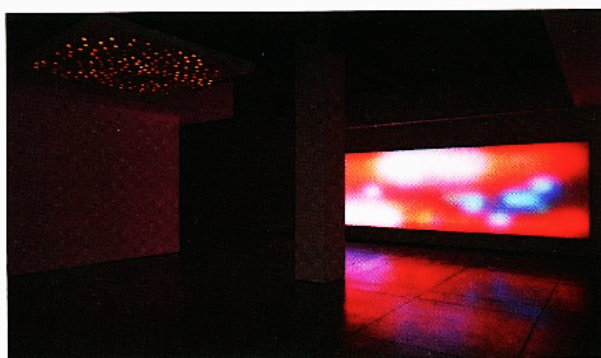


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Leo Villareal, *Hive* (foreground) and *Field* (background), both 2007, mixed media, installation view. Gering & López.

Reviews: [New York](#)

Leo Villareal

Gering & López

Leo Villareal conjured a dazzling variety of effects in this show of only three light installations. Although all featured flat arrays of LEDs configured by complex algorithms, each of the works (all 2007) operated according to its own logic and had its own allure.

Taken together, their contrasting styles seemed to demonstrate radically different views of the world. Just below the ceiling hung *Hive*, its eight-foot-square wood surface covered with a network of exposed circuit boards, their regimented patterns of blinking orange lights signaling efficiency and order.

Then there was the brooding *Field*, whose slowly shifting pastel hues, diffused by a 24-by-7-foot expanse of plastic, enveloped viewers in a universe of emotions. *Diamond Sea* was exuberant, alive with 2,400 points of white light dancing across a polished metal surface that shimmered on the back wall of a dark alcove.

Utterly abstract, the works nonetheless brought numerous references to mind. The oozing, cloudy colors of *Field* could have been a depiction of the aurora borealis. The constantly evolving patterns of *Diamond Sea* evoked early video games, wind moving across fields, and clouds that nearly coalesce into a recognizable shape before drifting apart again.

The closest analogy for these works would be music. Villareal marries the rhythms and harmonies held within the algorithm for each artwork to its materials in the same way a composer might orchestrate a piece to make it more plainspoken, more lush, or more effervescent. And like good music, these pieces drew the viewer back in and revealed new delights with each encounter.

—Eric Bryant