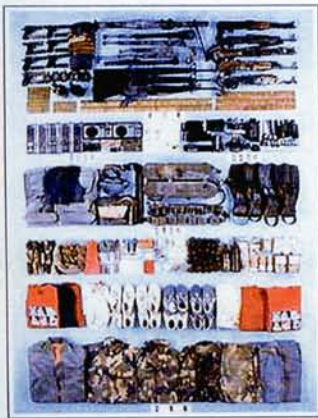


Gray, Emma. "Kitchen Sync," *Art Review*, June 2006, pp. 20-21.

Kitchen sync

Everyone has a drawer that's full of useful stuff that doesn't belong anywhere else. For Amanda Ross-Ho, it's an artistic treasure trove. **Emma Gray** has a rummage



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Amanda Ross-Ho makes choices in the space of seven breaths – an ancient Samurai practice. Just as well, as rapid-fire decision-making defines the work and life of this 31-year-old Chicagoan, who is exploding into the art world. When I speak to her she is putting the finishing touches to her masters thesis at the University of Southern California and preparing for her debut at LA's hottest new gallery, Venice's Cherry and Martin. A trip to Mexico for the Maco art fair follows.

'I work best at fever pitch,' says Ross-Ho. 'The eleventh hour ends up being when most clarity presents itself.'

Ross-Ho describes her work as 'interdisciplinary': she uses found objects, photographs, drawing, painting and video with a strong performance element. Remnants and left-overs are crucial to her work, much of which consists of the detritus of domestic life – the stuff crammed into that kitchen drawer where nothing belongs or is of much use but is fervently held on to, or the junk in the bottom of a handbag. For most of us this cack is the bane of our existence, but for Ross-Ho it is her reward, what she calls her 'unresolved dividend', from which profound ideas evolve.

'Once you have cleaned and organised everything, it's the stuff that doesn't really have a place – that's the unresolved dividend,' she says. 'It's an interesting principle for giving those things a place, not only a place but a partnership.'

Ross-Ho is big on partnerships: disparate homeless objects are strung together to create a new organism. In '100 Arranged Marriages', an older work, items are bundled together with elastic bands – a police badge and a cardboard loo roll, dollar-store earrings and a plastic yellow dinosaur.

'Black Widow' pointedly stands alone. A doily – another domestic object found on the periphery – is painted black and rendered large on canvas. Hung on the wall, it looms like an enormous spider's web or shamanic wheel.

Some material comes from the vestiges of an evening in the studio: beer cans, bottles, corks, string, wrappers or deflated balloons, an empty stage space bearing the footprints where musicians played. Sometimes it's the marks left on a wall where a painting was hung and then removed.

There's an overarching romance and hopefulness in *Untitled (Puddle)* – a mackintosh thrown over a puddle of water, in a nod to Sir Walter Raleigh's chivalrous gesture to his queen. Ross-Ho sums it up when she speaks of wanting to navigate what is in front of her nose while hunting for a larger meaning and purpose.

'It has to do with ways of looking at your immediate surroundings and demanding meaning out of what's directly in front of you, locating a certain amount of fantasy within a domestic situation or looking at ways to alter your perception of the everyday.'

Until 17 June, *Cherry and Martin*, Los Angeles (+1 310 398 7404, cherryandmartin.com)