

ARTFORUM

Mitzi Pederson

RATIO 3

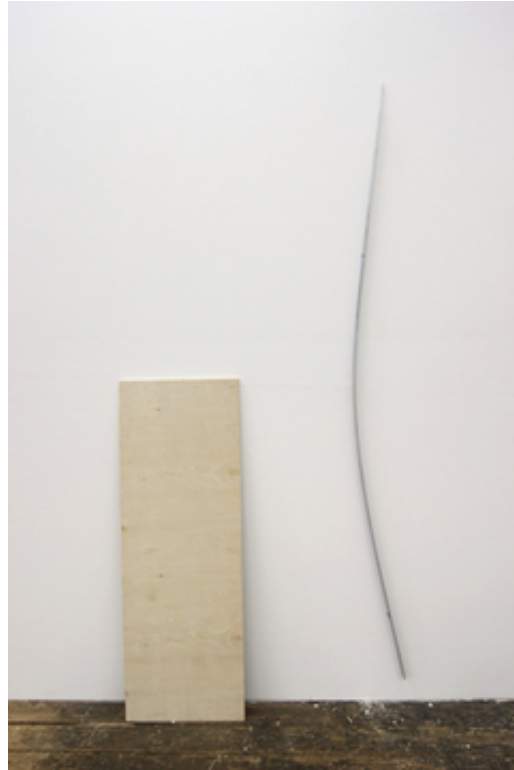
1447 Stevenson Street

September 11–October 24

By titling her exhibition "I'll Start Again," Mitzi Pederson hints at reinvention. But though the show finds the artist maintaining an economy of modest gestures and low-grade materials that seem diverted from landfill, her new sculptures exude the integrity of starting from scratch. Where Pederson's previous bodies of work have evoked Richard Tuttle, here the spirit of Fred Sandback appears in a series of string-based works that respond directly to the gallery space. Several balance thin thread and pieces of wood and at times articulate geometric volume. All are far more commanding of space than their humble ingredients would ever suggest.

Pederson responds with grace to the gallery's floor, an irregular patchwork of wooden planks, some splattered and stained by former tenants, others more recently placed. She tackles this visually dominant feature head-on with a group of eight small sculptures made from irregular, scraplike pieces of wood placed directly on the floor. As if spawned from the worn planks underfoot, the artworks are made of fresher wood and function primarily as platforms for smaller papier-mâché forms that are visually droopy but materially firm, defiant in their pint-size ungainliness. A back room features an assortment of works less dependent on the gallery architecture. Letter-size sheets of vellum are the ground for rough washes of paint that seem almost to be as weighty as the tattered and curling paper, revealing that Pederson confidently takes her foundations where she finds them.

— *Glen Helfand*



Mitzi Pederson, *Untitled*, 2009, wood, paint, string, 87 x 39 1/2".

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