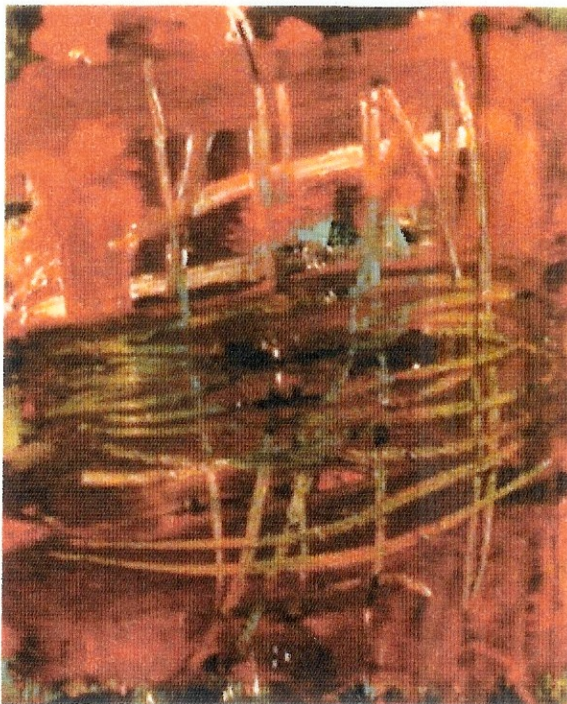


Denise Gale at *The Painting Center*, 52 Greene Street to April 23rd

These very painterly pieces are aptly presented in a space called "The Painting Center". Gale's paintings were last shown in this space as part of a dual show with Geoffrey Dorfman. This time she dominates the gallery and I do mean *dominates*. These pieces contain the artist's characteristic robust and raw paint handling which create temples of unrestrained gesture. Clearly they were created 'on the fly'; meaning that if they were somehow preconceived, it's not evident in final product. This speaks to the intrinsic beauty of the work, the completely unfettered manner in which Gale finds her way to resolution. Are they completed works? For the most part yes, but some of the question remains open. You get the sense that these paintings could be worked on further (with the danger of running them right into the ground of course). But Gale instinctively knows just where to stop and leave just enough uncertainty about their completion to allow them breathing space. It is this very notion that imbues these paintings with so much life.



Denise Gale at *The Painting Center*



Denise Gale at *The Painting Center*



Denise Gale (detail) at *The Painting Center*

Another aspect to this work is the strength offered by the deep contrasts, broad paint strokes, rough texture and solid color (Gale build's her color and

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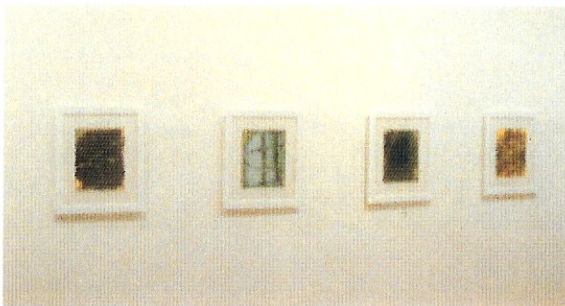
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and surfaces like Mack builds its trucks). However, it only becomes effective because she also knows how, when and in what quantity to deploy subtlety. A delicate balance is maintained between an otherwise overt and sublime approach to all the elements. While the first thing in your face is the stronger effort, more time spent with the work releases their more understated features. The relationship between the two represents a yin-yang dependency where one could not exist without the other. Gale brilliantly masks the difficulty of this by making it all appear effortless. But anyone attempting this sort of abstraction definitively knows better.

Gale's art is about nothing if not about intuition which goes right to the heart of meaning for her work and defines its content. From painting to painting she finds her way to an approximation of its completion so that each piece is delightfully unique while stylistically united with the others. In this you are afforded the opportunity to choose your favorites, yet all of the work holds up. To that end the entire exhibition makes a solidly strong comprehensive statement regarding the importance of the shifting relationship between uncertainty and resolution.



Denise Gale at *The Painting Center*



Denise Gale at *The Painting Center*



Scott Richter at the *Elizabeth Harris Gallery*

Scott Richter at the *Elizabeth Harris Gallery*, 529 West 20th Street to April 16th

Scott Richter's art has slowly been evolving to encompass a more fully sculptural and somewhat figurative esthetic. His signature approach of creating an encompassing carnal build-up of paint on top of small tables and other structures remains. What has changed is the subtle shift from a solely abstract rendering to the inclusion of out-right figurative elements in some pieces. For all this, however, his work is still predominately abstract. True, the form of a boat slathered with crimson paint is a recognizable form, for example. But no other detail beyond its distinctive shape distinguishes it as such. As with his last show in this gallery, Richter is straddling the line between pure and impure abstraction. Two spiral pieces in

the show playfully acknowledge and engage Modernism. The playful part has to do with color, the overt texture of the paint and how both conspire to undermine the seriousness of Modernism even as the artist is not entirely tongue-in-cheek with these pieces.

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