

KATE WERBLE GALLERY

83 VANDAM STREET NEW YORK, NY 10013

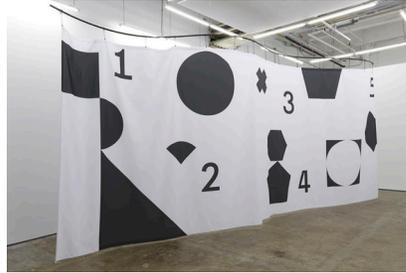


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Emily Colucci

*Beyond Chelsea And The Lower East Side: The West Village Gallery Round-Up
Part 1*

September 22, 2016



*Gareth Long, He Knew Many Things, But He Knew Them All Badly (Counting Waves), 2016,
UVA inkjet on fabric, custom curtain rod (Courtesy the artist and Kate Werble Gallery)*

[Gareth Long's He Knew Many Things, But He Knew Them All Badly](#) and [John Lehr's Selections From 'The Island Position'](#) in Kate Werble Gallery prove just how much the cultural relevancy of an exhibition matters. The success of Long's exhibition and the problems in Lehr's show depend on timeliness alone rather than the technical prowess of their work.

Located in [Kate Werble's](#) main gallery, Long's show delved into stupidity. This seems like a perfect theme for an exhibition in the fall of 2016. It's no mistake that the press release starts with a 2013 tweet by Donald Trump boasting how his "IQ is one of the highest." Putting politics aside, Long's interest in our continued ignorance even in the wake of increasing technology and accessible knowledge remains wholly relevant.

The exhibition's lengthy title derives from lost Homer comedy that follows a man, [Margites](#), who tried to count all the waves in the sea even though he could only count to five. After learning about its obscure inspiration, the various multidisciplinary works in the exhibition come together. For example, Long's central sculpture *He Know Many Things, But He Knew Them All Badly (Counting Waves)* seems, on first glance, like a math nerd's shower curtain. However, the work combines Margite's five numerals with geometric shapes resembling educational toys. Spanning the entire front gallery and obscuring a pencil drawing on the far wall, the curtain becomes a monument to blind ambition and impossibility.

This futility is further reflected in Long's video [Square Peg/Round Hole 3](#), which is such a simplistic concept that it barely needs explaining. The looping video shows a primary colored 3-D model of a square peg aimlessly trying to jam itself into a round hole. The repetitive video becomes an exercise in failure worthy of a Samuel Beckett play. Even with all our technological prowess, we still can't solve this old puzzle.