

SFAQ

INTERNATIONAL ARTS AND CULTURE

“A Function of Lines” by Sabine Reckewell and “frustrules” by Rachel Abrams at Chandra Cerrito Contemporary, Oakland



Sabine Reckewell, foreground “Blue Canopy”, ribbon, 2013; center, Rachel Abrams, “frustrules”, foam and metal, 2011-2013; back, Sabine Reckewell, “Red Curve into Plane”, ribbon, nails, 2013. Image courtesy of gallery.

Currently on view at Chandra Cerrito Contemporary in Oakland is the work of two artists that appears minimal in the sense that only one or two materials are used, and by accumulation of repeated gestures or placement they become all-encompassing as singular pieces contingent on the space.



Sabine Reckewell, "Square #4,5,6", wire. 1979.

Sabine Reckewell began creating "linear installations" in the late 1970s and early 1980s, using a variety of strand materials, such as string, wire or ribbon. For the current exhibition at Chandra Cerrito in Oakland she has revisited these earlier installations. Also on view is an earlier piece comprised of three layers of crocheted wire: "Square #4, 5, 6", dated 1979. Through juxtaposing soft materials with hard lines, or using hard materials to make objects normally made with soft ones, textiles becomes blurred with architecture, Minimalism is blurred with Process, placing her work in an important position to question history, while remaining in conversation with it. The work

can be likened with other Conceptual and Minimalist artists, such as Sol LeWitt, Agnes Martin, or Anne Truitt yet remains fresh and current.



Sabine Reckewell, foreground "Blue Canopy", ribbon, 2013



Sabine Reckewell, foreground “Blue Canopy”, ribbon, 2013. detail.

Upon entering the gallery, “Blue Canopy” hovers above the entire entrance of the gallery. The dozens of lines are comprised of 1” cobalt blue ribbon, held in place by strips of wood that span the space from the ceiling to the near floor. As the title suggests, it does create a canopy and viewers are able to stand under it, and beside it. The original shape of the room becomes altered by the angles of the ribbon lines, creating a comforting, and serene intervention despite its linearity: light shines through the stripes, creating soft shafts of gradating shadows on the walls; the ribbon is satin finish and it too has its own sheen that complements the light shining through. Depth of field becomes altered and the lines play tricks on the eye, creating a sense of majesty as viewers are inclined to look up, situating them in a vulnerable stance of contemplation. The activity of their making is frozen in time, shifting with the play of light, only to be de-installed and gathered (sometimes saved) as remnants of their original standing reduced to materials alone – the all the more marvelous because of its temporality. The peak of the canopy leads into the second gallery room, which does not enjoy the luxury of natural light that the entrance affords.



Sabine Reckewell, "Red Curve into Plane", ribbon, nails, 2013.



Rachel Abrams, "frustrules", foam and metal, 2011-2013. detail.

In the front portion of the space is a viral, and encroaching swarm of clusters by Rachel Abrams entitled “frustrules”, wandering to the ceiling in some spots, and to the floor in others, the white spores invading the also-white walls. This work is both intriguing and repelling because it insinuates nature, yet is created from reclaimed man-made foam. The formal quality of this work is much more playful and malleable than Reckewell’s, in that the work can be installed in many site-specific ways depending on the location. Collectively the small sculptures are applied to the wall, reiterating their reclaimed form from one location to the next.

In comparison, Reckewell’s work is site contingent, as well as site generated – each structural line installation alters the space, inhabits it, cuts through it and changes it. The walls are not a place holder they are part of the piece, which in turn, is part of the place, at least for the time being.

-Contributed by Leora Lutz