

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2011

➔ Uta Barth @Bonakdar

JTF (just the facts): This show contains a pairing of recent projects, displayed in separate rooms. The main gallery contains works from the project ... *and to draw a bright white line with light* from 2011. There are 10 works on view, each made up of one to three 38x56 panels. The prints are inkjet prints face mounted against matte acrylic, framed in white and unmatted, in editions of 6+2AP.

The back gallery contains works from the project *Compositions of Light on White*, also from 2011. There are 8 single panel works on view, ranging in size from 24x23 to 41x48. The prints are inkjet prints in white lacquered wooden frames, in editions of 6+2AP. (Installation shots at right.)



Comments/Context: Uta Barth's newest works explore the idea of using focused light as a drawing mechanism. Her pictures turn luminous lines and areas of white brightness into a discrete medium, like ink or paint, that can be carefully controlled by the hand of the artist, not in the sense of a photogram or a darkroom manipulation, but in the context of straight photographic image making. In two separate projects, she has used curtains and window blinds to direct the incoming light, creating ethereal shapes and forms that are projected onto different underlying surfaces.

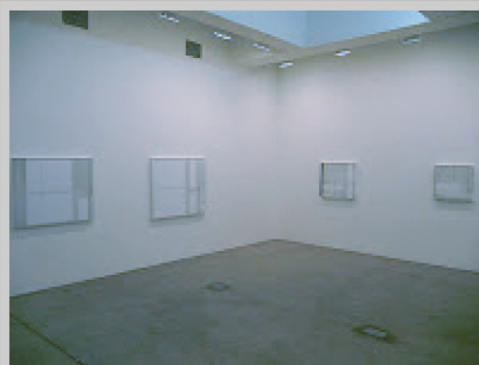
The walls of the main gallery space are covered by works that chart the passing of time across an afternoon. A thin white line of sunlight streams in through gauzy textured curtains, creating a wiggly, heartbeat-like form projected through the undulations of the transparent fabric, reminiscent of Minor White's *Windowsill Daydreaming* ([here](#)). This white line slowly expands into a wide ribbon as the time passes, in the end becoming a thick stripe of sinuous diffusing light, almost like waves on a seashore or Morris Louis' washes of watery paint. It's an extremely simple construct that provides a graceful and meditative view of the abstract movement of time.



I found the images in the back room to have more complexity and visual punch. In these works, Barth uses the blinds to generate squares and rectangles of radiant projected sunlight, which are then directed onto flat white closet doors and arrays of drawers. The black cracks along the edges of the storage areas create linear geometries, which are then covered in additional layers of brilliant white shapes, creating flattened planes of Mondrian-like abstraction. Barth subtly changes the camera angle from image to image, bringing in more or less of the perspective of the drawers, in a few allowing the view down the hallway to become a dark stripe along the edge of the frame. These are quiet, intellectual pictures, playing with reference points and internal geometries, examining shimmering light as a defining overlay.

As always, there is a calmness to Barth's heady explorations. She continues to probe the edges of perception and visual recognition with a meticulous sense of restraint, in this case, proving that elemental light can be an inventive medium in and of itself.

Collector's POV: The prices of the prints from ... *and to draw a bright white line with light* are dependent on the number of panels in the work: 1 panel at \$26000, 2 panels at \$36000, or 3 panels at \$46000. The prices of the prints from *Compositions of Light on White* are based on size, ranging from \$18000 to \$26000. Barth's photographs have become more available in the secondary markets in recent years, with auction prices ranging between \$3000 and \$38000.



Rating: * (one star) GOOD (rating system described [here](#))

Transit Hub:

- Prior Exhibit: Art Institute of Chicago, 2011 ([here](#))
- Feature: Daily Beast ([here](#))

Uta Barth

Through December 22nd

Tanya Bonakdar Gallery

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