

Art Forum

## Danny Rolph at Barbara Davis Gallery

Critic's picks, Sean Carroll, 2009



Dominating the main gallery, London-based artist Danny Rolph's *Accelerator*, 2009, is a large, vigorous wall drawing comprising collaged magazines and newspapers, drawings half-filled with runny paint, clear plastic sheets, and literature from the 1960s and '70s. Using cut vinyl in bright yellow, neon pink, orange, aquamarine, and black, jagged forms and arresting dynamics dominate a *mélange* of pop-culture references. Rolph's work threatens to burst forth from the surface. Adding a personal touch to the otherwise abstract assemblage, Rolph blends literary texts and sports images with found drawings and pages from his children's coloring books. In *Accelerator*, the repeated image of iconic soccer player Bobby Moore holding the World Cup hovers above a grouping of illustrated book covers from countercultural literature that snakes down to the ground; to the right, a photograph of the Rat Pack is set against the wall, held up with stickers featuring the numbers 1, 9, 6, and 7. Torn-paper sketches such as *Atomic 2 and 5*, 2007, illuminate Rolph's process, constructing compositions from advertisements and magazines. In a separate gallery hangs a series of paintings made from Triple Wall

plastic that feature strident

juxtapositions of painted and collaged elements. Here pictures of the artist with his children and a painted pattern from a colleague's tie are set side by side with photographs of trucks and Le Corbusier buildings. Reaching across the Atlantic, Rolph finds inspiration in the vigor of Americana but tempers his excitement with an orderliness that allows his instinctive, lyric arrangements to shine through.