

# ARTFORUM

Akel, Joseph, "Ruth Laskey & Suzan Frecon," *Artforum*, October 2014



Suzan Frecon, *Impracticable Enceinte (b)*, 2014, watercolor on Indian paper, 9" x 12 3/4".

SAN FRANCISCO

## Ruth Laskey and Suzan Frecon

RATIO 3

2831a Mission Street

September 5–October 25, 2014

Located on the bustling Mission Street thoroughfare between to-die-for taquerías and mango-laden fruit stands, this exhibition of works by Ruth Laskey and Suzan Frecon, both known for creations that eschew the bombastic in favor of a cool craftiness, is a meditative world apart. Painstakingly woven over a period

of six months, the seven framed textile pieces from Laskey's "Twill Series," 2005–14, incorporate abstract, geometric forms that recall Navajo graphic motifs and Pomo Indian basket designs. Working on a diaphanous white linen ground, as in *Twill Series (Caribbean Blue/Black)*, 2014, the artist wove a single monochromatic shape, then bordered the form with a black line, but left one side of the blue plane exposed. With their minimal forms, her work undoubtedly hews closer to the likes of Bauhaus innovators Anni Albers and Gunta Stölzl than the samplers of Elaine Reichek.

Though Laskey may have traded in painting for textiles, the seven abstract watercolors by Frecon are a testament to her mastery of the former. Painted on salvaged Indian or Japanese papers, Frecon's compositions of rounded mounds and milky color fields evoke abstracted vistas. In *Indigo Light*, 2014, a hole pierced near the center of the creased paper resembles a horizon line bound by swathes of deep indigo. Nearby, the lozenge-shaped pool of marbled cobalt-blue encircled by a field of brick red in *Impracticable Enceinte (b)*, 2014, calls to mind a cooling oasis amid an arid landscape. With the din of the world beyond the gallery faintly perceptible, Frecon's watercolors remind us that art can offer a sublime refuge.

—Joseph Akel