



Daniel Knorr Maps the Streets of L.A. in Colored Shards of Polyurethane

—Karen Kedmey

In keeping with a commonly held attitude toward methods and materials by conceptual artists throughout history, [Daniel Knorr](#) once said: "For me, material is not important, material comes [from] or is triggered by the concept itself." True to his claim, he has worked with a wide variety of materials, many of them humble, utilitarian, or discarded, including LED screens, shards of glass found on city streets, and pulverized Stasi secret police files. With these, as well as with photographs and his own drawings, he creates sculptures, animations, installations, and exhibitions through which he examines history and its resonances in contemporary life, societal systems and national identity, and cities worldwide. There is a political charge to his works, which serve as reflections of the place in which they were made and, ultimately, of ourselves.

Among the places Knorr has explored and transformed into art is Los Angeles, city of angels and, apparently, cracked and potholed streets. As a part of his ongoing "Depression Elevations" series, the artist sought out these urban aberrations and cast them in transparent colored polyurethane, displayed on the walls of L.A.'s [Kayne Griffin Corcoran](#) gallery last year. In glowing shades of crimson, pink, orange, and blue, these casts appear as lovely, luminous abstract wall sculptures. For the artist, they also stand as records of the city's unique topography, shaped and worn by years of use by people in their cars—and networked into the larger world, whether or not they actively realize it. In his [words](#): "[M]y work always responds to a place...in Los Angeles I found the car culture as one of the special conditions of the city. 'Depression Elevations' are physically the potholes of the streets, but also refer to the world economic crisis, political conflicts, psychological condition, etc."