

BRIDGETTE MAYER GALLERY

## **Nathan Pankratz: Over the Urubamba**



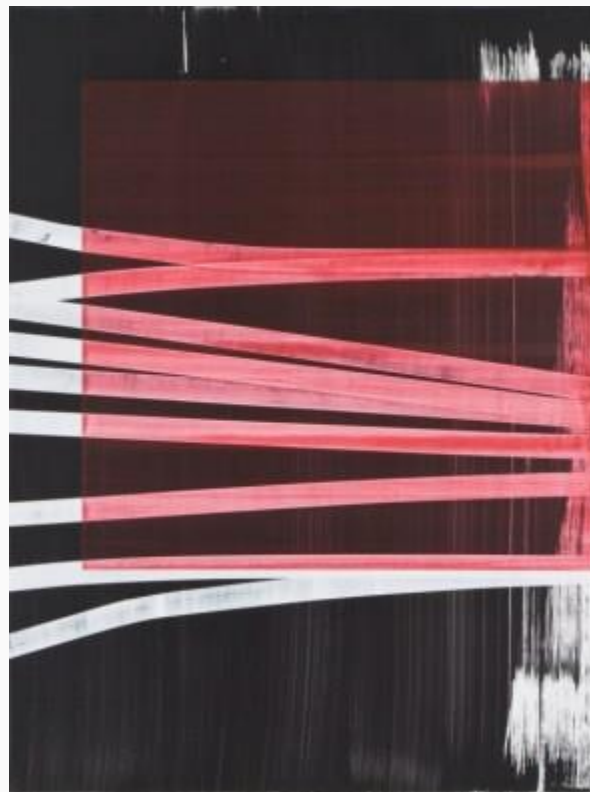
Bridgette Mayer Gallery

February 28 – March 31, 2012

By Isabel Oliveres

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Conflict. Negotiation. Resolution. These words seem more closely related to an HR Conflict Mediation workshop than a Center City art gallery. Yet the works on display at Nathan Pankratz's first solo exhibition at the Bridgette Mayer Gallery manage to gracefully portray the struggle and resolve that are an inevitable part of an artist's process. *Over the Urubamba* presents a dynamic collection of abstract, at-times minimalist paintings that are as entrancing as they are delightful. *CMYK* is a large canvas of deep navy brush strokes going every which way, through which a whimsical array of pastel yellows, pinks and greens pokes through. The painting contrasts pointedly with the exhibit's namesake work: a stark white center, framed by equally wide gray and blue strokes that glide out of site. The former is almost dizzying, the patient layering of colors seeming to reflect a flurry of positive emotions veiled by the unclenching darkness of despair; the later provides a calming counterpoint, the white center is an invitation for calm and reflection. *Flags of Our Fathers*, an enormous canvas that dominates the back wall, deconstructs the red-white-and-blue we so relate with the Founding Fathers and rebuilds it as a blended array of reds, pinks, blues, yellow, and white. Perhaps this is a reference to the diversity of populations that have made up the United States since its beginnings, and are often overlooked, or maybe it is nothing more than formal abstraction. Pankratz's seamless incorporation of collage into his paintings is highlighted in *Gable*, where brown fragments of quasi-wooden texture lay upon an otherwise simple background, adding depth and interest. The works that this Philadelphia-based artist has put together for *Over the Urubamba* are a unique pleasure, compelling the viewer to get lost in the abstract.

*Isa Oliveres was born and raised in Mexico City, though she currently lives in Philadelphia where she studies English and History.*