

ART ENTHUSIAST



“New Paintings” at Aggregate Space

by admin on April 15, 2015

Aggregate Space Gallery’s current group show, *New Paintings* presents a collection of works by five locally-based artists: Tara de la Garza, William Emmert, Adam Hathaway, Clive McCarthy, and Evan Reiser that each contend with the assumptive conflict between traditional painting and new media, and experiment with hybrid aesthetics, exploring new avenues of expression in traditional painting practices. By implementing techniques and practice formulas that may well be described as subversive in nature, which in this exhibit is primarily focused upon conversations between painting and media arts, *New Paintings* confronts the limitations and opportunities for practice around which there has been debated a threatened obsolescence, and questioned suitability as a mode of expression within an era of which technology continues to permeate into almost every facet of life.

Artist Tara de la Garza describes her installation piece, *Flow* on the second floor of Aggregate Space as a “projection painting” where she says, “[j]ellyfish pulsate wildly or slowly glide by the descending parasailers as the scene fades and we see the underlying canvas. . .” Garza’s dexterous implementation of media projection alongside canvas prompt reflections upon the fundamental qualities and tools of each media. In addition to this, Garza’s multilayered work depicting, she says “the natural ebb and flow echoes a cycle of destruction and regrowth” push resolutely beyond the boundaries of the physical perimeters of both mediums, and in doing so aims to redefine the painting surface lexicon and the expansive reach of the video projection, the relations between it for both artist and audience. Rather than providing one picture plane upon which to create as painter or which to view as spectator, Garza’s “projection painting” offers myriad potential viewing experiences and entry points for engagement.



Rainbrush, a large installation by Adam Hathaway that immediately confronts viewers upon entering the main floor gallery space, silently and steadily performs the task of making a painting, dripping colors of paint from several feet above a canvas that rests on the floor, creating a vibrant abstract work throughout the duration of the exhibition. In this way Hathaway devised a system that all but completely removes the traditional painter's direct role as maker, inventing instead a mode of machinated gesture that does not require the artist to be present for the work, nor to make personal aesthetic choices. Intriguingly, the abstract work in its first states recalls pixelated images, drawing parallels between the mechanic system devised for its creation and the manifestation of that process.

Putting his formidable knowledge of art history and theory and applied mathematics to work, engineer and artist Clive McCarthy's complex digital paintings are on view in the corridor leading to the gallery's screening room. On flat-panel screens McCarthy implements a series of algorithms that imitate line, texture, and brushstroke to create painterly images in a constant state of flux. Swathes of color randomly dissolve and reconstitute, eternally continuing to recompose the picture plane. Like Garza's "projection painting," as McCarthy's video moves, viewers are constantly engaged with infinite viewings of simulated action. Additionally, McCarthy and Garza experiment with audience, encouraging a reconciliation with the two different ways of viewing: the almost meditative observance commonly associated with painting, with the brightly-lit, and moving image stimulus more common in viewing digital media. However, McCarthy's works diverge from Garza to align more perhaps with Hathaway, offering a view into the practice perhaps unavailable to the wider public in exhibition, which is more often concerned with display of a finished product.

New Paintings, including artworks by Tara de la Garza, William Emmert, Adam Hathaway, Clive McCarthy, and Evan Reiser will be on view at Aggregate Space Gallery, 801 West Grand Avenue through May 2, 2015.

