

Art in America

D'ETTE NOGLE



View of “Michael Clifton & Michael Benevento and D’Ette Nogle Present: Information from Two Sources,” 2012; at Clifton Benevento.

Walking into “Michael Clifton & Michael Benevento and D’Ette Nogle present: Information from Two Sources” felt something like entering a subway station in *Blade Runner* and becoming disoriented by a cacophony of recorded public announcements. Composed of three single-channel videos playing on monitors mounted on AV carts, as well as two portfolios of photographs of Nogle’s luscious blond hair (one printed in silver and the other in gold), the exhibition managed with very few visual clues to transmit the impression of a dystopian world.

The first video stood like a sentinel near the entrance, instructing viewers on how to experience the show. Trapped in a tiny frame, Nogle sweetly explains that, on a monitor in one viewing room at the rear of the gallery, she will read an *Elle* magazine profile of “Gossip Girl” star Blake Lively; on the monitor in the other, she’ll read the text of financial advisor/publisher Porter Stansberry’s 77-minute doomsday infomercial “End of America” from 2010. When her announcement concludes, a frame reading “Investment Opportunity” flashes on-screen, over which the voice of Michael Clifton, the gallery’s co-owner, reminds visitors to view the portfolios before leaving. Too obviously driving home the show’s point about overly commercialized art, the portfolios themselves are an unnecessary footnote.

Visitors then entered one of two cubicles, the interiors of which felt like spaces for watching an instructional tape at the DMV. The videos shown in each feature Nogle sitting in front of a desk while she recites, like a sexy talking head, the entire text of either Stansberry’s video or Lively’s profile. The former predicts the complete devaluation of the American dollar-and ensuing apocalypse-while at the same time exhorting viewers to buy reports from Stansberry, who was successfully sued for fraud by the Securities and Exchange Commission in 2003. In the latter, Nogle-who herself resembles Lively-peppers her flat monotone with a Valley Girl-like emphasis on phrases like “as if” and “artisanal pizza.” The profile is just as insipid as Stansberry’s infomercial, reading like fawning bubblegum pop composed of an endless stream of name-dropping.

Nogle received her MFA from UCLA in 2000. She makes a living as a public school teacher and does not keep a studio; instead her work manifests in response to specific invitations. For “Made In L.A.,” she used chimes like those rung at the end of meditation sessions to create a sound piece. In “Reality/Relax” (2011) at L.A.’s now-defunct Parker Jones, she paid homage to Dan Graham’s 1969 performance Lax/Relax, with a video installation using scripts from TV shows like “Keeping Up With the Kardashians.” For this, her N.Y. solo debut, she became a soothsayer of societal downfall, one brought on by celebrity worship, fear-mongering and art for money’s sake.