

Drohojowska-Philp, Hunter, "Mary Weatherford at David Kordansky Gallery," *KCRW.com*, May 1, 2014



Art Talk

## Mary Weatherford at David Kordansky Gallery

Thurs May 1, 2014

Host: Hunter Drohojowska-Philp



Installation view of Mary Weatherford, Los Angeles at David Kordansky Gallery, Los Angeles, California

If you thought that the soft focus Color Field painting of Helen Frankenthaler couldn't be revisited successfully by a contemporary artist, you wouldn't be alone. How could an artist paint thinned acrylics onto raw canvas without seeming as though he or she was copying that group of artists who were propelled to stardom by the critic Clement Greenberg in the 1960's?

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But now there is Mary Weatherford, an artist who has been gathering attention for her accomplished abstract paintings for some time. The paintings themselves have grown grand and romantic, darkly dashing and dynamic, tossing and turning with light and shade like the windy skies of a Turner seascape. Each bears an unlikely addition: a bar or two of neon with its electrical cord and equipment exposed. The combination is startling. When similar works were exhibited in New York, the Times critic Roberta Smith used a most astute phrase. She described her art as having an "ecumenical historical awareness."



Mary Weatherford, "the light in Lancaster," 2014  
Flashe and neon on linen, 112.25 x 99.25 x 4.375 inches,  
(285.1 x 252.1 x 11.1 cm)



Mary Weatherford, "Oxnard Ventura," 2014, Flashe and  
neon on linen, 112.5 x 100 x 4.375 inches (285.8 x 254 x  
11.1 cm)

Titled Los Angeles, on view at David Kordansky Gallery through May 31, this show includes seven rectangular linen canvases in the range of eight to ten feet tall and almost as wide in vertical orientation, which fights any easy attempt to see them as traditional landscapes. Yet, landscape is at least partially in the mix. Named for various points around Southern California, such as the particularly spectacular the light in Lancaster, 2014 she brushes a paint called Flashe in loose gestures of tangerine, copper, and rose. An angled bar of neon is attached over the completed painting but manages to accentuate rather than compete with the rich layers of color.

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She did a series for New York but the LA paintings made me think of moments of driving when the sky is a delirious riot of sunlight and fog or bruised nocturnal shades and you pass a neon sign for gas or beer. LA offers that momentary cocktail of the mystic and the urban and Weatherford captures that special thrill in these paintings. For more information, go to [DavidKordanskyGallery.com](http://DavidKordanskyGallery.com).