

# ANDREW RAFACZ

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**ANDREW RAFACZ** is pleased to announce a solo exhibition of new work by Scott Wolniak.

Chicago, IL, February 4, 2012 – Andrew Rafacz begins the 2012 season with *Scott Wolniak*, new sculptures and relief paintings by the artist in Gallery One. This is the artist's second exhibition with the gallery and continues through Saturday, March 17, 2012.

Scott Wolniak's previous exhibition with the gallery, *Afterimage*, presented works on paper that combined bleach and ink to produce what he terms 'internalized abstractions.' The materials were absorbed into the fibers of the paper and, chemically resisting one another, created beautiful visual effects while simultaneously destroying the material integrity of the surface. The resultant images were indebted to chance but also revealed certain possible pictorial and narrative cues.

With his new body of work presented in this exhibition, Wolniak continues his use of cause and effect to unlock what he perceives as a hidden interiority. He has created a series of plaster sculptures and relief paintings that investigate internalized process and bidirectional becoming, but the material stakes and methods are raised dramatically, including plaster casting, carving, etching and 3-dimensional fabrication along with chance operations and infused color. Sculpture, painting and drawing are combined in densely patterned, visually enigmatic objects that refer to ancient tablets, ceramic tiles, fresco painting, scholar stones, geologic souvenirs, psychedelic knick-knacks, and animism. Ultimately though, they remain unnamable.

The central work of the exhibition, *Liminal Set*, is a fabricated open-air cabinet that contains a curated series of these freestanding pieces, arranged in small groups or individual compartments and often resting on mirrored tiles or artist-made surfaces. The design relates to a lab display where the lower levels are used for storage and the surface for analysis and presentation. This context gives the objects a practical feel, as if they are natural specimens, but in their thoughtful insertion into a larger installation, they also play as precious objects. The cabinet was designed and built in collaboration with artist Andy Hall.

Wolniak's relief tablets, presented on wall cleats and minimal shelves in the gallery, occupy a hybrid territory between painting and sculpture. They function like something out of time and far away, historically ambiguous, simultaneously ethereal and physical. These pieces take material cues from the aforementioned sculptures but operate in entirely different ways. Where the objects deal with seeing the universe in localized gritty chunks of broken-off things, the tablets are about making (and unmaking) the universe from scratch.

**SCOTT WOLNIAK** (American, b. 1971) lives and works in Chicago. He received his M.F.A. from the University of Illinois, Chicago in 2002. Recent solo exhibitions include *Ungray: Color, Light, and Other Balms* at the Chicago Cultural Center in 2009 and *Afterimage* at Andrew Rafacz, in 2010. His work is currently on view in *Contemporary Drawings from the Irving Stenn Jr. Collection* at the Art Institute of Chicago. His works are included in the collections of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Peter Norton, Santa Monica, CA; Peter Stern, NY; *Sonke Magnus-Muller*, Berlin and numerous other private collections in the U.S. and Europe.