

NEWS

"Exceptionally Good' photos at Fraenkel

DAVID BONETTI, EXAMINER ART CRITIC

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DURING AUGUST, galleries tend to shift into low gear, but that doesn't necessarily mean they don't put up interesting work for us to see. Take "Several Exceptionally Good Recently Acquired Pictures," the summer show that has been a fixture of the [Fraenkel Gallery](#), 49 Geary St., for the past dozen years. (The current installment continues through Sept. 5.)

You could look at such a show as an opportunity for a gallery to air its inventory, putting on view the objects of desire that don't otherwise fit comfortably into the year's schedule. But the enthusiasm, imagination and good eyes the Fraenkel staff brings to the choice and installation of the work lifts it into a special category.

Brian Gross Fine Art, 49 Geary St., is showing two particularly interesting New York-based artists through Aug. 22. In "Last Portraits," [Stephen Sollins](#) has appropriated images of the dead from the [New York Times](#) obituaries for a body of work that is moving and elegiac.

In "Last Portraits (March-October 1996)," his most ambitious work here, Sollins transferred onto strips of Scotch tape the faces of a number of people who died during that period and applied them to sheets of glass to recreate ghostly images of the dead. Arranged, approximately 30 in a row, in irregular rhythm on five glass shelves, the work gives a collective or community expression to individual loss.



The faces that look back at you are of the distinguished. For the most part old, white, male, prosperous, the number who wear eye glasses is out of proportion to the general population.

In "49 Geary," [Susan Chorpenning](#) has created an installation that is almost invisible - even when you're standing on it. Recording the sun's patterns thrown on the gallery's office floor during the summer solstice, she recreated the patterns on a carpet that fits the office contours. With real light falling across the installation's record of a previous experience, you get the actual and the remembered overlapping to perceptually provocative effect.<

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