



Curators' Picks



Virginia Katz, *Beneath the Surface*, 2013, Acrylic on gesso on panel, 8 x 10 inches, Retail: \$1,400, Courtesy of the Artist

Virginia Katz grew up spending a lot of time outdoors ice-skating, riding horses, hiking, and playing in the woods, all of which provided a precursor for her artistic exploration of the natural environment. Eight years ago in Los Angeles I included Katz's work in a solo exhibition featuring a room chockablock with dozens of 11-foot scrolls, each with copious hand drawn lines corresponding to the size and color of individual ocean waves she spent hours recording as they broke along the Southern California coast. She returns to this theme in *Beneath the Surface*, part of her recent work focusing on the three-dimensionality of paint as it relates to forms from polar landscapes (such as ice caps and water formations).

Using paint as a sculptural medium, Katz skillfully slathers and shapes sometimes up to three inches of impasto, dramatically building up luscious and palpable physicality. According to Katz, "Scale and proportion are the physical and visual tools I use to convey the power, immensity, and mystery of the environment." For an artist to depict the sea is not unprecedented, but Katz displays the talent to capture the massive force of an ocean swell in a very dimensional and modest scale painting. It's as if she took a fractional slice of an energetic wave, immobilized the surge, and presents it to us on an eight by ten inch panel.

Katz was born in Brooklyn, New York and earned her MFA from California State University, Long Beach. Her work has been reviewed in *Art in America*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *LA Weekly*, and *Whitehot Magazine*. In 2014, Katz will attend a residency at Kaus Australis in The Netherlands, and her work will be featured in a 15-year survey at the Irvine Fine Arts Center.

-Donna Napper