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VIDEO: Alison Elizabeth Taylor, Veteran of Veneer



by Dion Tan
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Alison Elizabeth Taylor started out as a painter; but it was the curiosity of collaging a first-grade picture of her friend from wood-grain contact paper that ignited the Brooklyn-based artist's passion for marquetry. For her fourth solo exhibition "**Surface Tension**" at **James Cohan Gallery** in New York, Taylor returns to her palette roots by adding a splash of desert colors to her delicate wood veneer collages.

"It kind of makes sense to bring the two back together to see how two visual languages can work together on the same surface," said Taylor.

"Marquetry has such an ability to memorialize, make permanent, and turn things into a fabric of history," she said. Marquetry, the art and craft of applying pieces of veneer to form decorative patterns, was popularized during the 17th century at Versailles during the reign of Louis XIV.

Taylor's fusion of modern renaissance pieces are often inspired by relationships between nature and human folly. She observes fragments of broken life surrounding her and transforms them into art that she hopes makes certain moments in time memorable to those who view it.

In her latest works, Taylor draws influence from broken trees during her walks in Van Cortlandt Park after Hurricane Sandy in the Bronx.

The exhibit at James Cohan Gallery in Chelsea is on view until November 30.