

dogged discipline and understated variation—a dialectic repaid by an unhurried gaze. To that extent, as much as Sonnabend's show marked a subtle departure in the couple's work (now carried on by Hilla alone), it underscored an abiding, mesmerizing constancy.

—Ara H. Merjian

Rey Akdogan

MIGUEL ABREU GALLERY

Who didn't move to the Big City for the nightlife? Or at least the *idea* that it's there for you if you want it? Well, prepare to be happy: Rey Akdogan's show "night curtain" was open to the public from dusk to midnight. Accordingly, it took full advantage of an often-ignored truth of metropolitan art-viewing, one that the night hours at Palais de Tokyo in Paris have exploited to great effect for years, and that the lines out the door for the occasional late nights at New York museums demonstrate: People love to see art after the sun goes down. Doing so changes the whole texture of the viewing experience. Being able to wander into Akdogan's exhibition after dinner, instead of having to rush in before the 6 PM end of a typical gallery's "business hours," made for an entirely different and in many ways preferable kind of art spectatorship, one colored more by leisure and reflection than by the workaday world of commerce and productivity.

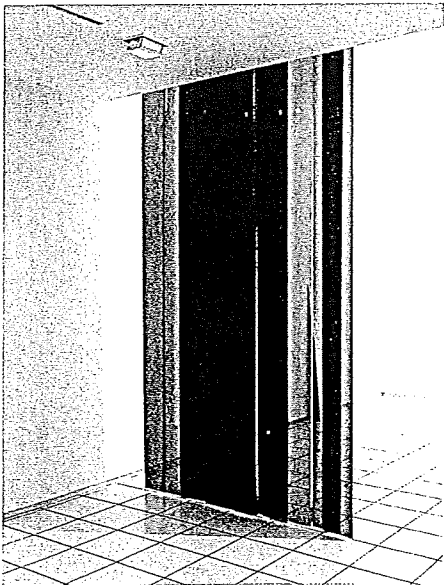
Akdogan's show contained various spatial nodes that explored subtle shifts in light conditions, underscoring the phenomenology of

viewing objects and spaces in those twilight to midnight hours. Outside the gallery, a pink light was placed in a doorway adjacent to the gallery's main entrance, mirroring the site of an existing yellow light flanking the other side of the entry, an intervention so understated it risked being overlooked. Indeed, viewers were likelier to notice the pink glow on the way out, after their attention to color and light had been heightened by Akdogan's barely-there work.

Inside the gallery, a slide projector spun through a series of slides made of theater-lighting gels and semitransparent plastic packaging. These "compositions" play abstraction against real-world materiality, and ephemeralize as mere afterimage every few seconds when the carousel moves forward. Partitioning the projector from the back portion of the gallery,

a screen of sepia-toned PVC vertical blinds hung from floor to ceiling—the curtain of the show's title. The resultant "room" the curtain created was nearly empty but for a stack of sandblasted glass light diffusers resting on the floor, a discreet step light situated near an electrical outlet (like those used for visibility in darkened theaters), and a group of white aluminum fan blades that leaned against a wall and mimicked the striated form of the night curtain in abbreviated fashion. Overhead, a giant industrial fan slowly whirled, producing a slight flicker effect.

Rey Akdogan, *Artikelgruppe* (detail), 2012, ceiling fan, PVC-strip curtain, industrial halogen lights, sandblasted glass diffusers, aluminum fan blades, light with Lee 748 and Lee 238 lighting gels, dimensions variable.



The components of Akdogan's work incite myriad connotations—movie theaters, manufacturing spaces, supermarkets, etc.—that refer these things back to their human uses. Because the anthropocentric nature of these objects is always foregrounded, the act of seeing them becomes an experiment in narrativizing the social preconditions—a night curtain pulled aside to invite us in—that make possible the specific experiences of visual acuity they provoke.

—Eva Díaz

Mary Weatherford

BRENNAN & GRIFFIN

Mary Weatherford moved from New York back to her native Southern California in 1999. Ever since, her abstract paintings have drawn their inspiration from the landscape of her home state, focusing on motifs such as a coastal rock at Malibu or a cave at Pismo Beach, as well as on less geographically specific details such as tangles of vine or the remnants of sea life that wash up on the shore. Weatherford is not afraid to wear these inspirations on her sleeve, even at the risk of seeming naive: Over the years, she's repeatedly affixed seashells and starfish to her fields of exuberant color. If this makes them more redolent of a summer camp arts-and-crafts project than of high-style painting, so be it: A lot of the best art of our time works by breaching rather than recoiling from the boundaries of kitsch, and Weatherford has shown herself to be as daring as she is sophisticated in what's been called the "embarrassed lyricism" of her flirtations with the saccharine.

Weatherford's recent abstract paintings incorporating neon tubes don't quite touch the same chords of sentiment as those beachcomber reveries, but they do compromise the purity of the painted canvas in related and equally debatable ways, and they likewise play on nostalgia—this time for the city she left behind more than a decade ago. But while the show was called "Manhattan," and the individual paintings bore titles such as *Varick St.* and *Chinatown* (all works 2012), you'd have been hard put to make out any specific references to the sights of the city then or now. My guess is that the New York that these works refer to is the one that subsists in the paintings of those who flourished here in the four decades preceding Weatherford's own arrival in 1984, mainly the Abstract Expressionists and Color Field painters, the Pollocks and de Koonings, but also the Frankenthalers and Olitskis—which means, in turn, the art-historically validated together with the critically sidelined.

Painting with *Flashe*, a vinyl-based paint that allows for effects of gouache-like translucency without loss of chromatic vibrancy, even when the paint is densely layered, Weatherford evokes Technicolor skies in *Chinatown* and *Coney Island*—has she forgotten that this particular peninsula is not in the borough of her title?—while in *Empire* and *Varick St.*, she delves into nocturnal subtleties that even Whistler might have appreciated. Either way, her color is ravishing—but it always fades out well before the edge of the canvas, framing and thereby distancing her abstract

Mary Weatherford, *Empire*, 2012, Flashe paint and neon on linen, 105 x 79".

