

# REGEN PROJECTS

Hudson, Suzanne. "Alex Hubbard: Maccarone." *Artforum* (December 2015) pp. 265 – 266 [ill.]

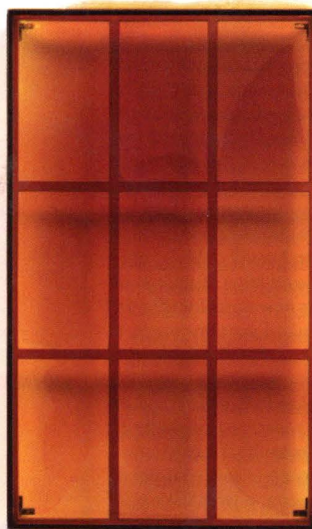
## ARTFORUM

LOS ANGELES

### Alex Hubbard

MACCARONE

Alex Hubbard's latest show, which christened Michele Maccarone's new Los Angeles space—and which, as so much initial press detailed, opened in tandem with the Broad Museum nearby—serves as a prime example of the recent westward migration of New York galleries, and of a more general media interest in contemporary cultural production in LA's Arts District. Hubbard's "Basic Perversions," the artist's third outing with Maccarone (on view through December 19), has the additional distinction of marking the fifteenth anniversary of the gallery. Given Hubbard's practice, which attends deftly to the place of his work's making and viewing, he was a canny choice for the first slot, here exhibiting eleven large-scale wall- and floor-mounted paintings produced over the past year in the artist's studio, which,



Alex Hubbard,  
*[To be titled]*, 2015,  
pigmented urethane,  
steel, 10' 3" x  
6' 3" x 1' ½".

as it happens, is directly adjacent to the gallery.

In earlier videos, which detail the evisceration of paintings featuring materials that had already survived torching, tarring, or other types of destruction in their first lives as props for filmed, tabletop scenarios, Hubbard has exploited two- and three-dimensional space and real and illusionistic depth. He has also rendered the once-heroic painterly studio practice as a site of deflation, by combining agentless causal processions reminiscent of Fischli & Weiss with willful, expressive mark-making. This grouping of Hubbard's pigmented urethane, resin, and fiberglass panels—affixed to casts of stretcher bars—continues the logic of his performance-based painting, which make process visible. Additionally, because he simultaneously casts the stretcher-bar supports as well as the works' surfaces from a single pour of pigmented urethane, the structures in their entirety are open to the passage of light. Those mounted a few inches

from the wall appear to float above their ambient and intensely colored shadows; other freestanding works cast longer shadows in subtler hues.

The tic-tac-toe-board armatures of those positioned away from the room's walls are as conspicuously present as the planes that front them. The colored stretchers produce a regulated pattern that anchors the amorphous, multihued gels. While the works have sculptural aspects, Hubbard has pointedly painted only on one side of their surfaces, ostensibly their fronts, as a way to highlight the devices germane to the genre. Each presents congealed pools of once-viscous materials, poured and allowed to self-organize in a kind of industrial Color Field that sometimes extends irregularly beyond the rectangular frame. The giant coruscating purple pool of one panel (all works named *[To be titled]*, 2015) suggests a melting Popsicle. The amber glow of another is modulated at closer range by the corrugated weave of the fiberglass sheets that Hubbard adhered to it; the visible mesh regulates the amorphous matter pooled within the matrix of its horizontal and vertical threads.

Although many pieces still look wet, and even as though they are in motion—one in particular gave the impression of bubbling up like a lava lamp—the works are very much settled and done, the forever-delayed nomination of titles notwithstanding. In fact (and in contrast to the paintings' appearance of languid transitivity), Hubbard had very little time to work before the urethane substances hardened irrevocably, producing a ground that, when cured, would regulate the composition; at this point, alterations could be effected only as new layers. Writing in these pages in 2010, I described Hubbard's work as posing action "as something to be circulated, whether transmissible as video projection or YouTube clip or portable as painterly trace. Process and distribution are superimposed, evoking a broader condition in which sharing and displaying an event are also a kind of consumption—in which everyone may be a producer and receiver at once." With this newer scenario, in which works are displayed where they were made, we might add that Hubbard has rendered focal the given of production as inherently performative—that is, as a show in itself.