

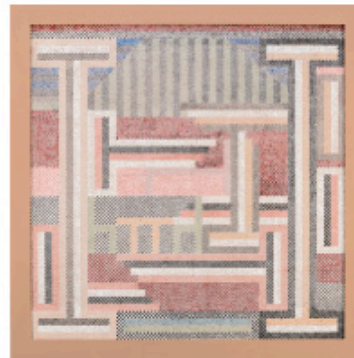
Art in America

INTERNATIONAL REVIEW

EXHIBITION REVIEWS



Jon Pestoni: *Red Tape*, 2010, oil on canvas, 45 by 32 inches; at Lisa Cooley.



Joe Zucker: *The Atrium at Neutrino*, 2010, watercolor and gypsum on plywood, 48 inches square; at Mary Boone. (See review on next page.)

explore the border between civilization and wildness, the garden and the woods.

In some of Doig's best-known works, views of buildings are interrupted by foliage, which creates an irregular pattern across the surface of the painting. Anderson seems to reverse this formulation, mostly in the larger works, by applying painted geometric structures on top of loose verdant landscapes. The various overlays act as viewfinders, measuring devices or screens. Inserted between the observer and a potentially threatening landscape of gestural paint, they serve to hold back the chaos.

Over the mossy expanse of *Central* (about 8 by 5 feet), a silver sunburst pattern contained in a rectangle looks like a machine for calculating perspective. *Beaded Curtain (Red Apples)* shows plants and sky through a surface pattern of regularly spaced red daubs (the apples of the title). The daubs look something like Sigmar Polke's dots, perhaps revealing another influence on the artist. In the large *Constructed View*, incised circles, the size of coffee-can lids, and prismatic lines suggest an iron-work security grille that is paradoxically both in front of and behind the painted palm landscape. *Northern Range*'s structure is subtler, with horizontal registers that serve as the warp for a weft of watery green leaves. Extending flatly on the surface of the canvas, these various structural devices bring to mind 1980s hard-edge abstraction, and, unexpectedly, the quiet grids of Agnes Martin.

Anderson's paint handling was skilled and sensitive throughout. If one had a

quibble, it would be only with a too calculated contrast between oily clumps of paint and thin, washy passages. The very artfulness with which these are distributed on the canvas sometimes neutralizes the otherwise engaging, unruly aspects of the landscape.

—Jeff Frederick

JON PESTONI

LISA COOLEY

Until recently, you couldn't have persuaded me that I could really like paintings in certain colors, but Jon Pestoni's large, abstract *Brushed Teal* (2010) suggests otherwise. Though its palette smacks of a sleeve design for, say, Duran Duran's 1982 record *Rio*, it's a serious painting. Several thickly brushed, off-vertical light teal strokes share the top layer of paint, not very willingly, with horizontal, more thinly applied brushstrokes in aqua. These rest on an off-white background with bright red diagonals; where the red is unblemished by the overlaid teal, it pops forcefully.

For reasons other than their deft deployment of color, the nine gestural abstractions (all 2010) in this 41-year-old Los Angeles artist's first solo show all rewarded long, long looking, as seemingly monochrome fields revealed colorful underpainting, and layers of paint played tricks with each other. For example, *Licked* (24 inches square), which greeted the visitor, concisely set forth one of the artist's concerns. Over a brushy off-white background, two white stripes overlay a roughly butterfly-

shaped area of red. Despite being beneath the white, the red leaps forth and denies the white its place on top.

Two larger vertical paintings (each 63 by 48 inches) hung close together. On the right was *Smoke*. Against an ochre background with three brownish-yellow bars that lag slightly from the horizontal, the artist brushed in a handful of roughly vertical purple strokes, varying thick and thin. Cooley described them to me as aggressive and visceral, but I saw them as languorous, with all the grace of curtains blowing in the breeze. As I stared, luminous bits of orange pigment popped up in various places on the canvas, adding warmth to the palette.

Next to it, *Black Out* presented a handful of irregular, slim white verticals at varying intervals over a murky black ground; the shiny surface of the white contrasts with the matte black, which sometimes nudges well into the white slats. Over both are thin applications of purple; as I looked, these colors were gradually joined by yellow, green and blue throughout, as if all these hues were vying for a place on the surface.

In *Red Tape*, two blunt, uneven red bands shout from the foreground, but the whisper of various shades of gray behind them is just as interesting. Under and partly overlapped by these red stripes are dull gray ones, as though the red bands were translucent and casting shadows onto a surface behind them. Throughout lurk bits of blues and yellows; against the primarily horizontal action, a few vertical strokes become a painterly event.

—Brian Boucher