



A gallery view of the exhibition "A Point in Space Is a Place for an Argument" at David Zwirner in Chelsea.

## 'A Point in Space Is A Place for an Argument'

David Zwirner  
525 West 19th Street, Chelsea  
Through Aug. 10

The exhibition's title is from Ludwig Wittgenstein, but you don't have to be a philosopher to know that arguments can happen anywhere, anytime — or, to narrow things down a bit, that art, at base, is argument made visual. It's all a matter of more or less convincing arguments.

Although every artwork is an argument about what art should be, there doesn't seem to be a lot of disagreement in this sprawling exhibition, just an inspiring range of work, quite a bit of it drawn from the margins and beautifully installed. There is, however, a shared opposition to tradition, to standard definitions of greatness, to accepted notions of material or finish or the separation of art mediums.

The show unfolds over five galleries, presenting 56 works by 30 artists. In the first space, color is mostly held at bay and decay is embraced, whether in Julien Bismuth's salt-covered canvases, Steven Parrino's partly stretched, crumpled painting, Dieter Roth's unidentified organic materials or Gordon Matta-Clark's inchoate idea of a musical score. Rachel Khedoori, Mike Kelley and Paul Thek contribute.

A new Mary Heilmann painting, oddly architectural and awash with turquoise, looks as if it should be in the second gallery, where color and painting, usually but not always together, have their say in both two and three dimensions. Joe Overstreet, Forrest Bess and Alfred Jensen (represented by bright, bristling diagrammatic paintings on paper) hold the walls. Lynda Benglis picks up where Pollock left off, pouring globs of polyurethane foam pigmented red, green and orange on the floor (in 1968 just before Robert Smithson began his outdoor rundown earthworks). Her piece is a cheerful retort to Eva Hesse's somber latex coil. Contemporaneously, Paul McCarthy drags himself through paint in a black-and-white video. Three small polygonal sculptures from 1999 by Kay Schimert add geometry to Ms. Benglis's proposition. Jason Rhoades, Michael Mahalchick and Vincent Fecteau raise the quirkiness quotient.

In a small gallery in the middle, the intriguing Scottish artist Cathy Wilkes comes closest to talking back to the rest of the show with an installation titled "We Are Pro-Choice." It looks both dated (a store mannequin on a toilet?) and fresh at the same time — related to the British artist Sarah Lucas, only more refined, and to Giacometti's "Palace at 4 A.M.," only raunchier and a lot bigger.

Simple sculptural forms or structures prevail in the final two galleries, constantly switching between outlines and filled-in shapes. The cobbled together forms of Al Taylor and Hans Accola mingle with the elastic lines of Fred Sandback, a video of Bruce Nauman working on the range and the molded and carved concrete of Isa Genzken and the carved foam rubber of John Chamberlain. Raoul De Keyser's paintings and Claes Oldenburg's sculpture of bread reiterate Mr. Chamberlain's loaf shape. Blasts from the past, a more argumentative time, come from Lee Lozano, Niki de Saint Phalle and Andre Cadere.

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