

ARTFORUM

CRITICS' PICKS

Julia Dault

MARIANNE BOESKY | CHELSEA
509 West 24th Street
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Julia Dault, *Music Factory*, 2014, oil and acrylic on canvas, leather, 24 x 18".

Abstract painter and sculptor Julia Dault titled one of her aesthetically seductive and conceptually rigorous paintings *Chasing Waterfalls*, 2014, after TLC's 1995 hit song. Featuring a repeating motif of semicircular shapes (reminiscent, says Dault, of a waterfall), made with a triangular comb to expose layers of brightly hued underpainting, this rule-based composition is but one of several exceptional works in this smart and refreshingly bold show.

An immersive environment expunged of color, the first room consists of several black-and-white geometrically patterned canvases. The walls have been covered with a polka-dot design, creating the feel that the content in the paintings have overrun the canvases. Visible from this achromatic area is a twenty-foot Plexiglas-lined wall in the adjacent gallery that has been carefully angled to reflect the phantasmagoria of color that awaits in the next space.

In contradistinction to the effusive and spontaneous productions of AbEx artists, Dault abides by a set of self-imposed rules (e.g., no mixing colors). To avoid the transcendental subtexts of many mid-century nonobjective works (think of Barnett Newman's *Vir Heroicus Sublimis*, 1950-51) and give viewers immediate access to her pictures, she titles them after pop-cultural phenomena. *Twizzler*, 2014, a standout electric-blue-and-ruby-red painting bordered by a black-speckled white frame, for instance, is named after the licorice used to generate the work's constitutive wavy lines. Unorthodox tools are a staple of Dault's idiosyncratic practice. The white shapes populating the amoeba-like forms in *Five Guys* (named after the burger franchise), 2014, were made with foam blocks from the children's megastore Toys"R"Us. Don't be fooled, however, by the pieces' playful titles and vibrant colors—these process-driven works demand and reward sustained attention.