

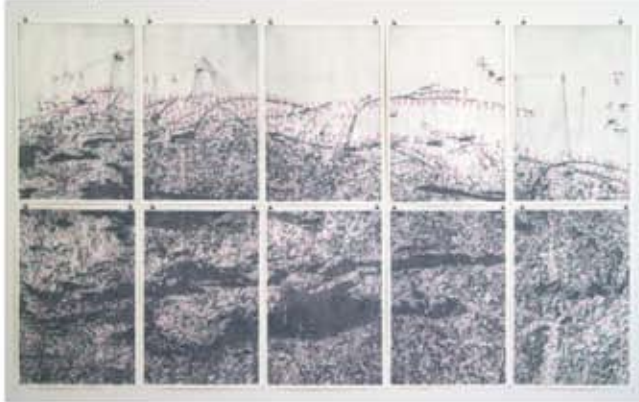
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The Boston Globe Review: Louis Risoli and Yizhak Elyashiv

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Theater & Art

GALLERIES

Shifting perspectives; landscape by number

By Cate McQuaid | Globe Correspondent January 16, 2013

Over the years, the printmaker Yizhak Elyashiv has gone from diagrammatic abstraction based on chance — he'd toss a handful of rice, say, onto his printing plate and chart the grains — to a deep consideration of landscape. It's not that far a leap. In his show at Gallery NAGA, he still applies discrete gestures and algorithms to his work, all as a means of exploring the land.

"Untitled (#4)," for instance, conveys rolling hills in swarms of small, smudgy engraved marks. Elyashiv writes in his artist's statement about working in Ireland, and studying the history of the potato famine. "Sulfuric fields," he writes, were said to stink with the scent of rotting spuds.

It's hard not to see those spent potatoes in these sooty marks. Then, some rise from the landscape into the air, like ocean spray over a wave. The artist draws fine lines networking the smudges, and writes numbers, counting from zero to nine again and again throughout the print in pink watercolor. The numbers and lines come across as the artist's attempt to apprehend the land, and all the history and sorrow that it holds.

Also at Gallery NAGA, Louis Risoli's dense, smart, joyful paintings include five big triangular canvases bubbling with pattern and demented hues, and one grid of smaller rectangular paintings filling a wall. "Edie," a triangular piece well over 5 feet tall, sports intersecting circles. Risoli fills the overlaps with swipes of lime green and peachy cream. The parts that don't overlap are white, but they blush like schoolgirls.

"Let $X=X$," the grid of paintings, is full of delights. On one checkerboard of deep pink squares, the surface crimps and rumples, and in places rises as if there are jar lids embedded beneath. Another shows yellow diamonds on a red-gingham type background; the diamond in the middle looks like thick frosted glass, with shadows and streaks beneath it.

These painterly, off-kilter works and their juicy patterns suggest textiles, and microbial cross sections you might see through a microscope. Patterns are everywhere; we're in them, and tied to each other by them. Risoli's work celebrates that.