

ART & DESIGN

# Lucky DeBellevue: ‘Open Concept’

Art in Review

By ROBERTA SMITH    OCT. 23, 2014

Lucky DeBellevue has made his name working magic with inconsequential materials, fashioning brightly colored pipe cleaners into abstract sculptures and installations imbued with a strange, Seussian energy. But he has always made paintings on the side and is now showing a group for the first time, along with some new sculptures. The interest in converting the inconsequential continues.

The new paintings masquerade as modern, slightly exotic textiles. With their hand-stamped patterns subdivided by white dotted lines that turn out to be pistachio shells, they might almost be souvenirs from a trip around the world. Their checkered or irregular patterns gain complexity and mystery as their layers of color — shadowy blacks with touches of gray, magenta on orange — and rough edges come into focus. Two homages to Paul Klee combine blushes of color and a network of arrows on raw linen. Each work has its own visual pulsation and quirks of process. All the while, the shells keep pretentiousness at bay. Mr. DeBellevue is making paintings, not Paintings, but mainly, they are wonderful things.

As are his new sculptures, which should probably be called relief-drawings. Made from little pieces of birch veneer glued together every which way, these upright silhouettes are finished off with graphite scribbling and color. The results suggest rubbings, resurrect Futurism’s blurred figures and recall the hooded characters in Philip Guston’s late paintings. All together, the works in this terrific show give Mr. DeBellevue’s quietly inventive, brilliantly economical art a whole new lease on life.

**Lucky DeBellevue: ‘Open Concept’**

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*Through Nov. 2*

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