

# ARTFORUM

## “Practices Remain”

NORWEGIAN WOOD BUILDING

99 NE 39th Street

March 10–April 8

“Practices Remain” features work by thirteen Miami-based artists who critique the act of artmaking and the finished object, complicating the interdependence of both. The provisional truce these artists sometimes arrive at takes several forms; the first is a retreat to sloppy formalism. The show’s curators—Alexandra Hopf, Odalis Valdivieso, and Marcos Valella—contribute spartan works of their own, in which a priority is placed on geometry. Hopf’s *Posters*, 2012, have the most basic visual skeleton of a street poster. Valdivieso’s printed abstract photographs are made on paper that she has mutilated with a razor blade. Valella’s four untitled canvases from 2012 are sullied monochromes stretched over other paintings, bulging at painting’s limits while dodging any definitive gesture. The crooked lines, mangled surfaces, and muddied color fields fail to align themselves with mathematic clarity, revealing a pronounced frustration with, yet love for, medium-specificity.



View of “Practices Remain,” 2012.

For other artists, medium isn’t a trap but a type of transportation. For instance, Gean Moreno’s two untitled paintings are diagrams for generic shipping modules overlaid with sheets of colored plastic and lo-res JPEGs of lava, which seemingly represents the flow of information and its tendency to alter the surrounding landscape. Another trend in the show involves the found object—a counterintuitive yet successful gambit. Jim Drain’s *Sister Act 2*, 2012, is a neon cathedral of plastic beads, ropes, and chains. For *Beaver Tails*, 2011, Christy Gast re-creates the rodent appendage out of homemade afghans. The blankets are so alienated from their original surroundings that, although once complete on the level of use-value and product placement, they become ontologically marooned. Much of the work in “Practices Remain” constantly threatens to unravel or congeal. This precariousness, though, leads not to exasperation but to a state of potential.

— Hunter Braithwaite