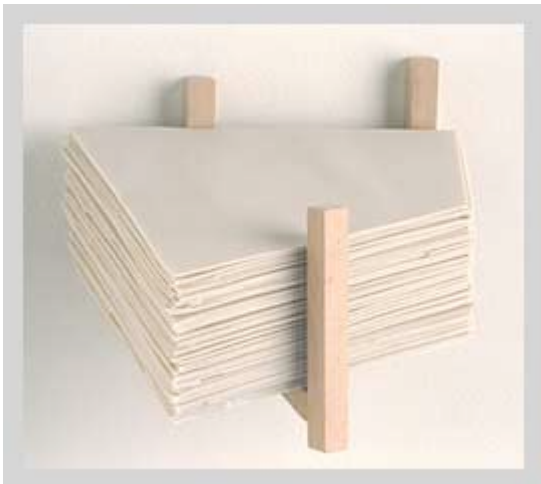


SUSAN YORK
CENTER OF GRAVITY

STEVE PETERS
DELICATE ABRASIONS

Imagine Ellsworth Kelly's shapes and colors married to Sol LeWitt's wooden forms, miniaturize both, and you have some idea of Susan York's new work.

Her show is modest but engaging—nine small wall sculptures, each measuring between three and eight inches, that address issues of proportion, color, repetition, and movement. Each sculpture is composed of paper-thin shards of porcelain stacked to resemble crinkled pages of an old book. (You must resist your desire to thumb through them.) York made the shards by pouring porcelain into individual molds that bleed a big at the edge. The porcelain is flat in tone, but subtly textured or wrinkled; the colors are pure and attractive: parchment, cobalt blue, butter, or ivory.



Viewed from the side, York's porcelain does not stack quite flush, so that in between the shards you see narrow slats of light, as if though tiny venetian blinds. These openings are important for creating interior space and adding lightness to the density, for opening a dialogue between negative and positive space, and for staging a play of light and dark, which produces op art effects as you move around the work.

The sculptures come in two variations: the porcelain fragments are either stacked flat on aluminum bases set at ninety degrees from the wall, or they're stacked at angles, cradled in beech wood forms set obliquely to the wall. As a material, wood marries porcelain better than aluminum.

However, both series feel simultaneously fragile and enduring, stable and slightly precarious. Precarious because the shards have no side support --- think of a waiter carrying too high a pile of plates. The tilted beech wood pieces produce more tension still, since they seem ready to slide both straight down and off to the side.

Aside from satisfaction of form, York's work suggests allegory: as if gathering civilization's delicate fragments and giving them shape and meaning, her sculptures perform a famous line from T. S. Eliot's poem *The Wasteland*, "these fragments I have shored against my ruin."

Behind the Marr Gallery is tucked one of Santa Fe's hidden treasures, "Shack Obscura," an intriguing space showing experimental work. Only "showing" is the wrong word for Steve Peter's sound installation, *Delicate Abrasions*. Rendered dark and mysterious for this show, the Shack masks a dozen speakers broadcasting a twelve-channel soundtrack made for and recorded in this same space. Peters created an aural environment by recording his encounters with various surfaces in the Shack. Seemingly from everywhere, we hear irregular sounds —static, drips, scrapes, pings — somewhere between noise and music. They dialogue across the empty space, dramatically lit to focus on the different materials that "speak" on the soundtrack. You contemplate Peter's *Delicate Abrasions* on six handsome benches he designed for the installation.

ARDEN REED, *THE MAGAZINE*, SANTA FE, NM