

A Geometric Progression

GRID Collective believes that we are not born with geometric knowledge, we learn it, and we wondered how much of that knowledge finds its way into our work without our realizing it, and how much it remains in constant contention within the free flow of our individual and collaborative explorations.

Looking back over what we've done in our short existence as a collective, some possible answers to those questions emerge. From the start, there was geometry in how we approached the display of our work, but also disruption (a key element of our collaboration) in how we determined the groupings and juxtapositions (see the collection, *Playing with the Grid*). Disruption is also inherent in the fact that we come from different disciplines and work in different media and in the freedom allowed to each of us to respond to the chosen theme or criterion.

Another expression of this geometry/disruption dynamic is found in our increasingly interactive collaborative works; the *Conversation* pieces are grid-based arrangements of random elements, arrangements which we decide on through experimentation and instinctive reaction. When we all agree, 'That works', then, that's the work done.

So, from the beginning, this contention between geometry and randomness has been present in our process. But it was only in retrospect that this became clear to us. Preparing for our previous exhibition, *Geometry was not my mother tongue*, we spent much time teasing out the issue of whether or not geometric knowledge is innate, which led us more closely to examine our work, both individual and collaborative. Our (tentative) conclusion was that we all know a bit of the language of geometry, but some are more 'fluent' than others. Smith and Blair, both former architects, have been well trained in this language, and that led to the idea of subverting this 'education'. Taking old architectural drawings, tearing them up, and creating a collage by instinctive interventions resulted in the collaborative piece, *Faultline*.

In our individual pieces we responded differently. *Rule of Thirds* questions traditions of formal art education, while *Fighting Fibonacci* confronts the certainty of this famous formula. *Torn between* and *Freedom in containment* explore the challenge of finding a balance between seemingly opposing elements. *I don't do lines* and *What is my language?* suggest that even in the most abstract of approaches the geometric language of lines and shapes can appear.

This exploration of the push and pull between formality and randomness continues with the exhibition, *A Geometric Progression*. Exhibiting works from different stages in GRID Collective's evolution (randomness) seemed a natural response to Alison Baker Kerrigan's offer to curate (formality). This is an invaluable exercise for us, the artists, making it possible to see more clearly where our process is leading. On the other hand, you, the viewer, will perhaps discern elements which we may not even be aware of – please join in the conversation!