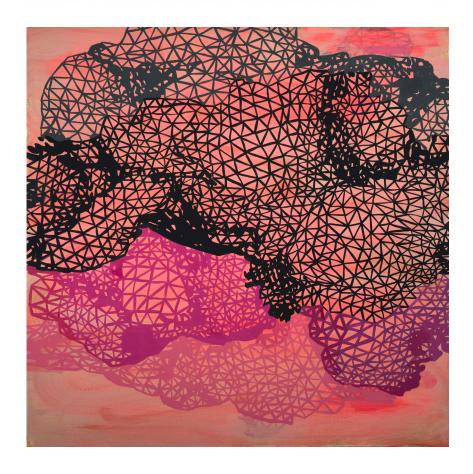SANTA FE *arts* JOURNAL

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Geological Shifts

Rebecca Rutstein explores seismic events in her latest work

June 26, 2017 by Emily Van Cleve — Leave a Comment

The natural world, and in particular the ocean floor and seismic events, is a source of inspiration for the work of Philadelphia-based artist Rebecca Rutstein.

In "Fault Lines," her first solo show in New Mexico opening at form & concept on June 30, Rutstein focuses her attention on seismic events that occur deep in the Earth's crust.

"I took a geology class as an undergraduate that had a huge impact on me," Rutstein says. "Recently, I looked back at the geology textbooks I used in college. The collision of the Earth's plates, which has inspired the work in my Santa Fe show, seems like a metaphor for what has happened in my life and other people's lives."

Information Rutstein gathered from three artist residencies with oceanographic cartographers helped birth the artistic process used in her latest work. Rutstein not only uses brushes to create her acrylic paintings but also pours paint in a rocking motion onto the surface of the canvas.

"At first, I would try to tightly control my pigments, fighting the movement of the ship," Rutstein explains about the challenges she faced while trying to paint at sea. Her breakthrough moment came when she started pouring paint and allowing the ship's rocking motion to disperse it.

"This body of work comes full circle, from the artist residencies that I've just completed at sea to the other geological themes I've been exploring for much of my career," Rutstein adds.

In addition to displaying 10 paintings, Rutstein has created a sculptural installation in form & concept's upstairs gallery space that is painted dark gray and has undulating lacy steel forms that float off the wall.

Rebecca Rutstein: "Fault Lines"
June 30-August 12
Opening reception: June 30, 5-7 p.m.
form & concept
435 South Guadalupe Street
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