

## Liz Larner

at REGEN PROJECTS, 27 June–1 August

It would seem to be obvious that we know how we know things, or even that we do, but there are times when the awareness and judgment necessary for cognition fall apart. The relationship between two and three dimensions is particularly vertiginous. My first realization regarding the symbolic versus the physical property of lines and planes occurred when I was about three years old. I was stunned that when

to art-school drawing class, to classic Minimalist sculpture—is a regular solid of six square sides. Larner's cubes are recognizable as such, but there is nothing regular or square about them. The pair comprises a candy-colored geometric paradox that is as creepy-crawly as mating insects. Knowing is belied by looking: Familiarity with the cube gives you a false sense of understanding the structure in front of you. As

ing to figure out whether they are joined at any point keeps you meandering around the sculpture. The constant shifting of perspective animates the lines and makes what is solid seem liquid. *2 as 3 and Some too* flips between containing three-dimensional space and catalyzing it via two-dimensional drawing.

The show's two other works, an untitled drawing and the small sculpture *Devex Yellow*, fall into the categories Larner confounds in *2 as 3 and Some too*. Wispy graphite and ink lines demarcate a linkage of biomorphic shapes in the drawing. In *Devex Yellow* ("devex" is Old English for "empty"), a similar shape is realized in three dimensions, and multiplied a hundredfold, resulting in a knotty cluster of interlinked, podlike forms. Painted yellow, they reflect each other, intensifying the color of the whole. Proffered in a white ring attached to the walls in the far corner of the gallery, the mass resembles a tangle of pubic hair caught in a drain and a bouquet of wild flowers. Drawing viewers up close, as if to smell the flowers, it appears to be a glowing molecular environment much larger than *2 as 3 and Some too*.

Prying into the mysteries of cognition, Larner invites viewers to question them as well. Her careful attention to detail coaxes us with knittinglike pleasure to take on heroically scaled puzzles. The insistent, structural incongruity of all her works launches us via the fourth dimension of time into a netherworld that will always remind me of cutout stick figures.

**Ingrid Calame** is an artist and writer living in Los Angeles.



I cut out a stick figure I was left holding a circle (which had been the head) and some chunks of paper (which had been limbs and a body). In trying to make the figure more tangible, I had made it disappear! This moment still haunts my understanding of the world. Liz Larner creates similar situations, in which our mental expectations and sensual knowledge meet head-to-head.

Wiggling its way toward drawing, Larner's *2 as 3 and Some too* (1997-98) is a pair of monumental steel cubes that have the lightness of kite skeletons. A cube—the form immortalized throughout life from building blocks, to high school algebra,

you walk around the form, knowing and seeing trip each other up. The sensation isn't so different from what it feels like when an optometrist flips various lenses in front of each eye, trying to find the right prescription for one and then the other.

Larner sticks to primary colors in *2 as 3 and Some too*, but here again the impression of simplicity is misleading. She has brushed watercolor paint over the bars' bone-smooth paper surface, which is an evolved form of papier-mâché. Their pastel tones are organic and artificial at once—like a sun-bleached signboard of a desert saloon. Where the edges meet, the colors overlap with delicate irregularity. The colors seem to code the bars, but just when a pattern is about to emerge, some inconsistency disrupts the impending order. By implying a logic only to depart from its structure, Larner's pair of cubes keeps your eyes roving restlessly.

Like two hearts linked in "4Ever," the cubes are discrete but inseparable. Try-

**Liz Larner**  
***2 as 3 and Some too*, 1997-98**  
**Paper, steel, and watercolor**  
**Two elements, 5' x 5' x 5' each**