

'Teeming' and Linda Day at POST

Sometimes things really are more than the sum of their parts. *Teeming*, a show of four established Los Angeles abstract painters, curated by Habib Kheradvar at POST is one such case.

An underlying curatorial intelligence connects the group show and the separate solo show upstairs by Linda Day. The common thread intuited by the curator becomes a felt presence.

Presence pulsates in Robin Mitchell's *Dervish* with wild red

phosphorescent energy which echoes and whirls rhythmically, like a fluorescent Jackson Pollock. The pulse continues in Merion Estes's *Cosmic Wink*, which flows into delicate skeins and veils overlaid onto an ebb of silky watery movement. It widens into pond-like meandering lines of old, comfortable rivers in the more geometric but still highly tactile *Echologica* by Marie Thibeault, where a vague threat—something black and murky—is encroaching from the side, offset by an optimistic lavender patch.

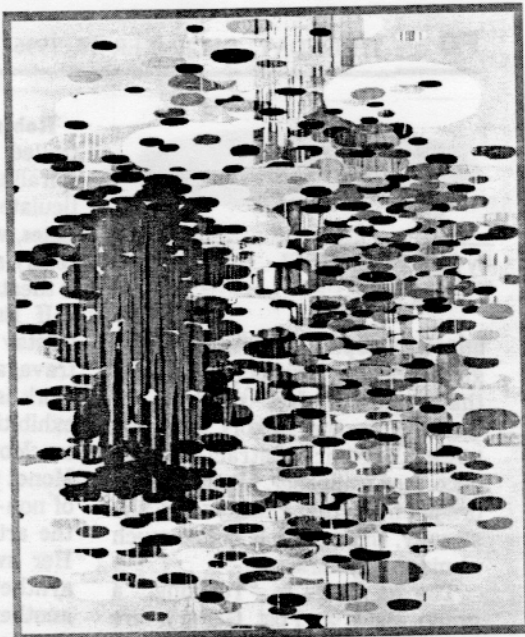
Care is needed here.

Or I could become engulfed, protozoan-like in Mitchell's *Blood Tree*. I feel as if I'm swarming upstream in its vast fluorescent yellow-green spermatozoal fluid, then begin to wonder just how much of my blood is sea water? More blood platelets may devour me in Linda Day's *Tantrum*, or are those innocent Monet lily pads gone a little berserk—lifting, falling, running in rivulets, ascending, descending in an aerial world that hovers like a visceral spacecraft, alien, yet intimately familiar.

Upstairs there are more of these arabesques, but then in *Stalemate (Win Win)* I'm brought back within my own body by the floating red, orange and violet blood platelets interrupted by a gushing green cascade on the side. These canvases create a finite space of drips, platelets, bubbles and baubles (*L.A./L.A.*) over and within an infinite space that is confidently divided like a Diebenkorn, but flows and gathers and ascends as its own self.

While references to pattern and decoration, biomorphic and organic abstraction abound, ultimately this quiet, yet

with the electrons and photons of pulsation behind the mere appearance, with chaos behind order, with intelligence connected to intuition, with abandonment tamed by extreme care. This is abstract painting that not only connects with its own historic legacy (or burden), but also to the living world outside, in all of its organic messy delirious confusion. All of this contradiction opens up many layers of connection for us the viewers, from the innate to the intellectual, with many stepping stones in between. These connections are crucial, since the treacherous risk inherent in abstract painting today—that of static or self-indulgent repetition—is here overcome by a visceral flow and pulse, by a



Linda Day, *Stalemate (Win Win)*, 1996, oil on canvas, 72" x 60", at POST, Los Angeles.

self-confidence won by many years of intense marking, puddling, drawing, dripping, waiting, and the exercise of sheer intelligence that must impose itself over all. The energy felt here is teeming, yet tamed, and we are allowed into a bit of the mystery of not only appearances themselves, but of the webs of mystery behind appearance.

This is a courageous show for our cynical hyper-plastic contemporary world and its refreshing energy reminds us that while its territory may have been thoroughly examined before, new explorations remain for those who are determined.

—Victoria Martin

Teeming and Linda Day closed December 21 at POST, Los Angeles.

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