

MORGAN LEHMAN

534 West 24th Street, New York, New York 10011

Art in America



Katia Santibañez

at Morgan Lehman Gallery,
through Nov. 12

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In her fourth solo show with the gallery, Katia Santibañez continues to structure natural phenomena into the kaleidoscopic worlds she creates in her abstract paintings. After studying philosopher Gilles Deleuze's eight-hour TV series *ABECEDAIRE* (1988-89), featuring his conversations on individual topics designated by letter (e.g., W for Wittgenstein), the American artist prepared for her exhibition "The Visible

and the Invisible" by choosing two words for each letter of the alphabet that have impacted her life and practice ("Albers" and "Abstraction" for A, for instance). Listed in the press release, these terms illuminate Santibañez's meditative approach to painting.

Though these new works (all 2016), most of them acrylic and gouache on panel or wood, are small in size (the largest piece in the show is only 24 by 18 inches), the weight of words such as "harmony" and "universe" adds a transcendental aspect to images that incorporate a mélange of colors and geometric shapes. The bright orange and dark blue groupings in *Side by Side* seem to burst open, allowing them to resonate beyond the canvas. *They Come and Go* references fall foliage. Warm brown hues and spots of blue spiral softly together on the wood surface. The abstract depiction is decidedly outside of leaves' common organization in nature, yet the painting recalls nature's rhythm of flourishing and decay. Inhabiting a space with Santibañez's paintings, one must confront the extent to which the natural order of the world remains unfixed. —*Nectar Knuckles*

Pictured: Katia Santibañez: *Side by Side*, 2016, acrylic on panel, 20 by 16 inches. Courtesy Morgan Lehman Gallery, New York.