



NOVEMBER 2010

Tom Orr

Marty Walker Gallery

www.martywalkergallery.com

The experience of Tom Orr's work is zenful, but not, say, in the way water babbling along in a brook or fountain or arranging the smooth white pebbles of a rock garden might be. His is an art of the unnatural Zen — the soothing calm brought about by transparent plastic, electric lighting, Plexiglas and various grades of laminate artifice. "Adults without Heads" is a thin diaphanous screen of plastic leaning against the wall. Coursing through its plastic matrix is a thin blue line of electroluminescent wire laid out in a grid at a larger scale. Its name comes from "Rokuro-Kubi," a Japanese short story about bodiless goblins that haunt the countryside in the form of free-floating heads. "Ko Onagadori" is a series of interconnected wooden rectangles abutting a large Plexiglas podium. Some of the edges of the wooden geometries are left bare, while others are covered in shiny white and black laminates. This clean small structure of orthogonal form references the long-tail fowl of the same name, which is in Japan, prized for its long tendrils of feathers. Orr rethinks representation, replacing the standard paradigm where what is inside the frame references something outside in a one-to-one relationship with a moebius-strip sensibility. Inside and outside give way to the wending movement of the imagination. Text connects to object, short story to thing, not so much in a literal arrangement but like a ghost haunts the mind. **Ends November 13.**

— CHARISSA TERRANOVA