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Miriam Ancis

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MIRIAM ANCIS: BENDING THE RULES OF GEOMETRY

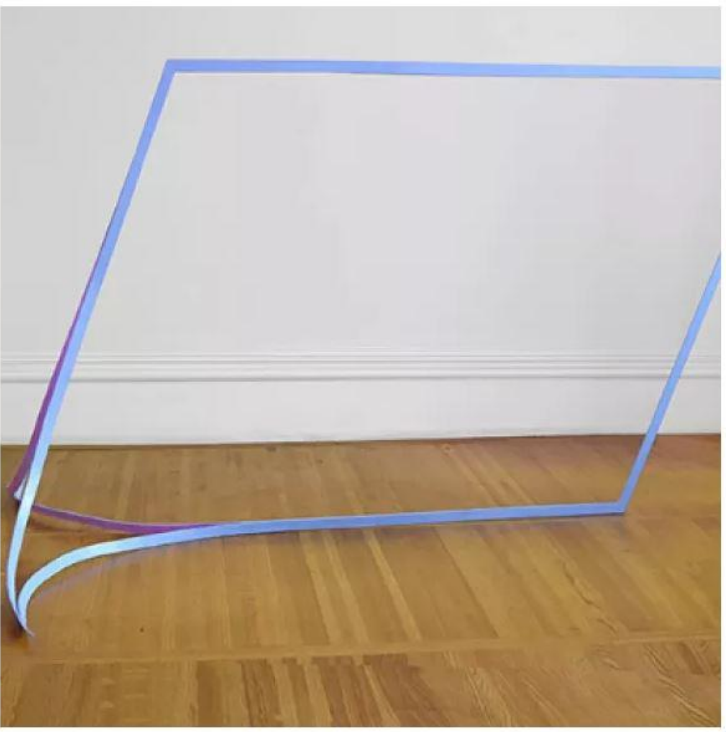
a micro-interview with Elaine Sexton

Elaine Sexton: I wonder if you would expand on something you've said of your recent sculptures, how the social and emotional charge of gender, religion and politics inform for your process. And, also, how your approach shifted from 2008 to the present. A new sculpture, "Blue Fold," echoes some of your earlier work in pastels, in particular the "Red Wave," "Orange Wave" sequence, while your "Defiant Geometries" are more in conversation with your collage paintings. This is a portfolio of pastels, collage paintings, and sculpture from 2008-2019.



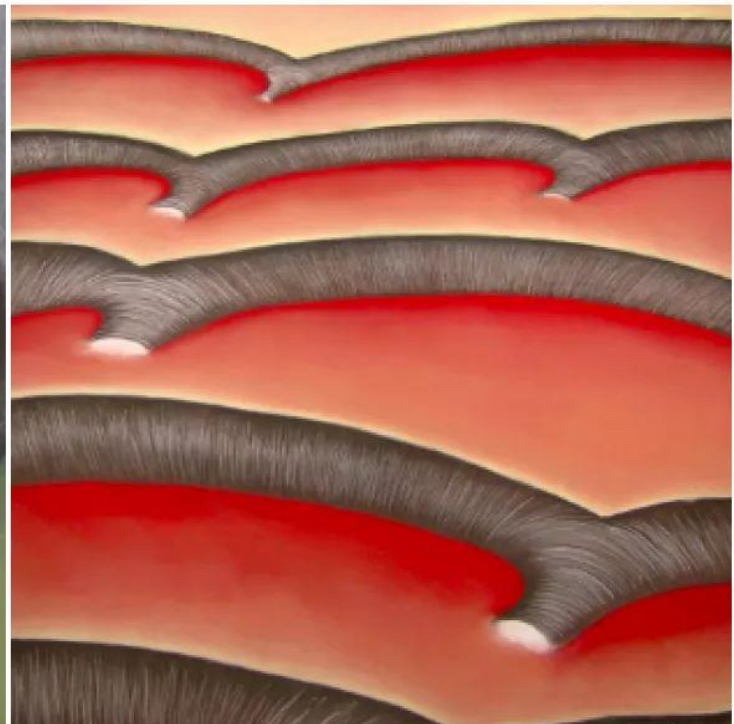
Blue 3, 2008. Charcoal and Pastel. 22 x 25 inches. 2008

Miriam Ancis: Inevitably, when people hear that I weld, the reaction is surprise. Why? Because I am a woman (she, her), which I assume is augmented by my being slight or because I am approaching 60. But how I came to steel wasn't because I wanted to be seen as a strong woman or defy stereotypes—I was drawn to steel as a revolutionary material that can defy gravity and allow me to draw in space.



Fall Through: Steel, Acrylic. 51 x 48 1/2 x 6 inches. 2017

My current work evolved through a fascination with what is unknown—in relation to what is known—a motif I explore in the pastels and collage paintings through the EKG (a medical attempt to understand the goings-on in the body).



In my sculptures this preoccupation finds form and consideration in basic shapes that peel apart, stretch and turn. In “Flip,” for example, one corner of the rectangle extends and turns upward, creating a tension of what it is expected to be and what it is becoming. Like the heartbeat in the pastels that migrates through space, the solid dark spheres painted on the surface wrap around the folded sheet metal. The spheres overlap, sometimes giving the impression that the surface is one plane, sometimes highlighting its multi-dimensional ins-and-outs. The sculpture is also a painting, simultaneously playing with real and illusionary space.



Bending the rules of geometry relates to my being a liberal Jew. I was ordained a rabbi by the progressive branch of Judaism that allows you to accept, reject, and transform ideas and practices. So often we act as though we must sustain religion rather than use it to help us live a better life. As with religion, in my work, geometry describes the jumping off point – within air — that brings change and evokes the unknown space around us.



Miriam Ancis has been sculpting for over 30 years. Her new work will be part of a two-person exhibit at 490 Gallery, Brooklyn, NY in September, 2019. Other recent gallery exhibitions include Chashama Gallery, NY, Cleveland West Arts League, Platt Gallery, Los Angeles, and Kahl Gallery, New York. Group exhibitions include Fall Forward: Long island City Open Arts; From Miniscule to Monument: Long Island City, New York Equity Arts Association, Equity Gallery, NYC, and Collage As Matter; Art & Real Estate, Chelsea, NY, Site Brooklyn, and MC Gallery, NYC. Recent awards include the following residencies: Cotto Design, Lima, Peru; The Sam & Adele Golden Foundation, and Fantasy Fund Scholarship Award, Paris. Her work has been featured in

publications including the blog site of International Sculpture Center, Brooklyn Rail, Interiors + Sources Magazine. miriamancis.com