

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jason Middlebrook: *Line over Matter*
May 22 – July 5, 2014
Opening reception: Thursday, May 22, 6–8 pm
Artist's talk will begin at 7 pm

Lora Reynolds is pleased to announce *Line over Matter*, an exhibition of plank paintings and works on paper by Jason Middlebrook. This is the artist's first presentation in the main exhibition space at Lora Reynolds Gallery.

The work in this show features angular, geometric motifs layered over free-flowing patterns. The hardwood slabs—tall, slender, leaning pieces or smaller works that hang directly on the wall—have natural edges and fluid grain patterns that seem at odds with the crisp designs Middlebrook imposes upon them. Similarly in the works on paper, bold, straight, rigid lines sit on top of subtle, undulating underpaintings; paint seems to muffle whatever is beneath it.

Middlebrook has long been interested in man's complex and often adversarial relationship with nature. The straight lines and precise angles in his paintings might be found in math, architecture, and industry more readily than in grassy meadows or dense forests. But relying solely on this sort of metonymy is limiting. A more nuanced read reveals some of Middlebrook's geometric patterns are also inspired by nature. Crystals and geodes form important reference points. Chevrons are a recurring motif that simultaneously refer to decorative military insignia and V-shaped, large-scale rock formations. Even Middlebrook's metallic paints find their referents in the earth, where gold and silver originate.

The distinctions between natural and artificial, order and randomness, and man and Mother Earth are not always clear. But perhaps cloudiness is the point: instead of striving to catalogue and categorize, Middlebrook gives precedence to the feel of grass between his toes and sun on his forehead.

Jason Middlebrook, born in 1966 in Michigan, lives and works in Hudson, New York. Middlebrook has mounted solo exhibitions at a number of institutions, including the New Museum (New York), the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum (Connecticut), and the Santa Monica Museum of Art. He has participated in group shows at the Whitney Museum of American Art (New York), the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston. Last year he unveiled a major outdoor sculpture commission at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery (Buffalo). Middlebrook's work is included in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art (New York), the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston, the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, and the Princeton University Art Museum, among others.