



By **KATY DONOGHUE**
September 17, 2012

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HI/LO AT THE ARTBRIDGE DRAWING ROOM

The ArtBridge Drawing Room was once a broom closet and is now a gallery. So you can imagine its size and appreciate the curators and artists that work within it. This fall, artist **Ryan Turley** has totally transformed the tiny space in “Hi/Lo”, a first for the gallery and for director and curator **Jordana Zeldin**.

Zeldin told us about choosing Turley for this project: “Having gotten the hang of hanging 2D works in a variety of media and sizes in our 78 square feet, I wanted to explore ways in which we could push the boundaries of this unconventional gallery space even further. Working on an installation of this kind was a first for me, but after my first studio visit with Ryan I found that we spoke the same language, and shared the desire to create an immersive experience that felt totally outside the realm of everyday life and, though simply made, addressed some larger ideas about human experience.”

Said Turley about his initial idea for “Hi/Lo”: “Knowing first and foremost that I had this small space to work with, my first impulse was to try to make it feel expansive, using as few basic elements as possible. In all of my work I attempt to reconcile powerful and complex socio-political concepts with simple, relatable, familiar objects that I reinterpret into the final sculpture or installation. With ‘Hi/Lo’ I hope to place viewers in a state of limbo, offering them the experience of losing themselves inside a synthetic prism while simultaneously grounding them with the natural earth and mulch beneath their feet.”

When we visited during the opening in early September, we were allowed in the space three at a time, opting to replace our shoes with customized socks. Pulling back a black curtain we walked up a short, steep ramp covered in dark, mulch. A small ladder and a



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covered in dark, mulch. A small ladder and a few benches were available for us to sit in, taking in the installation, the space, the smell of mulch...

“Though viewers will at first likely feel uneasy in the installation’s unfamiliarity, by revealing its inner-workings-- cords, LED light fixtures and sockets-- I hope to make it easy for them to “figure it out,” so to speak, allowing for them to lose themselves in their own thoughts and sensations from their private viewing booths. The experiences I imagine viewers will come away with will be varied, both comfortable and tense, disoriented and grounded, introspective and also captivated by the materials working together around them. It is in this middle or grey area that I am most interested in exploring, as I believe that we all exist somewhere in between the extremes we so frequently subscribe to,” said Turley.

We asked Zeldin about what she’d learned from her first time creating an immersive installation: “For me, the most exciting part of the process was the problem solving we did together near the very end—everything was in the space, the ramp was built, we had the 30 bags worth of mulch packed down, the 60 2x4s, the lights, the film, but for some reason it wasn’t cohering. What really tied the piece together was Ryan’s transformative revelation about his diffraction film being this sculptural material, not just something that functions only in service of creating an effect with the light. He started to think about it as an element that could direct the movement and attention of the viewer, to really shape the space. The column of film in the center was Ryan’s last addition: a bold finishing stroke that reinforced his new conviction of the film as a delicate, yet also unexpectedly substantial sculptural material.”

“Hi/Lo” is on view through December 6, 2012 at The ArtBridge Drawing Room, 526 W. 26th Street, 502a, New York, NY 10001.