

## Barbara Kasten

HANNAH HOFFMAN GALLERY  
1010 N. Highland Avenue  
July 23–September 2

Barbara Kasten's photographs and moving images have a lot to say about the relationships between perception and physical reality, and even the complicated dialogue between an image and its author. The oldest works in the show, "Constructs LB 1-6," 1982, are small color Polaroid prints, which vibrantly record the artist's previous installations composed of geometric objects, light, and shadow. Though not wholly abstract, the compositions feel theatrical and painterly while emphasizing contrast, spatial volume, and a lack of recognizable hierarchy.

The images in the 2016 series "Elementals" are the newest in the show and also the largest. Their shapes, made of everyday materials such as Plexiglas and cardboard, seem at once familiar and monumental, while their rough-hewn surfaces drive home a sense of materiality. Remarkably, capturing 3-D space on a flat plane seems to expand one's view of the elements within the frame, strengthening the visual relationships among them.

This is also true of the series "Double Negatives," 2012–16, comprising gelatin prints of common household window screens, rendered fantastical by the wavy effects of light and the illusive reversal of positive and negative space. Strangely, that ill-defined concept of the picturesque comes to mind here, not as a Romantic ideal, but perhaps as a way of acknowledging these exploratory, imperfect arrangements as somewhere between beautiful and sublime.

— Honora Shea



Barbara Kasten, *Elemental 3*, 2016, C-print, 70 x 56".