

Chuck Nanney  
BODY PARTS & ORACLES  
July 20 - September 7, 2014

For his first solo exhibition since 2003, and the first presentation in Los Angeles, Chuck Nanney presents a new body of work produced over the past two years in Oakland, CA, where he currently resides.

BODY PARTS & ORACLES develops upon a style crafted by Nanney beginning in the early 1980s, in which he stretched canvases on tree branches to create organic forms beyond the conventions of the formal picture plane, which were then applied with monochrome surfaces using commercial sign paint and car paint. Nanney continued to produce these tree branch paintings over several years, in addition to pieces that utilized humble materials such as paper clips, cardboard, fabric, and shaped bits of canvas pinned directly to the wall. His attention to material and surfaces is frequently foregrounded in his process, which has continued to inform the current body of work presented in this exhibition. The forms are jigsaw-cut from sheets of plywood and pre-fabricated pinewood, painted with acrylic and delicate materials such as gold leaf, adhering to the walls with hinges and metal brackets. The pieces oscillate between painterly planes and movable sculptural works that investigate confusion and interaction with physical bodies in space, and disrupt traditional forms of viewing.

Alluding to organs or bodily shapes, the oblong “linga” forms take on a corporeal or phallic quality when protruding from the wall in direct contact with the viewer, and respond to the exhibition space in an intuitive manner of installation. The “oracles” refer to small rectangular pieces cut in the shape of Tarot card decks and iPhones, as well as symbolic sigils which appear within painted surfaces, containing statements of intent or spells reduced into abstract signs. These works engage with their surroundings, punctuating the architectural details of the room and creating patterns of repetition. Nanney also produces audio works and music concurrently with the pieces in the studio, which informs and incorporates a looping, synesthetic rhythm experienced in the installation. BODY PARTS & ORACLES continues to push the conventions of traditional painting and sculpture not only in the formal qualities of Nanney’s work, but perhaps more poignantly in the emotional narratives they contain, reflecting moments of potentiality and enduring presence.

Chuck Nanney (b. 1958, Memphis) has exhibited widely in the USA and Europe, extensively in the 1980s and 1990s, with previous solo shows at Debs & Co., New York, and Galerie Jousse Seguin, Paris. Recent exhibitions include a two person show with Amy Granat at Broadway 1602, NY (2010); and group shows at Art & Public, Geneva (2011); Spencer Brownstone Gallery, NY (2011); and Alex Zachary, NY (2010).