



SAN FRANCISCO
Sarah Cain: "LOUD OBJECT"
at Anthony Meier Fine Arts

In her letter to viewers of "LOUD OBJECT," her recent solo show of paintings, LA-based artist Sarah Cain writes that "As a woman I conflate the phrase(s) TAKING A STAND with TAKING UP SPACE. It dawned on me today that my paintings are undeniable extensions of my body." By doing so, she contextualizes her work as related to her gendered identity, imbuing the formal and spatial issues that she addresses with a symbolic charge.

With an interest in dimensionality, it may seem counter-intuitive to devote the majority of her paintings' surfaces to emphatically flat compositions, but this tactic allows her pieces to hover between surface and object, examining the overlap between painting and sculpture. In *synchronized dreaming* (all works 2013), Cain uses flat white shapes to delineate four rounded rectangles on a surface constructed out of bare, paint-spattered cardboard strips taken from her studio floor. Although none of her marks represent an academic illusion of depth, there is nonetheless an illusion created—one of spatial unity amidst the four rectangles, bound by the white negative space. In fact, the surface is cobbled together out of many disparate pieces. The entire surface further serves as a backdrop for a series of prisms hanging from the work, which refract the light from Meier's sunny gallery space, echoing much of Cain's primary color palette, and emphasizing the painting's relationship, as an object, to the ambient gallery conditions.

Untitled (kite) similarly features a geometric shape bounded by white negative space, as well as prisms, hanging like rain drops or tears, and ribbons of canvas hanging from the lower edge of the painting like awards. Painted in scintillating complementary pinks, greens, blues, oranges, yellows, and purples, the flat, central diamond shape is unapologetically beautiful. *blue in your body, red when it hits the air* bears Minimal white bars on a half red, half blue canvas, with a long fringe of yellow strings gathered into two tassels hanging from the lower edge. The title and the sculptural additions to the piece abstractly recall blood, milk, and urine, much like the figurative works of sculptor Kiki Smith. Taking cues from contemporary painters whom have also ventured into sculpture, such as Frank Stella or Lynda Benglis, Cain demonstrates that she need not abandon stereotypically feminine qualities such as prettiness or decorativeness in order to make works with legitimate gravitas and poetic resonance.

—MARY ANNE KLUTH

"BLUE IN YOUR BODY, RED WHEN IT HITS THE AIR"
2013, Sarah Cain
ACRYLIC, CARDBOARD
AND TWINE ON CANVAS, 86" X 48"
PHOTO: COURTESY ANTHONY MEIER FINE ARTS

