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# Site Aperture: Using Materials In Unconventional Ways



By Tara Heuser on Oct 11, 2011 | Add a Comment (0)



Mia Feuer, Talia Greene, Margaret Boozer, Mariah Anne Johnson



Using a variety of diverse materials, four artists shared the experience of creating site specific installations for Flashpoint's "Site Aperture". Talia Greene, Mia Feuer, Margaret Boozer, and Mariah Anne Johnson constructed installations specifically for this gallery space. While each work is unique to the artists, their pieces share theoretical pursuits. During the installation process, the artists worked alongside each other to determine the placement and spacing of each work of art, using the provided space to their advantage.

Talia Greene's painted wall pattern forms the back wall of Flashpoint Gallery. Using coffee as the medium, Greene painted a graceful design that possesses a leafy quality, but also reminds me of a shape I've seen; perhaps on a family crest. Talia Greene sent her hand painted pattern to a company that reproduced the image into a repeating pattern similar to wallpaper. Actually, her painting turned into exactly that, wallpaper. Once the wallpaper was installed in the gallery, Greene painted weaver ants in countless conspicuous placed throughout the motif. The shapes occupying the ants have been deconstructed and in turn form a completely new pattern. Greene incorporates the fact that ants commonly make their own patterns in the places they inhabit. Greene has also strewn white silky ribbons in the space where the wall joins the ceiling. The ribbons also contain painted weaver ants forming their own pattern on the ribbon, which in turn forms its own pattern on the wallpaper. Ants depicted on the ribbons emphasize the domestic aspect of matters (as ants are often associated with domesticity) and the relationship between humans' relationship with the insect world.

Depicting a far different species, Mia Feuer's sculptural renderings of jackals literally flow from the walls invading the gallery. While Feuer's intricate constructions appear to be made of welded steel or an equally heavy material, they are in fact made from separate pieces of Styrofoam. Mia Feuer's work explores the concept of infrastructure and the instability and chaos it often creates. While her sculptures appear to be

strong and sturdy, much like the animal depicted, they are in fact extremely buoyant. In her installation at Flashpoint, Feuer covered the Styrofoam with black paint and dripped wax on top of the paint adding to the visual weight of the installation. The result is an amazing piece of work that literally transforms a material commonly known for its insubstantial mass to a weighty, industrial structure.

Using a somewhat conflicting material, Margaret Boozer re-created the exact soil strata from 60 feet below the earth. Taking materials from two soil sites, Boozer methodically built a line of dirt and rocks that encompasses the length of the gallery. This soil stratum extends thousands of years and contains clear planks strategically placed over the soil depicting sea level. The artist collaborated with construction workers on the soil sites when preparing for this installation. She also made a video of her experience on the sites, which accompanies her installation. The video is a nice compliment to Boozer's work and also explains how x-rays reveal diffraction patterns confirming various minerals, such as vivante, that are often found in rocks, which is pretty cool.

Last, but certainly not least, Mariah Anne Johnson, introduces splashes of color with her precisely folded fabrics. The fabrics in Johnson's installation are all second hand materials she has collected through the years, an interest that runs in her family. She uses fabrics in similar way sculptors use clay, layering the material to create mass, texture, and color. Her pieces of cloth are layered to form groupings of monotone hues in strategically chosen areas of the gallery. Johnson assembled the fabric by color, forming vibrant areas of yellow, orange, red and pink, providing the only source of color in the space. The fabrics are mostly solid, but a few have patterns of flowers and other designs. Mariah Anne Johnson's fabric pieces are primarily concentrated in the front of the gallery and give off a subtle sheen when the sun shines through the windows.

"Site Aperture", curated by Danielle O'Steen, features four extremely talented artists who use both conventional and unconventional materials to challenge the viewers' notions of the materials' structure and usage. The artists took Flashpoint's history and physical space into account when creating their installations and the result is an educational and unique experience for the viewer.

"Site Aperture" showing through November, 5th at Flashpoint Gallery, 916 G Street, NW, Washington, DC 2001, 202-315-1305

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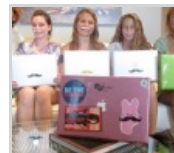
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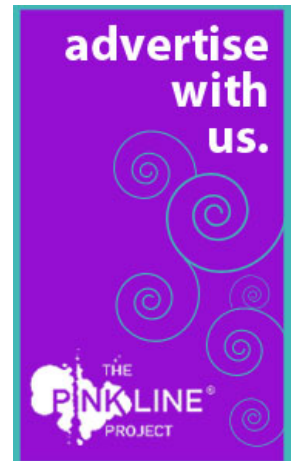


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