

SHANE CAMPBELL GALLERY

Art Ltd.
November 2016



"UNTITLED (ORGANIC PARTICLE RH 2018)"
2016, **Rafael Domenech**
WOOD, PLEXIGLASS, ZIP TIES
72" x 60" x 60"
PHOTO: COURTESY FREDRIC SNITZER GALLERY

impact when we can see outlines of the truth stirring beneath the surface.

—JORDAN EDDY

CHICAGO

Zak Prekop
at **Shane Campbell Gallery**

First reaction—such fun! These paintings look like big blow-ups of those small Robert Motherwell collages one sees hawked at every art fair, a kind of playful and visually engrossing meander through the possibilities of gestural abstraction, if one restricts those possibilities to being puckishly amiable and clever. Prekop's are big vertical paintings, all nine (excepting one relegated to the gallery office) either 84-by-57 or 96-by-64 inches, standardizing format as a way to control it as a factor. There's a blue one and a yellow one, a loopy one and a bifurcated one, a patterned one and a layered one, all achieving a lovely hum of resolution, elements smoothly dovetailing into inoffensive but mesmerizing equanimity. Sometimes paint is slathered a bit, sometimes it creates large fields of soaked chroma, and at other moments it is applied so slavishly and minutely as to suggest a mapmaker recording every rock in an archipelago. Prekop succeeds in his practice of chasing confection rather than conviction, and this circumscribed journey toward creating the equivalents of a number of the tropes of 20th-century abstraction provides a delightful romp; I couldn't avert my eyes from this juggling act.

INSTALLATION VIEW, 2016, **Peter Soriano**
"3 MURALS AND RELATED DRAWINGS"
PHOTO: COURTESY LENNON WEINBERG, INC., NY

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Take, for example, *Three Patterns (White)*, (2015). It's just drop dead lovely, an 8-foot tall painting that reads as if it's 8 or 18 inches tall instead. It has, duh, three patterns inscribed on (and sometimes through, Prekop often paints from the 'back' of the canvas) its muslin surface, a taut grid of smallish white balls, all the same size, all perfectly circular, and two much looser and more lumpish arrays of pink and black roundish shapes scattered more (seemingly) arbitrarily across the surface. The black shapes are on "top," as they can overlap both the pink and the white shapes, and then come the more pink ones, which can overlap the white shapes. It's so much like Prekop's work—an arbitrary system played out to see where it might go, and it always goes somewhere dreamy. *Sliding Doors*, (2016), (the blue one) has a bolder composition; an all-over blue field (framed by two thin vertical slats of lighter blue paint) has brown, white, and green slashing and seemingly arbitrary (though actually contrived) areas of paint, with much of the brown areas rendered in that micro-specificity that belies their seemingly aggressive shapes. It's all a bit like that gesture a chef performs when he, she or they makes a slashing vertical gesture with some unctuous sauce on the bottom of a plate; so arbitrary, but so tasty!

—JAMES YOOD

MIAMI

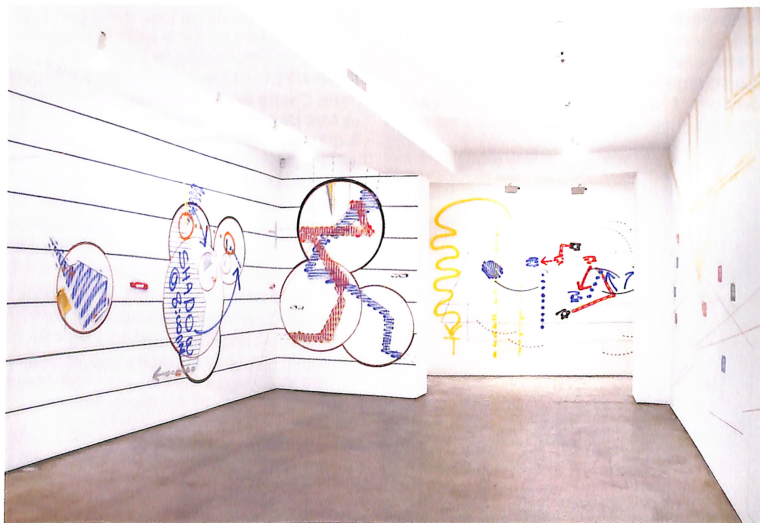
Rafael Domenech:
"The List of Messier Objects"
at **Fredric Snitzer Gallery**

Cuban artists have been mired in the same representational fracas that plagued Soviet art for most of the 20th century. Seeking to expose a bitter social realism in their work, art from the communist bloc remained staunchly grounded in direct metaphor. Cuban-born, Miami-based artist Rafael Domenech is somewhat of an anachronism. Though he emigrated from the island just

several years ago, his work is influenced by Western strains of conceptual art more than other artists from Cuba. Domenech's latest show, "The List of Messier Objects," at Fredric Snitzer Gallery, exhibits a mixture of sculptural pieces—composed of Plexiglas, plywood, and various other industrial materials. Yet, it's not so much what's hung on the walls that makes this show stand out, it's the process by which they came to be that's really on display.

As a whole, the show represents an artist in full control of his subject matter. Unlike most of his colleagues, Domenech is completely hands-on, from buying materials, to manufacturing, and even installing his pieces at the gallery. "I don't believe in people sending out their work to be fabricated by someone else," he explains. "I like going to the wholesaler, looking at materials, engaging in conversation; for me, it's a better way to work." The creative process is not just a means towards an end, but the object of representation itself. Domenech carefully plans his pieces and has even collected his handwritten notes and sketches in bound books labeled *Formica*, which viewers are encouraged to flip through, putting them in the midst of the artistic thought process. The show's title references a German astronomy tome (produced between 1771 and 1966) that the artist uses as an organizational guide for the internal consistency of each piece and the relationship between the sculptures themselves. Much like the book, the exhibit is a work in progress—an active rather than passive creative process. In *Untitled (Organic particle RH 2018)*, for example, Domenech zip-ties elliptically shaped pieces of wood and Plexiglas in a manner reminiscent of the ordered chaos found throughout the universe.

Working from local magazine clippings, he was interested in the extensive use of



2021 S WABASH AVE
CHICAGO IL 60616
+1 (312) 226 2223