

ARTFORUM

Critics Picks - DANICA SACHS

RATIO 3
2831a Mission Street
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There's a bit of sneakiness at work in Noam Rappaport's new paintings on view in "Dogleg" at Ratio 3. Each comprises two intersecting rectangles, merged at an oblique angle to create one large-scale, custom-built canvas. Riffing on this template in the four dogleg paintings in the exhibition, Rappaport focuses on how to resolve the moment of intersection, and this is where cunning comes into play in the artist's process. Building up the surface of his canvases with acrylic modeling paste, Rappaport takes several approaches: excavating a smaller rectangle where the two larger ones overlap and filling the negative space with contrasting paint or with a thick, gloppy pile of the putty; or molding it into clean geometric forms that float on the surfaces. In both cases, these three-dimensional architectural elements stand out against the perspectival forms that Rappaport creates with lines of subtly different shades of color. The artist's shaped-canvas paintings are typically linked to Frank Stella and Ellsworth Kelly, but Rappaport's efforts are not so meticulously polished. Instead, the breeziness of his compositions on view, suggested in his washy brushstrokes and in the frayed canvas ends visible in *Ridge (Road)*, 2015, more readily call to mind Richard Tuttle.

Interspersed with the large dogleg paintings, Rappaport's smaller, monochromatic wall-relief sculptures likewise engage optical illusions. Here, Rappaport finds interesting variation in manipulating modular forms. Constructed from plywood or aluminum and painted in a saturated color such as Klein blue or rich magenta, these objects are more austere than the dogleg paintings but are just as enticing in the way that shadows and angles subtly shift our perceptions of their forms.



Noam Rappaport
Twos, 2015
Oil, acrylic, paper, canvas
90 x 55 inches