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ART IN REVIEW

ROE ETHRIDGE: 'Le Luxe'

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Visitors to Roe Ethridge's latest show, his fifth solo at Kreps, must maneuver around a pine shelving unit. It's just one of several barriers breached in this wry exhibition.

Here, as is his wont, Mr. Ethridge mixes commissioned and more personal work with a smart editorial sensibility. The commercial, in this case, is fairly distinct: a six-year assignment from the investment bank Goldman Sachs, which hired him to document the construction of its new headquarters downtown. One of the pleasures of this show is seeing Mr. Ethridge apply his subtle, scattershot approach to a powerful corporation with a tightly controlled image.

He begins with the 2005 groundbreaking, zooming in on Senator Hillary Clinton and Henry Paulson, then the Goldman chairman, so that a public ceremony becomes a tense tête à tête. Later, in "Sand Pit 3," he captures the swirling, primordial ooze of the foundation. And in an exterior shot from 2009, he catches the edge of a banner so that the word "Money" intrudes on the rising building frame. (That frame, by the way, is echoed in the shelving unit and in a shorter, stainless-steel bookcase.) More images from the site can be found in an accompanying book, also titled "Le Luxe," which may be an easier entry point for viewers who are new to Mr. Ethridge's work.

Conventional photodocumentary narrative seems entirely absent from the second half of the show, where a rephotographed poster from the movie "Point Break" (with Mr. Ethridge in Patrick Swayze's role) hangs opposite dusky shots of the Tokyo skyline. There's a pixellated image of a giant red bow, too, though Mr. Ethridge has made clear that he is not one to tie things up in a pretty package.