

ARTslant

Frustrating and Metaphorical Relationships by Dan Gunn

Ps & Qs

Group Exhibition

Hyde Park Art Center

5020 S. Cornell Avenue, Chicago, IL 60615

February 28, 2010 - June 6, 2010



“Ps and Qs” at the Hyde Park Art Center presents a variety of abstract painting and sculptural practice in a single space. Curated by Shannon Stratton and Jeff M. Ward, this exhibition is actually a sequel to an exhibition of the same name presented in Houston in 2006. This version contains different works than the first, many of the same artists. This installment features Todd Chilton, Peter Fagundo, Carrie Gundersdorf, Jessica Labatte, Andrea Myers and Tessa Windt. The curators in their accompanying essay describe the exhibition as displaying the “object as subject, as a thing that makes relationships.” These relationships are formed in different ways, through spatial incoherence and lingering cultural associations.

Tessa Windt’s lone piece *Yellow Green Relief with Grey* [seen at right, all image credits at bottom] is an abstracted wall relief shaped like a booth or kiosk. Using store bought fabrics, she wrapped, twisted, lacerated and folded the material to make its shape. Beginning on the wall supported by several arrayed open pink triangles, a large swath of minty lycra netting swoops down to rest on another pink triangle frame near the floor. The netting reads a bit like a camouflage but the fabrics have more in common with spandex jogging gear or Halloween costumes. Several sheer layers partially conceal the interior of the piece and it’s that veiling action which makes it slightly disappointing not to discover anything inside.

Working in a similar material practice, it’s interesting



to compare Katy Heinlein's artwork to Windt's piece. Also involving the strapping, draping and layer (though slightly less aerobics inspired this time), Ms. Heinlein's pieces like *Present* [seen at left] at o their underlying structure and conceal it. *Present* juts out forcefully from the wall, straining the se



turquoise straps that attach it. At the end, fo straps, two semicircles of fabric drape ground. Yet these circles seemed stiffened ei themselves improbably up. The wrinkles ir belie its actual motility, though in a suspension seems miraculous. The theater i the materials gives Ms. Heinlein's wor subversive core, suggesting a situation wh one could very well equal three. This is 1 equivalent to the perceptual problems gener Chilton's black and white striped pa *Diamonds*. The pattern creates a noticeable one's eyes especially with extended viewing.

This perceptual activation is starkly contrasted by Peter Fagundo's painted constructions. Works like *A few quiet things* are made from cardboard boxes set atop unassuming coffee tables [seen at right]. Not more than three feet tall the painted army green boxes also invite a look inside. This top-down viewing relationship, only allowed by proximity combined with familiarity of the cardboard box gives Mr. Fagundo's work an intimate quality. Inside of the boxes lie abstracted stacks of painted material carefully arranged. Ultimately Mr. Fagundo's work draws its impact from its associations, i.e. the melancholy of packing up ones things in a box. Its abstracted form merely prevents particular items from dominating the associations generated by the work.



Similarly Andrea Myers' piece *Soft Concentrics* subtly echoes freshwater springs or the contours formations. Also Carrie Gundersdorf's elegant drawn recreations of astronomical imaging in colored childhood wonderment into the hard sciences. These along with Jessica Labatte's photographs (*Gradient Ribbon*), a long rainbow ribbon curled up on a flattened black background, give the s "objects as subjects" either make relationships with us by metaphor or perceptual frustration. E enjoyable.

--Dan Gunn

(Images, from top: **Jessica Labatte**, *Untitled (Gels #7)*, 2010, Archival Inkjet Print, 18 × 22 inches. ' *Yellow Green Relief with Grey*, 2009. **Katy Heinlein**, *Present*. **Peter Fagundo**, *A few quiet things*.)

Posted by **Dan Gunn** on 3/8/10 | tags: **abstract painting conceptual installation mixed-media**

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