

AROUND THE GALLERIES

A print-off in one kind of ink

Uniting the 31 works in "Ultrachrome," a group exhibition at Carl Berg Gallery, is a technical detail that would be easy to miss were it not specified in the show's title: Each is a digital image printed in Epson Ultrachrome ink, a pigment-based ink renowned for its color range and archival longevity.

The result, although not officially sanctioned by Epson, feels a little like a Pillsbury Bake-Off, where the intention is to publicize the tremendous array of things one can accomplish with a bag of all-purpose flour. There are prints that look just like traditional photographs, prints that look like lithographs, prints that look like drawings, prints that look like collage, and even one print that approximates stained glass.

In the end, the timeworn truth prevails that interesting work is interesting and uninteresting work is uninteresting,

whatever the technology. There are both sorts here.

Among the highlights are Jody Zellen's "Urban Chaos" (2004), a lively, translucent window mural; Laura Parker's "Pot Bottoms #1 and #2" (2004), photographs that present the mottled undersides of everyday cooking pots in such a way as to resemble pre-Columbian amulets; and Kyungmi Shin's "Beach," a day-at-the-beach photograph in which all the bodies have been eerily cut out. Dianna Cohen is represented by a characteristically lovely collage of quilted plastic bags, part photographic and part real (it's a challenge to tell the difference), and Hillary Mushkin by "YOU ARE HERE," a structurally confusing but visually dazzling image involving clouds, distant figures and some sort of land-mass.

Several of the most striking photographs, such as Katrin Korfmann's "Pink Wall" and a pair of untitled images by Rudy Vega of bare treetops against a wintry white sky, prompt one to wonder whether a big, lush Cibachrome wouldn't be more satisfying — digitally rendered images have a shallower, more plastic feel — but the difference is admittedly less apparent as the technology advances.

Carl Berg Gallery, 6018 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, (323) 931-6060, through Aug. 28. Closed Sunday and Monday.

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Special to The Times