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Robin Hill

Multiplying the Variations

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Tuesday-Saturday 10-6

Robin Hill explores relationships among materials, process, and form. This exhibition, her first in New York since 1997, presents works that echo each other in subtle ways. Her sculptures, installations and cyanotypes reflect the artist's engagement with elements that flow, accumulate and dissipate. In a recent interview with the artist Ron Janowich, Hill explains "Everything in the exhibition has its root in something found. It's not specific as to where it is found. The finding takes place on the street, in industry, and in nature. I often find things in my own work."

Robin Hill teaches at the University of California at Davis and summers near the ocean in Nova Scotia. *Beach Debris*, an installation of cyanotypes and a sand-topped table offers two views of flotsam washed ashore - the objects themselves and images of them cascading down nine tall panels. "The cyanotypes," Hill says, "explore a view of forms that can't be seen with the naked eye. It's not a microscopic view or a magnification. It's a one-to-one ratio of the actual object itself. The objects seem to be sitting back, behind the plane of the paper, making it seem like you could reach in and grab them."

Two other works, *Mica and Pins* and *Against the Wall*, address accumulation. The artist found thousands of tiny translucent discs of mica in a dumpster and placed one each at the end of an equal number of straight pins arranged in a looping, rotating line. Similar arrangements of materials like wax, plaster, or cotton have been part of her work for twenty years, but the light, barely-there quality of this new work is extraordinary. *Against the Wall* and its companion sculpture, *Concretion*, represent accumulation in a more physical, sculptural way. A hundred wood discs, also found, become bases for a multitude of little balls of wax arranged in concentric circles; they are hung in a tight grid on the wall. A hundred plaster casts of the wax discs are presented in a horizontal column, providing a contrast of material (bright hard plaster vs. buttery soft wax) and volume (extended along a plane vs. compacted as a sculptural mass).

Using a material that comes from Robin Hill's many years finding cast-off material in industrial Brooklyn, *Dissipation* is made of round wads of cotton batting from a factory that made shoulder pads. Using the material's lightness and its tendency to cling to itself, Hill layers the cotton dots on paper in an arrangement that's "heavy" at the bottom and "light" towards the top.

The remaining work, *The Shape of Things to Come*, uses the same table as *Beach Debris* to support a community of translucent wax shapes, flat, their shapes defined by lengths of string. As in all of the works in the exhibition, Hill uses simple materials and the act of repetition to state and reexamine her premise: "My approach was to see what processes can do independent of any particular idea. Using mostly found materials, the ideas *came from* the processes. It is important to me to stay open to

the outcome, to encompass accident and chance. The way that *finding* factors into my work is in the collection of random materials, situations, phenomena and in making a decision to wrestle the collections into artwork of my own.”

Robin Hill was born in Houston, Texas in 1955 and studied at the Kansas City Art Institute. She has had five solo exhibitions in New York galleries since 1987 and has had solo exhibitions in university museums and galleries in New York, Massachusetts and California. She has received grants and awards from the NEA, Pollock-Krasner Foundation, and the New York Foundation for the Arts. She is an Associate Professor of Art at UC Davis. Additional information about Robin Hill is available online at <http://robinhill.ucdavis.edu>.

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