



# ART REVIEW: Ubiquity and Omnipresence at ILLE Arts

April 23, 2015

by Janet Goleas

For Sag Harbor artist Saskia Friedrich, thoughts of omnipresence have yielded a lively exhibition at ILLE Arts. The show, organized by Friedrich, features five artists (including the curator herself) whose works bounce from temporality to fixed patterning, gesture and abstraction. Titled “Ubiquity,” the exhibition frames the creative act as a phenomenon that exists in an eternal now, as if a work of art is always beginning, always in process and always completing.

The artist’s own colorful works open the show. In them, Friedrich seeks to capture the fleeting image—a universal construct—in selected pieces that are playful and aesthetically concise. Her strategy is one of simplicity, commingling shape and color in works that are thoughtful, spare and ephemeral, their dazzling color notwithstanding.

Here Friedrich paints through stitchery, sewing various fabrics, colors and textures together in minimalist compositions. Establishing formal structure through the subtle junctures that take place in the process, Friedrich’s shifting textures and colors offer a succinct and mindful clarity.



“123SOLAR” by Saskia Friedrich, 2014. Dyed fabric on canvas, 8 x 36 inches.  
Photo courtesy Ille Arts.

A selection of large format drawings and sculpture by Brooklyn artist Bill Saylor radiate a raw, heated energy both in muscle and tone. His drawings on paper are affixed to stretched canvas that acts as a container for the bird-monsters, amphibians and ghostly faces that crash against its margins.

Saylor lays down marks in oil stick, spray paint and pigment in a furious scrawl that ricochets from side to side like visual warfare. The resulting compositions feel as if they were pulled from the subconscious with a veracity that would make Carl Jung proud.



Artwork by Bill Saylor, installation view. Photo courtesy Ille Arts.

Relative to his paintings, Saylor's sculpture is soundless and poetic. In the main gallery *Untitled* stands like a sentinel, its head a loopy amalgam of crusty plaster and foam bobbing atop an unembellished wooden stud. Painted in brilliant reds and orange, its presence is both comedic and professorial as it holds court in the main gallery.



"Untitled" by Bill Saylor, 2015. Wood, metal wire, foam, paper mache, flashe, 24 x 10 x 13 inches. Photo courtesy Ille Arts.

Nearby, Sabra Moon Elliot deploys coiling, gestural brush strokes across the surfaces of hand-painted geometric grounds. Her interest in textiles, quilts and tapestry serves as source material for the schematic underpainting, which, though loosely painted, exudes precision.



"Bye Bye Bolinas" by Sabra Moon Elliot, 2015. Acrylic on canvas, 18 x 18 inches. Photo courtesy Ille Arts.

Elliot references Taoist meditation in her methodology, specifically as it relates to the slushy brushwork she applies to each meticulous ground. Invoking the term *wei wu wei*, or "action that is non-action," she describes her process as one that is liberating and based in instinct. The resulting paintings are crisp and ebullient.



"Anywhere but Nowhere" by Sabra Moon Elliot, 2013. Acrylic on canvas, 24 x 24 inches. Photo courtesy Ille Arts.

Two works by multidisciplinary artist Jim Drain speak to a psychedelic collision with pop culture, design and the frenzied formalism for which he is known. His flamboyant use of color transforms these drawings on paper into the phantasmagorical, with form and gesture so lavish the works

seem to glow.

In the past 15 or so years, Drain has established his own visual art code, re-contextualizing design tropes and borrowing from vintage templates to create experimental textiles, assemblages, sculpture and screen prints. His paintings are often knitted and sewn; his sculptures are a mélange of found objects, faux fur and beads that vary in scale from the diminutive to the monumental.

Drain cut his teeth as a member of Forcefield, an art collective/noise band that grew out of the 1990s climate at RISD. The group disbanded shortly after they were featured in the 2002 Whitney Biennial, but in the years since, Drain has developed into one of the compelling artists of his generation.



“Backlight Dragon” by Jim Drain, 2015. Drawing on paper, 31 1/2 x 24 inches. Photo courtesy Ille Arts.

Paintings by Maeve D’Arcy examine pattern and decoration with some effective twists and turns. Laying down meticulous abstract patterns on wood panels, she covers the surface with rhythmic geometries that are rigorous yet casual. Within these fields of lines and wood grain, D’Arcy gradually nudges imagery into the composition.

It feels as if the artist has cast a net across the painting surface with the intent of capturing images. And, like rogue drones, imagery and structural anomalies land in the composition and there—anchored among layers of hand drawn lines and surface embellishments—they become paintings. This spontaneous alertness is key to her art.



“Hieroglyphics 101” by Maeve D’Arcy, 2015. Acrylic, ink, graphite and glitter on wood panel, 12 x 12 inches. Photo courtesy Ille Arts.



“BLINKing” by Maeve D’Arcy, 2015. Acrylic, ink, charcoal and graphite on wood panel, 12 x 12 inches. Photo courtesy Ille Arts.

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**BASIC FACTS:** "UBIQUITY" remains on view through April 27, 2015. ILLE Arts is located at 216a Main Street, Amagansett, NY 11930. [www.illearts.com](http://www.illearts.com).

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