



Los Angeles-based Channing Hansen creates evocative abstractions using colored yarn and algorithms. His process has been to acquire raw fleece, dye the fibers, spin wool, alpaca, silk, mohair and even holographic polymers into yarn which he uses to knit large, off-kilter rectangular shapes that he then stretches over wooden frames. In many ways, his process is akin to painting with yarn and knitting needles, however his works also engage with technological and scientific principals.



*6-Manifold, 2017*

In each series, Hansen begins by reducing something specific to its essential components, be it a painting like Malevich's *Black Square*, a scientific principal like fluid dynamics, or the composition of his own genetic makeup. Abstracting from this data, Hansen derives an algorithm that directs the shape, pattern, colors and stitch sizes for each composition.

The pieces included in *Fluid Dynamics* are influenced by mathematics and fractal geometry.

According to Hansen, "*the construction of these works is partly based on surgery theory, which is akin to collage in higher dimensional space. It involves cutting and pasting and swapping various parts of a topological surface called a 'manifold.'*" The application of an algorithm derived from these principals is key in the creation of the artworks, yet because of their soft textures and loose knits, the results appear more incidental than scientific, as they resemble colorful abstract landscapes dotted with mountains and rivers.



*9-Manifold, 2017*

In his exhibitions, Hansen often provides an index artwork that in many ways becomes the key, containing all the information used in the other pieces. *Index-Manifold*, (all works 2017), is comprised of sixteen connected triangular wooden supports forming four rectangles which in turn become one large multi-part piece. Here, Hansen separates the different stitches, yarns and colors to create isolated fragments that are presented as a collage rather than interwoven into a single composition.

While it is impossible to map the specifics of the index to the other works, the type of stitching, shapes of colors and the shared materials translate. For example, loose brown and magenta toned stitches contained within Hansen's *Index* populate the lower quadrant of *6-Manifold* where muted colors color ebb and flow on either side of a raised blue divide. Similarly, colored circles from *Index* are also found in *11-Manifold*. In *1-Manifold*, twisted triangular forms criss-cross the composition. This work is comprised of somber earth-toned blobs— blues, greens yellows and grays— that intermingle across the surface. Like in most of Hansen's pieces, *1-Manifold* has a transparency that stems from the empty spaces between the stitching and allows the stretcher bars and walls to emerge, giving the work a lightness as well as a fragile aura.



*8-Manifold, 2017*

In his *Manifold* series, Hansen continues to explore the relationship between the computational and the hand-made. He is interested in numerically derived patterns like fractals, yet rather than create them as hard-edged geometry he used the weave of the yarn as an expanded grid which disperses and softens the intensity of the system. His approach is methodological, his process technological, yet the resulting works have the presence of giant, well-worn and much loved sweaters that were collaged together from numerous unrelated yet harmonious patterns.

Photos courtesy Marc Selwyn Fine Art