



Kantor/Feuer Gallery

**UNDULATING VALLEY:** Phoebe Washburn used castoff materials to create a walk-in landscape at Kantor / Feuer Gallery.

## Finding a good use for art-speak

At the space known as Another Year in LA, Joe Amrhein

begins with language culled from published art criticism to create an installation titled "Abecedarian." You won't likely notice specific quotations, as the artist plucks individual words or short phrases, many suggestive of art-speak; but most, once out of con-

text, are only suggestive of art when returned to art's proximity by Amrhein. That is achieved via 26 sets of glass shelves, five shelves per set, each meticulously painted with words beginning with one letter of the alphabet.

Light shines down through the shelves and casts legible shadows on the walls. Amrhein often breaks a word into multiple sections across multiple shelves, so that the light, shone from a specific angle, reunifies the word in shadow. A few words are even painted in distorted form and then are corrected by the throw of the shadow.

The arrangements of words, offered in an endless array of fonts, vary from group to group. Some appear more like lists, others become a kind of concrete poetry, some verge on abstraction as the result of their layering. One can play endless associative and interpretive games.

The M section, dominated by the word "modernism," suggests an upward trajectory with all the

words slanting from lower left to upper right. Almost every word in P is in a dynamic script font, perhaps apropos for "psychedelic," "Picasso" and "post-pop."

"Fixed perspective" is fixed in perspective, thanks to a deliberate correction of distortion in the F section. Though God is nowhere to be found among the G words, the presence of the supreme is implied by the downward, radial thrust of the arrangement.

Amrhein's play with words is engaging and provocative, but the compelling aspect comes from how the materialized and dematerialized come together. The experience enfolds the very pleasure and dilemma to which the work speaks as one attempts to navigate projection, reflection, shadow, overlap and alignment, distortion and correction, picking it apart and piecing it together as one goes.

**Another Year in LA,** 2121 N. San Fernando Road, Suite 13, Los Angeles, (323) 223-4000, through Oct. 28. Closed Saturdays. [www.anotheryearinLA.com](http://www.anotheryearinLA.com)