Susan York New Sculpture & Drawings

Opening Reception: Exhibition Dates: Contact:

Friday, October 15th, 2010, 5:00-7:00 pm October 15 — December 11, 2010 James Jernigan: jernigan@jameskelly.com



Susan York, Double Golden Mean Rectilinear Solid, 2007, kiln fired solid graphite, $16 \times 25-3/4 \times 9-3/4$ inches

James Kelly Contemporary is pleased to announce a solo exhibition of sculpture and drawing by Susan York. This will be her first solo show with the gallery.

"On a columnar self- How ample to rely"
-Emily Dickinson

Between the hard facts of graphite -- of which carbon is the pure element -- and the softer sensibilities of a body encountering sculpture lies the work of Susan York. York exhibits New Graphite Sculpture and Drawings, her first solo show at James Kelly Contemporary from October 15-December 11, 2010.

The artist, who was raised in Albuquerque, educated at University of New Mexico, and holds an MFA from Cranbrook Academy of Art, now sculpts and draws with the compound of graphite that first interested her in 1995, during her time at graduate school.

The show consists of a group sculptures - three interacting with walls, one placed on the floor - and a suite of new drawings, including a sculpture-drawing diptych. One of the sculptures is installed so as to pierce a freestanding gallery wall, animating a response "sensitive" to its site. That gesture calls attention to motion and surface simultaneously - and makes both ends of the volume visible.

The graphite sculptures are hard solids. York casts the graphite into forms, then shapes and polishes the surface until it turns storm ocean hues, gunmetal to black-blue. The intensely concentrated sculpture embodies what Antony Gormley calls physical intelligence.

York has been pursuing inquiry between 2- and 3-dimensional forms of drawing and sculpture since the 1990s. The re-introduction (after grad school) of graphite to York's practice came in 2002 when for "Organizing the World: Sculptural Interventions" she rubbed the walls of a New Mexico Museum of Art alcove with graphite, turning the surface hard-clad and resonant with her sculpture on the floor.

In 2008, she "hung" 3 Columns, a strictly sculptural installation at Lannan Foundation in Santa Fe. The graphite columns hung at corners cast shadows. They ended inches above the floor. The work of this new site-sensitive exhibition at Kelly furthers and even reunites these queries.

The graphite lines of the sculptures are hard, fixed. The graphite line is a softer proposition when applied to a sheet of white Arches paper with a pencil. York in her studio shakes out a box of such pencils. The graphite nubs have been rubbed smooth. Yet the cylinder's physics are palpable.

The duality of drawing and sculpture for the artist is apparent. Notice how a drawing reveals a sculpture's composition. Or how the edge-plane relationship, proposed in a sculpture, points back to a drawing.

York has been at pains to explain how the drawings use the white of the paper as a compositional edge. The rim of the paper keeps the animism of the graphite afloat - both as an insistent gesture and a vital plane. Consistently, the paper imposes a boundary.

Despite frequent comparisons made between York's work and Sol LeWitt's, or with her mentor, Agnes Martin, York's revitalization of minimalist concerns, is, as Lucy Lippard has observed, strongly paradoxical. "York . . . subtly and studiously makes her forms just a little bit off - while her surfaces are very much on," wrote Lippard in a 2008 Lannan Foundation catalog.

The fractions of interval, paper to graphite, are unequal. A residue of carbon smoke hovers above the end-mark. The sculpture transecting the wall asks you to see at work the rigorous plane turned on its hard polish. The embodied idea, and its patient practice.

York's work is included in the permanent collections of the Lannan Foundation, Santa Fe, NM; The Panza Collection, Lugano, Switzerland; The Stedejlijk Museum's Hertogenbosch, Netherlands; and the New Mexico Museum of Art, Santa Fe, NM among others.

The artist will be in attendance for the opening at James Kelly Contemporary, on October 15th from 5-7 pm.

James Kelly Contemporary is located at 1601 Paseo de Peralta, Santa Fe, NM 87501. Gallery hours for the duration of this show are Tuesday through Friday from 10:00-5:00 p.m. - Saturday from 12:00-5:00 p.m. - Monday by appointment. Please call the gallery at 505.989.1601 - fax 505.989.5005 - email jernigan@jameskelly.com for more information.