

In *The Common Citizenship of Forms (Surgical Hospital)*, 2010, an approximately 3-by-7-by-3-foot structure, Carter creates a striking model of a horizontal, four-level modernist building. We can think of IKEA furnishings, with their sleek lines, as meeting in some ways the Bauhaus's mission of bringing affordable design to everyone, albeit through ecologically unsustainable means. All the works blur the bounds of sculpture, architecture and design, and possess a conceptualist edge. Though they tend to be more clever than profound, the artist nonetheless raises some intriguing questions about permanence and impermanence, disposability and durability, and beauty and mass-produced banality.

Along with such serious themes, an equally important sense of playfulness runs through these pieces. *The Common Citizenship of Forms (Laundry Building)*, 2010, a squat rectangular work with pull-out mesh baskets, shakes as the sounds of a washing-machine spin cycle play from a speaker—a performance that inevitably draws a laugh.

While most of the selections in the two shows were floor-based pieces, some hung on the wall. *The Common Citizenship of Forms (Linear Accelerator)*, 2011, for instance, is a three-tiered, wall-mounted box, from which three blue electrical cords extend to the floor, with illuminated light bulbs at their ends. Several of the works have kinetic elements, such as *Untitled #5 (Chicago Tribune Tower)*, 2014, a gray, blocky piece with six cut-out niches, each holding a fuchsia pillow that inflates and deflates.

Although IKEA's modular products were never intended to be artistic building blocks, Carter shows that they can be effectively used to create expressive, fun and sometimes pointed works.

—Kyle MacMillan

DENVER BRUNO NOVELLI David B. Smith

Vivid flora and sharp geometries mingle and conjugate in “Materia Radiante,” Bruno Novelli’s first solo exhibition in the U.S. since 2008. The artist lives and works in São Paulo, where a few years ago he founded the Universidade Autoindicada por Entidades Livres (Autodidactic University for Free Entities), a loose bundle of classes and training programs promoting interdisciplinary artistic endeavors. Novelli, who also goes by the name Bruno 9li (*nove* meaning nine in Portuguese), has garnered attention for paintings of fantastic creatures and dreamlike landscapes constructed with colorful, patternlike brushwork. The four paintings and two works on paper in “Materia Radiante” explore Henri Bergson’s claim in *Matter and Memory* (1896) that “the separation between a thing and its environment cannot be absolutely defined.” The artist



Bruno Novelli: *A Matéria Vibra Numa Fluidez Radiante*, 2014, acrylic on canvas, 69¼ inches square; at David B. Smith.

draws upon the Bergsonian ontological model and the lush rainforest of his native Brazil to examine the boundaries and parallels between nature and language.

Novelli studied sculpture at New York’s School of Visual Arts in 2001, and he displays a structured sense of space on the canvas, especially in his geological approach to stratifying paint layers and compositional forms. Tentacular plants slither and flourish within the canvases, but they are quickly outstripped and crossed by surging bands of color. The hues veer toward neon and are mostly yoked with chromatic, invigorating complements. Novelli’s bold and craning outgrowths feel especially vibrant against the angular motifs of their backgrounds.

The tight patterns of folded, planar vectors marching down one painting (*A Matéria Vibra Numa Fluidez Radiante*) and the two works on paper (*O tempo é a matéria em movimento—Tudo vibra* and *Os Objectos físicos têm limites imprecisos*) actually spell out, in a formally encoded way, the titles of the works. The abstracted characters investigate the visual appeal of written language and its relation, by way of basic geometry, to natural forms. As a cofounder of *Meta-grafismo*, a collective committed to exploring the graphic potential of language, Novelli has fully embraced geometric abstraction as a potent strategy of representation. Adopting a universal mode of expression, he uses similar blocks, bars and angles to compose the various types of forms he presents.

While in Denver for the exhibition, Novelli created a mural in the city’s Confluence Park, *This River Is Alive*—another work whose title is hidden in plain sight, as an intricate geometric design. The artist seems to have found a powerful interlocutor in Bergson, and there is great possibility for further engagement with the interplay of natural and lexical objects along this trajectory.

—Ben Gillespie