

September 7 –
October 20

Anne Lindberg *sustaining pedal*

Carrie Secrist Gallery is pleased to present our first project with Anne Lindberg, in conversation here with artist, curator and writer, Jamilee Polson Lacy.

Do you hum?

Not audibly, I tend to move my body instead

Describe your studio with five words or less:

light-filled, organized, books, concentrated, ready

What is your favorite song?

Zoe Keating's "The Path" from her CD "Into the Trees," but then, that's just what is playing right now in the studio....

Your work does a remarkable thing in that it fits into a number of art historical trajectories. For example, lineages of painting, installation, performance, design, abstraction, color theory and more are all present, and conceptual artists like Sol Lewitt, Agnes Martin and Fred Sandback come to mind. Is there a critical history, experience or reference point at which you would like your audience to begin when viewing your work?

I tend to align myself most closely with conceptual artists like Lewitt, Martin and Sandback – there is a strong focus on rigor and concentration yet also a true sense of the hand and the momentary... and a posture that is almost metaphysical. I'm glad you used the term "conceptual" artists when listing Lewitt and Martin, etc, as I find the term "minimalism" to be overused and oftentimes mis-used. I will say that with recent installations and the drawings made for this show at Carrie Secrist, I am increasingly aware of my work as a form of performance, albeit without a live audience. That being said, they are also very much like paintings, as the construction of the work is additive and indexical.

And artists working today, such as Gabriel Dawe, Michelle Grabner and Rebecca Ward, are in conversation with your work through a reactivation of rhythmic pattern and color. Do you think process, in terms of both routine and technique, informs this more contemporary dialogue in which you are engaged?

First and foremost, I understand all of my work as a form of drawing—hand to eye to point to mark to tension within a space or place. The installations are drawings made in time and space. My process, in terms of reference to these art-

ists, is quite fluid and tactile, less based upon geometry or established color systems. My relationship to color is much more emotional and spiritual. I am seeking a physiological and bodily experience in and with the work; it's akin to the way I move through life. I find myself captivated with everyday things like coffee grounds in the kitchen sink, freckles, rumpled bed sheets, the color of a peach, pin holes in my studio wall, passages of light and birds nests. There is definitely diagramming, engineering and planning for these spatial installations, yet the work in the end is quite visceral and otherworldly, of the body, something primal that can't be totally planned. The Reticulárea environments of Venezuelan artist Gego come to mind, or Gerhard Richter's recent work with Patterns, breaking down a painting further and further into bands of color, beautiful!

Would you describe your process as a fluid one? Or as something discontinuous?

It's both fluid and discontinuous. You could indeed say that the actions are repetitious—pencil down, pull to the left, feel weight of the arm, tilt of the wrist, spin of the fingers, pencil up... pull thread taut, look back, locate position, fire staple gun, hold taut for Matt—but then, each of those decisions has choice and nuance within it

CARRIE SECRIST GALLERY

so it's discontinuous, or you could say it is flexible and subtle. I embrace the snag in the pencil line, for instance, because it's honest. It makes me think of breathing; one feels their breath when it's interrupted, quickens or changes.

What is your favorite instrument?

It would be the cello, the piano and the dobro. The dobro is so full of longing and lament.

Which came first, the chicken or the egg? The installations or the drawings?

The drawings came first in my studio, but now they overlap one another, speaking back and forth especially now that color has been introduced. I understand them, in many ways, as the same.

Do you conceptualize the two in tandem or as separate entities?

I definitely conceptualize them in tandem, although of course they are made differently and take different body motions and tools. The 2D drawings are made in my studio alone; they are quite private. The spatial installation drawings are made in the space where they will reside with several other people, lots of physical effort, concentration and attention to the evolving color, thread by thread, line by line.

Do you or have you ever played an instrument?

I played the flute and piano intermittently from 8-12... and now I'm studying the piano again. Amazing how one's muscle memory returns quickly once you return to playing an instrument again.

Describe your studio in another five words or less:

form, hand, history, material, idea

You have spoken before about your work as a series of optical and spatial phenomena. From that point of view, what kind of physical reactions are you seeking from your viewer?

I never dreamed that the phenomenological and physiological could become so powerful. Each drawing, two- or three-dimensional, has its own life and seems to guide the next one. The spatial thread installations were, at first, quite small. I took a huge leap of faith when I made the initial room-scale installation at the Nerman Museum. Suddenly, the architectural scale brought forth a matrix of spatial and optical conditions. Things happened that I never imagined! The gallery turned yellow, especially in contrast to the daylight atrium space just outside the gallery that appeared abnormally blue to the eye. The color was enveloping in a manner I could not have predicted.

Is it your intention to create installations that conform to a space's architecture or particularities?

It all begins with a recognition of the character of the space - a raw warehouse, a pristine

museum space, northern daylight, only electric light, proportions, who is the user? I make numerous small, inch-scale models of each project to study potential configurations. All of these conditions feed the decisions about the form, path, direction, density, color and gesture of the work. Many of the works feel as though they are passing through the space, like an emotion or condition.

Do you prefer the chorus line or the verse?

Definitely the verse, it's complex and mysterious—I often ready poetry in my studio as a way to stay afloat, to keep concepts open and to not understand.

Many of the pieces, both the installation-based work and graphite drawings, seem to undergo transformation between spaces and different kinds of lighting. Is this a desired effect? And is it necessary for you to somehow control space and light?

This is the most thrilling part of making these installation drawings. I don't know exactly how it will respond until we begin working. I light the work as it is being made, and of course make fine adjustments once it's complete, but I give a lot of consideration to the existing light conditions and embrace what I can't control.

The use of light and color in your work is simultaneously simple and complex. At times the color combinations are familiar, at others they are truly unique. Do these palettes take time to develop, or do they come to you instantly?

The first introduction of color came from an experience I had while a resident at the Art Omi International Artists Residency in upstate New York in 2009. The peach I ate at lunch propelled me to find yellow/orange thread and to abandon the grey I had brought along to experiment with. There was something about the wet color, the luminosity, the way the peach behaved under a blue tent tarp in the sunlight. It was an instinct. And the color choices continue to be instinctual... color has become more and more mysterious to me. It's so complicated and subtle; I try not to analyze or follow a known system because it would become predictable.

In the drawings, the color, or sometimes the lack thereof, creates quick-shifting subtleties between line and shape, often making the lines and shapes that are actually present appear one and the same. Conversely, the installations allow the viewer's eye to slowly experience color until it becomes dramatically thick. Do you think color accounts for this shift in experience? Or rather, is it the combination of line and shape?

I believe it's all of those elements, but honestly it's quite mysterious and difficult to comprehend all of the environmental factors that

influence how the eye and the body receives this work. I watch the building of the work very closely, making moment by moment decisions about line weight, action, path, color and proximity. I believe that one of the compelling qualities of the work is its indeterminate nature. The embedded structure and individual colors are not quickly visible.

What else are you playing at with color, line and shape?

At the moment, as color passages are added to the graphite drawings, I am constantly testing how "hot" or "vibrant" the color can be and still let it reside within the graphite, to coexist. It's sort of the dance of density and emptiness—overlapping and embedding. Within the large spatial installation drawings, I have made color choices based more upon the character of the place, existing light conditions and what else might be in the space.

The lines, especially those in the drawings, correlate to action; if the viewer gets in close, they can see that those actions have varying degrees of urgency and that the spaces between them contain moderately different kinds of pause and rest. For you, does any part of the work, and/or the making of it, correspond to performance?

Yes, although not in a conscious or scripted way. I don't set out to create performance or to plot an action to achieve a certain result—it's much more like handwriting. The meaning is written into the lines and spaces.

Though meticulousness features prominently in your work, a sense of playfulness still shows through. Perhaps it is the few, very brief interruptions of repetition or the slight deviations in form. Do elements of play, chance and happy accident figure in your work? In your studio practice?

Absolutely. Because of the performative nature of making this work, if the pencil snags, I just leave it. I feel that these momentary blips and actions of the tool are part of the human quality of the work. I always try to create a balance of structure, such as system and plan, and the unknown so that the incidental, accidental and unexpected can occur, or I can encourage it. Being playful in life keeps me serious and real.

Do you hum?

I say "hummm" frequently.

Describe your studio in another five words or less:

necessary, daily, tools, changing, honest

Do you like to dance?

Yoga, running stairs, paddling a canoe or ice skating would seem to be much better ways for me to move.