

Current City's
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Rebecca Rutstein returns to Bridgette Mayer Gallery (<http://www.mayerartconsultants.com>) at 709 Walnut Street just off Washington Square. Her latest show is "Ebb and Flow," with a First Friday opening. This time out, the artist has expanded on her previous work by offering inspiration that was literally hands on, as she recently had the opportunity to explore the lava flows of Hawaii on a travel grant. On view is a collection of paintings, some of which are incorporated into an installation that covers a wall of the gallery, enjoins the graphic representation of cardiograms with seismograms that catalog the slight temblors that accompany volcanic eruptions. This links the shifting of earth well beneath our feet to the beating of our hearts.



"Adrenaline Junkie" Rebecca Rutstein, 2005, acrylic on panel, 36" x 36"

The overall aesthetic here incorporates a number of scientific disciplines, including geology, biology, and interpersonal psychology. Though resilient, the planet is subject to violent vagaries from deep within, just as are each of our own lives. By recognizing this, an emotional stability can arise from the most horrendous earth events as acceptance of what the ongoing processes of magma and mantle yields when the pressure builds and finally bursts.

These results are thus sequenced in a suite of paintings that are all of gabbro and gabbing, the hiss of steam from below our feet to the ash that fills the air. Time is upended, as what flies from the volcano's top is incredibly old, and the work reflects this through a combination of figurative and abstract aspects. Hints of geologic charts, grand fields of color, a natural shock and awe, and wonderment combine in a heady mix. "Ebb and Flow" is a testament to what we face between each other and our environment.