

## ARTS &amp; ENTERTAINMENT

## Rappaport's perimeters interact with content

Baker from page D1

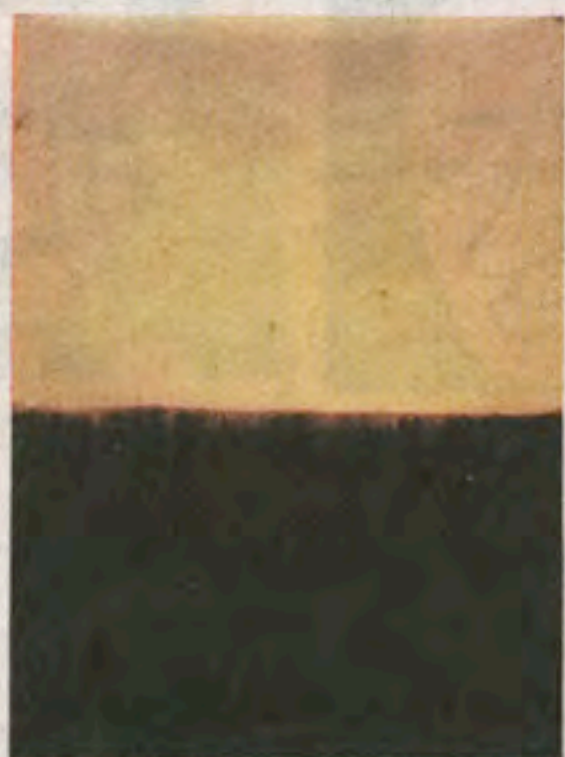
culture that makes concentration seem like a vanishing skill, the white cube's time may be coming back.

Rappaport's work also has its throwback qualities. It anticipates viewers already acquainted with the "shaped canvas" — the deconstruction of the traditional pictorial rectangle's arbitrariness that Frank Stella led in the 1960s.

Like Stella, but less soberly, perhaps with a thought of Elizabeth Murray (1940-2007), Rappaport makes the perimeters of several of his pieces on stretched canvas interact compositionally with shapes painted on them. Here and there, he cuts apertures in his canvases so that the wall seems to participate in the work that hangs on it.

Rappaport engages in further allusive mischief in a fine untitled piece whose cruciform composition — made of found wood and of green acrylic layered so heavily that it formed a slab — seems to bite into and wrinkle its canvas support, framed within a frame. Anyone who knows the abstract work of Kazimir Malevich (1879-1935) and its utopian associations will spot a wry reference to them here.

Rappaport's art can look academic when he does not offset its studied



Gallery 60Six

**Julian Hoenig's "Half Half 2" (2013), wood stain on mulberry paper.**

quality with chance-infiltrated passages or funny devices such as the black lines that float (on little transparent pegs) in front of several pieces.

Years ago — few seem to have noticed — I coined the term "comic abstraction" for a mode of contemporary artwork that respects abstraction as an idiom of creative striving, but refuses to take it too seriously. On the evidence of his Ratio 3 show, Rappaport works in that vein, and ought to deepen his commitment to it further.

**"Stain" at 60Six:** Julian Hoenig's "Stain" at 60Six suggests how difficult simplicity has become in contemporary abstract art.

Hoenig, a Silicon Valley engineer who tends to do his studio work by night, coats unframed sheets of mulberry paper

**Noam Rappaport:** Paintings and assemblage. Through March 23. Ratio 3, 2831-A Mission St., S.F. (415) 821-3371. [www.ratio3.org](http://www.ratio3.org).

**Julian Hoenig: Stain:** Works on paper. Through April 6. 60Six, 66 Elgin Park, S.F. (415) 577-4396. [www.gallery60six.com](http://www.gallery60six.com).

**Resistance: Taraneh Hemami:** Sculpture and installation works. Through March 23. Luggage Store Gallery, 1007 Market St., S.F. (415) 255-5971. [www.luggagestoregallery.org](http://www.luggagestoregallery.org).

with wood stain of various hues. The works that result, such as "Half Half 2" (2013), minimize distinctions between content and the residue of process. Yet they cannot fend off allusions or metaphorical associations.

The late works of Mark Rothko (1903-1970), particularly those on paper, come to mind here. The sense of Rothko having purged the landscape format of subject matter, except what belongs to viewers' private memories, finds an echo here.

Light seems to bleed across the division in Hoenig's "Half Half" (2013), as over a dark horizon at daybreak. His pieces evoke not merely partitioning of the real into domains of light and darkness or earth and air, but of the very need to carve existence conceptually to cope with its su-

**"Blood Curtain" (2013), by Taraneh Hemami, can appear like**

perabundance.

That reading gets encouragement from a couple of pieces here choked with the detail of repeatedly printed engineering drawings.

**Pieces of "Resistance":** Tehran native Taraneh Hemami has a powerful show of sculpture at the Luggage Store that conjures the activist optimism and fears predating and surviving the 1979 Iranian Revolution and the stifling theocracy it ushered into power.

Nothing dates more

