

BRIDGETTE MAYER GALLERY

Aspect Forming by Dana Hargrove at Bridgette Mayer Gallery

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Scottish artist Dana Hargrove newest body of work at the Bridgette Mayer Gallery creates a fun, technicolor wonderland. Most of the show consists of towering geometric structures resembling a three-dimensional game of Tetris. In addition to these are some small works on paper and illustration board.

Most striking upon entering the exhibit is how suitable these works would be in a child's room. The playfulness and ambition of many of Hargrove's works cannot go unnoticed. The contrast and colors seem to be perfect for a growing child learning to visually interpret the world. The towering structures encourage kinetic capabilities.

Hargrove has stated that the inspiration for her towering structures comes in part from cairns, small man-made mountains of stones. Cairns have been used since ancient times as a means of way-finding in a natural landscape. They are found in almost all cultures and countries across the world, and are an example of humans exercising their dominance over nature. Today, they are often used to mark hiking trails.



An example of a cairn in Switzerland

Seeing so many cairn-like objects in one space together begs the question: what are they marking? If cairns mark a particular spot as a landmark or meeting place, what is the effect of many cairns, and does their ubiquitousness subject them to commonness? Moreover, when a

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collector leaves the exhibit with one of these cairns, is the place of honor that it occupies in their house any more so with this ancient motif?

The disparity between Hargrove's technicolor cairns and the ones made of natural rock deserves examination as well. It causes a distinct riff between her works which draw inspiration from what is usually a natural formation and turns them into something even more manmade, something that seems to discard its natural roots altogether. What is left is a piece of art that recalls without directly referencing the influence that humans exert on the world around them, and our unique ability to create towering objects. Our need to mark our place is exercised.

Aspect Forming will be on view November 20 – January 11, 2014 at the Bridgette Mayer Gallery, located at 709 Walnut St.