

## CLIFTON BENEVENTO

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### Polly Apfelbaum: A Handweaver's Pattern Book at Clifton Benevento

#### Gallery

By Lynn Hunter / August 5, 2014



New York abstract artist, Polly Apfelbaum, is currently showing an installation at the Clifton Benevento Gallery of 50 colorful weaver's "pattern swatches". However, these are hardly reminiscent of a standard pattern book that invites careful consideration and constant touching. The 50 "swatches" are hung on the wall with the droop and drape of a sad party banner. Their colors are not sad however. On the contrary, they are quite bright and exciting.\

Upon closer inspection, you notice that these patterns haven't been woven at all but are almost perfectly painted. The material, synthetic white velvet, leads the pattern and colors to bleed while almost giving them the feel of a cheap Ikat weave that was made for a large, fast-fashion corporation. They appear manufactured, but also hold the spirit and truth of their handmade origins.



After seeing an older project of Apfelbaum's at the Mumbai Art Room last year in India, it's fun to see her current work has the same playful air. The day I saw her show, I had been walking all over the city with a super talented painter friend of mine looking for promising connections. Besides a fantastic show of the wonderful South African artist, William Kentridge (way out of our league), most of the work we saw was pretty mundane. Until we came across a little gallery filled with Apfelbaum's "Feelies". I immediately signed up for their mailing list.



Apfelbaum describes these works in such a poignant way:

[The "Feelies" show] a sense of immediacy, as opposed to the durability and permanence that always seems to me to be signified in painting. There is a focus on possibility and process as opposed to an end point. I think of it as automatic abstraction, a negative abstraction, more open,

based on chance, creating order within even haphazard circumstance.

[Quote from *Second that Emotion* Press Release via Mumabi Art Room]