

BRIDGETTE MAYER GALLERY



art

Closing Time

Catch these two excellent shows before they close.

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Nathan Pankratz's "Flags of Our Fathers"

Nathan Pankratz at Bridgette Mayer Gallery

Although Nathan Pankratz works with acrylic paint, his panels have the distinct feel of collages. The tension between the two is arresting. It's a lovely, cross-media confusion kept afloat by the languid intensity of the colors in Pankratz's 17 paintings and four collages.

Pankratz intentionally courts such aquatic references: the titular Peruvian river invoked in *Over the Urabamba*'s title ripples its murky currents through each canvas. In "CMYK," an uninterrupted tract of squeezed brown paint snakes its way around the canvas while in "Fold," elements of collage break in to arrest the lazy downward flow of paint with sharply cut, horizontally painted planes. In both, paint that at first mimics the murky brown of river water churned with sludge thins to reveal mossy greens and luminous pinks.

Aside from "Page," where strips of tape have been left on the canvas to form a triangle, Pankratz's process is opaque. Collaged elements might look like paper but are, in fact, carefully lifted strips of paint. Part of the pleasure of looking at the work emerges from this indecipherable but utterly compelling scavenger hunt.

Although Pankratz writes in a statement that he hopes visitors will "glimpse moments of the sublime via landscape as in Caspar David Freidrich" (a 19th-century artist whose paintings are considered the hallmark of German Romanticism), his muddy rivers seem less sublime than phenomenological. They insist on a personal, visual experience. Instead of buffeting us to mass euphoria on the foamy spray, Pankratz's paintings drag us down into the undertow, where we must each slip and slide in our own way. ■

Through March 31. Bridgette Mayer Gallery, 709 Walnut St. 215.413.8893. bridgettemayergallery.com