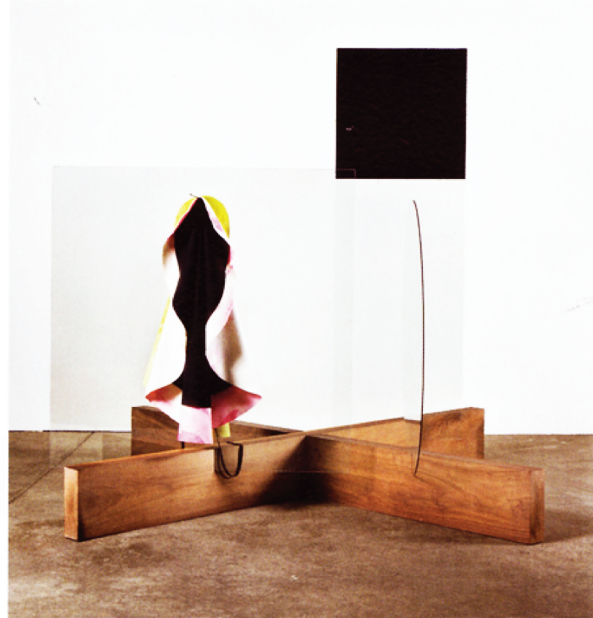


PATRICK HILL

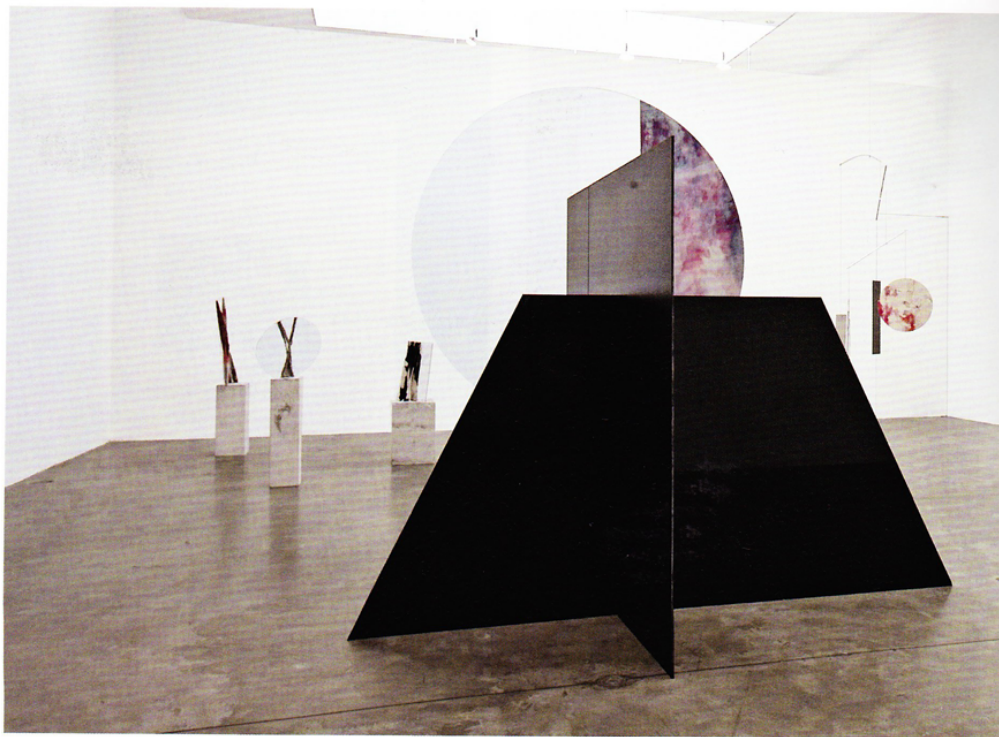


Valley, 2006. Wood, glass, brass, canvas, dye, oil, glue, syrup, and bleach, 79¼ x 76 x 73 in. (201.3 x 193 x 185.4 cm). Private collection

Born 1972 in Royal Oak, Michigan; lives in Los Angeles, California Employing the language of abstract sculpture, Patrick Hill creates highly referential, narrative constructions in the tradition of Anthony Caro and Barry Le Va. Hill opposes hard, architectural elements (stone, glass, brass, wood) with soft, supple materials (ribbon, canvas, wool), combining Minimalist forms with a more feminine tradition. Often alluding to unpleasant or distasteful aspects of the physicality of the human body, Hill is interested in the phenomenology of his work, inviting the viewer into difficult dialogues.

In *Sex and Violence* (2006), Hill addresses pornography through abstract terminology. A circular piece of glass, from which a smaller circle has been removed with surgical precision, intersects a horizontal wooden beam resting on the gallery floor. One side of the glass is covered in a purplish-pink-stained cloth, invoking connotations of blood, bruising, and other bodily excretions—"sex." The alternate side is sheathed in sooty black canvas—"violence." A second piece of glass, cut to the hole's dimensions, obstructs the orifice of the purple face. As the viewer physically shifts between vantage points, the work's appearance changes: from the front and back, the fabric adds an illusion of weight and substance which dissolves when seen from the side. Light is alternately absorbed by the fabric and reflected by the glass, manifesting the duality characteristic of his work: interior/exterior, public/private, masculine/feminine.

Forming, Hill's 2007 exhibition at Bortolami in New York, takes a darker, more brutal tone with works created from concrete, stone, steel, glass, and stained cloth, anchored by the large, imposing title piece. Referencing the debut single of the Los Angeles hardcore punk band The Germs, the title has multiple meanings, acknowledging Hill's debt to music as well as his preoccupation with tumors and other growths. The title piece, *Forming* (2007), is composed of a 5-by-10-foot granite trapezoid bisected by a 7-foot steel square. Perilously set in a narrow groove in the steel, a 6-foot circle of glass covered on one side with magenta-dyed fabric and on the other with black canvas evokes an apocalyptic scene—a mottled, deep purple sun setting behind a looming mountain. There is little tolerance for movement between these weighty elements, lending a precarious feel to the substantial structure. Hill has dripped fabric dye down one side of the granite and the steel, and its chemical composition deteriorates the surface of these stoic materials. While they are not stained, they decay. This erosion is reminiscent of Hill's frequent use of beet and berry juices as dyes. Organic stains react unpredictably and with volatility, creating a dynamic relationship between materials. On a larger scale, his sculpture itself is vulnerable, underscoring the temporal nature of Hill's antimonument as it reminds us of the frailty of the human body and our own mortality. **S.G.**



Forming, 2007 (installation views, Bortolami, New York, 2007). Glass, steel, granite, canvas, dye, paint, and glue, 108 x 120 x 84 in. (274.3 x 304.8 x 213.4 cm). Collection of the artist