

Art

Extending boundaries of drawing

Mark Sheinkman and Annabel Daou exhibit at Gallery Joe.

By Edith Newhall
FOR THE INQUIRER

At first glance, Mark Sheinkman and Annabel Daou, who are exhibiting work in separate shows at Gallery Joe, seem to have little in common.

The lines in Sheinkman's graphite drawings — as often erasures as they are pencil rendered — are loopy and swooping like lariats, roller coasters and highway cloverleaves. They're enigmatic, but have a distinctly American heritage behind them, from late Jackson Pollock to early Frank Stella to recent-vintage Brice Marden.

Daou documents the passage of time in tiny, cramped ink notations on pieces of folded paper that resemble pages from a book (one of her pieces is, in fact, a 120-page book tracing the last six months of her life through a sequence of words that repeat from page to page).

It came as no surprise that he is a New York-born Princeton alum and that she was born and raised in Beirut, Lebanon, and graduated from Barnard College. You can see in their work what these two contemporary, New York-based artists have been exposed to.

Some time later, however — perhaps even after you've left the gallery — you realize how much Sheinkman and Daou share. Both create works on paper that immediately and concisely stretch the boundaries of drawing. They are also both masters of intrigue in their own different ways.



Mark Sheinkman's "11.5.06," graphite on paper, is in the Gallery Joe show through Feb. 24: His work is appealingly mysterious.

In Sheinkman's case, you recognize an extension of abstraction in the vein of Marden's www.galleryjoe.com

recent explorations of line. Daou's works are the result of a diaristic, repetitive, mystical activity that brings to mind medieval manuscripts and chants but also such contemporary artists as Ann Hamilton and the late Mark Lombardi, whose diagrammatic drawings were shown by the gallery last month.

Sheinkman's most recent drawings, *10.26.2006* and *11.5.2006* (all his works have dates as titles, presumably noting the day they were made or completed), are of curling white lines that look like cigarette smoke or jet contrails — I am guessing the white lines are erasures, but perhaps they are the paper untouched by graphite. These are the most eye-catching of the works he is showing, but all of them have an appealingly mysterious character.

Some of Daou's efforts are also more prepossessing than the others.

That book, for example — along with the handsome white pedestal it sits on (designed by Amy Byrum), a hypnotic sound track of two voices reading (a collaboration with poet and sound artist Greta Byrum), and an accompanying series of drawings, it could have made up Daou's entire show. It's a poetic, site-specific work that was created to make the most of the churchlike atmosphere and acoustical properties of Gallery Joe's small "Vault Gallery." It does, memorably.

Gallery Joe, 302 Arch St., noon to 5:30 p.m. Wednesdays through Saturdays. Through Feb. 24. 215-592-7752 or