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ART REVIEW

## COLA 2009 an accessible brew in Barnsdall Park

The nine winners of L.A.'s Individual Artist Fellowships serve up an accessible brew in Barnsdall Park.

By David Pagel  
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This year's exhibition of artworks by the winners of the city of Los Angeles' \$10,000 Individual Artist Fellowships is better than ever. The sculptures, videos, photographs and one whopper of a painting by nine artists deliver a satisfying mixture of ambition and accomplishment. In nearly all the pieces, these qualities play off each other in ways that make for lively exchanges and leave plenty of room for viewer participation.

Although no theme unites or defines the diverse objects and images that are very simply installed in the rabbit warren of awkwardly proportioned spaces at the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery in Barnsdall Park, most of the multilayered works address the relationship between the individual and the group.

That's a big, wildly general idea filled with great possibility. You are able to savor each artist's installation as a show unto itself or to see it as a part of a whole.

Better yet, do both. Art, after all, is one of those rare things not consumed or used up when experienced. Instead, it replenishes itself and anyone who gets deeply involved with it.

Natalie Bookchin's "Mass Ornament" stands out as the exhibition's most sustained meditation on individuality and anonymity. With a keen eye for detail, a terrific sense of timing and a killer instinct for editing, she has clipped and combined hundred of vignettes from YouTube and set them to the soundtracks from two 1935 films, Busby Berkeley's "Gold Diggers" and Leni Riefenstahl's "Triumph of the Will." Bookchin's deft selection of highlights is awesome, a powerful instance of making something great from the stuff at one's fingertips in the Digital Age.

To watch the split-screen extravaganza is to feel as if you are at once enjoying a god's-eye view of a vast, everyday parade of vulnerable human beings and also an intimate part of a democratic drama that is deeply moving.