

In a formal sense, there is an underlying geometry that unites the works brought together in a three-person exhibition curated by Amy Thoner. The artists — **Steven Bankhead**, **Britton Tolliver** and **Torbjörn Vejvi** — are also tied together through their conceptual references to the past. Vejvi's sculptural works are built of sparse cubic constructions that contain mundane objects arranged in unusual ways. Witness the upside down wine bottle hanging from a bookcase, or the surreal high-heel shoe with a staircase arch support. They suggest interior spaces, both physical and intangible, as the slightly off-kilter goods are suggestive of the way emotion filters memory.

Two series of paintings by Bankhead, "Picnic" and "Bleeds," blur tech-

niques of printmaking, stamping and stenciling, in the artist's application of paint. In the latter, Bankhead creates a stencil with punctured and slit Fontana-like canvases on a larger second canvas. Washes of paint bleed through the fissures and emphasize the rectangular edges of the stencil, resulting in illusions of door-like passageways. This is an effective response to Lucio Fontana's rejection of easel painting to conjure the entrenched notions of the painting as window. Meanwhile, Tolliver employs the grid to create paintings that are anything but meditative. To begin with, this artist's version of the grid is created in reverse, akin to Matisse's "Red Studio," masking off a multi-hued underpainting, which forms the lattice of the grid. On this, Tolliver applies a coat of monochromatic paint to create the interior cubes. Any sense of constraint by the grid's regularity is further deconstructed by strident horizontal brushstrokes interrupting the continuity of the networked squares, while creating a sense of movement across the circuit-like surface. These works buzz with electric energy, and somehow Tolliver is able to blend the traditional medium of paint with a high modern arrangement to evoke allusions to contemporary technologies (Samuel Freeman Gallery, Culver City).

Molly Enholm



Torbjörn Vejvi, *Dividing the loot*, 2009/2013, wood, canvas, paper, acrylic paint, 48x46.5x35", is currently on view at Samuel Freeman.