

“Studio 101” Presents

SPACE + DISPLACE

Dameon Lester and John Paul Rosenberg

“Studio 101” at Canopy brings together works by Dameon Lester and John Paul Rosenberg for their visual relationships and to examine interrelated or opposing processes, materials and motivations. Displayed together, the works reveal duality, connection, extraction, neutrality and minimalism related to geometric abstraction. However, they are also somewhat divergent in ideology. While the pieces might appear to be connected by the displacement of a shape or volume from the other, the works were created independently, from different disciplines, inspiration and values.

From his “Glacial Crush” series, Dameon Lester uses a labor-intensive process to construct repetitive white geometric-paneled sculptures. These flat, elegant reliefs appear to float with cool hues on the underside edges in varying lengths and depths that appear to extricate themselves from the wall. While to some, they might first appear to be merely aesthetic objects that nobly exist or delight us in the realm of formalism, they maintain an asceticism to hint at something bigger -and intellectually go deeper than the pure, uncontaminated papered surface. The artist’s intention is to create an uneasy continuum between the known and unknown, as well as the controlled and controlling elements of the world that surrounds us.

John Paul Rosenberg’s objects use various conventions in the discipline of painting and are created much less fastidiously. While both artists gather recycled, devalued or throw away materials for their work, Rosenberg denies any preciousness or elitism and rather thinks of the work as transcendental in the hopes that perceptions carry beyond the materiality into some imaginative, reminiscent or spiritual realm. Old, painted drop-cloth remnants dictate the distilled compositions that sparingly cover the traditional stretcher bars. Most of the painted surfaces have been previously cut away, creating empty spaces. Voids are joined with delicate threads, flexible straps (or in other works) sweeping folds that keeps fluid, a composition in a state of flux. Combined with these “actionables” (ie: strapped, threaded, flexible), titles such as “Return to Nothing,” “Ascension” and “If I could be anything, I would be this” begins to sound like advice, personal subjectivities or declarations, further expanding on the work’s anthropomorphism – in order to create communal connectivity and reflect human choice and potentiality.

While Lester’s pristine objects in this show appear to be abstract, they are actually tight representations of glacier ice, accurate replications shifting perception and scale. The artist has traveled extensively, visiting with locals, emotionally responding, listening and physically connecting with the subject matter. Photo documentation and preliminary drawings are made, so to recall the impact of massive, fragmented dislodged pieces of ice that drifted by the artist, in waters continually dropping in depth... the artist states, “the sculptures are that quiet moment of resignation.” The artist is interested in making sculptures that might encapsulate the fleeting qualities of nature’s presumed permanence.

On one hand, Rosenberg is also interested in capturing transitions and transformations. On the other hand, the artist desires the works to exist autonomously (standing alone) and *be* in harmony with its surroundings, achieving changeability and adaptability depending on the environment.