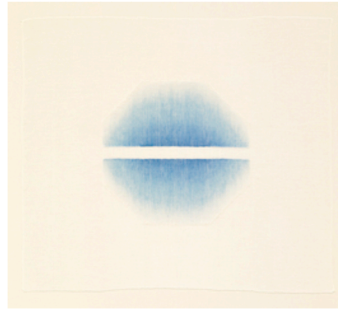


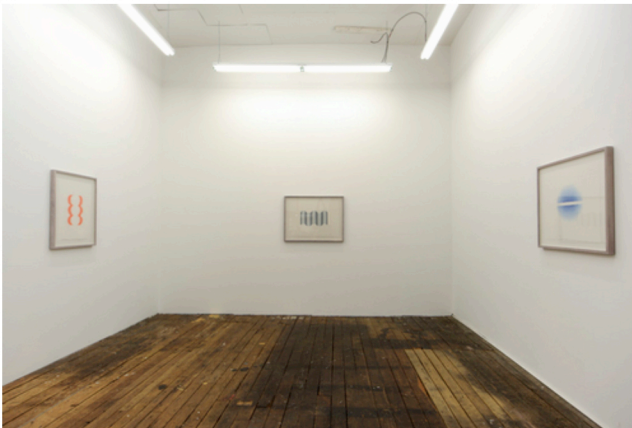
**A Subtle Stretch**

by Ava Jancar

**RUTH LASKEY****Ratio 3****1447 Stevenson Street, San Francisco, CA****94103****September 10, 2010 - October 23, 2010**

It would be a stretch to describe Ruth Laskey's reductive weavings on linen as environmental. They are not site-specific and each of the seven pieces hanging in the current exhibit at Ratio 3 is hermetically sealed off from the space that surrounds the preciously mounted and framed, almost translucent, textile. In spite of this, it is difficult not to think of them as spatially competitive. Although, affecting, intruding or altering space does not seem to be Laskey's intent, the delicate and minimal compositions with subtly undulating, graduated color, bounded by geometric form, draw from the gallery's ambient neon lighting. It is, therefore, inevitable, as with any examination of color, that light would factor heavily in the perception of that represented.

Each piece is described by a singular color, as part of the title, and characterized as a gradient of values. The simple shapes are defined by hard yet softened, glowing edges. Although the surfaces of these pieces, from her "Twill Series," are not impeccable, not without evidence of the artist's hand, they invoke the ocular smoothness and fetishism of Craig Kauffman's vacuum forms.



In a similar sense, a tenuous relationship could be made between Laskey's work and Bruce Nauman's, *Green Light Corridor*, 1970. Nauman constructed a tight corridor filled with green neon light that was to be passed through by viewers, ultimately imposing a magenta afterimage upon exit. Photographic documentation of this piece with green light spilling from the corridor's walls depicts the simultaneously hard and soft edge of the work. Distinctive in that there is no attempt to conceal the source in order to fool the eye, the structure is instead purposely revealed. In both cases, Laskey and Nauman deliberately manipulate the notion of what is visible but do so without pretense. Although it may seem a bit lofty to compare Laskey's work to such spatial manipulations, her calculated gestures, though restrained, are not dissimilar or without impact.

- Ava Jancar

Ruth Laskey "Twill Series (Sky Blue)," 2010, Hand-woven and hand-dyed linen, 21 x 24 inches; Installation View at Ratio 3

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