

Painting Advanced

Group exhibit
March 9th through April 20th, 2013

Edward Thorp Gallery is pleased to announce “Painting Advanced”, which addresses the ever-expanding range of complexity in recent abstract painting. All the works selected question the materials and tools of painting as they push it’s identity further. The artists are not confined to the language of painting as being a narrow set of conventions. Challenging historical tropes and often finding irreverent ways to supplant received knowledge, their works broaden this dialogue, enabling us to uncover the energies that painting still possesses.

Andrea Belag’s unpretentious and playful works exude an expressive surface of color swaths built from areas of translucent color. Belag’s paintings evoke contained, corralled spaces, which give way to a psychological narrative of concealment. Also her economically nuanced technique alludes to a disclosure of a paintings evolution.

Jim Lee’s paired-down aesthetic toys with the distinction between painting and sculpture with often unsettling results. Surprising inclusions and edits ensue through the use of cursory materials, achieving a fluent, almost found quality. A mischievous casualness turns the usual components of a painting into something unknown and innovative.

The process in **Rachel Malin’s** breathlessly upbeat works allows for a refreshing immediacy. With a distinct lack of restraint, the directness she employs leaves little room for the over-thinking of an idea or gesture. Brush strokes flow with rhythms of subtle intimacy, and a number of dichotomies, abstraction and representation, skilled and unskilled, sophisticated and rudimentary ensue with images reminiscent of tribal or craft forms.

Andrew Spence explores abstraction in relation to utilitarian objects, distilling his imagery from contemporary cultural life, as in architecture, industrial design or common objects. These subjects, often chosen for their utopian implications, are then filtered through his cool, sensuous surfaces that illustrate the clarity of his intent. Highkeyed color and dramatic tonal combinations result in a strikingly constrained quirkiness.

The interplay of paint qualities and surface values in **Gary Stephan’s** diagrammatic paintings create vibrating pictorial tensions that emphasize situations of analogy and perception. The layers of his process, including webbing-like striated surfaces, become equivalents for the real world and its existing (found) textures. Structure once achieved only then to be disrupted by rogue elements, resulting in unexpected pictorial ambiguity and beauty.