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HOT POTATOES: ABSTRACTION FLOURISHES UNDERGROUND IN THE HAMPTONS

BY [Alfred Mac Adam](#) POSTED 06/21/16 12:09 PM

"Territory" takes place in artist Karen Hesse Flatow's Amagansett, Long Island studio, a former potato barn (remember "Long Island Potatoes?"). To see the work you literally have to go underground and enter a glittering white space. What you experience down below is an essay on the many varieties of abstract art, from hard-edged geometric, to reconfigured Abstract Expressionism, to Op, to riffs on minimalist sculpture. A visit to 68A Schellinger Road is a must for anyone sojourning on the East End, not only because the show expresses the energy, diversity, and dynamism of the local art community, but also because the 24 works that organizers Henry Brown, Flatow, and Li Trincere have assembled are all of the highest quality. Participating artists include Eric Brown, Amanda Church, Don Christensen, Peter Dayton, Gabriele Evertz, Janet Goleas, Erik Gonzalez, Christian Haub, Charlotte Hallberg, Gregory Johnston, Bill Komoski, Lauren Luloff, Rory MacArthur, Chuck Manion, Lola Montes, Drew Shiflett, Christine Sciulli, Taro Suzuki, Ryan Wallace, Tad Wiley, and Almond Zigmund.

Taro Suzuki's untitled Op piece (2016) continues the line of abstraction's experiments in the phenomenology of vision. The composition's particular shade of green is a soothing complement to the unnerving fluctuations our eyes create when prompted by Suzuki's meticulous arrangement of curves. Lola Montes, on the other hand, appeals to our passions, and her *Moonscape* (2014) captures the emotional turmoil that gives Abstract Expressionism its kick. At the same time, we sense Montes's absolute control over her medium (oil): this work is not about madness but directed frenzy.

Amanda Church's *Left/Right: Untitled Interaction* (2015) moves us from the cerebral or the impassioned into whimsy. Her vaguely biomorphic (sexy amoebas?) shapes tease us with false movement, while the one-inch space separating the halves of the diptych constitute a visual silence, a reminder that all artistic space is ephemeral. The same sense of interruption drives Flatow's *Untitled* (2016), a deliberately constructed fragment. Flatow, perhaps taking a cue from the broken arches of Mannerist architects, gives us a three-sided picture hung in a corner so the adjacent wall constitutes its terminus: A brilliant metaphor for beginnings, endings, starts, and finishes.

Erik Gonzalez's *Unauthorized Donald Judd Chair in a Wind Tunnel* (2016) combines humor, parody, and the sense that abstract artists belong to a tradition they must constantly deconstruct in order to keep it alive. It is here that abstraction blends seamlessly into installation, simultaneously reworking the past and blazing a path into the future. Ryan Wallace's *Crostics* (2016) reconfirms geometric abstraction's affinities with architecture. Like Gonzalez, Wallace casts a sardonic eye on the past, the frigid geometry of the skyscraper, here turned into a figure of fun. "Territory" will only be up for another week. Don't miss it.

Organized by the artist-run curatorial group Crush Curatorial, the show is on view June 25 and June 26 from 12 to 6 p.m. and by appointment.