

**D'AMELIO
TERRAS—**

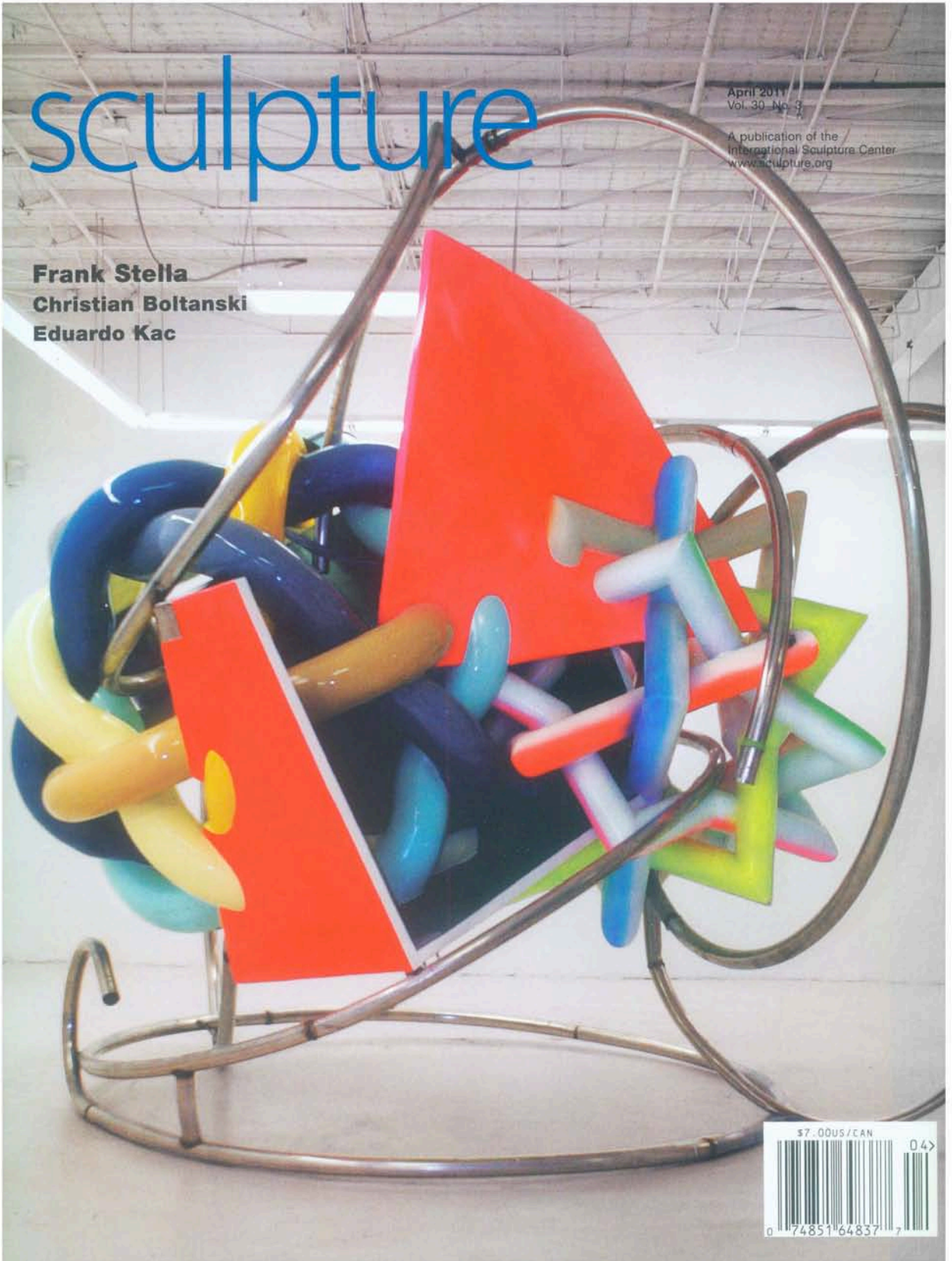
525 W 22nd St
New York, NY 10011
t 212 352 9460
f 212 352 9464
damelioterras.com

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Frank Stella
Christian Boltanski
Eduardo Kac





Above: Jedediah Caesar, *//////
 ////////////////*, 2010. Resin and mixed
 media, 31 panels, 35.9 x 26.7 x .6 cm.
 each. Below: Rashid Johnson, *Sweet
 Sweet Runner*, 2010. MDF, wax,
 plants, mirror, shea butter, rocks, and
 video, dimensions variable.

NEW YORK

Jedediah Caesar

D'Amelio Terras

Los Angeles-based Jedediah Caesar, in his second solo show at D'Amelio Terras, has taken a step away from projects that overtly demonstrate their "process-oriented" approach, moving simultaneously toward and away from the intellectual precision of Minimalism and the masculine romanticizations of Land Art. Seductive in their material physicality, these are undeniably beautiful works—six resin-panel sculptures and one "horizon mound" that force viewers to engage aesthetically and physically.

Caesar manufactures the panels from a concoction of resin, dust, pigment, detritus, and found materials, then industrially cuts and polishes them into perfect tiles. They appear to consist of either a sponge-like material or something hard and indestructible like marble (or, interesting-

ly, both at once). Each element contains random forms, perhaps a round shape embedded in the resin that appears and disappears (reminiscent of a moonrise, an interplanetary journey, or perhaps an otherworldly passage of time), or great swaths of secondary color that carry on beyond the borders, seeming to fill the empty spaces in the grids with their sweeping forms. Though the accumulations that compose the individual pieces may seem directly related to serendipity and the act of gathering, the perfection of the finished forms lays much at the feet of predecessors such as Andre and Judd. Caesar organizes the panels in relationships that mirror each other or progress along what may be seen as a narrative path. We find ourselves bending to investigate more closely, then walking along the panel-path, physically enacting the visual storyline, even pulling back to locate similar effects as they appear across the gallery.

But how do these panels relate to the horizon-mound that bears witness to an opposing type of imagery, one of dirt and decay, almost a post-apocalyptic landscape? This earthen cast, created from a dig at Socrates Sculpture Park, responds to the Great American Land Art tradition, but instead of hailing the land as utopian purity, site of endless progress, or symbol of the idealized American male, it presents a historical record of the remnants tossed aside by our disposable culture. The cast is doubly intriguing given Socrates' history as a former illegal trash dump. Both the partially disin-

tegrated material and the socio-political history of the original site become part of the work's reading and reception. As with the resin panels, the elements of chance and the traces of history inherent in the process of creation transform the mound into more than a purely formal structure. With these works, Caesar opens up an alternately beautiful and anti-utopian space in which to reconsider form, history, and even humanity itself.

—Audrey Walen



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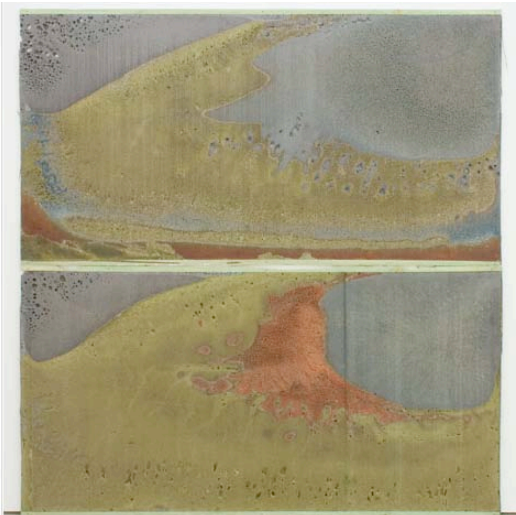


Art review

Jedediah Caesar

Caesar brings Land Art indoors. By Michael Wilson

The studio in which Jedediah Caesar produced much of the work for his current show was a distinctly unconventional one—Socrates Sculpture Park in Long Island City. To make the latest in his “Horizon” series, the Los Angeles artist not only explored the former landfill, but also drilled it full of holes, casting one such excavation to create the large, gray, moundlike form that’s on display here. Accompanying it are several wall-mounted works constructed from panels of what the gallery statement describes as “a unique amalgamation of resin, earth and detritus.” Resembling multicolored sponge, and studded with chunks of largely unidentifiable and frequently toxic-looking matter, Caesar’s signature stuff is an unlovely blend that suggests various inspirations, from Land Art to collage and even experimental film.



But while Caesar would doubtless acknowledge the influence of *Spiral Jetty* creator Robert Smithson—and perhaps French torn-poster virtuoso Jacques Villeglé or *Mothlight* director Stan Brakhage—he has yet to add a substantive postscript to their complex legacies. Though well-intentioned in his address of ecological concerns, and commendable, too, in his exploratory approach to materials, the artist seems to lose his way between green space and white cube.

There’s an awkwardness to the arrangements here that detracts from the genuine interest residing in their internal composition and surface texture. The time that Caesar spent roughing it in Queens may have been revelatory for him, but the result doesn’t communicate that experience as fully as it could now that it’s in Chelsea.

Art in America
INTERNATIONAL REVIEW

JEDEDIAH CAESAR

6/4/10
D'AMELIO TERRAS
by *matthew guy nichols*



New York Developed over the past seven years, Jedediah Caesar's signature sculptures are made from scraps of wood, cloth, cardboard and plastic that he mixes with liquid resins in buckets, boxes and other containers. When the debris-laden concoctions harden, he has often presented them as large chunks, or sliced them into thin panels. Although aspects of this practice turned up in Caesar's recent show, many of the seven new works (all 2010) replaced material congestion with a surprising restraint.

The most familiar-seeming sculpture in the show was also the least satisfying, partly because its 31 panels (each 14 by 10 inches) were displayed at floor level, forcing the viewer to crouch to inspect their myriad details. Like many of Caesar's earlier works, these rectangular cross sections of trash-filled resin blocks resemble slabs of veined marble; sometimes, bits of glass, wood and plastic are embedded in their milky swirls. (All titles, by the way, consist of punctuation marks arranged to mimic each sculpture's shape, and are difficult to print.)

By contrast, several other works appeared deceptively soft and porous, and seemed more organic than mineral. Leaving debris out of the mix, Caesar has begun pouring earth-toned resins into rectilinear molds before slicing the hardened volumes into small, squarish panels. Twenty of these squares spanned a corner of the gallery in a checkerboard design, each displaying irregular zones of muted green, brown, orange, blue or violet. When viewed up close, they reveal countless ruptured air bubbles on their surfaces, as if each square were a paint-soaked sponge. Similar perforations appeared in two larger examples of this technique (both about 6 by 5 feet), in each of which a pair of proximate cross sections were stacked against the wall, creating strong impressions of sequential growth. In one version, the contours of a greenish wave shifted from one panel to the next, suggesting the creep of a velvety moss.

A very large and lumpy sculpture rested on the floor and looked like a pile of dirt—which it was, more or less. Caesar recently dug a long, irregular hole on the grounds of the Socrates Sculpture Park in Long Island City and cast the cavity in plaster. When flipped over in the gallery, a layer of earth clung to its

convex surface, as did numerous stones, pieces of broken glass and some scraggly plant roots. While the sculpture literally exposed the site's previous use as a landfill, it also reprised the creative tactics of Bill Bollinger, an overlooked artist who cast many iron sculptures from shallow holes in the 1970s. But unlike Bollinger's solid and heavy abstractions, Caesar's plaster cast is a thin and hollow index of a hole, a fact confirmed by the shadowy separations between the sculpture and the floor. Once noticed, that gap lent the grimy mound an uncanny buoyancy, and underscored the lighter hand at work throughout the show.