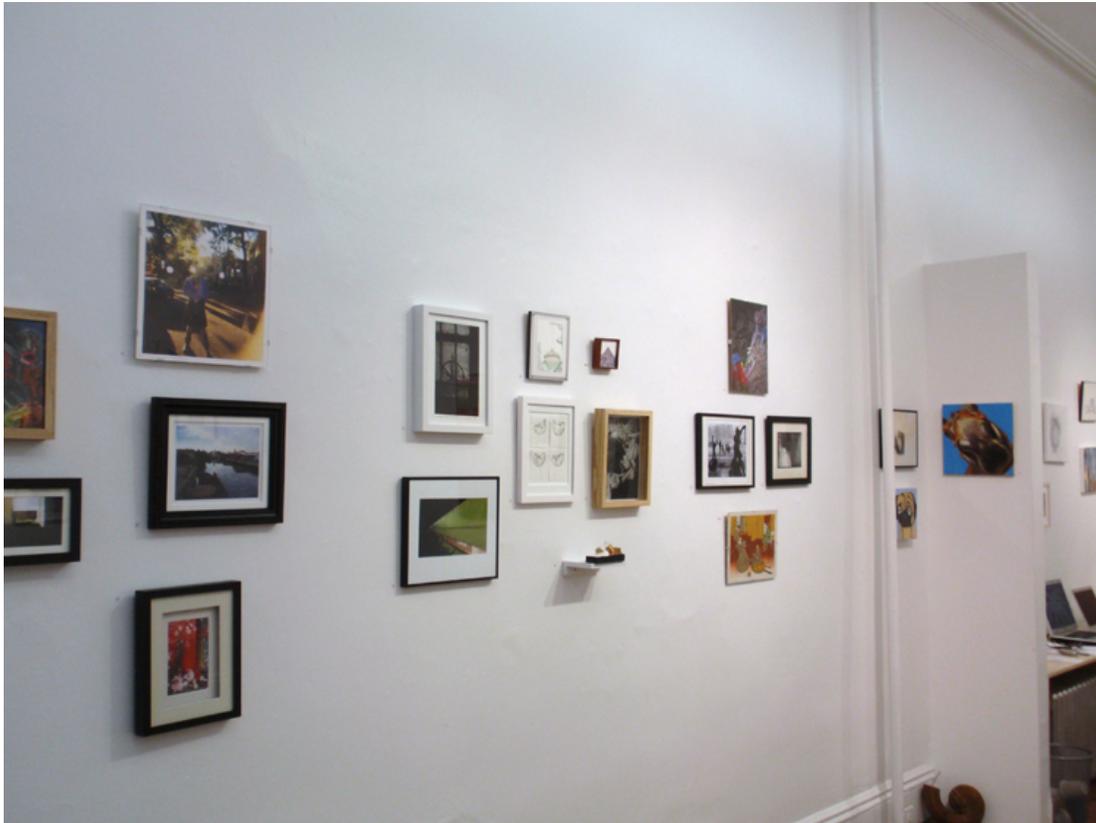


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# Collaboration is key in Brooklyn art collective 440 Gallery

BY YISHU HUANG • DECEMBER 10, 2009, 11:48 PM



440 Gallery brings artists together who both create and display their work in Park Slope. The abstract works are eclectic and original.

Despite high real estate prices, Park Slope remains heavily populated with local artists, whose diverse talent and creativity continuously shape the freer, non commercial nature of visual art galleries. Situated on the quiet corner of Sixth Avenue and 10th Street, 440 Gallery is a modest one-room space with stark white walls, yet the pieces occupying it are anything but ordinary. The gallery is run by an eclectic collective of 13 artists, whose works range from painting and photography to sculpture and installation. The "Small Works Show," currently on view, features a mixed-media piece crafted by Tom Bovo, a member of the 440 collective. The piece is titled "Texture #1" and consists of layers forming a complex gray pattern with hints of blue. This subdued piece reflects Bovo's abstract expressionist and surrealist influences, but diverges from his normally bold photography work, which seeks to explore the disparity between what is seen and what is perceived in an increasingly complex environment. In contrast to Bovo's work, Rachel Mosler's "Nail Book"—an assemblage of found objects—seeks to explore states of decay by using more natural materials. Nails spring out from the two ends of this carefully crafted book and create a jarring discord within the piece. The work garnered the collective's members' choice award for the "Small Works Show" this year. Ellen Chuse uses acrylic paint and colored pencil to depict a series of oval shapes and fluid forms in her piece "Cousins." The repetition

nature. For Chuse, the process is just as important as the final product. "I work intuitively within the forms and color that engage me at the moment and I am often surprised to discover the work that emerges," Chuse said. The way in which she approaches her work also gives it a layered texture that provides viewers with a unique experience each time they look at it. This artist-run gallery allows its members the freedom to take risks in their work, giving its shows a token originality and eccentricity. Exhibitions at 440 Gallery are free and open to the public, and with the bulk of its original art selling for \$150-\$1,000, even those on a tighter budget may find themselves purchasing a piece or two. For those seeking refuge from the overpopulated clusters of art spaces in places like Chelsea, 440 Gallery provides a non intimidating, intimate alternative. The gallery allows visitors to engage on a more personal level both with the works and the artists themselves.