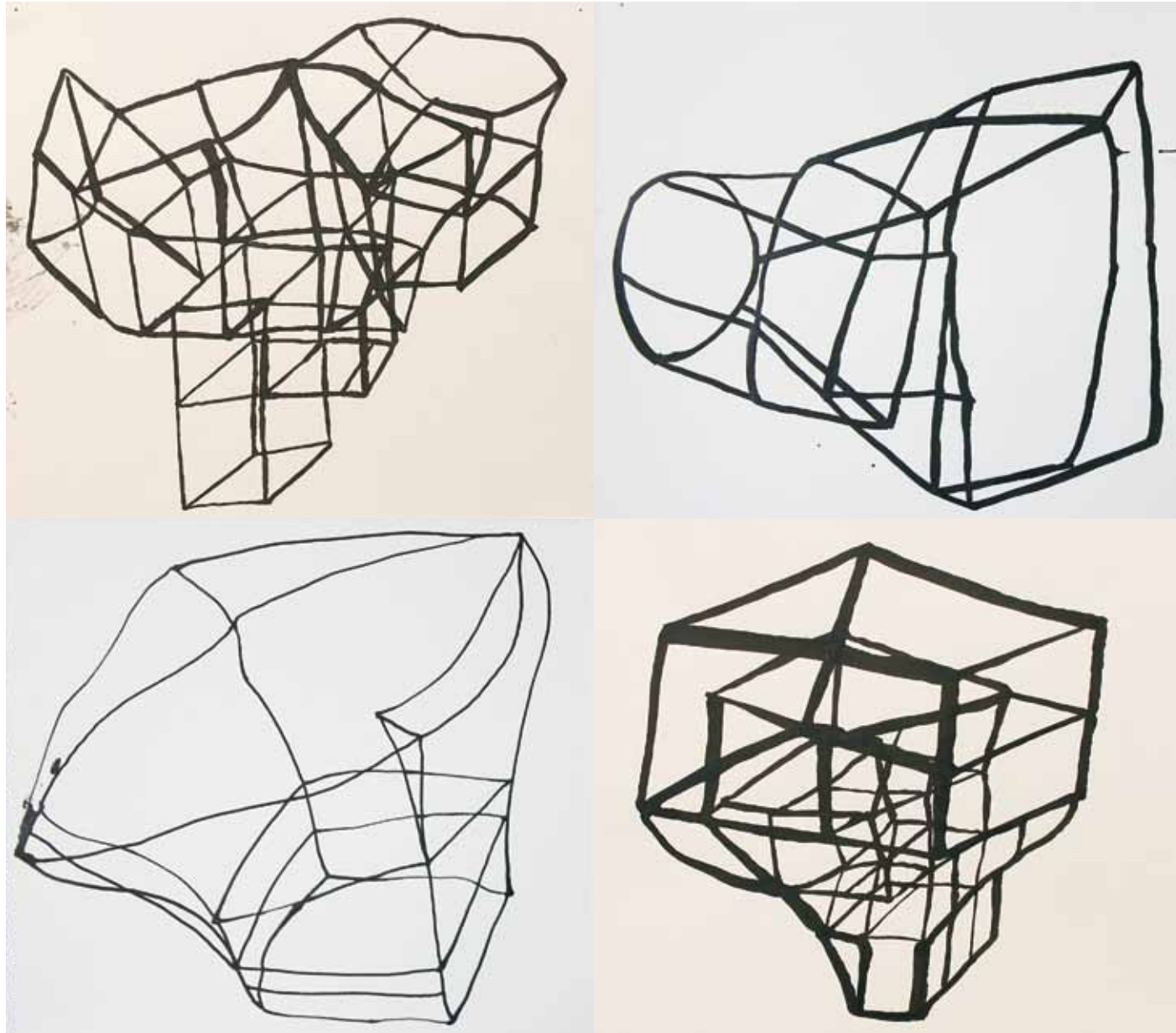


Jason Karolak & Leah Patgorski

Recent Works





The Phenomenological Unconscious

"I want the abstraction to bleed out."
—Jason Karolak

"Everything grows out from the core."
—Leah Patgorski

The human figure excreted an abstraction. You must tend this externalized self and cultivate it. Articulate it, modify it, practice it, make it move and send it off into the world. Your abstraction walks a pace and stops, then turns and poses. It is not supernatural, just the residual energy of having a self. The displaced being gathers and rises, drifting in and out of artworks as vessels, temporary tombs. Herd this phantasm, or it will seize your delicate feelings and flee like helium to outer space.

Building an artwork is like building a body, a house for a breath. You must invent an architecture for your psyche, for it is unburdened by freedom. How do you make a home for a shadow? The domesticated anima is content to be contained. It cleans itself like a cat, grooming its aether into a chewy mass. At night the animus tumbles through the tangled jungle gym of its mind. With great effort, the anima amasses gravity, pressure points, an emotional framework, heat. The animus now drags a body it calls its own. It has tailored an armor, an exoskeletal patchwork of found and fabricated selves, in order to feel things close to its being. But its skin is ripe with tiny holes, denuding the psyche's latent drive: to feel more human. Have you ever smelled an old painting hanging in the museum? The anima smells like that, like nothing at all.



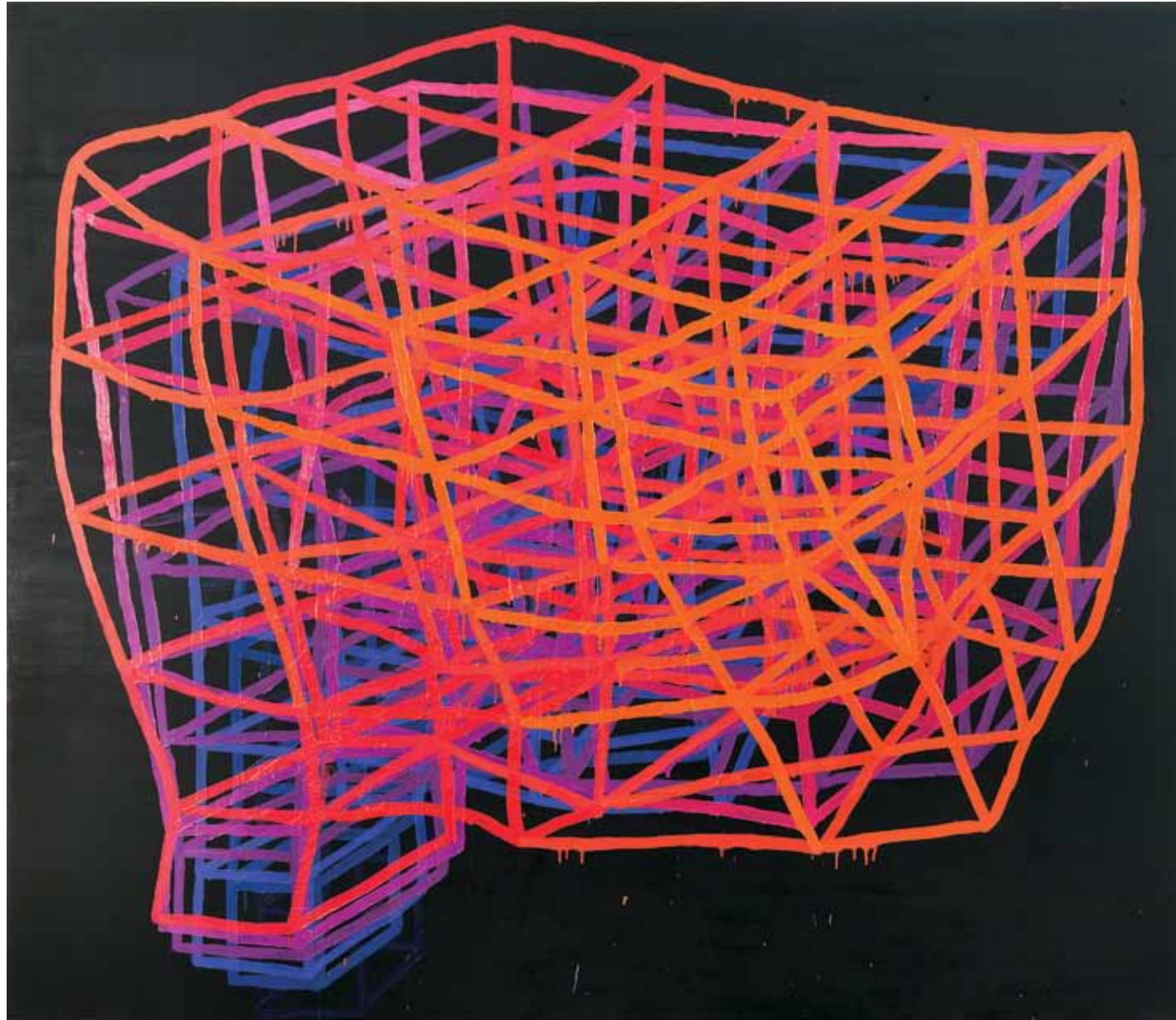
The animus has aspirations, desires. It likes the taste of your saliva. It inhabits the negative spaces inside your body: warmed in your nasal cavity, cradled in your gut, floating in the vitreous body of the eyeball, nesting in the pauses between heartbeats where it is squeezed like a hug with every contraction of muscle and blood. Each breath is a duet with the animus. How could you not want to believe that the collaboration will last a lifetime?

The animus cannot be seen directly, as an eyeball cannot see itself, but it can be sensed and experienced, as a body senses itself when moving through a cavernous space. You know the feeling of voices in the next room, you know the feeling of ancestors bubbling beneath your feet, you know the feeling of symmetry, you know the feeling of being-in-the-world, you know the feeling of just passing through, you know the feeling of day-long ritual and of hungry sleep. It feels like something swallowed, like something dissipating, like your glands are communicating, like something inside you woke up and needs you to assign it a color.

You make a problem for yourself, and you deploy the anima to figure it out. The problem is about structure, or scale, or the fiction of a line, or how to make the thing speak. How much to push back, subtract, tighten up, let go. Maybe you break something intentionally and it needs a fix. The problem is self-contained; so is the resolution. How should you harmonize an abstraction? How should you possess yourself? The animus jumps all over that problem.

Before physics, there were geometric totems—ghosts of spacetime. "Swim into the abyss," wrote Kazimir Malevich, anticipating what we now know: The structure



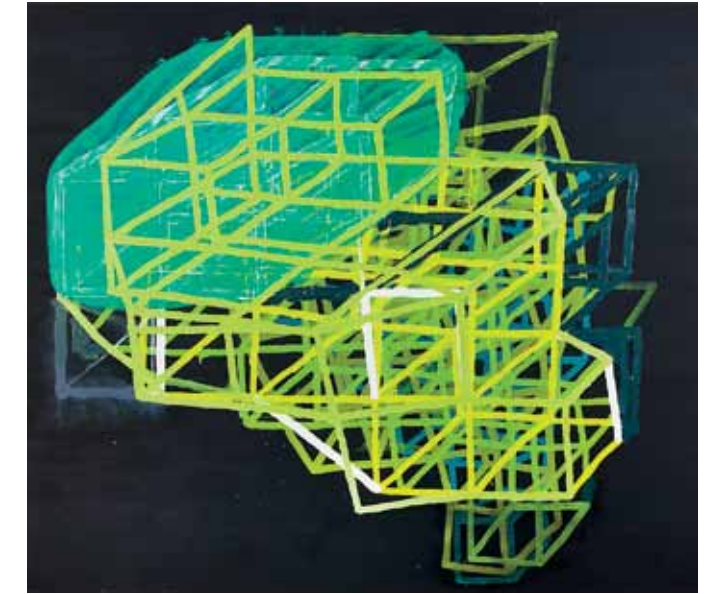


of the universe is very strange. We can explain the distance between atoms by likening those microcosmic vast voids to the length of football fields. Malevich's *Painterly Realism of a Football Player—Color Masses in the 4th Dimension* (of 1915, with eight simple shapes cavorting in space) intuited that simple analogy by decades. Conceptual renderings of the shape of the universe may be cylindrical or donut or spiral, with a Renaissance perspectival tilt, or just a black square with an imagined infinite depth, and at the bottom of the universe: You see the back of your head. The lure of dark matter and of the wormhole, of romantic mathematics, is strong, erotic even. Consciousness is a flowing structure that may be a solid or a mass, a fuzz or a form. The names, or *flavors*, of the six quarks are: *up, down, strange, charm, bottom* and *top*. The quarks' nomenclature reveals the quirks of our cosmology, and the urge to inject pathos into every metaphysical crack.

Such is the entrance of Psyche into the body of the Universe, kindling and exciting the dead mist, the utmost projection of her own life into an Aethereall vivacity, and working in this, by her plasmaticall Spirits or Archei, all the whole world into order and shape, fitting this sacred Animal for perfect sense, establishing that in being, which before was next to nothing. —Dr. Henry More, from Notes upon Psychozoia, 1647

—Jason Foumberg

Jason Foumberg writes about contemporary art and is based in Chicago. He is the art editor for *Newcity* and contributes freelance art criticism to *Frieze*, *Modern Painters*, *Photograph* and *Sculpture*.

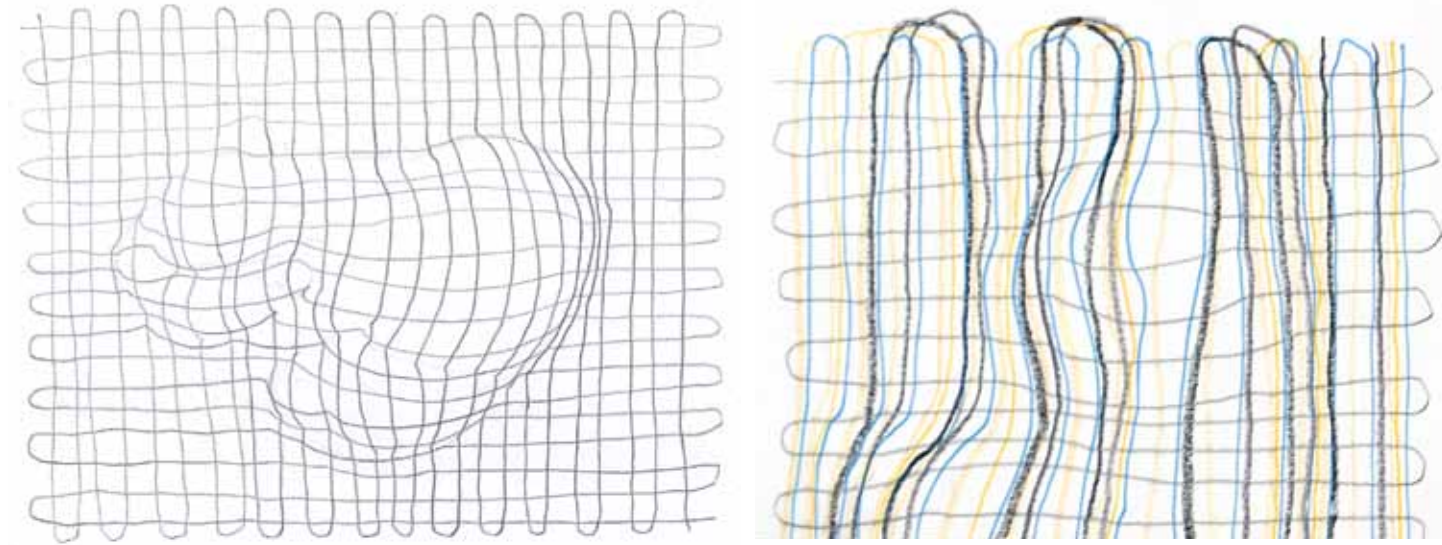
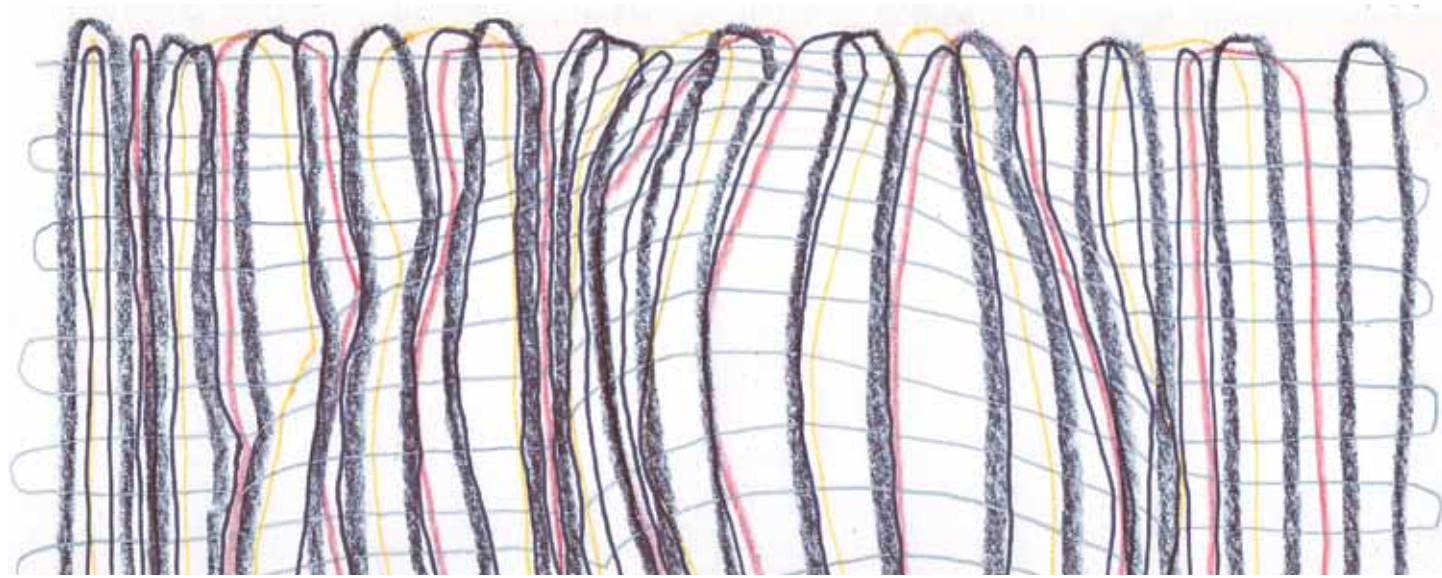


Top: Jason Karolak, *Untitled (P-1110)*, 2011, oil on canvas, 75" x 85"

Page 4: Jason Karolak, *Untitled (P-1203)*, 2012, oil on canvas, 76" x 86"

Page 2: Leah Patgorski, *Untitled*, 2012, cotton fabric, 17" x 12"

Page 3: Leah Patgorski, *Dress Room*, 2007/2012, cotton fabric and steel, 84" high x 36" diameter



Leah Patgorski was born in 1978 in Virginia Beach, VA. She received her Bachelor of Science in architecture from the University of Virginia in 2000. In the years that followed, she worked for a landscape architect and then for a drapery manufacturer until moving to Chicago in 2004 to attend the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She earned her Master of Fine Arts there in 2006. Patgorski's work over the past 10 years consists primarily of textile sculptures and associated drawings. She has been commissioned to construct various pieces, from a life-size fabric rowboat to a portable tea tent, and has participated in group exhibitions in Chicago at Adds Donna, Hyde Park Art Center and the Museum of Contemporary Art. Patgorski recently moved her headquarters from Chicago to Pittsburgh.

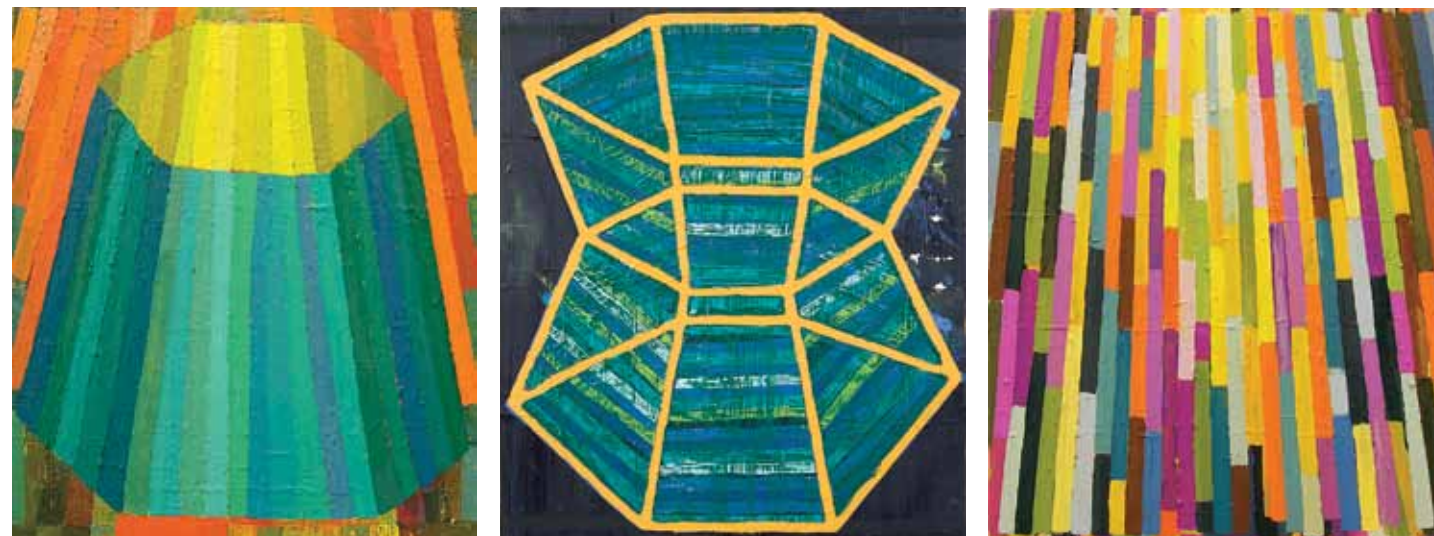
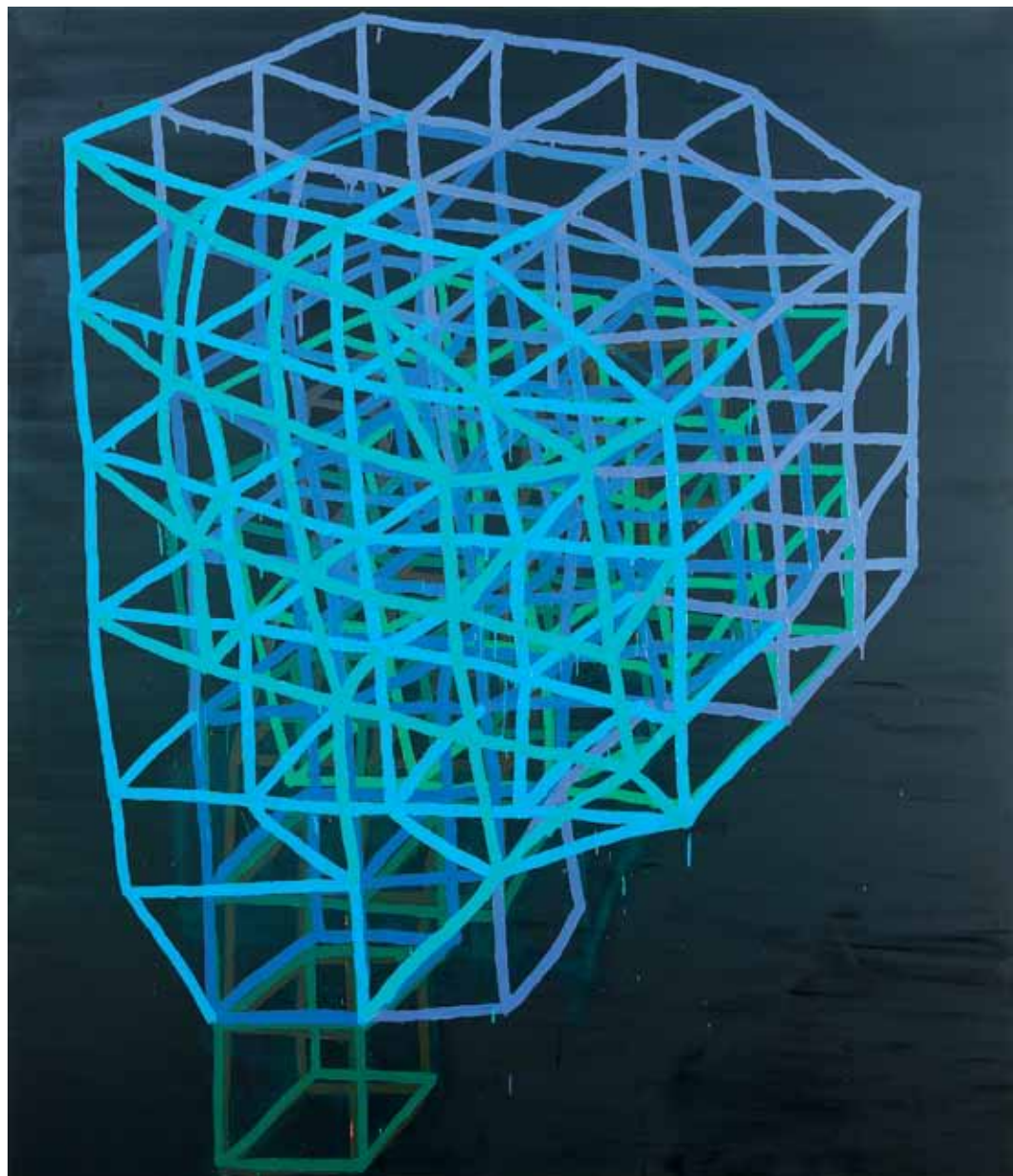
Right: Leah Patgorski, *Encampment*, 2012, mixed fabric and steel wire, 84" high x 20" diameter

Page 6 top: Leah Patgorski, *Cling G*, 2012, colored pencil, ink and graphite on paper, 7" x 10"

Page 6 bottom left: Leah Patgorski, *Cling C*, 2011, graphite on paper, 8" x 10"

Page 6 bottom right: Leah Patgorski, *Cling E*, 2012, colored pencil and ink on paper, 7" x 9"

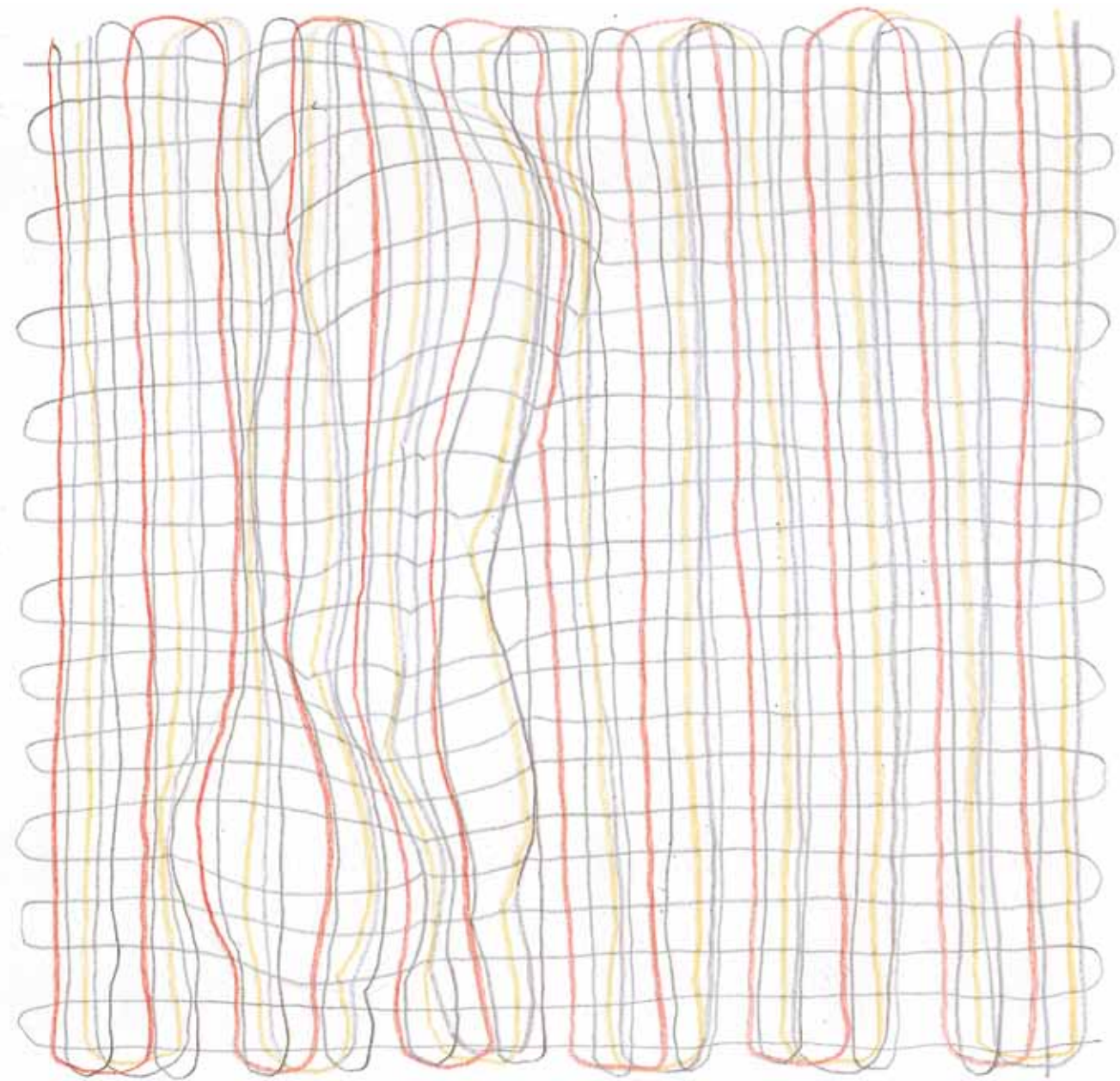




Jason Karolak was born in 1974 in Rochester, MI. He earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts in painting from Pratt Institute in 1997 and a Master of Fine Arts in painting and drawing from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2006. Karolak has had solo exhibitions at Massimo Audiello (New York) and Rowland Contemporary (Chicago), and has participated in group exhibitions at Kavi Gupta Gallery (Chicago), Corbett vs. Dempsey (Chicago), Dolphin Gallery (Kansas City) and devening projects + editions (Chicago), among others. He currently lives and works in Brooklyn and teaches in the art department at Drew University.

Top, from left to right:
 Jason Karolak, *Untitled (P-1004)*, 2010, oil on linen, 14" x 12"
 Jason Karolak, *Untitled (P-1104)*, 2011, oil on linen, 15" x 13"
 Jason Karolak, *Untitled (P-0926)*, 2009, oil on linen, 15" x 13"

Page 8: Jason Karolak, *Untitled (P-1205)*, 2012, oil on canvas, 90" x 80"



Gahlberg Gallery
Jason Karolak & Leah Patgorski: Recent Works
Thursday, May 31 to Saturday, Aug. 4, 2012

The Gahlberg Gallery/McAninch Arts Center would like to thank the artists, Jason Karolak and Leah Patgorski, and the writer, Jason Foubberg, for their creative insight, development and contributions to this project and publication.

Barbara Wiesen
Director and Curator
Gahlberg Gallery



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Page 10: Leah Patgorski, *Cling F*, 2012, colored pencil and ink on paper, 8" x 10"

Page 11: Leah Patgorski, *Untitled*, 2012, mixed fabric, 50" x 24"

Opposite page: Jason Karolak, *Untitled (P-1002)*, 2010, oil on linen, 13" x 15"

Front cover:

Left: Jason Karolak, *Untitled (P-1111)*, detail, 2011, oil on linen, 15" x 13"

Right: Leah Patgorski, *Encampment*, detail, 2012, mixed fabric and steel wire, 84" high x 20" diameter

Inside front cover:

Top left: Jason Karolak, *Untitled (D-1069)*, 2010, ink on paper, 10" x 11"

Top right: Jason Karolak, *Untitled (D-1079)*, 2010, ink on paper, 11" x 13"

Bottom left: Jason Karolak, *Untitled (D-1086)*, 2010, ink on paper, 8" x 9"

Bottom right: Jason Karolak, *Untitled (D-1087)*, 2010, ink on paper, 9" x 10"



Gahlberg Gallery
College of DuPage
425 Fawell Blvd.
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137-6599
www.cod.edu/gallery
(630) 942-2321