soldiers, with an open, flat-cheeked face straight out of Gorky, meets our gaze as he raises the figure's sleeve, empty and gaping yet oddly animate, like an elephant's trunk. A disproportionately small bystander passes on the near side of the road but doesn't register the scene or its strangeness. To look at the painting is to make eye contact across time, across logic. To Davis's credit, that portentous moment lasts.

—Leah Ollman

SEATTLE YUKI NAKAMURA HOWARD HOUSE

Yuki Nakamura's recent solo show at Howard House was her third since her 2005 debut there. With the lightbulb as a unifying theme, the five sculptures on view (all 2010) relate to the artist's 2008 public artwork *Filament*, commissioned by Seattle City Light, the local utility, for its lobby in the downtown Municipal Tower. At 30 feet long, it is a wall of porcelain sculptures of lightbulbs on which appear continuous DVD projections of white light in the shapes of tungsten filaments.

The works at Howard House were far smaller in scale. Only one, *Filament Drawing* (11 by 5 by 5 inches), employed projection, distilling the public artwork to its essence. The surface of a single porcelain bulb sculpture with a matte, chalky glaze offered a 25-minute sequence of slightly flickering images of filaments. The bulb becomes the recipient, rather than the source, of illumination. In *Light Bubbles*, 15 bulbs of different sizes and shapes jut from Plexiglas discs set along a 15-foot section of the wall, resembling soap bubbles adrift. Some of the bulbs are frosted, others opaque, adding subtlety.

With LED tubes, Nakamura achieves a different effect in *Filament Structure*. A cold light escapes from the top, bottom and sides of a nearly 12-foot-long row of porcelain semi-cylinders attached to the wall like sconces. A standout in this otherwise reserved show was *Illuminant (Pink)*, a 16½-by-39-by-9½-inch light box tinted hot pink. It holds an array of 11

bulbs, which take on the appearance of nipples and breasts in the pervasive rosy glare. The chromatic note added both a welcome sensuality and a subtle erotic humor to this elegant body of work.

—Matthew Kangas

INTERNATIONAL TORONTO KRISTA BUECKING SUSAN HOBBS

"Love Song for a Future Generation," Krista Buecking's first solo, featured a series of graphite diptychs that were luminous and compelling, and signaled the emergence of a surprisingly well formed young artist. Buecking's subject matter is as socio-historically nuanced as her graphic sense is direct. Her fascination with Isamu Noguchi's gardens and landscapes subtly influenced works in which she memorably pairs images of worn or broken bricks with lyrics from 1950s and '60s popular ballads.

Whereas Noguchi transposed the realm of the traditional Japanese garden to his modernist sculptural language, producing spaces positioned between the historical East and the modern West, Buecking transports the recent past into the present. Displaced in time but as persistent as brick or stone, these once ubiquitous lyrics still haunt the soundscapes of daily life. Texts such as HURT ME NOW GET IT OVER, TOMORROW WILL BE TOO LATE or YOU DON'T HAVE TO STAY FOREVER are borrowed from the songbooks of Patsy Cline, Elvis Presley and Dusty