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Cryptopictos

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Reed Anderson
Isaac Tin Wei Lin
Patrick Maguire
Sarah Walker

Cryptopictos brings together four artists who create abstract paintings using patterned perforations, lattice-like structures, fields of repetitive marks, and calligraphic gestures that suggest writing and communication, but whose syntax is ultimately ineffable. The notion of a "cryptopicto," or cryptic picture, is further suggested by featured works that veil and obscure underlying imagery through layers of paint applied in hatch marks, pools, or with stencils.

Reed Anderson fuses printmaking, painting, and collage. He begins his perforated paintings by screen- or woodblock-printing bands of color onto paper, cutting oval and circular-shaped voids, folding the sheet into a stencil, and then applying paint through the perforations to create patterns. Finally, he adds collage elements to the surface. Anderson approaches printmaking through the side door: "I came to paper through printmaking and while lousy at making editions, I was totally taken up with the working proofs in the studio...the cut-up, collaged, smudged dialogue of correction was something that I embraced." For Anderson, then, the finished work is actually more like a work-in-progress, with evidence of mistakes and smears playing dominant compositional roles, warts and all.

Like Anderson's, Sarah Walker's work is also process-driven with an emphasis on layering. Walker begins with thinned paint that she pours onto the support; she sometimes pours pure water onto the surface and then adds pigment, creating shadowy, graduated effects. How the paint pools and how it dries is left up to chance, but the chaotic liquid forms become the structure of the painting, visible through all its layers. While ultimately abstract, Walker's paintings suggest satellite imagery of cities and geologic formations viewed from space, the vastness of the cosmos, and the extreme magnification of cells under a microscope. This exploration of inner and outer space reconciles the biological and the celestial and suggests that Walker's paintings are mandalas, microcosms of the universe created to focus the attention of the viewer into a meditative state.

While Patrick Maguire's paintings may not evoke mandalas like Walker's do, meditation plays a significant role in his practice. Incorporating row upon row of diminutive marks of color in the creation of paintings that suggest architecture, portals, and spectres, Maguire's controlled gestures are meditative in that repetition empties the mind and allows it to surrender to the act of painting itself. In so doing, Maguire invites us to explore a landscape of the unconscious where archetypal forms are both composed of and shrouded by layers of tiny painted strokes. Maguire sometimes uses earlier paintings as the starting point for compositions, painting over existing elements and redeeming old imagery so that they remain visible under screens of paint. In these instances,

Maguire creates palimpsest paintings.

Using paint and ink, Isaac Tin Wei Lin overlays calligraphic, letter-like forms on a variety of materials including panels and paper, but also family photographs, vinyl tarps, clothing, and walls (both indoors and out). Lin's dense patterns—a kind of graffiti of the imagination where form eclipses identifiable lettering—spring forth like kudzu vines covering anything within reach. Accentuating the density of kudzu, Lin often installs his art on similarly painted walls. While at first glance Lin seems to prefer the grand gesture, he also rewards the viewer with more subtle, measured experiences with paintings on paper that engage with history of 20th century abstraction by artists including Miro, Kandinsky, Gorky, Gottlieb, and Tomlin.

Reed Anderson (b. 1969, lives and works in Great Barrington, MA) has had solo exhibitions at Pierogi, New York, NY; Swimming Pool Gallery, Strassen, Luxembourg; Gallery 16, San Francisco, CA; and Gregory Lind Gallery, Oakland, CA, among others. He has been included in group exhibitions at a range of venues including Birmingham Art Museum, Birmingham, AL; Pierogi, New York, NY; Feigen, New York, NY; the Museum of Craft and Folk Art, San Francisco, CA; and Vox Populi and Space 1026, both in Philadelphia. Anderson's work is included in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; the Albright-Knox Gallery, Buffalo, NY; and numerous private collections including Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary, Austria; Olbricht Collection Essen, Germany; and the West Collection, Philadelphia, PA.

Sarah Walker (b. 1963, lives and works in Brooklyn, NY) has had solo exhibitions at venues such as Pierogi, New York, NY; Alcott Gallery, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC; Rose Art Museum, Waltham, MA; University Gallery, Clark University, Worcester, MA; and Bowman Gallery at Allegheny College, Meadville, PA. Group exhibition venues include Pierogi, New York, NY; DeCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, Lincoln, MA; American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York, NY; Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento, CA; Weatherspoon Art Museum, Greensboro, NC; National Academy Museum, New York, NY; and Neuberger Museum, Purchase, NY. Walker's paintings are in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee, WI; DeCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, Lincoln, MA; Neuberger Museum, Purchase, NY; and the Rappaport Foundation, Boston, MA. She is a recipient of the Joan Mitchell Prize and the Rappaport Prize.

Patrick Maguire (b. 1988, lives and works in Philadelphia, PA) has shown in Philadelphia venues including University City Arts League (solo); Space 1026 (two person exhibition with Adam Lovitz); Ice Box Project Space, and Little Berlin. He has also exhibited at Lump Gallery, Raleigh, NC; Aquinas College, Grand Rapids, MI; and Whitdel Arts, Detroit, MI.

Isaac Tin Wei Lin (b. 1976, lives and works in Philadelphia, PA) has had solo exhibitions at the Asian Arts Initiative, the Print Center, Fleisher/Ollman, and Gallery 543 Urban Outfitters Headquarters (all in Philadelphia); Park Life, Queen's Nails Annex, Woodward Flats (all in San Francisco); and Lamp Harajuku, Tokyo. Lin participated with the DFW collective in Arts Le Havre, 2012 Contemporary Art Biennial, France. He has been featured in group exhibitions at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Institute of Contemporary Art, Fleisher/Ollman, Painted Bride Arts Center, and the Philadelphia Museum of Jewish Art (all in Philadelphia); the Hole, Bravin Lee, and Franklin Parrasch (all in New York); MASS Gallery, Austin, TX; Elizabeth Leach Gallery, Portland, OR; Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago; and Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, CA, among others. His work is in the collection of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Berkeley Art Museum, and the Free Library of Philadelphia.