

# ARTFORUM

Nair, Kaveri. "Cherry and Martin." *The Online Edition of Artforum International Magazine*, 6 Oct. 2012, <https://www.artforum.com/picks/matt-connors-34868>.

## Matt Connors

Matt Connors draws on several modes of postwar abstraction, most notably Color Field painting, in his lucid second solo exhibition at this gallery. "Sandpaper Sleeve" finds him restricting his stylistic range more tightly than in the past, while the thoughtful selection and installation continues to amplify the quarrels and consonances embedded in his work. The show centers on a group of medium- to large-scale paintings composed of broad blocks of color soaked directly into unprimed canvas. Off-kilter pencil outlines, stray splatters, and bleeds signal a casual approach to facture that, despite evident roots in AbEx and Minimalism, place the works in the scruffy, antiheroic vein of contemporary abstraction.



View of "Sandpaper Sleeve," 2012

A lyricism still comes through, particularly in the darkly evocative color harmonies of *Thirds* (violet/orange) (all works 2012)—superimposed rectangles whose overlaps create a purplish-brown central void. Directly across the gallery hangs *What Was Music*, a piece of similar dimensions constructed from planks of poplar wood painted yellow. Complementary in more than hue, the sculpture's thick coating of yellow paint highlights the ghostly translucence of the painting's floating panes of color—and provides a possible explanation for a couple of random buttercup-colored flecks on the canvas's dark surface. The two pieces share a framelike composition, but the emptiness at the center of the sculpture is of course actual. At the gallery's entrance and exit, two smaller canvases mostly eschew paint in favor of colored pencil lines, as if sketching the theory embodied in the pieces that came between.

The largest work in the show, *A Poem Is Two Words II*, is a gray wooden platform that fills the first room of the gallery. It could be a plinth for the viewer, a nod to the gray floors of so many art studios, or a Minimalist sculpture. The least visually engaging, it is the most metaphorically rich piece on view, as it perfectly fills the space between viewer, maker, object, and art history.