



LISA HOKE

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*The Gravity of Color, New Britain*  
2008-2010

*Recent Installations*  
2004-2008

## Lisa Hoke is an urban beachcomber.

With a keen eye for color and form and light, she sees beauty and possibility in everyday objects – drinking straws, matchbooks, plastic fasteners – and transforms them into art. She sees a purpose for the things we take for granted, the things we use once and then discard. We see one thing – she sees something else.

In Lisa's world, lonely zippers and castaway cable ties come alive when assembled in patterns and carefully constructed combinations. Structure, she says, always reveals itself. She includes light as a subject, and her installations vibrate with energy and wit. They wink. The things we think we're finished with? The items we toss aside? She rescues them and makes us see their value. And their beauty.

Over the years, I've watched Lisa transform other functional objects into sculpture: Paper cups from the 1960's. Plastic wine-

glasses. Rubber bands. Colored paper. Playing cards from dealers in Las Vegas. She often buys her raw materials on eBay – not at an artist supply store. Sometimes she buys a case – sometimes just two pieces. For Lisa, American culture is so accessible – a few clicks and it's hers. She makes creative use of what already exists. She never knows how things will end up. She creates until she knows it's right. And it always is.

You see in her work the influence of Sol LeWitt, of course. And Robert Irwin. Josef Albers. Mary Heilmann. Alfred Jensen. The quilts from Gee's Bend. These are the artists and artworks that have thrilled her. And writers. A character in Mark Helprin's *Winter's Tale* led her to name her installation at Elizabeth Harris Galley, *The Gravity of Color*. Now, with a fellowship from the National Academy Museum in New York and the New Britain Museum of American Art in Connecticut, we see a newer and

even more grand and dramatic vision. Her use of space – and her understanding of scale – astounds. Lisa knows how to fill a room so that you notice the work first – and then you marvel at the space it fills. Everything fits, as if the space had been made for her art, and not the other way around.

Lisa was a Navy brat, the daughter of a fighter pilot. Because her family moved so often, nothing was ever permanent. Perhaps that's why it's so easy for her to find grace in the disposable world. And perhaps that's why she doesn't think twice about tearing things down. Her installations go up, they delight,

they provoke, they surprise – and then when their time is up, she takes them apart without guilt or nostalgia. They disappear. She has an intuitive sense of completion. Like most things we discard, once Lisa breaks them down, they are gone forever. She never looks back. She finishes and walks away. And then does it again.

*Alyse Myers is a writer whose book, WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE? A Memoir was published by Simon & Schuster/Touchstone. She lives in New York City.*

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## *The Gravity of Color, New Britain*

New Britain Museum of American Art  
New Britain, CT

2008-2010



New Britain Museum



National Academy Museum

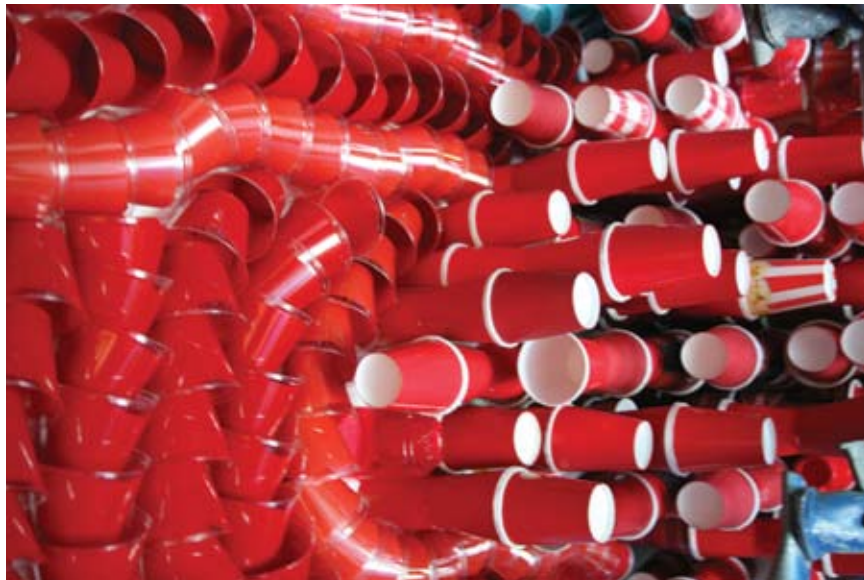














*Richard Webber, Brooke Ripley, Katalin Vilim and Lisa Hoke, Alexandra Pacula*

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## *Recent Installations*

*Light My Fire* 2006  
Rice University Gallery, Houston, TX

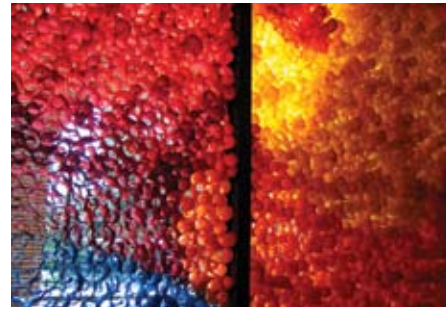
*Moody Blues, Reds and Yellows*, 2007  
Montclair Museum of Art, NJ

*Rhapsody of Chaos* 2007  
Elizabeth Harris Gallery, NY

*A Splendid Order* 2004  
Elizabeth Harris Gallery, NY

*The Gravity of Color* 2004  
Elizabeth Harris Gallery, NY

*The Gravity of Color* 2005-2006  
Addison Gallery of American Art, Andover, MA  
Katonah Museum of Art, NY  
Austin Museum of Art, TX



*Light My Fire* 2006 Rice University



*Moody Blues, Reds and Yellows*, 2007 Montclair Museum of Art, NJ



*Rhapsody of Chaos*, 2007 Elizabeth Harris Gallery, NY



*A Splendid Order*, 2004 Elizabeth Harris Gallery, NY (above)



*The Gravity of Color*, 2005 Addison Gallery of American Art, Andover, MA



*The Gravity of Color*, 2005 Katonah Museum of Art, NY



*The Gravity of Color*, 2004 Elizabeth Harris Gallery, NY



*Untitled, 13 x 20 inches, 2007*

## *Acknowledgements*

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To Alyse Myers, for her thoughtful essay, thank you.

I would also like to thank the following institutions and their staffs for their tremendous support and encouragement in the building of my installations:

Rice University Gallery, Houston, TX, Montclair Museum of Art, Montclair, NJ, Katonah Museum of Art, Katonah, NY, Addison Gallery of American Art, Andover, MA, Austin Museum of Art, Austin, TX (not pictured) and The Elizabeth Harris Gallery, NY, NY

Many thanks to Curators, Judith Fox and Ginger Duggan for their traveling exhibition(2005-2006). Thanks to my studio assistants, Stephanie Lempert, Karli Henneman, Elizabeth Sowell-Zak and Jill Dubreuil, and to Elizabeth Harris and Miles Manning.

*Catalogue Design* Susan Bowman     *Printer* TK

### *Photography*

Craig Norton: New Britain Museum of American Art, 2008

Jack Abraham: Elizabeth Harris Gallery, 2007

Cathy Carver: Elizabeth Harris Gallery, 2007

Nash Baker: Rice University Gallery, 2006

Margaret Adasko: Katonah Museum of Art, 2005

Frank Graham: Addison Gallery of American Art, 2005

Beckett Logan: Elizabeth Harris Gallery, 2004

All work courtesy of The Elizabeth Harris Gallery

