

# San Francisco Chronicle

KENNETH  
BAKER *Galleries*

Datebook

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Chandra Cerrito Contemporary

**Keira Kotler: Stillness:** Paintings, photographs, monotypes and a video. Through July 24. Chandra Cerrito Contemporary, 480 23rd St., Oakland. (510) 260-7494, [www.chandracerrito.com](http://www.chandracerrito.com).

**Three 2010 paintings in urethane and varnish on acrylic by Keira Kotler defy associations by viewers.**

and David Simpson have tried to get nothing into their work, though something has nearly always intervened.

Marin painter Keira Kotler enters this stream with the pivotal work in her show at Chandra Cerrito in Oakland: a 12-minute projected video titled "Horizontal Space 051110" (2010).

The looped, uncut projection shows only a depthless rectangle in which proportions of light and shadow slowly shift.

Something intangible appears to course through the video — perhaps the medium's raw self-display — and watching it feels like watching time pass.

Few people will linger with "Horizontal Space ...," which is unfortunate because it instructs viewers in the sort of recep-

**Nothing to declare at Cerrito: Contemporary artists from John Cage, Robert Rauschenberg and Yves Klein to Robert Irwin, Robert Ryman**

tion that Kotler's paintings solicit: wordless, unhurried attention.

Coating sheets of acrylic with one layer a day of pigmented urethane and varnish, Kotler seeks optical nuances in her paintings that might register differences in time of day and

other light-altering factors such as viewing angle and duration, and perhaps even the viewer's mood.

She titles the paintings with date spans, such as "February 1 to April 17, 2010 [I Look for Light]."

These intervals no doubt bracket events in

her private life, though to us they merely indicate the time it took a painting to ripen fully. No matter their brightness or subtlety, the paintings exude a faint skepticism and resignation by this hint of an unbridgeable gulf between their meanings to her and to us.

While unprepared viewers try to bring content to the paintings, she may struggle to free them of private memories and other associations. Their physical beauty finally appears incidental to their seriousness.

Strangely, the photographs and monotypes on view, which lie somewhere in the background of Kotler's paintings, refuse to come to life.

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