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## Something lost, something found in Sara Gernsbacher's silicone sculptures

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Sara Gernsbacher, "Flower Brick Body — Black Center Yellow Out," 2018. Pigmented silicone and paint, 40 by 29.5 inches (Parrasch Heijnen Gallery)

Sara Gernsbacher's new sculptures are so unassuming you may not notice how good they are.

If you like your art big, bold and aggressive, you'll probably think that the young L.A. artist's seven body-scaled works fail to hold the walls on which they hang. And that they make the large main space at Parrasch Heijnen Gallery feel hollowed out, even empty.

You would not be wrong.

But you'd miss the supple strength — and silent power — of Gernsbacher's scrappy sculptures.

Emptiness, and the sense that something is missing — either lost or stolen — is intrinsic to Gernsbacher's exhibition "Threefold Body." Each of its quietly compassionate pieces takes its place in a world of suffering and sorrow, both obvious and immeasurable.

Gernsbacher makes her irregularly shaped forms by puddling pigmented silicone onto her studio floor and letting it dry into skin-like sections. She spray-paints some areas, trims selected edges and cuts sleeve-size holes in others. The resulting shapes vaguely resemble flowers, garments, limbs, easels and architectural elements.

Gernsbacher then loops together three or four shapes and pins the casual composition to the wall, where it droops, like a coat thrown over a chair or a decorative garland that has fallen to the floor and been trampled underfoot.

All of her works look limp and dirty, as if they have been scraped from a downtown sidewalk. The sense of exhaustion is palpable and poignant, suggesting the kind of weariness you feel in your bones.

Pie-in-the-sky idealism is nowhere to be found. The same goes for saccharine sentimentality. But ennui does not win out.

What you get, instead, is a no-nonsense assessment of art's place in life: an intimate endeavor that flies under the radar of everyday attentiveness, a sotto voce communiqué whose meanings get under your skin and won't go away. Underdog optimism is Gernsbacher's great subject.



Sara Gernsbacher's "Shape Is Your Touch," 2018. Pigmented silicone and paint, 26 by 12.5 inches. (Parrasch Heijnen Gallery)

*Parrasch Heijnen Gallery, 1326 South Boyle Ave., (323) 943-9373, through Jan. 19. Closed Sundays and Mondays. [parraschheijnen.com](http://parraschheijnen.com)*