

SEARS·PEYTON·GALLERY

NEW YORK·LOS ANGELES

Celia Gerard

CV

- 2007 M.F.A. New York Studio School of Drawing, Painting and Sculpture
2003 Ed.M. Harvard University
The International School of Art, Montecastello di Vibio, Italy 1996–98. Studied with Bruce Gagnier and Nic Carone.
1995 B.A. Colgate University, Cum Laude

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2019 *Sculpture*, John Davis Gallery, Hudson, NY
2018 *In This Blue Light*, Tayloe Piggott Gallery, Jackson, WY
2017 *ASCENT/DESCENT*, Sears–Peyton Gallery, New York, NY
2015 *Works on Paper*, Tayloe Piggott Gallery, Jackson, WY
2014 *Lost at Sea*, Sears–Peyton Gallery, New York, NY
2012 *New Work*, Tayloe Piggott Gallery, Jackson, WY
2011 *Regions of Unlikeness*, Sears–Peyton Gallery, New York, NY
2010 *Recent Work*, Mark Potter Gallery, Watertown, CT
2008 *Drawings*, NYSS Dumbo Annex, Brooklyn, NY
2007 *Drawings*, the shala, New York, NY
2007 *MFA Thesis Exhibition*, New York Studio School, New York, NY
2006 *Recent Work*, NYSS Gallery, New York, NY
1995 *Thesis Exhibition*, Colgate University Art Gallery, Hamilton, NY

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2019 *summer essentials*, Sears–Peyton Gallery, New York, NY
Patterns of Influence, The Painting Center, New York, NY
NYSS Juried Alumni Invitational, New York, NY
Fur Cup, Underdonk Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
2018 THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH, Sideshow Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
Anima Mundi, Celia Gerard and Emily Auchincloss, Kate Oh Gallery, New York, NY
X Marks the Spot, NY Studio School Juried Exhibition, New York, NY
Greenwich House Pottery Artists Exhibition, Jane Harsook Gallery, New York, NY
2017 *All in One*, Kate Oh Gallery, New York, NY
ISCP Invitational Benefit Auction, Ryan Lee Gallery, New York, NY
NYSS Juried Alumni Invitational Exhibition, Steven Harvey and Jennifer Samet, jurors, New York,

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NY

- Greenwich House Pottery Artists Exhibition*, Jane Harsook Gallery, New York, NY
SIDESHOW NATION V, Thru the Rabbit Hole 2, Sideshow Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
- 2016 *Greenwich House Pottery Artists Exhibition*, Jane Harsook Gallery, New York, NY
SIDESHOW NATION IV, Thru the Rabbit Hole, Sideshow Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
- 2015 *NYSS Benefit Auction*, New York, NY
NYSS Juried Alumni Invitational Exhibition, Jason Andrew, juror. New York, NY
CIRCLE THE WAGONS, Sideshow Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
- 2014 *Pratt Foundation Faculty Exhibition*, Rubelle and Norman Schafler Gallery, Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY
Benefit Invitational, The Painting Center, New York, NY
September Exhibition, Sears-Peyton Gallery, New York, NY
NYTAS Group Show, ACTIVESPACE, Brooklyn, NY
one thousand nights and one night: sleepless nights of sheherazade, the 21st annual watermill center auction, Watermill, NY
Sideshow Nation II, Sideshow Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
- 2013 *Dolce Far Niente*, Sears-Peyton Gallery, New York, NY
SIDESHOW NATION, Sideshow Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
- 2012 *Pratt Foundation Faculty Exhibition*, Rubelle and Norman Schafler Gallery, Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY
MIC: CHECK (OCCUPY), Sideshow Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
Float, Sears-Peyton Gallery, New York, NY
- 2011 *New York Studio School Alumni Exhibition*, John Newman, juror. New York, NY
PULSE LA (Sears-Peyton Gallery), Los Angeles, CA
Fall Gallery Exhibition, Tayloe Piggott Gallery, Jackson, WY
Summer Paper, Lori Bookstein Gallery, New York, NY
Scalding Hot, Sears-Peyton Gallery, New York, NY
It's All Good (apocalypse now), Sideshow Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
- 2010 *For the Love of Paper*, Tayloe Piggott Gallery, Jackson Hole, WY
Summer Group Exhibition, Sears-Peyton Gallery, NY, NY
ART for HAITI Invitational, Lohin Geduld Gallery, NY, NY
- 2009 *Coolidge Center for the Arts*, Wentworth-Coolidge Mansion, Portsmouth, NH
Open Your Arms to the Sun, Sears-Peyton Gallery, NY, NY
- 2008 *183rd Annual Invitational Exhibition*, National Academy Museum, NY, NY
I Wonder If You Know What It Means, Sears-Peyton Gallery, NY, NY
- 2007 *Inaugural Show: Drawings*, NYSS in DUMBO, Brooklyn, NY
- 2005 *LREI Invitational Auction*, 1-20 Gallery, NY, NY

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- 2003 *Sculpture and Painting*, Gutman Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA
2000 *Group Show*, 68 Greenpoint Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
1998 *Summer Show*, The International School of Art Gallery, Italy

AWARDS AND HONORS

- 2018 Honorable Mention, Mercedes Matter/Ambassador Middendorf Award, NYSS
2008 S.J. Wallace Truman Fund Award for Graphic Design, National Academy Museum
2007 LCU Foundation Grant for Women Graduate Degree Candidates
2005–07 Seligman/ Von Simson Scholarship for Excellence in Sculpture
2000 Cathedral of St. John the Divine Sculpture Fellowship
1995 Honors in Art and Art History, Colgate University

RESIDENCIES

- 2019–2020 New York Studio School, DUMBO Artist-in-residence, Brooklyn, NY
2015 Spruceton Inn Artist Residency, West Kill, NY
2007–08 New York Studio School, Artist-in-residence, New York, NY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Andrea Scott, "Fur Cup", *The New Yorker*, November 2019.
Torey Akers, "7 Artists to Watch: September 2019", *Artspace*, September 5, 2019.
Carol Diamond, "Cubist Art, Fresh Angles", *The New York Sun*, April 28, 2017.
Charles Schultz, "Celia Gerard: ASCENT / DESCENT", *ARTSY*, April 2017.
Erika Dahlby, "Works on paper bring imaginary landscapes to life", *Jackson Hole News & Guide*, December 16, 2015.
Leigh Patterson, "Celia Gerard Profile", *Apiece Apart Woman*, October 2015.
Charles Schultz, "A Form between Forms: An Interview with Celia Gerard", *ArtSlant*, January 2014.
Justin Jones, "In 'Lost at Sea' Exhibition, Celia Gerard's Sculpture turns to Drawing", *The Daily Beast*, January 11, 2014.
Douglas Maxwell, "Celia Gerard at Sears-Peyton", *MAX-ART*, January 2014.
Katy Niner, "NYC residents explore infinite, indefinite", *Jackson Hole News&Guide*, May 16, 2012.
Mario Naves, "Celia Gerard at Tayloe Piggott Gallery", *Too Much Art Blog*, May 2012.
Mona Molarsky, "Celia Gerard at Sears-Peyton", *ARTnews*, April 2011.
Tracy Cochran, "Regions of Unlikeness", *Parabola Editor's Blog*, February 13, 2011.
Mario Naves, "Celia Gerard: Regions of Unlikeness", *CityArts*, February 8, 2011.
Richard Whittaker, "Celia Gerard: Portfolio," *works + conversations*, No.17 (Fall 2008): 32–33.
Six Sculptors, catalogue essay by Garth Evans. 2007.

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TEACHING CAREER

- 2010–present Faculty, School of Visual Arts, New York, NY.
Courses: Foundation Drawing, Drawing I&II
- 2014–2018 Adjunct Assistant Professor, Columbia University, New York, NY.
Courses: Figure Drawing, Basic Drawing, Nature Forms
- 2012–2016 Visiting Assistant Professor, Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY.
Courses: Foundation, Drawing I&II
- 2011 Visiting Assistant Professor, Studio Arts, Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, PA.
Courses: Foundation Drawing, Sculpture Materials and Techniques
- 2009 Visiting Instructor, Visual Arts, Bard College, Annandale–on–Hudson, NY.
Course: Drawing I
- 2008–2017 Invited Guest Critic, Sculpture and Drawing, The New York Studio School, New York, NY.
- 2008–2009 Adjunct Instructor, Fine Arts, Centenary College, Hackettstown, NJ.
Courses: Foundation Drawing, Advanced Drawing.
- 2007–2015 Visiting Instructor, Sculpture, The New York Studio School, NY, NY. Teach MFA candidates figurative and non–representational sculpture in a classroom setting using clay, plaster, wax, paper and metal.
- 2003–2009 Drawing Instructor, Jane Rosen Summer Drawing Workshop, San Gregorio, CA.
Teach Renaissance drawing technique to beginning and advanced students.
- 2003–08 Manager, School Programs, Rubin Museum of Art, NY, NY.
Created, developed and taught art programs in NYC Public High Schools and Riker’s Island Correctional Facility. Hired and trained all teaching artists. Worked with the NYC Department of Education.
- 1999 Teaching assistant to Jane Rosen, Bard College Summer Program, Lacoste, France
- 1996–98 Teaching assistant to Jane Rosen, Bard College, Annandale–on–Hudson, NY
- 1995–96 Studio assistant, Tallix Foundry, Beacon, NY
- 1994–96 Studio assistant to Judy Pfaff, Mahopac, NY and New York, NY

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Celia Gerard

Artist Statement

Celia Gerard's imagery is derived from a developing language of shapes that collide with traces of memory. Exploring the lines of form and structure, Gerard's process uses the grid as a foundation for adding and subtracting layers of spatial relationships. From piece to piece, the grounds of each individual work oscillate between the lightest light and a mesmerizing darkness. This balance combines materiality with elements of a mysterious state of limitless potential. The multiplicity of Gerard's mark making turns in on itself, creating a prismatic reflection that strikes a sense of quiet mindful awe. Gerard's wide-ranging influences include Islamic architecture, graffiti, crystal formations, and the works of composer John Cage and artist Georges Braque.

Drawn from works by Augustine and poet Jorie Graham, Gerard's work pays homage to both historical and contemporary influences, while also referencing a sense of being in between the unknown and the known. Within Gerard's works, the eye takes timeless journeys through prismatic fields and landscapes. Bruce Gagnier, one of Gerard's mentors, describes the work this way:

"Celia Gerard draws in depth, a plastic, pictorial depth; forming volumes in space based on geometry; perhaps the geometry that is hidden in nature. The space we travel through in these works is palpable in the drawing and resonant in our unconscious. Looking at one of these works is a journey to an important place located on the picture plane; a focal point; we are guided to this locus, far from the surface; a somewhere else; an important place to arrive at after a poetic journey; a place deep in space; but with no named presence; focused finally in ourselves."

SEARS·PEYTON·GALLERY NEW YORK·LOS ANGELES

Celia Gerard (b. 1973, Washington, D.C) received her BA with honors in art and art history from Colgate University, her EdM from Harvard University, and her MFA in sculpture from the New York Studio School of Drawing, Painting and Sculpture. She has exhibited her work at Sears-Peyton Gallery, New York, NY; Tayloe Piggott Gallery, Jackson, WY; The National Academy Museum, New York, NY; The Mark Potter Gallery, Watertown, CT; The New York Studio School, New York, NY; Gutman Library, Harvard University, MA; ISA Gallery, Montecastello di Vibio, Italy and numerous other galleries in New York and abroad. Awards and grants include the S.J. Wallace Truman Fund Award for graphics from the National Academy Museum; Artist-in-residence, the New York Studio School; Seligman/ Von Simpson award for excellence in sculpture; LCU foundation grant; and a sculpture fellowship from the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. Her work has been written about in ARTnews, Parabola, works & conversation, and City Arts. She currently teaches at Pratt and the School of Visual Arts, and has taught at Bard College, Swarthmore, the New York Studio School, Centenary College and Riker's Island Correctional Facility. She lives and works in New York City.

Artspace

Seven Artists to Watch: September 2019

By Torey Akers

Artspace

September 5, 2019

Celia Gerard

Gerard's fierce, crumpled ceramics reflect the hijacked geometry of their making; tears, indents, drips, and folds freeze in time to create each piece's soft, seamful scaffolding, a kind of intuitive architecture that extends the careful linework of her paintings into three dimensions. There's a corporeal quality to her work in porcelain, which doesn't so much evoke the body as recall it through touch, simultaneously deconstructing and reconstructing the complicated longing inherent to intimacy. Latent violence also bubbles under the surface of these sculptures—Gerard's interventions sizzle in their stillness. A graduate of the New York Studio School and Harvard University, Gerard has exhibited widely and taught at Bard, Swarthmore, Pratt, Columbia and SVA.



Celia Gerard: ASCENT/DESCENT

By Charles M. Schultz

Artsy

April 28, 2017

The shape of Celia Gerard's studio is akin to an isosceles triangle whose apex has been leveled. It is a slightly irregular shape, but with a door on one end, a window at the other and a set of walls connecting base to foregone-tip, its geometric irregularity recedes beneath the structural logic of a building within which this little polygon fits neatly. When I imagine an image generated by changes in the layout of this building—small studios merging; larger ones being subdivided—I see fluctuating spatial relationships defined within a set of unchanging parameters. Older forms become ghosted beneath newly constructed arrangements that arise as they are needed. There is a natural order that underlies this apparent chaos; the question is how does one find that natural order? How does a person cultivate the ability to see the logical operations that give shade and shape to what may otherwise appear tangled and arbitrary?

Celia Gerard's artistic practice is grounded in this kind of search and her procedural basis—regimented and systematic—is engineered towards the experience of discovery. In Gerard's drawings, the process of construction and erasure that ultimately leads to a highly nuanced geometric coordination is made visible. One sees the final composition, and at the same time, the choices by which Gerard arrived there: her destination and journey pressed into a single visual arrangement.

This kind of practice is built on the type of looking that comes naturally to seekers of all variety. It is active and mindful observation, full of intent and near to the experience of contemplation. This way of seeing draws heavily on one's insight and, by extension, encourages intuitive association. When I give myself over to studying the details of Gerard's work, to becoming a seeker myself, certain mental operations fire into action. Intuition leads directly to imagination. My sense of wonder is stimulated, but so too is my analytic mind, probing and cataloguing. To my eyes Gerard's work accomplishes a rare double action. It is developed through steady, calibrated technical decisions that eventually accumulate into an image that speaks to the embrace of understanding arrived at without any need for reason or proof.

Gerard favors very strong paper for her drawings because it needs to withstand a great deal of her touch, which can be as aggressive as it is gentle. Consequentially, they are works of great tactility

and sensuality. Her exploration of bronze and ceramics is rooted in the same hands-on curiosity that is the foundation of these drawings. The plate-sized ceramics are each a unique response to the same question: what happens when I try this? They are cast from the same mold but Gerard has used a variety of clay bodies—porcelain, earthenware, T1—and glazed each piece differently. They seem to float on the wall, almost rising against the pull of gravity.

Gerard's bronze sculptures embody an opposing sensibility; some are dark and heavy, scarred, pockmarked and pitted like the weather-beaten anchor of an old ship. These pieces also bring to mind the slag that remains after a coal fire, or a growth of chaga upon a birch tree. But of course Gerard's bronzes are not meant to represent any of these things. They are resolutely abstract—like her drawings and ceramics—and in that sense attend to a discourse that long ago departed from the merely representational. It is a discourse between a creator and her material that is concerned with essential formal ideals such as balance, harmony and rhythm. Kandinsky worked in this manner. So did Agnes Martin. These artists sought to express the intrinsic qualities of their art, to create visual structures that would resonate on a level beneath the system of words that comprise our languages. It is not easy. Martin destroyed much of what she made.

It is also easy to be misunderstood: for a long time critics identified Martin's compositions with rows of crops and textiles—because one can point to a visual resemblance—despite the fact that Martin herself did not make that association. As I walked down the narrow hallway from Gerard's studio to the elevator, I wondered if I was making a similar mistake, connecting her aesthetic configurations with architectural space. But I wasn't wrong. Insofar as Gerard's work achieves a state of equilibrium amidst its many parts, there will always be congruence between her abstractions and the ideals of constructed space, be it a building, a borough or a city. The danger is thinking that such a relationship in anyway explains the work. It does not. It only proves that her abstractions are very deeply in tune with how we create the places we inhabit.

Cubist Art, Fresh Angles

By Carol Diamond

The New York Sun

April 28, 2017

Two gallery shows of contemporary art in Manhattan bring geometry and tactility together with vibrant results. New York-based artist Celia Gerard is exhibiting her signature large-scale mixed media drawings alongside relief sculptures in ceramic and bronze at Sears Peyton Gallery in Chelsea. At Fox Gallery on the Upper West Side, Greek artist Eozen Agopian adds thread and fabric to her abstract paintings. Large and small-scale works by Ms. Agopian fill two rooms of the salon-style gallery. Both artists use the pictorial language of geometric abstraction to take on the mantle of Cubism.

In Ms. Gerard's drawings, triangles appear and disappear in transparent veils of muted hues that press toward and away from the picture plane. Black lines zigzag playfully across the page, creating scalene triangles in "Ghost Bird," 2016. Translucent layers of aqueous blues cover large areas of the composition, delineating white and pale-yellow birdlike forms. Ms. Gerard achieves formal tension here by combining soft, barely-there atmospheric color with resolute, geometric clarity. Her abstracted birds in flight recall Georges Braque's iconic "*oiseaux*," a recurring symbol in the Cubist master's late work.

While Ms. Gerard's ethereal abstract drawings evoke airy landscapes, her sculpted pieces are dense and earthy. These relief sculptures are modeled with stamped triangular shapes, sometimes gouged into thick slabs of plaster to make concave forms, sometimes built up into bulging convex objects. Works here have been cast in bronze and patinated in umber tones. In "Dymaxion Love Letter," 2016, undulating rows of stamped triangles cover a ragged-edged square.

Ms. Agopian's energetic paintings have the rigor of Analytic Cubism. In "Arshalous/After August," 2012, among the larger paintings on display uptown, black and white triangles are subdivided into smaller triangles, creating staccato rhythms that move the eye this way and that. Veils of vertical lines overlay her triangular design. The sides of triangles line up to create rhythmic axial divisions. A blue haze across the picture unifies the composition.

Achromatic artworks in black and gray hang alongside canvases that explode with color. She incorporates intensely hued thread and fabric into her paintings, a device, Gallery Director Annette Fox says, reflects the artist's interest in traditional women's crafts of Greece. In an interview in the

catalog accompanying the exhibit, Ms. Agopian explains that thread holds a symbolic meaning for her: "As a young girl growing up in Greece, needle-work was an activity that deliberately kept us busy in the late afternoons."

Another large artwork here, "Between Two Continents – Off Broadway," 2016, synthesizes flat shapes of high-chroma fabric with black and gray paint. Layers of white thread and patterned fabrics hang off the canvas, adding areas of sculptural relief.

For both Ms. Gerard and Ms. Agopian, their Cubist language of shapes, forms and tactile forces, inspires captive viewing and sensory fulfillment.

Celia Gerard: Ascent/Descent is on view through May 6, 2017, Sears-Peyton Gallery, 210 Eleventh Avenue, Suite 802, New York, NY, 212-966-7469, www.searspeyton.com

A Form Between Forms: An Interview with Celia Gerard

By Charlie Schultz

ArtSlant

January 2014

Celia Gerard is an artist for whom two sticks of charcoal, a bit of white paint, and a strong sheet of paper is plenty of material. “Line Quality” could be her mantra, and looking at her works one can see why. Gerard’s abstract compositions are built on geometric foundations of linear marks that may be subtle or bold but are always decisive. While her solo exhibition, “Lost at Sea,” was being hung, ArtSlant editor Charlie Schultz paid Gerard a visit to discuss her newest body of work.

Charlie Schultz: On first sight your work looks abstract. But nearly all the titles in the show refer to the landscape, either sea or city. How does this relationship between the abstract image and the landscape function for you?

Celia Gerard: I think of this work as an investigation of depth and space on a two-dimensional surface. A sense of a landscape develops, but I feel they’re still very much abstract works. My hope is that the viewer recognizes something in them, which may be a landscape—a placeless place—something familiar but unnamable. It could be a feeling too.

CS: The lion’s share of titles in this new body of work refers to “the sea.” Can you tell me about what the sea means to you? Is there a specific sea or sea-experience you are drawing upon?

CG: I have very personal associations with the sea. When I’m in the sea and I’m floating, there’s this sense of the sea and the sky, and I’m in between, but I’m part of it, as a third piece. That’s something I play with in my work, the sky and the ground, which becomes another landscape question, a classical one. There’s the duality—sky/ground and sky/sea—but what’s in between and how do they merge? And what’s the third element? That’s something that really interests me.

CS: Can you tell me about your process? How much is improvisation vs. premeditation?

CG: There is a process, but for the most part it’s improvisational. It’s improvisation within a defined set of parameters. The title of this show is “Lost at sea,” which is a bit of a metaphor for my process. In the studio it’s about working into the unknown. But of course I’m not totally lost. I know my materials; I know how to use them, but I don’t know where I’m going to end up when I get started.

CS: Do you find one work influences another?

CG: Definitely. I work on multiple pieces simultaneously and ideas in one piece might activate another set of questions in a different piece. But I've learned to let them each have their own life and see through the questions on their own instead of trying to answer every question in one piece.

CS: What about the materials? What are you using?

CG: I keep it basic. I find that you can do a lot with very little. There's graphite, charcoal, chalk, ink. I use a great goat milk-based paint. But I also use sand paper and an electric sander. The paper is so strong. It's handmade and wouldn't fall apart if you put it in a washing machine.

CS: There is a sculptural quality to your works, at least partially because of the physicality of the mark making. To me, they aren't quite drawings, or paintings; it's more like you're using techniques of both mediums to create a heavily worked surface that feels sculptural even though the works are on paper and mounted behind picture frames. Is this negotiation between mediums something you think about or is it more of an unconscious effect of the process?

CG: I'm trained as a sculptor. That's what I majored in undergrad and studied as a graduate student. So I'd say I identify more as a sculptor than a painter. This series, which I began in 2007, came out of sculpture that I was making at the Studio School. I was studying the figure and looking at proportion and I became interested in a kind of depth that I couldn't achieve in sculpture. So I started working in low relief, and playing with very small increments of depth that of course become huge increments in space. So working into space, into depth, has always been an interest and a priority, and sort of by accident it lead me to this two-dimensional work.

CS: There are a lot of basic geometric shapes in your work—triangles and circles are dominant—that overlap and build into fluid, even lyrical, compositions. Do you think of these shapes on a strictly formal level or are there secondary or even tertiary relationships at play?

CG: I think of them as elemental. Everything in nature is based on these basic shapes. Cezanne made that observation and it influenced a lot of modernism, cubism certainly. For me, the exchange of depth and flatness is also interesting. When do these shapes become three-dimensional? When do they flatten out again? I'm interested in moving them around in that way. There is also a sense of anonymity to these kinds of shapes. It makes them universal, easily recognizable, familiar.

CS: Sea Song (Khora III) is especially interesting to me because of the reference to khora, which is a philosophical term Plato used to describe the space or interval when forms take shape. It's almost womb-like, in a way. And in relationship to the rest of your pieces it shifts the emphasis away from tactile bodies of space, like sea or city, and into philosophical dimension. Can you talk about what khora means to you?

CG: I became somewhat obsessed with the khora a couple of years ago when color started coming into the work and I saw some elements of landscape imagery starting to seep in. I began asking, what is this? What is this about? What is this landscape? I don't want them to be literal landscapes, and they aren't. But what are they then? Something in between, a form between forms. I like the elusive quality of an unnamable space, something that feels both familiar and strange. That's what this series is about in a lot of ways, navigating between the familiar and the unknown.

DAILY BEAST

In 'Lost at Sea' Exhibition, Celia Gerard's Sculpture Turns Drawing

By Justin Jones

Daily Beast

January 11, 2014

Celia Gerard's mixed-media works hang in a balance of solidity and transparency, sculpture and drawing.

The eight compositions on display at the Sears-Peyton Gallery are a continuation of a body of work. "The work started when I was studying at the [New York] Studio School," Gerard told *The Daily Beast* Thursday night at the opening of her new show, *Lost at Sea*. "I was working in low relief... and I realized that I wasn't able to go as deep [into the space] as I wanted to," she said, mentioning her formal training as a sculptor. "So I moved to drawing out of necessity."

The first drawings were just black and white and appeared at Sears-Peyton in 2011. "I was interested in what I could do with only a few materials and a limited palette," Gerard said, "but it wasn't until a couple of years ago that color started seeping in."

Even though colors have now permeated her works, it still has a lot to do with depth and form. "It wasn't as much about color as it was about pushing the drawing along and getting deeper into the space that I was looking for," she said. "Still, I wanted to keep a very limited palette."

Even so, the colors of the geometric forms are very muted. But that is one of the key components that give these drawings their sculptural elements. The subtlety of the colors, along with defined outlines, create an illusion of solidity and transparency as the basic shapes—triangles and squares—rendered gradually fade into one another and deeper into space. "I was trained as a sculptor," said Gerard, who teaches at the Pratt Institute and School of Visual Arts in New York. "So I see these as sculptural works in a way. I'm carving into space, moving deeper into space."

ARTNEWS

Celia Gerard Review

By Mona Molarsky

ARTnews

April 2011

Celia Gerard's mixed media works on paper are large and arresting, and this show included six of them, three black on white and three white on black. Each is an abstract meditation on geometry and also a kind of imaginary landscape with an implied horizon and multiple vanishing points. In all the works, triangle shapes predominate, often rising up like mountains, sometimes overlapping at skewed angles. They send the eye careening.

With its fragmented surface, *Up in Smoke* (2007) seems to pay tribute to Cubism and Constructivism. Charcoal and graphite lines carefully ruled over layers of off-white gouache suggest crystals—or architecture gone berserk. There are ladderlike patterns and tetrahedrons and slabs jutting up like the concrete floors of half-collapsed buildings. *Region of Unlikeness* (2010) uses similar shapes to a more Minimalist effect. Sharp angles poke up like ice splinters in a polar landscape where everything shimmers with reflected light and frost.

Gerard's white-on-black works lead us into a night where ghostly glass structures loom like memories of dreams. *Raven (East)*, 2009, is crowded with transparent pyramids, wedges, and inky origami-like shapes, but, in a few spots, the hard-edged geometry is bisected by curvilinear forms, suggesting lips or little lost birds.

Black Star (2009–10) and *Notte 3* (2010) seem to have been mapped out with a protractor and T square. The paintings' jagged polygons and ubiquitous triangles animate the artist's private universe, together with concentric circles, biomorphic afterthoughts, and the occasional sphere. Might there be a breast, a mouth, or an internal organ among the geometric constructs? In a world of points and planes, each curve implies something human.



Celia Gerard: Regions of Unlikeness

By Mario Naves

CityArts

February 8, 2011

In his seminal essay “Cezanne’s Doubt,” philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty wrote of the French artist’s painterly process, of how vacillating fields of chiseled brushstrokes simultaneously defined and questioned the objects at hand. Merleau-Ponty concluded that for Cezanne “‘conception’ [could not] precede ‘execution.’” The results, rigorously analytical and forever skeptical, set into motion the idea of the canvas as a public accounting of an artist’s tussle with uncertainty.

Having filtered its way through Modernism—roughly speaking, from Cubism to Giacometti to Action Painting to any number of artists eager to flaunt their egos and erasers—“Cezanne’s Doubt” has become as much a cliché as any other approach to art-making. That is, until someone comes along and demonstrates why it is, in fact, viable and vital. Celia Gerard’s black-and-white mixed media drawings, at Sears-Peyton Gallery, remind us that tradition is for the taking should an artist have the gumption to follow through on it.

Cezanne resides in Gerard’s drawings more in process than in image, but one can divine a link from her ruled forms to Cezanne’s insistence that nature be represented through cylinders, spheres and cones. Gerard goes about it in a reverse order—transforming fractious arrays of triangles, circles and the odd sloping contour into panoramic landscapes—of a sort, anyway. Though her diagrammatic structures create a certain perspective logic, space is developed more from the reinvention of individual shapes and the connections that accrue between them. Gerard’s compositions are malleable even as they achieve an elegant and scabbled resolution.

Gerard works on both white and black grounds, the latter to less convincing effect: their photonegative character seems overly dramatic for a draftsman as tight-lipped and pensive as this one. Then again, “Black Star” is irresistible not only because its lustrous surfaces recall Japanese woodblock prints, but because it comes off like an X-ray transcription of El Greco’s “View of Toledo.” Elsewhere, Gerard divines a hitherto unknown correspondence between Yellow Submarine and Sieneese painting—really, “Campo” is Sassetta on LSD—and, overall, provides an object lesson in why doubt, at least when it comes to art, can be a good thing.

Works and Conversations: The Precision of the Artist, No. 17

Richard Wittaker

January 8, 2009

Celia Gerard

It was through contributing Editor Jane Rosen that the work of Celia Gerard came to my attention. Gerard's abstract, geometrical works immediately struck a chord with me in a way that remains mysterious. If asked to describe what that is, I can only fall back on the descriptor *poetic*, a quality with no fixed rules. The sculpture of David Nash comes to mind as having this elusive quality, or the work of Martin Puryear. Somehow, one's feeling is engaged. It's interesting that it's the work of two sculptors that comes to mind first.

What Jane Rosen has to say about Gerard's work might shed some light here: "Trained in figuration with a bent towards minimalism and eccentric spirituality, the work navigates special relationships which generate an emotional stance. Fragments and places that occupy the various pieces are a stand in for the energies of the body and the presence of landscape without depicting them in a literal way. Much as fractals and crystals offer a fragmented view of the parts that they reflect, one can only glimpse pieces of a puzzle while sensing the whole in a playful and mysterious way.