



DENVER

Mindy Bray: "Urban Idyll"
at Goodwin Fine Art

Although it may be hard to discern with everything looking abstract at first glance, the works comprising Mindy Bray's "Urban Idyll" are based on exterior reality, being directly based on photos of rivers and creeks. More specifically, it's the light reflecting off their surfaces that Bray renders, making her works technically representational, their appearances to the contrary notwithstanding. Though the photographic component is essential to Bray's process, the finished works are not photos, nor do they incorporate them. Instead, Bray takes photos, downloads the images into a computer, and then digitally alters them so that the results are fragmented. Finally, she projects them onto stretched paper or the wall itself, going in and picking out with colors those elements she wants for a specific piece. For the works on paper, she uses ink, while for the wall pieces, she employs latex. Because she uses brushes to create both, she considers not just the wall pieces, but also the ink ones, as being paintings.

Among the several examples of Bray's paintings in ink on stretched paper is the magisterial *Instream* (all 2015), a large triptych depicting an abstracted view of water running over rocks. Primarily black over icy blue and white, it is based on an image taken of the Platte River as it winds around downtown Denver in Confluence Park. The rapids that she captured are a design feature and not a natural element. Opposite *Instream* and other works on paper, are a series of wall paintings that incorporate sculptural elements. These, including *Channel* and *Whitewater*, are based on the shapes taken by sunlight as it's reflected

off the surface of Cherry Creek, a waterway that also runs through central Denver and which has likewise lost its natural qualities through the imposition of infrastructure. The resulting forms are quite complex, almost recalling Pollock-like splats, and have been layered, one on top of another. Water-jet-cut resin-panels have been mounted over the painted parts, and where the resin overlaps the paint, the colors change as the painted elements are seen through the tinted resin sheets. Her interest in juxtaposing the built-environment to the natural one explicates the show's title, "Urban Idyll."

Mindy Bray moved to Denver less than a decade ago and since then has rapidly established herself as major Denver artist. The underlying intelligence and high quality of her work, as seen in depth at Goodwin, is the reason why.

—MICHAEL PAGLIA

"INSTREAM," 2015

Mindy Bray

INK ON STRETCHED PAPER, 72" x 108"

PHOTO: COURTESY GOODWIN FINE ART