

*There is a fourth routine that arises in late Abstract Expressionism: what I call the ingrown mark, and which I associate with Joan Mitchell – or Philip Guston, and later Cy Twombly. Here each gesture is encapsulated as though occupying its own space. Marks remain distinct from a unifying network or field: They coagulate like scabs across the canvas. Because of the proliferation of distinct and largely disconnected passages and disjointed temporalities within such painting, I link their time signature to aphasia.*

David Joselit

Like many young artists painting today, Katelyn Farstad is working in a period of renewed interest in the medium. Farstad is freely dipping her toes into a variety of stylistic histories: surrealism, artbrut, fauvism, cubism, dada, still life, and the decorative arts all manifest themselves within her reign of aesthetic pederasty. She augments her surfaces by cutting through them, piling on disparate materials, attaching objects or images to the picture plane, or suturing pieces together.

The works in the room are experiencing a bashful and seeping anxiety attack. Their scale is modest and often dictated by the inclusion of fragments of rattan furniture, dollhouses, vases, candles, and dried flora. In addition to these domestic items, images and objects including squabbling animals, hoses, receptacles, phones, mouths, gesturing hands, and dental prosthetics permeate throughout Farstad's work and suggest notions of muted and clogged communication or transmission. This impairment of language that Joselit refers to in his notion of the ingrown mark seems to afflict Farstad's works.

She often ventures into dangerous formal terrain placing objects square in the middle of the canvas seemingly fearless of compositional heresy. She stacks paintings on paintings and hangs them off the edge. In *Wake Up Those Sleeping Dogs*, paintings form an architectural still life atop a pedestal grotto-cum-dog house, whereas in many of her other works, slats, blinds, and wire mesh are painted, creating physical screens and visual obstructions across their surface. The surface of a structure becomes a stage for flat graphic space to wander over three-dimensional objects in order to challenge the viewing experience of perceptual depth. These works push painting beyond painting as object and into a terrain of painting as visual barricade.

Their three-dimensionality extends into the architecture of the gallery as they transpose their logic onto a gaudy plastered wall that bisects the gallery space and an egg shaped perforation cut into an adjacent wall that serves almost as an exit option to discharge the viewer. Not exactly painting as performance, but stand-up comedy. Works are reworked, rearranged, and reconfigured and impress themselves upon one another; they literally imprint themselves on each other. This contextualization reveals an ear attuned to the networked nature of much painting today.

*Farstad is a recent graduate of the Minneapolis College of Art and Design. She has exhibited at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts (MN), Zach Feuer Gallery (NY), Hopkins Art Center (MN), Art of This (MN), The Soap Factory (MN), Fox Tax Gallery (MN), Synchronicity Space (LA), and has an upcoming exhibition at Julius Caesar (Chicago) in April of 2013. Farstad is also an active musician in the Twin Cities, playing drums in two bands, 'Tips for Twat' and 'Larry Wish and His Guys'. A catalog will be published in conjunction with her Midway exhibition early next year.*