



LOS ANGELES

Virginia Katz: "Between States" at Ruth Bachofner Gallery

Virginia Katz's "Between States" is the second half of a two-part exhibition at Ruth Bachofner Gallery. In the first part of the exhibit, titled "Tracing Places – 8 Years," that was shown a few months earlier, Katz recycled pieces of paper that she found in various locations. She cut the paper into two-centimeter squares and arranged them into a flat mosaic-like map. In contrast, her current show also contains three-dimensional works. *Particulate 405 FWY* (2013) is one of her new creations. The work resembles a diorama, perhaps a miniature scene of a car-free day on the 405 freeway, or some polar ice caps. The layer of acrylic paint that composes the bottom of the piece has been handled with a spatula and palette knife and is spread so thickly and deliciously that it tempts one to dip a finger into the blue mass and lap it up like Nutella. As with many of Katz's works, *Particulate 405 FWY* draws attention to global warming caused by fossil fuels emitted by cars, among other things, and the effect of this on the thinning Arctic ice. Thus, the piece seems to be a call for viewers to think about alternative transportation, such as using a Hybrid, the metro, buses, bikes, or car-pooling.

Aqua Major (2013), one of Katz's larger, two-dimensional works, seems at first glance like a shattered mirror with different shades of blue and yellow paint flowing through its cracks like a river. Yet what we are viewing is actually an abstract version of a satellite image of our planet Earth. It is made similarly to Katz's previous work;

a combination of painting, drawing, debossing, layering with gold and silver leaves, and a printmaking process that includes monoprint and collagraph.

As the show's title implies, Katz seems to ponder the idea of existing in different states of consciousness, the place between looking at the earth from within, and from a distance. She describes her work as "traversing that in-between state of both scenarios: satellite viewing and our physical experience." As she notes: "Scale and proportion are the physical and visual tools I use to convey the power, immensity, and mystery of the environment." Her show is important and beautiful not only aesthetically, but also spiritually, as the environmental issues they examine concern each and every one of us.

—SIMONE KUSSATZ

"AQUA MAJOR," 2013

Virginia Katz

MIXED MEDIA ON PANEL, 5½' x 3'

PHOTO: COURTESY RUTH BACHOFNER GALLERY