

SPACE BETWEEN

By Samuel Feldblum | Tuesday, September 8, 2015

When I could find voice, I shrieked aloud in agony, “either this is madness or it is Hell.” “It is neither,” calmly replied the voice of the Sphere, “it is Knowledge; it is Three Dimensions: open your eye once again and try to look steadily.”

Edwin Abbott, *Flatland*

Peter Schjeldahl, speaking with Jarrett Earnest in the July/August issue of the *Rail*, pointed out that sculpture can be “irritating” because, unlike some of its peers, it competes for space with the viewer. We wonder “what it is, why it’s there, and when it will go away.” With that in mind, the works on view in FLAG Art Foundation’s *Space Between* offer a somewhat gentler entry into the third dimension, and perhaps a more amicable viewing experience. Inspired by a pair of recent Ellsworth Kelly works on view, the show explores the rift and link between two-dimensional and three-dimensional work.

The two Kellys, *Blue Relief Over Green* (2004) and *Dark Red Relief with White* (2005), set the template for many of the works in the show: solid-color rectangular canvases, wherein the image wraps around to the side of the rectangle, forming a prism. Kelly stacks two such canvases atop one another, gesturing gracefully toward the physicality of his art.

Nearby, Tony DeLap’s *Mystry Man* (1984), an oversized shark’s-tooth-shaped canvas in gray, warps its z-axis, so the sides of the canvas are not perpendicular to its face, but bend and slope—a glimpse, maybe, into non-Euclidean painting. Sérgio Sister contributes *Pontalete #16* (2012), an empty portico of canvas-covered wooden and aluminum bars in greens, deep blue, purple, and black—a sculpture that indicates traditional painting while eschewing it entirely.

The show’s success is in creating an environment of dimensional meditation. Photographer Andreas Gursky’s *Bahrain II* (2007) depicts three gray-backed black stripes at the top, middle, and bottom of a large canvas, traced by racing stripes and sporting a Vodafone logo. An overhead shot of a motor racetrack digitally dis- and re-assembled, the image might remain in another setting more comfortably flat. But here one easily imagines bending it into a torus of some sort, and the mind does the work of adding a third dimension. Sarah Crowner’s *Sliced Snake* (2015) also unravels a black form on a light background; the rectangular canvas is sewn together from smaller, irregular pieces, the stitchwork still evident. Again, we are reminded of the painting as object. Likewise with her *Hook Swan* (2015), an elegant light green figure on a canvas background that perhaps bridges not only the dimensional gap, but that between the plant and animal kingdoms as well. In the adjacent *Untitled* (2014), Wyatt Kahn uses a similar stitching technique to assemble a light taupe, stingray-shaped canvas.

Two corner pieces, meanwhile, serve to remind that tri-dimensionality can be achieved not just through depth, but by bending too. Kaz Oshiro’s acrylic-on-canvas *Untitled Still Life* (2013), a pink and red square toppled onto its vertex, turns up a corner like an earmarked book page to skirt a second wall. Across the gallery, similar color play twinkles through Jim Hodges’s mirror-on-panel *Toward Great Becoming (orange/pink)* (2014), shiny halves of the eponymous colors jutting from each other and reflecting into one another’s surfaces exuberantly. Here, depth is again created through reflection.

And everywhere: shadow—the surest sign of an object in space. Upstairs, the pattern now established, Thomas Demand’s *Detail (Sportscar)* (2005) depicts close-ups of a car’s gills and orifices, dark shadows contrasting with the hot orange of the car’s paint, the depth abstracted in these context-less images. Svenja Deininger, in her *Untitled* (2012), draws on shadow and geometric shapes to paint a receding room in grays and black; across the room, her *Untitled* (2009) uses similar shadow-play to suggest the

contoured terrain at the corner of a painting's frame.

Two larger works on the second floor offer singular takes on the show's theme. Olafur Eliasson's *Walk through wall* (2005), a mirror featuring two offset sets of rippling concentric circles, offers a double-vision reflection of the room behind the viewer. The distorted view enlivens the other works reflected in the frame, especially Mark Grotjahn's *Untitled (Red & White)* (2002) and *Untitled (Blue & Yellow)* (2003), rayed abstractions reminiscent of a skyward view from the Brooklyn Bridge.

Rebecca Ward's *clandestine* (2015), meanwhile, aspires to depth not through wrapping itself in surface but through transparency. The canvas is stitched, and most of the right half, hard-edged white and green shapes, is threadbare, so that a wooden cross behind is visible—a manmade glassfish. Nearby hang a couple of Agnes Martins, *Untitled #6* (1999) and *Peace and Happiness* (2001)—pastel-colored stripe numbers with gaps between the edge of the canvas and the frame, so that the object itself is presented, rather than just a face of it.

Agnes Martin and Ellsworth Kelly lived among a group of artists in the mid-20th century in the Coenties Slip of downtown Manhattan, outside the developing tradition of Abstract Expressionism, working largely with geometric shapes and hard-edged coloration. The effect of this work on subsequent artists is evident, the patterns of Coenties artists morphing through the decades into more peculiar shapes. Martin was influenced by the weaving of Coenties Slip artist Lenore Tawney; here, we see Rebecca Ward, for example, bring that influence full circle. Curators Louis Grachos, executive director of The Contemporary Austin, and Stephanie Roach, director of the FLAG Art Foundation, honor this nexus of influence through generations of artists. The show buoyantly leaps between surface and space. The fourth dimension awaits.

A Diffuse Glow: "Space Between" at The FLAG Art Foundation

By Stephen Maine | Wednesday, August 12, 2015



Installation shot, "Space Between", The FLAG Art Foundation, 2015, with Sarah Crowner, *Sliced Snake*, 2015 (left) and Tony DeLap, *Mystery Man*, 1984

A group exhibition may be tightly focused, like a beam of light that penetrates the artfog to reveal a previously obscure order. Or it may cast a more diffuse glow, allowing the assembled works to illuminate one another, and viewers to intuit an order as they may. The latter curatorial style is just as rigorous as the former; if anything, a less programmatic exhibition requires (and rewards) heightened alertness to unexpected affinities among diverse works. Such an exhibition is the lively, elegant "Space Between," on view through August 14 at the FLAG Art Foundation in Chelsea.

Curated by Louis Grachos, Executive Director of The Contemporary Austin, and FLAG Art Foundation Director Stephanie Roach, "Space Between" is ostensibly a consideration of objects in which the conventions of painting coexist with characteristics native to sculpture. This cross-generational exhibition of 33 works by 24 artists also reaches to photography to demonstrate the interplay of pictorial and physical space, exploring the fuzzy edges of this fruitfully gray area.

Of course, spatial ambiguity is not front-page news. Duchamp's *Bride Stripped Bare* (1915 – 23) is but one illustrious 20th-century example, among many others. And then there is the ancient tradition of bas-relief, which transmutes ambient light into *chiaroscuro*. But "Space Between" doesn't overplay this hand, as it touches also on the persistence of a certain shape-heavy, color-centric strain of abstraction and, by extension, urges viewers to think about art history in terms of continuity rather than wave upon wave of innovation, of radical newness.

Three relatively recent works by Ellsworth Kelly anchor the show. The most salient of these is *Blue Relief Over Green* (2004), two oil-on-canvas monochrome rectangles joined at a right angle and measuring about seven by six feet — plus, (the all-important third dimension) the two and three-quarters inches depth of the panels' stretchers. The seemingly minor physical displacement of the picture plane interferes with the property of color — even Kelly's full-throated hues — to appear to advance or recede in relation to one another. The visual tension is exquisite, and sets the tone for "Space Between."

Gazing down into Roni Horn's *Pink Around (B)* (2008), a solid glass disk 40 inches in diameter and 15 inches high, the viewer is simultaneously impressed by its mass and beguiled by the blushing delicacy of its coloration. Sadie Benning's compact wall pieces, such as *Wipe, Montana Gold Banana and Ace Fluorescent Green* (2011), embody color quite differently: on these small, plaster-covered panels, two distinct hues occupy the same physical plane while vying for illusionistic space. Meanwhile, the title divulges the object in Thomas Demand's photographic triptych, *Detail (Sportscar)* (2005), in which extreme cropping renders unrecognizable these sleek orange forms.

In this context, attention to color doesn't necessarily imply abundant chroma. The oldest work in the show is *Mystery Man* (1984) by Tony DeLap, a seven-foot-high wall construction made of canvas over an eccentrically shaped and beveled wood stretcher and painted a precise shade of gray. Nearby is Wyatt Kahn's *Untitled* (2014), another painting/sculpture hybrid, in which the deadpan color of raw linen contrasts with the flat panels' animated, undulating contours.

There are two corner pieces in the show. *Untitled Still Life* (2013) by Kaz Oshiro is a large, cherry-red, square canvas tipped 45 degrees, its left corner bent and crumpled where it meets the adjacent wall. It seems a bit *reluctantly* sculptural. Jim Hodges contributes *Toward Great Becoming (orange/pink)* (2014), in which two mirror-tiled panels — irregular polygons — reflect each other and complete themselves. It is dazzling, and makes you giddy.

Two adjoining galleries testify to the wide influence of Agnes Martin on the work of contemporary artists. One space houses Martin's *Peace and Happiness* (2001), a wonderful 60-inch-square canvas comprising alternating horizontal bands of azure blue and dusty white, faintly delineated in pencil. The mirage-like effect is atmospheric one moment, concrete the next. In its proximity, Rebecca Ward's *clandestine* (2015) — a five-foot-high work in which stitched sections of canvas, painted in pearly tones, are partially deconstructed to reveal the stretcher—shares this Martin's split personality. *The Sun, Chapter 1 [diagonal edge, horizontal stripe]* (2001), a quiet stunner by R.H. Quaytman, also reflects on its own structure; the primary motif, a diagonal band, depicts in section the plywood panel on which it is painted. The interconnectedness of visuality and materiality is borne out in other splendid works in this gallery by Julia Rommel and Svenja Deininger.

A second Martin, the 12-inch-square *Untitled #6* (1999), keeps company with a trippy, mirrored, space-confounding 2D work in glass, mirror and wood by Olafur Eliasson, *Walk Through Wall* (2005); a cast resin piece by Rachel Whiteread, titled *A.M.* (2011) — in homage to the Martin? — which seems to refer to a gridded windowpane; and two colored pencil drawings by Marc Grotjahn from his "butterfly" period of a decade or so ago. Rounding out the show are terrific works by Sarah Crowner, Liam Gillick, Sérgio Sister, Andreas Gursky, Blair Thurman, and Douglas Coupland (yes, the novelist).

In the mid-to-late 1950s, Kelly and Martin worked in a loft building on Coenties Slip in lower Manhattan. Contrary to the prevailing Abstract Expressionist autographic touch, improvisational composition and spatial flux, they concerned themselves with unbroken color and unambiguous, hard-edge shape. Decades of "isms" (and the neighborhood's loft buildings) have fallen like dominoes since those days, but the deeper structures of contemporary art's visual vocabulary remain intact and vital. As Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns are lauded for eliding painting and sculpture in the neo-Dada 1950s, so too do the efforts of Kelly and Martin (and other Coenties Slip figures like Jack Youngerman and Charles Hinman) echo today.

Chelsea Art Show Blurs Lines Between Two and Three Dimensions

By Hailey Cunningham | 06.05.2015



Ellsworth Kelly's *Blue Relief over Green*, (2004), inspired The FLAG Art Foundation exhibition.

(Photo: Courtesy of the artist)

On two floors of a Chelsea tower, the exhibition space FLAG Art Foundation opened its newest show “Space Between” this week.

Most summer group shows are fairly sleepy, either space-fillers or opportunities to experiment, with all the curatorial erraticness that implies. This one offers works by a roster of superstars, old and new: Douglas Coupland, Thomas Demand, Liam Gillick, Mark Grotjahn, Andreas Gursky, Agnes Martin, etc. The signature piece, and the one that inspired the title, is a blue and green superimposed canvas by Ellsworth Kelly.

The unusual and fresh exhibit plays with the boundaries between two- and three-dimensional spaces—stacked canvases create shadows, objects protrude from the walls and one work even dangles from the ceiling in the entranceway. This approach to curating makes for an exhibit that surprises at every turn, but makes it difficult to label an artwork “painting” or “sculpture” or “sculptural painting” or “painted sculpture.”

Curated by Louis Grachos, who is director of the Contemporary Austin, in Texas, and for years helmed the Albright-Know Museum in Buffalo, NY, and Stephanie Roach, FLAG's well-known director, the show is meant to explore multiple generations of contemporary artists' radical abstraction. Non-profit FLAG is meant to act as an educational space, teaching and encouraging a

And this show does exactly that, combining artists of a variety of ages, working in a variety of mediums. Olafur Eliasson's *Walk Through Wall* (2005) acts as the focal point for the upstairs gallery space. Reminiscent of Michelangelo Pistoletto's mirror paintings from the '60s, this framed spiraling double mirror plays with space and dimensions while interacting with the viewer. However, as the young gallery hoppers meandered upstairs, it quickly became little more than "selfie station."



Kaz Oshiro's *Untitled Still Life*. (Photo: Courtesy Honor Fraser Gallery, Joshua White/JWPictures.com)

The brilliant pink canvas in Kaz Oshiro's *Untitled Still Life* (2013) straddles the corner, playfully subverting traditional white-wall gallery presentation.

And in *Sliced Snake* and *Hook Swan*, artist Sarah Crowner cuts up and sews her canvases back together. She appropriates the traditionally female act of sewing, exploring the history of the craft.

The exhibition will on view at The FLAG Art Foundation's gallery at 545 West 25th Street through August 14.

8 Things to Do in New York's Art World Before June 5

By Paul Laster | 06.01.2015

TUESDAY, JUNE 2

Opening: "Niele Toroni" at the Swiss Institute

A conceptual artist who has made a unique place for himself in the art world by making repeated, measured marks with paint on a variety of surfaces for the past 50 years, Niele Toroni rarely shows in New York. The Swiss Institute presents the artist's first solo exhibition in the U.S. in 25 years with a survey that spans 40 years of monochromatic imprints from a No. 50 brush repeated at regular intervals on 30 centimeters on fabric, canvas, paper, and specific sites in the space. Don't bother to bring a measuring tape; this guy never misses the mark!

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3

Opening: "Eduardo Sarabia: Ballads" at Other Criteria

Combining decorative art objects with motifs referencing the Mexican and Mexican-American drug scene—ranging from guns, skulls, and nude pin-up models to marijuana leaves and animals symbolizing specific illegal drugs—Eduardo Sarabia makes art from Narco culture. On Wednesday night, the artist introduces some new items to his ironic body of work: a tapestry inspired by violent coded messages from Mexican gangs and a series of cut paper diorama boxes with drug symbolism in a traditional blue and white color scheme.

Talk: "Our History/Notre histoire" at Cabinet

If you want to understand the difference between Canada and Quebec, this show and talk are for you. Artist and professor Michael Blum presents his exhibition and book "Our History/Notre histoire," a creative project on Canadian and Quebecois politics. Museum of Modern Art director Glenn D. Lowry joins Mr. Blum for a discussion, which is followed by an audience Q&A—just don't drink too many free Brooklyn Brewery beers and ask Mr. Lowry about Bjork, Yoko, or Klaus!

Opening: "Space Between" at The FLAG Art Foundation

Drawing on a mix of established and lesser-known artists working with abstraction, Louis Grachos, the highly-respected director of The Contemporary Austin, and FLAG Art Foundation's Stephanie Roach present a group exhibition of paintings, sculptures, and photographs that defy categorization, instead falling into the space between. With works by Ellsworth Kelly, Liam Gillick, and Rachel Whiteread—among others—on view, expect the experience to be sublime.

Talk: "Painting and the Legacy of Feminism" at Maccarone

Presented on the occasion of Maccarone's two current shows, Cecily Brown's "The English Garden" and Rosy Keyser's "The Hell Bitch," and the recent exhibition "Joan Semmel: Across Five Decades" at Alexander Gray

Associates, super-curator and writer Alison Gingeras moderates a discussion on painting and feminism with some of the best women artists working today. This will be a unique conversation, where much can be learned.

THURSDAY, JUNE 4

Opening: “Kim Gordon: The City Is A Garden” at 303 Gallery

Most folks identify Kim Gordon as the bass guitarist and vocalist of the alternative rock band Sonic Youth, but Gordon is also an established visual artist and curator. A 1980s graduate from L.A.’s Otis College of Art & Design, Ms. Gordon has organized shows and exhibited her art around the world. For her first solo show with 303 Gallery, the artist uses resins, glitters, and fiberglass to make playful, irreverent works that get displayed under a black and white banner of Kim in the studio—adding a bit of performance to the process of making art.

Talk: “Marin Hopper & Mark Rozzo Discuss Dennis Hopper: Drugstore Camera” at Strand Bookstore

Shortly after completing the film *Easy Rider* in the late 1960s, Dennis Hopper settled in Taos, New Mexico, where he started taking pictures with a disposable camera that shot black and white film to be developed at drugstores. These intimate images of family and friends, strange road trip shots, and offbeat still life pictures were lost until Hopper’s daughter Marin discovered them after his death and put them together in a handsomely designed book. On Thursday, *Vanity Fair* deputy editor Mark Rozzo joins Ms. Hopper to discuss the captivating photos and the vision of the unforgettable actor and artist who made them.

Opening: “Olaf Breuning” at Metro Pictures

A bad-boy artist with a wicked sense of humor, Olaf Breuning offers a series of large photo-collages of people engaged in comical activities that get printed as wallpaper and mounted to nine-foot circular disks on the gallery’s walls. Ten of these digitally manipulated montages surround five large steel sculptures made with mirrored surfaces to reflect the nutty imagery and turn the whole environment into a modern-day funhouse chock full of charm.

THE MUST-SEE ART SHOWS OPENING IN NYC THIS WEEK

By Gary Pini | 06.01.2015

This week is (almost) all about Bushwick. The ninth annual, multi-venue blow-out known as Bushwick Open Studios kicks off with a big launch party and group exhibition called "Seeking Space" on Friday, June 5th, 8 p.m., at Be Electric Studios (1298 Willoughby Avenue, Brooklyn). Works by over 100 artists will be on view there through Sunday, plus the opening features music from David Kiss, NSR, Max August, Housing Corp and dgro. The neighborhood's many galleries, studios and random pop-up venues will be up-and-running all weekend -- with several parties and openings starting earlier in the week. Check out DARKCLOUDS' latest works in a show called "Substance Abuse" at Wise Man's Garage (107 Forrest Street, Bushwick), opening on Friday, noon until late; and a group show called "Auto-Chemistry" at Hollows Artspace (708 Bushwick Avenue) opening on the 3rd, 6 to 10 p.m. The "official" closing party starts late on Sunday at Bushwick Community Darkroom (110 Troutman Street, Brooklyn)

And let's not forget Ridgewood, Queens: Yulia Topchiy curated a group show called "Made in Ridgewood" that also opens on Friday, June 5th, from 6 to 9 p.m., with a live video/modular synthesizer performance by Balloon Monument and Adam Sipe at 8:30 p.m. All the works in the exhibition were created by artists that live and work in Ridgewood including Joy Curtis, Riitta Ikonen, Yasue Maetake, Christian Sampson, Adam Sipe and Josef Zutelgte. On view all month at 1902 Palmetto Street.

Multimedia artist Richard Garet is doing a month-long, 3-minute takeover of several electronic billboards in Times Square. Running through June from 11:57 p.m. to midnight daily, "Perceptual: Sonic Landscape/ Midnight Blink" uses street sounds to create "chromatic, visual landscapes." The work is presented by Times Square Arts and the Times Square Advertising Coalition. You can meet the NYC-based artist and learn about his recording techniques on June 5th at 11:15 p.m. at the red steps in Duffy Square.

Toronto artist Cybele Young has her first NYC solo show opening on June 4th at Forum Gallery (730 Fifth Avenue, 2nd floor). She's known for her intricate, paper sculptures and for this show, "Some Changes Were Made," she juxtaposes "lost" everyday objects to "create a sense of dialogue between them." On view until July 17th.

High Line Art celebrates the conclusion of their commission called "A Hudson Yard"-- a wheat-paste poster campaign of the letter "A" by LA-artist Shannon Ebner with David Reinfurt -- in the tunnel on the High Line at West 14th Street, Thursday, June 4th, 6 to 8 p.m. The event is also the launch of a booklet for the year-long project. It's open to everybody and admission is free. At 6:30 p.m. sharp, there's a performance of a new composition by Alex Waterman called "Clouds and Crowds" for 12 singers

Mitchell-Innes & Nash (534 West 26th Street) presents their third solo show, "Art School," by the UK artist Paul Winstanley, opening on June 4th, 6 to 8 p.m. The ten new works depict empty art student's studios in a style the "wavers between photorealism and painterly softness." Up until July 19th.

Blum & Poe (19 East 66th Street) opens the first US survey of sculpture by Swiss-born artist Francoise Grossen on Thursday, June 4th, 6 to 8 p.m. and up until August 14th. The "knotted and plaited rope" works are from 1967 to 1991.

On June 7th, 7 to 9 p.m., Off Vendome (254 West 23rd Street #2) opens a group show called "The Longest Bridge" with works by William Gedney, Kayla Guthrie, Dustin Hodges, Kaspar Muller and Silke Otto-Knapp. Up until July 18th.

Every Tuesday until the end of June, NYC-based artist Nelson Saiers unveils a new work at The Hole Shop (312 Bowery). This week's installation, "Shortening: Making Irrational Rational" incorporates football jerseys, the mathematical concept of Pi and the number "3" drawn in charcoal to address the absurd prison sentences given to people for drug offenses. Check it out during the shop's regular hours, Tuesday to Sunday, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. -- and then go back next Tuesday.

The FLAG Art Foundation (545 West 25th Street, 9th and 10th floors) has a group show called "Space Between" curated by Louis Grachos and Stephanie Roach that investigates the "seams, tears and edges between two and three dimensions." The artists include Doug Coupland, Thomas Demand, Olafur Eliasson, Roni Horn and many more. On view through August 14th.

If you're heading north for the weekend, stop by the Dia: Beacon (3 Beekman Street, Beacon, NY) and see Robert Irwin's *Excursus: Homage to the Square 3* (1998-99). It's been seventeen years since the work was originally shown at Dia, when they were here in town.

Santiago Calatrava-- he's the Spanish architect that designed the transportation hub at the new World Trade Center -- has installed seven red, black and silver aluminum sculptures on the Park Avenue median between 52nd and 55th Streets. They'll be there until mid-November.

THESE ABSTRACT WORKS OF ART BLUR THE LINE BETWEEN TWO AND THREE DIMENSIONS

By Stephanie Strasnick | May 29, 2015



Red and White Painting, 2013, Sadie Benning.
Photo: Courtesy of the artist and Callicoon Fine Arts, New York

With their overlapping, asymmetrical canvases, Ellsworth Kelly's *Blue Relief over Green* (2004) and *Dark Red Relief with White* (2005) blur the line between painting and sculpture and distort the distinction between two- and three-dimensional space. These works serve as the jumping-off point for a new exhibition at the Flag Art Foundation that explores the radical abstraction techniques of contemporary artists across multiple generations. Titled "Space Between," the show opens June 3 and includes works by such figures as Olafur Eliasson, Liam Gillick, Jim Hodges, Agnes Martin, and Rachel Whiteread.

Perhaps most engrossing about the exhibition is its ability to challenge traditional expectations of a white-wall gallery experience. Kaz Oshiro's acrylic-on-canvas *Untitled Still Life* (2013) straddles a corner of the space, creating unexpected shadows, depth, and three-dimensionality. Liam Gillick's *Double Projection Platform 1* (2008) eschews the wall altogether and is instead suspended from the ceiling by nearly invisible cables. By appearing to creep off their plane, the artworks in this show present the viewer with subversive surprises at each turn.

June 3 through August 14 at the Flag Art Foundation, 545 West 25 Street, 9th and 10th floors, New York; flagartfoundation.org

