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# Flatbed Picture Planes opens at the Center for Art & Theatre in January

December 20, 2016



*Flatbed Pictures Planes* is an exploration of how the painted or printed surface functions today as an information-dispensing artifact. How does the static picture plane operate in contemporary information culture? What does representation mean in a society increasingly organized by abstract networks?

Alicia LaChance, Laura Mosquera and Amy Schissel have dispensed with notions of painting as a single window into a unified optical or pictorial space, and instead create dynamic approaches to layering and visual mash-ups in tune with hybridized, jump-cut modes of seeing.

“The idea for this show comes from a brilliant, if often overlooked essay by Leo Steinberg, titled *The Flatbed Picture Plane*” said Gallery Director Jason Hoelscher, who curated the exhibition. “Writing in 1968, Steinberg was prescient enough to see that the industrial era was beginning to shift toward an information culture. In the light of this, Steinberg suggested art would need to update its approaches to depicting the world if it wanted to stay relevant to what were just then emerging information technologies.”

Fast forward nearly 50 years after Steinberg’s essay and his predictions have come to pass, and then some.

“In this show I thought it would be interesting to combine Steinberg’s idea of the flatbed picture plane—a surface less focused on representing things than on being a work surface where things happen—and combine it with contemporary art’s tendency to explore, sample, and mash-up the history of art, to make everything contemporary again,” said Hoelscher. “The result is this exhibition of work by three contemporary artists from different regions of the United States, who create densely worked and layered paintings in which the surface presents overloads of perceptual, conceptual, and art historical information with eye-popping density and intricately constructed surfaces—flatbed picture planes redux.”

*Flatbed Picture Planes* will be presented in the Contemporary Gallery at the Center for Art and Theatre from Jan. 9 – Feb. 3. A reception will be held on Thursday, Jan. 19 at 6 p.m. at the Center for Art and Theatre. A curator lecture on Thursday, Feb. 2 at 5 p.m. in Visual Arts Building, room 2071. All events are free and the public is invited to attend.

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