

## VISUAL ARTS & ARCHITECTURE

# Organization, chance blend harmoniously

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Known for her cool, minimalist abstractions, Annette Cone-Skelton fills the main space at Kiang Gallery with a site-specific installation of 100 small-format panels, each 10" x 10" square. They hang in a spare, horizontal line, eye-level, stretching across four walls.



Together, Annette Cone-Skelton's 100 mottled and marked panels have the calming effect of abstracted sheet music.

"Random Order" focuses on process, material, line and color, as Cone-Skelton seeks to impose artistic order on a mix of random elements. She uses sanded wood as her surface, on which she applies Instant Rust, a material with properties that are largely outside the artist's control: as it oxidizes, it leaves pools of coppery tones, creating imagery resembling soft spills and cloud formations. Each panel's pattern is thus distinctive, as natural forces (air, light, temperature) shape the result.

A computer program is then used to randomly generate a series of 100 numbers, limited to 4 choices – from 0 to 3. This sequence (for example, 2, 0, 1, 3, 1 and so on) becomes a roadmap for the artist to follow. Cone-Skelton uses it to draw one, two or three lines (or none at all) on each of her painted panels. Placement, thickness and length of the lines are left to her aesthetic sense.

In contrast to the fluid backgrounds, the visual weight of graphite marks imposes a sort of spatial organization on each otherwise ethereal composition. What emerges is simultaneously liquid and linear, random and orderly.

The inclusion of 100 artworks in a roughly four-walled configuration broadens Cone-Skelton's elegant square-within-a-square theme, developed over the years. The effect, standing in the space, is calmly melodic, as if the visitor is surrounded by abstracted, undulating sheet music.

Add in clever mathematical dualities and this is a wholly satisfying sensory and intellectual blend – serendipitous, structured and ultimately, the governance of keen artistic vision.

## REVIEW

### **Annette Cone-Skelton: *Random Order***

Through January 12. 11:00 a.m.  
– 5:00 p.m. Tuesdays – Fridays.  
Noon – 5:00 p.m. Saturdays.  
Kiang Gallery  
1011-A Marietta Street, Atlanta  
404-892-5477, [www.kiang-gallery.com](http://www.kiang-gallery.com).

**Bottom line:** Smart, understated  
and elegant installation