

LOWELL RYAN PROJECTS

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ART

RACHEL HAYES'S "LAND LINES" INJECTS VIBRANT COLOR INTO A GRAY LANDSCAPE

IN THE MIDST OF A GLOBAL PANDEMIC, SOCIAL UNREST AND
UNCERTAINTY, RACHEL HAYES'S "LAND LINES" INJECTS VIBRANT COLOR
INTO A GRAY LANDSCAPE.

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INSTALLATION VIEW BY RUBEN DIAZ.

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“Land Lines,” Oklahoma-based artist Rachel Hayes’s latest solo exhibition at Lowell Ryan Projects, is her first in Los Angeles. In it, twelve patchwork panels made of ripstop nylon and polyester organza hang from the gallery’s ceiling to its floor. Staggered in rows, the panels flood one’s field of vision with a bold medley of colors muted by the fabrics’ varying levels of translucency. From different angles, the panels layer on top of one another to produce new compositions. Their layout encourages viewers to weave through the gallery in search of these moments.



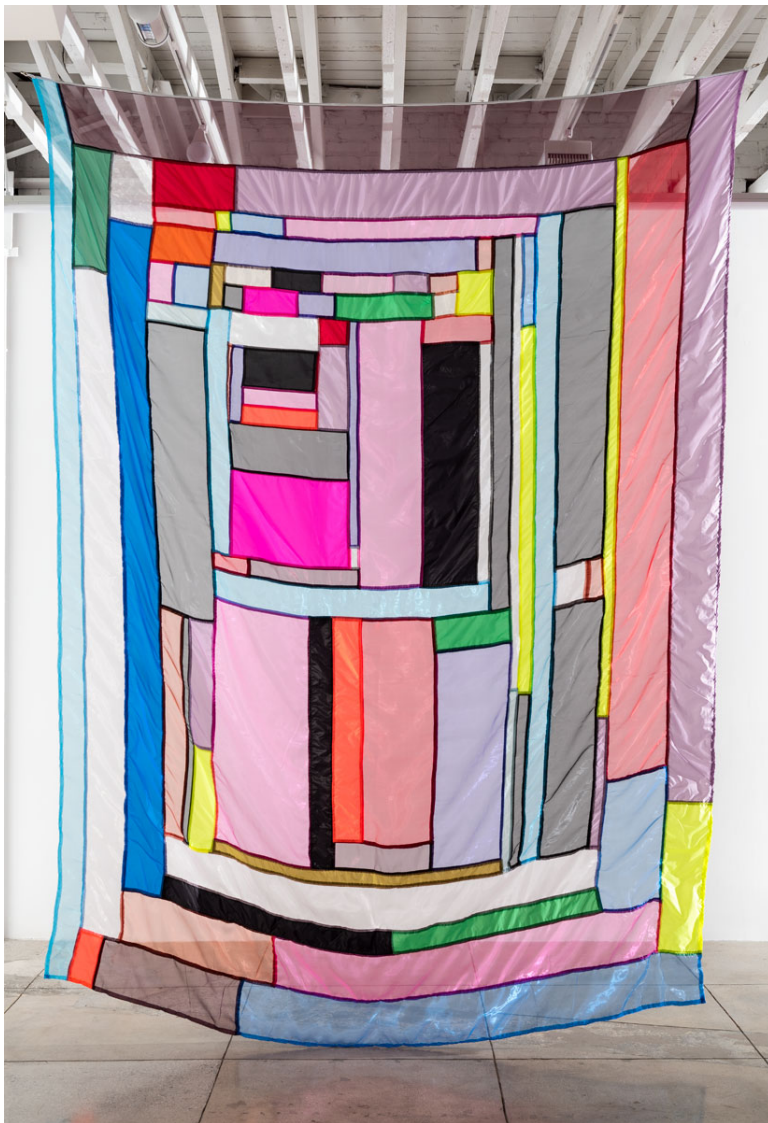
INSTALLATION VIEW BY RUBEN DIAZ.

Teal touches mustard, powder blue, burnt sienna, neon orange and burgundy. Appearing to borrow from butterflies and moths, her palette and arrangements are a productive clash of color, reflecting—like Paul Smith’s signature stripes—a logic all her own. While painterly in its abstraction, each rectangular panel, comprised itself of rectangles, has no front or back. The opaque seams delineate and outline the constituent rectangles. The use of a grid appears over and over in a range of satisfying configurations, echoed by the square gridding of the ripstop and the stamped concrete floor. What softens these geometries is the work’s seductive materiality. Straight lines bow, bend and ripple like waves, relaxing the rigidity of her compositions. AC vents activate an ever-so-slight billowing in several of the panels.

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Similar to Fred Sandback's acrylic yarn line constructions, so much of the pleasure of "Land Lines" stems from moving through and around it. Like a wall, the panels reach from floor to ceiling, but like a window, one can see through them. Superimposed on one another and their environment, they incorporate their surroundings. The ways in which the fabrics transmit and reflect light enhances their rhythm and momentum.

One of the artist's primary goals is to give her viewer the experience of being surrounded by material in space. It is not surprising, then, that the COR-TEN steel sculptures of Richard Serra serve as a conceptual counterpoint for Hayes. Early on, she was inspired by how Serra could "envelop someone and give them a feeling,"



although it wasn't the feeling she was after in her own practice. Where Serra channels a stark and intimidating severity, Hayes puts forward a vivid and diaphanous radiance. Working to reveal, rather than occlude, her interventions divide space physically, but not visually.

The panels simultaneously evoke fragility and strength. As is customary in Hayes's practice, each panel was not only composed, but also sewn by the artist herself, a physically demanding process. Employing the language of log cabin quilting, she crafted each panel from the center out. Hayes uses words like "building" and "structure" to describe her practice and output, reflecting an emphasis on the work's form, construction and sculptural qualities.

Appointments to view the work can be booked with [Lowell Ryan Projects](#) until June 27