



LOS ANGELES

Gina Osterloh  
at François Ghebaly Gallery

The takeaway from Gina Osterloh's recent exhibition at François Ghebaly is how impressive and satisfying it is when an artist achieves balance between continuity and evolution in their practice. Creating public spaces for performing private rituals is both her content and her allegorical framework, and those tenets have remained consistent even as her aesthetic and formal approaches have grown increasingly loose, abstract, and interactive. Her basic format—of building three-walled rooms and photographing them, after defining these shallow architectures through operations of color and pattern camouflage and the presence and absence of her own or other bodies—hasn't changed. Yet her deconstructed grid system has become increasingly expressive, overtly hand-rendered and deliberately imperfect. It has also exploded well beyond the edges of her photographs and now unfurls across the gallery walls—turning the entire installation into one meta-proscenium. The exhibition's title "PRESS ERASE OUTLINE SLICE STRIKE MAKE AN X PRICK!" references how words can be both nouns and verbs, and constitutes a set of both observations and directives. On opening night, she destroyed a wall of colored paper with her body; its remains stand as monumental sculptural ephemera, which together with the wall-painting offers a context of action and consequence for the individual photograph and video works.

Large archival pigment prints titled *Grid #1 - Grid #6* (all works 2014) relate variations on the theatrical space trope, exploring combinations of color and linear deviations expressing in subtly different ways the affecting subjectivity of repetitive choices. None contain a figure, although the giddiness of the grid-drawing is itself evidence of someone's

presence in the space. Only *Grid #4* contains text. It reads, "Nothing to see here, there never was," in further reference to the conceptual capriciousness of images constructed for a camera. *Drawing for the Camera (Vertical)* makes this point emphatically, both in its title and in the fractal chaos and organic density of its subverted linearity. Two pairs of color photographs are luminous and serene, devoted to exposing implicit choices made by photographers that affect their images but are often overlooked in the belief that photographs as "real" documents are unaffected by aesthetic considerations. *Perspective Shift (Distance)* and *Rectangle (Blue)* create drama through proximity; and *Yellow Maximum* and *Yellow Minimum* compare the emotional effects and implicit narrative of detail density. The exhibition excels in addressing both her maturing ideas and familiar methodologies, even as it expands upon the aesthetic and material scope of how Osterloh performs that address.

—SHANA NYS DAMBROT

"GRID #3," 2014, **Gina Osterloh**  
ARCHIVAL PIGMENT PHOTOGRAPH WITH UV LAMINATE  
MOUNTED ON COLORED ACRYLIC PANEL, 45¾" X 30"  
PHOTO: ROBERT WEDEMEYER  
COURTESY: FRANCOIS GHEBALY GALLERY AND THE ARTIST