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HYPERALLERGIC

Shredded Sheets and a Mountain of Words

Allison Meier / December 19, 2014

A mountain of typography and a two-story installation of ripped fabric are on view at Pierogi Gallery's the Boiler as part of Terra Infirmia, a duo exhibition featuring Linda Herritt and Elana Herzog. Both artists are working at a large scale, in keeping with the architecture of the cavernous Williamsburg space, transforming scraps of fabric and other workaday material into something monumental.

Terra Infirmia — an unstable version of terra firma, Latin for "solid earth" — opened in November and runs through this Sunday. It's worth catching the two site-specific pieces before the exhibition closes, as both of the New York-based artists are expanding on their previous work with a scale that's rare to fit into a New York gallery.

Herritt, who experiments with text-based wall art that distorts language as a sort of architecture, has taken the names of bands that played in Brooklyn over two nights this June and morphed them into the shape of a Colorado mountain. Chains both metal and just paper pictures link letters made from yarn, tape, and fringed fabric. She was inspired by Robert Smithson's comparatively diminutive 1966 "A Heap of Language," in which the earthworks artist building a mountain from words, both giving the accumulation of language a physical form.



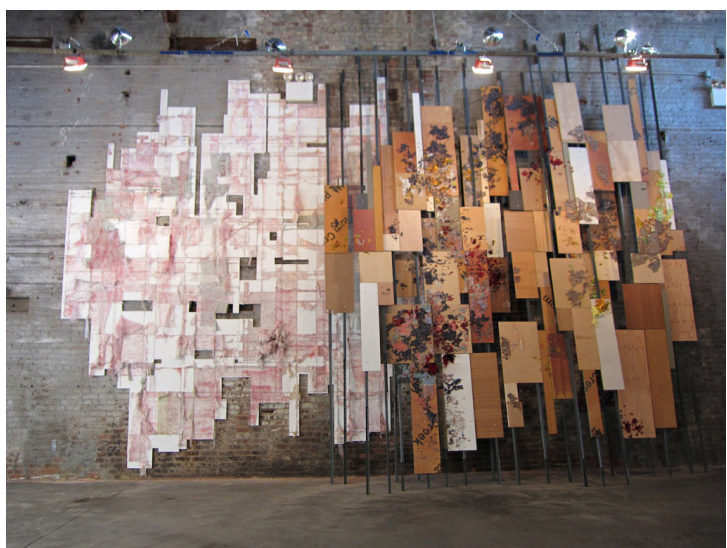


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Herritt worked with a wireframe to grid the text, and likewise Herzog has an invisible digital structure behind her towering "Valence" piece. Threads and ragged edges of chenille are clutched by staples to wood panels supported on steel shelving posts, while alongside the delicate pink of a shredded bed covering is mounted on white sheet rock, the wispy color contrasting with the worn grey bricks on the wall.

Linda Herritt, "Terra Infirmis," (2014), Fabric, foam, tape, yarn, plastic, and wood, approx. 16 x 50 feet



Herzog has been reducing fabric to these subtractive installations for over a decade, and here she's inspired by Anni Albers's Bauhaus weaving to create her own geometric forms laid out digitally in AutoCAD. Standing back from the installation, the wood side is actually the same pattern as the pink side, just suspended out from the wall. Joined by Herritt's work, the two installations complement each other with their tactile details that contrast with the industrial space.

Elana Herzog, "Valence" (2014), Fabric, wood, drywall, paint, and steel, approx. 17 x 24 x 4 feet

Linda Herritt and Elana Herzog's Terra Infirmis continues at the Boiler (191 North 14th Street, Williamsburg, Brooklyn) through December 21.