

For Immediate Release

**TERRAZZO ART PROJECTS**  
81 HESTER STREET NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10002

**CONCRETE IMAGES** curated by Robert Costa

Opening Reception: Friday, November 22nd, 6 - 8 pm  
November 22, 2013 - January 5, 2014  
Wednesday - Sunday, 12 - 6 pm



On the centennial anniversary of abstract painting, commemorating Kashmir Malevich's foray into Suprematism in 1913, Concrete Images examines the distinction between the abstract and the concrete in non-representational art. Here is the nexus where -- in Malevich's words -- "feeling had...assumed external form." His comment evokes a question: Is art abstract because it appeals to the emotions, the intellect and the yearning to *see* the metaphysical, or is it concrete because a work of art is ultimately the sum total of material and processes that goes into its creation? The three artists selected for this exhibition represent divergent approaches to this inquiry.

**Merrill Wagner** applies pigmented rust-preventative paint on corroded steel plates. While her imagery suggests natural forms, such as a barren landscape in *One Square Equals Three Blues* (2013), her minimalist geometry speaks to the physical presence of paint on metal. This dichotomy, intrinsic of much of her work, gives it the industrial sheen of enamel-coated signage (the literal flat surface) while prompting in the viewer a long, contemplative stare into infinite space (illusionistic depth).

**Gayle Ruskin's** gestural, geometric abstractions are a stage on which hardedge lines slice across expansive fields of expressive color. By working and reworking her panels with oil paint, she achieves a precarious balance between tension and harmony. Though her work is generally introspective, her improvisational method is not dependent on chance occurrence in the manner of action painting; Ruskin's art goes beyond the simplistic conventions of automatism -- i.e., paint flung across a canvas with seemingly mindless abandon -- to arrive at a poetically driven but psychologically discerning expressionism.

**Leif Kath's** paintings engender a spatial ambiguity with reductionist compositions that skew the accepted figure/ground relationship. In his "Untitled 2011" an array of black horizontal and vertical lines -- some meeting at right angles, others standing alone -- delineate the picture plane to suggest interlocking planes. Or are they meant to be white planar fragments floating atop a black ground the way brick are held together with cement? Either reading is allowed yet each is exclusive of the other. The traditional dynamics of composition (positive/negative space and advancing figure/receding ground) are alternatively reversible in that either component of the duality can predominate.

All three artists have remained faithful to the modernist program while each in his or her way helps bring it to a deterministic and satisfying conclusion.

*Robert Costa*

Please note that the gallery will be closed on the following dates: November 28, 29, December 25, 26, and January 1, 2014. For further information, please contact Willie Diaz - [terrazzo.artprojects@gmail.com](mailto:terrazzo.artprojects@gmail.com).