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Tiny Park artists going old school for new exhibit

By Luke Quinton
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So, these are drawings? Sure. Maybe digital technology is lagging behind, or maybe it's just the satisfying brush of graphite, but putting pen on toothy art paper is popular as ever. And it's rewarding art lovers, too.

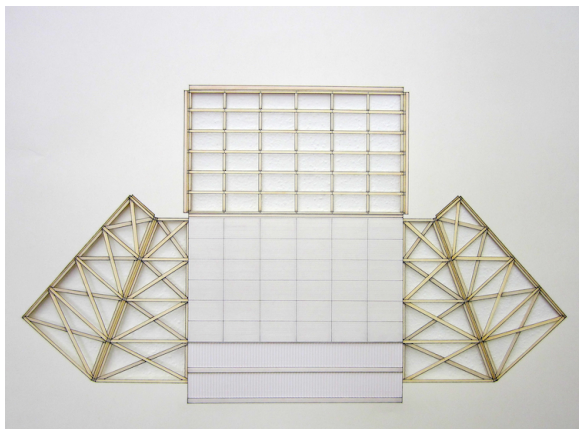
Tiny Park gallery's third annual drawing show brings a gratifying collection of artists who think about drawing and paper as springboards to other realms. Take Dave Culpepper — a co-founder of Austin's Ink Tank art collective — whose drawings turn into little sculptures.

"I made a lot of models when I was growing up," he says. "Die-cut wood dinosaur bones and stuff. I guess I've always been sort of fascinated with that idea — that a 3D object could be in that box!" Culpepper says he wondered "how to get these things off the page and occupying physical space." So, for the drawing show, he strategically drew a design on paper, then screenprinted it on chipboard. The image, once you cut it from the wood, assembles into an adorable radio tower (or maybe an oil derrick). It's a drawing that transforms into a little sculpture. A field of tiny towers stands in a corner of the gallery.



The show is full of innovative ideas.

Rob Verf makes a series of schematic maps from coffee stains. Mexican artist Calixto Ramirez made a video, "drawing" across the sky with a long, cursive ribbon, in the wind.



Veteran artist Claude van Lingen's political drawings are part sculpture and part act-of-creation. For "100 Years from Now, American Democracy Corpocrisy," he drew a list of names in light pencil — names of people in the federal government, from the president on down, to names that basically no one would recognize. Then, van Lingen wrote the names of every company in America that sends lobbyists to Washington. These, he drew in very dark pencil, and by the time he reached the bottom, they formed a dark mass, with layers of paper torn up in the act. The names of federal employees shine through, but they're nearly washed out by the thick coating of graphite.

There are colorful works from Sam Prekop (who's also from the band, the Sea and Cake) and from San Antonio artist Sara Frantz. Culpepper has another group of more delicate drawings, in marker and pencil. One is half cut-out, dangling from the wall, in mid-transformation. These are like model satellites, part of his fondness for space travel and space architecture. They're half in the past and half in the future.

As a kid growing up in Virginia, Culpepper would visit his grandparents in Alexandria, and sometimes they'd visit the Air and Space Museum, walking past spent capsules from Apollo missions, and "walk through pieces of Skylab that came down," Culpepper says. This futuristic technology now looks both quaint and ahead of its time. Culpepper recalls the strangeness of seeing airplane graveyards. "You kind of want to keep them around and preserve them," he says. "But they just kind of start piling up."