

THE BARBARA WALTERS GALLERY
Sarah Lawrence College
Heimbold Visual Art Center
915 Kimball Ave., Bronxville NY 10708

Gallery Hours
Monday-Friday, 10-4pm
Saturday-Sunday 1-4pm



Cordy Ryman, *Sparks*, 2013
Acrylic, enamel on wood, 48 x 47.5 x 3"

The Barbara Walters Gallery is pleased to present *See with Fingers*, curated by Laurel Sparks. The exhibition will be open from **November 21 – December 20, 2013** at the gallery's location in the Heimbold Visual Arts Center at Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, New York.

An opening reception will be held on Thursday, November 21st from 5 – 7 PM with Artist Talks by Bruce Pearson on December 4th and Yevgeniya Baras on December 11th, both at 2pm.

Artists: Yevgeniya Baras, Anna Betbeze, Sue Havens, Jane Fox Hipple, Eve Lateiner, Lauren Luloff, Chris Martin, Cordy Ryman, Laurel Sparks and Nancy Shaver

See with Fingers is a group exhibition of ten artists whose work conflates painting and sculpture practices. Each artist engages “experimental abstraction”, through the use of unorthodox materials such as, burn holes, rugs, jingle bells, collage, glitter, papier-mâché, foil, fabric, stitching, rope, wood and industrial materials. This exhibition is a reflection on the diverse history of abstraction and the ongoing expansion of painting as a categorical medium. The selected works demonstrate a merging of formalism with eccentric material applications. These artists examine abstraction sui generis: whether in critical response, with faithful engagement, or casual interest. The exhibition is ultimately an alchemical expression of transmedia, yet focuses on hand made and physical engagements with abstract painting issues. The output ranges from baffling to bewitching

The heavily textured portrait-sized works of **Yevgeniya Baras** begin with layers of materials such as papier-mâché, stuffed fabric, rope and stitching. The material is ripped before the final application of paint, and like weathered bodies, her paintings wear the scars their surfaces have encountered. **Anna Betbeze** experiments with caustic methods and their effects on textured materials like wool and terry cloth. Similar to Baras, this process creates an accumulation of battered and blemished surfaces. Conglomerations of colors and holes on wool are rendered scarred through traces of corrosives like acid dyes, ash and stains. Unlike Baras and Betbeze, Eve Lateiner uses a delicate blend of breaking and mending, emphasizing the need to heal the destruction. **Lateiner** regards her austere painted and dyed fabric surfaces as skin or intimate embodiments of memories. In a similarly delicate nature, **Lauren Luloff** makes phantasmagorical paintings combining oil paint, bed sheets and bleach. Her pale colors, transparent materials and fragmented shapes become dreamy abstractions upon a single surface.

In a more bombastic style, **Chris Martin** incorporates neon spray paint, glitter and collage in a network of texture. Striking colors and thick lines combine with bulges of relief to create physical and optical layers of dimension. Once combined, these mediums are augmented to form a new collective whole. **Sue Havens** takes an altogether different approach to exploring the tension between dimension and flatness. Her paper constructions emerge directly from acrylic paintings. Pattern sequences are cut into various three-dimensional shapes and stacked one on top of the other at fluctuating levels like ornamental gift boxes. Pattern and relief are primary elements in works by **Laurel Sparks**. Her painted compositions include encrusted pours of marble dust and mounds of papier mache' adorned with beads and pom poms. Elements of artifice and rawness come together in constellations of dandy plaids and encrypted symbols.

Nancy Shaver and **Cordy Ryman** both make geometric assemblages from found objects and paint. Shaver uses utilitarian materials as a force of transformation, whereby the everyday object is recast as a unique abstraction through a layering of materials and crafted geometric shapes. Shaver's works call to attention the cultural implications of the common disposable nature of these mass produced items. Like Shaver, **Cordy Ryman** incorporates scrap wood material, creating square and rectangular sculptural entities. Free flowing and eccentric, the materials are honeycombed together in irregular patterns that emphasize their humbleness as much as elevate their formal potential.

Jane Fox Hipple applies the most deconstructive strategy among the artists. Her work explores the objecthood of painting, by using the conventional canvas itself as a tool for manipulation. By puncturing, reversing and allowing excess canvas to gather in waves around the frame, the inner workings of the canvas become both the material and conceptual subject matter.

About the Curator

Laurel Sparks is a Brooklyn-based abstract painter. She earned her BFA from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston and her MFA at Bard College. Sparks has exhibited in major galleries and museums including D'Amelio Terras (NY) Dodge Gallery (NY) the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, CCS Bard Hessel Museum (Annandale-on-Hudson, NY) Howard Yezerski Gallery (Boston) DeCordova Museum (Lincoln, MA) and Art in General (NY). Awards include two New American Paintings Northeast Editions, Elaine DeKooning Fellowship, SMFA Traveling Fellowship, Massachusetts Cultural Council Grant, Berkshire Taconic Fellowship, and a Boston Cultural Council Grant. Sparks was a 2013 Fire Island Artist Resident and is the Visiting Artist Professor in painting at Sarah Lawrence College, NY

Exhibition Catalogue

A catalogue will accompany the exhibition, with introduction text by Laurel Sparks, essay by Sarah Lawrence students Montana Jaro, '14, Design and Layout by Kaitlyn Laurie, '14 and Rachel Potter, '14.

For more information and press inquiries, please contact Janine Ryan at jryan@sarahlawrence.edu.