



The Washington Post



In the galleries: Dynamic exhibits drawn from personal histories

Also: Vivid paintings celebrate Haitian heritage, boxes make everyday objects alien, an artist claims a city's streets as his own

The found objects contained within Anselm Reyle's assemblages might be neon signs, evocative of urban entertainment zones, or bales of hay, redolent of the countryside. But all the elements in the Berlin artist's Von Ammon Co. show, "Xeno Dust," come to the same end: They get encased in tinted acrylic boxes that suggest see-through coffins. As the gallery's statement notes, Reyle's brightly colored but entombed artworks invite thoughts of "the funereal and sepulchral."

"Xeno" is from the Greek word for "stranger," hinting at an alien quality to Reyle's creations. Yet they're made of everyday stuff, mostly shiny and manufactured. (The hay is a partial exception, but it's coated in silver enamel to give it an industrial character.) Although the neon pieces include recognizable words and images, much of Reyle's work can be seen as riffs on abstract painting. When fixed inside plastic boxes, rumpled sheets of reflective Mylar bunting come to resemble color-field canvases, with creases standing in for brushstrokes.

Also akin to abstract painting are five computer-generated photographs in which neon-bright colors — and in one picture, part of a word — swirl and splinter. Like his 3D artworks, Reyle's photos are kinetic yet frozen, vibrant yet embalmed. — Mark Jenkins, 04 August 2023

*Anselm Reyle: Xeno Dust Through Aug. 13 at Von Ammon Co., 3330 Cady's Alley NW.
vonammon.co. 202-893-9797.*