

ART AND CAKE

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Experiencing Light, Gisela Colon's New Work at Diane Rosenstein Gallery

By Sydney Walters, February 11, 2018



The "New Sculpture" exhibit at Diane Rosenstein Gallery showcases the renowned work of Gisela Colon, a master of her craft specializing in pushing three-dimensional objects into light-space. "New Sculpture" highlights Colon's recent innovations that comment on the material and non-material.

This exhibit is an amalgamation of Colon's unique pods, slabs and monoliths that both project and retain a carefully considered color spectrum. A fifteen-foot monolith towers in the center of the main gallery. Using aerospace engineering, a means for fabricating a design that does not have right angles or edges, her parabolic monoliths look familiar, but futuristic. Although these monoliths were made with the intention to be installed outside, the gallery lights rebound off of the piece creating an ever-changing halo as the viewer circumvents the sculpture. The monoliths conjure semblances of Stonehenge or *inukshuk* statues. By drawing parallels between symbols of ancient ritual with contemporary industrialism, Colon recalibrates what it means

for an object to exist in a minimal state. She says, "the way I see it, there is no reason why minimalism, as a concept or genre, need to be devoid of life, or cold, or unwelcoming. Minimalism today, what I call the 'new minimalism' or 'organic minimalism', is a way of life. It is a choice on how to curate one's surroundings, one's environment-it is a thoughtful considered philosophy of life."

Colon situates her work to perform within an art and architectural arena. Depending on the viewer's perspective, the time of day and lighting conditions, her carefully engineered prisms change color. The interior colors of her wall-mounted work are hazy under a frosty casing of blow-molded acrylic. And, although Colon assigns a uniquely geometric lexicon to her work, i.e., "rectaguloid", "ellipsoid", "spheroid", she is preoccupied by their capability to reflect human movement rather than rendering a formal or rigid shape. By making free-form pieces and ever-changing color reflections, she taps into the psychology of movement. She says, "the work seeks resonance with the human condition, which is one of constant change and movement in different directions, always moving into the future into an ever-evolving self, into a changing identity, into something new, seeking authenticity throughout time."

One of the pieces that demands individual attentiveness to movement and existence is *Light Slab*, an eight-foot, free-standing rectangle made of molded acrylic and polished stainless steel. Standing close, the multi-colored plane encompasses peripheral vision, turning *Light Slab* into a visual vehicle into an airy, ethereal color field. Much like James Turrell's *Dark Spaces* or *Shallow Space* constructions, Colon's *Light Slab* is an illusory expanse into a colorful cocoon. As a collective body of work, light is experienced rather than observed. The multiplicity of color within embryonic forms evokes a calm purity and sacred experience that feels familiar as it is a visual translation of prehistoric and modern consciousness.