

ARTslant los angeles

Prime Real Estate

by Sasha Bergstrom-Katz

NO \$ DOWN

Kim Light/LightBox

2656 S. La Cienega Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90034

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Penelope Gottlieb's installation, NO \$ DOWN, is both playful and somber. The installation is comprised of monochrome drawings, in frames matching the color in each drawing, all placed salon style around a fake fireplace. The fire in the fireplace lights up as if it were real and the gallery space is made to feel like an odd, kitsch representation of a living room.

Gottlieb depicts, in simple, semi realistic colored pencil drawings, homes that represent the stereotype of the American dream, and more specifically, the American dream as conceived in Southern California. All of the homes are drawn from a straight on perspective, representing a one dimensional view of this dream. The homes are drawn without insight into the life lived within and no information about the surroundings is provided. The style in which the houses are drawn is also reflective of how they are portrayed when they are advertised by real estate agents in magazines and newspapers.



What makes the show feel somber is something outside of the content of the show (although it is pointed to in the title). The American dream of owning a home is now turning into a curse. The stark and strange installation of the show does mirror this, but in a different economic climate the work would really provide the viewer with a different meaning. A year ago, I would have said that the show somewhat mocks the mentality of Southern California and suburbia, but now I would say that it is a grave reminder of the fragility of success.

-Sasha Bergstrom-Katz

(Images: Installation views of NO \$ DOWN, all courtesy Kim Light/Lightbox)