



stan gregory / solitary dime / 2007 / oil on tinted gesso on canvas / 64 x 64 inches / sundaram tagore gallery

I hadn't been to see any exhibits in about a week or two...Today I went down to Sundharam Tagore Gallery to see the show of Stan Gregory's work, whose work I've been waiting to see for a while now. His paintings are deceptively simple. I found myself drawn into the fluctuating shapes and the interpenetrating spaces. The arabesque lines of the paintings and the dynamic positive and negative shapes call to mind Islamic calligraphy and images of whirling dervishes. The paintings are joyful and both the lines and the colors have a lot of movement and energy. However, and maybe this is just because I am a painter, I found myself drawn past the lines, the shapes and the colors, right up and into the surface. The thick heavy layers of paint smoothed down with a knife and sandpaper to create a soft luminous ground. The contrast with the thin

impasto lines. Semi-transparent colors, subtle brush marks next to smooth matte flat areas. Paint mixing around the lines, layers upon layers of paint, giving the feel of smooth heavy fresco. I could go on, but what the surface revealed to me was a painting that took time. It grew and evolved and changed...and will continue to do so as the painting ages and the layers become more transparent.

From the catalogue:

These are the paintings of a sensualist.

Admittedly when looking at Stan Gregory's work from across the room that might not be the first adjective that springs to mind, though at any distance the standard terminology of styles and "isms" is mostly misleading. The spareness of these paintings will sooner or later suggest the labels "minimal" or "reductive" as well, but only to those whose tolerance for overall abstraction is contingent on bravura effects or atmospheric auras. Gregory doesn't invite such associations, and they don't take the attentive viewer much of anywhere except back to the same starting point...

That is what paintings like Gregory's are all about. Looking once and getting your bearings, looking longer and losing them, looking away and then back and finding a new optical purchase or path, looking at one part and then jumping to the furthest point from it and trying to account for all the transitions and liaisons that map their connection. The best thing about doing this is that there is no "X marks the spot" to these mazes, no predetermined course through them, no one way traffic, no privileged entrance or exit, no inside or outside and no price to pay for perceptual or conceptual pleasure except that of paying attention. These are the works of a rigorous sensibility but also of a generous one, and they are delivered to the viewer in move-in condition without further explanation needed and with no theoretical strings attached. To spurn an offer made with such painterly know-how and conviction would be foolish; to accept it is to yield to that intelligence and that commitment and so make a self-rewarding commitment of one's own.

Robert Storr – 2008

about

the blind swimmer blind swimmer...painter...artist...art lover...art nerd...aka, gordon fraser

the art world is a vast ocean of exciting artists producing exciting works with techniques both old and new all over the world. it can be both intimidating and overwhelming.

the blind swimmer is a place to dive into this ocean and swim in the abyss...without fear of drowning...the blind swimmer is a blog for artists and art lovers to discuss contemporary art, painting, and abstraction - to explore, learn about, and exchange ideas about art.

the blind swimmer (aka, gordon fraser) has a particular focus and interest in the exchange between asian and western art.