

JACK HANLEY GALLERY

LESLIE SHOWS

Five Grounds

June 3rd - July 3rd, 2010

Opening Reception:
June 3rd, 6-9pm



Jack Hanley Gallery is pleased to present “Five Grounds”, a solo show of paintings by Leslie Shows. These large-scale works are an investigation into landscape painting and abstract diagrams. By tying earth processes to social and psychological systems, a view emerges of landscape as neither separate nor a cipher, but the indivisible fabric of reality, and a field of discovery with its own agency.

In varying degrees of abstraction and photorealism, Shows uses ink, poured paint, snapshots, and manipulated found images to diagram the invisible in the landscape - time, forces, processes and connections. The materials shift between illustrative, metaphorical and isomorphic representations of the subject matter: ink drips depict stalactites, rain and lava, and multiple registers of time are suggested by a rapid paint trawl, or a “core sample” of printed material from different eras. Collaged scraps accumulate on massive brushstrokes, and language colonizes abstract forms.

Abstracted, these forces and structures develop a psychological dimension, evoking subjective experiences of the mind’s textures, intensities, and silences, and recalling Robert Smithson’s quote that “...ideas decompose into stones of unknowing, and conceptual crystallizations break apart into deposits of gritty reason...This slow flowage makes one conscious of the turbidity of thinking.”

Aligned with the “intelligent materialism” associated with findings on self-organizing matter, these paintings map complex feedback systems of natural phenomena in which culture and language take their places in a continuum of material flow. Connections are drawn between caves, crystal structures and architecture; volitional violence and impersonal intensities; or the fragmentation and stratification of matter and thought. As the artist experiments with the materials’ physical and linguistic properties, painting itself becomes part of this feedback loop.

The result is a kind of synthetic documentary painting that includes multiple scales of time and space. The material histories of painting, the earth, civilization, and the micro-histories of an individual work are nested and collapsed into two dimensions.

Leslie Shows’ work has been exhibited at the Orange County Museum of Art, the Oakland Art Museum, and Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, and is currently part of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art’s 75th Anniversary exhibition. Shows has been the recipient of an SFMoMA SECA Award, an Artadia award, and the Tournesol Award from the Headlands Center for the Arts. This is her fourth solo show with Jack Hanley Gallery.

*For more information or images, please contact Katie Schetlick at 646.918.6824/
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