



## Spatial Territories Amy Stephens at La Scatola

Exhibition curated by  
Valentina Fois

Review by James  
Brewer

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Here is a show that takes as its starting point geographical fault lines. Fittingly, it teeters on artistic boundaries, just as geological movement creates new forms by pushing together strata of different materials.



London-based artist Amy Stephens relates her work to the long fault line that is the main feature of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, which extends from northeast of Greenland, through Iceland, all the way to the Cape of Good Hope and into the Indian Ocean. Amy was intrigued as a student by physical geography and that interest has continued, with a particular impulse from a residency two years ago with the [Association of Icelandic Visual Artists at Reykjavík](#). This brought her up close to the fracturing of the earth, and symbolically she brought back a small piece of rock which she has incorporated into one of her installations.

Similarly, her [Visual Arts Creative Residency in 2010 at Banff, Canada](#), situated her among giant natural formations of mountains and lakes.

Amy's background is as a painter; but for all her fascination with earth-shaking Triassic times, Amy affects a minimalist approach in sculpturally assembling found, man-made and natural elements (including lava), with the result emerging as the 'territories' of the exhibition title derived from representation of how the tectonic plates divide the mostly undersea Ridge.

Thus, in *Copper Mountain*, she uses an oak plinth, bright blue flock fabric, copper and paper, and in *Ocean Ridge* fluorescent orange tape encompasses a barnacle. She includes in one instance a plank of yellow pine which she painstakingly prepared and planed herself.

Amy seeks a strong sense of architecture and form as her work, in her words, "transforms the physical space into an exploration of line, plane and volume. Wooden outlines of geometric shapes display an affinity to drawing and awaken our fundamental instinct to critically engage with form and colour."

Amy at present has a residency with the [Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin](#), where her work is on show. She was shortlisted for the Threadneedle Prize 2011 for representational art.

The exhibition is on at La Scatola, 1 Snowden Street, London EC2 until October 16 2011.

**Image used:**

***Spatial Territories***  
***Works by Amy Stephens***  
***Photos by Elizabeth Boyd***