

ARTFORUM

"Between People—Four Artists on Connecting"

DAVID PATTON LOS ANGELES

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Robby Herbst, *Choreography: We Erect Barriers* (detail), 2007, pencil and watercolor on paper, 22 x 30".

The artists in "Between People—Four Artists on Connecting" use a light touch to address the dense topic of human interaction; the result is a thoughtful exhibition that, like the works themselves, operates beyond the physical space of the gallery. With roots in Conceptual art, dance, and Fluxus, "Between People" demonstrates a surprising range and freshness. Adam Overton's participation is perhaps the simplest: He makes himself available for conversation in *untitled private encounter*, *Art as Excuse series* (all works 2007), stripping the activity bare of any purpose other than communication. Throughout the reception, Overton could be seen in polite but continual conversation, his manner, part patient therapist and part curious neighbor, distinguishing this work, which continues throughout the exhibition's run, from more hard-edged predecessors, such as the many feminist artists who used their own bodies as tools for audience interaction. Pencil-and-watercolor paintings by Robby Herbst (also curator of the exhibition) provide lyric documentation of a process in which the artist works with a band of improvisers to interpret oblique phrases like "We are drawn in" and "We erect barriers." Seemingly alone in courting confrontation, Marc Herbst's *Talking About the Possibility of Supporting Each Other* (from conversations with Katie Bachler, David Burns, and Evan Holloway) includes staged public conversations about heated topics, though the familiarity of the display—notes and diagrams pinned to the wall—diminishes the power of the original proposition. In contrast, Hana van der Kolk's idiosyncratic sound piece, *Slow Eyeball Turn Dance*, posits solitude as a means of fostering connections, transforming the gallery experience into a meditation on subtle awareness.

—Annie Buckley

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