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CRITIC'S PICKS: Houston

by nancy zastudil

Sep 2014



Pan's Labyrinth

2014

Mokha Laget

Acrylic and clay-based paint on canvas

32" x 48"

Photo: courtesy Sonja Roesch Gallery

Uniting Modernist-influenced compositions with geometric-shaped canvases, **Mokha Laget's** compositions have the aura of a quiet revelation. This fall, they will be featured in a solo show titled "Chromatic Constructs" at Sonja Roesch Gallery. Laget skillfully uses clay-based pigments to create a rich palette, and matte, velvety textures. Form butts up against form, each filled with colors that vary in hue and saturation—transparency and depth in the same painted space. Sometimes a square is a square, but relax the eye and that square might give way to illusions of 3D space—a building, a mountain, an entryway, or maybe a swimming pool. Laget's artistic lineage is that of the Washington Color School, evident in her use of color field techniques. But her strong diagonal forms—which she refers to as "the wedge" —both divorce and marry her compositions, enforcing the inherent dynamic expressive nature of painting and resisting expectations of "hard edge." Laget was born in Algeria and spent her early years in North Africa, with subsequent relocations to France and the United States. She currently resides in Santa Fe, New Mexico, the influence of which can be seen in colorful forms that pop and protrude with shapes referencing the long shadow, and deep pink lights of the Southwestern landscape, the rich blues of the desert sky. Mokha Laget's "Chromatic Constructs" remains on view at Sonja Roesch from September 2 - November 1, 2014.