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"Merce Drawing" (2017), by Nancy Brooks Brody, at the Klaus von Nichtssagend Gallery's Emoji Show. Nancy Brooks Brody/Klaus von Nichtssagend Gallery

Emoji Show

Through Aug. 18. Klaus von Nichtssagend, 54 Ludlow Street, Manhattan; 212-777-7756, klausgallery.com.

It still is possible, despite everything, to find uncomplicated pleasure in art. Or at least that's how it feels right now inside [Klaus von Nichtssagend](#), where obsessive, exuberant and faux-naïve artworks, by 23 artists, make up a florid, occasionally cloying but always heartening summer group show. (Its actual title consists of a string of summery emojis, including a whale, a rainbow and a beach umbrella.)

[Juliet Jacobson's](#) graphite drawings of blank computer screens very nearly impart the serenity of a [Vija Celmins night sky](#) to an ordinary instrument of monotony and overwork, and two finger-thick but otherwise meticulously realistic sculptures of lined paper by [Joshua Caleb Weibley](#), fit together like puzzle pieces from strips of Corian and colored epoxy, find virtuosity in sublimation. Nancy Brooks Brody's wonderful "[Merce Drawings](#)" — as in Merce Cunningham — are reprinted photos in which she's made the dancer a kind of levitating tightrope walker by drawing a line around his body, from the soles of his feet to the tips of his fingers to the top of his head. [Clintel Steed's](#) "Olympic Series, 300 Relay #1" (2017) an outlandishly impastoed, jagged kaleidoscope of a painting based on a found photo of Olympic swimmers springing off their platforms, suggests a moment of excitement and urgency almost more than it literally depicts it.

But in all this art for art's sake, [Jared Buckhiester's](#) glazed stoneware sculpture "Urinal (Full Back)" (2016) stands out for the power with which it leverages its formal idiosyncrasy to emotional ends. Imagine a plucked chicken in football pads with a tube shoved down its throat: At once totally vulnerable and deeply strange, the piece lets you inhabit an unfiltered piece of the artist's psyche without forgetting for a moment its otherness. WILL HEINRICH